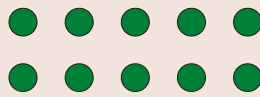


Spring 2023



# LA TAVOLA

ISU Italian Club



## NEWSLETTER

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### Eventi Culturali

by Kathryn Stangel

For the first time in La Tavola history, we introduced a new tradition. Pasquetta—Easter Monday—occurred in mid-April on a rare warm evening. We set up a picnic in the quad, complete with tasty treats and a *colomba* (or dove-shaped cake). We finished off the evening with an old-fashioned egg hunt with hints in Italian to help find each egg. The winners received a pasta-making kit, but win or lose, everyone agreed it was an event that La Tavola intends to carry forward in the future!

Spring 2023 is coming to a rapid close, so now's the time to reflect on the various events and new traditions implemented through La Tavola. We had fantastic turnouts from students across all Italian classes—even from some unexpected guests, like Carrot the dog and Anna, our honorary member!

We started off the semester celebrating San Valentino and San Faustino. We made valentines, both to commemorate the tradition of giving out affirmation notes to loved ones, while also learning about the alternative celebration for singles. It's a relatively recent holiday, celebrated the day after Valentine's Day in Northern Italy. Whether in a relationship or not, it was a fun time spent together!

Shortly after, Fat Tuesday, or *Martedì Grasso*, was upon us. Our second annual *Carnevale* mask-making event was a smash hit. Filled with sweets, like traditional *chiacchiere/crostoli* and a *schiciata alla fiorentina*, music, and crafts, we upheld the country-wide custom of donning colorful masks the day before the Lenten season begins.



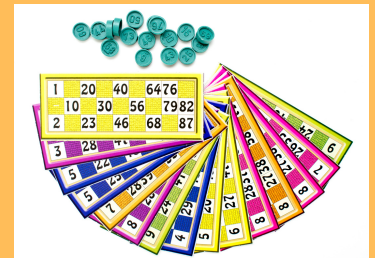
The winners of our Pasquetta Scavenger Hunt! >

# Serata multiculturalale

By Isabella Loparco

This semester La Tavola collaborated with Gamma Phi Omega International Sorority, a multicultural sorority that promotes Diversity and inclusion for all.

We hosted a collaborative game night with snacks and various games with the goal of learning about Gamma Phi Omega and promoting Italian language and culture. It was to our surprise that the traditional Mexican game Loteria originated in Italy in the 15th century. We also played Tombola which is a traditional Italian Bingo game. It was a special moment for both organizations because we were able to bring a variety of cultures together and see the similarities between traditional games. We also played Bocce and musical chairs. La Tavola was very impressed with the outcome of this event and invites all ISU Students to participate in our upcoming events that highlight learning about cultural differences. We'd also like to thank Gamma Phi Omega for a great event and look forward to future collaborative events.



## Italian Student Spotlight!

By Dr. Demos

On Sunday April 23 Madelyn Owens, a soprano and Voice Performance major, gave a moving performance during her Junior Recital in Kemp Recital Hall. She sang pieces by Handel (in Italian), Debussy (in French), Schubert (in German), and Hoiby (in English).

Madelyn—or Maddalena as she is known in our courses—is currently a student in Italian 112 and an Italian Studies minor. She is also looking forward to her summer in Italy where she will join other classmates and her professors on the ISU in Bologna program.



# Italy's Piqued Jacks are heading to EuroVision!

by Dr. Demos

I met the Piqued Jacks, a band from Tuscany, nine years ago, during SXSW in Austin, TX. The next night, I saw them perform live and I was hooked. Aside from their explosive energy on stage, their sound was like an intoxicating mix of funk and alt-rock with a twist of grunge. We became fast friends. The following year, they returned to SXSW with a new album and asked if I would be their language advisor, to check over lyrics, and to help fine-tune their pronunciation during the recording sessions. Yes, because the Piqued Jacks sing in English, not in Italian.

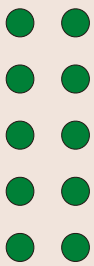
Since then, the band has undergone some line-up changes—two founding members left to work on other projects, and two new members joined. They published three more studio albums (*Aerial Roots*, *The Living Past*, *Synchronizer*) and a slew of singles, and have played stages around Europe, in Canada, and the US. The current line-up consists of **E-King** (Andrea) - vocals & keys, **littleladle** - bass (Francesco), **Holy Hargot**- drums (Tommaso) & **Majic-o** (Marco)—guitar.

In 2019 the PJs won the title at Sanremo Rock; in 2022 they were the first Italian band ever to play at Milwaukee's Summerfest; and in March 2023, they won "Una Voce per San Marino" song contest to represent the Republic of San Marino at **Eurovision Song Contest** (May 9, 11 & 13), while Italy will be represented by Sanremo Festival winner, Marco Mengoni. This past month the PJs have been on a whirlwind Eurovision pre-party tour with shows in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Krakow, Tel Aviv, Madrid, and London. On **May 11**, this Tuscan Fab Four will perform in the Semi-final 2 round of Eurovision in Liverpool, England to compete against other European bands with their winning single *Like an Animal*: a pop-forward, dancy, feel-good tune, with Andre's signature soaring vocals toward the end. *Forza, ragazzi! In bocca al lupo!*

If you would like to see the Piqued Jacks live, they will return to perform at Summerfest on July 7, 2023.



\*\*Thanks to Dr. Demos, recent ITA 115 classes have been able to talk to the Piqued Jacks members on a Zoom call during the semester! The students prepared questions in Italian ahead of time and practiced speaking and listening to Italian with the band.



# Florence Study Abroad with Olivia J.

by Kathryn Stangel

ISU's La Tavola member, Oliva J., completed a direct enroll program at Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici in Florence during the Fall 2022 semester. She was there for three and a half months studying biology and business administration, but also Italian! With her first semester back, she recaps some memorable moments and experiences she encountered during her time abroad.



## **How was your experience in Florence compared to studying in America? What is the most surprising aspect you've encountered while traveling abroad?**

Compared to studying in America, my experience in Florence was all-encompassing. I say this because when I wasn't in class, I was learning so many other new things. For example, before my lectures I was becoming accustomed to Italian bar culture and after class, I was immersing myself in Renaissance art and architecture. The most surprising aspect I encountered while traveling abroad is the pace of life in Italy. There is such an emphasis on savoring the present moment and appreciating simplicity- something that I had not been very mindful of before I lived in Florence.

## **How has/do you feel that ISU prepared you for studying abroad?**

I felt that ISU prepared me very well for studying abroad. The visa process is very confusing but my study abroad advisor made sure I had everything I needed to be successful.

## **Did you have any "lost in translation" moments?**

I didn't really have any true "lost in translation" moments, but I did have a couple of times when communicating was a bit difficult. Although confusing, these situations were great learning opportunities for advancing my Italian language skills.

## **Which Italian slang words did you pick up from locals did you start using?**

Italian words that my roommates and I picked up were mainly *certo* and *allora*. We heard these words very frequently and, being beginners in Italian, were able to integrate them into conversation very easily.

## **How do you see yourself/your perspectives on life after studying in Italy?**

My perspective has certainly changed after studying in Florence. Somewhat connected to what I said above, I now place a much higher value on the simpler things in life. Before arriving in Florence, my main focus was to take in the extravagant sights and food that Italy was so renowned for. However, as time went on (and looking back now), it was the routine I established and my exchanges with locals that I found much more rewarding.

If you have any interest in study abroad in Italy, visit [studyabroad.illinoisstate.edu](https://studyabroad.illinoisstate.edu) or talk to your Italian professor to learn more information!

# Ore di Conversazione e Cineforum

By Kathryn Stangel

This semester, La Tavola's conversation hours were a hit! Occurring twice a week—Tuesdays from 5-6 pm and *Pranzo e Chiacchiere* on Wednesdays from 12-1 pm—students across all Italian classes attended. From verb tenses to possessive pronouns, we covered a variety of topics and skills. Whether it was playing verb charades, reading *Il Gatto e il Cappello Matto* (The Cat in the Hat), or visiting the University Galleries we had a fun time practicing our Italian in a real-world setting!

As for our films, we had a new lineup for Spring 2023:

February: *Quattro Metà*

March: *Rapiniamo il Duce*

April: *Una Boccata d'aria*

If you didn't have a chance to attend, they are available through Netflix. We highly recommend checking them out and trying your best to follow along with the Italian. Until next semester, stay tuned for La Tavola's Fall 2023 film series!



# ITA 112 celebrates festa della Liberazione

By Dr. Edwards

Students in Italian 112 this semester spent several weeks learning the words and melody, practicing in class, and playing instruments to perform *Bella ciao* at LAN's multicultural karaoke night. This event took place on the 25th of April, coincidentally also the date Italy celebrates their liberation from Nazi-fascism at the end of World War II, and *Bella ciao*, along with *Fischia il vento* is one of the most famous songs celebrating the Italian resistance.



# La Tavola Executive Board Spring 2023

**President-** Isabella Loparco  
**Vice President-** Leah Brecheisen  
**Secretary-** Kathryn Stangel  
**Treasurer/Recruitment-** Jillian Groot

**Faculty Advisor-** Dr. Laura Edwards  
**Faculty Advisor-** Dr. Melissa Demos



## What can I do with an Italian Minor?

By Isabella Loparco

A question that I usually get when discussing the Italian language and culture is “how can I use my language skills here in the United States?” There are about 6,500 languages spoken in the world and knowing more than one language is important to be able to communicate with people at home and abroad. I recently accepted a position where I will be working with Italian Americans seeking to receive dual citizenship status in Italy. I am eager to utilize the language skills that I have learned at ISU in my new career endeavors. Some of my daily tasks will include working with lawyers from Italy, translating documents, and attending court hearings where I will interpret for clients. My language skills have not only helped me secure a job straight out of college but have given me the chance to explore new opportunities here in the US and in Italy. Knowledge of the Italian language can bring passion into your life in many different fields such as cuisine, history, art, and understanding a variety of human perspectives. An additional benefit to my job is I will be able to obtain my dual citizen status in Italy, giving me the opportunity to explore career endeavors abroad with relations here in the US. I'm very thankful to the language department for helping me achieve this goal and for creating the environment for an education that has helped me transition into the next chapter of my life. I am thrilled to use my language skills not only with my family but now helping others obtain their dual citizenship.

### Are you interested in learning Italian?

Now is the perfect time to start! The first Italian class, ITA 111, is offered every fall semester. so you can register for it now!

If you would like more information, want to register for the class, or add the Italian Studies Minor to your plan of study, talk to [Dr. Laura Edwards](#), the Languages Advisor.

Dr. Laura Edwards  
Lcedwar@ilstu.edu

The minor requires four semesters of Italian language study: ITA 111, 112, 115, and 116, + 3 electives (some include ART 156, HIS 221, ITA 221, and so many more!)

