



February 2025
Volume 43 No. 2

The News

THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

A Nonprofit Corporation; Omaha, NE



Pasta Amore & AIHS Present **Carnevale**

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Pasta Amore - 11027 Prairie Brook Rd

Cocktail Hour 6:11 PM

Dinner Hour 7:11 PM

Entertainment 8:11 PM

Menu

Arancini

Roasted Duck Gumbo

Chicken

(with a green and white taste)

Carved New York Strip

(with quattro formaggio penne)

Raspberry Zeppole

Raspberry filled Italian donuts

\$45 per person

AIHS Members

\$40 per person

Tax & Tip Not Included

RSVP to (402) 391-2585

Limited Availability

Crowning the King and Queen of Carnevale during entertainment

**Join us for pageantry, food, drinks and live music!
Costumes are encouraged, but not required.**

The News is a monthly publication of the American Italian Heritage Society, an independent, nonprofit organization, legally incorporated in Nebraska. The deadline for submissions is the second Wednesday of the month. Correspondence and articles can be sent to secretary@omahaitaly.com.



UPCOMING EVENTS

February Membership Meeting
Monday, February 9th
Social Hour 6:30 PM Meeting 7:30 PM

Carnevale @ Pasta Amore Feb. 17th

Spring Spaghetti Dinner/St. Joseph's Day
Sunday, March 8th

Easter Sausage Fundraiser
Saturday, March 28th

T.G.I.F. Pizza Night Friday, April 10th



CARNEVALE IN ITALY

Carnevale in Italy is not just a celebration—it's a spectacular blend of history, art, and pure joy that transforms cities and villages into living theaters. Held in the weeks leading up to Lent, Carnevale is a time when rules loosen, creativity explodes, and Italy's streets fill with masks, music, and color.

The word *Carnevale* comes from the Latin *carnem levare*, meaning "to remove meat," referring to the last great feast before the fasting period of Lent. Its origins stretch back to ancient Roman festivals like Saturnalia, when social hierarchies were temporarily overturned and indulgence was encouraged. Over time, these pagan traditions merged with Christian customs, evolving into the Carnevale celebrated today.

At its heart, Carnevale represents freedom and transformation. Masks play a crucial role, allowing people to hide their identities and step outside everyday social roles. For a brief moment, everyone is equal—nobles and commoners alike—free to laugh, mock authority, and embrace excess.

Venice: The Queen of Carnevale

No place is more closely associated with Carnevale than Venice. The Venetian Carnevale dates back to at least the 12th century and is famous worldwide for its elegant masks and opulent costumes. During the festival, the city feels like a step back in time, with figures in silk cloaks and gilded masks wandering through misty canals and grand piazzas.

Traditional Venetian masks include the *Bauta*, which covers the entire face and was once worn even in daily life, and the *Moretta*, a mysterious oval mask traditionally worn by women. Events such as the *Flight of the Angel* in Piazza San Marco—where a costumed performer descends from the bell tower—add drama and spectacle to the celebration.

Many Carnevale costumes are inspired by *Commedia dell'Arte*, a form of improvised theater that emerged in Italy in the 16th century. Characters such as Arlecchino (the clever servant in a patchwork costume), Pulcinella (the mischievous Neapolitan trickster), and Pantalone (the greedy old merchant) are still instantly recognizable and beloved. These characters bring humor and satire to the streets, reinforcing Carnevale's spirit of playful rebellion and social commentary.

Today, Carnevale continues to thrive, attracting visitors from all over the world while remaining deeply rooted in local tradition. Whether it's the refined elegance of Venice, the political satire of Viareggio, or the raw energy of Iurea, Carnevale in Italy is a powerful reminder of the country's love for art, community, and celebration.

For a few magical days each year, Italy becomes a place where fantasy takes over reality—and everyone is invited to wear a mask and join the fun.

BUON CARNEVALE!



Spring Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner

Sunday, March 8th from 12:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Tickets: Adults \$14 Children \$7

Spaghetti and 2 Meatballs

Includes Italian Salad, Bread and Butter

Guests are welcome, so please invite your family and friends

Members please bring desserts or pastries for our Bake Sale

Hope to see you there!

The Mission Statement of the American Italian Society

The fundamental purpose of the American Italian Heritage Society is to encourage, promote and preserve Italian culture and heritage with its activities centered upon Italian traditions, foods, language, culture, history, religion, folklore, customs, celebrations, music and family genealogy. Your president and board of directors are dedicated to this mission but we need your moral and financial support to be successful.

EPIPHANY CELEBRATION 2026

We had a wonderful turnout for our annual Epiphany Celebration held at the Palazzo on Sunday, January 4, 2026. Approximately 175 people attended including members, guests and Society volunteers. This is one of the best family events of the AIHS with over 40 children there having a lot of fun. It is always very heartwarming when the Befana gets all the children dancing the Tarantella with her. Emma Leo-Mueller was our Chairperson once again this year. She and her group of volunteers worked hard to make the event so special. We can't thank her enough for chairing this event for the last several years. The meal was fantastic, as always, with mostaccioli, meatballs, Italian salad, bread and butter. Members brought a vast array of desserts and cookies. Thanks to all the members that took the time to bake homemade goodies. The Society also had a bar serving refreshments. Members mentioned that they were very happy that our Society promotes and preserves this Italian tradition and keeps it going. Santa and the Befana arrived shortly after the meal was served. The children were so excited as they anticipated their arrival. The children listened intently as the Befana told the story of how she lost sight of the Three Wise Men on her way to see Baby Jesus. She then lead the children in singing Jingle Bells Italian style. Once again this year, the Befana got all of the children to stand and do a Tarantella train through the crowd. Many adults in the crowd joined in and also danced with the Befana. It was a very festive event. Santa and the Befana handed out goody bags filled with candy and fruit. We want to thank Lou Rotella from Rotella's Italian Bakery for the donation of bread for the meal. We would also like to thanks Greenberg Fruit Co. for donating the lettuce for the salads and oranges for the goody bags. We would like to express our gratitude to all the members that volunteered in the kitchen, front desk area, dessert table, the bar, the serving line, and all those who helped with food preparation, set up and clean up. Special thanks to Rose Koch and John Ruma for their roles in this event. Great job everyone! Millie Grazie!!

Submitted by Dr. Terry Bolamperti





PRAYERS FOR OUR MEMBERS

Please keep in your thoughts and prayers our members who are ill, including Ted Bolamperti, George Grillo, Cookie Mascarello-Ladwig, Geno Crisafulli, Maria Leo, Margo Pirruccello, Ann Marie Falco-Marr, Judge Joe Troia, Tara & Tim Virgilito, Cecilia Bellinghiere, Sam & Lucy Marasco, Lou Buda, Joan Gentzler, Kathy Eichelberg, Leo Fascianella, Tony Anderson, and Heather Goertz—daughter of Gary & Mary Kay Ford.

***SUPPORT & PROMOTE THE PALAZZO!!!

We need your help to promote our home, The Palazzo for rentals. Please call Beth at the AIHS office to schedule a tour and she will help provide information on our exclusive caterer, Catering Creations.

SCHOLARSHIPS

AIHS SCHOLARSHIP: We will be offering two scholarships. Applications are now available to members' children attending a credited college. Must be paid members for 2 years.

THE JOHN SCIGLIANO SCHOLARSHIP: We are now taking applications for any AIHS members' children and grandchildren attending Creighton University in the science program.

If interested, please call the AIHS office at 402-493-8888 x 1 for either application.

PLEASE CONSIDER ADVERTISING WITH US

We are looking for additional businesses to advertise in our monthly newsletter. If you have a business or know of one that would like to advertise in our newsletter, we encourage you to call the office at 402-493-8888 x 1 or email Secretary@OmahaItaly.com

Carlentini Omaha and Beyond- Sicilian/Italian Genealogy, History and Culture

Nick Cimino believes that genealogy is a path towards reconciliation and reunion with families transcending the boundaries of time and space. Nick conducts a weekly Zoom Meeting entitled: Genealogy- Carlentini, Omaha and Beyond. Contact Nick to join the meeting or to learn more about Sicilian and Italian genealogy. www.ancestorpuzzles.com

Here is the upcoming schedule:

February 17, 2025 - Jenna Peccia, President of the Filitalia Denver Chapter - Filitalia Organization Overview and the Little Italy of Denver

February 24, 2025 - Lita De La Guardia - United in our Roots: A Tale of Two Cities in a Cultural Art Collaboration <https://www.facebook.com/lita.de.la.guardia.2025/>

March 3, 2025 - Carmelita De La Guardia - The Story of her Song: The Sicilian Heart

March 10, 2025 - Brian Bivona - Our Life In Texas and Sicily - Producing and Selling Olive Oil

March 17 Lita De La Guardia - Photographic Record of the Mausoleums in Carlentini Cemetery



[facebook.com/AIHSOmaha](https://www.facebook.com/AIHSOmaha)



www.omahaitaly.com



secretary@omahaitaly.com



MILLE GRAZIE!

We are sincerely grateful to our past board members, Chairman April Belfiore, and Secretary Courtney Dice. Thank you for your commitment and time serving the Society and members.

Many thanks also to the current and new Board Members now serving the Society. David Fucinaro, Chairman; Terry Bolamperti, President; Beth Gibbs, Vice President; Sarah Barolomei, Secretary; Sal Belfiore, Treasurer; and Lauren Orsi, Board Member.



WE NEED YOUR HELP CUTTING MEAT!

Thursday, March 26th from 8 AM to 3 PM and Saturday, March 28th from 7 AM to 1:30 PM

Call 402-493-8888 x 1 or email secretary@omahaitaly.com, if you can help. If you are going to volunteer either day, please place your food order by Wednesday, March 25th.



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Lady Fingers (Savoardi Piccoli)

pg.189

by Fran Macchietto

2 c. flour	2 tsp. baking powder
1 c. sugar	1 T. almond extract
4 eggs	Pinch of salt

Beat sugar and eggs until blended and cream colored. Mix flour, salt and baking powder. Add slowly to egg mixture and beat until smooth. Grease cookie sheets generously and dish with flour. Drop batter by spoonfuls, shaping about 3 inches long and 1 inch wide. Place them about 1 1/2 inches apart as they will spread while baking. Bake at 350 degrees for about 10 minutes or until light brown. Makes about 3 dozen.



**Our AIHS Society cookbook “A Taste of Italy”
is available for purchase at the office year round.**



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MEATBALL DAY

We need lots of help on Thursday, February 19th - 8 A.M. - 2:30 P.M. to “Ball, Bake, and Bag” (BBB) 6,000 Meatballs. Lunch is provided. Please email Beth at Secretary@OmahaItaly.com or call 402-493-8888 x 1 if you can help us out.





THE AMERICAN ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

5110 North 132 Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68164

Return Service Requested

Buon San Valentino Happy Valentine's Day



il Palazzo

*Members, friends, & family call to host your next
wedding or special event with us!
Call 402 493-8888 x 2*

The sign for 'il Palazzo' features a small cluster of grapes at the top center. The text is in a cursive font.

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