

IAHF NEWS

ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER • JANUARY 2013 • FOUNDED AUGUST 5, 1975 • CELEBRATING 38 YEARS

President's Message

by Ken Borelli



ARE YOU A GUELPH OR A Ghibelline, OR...

"Is it in the water?" The thought or theme for this article came from attending the opera *The Capulets and the Montagues* (*Romeo and Juliet*) by Catania's gifted son, composer Vincenzo Bellini. I had the opportunity to do this presentation at San Jose's Amici d'Oro club in November (a very gracious group). What sparked my interest in this theme was a lightly touched upon comment at a pre-concert lecture at the San Francisco Opera. Bellini took his story line from the original sources for the Romeo and Juliet tale including Luigi Scevola's *Giulietta e Romeo*, and not the one that evolves from the version we are all more familiar with by William Shakespeare. What the lecturer touched upon was the early Renaissance rivalries between houses, cities, and neighborhoods throughout the Italian peninsula at the time, roughly labeled as supporting the Guelphs or the Ghibellines.

As a student of Italian history, one can not avoid references to these factions throughout the literature. I usually tried to ignore the references, thinking they are nothing more than appendixes to Italian history, until I finally decided to "go there" and figure out what these terms mean and how they impacted the evolution of Italian thought, hence the reason for my sub title, "Is it in the water?". We are all familiar with the two young lovers, Romeo and Juliet, but what is often over looked is the

historic setting of the times. Yet how these historical events led to the tragedy of the two ill starred lovers from old Verona was truly an "eye opener"! We are led to believe that Romeo and Juliet had to confront two feuding families, (or as in the West Side Story version, two gangs, e.g., Sharks vs Jets). Yet when you drill down into the rivalry, it became clear that this was not an isolated one, such as in the USA's "Hatfields and McCoy" situation. Rather it was a tragic obsession that paralyzed the Italian peninsula for centuries, spawning many personal tragedies, Romeo and Juliet just being one example. In many ways, too, the



tale was a plea to overcome these same rivalries, for the sake of the youth and next generation. Sound familiar?

Going back to the matter of "Guelphs and Ghibellines". Just who were they? They basically arose from a series of succession issues in the Germany of the time, incorporated as the Holy Roman Empire, and then "who's interest would be best for Italy of the day to ally with". The Guelphs were associated with the Pope and Papal States, and the Ghibellines were associated with the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Throughout the Empire and Italy, the various regional states took sides

based on political and economic interests. Accordingly, for example, a city like Siena declared for the Ghibelline, and Bologna for the Guelphs, with most of the south being a Guelph stronghold. To further muddy the waters, in Italy the matter became even more convoluted and confusing, so that neighborhoods, and districts in a City State could either be Guelphs or Ghibellines. The consequences of this divisions soon degenerated into intense fratricidal wars hence the setting for our famous romance, along with a plea to overcome these terrible rivalries. In both Verona, and Florence the factionalism was very destructive for the society as a whole.

Ironically even after the source of the rivalry in Germany was resolved, the conflict among the Italian City states continued for almost two hundred years more! And even when one side was victorious the other side would regroup to fight again. Victory sometimes then degenerated into factionalism, so that we see the famed Dante, who is recognized as the 'father' of modern Italian, having to leave his home, (Firenze) in exile, never to be able to return. He was actual-

ly given refuge in Verona. In theory he was on the winning Guelph side, only to experience a split into "Black and White Guelphs". He was on the losing side of that fight. While the Italian Peninsula continued with these rivalries, by the 1500's modern nation building was occurring in France, Spain, England and Austria. Italy, however, became bogged down in these city state conflicts, eventually to become bootie to the super powers of the day.

In terms of reflecting upon this historical lesson, and life today, I recall an article by Joe Aiello, founder and former editor of "Andiamo," of Denver, (continued on page 6)

ALL THAT JAZZ

IAHF member Richard Vanucci sends in the following article on one of his passions, jazz, and especially Italian Americans in jazz. Richard is a jazz historian, and events organizer. He lives in Castro Valley, and part of a small but dynamic part of IAHF life that supports our goals from afar, even so, he finds the time to join us and contribute to a number of our activities, along with the cause of "Italianita" throughout the Bay Area.

He writes: *We have all heard of Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett, and while giants as popular singers, neither of them could be defined as jazz artists, although both were deeply indebted by the jazz idiom, (Sinatra with Tommy Dorsey and Bennett with Count Basie). However, how many of us know of trombonist Frank Rosolino, tenor sax Vito Musso, guitarist Eddie Lang, band leader Hank La Rocca, or bassist Mario Suracci? The list can go on and on. To this most American of art forms-- jazz, little is known or appreciated of the Italian Americans and their contributions to this American idiom. I will be helping the IAHF correct this gap in our heritage by preparing some panels for the IAHF exhibit at the San Jose Martin Luther King Main Library show, set up a lecture on Italians and jazz, as well as do a display for the cultural tent for the 2013 IAHF Family Festa.*

In order to give appropriate in depth exposure to this little understood slice of Americana, I am requesting information in the way of your own personal memories, photos and histories. I am particularly interested in local , younger Jazz folk, but all information would be appreciated. I would like to be contacted by middle February. I can be reached at (510) 581-9139 for details. Con molto anima, Richard Vanucci

Richard also went on to share a quote from Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863-1938) that I am also passing on: *"Learning about our origins is an important legacy to our children, since memories are not used to remember the lost times, but to start again, knowing that losing our roots inevitably leads to a loss in our identity as a people who live, think and love."* Grazie tante, Richard, for all your support of the vision of the IAHF! In addition, he will bring a group to cook a regional lunch from Piedmonte, in February. 🍷



CARMINE ABATE LECTURE

*The Arbëreshe Club of the Italian American Heritage Foundation
presents a lecture by guest speaker*

*Professor Valerio Ferme, Toso Chair of Italian Studies at Santa Clara University
Topic: Acclaimed author Carmine Abate*

Carmine Abate has written numerous short stories, novels and essays, mainly focusing on issues of migration and the encounters between disparate cultures. Abate spent his childhood in Carfizzi, a small village of the Arbëreshë community in the southern region of Calabria. He grew up speaking Arbëresh, a variant of the Albanian language. After graduating from the University of Bari, he moved to Hamburg, where his father had earlier emigrated. There he taught at a school for immigrants and began publishing his first stories. In 1984, his first collection of short stories appeared under the title *Den Koffer und weg!* This was followed by a socio-anthropological study conducted jointly with Meike Behrmann; their account of a community of Calabrian emigrants was published as *I Germanesi*. Having spent more than a decade in Germany, Abate returned to Italy and settled in Besenello in Trentino where he continues to work as a writer and teacher.

- Date:** *Wednesday, March 6, 2013*
Time: *7:00 PM*
Where: *IAHF Hall, 425 N. Fourth Street, San Jose, CA 95112*
Admission: *\$8.00 Members & Santa Clara University Students • \$10.00 Non-Members*
Reservations: *Please call the IAHF at 408 293-7122 to make a reservation.*

Lite refreshments will be served. Please join us for this educational lecture. 🍷

HOME-STYLE POLENTA DINNER & DANCE

*The Tricarico Social Club
&*

*The Italian American Heritage Foundation
cordially invite you to our
Home-Style Polenta Dinner & Dance
& IAHF Installation of the Board of Directors*

- *Sunday, February 1, 2013*
- *6:00 pm to 6:45 pm - Social hour*
- *6:45 pm to 7:00 pm - IAHF Installation Ceremony*
- *7:00 pm to 8:30 pm - Dinner*
- *8:00 pm to 10:00 pm - Music*

*Dance and enjoy the
sound of Tom Volpi,
DJ Extraordinaire!*



*Join us for a fun filled evening & learn more about the activities of each organization.
Meet old friends & new friends at our polenta dinner prepared by
Master Chef Tony Amato & his crew from the Tricarico Social Club.
We will also install the new IAHF Board at this event.*

M E N U

Antipasto • Salad • Polenta • Sausage • Sauce • Dessert • A carafe of red wine per table

ALL proceeds from the dinner will be used to support the ongoing activities of each organization.

Chairs: Mike D'Antonio, President Tricarico Club and Ken Borelli, IAHF President

\$20 for members • \$22 for non-members

Location: The Italian American Heritage Foundation • 425 No. 4th Street • San Jose, CA 95112 • Ph: 408-293-7122



REGIONAL LUNCH: FROM TRABIA WITH LOVE

Save the Date • All Are Welcome!

January 24, 2013 @ 12:00 PM

*Our Regional Lunch series continues with
"From Trabia with Love"*

- *With chefs Sal Campagna, John Scorci and Friends*
- *\$12.00 members / \$14.00 non-members*
- *Call to make your reservations by Tuesday, January 22, 2013*

Location: The Italian American Heritage Foundation

425 N. 4th Street • San Jose, CA 95112 • Ph: 408-293-7122

25TH ANNUAL WORLD OF ITALIAN OPERA ON DECEMBER 7, 2012



Photos by John Eric Paulson

MUSIC WITH & AT THE IAHF

Nothing warms the soul on a cold winter night more than the joy of music... and this winter the IAHF has a wonderful selection to choose from.

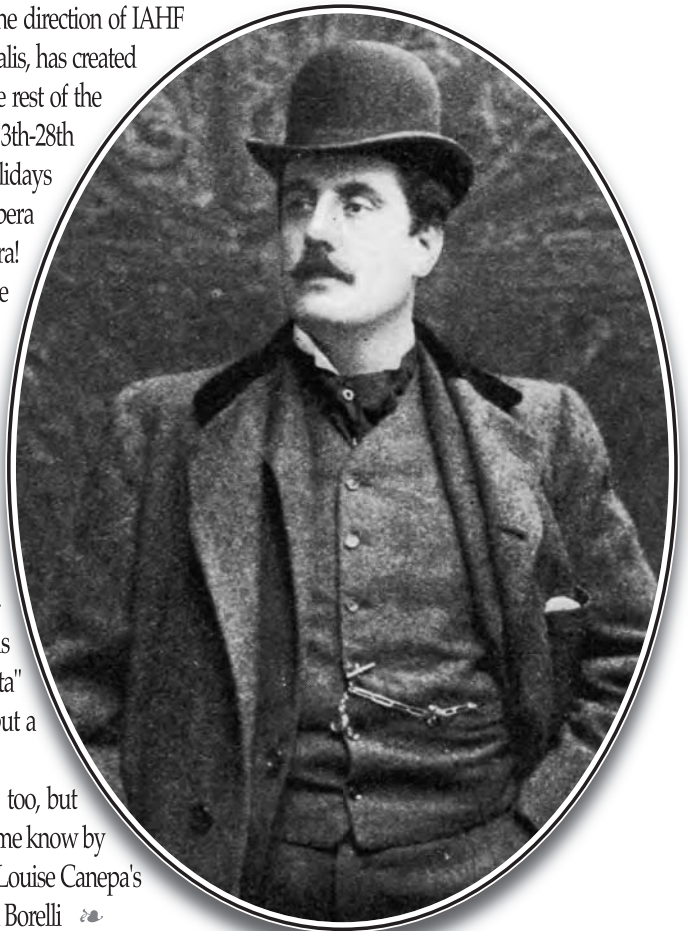
On Saturday, February 9, 2013, the Mission Chamber Orchestra will perform *That's Amore*, and brings Italian passion to Valentine's Day, located at Le Petit Trianon Theatre, 72 N. 5th St. in San Jose. The orchestra, led by IAHF member and achievement award recipient, Maestra Emily Ray. The program features the orchestra in concert with famed tenor Pasquale Esposito, and a selection from his wide vocal repertoire of operatic arias and Neapolitan songs. Also on the program will be Luigi Cherubini's *Sinfonia in D*, and a rarely heard piece by Italian American composer Romeo Cascarino - the *Acadian Land*. Special kudos to the Mission Chamber Orchestra for including this little known but highly accomplished Italian American composer on the program... "bravi"! Order your tickets now, and for IAHF members you will receive a \$2.00 discount per ticket either by ordering at the door with a valid IAHF membership card, or on line with the code "IAHF". For more information, check out their web site at www.missionchamber.org Their telephone number is 408 236-3350. The program starts at 7:30 pm.

Likewise, Opera San Jose, under the direction of IAHF member and achievement award winner Irene Dalis, has created a special promotion code for IAHF members to access the rest of the

2013 opera season. The selections include, on Feb.9-24, Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, and in April, 13th-28th Puccini's *Suor Angelica* and Gianni Schicchi. If you attended our Home for the Holidays Christmas Concert you were able to hear a preview of the works being performed. Join Opera San Jose as we acknowledge these great masterpieces from the golden age of Italian Opera! Opera San Jose has also made available to IAHF members the ability to receive an on line discount of 25% by entering a special "IAHF" promo code on the web site. For more information go onto the Opera San Jose web site, or call the Opera San Jose office at 408 437-4463.

And on Friday, March 15, there will be a special concert at the IAHF featuring the Ohlone Chamber Singers, highlighting the rich choral music tradition of the Italian Masters, under the direction of Michael Morris. The concert will be dedicated to the 200th Anniversary of the birth of Giuseppe Verdi, and also join in celebrating 2013 as the Year of Italian Culture in the United States of America. This is a not to be missed musical experience and if you attended the reception for the Florentine Delegation last year, the Chorus sang at the IAHF, to the delight of the sold out crowd. We will be having a "birthday torta" and other light refreshments after the concert. Save the date for this very special event but a separate flyer will be out shortly.

The spring and summer months will also see some very wonderful musical venues, too, but dates are not set yet, even so, if you would like to volunteer some time on these events let me know by contacting the IAHF. Hopefully by the fall of 2013 we plan on doing a pocket version of Louise Canepa's *Sicilians of Monterey* along with hosting some visiting musicians from Italy. *Auguri!* -- Ken Borelli 🍷



Dear IAHF Members,

This is to let you know that after several years as the IAHF Newspaper Editor I am resigning. I have really enjoyed working with the newspaper and the fabulous design person John Romano. Thank you for allowing me to be your Editor.

Wishing you all a very healthy and Happy New Year!

Ciao, Judy Verona Joseph 🍷

(President's Message continued from page 1) Colorado who wrote an editorial entitled "Its Time for Us to Make Some Changes," referring to the need for local unity. He attributed this lack of unity in Denver, to two factors, historical regionalism, and the North/South split. To a great extent they are valid points, but then what accounted for the splinterism within region? Hence, my observation, "Is it in the water?" In terms of Joe's conclusion, the time to change is really and simply "now," if we want to do so (?). Just imagine if Italy could have let go of those meaningless "G & G" rivalries sooner, true there would not have perhaps have been a Romeo and Juliet tale, but then again some of the more tragic aspects of Italian History may have also been averted.

Moving beyond these speculations, however, and timely to our discussion, one of the "silver linings" of our history and patrimony for the Italy of today, has been the conscious effort towards unity and cultural coexistence. In fact, bringing this article full circle, the new director of the SF Italian Cultural Institute Paolo Barlera has noted, that it is specifically because of

these historic trials and tribulations, the Italy of today, has had to learn how to actually survive and even thrive in a multicultural environment (Italo-American 11/15/12). Building upon that concept, I think the challenge for us as Italian Americans is to really understand and appreciate the evolution of the Italy of today, along with modern Italian thought as part of our heritage too, and not get stuck or over identify with the historic divides of 18th-19th century Italy, or even our immigrant past. In other words we need to build upon a dialogue with the Italy of today! As 2013 has been proclaimed the Year of Italian Culture, we will be having ample opportunity to engage in this important history making dialogue. There will be more information on the events planned by the Office of the Italian Consulate, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, and Italian Government. What we can hopefully take to this Italo-American dialogue is our experiences, and ability to learn from our own past as well as our own sense of consciousness as we try to sustain an Italian American identity. 🍷



ITALIAN AMERICAN OLIVIA CULPO WINS MISS UNIVERSE COMPETITION!

Olivia Culpo competed in the Miss USA 2012 competition on June 3, 2012, representing the state of Rhode Island. She won the title of Miss USA. She went on to win the Miss Universe competition!

Culpo was brought up in Edgewood (Cranston), Rhode Island, and is the daughter of Susan (née Curran) and Peter Culpo. Her father is of Italian descent and her mother is of Irish and Italian ancestry, Culpo graduated from St. Mary Academy – Bay View in 2010 with high honors and as a member of the National Honor Society. In high school she participated in two foreign language trips to Milano, Italy. 🍷

2013 THE YEAR OF ITALIAN CULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES!

The new Consul General of San Francisco, Mauro Battocchi will be the driving force in the Bay Area behind the 2013 Year of Italian Culture, an ambitious campaign by Giulio Terzi, Italy's foreign minister, to create a new Renaissance and help Americans learn more about Italy. There is a detailed program that will take place in various cities around the country such as New York to San Francisco, Washington to Chicago, with a series of very unique events that will highlight Italy's many contributions.

There will be a great deal of collaboration with the Italian private sector as well as American and Italian-American entities. Overall, this project aims to elevate the image of Italy!

Italy's strengths are vast—just go into any museum in the world to recognize this—but the concept of culture goes beyond this and touches, for example, on design, technology, fashion, cars, art, cuisine, music and more.

A year long journey: 2013 the Year of Italian Culture in the United States.

A journey that will communicate and promote Italy, engage and enthuse Americans, strengthen the bonds that unite us and create new ones.

A journey that will reveal today's Italy, its brilliance and its excellence anchored in the present and driven by an unparalleled past, it will present an Italy of innovation moving forward, engaged in projects and looking ahead.

The concept of 2013 as a showcase of Italian culture and what it means to the American public is an ideal opportunity to promote Italy as a whole in both the cultural thematic and the economic features of the Italian Brand.

In short, the approach is to strategically affirm the Italian system from the perspective of cultural economy, in other words, presenting culture not only in its traditional form of historical and artistic legacy, but as a dynamic asset that gives value to the whole system.

Stay tuned for more information! 🍷



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IAHF NEWS

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Editor, IAHF NEWS
425 N. Fourth St.
San Jose, CA 95112
Phone: 408-293-7122
Fax: 408-293-7154
E-mail: iahfjs@sbcbglobal.net
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Rates are payable in advance:

- \$75 for minimum of three months
- \$275 for twelve issues.

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August 24 & 25, 2013

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IAHF NEWS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- ❖ *January 24, 2013 @ 12 noon*
Regional Lunch: "From Trabia with Love"
- ❖ *February 1, 2013*
IAHF Installation Dinner & Dance
- ❖ *Thursday February 21*
Regional Lunch: Piedmonte
With Richard Vanucci, Dave Davis, Al & Jean Ferrari

New Service - IAHF NEWS via Email!

Would you like to receive the newsletter before it goes to press?

Send your email address to iahfsj@sbcglobal.net and we will send the IAHF newsletter to you via email! ❖

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2013: The Year of Italian Culture in the USA



In honor of the official kick-off of the Year of Italian Culture, San Francisco's City Hall is lit in the colors of the Italian Flag for one night. *Photo credit: Nickolas Marinelli*