April, 2010 Vol. XXVII, No. 8

poche parole

The Italian Cultural Society of Washington D.C.

Preserving and Promoting Italian Culture for All

www.italianculturalsociety.org

ICS EVENTS

Social meetings start at 3:00 PM on the third Sunday of the month, September thru May, at the Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD (See map on back cover)

Sunday, April 18: ***Silvana Ehrman and Luigi De Luca will give a presentation entitled "Between Art and Science: Chemistry on the Walls" based on an exhibit, scheduled to open June 9 at the Italian Embassy, of artistic posters of the 19th and 20th century advertising various industrial and agricultural products, such as soaps, perfumes, talcum powder, oils, wines and other Italian products, and showing how chemistry affects people's daily lives. See examples below and on pages 9 and 10.***

ITALIAN LESSONs ON APRIL 18 AT 2:00

Movie of the Month: ***at 1:00 Era Notte a Roma. See page 10***

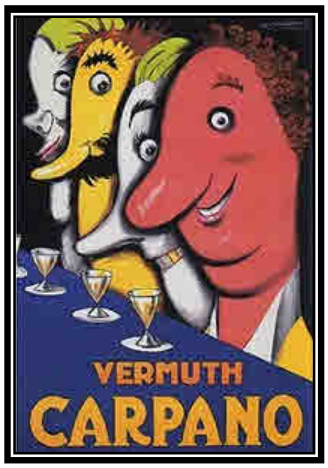
Sunday, May 16: ***The National Philharmonic Singers, a group of 26 voices that performs regularly in the DC area will present a concert of music from Italian opera.***

Saturday, June 12: ***Annual ICS Scholarship Gala at SPEZIE restaurant. See page 11.***

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Celest Di Pietropaolo and Maria DiCocco were certainly as pleased as we were with the large turnout at our March meeting to enjoy their learned and enthusiastic presentation on Italian folk traditions. They treated us to video clips from Sardegna and Puglia centered on village celebrations that included music and dancing, sometimes in amazing costumes. That was followed by musical examples on a variety of instruments, and finally by involving several brave couples in a variety of dances accompanied by recorded music. One was a bit like an American contra dance, with couples moving in a circle through intricate figures, and another was more like a traditional Mediterranian circle dance. How large was the turnout? Well, we actually ran out of bread for the first time in recent memory! Our April meeting features SMATCH's Sylvana Ehrman and Luigi De Luca giving us a preview of an exhibition that is to be displayed at the Italian Embassy "Between Art and Science: Chemistry on the Walls" about colorful and interesting posters from an earlier era. Designed with customary Italian panache, these posters from the advertising world harken from the period before we were drenched in fast-moving TV images, when the eye could still wander in leisurely appreciation of design and form. And if that is not enough Italian-inspired art for you, please be sure to join us for an ICS sponsored tour of the Brumidi murals in our nation's Capitol building that is taking place on Saturday, April 24. Groups are limited in size, so be sure to sign up soon…April 16 is the deadline to receive your reservation. After the 2 h tour, the group heads out for lunch at Toscana Cafe near the Capitol. Two other brief announcements: our May meeting promises to be a delight as the National Philharmonic Singers,►►►►► a select group from the National Philharmonic Chorale, perform a capella works selected from opera and other choral music. In June we have our annual gala dinner, featuring our scholarship winners…for which we remind our applicants to get their dossiers to us by the May 22 deadline. Scholarship application information appears on page 2 in this issue.

Ron Cappelletti



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ITALIAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM

4827 Rugby Avenue, Suite 301
Bethesda, MD 20814
Day, Evening and Weekend Classes
for Adults and Children
Serving Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC
SPRING SESSION STARTS APRIL 12
website: www.italianculturalsociety.org

phone: 301-215-7885

CONSULAR SECTION
ITALIAN EMBASSY

3000 Whitehaven Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008
Information: 202-612-4400
Serves residents of Washington, DC, Montgomery & Prince George's Counties, MD; Arlington & Fairfax Counties, VA

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ICS ANNUAL AWARDS APPLICATIONS

Applications are being sought for the following Awards:

1. The Elena and Antonio De Luca $1,000 Award to a scholar who has excelled in Latin and/or Greek.

2. The Fred La Marca Award for studies in the Humanities in the amount of $1,000 to be given to a person who has excelled in the Humanities.

3.The Candida Di Croce Italian Language Award of $1,000 to be given to a scholar who has excelled in learning the Italian Language and shows promise of continued commitment to excel in the Language and Culture of Italy.

4. The Vincenzo Palumbo Artisan Award of $1,000 to be given to an artisan who has distinguished him/herself in working with stone, wood, natural and synthetic fibers and other relevant media.

5. The Ruggero Moriggi Artist Award of $1,000 to be given to a scholar, who has excelled in the Arts. Written reviews, recordings and/or photographs, etc. of work must be submitted to the Committee.

6. The Young Scientist Award of $1,000 to be given to a scholar who has excelled in mathematics and/or physical or biological science.

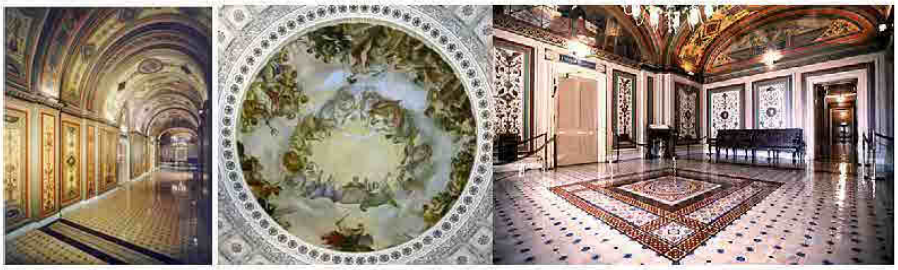
7. The Pietro Antonio Donna Italian Scholarship of $600 for a high school student who has excelled in the study of Italian.

Applicants should be no more than 25 years of age (except for Award No. 4, for which older applicants are accepted) by **Saturday, May 22nd, 2010**, the post-marked date for receipt of applications. Materials to be included in the application are:

1. College transcripts when appropriate (not required for Award No. 4)
2. Three letters of recommendation
3. An essay describing why the applicant feels worthy of the award
4. A short biographical presentation of the candidate (curriculum vitae)
5. Anything that would demonstrate the ability of the candidate, including publications by and/or about the candidate, photographs, CD's, etc.

Applications must be postmarked no later than May 22, 2008 and mailed to:
The Italian Cultural Society, Awards Section,
4827 Rugby Ave. Suite # 301,
Bethesda, MD 20814

Awards will be presented at the gala dinner, which will take place on Sunday, June 13 at the Spezie Restaurant, at 1736 L St. NW, Washington, DC. Attendance at the dinner is compulsory and awards will be reassigned if the winner is unable to attend except for exceptional circumstances as determined by the Awards Committee.



"The Art of Constantino Brumidi, the Michelangelo of the Capitol Building, a Guided Walking Tour"

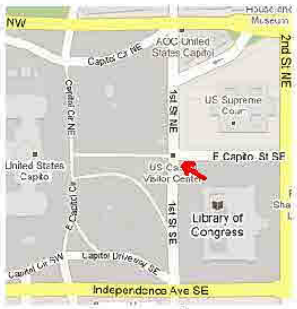
conducted by the US Capitol Historical Society

Sponsored by the Italian Cultural Society

through a special arrangement by ICS member
Joseph Grano, Chair of the Brumidi Society

When: 10 am to 12 pm, Sat., April 24, 2010
Where: see map for 9:30 am meeting place
Call 301-437-3362 for information

limited to two groups of 20 each; *make reservations now*!
$8 per person
followed by optional lunch at Toscana Café (601 2nd St. NE)



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RESERVATION FORM - Reservations to be **received by Sat., April 16th 2010**

Full Names (1)_____(2)_____(3)_____

(4)_____(5)_____(6)_____

Home Phone of Payer: ( )___-_____ Cell Phone: ( )___-_____Email:_____

Total Check Amount: _____Number For Optional Lunch:_____

Mail Check and Reservation Form to:

ICS, Attn: Brumidi Tour, 4827 Rugby Ave., Suite 301, Bethesda, MD 20814

Groups will **assemble at 9:30 am** on the sidewalk at the southeast corner of 1st St NE and E. Capitol St NE, across from the Visitor Center of the U.S. Capitol. Standard "airport" security check, cameras permitted in some areas.

Metro stops: Union Station, red line, or Capitol South, blue or orange line

UN' IMMIGRATA DI OGGI STUDIA GLI IMMIGRATI DI IERI

dI Simona Floris Westlund

"L'emigrazione italiana negli Stati Uniti fu una grande tragedia muta. Le sue vittime non sapevano scrivere, e quasi non sapevano esprimersi". Questa era la sentenza proferita dall'intellettuale italiano Giuseppe Prezzolini, nel 1969 sui suoi "trapiantati italoamericani".

Al termine di un corso di storia contemporanea presso l'Università di Siena, dove conclusi i miei Studi di Laurea Specialistica in Lingue Moderne e Studi Interculturali, decisi che questo sarebbe diventato il tema della mia ricerca di laurea. Otto mesi di lavoro portarono al risultato di una tesi dal titolo "Con il cuore in Italy e la testa nella Merica. Lingue della memorialistica d'emigrazione italoamericana". Scelsi di analizzare i testi autobiografici degli italiani immigrati negli Stati Uniti e in quanto studentessa di lingue decisi di porre la lente d'ingrandimento sulla lingua utilizzata da questi scrittori tentando di dare delle risposte al perché ci siano state delle scelte così diverse.

Nonostante gli autori fossero tutti riconducibili sotto l'etichetta di "italoamericani", alcuni avevano scelto di narrare la propria storia d'emigrazione in italiano, altri in quello che per loro era italiano (più spesso simile al dialetto), altri ancora in lingua inglese, per passare infine a casi in cui si ritrova un po'di dialetto e italiano misti ad inglese e slang americano che vengono a formare quegli ibridi linguistici a cui ci si riferisce di solito con i termini Italglish e broken English. Nella mia ricerca mi sono imbattuta con ciò che definirei vere e proprie opere d'arte linguistiche e che purtroppo solo un lettore bilingue può apprezzare a pieno.

Sapevo di inoltrarmi in un campo non semplice ma rimasi cosí affascinata da non permettere a nessun ostacolo di fermarmi. Non fu facile neanche reperire il materiale di ricerca, in quanto il compito di far conoscere quegli autori è relegato oggi quasi esclusivamente a poche biblioteche italiane, che conservano testi ingialliti con storie che qualcuno etichettò come non degne di andare oltre una prima edizione di stampa.

Ho analizzato autori come Tommaso Bordonaro, quale rappresentante della Great Migration e cioè degli emigrati italiani che partirono con i grandi esodi di inizio Novecento e che scrissero in "italiano" o comunque in quella lingua tra italiano, dialetto e inglese che era il loro bagaglio linguistico. Poi i casi eccezionali di Emanuel Carnevali e Pascal D'Angelo, i quali acquisirono una conoscenza così buona della lingua d'adozione da poter scrivere in inglese. E in ultimo presi in considerazione i

AN IMMIGRANT OF TODAY STUDIES THE IMMIGRANTS OF YESTERDAY

by Simona Floris Westlund (translation)

Simona Floris Westlund studied Translation and Interpretation (English French and German) at the University of Cagliari and obtained a Master's Degree (Laurea Specialistica) in Modern Languages and Intercultural Studies at Siena. She has studied for a year in Stuttgart and taught Italian for a year in Glasgow. She has been until recently an intern at the Italian Cultural Institute, is married to an American, and recently became a permanent resident of the US.

"Italian emigration to the United States was a great silent tragedy. Its victims could not write and almost could not express themselves." This was the judgment pronounced in 1969 by the Italian intellectual Giuseppe Prezzolini on his "transplanted Italoamericans"

At the end of a course in contemporary history at the University of Siena, where I finished my studies for a Degree in Modern Languages and Intercultural Studies, I decided that this would be the subject of my thesis research. Eight months of work led to the result of a thesis entitled "With heart in Italy and head in America: Languages of the Literature of Italianamerican Emigration". I chose to analyze the autobiographical texts of Italian immigrants to the US, and as a linguistics student, I decided to focus (a magnifying glass) on the language used by these writers, while trying to answer why there were such diverse language choices.

Although the authors could all be labeled "Italianamericans", some had chosen to narrate their own emigration stories in Italian, others in what was Italian for them (often similar to dialect), others in English, and finally in cases where one finds a bit of dialect and Italian mixed with English and American slang that come together as those linguistic hybrids usually referred to as Italglish and broken English. In my research I came across what I would define as true linguistic works of art, ones that unfortunately only a bilingual reader can appreciate fully.

I knew that I was getting into a complex field but I was so fascinated as to not let any obstacle stop me. It was not even easy to find the material for the research, since the task of making known those authors is these days relegated almost exclusively to a few Italian libraries that preserve the yellowed texts containing stories that someone labeled as not worthy of getting beyond a first printing.

I analyzed authors like Tommaso Bordonaro, representing the Great Migration, that is, the Italian emigrants that left with the great exodus of the start of the 20th century, and who wrote in "Italian" or, in any case, in that language between Italian, dialect, and English that was their linguistic baggage. Then the exceptional cases of Emanuel Carnevali and Pascal D'Angelo, who acquired such a good knowledge of their adopted language that they could write in English. Finally, I took into consideration the cases closer to us, of those perfectly bilingual writers, for example, Joseph Tusiani, that live halfway between the two worlds and

casi più vicini a noi, di quegli scrittori perfettamente bilingui, come ad esempio Joseph Tusiani, che vivono a metà tra due mondi e due lingue e che devono quindi operare una scelta sulla lingua in cui scrivere le proprie opere. Vi sono casi di scrittori che volutamente tengono i due codici ben separati e coloro che invece hanno sfruttato il proprio multilinguismo per creare una letteratura ibrida, più vicina alla loro nuova identità e cultura.

A quasi due anni dalla conclusione del mio lavoro, mi ritrovo ora immigrata a vivere in prima persona, scherzo del destino, quello che lessi nelle tante autobiografie degli immigrati della mia Tesi. Forse non perfettamente bilingue (o magari trilingue con il sardo?), inizio comunque a sentire la necessità di utilizzare l'inglese, l'italiano e il sardo per esprimermi e comunicare interamente il mio essere nei vari "mondi" che parlano lingue diverse e in cui mi sono ritrovata a vivere.

Mi trovo tra i tanti immigrati del Nuovo Secolo che ancora sognano le cose lasciate aldilá dell'oceano, che a volte piangono per una canzone italiana, che sono grati a Skype per permettere una comunicazione meno dispendiosa con i familiari lontani, e che si amareggiano, quando andando nella Little Italy di Baltimora, vedono le bandiere tricolori che danno il benvenuto in italiano e che mostrano una cartina dell'Italia con uno stivale, una Sicilia e una Sardegna che qualcuno purtroppo ha dimenticato. Mi trovo a rivivere le parole di Mario Soldati che nel suo "America primo amore" diceva:

"E ci ripugna non poter vivere contemporaneamente in due luoghi, quando e l'uno e l'altro vivono nel nostro pensiero...Possiamo infatti metterci in viaggio. Ma mentre la meta si avvicina e diventa reale, il luogo di partenza si allontana e sostituisce la meta nell'irrealtà dei ricordi; guadagniamo una e perdiamo l'altro. La lontananza è in noi, vera condizione umana".

Benché modesto, spero con il mio lavoro di aver dimostrato quanto sia limitata la considerazione di Prezzolini e come i nostri emigrati di ieri, nonostante le difficoltà, furono tutt'altro che muti, anzi dimostrarono di avere una voce che non rientrerà magari in un canone letterario, ma che ha tutto il fascino delle mille tonalità di colore che l'esperienza americana le ha potuto dare, come in questa piccola rima:

"Difficile? Non tanto quanto credi;
Sei giovane e fai presto ad imparare:
Ollrait, detsòll, sciaràp, go hom, gherare!*
(a un seccatore che ti vien fra i piedi).
E quando non ti puoi capacitare
Tu chiedi:Uazz de matter?** Se mai vedi
Una guagliona ci si dice: ledi***
e dà del mistar fino al tuo compare! ►►►►

two languages and must make a choice of the language in which to write their own work. There are cases of writers who purposely keep their languages well separated and those who have taken advantage of their multilingual abilities to create a hybrid literature closer to their new identity and culture.

Almost two years after the conclusion of my work I find myself now , as luck would have it, an immigrant living in the first person what I read in so many autobiographies of the immigrants in my thesis. Perhaps not perfectly bilingual (or maybe trilingual with Sardinian?), I am, however, beginning to feel the need to use English, Italian and Sardinian to express myself and communicate fully my being in the various "worlds" that speak various languages where I have found myself living..

I find myself among the many immigrants of the New Century that still dream of the things they left across the ocean, that sometimes cry for an Italian song, that are thankful to Skype for permitting less expensive communication with far away family members, and that get sad when they go to Little Italy in Baltimore, see the Italian flags that welcome people in Italian and that show a map of Italy with a boot, a Sicily and a Sardinia that someone has alas forgotten. I find myself reliving the words of Mario Soldati, who said, in his " America, first love"(1935):

"And it disgusts us not to be able to live in two places at once when both are alive in our thoughts…We can in fact start our trip. But as the destination gets closer and becomes real, the place of departure gets farther away and substitutes for the destination in the unreality of memories; we win one and we lose the other. Absence in us is a true human condition."

I hope to have shown, with my modest work, how limited Prezzolini's judgment is and how our immigrants of yesteryear, despite the difficulties, were everything but mute. They have shown us a voice that perhaps will not enter a literary canon, but one that has all the charm of the thousand tonalities that the American experience could give them., as in the little rhyme shown below starting in the left column :

Ma imparati l'inglese, perché se
domandi la tua strada in italiano
a un sciainatore**** o a quel del fruttistendo*****
quello, sia piemontese o siciliano,
per far vedere che ne sa più di te
sai che risponde?
"ai du not andestendo."

(by Achille Almerini *"La Colonia di Dante"*, 1912)

* alright, that's all, shut up, go home, get out of here
** What's the matter *** lady **** shoe shiner ***** fruit stand

FESTA ITALIANA, SUNDAY, JUNE 20
11;30 AM – 5:30 PM
WE NEED ICS VOLUNTEERS !!!

At one time, Washington, D.C., had its very own Little Italy! The area around Holy Rosary Church, at 3rd and F Streets N.W., was once home to a thriving Italian neighborhood, complete with frequent *feste* – street festivals. In 1999, Washington's active and growing Italian community came together to revive the traditions of their ancestors, and Festa Italiana, DC was born and has continued every year since!

Our Society along with the other sponsoring organizations, Holy Rosary Church Council and FIERI, has established a separate non-profit entity, the Festa Italiana Foundation, to organize and stage the Festa. Currently, the FIF is in itsplanning stage and our Society is represented by three members of ICS: Joe Onofrietti, Cecilia Fiermonte, and Arrigo Mongini. Romeo Segnan, Aldo Grossi, Nick Monaco and Paolo Vidoli are also making important contributions.

Festa planning is now at the point were volunteers are being sought from all the sponsoring organizations. ICSmembers interested in volunteering are requested to complete the following information and either bring this form to an ICS Social meeting to hand in at the front raffle table or mail it to Arrigo Mongini, 5541 Mohican Rd.,Bethesda, MD 20816 or just call him at 301-229-1653 or send an email to arrigo.mongini@verizon.net .

FESTA ITALIANA 2010 VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP SHEET

Name _____ E-mail_____
Phone_____ Cell_____
_____ This year we celebrate the Molise region. I would like to help with the regional cultural displays
_____ I would like to help with publicity and getting organizations to participate
_____ I know some vendors who might be willing to donate raffle or silent auction prizes and I will contact them.
_____ I would like to help with the layout of the various components in and outside Casa Italiana
_____ I would like to help put together the souvenir program, deal with advertisers, printer, etc.
_____ I would like to help with any number of jobs on the day of the Festa

You will find volunteering to stage this colorful and lively Festa to be very rewarding and a means by which to show your pride in our shared heritage and/or your love of Italian Culture

I Maestri del Ballo

Adagio ma non troppo !

Un calcio al compagno

Una bella passeggiata

Pictures from the March 21 program with the Italian Village Dance Company of Celest DiPietropaolo and Marie DiCocco.

Ai nostri lettori: Questo saggio e' un lavoro di uno studente in un corso avanzato di Camilla Presti Russell dell' Italian Language Program

DUE FIGLI DELLA PUGLIA

dl Jeff Nico

Questa e' la storia di due figli della Puglia, Nicola Nico e Carmela d'Onofrio. Penso che sia una storia molto comune degli immigranti italiani e altri stranieri intorno al 1900 - e probabilmente oggi. Nicola Nico e Carmela d'Onofrio erano i miei nonni.

Io non sono la prima persona a raccontare la storia di Nicola e Carmela. La figlia di mio cugino, Carla, ha avuto un compito dalla scuola: "Parlate dei vostri parenti e rispondete ad alcune domande." In generale, le domande erano di questo tipo: chi erano i vostri antenati immigrati e discutete il loro paese, i loro cibi, le arti, le canzoni, ecc. Carla ha scritto a suo nonno (mio zio) e gli ha chiesto di darle queste informazioni. Certo mio zio ha risposto alle domande, ma inoltre ha scritto tante pagine delle storie e dei ricordi dei suoi genitori, i miei nonni appunto. Per la maggior parte della famiglia, queste storie erano nuove perche' mio nonno e' morto giovane (non l'ho mai conosciuto) e gli altri parenti hanno parlato raramente della loro storia.

Nicola Nico era nato nel 1887 e Carmela d'Onofrio era nata nel 1902. Tutti e due erano di Castellaneta. La citta'di Castellaneta e' nella provincia di Taranto. E' una vecchia citta' le cui origini vanno all'eta' del bronzo. Ricercatori hanno scoperto segni di un' importante presenza umana nel territorio dal 2000 a.C. La citta' di Castellaneta e' nata nel 550 e la sua storia e' simile a quella di altre citta' della regione: invasioni dei saraceni, normanni, ecc. E' una piccola citta' - meno di 10.000 abitanti nel 1900 e adesso 17.000 abitanti. La regione e' famosa per le sue "gravine", enormi crepacci nel suolo argilloso della zona.

La citta' e' nota per un'altra ragione. Il figlio piu' famoso e' Rodolfo Valentino. La citta' di Castellaneta era molto piccola e mio nonno e Rodolfo si conoscevano. Infatti, andavano a scuola insieme in una classe dove livelli diversi studiavano insieme.

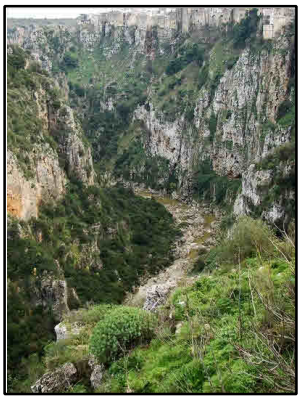
Nella famiglia di Nico, c'erano 5 figli e Nicola era il figlio maggiore. Suo padre e' morto molto giovane, e Nicola ha dovuto lasciare la scuola per guadagnare soldi. Certo la famiglia non era ricca e e' comprensibile che

To our readers: This essay is the work of a student in an advanced course of Camilla Presti Russell of the Italian Language Program

TWO CHILDREN OF PUGLIA

by Jeff Nico

This is the story of two children of Puglia, Nicola Nico and Carmela d'Onofrio. I think it is a very common story of Italian immigrants and other folks from other countries around 1900 – and probably today. Nicola Nico and Carmela d'Onofrio were my grandparents.



Gravina a Castellaneta

I am not the first person to tell the story of Nicola and Carmela. My cousin's daughter, Carla, had a homework assignment "Talk about your parents and answer some questions" Generally the questions were of this type: who were your immigrant ancestors, and discuss their country, their foods, the art, the songs, etc. Carla wrote to her grandfather (my uncle) and asked him to give her this information. Of course my uncle answered the questions, but in addition he wrote many pages of stories and memories of his parents, my grandparents. For most of the family these stories were new because my grandfather died young (I never knew him) and the other relatives only rarely told of their past.

Nicola Nico had been born in 1887 and Carmela d'Onofrio in 1902. Both were born in Castellaneta. The city of Castellaneta is in the province of Taranto. It is an old city, whose origins go back to the bronze age. Researcher have discovered signs of an important human presence in the area from 2,000 BC. The city was founded in 550, and its history is similar to that of other cities in the region: Saracen and Norman invasions, etc. It is a small city – fewer than 10,000 inhabitants in 1900 and now, 17,000. The area is famous for its "gravine" enormous canyons in the clay soil of the area.

The city is famous for another reason. Its most famous son is Rudolph Valentino. The city of Castellaneta was very small and my grandfather and Rodolfo knew each other. In fact they were in school together in a class where students of different levels studied together.

abbiano deciso che Nicola andasse in America. I' 11 agosto 1910 e' arrivato a Ellis Island con 25 dollari. E restato nel nord di New York (lo stato) per 1 anno e ha lavorato in una fattoria prima di andare a Lansing, MI. Li', come Il suo primo lavoro tagliava il ghiaccio dal fiume per raffreddare i cibi nelle case e nei ristoranti. Non gli piaceva quel lavoro e un giorno ha comprato delle verdure con tutti i suoi risparmi e ha cercato di rivenderle davanti ad un negozio abbandonato. Non ha venduto niente e era molto scoraggiato, ma non ha mollato. A poco a poco, ha cominciato a vendere le sue verdure e dopo 2 anni ha aperto il suo proprio negozio che si e' chiamato "Garden Sweets." Ha imparato a scrivere e parlare in inglese da solo benche' non avesse mai finito le superiori. Nicola lavorava molto e mandava i soldi alla famiglia in Italia. Alla fine ha guadagnato abbastanza per far venire due fratelli in America, Domenico e Angelo.

Dopo 10 anni negli Stati Uniti, in Italia a Castellaneta le due famiglie , Nico e d'Onofrio, discutevano e hanno deciso di mandare la figlia del d'Onofrio, Carmela, in America per sposare Nicola, adesso un fruttivendolo di successo. E' arrivata nell'ottobre del 1920 e Nicola e Carmela si sono sposati dopo poco. Hanno avuto 3 figli e una figlia. Tutti i figli hanno dovuto lavorare nel negozio. Diceva Nicola, "non si lavora, non si mangia." Carmela si e' accertata che tutti i figli imparassero a cucinare, pulire la casa, e lavare i vestiti. I figli la chiamavano la "Enforcer." Come bravi italiani, hanno avuto un accordo fra loro stessi quando qualcuno era nei guai: "Nessuno sa niente!"

Garden Sweets era un negozio molto popolare. Era aperto dalle 7 della mattina alle 11 della sera 364 giorni durante l'anno. Era chiuso solo a Natale. (Nicola diceva, "Se volete vivere come una persona di 8 ore, lavorate 8 ore. Ma se volete una vita migliore, lavorate piu' a lungo e piu' duramente.") Qualche volta durante il weekend, il negozio stava aperto fino alle due della notte per vendere i gelati alla gente dopo il cinema.

Il negozio ha avuto qualche cliente famoso e infame. Forse il piu' famoso era Ransom Eli Olds, padre della macchina Oldsmobile. Era un cliente abituale e quando lui frequentava il negozio, veniva con un autista e una cameriera. Un altro cliente era molto malvagio. Secondo i ragazzi, qualche volta una macchina arrivava e il loro padre gli diceva "andate nella stanza di servizio e stateci." Nessuno dei figli ha visto il Sig. Capone, ma penso che fosse vero. E' un fatto che il Sig. Capone partiva da Chicago quando la situazione con la polizia si faceva difficile. Lui e la sua coorte avevano alcune case sui laghi nel mezzo dello stato.

Nicola ha dato il negozio ai due nipoti ma non erano molto coscienziosi o buoni uomini d'affari, e dopo 2 anni hanno perso il negozio. Nicola e' morto giovane e non e' mai tornato in Italia. Carmela e' morta nel 1987 e lei e' andata in Italia 2 o 3 volte nei suoi ultimi anni.

In the Nico family there were five children, and Nicola was the oldest. His father died very young and Nicola had to leave school to make money. Of course the family was not rich and one can understand why they decided that Nicola should go to America. On August 11, 1910 he arrived at Ellis Island with 25 dollars. He lived in northern NY State for a year and worked in a factory before going to Lansing Michigan. There, for his first job he cut ice from the river to refrigerate food in houses and restaurants. He did not like that work and one day he bought some vegetables with all his savings and tried to sell them in front of an abandoned store. He sold nothing and became very discouraged, but he hung on. Little by little he started to sell his vegetables and after two years he opened his own store, which he called "garden Sweets". He learned to read and write in English by himself even though he had not finished high school. He worked a lot and he sent money back to his family in Italy. Finally he had made enough to have his two brothers, Domenico and Angelo to America.

After 10 years in the US, the two families, Nico and d'Onofrio, were talking things over and decided to send the d'Onofrio daughter, Carmela, to America to marry Nicola, by then a successful greengrocer. She arrived in October, 1920, and Nicola and Carmela got married shortly afterwards. They had three sons and a daughter. All the children had to work in the store. Nicola would say "you don't work, you don't eat" Carmela made certain that all the children would learn to cook, clean house, and wash clothes. The children called her "The Enforcer". Like good Italians they had an agreement among themselves for when someone got into trouble: "Nobody knows anything"

Garden Sweets was a very popular store. It was open from 7 AM to 11 PM, 364 days a year. It was closed only on Christmas. (Nicola would say "If you want to live the life of an 8 hour worker, work 8 hours. But if you want a better life, work longer and harder"). Sometimes on weekends, the store would stay open till 2 in the morning to sell ice cream to people after the movies.

The store had some famous and some infamous clients. Perhaps the most famous was Ransom Eli Olds, father of the Oldsmobile car. He was a regular customer, and when he visited the store, he came with a chauffeur and maid. Another customer was a real villain. According to the boys, at times a car came and their father said to them "go to the room inside and stay there". None of the boys saw Mr. Capone, but I think it was true. It is a fact that Mr. Capone would leave Chicago when the situation with the police got difficult. He and his gang had several houses on the lakes in the center of the state.

Nicola gave the store to two nephews, but they were not very conscientious or good businessmen and after two years they lost the business. Nicola died young and never returned to Italy. Carmela died in 1987 and she visited Italy two or three times in her last years.

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Editor, Poche Parole
4827 Rugby Avenue, Suite 301
Bethesda, MD 20814

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Antenna Italia

is now on the AMICO website. Get news from Italy and information on Italian and Italian-American events as well as music & commentary in streaming audio. Log on any time at Pino Cicala's web site
www.italianamericancommunications.org

MOVIE OF THE MONTH

The Italian Cultural Society film of the month for April is ***Era Notte a Roma***. A beautiful nun, Esperia (Giovanna Ralli), risks her life to hide three escaped ally POWs in Nazi-occupied Rome. Wounded American Air Force pilot Captain Bradly (Peter Baldwin), British Major Pemberton (Leo Genn) and Russian Sergeant Fyodor (Sergei Bondarchuk) quickly form an alliance as they contemplate their fate. Will their friendship last once they find out Esperia's true identity and motives? **Roberto Rossellini** directs this 1960 black and white drama. Italian with English subtitles.

FILM DEL MESE

Il film del mese della Italian Cultural Society e' ***Era Notte a Roma***. Una bella monaca, Esperia (Giovanna Ralli) rischia la vita per nascondere tre prigionieri di guerra fuggiti a Roma, occupata dagli tedeschi. Il Capitano Bradly, ferito, delle forze aeree americane (Peter Baldwin), il Maggiore Pemberton, inglese (Leo Genn) e il Sergente Fyodor, russo (Sergei Bondarchuk) si alleano subito mentre contemplano il loro destino. Durera' la loro amicizia una volta che scoprono l' identita' ed I veri imotivi di Esperia? **Roberto Rossellini** dirige questo dramma in bianco e nero del 1960. In italiano con sottotitoli in inglese.

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ICS TRIP TO PUGLIA BEING PLANNED

Adele Baker, Chair of the Foreign Travel Sub-Committee of the Outside Events Committee, has been hard at work developing an ICS trip to Puglia. The planned 7 to 10 day trip would take place in early to mid-October 2010. Adele currently has three proposals for the trip and has been negotiating with the three travel companies to work out the details and pricing. The ICS Board expects to select the best package to offer to ICS members within the month.

If you are interested, please hold open the early to mid-October time until the trip announcement is sent out.

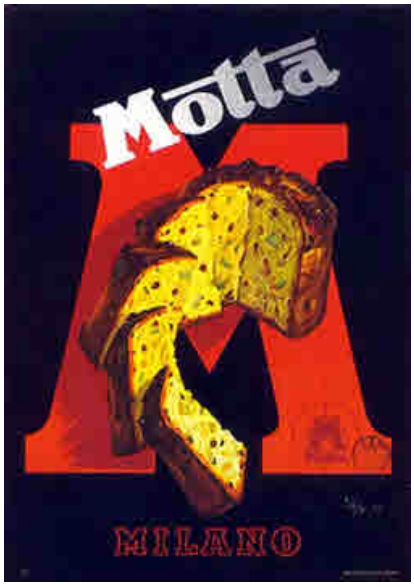
LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

Italian Cultural Institute:
Opening reception for photo exhibit "Italy:A Journey through the Layers of Time" by Diane Epstein, an American fine art photographer, who has made Italy her home since 1995. 6-8 PM Friday, April 9 at Susan Calloway Fine Arts, 1643 Wisconsin Ave, NW, Washington, DC. RSVP at 202-965-4601

"At Home with the Vivaldi Project" reception and baroque music and dance 5:30 PM, Sunday, April 11 at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St. Alexandria VA, $65 min. donation, info@thevivaldiproject.org for reservations.

Washington, DC Italian Language & Culture Meetup Group: "Cherry Blossoms & Monuments-by-Moonlight River Cruise" on the Potomac, Saturday, April 10 at 7:30pm - practice your Italian language skills - For details click: www.meetup.com/DCitalian

Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society: Day trip to visit the Italian American Museum in the heart of Little Italy, New York City and other NY landmarks, with evening dinner dance at the Orsogna Club, 7:00 AM, Saturday, April 17 $90 per person, for details www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org/FlyerTriptoNYC2010.pdf



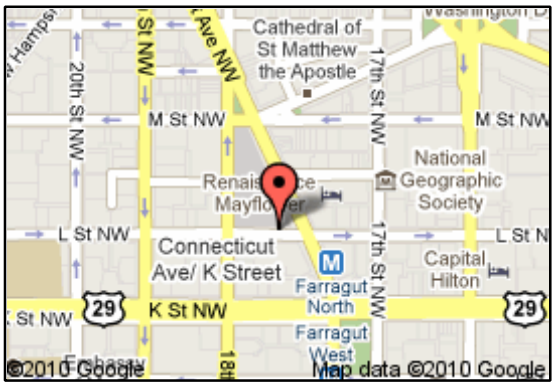
SAVE THE DATE

2010 ANNUAL GALA AWARDS DINNER
of the Italian Cultural Society
SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 12
7:00 pm
at

SPEZIE

1736 L St. NW
Washington, DC

Menu and price details plus a reservation form will be in the May issue of Poche Parole, but in the meantime you can check out www.spezie.com and start your mouth watering, or www.spezie.com/the chef.php to meet the two famous chefs, one of whom, Cesare Lanfranconi, came to the Italian Cultural Society and gave us a cooking demonstration last year.



NEWS FROM ITALY

The following, by Rocco Cotroneo and translated by Giles Watson, originally published on March 19, was extracted from an investigative report in Corriere della Sera's online edition . The full article can be seen at :
http://www.corriere.it/International/english/articoli/2010/03/19/passport_scam_italian_brazil.shtml

THE GREAT ITALIAN PASSPORT SCAM *How to make an Italian citizen – stamps from embassy in Brazil and residence in Apennines.*

RIO DE JANEIRO — Un bisnonno perduto, o mai esistito, un indirizzo in Italia, un cognome. Tutto si può avere, basta pagare. Diventare italiani non è difficile, con i contatti giusti, un po' di soldi e pochissimi scrupoli. Non importa se si è davvero discendenti, basta partire dal Brasile. Infine essere disposti a passare qualche settimana in uno sperduto comune appenninico. Il premio finale sarà un passaporto rossiccio con l'ambita dicitura «Unione europea». . Un lavoro di ricerca tra il Brasile, Londra e alcuni comuni italiani ha permesso al Corriere di venire a capo di una rete criminale che fa evitare anni di attesa, o addirittura crea dal nulla il diritto alla cittadinanza italiana, I documenti di cui siamo in possesso dimostrano connivenze pesanti: alberi genealogici fasulli sono stati legalizzati presso la nostra ambasciata a Brasilia, poi fatti pervenire in un comune del Savonese, dove nel frattempo la «rete» offre alloggio e una residenza fittizia al futuro cittadino italiano. È una forma assai sofisticata di riciclaggio di identità, con la legge italiana anello debole della catena.

RIO DE JANEIRO – A long-lost, or non-existent, Italian great-grandfather, an address in Italy or an Italian surname are all available. At a price. It's not hard to become Italian, if you have the right contacts, a bit of money and not too many scruples. You don't actually require any Italian ancestors if you start from Brazil. But you do have to spend a few weeks in a remote village in the Apennines. Your prize will be a shiny maroon passport with the magic words "European Union" on the cover, Research in Brazil, London and various municipalities in Italy has enabled the Corriere della Sera to unearth a criminal network for jumping the years-long queues, or even inventing Italian citizenship out of thin air. Documents in our possession expose large-scale conniving. There are false genealogies legalised at the Italian embassy in Brasilia and forwarded to a municipality in the province of Savona, where the network arranges lodgings and fictitious resident status for the aspiring Italians. It's a very sophisticated form of identity laundering and Italian law is the weak link in the chain.

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meeting location

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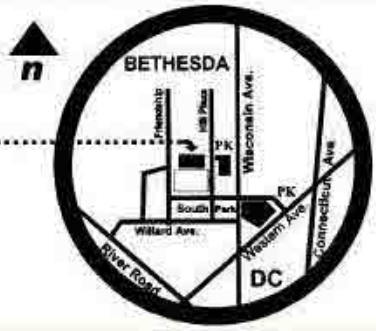

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