



January 2022
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The News

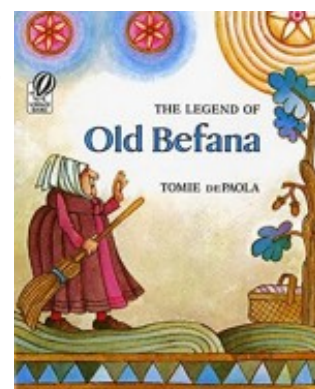
THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

A Nonprofit Corporation; Omaha, NE

Feast of the Epiphany Celebration has been cancelled!

We are very saddened once again that we cannot celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany this year due to Covid. This has been an AIHS family event for many, many years. If you are looking for some cultural, family fun, we highly recommend reading the book "The Legend of the Old Befana" to your children or grandchildren. There are also audio recordings online to listen to the book.

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.



40th Anniversary Gala

Save the
Date!



March 12th, 2022
Il Palazzo

40th Anniversary Gala Event will be at the Palazzo, March 12th. Many people are needed to make phone calls, sell tickets, collect donated items for auction and set up event. Contact Terry to help or donate. This will be a milestone for the Society 40th anniversary. The Gala will feature Silent and Oral auctions, hopefully everyone can plan on attending or supporting this fundraiser. More information to come.

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@omahaitaly.com.



THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

UPCOMING EVENTS**No January membership meeting****Epiphany Celebration cancelled due to Covid-19****Carnevale at Pasta Amora March 1st, 2022****AIHS 40th Anniversary GALA March 12th, 2022****December 2021 Membership Meeting Report**

The General Membership meeting, held on December 13, 2021, was called to order by President Terry Bolamperti and was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance with veterans John Portera and Joe Daniels 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 member Pat Rodino had recently passed away. Pat and her previously deceased husband, Vincent (Charlie) have been members for 35 years. All of her family (sons and daughters) have volunteered for many years for the Society. Her husband and son, Bob, have both served as presidents of the Society. She will be dearly missed.

Guest welcomed was Frank Reher, the father of member Shari Kanger. Frank has helped his daughter in genealogy of their family and her Sister City project. Also welcomed were members Sal and Cheryl Belfiore who were in town from Surprise, Arizona. They are here visiting family for Christmas. Sal has helped this past week with the sausage fundraiser. Both families were warmly received.

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.

Old business was discussed including last month's Board election results with John Portera and Joe Garrett as new Board members. The Festa was briefly discussed with a few bills yet to be paid. Last month's Spaghetti Dinner was also discussed and the Sausage Fundraiser held this previous weekend was discussed and all that volunteered to help in any way were sincerely thanked.

New Business discussed was the upcoming Epiphany Celebration (NOTE: this has been cancelled due to covid-19). It was also announced that we are planning a 40th Anniversary Gala Celebration in early March.

We are three years behind awarding The Dan Polley-Lou Buda Award. One year was during construction of the Palazzo and there was no selection last year during Covid. The three winners for the Society's Man and Woman of the Year were Steve and Carolyn LaGreca and Larry and Deana Belfiore for the previous years. Tom Clark and Dawn Abboud were given the award for this current year. 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 all offered to the Society over the years. They were all most 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

2022 AIHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS NewsLetter/Website Help wanted**Chairman of the Board:** Toni Bac**President:** Dr. Terry Bolamperti**Vice President:** Jeff Ladwig**Treasurer:** Joe Garrett**Secretary:** Nikki Sandmeier**Board Member:** John Potera

We are still looking for someone to help with our monthly newsletter and Website. If you have experience writing and designing in Word/ Publisher or Word Press, we ask you please consider volunteering. This is a great way to help our Society from home and it only takes a few hours a month.



THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

Thanks to outgoing Board Members

Mille Grazie to our Chairman of the Board Lisa Bolamperti Garrett and Board Member Missy Johnson Orlando, who are transitioning off the American Italian Heritage Society board this month, we appreciate everything you both have contributed to the society during your tenure on the board.

These two individuals have provided outstanding leadership over these challenging past years enduring the pandemic. Whether it was drive-thru fund-raising, marathon pizza and meatball making events, helping create the first "drive-thru" Festa or just promoting our Italian heritage, these two volunteer Extraordinaires' have been the back-bone of our small but mighty team.

Thank you Lisa and Missy and we can't wait to see you at future Society events.



Pictured: Missy and Lisa

December meeting Cookie Exchange



Pictured: Terry, Tammy and Larry

Good bye to Tammy Klimisch, the AIHS wishes you all the best. You did a great job while you were our office manager for the AIHS. Thank you and we hope to see you around at future Society events.

We welcome new office manager Jen Rauscher. She will be in office Mondays and Fridays.



Thanks to all the members and guests that attended this years Cookie Exchange. The assortment was delightful. Mark your calendars for next years December membership meeting and partake in our cookie exchange.

Society Specialty Foods for Sale

Society Italian specialty food items available: 5# bags Sausage (Hot and Reg), quarts pasta sauce. Contact the AIHS secretary, Jen for purchase.



THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

DAN POLLEY - LOU BUDA AWARD**AIHS Men and Women of the Year****2013 - Steve and Carolyn LaGreca****2020 - Larry and Dena Belfiore****2021 - Tom Clark and Dawn Abboud**

"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 in 2020 many membership meetings were cancelled due to the Covid Pandemic and this award was not given out. In researching the award the 2013 selection was not made since we were homeless and having meetings at various locations. This was also the year of construction of the Palazzo and this award was overlooked. This year we are recognizing the award winners for the AIHS Men and Women of the years of 2013, 2020 and 2021. Past award winners contributed in the selection process of this year's recipients. This year's well-deserved Dan Polley-Lou Buda Award winners are Steve and Carolyn LaGreca (2013), Larry and Dena Belfiore (2020) and Tom Clark and Dawn Abboud (2021).

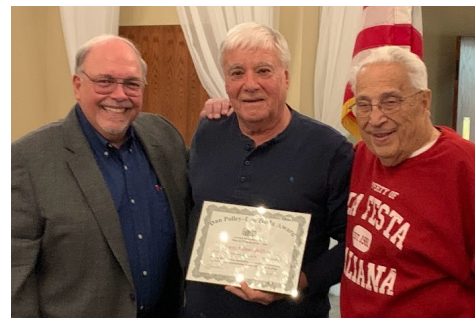
Longtime members Steve and Carolyn La Greca have volunteered for many years. They were helping at the first Festa in 1982 at the Civic Auditorium. They have captained the Sorbetto/Spumoni booth for the last 15 years at the Festa. Steve and Carolyn have also mixed all the pudding for the Festa cannoli for over 20 years. They are always willing to help out when needed. Steve previously served as a Board member years ago and he, Carolyn and his family also play a big part in the St. Joseph Day Celebration for over 30 years, acting out the roles of Joseph, Mary and Jesus in the pageantry of the event. Besides all they do for the Society throughout the years, Steve and Carolyn also are involved with volunteering at the Sons of Italy and Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. Their service is truly appreciated.





THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

Larry and Dena Belfiore are Charter Members of the Society joining in 1981. They also were volunteers in the first (1982) Festa. They have Captained the Festa Pizza Booth for over 35 years going back to those at Peony Park. Larry and Dena make their Festa Pizza crew a family affair. Their children and grandchildren have also volunteered for years along with his cousin Sal Belfiore and his children and the rest of the extended family. It's a blessing to see three generations from both of their families helping to make the Festa a success. Larry also volunteers for all the sausage and meatball crews and most any fundraiser we have. The Society is genuinely grateful for all their efforts.



Dawn Abboud has been an active volunteer for over 15 years as a Festa money room collector, a Palazzo Operation Committee member and a AIHS Board member. She has helped at almost all of the food preparations in the last few years along with helping organize and run the Drive-Thru events as supporters picked up their orders. Dawn has managed the AIHS Website and has updated it with current info. She has helped maintained our Facebook page and our followers have really grown. She also organized and downloaded most all of our Society photos on a slideshow. This last year Dawn volunteered to temporarily help put together the AIHS Monthly Newsletter. We are thankful for all she has done for the Society.

Tom Clark has been an enthusiastic member for the last 8 years since we opened the Palazzo. Tom has helped with every fundraiser event that is held. He volunteers making the spaghetti sauce, making the mixture for all the meatball crews, prepping and cleaning the casings for sausage stuffing, making the salad dressing, grating of cheese for pizzas, precooking pasta and always helping with cleanup to mention a few. Tom is part of the Festa Organizational Committee and two weeks before the Festa, he and Jim Mazzei put up all the banners throughout the city. At the Festa Tom helps with construction of all the booths and setting up the entire Festa grounds inside and outside. During the Festa he and Jim Mazzei keep busy repairing or fixing any equipment that is not working correctly. After the Festa Tom helps with tear down and reloading the storage truck. Tom has a full time job and still gets all this done for the Society. In the last several years Tom has taken a week of vacation in order to volunteer his time for the success of the Festa. The Society is very appreciative of all his time that he offers to the AIHS.



On behalf of the members of the American Italian Heritage Society we are very grateful for all Steve and Carolyn LaGreca, Larry and Dena Belfiore and Dawn Abboud and Tom Clark have done for the Society. We thank you all for your countless hours of dedicated service when and wherever needed. All of you are most deserving of this award. Congratulations to you all.



Submitted by Terry Bolamperti



THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

2021 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 13, 2021 General Membership Meeting. It has been an extremely busy year for the Society with our scheduled fundraisers, meetings and events. Our membership 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 somewhat hindered and impeded this year due to Covid restrictions and protocols. We've done the best we could and stayed very busy throughout the year. Our accomplishments include:



- **General Membership Monthly Meetings were held but several were cancelled due to Covid.**
- **The Celebration of Epiphany, normally held January at the Palazzo, was cancelled due to Covid.**
- **The Superbowl Italian Style Fundraiser was held as a Drive-Thru Event in February.**
- **The Carnevale was celebrated in February at Pasta Amore.**
- **Sausage Fundraisers were held as Drive-Thru's in March and June and In-House in December.**
- **Two Pasta Friday Fundraiser Events were held in March as Drive-Thru's.**
- **The Annual St Joseph's Day Celebration was cancelled due to Covid.**
- **Successful Society Spaghetti Dinners were held in April (Drive-Thru) and Nov (In-House).**
- **Society Food Specialties have been sold at all Sausage Fundraisers and Spaghetti Dinners.**
- **Our Annual Wine Tasting Event was cancelled due to Covid.**
- **The AIHS Summer Picnic usually held in June was cancelled due to Covid.**
- **In July and August food preparation was done for the Festa.**
- **The AIHS Scholarship was awarded to Jamie Bac.**
- **The Festa Italiana was held successfully on Labor Day weekend.**
- **New Board Members, Joe Garrett and John Portera were elected at the Nov Membership Meeting.**
- **The Italian Christmas Italian Cookie Exchange was enjoyed by all at the Dec Membership Meeting.**
- **The Dan Polley-Lou Buda Awards for the 2013, 2020 and 2021 Men and Women of the Year were awarded to Steve and Carolyn LaGreca, Larry and Deana Belfiore and Dawn Abboud and Tom Clark respectively at the April Membership Meeting.**

Our building and home, the Palazzo, will be a focus of Italian activity for generations to come. The Palazzo is a testament to the pride, will and efforts of the Italians of the Omaha community. This was the 7th year in our new home. We have been hit hard with many cancellations of weddings and events due to Covid this year. We do have event bookings that are very good for the spring, summer and fall of 2020.

The STATE of THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY is STRONG, STEADY and VITAL.

OUR SOCIETY HAS A GREAT FUTURE

REGARDLESS OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE COVID PANDEMIC



THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

PRAYERS FOR OUR MEMBERS

Please keep in your thoughts and prayers our members who are ill, including Ted Bolamperti, Tom Morinelli, George Grillo, Cookie Mascarello-Ladwig, Ann Marie Falco-Marr, Teri Carlino, Lou Marcuzzo, Lou Buda, Dee Mascarello, Joe Daniels, & Maria Leo.

Memorial:

Keep these members who have passed away in your prayers

Grazie/Thank you

The American Italian Heritage Society is a qualified 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation for Federal tax purposes.

Please consider including American Italian Heritage Society in your estate planning.

Festa Tickets and Membership Dues

Please promptly return Festa tickets/money and mail membership dues as soon as possible.

5110 N. 132nd Street Omaha NE 68164

contact the office to drop off Festa Ticket money or to renew over the phone.

Please Consider Advertising with us!

We are looking for additional businesses to advertise in our monthly newsletter. If you have a business or know of one that would like to advertise in our newsletter, we encourage you to call the office at 402-493-8888 or email secretary@omahaitaly.com.

AIHS COOKBOOKS FOR SALE

Our original cookbook "A Taste of Italy" is still available for sale for \$23.50, tax included. There are many great authentic, family recipes and Society specialties.

TAGG (Together A Greater Good)

Download the TAGG mobile app on your smartphone. Visit participating businesses, snap a photo of your receipt. Choose American Italian Heritage Society. Hy Vee is among businesses that donate a % to AIHS for your purchases.

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Risotto

1 med onion, diced
3 stalks celery, diced
1 clove garlic, minced
1 & 1/2 sticks butter
2 qt. chicken broth

Taste of Italy pg. 227 by Jeaniene Bolamperti

2 c Water Maid long grain rice or Arborio
3-4 pieces chicken livers (gizzards, heart) diced
2 T. tomato paste (optional)
1 T. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper



Sauté onion, celery and garlic in melted butter. Add rice and cook for 3-4 minutes at medium heat, stirring frequently. Add finely chopped chicken livers & gizzards. Add 1 qt of chicken broth and tomato paste if desired. Stir well. Cook until rice is done, adding more broth as needed to cook rice to desired texture.

Grains of rice swell and grow as they cook, in many cultures representing abundance and wealth. Accordingly, in northern Italy, especially Piedmont, Friuli and Lombardy, it is customary to serve a New Year's Eve first course of risotto to encourage prosperity in the coming year.

Member Achievement

Any members celebrating Birthdays 80+, new babies, Anniversaries 50+, submit by 2nd Tuesday of the month. Pictures welcome: secretary@omahaitaly.com

Ann Marie (Albino) Falco-Marr
celebrated her 90th Birthday December 28th

Lucille "Lucia" (Favarra) Gibilisco
celebrated her 94th Birthday December 15th



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