

La Nostra Voce

Sempre Insieme ~ Always Together

American Italian Cultural Society
1918 Donmaur Drive • Crest Hill, IL 60403

President's Report February / febbraio

Hello Club Members

As we move into February, I'm pleased to share an update on our society's activities, progress, and upcoming plans.

Highlights from January

- **Cultural Events:** Our January gatherings were well-attended. La Befana, Spaghetti dinner and The Bears Game gathering helped make this month successful.
- **Membership Engagement:** We welcomed several new members and bartenders to the club. Their passion for our heritage will help our club continue to grow and succeed.
- **Facility Updates:** Routine maintenance and winter preparation were completed at the hall, ensuring a comfortable and safe environment for all upcoming events.

February Events & Activities

- **Paint and Sip-** will take place February 6th at 6pm. Enjoy an evening of painting along with appetizers and a glass of wine.
- **Super Bowl Chili Cook-off-** will take place super bowl Sunday starting at 4:30 pm. Bring your best chili for a chance to win. Free to members and guests.
- **Spaghetti Dinner-** will be February 12th from 11 to 7. Volunteers are always needed from Monday to Friday for our monthly event.
- **Queen of Hearts-** this takes place every Monday starting at 5pm. The current pot is at \$9767.00. I wish you luck

Administrative Notes

- **Meetings:** The February board meeting will take place on February 4th. Agenda items include spring event planning, scholarship updates, and facility improvements. General meeting is February 26th.
- **Financial Overview:** The Society remains in strong financial standing and fundraising efforts continue to support our club and its cultural initiatives.
- **Volunteer Opportunities:** As always, we rely on the generosity of our members. Anyone interested in helping with events, positions or chairing an event are encouraged to reach out.

A Personal Message

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to every member who contributes time, talent, and passion to our Club. At the general meeting I mentioned that I have never worked a full spaghetti dinner until January. I was amazed to see how much you all do for this event. I truly have no words. So thank you again. Lastly our 2026 scholarship applications are available online for all high school seniors.

Always Together/Sempre Insieme
Dan Brandolino
President, American Italian Cultural Society



Inside this issue:

President's Letter	1
Upcoming Events & St. Joseph Table	2
Calendar & Valentines Dat in Italy	3
Event Information	4
In Case You Missed It	5
Umbria	6
Umbria	7
Sunshine Report Hall Rental	8
Puzzle	9
AICS Directory	10
Sponsors	11

CLUB HOURS

SUNDAY
6:30 PM -11:00 PM
MONDAY
5:00 PM - 9:00 PM
THURSDAY
6:30 PM -11:00 PM
SATURDAY
6:30PM - 11:0 PM

Phone: 815-725-7450

Fax: 815-725-9074

Email office:

officemanager@americanitalian.org

Email for newsletter:

Andrea.DiVecchio@americanitalian.org

UPCOMING EVENTS



QUEEN OF HEARTS EVERY MONDAY NIGHT 5-9 PM

Cut off time to purchase a ticket for the Queen is 7:30pm, drawing at 8:00pm

FEB 4 - WEDNESDAY	BOARD MEETING	7:00pm
FEB 6 - FRIDAY	PAINT & SIP	6-10pm
FEB 8 - SUNDAY	SUPERBOWL PARTY	4:30pm
FEB 12 - THURSDAY	SPAGHETTI DINNER	11am-7pm
FEB 19 - THURSDAY	BOOK CLUB	12:00pm
FEB 26 - THURSDAY	GENERAL MEETING	7:00pm
FEB 27 - FRIDAY	WINE CLUB	7:00pm

SAVE THE DATES

MAR 1 - SUNDAY	WALKING IN FAITH SAINTS OF LENT & EASTER	5:00pm
MAR 15 - SUNDAY	ST. JOSEPH TABLE	1:00pm
APR 11 - SATURDAY	ABRUZZO REGIONAL DINNER	6:00pm



VIVA LA TAVOLA DI SAN GIUSEPPE!

Annual St. Joseph Table

Sunday, March 15, 2026 1:00pm Mass

Please join us as we gather together to celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph.

We will begin with Holy Mass
and then partake of a delicious meatless Pot Luck Meal

Free Admission (**DONATIONS TO ST. JOSEPH ARE SUGGESTED**) AICS Members Only

MEMBERS

Please bring a meatless dish or a dessert to pass for our pot luck meal. It must be enough to feed 10 people and brought in a disposable dish.

Contact Robin Margliano 815-531-9116
to coordinate your dish. Thank you!

**AICS will be providing Penne/Marinara, Spaghetti
Aglio e Olio with Tuna, Fried Smelts & Sicilian Bread*

Free tickets are available at the bar or online by scanning this QR Code.



For more information call Andrea 815-529-0036

**DEADLINE FOR
TICKETS/RESERVATIONS IS-
MARCH 8, 2026**

- † Mass at 1:00pm
- † Blessing of the food
- † Partaking of the meal
- † Auction

CALENDAR

February



2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2  QOH  GROUNDHOG DAY	3	4  Board Meeting 7:00pm	5	6  Paint & Sip 6pm-10pm	7
8  SUPER BOWL Super Bowl Party 4:30pm	9  QOH	10	11	12  Spaghetti Dinner 11am-7pm	13	14  Happy Valentine's Day
15	16  QOH  PRESIDENT'S DAY	17	18  Ash Wednesday	19  Book Club 12:00pm	20	21
22	23  QOH	24	25	26  General Meeting 7:00pm	27  Wine Club 7:00pm	28

Valentine's Day, known in Italy as **La Festa di San Valentino** or **La Festa degli Innamorati** (the Feast of Lovers), is an intimate celebration strictly for romantic couples. Unlike in the U.S., it does not involve children, friends, or family.

- **Baci Perugina:** These "kisses" are the quintessential Italian gift. They are chocolate pralines with a whole hazelnut, wrapped in silver foil with a "love note" (a quote or poem) inside.
- **Lucchetti dell'Amore (Love Locks):** Inspired by the novel *Ho voglia di te*, couples write their initials on padlocks, attach them to bridges (like the Ponte Milvio in Rome), and throw the key into the water to symbolize eternal love.
- **Romantic Dinners:** Couples typically enjoy a candlelit dinner, often featuring seafood, truffle risotto, or heart-shaped desserts.
- **Gifts:** Red roses, jewelry, and handwritten love letters are common tokens of affection.



EVENT INFORMATION ~ Don't miss out!



SUPERBOWL WATCH PARTY CHILI COOKOFF

4:30 GAME TIME AT 6:30
BRING YOUR BEST CHILI FOR A CHANCE TO WIN
DON'T MAKE CHILI? BRING A DESERT OR APP!
WINGS AND PORK SLIDERS
BLOODY MARY BAR
50/50

FREE ENTRY-MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS

1918 Donmaur St Crest Hill
RSVP to Vanessa or Gary

Paint & Sip
AMERICAN ITALIAN CULTURAL SOCIETY



February 6th, 2026
1918 Donmaur Drive
6:00-10:00 pm
\$45.00 per member
\$55.00 per non-member

*Ticket includes:
all paint supplies, a glass of wine & appetizers.*

Scan me



For more information & to purchase tickets scan QR code

American Italian Cultural Society
1918 Donmaur Dr. Crest Hill, IL
815-725-7450

Spaghetti Dinner

THURSDAY
FEBRUARY 12, 2026
11AM - 7PM
(OR UNTIL WE RUN OUT)

\$13.00
CARRY-OUT OR DINE-IN

ALSO AVAILABLE FOR SALE

Meatballs	Sauce
\$3.00 for 2	\$8.00/Quart

HOMEMADE BAKED GOODS & SALAD DRESSING

Skip the Line & Order Online!

Visit our website www.americanitalian.org
or scan the QR Code to place your order

Some restrictions may apply




REMINDER

General Meeting

Thursday
February 26, 2026
7:00pm

Delicious Snacks will be served after the meeting!



Wine Club

27 Feb. 2026

7:00pm

Tasting Fee
\$ 5.00 AICS Members
\$10.00 Non-Members

Tasting & Discussion Topic
French Wines



Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share



WALKING IN FAITH

*Italian Saints of the Season
Lent and Easter
presented by
Rachel Frustini*

SUNDAY
MARCH 1, 2026
500PM

American Italian Cultural Society
1918 Donmaur Drive
Crest Hill, IL 60403
For more information please contact Rachel 815-474-4726



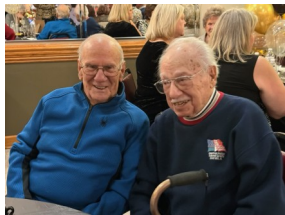
IN CASE YOU MISSED IT!

SO LONG 2025...

AICS rang in the New Year with a bash! Over 100 people attended our New Year's Eve party and enjoyed an evening filled with good times and laughter. Partygoers had a delicious meal catered by La Dolce Vita, delighted in a chocolate fountain, danced the night away to the sounds of Smoke & Mirrors. Thank you to our party chairperson Vanessa Pascente and her team Todd & LeAnn Maland, Eleanor Picard, Anna Binkley



Robin Margliano and Rocky Pascente. Vanessa is already planning ahead for 2026!



VIVA, VIVA LA BEFANA!

La Befana made her annual visit to AICS on Sunday, January, 11th. Her traditional visit has been a long time cultural event at our club and always begins with the celebration of Mass to honor the Epiphany of our Lord. Mass was followed by a wonderful meal and then the exciting visit from La Befana. A game or two of tombola is always a part of the tradition. Thank you to chairpersons Franca Liburdi, Tanja Conte and



Lynn Coladipietro and their helpers Adria Meilinger, Ali & Dan Brandolino, Carla Liburdi, Marco Coladipietro and Tony Brandolino for sharing this tradition with our children.



UMBRIA - The Green Heart of Italy

Known as the "**Green Heart of Italy**," Umbria is the only Italian region that is landlocked and has no international borders. It is characterized by its rolling green hills, dense forests, and medieval hill towns that offer a more rustic and quiet alternative to neighboring Tuscany.

Inhabited since the Stone Age, Umbria was the scene of the **Battle of Sentino** in 295 BC between the Roman army and an alliance of the Etruscans, Samnites, Senones and Umbrians.

Part of the **Duchy of Spoleto** established by the Lombards, for centuries the territory was linked to the **Papacy** after Charlemagne's conquest. **Saint Francis of Assisi** was born here, giving rise to the Italian literary tradition and a new type of spirituality linked to fraternity, humility and poverty.



Umbria enchants around every corner with its rolling hills, the dramatic Marmore Waterfalls and rich traditions. It boasts the greatest number of **medieval villages in Italy**, with centuries-old fortresses, including the imposing **Rocca Paolina**, commissioned by Pope Paul III as a symbol of papal power over the ancient

city of **Perugia**. The region is loved for olive oil, truffles, art, and peaceful landscapes, offering authentic Italian culture away from the crowds.

Time stands still in Perugia, with Etruscan walls, a medieval historic center and the imposing Palazzo dei Priori ("Palace of the Priors"). A fantastic cultural hub, the city is home to the highly prestigious University of Perugia, founded in 1308, and the largest university in Italy for foreign students. Perugia is also known world wide for its chocolate. Gubbio, the *city of stone*, has always fascinated illustrious travellers and writers with its beauty, history and traditions.

Orvieto is a jewel perched on a tuff cliff, with an imposing Duomo and the impressive Well of St Patrick.

Foligno, at the heart of the Umbrian Valley, displays hints of its ancient origins in its elegant architecture and precious paintings preserved in the city's museums.

Then there is Assisi, a unique example of a sanctuary city recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site because of the Basilica of San Francesco d'Assisi and other sites linked to the saint, including the Basilica of Santa Chiara and the Cathedral of San Rufino.



UMBRIA - The Green Heart of Italy *continued*

The Tale of St. Valentine

In Umbria, the land of thunderous waterfalls and quiet olive hills, a bishop named Valentine served the city of Terni. Rome ruled with strict laws, one of them banning young soldiers from marrying.

A Roman guard, Lucius, fell in love with Ilaria, a woman of Terni. Their bond was strong, but forbidden. When they were caught, they were ordered to separate forever.

Ilaria ran to Valentine, pleading for help. The bishop, who believed love was sacred, whispered: *"God shaped your heart, not Rome."*

At night, near the roaring Marmore Waterfalls, he secretly blessed their marriage in a small stone chapel. The lovers were united, but Rome soon learned of it.

Valentine was arrested and taken away, becoming a martyr for defending love. Lucius and Ilaria returned to Umbria, planting red roses by the river in his honor.

To this day, Terni remembers him as the saint who proved that love flows like Umbrian water - wild, unstoppable and holy.



Recipe - Strangozzi al Tartufo (Umbrian Truffle Pasta)

Ingredients (2–3 servings)

- Strangozzi pasta (*or linguine/fettuccine if unavailable*)
- 1 small black truffle, finely grated (*or 2–3 tbsp truffle paste*)
- 4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, lightly crushed
- 1 tbsp butter
- Salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste
- 2–3 tbsp pasta cooking water (*for sauce*)

Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook pasta until al dente.
2. In a pan, warm olive oil with the crushed garlic on low heat for 1–2 minutes to infuse. Remove garlic.
3. Add butter if using, then stir in 2–3 tbsp pasta water to create a silky sauce.
4. Drain pasta and toss into the pan.
5. Mix in grated truffle or truffle paste. Season with black pepper and adjust salt.
6. Serve immediately, finish with a little more olive oil and extra truffle if you like.

Tips

- Don't overheat the truffle - gentle warmth keeps the aroma strong
- Keep it minimal - Umbrian cooking celebrates simple, earthy flavors



Sunshine Report



Michael Nakroshis - 3rd
Lydia Marquardt - 4th
Betty Brandolino - 7th
Tim Cora - 7th
Joseph Alberico - 8th
Patti Pastore - 9th
Anthony Stellato - 10th
Franca Liburdi - 12th
Steve Joutras - 14th
Judy Moroz - 15th



Barbara Lewis - 16th
Teresa Alberico - 17th
Eleanor Picard - 17th
Janet Ditello - 19th
Cathie Lawrence - 24th
David Egizio - 25th
Mike Lavazza - 25th
Marijo Amatulli - 26th
Nick Amatulli - 27th



Diana Alberico
Caesare Conte
Christy Dawson
Rebecca Horn



Jim Alberico
Jerry Capista
Joe Governale
Claudia Munoz
Ruben Munoz
Arlene Packley



Molly Marchio and her family on the passing of her daughter Michele Martis. May she rest in the arms of the Lord.

Don & Mary Govoni and family on the passing of Don's father Primo "Don" Govoni. May he rest in peace.

If you are having, or know someone who is having a milestone birthday or anniversary, or know of an illness, condolence or a special congratulations for our members or if you want to be excluded from the Sunshine Report please contact
Anna Binkley (815) 342-6524 / Email: anna9108@att.net or
Robin Margliano (815) 531-9116 / Email: rmargliano@aol.com



American Italian Cultural Society

Event VENUE RENTAL

About us

Host unforgettable events for up to 125 people in our stylish, flexible venue. Perfect for showers, weddings, anniversaries, parties, and meetings.

Our services

- ✓ Custom Event Setup
- ✓ Audio-Visual Equipment
- ✓ On-Site Support Staff
- ✓ Catering Coordination

CONTACT US



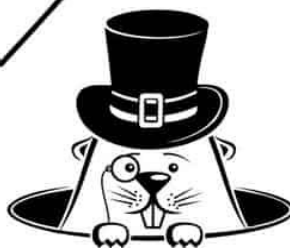
☎ 815-274-9235

✉ Vpascente71@gmail.com

🌐 americanitalian.org



WORD Search



FEBRUARY

WORD SEARCH

S C H O C O L A T E F R W D L O C Y
 R U R A U Y M J P A A E K X T N A A
 E P B T F L S A R G I D R A M S Y D
 W I N T E R S W E E T H E A R T K I
 O D M U B R T E S H R V X J E V O L
 L G L N R E S G I W A F D R E W M I
 F W W S U T P B D L R E H E K F L H
 G R O R A E Y W E N E S E N I H C C
 G J B I R U K N N U F A U M N A E S
 R H R R Y B T S T T I C P L D K R R
 A E E E L I L N S E T U Y Y N E R G
 S E P C N R R O D L I T J K E A A H
 S E U E D S Y E A L R A S G S A R R
 I T S R E P P I Y A W T A P S Q R N
 W F R I E N D S P S G E L K B T O R
 C H Y A D G O H D N U O R G O O W R

ARROW
 CHILI DAY
 CHINESE NEW YEAR
 CHOCOLATE
 CUPID
 FEBRUARY
 FLOWERS
 FRIENDS
 GROUNDHOG DAY
 KINDNESS
 LEAP YEAR
 LOVE
 MARDI GRAS
 NUTELLA
 PARTY
 PRESIDENTS DAY
 SUPER BOWL
 SWEETHEART
 VALENTINES
 WINTER

AICS DIRECTORY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - OFFICERS

President	Dan Brandolino	(815) 919-5440	dan.brandolino@americanitalian.org
Vice President	Christina Hayden	(815) 409-0511	christinamhayden8@gmail.com
Recording Secretary	Todd Maland	(815) 791-5215	recsec851@aol.com
Treasurer	Marco Coladipietro	(815) 530-3516	mc@coladipietro.com
Sergeant-at-Arms	Carla Liburdi	((815) 931-0667	carla.l@americanitalian.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - TRUSTEES

Paolo Binkley	(708) 488-6297	paolobinkley2002@gmail.com
Catherine Cerri	(815) 355-2055	kat2478@aol.com
Dane Carlyle	(815) 585-3189	dcarlyle22@gmail.com
Tony D'Amico	(630) 308-0019	tdamico256@aol.com
Zak Kohlhagen	(708) 417-8402	bullsin198@aol.com
Franca Liburdi	(815) 768-9812	francaliburdi@aol.com
Sharon Muhich	(815) 347-9299	muhich1946@gmail.com
Vanessa Pascente	(815) 274-9235	Vpascente71@gmail.com
Toni Van Gampler	(815) 263-1750	tonijvg@gmail.com

CLUB CONTACTS

AICS General Email			officemanager@americanitalian.org
Bar Manager	Matt Mauzer	(815) 325-7631	mmauzer@att.net
Building/Grounds	Gary Binkley	(815) 342-6521	bink25002@yahoo.com
Call All	Sandi Doyle	(815) 409-0513	officemanager@americanitalian.org
Decorating	Robin Margliano	(815) 531-9116	rmargliano@aol.com
Festa Italiana	Dan Brandolino	(815) 919-5440	danbrandolino@aol.com
Hall Rental	Vanessa Pascente	(815) 274-9235	Vpascente71@gmail.com
Kitchen Manager			kitchenmanager@americanitalian.org
Newsletter Ads	Sandi Doyle	(815) 409-0513	officemanager@americanitalian.org
Newsletter Editor	Andrea DiVecchio	(815) 529-0036	Andrea.DiVecchio@americanitalian.org
Office Manager	Sandi Doyle	(815) 409-0513	officemanager@americanitalian.org
Scholarship	Dan Brandolino	(815) 919-5440	danbrandolino@aol.com
Sunshine	Anna Binkley Robin Margliano	(815) 342-6524 (815) 531-9116	anna9108@att.net rmagliano@aol.com
Welcome Committee	Vanessa Pascente	(815) 274-9235	Vpascente71@gmail.com
Website	Andrea DiVecchio	(815) 529-0036	Andrea.DiVecchio@americanitalian.org

Grazie ~ Thank You to Our Sponsors



Resurrection Cemetery, Mausoleum & Cremation Gardens

And the Catholic Cemeteries in Crest Hill & Joliet

Bellissimo Mausoleum Crypts, Cremation Niche's, Grave's and Memorial Monument Sales

Come and experience the difference, locally owned and operated!

Eric Holloway, Executive Director

www.dioceseofjoliet.org/cemeteries

815-473-5000



Corsetti Structural Steel, Inc.

Steel Fabricators and Erectors Crane Rental www.corsettisteel.com

2515 New Lenox Rd. Joliet, IL 60433 Phone: (815) 726-4083

Lockport Sister City Program



Città di Asiago



Sewer and Water

Alberico Construction Co. Inc.

2501 New Lenox Road
Joliet, IL 60433

(815) 722-2517



Private Music Instruction

815-351-0547

angelapiano@comcast.net

www.angelapiano.net

Mamma Onesta's
Italian Restaurant

Owned and Operated by the
DeGrassi Family

(from Trieste, Italy)



Mamma Onesta's

ITALIAN RESTAURANT

1100 South State St
Lockport, IL 60441

Located in Historic Downtown Lockport

815-588-0900

www.mammaonesta.com

Richard J. Tapella

Funeral Director

Rich@farkasfuneralhome.com



3201 W. Jefferson St.
Joliet, IL 60431
(815) 725-0100



BRYAN M. WELLNER

ATTORNEY AT LAW

MAHONEY, SILVERMAN & CROSS, LLC

822 INFANTRY DRIVE, JOLIET, IL 60435

(815) 730-9500

bwellner@msclawfirm.com

www.msclawfirm.com

Milano



433 S. Chicago Street, Joliet

727-2253

www.milanobakerv.com

Morgan Stanley



William Conte

Portfolio Management Director
Senior Vice President

Wealth Advisor

1150 Essington Rd

Joliet, IL 60435

+1 815 729 8040

William.Conte@morganstanley.com

© 2024 Morgan Stanley Smith Barney
LLC. Member SIPC. CRC 4044509 11/24

Tiffany & June Allen-Smith

Owners

PostNet of Shorewood, IL

1147 Brook Forest Ave

Shorewood, IL 60404

815.230.2222

815.230.2223

IL131@postnet.com

postnet.com/il131



Your Design, Printing, and Shipping Partner

American Italian Cultural Society

1918 Donmaur Drive
Crest Hill, IL 60403

Phone: 815-725-7450

Fax: 815-725-9074

Email office:

officemanager@americanitalian.org

Email for newsletter:

Andrea.DiVecchio@americanitalian.org



For more info please visit us on the web:

www.americanitalian.org

or



BUON
*San
Valentino*



CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

Our spaghetti dinner is held the 2nd Thursday of the month from September until May every year. We are looking for more student volunteers to work in the dining room. If you can help or know any high school student who would like to work a few hours, please contact: **Robin Margliano**

815-531-9116

Did you know you can access member information from our AICS website? You can see pics from the club, download a new membership application and see copies of our newsletters. There's a member portal where you can sign up with your email.

Member access code is AICS2024
Please contact:

officemanager@americanitalian.org
for more information.

Scan to visit our website

