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LA
LETTERA
TOSCANA

MY ITALY: SLIDE SHOW—AND—TELL

BY KEN KANE

Get ready for a personal tour of Italy ... without ever leaving southeast Portland. You won't need your passport for *My Italy: Slide Show-and-tell*, this month's OregonTuscans meeting at Carvlin Hall, 2408 SE 16th Ave. at 3:30pm on Mar. 20. Seventeen of us will share our photos, impressions and memories of the old country. Thanks to all of you who have contributed photos for the program!



LET YOUR FELLOW OREGONTUSCANS
BE YOUR TOURGUIDES FOR OUR ITALY
SHOW—AND—TELL ON MARCH 20!

Our journey will stretch from Sicily in the south to Abruzzo in central Italy to the Dolomites and Venice in the north, with plenty of stops in between. The show includes photos taken in the past few months to one that goes back 60 years!

(see **MY ITALY**, page 4)



KEEPING MARIO IN MIND

Mario Monti (above, with wife Jo), our club's most senior citizen, has had some health issues in recent weeks. He is currently receiving care at the VA Hospital. When one is 98 years young, like Mario, every health downturn brings concern. So, please keep our longtime club member and friend – our *Super Mario* – in your thoughts and prayers.

NEXT MTG:

NEXT SUN., MAR. 20,
3:30PM, CARVLIN HALL

20TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY!

APR. 17, 3:30PM

DAL PRESIDENTE

THE OLD BRIDGE IS TIED TO
AN OLD PROVERB

BY JIMMIE MOGLIA
PRESIDENT



Among Italian proverbs, some have both a literary and historical trail. Such is the case of "*Cosa fatta, capo ha.*" It is used mainly when we wish to avoid discussions about a past event or occurrence, rather than dwelling on other now-impossible outcomes. It could be approximately translated, "What's done is done."

Behind the proverb there is an offense, a feud and a broken promise. At least if we believe Dante Alighieri, who included "*Cosa fatta, capo ha,*" in the Divine Comedy. Later, Florentine historian Francesco Guicciardini, gave a more detailed account of what happened on the *Ponte Vecchio* in Florence, sometime in 1225 AD.

(see **SPURNED**, page 3)

FROM OUR 20 TH ANNIVERSARY PHOTO ALBUM	2
L'ANGOLO ITALIANO	3
YOUR LINKS TO ITALIAN NEWS ON THE INTERNET	4
WHO'S THAT ON THE DARSENA?	4

Celebrating 20 YEARS

There's a party in our future, coming April 17!

LOOKING BACK THROUGH THE TUSCAN CLUB ARCHIVES...

As we OregonTuscans prepare to mark our twentieth year as an association at our April gathering, it might be fun to look back a little. The three photos to the right are from the past decade – our club's adolescence, if you will. The top photo is from *Festa della Befana* 2008 and features Maria Bruce in the title role. The little girl is Olivia DiGiulio who, with her sister Eliza, has entertained us musically at several Christmas potluck meetings since then.

The middle photo is from the Tuscan Association's 10th anniversary celebration and includes our first two presidents, Carlo Mannocci (far left) and Gino Pieretti holding the microphone.

At the bottom are the next two club presidents, Audrey Perino (middle) and Joe Cavalli, with Gloria Catalan during a meeting about five years ago.



CAN "THE DONALD" TRUMP BERLUSCONI?



Donald Trump is getting a lot of ink and airtime this election season for being the Presidential aspirant unlike any other. But not so fast – there's been at least one other businessman-turned-candidate who bears something of a resemblance.

Your humble newsletter editor noticed these GOPs-in-a-pod even before it was pointed out on the English-language Italian news Website www.TheLocal.it. Hit the link and see if you don't agree. And while you're at it, go to page 4 of this newsletter for more links to other interesting recent Italian online news stories and features.



SPURNED FINACÉE LEADS TO FAMILY FEUDS, BONDELMONTI'S DEMISE

(continued from page 1)

Mr. Bondelmonte dei Bondelmonti, a Florentine nobleman, had engaged himself to marry a young lady belonging to the family of the Amidei, and daughter of Lambertuccio. But... as Bondelmonte was riding through the town, he was approached by a woman belonging to the rival family of the Donati. She told Bondelmonte that the Amidei girl was not up to his standards and added, "I had kept and guarded for you this most beautiful daughter of mine." Suddenly struck by the charm of the Donati girl, Bondelmonte changed his previous plans and married her.

The family of the Amidei did not take the affront kindly and decided to retaliate. Some relatives suggested that, out of the proposed revenge (read: assassination), much harm may befall on Florence. But Mosca de' Lamberti, of the Amidei clan said that those who keep always thinking about everything, in the end do nothing, uttering the concluding sentence, "*Cosa fatta, capo ha.*"

Accordingly, the hapless Bondelmonte was wasted on the *Ponte Vecchio*. And that was the seed of numerous, not to say countless, feuds among the Florentines – Blacks vs. Whites, the Corsis vs. the Donatis, the



Guelphs vs. the Ghibellines, etc., in an orgy of domestic imperialist disputes. Due to one of which, Dante was banned and sent into exile, from which he would not and could not return.

On Feb. 21, Ken Kane showed a documentary

about an Italian family of designers,

who have made their mark in America, notably with the logos of some main and familiar brands, from Ford to American Airlines etc. Thank you, Ken. You made us take a bold new look at "Helvetica."

For our March meeting, Ken has organized a communal event. Those who have emailed or sent him one or more pictures of Italy, will be invited to say something about their photo and how they came to take, like or keep it.

See you on March 20,

[Editor's note: In keeping with the spirit of our meeting – using personal photos to tell stories and depict Italy – Ken's photo of the Ponte Vecchio illustrates Jimmie's column. To paraphrase movie credit rolls, but unlike the unfortunate Mr. Bondelmonte, no one was hurt in the making of this picture!]

L'ANGOLO ITALIANO DI CARLO ILIO MANNOCCI

Il 17 Aprile prossimo celebreremo il 20mo Anniversario di Fondazione dell'Associazione Toscana dell'Oregon.

Venti anni or sono non avrei mai immaginato di arrivare a un così' ambito traguardo, ne sono sinceramente fiero ed orgoglioso ! Sono felice assieme ad altri soci fondatori di aver dato alla comunità Italo-americana di Portland un veicolo per meglio conoscere le tradizioni, la cultura e la storia della Toscana e con essa apprezzare meglio l'Italia.

Abbiamo consentito a diversi giovani di frequentare corsi culturali in Italia mettendoli in contatto con la realtà della vita locale, contatti che sono serviti a spronare il raggiungimento di traguardi di valore.

Uniamoci quindi per partecipare in armonia di intenti a condividere felicemente questo importante storico evento della nostra associazione!



MY ITALY, AS SEEN THRU 34 EYES



Our Mar. 20 slide show-and-tell, *My Italy*, will give 17 members of our club a chance to reminisce about their favorite spots in Italy. Alba Orsi (far left) will be among them. Here she is with two friends at the old *Darsena* port in Milan.

The *Darsena* marks the end of the *Naviglio Grande*, a 50-kilometer canal which connects villages in Lombardy. Begun in 1157, it was a major post-medieval engineering project which spurred the development of commerce, agriculture and transportation in that part of Italy. Recent renovations have turned the *Darsena* into a tourist attraction. Says Alba, "It went from a place of rats and dirt, to a nice promenade on the canal with a public market and food stands."

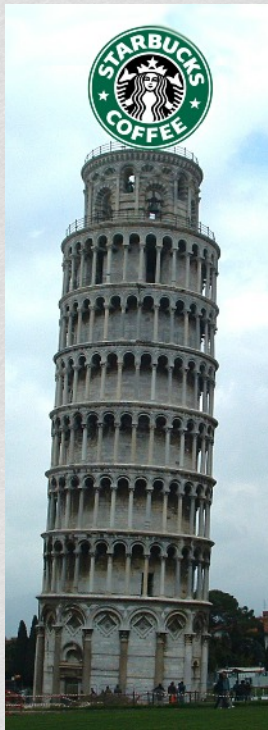
Come see what else Alba and her fellow OregonTuscan photographers have in store for us on Mar. 20!

FOOD DOMINATES THE HEADLINES WHEN IT COMES TO ITALIAN STORIES THIS MONTH

Stories about gourmet seasonings, controversy in the market for an Italian cooking staple, and a coming change to Italy's coffee culture all made the [g]rounds of the Internet in recent weeks. If you click on the links in this article, you can read all about them.



L'Italo Americano chronicled the tasty and laborious story of bringing "sweet salt" from Adriatic coastal marshes to your table: <http://www.italoamericano.org/story/2016-2-23/sale-cervia> ... Another *L'Italo* story profiled Tuscan winemaker Ginevra Venerosi, whose wine is available locally at Nel Centro in downtown Portland: <http://www.italoamericano.org/story/2016-3-4/ginevra-venerosi> ... Meanwhile, the *New York Times* reported on the problem of legislating the purity of Italian olive oils and the strain it is putting on small producers:



<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/world/urope/italy-growers-wary-of-olive-oil-fraud-as-new-law-is-weighed.html>. And, as if there weren't enough of them elsewhere already, Starbucks is planning to open its first shop in Italy: <http://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/feb/29/taking-the-plunger-starbucks-to-open-first-store-in-italy>.

If food's not your thing, then read about the long-overdue Oscar presented to Italian composer Ennio Morricone (below), as reported by TheLocal:

<http://www.thelocal.it/20160229/italys-enio-morricone-finally-wins-an-oscar>.

