

ITALIAN AMERICAN CLUB OF MAUI
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
KAUNOA SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTER
June 8th, 2010

Yikes! It's already August, and I realize how dilatory I've become because my notes on the June 8th meeting have languished in my IACM file. So, having dusted them off, I'll do my best to recollect the particulars of that oh-so-distant June evening.

Of initial note was a letter found in an Italian version book of Jonathan Livingston Seagull. Doc's friend, the Reverend Heather Mueller, asked Doc to translate the letter into English. With an imperceptible sleight of hand, he turned the translation over to Maria Rawe, who "sped through it" as if navigating the left lane of Sicily's autostrada. As it happens, through "Six Degrees of Separation," the letter actually belongs to one Jing Wong, Maria's neighbor at Kalihi Place, Kula. Go figure! Through subsequent investigation, Fred learned that the letter's contents had to do with a shared recipe for a robust Risotto alla Milanese, washed down with an Amarone di Valpolicella. "A Salute!"

The Club members welcomed Stacy and Olivia, guests who currently live in Hana but who hope to live in Italy for a couple of years. Several IACM members rushed to recommend WHERE to live, though no one suggested the *circostrizioni* in Naples, an area of dubious repute known as "*Giovanni a Teduccio*" –whose only claim to fame is its *Pizza Funghi di Guido*.

Welcome, too, to Andre and Sarina – Doc's *amici* from a dozen years ago. Andre is a realtor/artist, and Sarina is also an artist.

MEMBERS' NEWS:

John and Kathleen have been married for 44 years and have 5 grandchildren, all of whom live in Ohio. However, when the g'kiddies visit Pukalani, John will house them in his new den -- the desk and bar of which convert to comfortable bunk beds.

June attended Chase's graduation and leapt to her feet to sing the refrain from the Italian National Anthem – as a heartfelt tribute to Chase's achievement.

Slater, a kindergarten graduate and pomade-free for this meeting, is now – in his own words – "officially in 1st Grade." Sharpen those pencils, Slater!

Andrea is a "full-time grandmother." Blessed be your love and dedication, Andrea.

EVENTS:

- 1) Flatbread Fundraiser – Tuesday, September 7
- 2) Maui Beach Party – Sunday, October 10
- 3) Holiday Party – Saturday, December 12

SUMMER PICNIC – SUNDAY, JULY 18:

“Mahalo,” again, Doc, for hosting this very special event. As usual, we all enjoyed the food, the pool, the games, and – not least – the companionship that strengthens the IACM.

THE ITALIAN MOMENT:

Frank Fiorentino graced us with his very special version of “The Bronx Story” – a retrospective that captured the essential goodness of growing up in an Italian-Irish-Jewish enclave whose irrepressible residents exuded colorful – and durable -- cultural qualities.

Fiorentino Highlights:

- 1) On his mother’s side of the family, there were 11 siblings – enough so that Frank was hard put to remember all of their names ... though chances were that, among them, you’d happen across an Uncle Tony (or two), and an Uncle Franco ... with a Guido or Pasquale thrown into the mix.
- 2) Family size, in every household, had something to do with how a father and mother occupied themselves – with no TV – late at night.
- 3) ... and then there was the food ... ALL of the food ... spread across Grandma’s endless dining table, which accommodated 13 paisans, give or take an Irish buddy. Every Sunday was a high-carb day, from tortellini to rigatoni to gnocchi to lasagna, complemented by a homemade chianti, delicately served in a two-gallon jug. After all of that – and not a few of Mamma’s incomparable meatballs – Frank dabbed at the spaghetti sauce on his upper lip, pushed himself away from the table, and sighed with no little satisfaction. As he so delicately put it, “There wasn’t a skinny kid in the Bronx.”

It was especially clear that Frank so valued – and continues to value – his Bronx/Italian heritage, a culture into which many of us were born and which all of us love. Consequently, the Frank Fiorentinos of our world dedicate themselves to perpetuating valuable traditions that connect us with a distant homeland -- from Genoa to Lucca to Rome to Messina.

