



January 2020
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The News

THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

A Nonprofit Corporation; Omaha, NE

Celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany with the Befana and Santa Claus on Sunday, January 5 from 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

**Spaghetti & Sausage Dinner - Adults
Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner - Children
Served at 1:30 p.m.**

**Dinner is free for all members!
Cash bar available.**

**Guests are welcome. A \$10 donation
per guest is appreciated.**



The Epiphany is one the best family events we hold! It's a true ethnic event and part of our Italian culture. The Befana and Santa will be visiting and giving bags of treats to children under age 12. Reservations are necessary. Please indicate the number of adults and children under age 12. Call 402.493.8888 or email secretary@omahaitaly.com. Deadline is January 2.

The Epiphany feast marks the end of the Christmas season in Italy. It is believed La Befana was approached by the Three Wise Men a few days before Jesus was born. The men asked if she saw a star in the sky, but she did not. The Wise Men asked her to join them in their journey to find baby Jesus, but she declined saying she had too much housework. She soon had a change of heart but couldn't find the Wise Men, so she began her journey alone. La Befana is still believed to be searching for baby Jesus on her broomstick, which is why she bears candy and fruit to children in Italy. She is loved as much as Santa Claus.

The Mission Statement of the American Italian Heritage Society

The fundamental purpose of the American Italian Heritage Society is to encourage, promote and preserve Italian culture and heritage with its activities centered upon Italian traditions, foods, language, culture, history, religion, folklore, customs, celebrations, music and family genealogy. Your president and board of directors are dedicated to this mission but we need your moral and financial support to be successful.

The News is a monthly publication of the American Italian Heritage Society, an independent, nonprofit organization, legally incorporated in Nebraska. The deadline for submissions is the second Wednesday of the month. Correspondence and articles can be sent to secretary@aihs.com.



THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

UPCOMING EVENTS**Epiphany Celebration**

Sunday, January 5 from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Carnevale at Pasta Amore

Look for details in February newsletter

No January Membership Meeting

Next Meeting is Monday, February 11

DECEMBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

The general membership meeting, held on December 9, 2019, was called to order by President Terry Bolamperti and was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance with veterans Lou Buda and Vinny Romano as flag-bearers. There were over 38 members in attendance. Members were asked to take a moment of silence to pray for all of the Society members who are currently ill. Also it was announced that long time Charter Member Georg (Gabrielle) Scalise had recently passed away. George Scalise's long list of services to the Society of over 35 years were noted, with special recognition of all the homemade ricotta that he made for the Society for all the Spaghetti Dinners and Festas and special events throughout the years. He will be dearly missed. New members welcomed were Steve Cassel who is half Italian. His mother was an Aliotto whose family immigrated from Sicily. Also welcomed was Fritz and Colleen Ladwig who came with other family members Jeff and Deb Ladwig and their dear mother Cookie Mascarello-Ladwig. The family was warmly received. Cookie mentioned how their whole family has cooked and served meals every 4th Monday of the month over the last 25 years at the Siena-

Francis homeless shelter. Their family received a sincere round of applause.

The minutes of last month's meeting were read and approved. The Treasurers Report was given by President Terry Bolamperti, which was approved by members. He did mention that more rental revenue is needed.

Old business was discussed including last month's Board election results with John Mangiameli, Jeff Ladwig and Nikki Capellupo-Sandmeier as new Board members. The Festa was briefly discussed with a few bills yet to be paid. Last months Spaghetti Dinner was also discussed. The Sausage Fundraiser held the previous weekend was discussed and all that volunteered to help in any way were sincerely thanked.

New Business discussed was the upcoming Epiphany Celebration which will be held on Sunday January 5, 2020. Emma Leo-Mueller will once again be chairing this event at which the meal is free for members and all are invited to attend. There will be a cash bar available. Volunteers are needed and were asked to call Diana at the office if anyone could help.

The Dan Polley-Lou Buda Award winners for the Society's Man and Woman of the Year were Gino Crisafulli and Rose Leo-Koch. A brief explanation of the meaning of this award was given. Lou Buda presented the award after Terry Bolamperti noted all the services that they both offered to the Society over the years. They were both very deserving of this prestigious honor. Photos were taken of the Award presentation and also of those in attendance who were winners of this award in years past.

Terry Bolamperti gave the President's Annual Report of the Transactions of the Society. The Piece of the Pie winners and multiple special Christmas gift winners were drawn, and the Christmas Italian Cookie Exchange was enjoyed by all. This year's cookie exchange was one of the best arrays of homemade Italian cookies that we have ever had at this meeting.

Buon Natale.

Submitted by President Dr. Terry Bolamperti



THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

2019 AIHS PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

As directed by the By-Laws, the President of the American Italian Heritage Society is to give a written annual report of the transactions, accomplishments and condition of the Society. This was presented at the December 9, 2019 General Membership Meeting by President Terry Bolamperti. Many guests have attended activities and events at the Palazzo. It has been an extremely busy year for the Society with our scheduled fundraisers, meetings and events. Our membership now has a home that we can all be proud of which will fulfill the needs of the Society and serve the needs for future generations. Our leadership and volunteers have been very active making the Society a success. Our mission of promoting, encouraging and preserving our Italian heritage and culture has been accomplished in the year 2019. These accomplishments include:

- **General membership monthly meetings were well attended and camaraderie enjoyed by all.**
- **The Celebration of Epiphany was held in January at the Palazzo, chaired by Emma Mueller.**
- **AIHS winter and spring Bocce Ball leagues were once again held, chaired by Tom Morinelli.**
- **The Carnevale was celebrated in February at Pasta Amore.**
- **Sausage Fundraisers were held in March, June and December at the Palazzo.**
- **St. Joseph's Day Celebration was held in March, chaired by Lucille Gibilisco, Joe Gregory and Diane Wortman**
- **Successful Society AIHS Spaghetti Dinners were held in April and November at the Palazzo.**
- **Society food specialties have been sold at all Sausage Fundraisers and Spaghetti Dinners.**
- **Our 5th annual Wine Tasting Event was held in May at the Palazzo, chaired by Tom Morinelli.**
- **The AIHS Summer Picnic was held in June on the Festa grounds, chaired by Wayne Moore.**
- **In July and August food preparation was done for the Festa.**
- **The AIHS Scholarships were awarded to Jessica Mueller and Emily Schneckengerger.**
- **In July the Society eliminated our Sales Manager's position and contracted with the Omaha Event Group to manage the rental business at the Palazzo.**
- **A very successful La Festa Italiana was celebrated Labor Day weekend at the Palazzo.**
- **New Board Members John Mangiameli, Jeff Ladwig and Nikki Capellupo-Sandmeier were elected in November.**
- **At the December Meeting we once again had the Italian Christmas Cookie Exchange.**
- **The Dan Polley-Lou Buda Awards for the 2019 Man and Woman of the Year were very deserving members Rose Leo-Koch and Gino Crisafulli.**
- **Our building and home, the Palazzo, is unprecedented in the Midwest and will be a focus of Italian activity for generations to come. The Palazzo is a testament to the pride, will & efforts of the Italians of the Omaha community. This was the 5th year in our new home.**

The State of the American Italian Heritage Society is Strong, Vital and Growing.

OUR SOCIETY HAS A GREAT FUTURE



THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

2019 DAN POLLEY - LOU BUDA AWARD**AIHS Woman and Man of the Year - Rose Leo-Koch and Gino Crisafulli**

“In recognition of their dedication, service and tireless effort in preserving and promoting Italian culture and heritage”

Every year since our inception the American Italian Heritage Society has recognized from our membership an individual man and woman who have exemplified extraordinary dedication and service to the Society. These men and women have expended tireless hours without any expectation of gratitude or recognition. They are the glue that keeps us together and they are the generators that propel our Society to be a success in the promotion of Italian culture and heritage. There are many, many members that deserve this honor and it is always a difficult choice to make. Last year's well-deserved Dan Polley-Lou Buda award winners were Larry and Barbara Pence. They contributed in the selection process of this years recipients. This year's AIHS Woman and Man of the Year are Rose Leo-Koch and Gino Crisafulli.

Rose Leo-Koch is a long-time member and volunteer. Rose was born in Italy and came to America in 1979 with her family from Terravecchia, Calabria. They were sponsored by her Uncle, George Scalise. Through the years Rose has helped the Society in many ways. She has volunteered for years at the Festa in many different roles starting off when she was a young child. Rose and her family helped work the Fried Dough Booth at the Festa for years. In the last ten years she has helped make all the pastries for the Festa including the many, many cannoli and biscotti. Rose has been chair of the Pasticceria Booth for the last five years. She has also helped with other food prep crews. Rose and her family have volunteered at many Spaghetti Dinners running the Bake Sale. At the dinners she often helps the day ahead with setup and offers to stay late with cleanup. We should all be thankful for Rose's dedication and service to the Society. She is well deserving of this honor. Congratulations Rose!

Gino Crisafulli is also a long time member and volunteer who grew up in Syracuse, New York and after college his profession as a pharmacist brought him to Omaha. Throughout the years, Gino has helped in every aspect of the Society. Gino volunteers for every Sausage Fund Raiser. He usually helps all three days and stays late for cleanup. At the Spaghetti Dinners he not only helps serve but is also on the meatball crew and also helps prepare the sauce. Being considerate of others, Gino often helps elderly guests by carrying their trays of food to their table and always helps the Boy Scouts cleaning the tables. Gino volunteers for all the Festa food prep. During the biscotti prep Gino has often prepared lunch for this crew. A true volunteer, Gino also helps at the Red Cross, the St. Vincent DePaul Society and the homeless shelter at the Siena- Francis House. We appreciate and thank Gino for all of his dedicated service. He is most deserving of this award. Congratulations Gino!

Submitted by Dr. Terry Bolamperti



THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY



Terry Bolamperti, Rose Leo-Koch,
Gino Crisafulli Lou Buda.



Past recipients of the Man and Woman of the
Year Award who attended the December
membership meeting were also recognized.
Thank you all for your on-going dedication
to the Society.



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COOKIE EXCHANGE

Thank you to all our members who participated in our annual Christmas cookie exchange at our December membership meeting. This year was truly one of the best displays of cookies we have had.

If you are looking for new dessert or cookie recipes, the AIHS cookbook, Taste of Italy, has a variety of recipes you can try. Contact the office to purchase one for yourself, a friend or a relative.

**PRAYERS FOR OUR MEMBERS**

Please keep in your thoughts and prayers our members who are ill, including Teri Carlino, Jim Capellupo, Romana Olivotto, Dick Wieler, Fred Pisasale, Marie Shafer, Lou Marcuzzo, and Betty Grillo.

Our condolences and prayers to the family and friends of Michelle Seminara, daughter of Dr. John and Teresa Seminara. Please contact Diana at the office to add to this prayer list. 402.493.8888.



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**TAGG YOUR RECEIPTS!**

If you haven't done so already, download the TAGG app on your cell phone. Anytime you visit a participating TAGG business (there are a lot!) submit a photo of your receipt and select American Italian Heritage Society as your organization,

Most businesses and restaurants donate up to 5%. It is very easy to do and helps us greatly.

If you need help downloading the app and submitting your receipts, please call Diana at the office and she can help you!



THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

MEMORIAL TO GABRIELE 'GEORGE' SCALISE

George Scalise passed away December 1, 2019 at the age of 89. George and his late wife Immacolata were Charter members of the Society. George was very active in our Society attending many events and volunteering throughout the years. George and his late brother Paul Scalise immigrated to America and raised their families in the Italian neighborhood of St Ann's parish.

George enjoyed gardening, cooking, making homemade sausage, pizza, cured meats, cheeses and his famous homemade ricotta. Anyone visiting George at his home could not leave without sitting down and visiting over a sip of Anisette, Galiano or a glass of wine, bread and his homemade suprasata and cheeses.



In 1979 George was instrumental in bringing his brother-in-law and sister-in-law and their six children to America. They immigrated to America from Calabria and made Omaha their new home. George sponsored Antonio and Anna Maria Leo and their family and assisted them as they began their new life and opportunities in America.

For the first twenty five years of the American Italian Heritage Society, George Scalise made most all of the fresh homemade ricotta used by the Society. His ricotta was used in the cannoli fillings. This helped make our cannoli extra special and delicious. The Society always appreciated everything that he did for us and we will miss him dearly.

We offer our deepest sympathy to George's children Maria, Frank and Julie and their families. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers. Submitted by Terry Bolamperti

2019-2020 AIHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman of the Board: Lisa Bolamperti-Garrett

President: Dr. Terry Bolamperti

Vice President: Wayne Moore

Secretary: Missy Orlando

Treasurer: Open Seat

Board Members:

Dawn Abboud

Nikki Capellupo-Sandmeier

Jeff Ladwig

John Mangiameli

Pat Peterson

**We thank Wayne Moore for his nine years of service
as his terms come to a close.**

The American Italian Heritage Society
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THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

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