Cucina Ebraica: What Italian Food Teaches Us About Jewish History

By Erika Myers

Professor Mark Goldberg’s first experience with Italian Jewish food was during a semester study-abroad program while in his junior year in college. “Life in Rome is like a living history museum. My Italian was so great. I got really good by the end of the trip,” he tells me enthusiastically at the beginning of our conversation. “When I was there it was the first time I learned about Carciofi alla Giudia – an Italian Jewish dish that continues to keep the most prominence. My parents came to visit and they knew about the history. That is when I first learned that there was an Italian Jewish cuisine.”

A native Houstonian – first generation American – whose lineage traces back to a Jewish Ashkenazi family that first settled from Eastern Europe to Mexico and then from there to the United States. Professor Goldberg has made his passion for history and the research of popular cultural expressions – such as storytelling, music and food – the center of his research and lectures taught at The University of Houston ever since he was offered a position in the History Department in 2011. Dr. Goldberg has since been named Director of the Jewish Studies Program in 2017.

Tracing back the roots of an Italian Jewish cuisine has not been an easy task. Jewish families have lived in Italy for over 5,000 years. Their backgrounds span over several countries, each reflecting specific elements that mix kosher traditions with the distinctive tastes found in Italy, the Middle East, and Spain. In his search for highlighting the elements that are the most prevalent, he found that “we claim a history as our own while there are many histories we don’t tell.”

Asked what elements of modern Italian cuisine can be traced back to an Italian Jewish past, Professor Goldberg explained that “what I learned from teaching Jewish food history is that over the years of Jewish migration around the world – despite Jewish dietary laws resulting in different dishes between Jews and non-Jews – overall Jews have culturally adapted to their environment. In Italy, that means that Jewish food – while there are elements of Jewish cuisine that are different from what has been dominant Italian cuisine - there are so many overlaps. There is not according to historians a distinct Italian Jewish cuisine. It is more about the interplay between Jewish Italians and non-Jewish Italians and the way their food influences one another. The history of Jewish food is the stories of individuals migrating from one place’s cuisine to another, bringing dishes and merging them with their new home and influencing local cuisine. Food is a product of some sort of mixture. The way we describe food simplifies the history.”

In his class on Jewish food, Professor Goldberg likes to refer to a cookbook called “Cucina Ebraica” by Joyce Goldstein “because it is a modern cookbook. What is great is that they [modern cookbooks] are full of personal stories, and their discussion of histories. And this book is one of those.”

You don’t want to miss this lecture on Wednesday March 27th starting at 7 p.m. For more information, visit www.iccchouston.com.
Mozart’s Notorious Librettist
By Hadia Mawlawi

“I, Don Giovanni”, a film by Carlos Saura, tells the story of Lorenzo Da Ponte, the librettist of Mozart’s most celebrated operas: The Marriage of Figaro, Don Giovanni, and Così Fan Tutte.

Lorenzo Da Ponte lived an illustrious and colorful life, re-inventing himself several times to escape persecution, imprisonment and destitution. He was the archetypal immigrant.

He was born Emmanuele CONEGLIANO in 1749 in Ceneda, in the Republic of Venice, to a Jewish family. In 1764, his father converted to Catholicism in order to remarry and Emmanuele was renamed Lorenzo Da Ponte, after the baptizing bishop. He began teaching literature in the seminary of Portogruaro and in 1773 he moved to Venice where he was ordained a priest. His priesthood was short-lived after he was accused of debauchery and seduction, having taken on a mistress and fathering two children. Following his trial in 1779, he was found guilty and banished from Venice for 15 years. He moved to Austria and eventually became a librettist at the Italian Theater in Vienna. It is there that he met Mozart and his then librettist Salieri, and wrote his three famous operas for Mozart: The Marriage of Figaro (1786), Don Giovanni (1787), and Così Fan Tutte (1790).

In 1790, following the death of his patron Austrian Emperor Joseph II, and Mozart in 1792, he was dismissed from the court and received no support from the new emperor Leopold. In 1792, unable to return to Venice because of his banishment until 1794, he made his way to Paris first, then London where he was first an Italian teacher, then a grocer, before eventually landing a job as a librettist at the King’s Theater in 1803.

He remained in London with his companion Nancy Grahl, with whom he eventually had four children, until 1805 when debt and bankruptcy forced him to flee to the United States. He settled first in New York City, then in Pennsylvania, taking up shop as a grocer and an Italian teacher. He returned to New York City where he continued to teach Italian and then through a friend, was appointed as the first professor of Italian literature at Columbia University. There he introduced opera to the New York high society and in 1825, produced the first full-length performance of Don Giovanni in the United States.

In 1833, at the age of 84, he founded the New York Opera Company. The company only lasted two years due to his poor business acumen, and after being sold off and destroyed in two fires, it was eventually the predecessor of the New York Academy of Music and then the New York Metropolitan Opera.

Da Ponte died in 1838 in New York City and is buried in Queens.

In 2009, the Spanish director Carlos Saura released his Italian film Io, Don Giovanni, a fictionalized account of Da Ponte’s life and its link to Don Giovanni. On April 9th the Italian Cultural & Community Center, in collaboration with Houston Grand Opera (HGO), will host the screening of the movie followed by a short discussion with HGO dramaturge Jeremy Johnson. Tickets available on Eventbrite or by calling Erika Myers at (713) 524-4222 ext. 7.

Il Sapore Italiano: The art of making fresh pasta
By Francesca Lanza

Dear ICCC Friends,

My name is Francesca Lanza. Not only do I teach Italian language and Italian art history at the ICCC, but I also teach cooking classes. Cooking has always been my passion. I grew up in Italy and ever since I was a little girl, I have been carefully observing my grandmother and my mother preparing all kinds of delicious food trying to learn every secret from them. Now that I live in Houston, I love sharing my love for cooking with all the people interested in learning genuine Italian recipes.

Recently, I made an appearance on behalf of the ICCC on Houston Life, a TV show on KPRC Channel 2, where I promoted the cooking class: “Il Sapore Italiano: The art of making ravioli”. This was a great opportunity for the Italian Cultural & Community Center. I showed the audience how to make ravioli with ricotta and spinach. After the great success of the previous cooking classes, the ICCC has decided to present two new classes for this Spring. This series of cooking classes is aimed at promoting the Italian traditions. Participants will have a hands-on culinary experience preparing authentic and delicious Italian dishes.

The first class will be held on March 28th. During this class participants will learn how to make gnocchi from scratch. Every participant will prepare the dough and the gnocchi. At the end we will cook the gnocchi and dress it with a tasty meat sauce and Parmesan.

The second class will be on April 25th. During this lesson each participant will prepare ravioli using a delightful filling made of spinach, ham and Parmesan (my mother’s recipe). To finish, we will cook the ravioli and season them with a simple but delicious tomato sauce.

Don’t miss this wonderful opportunity to learn how to make fresh pasta from scratch! For more information, visit www.iccchouston.com.
new iccc members
Benvenuti! The ICCC wishes to welcome the following new members and invites them to stay fully engaged with all of the wonderful programs and events that the ICCC has to offer. For more information about becoming a member and joining the ICCC family, please contact Alessandra Pistone, Business Director, at 713-524-4222 ext. 6 or at accounting@iccchouston.com.

Mr. Brent Arnspiger
Mrs. Vera Balic and Mr. Chris Jordan
Mr. Estevam Beer
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Mr. Stefano Mazzoni and Family
Ms. Trisa McLaughlin
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Mr. Roberto Gil and Mrs. Diana Puente
Mr. Chad Reeves
Mr. Ted Richardson
Ms. Anna Seroshtanova
Ms. Monica Taunay
Mr. and Mrs. J. Hunter Todd
Mr. and Mrs. Pascual Yacovodonoato

All’ICCC (At the ICCC)
Dear Friends,

These past two months, the staff and Board of the ICCC hit the ground running with plans, projects, and events for the new year. 2019 has brought with it many new ideas and objectives, along with some transition, which everyone is navigating with a positive attitude and a spirit of cooperation. This enthusiasm is what continues to propel the ICCC forward with success in all its endeavors.

In January, we bid farewell to the ICCC’s Marketing Coordinator, Kat Brough, who has gone on to pursue her marketing career at her church. The ICCC is grateful for Kat’s hard work and the dedication she brought to her job and we wish her the best! The Marketing Coordinator position did not stay vacant for long. Though, last month, the ICCC family welcomed Mégane Primault, who has transitioned into her new role seamlessly and with enthusiasm.

Both January and February saw a steady flow of members and guests attending fun and engaging events at Milford House. Our first film of the Contemporary Film Series was well-attended. Our wine tasting event, “Come Wine With Us” kicked off last month to the theme of l’amore (love) with a sold out crowd. Italian food and cooking enthusiasts enjoyed making ravioli at our “Il Sapore Italiano” cooking class. Last month, two speakers from the Houston Archeological Society gave a lecture on Rome’s Aurelian wall. Our Italian language school continues to thrive and classes of all levels continue to welcome new students. These next two months, Milford House has more fascinating events planned, including a gnocchi cooking class, a lecture on the region of Alto Adige, and a children’s party to celebrate Carnevale.

Coordination and planning for the 41st annual Festa Italiana is well underway. This year’s festivities will run Thursday, October 10th through Sunday, October 13th on the campus of University of Saint Thomas. We have begun the call for volunteers, and the sponsorship and exhibitor information packets will be in the mail soon. Over the next few months, we will be unveiling some new and exciting features to this year’s Festa so stay tuned.

Our events and the Festa would not be possible without the generous help of our volunteers, who willingly share their time and talent to help make each event a success. Our volunteers are the heartbeat of the ICCC and the staff and Board is always grateful for their participation. This year and going forward, we are also welcoming anyone interested in underwriting any one of our events at Milford House. This new level of member participation will allow the ICCC to continue to offer its dynamic and varied events, and keep promoting the Italian culture throughout Houston. If you are interested in sponsoring an upcoming event and/or volunteering at Milford House, please contact our Programs and Events Director, Erika Myers. We are always ready to extend a warm, Italian welcome to more sponsors and volunteers, so do not hesitate in letting us know if you are interested in joining the ICCC family. We would love to have you.

Peter Scalzitti
ICCC 2019 President

2019 ICCC Board of Directors

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La Voce Italiana
Published six times a year (January, March, May, July, September and November) by the Italian Cultural & Community Center (ICCC) of Houston.

1101 Milford Street, Houston, Texas 77006

La Voce Italiana is a benefit to ICCC members and is also available by subscription for $15 per year. For more subscription information, please call 713-524-4222 ext. 6 or email accounting@iccchouston.com
Scholarship Deadline is Right Around the Corner
By Ray Miller

The ICCC awards annual $1,000 renewable scholarships to graduating high school seniors who are of Italian descent, to any degree on either side of parentage and who submit complete applications by the specified deadline. The deadline this year is 5pm April 12, 2019. Since 2000, the ICCC has granted over $215,000 in scholarships.

This year the ICCC has the following scholarships available: ICCC Merit Only Scholarship (for ICCC Members Only), ICCC Merit/Financial Based Scholarship, and Wayne B. Dudley Sr and Margie DiPuma Merit/Financial Based Scholarship. If applicable, students should complete separate applications for each scholarship for which they are eligible. Recipients are chosen by the Scholarship Committee based on scholarship, leadership, and financial need. The recipient may apply for a renewal of the scholarship every spring (renewal applications are due by July 1 each year) for a period totaling four years. Renewals are only awarded for consecutive fall/spring semester during the four-year period of eligibility. To qualify for a scholarship renewal, the student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 and a minimum semester total of 12 hours.

Early in the school year, information will be mailed to over 155 high schools in the greater Houston Metropolitan area and are made available to ICCC Members as well as the general public by downloading them from ICCC website (www.iccchouston.com/scholarships/apply/). For all scholarship instructions and applications please refer to the website above.

2019 Fashion Show and Luncheon
By Ray Miller

Due to unforeseeable circumstances, we regret to inform you that the 2019 Fashion Show and Luncheon originally planned for Saturday May 4, 2019 has been postponed to a later date. We are working to reschedule the event in the Spring of 2020. One of our key goals is that the Fashion Show and Luncheon be a top-level event similar in stature and performance of our past Galas. We are currently in the final stages of adding the key ingredients to the mix and plan to be announcing the date soon.

We are thankful to the event committee and the professionals that they reached out to. This group is working diligently to help create an event that will showcase the Italian Cultural & Community Center and at the same time will benefit the scholarships that the ICCC awards annually to deserving students in the greater Houston community.

Thank you all for the many years of continuous support of our organization.

La Piccola cucina

SATURDAY
March 23
11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Join us to learn how to make Tarallini dolci, ring-shaped cookies made out of butter and orange peel!

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La Voce Italiana
Volume XXVIII, No 2

Cultura
Marzo-Apriile 2019

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Giulia Iasoni
School Coordinator
713-524-4222 ext. 2
school@iccchouston.com

Il Sapore Italiano
The Art of Making Gnocchi
Thursday, March 28, 2019
Class starts at 7:00 pm

Reserve today:
iccchouston.eventbrite.com
programevents@iccchouston.com
713-524-4222 ext. 7

Registration deadline is March 26
$50 members | $60 non-members

Il Sapore Italiano
The Art of Making Ravioli
Thursday, April 25, 2019
7:00 PM

Reserve today: iccchouston.eventbrite.com
programevents@iccchouston.com | 713-524-4222 ext. 7
Location: ICC | 1101 Milford St. Houston, TX 77006

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Marc Longo, M.D.
He is a native Houstonian and 1981 graduate of St. Thomas High School.

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Before Lid Surgery
After Lid Surgery
# MARCH 2019

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**March 2 - Carnevale!**
Join us at the ICCC to celebrate carnevale with snacks, games, and costumes! Children of all ages are welcome to attend in their favorite costume and join in the celebrations. Donations are welcome and appreciated!

- **Time:** 11:30 am - 1:00 pm | **Place:** ICCC Houston

**March 7 - Things You Didn't Know About Alto Adige: My Travel Diaries**
This lecture will tell you everything there is to know about this region and you will become an Alto Adige expert!

- **Time:** 7:00 pm | **Price:** $10 for Members and $15 for Non-Members | **Place:** ICCC Houston

**March 10 - Italian Mass & Pasta Lunch**
Catholic Mass which is said in both Italian and English. If you decide to stay after Mass, a delicious home-cooked pasta lunch is served for only $5 a plate (children 10 and under are free). Experience Mass, or just come for lunch, in a personal setting with family and friends.

- **Time:** Mass starts at 10:30 am, Lunch starts at 11:30 am ($5 pasta lunch) | **Place:** ICCC Houston

**March 20 - 2019 Contemporary Italian Film Series**
Join us for our Contemporary Italian Film Series, recent releases from Italy screened in Italian with English subtitles, all premiering in Texas. March will feature the film "Sono Tornato (I’m Back)".

- **Time:** 7:00 pm | **Tickets:** $10 ICCC Members and $15 for Non-Members | **Place:** ICCC Houston

**March 23 - La Piccola Cucina - Let’s make Tarallini Dolci**
La Piccola Cucina is a hands-on cultural culinary experience for children aged 3 - 10 years old. Our little chefs will be preparing Tarallini Dolci, ring-shaped cookies made out of butter and orange peel!

- **Time:** 11:30 am - 1:00 pm | **Tickets:** $30 ICCC Members and $45 for Non-Members | **Place:** ICCC Houston

**March 27 - Cucina Ebraica**
Presented by Professor Mark Goldberg, Director of the UH Jewish Studies Program, this lecture will discuss lessons of Italian food history, focusing on what food tells us about an Italian Jewish past.

- **Time:** 7:00 pm | **Tickets:** $10 ICCC Members and $15 for Non-Members | **Place:** ICCC Houston

**March 28 - Il Sapore Italiano (Cooking Class) - Gnocchi**
Join us for Il Sapore Italiano, a series of cooking classes where you will learn how to prepare authentic and delicious Italian dishes. Come learn the "The Art of Making Gnocchi." Registration required.

- **Time:** 7:00 pm | **Price:** $50 for Members and $60 for Non-Members | **Place:** ICCC Houston
### APRIL 2019

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**April 2 - Dine Around**

Join us for a 'Dine Around' at Amalfi Ristorante! Get ready to be delighted by Chef Giancarlo Ferrara's delicious creations. Guests will have the opportunity to enjoy a nice evening surrounded by ICCC members and friends. This event will offer a prix fixe menu ($41 per person). You must previously register and pay in order to attend this event.

- **Time:** 7:00 pm | **Place:** Amalfi Ristorante

**April 9 - I, Don Giovanni**

The Houston Grand Opera and the Italian Cultural and Community Center present the film Io, Don Giovanni (I, Don Giovanni) about the life of Lorenzo da Ponte, his relationship with Mozart, and the creation of the opera Don Giovanni. The film also underscores the parallels between the life of Da Ponte and the character he and Mozart brought to life so vividly. A short discussion with HGO dramaturge Jeremy Johnson will follow the screening.

Wine and light bites will be served.

- **Time:** 7:00 pm | **Price:** $15 for Members and $20 for Non-Members | **Place:** ICCC Houston

**April 14 - Italian Mass & Pasta Lunch**

Catholic Mass which is said in both Italian and English. If you decide to stay after Mass, a delicious home-cooked pasta lunch is served for only $5 a plate (children 10 and under are free). Experience Mass, or just come for lunch, in a personal setting with family and friends.

- **Time:** Mass starts at 10:30 am, Lunch starts at 11:30 am ($5 pasta lunch) | **Place:** ICCC Houston

**April 17 - 2019 Contemporary Italian Film Series**

Join us for our Contemporary Italian Film Series, recent releases from Italy screened in Italian with English subtitles, all premiering in Texas. April will feature the film "Euforia".

- **Time:** 7:00 pm | **Tickets:** $10 ICCC Members and $15 for Non-Members | **Place:** ICCC Houston

**March 25 - Il Sapore Italiano (Cooking Class) - Ravioli**

Join us for Il Sapore Italiano, a series of cooking classes where you will learn how to prepare authentic and delicious Italian dishes. Come learn the 'The Art of Making Ravioli.' Registration required.

- **Time:** 7:00 pm | **Price:** $50 for Members and $60 for Non-Members | **Place:** ICCC Houston
Festa Italiana - Call for volunteers
By The Houston Italian Committee

The Houston Italian Festival is seeking new, volunteers to join the Festival Executive Committee in 2019! Each year, Festa Italiana is made possible by the helpful hands of the committee members, who serve in the full calendar year and make important decisions throughout the year. The Committee meets once a month beginning in February. If you feel like taking the next step and getting involved, we need your help.

Current openings on the Festival Executive Committee include individuals who are interested in:

- Serving as “Festival Grounds Apprentices”. Qualified person(s) must be physically able to manage a crew of 2 to 4 individuals. Person(s) must also be willing and available to work the full days Monday, October 7th through Monday, October 14th. These days encompass the set-up, the festival and the tear-down. If you’re ready to volunteer your time, please ask us about this today!

- Serving as “Food - Supply and Booth Coordinator Apprentice”. Qualified person will assist with making sure correct food supply quantities are ordered and that all booth managers are secured and ready to go by October. If you have a background or interest in business management, we’d love to have you involved!

- Serving as “Volunteer Coordinator Apprentice”. Qualified person will assist with volunteer recruitment, coordination and management for the over 500 volunteers it takes to run the festival each year. Person must be computer knowledgeable with working with emails and spreadsheets. Person must also be available to work at the festival volunteer check-in booth beginning Thursday, October 10th through Sunday, October 13th. If you like working with people who are giving of their time for a cause, then call us today!

- Serving as “Sponsorship Coordinator”. Qualified person will seek new cash and in-kind sponsors. Person must be able to make phone calls and send emails as well as research and in some cases visit with potential sponsors. If you are out-going and are not afraid to ask with the possibility of begin rejected, then this job is for you!

Of course, we can always use your gifts and talents throughout the year, in any capacity you are able to assist. To become more involved with the Festival Executive Committee and more, based on your availability, send an email to info@houstonitalianfestival.com. We’d love to be in contact with you!

Welcome to the ICCC team
By Erika Myers

We are pleased to announce a new addition to the team. Mégane Primault has taken over the role of Marketing and Communications Coordinator from Kat Brough.

Mégane holds a degree in Mass Communications from the Cesacom Communication School in Paris, France. After graduating, she worked in marketing for a large French manufacturer of premium frozen meals before relocating to Houston in 2017.

Please join us in welcoming Mégane as we wish Kat Brough much success in her new career endeavors.
Quaresimali (Florentine cookies for Lent)


The period between Carnival and Easter is an unusual one. Traditionally, during Lent, Quaresima, the foods which you eat change. It’s a time for spiritual reflection which should prepare you for Easter, through giving things up and purification. Throughout Italy, the traditional recipes during this time exclude all meat and animal fats, instead introducing fish and vegetables. The ingenuity, however, of housewives, men and women of faith brought about the creation of sweets offered during Lent, biscuits known throughout Italy as quaresimali or Lent cookies.

In Sicily, the quaresimali look like the Tuscan cantucci, they are almond biscuits with lemon zest and cinnamon. In Genoa, the quaresimali take on a rounded shape - they are biscuits made with almonds, flour, sugar, egg, orange flower water, and decorated with icing and coloured sugar sprinkles.

In Florence, right after Fat Tuesday, the schiacciata alla fiorentina gives way to the quaresimali, which then quickly disappear from bakeries and pastry shops on Holy Thursday, replaced then by pan di ramerino. Here, in the Val d’Elsa area, only a little under an hour’s drive from Florence, the quaresimali never made it. I discovered them therefore almost by complete chance when I began visiting Florence.

**Ingredients**

- 3 egg whites at room temperature
- 200 g 1 cup - 7 oz of sugar
- 50 g 1/3 cup, whole - 1,7 oz of hazelnuts, finely ground to a paste
- 150 g 1 1/5 cup - 5,3 oz of flour
- 50 g 3/5 cup - 1,7 oz of unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder
- Seed from half a vanilla pod
- Zest from a whole organic orange
- 1 pinch of cinnamon
- 1 pinch of salt

**Directions**

1. Whip the egg whites until soft peaks form. Add the sugar and keep on whipping until it becomes a glossy meringue. Add the hazelnut paste and stir into the egg whites.

2. Sift the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt and fold gently into the meringue. Add now the vanilla seeds, orange zest and cinnamon. The final texture of the dough should be quite firm but still soft enough to be used with a pastry bag.

3. Line three baking sheets with parchment paper and draw many alphabet letters with the pastry bag. Keep them spaced enough as they tend to expand while baking.

4. Let sit at room temperature for a few hours.

5. Preheat oven to 140°C (275°F - gas mark 1) and bake the cookies for about 15 minutes. Let them cool down on the baking sheets before removing them, as at the beginning they’ll still be quite soft.

6. Keep them in a closed tin or in an airtight container.

**Pair it with: Passito di Pantelleria**

Taken from https://wineguy.co.nz/index.php/glossary-articles-hidden/886-passito-di-pantelleria

The history of crafting ‘Passito di Pantelleria’ is over 2000 years. Passito di Pantelleria has been produced since time immemorial from the grape varietal Zibibbo (aka: Moscato di Alessandria), and described as a unique Italian wine with a delicate aroma and its palate velvety sweet, affectionate and generous. In August 1971, it became the 3rd Sicilian wine to obtain DOC status - after Etna in August 1968 and Marsala in April 1969. Some of Italy’s best sweet wines come from the island Pantelleria in the Mediterranean, a volcanic island 180 km’s south-west of Sicily and just 60 km’s east of Tunisia. The island is only 15 km’s long and home to some of the world’s most unique vineyards. The islands high summer temperatures, are moderated by the surrounding sea. But a distinctive feature in its terroir is the strong hot, ‘sirocco’ winds that come across from North Africa on their way to Sicily and southern Italy. The dry heat of Pantelleria is perfect for producing the sun-dried Zibibbo grapes used to make the delicious sweet wine. Vinification involves the drying of the hand-picked grapes and then fortifying for the distillation of liqueur styles, all of which must be carried out on the island of Pantelleria. The vinification and bottling of ‘Passito di Pantelleria’ must take place within designated winemaking areas. The production of premium Passito di Pantelleria can take a minimum of three years.
ICCC clubs and organizations

Charity Guild of St. Joseph
By Gerry Barone, president
Charity Guild will hold our annual St. Joseph Day celebration on March 3rd at Holy Ghost Catholic Church at 6921 Chetwood, Houston Texas 77081. The Church is located between Bissonnet and Bellaire. We will have a Mass at 11:30AM, followed by a spaghetti lunch. The cost for the lunch will be $8.00 per person. Items will be sold from the Altar and all donations will go to the St. Vincent DePaul Society.

For more information on Charity Guild please contact Gerry Barone - 713-526-4239 or Minnette Carrabba - 713-864-4200.

Unite
By Gerry Barone, president
Unite is having a Spring Fling Reunion on Sat. April 6th at the ICCC. All members are welcome. Please RSVP as soon as possible to let us know how many are coming. Details will follow on Facebook and an email later this month.

For more information please contact Gerry Barone - 713-526-4239.

Italy in America Association (IIAA)
By Betty Donellan, president
Elections were held at our January meeting and Betty Donellan, President; Gail Gant, Secretary; Elaine Kennedy, Director and Bianca Cunningham, Director remain on the Board. The following were either elected or re-elected: Len Trombetta, Executive Vice President; Jerry Reimondo, Treasurer; and Nathan Tritico, Director.

A great year is planned for members and we look forward to greeting new members as well. On January 24, 2019 we again held our 2nd Happy Hour at the gorgeous Hotel Granduca and our February social was held on Valentine’s Day and we celebrated in the evening with a “Special Culinary Event”. The event was very well attended and we participated in creating culinary delights which contributed to an elegant dinner. Thanks to everyone who joined in the fun!

Our March meeting will be held on March 14th and we will again be entertained and educated by Merrianne Timco who will present a program with the food theme of Thermopolium, takeout at Pompeii (finger food and wine in the ancient Roman tradition!) This is the forerunner of modern day fast food which foods will also be part of the program.

We welcome all who love Italians or are of Italian descent to join us. Our dues is ONLY $50/year single and $75/family and includes our monthly meetings and plenty of food, wine and water. Questions, please feel free to contact Betty Donellan at bettyrelaw@gmail.com or 310-702-2090. We look forward to more new members joining us this year as our membership continues to grow. Ciao!

Amiketos
By Minnette Carrabba | Rosalie Brandino, president
The Amiketos welcomed in the New Year with an installation banquet held at tony’s. New officers were sworn in. The following is the roster of new officers for 2019.

President: Joann Martino
Vice President: Rosalie Montalbano Aquillina
Recording Secretary: Tee Sicola
Corresponding Secretary; Sandy LaCorte
Treasurer: Frances Jo Caliva
Spiritual Director: Marylyn Colonnetta
Club Reporter: Minnette Carrabba

Outgoing President Rosalie Brandino gifted the 2018 officers with a thank you gift. Donna and Tony Vallone did an outstanding job of hosting the Banquet at their restaurant. A perfect dinner was served, and surprise displays of flaming soufflés were presented as dessert.

The February meeting was hosted by Carolyn D’Anna and Rosemarie Schiro at Damian’s restaurant.

Members were saddened by the death of Pete Beneritto, husband of long time member Rosalie Beneritto. Please keep Rosalie and her family in your prayers.

Bonita Doss and Bernadine Orlando are both recuperating from surgery. Please remember them in your prayers.

Joe Barone presented Rosalie Brandino with a gift from the club for doing a wonderful job of presiding as President for the past two years.

For more information on Charity Guild please contact Gerry Barone - 713-526-4239 or Minnette Carrabba - 713-864-4200.
DOIH will host a St. Joseph Dinner for our members on March 13th, 2019. (picture 2018)

While many people are more familiar with the celebration of St. Patrick on March 17, there is another saint who we celebrate in the month of March: St. Joseph. His day always occurs on March 19. Many Italian-Americans, especially Sicilians, celebrate this day since he is regarded as their patron saint. Joseph (San Giuseppe) is believed to have prevented a famine in Sicily during the Middle Ages. It is tradition to prepare a beautiful altar as a symbol of devotion and thanks and customary to wear all red. A variety of food is brought to the table, while the altar is donned with flowers, white linens, candles, fruit, & vegetables. There is no meat, as this day usually falls during Lent. Every food has some significance. Quite a number of the breads are symbolic. To name one only Papaculova, bread baked with dyed Easter eggs reminding of the close approach of Easter. Bread is shaped like crosses, Joseph’s staff, and his carpenter’s tools including saws, hammers and ladders. This is known as “St. Joseph’s Table” or “la tavola di San Giuseppe.” Also, food containing breadcrumbs “called Mudrica” is usually served since the breadcrumbs represent saw dust. Fava beans are one of the most important items to be brought to the table since during a drought the crop thrived while others failed. And of course there are many Symbolic Italian Pastries. The foods are not limited to the typical symbolic foods mentioned. We thank our Committee Leader Fran Danna, Co-Leader Lisa Rivera, along with other DOIH members. The First decade of rosary will be recited by Antonia Comardo.

Daughter’s of Italian Heritage
By Deborah Graustein | Jamie Russo, president

The ICCC initiated an Annual Fund Campaign in 2014, and we have received a total of one hundred fifty-three donations, totaling $45,159 for the years 2014 through January 2019. Thank you to all who have responded to those campaigns and made other donations throughout the year.

Following are those who contributed to the 2018 Annual Fund Campaign:

Dolores (Dee) & Jim Avioli Sr.
Philip L. Cimo, MD.
Robert D’Aprele
Rev. Nick Ferrantino in Memory of Al & Mimi Ferrantino
Claudio Galimberti
Pam & Mike Graham in Honor of Ilaria
& Luciano Topi
Susan Randazzo-Currie in Memory of John & Alice Randazzo
In Memory of Louis & Katherine Carabba
In Memory of Joseph & Concetta Giuffrida
In Memory of Johnny Holden
Many Anonymous Donors

As we start 2019, we mark with pride our achievements and promise to continue improving the Italian Cultural & Community Center as we fulfill our mission to advance, celebrate, and preserve Italian culture for all Houstonians. Today, we include approximately 450 households and we are holding more language classes than ever, pre-school through adult. More events are being held at the ICCC such as lectures, Italian contemporary film series, an Italian-American film festival, cooking classes for adults, cooking demos, wine tastings, and our La Piccola Cucina for children; also, our regular monthly Italian Mass, and the annual Festa Italiana, which will be October 10-13, 2019. All this activity has brought thousands of visitors into our home, the Milford House, and continues to place the ICCC on the city’s culture map. We thank you for your continued support.
ITALIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES

For kids and teens
Saturdays | 9:30 - 11:30 am
Session 5: March 23 - May 4
Session 6: May 11th - May 25th (Mini-session)

Spring Session:
Adults A1 Session 1 | 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Thursday, March 7 - April 18

Italian for Travelers | 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Wednesday, March 27 - May 1

Italian Conversation | 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Thursday, April 18 - May 30

Summer Session:
Adults A1 Session 1 | 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Tuesday, May 7 - June 18

Italian for Travelers | 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Wednesday, May 29 - July 3

Conversando | 12 - 1:30 pm
Thursday, June 13 - July 25

Italian Conversation Beginners | 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Thursday, June 20 - August 8

Advanced Italian Conversation | 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Thursday, July 11 - August 22

Visit icchouston.com for more information
Email school@iccchouston.com or call 713-524-4222 ext 2 to register