



# tradizioni

NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA

Editor: Jackie Capurro

IFAFA Website: [www.ItalianFolkArtFederation.org](http://www.ItalianFolkArtFederation.org)

VOLUME 32

2013

No. 1

## Letter from the President

Dear Members,

Several important items:

### Conference

This year's conference will be held October 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, in historic Boston, MA. *Ricordi d'Italia* will be the host group for this year, and they've been very busy planning an amazing conference for all of us. Included in this year's workshops are several brand new dances, a seminar on Venetian masks, an interactive opera clinic, amongst others.

On Saturday night, you will be treated to a true gala-style event. The Boston area is known for its rich Italian culture, and the Saturday night celebration, open to the public, will be no exception. *Ricordi d'Italia* has hosted a number of events over the past years, and each and every event has sold out. This event is not to be missed!

**Important information:** In regards to hotel and registration details, the conference workshops will be held at the Crowne Plaza Boston–Newton hotel, which is only a few miles outside of Boston city proper. Hotels in Boston are typically much more expensive than compared to most other cities, so this year we struggled somewhat in finding a reasonable rate for a decent hotel. The contracted hotel rate this year is \$169/night, though we do have some good news. IFAFA will be subsidizing that rate by \$30/night. In other words, you will receive a reimbursement of \$30/night in the form of a check, should you stay at the designated hotel. PLEASE NOTE: This subsidy will only be available for the first 15 rooms booked. After that, attendees may have to consolidate rooms, pay the full price, or find alternative lodging (we will also reevaluate this restriction as rooms start to fill up – obviously we want as many people at the designated hotel as possible).

Registration will be completed this year through our website, or through a printed registration form (**see page 3 of this issue for a form you can print out and mail in**). We have switched payment options for the website and moved over to using PayPal for our main payment processor. We hope you find this option easier and more secure than our previously outdated and essentially nonfunctional payment option.

Finally, for those of you on Facebook, please 'like' our new page, where we will provide updates to conference information as it comes in. And as always, be sure to visit our website, [www.ItalianFolkArtFederation.org](http://www.ItalianFolkArtFederation.org), for conference updates and registration information.

### Dues

Many of you have asked about dues. In previous years, sending out hard-copy notifications and collecting dues was an extremely arduous task. It required a lot of planning and work, and forced one or two individuals to take on the full job. While we updated our website to offer the new online payment options, as well as in response to the lower amount of overall communications from our organization, we will not be pursuing dues for 2013. With that said, dues will be fully reinstated for 2014.

### Leadership Changes

As much as I've enjoyed my time as President for this organization, it has come to that time where I must step down. The truth is, for the past couple of years, I simply haven't had the time to dedicate myself to the cause. I will be sending out a separate farewell letter when the time comes, but I wanted to let everyone in the general membership know that we are looking to fill gaps in both the Board of Directors and Executive Leadership. Are you interested in learning more? Please send me an email, and I will help you understand what is involved, and how you can make a difference in keeping our Italian heritage alive through folk arts.

So to conclude, please find us on Facebook, visit our website, or send me an email direct if you have any questions at all. I hope to see a large turnout at this year's conference, and I look forward to our future together with this great organization!

Sincerely,

Mark DeSanctis

Cell: 414-550-6419

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[www.italianfolkartfederation.org](http://www.italianfolkartfederation.org)

## Greater Rockford Italian American's Hall Of Fame 2012

October 6, 2012, the *Amici Italiani* Youth & Adult Dance Troupes of Rockford, Illinois, had the honor of being inducted into the Greater Rockford Italian American's Hall Of Fame! Congratulations!!

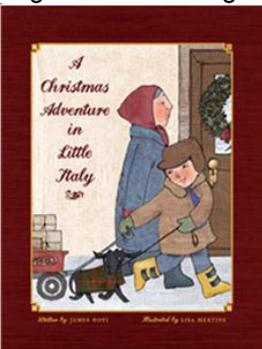
Right: Shirley Martignoni Fedeli, Rosie Sheridan, Bea Giammarese Ricotta, Carla Mullen, and Pauline Ursa all of *Amici Italiani*, with Dr. Alberto L. Pumilia who was also honored.

Below: Members of the adult and children's groups of at the ceremony.



### **Book: *A Christmas Adventure in Little Italy***

It's the day before Christmas, and Jimmy and his best friend—his dog, Blackie—are visiting *Nonna*, Jimmy's grandma, in her neighborhood called Little Italy. Jimmy loves to visit with *Nonna*, especially when he can help her make *biscotti*. After they finish their baking, Jimmy, *Nonna*, and Blackie set out together on the wintry day to take packages of the freshly baked *biscotti* to St. Michael the Archangel Church, where the cookies will be given to poor families on Christmas Eve. But as they leave the church, a bus making a sudden stop startles Blackie, and the little dog runs off through the neighborhood. All too soon, Jimmy realizes that Blackie is lost. Even though Jimmy and *Nonna* search everywhere, the quickly falling snow covers up Blackie's paw prints, making it impossible to follow him. Will Jimmy's Christmas be a sad one without his best friend?



*A Christmas Adventure in Little Italy* is a heartwarming tale of a boy and his dog, set against the backdrop of a 1950s-era Italian neighborhood. The endearing and evocative images and child-friendly narrator's voice will enchant young readers (and listeners), transporting them to a time gone by—a time of simple pleasures and special relationships. The inclusion of *Nonna's biscotti* recipe at the end of the book—a real taste of Little Italy—is an added treat that children and adults alike will love. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this book will be donated to the Kathleen Muth Reading Center at Chapman University. For more information, please visit [www.chapman.edu](http://www.chapman.edu).

To buy the book from the author, go to <http://www.achristmasadventure.com/>. The book is also available through amazon.com or Barnes & Noble.

## I Pastori (The Shepherds)

Gabriele D'Annunzio

Settembre, andiamo. E' tempo di migrare.  
Ora in terra d'Abruzzi i miei pastori  
lascian gli stazzi e vanno verso il mare:  
scendono all'Adriatico selvaggio  
che verde è come i pascoli dei monti.

Han bevuto profondamente ai fonti  
alpestri, che sapor d'acqua natia  
rimanga nei cuori esuli a conforto,  
che lungo illuda la lor sete in via.  
Rinnovato han verga d'avellano.

E vanno pel tratturo antico al piano,  
quasi per un erbal fiume silente,  
su le vestigia degli antichi padri.  
O voce di colui che primamente  
conosce il tremolar della marina!

Ora lung'hesso il litoral camina  
la greggia. Senza mutamento è l'aria  
Il sole imbionda si la viva lana  
che quasi dalla sabbia non divaria.  
Ischiacquo, calpestio, dolci rumori.

Ah perchè non son io co' miei pastori?

September, let us go. It's time to migrate.  
Now in the land of Abruzzi my shepherds  
leave the stables and go towards the sea:  
they go down to the wild Adriatic  
which is green as their mountain pastures.

They drank deeply at the mountain  
springs, so that a taste of native water  
stays in their displaced hearts to comfort them,  
so that long it may soothe their thirst along the way.  
They have replaced their chestnut shepherd's staff.

And they go along the ancient track to the plain,  
as if following a grassy silent river,  
on the footsteps of their ancient fathers.  
O the voice of he who first  
recognizes the trembling of the sea waters!

Now following the coast the sheep tread.  
Motionless is the air.  
The sun so lightens the living wool  
that it's almost indistinguishable from the sand.  
Splashing, trampling, sweet noises.

Alas why am I not with my shepherds?

## Dolce far niente

Recently I was paging through one of my favorite books **Festivals and Folkways of Italy** by Frances Toor. Toor (1890-1956) was an ethnologist who traveled through Italy shortly after World War II. She spent eight months in Italy experiencing and writing about the festivals, crafts, foods and traditions of the "peasant" Italians. She believed that the "richest" traditions and folk arts belonged to the poor.

In her book, Toor describes Neapolitans as intelligent, generous and capable of great friendship. She then notes how they are good workers but do not like working under bosses. As a result they try to eke out a living by selling something or working in their crowded *bassi* (one room apartments). Toor states that she saw little of the ***dolce far niente*** (sweet laziness) which Neapolitans are famous for. She offered the following story as an example of *dolce far niente*.

A fisherman asleep on the shore in the shade of his rowboat was awakened by a friend who said to him, "Wake up Giovanni, a big passenger ship with many foreigners has just come in!"

"What's that got to do with me?" asked Giovanni, stretching lazily.

"Why, you ought to go out there with your boat and bring in passengers. You can make lots of money that way."

"Then what?" replied Giovanni.

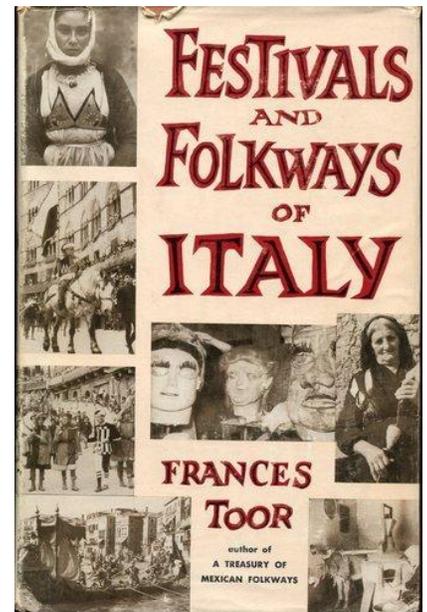
"Why, in time you can buy another boat and your son can help you."

"Then what?" Giovanni queried again.

"Then you will be rich and you can rest!"

"But here I am resting already," said Giovanni, as he turned over and went to sleep again.

Copies of Frances Toor's book **Festivals and Folkways of Italy** (1953) can be purchased on the web for less than \$5! It is a must read of Italian folklore.



Submitted by Paul Torna

# Italian Folk Art Federation of America

October 25 – 27, 2013

Hosted by: *Gruppo Folkoristico Ricordi D'Italia*, Newton, MA

## CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Hotel reservations are made directly to the Crowne Plaza Boston Newton. Be sure to tell them that you are attending the IFAFA Conference. If reserving online, the Group Code is "IFA." The IFAFA room rate is only available for Friday and Saturday nights. If you stay additional nights, the cost will be the hotel's going rate.

Hotel: Crowne Plaza Boston Newton  
320 Washington Street  
Newton, MA 02458

Room Rate: \$169 per night (plus 11.7% tax)  
To make a reservation please call: 1-877-227-6963  
Cut off date for reservations is Oct. 5, 2013

Parking Fee: \$10 flat rate

Check in time: 3:00pm  
Check out time: 11:00am

Registration Information: Full Conference fee includes all activities, workshops, & meals (excluding breakfast).

DVD of entire event & Group Photo will be available to order at the conference.

Please complete and detach form below. Make check payable to IFAFA. Mail form and check to:  
Claire Guerriero, 230 Gaston St., Medford, MA 02155. If you have any questions please feel free to call Claire at 781-391-8434.

Name(s)\* \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Add. \_\_\_\_\_

Group Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_ IFAFA Member? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

Indicate number of registrations and calculate cost:

**Registration after Oct. 5, add \$15 per person.**

Full Conference: IFAFA Member # \_\_\_\_\_ x \$135.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Full Conference: Non Member # \_\_\_\_\_ x \$145 .00= \_\_\_\_\_

For Non-Participating Guests:

Lunch for Saturday # \_\_\_\_\_ x \$35.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Night Festa # \_\_\_\_\_ x \$60.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount of Check: \_\_\_\_\_

\*If this registration is for more than one person, please use a separate sheet to list all the names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses for each participant and include with registration.

## Collection of Photos of Italian Folk Costumes

The following photos were provided by Richard Castillo who lives in Oakland, CA, and is very much into Italian folklore and traditional costumes. He has collected numerous pictures of Italian regional folk costumes that he would like to share with various Italian organizations.

Richard says, "It seems as though not enough is done in promoting our folk costumes, and my wish is to bring the costumes to the forefront." His goal is to promote our Italian heritage by promoting the folk costumes to the Italian American museums and various Italian centers so they can also promote the folk costumes.

Since many IFAFA members are involved with Italian Community Centers, you are invited to contact Richard who will gladly email photos to you from his collection. His email address is <[rcastill@acgov.org](mailto:rcastill@acgov.org)>. You may also contact him if you have a personal interest in costumes from a particular region; you do not need to be a member of an Italian Community Center to request photos.

The two pictures below are of *il Gruppo Folkloristico Firlinfeu 'La Primavera'* from Sovico, provincia Brianza, Lombardia. The first picture also includes members of *il Gruppo Folkloristico Firlinfeu 'Renzo e Lucia'* from Lecco, provincia Brianza, Lombardia.



The pictures below show *L'Associazione Gente di Rogolo* from Rogolo, provincia Sondrio, region of Lombardia.



## Will Our Italian Heritage Become Extinct by the End of This Century?

I have devoted a great deal of my life working to preserve our Italian heritage in the United States. Many of you have spent time and money doing the same but, in doing so, have we wasted our time, money, and energy? The odds are against us because we are not doing the things we should. How does an ethnic group insure its survival?

Italy today is not the same country your grandparents left, and it is true that many Italian-Americans are now highly acculturated and assimilated members of American society. We also agree that the language has been lost, and almost everything of Italy and things Italian. If there was the will, Italian-Americans could learn about Italy and her heritage. If we are able to get across to Italian-Americans that our Italian heritage is a treasure, we may have more success. We need to point out that Italian personal and family values and our way of interacting with relatives and friends is very enriching. By raising the consciousness of our intellectual heritage, they will come to value what Italy has contributed to the world!

I have always been amazed by the effect that Italy has had on the Italian-American tourist. It is a key to culture and identity, especially when contact is made with family and place. Italy is playing a formidable role in the world economy, politics, science, and arts in the present day.

I agree that our future depends upon social cohesion. We need to encourage more Italian-Americans, especially young people, to join Italian-American organizations. As members, they will have interaction with other individuals with shared values and personal identity. We must welcome the spouses who are not of Italian descent and encourage them to share both heritages with their children. Our Italian-American organizations must provide educational material for children of mixed antecedents. There must also be programs and events in our organizations for various socio-economic class positions.

Complete assimilation and the extinction of our Italian ethnicity has not yet taken place. We are in the *twilight of ethnicity*, and that is why it is so important to act today. We have some of the answers when we see the persistence of ethnicity in the United States. We notice a lingering attachment to Italy by third- and fourth-generation Italian-Americans. Why? One good reason is an authentic and deep understanding of things Italian, past and present.

We must raise the consciousness of Italian-Americans in light of being more educated. The affairs of a very modern Italy have appeal because Italy is contributing so much to modern life. Italian radio and television are now available in the United States, There are so many opportunities to keep in touch with Italy and with our families there.

-- Prof./Cav. Philip J. DiNovo

## A Letter from Paolina Kavanagh of *Cuor d'Italia*, Hartford, CT

To all my dear friends,

I'm writing this letter to let you know that as of June 31, 2013, and after 13 years of directing and choreographing the Italian Folk Dance Group, *Cuor d'Italia*, I have decided to retire.

It has been.....years of ups and downs, tears and laughter, exciting trips and performances we will never forget. And also, the fantastic IFABA conference we hosted in October, 2011.

What a pleasure it was as I started teaching young students of Nina DiMascio's Italian classes the Tarantella and other fun dances. Although they had never seen or done any of these dances, they tried very hard to please me, and we actually did perform for various groups and also at Trinity College. Two of those original children are now in college, and still dancing with "Signora Paolina".

Well now, I feel that it is time for me to "pass the baton", or in this case "pass the dancing shoes" to two very capable dancers of *Cuor d'Italia*. They are Dr. Henry and Mrs. Laura Speno. Henry and Laura are a very dedicated couple who will continue promoting Italian culture through music and dance. I will continue working with them if and when my assistance is needed.

I also want to thank Nina and Erminio DiMascio; Johanna Dolge; Emily, Ashley and Laurie Peters; Roberta Maurer; Lisa Tomasaitis; Theresa Giard and all the former members of *Cuor d'Italia* for the joy they have given me all these years. They have always made me so proud of the way they performed, bringing much pleasure to so many people.

So, GOOD LUCK, GREAT DANCING, AND MUCH LOVE TO ALL.



Paolina Kavanagh (third from the right) and members of *Cuor d'Italia*

-- Paolina (Bosco) Kavanagh

## Italian Notebook

Italian Notebook is a free, brief, daily email from Italy read by tens of thousands of Italophiles worldwide! GB, the editor, launched the online resource with the objective of taking his dual insider/outsider perspective on Italy to the web. Born in Germany, raised in France and Italy, both a US and Italian citizen, educated at Penn in Philadelphia, he now lives in Rome again. He has many great contributors on board and is looking forward to adding exciting new features to the site.

To sign up to receive this free email and to peruse past issues, go to: <http://www.italiannotebook.com/>  
Here's a sample email from August of last year.

### ***Botteghiamo?***

August 1, 2012

Sorrento, Campania



Unfortunately we all know that the speed of modern life can make it difficult to appreciate and give proper due to the old traditions and know-how of cabinet makers, inlayers, embroiderers, upholsterers, restorers, ceramicists, and shoemakers, among others. Artisans, their traditional workshops, and thus a small piece of history are unfortunately slowly disappearing throughout Italy.

Well, rather than lament the state of affairs, our new friends at [Botteghiamo](#) (an untranslatable, made-up word; roughly meaning, "Let's artisan workshop/ing") have decided to do something about it. Their admirable goal is to foster an until-now non-existent link

between the traditional artisans and the global community through the web, social technologies, and the increased awareness of this priceless and irreplaceable legacy. Their first project?

Together with the *Unione Artigiani Intarsio Sorrentino* (Sorrento's inlayers association), *Botteghiamo-Intarsio* is a modern hands-on journey into the workshops, old traditions, and know-how of these incredible wood-working artisans.



Beginning in June 2012, *Botteghiamo* and the *intarsiatori* of Sorrento have set up shop, showroom, and workstations inside the ancient defense walls of the town. Work from each and every one of Sorrento's *intarsiatori* is on display, and four artisans at any given time are on location all day creating their beautiful masterpieces right before the eyes of any and all friends (that's us!) who are invited to stop by to witness firsthand the breathtaking art and technique of these *maestri*.

*Botteghiamo* has also done events with the artisans of Rome, and will be expanding there as well as in other cities

throughout Italy that are *centri di eccellenza artigianale* (centers of artisanal excellence). Keep an eye out for copies of their city maps, (printed from a hand-painted original, obviously!), available at tourist information booths in Rome and Sorrento.

*ItalianNotebook* fully endorses *Botteghiamo's* mission, and we look forward to more collaborative work with their team, proud to be an international mouthpiece and strong web presence by their side. *Auguri!*

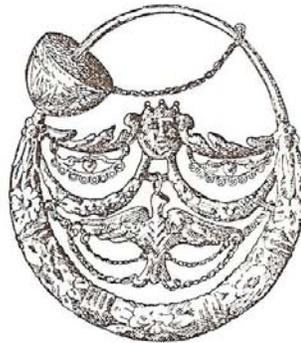


## Regional Italian Folk Costume

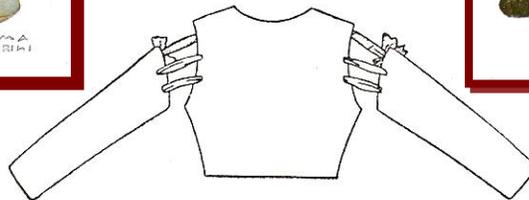
We continue the series of descriptions of folk costumes taken from the book, now out of print, Il Costume popolare in Italia, by Emma Calderini, published by Sperling & Kupfer, Milano. In this issue, we highlight two costumes from the region of *Abruzzi*.



**BELOW:** Detail of gold earring from Orsogna



**BELOW:** Detail of bodice from Castel di Sangro.



**LEFT:** Peasant woman of Castel di Sangro

Blouse of homemade fabric with a scooped neckline, decorated with crocheted lace at the neck and sleeves. Bodice of hand-woven fabric; separate sleeves are attached with colored lace and embroidered with gold braiding (see detail). Wide pleated skirt striped at the bottom with bands of fabric and velvet. Small silk apron. Woolen knit stockings. Shoes of black leather. Hair parted at the forehead and braids gathered in the back. A handkerchief of white muslin, embroidered in the corners, covers the head allowing glimpses of the silk ribbon that ties around the head. Gold pendant earrings. Necklace of hammered gold beads. Gold rings with images of saints.

**RIGHT:** Holiday Attire of Orsogna

Blouse of flannelette, decorated at the neck with lace and on the front with narrow pleats. Skirt of heavy wool with velvet appliqués and colored stitching, gathered in pleats at the waist and smooth in the front. Little taffeta jacket, decorated with fabric remnants and velvet. Apron of embroidered silk, hemmed with an embroidered lace border. On the head and shoulders, a shawl of beautiful Damask silk. White knit stockings. Shoes of black leather. Large earrings of wrought gold (see detail).

## HOW TO CONTACT US

### IFAF A PRESIDENT

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### TRADIZIONI EDITOR

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Email: [viva\\_ifafa@hotmail.com](mailto:viva_ifafa@hotmail.com)  
2512 Glen Hastings Court  
San Jose, CA 95148

### Founder's Fund

The Elba Farabegoli Gurzau Founder's Fund was originally established as a living memorial to the founder of the Italian Folk Art Federation of America. Contributions for any intention, i.e. birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion, as well as in memoriam, are used only for artistic endeavors.

Donations may be made payable to "IFAF A – Founder's Fund" and mailed to: IFAFA, c/o Treasurer, P.O. Box 3185, Fort Lee, NJ 07024.

When sending a donation to commemorate an event, please: Identify the occasion and give the full name of the individual to be honored. Also give the full name and address to whom the announcement is to be sent. The contributor should also provide his/her name, address, and telephone number.

A special letter, announcing the contribution and naming the contributor, will be forwarded to the honored person or family, and an acknowledgement will be sent to the contributor.

### FOLK DANCES, COSTUMES AND CUSTOMS OF ITALY

by Elba Farabgeloi Gurzau

Softcover book, 128 pages, including black-and-white and color illustrations. Seventeen dances with description and notated music, information about Italy, costumes, customs, etc. Comes with recorded music to accompany the dances, your choice of CD or audiocassette.

Price: \$25.00 plus \$3.95 for handling and postage.  
Be sure to specify CD or cassette.

Please make check or money order  
payable to IFAFA and mail to:  
IFAF A Treasurer  
103 Greenbrier Drive  
Carnegie, PA 15106

### Contributors to this Issue of Tradizioni

The editor would like to thank the following people for contributing articles and/or information for this issue:

Richard Castillo  
Mark DeSanctis

Prof./Cav. Philip J. DiNovo  
Claire Guerriero  
Paolina Bosco Kavanagh

Bea Giammarese Ricotta  
Paul Torna

The purpose of the ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA (IFAF A) 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.

IFAF A 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.

### Membership in IFAFA

You may also join online!

<http://www.italianfolkartfederation.org/EN/Membership.asp>

Individual Membership:

- Youth (under 18): \$18/year
- Adult (18-60 years of age): \$24/year
- Senior (60 and up): \$18/year

Performance Groups:

- Groups (up to 10 members): \$100/year
- Groups (10+ members): \$150/year

Contributing to the work of IFAFA: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions are tax-deductible. Make checks payable to IFAFA Mail to:  
IFAF A Treasurer, 103 Greenbrier Drive, Carnegie, PA 15106