



## THE ITALIAN TIMES JR.

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Welcome to Milwaukee Public Market – our new sponsor – “A Gathering Place Where Great Taste is Always in Season”. John Gurda, Milwaukee Historian wrote: “Milwaukee Public Market is rooted in an old tradition. Long after the novelty wears off, the Public Market will remain the freshest landmark in downtown Milwaukee.” MPM offers a wide variety of foods. It also showcases a variety of cooking classes.

### **A Message From The President**

We're in major countdown mode to Festa Italiana 2024 and our return to the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds. I consider this a renaissance year for us. Our “Little Italy on the Lakefront” will feature the usual Festa favorites, but with ramped up food, wine, and Cucina Showcase programming. I'm especially excited to be bringing back the Florentine Opera. The Regional Exhibit is also returning, and we'll be celebrating Sicily. As always, we need volunteers to join Team Festa and help us in a variety of areas. Sign-up is available on our website. Please

follow Festa Italiana on Facebook and Instagram for the latest news on all things Festa. We look forward to seeing everyone at our biggest event of the year. Let's show this town how we the Italians throw a celebration.

Be well,  
SW



### **What's Happening With Festa?**

- Pre-Sale Tickets & 3-Day Passes are now available for purchase.
- Festa Italiana will be serving Rice Balls, Italian Sausage, the currently popular Italian Chopped Sandwich, and Gelato.
- Most of the entertainment has been contracted, including Rebel Grace, The Florentine Opera, and The Little Monsters Tribute to Lady Gaga.
- Italian Idol will return.
- Cucina Showcase will feature chefs who have been nominated for the James Beard Award (the Oscar for chefs!)
- Festa Mass will be on the US Cellular Stage on Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 1:00 pm. Fr. Carlos Londoño, the Associate pastor of the Family of Five Parishes, will be presiding over the Mass.
- Fireworks will light up the sky on Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:30 pm.
- The Festa Bocce Tournament will be held on Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Register your team of 4 players. Team fee is \$60. Open bocce playing will also be held on Friday and Saturday.
- The Festa Raffle will include a Vespa as 1<sup>st</sup> prize, \$2,000 cash as the 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, and \$1,000 cash for 3<sup>rd</sup> prize.

**FestaMKE.com**

## Festa Volunteers Needed

Tracy Balistreri reports that there has been a positive response for volunteers, however more volunteers are needed. You can sign up at [FestaItalianaVolunteer.com](http://FestaItalianaVolunteer.com)

## Best Sauce Contest



St. Rita Square is hosting its third annual Best Sauce Contest. Preliminary judging will be held on May 18<sup>th</sup> at St. Rita Square, 728 E. Pleasant Street, from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm. The top 6 contestants will compete at Festa Italiana on Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> for the coveted “Best Sauce in Milwaukee” honor – cash prizes and awards for the winners. Both meat and meatless Italian red sauces are eligible. Entry fee is \$10.00. Full details and registration can be found at [mkebestsauce.com](http://mkebestsauce.com).

## Elections

President Sandy Winard has appointed Christine Conley and Ann Zambito as Co-Chairs of the Nominating Committee. Nominations for Committee Members were made from the floor, and the following individuals will serve on the Committee: Sarah Kissinger-Carini, Maria Megna-Scarano and Andy Etier. The slate of nominees for the elections will be presented at the April General Membership Meeting. Positions up for election: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sargent-At-Arms and four Board of Director seats.

## Election Eligibility Requirements:

- Must be a member in good standing;
- Must have been a member of the Italian Community Center for at least 24 months prior to his/her nomination;
- Must have served on at least one **Italian Community Center** Committee, or held the position of a Festa Italiana Manager within the past year, or attended at least 50% of the regularly scheduled general membership meetings in the preceding year as confirmed by record.

The Committee will present a slate of candidates at the **April 18th** General Membership Meeting. Ballots go out the week before the May General Membership Meeting, and the results will be announced at the June GM Meeting.

## Italian Language Classes

The final class of the first session of the Italian Language class ended. Sabrina Lupoli had the students complete a survey about the class. All responses were extremely positive. The second session is underway.

## Gallery Night

Come see the mosaic works of Anthony Lauer, and drawing and paintings by Cris Hart at Gallery Night, Friday April 19<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 – 9:00 pm and Saturday, April 20 from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm. Gina Jorgensen will also provide a journey through Italy and Sicily with photographs.

## Italian Heritage Day with the Milwaukee Brewers

A limited number of tickets are still available for the June 30<sup>th</sup> game – cost to attend \$35 for Members and \$40 for non-members. A tailgate party will be held at the ICC at 11:00 am, and bus transportation will be provided to and from the game.

## **Benvenuti Bambini Workshops**

The third workshop featured Bubagalova making and egg dying. The children had a great time making the traditional Easter cookie, especially putting on the sprinkles! Each child had a cookie to take home to enjoy. The final class will be on April 21<sup>st</sup>. Attendees will be making fresh pasta and ravioli from scratch, taught by Alex Pawlak!

## **ICC Movie Night**

The April 12th movie is the original Mary Poppins, starring Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke. Movie Night is sponsored by Michael Massey of Packerland Brokerage Services, Inc. Concessions are available for purchase – the featured food item is Macaroni and Cheese and Hot Dogs. Doors will open at 5:30 and the movie will start at 6:00. The Membership Committee is planning to have some kid-friendly activities.

## **Bocce Needs Help**

The Tuesday noon league is in need of players. You don't have to be an expert bocce player. If you can roll a ball, you can play bocce. The fee is \$30 for members and \$40 for non-members. The next season has already started but if you are interested, please call Craig Lieber at 414-617-0620, and he will assign you to a current team. This session will end in May and the next one will start in September. It's a fun way to spend a Tuesday afternoon!

## **Unico Citizen of the Year and Scholarship Awards Dinner**

The event has been set for May 14<sup>th</sup> at the ICC. Joe Emanuele will receive the Citizen of the Year Award and Sr. Marie Louise Balistrieri will receive the Service Above Self Award. Scholarships will be awarded to the selected students. The fee to attend is \$50.00 per person.

## **With Heavy Hearts**

Ray Besasie, long-time ICC member, passed away on Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at the young age of 90 years. Ray and his brothers were the "ticket masters" at the gates of Festa Italiana for many, many years.

Ray loved cars, especially Excaliburs, which he and his brothers built. His second love of cars involved Jaguars. He was called "The Jaguar Man". Ray loved racing. (Do they give speeding tickets in Heaven??) He, along with his brother, invented their own car – the Baci. They actually sold 31 of them! Ray was the loving husband of Caroline (nee Purpero), and cherished father of Raymond Bisesi, Gressi Bisesi, Roslyn (David) Radke, Marilyn (Donald Unverrich) Besasie and Carlo (Wendi) Besasie. Beloved grandfather of Vince, Gina, Rosalia, Joseph, John, Christian, Serafina, Peter, Charles, Terese, and Catie. Dear brother of Fred and Joseph (Virginia) Besasie.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his entire family. He will surely be missed by all who knew him.



**The 1994 Besasie Excalibur Baci auto.**

## **This and That:**

Reminder: Renew your membership so you can enjoy all of the benefits the ICC has to offer, and don't forget: registered, paid adult members will receive 2 tickets to Festa!

Gallery Night: April 19<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 9:00; April 20<sup>th</sup> 10:00 to 2:00. Refreshments courtesy of MKE Life Church.

ICC welcomed new members: Meghan Ferreri and Gary Zandi at the last General Membership Meeting. Welcome!

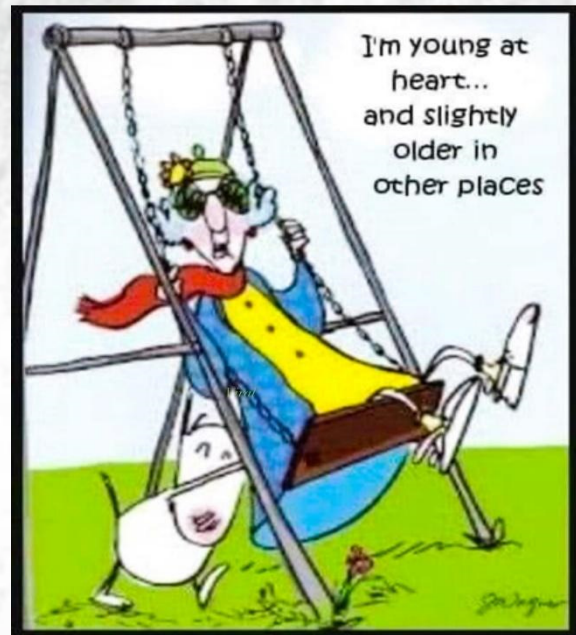
Frank Schiro has been elected as President of the Order of Sons and Daughters.

Club Garibaldi #1 from the Wednesday Night League held on to beat Gang Bocce from the Tuesday Afternoon League in a 12-11 victory for the Winter 2023 Session. Tony LoCoco, Jim Lehman, Gary Lisiecki, Russ Sereno are members of the winning team.



Spring Bocce League Tournament Winners

## **Bringing a Smile to Your Face**



*Note: The Italian Times, Jr. staff will be working on a "Festa Issue" to be emailed a bit later than the 1<sup>st</sup> week in May and will replace the May regular issue.*

From the staff of the *Italian Times, Jr.*, the ICC Executive Officers and the ICC Board of Directors, Happy Spring!

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