



tradizioni

NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

For this issue, in place of a letter, I'd like to share a poem that has been circulating through the country over e-mail. Perhaps you've already read *The Power of One*. It testifies to the feeling of unity that Americans of all ethnicities should share after September 11th of this year. God bless you all.

*Yours in Italian folklore,
Anna Marie Fiori*

THE POWER OF ONE

(author unknown)

As the soot and dirt and ash rained down,
We became one color.
As we carried each other down the stairs of the burning
building,
We became one class.
As we lit candles of waiting and hope,
We became one generation.
As the firefighters and police officers fought their way into
the inferno,
We became one gender.
As we fell to our knees in prayer for strength,
We became one faith.
As we whispered or shouted words of encouragement,
We spoke one language.
As we gave our blood in lines a mile long,
We became one body.
As we mourned together the great loss,
We became one family.
As we cried tears of grief and loss,
We became one soul.
As we retell with pride of the sacrifice of heroes,
We become one people.

We are
One color
One class
One generation
One gender
One faith
One language
One body
One family
One soul
One people

We are The Power of One.
We are United.
We are America.

DR. EMELISE ALEANDRI RECEIVES CORNARO AWARD

The Order Sons of Italy in America New York State Grand Lodge recently presented the Elena Cornaro Award to Dr. Emelise Aleandri, a member of IFAFA.

The award is named in honor of Lady Elena Lucrezia Cornaro Piscopia, the first woman in history to receive a Ph.D., bestowed upon her by the University of Padua on June 25, 1678. "La Cornaro" spoke many languages fluently, studied Literature, Rhetoric and Logic, and the Arts, Sciences, and Theology.

This year's recipient, Dr. Emelise Aleandri, was born at Riva del Garda, Italy. She grew up in the Bronx, earned an A.B. in French from the College of New Rochelle, an M.A. in Theatre from Hunter College, and a Ph.D. in Theatre from CUNY. She has taught at several colleges and universities in New York. Dr. Aleandri's research on the Italian-American immigrant theatre has resulted in articles for journals and encyclopedias, documentaries, television programs, concert and theatre productions, books, lectures, and conferences in both the United States and Italy. She produced two documentaries for television: *Teatro: The Legacy of Italian-American Theatre* and *Festa: Italian Festival Traditions*.

Emelise was the creator, producer, and host of *Italics: The Italian-American Magazine*, a CUNY/TV cable program which also aired in twelve states. Her most recent publication is *The Italian-American Immigrant Theatre of New York City* (Arcadia, 1999). Her troupe, Frizzi & Lazzi: The Olde Time Italian-American Music and Theatre Company, revived the immigrant entertainments from 1900 for Italian-American organizations in the tri-state area (website: www.frizzilazzi.com). Emelise has appeared in numerous film, theatre, and television productions, including *Italian Funerals and Other Festive Occasions* in Philadelphia, the Off-Broadway productions of *Sweatshop* and *Festa Primavera*, and, most recently in the leading role of Eleonora Duse in the teleplay, *Of Penguins and Peacocks*.

(continued on page 3)

IL MAZZAMURELLO

Nel mondo delle tradizioni popolari la realtà non è soltanto quella che si vede e che si tocca, ma è anche una dimensione energetica e spirituale che permea tutto l'universo. Ogni cosa appare dipinta di un alone magico e pervasa da un continuo senso del miracolo. Così il mondo popolare è abitato da esseri misteriosi: spiriti, folletti e fate che si manifestano di quando in quando operando una sorta di corto-circuito tra il mondo dei sensi e la realtà dell'immaginario.

Nel Lazio questi spiritelli vengono chiamati *mazzamurelli*. Alcune persone li hanno visti e li descrivono come nanetti vestiti da chierici, con le fibbie d'argento sulle scarpe e con lo zucchetto rosso in testa. Secondo alcuni il mazzamurello va in giro recitando l'ufficio come un buon prete e suonando i campanelli delle porte, con grande spavento degli abitanti. Questi folletti gironzolano prevalentemente nelle vie tortuose e strette: a Roma c'è infatti, a Trastevere, il vicolo di Mazzamurelli, dove un tempo questi spiritelli transitavano.

Il mazzamurello talvolta si trasforma in serpe oppure in elegante giovanotto liscio e azzimato; altre volte prende l'aspetto di un vecchietto con la parrucca. Se lo si incontra non bisogna rimanere paralizzato dallo spavento. Basta riuscire a toglierli il cappello, di qualunque forma esso sia: per riaverlo il cospicuo la magica creatura vi regalerà una manciata di monete d'oro. Infatti se il mazzamurello si mette a proteggere qualcuno lo riempie di regali. A Roma si racconta che questo spiritello va pazzo per le belle ragazze povere e modeste e spesso la beneficia con doni misteriosi. Ma se inizia a fare i dispetti, allora sono dolori.

A Castro dei Volsci, nel Lazio, si racconta ancora la storia di un avvocato che aveva casa e studio in un palazzo dove si era installato un mazzamurello. Lo spirito si divertiva a tartassare il pover'uomo con ogni sorta di scherzi. A un certo punto cominciò a nascondere all'avvocato gli incartamenti dei processi, le date delle udienze, le testimonianze da esibire. Era un inferno. Non potendone più di quell'insopportabile folletto, l'avvocato e la sua famiglia decisero di cambiare casa. Non era un'impresa facile, dovevano essere trasferiti centinaia e centinaia di libri, enormi scatoloni di carte, mucchi di fascicoli, più tutto l'arredamento della casa. Malgrado le difficoltà l'avvocato chiamò due facchini che vennero con un grande camion. Dopo ore di duro lavoro il camion fu riempito. Ma quando tutto fu pronto per la partenza, sulla cima delle casse e dei mobili che formavano un'instabile torre, chi apparve gridando e schiamazzando? Il mazzamurello! Sì, proprio il mazzamurello, che ridendo sgangheratamente e battendo le mani strillava: "Che bello! Che bello! Si cambia casa! Si cambia casa!"

Secondo altri il mazzamurello è alto come un bambino di tre anni, è pallido e smunto, è tutto infagottato in una tonaca e in un cappuccio da frate e gira per le case a combinare guai. E sempre lui che fa entrare i gatti famelici in cucina, che spegne i fornelli appena si butta la pasta nella pentola, che rompe i piatti e i bicchieri. Pochi in realtà lo hanno visto, ma tutti hanno sentito echeggiare la sua risata, un po' allegro e un po' stoffante, che tace solo nelle notti di luna piena quando il folletto si fa improvvisamente malinconico.

Nel Lazio per cacciare il mazzamurello bisogna mettersi sulla porta di casa con le spalle rivolte all'esterno e cantare così:

"Mazzamurello che stai alla porta,
non ci venire un'altra volta:
per Gesù e Santa Maria
vattene fuori da casa mia."

THE "MAZZAMURELLO"

In the world of popular tradition, reality is not only what we see and touch, but it's also an energetic and spiritual dimension that saturates all the universe. Everything seems to be painted with a magic halo and permeated by a continuous sense of the miraculous. And so, the popular world is inhabited by mysterious beings: spirits, imps, and faeries that show themselves from time to time, operating in a sort of short-circuit between the world of the senses and the reality of the imaginary.

In Lazio, these little sprites are called *Mazzamurelli*. Some who have seen them have described them as little dwarves dressed in ecclesiastical habits with silver buckles on their shoes and with a red skull cap on their heads. According to some, the *Mazzamurello* goes around reciting liturgical readings like a good priest, and then ringing doorbells, giving the inhabitants a great scare. These little imps wander about mainly in narrow winding streets. In Rome, in Trastevere, there's even a *Mazzamurello Alley* through which these sprites once passed.

The *Mazzamurello* sometimes changes himself into a snake, or into a smooth, elegant, ornately dressed young man; at other times it takes the form of an old man with a wig. If you should encounter one, you should not become paralyzed with fear. You need only succeed in removing his hat, whatever shape this takes. To regain his head gear, the magical creature will present you with a handful of gold coins. In fact, if the *Mazzamurello* takes it upon himself to protect someone, he'll regale him with gifts. In Rome, they say that this imp goes crazy over lovely poor modest girls and often treats them with mysterious gifts. But if they start to do you wrong, then they are pains.

In Castro dei Volsci, in Lazio, they still tell the story of an attorney who had his house and study in a palace where a *Mazzamurello* had installed himself.

The imp amused himself by harassing the poor man with all sorts of tricks. At a certain point, he began to hide the attorney's process papers, hearing dates, and evidence. It was hell. Not being able to tolerate the insufferable imp any more, the attorney and his family decided to move. It was not an easy undertaking; they had to transfer hundreds and hundreds of books, enormous cartons of letters, piles of dossiers, plus all the household furniture. Despite the difficulties, the attorney called two movers who arrived with a huge truck. After hours of hard work, the truck was filled. But when everything was ready for departure, high atop the boxes and furniture that formed an unstable tower, who should appear yelling and squawking? The *Mazzamurello*! Yes, none but the *Mazzamurello* who, laughing rudely and clapping his hands, squealed, "How nice! How Nice! We're moving! We're moving!"

According to others, the *Mazzamurello* is as tall as a three-year-old child, is pale and thin, is completely bundled up in a cassock and monk's hood, and roams the house causing trouble. It's always he who lets the starving cats into the kitchen, who blows out the fire as soon as you put the pasta into the pot, who breaks plates and glasses. In reality, few have seen him, but everyone has heard the echoing of his laughter, a little happy and a little annoying, which is only silent on nights of the full moon when the imp becomes suddenly melancholy.

In Lazio, to catch a *Mazzamurello*, you must stand in the doorway of the house with your back to the outside, and sing out:

"Mazzamurello who is at the door
Don't come back another time.
In the name of Jesus and Holy Mary
Leave now from this house of mine."

ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS IN ITALY

Continuing our listing of Italy's "ethnographic" museums which may contain folk materials for research purposes, we list some more places of interest in Piemonte. Please feel free to send in any additions or corrections that you discover in your travels.

In this issue, we'll continue with the Piemontese provinces of Novara, Torino, and Vercelli.

Novara

Museo Civico di Ricordi Cimeli e Attività Popolari Oleggesi vicolo della Chiesa, 4 28047 OLEGGIO (NO) 0321/91429
Museo Storico Etnografico della Bassa Valsesia via Torre, 2 28078 ROMAGNANO SESIA (NO)
Mini Museo Attrezzi Contadini 28019 SUNO (NO)
Casa Museo della Montagna 28036 CRODO (NO) 0324 - 61003
Museo civico etnografico 28050 GURRO (NO) 0323 - 76100
Civico museo dello strumento musicale a fiato via Roma 28020 QUARNA SOTTO (NO) 0323 - 826368
La cà vegia di Colloredo 28020 PREMOSELLO CHIOVENDA (NO) 0324 - 88104
Casa Museo della montagna di Crodo 28036 CRODO (NO)

Torino

Museo di Storia Valdese via D'Azeglio, 2 10066 TORRE PELLICE (TO)
Museo Etnografico della Valcenisia 10050 NOVALESA (TO)
Centro salesiano di documentazione storica popolare mariana Via M. Ausiliatrice, 32 10152 TORINO (TO) 011 - 5224254
Museo della Marionetta 10100 TORINO
Museo civico di numismatica, etnografia, arti orientali Via Bricherasio 8 10137 TORINO 011-541557
Museo delle genti delle valli di Lanzo Piazza Municipio 10070 CERES (TO) 0123 - 53316
Museo degli oggetti di uso quotidiano Fraz. Castagnole 10070 GERMAGNANO (TO) 0123 - 28296
Centro studi della civiltà contadina «Il Rubat» via Umberto I, 64 10060 PISCINA DI PINEROLO (TO) 0121 - 57496
Museo di antropologia e di etnologia Via accademia Albertina 17 10064 PINEROLO (TO) 011-8173262
Museo Etnografico Via Brignone, 3 10064 PINEROLO (TO) 0121-794265-794257 Fax 0121-794266

Vercelli

Walsermuseum Frazione Pedemonte 13021 ALAGNA VALSESIA (VC) 0163 - 91326
Museo etnografico e del folclore valesiano via delle Manifatture, 10 13011 BORGOSIESA (VC) 0163 - 22505
Museo Etnografico Fraz. Rabernardo 13020 RIVA VALDOBBIÀ (VC) 015 - 761116

DR. EMELISE ALEANDRI RECEIVES CORNARO AWARD

(continued from page 1)

The Elena Cornaro Award, established by the Grand Lodge of New York OSIA in 1978 on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of Elena's investiture with the Ph.D., promotes and recognizes outstanding Italian-American women in higher education from New York State who have made significant contributions to their professions and to their community.

Recognition of these individuals helps to project a positive image of Italian-American women and promotes Italian and Italian-American heritage and culture. An additional objective is to offer role models to our young people, and, each year, the Cornaro Award is presented as part of the Grand Lodge Scholarship Program.

In her acceptance speech, Emelise Aleandri spoke of the small OSIA grant she received as a graduate student to begin her ethnic theatre research and how it had developed into a lifelong pursuit. In congratulating the OSIA scholarship winners, she encouraged them to use the grants they were receiving to discover and explore the world of learning that awaits their inquiring minds.

ALBA TRUFFLE FAIR

Truffle season runs from September to November, so the October Truffle Fair is prime time for white diamonds, the white truffles that are unearthed near the noble Northern Italian town of Alba, Piemonte. The world's greatest chefs come to treasure the exotic white clods that go for more than \$900 per pound. Try the truffle oil, truffle butter and other Epicurean wonders produced using this cauliflower-looking fungi. Nearby, you'll find the town of Cherasco, famous for its snails, as well many areas producing the famous Barolo wines. Do not be surprised to see these goods at the fair too. If indulging in white truffles is your passion, don't miss another white truffle festival the last three weekends of November at the Piazza del Popolo in San Miniato, also in Piemonte.

FESTE REPORT FROM NIAF

Information about 113 Italian American festivals in 91 cities and 27 states is now available through the National Italian American Foundation. The Year 2001 Feste Report lists the city, state, name, and date(s) of the festival, a contact person and telephone number.

The new list is on the NIAF website at "www.niaf.org.". For a free printed copy of the 10-page report, send a stamped (55c), self-addressed business-size envelope to:

NIAF FESTE LIST
1860 19th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

FROM EARLIER ISSUES OF TRADIZIONI

DANCES OF SOUTH TYROL: "ZOCOLITANZ"

"Zocolitanz" means "Clog Dance" in German which, along with Italian and Ladin, is one of the three official languages of Trentino-Alto Adige, also known as the South Tyrol. This dance is best performed in the traditional wooden clogs of the region.

Meter: 2/4

Steps: step-close steps, walking steps

Beginning Formation: Partners in ballroom dance position with bodies slightly turned in LOD.

Figure I:

- With arms (man's L, lady's R) bent up at elbow, couple takes 4 short, light steps CCW, moving arms slowly to point LOD by end of step 4. Stamp in place 3 times (M: L-R-L. W: R-L-R). Without changing position, couples repeat the above pattern in opposite direction. Arms are brought back up, bending at elbow, pointing in direction of movement. Repeat all of the above one more time.
- End the above sequence so that the M are facing CCW, L shoulder to center of circle, and ladies facing CW, right shoulder to center of circle.

Figure II:

- Dance 2 step-close steps toward center of circle; men begin L, ladies R. In place, stamp 3 times. Repeat away from center, and stamp 3 times. (Arms bend down and up as in Figure I.)
- Repeat 2 step-close steps toward center and 3 stamps. Dance 2 step-close steps away from center and release man's R hand and lady's L hand. Raise joined man's L hand and lady's R hand and turn lady under once CW with 3 steps so that lady stands to man's L, both facing center of circle.

Figure III:

- All couples end side-by-side facing center, joined hands shoulder-high. Beginning R, take 2 step-close steps, stamp 3 times in place, R-L-R. Repeat in opposite direction. All make 1/4 turn CW and end facing CCW around the ring. Man stands behind partner with his hands on her hips. Beginning on R foot, all take 4 small, light walking steps, forward and slightly to the right (he pushes her a little). Stamp 3 times in place. Repeat this pattern beginning L. During last 3 stamps, couples open up and again close the circle with both partners facing center of circle.
- Repeat from beginning of Figure III, except instead of last 3 stamps, man turns CCW and lady turns CW with 3 steps and take ballroom dance position as in Figure I.

Figure IV:

- Repeat Figure I. End as in the end of Figure I but both with hands on own hips, instead of in ballroom dance position. Each moving to own L, beginning with L foot, take 2 step-close steps and 3 stamps in place, L-R-L, repeat to R, coming back together. Repeat entire pattern of Figure IV, but beginning to own R. Instead of final 3 stamps, return to ballroom dance position and turn once CW.

Figure V:

- Repeat all of Figure III.

ZOCOLITANZ

Vorspiel: Takte 13-16 / Introduction: measures 13-16

A - B - A - B

"Zocolitanz" was noted in July, 1940, by Klara Stern from verbal descriptions and demonstrations by Mrs. Gina Valsecchi, née Grassi, Roveredo-Misox, Tession, Switzerland. Mr. Santino Valsecchi, a member of the village band, furnished music. Taught by Karen P. Gottier at the IFAFA Conference in 1986, and again by David Valentine, of the Rochester, NY, Dance Troupe, at the IFAFA Conference in 1989.

ABBREVIATIONS USED:

CW = Clockwise

CCW = Counter Clockwise

L = Left

R = Right

LOD = Line Of Direction

REGIONAL ITALIAN FOLK COSTUMES

We continue the series of descriptions of folk costumes taken from the book, now out of print, Il Costume popolare in Italia, by Emma Calderini, published by Sperling & Kupfer, Milano. In this issue, we highlight costumes from the region of Puglia.



Holiday Dress of S. Nicandro Garganico

Shirt of homespun fabric decorated with lace. Corset of beautiful (pale blue) silk, tight-fitting with long sleeves with a wide stripe of gold at the wrist. Over this she wears a scarf of (powder blue) damask silk adorned with long fringe, closed with a gold stick-pin. Full (dark blue) silk skirt, gathered at the waist, that falls in pressed pleats even in the back, decorated with three wide stripes of gold. The long apron is of (pale blue) damask silk, gathered at the waist. White knit stockings. Low-cut shoes of leather. The hair is braided at the nape and decorated with brooches and stick-pins of gold. Gold necklaces with charms of worked gold. Long earrings and various rings also of gold.



**Peasant in Wedding Suit
from Monte S. Angelo (Gargano)**

Shirt of homespun fabric with soft collar, folded back onto the jacket with a silk handkerchief (pale yellow with red/brown design) knotted as a tie. Pants and jacket of (black) velvet printed with lines. Fringed scarf (red with small stripes of orange and yellow) wrapped around the waist a few times. Knit stockings. Footwear of strong leather, tied to the feet with sturdy cord. Stocking cap of (black) woolen cloth, folded back on the head, ending with a large (purple) tassel.

Mediterranean Folklore Studies

The American Folklore Society has founded a new Mediterranean Studies Section to foster research on the cultures of Southern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. In their definition, "Mediterranean" includes all societies located around the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, as well as their ethnic counterparts around the world.

Please visit the homepage of the American Folklore Society Mediterranean Studies Section (AFSMSS) at "<http://orpheus.tamu.edu/afsmss/main.htm>". You will find an electronic discussion list where members may post questions or information on upcoming conferences, special archival collections, useful databases, and other educational resources.

Membership in AFSMSS is open to all those interested in the scholarly study of Mediterranean folklore. If you are interested in joining, please send your email message to the section convener, Giovanna P. Del Negro at "delnegro@tamu.edu" or write to her at: AFSMSS Convener, Department of English, Texas A & M University, College Station, TX 77843-4227.

MY FATHER, GEORGE

In 1915, my father, Gabriele Le Pera, then seventeen, came to the U.S. from Italy, more precisely from Aprigliano, Provincia di Cosenza in Calabria.

After an arduous lengthy sea trip, at Ellis Island, NY, he was given a new name, George (Gabriele must have sounded too ethnic or may have been too difficult for the guard to spell), and was allowed to leave under the protection of a religious group. This religious group gave him \$2.00 and put him on a train with the advice that he should get off when the money ran out and find himself work.

And so, for this young man whose mother had died when he was a very young boy, a new life with a new identity was about to start in a new world.

Whether he helped himself through magic ways or worked for his food, he stayed on until the train's last stop, all the way to the far west, to Portland, Oregon.

Unskilled and with only a grade school education, my father (George) became a tree logger. A tree logger is one who stands and unclogs the rolling logs as they float careening down the river to the saw mill at the lumberyard.

He had one too many close calls, falling off the rolling logs and getting wedged between some of them. He eventually decided to volunteer in the U.S. Army. Even though he was not a citizen, and with minimal training, "George" was sent overseas. He saw some fighting, witnessed the Armistice, and was sent back to the U.S. He settled with friends in Jersey City, NJ.

With one unskilled job after another and by studying at night, he mastered the English language, discarding all trace of an accent. Eventually he became one of the top labor foremen at the Tydol-Veedol Oil Company in Bayonne, NJ (now the Getty Oil Co.).

Even though he was able to lose his accent, he still held on to his Italian hand gestures, so important to him for emotional release and especially for clearer communication. He was always eager to tell this story: Once, after he gave instructions to his men for a proposed project and made clear his instructions by the use of his hand gestures, a rather waspish co-worker named Walker remarked, "George, you Italians would be lost if you could not use your hands."

One day, Mr. Walker was giving directions to some men to move "these here pipes and pile them over there," etc., all the while pointing with his foot to the pipes and in the direction they were to go. My father found that scene hilarious. He then approached Mr. Walker and whispered to him, "Don't you find pointing with your feet very primitive?"

My father Gabriele, alias George, encountered all the hardship and discrimination of the immigrants. He was true to himself and determined to overcome all of that. He was self-taught, married, had three children, owned his own home, and traveled to work every day by public transportation. Together with my mother, he financed our education; all three children are college graduates with multiple degrees.

Dr. Anthony Francis Le Pera is a Dentist, graduated from Georgetown University. Besides his private practice, he followed Academia. Formerly, he was Adjunct Professor at St. Joseph's Hospital for Children in Paterson, NJ. Today he is retired from private practice and is presently Clinical Faculty, Associate Professor at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Dr. Le Pera is also a former President of IFAFA and former Editor of Tradizioni for more than ten years.

SPECIALITA DI NATALE

Zelten

Zelten is a Christmas cake which is a specialty of Trentino and Alto-Adige, eaten on Christmas Day. Stored in cool, dry conditions, it will keep until Easter.

1/2 cup raisins	1/3 cup butter
1-1/4 cup dried figs, chopped	2/3 cup sugar
1 cup chopped hazelnuts	2 eggs
1/3 cup chopped almonds	1/4 cup milk
1/3 cup pine nuts	butter and flour for baking
3/4 cup diced candied fruits	pan
6 ounces grappa	1 egg yolk
1-2/3 cup all-purpose flour	candied fruit, almonds, &
5 tablespoons baking powder	hazelnuts for decoration

Pre-heat oven to 350°.

Soak raisins in lukewarm water; drain. In bowl, soak the raisins, figs, hazelnuts, almonds, pine nuts, and diced candied fruits in grappa.

Mix baking powder evenly into the flour. Melt butter in a bowl over hot water; add sugar and beat together until smooth and creamy. Then blend in the eggs, followed by the flour and baking powder mixture. Add milk to soften the mixture. Add the soaked fruit and nuts, and mix well.

Butter a cake pan and coat with flour. Transfer the mixture to the baking pan and brush the top with egg yolk. Bake for about 45 minutes. When partially cooled, decorate the top with candied fruits, almonds, and hazelnuts.

Serve cold in thin slices.



Macedonia di Natale

In winter, when fresh fruit was not plentiful in Emilia-Romagna, dried fruits were used to make this traditional fruit salad. Nowadays fresh fruit may be used, if desired.

- 1 pound mixed dried fruit (peaches, plums, apricots, pineapple, figs, etc.)
- 1 cup sweet white wine
- 2 cups water
- 1-1/2 cup sugar
- peel of 1 lemon
- peel of 1/2 orange
- 4 cloves
- optional: shot of fruit liqueur (like Maraschino, Grand Marnier, etc.)
- chopped nuts to garnish (almonds or hazelnuts are best)

Soak the dried fruit in a bowl with white wine and water for half a day. Remove the fruit from the liquid and keep separate. Pour the liquid into a large heavy pot. Add sugar, lemon peel, orange peel, and cloves. Bring to a slow boil, stirring slowly. Add the fruit and cook over medium heat until fruit is soft. Allow fruit salad to cool. Remove peels and cloves. (If adding optional liqueur, do so now.) Serve in glass dishes, sprinkled with chopped nuts.

MEET OUR ITALIAN FOLK TROUPE

Italian Folk Dancers, Kansas City, Missouri

IFAF members who attended the two most recent conferences in Milwaukee and Pittsburgh have probably made the acquaintance of two dear gentlemen named Victor Peck and Victor Gugliuzza, senior citizens who have combined the dignity of their age with the enthusiasm of teenagers! Peck and Gugliuzza are members of an International Folk Dance Group, and an on-again-off-again Italian Folk Dance Group, in Kansas City, Missouri.

Greater Kansas City has 59 ethnic groups. Each one has its own festival every year. The Italian Festival has been fairly small, consisting of carnival rides and games for the children, food booths, and a stage with about two hours of entertainment, mainly groups singing songs in English made famous by Italian-American singers.

In the 1980s, the Mayor of Kansas City developed the Ethnic Commission to better inform the public about the cultural variety of their city. He established the third weekend in August as the date every year for all the ethnic groups to come together to participate in one big Ethnic Festival for Greater Kansas City. Attendance at the festival is between 70,000 and 100,000, depending on weather. People come from all over the United States as well as from other countries.

The Ethnic Festival provides the opportunity for each ethnic group to organize booths selling food or souvenirs representative of their nationality. In the 2001 Festival, 33 different nationalities had food booths. The Italian booth typically sells pizza, Italian chicken, Italian ice, and lemonade.

The three-day festival provides entertainment Friday evening, and all day Saturday and Sunday, with a different performance group on the stage every half hour. Nationality groups which are too small to have a food booth or a performance group have members who dress up in their countries' costumes and walk around answering questions and passing out information about their country.

Victor Peck reports that the local chapter of UNICO has been instrumental in trying to unify the various Italian groups to participate as a cooperative organization. This was the second year that UNICO sponsored Italian entertainment on the stage: Frankie Vee, a singer who presented *A Salute to Italian Crooners*.

Peck and Gugliuzza hope to rebuild a dance group that will eventually be able to present Italian folk dances at a future festival. At one time, their group had seven Italian dancers, aged 57 to 80, providing performances around the city. Their costumes represented different Italian provinces. Unfortunately, due to physical limitations, they had to disband. But with the growth of UNICO, Peck and Gugliuzza hope to teach the dances they know to members of UNICO so that they can form a dance group with younger dancers who will carry on the traditions. They also hope that UNICO will take over the organization of the currently small Italian Festival and build it into one of the city's biggest festivals.

Peck and Gugliuzza have also participated in an International Folk Dance Group which meets weekly. This group presents mostly Balkan dances, but Peck and Gugliuzza have taught them several Italian dances as well. The Vesolo Dancers, the performance group of the international dance group, do unit dances, each unit consisting of four to six dances from a particular country. Their unit of Italian dances includes *la Furlana*, *la Tarantella Siciliana*, *la Tarantella Montevergine*, and *la Mazurca Iselteler*.

Peck and Gugliuzza are most proud of their participation in the development and building of *la Scuola Vita Nuova*, an Italian Fine Arts Charter School. The school is three years old, currently with students in kindergarten through 6th grade. Next Spring, the school breaks ground for a new building to house 7th through 9th grades. Two years later another building will be constructed to accommodate 10th through 12th grade students.

In addition to their regular studies, all students learn Italian, Spanish, German, French, and Latin. They also have some kind of Fine Arts class every day, ranging from instrumental music to voice to jazz and modern dance, and have opportunities to attend performances of operas and symphonies. Peck and Gugliuzza hope to be able to teach Italian folk dances to the children this winter, bringing to these children what they have learned through their participation in IFAFA.

Although IFAFA has every reason to be proud of the large troupes of 30 or 40 dancers who are IFAFA members, it is equally important for us to applaud and embrace the accomplishments of small groups and individuals who are doing their best to preserve our Italian heritage!

GENE FEDELI - GIFTED WRAPPER!

Congratulations to IFAFA member Gene Fedeli, from *Amici Italiani* folk dance group in Rockford, IL, who was the Grand Prize winner in the fifth annual "Scotch Brand Most Gifted Wrapper Contest" sponsored by 3M/Scotch Tape in New York in mid-November.

The finalists, four men and four women, were given three odd-shaped gifts to wrap without using boxes: a tennis racket, a tricycle, and a trampoline. Gene's winning wrapping designs were very imaginative. He wrapped the tennis racket to resemble a guitar, the tricycle as a butterfly, and the trampoline like a Hershey's Kiss™.

As Gene stated before leaving for New York, "I just plan on having a good time, and what happens....happens." As it

happened, he won the Grand Prize of \$10,000! He and his wife Shirley also had a great time while in New York.

Scores of gift wrappers from around the country are nominated for the contest. Each nominator is asked to submit a brief essay describing the candidate's ability to transform even the simplest packages into exquisite works of art. At the event, finalists are judged on three criteria: the appearance of the gifts they wrapped, technique displayed while wrapping (e.g. ease of wrapping and efficient use of supplies), and speed.

All gifts wrapped during the contest are donated to local non-profit organizations that distribute new clothing and toys to needy children and adults throughout the year.

POESIA NATALIZIA

by Guido Gozzano

Discesi dal lettino
son là presso il ciminio
grandi occhi estasiati,
i bimbi affaccendati

a metter la scarpetta
che invita la Vecchietta
a portar chicche e doni
per tutti i bimbi buoni.

Ognun, chiudendo gli occhi,
sogna dolci e balocchi;
E Dori, il più piccolo,
accosta il suo visino



alla grande vetrata,
per vedere la sfilata
dei Magi, su nel cielo,
nella notte di gelo.

Quelli passano intanto
nel lor gemmato manto,
e li guida una stella
nel cielo, la più bella.



Che visione incantata
nella notte stellata!
E la vedono i bimbi,
come vedono i nimbi

degli angeli festanti
ne' lor candidi ammantati.
Bambini! Gioia e vita,
son la vision sentita

nel lor piccol cuore
ignaro del dolore.



Climbing down from bed
they're there near the chimney
eyes wide in ecstasy,
the bustling children

placing the stocking
that invites the Old Lady
to bring sweets and gifts
for all good children.

Each one, closing his eyes,
dreams of sweets and toys;
and Dori, the youngest,
turns his little face

to the big stained-glass window
to see the parade
of the Wisemen, above in the sky,
in the frozen night.



They pass by meanwhile
in their bejeweled robes,
guided by a star in the sky,
the most beautiful one.

What an enchanted vision
in the star-studded sky!
And the children see it
as they see the clouds

of angels jubilant
in their pure garments.
Children! Joy and life
are the sight felt

in their little hearts
unacquainted with sorrow.



The purpose of the ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA (IFAFA) is to preserve and foster interest in Italian folk art: to research Italian folklore, traditions, customs, costumes, dances, songs, instruments, etc.; to act as a center for gathering, storing, and disseminating the information; and to bring together Italian folk performing groups and other interested individuals.

IFAFA is an outgrowth of the Italian Folk Art Project initiated at the Nationalities Service Center (NSC) of Philadelphia in 1977. With the assistance of NSC and the leadership and dedication of Cav. Elba Farabegoli Gurzau, IFAFA was incorporated May 7, 1979, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a non-profit cultural and educational organization.

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- ☐ Individual \$10.00
- ☐ Student/Senior Citizen \$5.00
- ☐ Contributing to the work of IFAFA
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