It was a wonderful gathering that Andy put together for our first social of the year. Therefore, it became even more surprising and upsetting when he announced that same evening by e-mail to the members of the Board of the ICS that for personal reasons he had to resign immediately both as our president and as a member of the Board. The Board’s insistence that he should reconsider and congratulatory remarks for the organization and success of the social were in vain. Therefore, we had to respect his decision and move on, since events are to be planned and the October social is around the corner. We wish Andy and his family all the best and look forward to welcoming them back to our Sunday socials.

The Board has asked me, and I have accepted, to serve as president for the present year. I have responded positively mainly to warrant continuity and effectiveness to our most important commitment, the Italian Language Program, that Maria Wilmeth and Cesarina Horing so valiantly direct. We felt that discontinuity in leadership of the ICS would severely impact the Program and wanted to avoid it at all costs.

For our next social on October 19 we will have a presentation on the culture of Sicily. This region of Italy has been the mixing crucible in which Carthaginian, Arabic, Greek, Roman and Norman civilizations have come together with the local element and produced linguistic, architectural, and culinary delights. In concordance with the subject of the talk there will also be a movie about Sicilian peasants preceding the talk and cannoli and a wine of Sicily to complete our enjoyment.

I look forward to seeing you all on October 19.  

Luigi De Luca

COLUMBUS DAY
by Elio Grandi
Most people don’t know that Columbus day was not celebrated as a national holiday in these United States until September 11, 1971 when, as the result of lobbying by Italian-American organizations, the Congress of the United States passed a bill that

FESTA DI COLOMBO
di Elio Grandi (traduzione)
Pochi sanno che la celebrazione della scoperta dell'America (Columbus Day) non fosse riconosciuta come festa nazionale negli Stati Uniti fino all’ 11 settembre, 1971 quando, grazie a pressioni da parte delle organizzazioni italo-americane, il Congresso degli
replaced the actual date of the first landing of Christopher Columbus in the New World by the second Monday of the month of October, and President Lyndon B. Johnson signed it into law.

The law was to take effect five years after the signing to give publishers of calendars time to correct the date on their production. So even though LBJ is credited with adding Christopher Columbus to the national heroes the nation celebrates every year, it was President Richard Nixon who signed the first PROCLAMATION mandated by Congress by the Act of June 28, 1968.

The only Italian-American who served in the Nixon cabinet was Massachusetts’ John Volpe who moved from Boston to the District of Columbia and became Secretary of Transportation. He gathered around his conference table a group of twenty local prominent, and not so prominent, Italian-Americans (among them, yours truly) to decide what to do to celebrate the historic occasion.

Because I suggested a Gala Concert at the recently opened Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, I was put in charge of setting up and actually masterminding it.

Over two thousand people enjoyed, free of charge, a concert of mostly Italian opera arias that include “Pace, Mio Dio” from Verdi’s La Forza del Destino, chosen to send a message to President Nixon who was scheduled to attend, but was a no-show.

Present, and together for the first time in history, were both the ambassadors of Italy and Spain who contributed their own declarations to the program. Also present, as the result of a last minute decision, and therefore not included in the program, was the great, great, great, great, great grandson of Cristobal Colon who came from Spain at his country’s expense.

This writer has one of the pens used by President Johnson to sign the bill into law and also a copy of the program that most people don’t realize contains a gigantic faux pas in having printed the name of the Italian ambassador over the photograph of the Spanish ambassador over the photograph of the Spanish ambassador over the photograph of the Spanish ambassador over the photograph of the Spanish ambassador over the photograph of the Spanish ambassador over the photograph of the Spanish ambassador.

Elio Grandi
Sino alla prima metà degli anni '60, in Italia tutti i disabili venivano educati nelle scuole speciali e negli istituti con residenza notturna come nel resto d'Europa e del mondo. Verso il 1966 ed il 1967 gli operatori degli istituti speciali per disabili convinsero i genitori a portare i loro figlioli fuori da tali strutture considerate "ghetti" ed a inserirli nelle scuole comuni. La Legge n. 118/71 prende atto di questa realtà e stabilisce che anche gli alunni disabili debbono adempiere l'obbligo scolastico nelle scuole comuni, ad eccezione di quelli più gravi. Nel 1977 un’ altra legge stabilisce il principio dell'inclusione per tutti gli alunni disabili della scuola elementare e media dai 6 ai 14 anni e, nel 1992, anche delle scuole superiori.

Nel 1992 è stata approvata una legge che fissa i principi per una buona qualità dell'integrazione scolastica, fra i quali: la necessità di una diagnosi clinica, fatta da uno specialista sanitario, e di un piano educativo individualizzato per ogni studente disabile. In Italia, tutte le scuole hanno l'obbligo di accettare l'iscrizione degli alunni con disabilità anche se in situazione di gravità. Anzi, il rifiuto di iscrizione di tali alunni è punito penalmente. Ad esempio, un bambino cieco deve avere un insegnante specializzato che conosce l'alfabeto "Braille". La legge prevede anche che il trasporto dall'abitazione allo stabilimento scolastico sia fornito gratuitamente. Gli alunni con handicap vengono valutati secondo il piano educativo personalizzato da loro svolto e ottengono una valutazione legale al pari di tutti gli altri compagni. Comunque al termine della scuola media, tranne i casi più gravi, normalmente viene rilasciato il diploma di licenza media.

Le classi debbono avere di solito un solo alunno disabile, eccezionalmente possono essere inseriti nella stessa classe due alunni disabili, purché non siano in situazione di graviità. Le classi debbono in genere avere non più di 20 alunni. Gli alunni disabili partecipano alle attività di tutta la classe. Ciò è ovviamente più facile nella scuola materna e nei primi anni della scuola elementare. Nella scuola media ed in quella superiore, per gli alunni con minorazioni intellettive gravi, il piano educativo individualizzato può prevedere momenti in cui l'alunno esce dalla sua classe e frequenta attività di altre classi, più adatte a lui.

L' Inclusione Lavorativa: Per i disabili esiste un diritto al collocamento obbligatorio al lavoro, in enti pubblici ed imprese private, sulla base della percentuale d'invalidità riconosciuta da una apposita commissione medico-legale. Nel 1999 è stata approvata una legge che ha fissato la percentuale dell'obbligo di assunzione al 7% del totale dei lavoratori assunti. Questa legge ha introdotto il principio del "collocamento lavorativo mirato", cioè in base ad un progetto che tenga conto delle minorazioni e delle capacità della persona chiamata.

Le Università: Quanto all'università, la legge prevede che gli alunni disabili, in possesso del prescritto titolo legale di studio, possano concordare coi docenti i contenuti dei programmi e le modalità della prove di esame. In ogni università deve esserci un docente incaricato dell'accoglienza degli studenti disabili e debbono esservi dei "tutor". Debbono inoltre essere garantite, anche nelle università, l'abbattimento delle barriere architettoniche ed assistenti per gli spostamenti di studenti in sedia a rotelle.

Il Futuro: Sino a circa 15 o 20 anni fa trovavano grande spazio sulla stampa le notizie di genitori di alunni non disabili che contestavano l'inclusione nella classe di alunni disabili. Oggi questi episodi non esistono o quasi, e l'esclusione di un alunno disabile da una scuola, vietata dalla legge, fa scandalo sui giornali. Questo problema è ormai superato da problemi più recenti, quali quello dell'ingresso nelle scuole comuni di studenti provenienti dall'Africa, dall'Asia e dall'Est europeo.

Questa esperienza che da oltre trenta anni si sta attuando in Italia ha costituito sia il più forte fattore di innovazione e di cambiamento della scuola italiana che un forte fattore di cambiamento sociale, poiché la presenza di alunni disabili, anche gravi, nella scuola, ha abituato lentamente i compagni a considerare la loro presenza come cosa naturale nella società non solo civile, ma anche ecclesiale. I disabili cominciano sempre più ad uscire dagli istituti gestiti da sacerdoti e religiosi per partecipare, sia pur con qualche problema di comprensione, alla vita delle comunità dei fedeli.
THE ITALIAN ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM AND EFFORTS BEING MADE TO ENSURE ITS CONTINUANCE
by Cesarina Horing

In June 2008, the College Board, a non profit organization in charge of offering in public and private high schools the Advanced Placement (AP) programs and exams in various subjects as well as the SAT exams, run by the Educational Testing Services (ETS), announced, without first informing school administrators, the canceling of the Latin and French Literary AP Exams immediately, and by 2009 also the Italian AP Exam. This last one would definitely be cancelled in 2009, unless up to $6,000,000 in funds were provided. The reason given for these cancellations was the small number of students taking the exams in these three language programs. Yes, the situation was indeed quite serious last June!

In answer to the outcry that ensued, the College Board indicated that it would try to allow the Italian AP Exam to continue, if at all possible. However, substantial funds would still be needed.

The College Board had implemented for the first time an Italian AP Program in 2005 after funds totaling $500,000 had been raised from contributions donated by the Republic of Italy, the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF), the Order Sons of Italy (OSIA), and UNICO.

What was indeed surprising and incredible, was the fact that the Italian AP Program had been offered for only three years when the announcement of its cancellation was made. Generally it takes a minimum of four to five years to finally offer an AP Course at the senior year level. However, not many students take four years of a foreign language and on the last year of school, the courses have only a few students. Therefore, most principals will not let these courses run course with a small number of students.

IL PROGRAMMA DI “ADVANCED PLACEMENT” IN ITALIANO E GLI SFORZI PER ASSICURARNE LA CONTINUAZIONE.

di Cesarina Horing (traduzione di Paolo Vidoli)

Nel giugno 2008 il College Board un’organizzazione statunitense senza scopo di lucro, incaricata di offrire ai licei pubblici e privati programmi di “Advanced Placement” (AP) ed esami su vari soggetti come pure l’esame nazionale di ammissione alle università (SAT) condotto da l’Education Testing Services (ETS), ha annunciato, senza prima informare le amministrazioni scolastiche, la cancellazione immediata degli esami di AP di francese e latino e, entro il 2009, anche l’esame di AP di italiano. Quest’ultimo verrebbe cancellato definitivamente nel 2009 se non si trovano finanziamenti fino a $6,000,000. La ragione data per queste cancellazioni e’ stato l’esiguo numero di studenti che si sono presentati gli esami in questi tre programmi linguistici. In effetti lo scorso giugno la situazione era veramente molto seria!

In risposta alle proteste che ne sono seguite, il College Board ha indicato che, se possibile, farebbe in modo di permettere la continuazione dell’esame AP di italiano. Comunque sarebbe sempre necessario un finanziamento consistente.

Il College Board ha proposto l’esame AP di italiano per la prima volta nel 2005 grazie ad una somma di $500,000 raccolta tramite contributi donati dalla Repubblica Italiana, dalla Fondazione Nazionale Italo-Americana (NIAF), dall’Ordine dei Figli d’Italia (OSIA) e da UNICO.

Il fatto veramente sorprendente ed incredibile, e’ che il programma di AP d’italiano era iniziato appena tre anni prima dell’annuncio della sua cancellazione. In genere occorre un minimo di quattro o cinque anni per poter offrire un corso di AP a livello dell’ultimo anno di liceo. Comunque non molti studenti scelgono quattro anni di lingua straniera e, nell’ultimo anno, i corsi hanno solamente pochi studenti. Pertanto molti presidi non permettono che questi corsi vengano offerti con uno
Since the very sad announcement last June, several meetings have taken place and other meetings are being scheduled to resolve this problem. Members of the national American Association of Teachers of Italian (AATI) have been meeting with representatives from the Italian Embassy, the Educational Directors of the various Italian Consulates in the United States and numerous Italian American Associations, to strategize on how best to collect enough funds to appease the College Board, which has given, as a first deadline, October 15, 2008 to receive a certain amount of funds toward their request.

Many teachers have expressed their dismay and have lamented that all their very hard work would not be able now to have all the exciting results they were expecting and envisioning. Many parents have called the College Board indicating their dismay on hearing of the possible cancellation of the Italian AP Program. They have children who have begun the study of Italian and would like to continue till they can take the AP Exam and receive their deserved college credits.

All members of the AATI have been asked to consider joining in the effort to keep the Italian AP alive. Prof. Anthony Tamburri, President of the national AATI, in his message to the members said: “There is strength in numbers and if we could get all of our colleagues, from elementary school to professor that teach graduate school courses, to join the association and understand how important it is, we would be a formidable power indeed”. It takes about a minimum of five years of instruction to establish a sound Advanced Placement Program.

Last May, 2020 students took the Italian AP Exam. Most passed it received a very good grade. This is the first time that the number of students taking the AP Exam was over 2,000.

All the problems indicated by the College Board seem strange at a time when the study of Italian at all levels, has grown steadily in the last 8 years. So much so that a survey of language students in high schools taken in the fall of 2007, by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), reported that Italian, more than any other language, was the language that students were most interested in studying. In fact about 42% of the 17,000 high school students, who took the survey, indicated that they would study Italian at the college level if it were offered.

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On July 2008, a new foundation was established to collect funds to assist with the Advanced Placement Program. The press release indicates that:
Mrs. Matilda Cuomo, former first lady of the State of New York and chair of the Committee to Establish the Italian AP Program, Margaret Cuomo, M.D., a member of the committee, Louis Tallarini, president of the Columbus Citizens Foundation, and Salvatore Zizza, president of the National Italian American Foundation, announced the incorporation of the “Italian Language Foundation” to promote and help underwrite the AP Italian Language and Culture Program. The Foundation is a not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation qualified by the Internal Revenue Service to receive tax deductible contributions.

“The Italian-American community is galvanized in its determination that high school students have the opportunity to enroll in Advanced Placement courses in Italian,” said Mrs. Cuomo.

You are invited to go to the new Foundation Web Site and see what information is given there. You can decide to assist by taking part as a volunteer of the Task Force in your state and/or by contributing what you can, to help with the funds to be collected. The Italian Language Foundation (ILF) Web Site is: www.italianlanguagefoundation.org

We are confident that a good and equitable decision will soon be taken in regard to this very important program that enables students to do well in their study of Italian.

Sante tutti invitati a visitare il sito della nuova fondazione e leggere le informazioni che vi si trovano. Potrete decidere di aiutare come volontari del gruppo d’azione nel vostro Stato e/o dando il vostro contributo per aiutare a raccogliere i fondi necessari. Il sito della Fondazione della Lingua Italiana (ILF) e’: www.italianlanguagefoundation.org

Siamo certi che a breve termine verra’ presa una buona e giusta decisione riguardo a questo importantissimo programma che da’ agli studenti la possibilita’ di eccellere nei loro studi di italiano.

LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

Baltimore’s Columbus Day Parade & Celebration
SUNDAY OCTOBER 12
8:00AM Breakfast buffet in selected Little Italy restaurants
10:00AM Wreath Laying Columbus Piazza (President Street)
1:00PM - 3:00PM Parade Route: Linwood Avenue in Patterson Park, Proceed West onto Eastern Avenue, Right onto High Street, Disband on Central Avenue. Parade Reviewing Stand and Spectator Seating located at Intersection of Stiles and High Streets in Little Italy
3:30PM – Entertainment Italian Tenors: Elio Scaccio & Aaron Caruso in Little Italy’s DaMimmo Parking Lot
Post Parade Special Theme Hosting by Participating Little Italy Restaurants will be featuring a variety of Columbus Parade Day special dinners
For information www.columbuscelebrations.com or info@columbuscelebrations.com

Gourmet Deli and Catering
Featuring an extensive line of Italian food favorites, wines and beers!
* Italian deli products, panini, subs and sandwiches, fresh mozzarella plus
* home made delicious Italian meals to go !
* Panettone * Pandoro * Panforte *
* Torrone * Perugina Chocolates *

Bring this ad with you for a Special 10% Discount (except for beer, wine, or other beverages)
**Washington DC’s Columbus Day Celebration**

On MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 11 a.m., the embassies of Italy and Spain and the general public will lay wreaths at the base of the Columbus Memorial Statue located in front of Union Station

**Italian Cultural Institute**

In the 150th anniversary of Giacomo Puccini’s birth the Italian Cultural Institute presents, with the presence of director Giorgio Capitani and actor Alessio Boni, Puccini: The Movie, a mini series for television, outlining the most significant chapters in the life of the great Tuscan musician. You will be shown the part of the serial dedicated to Puccini’s last years and to his opera, Turandot, which he left unfinished at the time of his death in 1924 due to throat cancer, and which as subsequently completed by Franco Alfano. At the end of the one-hour viewing, Director Giorgio Capitani and some actors will present their filming and acting experience in dialogue with the public.

Monday, Oct 6, 6:30 PM at the Embassy, 3000 Whitehaven St. NW Washington RSVP 202-612-4458

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**ICS SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS**

by Maria Wilmeth

This past year, the Italian Cultural Society, besides the six (6) Awards of $1,000 each described in the September Poche Parole, also presented two scholarships to students at the secondary school level and four scholarships to students at university level, who have excelled in their study of Italian, as well as the $500 TROPAIA Award given to a Georgetown University student.

The two secondary level scholarships were offered thanks to Dr. Claudia Donna, wife of Prof. Luigi De Sanctis, Educational Director at the Embassy of Italy, in the name and memory of her father, who had passed away a few months earlier. This is what Dr. Donna, says of her father:

"Mr. Pietro Antonio Donna, born in Canavesano di Ivrea, (Province of Turin), after completing his studies at the Classic High School "C. Botta" in his native city, joined the Army during the Second World War. When the American troops landed in Italy, he was in Sicily and had thus a chance to welcome them and to tell them that he wished to help and work with them.

From my childhood, I remember him telling us stories that expressed how grateful he was to and how much he admired the American soldiers who had come to fight in Europe, as well as his dislike for the war. I have always kept the diary written by his father during the First World War and my family still has it.

After the war he devoted himself to his family, to his work in a government office and to his acting in a theater company from Ivrea named after “Giuseppe Giacosa” and often mentioned in the literature regarding our regional and local theater. In addition to acting he cultivated the reading of travel literature and poetry and as a “dilettante”, also wrote a burlesque comedy entitled: Misoginopoli, i.e. ‘The City of

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**BORSE DI STUDIO DELLA SOCIETA’**

by Maria Wilmeth

Quest’anno la Italian Cultural Society, oltre ai sei (6) Awards di 1,000 dollari ciascuno, ha anche presentato due (2) Borse di Studio a studenti delle Scuole Secondarie e quattro (4) Borse di Studio a studenti al livello universitario, che si sono distinti nello Studio della Lingua Italiana. Un Premio per 500 dollari è stato dato anche ad una studentessa dell’Università di Georgetown per il TROPAIA Award.

Circa le due Borse di Studio per i due studenti delle Scuole Secondarie, esse sono state elargite grazie al desiderio della Dott.ssa Claudia Donna, moglie del Prof. Luigi De Sanctis, Educational Director, presso l’Ambasciata di Italia a Washington, in memoria del padre, deceduto solo poco tempo prima. Ecco quello che dice la Dott.ssa Donna di suo padre:

"Il Signor Pietro Antonio Donna, Canavesano di Ivrea (To), dopo gli studi al Liceo classico “C. Botta” della sua città, è stato arruolato nell’esercito durante la seconda guerra mondiale e, quando le truppe alleate sono sbarcate, si trovava proprio in Sicilia e li’le ha accolte, dichiarando la sua volontà di collaborare. Fin dall’infanzia l’ho sentito raccontare storie che esprimevano la sua riconoscenza e ammirazione per i soldati americani intervenuti in Europa e la sua riprovazione nei confronti della guerra; ha sempre conservato il diario scritto da suo padre durante la prima guerra mondiale e ancora l’abbiamo in famiglia.

Dopo la guerra si è dedicato alla famiglia, al lavoro presso un ente statale e alla sua attività di filodrammatico in una compagnia eporediese, ripetutamente citata nella letteratura che riguarda il nostro teatro civico, intitolato a Giuseppe Giacosa.

Oltre a recitare, ha coltivato letture di viaggi e poesia e ha scritto, come dilettante, anche una commedia burlesca dal
Misogyny. For all these reasons, and if he were still with us, we think that he would be very happy to contribute to the study of our Italian language and culture in an American School.

The two Scholarships in the name of Mr. Pietro Donna, were given to: Amelia Brown - Italian 3 honors - Duke Ellington School of the Arts in DC and to Sonia Krupnikova - Italian 3 - Walter Johnson High School, Montgomery Co. MD. The four Scholarships at the university level were given to: Matteo Francolino - George Washington University, to Laura Patrick - George Washington University; to Julie Sorenson - University of Maryland, and to Emoni Virmet - University of Maryland. The TROPAIA Award was presented by the Society to: Maria Aleyna, Georgetown University.

Le due Borse di Studio a nome il Signor Pietro Donna, sono state elargite a: Amelia Brown - Italian 3 honors – della Duke Ellington School of the Arts in WDC e a Sonia Krupnikova - Italian 3 - Walter Johnson High School, Montgomery Co. MD. Le quattro (4) Borse di Studio al livello universitario sono state presentate a: Matteo Francolino, George Washington University, a Laura Patrick, George Washington University; a Julie Sorenson, University of Maryland e a Emoni Virmet, University of Maryland. Il TROPAIA Award è stato presentato dalla Società a: Maria Aleyna, Georgetown University.

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<th>Interest group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Literature</td>
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