MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Dear Members,

Thank you - from the bottom of our hearts - for making our Maria Wilmeth’s award fundraising event a huge success. This sold-out event was the highlight of the month of January and a token to your generosity and support of our vision. We believe that these scholarships are more than just a valuable recognition to the high school students of Italian. They encourage them to pursue their passion and allow them to dive more deeply into their studies. Most of these students come from families who cannot always afford them a trip to Italy or an extra class and yet they stay committed to learning the language of their roots or of their heart, no matter what the extra work requires.

We are also looking for individual donors for the Cesarina Horing Awards for college students who distinguished themselves in Italian studies. We already have one donor who contributed half of the amount for this. We would love to have another one (or more) to reach the goal of covering the $3,000 fund for these awards and be recognized on our website and material including the list of donors of the year, on the occasion of our annual Gala (unless the preference is to be anonymous). Please donate online, or reach out to our office if you can help us replenish this fund.

In February we hosted two other sold-out events, the annual Carnival aperitivo and the premiering of the Cabrini’s movie. It was a pleasure to bring the movie to our members before the opening into theaters on March 8th. A story of Italian-American courage and strength of an exceptional woman, Cabrini is a magnificent, documented story and a symbol for all women who still today face the hardships of discrimination. Her empire of Hope was built on the unwavering determination that the world can and must be a more just place for everybody.

Coming up this week are two webinars with in-person and remote options, for those like minded who intend to travel with us to Italy with a purpose. We are offering two separate trips to Tuscany and Piedmont. I will be leading the one in Piedmont while our Director, Francesca Casazza will be waiting for you in Tuscany in Villa Bonizella. (cont. on next page)
If you are curious, come and share a glass of wine and look at the detailed program on Tuesday, February 20th for the Tuscan trip and Thursday, February 22nd for the Piedmont trip.

We also have a few free tickets (for the initial 6 active ICS Members reaching out) for February 23rd movie at Landmark’s Bethesda Row Cinema of Io capitano by Matteo Garrone, which was Academy award-nominated, and it was an Official Selection at the San Sebastiano Festival, Palm Springs International Film Festival and the AFI Fest.

Dear Friends,

Winter Term is in full swing, offering a diverse array of courses tailored to suit various learning preferences, including online, in-person, and hybrid formats. As we transition into Session 2, on Tuesday, Feb. 20th, we will start:

- BEGINNERS 2 (A1) – sess. 2 Tue./Thu. 10am-12pm (Bethesda) D. Rodriguez
- ELEMENTARY 1 (A2)-sess. 2 Tue./Thu. 12:00-2:00pm (online) S. Mattocci
- ADVANCED CONVERSATION, READING & GRAMMAR REVIEW (C1-C2) – Conversation and reading, with grammar review in context. Tue./Thu.10am-12:00pm (Bethesda/online) Cristiana Fabiani

If you already know some basic Italian and want to join Beginners 2, starting February 20th, please call us to arrange a couple of tutorials to catch up, in order to be able to join the course. If you are a complete beginner, mark your calendar for April 2nd, and contact us while we are working on the Spring schedule, to find out the day and time of our next Beginners 1. The Spring Schedule will be online by the end of February with all of our weekly courses (10 weeks) and twice a week (5 weeks). You can join higher level courses at any time.

Cooking classes: on Feb. 24th and March 16th with Simona.

Next CELI Exam Preparation Course will start on Thursday, Feb. 22, from 5:30-8:00pm online, for four lessons.

Finally, you can try Yoga in italiano on a drop-in basis, or for the rest of the semester.

This year we offer two trips to Italy, one also includes the possibility to either start your Italian learning experience, or improve it at different levels. One will be in Tuscany, at Villa Bonizella, with the owners of the villa. I will be the instructor and am looking forward to teaching, while enjoying the beautiful nature, the luxurious mansion, and captivating excursions to Siena, Arezzo, Trequanda, Pienza, jewel of the Renaissance, and Montalcino, Vico d’Elsa, San Gimignano and Montepulciano, where we will enjoy exclusive wine tasting experiences.

The other trip will be in the Langhe region with Prof. Annelise Brody Morani. For this trip, Bethesda Travel will also offer wine tasting experiences, elegant lodging and visits to picturesque lake landscapes, vineyards of the Langhe region and the elegant Torino, city of the Italian royal family of Savoy, boasting five UNESCO sites within their historic residences.

La Langhe region will also be the feature of our next event, on March 1st: a Wine tasting focused on Barolo, Barbaresco, Barbera and Dolcetto, led by an expert wine enthusiast native to this region, the son of a winemaker who will share his knowledge and tasting expertise with the participants.

Our immersion in the sensorial beauty of Italy will continue on March 22nd. “Savoring Italy - apericena” will bring you to the region Abruzzo.

Stay tuned for more events, movie screenings and classes, through our webpage upcoming events.

Warmly,
Francesca Casazza

Chair of the ICS Board of Directors
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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Single:
- Sarah Diligenti
- Claudia Cecchi
Venerdì sera 2 febbraio un bel gruppo di bambini dai 4 ai 10 anni si sono divertiti a scoprire il Carnevale italiano. Hanno fatto un viaggio virtuale in Italia per ammirare le elegantissime maschere a Venezia, i carri allegorici di Viareggio, Acireale, Putignano, i carri ed i costumi realizzati con i fiori di San Remo, il particolare lancio delle arance ad Ivrea, la maschere di legno in Sardegna, la storia del costume di Arlecchino, la bella Colombina, il simpatico Pulcinella ed il dottor Balanzone. Hanno mangiato la pizza, imparando ad ordinarlo all’italiana: “Pepperoni? No, i peperoni non sono il salame! Al formaggio? No, si chiama Margherita con la mozzarella ed il basilico. Si sono scoperti artisti culinari, preparando le bellissime mascherine alla Nutella ed alla marmellata di more. Il tutto condito con balli, giochi e lavoretti dalle 6.30 fino alle 9.30 di sera, si, tutto in italiano all’ICS! (Pictures on page 5)

Vi aspetto per il prossimo laboratorio con cena dedicato alla festa del papà, venerdì 15 marzo 2024: https://italianculturalsociety.org/course/kids-workshop/

By Fiorenza Castelli, Workshop and Summer Camp Coordinator

PAST EVENTS - ITALIAN HERITAGE NIGHT: WIZARDS VS. UTAH JAZZ AT CAPITAL ONE ARENA
Di Emanuela Ciriotti

We are excited to share the amazing experience from the recent basketball game between the Washington Wizards and the Utah Jazz, which was hosted in collaboration with Monumental Sports and Entertainment. Our members enjoyed an unforgettable evening at the Capital One Arena on January 25th, complete with exclusive pre- and post-game activities. Children accompanied by their parents and grandparents were particularly thrilled, as they had the extraordinary opportunity to stand alongside the players during the National Anthem, exchange high-fives with them on the court, and even take a shot at the basket after the game. Additionally, our raffle for an autographed basketball by the Italian basketball star Danilo Gallinari added an extra layer of anticipation and excitement for our members. It was truly a magical event, showcasing the essence of sports and community spirit.
We’re thrilled to share the success of Maestro Diego Rodriguez’s Violin and Viola Concert at the ICS Headquarters on January 28th! The concert aimed to replenish the fund for the 2024 Maria Wilmeth Awards, supporting Italian language students in local schools. We’ve met our fundraising goal, thanks to our generous community!

The audience was captivated by a delightful selection of 10 pieces, including classics like “La Donna è Mobile” and “O Sole Mio” masterfully played by Maestro Rodriguez.

After the concert, attendees enjoyed a joyful reception and received a Ferrero chocolate gift box (courtesy of our generous sponsor!)

A big thank you to Maestro Diego Rodriguez and all who contributed to this memorable event. Together, we’ve made a meaningful impact on education in our community!

Watch the full video on our YouTube Channel!
Discover the riches of Piedmont’s renowned wine region with an exclusive wine-tasting class! Enjoy a guided tour through the diverse grape varieties, denominations, and terroirs that define this Italian wine paradise, as you savor the distinguished profiles of renowned varietals like Barolo, Barbaresco, Barbera, and Dolcetto.

Guiding you through this sensory adventure is an expert wine enthusiast hailing from the very heart of the Langhe region. Being the son of a winemaker and with an intimate connection to the land and its wines, our instructor brings unparalleled knowledge and tasting expertise garnered from growing up amidst the rolling vineyards and historic wineries of the area.

Reserve your spot now as limited tickets are available, so don’t miss out on this opportunity to enjoy a full immersion in the flavors and culture of Piedmont, enriching your wine experience and appreciation!

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**WINE TASTING AT THE ICS**
Friday, March 1st, at 7 p.m. at The ICS Headquarters – 4833 Rugby Ave., Suite #201, Bethesda, MD

Discover the riches of Piedmont’s renowned wine region with an exclusive wine-tasting class! Enjoy a guided tour through the diverse grape varieties, denominations, and terroirs that define this Italian wine paradise, as you savor the distinguished profiles of renowned varietals like Barolo, Barbaresco, Barbera, and Dolcetto.

Guiding you through this sensory adventure is an expert wine enthusiast hailing from the very heart of the Langhe region. Being the son of a winemaker and with an intimate connection to the land and its wines, our instructor brings unparalleled knowledge and tasting expertise garnered from growing up amidst the rolling vineyards and historic wineries of the area.

Reserve your spot now as limited tickets are available, so don’t miss out on this opportunity to enjoy a full immersion in the flavors and culture of Piedmont, enriching your wine experience and appreciation!

**APERICENA – SAVORING ITALY**

A HISTORICAL, ARTISTIC, ANTHROPOLOGICAL, AND ENO-GASTRONOMICAL TOUR OF ITALY’S REGIONS

Friday, March 22nd from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m at the ICS (4833 Rugby Ave., Suite 201 – Bethesda)

The event will be in English, with some Italian language learning exposure.

Our new event series, Apericena – Savoring Italy, builds upon our popular Aperitivo – Conversando in Italiano! This series will transport you to the diverse regions of Italy, exploring their eno-gastronomical origins. Each event features a cultural presentation of the region, accompanied by the enjoyment of typical food and wine in the relaxed style of “apericena”—an informal light dinner.

Our next region is Abruzzo, renowned for its stunning landscapes, including the Apennine Mountains and picturesque coastlines.

The Speaker:

Dr. Valentina Asciutti, a native of Abruzzo, will vividly present the region’s beauty, culture, and unique culinary delights, offering a captivating journey through history, art, anthropology, and enogastronomy.

Purchase tickets [here](#)!
SECRET TUSCANY AT VILLA BONIZELLA
TRIP PRESENTATION (IN PERSON + WEBINAR)
Tuesday, February 20th, from 7:00 to 8:00pm at the ICS Headquarters (4833 Rugby Ave., suite 201, Bethesda, MD 20814)

Join us online or at the ICS Headquarters to hear about this unique opportunity to be immersed in the beauty of nature, culture, cooking and the Italian language with the Hosts of Villa Bonizella and Francesca Casazza.

One or two hours class each day, for beginners or more advanced levels. Excursions include:

– Pienza, jewel of the Renaissance
– Montalcino, with Brunello wine tasting
– San Gimignano and Montepulciano (including wine tasting)
– the picturesque town of Trequanda
– Vico d’Elsa, with exclusive visit at the Majnoni Guicciardini’s cellar and mansion
– Siena and Arezzo

Space is very limited (max 12 people). Please secure your spot today by visiting the following link:
https://italianculturalsociety.org/trips-to-italy

After the presentation, we’ll have the opportunity to share a drink together and ask more questions.

If you’re unable to attend the presentation in person, you can join online via webinar. The link will be provided to you via email after you RSVP.

DISCOVERING TURIN & LANGHE
TRIP PRESENTATION (IN PERSON + WEBINAR)
Thursday, February 22nd, from 7:00 to 8:00pm at the ICS Headquarters

Join us for a Q&A with Guido Adelfio, owner of Bethesda Travel to learn more about this year’s ICS Tour of Piemonte (September 8th to 17th 2024) with Prof. Annelise Brody Morani.

Destinations:
• the elegant Torino, city of the Italian royal family of Savoy, boasting five UNESCO sites within their historic residences
• the surrounding lakes
• the wine country of Asti
• Le Langhe region, birthplace of the Slow Food movement and well known for its Barolo and Barbaresco wines (including wine tastings).

An itinerary to discover Piedmont through history, magical atmosphere, fine wines and stunning landscapes, designed specifically for students and friends of the Italian Cultural Society.
https://www.bethesdatravel.com/ics2024

After the presentation, we’ll have the opportunity to share a drink together and ask more questions.

If you’re unable to attend the presentation in person, you can join online via webinar. The link will be provided to you via email after you RSVP.
On Thursday, February 15th, The ICS had the opportunity and honor to offer an exclusive preview of the film CABRINI, thanks to the generosity of the film's producers, Angel Studios, and our Board Member Phil Contrino. At the AMC Georgetown, two entire rooms were reserved for our members (120 seats!), who chorally appreciated the viewing of what will surely be one of the best films of the year. We made this movie an occasion to thank our teachers, main donors, sponsors, representatives from the Embassy, and key institutions in Washington who support us, inviting them to a pre-screening reception at the prestigious Café Milano, just steps away from the cinema. Our thanks also go to Mr. Franco Nuschese and his staff who graciously hosted us.

Cabrini is a mesmerizing tour-de-force of the power one person - one woman - can have when her purpose in life is to serve God and His people. Denied her mission request to go to China, Pope Leo XIII instead sent Mother Cabrini to New York to care for the many, desperately impoverished Italian immigrants who were pouring into America during the late 19th c. Mother Cabrini took on the most powerful men in Irish-controlled New York and the Catholic Church in a fight for the city's sick, starving, and homeless Italians, and built the largest humanitarian empire in history. Cabrini draws on the grit and determination of Francesca Cabrini to present a story that showcases the resiliency of the human spirit and the power of a woman who refuses to accept society's limits.

The film details the life of St. Francesca Xavier Cabrini, the first future American saint (canonized in 1946). Cristiana Dell'Anna, who portrays Mother Cabrini, is superb, flawless in depicting the inner strength, fervor, and unfailing conviction needed to overcome ever-increasing obstacles to her mission. However, Dell'Anna is able to show deep vulnerability, tenderness, and love needed to breathe life into the full character of Cabrini. Dell'Anna's performance deserves accolades and awards.

Another standout performer is Romana Maggiora Vergano, who plays Vittoria, a young prostitute taken in by Cabrini and the sisters. Vergano imbues Vittoria with both the fragility of someone who has been hurt repeatedly and the strength of someone damaged who has chosen to survive despite her pain, resulting in finding peace and purpose. "We are survivors" is a theme repeated throughout the film by Mother Cabrini, and taken to heart by Vittoria.

When Mother Cabrini met with the Pope she said to him: We can serve our weakness or we can serve our purpose, not both. Cabrini, despite lifelong lung damage due to a near-drowning as a child, went on to establish schools, hospitals, and orphanages – in the United States and around the world: sixty-seven in all. And all of them were run by women.

Cabrini is a lush, cinematically incredibly beautiful film. In an interview with director Alejandro Monteverde, who also directed the award-winning box-office success The Sound of Freedom, Cabrini was described not as a “motion picture” but as a “motion painting.” Every frame in the film is crafted as a painting, affecting your heart and your life. When you leave the film you will feel hopeful, uplifted, encouraged, and maybe inspired to do more.

Cabrini is a true and inspiring story of what dogged determination in the pursuit of God's work can accomplish. In the words of Mother Cabrini: What kind of world do we want and what will we do to achieve it?
Giovedì 15 febbraio l’ICS ha avuto l’opportunità e l’onore di offrire un’anteprima esclusiva del film CABRINI, grazie alla generosità dei produttori del film, Angel Studios, e al nostro Board Member Phil Contrino. All’ AMC Georgetown, due intere sale erano riservate per i nostri soci (120 posti!) che hanno corolarmente apprezzato la visione di quello che sicuramente sarà uno dei migliori film dell’anno.

Abbiamo colto l’occasione per omaggiare e ringraziare i nostri principali donatori, sponsor, rappresentanti dell’Ambasciata e delle Istituzioni principali di Washington che ci sostengono, invitandoli ad un ricevimento pre-screening al prestigioso Café Milano, a due passi dal cinema. I nostri ringraziamenti vanno anche al Sig. Franco Nuschese e al suo staff che ci hanno graziosamente accolto.

CABRINI è un affascinante tour de force del potere che una persona, una donna, può avere quando il suo scopo nella vita è servire Dio e il Suo popolo. Negata la sua richiesta di missione di andare in Cina, Papa Leone XIII inviò invece Madre Cabrini a New York per prendersi cura dei numerosi immigrati italiani disperatamente poveri, che si riversavano in America alla fine del XIX secolo. Madre Cabrini affrontò la Chiesa cattolica e gli uomini più potenti della New York controllata dagli irlandesi, in una lotta per gli italiani malati, affamati e senza casa; e costruì il più grande impero umanitario della storia. CABRINI si avvale della grinta e della determinazione di Francesca Cabrini per presentare una storia che mette in mostra la resilienza dello spirito umano e il potere di una donna che rifiuta di accettare i limiti della società.

Il film racconta la vita di Santa Francesca Xavier Cabrini, la prima futura santa americana (canonizzata nel 1946). Cristiana Dell’Anna, che interpreta Madre Cabrini, è superba, impeccabile nel descrivere la forza interiore, il fervore e l’incrollabile convinzione necessari per superare gli ostacoli sempre crescenti alla sua missione. Tuttavia, Dell’Anna è in grado di mostrare la profonda vulnerabilità, la tenerezza e l’amore necessari per dare vita al carattere completo di Cabrini. La performance di Dell’Anna merita riconoscimenti e premi.

Altra interprete di spicco è Romana Maggiora Vergano, che interpreta Vittoria, una giovane prostituta accolta da Cabrini e dalle sorelle. Vergano infonde in Vittoria sia la fragilità di qualcuno che è stato ferito ripetutamente, sia la forza di qualcuno ferito che ha scelto di sopravvivere nonostante il dolore, trovando pace e scopo. “Siamo sopravvissute” è un tema ripetuto in tutto il film da Madre Cabrini, e preso a cuore da Vittoria.

Quando Madre Cabrini incontrò il Papa, dice: “Possiamo servire la nostra debolezza oppure possiamo servire il nostro scopo, non entrambi.” Cabrini, nonostante i danni permanenti ai polmoni dovuti a un quasi annegamento da bambina, continuò a fondare scuole, ospedali e orfanotrofi – negli Stati Uniti e in tutto il mondo: sessantasette in tutto. E tutti gestiti da donne.

CABRINI è un film lussureggiante, cinematograficamente incredibilmente bello. In un’intervista con il regista Alejandro Monteverde, che ha anche diretto il pluripremiato successo al box-office The Sound of Freedom, CABRINI è stato descritto non come un “immagine in movimento” ma come una “pittura in movimento”. Ogni fotogramma del film è realizzato come un dipinto, che influenza il tuo cuore e la tua vita. Quando lascerai il film ti sentirai pieno di speranza, sollevato, incoraggiato e forse ispirato a fare di più.

CABRINI è una storia vera e stimolante di ciò che la tenace determinazione nel perseguimento dell’opera di Dio può realizzare. Nelle parole di Madre Cabrini: Che tipo di mondo vogliamo e cosa faremo per realizzarlo?
ABOUT POCHE PAROLE

Poche Parole is published each month from September through May. Deadline for ad and article submissions is the 22nd of the month preceding publication of the issue. Please send submissions to ICS.Eventi@italianculturalsociety.org. Advertisers appearing in Poche Parole have paid a fee. Publication of any advertisement in Poche Parole does not reflect ICS endorsement or guarantee of the advertiser's services, products or statements. Material contained in articles is the sole responsibility of the author and does not indicate ICS endorsement.

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Rates per month, per 3 months: Business card - 1/8 page: $100; 1/4 page: $150; 1/2 page: $200; Full page: $300
For the year (9 issues): 20% discount

ABOUT ICS

The Italian Cultural Society of Washington D.C. (ICS) is your home for cultural and social events in the Washington metropolitan area, and for courses to learn or improve your Italian. Our community is growing and involving the entire US.

OUR MISSION

The Italian Cultural Society promotes the appreciation and knowledge of the Italian language and culture by creating opportunities through language programs, cultural events, and partnerships.

OUR HISTORY

Founded in 1953 by Professor Salvatore J. Castiglione, Chairman of the Italian Department of Georgetown University, the Society launched its Italian Language Program in 1974, with contribution of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

VISIT US ONLINE AT ITALIANCULTURALSOCIETY.ORG
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