



LA PAROLA

Bringing You Information About the Denver Lodge Since 1958

December / Dicembre 2022



Brothers and Sisters,

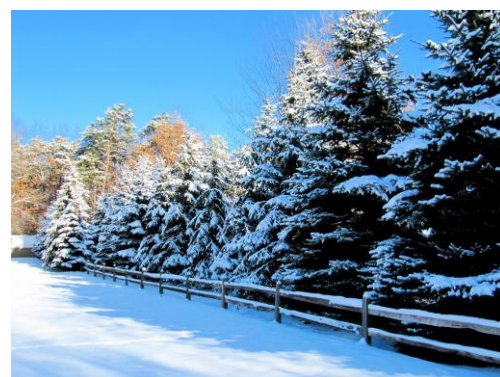
I hope that many of you were able to attend our Annual Christmas Party on December 3rd. It was a great party that included a Prime Rib dinner and the music of Tony David and Wildefire!

Don't forget our December General Meeting on Wednesday December 21st. We will be enjoying a delicious seafood dinner!

As we inch closer to Christmas Day, remember to recall why we celebrate this holiday. Amid the presents, the cookies and the parties, remember that Jesus is reason for the season. And please don't forget to take care of yourselves! Do not allow the stress, that sometimes accompanies the Holiday Season, to strangle you.

Enjoy your family and friends!!
Take Care and God Bless!!

Buon Natale - Felice Anno Nuovo!!
Fraternally Yours,
President Sal



9 Italian Christmas Traditions Not to Miss This

by Cyndi Lubrano

1. Feast of the Seven Fishes: In Italy, the Christmas Eve dinner is called the "feast of the seven fishes" and, as the name suggests, it's a seven-course meal featuring only seafood. The meat-free tradition comes from the Roman Catholic custom of abstaining from meat on Christmas Eve to purify the body. The specifics of the menu vary from region to region, but some common courses include marinated anchovies, seafood soup, hearty roast fish and seafood pasta.

2. Midnight Mass: After the feast of the seven fishes, Italian families flock to their local churches to attend midnight mass. though, "midnight mass" is a bit of a misnomer, since the event no longer is at midnight, they typically start around 9:30 p.m.

3. Bagpipe Music : If you head to any Italian town square during the holidays, you're likely to hear some folksy bagpipe carols. The musicians, known as zampognari, typically dress in traditional shepherd clothing as a nod to the shepherds who visited Jesus on the night he was born. The Sound of Bagpipes is available on Spotify.

4. Visit a Nativity Scene or Create Your Own: In Italy, nativity scenes, or presepi, are no joke. In fact, they are typically hand-crafted by skilled artisans and look more like works of art than rinky dink displays. It's also not uncommon to find large scale, ornate nativity scenes on display in the piazzas and churches in town.

5. La Befana: Epiphany, which is celebrated on January 6, marks the end of the Christmas season...and the last round of gift giving. In fact, a second Santa Claus (of sorts) pays a visit to homes on this date. According to lore, la befana, or "the good witch," stayed home cleaning house instead of following the three kings on their pilgrimage to visit the baby Jesus. Per tradition, she visits homes on January 6 to fill children's stockings with goodies and sweep the hearth to remove bad luck for the coming year.

6. Midnight Skiing: Given that Italy is home to a portion of the Alps, it should come as no surprise that Italians love to ski. In Northern Italy, it is tradition for skiers to hit the slopes at midnight on Christmas Day, sometimes carrying torches to light their way as they ring in the holiday. Midnight skiing in Colorado isn't a thing, but all resorts are open on Christmas Day if you want to hit the slopes then.

7. Sweets, Sweets and More Sweets: If you have a sweet tooth, Italy (or an Italian's house) is the place to be over the holidays. A wide range of desserts, like Christmas cookies and nougat fill the markets and bakeries.

Continued on page 7...



La Parola

December / Dicembre 2022

Pam Wright, Anna Vann, Sal Siraguse ,
LeAnne DiTirro, Beverly Mendicello, Eleanor Gaccetta,
Kathy Holt, and Dr. Rita DeFrangé

Building Contacts

Patrick Lubrano – Building Committee
Desi Ramirez – Facility Manager

Health & Condolence

Angelina Sether 303-989-2251

Hall Rental

Anna Vann

Address Changes

SOIDenver2075@gmail.com

By-Laws

According to Denver By-Laws, Article 1-Paragraph 4, "The by-law commission shall accept for consideration any by-law or change submitted in writing by a regular member in good standing by March 1 of each calendar year.

2021-2022 Lodge Officers

President

Sal Siraguse

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Patrick Lubrano

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Vice President

open

Trustee

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Trustee

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Past President

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Mistress of Ceremonies

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TJ Henderson

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Mistress of Ceremonies

LeAnne DiTirro

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Chaplain

Barbara Pietrafeso

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Historian

Open



Hall Inquiries by Anna Vann

2023 is starting to fill up with rentals. If you're thinking about having an event next year, please contact Anna Vann at 303-618-8023.



2023 -2024 Membership Information

Dues-It's that time of year again... Renewal for 2023 starts in January. Dues for regular members are \$65. Lifetime members (member for 25+ years and over 85 years old) are \$25. Junior members (ages 8-17) are \$8. If you're not sure which category you fall into, please don't hesitate to contact me at 303-618-8023. Ciao-Anna Vann, Recording Secretary.



Come Polka on Sundays!

Sunday afternoon Polka dancing is back in full force!! If you're interested, dancing is from 2-5:30 pm Sundays. Need information, contact Bev Meyer at 970-222-4331 or email coloradopolkaklub@gmail.com.



Book Club by Pam Wright

Book Club continues to meet the second Monday of every month. If interested in joining us, please contact either Pam Wright 303-210-6277 or Maggie Iozzo 702 244-1042.



Dancing at the Lodge – Come and Enjoy!

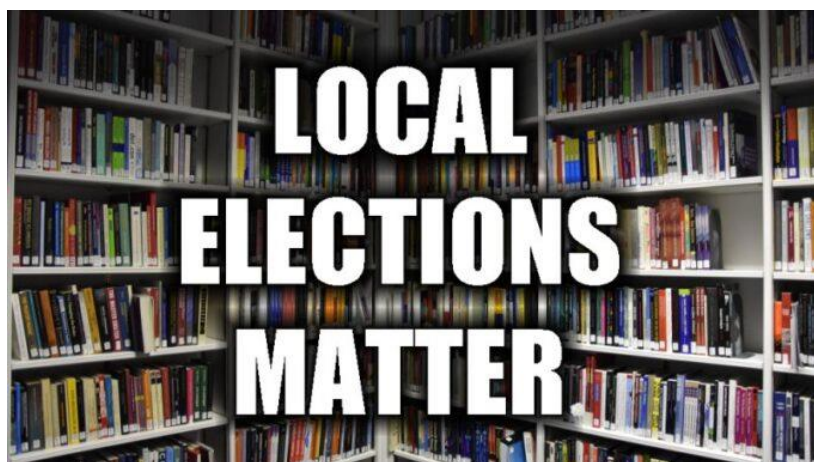
Sponsored by our own Maggie Francucci! Ballroom dancing is back in full swing too! They meet on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of most months. To verify or check with Cathy and/or Maggie at [Http://danceconnectioncolorado.com](http://danceconnectioncolorado.com) There is a one-hour class for various types of dances followed by open dance the rest of the evening.

Updates on Pursuing the 2023=2024 OSIA Denver Lodge Board Orator Pam Wright

At the November meeting the following members were elected 2023-2024 officers President Sal Siraguse, Vice President Patrick Lubrano, Orator Pam Wright, Recording Secretary Anna Vann, Financial Secretary Rita DeFrangé, Trustees Joe Calabrese, John Callor, Joannie Flynn, John Gargano, Joe Marino, Mistresses of Ceremonies LeAnne DiTirro and Diana Williams, Guard T.J. Henderson.

The position of Treasurer remains open and is available to any member that has been in good standing for at least 6 months. Pam Wright will continue to sit in as Immediate Past President with Dominic LoSasso filling in on that position as needed.

According to our by-laws new officers will be installed into office in the month of January. Therefore, installation will take place at our January general meeting. All outgoing and incoming officers must be present.



December Trivia

Beverly Mendicello pulled info from Carol Hallac

What are the most common superstitions at the Italian dinner table?

Never turn the bread upside down, or spill salt or oil, it's a sign of bad luck.

They are considered primary goods and deserve attention and care. Salt and oil should not be passed from hand to hand. That way there is no risk of having them fall.

It is also important not to cross the fork and knife, as they can cause fights.

It's absolutely a no-no in etiquette.

And there should not be 13 dinner guests, also bad luck, as it was the number of people at the Last Supper, in which Judas betrayed Christ.



Patrick checks in on Fran Brehm

by Dr. Rita DeFrangé

Everyone has been asking about Fran, so Patrick stopped in to check on our past Vice President. Fran is doing well – and sends his love to the members!



WELCOME

Welcome to our new members !

Welcome new members...there will be an initiation early in 2023. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact me at 303-618-8023. Thanks! Anna Vann, Recording Secretary.

Remember – general meetings are every third Wednesday, there are plenty of fun things going on at the lodge and across the community. For now – come down on Monday evenings to watch bocce – and maybe even sub ... we always need subs! We are working to schedule an official initiation...stay tuned for details!

The holidays are here! Let's Celebrate!

from Dr. Rita DeFrango

December 3rd, Sons & Daughters Adult Christmas Party

December 4th, Prima Domenica sponsor TBD

December 10-Sons & Daughters Kids Christmas Party

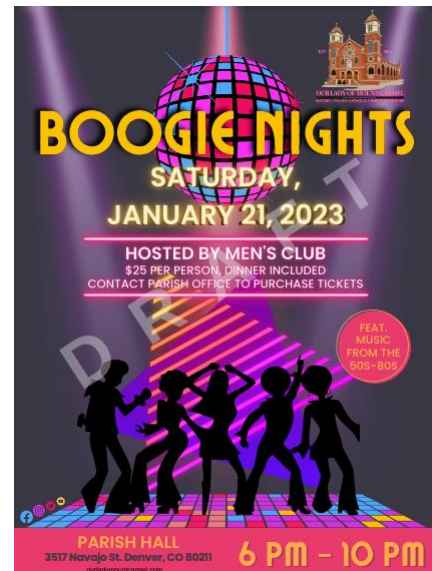
December 14th, IABA Christmas Dinner

In 2023....

January 21 - Boogie Nights at Mt. Carmel contact Paul Garrimone (303) 523 – 4939, for tickets

TBD IABA Bravo Awards – Sometime in February

See our website osiadenver.org for more information! Also, anyone interested in assisting with event planning at the Denver Lodge, please speak with Sal!



Camp Christmas

by Ed Mendicello

17 - December 24. Note: Please visit denvercenter.org/show-updates for more information regarding specific event dates.

Explore a six-acre winter wonderland and rekindle your sense of yuletide cheer at Camp Christmas! With a classic carousel, hot cocoa, visits with Santa, and sweet treats on hand every night, kids from one to 92 are guaranteed to have a jolly old time.

Campers will find themselves wandering through the elaborate campgrounds complete with craft cocktails at one (or all) of our three themed bars, shimmering light displays, and immersive exhibits that will fill your head with visions of Christmases past.

This is a Denver Center for the Performing Arts Off-Center event.

Camp Christmas is produced by Hanzon Studios and the Denver Center for the Performing Arts Off-Center.

New! Flexible Entry Time and VIP Camp Tours available.

Learn more and purchase tickets at DenverCenter.org/CampChristmas or call 303-893-4100



Italian Cookies

by Dr. Rita DeFrang

This time of year, Italian Cookies are everywhere! I found a [link](#) to the 10 most baked cookies.



Next issue will have info from the Adult and Kids Christmas Party's!

In Memorial...

By Angelina Sether

Please note that longtime member, Laura Busnardo, passed away in November.

Jingle Juice

from our own LeAnne DiTirro

- 4 c. Cran-Apple Juice
- 2 (750 ml) bottles red Moscato
- 1 (750 ml) bottle Prosecco
- ½ c vodka
- 2 c frozen Cranberries
- 1/3 c mint leaves
- ½ c granulated sugar,
- for rimming the glasses
- 2 limes, sliced into rounds



Combine all the ingredients
And serve over ice!

Red Point, Green Point

by Sal Siraguse



The Tuesday and Wednesday night Fiori Bocce leagues wrapped up on Saturday November 19th, when the 2 leagues played their season ending tournament at Mickey's Top Sirloin!

Some Ringers, featuring our very own Rita DeFrang, won both the Wednesday Night League as well as the tournament. The 4th place team in the tournament (The Sure Shots) were 4 Sons of Italy members including John and Gerri Fortunato, John Remigio and Bev Lilly!

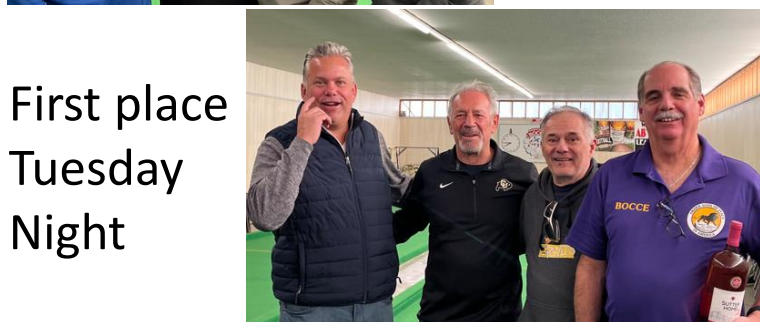
The Tuesday Night League Champs were the Wise Guys, also featuring 4 lodge members, Mike Falagrad, Louie Lombardi, Gary Puccio and yours truly.

A new Monday Night league at Mickey's has been started by Mathew DeCarlo. There are 8 teams playing 2 games per night.

I will let you know how that league winds up in January issue! Until then, throw it NICE NICE and don't be short!!



**First place
Wednesday
Night**



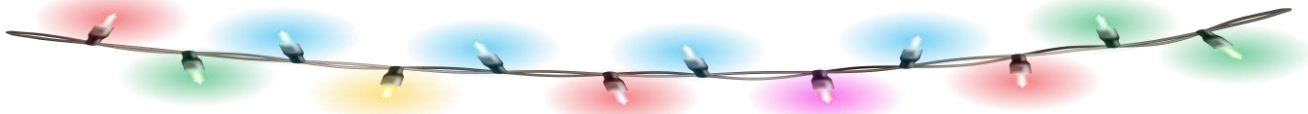
**First place
Tuesday
Night**



**Our very
Own in
4th!**



Happy Holiday's! from Ellie Gaccetta



Well, the first snowflakes have fallen, along with the leaves and we've survived another election season. Now comes the hectic holiday period from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day. For many, the days right after Thanksgiving are stressful swapping out the turkey platters and Thanksgiving tablecloth to bringing out everything Christmas. December is the time we gather with family and friends. If you are hosting the event, there is always stress of deciding what to serve. Is the gathering an informal potluck? Is the gathering a dinner evening affair? Is the gathering a casual "Bronco Sunday" with drinks and bites? Is the gathering one for friends and family to bake and share cookies? Lots of options for gathering!

I have an affinity for baking for the holidays. In my book, *Generations of Good Food*, there are many recipes for holiday cookies and candies. It always fascinated me that some bakers choose to begin baking Christmas cookies in November. They pack breads, cakes, pies, cookies, and candy in air-tight containers and store them in the freezer until they are ready to be shared in December. I am generally charged to bring a freshly baked pie and/or cake to Thanksgiving dinner which are made the day before. I was taught by my late mother to not bake Christmas desserts until shortly before Christmas. It is often a sprint to the finish line and consists of several days of being in the kitchen for long periods of time, but my cookie trays are fresh when I share them. Either way, the home cook needs to ensure all the ingredients necessary are on hand before baking and have a plan of attack to list of items to be baked. If you haven't noticed, the cost of butter, flour, sugar, eggs, and other items for baking this season could break the bank. My late mother also taught me that if you are going to invest the time, effort and energy, and money in baking, then buy the best quality ingredients and use only jumbo eggs and butter.

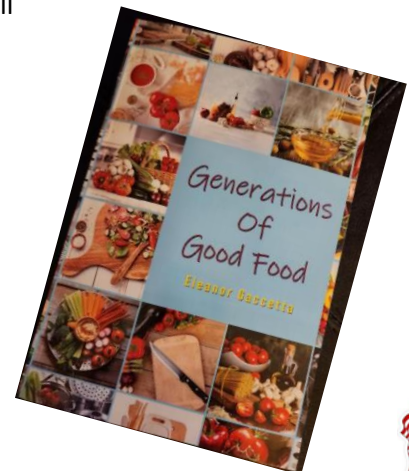
What will you most likely find on my holiday dessert trays? There are several cookies that my friends and family expect to see each holiday season. All these recipes are in my cookbook. Pizzelles, the quintessential Italian wafer cookie. Many Italian bakers use anise as the flavoring, I prefer to flavor my Pizzelles with homemade vanilla (in the cookbook.) Sweet Butter cookies made in the shape of crescents and rolled in powder sugar are my second favorite. This is one cookie I will freeze in an airtight can with waxed paper between the layers of cookies. Can't roll them in the shape of a crescent?

Not a problem, just make small balls for Snowballs or add chopped nuts for Italian Wedding cookies. This versatile recipe can also be filled with marmalade or jam for a Thumbprint cookie. Ricotta cookies are light, pillows of either vanilla, lemon or even chocolate flavor. Frost them with colored drizzle and add sprinkles for a beautiful effect on a holiday cookie tray. Pistachio and Cranberry biscotti, Whipped Spritz, and Sour Cream Twists (yeast dough) round out the basic cookies. Honey cookies are quite labor intensive and require more than one set of hands to make.

But why stop at cookies!?! Several years ago, I decided to try my hand at making candy. I found it to be most enjoyable, but tricky. In my cookbook there are several Fudge recipes, including Tiger Fudge which is a peanut butter and chocolate treat. Coconut Joys are a family favorite and an easy recipe. Cherry Cheese Balls take two days to make and two bites to devour. Children enjoy making Oreo Balls with just three ingredients of crushed Oreos, cream cheese and sprinkles. Peanut Clusters are also easy, and you can mix up the nuts! If you're preparing for a gathering, you might also add a Pumpkin Cheesecake or Chiffon cake to the lineup – they require a bit of skill and patience.

It is important for hosts to be aware of guests with food allergies. Display cookies with nuts separately for those with nut allergies and keep candies separate from cookies for the gluten-free folks. I opt to be all inclusive when I bake or cook for holiday gatherings, so no one is left out.

Whatever your taste and whatever your gathering be sure to include holiday desserts. Grab a copy of *Generations of Good Food* at Amazon or visit my website at www.onecaregiversjourney.com and purchase it there.



Self-Care: Remembering “me” in Merry

by Eleanor Gaccetta

Buon Natale!

The season for merrymaking and making ourselves crazy is upon us. The Thanksgiving leftovers have been eaten (thank God) and now we turn our attention to Christmas preparations and plans. Bring up all the boxes, unwrap the decorations and hang them on the tree. It doesn't matter where you hang them, you'll be moving them around several times after you stand back and look at it again. Set out the nativity set. If you have a fireplace or buffet they will get decorated as well. Then you haul all the empty boxes back downstairs and store them until it is time to take it all down again. After you've vacuumed and maybe taken time to have a cup of coffee you can move onto your next fifteen projects. Do you write out Christmas cards and send them? Start creating a shopping list for holiday dinners or baking items and check it twice. Are you having a family gathering that must be planned? That includes deciding who is invited and who is not. Are you going to a holiday affair and need to shop for something to wear because all your friends have seen everything in your closet? And then there is the gift list and how much to rob from the piggybank. Are you stressed yet?

Remember “me” in the merry holiday hustle and bustle where emotions range from positive to negative. For many the holidays means taking care of others. This leaves little time for yourself. Here are a few tips to practice self-care during the holidays from the Harvard School of Health.

1. Schedule time each day to exercise, meditate or enjoy a hobby or past time.
2. Practice gratitude for people and events in your life. Count your blessings. A grateful heart attracts more joy, love, and prosperity.
3. Relax. Listen to soothing music or just chill for a bit each day.
4. Tune into your emotions. You can be happy or sad and you can be both but be aware.
5. If you are angry, try to understand why. Some people set unrealistic goals and expectations around the holidays and feel overwhelmed. Readjust your goals so they are attainable.
6. Monitor your stress level. Do you feel stressed at certain times of the day or around certain people? (We're Italians, of course we do.) Take note of this and take a few minutes to relax, go for a walk or watch TV. Just don't say something you'll regret and can't take back – that's not the best way to de-stress.
7. Being present. Take notice of the sights, smells and sounds of the holidays. Be mindful of the joy and beauty that surrounds us.
8. Take care of yourself. Get plenty of rest and eat nutritious foods. Enjoy special foods and treats but balance them with healthy eating.

As flight attendants say – put on your own oxygen mask first before helping others. Take time to care for yourself and fully appreciate and enjoy this holiday season!



Merry Christmas from my family to yours!

Continued from page 1...

8. Tombola: After finishing off the Christmas Eve feast, families gather around to play Tombola –the Italian version of Bingo. This raucous lottery-style game involves prizes and plenty of merrymaking. <https://www.italyheritage.com/traditions/christmas/tombola.htm>

9. Gift Exchanges: Christmas Day is when the big present opening extravaganza takes place stateside, but in Italy there is no designated day for exchanging gifts. While some Italian families open presents on Christmas Day, others do so on Christmas Eve or even earlier; and, in Northern Italy, legend has it that St. Lucia delivers gifts to be opened on December 13.



Please Join Us at the Denver Lodge for These Events

December / Dicembre – Holiday Celebrations

December 3rd – Adult Christmas Party with Wildefire!

December 10th – Mark your Calendars for the Kids Party with Santa

December 21st – General Meeting Dinner (\$10) at 6-ish with social time right afterwards

Happy New Year!!!!

January / Gennaio

January 18th – General Meeting

Contact Us

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