



# tradizioni

NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA

VOLUME 6

1985

NUMBER 1

*"There is a tide in the affairs of men  
which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life, is bound  
in shallows...."*

*"On such a full sea are we now afloat,  
and we must take the current when it serves  
or lose our venture."*

*Wm. Shakespeare*

As we prepare to celebrate the fifth anniversary of **TRADIZIONI**, I wish to thank all who have generously responded to our appeal in the previous newsletters. The goal of our special fund-raising is \$5000 to defray the escalating printing and mailing costs and the diminishing source of funds.

Since our last newsletter, contributions amount to \$2000.00, making a grand total of \$2,074.00 for the past two years. The list of the additional contributors comes elsewhere in this issue.

Our readers are honest, hard-working people, not wealthy people. I know that a large contribution may not be possible, but every contribution is important. If you can't contribute \$20.00, please send \$10.00 or \$5.00 and keep the envelope open. We depend on the generosity of all of you. For those who have contributed, you may wish to renew your 1985 I.F.A.F.A. membership also reminded that their annual membership fee is now due.

*Dr. Anthony E. LaFollette, Editor*

## UPDATE ON N.E.A. GRANT

As previously reported, The National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C., has awarded I.F.A.F.A. a matching grant to produce a series of L.P. albums of Italian folk music and songs performed by first-generation Italian immigrants living in the U.S.

Anna Chairetakis, Project Director, is pleased to report that all recording has been completed, and distribution is expected in 1985.

The four L.P. records are:

- I. "La Baronessa di Carini" (Baroness of Carini)  
Traditional Sicilian songs of passion, romance and devotion, recorded in Western New York.
- II. "Nu Fazzu Chiu lu Carritteri" (I won't go anymore as a cart-driver)  
Traditional Sicilian songs and music of work entertainment and satire, recorded in Western N.Y.
- III. "Mo Simu Venuti, Mo Simu Arrivati" (Now we've come, now we've arrived)  
Traditional southern Italian music and songs from Calabria, Campania, Basilicata and Abruzzi, recorded in Western N.Y. and Southern Ontario.
- IV. "Cantate con Noi" (Sing with us)  
Choral songs from Istria and the Alps, and old-fashioned songs and music from South-Central Italy, recorded in Western New York and Southern Ontario.

Anyone interested in receiving further up-dates and releases as soon as they become available, should write to I.F.A.F.A.

## MUSICA POPOLARE

"Musica Popolare," the Ethnic Folk Arts Center's Italian Music Tour, traveled to a number of communities in the northeast in October, 1984.

Dr. Anna Chairetakis introduced the program:

*"...You have just heard 'La suonata processionale' – processional music – followed by the 'Shepherd's Quadrille,' played by Michele Strollo & Rocco Carbone of Colliano, Salerno.*

*We welcome you to Musica Popolare, a concert tour of traditional southern Italian music. The performers in this event are exceptionally fine traditional artists from the regions of Campania and Sicily, coming from Italy, and an outstanding group from Calabria, living in the United States. Accompanying the overseas performers is Paolo Apolito, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Salerno, who will be glad, I'm sure, to talk with you after the performance about the music and the performers.*

*Many Italian Americans of the 2nd and 3rd generations, the descendants of the first big immigration, have come to identify Neapolitan urban music, which emerged in its present form in the late 19th century, as the core of their traditional music, and sometimes as the badge of their ethnic identity. The same is true of the gay, sophisticated Neapolitan tarantella, as well as of the choral arrangements of regional favorites such as 'Vola Vola,' 'Sciuri Sciuri,' 'Calabrisella' and others.*

*As appealing, familiar, and powerful as these expressions are, the southern Italian folk music tradition encompasses*

*(Continued on Page 2)*

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF ETHNIC CULTURE IN AMERICA

The concept of "folk culture" includes the entire panorama of the traditional beliefs, activities, skills and art forms of a people. These philosophical, physical and aesthetic components endure over time as they are passed on from one generation to the next by word-of-mouth or by customary example. They also evolve over time, responding to new contexts, forever changing (sometimes subtly, sometimes dramatically) to meet new circumstances and new needs.

Because of differing conditions, the folk culture of an ethnic group in America develops into a form which is distinct from that of members of the same group who remained in their land of origin. An extreme example is the Amish who, because of severe religious persecution in their Swiss homeland, left Europe in large numbers and came to America. The Amish who stayed in Europe eventually merged with Swiss Mennonite congregations and were entirely assimilated, whereas the Amish in America have not only retained their individuality but have grown in number. At present there are 160 Amish church districts in Ohio alone.

Further, separate colonies of a single ethnic group all settling in America but in different localities also develop differently from one another. The Cajuns of Louisiana, the early settlers of the Old Mines district in Missouri, and the French Canadains of Quebec are all, theoretically, French. In reality, however, they are as different from one another as can be in their foodways, architecture, dialect, music and customs.

Considering the always-changing world in which our ethnic communities find themselves and the fascinating ways the old traditions are continually reshaped to

meet the demands of modern life, one would assume that the average layperson would be as enthralled by ethnic folk culture as he or she is with television programs like **60 Minutes, Nova, or Mystery**. Oddly enough, there seem to be only two types of people who are interested in their ethnic folk cultures — those members of an ethnic group who participate actively in their own culture and those members of the academic community who specialize in the study of man. The concerns of the professional practitioners and the professional observers of folk culture may sometimes turn out to be the very forces that perpetuate the general lack of interest in traditional culture.

**When folklorists, ethnomusicologists, anthropologists, and the like work with a folk community, studying the people and their culture, they publish their findings in articles and books intended solely for the academic audience. Scholars in a single discipline do not feel that they must convince one another of the importance of their field, so their writings seldom tackle the question — why do they study traditional culture?**

The scholar is interested in folk culture for what it can teach us about humanity, the human mind, and, therefore, ourselves. For instance, many peoples previously considered to be extremely primitive, living in areas long enough to become familiar with the native flora, developed complex systems of folk medicine based on herbal lore. Scientists now find that the ingredients of these traditional herbal medicines are often identical, although in natural form, to those being synthesized by pharmaceutical companies for use in modern prescription drugs. Obviously,

then, folk science among even the very isolated peoples has been developed to a much higher degree of sophistication than we might have suspected.

The first job of the folklorist, ethnomusicologist, or anthropologist working with ethnic folk culture is to describe the culture or one of its components in great detail. Such documentation subsequently is heard by other scholars to determine which details are characteristic of the culture, which innovations are cultural trends, and which are simply one-time occurrences. Once it becomes obvious that a widespread change is underway, the rules which dictate how these changes take place can be discovered.

The lessons ethnic folk culture can teach go beyond the rather esoteric interests of the academic community. What the layperson can learn is that all peoples have to meet the same needs (food, clothing, and shelter), answer the same ultimate questions (about the existence of a supreme being, life after death, and the difference between right and wrong), respond to the same urges (to imbue the surroundings with a sense or order, rhythm, and beauty). These needs, questions and urges, though shared by all humans, are met differently by different groups. Each group must act in accord with its surroundings, which vary greatly throughout the world and through history. If we understand that fact, we see that all the cultural manifestations of every culture of the world and every ethnic folk culture in America have a vital role for the members of that group and that all cultures are equally valid. □

*Ms. Zygas is Executive Director of Peoples and Cultures and is a doctoral candidate in folklore at Indiana University in Bloomington.*

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## MUSICA POPOLARE

*(Continued from Page 1)*

*much more. Just as Italy has many spoken dialects, she also has many identifiable local traditions and many musical languages. Historical processes, a convoluted geography, late national unification, and uneven development in the South have combined to create and nourish many beautiful local and regional cultures which are still cherished and enjoyed by those who live in them."*

After Dr. Chairetakis's remarks, a delightful and vibrant program of southern Italian folk songs and dances followed. Most unusual was the Coro Calabrese, doing the Villanella, Calabrian style.

In this Calabrian Villanella, several singers stand in a closed

circle and sing in three overlapping parts — leader, chorus, and high drone voice. The effect is similar to the sound of bagpipes. This is an antique form of harmony; scholars who have researched the history of music in the Mediterranean area say that it may predate the Roman period.

Due to the popularity of its program, the Ethnic Folk Arts Center of New York City is requesting funds from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to have a similar program in late 1985. □

Anna Chairetakis, Project Director, is an anthropologist in Cultural Anthropology at Columbia University. Recently the Italian government bestowed upon her the title of Cavaliere for her unique and scholarly contributions to Italian folk arts.

## I BALLERINI HOST-"SBANDIERATORI" FLAG WAVERS FROM CORI, NEAR ROME, ITALY

by Elba F. Gurzau

I BALLERINI of Philadelphia, assisted by members of the Reading, PA. and Vineland, N.J. member-groups of IFAFA, offered dinner and hospitality to a group of 35 people from Cori, Italy, of which about 30 were "Sbandieratori" and musicians.

The visitors had been invited by the City of Philadelphia to perform in the Independence Day Parade. As expected, they were fantastic and won first prize among the parade participants.

The art of flag-waving is exciting to watch and in recent years has become universally recognized. Several groups have recently come here from Italy to perform. If they let us know when they are coming, we can announce their arrival in TRADIZIONI.

The group usually comes from one town in Italy. They wear outfits that were worn long ago and they use flags. The flags are about 3 feet by 4 feet, beautifully and colorfully designed with symbols representing the different areas of their hometowns. The flags are attached to staffs which have a heavy weight at the end so that when the flags

are thrown high in the air, they come down with the flag flying above.

The performers can throw flags while walking or when standing in different positions. One person may play with one or more flags, but more often performers throw in groups of two or more, creating a sort of dance of flags in the air.

Members of the group from Cori, called "Leoni Rampanti" told us that for centuries there were only two or three groups as "Sbandieratori" in Italy, and the performances took place as part of larger festivals such as the PALIO of SIENA. Now, however, the interest has grown; about 25 towns have their own outstanding "Sbandieratori."

The design attached to this article is of a doll which the group from Cori gave us in appreciation for our hospitality. It gives a general idea of the costumes. Performers wear tight-fitting pants to the ankle, neatly covered by leather boots. A shirt with long sleeves shirred at the shoulders is also worn. Over this is a panel-like garment to the hips, open on

the sides and held together with a belt. Costumes are colorful and sometimes trimmed with gold braids. Sometimes the pants have legs each of a different color. A brimmed hat with a fluffy feather in front tops the outfit. The group has made a careful study of the costumes through the centuries.

Flag-throwing is an art worth preserving, and we congratulate the groups of Italy and the organizations that sponsor them.

If you, our reader, or someone you know, has further information about the origin or other interesting material about this old traditional art, please let us know; we would like to have a second article on the subject.

Wouldn't it be an accomplishment if someone could start a group of "Sbandieratori" in the United States! □

*Elba F. Gurzau is the artistic director of I.F.A.F.A. and author of the book "Folk Dances, Costumes and Customs of Italy."*

### FOLK DANCES, COSTUMES AND CUSTOMS OF ITALY

128 pages include illustrations, 171 dances with description and music, information about Italy, costumes, customs, etc. \$9.50.

An educational tape with music is available for the dance = \$5.00.

Add \$1.00 for handling and postage for first book and tape; add 50 cents for each additional book.

Please make check or money order payable to:

Elba F. Gurzau - 1325 West  
Roosevelt Blvd. Philadelphia, Pa.  
19140 - (215) 324-1250.



"Sbandieratori" Doll from Cori,  
Italy

Colors: Yellow,  
blue, gold trimmings.

**DIRECTORY OF PERFORMING GROUPS**  
**Members of the Italian Folk Arts Federation of America (IFAFA)**  
**Listed According to Area Codes**

GROUP	CONTACT PERSON	DANCE	SING	COSTUME	A – ADULT C – CHILDREN
Gruppo Folcloristico Italiano One North Square Boston, Mass. 02113	Angelo Cattaneo 617-523-2585	X	X	X	A
Gruppo Folk, I Paesani 270 Warren St. Waltham, Mass. 02154	Margherita Drake 617-893-3104	X	X	X	A
Italian Folklore Group 75 Columbus Ave. Montclair, N.J. 07042	Rose Grieco 201-746-9765	X	X	X	A
Italian Folk Ensemble Ricordi d' Italia 7 Linwood Ave. Elmwood Park, N.J. 07407	Michael La Porta 201-796-6089	X	X	X	A
Coro d'Italia 576 Ashford Ave. Ardsley, N.Y. 10502	Vincent Atalese 914-693-1907	X	X	X	A
I Paesani of Westchester Community College 75 Grasslands Rd. Valhalla, N.Y. 10595	Carlo Sciafani 914-347-6862	X		X	A
Roma Lodge Folk Group c/o Sons of Italy 264 Fourth St. Troy, New York 12180	Rocco DiFazio	X		X	A
Italian Heritage Dancers Central New York American-Italian Historical Assoc. P.O. Box 293 Morrisville, N.Y. 13408	Philip DiNovo 315-684-9502	X		X	A
I Campagnoli 318 Lexington Avenue Carnegie, Pa. 15106	Jane Ferro 412-276-3314	X	X	X	A & C
I Paesani 825 Elizabeth St. Allentown, Pa. 18103	Ivano Ventresca 215-437-0296	X	X	X	A
I Ballerini 1325 West Roosevelt Blvd. Philadelphia, Pa. 19140	Elba F. Gurzau 215-324-1250	X		X	A
I Ballerini Rusticani 1302 Allegheny Ave. Reading, Pa. 19601	Mr. & Mrs. A. Tucci 215-374-6131	X		X	A

**DIRECTORY OF PERFORMING GROUPS**  
**Members of the Italian Folk Arts Federation of America (IFafa)**  
**Listed According to Area Codes**

GROUP	CONTACT PERSON	DANCE	SING	COSTUME	A – ADULT C – CHILDREN
Italian Folk Dancers of Padua Academy 1719 North Rodney Street Wilmington, Del. 19806	Josephine De Lellis	X	X	X	Students
Balli d'Italia 2306 Baltimore St. Baltimore, Md. 21214	Jeanette Sias 301-327-7087	X		X	A
Italian Folklore Group of Washington, D C. 4500 S. Four Mile Run Drive Arlington, Virginia 22204	Celeste DiPietropaolo	X		X	A
St. John's Italian Festival Dancers 3057 Grandon Rd. Upper Arlington (Columbus) Ohio 43221	Mary Lou Casanta 614-457-5567	X		X	A
St. Martha's Italian Dancers 437 Marview Ave. Akron, Ohio 44310	Verna & Sam Merendino 216-376-6940	X		X	C
I Gagliardi Italiani P.O. Box 9156 Canton, Ohio 44711	James Tortora 216-494-8348	X	X	X	A
Italian Study Group of Troy Children's Folk Ensemble 4281 Forsyth Troy, Michigan 48098	Luella Baron 313-689-7129	X	X	X	C
Il Trattenimento Italiano 2200 South Union Des Moines, Iowa 50315	Patricia Civitate 515-244-4672	X	X	X	A & C
I Ballerini di Minnesota 740 North Hazel St. St. Paul, Minn. 55119	Michelina Frascione 612-738-5953	X	X	X	A
Italian Cultural Center Chorus 2401 So. Oak Park Ave. Melrose Park, Illinois 66402	Josephine Li Puma 312-484-4358 312-562-1152	X	X	X	A
Les Sortileges 6560 Chambord Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2G 3B9	James DiGenova 514-274-5655	X		X	A
Club Italia Folk Dancers 10 Bethany Court St. Catherines, Ontario; Canada 4-2N6B7	Jeanie Bennici 416-934-6065	X		X	A

Address the contact person directly for further information or for engaging a group for any of your social functions.  
Do not call IFafa.

# THE ITALIAN AMERICAN SHRINES

In 1899, Jacob Riss, journalist and social reformer, described an altar in honor of St. Donato, erected by residents of New York's Little Italy: "It was a yard no longer, but a temple. All the sheets of the tenement had been stretched so as to cover the ugly sheds and outhouses. Against the dark rear tenement the shrine of the saint had been erected, shutting it altogether out of sight with a wealth of scarlet and gold. Great candles and little ones, painted and beribboned, burned in a luminous grove before the altar."

Almost a hundred years later, Italian-Americans continue this Old World tradition by placing statues of Christ, the Madonna, and a host of saints in front of their homes. The most common reason for this spontaneous religious action is an individual's or a family's vow made to heaven.

Few leave the store-bought object unadorned, choosing to enhance and personalize the statue in various ways.

Both older and recent immigrants, as well as 2nd and 3rd generation Italian Americans, create decorative patterns and floral landscapes around the statue. Others construct miniature buildings to house the saint. In addition to these permanent structures, temporary altars, erected during the saint's feast day, are placed outdoors on front stoops, sidewalks, and even on fire escapes. This transplanted folk art has been much ignored, until recently.

Joseph Sciorra, a student of Italian folklore, is the director of a photographic documentation project on Italian American shrines. Mr. Sciorra, who is completing his M.A. at New York University, has been researching this unique religious art form for the past year and a half. "The interesting thing about these shrines," he remarked, "is that the more elaborate ones, besides being a showcase for artisan and working-class skills, are actually used by the

community." Neighbors leave offerings of flowers and candles, while one Brooklyn shrine has become the site of the annual selling of blessed bread in honor of St. Anthony. One man reported seeing local teenage boys make the sign of the cross as they passed his ornate front lawn grotto.

Though Mr. Sciorra has located many altars and shrines, he is certain he has missed many others. "The temporary altars are the hardest to find," he admits. If you know of a decorated saint statue or temporary altar in New York City, New Jersey, or Connecticut, you can contribute to this worthwhile endeavor. The project is interested in front yard decorations, tile and glass patterns covering facades of a home, indoor home altars, either those kept all year round or, like the Sicilian tradition for St. Joseph, those made for the feast day. You can contact Mr. Sciorra at 155 Guernsey Street, Apt. No. 1L, Brooklyn, New York 11222 or by calling (718) 389-3117.

## Sole in White Wine

Sciaccia, once a small colony owned by the strong ancient city of Selinunte, Greece, is now a flourishing town, while Selinunte, although famous, is now a ruin. The credit for this goes first to the Arabs, then to the Aragonese rulers from Spain, who transformed Sciaccia into an important agricultural and trading center. Credit also goes to its spas, ascribed to the mythical Daedalus. Visitors are also attracted by the beautiful landscape and by the numerous historical and architectural treasures. Here you will taste the best sole of Sicily.

**INGREDIENTS:** One 7-oz. sole or two filets per person, flour, olive oil, salt and pepper, dry white wine, parsley.

**PREPARATION:** 1. If using whole fish, remove head, fins and skin. Cut and wash fish. Cut length-wise and detach filets.

2. Coat filets with flour. Fry in hot oil until barely golden.

3. Arrange in buttered, flameproof baking dish. Add salt and pepper and put over flame.

4. As soon as they start to fry, bathe with wine and raise flame to reduce wine by two-thirds.

5. Serve garnished with parsley.

## Sicilia e le Isole in Bocca

(Sicily and Its Islands in Your Mouth), by Antonio Cardella (Edikronos, Palermo, 1981) is a leisurely, anecdotal guide to culinary traditions of Sicily and the small nearby islands. Produced on rough brown paper with intricate line drawings, handwritten in Sicilian and translated into Italian and English, this cookbook is full of authentic local recipes and tales of the travels of the author and his friends. Surrounded as they are by the Mediterranean, the Sicilians have developed a special talent with fish and seafood. The book is not available in the U.S.

R.T.

Excerpted and adopted for Tradizioni from the "Downtown Manhattan Newspaper."

## Stone Bass

To populate Lampedusa, one of the Pelagian Islands south of Sicily, in 1843 King Ferdinand II sent 100 men and women on the steamer Rondine (Swallow) to this distant island and gave them all the necessities of life. In the 15th century, Alfonso of Aragon had ceded the island to Don Giovanni De Caro di Montechiaro; two centuries later Charles II of Spain gave the Tomasi family the title of Prince of Lampedusa. Those were difficult times: pirates and troops in transit often devastated the place. At present Lampedusa is a resort for much quieter invaders. In the deep sea round this island, a common fish is the stone bass (*Polyprion cernium*), called "addottu" by the Sicilians.

**INGREDIENTS:** 6 thick slices of scaled stone bass; chopped onion, celery, garlic and parsley; ½ glass olive oil; 6 tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped; ½ cup salted capers, rinsed well; 10 green olives, seeded and chopped.

**PREPARATION:** 1. Fry onion, celery, garlic in large skillet with oil. Add tomatoes, capers and olives.

2. Put fish slices in this sauce; add salt and pepper to taste.

3. Cook over low heat.

4. Just before removing pan from heat, add parsley.

## Contributors

The following is an additional list of contributors who have generously responded to our appeal for funds. All contributions received after December 31 will be acknowledged in the next issue of TRADIZIONI.

Neil Valenty  
Vincent Visceglia  
Michael M. Bach  
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Maria Grigonis  
Grace Russomello  
Mae C. Valente

All listed are contributors and apart from membership.

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## Special Thanks

Lucy N. La Porta (F.D.U. faculty of Foreign Language Department) has resigned as senior proof editor of Tradizioni.

As a friend and as a professional, she contributed to the Newsletter for the past five years in many exceptional ways.

Lucy, with your knowledge and accuracy in both Italian and English, and with your uncompromising commitment to excellence, you have helped make Tradizioni an informative newsletter, blending the scholarly and the popular.

We will miss you and trust that your enthusiasm for life, which we so admire, will never diminish.

(The Editorial Staff)

Assuming the position of senior proof editor will be Sheila Lombardi, M.A., writing consultant and seminar leader.

### LACCIO D' AMORE THE RIBBON POLE DANCE OF TAGLIACOZZO (An engagement dance) Abruzzi, Italy Written up by Mae Fraley

In May, 1983, the dance group of Tagliacozzo performed the following ribbon pole dance for us in an old Roman theatre high in the mountains.

Music: 2/4 (Quadriglia)

Form: Pole with vari-colored ribbons fastened at the top, crowned with flowers.

1. Dancers enter as couples, inside hands joined with partner's; the engaged couple stands by the pole, the others move CCW around the pole and form a circle.
2. Partners face each other and form Grand Chain (Grand Right and Left) once around, until they meet the second time.
3. Girls dance step-hops in place. Men go to the pole and pick up ribbons for self and partner, and dance backward to place.
4. Men hold ribbons high as the girls form a circle, facing the pole, hands joined, and slide to the left (CW). Girls leave their circle and stand to right of partner and take their ribbon from partner.  
Girls turn and face outward, join hands, continue sliding to their right (CW) to end facing partner.  
Girls leave their circle and stand to right of partner and take their ribbon from partner.

5. Weave the Ribbons.

Partners face, dance as in a Grand Chain, but without taking hands. They pass right shoulder with partner, the man passing under the ribbon of the girl; then they pass left shoulders with next person, the girl going under the ribbon of the man. The pattern continues until partners meet the second time.

6. Unwind the Ribbons

When partners meet the second time, they turn backs to each other and reverse the weaving process, passing right shoulder with the one now faced, girl going under the ribbon first.

Notes: Please do not call this a "Maypole." A "Maypole" is strictly an English phenomenon, used on May Day strictly for springtime ritual purposes. Many countries have ribbon pole dances.

The Group at Tagliacozzo told us that this dance is performed at engagement parties. If the ribbons wind and unwind smoothly, the marriage will be a good one, but if the ribbons are tangled, the marital road will be rocky! Also, an odd number of couples at the pole means bad luck.

*Mae Fraley is a lecturer and International Folk Dance Teacher based in Maryland.*

The Italian Folk Art Federation of America, Inc. is a non-profit, educational federation. Its purpose is to research, preserve and foster interest in the various aspects of Italian folklore.

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**Reviews**

**JOSEPH TUSIANI –  
POETA E TRADUTTORE**

by Lucia Petracco Sovran

Professor Lucia Petracco Sovran, born in San Vito al Tagliamento, Friuli, Italy, teaches Italian language and literature at the College of Mr. St. Vincent. Riverdale, N.Y. Among her courses are Italian Folklore and Friuli Civilization. In 1983, she was invited by Friuli Nel Mondo to partake in the Region's summer festivals of folk dance, song and literature.

Her recently published book – JOSEPH TUSIANI – POETA E TRADUTTORE – has been reviewed by critics in the United States, Canada and Europe. Professor Pasquale Tuscano of the University of Perugia, Italy, says of Professor Sovran's book: *"The Italian-American community of the United States, and the land of Puglia, proud of her native son Tusiani, who bears witness to her culture and the humanity of her people, the most sensitive part of the national (Italian) culture, must be grateful to Lucia Petracco Sovran who, with this work, has made known to the rest of the world one of the most effective messengers of our literary heritage."*

The book, a critique of the works of

Joseph Tusiani, may be obtained by contacting Prof. Sovran at P.O. Box 185, Congers, New York 10920. The price, which includes postage and handling, is \$20.00.

**BROWSER'S BOOK OF BEGINNINGS:  
ORIGINS OF EVERYTHING UNDER  
AND INCLUDING THE SUN**

by Charles Panati

This interestingly-researched book deals with the origins of names, alphabet, music, liquor, candy and several other things dinosaurs never had.

Example: First names: The origin of the language itself (about 1.5 million years) also is believed to mark the use of first names to distinguish one man from his neighbor... "the short one", "the strange one." Bestowing names in this manner could also invest the individual with physical powers and traits. The Romans gave descriptive names like Agrippa, "born feet first", Seneca, "old", Lucius, "light bearing". The custom of family names did not really arise in Europe until patrician Venetian families began to hand down a second name from father to son in the eleventh century, frequently using "di" as in "di Giovanni" (John-son).

If you are interested in the origin of the "newsletter", 59 B.C., ask Julius Ceasar or read the book.

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER of the Greater Des Moines area, Iowa, is celebrating its first anniversary. Best Wishes!

The purpose of this newsletter is to share and support the progress of each affiliated organization in the area. Published monthly, it's a compendium of group activities plus historical, musical, and culinary information interspersed with color, wit and charm, Iowa style. Congratulations.

Anyone interested in how miracles are accomplished may write to Patricia Civitate, Editor, c/o Italian American Cultural Center, P.O. Box 8305, Des Moines, Iowa, 50301.

I am interested in:

- Group Membership \$25.
- Individual Membership \$10.
- Student (full time) and Senior Citizens \$5.
- Contributing to help continue the work of I.F.A.F.A.

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Contributions are tax deductible.

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