



ITALIAN HERITAGE CENTER

40 Westland Ave
Portland, ME 04102
207-772-2500

www.italianheritagecenter.com

FEBRUARY
2026

MEMBER NEWSLETTER



MISSION STATEMENT

The Italian Heritage Center is committed and dedicated to:

- The preservation and promotion of our Italian heritage, culture and history.
- Maintaining a vital repository of and being an important resource for information about Italy and the Italian experience in America.
- Social, charitable, benevolent, and educational endeavors.
- Teaching the Italian language and the history of Italy and Italian immigration to Maine and offering instruction on the significant contributions Italians have made to the Arts, Sciences and Humanities.
- Fostering the sharing & handing down of customs, traditions & cuisine from generation to generation.

[Facebook](#) (member page)



[Instagram](#)





INTERIM PRESIDENT

Bill Lucatuorto 303-887-9164

Well, we've started the year with a lot of cold weather. However, we are getting closer to Spring! We welcomed some new members in January, so please introduce yourself to them and include them in our events. It's been a quiet month for business as it is every January. We will now be calling former customers to see if they'll rebook with us for 2026. In addition, we are strategizing on how to draw new customers in. If you have suggestions, don't be afraid to tell us.

At the January General Meeting, nominations were taken from the floor for the Vice President's open position. We had received no nomination calls by phone nor any by mail. Ed Angelo was nominated from the floor at the meeting and accepted the nomination. The Board Secretary cast one vote and Ed was elected. Congratulations Ed!!

Moving forward, please attend some events we offer and enjoy YOUR Center. We offer a variety of things to participate in, so come and participate, see friends, laugh, and have a great time. As always, I enjoy all of you and all that you do for the organization. You can always reach out to me if you feel the need.

Bill Lucatuorto
Interim President

You must have your **MEMBERSHIP CARD** to attend the general meeting.



DATE: Thursday, February 19
TIME: 5:30 dinner/6:30 mtg
PLACE: Columbus Rm
COST: \$15 dinner

If you are coming for dinner at 5:30 pm, you must
RSVP by MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16 . Please call Bill at 303-887-9164

IHC POSITIONS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (Directors - 11)				COMMITTEE CHAIRS	
PRIMARY OFFICERS		ELECTED DIRECTORS		By-Laws	Sam Rinaldi
Interim President	Bill Lucatuorto	Activities Director	Tracy Rinaldi	Charity	Katie Guzman
Vice President	Ed Angelo	Director/Associate	Katie Guzman	Cultural	VACANT
Treasurer	Martin Joyce	Director	Joseph Cupo	Facilities	Ed Angelo
Recording Secretary	Cathy Giuffre-Renaud	Director	Annette Hoglund	Health & Welfare	Carlene Aceto
Membership Secretary	Robert Lax	Director	Jay Scala	Marketing	Melissa Martin
		PAST PRESIDENT	Vincenza Dunn	Scholarship	Judy Ann Ferrante
APPOINTED POSITIONS				OTHER/TECH	
Sergeant at Arms	Bruce Koharian			Business & Events Manager	Victoria Bailey
Parliamentarian	Martin Joyce			Webmaster (events)	Victoria Bailey
updated 1/15/2026				Webmaster (members)	Connie DiBiase



A Note from the Manager, Victoria Bailey

Hello Members!

As we step into February, our focus is shifting toward continuing to build on our marketing efforts, strengthening vendor partnerships, and preparing for a busy spring season ahead. There are so many exciting updates and initiatives in the works, and we can't wait to share them with you.

If you're not already following us on Facebook or Instagram, we encourage you to do so to stay up to date with all of the fun changes, behind-the-scenes moments, and upcoming marketing campaigns. We're looking forward to an energetic and productive season filled with beautiful events and new opportunities.



ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

Tracy Rinaldi 207-671-1238

Hello my friends!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making New Year's Eve a great success, with special thanks to Barbie and Carlene for organizing the event, and the Reali families for their help with displaying flyers in their stores. Kicking off 2026 with a proposal on the dance floor was truly incredible!

It is hard to believe February is already here. It wouldn't be February without the Super Bowl! We open the month with a Pre-Super Bowl party on February 7. Will you be the one to predict the winner and take home a prize?

Our next event is a Valentine's Dinner Dance, offering an enjoyable evening for both couples and singles. Attendees can look forward to a delicious meal and a lively performance by the dynamic duo, Annelyse & Michael. A tremendous thank you to my team and to Melissa and Betsy for their organizing and advertising efforts. You never cease to amaze me! To get member pricing for the Valentine's Dinner Dance, please purchase your tickets in person in the Cantina on Wednesday evenings, or send a check. All payments and ticket **sales must be completed by Wednesday, February 11**. You can also make special arrangements with me to purchase tickets if you are unable to come in on Wednesday evenings.

Be sure to join us on February 28 as we celebrate February birthdays.

Tracy

RECURRING EVENTS



DATE: Tuesday & Thursday
TIME: 9 - 11 am
LOCATION: La Cantina



DATE: Wednesday
TIME: 9:30 am
LOCATION: La Cantina



DATE: Wednesday
TIME: 5 pm bar opens/ 6 pm game
PLACE: La Cantina

ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: First MONDAY of month
TIME: 5:30 pm
LOCATION: La Cantina

Got an idea for a new/interesting activity?
Contact Tracy Rinaldi
207-671-1238

Want to watch the **FEBRUARY 2026 SLIDESHOW OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES?**

The slides replay when finished or you can close it



1. Open the camera app on your phone (or other device)
2. Point it at the QR code (as if you're taking its picture)
3. When some words appear on your screen, tap on that
4. The first slide will appear (like the one pictured here)
5. Slideshow **starts automatically** & slides **auto change every 10 seconds**

SCAN & wait 10 seconds for each slide to change!
[Or click this link to watch](#)



DATE	SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7
TIME	5 pm Bar Opens 5:30 pm Share Food & Fun
LOCATION	Cantina

Note: Your "tailgate" food must be from a licensed kitchen if you plan to share.

There will be a "PREDICTION" Game!

You might win a Gift Card!

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2026

MEMBERS \$40

NON MEMBERS \$45

Italian Heritage Center presents...

Valentine's Dinner & Dance

Couples & Singles Welcome!

Saturday, February 14th, 2026

- Bar Opens: 5:00 PM
- Dinner: 5:30 PM
- Live Music & Dancing:
6:30 PM – 10:00 PM
- Featuring Annelyse & Michael

\$40 members

\$45 non-members

Open to the Public

- Free Parking
- Columbus Room



Dance the Night Away

Annelyse & Michael will set the mood with live music perfect for dancing—from romantic favorites to crowd-pleasing classics.

TICKET SALES END 2/11/26

Dinner Menu

Appetizers

- Caprese Bites
- Shrimp Cocktail
- Garden Salad

Entrées

- Oven Roasted Pork Loin w/apples
- Chicken Cordon Bleu

Sides

- Roasted Potatoes
- Brown Sugar Glazed Carrots
- Green Beans with Almonds

Dessert

- Whoopie Pies
- Apple Crisp
- Sweetheart Cupcakes



Scan for Details



MEMBER BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

DATE	SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28
TIME	5:00 pm Bar Opens
	6:00 pm (bring your own)
LOCATION	Cantina

Come & celebrate your fellow members!

- Bring your own food
- Yummy Birthday Cake will be provided





MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Bob Lax 207-671-8470 robertlax@aol.com

Welcome to all our new members (regular and associate). We hope to see you at upcoming events. Don't forget to reach out if you'd like to join a committee (or two) or volunteer your help. Reach out to any of those listed here.

Committee	Chair	Email
Activities	Tracy Rinaldi	rinaldi.tracy@gmail.com
By-Laws	Sam Rinaldi	samrinaldi8@gmail.com
Charity	Katie Guzman	kguzman1655@gmail.com
Cultural (temp co-chairs)	Jay Scala Judy Kendrick	jaybo54@maine.rr.com jagwindham@aol.com
Facilities	Ed Angelo	eangelo@maine.rr.com
Health & Welfare	Carlene Aceto	otecac@gmail.com
Marketing	Melissa Martin	melissaamartin17@gmail.com
Scholarship	Judy Ann Ferrante	jferrante2@me.com



Do you **KNOW SOMEONE** that might want to become a
REGULAR member • ASSOCIATE member • REACTIVATED member
[download a MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION here](#)

OR grab a **copy in the Lobby** at the IHC

CULTURAL COMMITTEE



Our next **Murder Mystery Dinner** prepared by our own "Nonnas" is coming up soon. Dig out your cowboy boots & join us for this cool Western theme.

Saturday, March 7

SCAN for Tickets



Tickets on Sale NOW! \$75

Visit the IHC website to **BUY TICKETS** <https://italianheritagecenter.com/event-tickets/>
Want to pay with **cash or check?** Download a [MANUAL PAYMENT FORM](#)



We are sad to announce the passing of Professor Fiorello Ventresco (94) of USM, who taught many history lessons for the IHC. You can read the obituary here:
<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/portland-me/fiorello-ventresco-12709462>



Emily Loder, Bocce Commissioner • 570-780-2538

emilymloder@gmail.com

If you have questions, contact Emily

DATE: TUESDAYS

TIME: 6 pm

PLACE: Columbus Rm

The **last day** of playing Bocce is **March 10th**. The **banquet** will be held on **March 17th** at the IHC. Menu and pricing is TBD. Stay tuned for more details.

STANDINGS AS OF JANUARY 13, 2026

	1 FIRST PLACE			2 SECOND PLACE			3 THIRD PLACE			4 FOURTH PLACE		
WOMEN	WINS		LOSSES	WINS		LOSSES	WINS		LOSSES	WINS		LOSSES
	17		10	13		14	12		14	11		15
	1 FIRST PLACE			2 SECOND PLACE			3 THIRD PLACE			4 FOURTH PLACE		
MEN	WINS		LOSSES	WINS		LOSSES	WINS		LOSSES	WINS		LOSSES
	22		4	20		7	7		19	4		23

COST: \$2/card



DATE	SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21
TIME	6:00 pm
LOCATION	La Cantina



Bring your snacks and some friends and settle in for the traditional holiday family game of Tombola! We hope to see you there.

**LEARN
ITALIAN**

Write directly to Daniela at daniela.regorda@gmail.com for one-on-one symbiotic session with a native Italian to teach her some English and learn Italian from her.

ITALIAN Idiom

(nonna said it best)

"Chi non si lascia consigliare, non si può aiutare."

Those who do not seek advice
cannot be helped.

TRIVIA

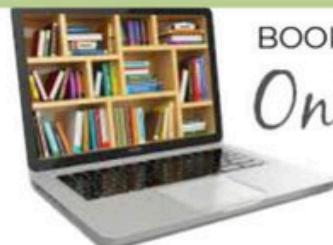
Which Region of Italy has a FREE wine fountain?

- A. Abruzzo
- B. Toscana
- C. Friuli-Venezia Giulia
- D. Piemonte

ANSWER: see page 12

BOOK CLUB (online)

DATE	WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18
TIME	6:30 pm

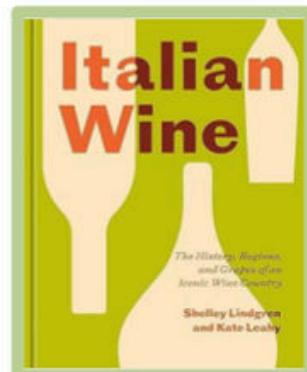


BOOK CLUB Online

Italian Wine: The History, Regions, and Grapes of an Iconic Wine Country

by
Shelley Lindgren and
Kate Leahy

From award-winning sommelier Shelley Lindgren, and acclaimed cookbook author Kate Leahy comes a user-friendly and charming guide to Italian wines two decades in the making. The dynamic storytelling duo takes you through a beautifully photographed and delightfully comprehensive journey to understand what Italian wine looks like today: the makers shaping the industry, the innovative ways farmers are adapting to climate change, and the history that paved the path for this current movement.



Contact **Jim DiBiase** for the link! **767-2292 or 831-4191**

THE MONUMENT COMMITTEE



The Monument Committee is pleased to announce they reached their first target by the deadline of 12/31/2025. Over \$118,000 has been raised. Now, we're ready to make the final push for donations needed to bring it to completion. While this is an effort to honor all the Italian ancestors who came to Portland and built beautiful lives and legacies for their families, the Committee wishes to especially thank the members of the IHC who have contributed to this Monument. By spreading the word, you can help this project be something everyone knows about.

ST. JOSEPH'S ALTAR/ITALIAN FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION



In southern Italy, on March 19th, St Joseph's Day, there is a tradition of "La Tavola di San Giuseppe" (St Joseph's Table.) The day is also celebrated as Father's Day throughout Italy.

March 18 & 19, 2026

The actual day celebrated in Italy is Thursday, March 19th. That is also the day of our Members' General Meeting. We are also going to have the table set with desserts and photos the night before for Show Me The Money on Wednesday, March 18th.

All proceeds from the bake sale will go to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Last year we raised over \$600 for the Preble Street Soup Kitchen. Thank you for your support by purchasing dessert items and for sharing photos of those you wish to honor on the St. Joseph's altar. There will be a black tote set up in the Cantina for your photos. Please mark your items so we can be sure you get them back after the event. If you have photo stands, please help us by providing those for easier display.



SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Judy Ann Ferrante, Chair 207-671-9412

FUNDRAISER will be the last weekend of September (26th or 27th). Next month, March, we will give out a "Save the Date". More info coming very soon!

THE BLUES BROTHERS: NEXT GENERATION SHOW will be here at the IHC!

DONORS

In addition to the IHC Scholarship, we have individuals and families who honor a family member and choose to help a student with his/her education. Currently, the Germani Family is a Scholarship Donor. Please contact Judy Ann Ferrante by March 31 if you're planning to be a Donor this year.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Italian Heritage Center Scholarship Applications are **available on the IHC website**. In addition to students entering colleges and universities, we are encouraging students entering certified trade schools to apply.

You can access the IHC Application by going to the Italian Heritage Center Website on your browser. Click the **Membership Menu**, a drop down menu will appear, then click **Scholarship**. Or you can use this link and it will open the Scholarship page:

<https://italianheritagecenter.com/scholarships/>

- Scroll down on the Scholarship page and find links to the applications.
- Click on a link and the application will open.
- Download that file. Print it out & complete all parts.
- Review your packet for inclusion and completion of all required components.

Plan to mail or personally deliver your application by Monday, 5:00 pm, June 1, 2026.



CHARITY COMMITTEE

Katie Guzman, Chair 207-400-4794

REMEMBER: Snacks are for sale in the Cantina!

Thanks for your support!



HEALTH & WELFARE

Carlene Aceto, 207-405-7156

otecac@gmail.com

Please be in touch if you know of anyone I should send a card to. Those cards might be Get Well • Thinking of You • Sympathy • Mass cards, etc.

Thank you - Carlene



**VOLUNTEER
RECOGNITION**
Marianne Reali

50/50 WINNER
Tom DiBiase

NEW MEMBERS



Stacy Mariano, Bill Lucatuorto
(Interim President), Bob Mariano



QUORUM WINNER
Vicki Spaltro

IHC MONTHLY MEMBER CALENDAR can be viewed by clicking on [this link](#). You may then view separate months by clicking on the tab for a specific month.

25	26	27	28	29	30	31
		9-11 am Muffin Club	9:30 am Scat	9-11 am Muffin Club		6:30-9:30 pm Member Birthday Celebration
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> 6 pm BOCCE Show Me the \$ 6 pm Scat </div>						
Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec						

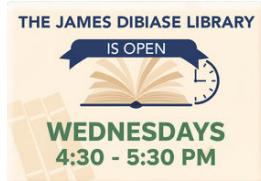
February 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	5:30 pm Activities Comm MONTHLY mtg	9-11 am Muffin Club	9:30 am Scat	9-11 am Muffin Club		6 - 9 pm PRE-Superbowl Party
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
SUPERBOWL 		9-11 am Muffin Club	9:30 am - Scat	9-11 am Muffin Club		5:30 pm Dinner 6:30-10 pm band Anneliese & Michael
		6 pm BOCCE	5:30 pm Cultural Mtg			
			6 pm Show Me The \$			
15	16 Presidents' Day	17	18	19	20	21
		9-11 am Muffin Club	9:30 am Scat	9-11 am Muffin Club		6 pm Tombola
		6 pm BOCCE	6 pm Show Me the \$	4 pm Board Mtg 5:30 pm Dinner 6:30 pm Member Mtg		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		9-11 am Muffin Club	9:30 am Scat	9-11 am Muffin Club		5 pm Bar Open 6pm Bring Your Dinner Member Birthday Celebration
		6 pm BOCCE	6 pm Show Me the \$			

Hey!

What are you doing on Wednesday afternoon?



Library committee members will be there to help you find the perfect book to curl up with in a snowstorm. Access is also available at other times by contacting the Business Manager.



TRIVIA ANSWER to Trivia Question on page 9 = **A. Abruzzo**

One of the most unique fun facts about Italy is that in the region of Abruzzo, there's a free wine fountain where visitors can help themselves to local red wine. This unique attraction, known as the "Fontana del Vino," is located along the famous Cammino di San Tommaso pilgrimage route.



ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS

MEMBER PAGE - IHC WEBSITE

SEND YOUR PHOTOS



SHARE those great photos you took at a recent event. Email high quality images to **Connie DiBiase** at cdibiaseihc@gmail.com

- If you are **not getting your emails** from us, check your junk/spam folder.
- Please remember to put your **membership number on all your correspondence**.
- Due to the State of Maine Rule & Regulations for private clubs, the **Cantina Door MUST always be locked**.
- All **guests** MUST be signed in by a member and leave when the member leaves.

SPONSORS



Want your business listed in the newsletter & on the IHC website as a sponsor of the Italian Heritage Center?

Do you have friends, relatives, colleagues who may know of a company that would like to support the IHC? Just send in payment (\$100/yr) along with the name, tel#, website, and contact person to Betsy Nilsen, Italian Heritage Center, 40 Westland Ave, Portland, ME 04102.



PLEASE NOTE: If you want your name (or a family member's name) to appear here, please send in **\$10 per name**. You can contact Bob Lax, robertlax@aol.com. Please make the check out to Italian Heritage Center and clearly print the name of the person in the "For/Memo" section



Paul J. Connolly	Marianna Grimaldi Oleson	Albert Stivaletti
Mario Grimaldi	Michael Pizzo	Filomena Lapomarda Tripaldi
Gloria Giordano Lax	Philip G. Rotolo	Maria Trivellin
Robert Lax	Jean Russo	

In Memoriam



Joseph Aliberti, Sr.	Dominic Distasio	Fannie Grimaldi	
Stephen W. Amero	Lucy Ferrante	Joseph Grimaldi	Emily Pirone
Joseph A. Capelluti	Sammy Ferrante	Frank Lorello	Alphonse Pizzo, Jr.
Josephine N. Capelluti	Lou Germani	Richard Lorello	Martin R. Pizzo
Orlando J. Capelluti	Rose Germani	Emilio (Leo) Micucci	John E. Pizzo
Andrew Carlista Sr.	Connie Giordano	Philomena Nicholas	Settimo Trivellin
Mary C. Connolly	Nino Giordano	Carmine Pirone	

TWO BIG EVENTS HAPPENING SOON

You can buy tickets online through the Italian Heritage Center website! Just open the **Events Menu** and select **Event Tickets**. <https://italianheritagecenter.com/event-tickets/> However, if you would prefer **buying your ticket with cash or check**, then you can use the forms below to do that. Just make a copy, fill it out, mail it in or drop it off.

Saturday, February 14, 2026

Bar Open 5:00 PM
Dinner 5:30 PM
Band: Annelyse & Michael 6:30-10:00 pm

ITALIAN HERITAGE CENTER

40 Western Ave, Portland, ME 04102
Questions? Tracy Rinaldi 207-671-1238

<https://italianheritagecenter.com/event-tickets/>

MEMBER \$40 MEMBER ID
 NON-MEMBER \$45

CASH
 CHECK **Payable to:** Italian Heritage Center

Write: **Valentine's Day** in the memo line



NUMBER OF TICKETS PURCHASED

<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	NAME(S) <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	TEL # <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	EMAIL <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	TOTAL DUE <input type="text"/>

If you purchased more than 2 tickets, please provide the names of the other people in your party

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Saturday, March 7, 2026

Doors Open 6:30 PM
Show Starts 7:00 PM
Price \$75
Dinner & The Show



ITALIAN HERITAGE CENTER

40 Westland Avenue, Portland, ME 04102

<https://italianheritagecenter.com/event-tickets/>

QUESTIONS? Contact Nancy (8am-5pm) 207-807-2299

WESTERN MURDER MYSTERY DINNER THEATER



CASH **CHECK**

Make checks payable to:

Italian Heritage Center

Write "Western Murder Mystery" in the memo line

Tickets **Price**
 1 \$75
 2 \$150
 3 \$225
 4 \$300
 5 \$375
 6 \$450
 7 \$525
 8 \$600

Please check the number of tickets being purchased. Complete the form.

NAME(S):
TEL #
EMAIL:
TOTAL DUE:

Please mail this form and your payment to the address shown above. You may also drop it off at the Center during business hours (10 am-5pm, Tuesday-Friday)

If you purchase tickets for a group of 3 or more, please provide the names of all the people in your group and also indicate if any of them need Gluten Free options.

1	4	Is anyone Gluten Free? List any who are.
2	5	
3	6	
	7	
COMMENT: <input type="text"/>		

Is anyone Gluten Free? List any who are.