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(613) 567-4532 • information@ilpostinocanada.com
www.ilpostinocanada.com

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Preston Street Community Foundation
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Executive Editor

Angelo Filoso

Managing Editor

Marcus Filoso

Associate Editor

Anna Gora, Luciano Pradal

Layout & Design

Marcus Filoso

Web Site Design & Hosting

dabdev.com

Printing

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Contributors for this issue

(in alphabetical order)

Giovanni, Goffredo Palmerini, Luciano Pradal, Renato
Rizzuti, Maria Rizzuti

Photographers for this issue

(in alphabetical order)

Angelo Filoso, Marcus Filoso, Alison Bernal, Giovanni

La Nostra Voce

www.lanostravoce.com

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Letters to the Editor

BUON NATALE E FELICE 2008

Gentile direttore, cari Amici della Redazione,

Desidero far giungere a ciascuno di voi l’augurio d’un Buon Natale e d’un sereno 2008. Qui all’Aquila c’è neve, 40 centimetri, ed in questo momento continua a nevicare. Un paesaggio candido e puro come questo non lo ricordavo da tempo. Prepara al messaggio profondo di pace che il Natale porta. Anche questa neve, dopo anni di siccità, è provvidenziale e - contro ogni motivo di apprensione - apre il cuore alla speranza ed all’ottimismo. Vi allego un memo che richiama le cose importanti della vita. Almeno così credo. Vi ringrazio per la pazienza con la quale mi accogliete e “sopportate”. Davvero di cuore, Auguri a voi ed alle vostre persone care.

Goffredo Palmerini

Dear Mr. Filoso,

The Canadian Tire Snowsuit Fund Gala 2007

As we look back on yet another wonderful Snowsuit Fund Gala, we recognize the tremendous assistance from our community. This year’s event raised over \$60,000-an amount that will go a long way toward providing local children with warm winter outerwear. Of course, we could not have done this without your participation and that of all our sponsors, donors, guests, volunteers and service providers.

On behalf of the Snowsuit Fund and Gala Committee, please accept our sincerest thanks for your generous support of this most worthwhile event. Your contribution to a memorable evening will help ensure that The Snowsuit Fund can maximize the benefits our clients realize from this particular fundraiser.

Be sure to circle Saturday, November 15th 2008 on your calendar for next year’s edition of the Gala! Our Gala Committee is already discussing ways to make next year’s event better than ever. We hope that me may count on your support again and will be in touch with you in 2008.

Thank you for sharing your warmth with a child.

Sincerely,

Krista Kealy & Karen Wood

Messaggio della Presidente uscente della
Settimana Italiana, Raffaella Plastino



Durante trentatré anni di attività la Settimana Italiana ha fatto passi da gigante: ha fatto meglio conoscere a Ottawa la nostra cultura; ci ha permesso di condividere con gli altri canadesi i nostri talenti e la nostra arte; ha dato alla comunità italiana di Ottawa un senso di fierezza. Grazie alla Settimana Italiana, abbiamo avuto l’opportunità di riunirci una volta all’anno, nel mese di giugno, per festeggiare insieme le nostre tradizioni e la nostra italianità e ricordarci che siamo tutti fratelli e sorelle.

Quanto a me, sono più di cinquantacinque anni che mi dedico alla comunità italiana. Da quando sono arrivata in Canada, ho fatto di tutto per aiutare gli immigranti italiani a trovare lavoro, casa ed a imparare l’inglese e, quando se n’è presentata l’occasione, mi sono occupata di organizzare eventi che rappresentavano le tradizioni e la vita italiana in questo paese.

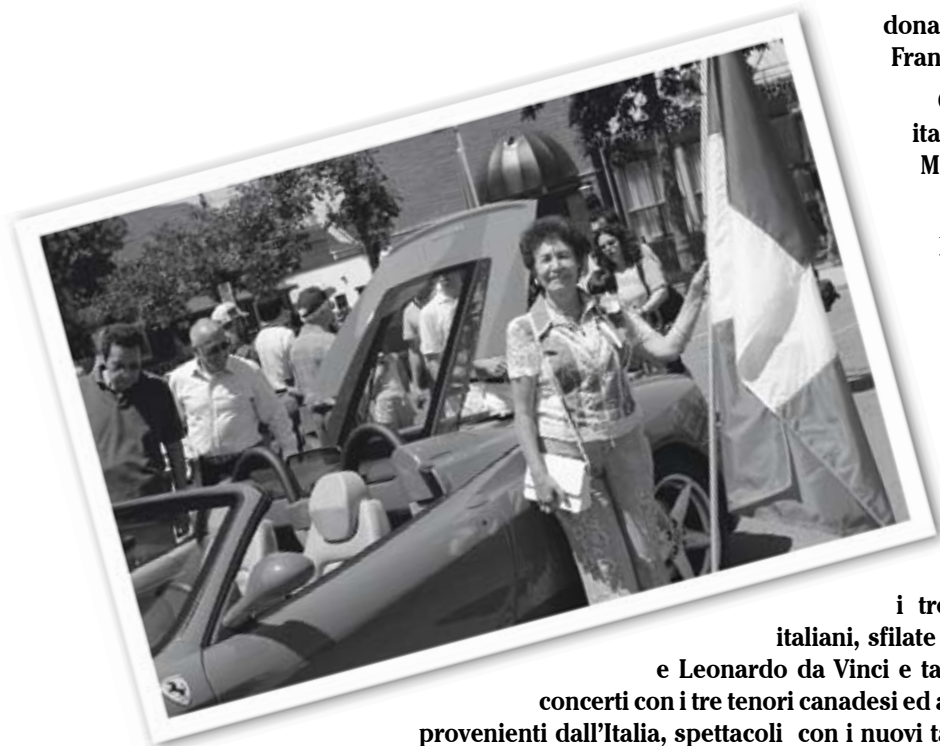
Molti di voi sanno che ho partecipato all’organizzazione della Settimana italiana dagli inizi, cioè da trentatré anni. Mi sono occupata soprattutto della raccolta fondi, di pubbliche relazioni e di eventi culturali e ricreativi. Durante tutti questi anni ho raccolto più di mezzo milione di dollari. Sono fiera di aver ricoperto la carica di presidente per otto anni e quella di vicepresidente per dodici anni. Durante tempi sia facili che difficili, ho sempre accolto la sfida di fare quello che c’era da fare, nonostante le difficoltà e gli ostacoli. Ho sempre cercato, al meglio delle mie capacità, di fare il vostro bene e di seguire ogni anno i vostri interessi nella pianificazione della Settimana Italiana.

Durante la mia associazione con la Settimana Italiana ho dato il via a tante iniziative, per esempio la sfilata delle macchine fuoriserie come Ferrari, Lamborghini, Maserati, Mercedes ecc.- sfilata che sin dai primi anni ho organizzato con l’aiuto di Franco De Carlo, e con il consenso dell’allora presidente Giovanni Liani. In seguito, nel 1997, i titolari del Frank’s Autocentre, Delio D’Angelo e Giovanni Centofanti, hanno chiesto se la sfilata delle macchine potesse prendere il via dal loro locale; d’allora in poi la sfilata delle macchine è stata organizzata dal Frank’s Autocentre, ma sempre sotto gli auspici della Settimana Italiana. Grazie, Delio e Giovanni, per aver garantito la continuità di questa splendida iniziativa.

Ho sempre appoggiato ed incoraggiato la corsa delle biciclette, organizzata da Peter Tyler, sotto il patronato della Settimana Italiana e mi sono data da fare per la continuazione di questa iniziativa, ammirata e seguita da tanti italiani e non.

Ho dato inizio al torneo di calcio, sia delle squadre dei grandi che delle squadre dei piccoli. Già dagli inizi, nei lontani anni ‘70 ed ‘80, ho organizzato tornei per i bambini, tornei che duravano giorni interi ed ancora ricordo come i piccoli calciatori giocavano con entusiasmo, accanimento, ma anche con tanto divertimento. Nel 1999 ho stabilito una coppa per il torneo di calcio dedicata alla memoria di mio marito, Francesco Plastino, e donata da me e dai miei figli Luisa e Franco. Nello stesso anno ho istituito due coppe per il torneo di bocce -una per le squadre femminili ed una per le squadre maschili- anch’esse dedicate alla memoria di mio marito, a nome mio e dei miei figli. Nel 2004 il comitato della Settimana Italiana ha approvato l’istituzione di un’altra coppa- sempre

continued on next page...



donata da me e dai miei figli - per il rally ciclistico giovanile in memoria di mio marito Francesco Plastino e dei miei genitori Filippo e Luisa Falsetto.

Oltre a queste iniziative, sono orgogliosa di essere riuscita a far alzare la bandiera italiana, per tutta la durata della Settimana Italiana, prima all’edificio della Regional Municipality, poi al Municipio di Ottawa.

Oggi la Settimana Italiana si piazza tra i festival meglio organizzati di Ottawa, alla pari con l'Ottawa Tulip Festival, Winterlude e l'Ottawa Jazz Festival. Tra questi, la Settimana Italiana è la sola organizzazione, allestita completamente da volontari, che non sia mai finita in deficit. Più di 100.000 visitatori in tutto il mondo hanno potuto aver accesso alle informazioni sulla Settimana Italiana tramite l’internet. L’apertura ed il lancio della Settimana Italiana si sono tenuti sempre nei posti più prestigiosi della National Capital Region, come il Parlamento, il Centro Nazionale delle Arti, il Congress Centre, l’edificio della Regional Municipality of Ottawa- Carleton, il Municipio di Hull ed il Municipio di Ottawa, il Museo canadese della Natura ed il Museo canadese delle civiltà.

Del resto, basta guardare i programmi annuali per rendersi conto delle numerose attività culturali e ricreative che sono state organizzate durante i trentatré anni della Settimana Italiana, come dimostrazioni gastronomiche con chef italiani, sfilate di moda, esibizioni internazionali come quelle di Marconi, Pompei, Michelangelo e Leonardo da Vinci e tante mostre con artisti locali. Abbiamo allestito lo spettacolo “Opera in Piazza”, concerti con i tre tenori canadesi ed altri cantanti, spettacoli teatrali e spettacoli di varietà, che includevano anche artisti provenienti dall’Italia, spettacoli con i nuovi talenti, danze folkloristiche e intermittenemente dal 1992 al 2000 gli affollatissimi balli all’aperto allestiti lungo Preston Street dal DJ Frank Plastino. Da non dimenticare le attività per i piccoli ed i giovani, come il ballo delle debuttanti, i concorsi artistici, i teatrini per i bambini, le serate di ballo per i giovani, le gare di spaghetti, di anguria ed altro, l’albero della cuccagna, le giostre e le gare dei piccini. Nel giugno del 2000 la Settimana Italiana ha promosso la squadra azzurra di pallavolo, campione del mondo.

Da parecchi anni l’Ottawa Sun sponsorizza un concorso per studenti, d’origine italiana, delle scuole medie superiori, i quali devono scrivere una composizione sul significato della loro italianità. E per tutti quelli interessati alla letteratura, è stato bandito ogni anno un “Concorso letterario nazionale” di prosa e di poesia, a cui hanno preso parte molti italiani residenti o immigrati in Canada ed anche canadesi, amanti della nostra lingua e della nostra cultura. La professoressa Panico ed il suo comitato stanno preparando la pubblicazione di un libro che raccoglie le migliori poesie ed i migliori brani di prosa presentati al concorso negli ultimi cinque anni. Nel 2007 c’è stata la prima edizione della Fiera del libro italiano, allestita dal Gruppo culturale di Villa Marconi, in collaborazione con il Comites, il Congresso nazionale degli italo-canadesi, distretto di Ottawa, la Società Dante Alighieri e l’ACI, gli Amici della Cultura Italiana. Vi hanno preso parte molti scrittori italo-canadesi dell’Ontario e del Quebec e molte Associazioni italo-canadesi di Ottawa. La mia profonda gratitudine va a Giovanna Panico per queste iniziative culturali, tra cui vorrei ricordare anche la lettura di poesie al femminile, che si è tenuta nel 2005.

Nel momento in cui sto lasciando la presidenza, voglio dirvi grazie per il vostro incoraggiamento, il vostro appoggio e le vostre parole di gratitudine e di apprezzamento. Vorrei ringraziare la comunità per la fiducia accordatami nel 2003 quando mi ha richiesto ed incoraggiata a ritornare di nuovo come presidente della Settimana Italiana. Desidero ringraziare tutti i membri del mio comitato che mi hanno sempre sostenuto anche quando le cose non andavano tanto bene. In modo particolare desidero ringraziare Rina D’Onofrio-Hart, che sia ufficialmente che ufficiosamente ha svolto il ruolo di segretaria; senza di lei né la Settimana Italiana sarebbe andata avanti né io avrei potuto svolgere tutto il lavoro di pianificazione che c’era da fare. Un ringraziamento speciale a Filippo Falsetto che si è occupato del sito web della Settimana Italiana e che ha dovuto occuparsi all’ultimo momento della brochure del programma per farla circolare in tempo prima del lancio della Settimana Italiana. Da non dimenticare Angelo Filoso, a cui sono grata per avermi aiutato ogni volta che ne avevo bisogno, in particolare nei lavori di logistica.

Ora che il nuovo comitato ed il nuovo esecutivo è stato eletto, il mio più grande desiderio ed augurio è che la Settimana Italiana continui ad avere successo, che riesca a mantenere le sue fiere tradizioni e che possa essere d’ispirazione alle nuove generazioni di italo-canadesi per molti anni a venire.

Spero tanto che il nuovo comitato continuerà la grande tradizione stabilita dalla Settimana Italian da più di trent’anni, tradizione che vuole celebrare con orgoglio la comunità italiana ed i suoi membri, giovani e non.

Raffaella Plastino, Presidente uscente Settimana Italiana



Have something to say?

Email your letters to information@ilpostinocanada.com

New Year’s Cheer

By Renato Rizzuti

Raise a glass raise a cheer
The New Year is here
Time to put away the old
And let new things unfold
Time for a brand new start
Resolutions take to heart
You can reinvent yourself
Learn to extend oneself
To reach better and bigger goals
Implement some self controls

Work on developing discipline
It's never too late to begin
Develop your mind and your body
So that you do not look too shoddy
Learn something new to work your brain
Think of the knowledge you will gain
Study the Italian language and speak it
So that your family will be tightly knit
Learn to cook Italian traditional dishes
To feed your culture and appetite wishes

You will get a thrill out of cooking pasta
Eat it in moderation, learn to say, “basta”
Get some regular daily exercise
Early to bed and early to rise
You can rework and redesign yourself
This year you must remember oneself
Be the best that you can be

A brand new life philosophy
Raise a glass raise a cheer
It is a brand New Year!



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City Wide

New Italian Restaurant Offers A Taste of Sicily

By Cheryl Brink
Stittsville Weekender

Poco Pazzo is not just another Italian restaurant.

The family-owned eatery has all the traditional fare but the chef is from Sicily, Italy, and is dedicated to bringing the taste of his homeland to Stittsville.

Emanuele Leonforte came to Canada a few years ago after working in New York, but has only been in North America for five years; he has worked in a few other local Italian restaurants.

His wife is the reason that he decided to set up a restaurant in Stittsville.

Angela Leonforte said she met her husband when vacationing in Italy in 2001 and the couple now live in the Timbermere in Stittsville with their three children.

Both of Angela’s parents have been giving a helping hand in the new business, the first to open in the new Jackson Trails Plaza on the Hazeldean Road at Stittsville Main Street. The official ribbon-cutting was held Saturday, November 24 and also featured a casual open house for residents to sample the Poco Pazzo atmosphere and cuisine.

Chef and owner Emaunele is not just offering his cooking for people to enjoy once in a while, either; he is also providing the opportunity for people to learn his secrets.

“Poco Pazzo means ‘a little crazy’ which he is,”
Angela Leonforte Poco Pazzo co-owner

Poco Pazzo’s will be hosting cooking lessons a couple times a week for whom ever is interested. Angela said that her husband will entertain during the class as he sings and dances while he cooks.

“Poco Pazzo means ‘a little crazy’, which he is,” she said with a laugh. “He’s trained in Sicily, and seasoned in New York.”

The restaurant is not just for formal dining, either take out and catering services are available.

Angela said the restaurant is very contemporary and has a comfortable atmosphere while providing taste straight from Italy.

“Our prices, they stand out,” she added.



Emanuele Leonforte, aka PocoPazzo



Grand Opening with Councillor Shad Qadri



Kanata-Stittsville’s Italian Flavour

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City Wide

Local Rock Celebrity Weds His Bride Rock N’ Roll Style in The Nation’s Capital

Ottawa’s local rock celebrity and songwriting talent, Sal Piamonte, wed his beautiful bride, Lynn, in a Rock N’ Roll ceremony that would have made Prince envious. With Gene Simmons’ “Family Jewel”-like flair, a colour theme that included black and leopard print, celebrity guests, a reception which included paparazzi, a red carpet entrance, interviews, and an incredible line up of performing musical guests, it is not hard to imagine what kind of night was in store.



also stood in Sal’s wedding party, longtime road manager “Downtown” Bob St. Louis, CTV’s Max Keeping, an entire sexy contingent of Acadian guys and gals from Lynn’s hometown of Caraquet, New Brunswick, rock producer Kirk Ellard, Toni and Gina Lofaro, Sandra Cacciotti, Max Keeping, Alanis Morissette’s parents Georgette and Alain and, also a handful of entertainment people, out of town friends and family, and even Sal’s former band mates from yearsŠand cities past! Providing the entertainment on this night was the Liquid Sound Trio, DJ MojoJive, The Robert Farrell Band, and of course, Sal Piamonte and his talented band, consisting of Eric Disero, Steve Pool, and Tony Raybould.

Article and Photos By Giovanni

The couple was joined by family and many friends who witnessed the exchanging of their vows at St. Anthony’s Church in Ottawa, a memorable and touching ceremony presided over by Father Paul McKeown, who delivered the ceremony in French, English, and Italian. Arriving in a black tour bus, and with the wedding party all clad in black, (along with the many guests who adhered to the same dress code of black and animal print), Sal’s gorgeous bride made her big entrance adorned in a beautiful white wedding gown, and walking up the aisle to Sal’s classic “Moments They Pass” original music-even Sal was observed to choke back some emotional tears! The highlight of the ceremony provided a typical Rock N’ Roll highlight when Sal actually licked his bride’s finger in order to slip the wedding band on. Afterwards, he was quoted as saying: *“There was no way that that ring wasn’t going on her finger, and there’s no way that it’s ever going to come off either.”*

The reception itself was a Grammy-like affair. Star-studded, classy, and elegant, there was no shortage of star appeal amongst the 325 + guests in attendance at the Colonel By Room of the Congress Centre. Notable celebrities on hand included Animal Planet and Discovery Channel’s hottest star and Sal’s best man, Dave Salmoni, Gemini Award winning editor and acclaimed director Miles Davren, who

For those lucky enough to have witnessed this great occasion, it will definitely rank right up their as one of the greatest rock events of the year!

Contact Giovanni at giovannipublicist@yahoo.ca



David Salmoni , Lynn with husband Sal , Max Keeping and Georgette with husband Alain (Alanis Morrisette’s parents)

McGarry Family Chapels - Un servizio delicato

La famiglia McGarry è ben presente nella nostra comunità provvedendo un servizio delicato basato su solidi valori famigliari. Bisogna riconoscere che Brian McGarry ha molto di più da offrire alla società.

Di Luciano Pradal



Brian McGarry, Salvatore Pileci, Joe Amendola

Recentemente, ho adempiuto al mesto dovere di rendere l’ultimo omaggio ad una persona cara presso il *McGarry Family Chapels* con alcuni amici; ad accogliere il nostro gruppo c’era Salvatore che, con molta cortesia e sensibilità ci ha accompagnati nel salone ove era esposta la salma. Devo riconoscere che, pur trattandosi di una mesta occasione, mi sono trovato piacevolmente sorpreso dall’attenzione nei nostri riguardi da parte di tutto il personale della *McGarry Family Chapels*.

Domenica 4 novembre a Villa Marconi si e’ tenuta l’annuale raccolta fondi per Tele 30, e mi è capitato di sedermi con Salvatore, Peter Vallee e Patrick McGarry due rappresentanti della famiglia McGarry. Nelle quattro chiacchiere scambiate sono stato favorevolmente impressionato della filantropia dei McGarry, che erano lì presenti per aiutare Tele 30, e che sono in ogni caso presenti nella comunità e si preoccupano di prestare sempre un’attenzione e un servizio alla clientela, basati su valori famigliari.

Qualche giorno dopo, mentre mi trovavo con Joe Amendola su Preston Str. abbiamo incontrato Brian McGarry che Joe mi ha presentato.

Brian ha cominciato a lavorare da giovane nell’ambito delle pompe funebri, un servizio delicato ma necessario.

Con grandi sacrifici e molto lavoro, Brian è riuscito a fondare la McGarry Family

Chapels, una compagnia al servizio della società per le onoranze dei defunti.

Uomo di successo, Brian ha sempre difeso le Case Funerarie che con il tempo aveva acquistato, affinché non passassero nelle mani delle grandi compagnie internazionali, e questo perché Brian desidera offrire alle famiglie provate dal lutto tutta l’attenzione personale possibile.

Brian McGarry, oltre ad essere un affermato uomo d’affari, si è sempre adoperato per il benessere della comunità: e’ stato per tre termini consigliere alla Ottawa School Board e ne e’ stato il Direttore per un termine. La più grande soddisfazione per Brian in detta esperienza nel School Board, era di vedere giovani appena graduati avventurarsi felici e confidenti nella società.

Brian ha anche un’ottima esperienza nel campo della politica locale, poiché e’ stato Consigliere Regionale per 3 anni.

Egli si definisce *“Fiscalmente conservativo e socialmente liberale”* e, a motivo di questa sua filosofia, Brian McGarry ha sempre saputo offrire delle soluzioni politiche e sociali equilibrate.

Brian McGarry, che conosce molto bene la comunità, è attualmente preoccupato per il Centertown di Ottawa:

“Il Centertown in Ottawa si sta’ trasformando molto rapidamente, in esso ci sono molti piccoli commerci che hanno bisogno di consigli e d’aiuto per essere ben rappresentati, loro hanno bisogno di noi ma noi abbiamo altrettanto bisogno di loro ...”

Questa non e’ la sola preoccupazione di Brian McGarry; ce ne sono molte altre e lui è disponibile a mettere conoscenza, esperienza e capacità a disposizione della comunità per renderla più efficace e dinamica.

General Interest

Parmigiano, Prosciutto, Balsamico

How Italy Conquered the World - The icons of Italian food are being refreshed by a new generation.

The Sydney Morning Herald David Dale From Good Living

As you approach the dairy just outside Parma where Giuseppe Censi makes some of the finest cheese in Italy, you're assailed by a loud noise coming from a big barn behind his house. You wonder if the barn is a hangar, because it sounds as if someone is revving the engine of a light plane in there.

After Giuseppe emerges and says hello, you ask what the sound is. He looks baffled for a moment and then realizes what you're talking about. He's been hearing it for so long he no longer registers it.
"That's my robot," he says. "Come and see."

He opens the doors of the hangar and displays his treasure: 24,000 wheels of parmesan, stacked from floor to ceiling on shelves which recede to infinity. The robot, which looks like a lawnmower with arms - more R2D2 than C3PO -- is trundling slowly along a track between the shelves. It stops, reaches in, seizes a wheel, pulls it out, rotates it 180 degrees and then slides it back. That process goes on 24 hours of every day, because every cheese in the hangar must be turned once a week during the two to three year maturing process.

Giuseppe loves his robot. "Making parmesan has been a sickness of my family for 200 years," he says. "I work at this from 5 in the morning till 8 at night. It would be longer if I didn't have the voltatrice automatica (automatic turner)."

The robot allows Giuseppe to take a two hour break most days for family lunch and siesta - which is essential for any civilised Italian. It's the only piece of automation he's prepared to consider, in a process that requires constant human involvement. He makes 37 new cheeses a day, each weighing 39 kilograms and selling (after months of maturing and turning) for around \$2,000.

He has to check the wheels constantly to make sure they don't contain air bubbles, which he detects by listening for changes in tone when he taps the surface with a silver hammer called an orecchio. Only then can he be sure of getting certification from the authorities in nearby Parma that he is producing genuine parmigiano-reggiano.

It was inspiring to encounter Giuseppe as I was researching a book about the food of north western Italy (Soffritto - A delicious Ligurian memoir, published this month). With the help of Lucio Galletto, who runs Lucio's restaurant in Paddington, Sydney, I was interviewing farmers, shepherds and fishermen about the fundamental question of our age: how did the Italians discover the secret of human happiness?

I was afraid we might find that the icons so close to the hearts of Australians, Americans and Britons - like parmesan, prosciutto, extra virgin olive oil, and balsamic vinegar - are becoming endangered species, as peasant skills disappear and traditional dedication is replaced by factory production.

It turned out the opposite is true. Soffritto reveals how young Italians are returning to the land which their parents wanted to leave, applying new business skills to boost efficiency without losing quality.

A prime example is Giovanni Bianchi, who runs a prosciutto-making enterprise called Pio Tosoni in the town of Langhirano, near Parma.
His family had been processing pigs for 100 years, but Giovanni went off to university and became a lawyer in Milan. After five years in the big city, he found he was craving "something real", so he came back to his home town and the family business.

The company produces 100,000 legs a year, from pigs fed on the whey that is a byproduct of parmesan making. It uses machines to massage the meat to tenderness, but employs 26 people to trim the legs into shape, rub on the salt and continually check the thousands of prosciuttos that must hang for more than 12 months before they can be sold. Checking still involves thrusting a needle made of horse bone into the meat and sniffing for hints of bacteria.

The secret of the flavour, Giovanni says, is the Langhirano air. On days when the wind is in the right direction, he opens the windows and lets the slightly salty breezes dry the meat. Only a member of the family can judge each morning whether the air is right and press the button to raise the shutters of the storerooms.

Near Siena, we met another of the new breed of farmer - Nicola Zanda, who is attempting to revive a breed of pigs called the Cinta Senese.
Distinguished by black fur with a white or pink "belt", they have meat of superb flavour but almost died out in the 1960s as Europe turned to factory-farming of higher yielding breeds.

Zanda's grandfather ran an engineering company that built bridges around the world. His father was a professor of medicine at Siena University. Nicola was destined for the diplomatic service but gave up that career in his late 20s to raise pigs.

"I started in 1997, from no knowledge," he told us. "I read about the disappearance of this race of pigs and I decided it was a project I could undertake. I had inherited 100 hectares of forest, and I realised the pigs could wander in the forest and eat the acorns."

Now he keeps 200 animals that earn him a modest income and huge satisfaction. He's made his operation "organic" and "free range" simply by following standard procedures of 200 years ago. "I would say that tradition is the future here in Tuscany," he said.

Back in Emilia Romagna, Italo Pedroni would agree. In the village of Rubbiara, near Modena, he makes balsamic vinegar. In a world where everything aims for fast and cheap, he takes pride in being very slow and very expensive.

He cooks the pulp of Trebbiano di Spagna grapes for 24 hours, then puts the liquid into 100-year-old mulberry barrels. After two years, he moves it into a smaller barrel made of chestnut wood. Then it proceeds through barrels of cherry, juniper and oak, absorbing the flavours of each wood and becoming more concentrated.

He's willing to let you taste it after six years, but it's not interesting until 12 years, and at its best after 25 years, when it's a thick, purple syrup more like honey than vinegar.

He makes only 500 litres a year and is certified by the local consorzio to call it "Aceto balsamico tradizionale di Modena" (if any of those words are missing from the label, it's not the real thing).

Italo Pedroni says the most important ingredient of his product is time. Fortunately for us, Italy still seems to have plenty of that.



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General Interest

No Starbucks to be Found

Globe and Mail Canada Eric Reguly

The moment I realized Starbucks would not dare invade Italy came early last summer, shortly after I arrived from Canada, when I covered a trial at Rome’s infamous Rebibbia prison. The place is vast, bleak and intimidating. There’s nothing there besides cell blocks and a courtroom lined with cages where the incarcerated await trial. Well almost nothing. To my suprise, I discovered a fairly decent caffee just outside the courtroom. It was filled with jurors and prison guards, all sipping coffee and merrilly nattering away. Except for the dim lighting and lack of windows, it could have been my neighbourhood joint.

Italians adore their coffee and caffes, or bars as they’re often called, and it’s impossible to imagine any street, piazza, shopping centre, train station, office building, even prison, without them. But not just any coffee in any bar will do. The coffee itself must be of the highest quality -- strong but not overly bitter -- and cut with the proper amount of steamed milk that leaves only a thin layer of froth on the top. It absolutely must be served in little white china cups on little white saucers. It must be made and served quickly and cost little (in Rome, an espresso costs 70 or 80 euro cents, a little more than a C-buck). The bar itself should be filled with locals, an efficient and smiling barista, and not necessarily be equipped with seats and tables. Italians like to crowd the marble counter, say their pleasantries and jump into the conversation about the latest political and soccer disasters.

In other words, the Italian coffee experience is everything Starbucks is not. Italians who travel consider a Starbucks coffee muddy water. They don’t like to chug half a litre of coffee out of big paper cups. Paper cups are inelegant and are needed only if the coffee is to be removed from

the premises. No Italian could imagine taking a coffee outside the bar. A Starbucks shop, oddly, is not filled with the aroma of coffee (I’d like to know if that’s intentional). Starbucks is expensive and the shops double as lounges that you in effect rent. You can pay \$4 for a coffee and linger for two hours reading a book or pounding the laptop. Italians tend not to linger in coffee bars. Of course, Starbucks could clone a proper Italian coffee bar in Italy.

But then it wouldn’t be a Starbucks.

I keep hearing rumours that Starbucks, which has some 14,000 outlets in 43 countries, will conquer Italy next. It does not have a single shop in this country; Britain and France succumbed a long time ago. A few years ago, a Starbuck International exec said Italy was on the to-do list. But nothing happened. Starbucks no doubt would love to have success stories in Italy. Imagine the publicity: If Starbucks is good enough for the coffee-snob Italians, it’s good enough for the world. But imagine if Starbucks opened Italian shops and they failed, as they probably would. Every story about the company’s global expansion would mention the flop.

The irony is that Starbucks was inspired by the Italian coffee experience. In the mid-1980s, company founder Howard Schultz visited Milan and was impressed by the product and the culture around it. He adapted the concept for American tastes and it worked phenomenally well. Or at least it did until now. In the last year, Starbucks’

shares have lost more than one-third of their value.

The company is still growing but not as fast as used to. The Italians don’t care. To them, coffee isn’t about making money. It’s about being part of the neighbourhood, a little bit of caffeine-fuelled theatre before heading to work.



Italians adore their coffee and caffes, or bars as they’re often called, and it’s impossible to imagine any street, piazza, shopping centre, train station, office building, even prison, without them. But not just any coffee in any bar will do. The coffee itself must be of the highest quality.

It’s About Time

By Maria Rizzuti

I have always been fascinated about the concept of time. What is the literal meaning of “time?” It is quite obvious that our lives are ruled by time. We may engage in some activities to pass the time. We try to educate our children in the proper use of time. Our fashion choices are a sign of the times. It seems that we experience vacation time differently than work time. The choices or decisions we make in our present time definitely have a huge impact on our future time. It is time to explore these important points.

Let’s begin with the definition of time. The Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary defines time as, “The measured or measurable period during which an action, process, or condition exists or continues.” Any which way you look at it, time can be demonstrated in diverse ways and can also be very subjective to ones own life and circumstances.

Time can be a predisposed issue. I find that our lives are ruled by time, specifically a moment, hour, day or year as indicated by a clock or calendar. “Oh my God what time is it? Am I late for work? What day is my doctor’s appointment?” Whether we like it or not we are governed by time. When we travel we have to worry about departure time. Our tour of duty may be from eight o’clock am to four o’clock pm every weekday. Dinner reservations are made for a certain time as is curtain time for the theatre. Things like job interviews and other appointments are scheduled for specific times. Cooking involves precise timing or your recipes will turn out undercooked or overcooked. I guess you get the point!

Okay for the time being, let’s forget about being so regimented with our time and let loose once in a while and just kill some time. Perhaps you want to occupy your time by doing nothing. So just because I am not doing something constructive with my time I am not contributing to society? After a hard day at the office maybe vegging out in front of the tube will do that for me. Speaking of television, “There’s television time to buy.” Even TV commercials are timed at fifteen, thirty and one minute intervals. A thirty second advertisement will either make us buy that brand of toilet paper or zit cream and the ad agency will have successfully sold us on buying their merchandise in such a short period of time. To buy air time during the Super Bowl game an ad agency will pay big bucks for that thirty second spot as millions

of viewers will be watching the game.

We as parents are constantly telling our children to turn off the TV. Instead of watching the football game, it’s time to do homework. “If you don’t do your homework and get good grades you won’t get into a good university or college.” If instead the kids pick a fight with each other you may give them a time out. If your child is the diligent type, he or she won’t even turn on the television and go right to his or her room and start that essay that’s due next week. Our children have to sort out the rest of their lives and decide what profession to pursue unless they want to be a football player of course.

Remember back in the seventies when we wore platform shoes and palazzo pants to that house party while your friend’s parents were away for the night. What were we thinking? Were we behind the times, old fashioned and or dated when we made those fashion choices? John Travolta didn’t think so when he strutted down to the 2001 Odyssey sporting that polyester look! Recollect that garage band that played at that same house party? Did the band keep time and perform oh so rhythmically in unison...not! That garage band was certainly not the Bee Gees! Who cares, they were great times and remember youth is the best time of your life.

I am a firm believer that things happen to us at certain times in our lives for a reason. The making of a certain decision at a particular moment or occasion in one’s life will determine your future. Your life’s course of events would not have had the same outcome if you had made a dissimilar choice at that time. Basically, you are the sum total of your personal experiences. At different times in your life, the occurrences and life choices you have made make you the person you are today. The choices that you made twenty five years ago, two years ago and even five minutes ago can be judged and reviewed at the final outcome. Perhaps you felt that the particular decision that you made was the best one at the time with a particular set of circumstances. Perhaps reflect back to a specific example and see if time has answered the question. Time will tell if what we have done here today was right.

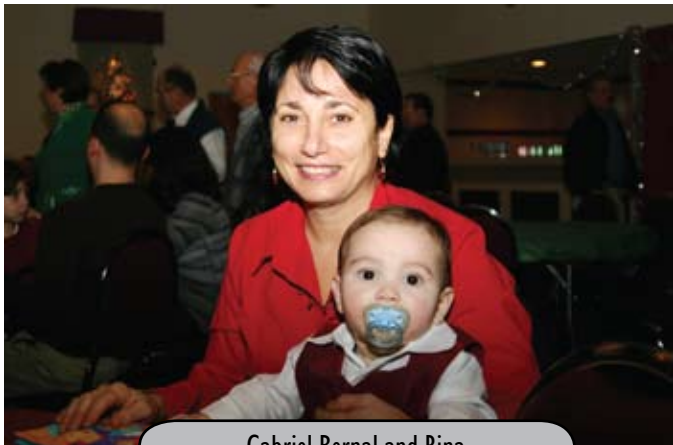
Time is a part of our daily lives. Time embodies our past, present and future. Time is indeed, a fascinating concept.



Community SnapShots

Associazione Rapinesi Christmas :: Dec.2007

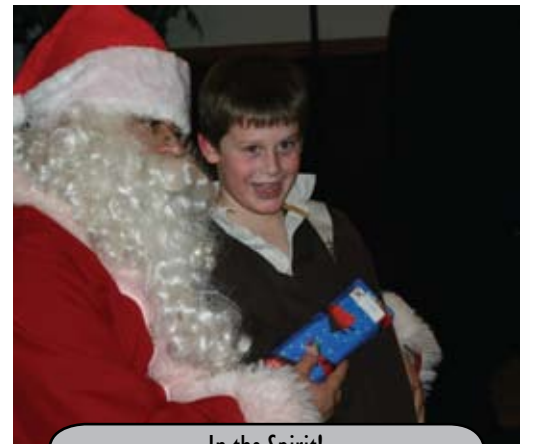
See story on page 10



Gabriel Bernal and Rina



Christmas Fun!



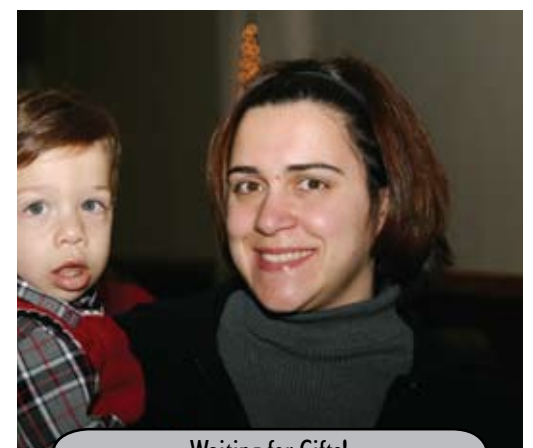
In the Spirit!



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In the Spirit!



Waiting for Gifts!



Anticipation!



The Christmas moment.



They were good this year!



The wrapping paper is the best part!



Gianna, Rosa and Lorenzo



Gabriel's first Christmas!

Community SnapShots

Christmas Celebrations :: Dec.2007



Angelo Filoso and Italian Community Christmas Celebration



Christmas Fun at the Soccer Club!



Jacques, Yu, Angela, Yong, Rick and Airmetrics Team



CHIN and Italian Community Center Christmas Celebrations



Christmas with the Italian Community Center



CHIN Ottawa Celebrations



Italian Community Center Celebrations

International

Christmas in Ortona

By SGT.LLOYD TOPPING (RET.)

Christmas Day, 1943 should have been like any other day I had experienced as a soldier with the Seaforth Highlanders. Instead it stands out as my most memorable Christmas.

On December 21 we entered the town of Ortona, Italy, pushing the Germans out toward the north. The fighting here was new to us. We had been used to being in the open and here we were in close proximity to the enemy with little room to manoeuvre. The enemy were highly skilled and well trained with the advantage of being well acquainted with the town. The streets were narrow and the multi-storied houses towered overhead. We had suffered many casualties and our companies were well under muster. Those of us left had to do double duty and we were tense and exhausted.

Two of us had been set out to guard the intersection in a particular area on Christmas Day, 1943.

Down a street to my right a movement caught my eye and a small boy appeared out of a doorway and approached me. I guessed him to be about eight or nine years old.

He made a pretence of eating and repeated the Italian word for food. I had nothing to give him and tried to make him understand in what little Italian I had picked up over the past weeks.

He eventually seemed to understand, made his way back down the street and disappeared into the same doorway.

Minutes later the door opened again and I could see steam. The child emerged with plates of spaghetti which he gave to me and my companion on the opposite corner. He hadn't been asking for me to feed him, he had wanted to feed us! How wonderful and unexpected to receive a hot Christmas dinner!

The day held more wonderful surprises though.

Tactical headquarters had been set up in a church, The Santa Maria de Constantinopli, just where we had entered at the south end of Ortona on December 20. Knowing we were exhausted both physically and mentally from the strain of fighting in such close quarters to the enemy, and the casualties we had suffered, the Quartermaster (by some miracle) was able to set us up with a Christmas dinner in the church.

They had rows of tables set with white cloths, each of us received one bottle of beer and there were cigarettes and candy and oranges. The meal was pork and vegetables and Christmas pudding. Not the meal we would have sat down to had we been with our families but not what any of us would have dreamed that we would get that day. Being a Scottish Regiment, our entertainment, besides singing carols while one of the officers played the church organ, was having our own piper play for us.

Each Company was in turn replaced by another at the front until all four companies had enjoyed their Christmas dinner in Ortona, only three or four hundred yards from the fighting.

Imagine the contrast of being brought tired and dirty from the front line fighting to be sat down in the midst of white tablecloths and carols. I will never forget the generosity of the Italian family that fed us spaghetti for Christmas, the respite from the war to relax for a short time and a buddy that we lost to a sniper that day. I am now preparing to enjoy my 80th Christmas. There are a lot of special Christmas Days that come to mind; but Christmas in Ortona stands out as my "most memorable Christmas."



Loyd Topping with a history of the Seaforth Highlanders,

Associazione Rapinese - Babbo Natale per i bambini

story from pictures on page 8-9

Domenica 9 dicembre presso il S. Anthony Italia Soccer Club l' Associazione Rapinesi ha organizzatola Festa del Babbo Natale che, naturalmente, era intesa per i bambini.

Tutti pero' erano della festa! Chi per organizzarla, o per socializzare, tutti erani li' grandi e piccoli.

Gli eventi sociali organizzati dai membri dell' Associazione Rapinesi di Ottawa hanno per scopo principale la promozione delle tradizioni ai bambini.

Nella Festa della Madonna del Carpine, che e' organizzata ai primi di maggio, i bambini sono i protagonisti principali, ora che ci prepariamo a celebrare le Festivita' Natalizie , i Rapinesi hanno organizzato per i bambini questo evento sociale durante il quale, tra la gioia di tutti i presenti e' arrivato....Babbo Natale.

Ma, andiamo per ordine.

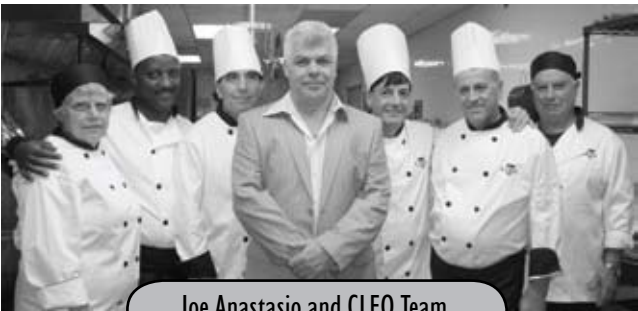
All' inizio del pomeriggio sociale chi arrivava alla sala era accolto da Maria Ferrante e la figlia Gianna, l' apposito tavolo pian piano si riempiva di ogni sorta di dolci fatti in casa.

Nel frattempo il bambini , appena arrivati in sala trovavano subito altri bambini con cui giocare, giocavano e si divertivano un mondo mentre i genitori ed i nonni socializzavano tra loro. A causa delle tradizioni analogiche che i Rapinesi organizzano per i bambini hanno creato un modo di socializzare spontaneo, alcuni di loro socializzavano lavorando in cucina per preparare l' ottima la cena per tutti i presenti, grandi e piccoli, altri socializzavano mentre si occupavano dei bambini e del ben svolgersi dell' evento.

Per i piu' piccoli il miglior momento e' stato quello di ricevere i regali da Babbo Natale, regali che poi venivano aperti, con gioia contagiosa, con quelli degli altri bambini.

Il pomeriggio si e' protratto nella serata. Non e' stato facile per i partecipanti di ritornare a casa e lasciare la sala ove aveva regnato tanta sincera amicizia e fraternita' ispirata dai numerosi bambini presenti.

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General Interest

A Christmas Story

By Father Joe Maier, C.Ss.R., Bangkok Post

It's Christmas and I'm almost positive I saw the Blessed Virgin Mary crying, running through the slum, carrying Jesus with tears running down her face. She slipped and fell down, tore her long dress, taking the full fall and cradling Jesus so he wouldn't be hurt. She quickly picked herself up, grabbed her son, held him so hard he started to cry too, then ran again.

There'd been a commotion and Mary had heard the word "soldiers". And that was enough. All she could think of was that Herod's soldiers were coming all over again. Coming again to kill her son. Hurrying through the village, somewhere on the border between Egypt and Judea, she picked up speed, pulling, almost dragging along her almost-three-year-old son Jesus, running away from the crowd into narrow pathways.

A few months before, they'd found a modest house. Living there, waiting ... waiting really for another dream from another Angel. But of that in a moment.

She ran into Joseph, her husband, rushing out of a house. He said, "Let's go back, melt into the crowd. It's safer there. They won't recognise us and I don't think they are looking for us. They won't hurt us here. We're safe now." Mary had skinned her knee, which was bleeding slightly, and Jesus, who had now stopped crying, blew on the cut and kissed it to make the pain go away, as his mother had often done to him. Jesus was getting too heavy for Mary to carry, so Joseph picked him up and they slipped back into the crowd.

They heard voices. Voices of men? Yes. Soldiers? Yes. But Mary hadn't known it was only a drill in the parade grounds. How could she? Soldiers practising: A routine, but uncommon enough to always draw a crowd. And they were Roman soldiers, not Herod's. She had to remind herself that they were no longer in Bethlehem, just a few kilometres from Jerusalem. They were now on the Judean-Egyptian border, and safe.

Months earlier, though it seemed like last night, they had run away in the middle of the night, running out of Bethlehem, minutes ahead of Herod's soldiers, who had orders to kill her son, that is, to kill all one- or two-year-old boys in the area.

Joseph had heard an Angel's voice in a life-saving dream, a nightmare really. "Run away now, and take the child and his mother to Egypt. Run for your lives. Stay there 'till you are told to return. You will know." And ran they did: Walking by night, hiding by day. A long journey on foot, some 50km over the Judean hills and then across the desert to the border of Egypt.

They had just escaped from Bethlehem - beautiful Bethlehem - the village where Jesus was born. The shepherds and their families - in those days, society's poorest and least respected people _ were watching their flocks by night when they heard the singing of angels, saw a bright star and came to pay homage to the newborn Christ. And on that special night - Christmas - as they came across the Judean hills, the night sky lit by a special star, angels in heaven appeared. Singing. Praising the new-born child. A child who had been born to bring love to the whole world.

And later, much later, perhaps two years, so our traditions say, the Magi followed that special star that rose in the East, arriving in royal caravan with mystical gifts: Gold for a royal person. Frankincense for a holy, consecrated person. And myrrh to prepare a body. A funeral.

Mary and Joseph, with their infant son Jesus, had moved from the stable where Mary had given birth. They'd found a modest house in Bethlehem, living there something like two years, as our traditions and old documents tell us, until the Magi came and found them. These are ancient stories in ancient languages believed by ancient peoples and by millions of us today.

And now, Mary and Joseph and their child silently slipped back into the anonymity of a crowd to hide from the soldiers once again, this time along the border of Egypt.

They'd gone there because that's what the angel said to do in the dream.

As they quietly joined the crowd, they looked around and laughed and cried for joy and relief: Just a soldiers' drill. A parade. No, not searching for them. Not searching for their child Jesus to come and kill him.

There would be soldiers again, years ahead, after Joseph had died, and Mary would stand on a faraway hill at the foot of a cross - but that's another story.

Mary watched her son Jesus playing with the other children, wondering what would become of them: She, Joseph and their child Jesus.

Angels and a star rising from the East ... the Magi and mystical gifts ... soldiers. Also, remembering back, it was 40 days after Jesus' birth when, according to religious custom, they had travelled from Bethlehem to Jerusalem and had presented Jesus in the temple; and there on the temple grounds, an old woman who had lived seemingly forever, known for her holiness, uttered strange prophesies about Mary and her child. Plus there was an old holy man, his face all aglow, coming up out of nowhere really, asking if he could hold her infant son, touch him, just for a moment and then saying now his life was complete. Now, he could pass on: He had held the son of God in his arms. He had seen the face of God.

And these happenings were a long time ago in Bethlehem and Jerusalem and along the border between Judea and Egypt, but here today in Bangkok, I hope it's not too brazen so say to all of us at Christmas: We too must look to see the very face of God in every child we meet.

And for me, maybe ... there are the faces of six-year-old Miss Peh and her best friend Miss Fon, who is seven, living at our Mercy Centre, both of them children with no place to go. Miss Peh, her eyes don't work too good. They tell me she was okay when she was born, but The Virus got her bad ... from her innocent mum, you know, who got it from her dad who came home at dawn one Tequila morning. The virus attacked her optic nerve plus goofed up lot of other things in her nervous system, so her walking ain't the best and her talking - well, she's still working on that, too.

But talk she does - lots - to her best friend Miss Fon, who can walk and talk normal-like, but her vision is going blurry. A few days ago, she walked right smack dab into a wall: Almost knocked herself out. A big bump on her forehead. And she cried and cried, asking over and over to everyone there: "Why didn't you tell me?" So Miss Peh came over and held her and blew on her forehead and kissed it to make the hurt go away. Then they started to laugh and giggle and whisper secrets again, like little girls do.

And the other morning, just before dawn, the girls were singing together - no, not like the music you hear in songs with words, but singing just the same. And all I could think of was the angels singing in high heaven with a message to the shepherds and to all of us to journey across the Judean Hills to see the newborn child. And then to look up and see that special star. And we all have to do that, don't we? To listen, especially at Christmas time, so that we can hear the singing of the angels in high heaven, no matter how faint or how loud or how far away, and to look up and see that special star rising from the East.

That's why Christmas happened: So we can look with compassion and love into the faces of Miss Peh and Miss Fon and your children and all children and see the very face of God.

Father Joe Maier is the chairman and co-founder of the Human Development Foundation in Klong Toey, Bangkok. For more information, call 02-671-5313 or visit www.mercycentre.org/



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Viewpoint

COMUNICATA STAMPA

Al via il progetto pilota per allestimento mostre multimediali nelle scuole italiane all'estero

La Direzione Generale per la Promozione e la Cooperazione Culturale del Ministero degli Affari Esteri ha avviato un progetto pilota per la realizzazione di mostre presso la rete delle scuole private italiane all'estero, attraverso l'invio di materiali espositivi e video su Cd. Le prime scuole che beneficeranno di questo primo esperimento, già dalla fine del 2007, saranno quelle non governative di New York (G. Marconi), Santiago del Cile (Vittorio Montiglio), La Plata (Centro di cultura Italica) e Belo Horizonte (Galileo Galilei-Fondazione Torino). Le mostre che verranno inviate, scelte su argomenti di interesse per gli studenti, sono: Giuseppe Garibaldi, La lingua italiana e il mare, Il mare di Salgari e Patrimonio delle isole minori italiane. Per far fronte ai costi dell'allestimento delle mostre le scuole potranno attingere ad una parte dei contributi ministeriali destinati

alle scuole non governative all'estero. La Direzione Generale sta inoltre valutando la possibilità di includere in questo progetto anche le Scuole Statali italiane all'estero.



“Il mio auspicio è che questa iniziativa rivolta ai giovani studenti e mirata a promuovere e valorizzare la cultura italiana all'estero si arricchisca in futuro di ulteriori proposte e si possa allargare ad un numero sempre più elevato di destinatari. La nostra rete scolastica all'estero costituisce infatti uno strumento prezioso per veicolare e amplificare le iniziative che nascono qui al Ministero e che devono essere conosciute e utilizzate tra i cittadini italiani residenti nel mondo” commenta così il Vice Ministro agli Affari esteri, Sen. Franco Danieli.

Roma 19-12-2007



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Entertainment & Food

Pasta Panic Strikes Italy

Fortune Magazine By Peter Gumbel

The price of wheat is up 60% this year, and in Italy they’re taking to the streets over the cost of tortellini.

Something unusual is going on in the pasta section of the largest supermarket in Parma, Italy, these days. All the pasta is still there, stacked on both sides of a tennis-court-length aisle in the center of the store. The dizzying choice, too, is the same as in many Italian supermarkets: dozens of shapes, sizes, and colors, ranging from banal penne and rigatoni to lumachine, shaped like tiny snail shells.

What’s new are the big signs fluttering above the aisle and affixed to the partitions at the Ipercoop market, a short drive from Parma’s city center. In capital letters, they declare, WE ARE NOT MOVING.

The movement in question has to do with the price of pasta, which has jumped about 20% this year for some varieties, touching off a nationwide protest. But the story behind the price hike is a global saga involving agricultural policies, commodity-market speculation, the growing use of ethanol as an alternative fuel, and Australian drought.

Italian pasta producers have taken great pains to justify the increase by pointing to the soaring cost of wheat, which has increased by 60% over the past year. That’s an excuse the conspiracy-crazed Italians aren’t buying.

“Yes, the price of wheat has risen, but it has simply gone back to 1985 levels. So who’s been profiting from low prices these past 20 years?” asks Rosario Trefiletti, president of the Federconsumatori consumers’ association in Rome.

Wheat’s the new top of the crops

Trefiletti’s association, along with three others, has been so incensed by the price hikes - according to their calculations, spaghetti is up by an average of 27% this year - that they called a pasta strike in September. For one day consumers were urged not to buy pasta (although in a country that consumes more than five times as much pasta per head as the U.S., nobody said anything about not eating it).

“It was a huge success,” Trefiletti says. It has certainly brought results. The government, which knows a good populist issue when it sees one, began holding talks with producers, farmers, and consumer lobbyists, who are calling for tougher controls and price safeguards for food staples. “The government can’t impose lower prices,” says Carlo Pileri, who heads another consumer group, “but it can do moral suasion.”

Then came the regulators. On Oct. 23, Italy’s antitrust agency announced it was launching a formal investigation to determine whether Italian pasta producers have been engaging in illegal price fixing.

The producers vehemently deny the charge, but they and Italian retailers are clearly on the defensive. Hence the big signs at the Parma Ipercoop promising not to raise prices on the store-brand pasta, at least until the end of the year.

For Guido Barilla, chairman of the eponymous \$3.4 billion Parma-based family company that is the world’s largest pasta producer, this Italian melodrama is missing the point. Barilla raised prices 15% this year, and for him it’s self-evident that higher wheat prices have to feed through to consumers at some point. Pasta is a low-margin business, and flour is one of just two principal ingredients, along with water.

“Wheat makes up 60% of the price,” he says, pointing to a box of penne on a table. What irks him is not so much the public fuss in Italy, which he dismisses with a shrug, but one of the reasons prices are rising in the first place: the growing use of agricultural crops to make ethanol and other alternative fuels. “Agriculture for energy is an extremely stupid thing,” Barilla says. “It’s very inefficient.”

Italians aren’t alone in this struggle. Rising bread and flour prices have sparked protests across drought-stricken Morocco, where the wheat crop dropped by 76% this year. Public disturbances have also been reported in Yemen, Niger, and the Ivory Coast.

And it’s not just wheat that’s soaring. Milk prices are at record highs, and rice is up too. Jacques Diouf, the Senegalese head of the UN’s Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), spoke last month about the risk of upheaval across the developing world. “If you combine the increase of oil prices and the increase of food prices,”

he said, “then you have the elements of a very serious crisis in the future.”

Governments from Cairo to Dhaka are looking to head off that prospect by offsetting higher wheat costs however they can. In September the Egyptian government jacked up its bread subsidies by 50%, to \$2.5 billion.

In richer countries, too, the hikes are spurring authorities to action. In Japan, where the government is the sole importer of wheat, bread prices have gone up for the first time in two decades. Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan have imposed restrictions on their wheat exports to ensure that their domestic markets don’t lose out in the rush by traders to make money abroad.

And in September the European Union reversed a 20-year-old policy that required farmers to leave 10% of their land fallow. The aim of abandoning the so-called set-aside policy is to spur a quick boost in production of wheat, oats, and barley.

The big winners in all this, at least for now: American wheat farmers.

Production is up about 14%, while exports, aided by the weakening dollar, are expected to rise more than 25% this year. Stocks are at their lowest level since the late 1940s. Best of all, prices have jumped to an average yearly price of \$249 a metric ton for hard red winter wheat, more than double what it was in 2000.

“The early-season pace of wheat export sales and shipments has been blistering,” reports the USDA’s October Wheat Outlook. At the Washington, D.C., trade group U.S. Wheat Associates, spokesman Steve Mercer points out that “we were the only ones who had wheat to sell for a while this year.”

The boom could be short-lived. FAO wheat expert Abdolreza Abbassian warns that a flurry of production increases by farmers trying to take advantage of the price rises may soon make itself felt. “It could all lead to a short-term glut,” he says. Indeed, wheat futures have eased since peaking in late September.

Wheat experts point to Four Factors that have combined to propel prices higher. The first and most significant is to be found in Australia, one of the world’s biggest wheat producers, where two harvests in a row have been ravaged by drought at a time crops in other big exporting nations, such as Argentina and Canada, have been less than stellar.

Second, stocks of wheat are at the lowest since 1983, a consequence of changing agricultural policy in both the U.S. and the EU, which no longer encourage excess production or subsidize exports as much as they used to. Commodity market speculation is also rife, as hedge funds and others bet heavily on rising prices created by worldwide demand.

And finally there’s Barilla’s gripe: the growing use of crops for fuel. Wheat isn’t directly affected; in the U.S. it’s mainly corn that is used for ethanol, while in Europe soy is converted into biodiesel.

But there is an indirect effect on wheat as farmers switch to more lucrative crops. That’s a stance actively encouraged by the Bush administration and the EU.

Barilla thinks that’s crazy. For one thing, it requires a huge and expensive use of water. It will require a big increase in the amount of food produced in the future. And he worries that the quality of the crops will drop. “This policy will have a tremendous effect,” he frets. His skepticism is shared by the International Monetary Fund, which took the U.S. and European biofuel policies to task in a recently published report, arguing that they are “sustaining inefficient production patterns.”...

Walk into Carmela Ugo’s pasta and bakery store on Garibaldi Street in the center of town, near the 12th-century pink-marble baptistery. She took over the store 32 years ago and caters to a steady stream of regulars who come in to buy the prosciutto- and Parmesan-filled cappelletti it takes her four days to make, or the less laborious Parma specialties such as tortelli stuffed with herbs, pumpkin, or potato.

“We’re trying to resist raising prices,” she says. “The danger is that the more they go up, the less people buy. But so far they’re still buying.” She stops to serve a customer a slice of focaccia for lunch before getting on to her pet peeve, the pasta strike.

“Just blown up by the media,” she says. “If you’re going to strike, you need to stage one like we had in the 1970s. Back then, pasta stores and bakeries closed down altogether for the day.” She beams.

“Now that was a real strike.”

Did You Know? Estimate per capita consumption of pasta

Italy 28.0 kg	Greece 9.6 kg	Chile 8.2 kg
Venezuela 12.6 kg	United States 9.0 kg	France 7.3 kg
Tunisia 11.7 kg	Sweden 9.0 kg	Argentina 7.2 kg
Switzerland 9.8 kg	Peru 8.5 kg	Germany 6.8 kg

From the History Pages

E' GENEROSO D'AGNESE IL VINCITORE DEL PREMIO GUIDO POLIDORO

Il giornalista, collaboratore di molte testate italiane all'estero, ha fatto dell'emigrazione la sua cifra

Goffredo Palmerini

L'AQUILA – E' Generoso D'Agnese il vincitore per la carta stampata del Premio giornalistico "Guido Polidoro", giunto alla sesta edizione. Lo ha stabilito la speciale giuria presieduta dal presidente dell'Ordine nazionale dei Giornalisti, Lorenzo Del Boca, che ha deciso di premiarlo per una serie di articoli comparsi su Oggi 7, magazine domenicale di America Oggi, il più diffuso quotidiano in lingua italiana degli Stati Uniti che si pubblica nell'area di New York, con le storie di personaggi abruzzesi che si sono distinti all'estero per la loro genialità. "Molti di loro – dice la motivazione – partiti per il mondo da famiglie povere hanno saputo affermare le loro qualità scientifiche, letterarie e politiche". Gli altri premi sono andati per la sezione "radio tv" ad Anna Di Giorgio ed Enzo Leuzzi ex aequo per reportage sul turismo; per la sezione "on line" a Fabio Iuliano per il lavoro "Zafferano on the road", dove "una bicicletta diventa il veicolo per diffondere negli Stati Uniti lo zafferano abruzzese"; infine il premio "alla carriera" a Mario Santarelli, giornalista di Rai 3, per la sua vita dedicata allo sport.

La premiazione è avvenuta in un affollato salone delle Assemblee della Cassa di Risparmio dell'Aquila, dalle pareti impreziosite dalle tele dei pittori del settecento napoletano, dopo un dibattito sul tema "Informazione e pubblicità", moderato dal presidente della sezione abruzzese dell'Ordine dei Giornalisti, Stefano Pallotta, con Enzo Iacopino, segretario dell'Ordine nazionale dei Giornalisti, Stefania Pezzopane, presidente della Provincia dell'Aquila, e con il direttore generale della Cassa di Risparmio, Rinaldo Tordera. Il premio a lui intitolato è il modo migliore per ricordare Guido Polidoro, scomparso immaturamente alcuni anni fa, una delle penne più prestigiose del giornalismo abruzzese per valore professionale e nell'affermazione della libertà d'informazione. Oggi, nella stampa locale e non solo, difettano sempre più certe qualità, il coraggio e lo spirito d'iniziativa, specie d'un giornalismo d'inchiesta così caro a Polidoro. Appunto l'articolo d'inchiesta, la ricerca diretta della notizia, è oggi spesso surrogata dall'uso indiscriminato di comunicati e veline provenienti dalle stanze del potere, da critiche appena velate, da interviste ossequiose al politico di turno. Il Premio, dunque, tende a riaffermare il valore d'un giornalismo libero da ogni condizionamento, come elemento distintivo della professione e del suo valore civile, utile al Paese ed alla sua democrazia. Come affermato per una vita è stato da Guido Polidoro.

Con ampio merito Generoso D'Agnese s'aggiudica il Premio nell'edizione 2007. Egli ha fatto di tale giornalismo libero la sua cifra, scandagliando la grande epopea dell'emigrazione italiana del secolo scorso, alla ricerca di storie che ne illuminassero contesti e personaggi di rilievo, ma anche drammi e situazioni che senza la sua penna sarebbero rimasti nell'oblio. D'altronde, come avrebbe potuto essere diversamente per chi, come lui, è nato in un Paese d'emigrazione quale la Svizzera dove ha vissuto gli anni dell'infanzia e dell'adolescenza. Nato a Zurigo nel 1961, D'Agnese vi è vissuto fino al 1974, quando con la famiglia è rientrato in Abruzzo, a Pescara. Nel 1984 ha iniziato l'attività giornalistica con testate regionali della carta stampata e televisiva, ricoprendo per molti anni anche l'incarico di caporedattore del mensile "Abruzzo nel Mondo", periodico legato alle tematiche dell'emigrazione italiana. Collaboratore di numerose testate nazionali, ha firmato soprattutto per l'estero i suoi articoli su agenzie internazionali, giornali on line e periodici, quali "Il Corriere degli Italiani" di Lucerna, "Il Corriere d'Italia" di Francoforte, "Il Cit-

tadino Canadese" di Montreal, "Utopia" di Londra. Attualmente, in Italia, collabora con il "Messaggero di S. Antonio", con "La Voce dell'Emigrante" e con "Abruzzo nel Mondo" e "Abruzzo Economia". Dal 1998, per il quotidiano America Oggi, cura la rubrica "Protagonisti italiani in America", con articoli che gli hanno valso il Premio Guido Polidoro 2007. Ma di premi di giornalismo D'Agnese ne ha vinti molti nella sua carriera: il Premio Nazionale "Parco Maiella" nel 1999, il Premio Internazionale Emigrazione nel 2000, 2002 e 2004, il Premio Asti-Europa nel 2006 ed il Premio "Guerriero di Capestrano" nel 2007.

Significative anche le sue collaborazioni nelle realizzazione di documentari, quali "Abruzzo Old & News" (2004), "Monongah" (2005), "Pascal D'Angelo, il poeta del piccone e della pala" (2003), "Pietro Di Donato" (2005), "La grande Migrazione" (2006) e "Cara Moglie" (2007), importanti video su fatti, personaggi e tragedie dell'emigrazione italiana, mentre dai suoi articoli sui missionari gesuiti in Paraguay è stato tratto il soggetto per l'opera musicale "De la tierra donde vengo" dell'Ac-



cademia degli Imperfetti di Genova. Ha infine pubblicato i volumi "L'Abruzzo degli anni '90" (1990), "Stramonio" (1993), "Dixie's land" (1996), per le edizioni Tracce di Pescara, "AbruzzoAmerica" (2002) per le edizioni Lupetti di Milano, "SuperCi@o. it" (2006) per le edizioni La Scuola di Milano e "Itala Gens" (2007) per le edizioni Iesa di Roma. Dunque di Generoso D'Agnese – nomen omen – va segnalata l'assidua e preziosa attenzione ad ogni tema che riguardi l'emigrazione, del quale egli con rara efficacia documenta gli aspetti più inediti e singolari. Un'opera notevole, sul piano della documentazione della memoria, talvolta della storia, su un mondo dove tanto ancora c'è da scoprire. D'Agnese lo fa con la competenza, il garbo e la delicatezza di chi affronta grandi questioni dell'umanità, segni persino distintivi della sua indole. Lo fa inoltre con una scrittura bella e scorrevole, ricca di riferimenti analitici e contestuali, capace d'interessare ma anche di stupire per la sua qualità letteraria. L'Abruzzo deve molto a questo professionista sensibile ed attento, per il contributo rilevante alla conoscenza della nostra gente nel mondo e alla storia sociale della nostra terra.

* gopalmer@hotmail.com - componente del Consiglio Regionale Abruzzesi nel Mondo



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Be Part of Your History!

"Ricordi degli italo Canadesi di Ottawa 1857-2007"
" Memories of Ottawa's Italian Canadians 1857-2007"

The President of the Italian Canadian Community Centre, Angelo Filoso, and the Project leader of the New Horizons funded program Memories of Ottawa's Italian Canadians 1857-2007, Ms. Ariella Hostetter invite you to a community gathering .

You are invited to contribute to building the history of our community by participating in the "Memories of Ottawa's Italian Canadians 1857-2007" project. Its purpose is to record and document the History of Italian Canadians who immigrated to Ottawa from 1857 to 2007 in celebration of Ottawa's 150th Anniversary.

This community gathering will be held at the Father Jerome Centre 425 Booth Street on Sunday from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. February 3, 2008.

The older you and your memories are, the better. Come and bring a "senior" family member or friend. Spend the afternoon with us. Refreshments will be served.

On a first come first serve basis, your photographs and documents on the Italian Community and Italian Immigrants of Ottawa from 1856 to present will be scanned into a computer during the meeting and returned to you.

A short presentation will be made on how these first steps in gathering information will contribute to the long term goal of producing a documentary about our community history.

This first work on the project is being made possible by the federal government of Canada's New Horizons Program for Seniors.

If you are interested in participating or require additional information please contact us.

For Information:



Angelo Filoso, President
613 -567-4532 - info@ilpostinocanada.com

Ariella Hostetter, Project Leader
613-567-4532 - Italiancommunity@gmail.com

St. Anthony Annual Church Fundraising Dinner

**Saturday, February 2, 2008
6:00pm-1am**

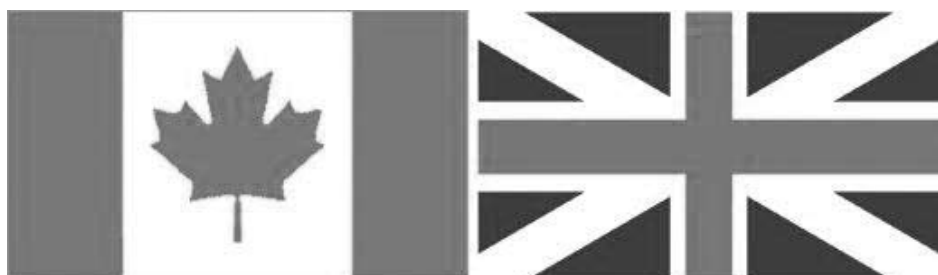
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