



January • February
2021



Italia

NEWSLETTER of the ITALIAN WORKMEN'S CLUB

914 Regent Street • Madison, Wisconsin 53715

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President's Message



New Year's Resolution

I'm honored to be your club President again, and I look forward

to working with the elected and appointed representatives as we discuss issues and make decisions impacting both the short and long term future of our club. The members of the Council have a sworn duty to fulfill the mission statement and lend our time and talent to work for the moral and material betterment of the club. We can do that most effectively with the active involvement and participation of all members. I encourage each of you not to settle for simply being a member, but to strengthen your resolve to seek opportunities, large and small to help your club.

IWC Mission Statement

Preserve and promote the history, culture, language, and

traditions of Italians and Italian Americans. The IWC is devoted to providing social opportunities that encourage its members to embrace their common Italian heritage, and to engage with the surrounding community, thereby increasing awareness of and appreciation for the collective achievements, honors and contributions of their ancestors.

The State Of The Club

Due to the highly contagious COVID-19 corona virus, 2020 was a challenging year.

We were forced to make the difficult decision to cancel our annual Festa Italia celebration, thereby eliminating a key source of revenue. In addition, because our tenant, the Greenbush Bar was forced to close and even upon reopening did so with reduced hours, we waived rent for several months and established reduced rent for several more.

In March 2020, we opted to liquidate

“Non puoi insegnare niente a un uomo. Puoi solo aiutarlo a scoprire ciò che ha dentro di sé”
-Galileo Galilei

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our investments in the General Business Account and go to cash to protect our principal. We decided to maintain our moderately aggressive strategy for the Scholarship Account since it's a long term endowment. The Finance Committee has recently finalized an investment policy statement to guide our strategy for 2021 and beyond. In addition, as part of the Master Plan, we committed to establishing an annual budget to better allocate resources and to more accurately track all revenues and expenses.

We weren't able to meet, greet, eat and share stories at our monthly meetings. Our social calendar, which usually includes; sauce tasting, wine making and trivia night at the clubhouse, charity golf outing in Sun Prairie, summer picnic in Fitchburg, and various other fun trips and activities was reduced to a blank sheet of paper after our participation in the International Festival at the Overture Center in late February.

In addition, social unrest, the absence of cultural events, athletic competition in unrecognizable formats and a very contentious election season increased everyone's stress meter.

Despite all of the above, we continued to conduct virtual meetings, paid our bills for insurance, taxes and utilities in full and on time and regularly monitored the temperature of our clubhouse and performed necessary checks to ensure the safety and security of our building.

We also formed a Catalyst Committee to explore ideas, develop timelines and consider financial implications of conducting Festa Italia in a variety of formats, and on alternative dates consistent with whatever guidelines governing outdoor gatherings are in place for Dane County.

Therefore, I can tell you that our club is structurally and financially sound . . . eager to turn the calendar page with the expectation of finding a brighter, friendlier and healthier 2021.

Before turning the page, I want to thank our three outgoing at large Council members; Joe Tripalin, John Caliva and Jack Theel for their service. I also want to thank Vice President Steve Urso for stepping up to fill a void and lending his organizational skills to our Master Plan project.

A special thanks to our outgoing President, Antonio Re for two years of great leadership and careful guidance during this challenging period. Antonio will continue to provide experienced counsel as immediate past President.

Meet Your Council Members & Appointed Representatives

As we start the new year, I'd like to present the officers, appointed secretaries, elected councilmen at large and members who have volunteered to fill key roles for our club. As prescribed in our by-laws, the secretaries must be approved by a majority of the councilmen at large at the January council meet-

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Italia

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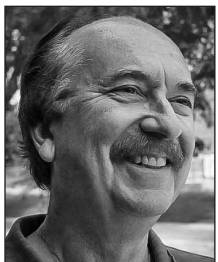
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Il Nuovo Anno



By Tom Smith

While time is something precious to us all, many are

looking forward to putting much of the events of 2020 behind us, and celebrating the start of 2021 and hope for the future. So, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day may take on an even greater importance for many this year.

The start of each new year has been celebrated by civilizations around the world for thousands of years. The earliest recorded history of a new year's arrival dates back about 4,000 years to ancient Babylon. But how did January 1st become New Year's Day? A little history is in order.

Civilizations around the world developed different calendars that chose the first day of the year based on agricultural or astronomical events. In Egypt, the new year began with the annual flooding of the Nile, which coincided with the rising of the star Sirius. In China, the first day of their new year came with the second new moon after the winter solstice.

Today's January 1st actually evolved from the Roman calendar. The early Roman calendar had just 10 months, 304 days, with the new year beginning at the vernal equinox. It was created by Romulus, the founder of Rome, in the eighth century B.C.

Later, it was king Numa Pompilius who added two more months, the months of Januarius and Februarius.

In the centuries that followed, the calendar fell out of sync with the sun, and in 46 B.C. emperor Julius Caesar -- consulting his most prominent astronomers and mathematicians -- introduced the Julian calendar (which closely resembles the Gregorian calendar used by most countries around the world today). As part of these changes, Caesar instituted January 1st as the first day of the year, partly to honor the month's namesake: Janus, the Roman god of beginnings.

Now that we've established how January 1st came to be New Year's Day, how have Italians celebrated this grand event... "Felice Anno Nuovo" (Happy New Year)? If not for the pandemic, and we were having our monthly gatherings at the Club, I would have been asking some of our members what their ancestors and families did to recognize the day and "Vigilia di Capodanno" (New Year's Eve), and shared those stories here. As that couldn't be the case, I did a little research and found some interesting facts and funny stories.

Of course, there would be food. The "big dinner" or Cenone might start with tasty and colorful Antipasti. Some traditional Italian New Year's dishes include pork (usually in the form of cotechino – sausage) and

lentils, thought by some to be eaten because lentils look like miniature coins, bringing the promise of wealth in the coming year. Speaking of wealth, when the morning rolls around, you would be sure you have money in your pocket when you went out the door. This tradition stemmed from the superstition that if you left the house with money on the first day of the year, you would have money in your pocket to spend every day of the new year.

Lentils and Cotechino



Lasagna



You might also have found a pasta dish, usually cappelletti, ravioli or lasagna.

The meal could well end with a savory panettone...sliced, stuffed with many different fillings, and served with a mascarpone cream.

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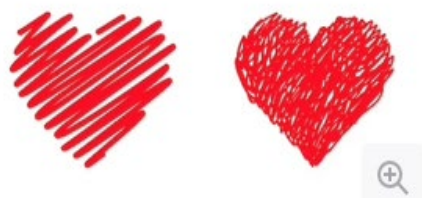


Pannetone

And there would, of course, be drink...a glass or two of wine with the meal, and some Prosecco or spumante for a toast. I came across another unique tradition where it is said you would dip your finger in a glass of the bubbly and touch the ear of someone to whom you'd like to wish a happy new year. And one more, eating grapes...when the clock strikes midnight one grape would be eaten for each of the 12 hours struck on the clock.



For New Year's Eve attire, party goers in the United States might wear anything from casual clothes to black-tie suits/tuxedos and formal gowns. But it is said that Italians associate New Years with the color red, as red is said to help bring love, good fortune,



and even fertility in the coming year. More specifically, whether a man or a woman, Italians liked to put on a new pair of red underwear or lingerie, which was thought to be especially lucky if gifted to you by a sweetheart. The following day, for best results, these garments were to be thrown away.

In some parts of Southern Italy (particularly in Naples), "out with the old and in with the new" was taken literally. The arrival of midnight was greeted by throwing things – old clothes, pots and pans, dishes, furniture – out the window onto the streets (known as "buttare le cose vecchie," throwing out old things). Again, the idea was to clear out the old in anticipation of better things to come in the year ahead.

After midnight, many Italians headed outdoors to their city's historic streets and piazzas. There, they'd find firework displays, open-air concerts and folks reveling in the shared festivities. In Rome, for instance, fireworks lit up the sky by the Colosseum. A bit chilly in our part of the world, but there have been times when we have had fireworks over the Capitol/Isthmus.



IWC Birthdays

January

James Trameri	1/5
Steve Urso	1/8
Matthew Jarosz	1/9
Dave Valenza	1/13
Carlo J. Bonura	1/17
Michael Luckey	1/17
Nick Baldarotta	1/23
Peter Cerniglia	1/24
Richard Trameri	1/29
Daniel Blasiole	1/31
Jason Mascitti	1/31

February

Thomas Speranza	2/3
Joe Alfano	2/12
Matt Rossetto	2/19
Joseph M. Schiro	2/19
Michael Alioto	2/21
Vincent Ritacca	2/21
Joseph Scarpelli, Jr.	2/22
Robert Chiesa	2/24
Stephen Sasso	2/26
Frank Alfano	2/27
Rossario G. Parisi	2/28

IAWC Birthdays

Katie West	Jan 20
Cheryl Parrino	Jan 21
Phyllis DeGioia	Feb 3
Angela Masino	Feb 3
Kristi Dohm	Feb 6
Sister Toni Palermo	Feb 15
Toni Gunnison	Feb 16
Kathy Williams	Feb 17



I don't know if any members will have heard of or experienced any of these traditions. Will any show up in your home this year? However you celebrate the new year this year, whatever traditions you might include, I'm sure it will be quite different from previous years, as many of us are limiting gatherings to

protect our families and loved ones.

There is an old saying that hindsight is 20/20, that it is easy to be knowledgeable about something after it has happened. The start of a new year represents a moment of transition. New Year's has always been a time for reflecting on the past year

and looking ahead to the future's possibilities. Since no one could have predicted this past year, I only hope that as we enter the new year we will be able to "put 2020 firmly in our hind sight," and say hello to better times. However you choose to celebrate, I hope you will be safe and be well.

Felice Anno Nuovo. ■



ROMA

ing. Upon approval, they and all newly elected individuals will take charge of their respective positions.

Council Members

David Rizzo – President

Tom Smith – Vice President

Dave Valenza – Membership Secretary

Anthony Gatti – Treasury Secretary

Butch Pullara – Building Secretary

John Caliva – Benefits Secretary

Fred Underhill – Social Activities Co-Secretary

Antonio Re – Past President

Steve Carrola – Financial Secretary

TBD – Corresponding Secretary

Bill Battista – Councilman At Large

Todd Cambio – Councilman At Large

Dr. Dan Malone – Councilman At Large

Bob Lavigna – Councilman At Large

Matt Rossetto – Councilman At Large

Jonathan Solari – Councilman At Large

Members Filling Key Role

Jim Phillips – Social Activities Co-Secretary

Tim Gatti – Club Historian

Steve Loniello – Rental Agent

Ross DePaola – Website & Membership Data Manager

Tim Gatti – Asst. To Ross

Jack Parrino – Houseman

Phil Clementi, Jr. – Asst. To Jack

Joe Shubat – Asst. To Butch

Membership

We currently have 150 members and membership is fundamental to our existence as a club. It's my sincere

hope that you're willing and able to maintain your membership. Thank you to those who have already renewed. If you haven't done so, please return your renewal form and dues payment.

By Age

A quick analysis shows we have only 52 (35%) members under the age of 60, just 24 (16%) under the age of 50 and an average age of 64. Once the external environment allows for it, we'll undertake a drive to attract new (and especially younger) members who'll provide fresh ideas, better reflect the demographic makeup of our community and perpetuate the life of our club.

By Tenure

Importantly, the interaction between our long – tenured and newer members has served a vital role in conveying our club's rich heritage and culture over its 109 year history. With one – third (48) having joined in the past five years and over half (78) in the past ten, we all look forward to encouraging this behavior to begin anew when we're allowed to gather together.

Moving Forward

As we begin 2021, we should focus our collective energy on these three areas:

Honor The Past

Commemorate the efforts of those members who built the club.

Acknowledge the accomplishments of current members who have lived our mission over a long period of time.

Preserve the photos, videos and audio interviews that tell the story of the Greenbush neighborhood.

Celebrate The Present

Continue the traditions of Festa Italia, Wine Making, Sauce Tasting, etc. that honor our rich cultural history.

Establish new events / activities to better engage all members and positively impact the community.

Embrace the specialness of our monthly business dinners.

Envision The Future

Complete and implement our Master Plan.

Strengthen our ties with the Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha clubs.

Ensure membership stability and pursue growth initiatives.

In future newsletters, I'll include examples of the progress we're making. ■■

**Felice st. San
Valentino**

Miscellaneous

SUPPORT

Italia

Call **Mike Heald** for more information on advertising in *Italia*.

(608) 821-0886.



In Memoriam

Frank Balistreri died on December 3rd. He was always smiling. Many of you might remember him as the bus driver for several of our outings to Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha. He was the victim of the terrible virus that has plagued our world for the past year.

Louis Cassini died of natural causes on December 16th. Louie was a nice, gentle soul. He was a craftsman, who owned his own tile company. The tile on the counter in our clubhouse kitchen was installed by his company.



President's Mail Box

Send me an e-mail (davidrizzo@me.com). If there's something you like or don't like about our club, or if you simply want to ask a question, or make a suggestion, I really want to hear from you. I can't promise that I'll address every need, or implement every idea, but I can promise you the courtesy of a response. ■■



A Personal Note From Your President:

Although I've lived in the Madison area for the past thirty - five years, I'm originally from Kenosha. My grandparents settled there after arriving to this country from Platania, Calabria in 1906. I graduated from UW – Madison in 1974 with a degree in Journalism / Advertising. I worked for thirty – five years in the Marketing Communications field at Jockey International, Kimberly Clark and Kraft Foods – Oscar Mayer. I also did project work for the Wisconsin Alumni Association and part time advising for the UW – Madison Human Resource department. I

married my lovely wife Barbara on 9/11/76. We have a son Brian and a daughter Shannon who both reside in the greater Dane County area. I'm an avid Badger sports fan (especially football). I also enjoy playing golf, recording music and eating desserts (especially anything with dark chocolate, coconut and/or raspberry or orange zest).

Please wear a mask, exercise good judgment in your daily activities and wash your hands.

Alla prossima volta, statevi bene e Dio vi benedica. ■■

Meeting Dates

IWC Council Meetings – 2nd Tuesday of
Each Month 7:00 pm

IWC Membership Meetings – 3rd Tuesday
of Each Month 6:30 pm

Please clip and post this calendar.



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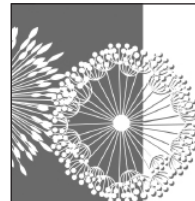
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