



## TUSCANY CELEBRATES SUMMER... ...AND SO DO WE!

The Tuscan Region of Italy will celebrate the second *Arcobaleno d'Estate* (Summer Rainbow) from June 20-22. This occasion promotes “Tuscanship” and includes rural tourism, concerts, visits to museums and towns, and relaxing at Tuscan beaches and spas.

Although half a world away, we OregonTuscans join the Summer Rainbow in spirit with our June 22 picnic to celebrate *our* “Tuscanship.”



Our final event of the program year and of Audrey Perino’s tenure as president, a picnic and BBQ, takes place next Sunday at 3pm at Sellwood Park in southeast Portland.

Last year’s picnic was relaxing and enjoyable. We hope this year’s version will be as fun and attract even more members. See page 2 for details and a map.

## DAL PRESIDENTE HOW THE TUSCAN ASSOCIATION SAVED MY PANCETTA!



BY AUDREY PERINO  
PRESIDENT

Greetings all! So, this is my last column as president of the Tuscan Association, and I have been trying to think of what to say as a farewell. But I decided instead to tell you a bit about how and why I initially became a member and what the association has meant to me.

It was probably back in 1995 or so when I saw a write-up about the club in a column in *The Oregonian* written by Jonathan Nicholas. My Tuscan mother had passed away in 1992 at the age of 69 and I was now the “matriarch” of the family.

I felt a great burden to pass along my Tuscan heritage to my niece and my nephew (who were 8 and 5 when they lost their *nonna*). I had no idea how to do this – just that I felt an immense responsibility not to let our Italian heritage die with my mother.

(See *HOW TO*, page 4)

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# SUMMER RAINBOW PICNICKERS HOPE FOR NOTHING BUT SUN



If our paisanos in Tuscany can have a Summer Rainbow weekend, then so can the OregonTuscans! Our final event this spring actually falls on the first full day of summer, on Sunday, June 22 at 3pm.

Come join us as we relax under the sun and trees in Sellwood Park in southeast Portland. Our park that day is *not* the one right along the river, but rather the one just east of it, that sits on the bluff overlooking the Willamette. If you are coming from the westside, allow a few extra minutes just in case traffic is temporarily stopped on the Sellwood Bridge. We'll have an "OregonTuscans" sign posted along SE Tacoma St. to help you find your way.

We will gather at Picnic Area B on the extreme southern end of the park. See the map above – park your car on either SE Grand Ave. or SE Nehalem St., just outside the park, and walk in the entrance.

We'll have horseshoe and cornhole games going nearby.



The club will provide the Italian sausages, hamburgers, buns and soft drinks. If you'd like beer or wine to drink, bring it along with a side dish or dessert to share. It would be a good idea to bring a lawn chair, too. There is a spot just outside the park where you can unload, then park your car.

## L'ANGOLO ITALIANO

DI CARLO ILIO MANNOCCI

Ancora scandali finanziari con il solito giro di mazzette e riciclaggi di denaro sporco, scandali che coinvolgono prominenti figure della politica italiana. Scandalo del Mose' (la diga fluttuante che dovrebbe salvare Venezia) con un giro di decine di milioni di euro, scandalo dell'Expo '15 di Milano e ancora alla CARIGE di Genova con imbrogli bancari.

Tutto questo sta accadendo quando Renzi sta dando la ...carica agli italiani. Malumori e mini scissioni nel Partito Democratico dopo la perdita di alcuni capoluoghi di provincia durante le elezioni amministrative, quello piu' scottante il risultato di Livorno che dopo 60 anni di dominio rosso e' passata ai grillini del Movimento 5 Stelle. Diciotto senatori del PD si sono autosospesi per protestare l'esclusione di due membri dalla Commissione del Senato per la riforma del Senato stesso.

E cosi' la vita politica italiana continua sulla stessa falsariga, ma che davvero non si possa cambiare????



# WILL *STRADA* BECOME PORTLAND'S ITALIAN POK POK?

BY KEN KANE

In recent months, *La Lettera Toscana* has told you about a couple of Italian-inspired Portland food carts. This month we introduce you to a purveyor of "Italian street food" which isn't even on the street.

*Strada* ("street" in Italian) is a local restaurant which looks a little like an Italian version of the Chipotle chain ... but offers big and small versions of street food. So, in a way, *Strada* does for Italian what southeast Portland's famed Pok Pok does for Thai cuisine.

The Italian eatery has been open since October in the Washington Square Mall complex, though not in the mall itself. *Strada* is in its own storefront near the Cost Plus World Market. The nearby parking lot is currently under construction, but it's worth the effort to dodge the pylons and find a space.

On a recent evening when Audrey was on a "Girls Night Out," her husband/your intrepid newsletter editor, Ken, decided to try *Strada*.

The fast-foodish restaurant features a 3 - 6pm happy hour menu. The Bruschetta Bites and Zucchini Frites found there both had pleasing combinations of textures and tastes.

One could fashion a light meal just from the economical happy hour choices, but your newly minted restaurant reviewer decided – in the spirit of investigative food journalism, of course – to order not only those small plates, but an entree as well. In addition to salad bowls and pasta



*piadina* entrees look like burritos. But the comparison ends there, since what goes inside is decidedly Italian, not Mexican.

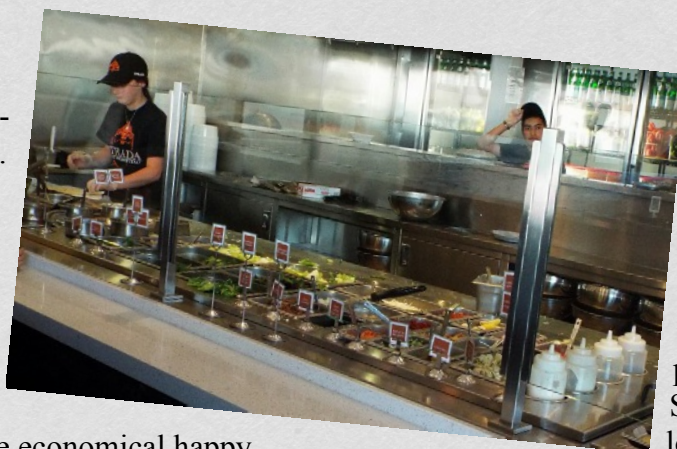
The Loreto, one of four *piadina* entrees, is stuffed with calamari, marinara, sauteed peppers, arugula,

Parmigiano Reggiano and ... spaghetti. Other types can be made to order. Biting into a pasta-filled burrito (I know, I know, it's not really, but...) takes a little getting used to. But by the third chomp, I was acclimated. A little more calamari and a little less spaghetti would make a good entree even better.

At *Strada* good things come to those who wait ... for dessert. Cannoli poppers, tiramisu and gelato are offered. I opted for the gelato: white chocolate *pancetta* (!), no less. I even

got one to go for Audrey. It earned the "Perino two-thumbs up!" I've heard that bacon enhances the flavor of anything ... except ice cream. *Strada* blows that out of the water!

I can't help but root for these guys. They're local, pleasant and hard-working, and trying to expand our palates. Check them out at Washington Square (and, hopefully, soon at a second location in Lake Oswego), or online at [www.gostrada.com](http://www.gostrada.com). For little more than the cost of a meal at the golden arches or that subterranean sandwich shop, you can experience a little taste of the streets of the old country!



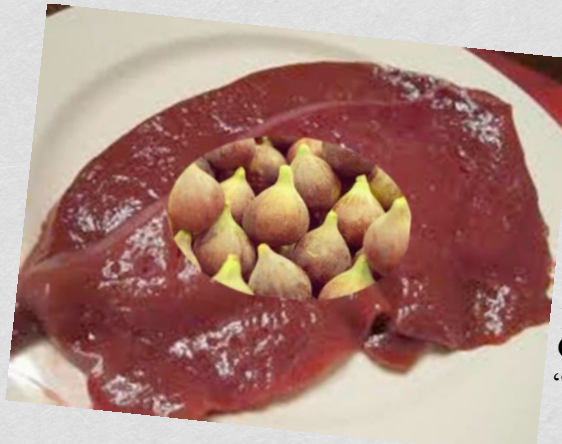


# WORDS TO THE WISE

BY JIMMIE MOGLIA

“Liver” in Italian is *fegato*, with the accent of the ‘e’. The origin is Latin and gastronomical. For the Romans a gourmet dish was liver cooked and marinated with figs (*figus* in Latin). The name of the concoction was shortened to *ficatum*. In an improbable McDonald’s franchise of the pre-Augustan era, you would order a “Ficatum” much as today in an Italian restaurant you would order a “Margherita,” short for “Pizza Margherita.”

Given the appetizer effect associated with stimulating food, it was easy to *ingest* more *ficatum* than it was easy to *digest*. This affected the human liver, which began to ache and swell. No longer “under the radar,” as we would say today, the liver needed a name. The easiest



was to give it the name of the plate that made it famous – or infamous depending on the side effects.

That gluttony caused the forging of the name *fegato* is proven also by other evidence. In Greek, liver is *hepas*, hence “hepatitis,” etc.

To figs we are also indebted for another word, “sycophant” – today meaning a person who acts obsequiously toward someone important in order to gain advantage.

In Greek, *sycos* means fig, and *phaino* means show. Dried figs were a godsend in times of famine. The original sycophants were merchants who showed and sold dried figs on the black market.

## HOW TO MAINTAIN AND PASS ON MY TUSCAN HERITAGE? *GRAZIE A DIO PER CARLO!*

(continued from page 1)

Then I read about Carlo Mannocci’s new association. I joined as soon as possible and went to my first meeting. Here was a man who *sounded* like my mother – same accent, same inflections. This was now my “Italian Connection,” a way to be “with” my mother, even though she was gone.

My mother had died suddenly during a visit to Montecatini. After that happened, I had no real desire to ever go back to Italy. But Carlo was offering a tour, and after being persuaded by a close friend, I went with him in 1998. Without knowing Carlo and the Tuscan Association, I might never have gone back to Italy. (I’ve been back six more times since then.)

But how to get the next generation involved? Enter the Viareggio program. My niece Chelsea was now 19 and in college. She applied, was accepted, and had a blast, learning Italian but more importantly, connecting with the relatives in Montecatini while she was there.

Fortunately, Chelsea and her Italian cousin, Martina, are almost exactly the same age. So, *of course* they are now terrific Facebook friends. Chelsea has been back to Montecatini several times and Martina has been to New York City to visit Chelsea. When Martina’s father passed away rather suddenly earlier this year, it was Chelsea who called *me* to break the news, rather than the other way around.

So, I think I accomplished my mission. Without the Tuscan Association, none of this would have happened—the “Italian Connection” might have died, I might never have returned to Italy, and the next generation of Perinos might have lost its connection to its heritage.

How can I thank Carlo and the Tuscan Association enough? There are really no appropriate words.

But at least I could be the president of the OregonTuscans for two years. It has been lots of fun and I have appreciated the support of all of you. You are a wonderful group and it is a privilege to know you. I hope to see you all frequently in the years to come.

*Audrey*







## OREGON OLIVE MILL FIELD TRIP

In the very Tuscan-like setting of the rolling hills above Dayton, Ore., 20 lucky OregonTuscans and friends enjoyed the afternoon of May 18 at Red Ridge Farms. We came to taste – and to learn – about olive oil.

Red Ridge Farms, home of the Oregon Olive Mill, is the only commercial olive oil processor in the state. Each

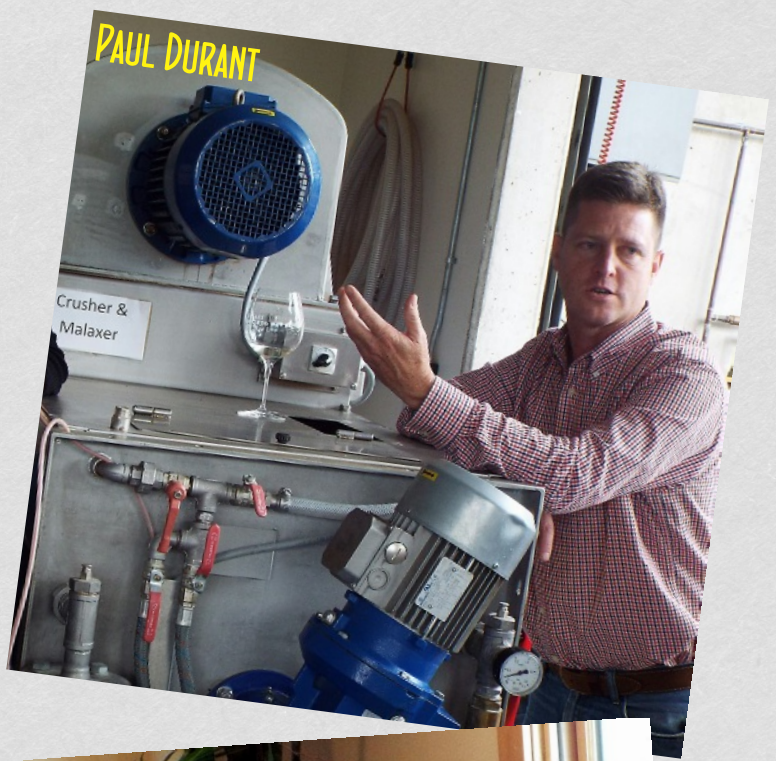
fall, the fruit from the Farms' 13,000 olive trees, as well as other olives brought in from northern California, are milled and pressed into five styles of oil.

Our host was Libby Clow, who toured us around the grounds and the mill and led us in a blue glass, professional-grade tasting of four of their oils. What a difference freshness and locality make! Some of us are still tasting the pungent pepperiness in the back of our throat! We also met Paul Durant, the general manager of the Farms.

Red Ridge Farms is also a vineyard. Some of us stayed on to taste wines produced for the Durant Vineyards label. It was one fun afternoon!







RED RIDGE  
FARMS





# WE'RE OUTTA HERE UNTIL THE FALL. WHADDYA GONNA DO?

The Sellwood Park BBQ is our last event and this is our last newsletter until the fall. In the meantime, our new president, Jimmie Moglia, will be assuming the duties of running the OregonTuscans. And *La Lettera Toscana* editor Ken Kane will spend the summer trying to figure out, since pancetta makes *Strada's* gelato so good, how he can make bacon homebrew.

But what will *you* do to pass the time between now and the fall? Here are a few suggestions...

**June 28: The *Amici d'Italia* yard sale.** Our Italian friends at *Amici d'Italia* (yes, we know that's redundant!) hold their annual yard sale on Saturday, June 28th, from 9am to 3pm. The sale will be held at 4010 NE 79th Ave. (just north of Sandy Boulevard).

This year, all profits will go into a fund for the Italian memorial window to be installed at St. Michael's Catholic Church after its restoration is complete in the next three to five years.

St. Michael's was built downtown by Italian immigrants in 1901 and is still a National Italian Church. This memorial window will be a gift from the entire Italian community and everyone is invited to contribute.

This annual fundraiser is a successful tradition. Last year's beneficiary was the *Festa della Befana* celebration which *Amici* puts on in concert with our club each January.

## **July 3: Italian avant-garde animation.**

The Clinton St. Theater will be the venue for the work of Luca Dipierro. The Italian-born artist moved to Portland three years ago and gets an hour-long retrospective of his short subjects on July 3 at 7pm. The films will be accompanied by a live soundtrack provided by *Father Murphy*, the Treviso-based band that collaborates with Dipierro on his productions.

You can learn more by going here:

<http://cstpdx.com/show/paper-circus-animations-luca-dipierro>

And while you're online, you might want to view one or two of Dipierro's cut-out animations (right). They're ... uh, different!



## **Aug. 16 - 23: Go to *Festa*. Eat a cannoli ... or 10!**

Portland's week-long celebration of Italian culture, *Festa Italiana*, includes a first-ever cannoli-eating contest. Are you man (or woman) enough to cram cannoli down your piehole? If so, contact Kerry-Lynne Demarinis Brown at [difamiglia@aol.com](mailto:difamiglia@aol.com) or Ed Ferrero at [Ed@ferreropc.com](mailto:Ed@ferreropc.com) and sign up to put your pastry where your mouth is! If not, then just check out the rest of the *Festa* lineup here:

<http://www.festa-italiana.org/>

**Listen to The Italian Hour on KBOO.** The Italian Hour airs every other Sunday at 9am at 90.7FM. It's been a fixture in the local Italian community for over 40 years. Reacquaint yourself with nostalgic Italian music or enjoy more contemporary tunes. Join hosts Lucia Galizia, Andrea Scasso and Bob Iannacone. Learn more and listen to previous programs at:

<http://www.kboo.org/ItalianHour>

**Subscribe to *L'Italo Americano*.** The voice of the West Coast's Italian communities publishes weekly and, in the last edition of the month, includes pages specific to Portland. Heck, our own Tuscan Association was profiled on May 22!

You can learn more about the newspaper at its Website, <http://italoamericano.com/>

**Surf [WeTheItalians.com](http://www.wetheitalians.com).** This Rome-based site is geared toward Italian Americans and Italians living in the U.S. Its weekly online magazine is broad in scope, covering culture, politics, travel and just about everything Italian. For example, check out this [feature on Sofia Loren](#), who turns 80 (!) later this year. (The *Strada* story on page 3 in this newsletter was spawned from an item at WeTheItalians.com!)

## **While you're online, hit**

**[OregonTuscans.com](http://oregontuscans.com)!** You can catch up on past meetings and newsletters and even **BLOG!** Go ahead, hit the Website, then click on the Ciao Chatter link and get creative!