



Christmas Traditions by Rosanna Aiuppa

Like many other countries, Italy is changing rapidly. Although they have taken on some of the trappings and symbols of the much-emulated USA, century-old traditions still prevail. The traditional *Ceppo* has sometimes been replaced with a Christmas tree. In some homes, *La Befana*, the good witch who brought children their gifts on the feast of the Epiphany, January 6th has been replaced with Santa Claus bringing gifts on Christmas Eve. In Italy, *Jingle Bells* is heard as often as *Adeste Fideles* and big cities in Italy have taken on the feel of any large American city during the holiday season.



Traditional Ceppo

However, in spite of all these changes, some traditions still prevail in Italy, especially as you leave the large city centers. The Christmas Crèche or Manger is the symbol of Italian Christmas. To celebrate the birth of the Savior, St. Francis has the honor of having created this tradition. He had a friend create the humble Manger of wood and clay, depicting the animals and the Holy Family. It was created so he could give thanks to this miraculous Holy Birth by celebrating Mass in front of the Manger on Christmas Eve. Since that first celebratory Mass, you would be hard-pressed to be in any Italian Piazza, home or church without marveling at the creativity and love evidenced by the uniqueness and beauty of each *Presepio*. As a matter of fact, in many Italian towns, it is customary to go from church to church and to neighbors' homes to view, admire, and even "rate" each creation. In Northern Italy, the Pagan /Christian custom of the Yule Log is still practiced. The Pagan tradition is that the evils of the past year are destroyed by the purifying fire. The Christian belief is that while the people attend Midnight Mass the blessed Virgin enters the homes of the humble to warm Baby Jesus before the burning log and to bless that hearth and home.

In Italy, eight days before Christmas, the activity begins with the shopping, the baking, and the preparation for the main event, the *Cenone*, the huge meal to be enjoyed after the traditional Midnight Mass. Even men whom you would not usually see at Mass during the rest of the year are present on Christmas Eve. When the Baby Jesus is placed in his manger accompanied by the sounds of traditional shepherds' bagpipes and all are singing the moving words of the beautiful Christmas carol, *Tu Scende Delle Stelle*, one feels he is not just celebrating Mass, but a part of the living link of traditions that go back centuries and hopefully will never die.



Once home the big event begins. Family and friends sit down to the meatless banquet, lovingly prepared and referred to as the *Cenone*. In Rome, it is sometimes called the *Capitone*, in honor of the traditional delicacy of eel prepared in various ways. Since Christmas Eve is traditionally meatless, the menu always has spaghetti with fresh anchovies, broccoli, *baccala*, and various fish, presented in

Continued on pg. 10



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello Everyone,

I'm sure a lot of us are saying, I can't believe the Christmas season is here already. This is truly my favorite time of the year with all of our rich culture and tradition. Getting together with family and friends, creating new memories and traditions as our families grow. One of my favorite events is our own Family Christmas Party. I heard a special guest will be making an appearance, so you had better be good.

Congratulations to our new 2012 Board Members and a sincere thank you to our Board Members who are leaving. There were so many great accomplishments this past year.

I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Healthy Happy New Year.

Auguro a voi e la vostra famiglia un Buon Natale e Felice Anno Nuovo anche!

G. George Urciuoli, President

December Calendar

View our complete online Calendar at calendarwiz.com/iacc

Every Monday	Italian Grand Buffet
Every Wednesday	IACC Bowling 6:00 PM
December 8 Thursday	Christmas in Italy 7:00 PM (Session 1)
December 11 Sunday	Family Christmas Party 12 Noon
December 12 Monday	Men's Club 6:30 PM
December 13 Tuesday	Board Meeting 6:30 PM
December 14 Wednesday	Women's League 6:30 PM
December 15 Thursday	Christmas in Italy 7:00 PM (Session 2)

Save the Date

January 6 & 27 Friday	Friday Family Fun Night
February 5 Sunday	Super Bowl Party
February 11 Saturday	That's Amore Dinner Dance

Treviso Restaurant Schedule

Restaurant	Closed on Christmas Eve Day Open 10 AM - 3 PM for gift cards and take outs Closed Christmas Day Open New Year's Eve for A la carte dining
Entire Building	Closed day after Christmas (12/26) NO buffet Closed New Year's Day

ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER
257 Washington Avenue Extension
Albany, New York 12205

*a place where family and friends can
meet, eat, play and
celebrate Italian heritage*

IACC Office

Linda Sciocchetti IACC Secretary
Monday - Friday 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM
518.456.IACC | FAX: 518.456.0338
membership@italianamerican.com

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Please submit articles, suggestions, or comments to:
Rachel Cameron, Editor, rcamero@nycap.rr.com



Board Election Results

By Anna Acconi, Chair Nominating Committee

Elections for IACC Board Members was held on Tuesday, November 15. Following are the results:

Board Members – Three-Year Term

Rosanna Aiuppa
Christine Dilonna
MaryLou Marando
Angelo Tarantino
Frank Zeoli

Board Members – Two-Year Term

David Cesari
Dominic Indelicato
Maria LaMorte
John Ritz

Board Member – One-Year Term

Robert Penna

The new board members will be officially sworn in in January, at which time they will select the board officers for the coming year. We congratulate all the new board members and wish them well as they assume their duties.

I would like to thank all the members who served as inspectors and counters during the election process. Gratitude goes to Tony Mirabile, Charlotte Lombardo, Theresa Lomonoco, Nancy Pardi, Al Sacca, Dick Kaplan, Maria Colbert, Don Colbert, Lou Acconi, and Joe Lombardo.



(left to right – back row) John Ritz, Frank Zeoli, Angelo Tarantino, Dominic Indelicato, Robert Penna, Jim Sano, George Urciuoli
(left to right – front row) Donna Zumbo, Mary Lou Marando, Rosanna Aiuppa, Christine Di Ionna
(missing from photo) Steven Alger, David Cesari, & Maria La Morte



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518.465.0292 www.trevisoalbany.com



Italian Christmas Market



at the American Italian Heritage Association

1227 Central Ave | Albany, NY 12205

518-435-1979

10 AM–6 PM Friday, December 2

10 AM–6 PM Saturday, December 3

10 AM–4 PM Sunday, December 4

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January 16th \$250

January 23rd \$250

January 30th \$250

**Grand Prize Drawing February 5th
at the Super Bowl Party**

at The Italian American Community Center

Ticket holders get 1 complimentary ticket to the Super Bowl buffet party based on availability.

Your ticket does not guarantee entrance to the party.

Ticket holders need not be present to win any of the prizes. Winners of any of the prizes will have their ticket entered into the next drawing.

Pre-Game Appetizers, Half Time Buffet,

House Wine, Draft Beer & Soda Included

For Super Bowl party only the cost is \$25 IACC Members | \$30 Non-Members

Do YOU have your Ticket?

We reserve the right to hold the drawing until a minimum of 150 tickets are sold.

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Italian American Community Center Family Christmas Party

Hosted by the Women's League

Sunday, December 11, 2011

12:00 – 4:00 PM

IACC Members \$15 | Non-Members \$20

Children: \$5

Adults' Menu

Choice of: Chicken Marsala or Eggplant Parmesan
Mixed Green Salad Family Style Pasta & Vegetable Rolls & Butter Coffee & Tea
Cassata Cake

Children's Menu

(ages 2-12 years old)

Pasta, Chicken Fingers & Fries, Ice Cream with Chocolate Syrup, Juice & Soda

For the Kids

DJ, Crafts, Games & Prizes, Raffles and Santa Claus

*Please bring a wrapped Santa Claus gift (valued at no more than \$15)
for each child labeled with child's first and last name*



Each family is encouraged to bring one new, unwrapped toy to donate to the Marines' Toys for Tots Foundation on behalf of the IACC



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Please make reservations by December 5th
Any cancellations must be received by December 7th
RSVP to Santa Pasquini 489.3949 or nonnasp@netzero.net
Number Attending (children &/or adults),
Meal Choice(s), & Contact Phone Number

Credit Cards payments are accepted, please contact the IACC office.

Mail Checks to:

IACC Family Christmas Party
257 Washington Avenue Ext
Albany, NY 12205

518.456.IACC (4222)

www.italianamerican.com

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PRESENTS

NATALE Christmas in Italy

Thursday, December 8

Thursday, December 15

7 - 9 PM

2nd Floor, Italian American
Community Center

257 Washington Ave Ext, Albany

December 8th we will reveal and discuss the **HISTORY** and **ANCIENT TRADITIONS** leading to present day festivities all over Italia. The many customs that endure are a living Italian folklore. Italian language will be woven throughout our discoveries. From music, religion, art and perhaps a visit from “La Befana”, we should have a great time.

December 15th we will explore the many traditions related to the **FOODS** of Christmas in Italy. After a lesson, with printed materials for vocabulary absorption and hopefully lots of laughs, **WE EAT!!!**

We will offer a beautiful tasting buffet of some of the many famous Italian Christmas foods, both savory and sweet. We hope to rekindle lots of childhood memories, the way only special tastes can do. Although this will be a light buffet, many will appreciate the varied flavors of our most treasured season.

Come awaken the Christmas Spirit -
la Gioia di Natale

Cost:

\$35 for IACC Members

\$40 for Non Members

Call the IACC office at 456-4222 to reserve a place

Class size will be limited

Credit Card payments are accepted.

Please contact the IACC Office.

Mail Checks to:

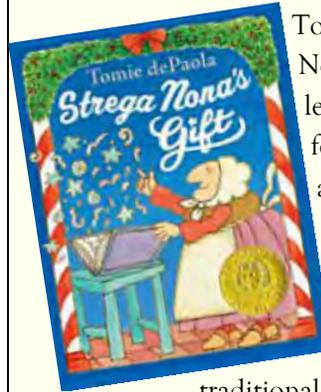
Italian American Heritage Foundation, Inc. (IAHFI)

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IAHFI Cultural Corner

By Rachel Cameron

Strega Nona's Gift by Tomie de Paola



Tomie de Paola's latest Strega Nona book for children was released in October, just in time for the holidays. Young and old alike will savor *Strega Nona's Gift*, this beautifully illustrated, amusing, charming story telling of foods, customs, and legend for each of the eight traditional feast days of the Christmas

season in Calabria. All kitchens are bustling from the Feast of San Nicola, when the children choose the food, to the feast of the Epiphany, when someone is chosen to be king or queen for the day. All is well until the eve of the Epiphany, when everyone customarily cooks for their animals. Strega Nona's ever-hungry sidekick, Big Anthony, can't resist a taste of "signora Goat's" delicious food and lands in yet another silly predicament. Strega Nona surprises everyone with a special gift.

Jim Sano Honored

On Saturday, November 19 the Roma Intangible Lodge Sons of Italy honored our own Jim Sano with their Golden Lion Award for 2011. They honored Jim for his many years of dedication to the Sons of Italy and the Italian-American Community Center, as well as several years of service to the entire community as a teacher, a coach, and a representative of the Ninth Ward on the Albany Common Council.



Member Profile Tony Mirabile *By Anna Acconi*

A Good Life Doesn't Have To Be Exciting

Tony Mirabile believes that he has led a very ordinary, unexciting life. After all, he grew up and attended school in Albany, owned a successful business, and raised two sons and two daughters along with his wife, Helen, to whom he was married for 57 years. However, in many ways, Tony's life has been anything but ordinary.



Tony's father, an immigrant from Sicily, began a career in the restaurant business as a pot washer and worked his way up to the position of head chef at several upscale restaurants in Albany. It was when Tony's father was working as a chef in a summer resort in Lake George that Tony was born in the nearest hospital in Glens Falls in 1926. Tony grew up in Albany among family and friends and, upon graduating from The Vincentian Institute in 1944, he went into the Navy where he served in the Pacific Theater, operating as a ship to shore communicator. When the war in the Pacific ended, Tony was deployed in September of 1945 to Japan where he served 8 months with the occupying forces at a Japanese naval base in Yokosuka.

When Tony returned to Albany, he worked for the Veteran's Administration and shortly transferred to the Veteran's Administration Hospital as a supply clerk while studying at night under the G.I. Bill at Albany Business College. It was at the V.A. Hospital that Tony met Helen Triolo who worked there as a ward secretary. Tony and Helen married in 1953 and, a year later, Tony went into business with his brother-in-law at Lake Electronics on Central Avenue, utilizing his background in electronics and business. Lake Electronics, one of the oldest businesses in the Village of Colonie, provided parts and services for many electronic companies and, at one time, employed 40

workers. Tony's fondest memories of his years of employment center around his contact with the public and the positive relationships with his employees.

In 1975, Tony and Helen joined the IACC and were active members, especially after Tony cut back on his work schedule. Tony served on many committees, acted as House Committee Chairman for many years, and represented the IACC for 12 years for the City of Albany's Columbus Day Parade. In addition, Tony started the gambling for the Festa, initially with the help of the Knights of Columbus.

As time progressed, Tony was able to purchase the gambling equipment outright. When the pavilion was being constructed, Tony donated and installed the sound system for the building. He chaired the fund raising campaign for the building of the garden and installed the audio system in that area. Helen also actively participated on numerous committees, served as a member of the Board of Directors and as an officer of the Woman's League.

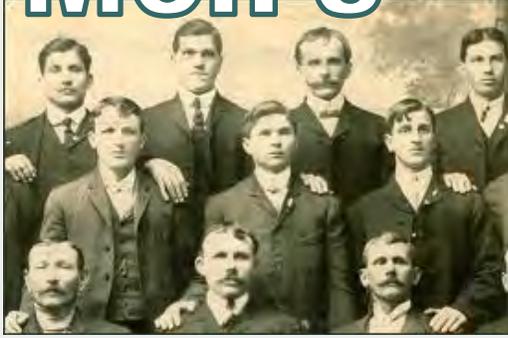


During all these busy years, Tony and Helen raised four children; Andrew, Joanne, Julie and Joe. Today, after Helen's passing, Tony keeps himself occupied with his close relationships with his children, 5 grandchildren and newly baptized great grandchild. He maintains his home, participates in many activities with friends and looks forward to a monthly lunch gathering at the restaurant with the other members of a birthday club. Tony states, "I enjoyed all the years at the IACC, mostly the camaraderie, the bocce and the good food."

Is this an unexciting life? I think not. What could be more exciting than living a full life surrounded by family and friends, enjoying each day, and selflessly making a positive impact on the lives of others? Tony Mirabile's life encompasses all that is good and exciting.

IACC

Men's Club



Men's Club will meet on **Monday, December 12** at 5:15 PM for dinner at the Monday night buffet, followed by our business meeting at 6:30PM in the Card Room. After the business meeting, there will be card-playing and Monday Night Football.

Please contact John at 434-0209 during the day or 477-7477 in the evening if you plan on attending the dinner.

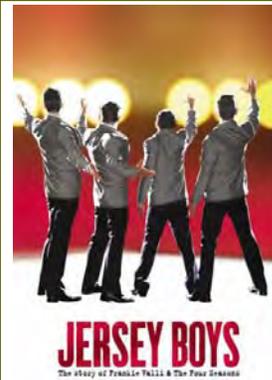
John Ritz, President



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Kids' Corner Coloring Page



Women's League

Girls' Night Out

Hello Ladies & Happy Holidays!

Once again, many thanks to the women who came last month and helped with the Christmas cards for the "Holiday Mail for Heroes." We are going to send out 100 Christmas cards for a very special "touch of home" to our service men and women. Another wonderful project that the IACC Women's League does for the community, more specifically, the military community!

We also had a visit from our club president, George Urciuoli. I would be remiss not to say a few words about this, so the women who can't make it to a meeting are kept informed. At issue between the club and the women's league is "member/non-member pricing." It is the feeling of the club that we should offer this pricing on all activities including Women's League sponsored events. It is the feeling of the Women's League to be exempt from this pricing since it would create a hardship for the Women's League and would most likely lead to higher prices on the family parties just to break even. It is also our contention that the family parties are just that - "family" events. These events are specifically priced so that as many families as possible can afford to come. Please let me know your feelings on this subject. The officers of both the Women's League and the IACC will be coming together to continue to discuss this issue and come to a favorable resolution for all. Feel free to call me at 452-2617 anytime.

This month I hope all ladies will join my officers and me for our Annual Women's League Christmas Party! We have a special appetizer presentation before dinner. Our dinner selections this month are Veal Parmigiana, Baked White Fish, or a vegetarian option of Grilled Vegetable Risotto. We'll also have Chicken Escarole Soup. The entrées will be served with potatoes and vegetables. Our dessert will be a special Mocha Cake.

Our meeting is on

Wednesday, December 14th, 6:00 PM.

Email your reservation to Lynn Indelicato at domlynn@yahoo.com or call 479-3714 by Monday, December 12th.

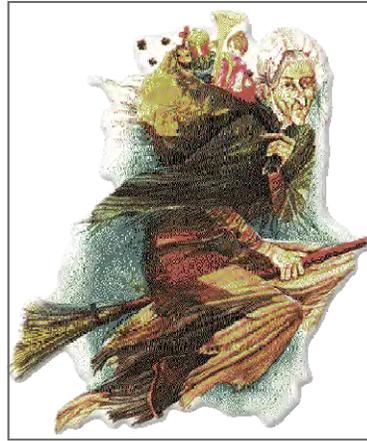
BRING A GRAB BAG GIFT VALUED AT \$10.00
WE WILL ALSO HAVE OUR COOKIE EXCHANGE -
BRING A DOZEN COOKIES AND BRING HOME A DOZEN COOKIES AND DON'T FORGET TO BRING THE RECIPE TO SHARE

Remember Women's League will not meet in January and February.

See you all in March!

Donna Zumbo, Women's League President.

Continued from cover



as many ways as the cook's talent will allow. This is followed by salad, nuts, roasted chestnuts, fruit, *dolce* and espresso with, of course, Anisette or Grappa. You might recall that nuts are always served before the fruit and *dolce*. As folklore tells us, eating nuts favors the fertility of the earth and the increase of family and flock. This obscure bit of folklore is

not what usually makes this the best part of the feast. All are satiated and a little time is needed before the holiday desserts are brought out. Therefore, over glasses of wine that pair so well with the nuts, the reminiscences of Christmases past, the stories of family heroes and characters, happy and sad events start to be recounted. This creates the family bond. This casual, entertaining oral history gives pleasure to the elders, is absorbed by the younger generation, and will become part of the collective family memory.

In Italy Christmas day itself is slow-paced. Children play like children play every where with their newly received presents and try to anticipate what might still arrive with the *Befana* on Epiphany only a week away. Later that day, house calls are made to family and friends who were not able to be with them on Christmas Eve. The visits would not be complete without bringing the symbol of Christmas, a wonderful *Panettone* or some other regional homemade Christmas cookies. These traditions serve to make us better understand the popular saying about this holiday: "*Natale conituo, capo d'anno con chi vuoi.*" Christmas with your own, New Year with whomever you choose.

BUON NATALE A TUTTI!

IACC Bowling Wednesday Nights

Since last year's first annual IACC Bowling was quite successful, we have begun another season this year. We bowl on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 PM at Westlawn Lanes in Guilderland. We bowl two games. The cost is \$3.00 per game. Bowling shoe rental is also \$3.00. If you would like more information or wish to participate, please contact Angie Groelz 250-4736.

CARING & SHARING By Anna Acconi

December Birthdays:

Evelyn Annelo	Doris Oliver
Dina Ariemma	Raymond Oliver
Lucy Bremm	John Paolucci
Charles Buongiorno	Sharon Patrei
Katherine Cardona	Fred Peters II
Jeanne Ciampino	Michael Rest
Michael Delbrocco	Ambrose Rinaldi
Laurie Elmendorf	Gloria Rossi
Christina Golash	Robert Sano
Richard Kaplan	Peter Scavullo
Ann Keneston	Connie Seeley
Donald Lawrence	Lisa Serafini
John Mallozzi	Deborah Seyboth
Mary Louise Mancini	Hannah Venduro
Mary Ellen Manzella	Joseph Venduro
Kristin McVeigh-Parente	Mary Weinman
Gloria Miller	Herman Wyld

Recovering:

We wish **Diane Biernacki** a speedy recovery after undergoing surgery.

Bragging Rights:

Joseph and Clara Ferracane are proud to announce that their granddaughter, **Alicia Dodge**, has passed her New York State Bar Examination and now is employed at the law firm of Maguire and Cardona.

Please contact Anna Acconi at 966-8664 or aacconi111@aol.com

New Members

Thomas Arcidiacono, East Greenbush
Sponsor: Jim Sano

Mark & Tamara DeSanctis, Ballston Lake
Sponsor: Jim Sano

Marie Faccioli-Erkes, Menands
Sponsor: Rosanna Aiuppa

Nicholas J. Criscione, ESQ.

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APPLE CRISP by Christine Di Ionna



Ingredients:

Apple Mixture

4 pounds apples
2 Tablespoons lemon juice
1 tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp fresh ground nutmeg
1/3 cup white sugar
3 Tbsp butter

Topping

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 cup light brown sugar packed
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup rolled oats
8 Tablespoons cold butter (1 stick)

Preparation:

- Peel, core and chop the apples; toss in a bowl with lemon juice.
- In a separate bowl, combine the white sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Add to the apples and toss to combine.
- In another bowl combine flour, brown sugar, and oats and ½ tsp ground cinnamon. Cut butter into small pieces, and cut butter into flour mixture with a pastry blender or two forks until mixture is crumbly.
- Butter a 13-inch baking dish. Spread apples in bottom of baking dish. Cut the 3 Tbsp of butter into pieces and sprinkle over the apples.
- Sprinkle the oat mixture over the top of the apples. Bake at 350° for 30 to 45 minutes or until apples are tender and topping is lightly browned.
- Serve warm or at room temperature, with vanilla ice cream

Enjoy!

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