

Maggio 2013

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MAY 19: BIDS & BAD GUYS

We'll convene on Sunday, May 19 at 3pm at Carvlin Hall at St. Philip Neri Church, 2408 SE 16th Av., Portland. There are four aspects to our program...

Family Matters: Joann Cartasegna will share some of her heritage, both from Piedmont and from Parkrose.

Moglia on the Mafia: The always-interesting Jimmie Moglia will opine on the Mafia, past and present.

May 19: An offer you can't refuse...



Jimmie Moglia on the Mafia

Or, to put it in Jimmie's own words:
"History is written by the winners. With the Mafia the issue is still pending. This is why there are so many related opinions and explanations."

Join Jimmie as he attempts to cast some light on one of the darker sides of the Italian experience.

Potluck Dinner and Silent Auction: See page 2 for more on these parts of the meeting.

NEXT MTG:

SUN., MAY 19, 3PM
ST. PHILIP NERI

FUTURE DATE: JUNE 22 —
OUR SELLWOOD PARK PICNIC!

DAL PRESIDENTE WHAT A TURNOUT!



BY AUDREY PERINO
PRESIDENT

For those of you who were unable to attend our last meeting, you missed what will likely be our largest attendance of the year (and perhaps the decade)! We had over 100 people come to hear our slideshow *Once Upon a Time in Lair Hill*. I was overwhelmed.

We took the opportunity to invite some other Italian clubs, and I think there were approximately 40 people with ties to
(see *TURNOUT*, page 3)

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MAY 19: OUR AUCTION AND POTLUCK'S SUCCESS DEPENDS ON YOU!

Question: What do we OregonTuscans have in common with Blanche DuBois (right, from *A Streetcar Named Desire*)?

Answer: Well, for this month at least, we both “depend on the kindness of strangers.”

When you're still bringing an event along – and this is just the second year for our fund-raising auction – you really depend on strangers *and* friends. The friends (our members) have been asked to seek out items for bid at the May 19 auction. They, in turn, probably need to approach some strangers (businesses) for donations to fill our auction table.

So, friend, have you done so yet? Time's getting short; please give it a shot. Elsewhere on this page you'll see some of the things some of our friends have been able to obtain. Now it's your turn!



The silent auction will take place while we're enjoying a club potluck. So, please bring a dish to share on May 19. We already know we've got the dessert table pretty well stocked, so we're asking you to bring something along the lines of a “heavy appetizer” or side dish. And, if you'd like something more than coffee or tea to drink, bring your favorite bottle of wine along, too. It should be a fun meeting, what with our speakers, Joann Cartasegna and Jimmie Moglia, the auction, and the opportunity to feed our faces!

SO, HOW CAN WE TEMPT YOU TO BID?

Well, here are some of the items you'll find on the auction table...

A two-night stay in a condo at either Ocean Shores WA, Newport OR or Sunriver OR (Thank you La Frazias!)

Restaurant gift certificates from:

- A Cena in Sellwood
- Lair Hill Bistro in the “old neighborhood”
- New York New York Pizza in SW Portland
- Tucci in Lake Oswego

A Regal Cinemas gift card

A cookbook/CD set from woodbloom.com

A kitchen doll to keep the cook company

A basket of Dorrie Palandrani's baked goods (Yum, yum!)

And wine (Thank you Menicosys!) and wine glasses





THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD PACKS THEM IN!

A standing-room-only crowd of about 110 jammed the former indoor pool at the old Neighborhood House in southwest Portland on April 21. They came to see a slideshow history of the city's Little Italy and Jewish Quarter of a century ago. The presentation was sponsored by the OregonTuscans.

Neighborhood historian Arnold Pantich (above) covered 125 years of South Portland, touching on the stories of the Italian and Jewish immigrants who populated the neighborhood. The attentive crowd was made up of OregonTuscans, Amici d'Italia, other Italian-Americans, members of the neighborhood, and parents and staff of the Cedarwood Waldorf School. Cedarwood now occupies the former Neighborhood House building. A good summary of the show, written by Lee Perlman, appears on page 8 of the May issue of *The Southwest Portland Post*, which is available at <http://www.swportlandpost.com>. Thanks to Lee and the *Post* for the photo of Arnold and Audrey.

The slideshow spawned from walking tours of Lair Hill which Arnold leads. He's got four scheduled for this summer: **June 20**, 6pm; **Aug. 20**, 10am; **Aug. 21**, 10am; and **Sep. 21**, 9am. All leave from the Lair Hill Bistro, 2823 SW First Av. You should consider joining him for one of these free tours. You'll enjoy reconnecting with Portland's original Italian roots!

TURNOUT

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Italy in attendance. The other 60 - 70 were members of the community who obviously were very interested in the history of the old South Portland Italian/Jewish neighborhood.

I think this slideshow reflected one of our purposes—to foster knowledge of Italian history and culture ... in this case *local* Italian history and culture. It was gratifying to share this story with so many others beyond our club. Perhaps we can do more outreach in the future. Maybe the time has come to let others know about our club in a more deliberate way. And that is exactly

SO ... HOW ARE THOSE AUCTION SOLICITATIONS COMING?

If you haven't visited a local business or two that you frequent to ask for a donation for our May 19 auction, hop to it! Solicitation letters were handed out at the March and April meetings to make this chore a bit easier.

If you've solicited, have you followed up? Sometimes a gentle reminder results in a contribution. When you have donations (either from a business or from you), **PLEASE LET AUDREY KNOW WHAT IT IS VIA E-MAIL OR PHONE CALL BY MAY 17.** Call 503-246-6462 or e-mail OregonTuscans@gmail.com.

Auction day is a hectic time. Your advance phone call by May 17 will make it a more enjoyable event.

what one of my presidential predecessors does on page 5. Take a moment to read Gino Pieretti's column. I guarantee you'll learn a little bit about our club ... and you'll be happy knowing that you're a part of this fine group of proud Tuscans, Italians and fans of Italy.

Ciao,

Audrey

L'ANGOLO ITALIANO

DI CARLO ILIO MANNOCCI

Finalmente l'Italia e' riuscita a varare un governo. Per ottenere questo risultato e' stato ri-eletto (prima volta nella storia italiana) il Presidente uscente Napolitano. Quindi si e' trovata (anche se non sappiamo quanto durera') una intesa tra Bersani, Berlusconi e Monti, con la benedizione di Napolitano, per un governo di larga intesa. Ma gia si intravedono all'orizzonte segnali di fumo che fanno prevedere una caduta del governo e nuove elezioni. Il Presidente del Consiglio Enrico Letta ha buone intenzioni, promette riforme (necessarie) e vediamo se sara' capace di raggiungere gli obiettivi prefissi. Intanto l'economia e' in crisi e tutti aspettano qualche miracolo per risollevare l'Italia. Speriamo in bene...

EDITOR'S NOTE...

Some stories are more fun to write than others. Take page 2's piece politely nagging you to solicit auction donations. Important? You bet. Fun to write? Not so much.

But now turn to page 6. A late addition to this month's newsletter is the update on Esther.

Fun to write about the "Life of Riley?"

You better believe it!



ITALY'S GOT A NEW PRIME MINISTER ... FOR NOW

DI CARLO ILIO MANNOCCI

Finally, Italy has a new government. The two-month, post-election stalemate ended on Apr. 28 when Enrico Letta became the new Prime Minister. At 46, he has the distinction of being one of the youngest Prime Ministers in Italian history. Energetic and charming, Letta (a native Tuscan, from Pisa) is well liked by the majority of the Italian political parties.

Though the youngest Prime Minister in a quarter-century, he is far from a political neophyte. He is a founding member of the Democratic Party (PD), which until last month was led by Pier Luigi Bersani. Letta has served in four center-left governments, dating back to 1998.

Letta's government has many young people in responsible positions with quite a few newcomers. It is difficult to predict the future of this government, sustained thus far by both the left and right wings. But the question remains: "How long will it last???"

Knowing Italian politics, there is a temptation to think that someone is already plotting the next move. In fact, as Letta's government was being sworn in on Apr. 28, a shooting in protest occurred on the street just outside the Prime Minister's office. Two carabinieri were injured. Only time will tell ...

**OUR FINAL EVENT OF THE PROGRAM YEAR
TAKES PLACE ON SATURDAY, JUNE 22 —
A PICNIC IN SELLWOOD PARK. WATCH NEXT
MONTH'S NEWSLETTER FOR DETAILS...**

JUST WHO DO WE THINK WE ARE? THE DISCUSSION CONTINUES...

BY GINO PIERETTI

[Editor's note: In last month's La Lettera Toscana, club president Audrey Perino mentioned that she recently had been asked what makes the OregonTuscans different from other Italian clubs in Portland. In the moment, she was a bit flummoxed by the question.

That got past-president Gino Pieretti thinking about how he – or any of us – could answer such a question. In other words, what's the "elevator speech" you could give about our club? Here are Gino's thoughts ... suitable for a ride up the elevator of the Empire State Building!]

One distinguishing characteristic of our club is its connectedness to other Tuscan organizations worldwide. The Tuscan Association of Oregon is one of about 90 Tuscan clubs that exist in the United States, Canada, South America, Europe, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. We have periodic meetings of the North American groups and a meeting every other year in Italy of all of the clubs worldwide. The meetings combine business and pleasure, as well as provide an opportunity to meet fellow Tuscans from around the world.

A lot of the Tuscan groups outside of Italy were founded after the Second World War when many emigrants, especially from Lucca, left Italy to find employment in other countries. Some clubs, such as those in Vancouver B.C. and Toronto, have their own building for classes, meetings, parties, bowling, bocce ball, etc. All Tuscan association members are invited to visit their sister clubs when traveling.

These Tuscan associations offer scholarships, funded



by the Tuscan regional government, so the next generation of the Tuscan diaspora can learn the Italian language and observe and study Italy's culture and history. In the past 12 years or so, over 40 young people have received scholarships through our club to spend the month of July in Viareggio, a beautiful seaside resort on the Ligurian Sea, a short distance west of Pisa.

These students spent weekday mornings studying the Italian language and were free in the afternoon and evenings to spend their time in town, at the beach or to travel to nearby towns such as Pisa, Florence, Montecatini and Siena. Weekend bus trips took the students to more distant parts of Italy.

Regione Toscana has changed the scholarship program over the past couple of years. The students now stay and learn at the University of Siena, rather than in

Viareggio. The entrance requirements are a bit stiffer, too, including a live Skype interview to

demonstrate

Italian language proficiency.

However, the chance to join the program through our club still exists.

This is another unique feature offered locally only by the OregonTuscans.

You can contact Audrey for more information about 2014 scholarships.



The Oregon kids who receive such scholarships meet similar students from Europe and throughout the world. The scholarships are an educational, interesting and life-changing experience, never to be forgotten by the students.

Children, grandchildren, relatives, and friends of members of the Tuscan Association of Oregon have

(see GINO, page 6)

GINO

(continued from page 5)

been awarded these scholarships. Many of the students have presented a lecture or slideshow presentation at one of our monthly meetings after their trip. Our members got to vicariously enjoy the student's trip and experiences.

Speaking of our meetings, we are proud of the friendly, social nature and educational quality of those gatherings. We usually meet on the third Sunday of the month between 3:00 and 5:00pm at St. Philip Neri's Carvlin Hall located in Portland at SE 16th & Division. Although we may have one or two special dinners a year, our meetings are usually intended to educate and entertain the members and guests with some aspect of Italian culture or "things Italian."

Typical meetings have consisted of lectures on Italian masters of arts and letters, presentations on various periods of Roman and Italian history, and Italian politics. We've enjoyed concerts by performers from Portland State's opera department and by the heads of the piano and violin departments at North Carolina State University, as well as a jazz concert at Classic Pianos. And we've got a Oregon Symphony Pops concert planned for Oct. 20. We've staged cooking demonstrations, such as the one by our dear friend Flora Rigatti on how to make raviolis. We also have marked "La Vendemmia" (a celebration of the October wine crush) at an Oregon winery.

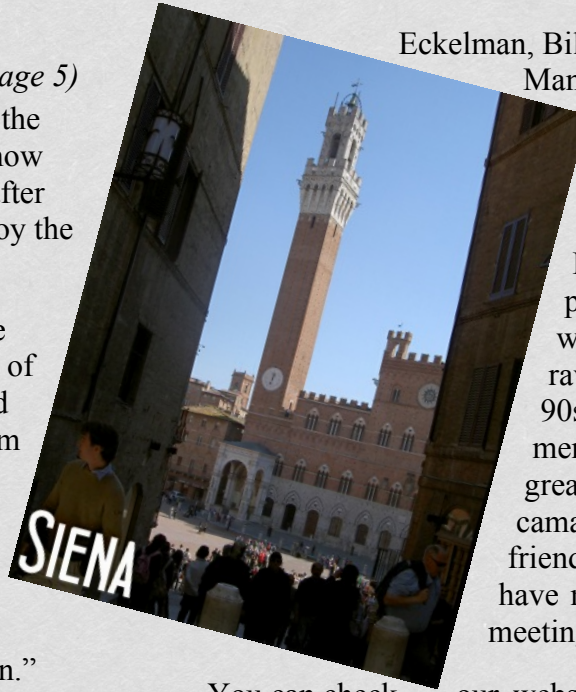
We are financed by modest annual dues: \$35 for couples and \$25 for a single membership. We also usually receive a modest annual stipend from Regione Toscana to help financially support the club. That is how important groups like ours are to our fellow Tuscans back in the old country!

There's one more thing that make the OregonTuscans unique: our most "experienced" members! Although most of our members are between the ages of 50 to 80 years of age, we have an exceptional and outstanding group of upper octogenarians and "better than 90-year-olds*," who for years have regularly attended our meetings. These "upper golden age" members are young in spirit, friendly, engaging, sharp, and interested in learning and socializing. They are role models for growing old gracefully and with character.

Mario Monti, Jo Monti, Jim Lamanno, Gloria Lamanno, Esther Riley, Gloria Catalan, Margaret

Eckelman, Bill Galbreath, Carlo Mannocci, Alberto

Cereghino, my mom, Alice Pieretti (who passed away at age 94) and Flora Rigatti, who recently passed at age 98 – but who demoed those raviolis well into her 90s (!) – are older members who have greatly helped create a camaraderie and friendliness in the club that have made the monthly meetings fun for all of us.

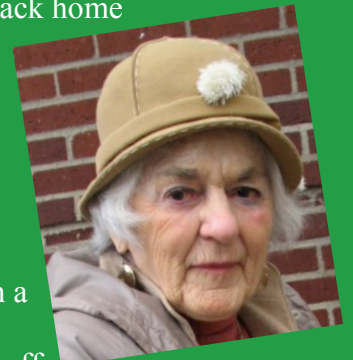


You can check our website for more information on our club: www.OregonTuscans.com.

* NEWS OF ONE OF THOSE NIFTY 90+ERS

Esther Tuon Riley is back home after a bout with pneumonia.

It's slow going, but she's grateful to be making progress. "Taking care of my health has always been a priority for me," says Esther. "There is a payoff time for that, and for me, it's now."



She won't be joining us on May 19, but only because she'll be celebrating her birthday with family. "When you get to be 91, it's something to shout from the rooftops! What's to complain about?" says Esther in her, well, typically Life of Riley way. She plans to be at our Sellwood Park BBQ on June 22.

"It's like I'm teaching a course on aging – Aging 101!" she says with a chuckle. "At this age it's a matter of survival. No one else is going to carry the torch for you." Not true, Esther. There are a bunch of we OregonTuscans who carry a torch for you. And we're thrilled that you're on the road to recovery.