



"we are here!"

A League of their Own....

We Honor the Women's League of the Italian American Community Center

There is a group of energetic and exceptionally creative women serving as the backbone of the



Aleda Graziano
first Women's
League president

IACC. Throughout the year, these women combine their creative forces to develop social events and community projects in order to that provide fellowship and vital services to the larger community. Who are these women? They are the Women's League of the IACC. It is a privilege to introduce them and honor them in this issue of the Siamo Qui. The IACC was founded in 1973 and the Women's League was established the following year. Aleda Graziano was the first president of the Women's League.



Officers: Maria De Nitto, Donna Zumbo,
Gail Tarantino, & JoAnn Viglucci

Events Sponsored by the Women's League

- Social Events -

- Family Halloween Party
- Family Christmas Party
- Family Easter Party
- St Patrick & St Joseph Mass and Brunch
- Mother-Daughter Luncheon & Fashion Show
- Fall Craft Fair

- Community Service Projects -

- Toys for Tots
- Regional Food Pantry
- Battered Women's Shelter
- Holiday Mail for Heroes
- Adopt A Family
- Veterans' Luncheon
- Uncle Shawn's Hugs

How do you become a member of the Women's League? Well, if you are a female member of the IACC, you are, in fact, a member of the Women's League. Our Women's League is a strong group of women who have contributed to the success of the club in every aspect. They coordinate numerous social events at the club throughout the year. In addition they work on several community service projects during the year. This group of women is the rock of the IACC.



80+ Birthday Party with 25 honored guests

You know what "they" say...behind every successful organization there are a few good _____! Now we don't want to give you the wrong idea that all they do is organize and work events. The Women's League has also become known as "Ladies' Night Out" and they certainly deserve it. They have very productive monthly meetings. Meetings include business issues of course, delicious meals, and some fun activities. They also bring in guest speakers to discuss a wide variety of topics including nutrition, safety, financial planning, women's health issues, cooking and baking demonstrations, and exercise. In October, there was a special 80+ Birthday Party. This past summer they even held a meeting at the pool for a water aerobics activity.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello Everyone,

I hope you all are well and had a wonderful Christmas.

As you may know by the cover story, our Women's League is very active at the IACC. I hope everyone had a chance to stop by this year's Family Christmas party. They did a wonderful job. **Congratulations!**

We had a very good turnout for our General Membership meeting on December 21st. After the presentation of the 2010 end of year financial report and the 2011 proposed budget the new membership structure and dues were presented. There were a number of good questions from the membership, asking for clarification on the new membership structure and dues. After a brief dialog on the rationale for the changes, we moved on to the by-laws. We needed to accept the changes to the by-laws (as presented in last month's Siamo Qui) in order to adopt the new membership structure and dues. I'm happy to report that the membership overwhelmingly voted to accept the changes to the by-laws. Once this was completed, the board voted to approve the new membership structure and dues, which were passed by a unanimous vote. To see the details on the new membership structure and dues please see this month's insert. This was a very important step to insure the health and growth of the IACC.

We have we have an exciting year ahead of us. I wish you all a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.

G. George Urciuoli, President

January Calendar

Every Monday	Italian Grand Buffet
Every Wednesday	IACC Open Bowling 6:00 PM
January 6, 13, 20, & 27	Ballroom Dance Lessons 6 - 7 PM
February 2 & 10	
Tuesday, January 18	Board Meeting 6:30 PM
Friday, January 21	Toast To Our Children's Program 6 - 9 PM

SAVE THE DATE

February 12	Notte Toscana (A Night in Tuscany) 6:30 - 11 PM
February 20	Dinner and a Movie with Professor Giuseppe Faustini of Skidmore College
February 24	IAHFI Elementary & Intermediate
March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	Italian Language Classes
April 7, 14, 21, 28	6:30 - 7:30 & 8 - 9 PM

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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POOL	JIM SANO
SIAMO QUI	RACHEL CAMERON EDITOR GEORGE URCIUOLI LAYOUT

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

The Italian Club Restaurant
will now be closed on Mondays
for lunch. They will be open for the Monday
Night Buffet and making it bigger and better!!

Cultural Corner

By Rosanna Aiuppa

New Year Celebrations in Italy

In Italy, the Festa Di San Silvestro is celebrated on December 31 (our New Year's Eve). New Year's Day in Italy is called Capodanno. Unlike our general custom of celebrating New Year's Eve at private parties or in clubs, in Italy, New Year's Eve is usually celebrated collectively in a city's main piazza. Throughout Italy, the night is filled with great food, public concerts, fireworks, and dancing in the streets until the wee hours of the morning. In the smaller towns, there are spectacular firework displays and huge bonfires lit at midnight. Naples has the distinction of having the largest and most spectacular firework show.

Rome holds the largest New Year's Eve celebration. Many people start to arrive in the morning in order to find the most advantageous spot in Piazza Del Popolo to hear free live performances of popular rock and classical stars. This scene is repeated in the large cities of Rimini, Naples, Capri, Palermo, Florence, and Venice and is televised throughout Italy. In the smaller towns, these telecasts are simultaneously shown in main piazzas, as they hold their more modest festivities. These



celebrations are sure to last until sunrise, so that all can witness the rays of the first sunrise of the New Year.

There are some other customs (although on the wane) still practiced, especially in the south. At midnight, if there are no fireworks, much banging of pots and pans takes place. If you are walking about, be ready to duck. The tradition of tossing old articles out of windows at midnight is still a common occurrence. ("Out with the old and in with the new.") In the Naples area, the custom of Lo Sciuscio is still enjoyed. Amateur musicians and singers making the neighborhood rounds, playing and singing at each house, are rewarded with sweets to eat or coins for luck in the New Year. A still popular tradition is for people to wear at least one red undergarment item on the first day of the New Year. Red symbolizes prosperity. Red is also believed to

ward off evil. They say it will protect "contro il mal'occhio" for the coming year.

As in all special days in Italy, food plays a major role. Before joining the public festivities, families and friends will get together at home or in restaurants on the Eve of St. Silvestro. Elaborate menus are offered both at home and in restaurants. A required dish at this Capodanno banquet (Cenone) is Cotochino or Zampone, special large pork sausages usually cooked with lentils. Tradition holds that the pork sausages define the richness of life and the lentils symbolize prosperity for the coming year. Of course the brindisi (toast) for the New Year is always made with Prosecco or Spumante. After this festive dinner before the concerts, time will be spent in the wondrous Christmas Market located in Piazza Navona that runs until Epiphany. Here in this festive setting, many little gifts can be purchased to facilitate La Befana in stuffing the stockings left for her to fill on the eve of January 6th.

The next morning, parents traditionally sleep in. The Nonnas accompany the children to free acrobat, magic, or marionette shows that are part of the New Year's Day festivities arranged especially for the young. Before their Capodanno dinners, many Roman families will pass by the Church of the Madonna Del Popolo. Outside this church are beautiful nativity scenes from over 100 regions of Italy and abroad. These scenes will remain until the end of "Little Christmas" on January 8th.

Restaurants in Italy are closed on New Year's Day. Family and friends gather in homes, enjoying their special dinner, toasting the New Year, and probably playing that popular Italian family game synonymous with Capodanno, Tombola. One thing remains constant, no matter where in the world it is celebrated, everyone is somehow always optimistic that the New Year will bring good health, love, and prosperity.
BUON CAPODANNO!!

'LADIES' NIGHT OUT"



Bocce League



Chair Yoga



Water Aerobics



Uncle Shawn's Hugs Project



Veterans' Luncheon

When it's time to play...they play bocce! They have 8 active bocce teams in the Tuesday night bocce league with 4 - 5 members on each team. The bocce season runs from May until August. These ladies rock or should we say bocce.

The IACC is proud to have the Women's League as an important part of the organization. *They are in fact in a league of their own.*

If you're interested in finding out more about the Women's League contact Gail Tarantino, President at 355.1316.

A Note from Gail Tarantino

The Women's League has always been an active part of IACC. When help is needed either by a member or a member's family, the women of our league always respond in a positive, caring manner. We always answer the call with open hearts.

Congratulations to all of our ladies who have kept the IACC strong and who continue to support our organization. May the Women's League of IACC be in existence for many more years to come. If I sound like I am proud to be a member of this unique league, you have received my message.

Gail Tarantino, President

IACC Family Christmas Party

by Lynn Indelicato



The Grand Ballroom was this year's setting for the annual Family Christmas Party sponsored by the Women's League on Sunday, December 19, 2010. Members and their families enjoyed a sumptuous dinner followed by the tradi-

tional Cassata cake for dessert, as well as ice cream for the younger set! Everyone enjoyed crafts, games, raffles, and dancing to DJ Ernie's

music, while awaiting the arrival of the guest of honor, Santa Claus! Just before the grand arrival, the story of La Befana was read to the children as well as a visit by this legendary



woman of Italian folklore, who brought gifts of candy to the children.

While singing Christmas carols, a distant ringing of jingle bells announced the arrival of Jolly Old Saint Nick. A deafening roar by kids young and old alike accompanied his arrival! Santa greeted everyone and presented gifts to all the children, then hurried off to get ready for Christmas! We're still trying to figure out how he magically disappeared from the closet in the ballroom. Even though a number of children rushed out to catch a glimpse of him with his reindeer, he and his sleigh were long gone!

Many thanks to Angie Groelz, Maria De Nitto, Gail Tarantino, and Sharon Patrei for their help in making this year's party a success! Thank you to all the families who donated to our Toys for Tots drive. You have certainly helped to put a smile on a child's face for Christmas! Next year's party is already tentatively scheduled for December 11, 2011. We hope you will be able to join us!

New Members

Michael Arduini

Albany

Sponsor: John Chiaramonte

Joyce Rescigno

Stillwater

Sponsor: Richard Ognibene

Siamo Qui Mail Prep Team

By Rachel Cameron

The Siamo Qui Mail Prep Team is an integral part of the distribution of our monthly newsletter. Each month the team meets at IACC to prepare over 300 issues to be



Maria Marchio, Mary Lou Marando, Maria La Morte, Rachel Cameron, Gail Tarantino, & Pat Serafino

mailed out to members. This process involves stuffing each issue with a flyer, folding, and adding address label, stamp, and closure tab. The current hard-working, dedicated team is composed of the following people: Rachel Cameron (Editor), Maria La Morte, Mary Lou Marando, Maria Marchio, Pat Serafino, Gail Tarantino, and (occasionally) Rosanna Aiuppa. Mary Finley is also a member of the team, even though she is presently “wintering” in Florida. Each member of the team takes a turn providing lunch for the group. (This year I think Rosanna holds the “prize” for the most creative, delicious homemade creations.)

Our Membership Secretary, Linda Sciocchetti, does a great job preparing address labels, acquiring postage, printing and mailing out Siamo Qui. We certainly enjoy each other’s company. However, even though we have made this process into a fun, social event, we would like to encourage more of the members to receive their copy of Siamo Qui on-line instead of a paper copy via “snail mail”. This would save considerable time, effort, and money for postage, paper, and printing.



Super Bowl Party

Sunday February 6th

Starts @ 5pm

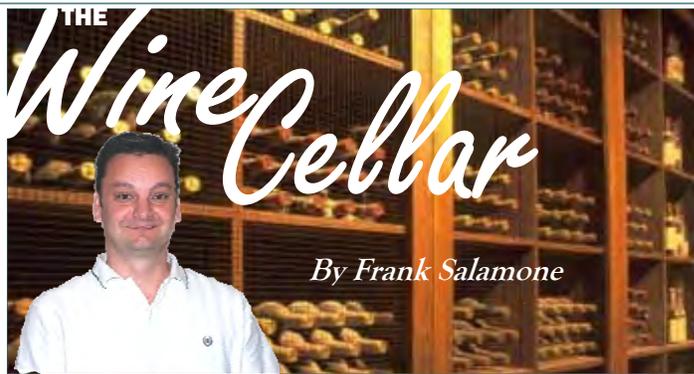
**\$25 per person includes
Pre-Game Buffet
Half-Time Appetizers
Soda**

\$2 Draft Beers

Raffles, Prizes, Giveaways

**Details to follow on website
after the first of the year.**

Call 456.0292 Sales Office for Reservations



It’s hard to believe that it’s the New Year already. At this time of year one should spend quality time with family and friends and contemplate what is really important in life. What can be more important than wine? Well, family and good health, but this is the *Wine Cellar* article, so get over it!

Let us talk about one of my all-time favorite wines, Amarone della Valpolicella. Amarone is a dry red wine from Italy’s famous Veneto region. This wine is comprised of primarily 3 different grape varieties, Corvina, Rondinella, and Molinara. If you are not familiar with any of these varieties, you may be wondering, “Why should I try this one?”



This wine is special for many reasons. With most wine, the grapes are harvested, pressed and put in tanks to ferment. After fermentation, the wine is often put in oak barrels to age for a short period of time, bottled and then consumed.

Amarone takes a much slower approach. The grapes are all hand selected and laid out on straw mats to dry for up to 4 months. During this time, the grapes lose up to 40% of their mass which concentrates the remaining sugars and flavors when pressed. The juice is then fermented at a low temperature for another 45 days and then aged in French or Slovenian oak barriques for 3-4 years. The wine is then bottled and aged for another 8-12 months before being released.

The result is a wine that has a gorgeous garnet color. The flavors are very ripe with a slight “raisiny” finish. These wines also have a reputation of having higher than normal alcohol levels (14% and up which may help with some of the holiday stress!).

I LOVE these wines and think they are sent straight from heaven! If you have never tried an Amarone della Valpolicella, you must make it your mission to do so as soon as possible, next time you are at the Italian Club Restaurant.

Happy New Year!

Membership Wine Special

The Italian Club Restaurant will be offering a Monthly Wine Special for IACC members only. Each month a different wine will be featured and offered by both the glass and the bottle. The price will be determined by the wine selected, but will surely be a spectacular deal to honor the IACC members. Please let your server or bartender (yes it is available at the bar too!) know that you are a member of the IACC.

Christmas in Italy By Rachel Cameron

IAFHI recently sponsored a two-night presentation entitled "Christmas in Italy". The first night (December 6) Maria La Morfe took the group to a creative cultural, historical, artistic "buffet".

She described various festivals that take place during the Christmas season in Italy beginning December 6 and ending January 6. One example was the Feast of Santa Lucia (Patron Saint of the Eyes) celebrated on December 13th. The procession takes place on the tiny island of Ortigia, near Siracusa, Sicily where the huge statue of St. Lucia is kept.



A surprise visit from La Befana (Maria De Nitto)

Maria also gave us "tastes" of the history surrounding the celebration of the birth of Jesus. We learned how Saint Francis of Assisi created the first live nativity scene. As she began to tell us the folktale of La Befana, we were surprised when La Befana herself (Maria De Nitto) arrived, dressed in traditional costume and carrying a basket of sweets - which she shared with everyone!

The artistic segment of the "buffet" included the large Ceppo, complete with ceramic nativity scene, fruits and nuts, and a Baby Jesus figure on the top shelf. Through-



out the evening we listened to beautiful Italian Christmas songs. The last "musical dish" we sampled was when we sang "Tu Scendi Dalle Stelle", a popular Italian Christmas carol.

On December 13, we were all delighted to take part in a delicious buffet, tasting some foods, both savory and

sweet, that are enjoyed in many parts of Italy at Christmas:

Anchovies (Alice), Sliced Fresh Fennel Salad (Finocchio), Lentil Dish (Lentichie), Stuffed Eggplant (Melanzano Ripiene), Bacalá Salad (Insalata Di Bacalá), Bread (Pane), Oranges (Arancie), Grapes (L'Uva), Egg Custard (Zabaglione), Sesame Honey Bars, Honey Balls (Struffoli), Amaretti cookies, Biscotti, and Panettone.

We also enjoyed toasting Natale with some tasty strawberry flavored Prosecco.

Maria told us that in each region of Italy, there are different specialties that must be served at Christmas time. Some people in the group who were born in Italy, shared

the names of various dishes they remember having every Christmas. A few actually described how to make a few of these wonderful treats!

The "Christmas in Italy" presentations were a great success. We all learned, laughed, and loved eating the food! We hope that this will become an annual event. We even discussed the possibility of offering a similar series about Easter in Italy!



**Friday
January 21
6 - 9 PM**

Second Annual IAHFi
"Toast To Our Children's Program"

*Auction | Music | Hors D'Oeuvres | Raffles
Tickets*

\$40 individual | \$70 for couple

A WINE TASTING EVENT TO BENEFIT OUR
Children's Italian Summer Program

CARING & SHARING By Anna Acconi

January Birthdays:

Anna Acconi	Loretta Viola Gadani
Robert Airhart	Bryan Goldberger
Eugene Aiuppa	Vera Hall
Suzanne Arket	James LaRosa
Helen Articolo	Mary Ann Macri
Frank Blancato	Lauren Mancuso
John Bremm	Emma Mannarino
Catherine Burke	Christine Marando
Victor Cardona	Marcella Michel
Frank Cesare	Barbara Palumbo
Nadine Cunningham	Anthony Serafini
Susan Daniels	John Thornton
Irene Del Torto	Josephine Tirino
Maria DeNitto	Anne Zanotta
William Fatica	Joachim Zumbo
Stephen Franke	

Condolences:

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of **Helen Mirabile**. Helen died peacefully on December 7 after a long illness while surrounded by her loving family. Helen was a long-time, active member of the IACC, serving as a board member and president of the Senior Citizens Group. We extend condolences to her husband, Tony, and to her entire family.

Unfortunately, two other members of our IACC family passed away during this month. **Joe Scalzo**, husband of June, former president of the Woman's League, died after a long illness. In addition, **Theresa Miranda**, wife of former board member, David Miranda, only 46 and the mother of three young children, also passed away.

How sad, especially at this time of year. Please keep all in your prayers.

Recovering:

Catherine Burke has not been feeling well of late. We wish her a speedy recovery and good health.

Congratulations:

Congratulations to Matthew Cardamone, son of **Joseph and Annemarie Cardamone** and grandson of **Arlene Tobia** and Ray and Josephine Cardamone and the late Grace Cardamone, on his engagement to Erika Ozkan. A wedding is planned for March 26, 2011.



Baccala Salad

By Mary Lou Marando

Ingredients

- 1 lb Baccala - soaked
- 1 small red onion - chopped
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 bunch scallions
- 1 cup celery - chopped
- 1 can black olives
- 1 jar cherry peppers (hot or sweet) - stem removed and quartered
- oil, lemon, & fresh parsley
- salt & pepper - to taste

DIRECTIONS:

After soaking Baccala for at least two days, place in a pan with boiling water and poach slowly. Add a slice of lemon to the water. After Baccala becomes tender, let it cool. Mix Baccala with remaining ingredients.

Best to prepare this the day before serving.



Access Database Expert Needed

It has been a number of years since we have done work on our Member Database. The database that we have currently works and holds all the necessary data, but the user interface has some issues. One problem is that all the reports go directly to the printer. While that worked years ago, there are reasons why it is an inconvenience now. One example is the use of e-mail. Is there a member who has Microsoft Access Database skills beyond the basics? If you are interested or not sure if your skill level would be helpful, please call the office 456-IACC (4222) and talk with Linda Sciochetti, Membership Secretary. After discussing the changes that are needed, you can decide if your skills match the job.



**Italian American
Community Center**

Membership Office

Phone: 518.456.IACC
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celebrate Italian heritage*

2011 Membership Structure and Dues
as adopted by the membership and board of directors at the
December 21, 2010 General Membership meeting

IACC Membership - this is an individual membership **\$275**

Pool Membership Only - this is an individual membership **\$225**

Optional Spouse Membership add \$50 - does not include pool

Optional Pool Membership add \$50 - includes all children under the age of 21
and spouse if spouse pays the optional \$50 membership fee

Lifetime Membership - includes spouse and pool membership **\$165**

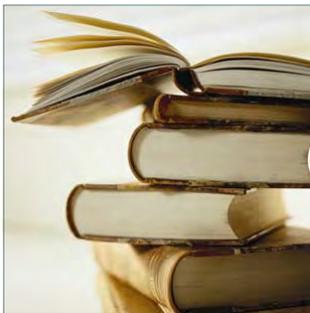
***Snowbirds** **\$165**

*We currently have 13 snowbird memberships which we will honor until such time that they cancel their membership. We no longer offer a snowbird membership.

The State of New York has informed us we no longer need to collect sales tax on membership dues.

Our Membership Office can now accept credit cards (Visa or MasterCard) for dues payments.

Contact the IACC Office for details.



Book Club

Mysteries in Venice

On **Wednesday, March 2nd**, at **7:00 PM**, the IACC Book Club will meet to discuss mysteries written by Donna Leon, all of which feature Commissario Brunetti and are set in Venice. Leon has written twenty-one Brunetti mysteries. We will focus on two of them: *Friends in High Places* and *The Girl of His Dreams*. Read one or both of the books, or any of mysteries in the series. Even if you have not read a Brunetti mystery before, you will enjoy meeting Brunetti and his captivating wife, Paola, and learning about the Italian life style they live in the world's most unique city. We will

also learn about crime in Italian society and how the Commissioner's moral outlook and unflinching commitment to reduce or eliminate it propel the novels' intriguing plots. Avid mystery readers Janet and Steve Alger will lead the discussion.

In *Friends in High Places*, Brunetti is visited by a bureaucrat inspecting his apartment as a ploy to ultimately provide him with some crime-related information. Before that happens, the visitor is mysteriously found dead. This compels Brunetti to launch an investigation that involves drug-trafficking and loan-sharking. In order to solve the crime, Brunetti has to turn to his "friends in high places" for assistance.

A preacher who may be fleecing his own flock, a missionary priest who is sent home from Africa, and an eleven year old gypsy girl found dead in the Grand Canal are a few of the mysterious strands Brunetti has to deal with in *The Girl of His Dreams*. There are multiple themes in the book including anti-clericalism, gypsy crime, the vulnerability of children, and contempt for officials who do not act to improve the social and moral life of Venice. Brunetti's social conscience and love of family are presented in stark contrast to his obsession for catching criminals in a book will make you angry, think, cry, and smile.

Book Club meetings are held in the Board Room and are free and open to the public. For further information, contact Dick Ognibene at 372-4919 or at rtognibene@nycap.rr.com.

ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER

PRESENTS

Notte Toscana "A Night in Tuscany"

Saturday, February 12, 2011

6:30 PM - 11 PM

(Doors open at 6:15 PM)

257 Washington Ave Ext, Albany

\$30 Members | \$35 Non-Members



Bread & Cheese Appetizer at 6:30 PM

Cash Bar

Dinner at 7:15 PM, choice of:

- ½ Spring Chicken, Roasted Potato, Vegetable
- Beef Roulade, Potato, Vegetable
- Eggplant Rollatini, Penne with Vodka Sauce

All meals include: Salad, Dessert, Coffee, & Tea

Music by: DJ Rafaella

Reservations required **Open to the Public**

Call 456-IACC (4222) no later than February 8

Write checks payable to: Italian American Community Center (IACC)

Mail payments to: IACC - Membership Office

257 Washington Ave Ext, Albany, NY 12205

www.italianamerican.com

membership@italianamerican.com

ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER

PRESENTS

Ballroom Dance Lessons

Thursday - January 6, 13, 20, & 27

Wednesday - February 2

Thursday - February 10

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Italian American Community Center, 2nd Floor
257 Washington Ave Ext, Albany

Cost: \$60 for six-week course (non-refundable)

Instructors: Paul & Louise Giuliano

Reservations required

To register, please contact:

Angie Groelz 250-4736

Class size limited to 30 people

Payment due at first class



www.italianamerican.com

membership@italianamerican.com

ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION

PRESENTS

ITALIAN LANGUAGE LESSONS

ELEMENTARY OR INTERMEDIATE LEVELS

Thursday evenings for ten weeks

February 24

March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

April 7, 14, 21, 28

Elementary: 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Intermediate: 8 PM – 9 PM

2nd Floor, Italian American Community Center
257 Washington Ave Ext, Albany



Elementary will focus on the basics of Italian language, with emphasis on simple, daily expressions to begin the wonder of communicating in our beautiful language.

Intermediate will continue on to study past and future tenses and many opportunities to practice and hopefully perfect the accent and mannerisms that make Italian so delightful.

The instructor will be Maria LaMorte. Although the language aspect of these classes is a serious component, the joy of life in Italy and the wonder of our heritage is always uppermost, so that we laugh and remember our childhood as we learn.

Cost of each session:

\$75 Members | \$85 Non-Members

\$15 additional will be collected on the first night
for textbook and other necessary materials

Call the IACC Office at 456-4222 to register

Class size will be limited

Write checks payable to: Italian American Heritage Foundation, Inc. (IAHFI)

Mail payments to: IAHFI, 257 Washington Ave Ext | Albany, NY 12205

www.italianamerican.com

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