



NEWSLETTER

A RECAP

On January 18, members and friends of the PBSCA enjoyed a wonderful evening that included music by young violinist Becky Anderson (who will be going to Bologna as part of a cultural exchange later this year), dinner with a menu inspired by food from the region of Emilia-Romagna wonderfully prepared by Western Culinary Institute's Bleu restaurant, and an update on association activities from Chairman Joe D'Alessandro. A roster of others reported on association activities. The packed dining room provided a great venue for lively social exchange.

February was a busy month for PBSCA-related activity. Treasurer George Passadore was awarded the 2006 DePriest Award for Excellence by the Volunteers of America, honoring his leadership in the community. MC-ing the event was PBSCA Chairman Joe D'Alessandro, who did a great job of highlighting George's passion for all things Italian, complete with Italian quotes and references throughout the evening. It was a wonderful and well-deserved tribute to George. Later in the month, Joe and George stopped off in Bologna for a few days, on their way to the Winter Olympics, and managed to accomplish much. They met with Francesca Martinese, our contact in the Mayor's office in Bologna who confirmed that Mayor Cofferatti hopes to make an official visit in the fall or spring. They also met with the Director of the Conservatorio, Carmine Carrisi, to finalize plans for violinist Becky Anderson's visit to Bologna as part of our musical exchange. Though this visit was postponed by the Conservatorio from February to the fall, Carrisi was enthusiastic about growing and expanding musical exchange opportunities with Portland. They visited with Massimo Antinucci, who founded the *La Vita e Bella a Portland e Bologna* association. This counterpart to the PBSCA

is a grassroots volunteer group committed to creating partnerships and exchanges between Portland and Bologna. Massimo is full of ideas and potential activities and exchanges. He is working now with the Economic Development Committee to bring local Bologna agricultural products to Portland. Joe and George also managed to visit Il Gelatauro, a *gelateria* in Via San Vitale, celebrated in Gourmet Magazine for its innovative and fresh ingredients. They confirmed that Il Gelatauro is worth its reputation!

Also in February, PSU Italian teacher and PBSCA co-coordinator Angela Zagarella, spoke to Paesano Club members and spouses at their annual "Ladies Social." Angela's talk was about the history of the Italian language—the role of dialects, the influences that finally helped unify and standardize it, and the loss of dialect in the process. The talk generated a lot of discussion and Angela was still answering questions and fielding comments well into the dinner hour.

Lots of PBSCA enthusiasts found their way to the Portland Film Festival's offering of "The Second Wedding Night" directed by Bologna native Pupi Avati (see more on Avati inside). Though the Bologna scenes were few, it was fun for those who know the city to see familiar sites.

In March, the Trailblazers hosted Italian Heritage Night at their game with San Antonio. There were information booths for the various local Italian groups (grazie Phillip Potestio for being on booth duty), discounted tickets with \$5.00 per ticket going to support Festa Italiana, and Frank Sinatra-style crooner John English performing before the game.

Keep reading to see what's coming up!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



April 25 6:00-7:45, Multnomah County Library. We are delighted to announce an event hosted by the PBSCA, in partnership with the Multnomah County Library. Bologna book artist Angela Lorenz will present a selection of works influenced by her life in Bologna, providing a crash course in all things Bolognese through a book arts lens. Angela, an American who has lived in Bologna since 1989, is internationally known; her work is well represented in North American and European collections such as the British Library, the Fogg Art Museum, the Getty, the New York Public Library, and the Victoria and Albert Museum and in a broad spectrum of university collections including Reed College. She was recently profiled in *La Repubblica* and in the *Boston Globe*. We are delighted Angela has agreed to come to Portland to offer

her own unique view and tribute to her adopted city through her work. This is an event open to the public and free of charge. Don't miss it. To learn more about Angela and her work, see www.angelalorenzartistsbooks.com.

April 29-September 17. Great Painters of Brescia, Portland Art Museum. This exhibition provides a sweeping overview of painting from Brescia, a city that lies on the border between Lombardy and the Veneto, from the Renaissance to the 18th Century. The exhibit is testament to the region's rich artist heritage, little known outside Europe and seldom represented in American museum collections.

May 25. Everyone is invited to this annual open board meeting, which will be held at the POVA offices, 1000 SW Broadway, #2300 from 4:00-6:00 pm. Dinner will follow at the Western Culinary Institute's restaurant, Bleu (site of our January dinner) at 921 SW Morrison Street.. Come to just the meeting, just the dinner, or to both. The meeting will be held at the POVA Offices, located at 1000 SW Broadway, Suite 2300. On the agenda are board member elections (recommendations are made through a board member) as well as reports from newly formed committees: the Economic Development Committee, the Education Committee, the Cultural Committee, and the Strategic Planning Committee. If you'd like to become more actively involved in the association, you might consider joining one of these committees. Please refer to the enclosed invitation for more details, including how to reserve a place for the dinner.

June. Bryan Johanson, Chair of PSU's Music Department has been invited to join a selection committee to choose composers who will participate in Bologna's prestigious "2 Agosto International Composition Competition." Winning participants will conduct their scores on August 2, in Piazza Maggiore, as one of the commemorative events held in memory of the victims of the terrorist bombing in Bologna's train station in 1980. This will be Bryan's first visit to Bologna and we are delighted that he is able to go, both as a representative of PSU and of Portland.

June 1. PBSCA is collaborating with the Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA) to host a photography exhibit at the PNCA of works by students from Bologna's Accademia delle Belle Arti (art school). The exhibit will open on First Thursday, June 1 and continue until July 1. This is an exciting venture on many levels—it represents the growing relationship between PBSCA and the Italian Cultural Institute in San Francisco (which was host to the exhibit in February and managed the logistics of getting the show to Portland) as well as the newly formed partnership between the PNCA and the Accademia. PNCA Director Tom Manly, who was in Bologna in March to meet with Accademia representatives and formalize a relationship, will be speaking at our May Board Meeting.

August 19-27. Festa Italiana. Our thanks to Lucia Galizia and the Festa Italiana, who are giving the PBSCA a table at the Festa to provide information on the Association and Bologna. We are also anticipating a group of visitors from Bologna, including a consortium of Appenine Farmers, to be here during the Festa, hopefully to provide Portlanders a taste of their products, including a variety of cured meats, wines, and cheeses.

October. We are working to bring the musical group Fiamma Fumana, to Portland in early October. The group, which hails from Emilia Romagna, melds the traditional music of the area with contemporary sound and technology, which results in an intriguing blend of old and new. This is a group with broad appeal that is guaranteed to get people out of their seats and dancing. Stay tuned (no pun intended) for details.

Fall Bologna Tour. Carlo Mannocci of Mannocci TravAdvise is planning a tour of Bologna, Emilia Romagna and Tuscany this Fall. Highlights of the visit are tours of Bologna, Parma, Modena Ferrara and Ravenna, and six days in Tuscany with visits to San Gimignano, Siena, Florence, Lucca and Pisa. Dates and details will be available soon. Carlo is donating \$100 from each participant's costs to the PBSCA.

PROFILE: MARIA ROSA MARTELLI BREKKE



As far as anyone has been able to determine, Portland boasts just one Bologna native among the PBSCA *amici*. While some of us claim an honorary connection, and even residency, only Maria Rosa

Martelli Brekke holds the distinction of being Bolognese by birth. The obvious question for me was how she came to be in Portland. Over *caffè* and *biscotti* at her home, I prodded her for details and discovered her path to Portland was a winding and circuitous one. Along the way I picked up a few Italian expressions.

Of course, it started in Bologna. Maria Rosa's first home was in Via delle Orbe (now known as Via Filippo Turati, just outside Porta Saragoza. When she was still a small child, her family moved to Paris. Maria Rosa says her father was an adventurer and this, combined with his unease over the growing fascist regime, provided the impetus to leave. They settled happily in Paris and her father opened a garage. But politics again played a role in their leaving. By now it was the late 1930s and with Italy aligning with Germany, it no longer felt safe for Italians in Paris. Maria Rosa's father came home one day and told his little family to pack their bags; they were going back to Bologna. She recalls their taking just two suitcases, driving to the train station, leaving the car, and the rest of their belongings behind. A family friend was to sell the car and send the money ... but that never happened.

The Martelli family did not stay long in Bologna though. Within the year they moved to Tripoli, part of an influx of about 40,000 Italian colonists in Libya during the late 1930s. But Libya became a major battlefield in the early part of the war. In 1941, Maria Rosa remembers a naval bombardment so severe her father decided it would be safer for her

and her mother to, once again, return to Bologna. They assumed the war would be over within months and they would be reunited; in fact, Maria Rosa and her mother didn't see her father for seven years. While the war was intense in Libya those first years, it grew more intense in Bologna as time went on. Maria Rosa and her mother lived in Via Turati again, with her father's family. Her cousin, of draft age, hid in the house to avoid joining the fascists. Maria Rosa remembers everyone running for the bomb shelters during air-raids but her cousin had to stay in hiding. Other memories during the war years are of the partisans being tortured and hung in Piazza Maggiore. Those who've visited Bologna have probably seen the wall alongside the *Sala Borsa*, that honors these victims and displays their photographs. Bologna was liberated in April 1945. Now captured fascists were hung in Piazza Maggiore. Maria Rosa remembers stepping over a body on Via Saragoza, under the *portici*, with a sign on it that read, "I loved Mussolini." She also recalls a pretty young woman who was among others thought to have entertained German soldiers. They were rounded up and taken to Piazza Maggiore, where their heads were shaved as a sign of shame.

The war finally over, Maria Rosa and her family rejoined her father in Libya in 1948. There she attended the *Istituto Magistrale*. She had a passion for languages, studying French and Latin, and then began to study English in earnest. Upon graduation she decided, rather than teaching, she held a variety of jobs, including working at Barclay's Bank D.C.O., and eventually becoming an interpreter and translator for the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli.

It was at the beach in Tripoli, that Maria Rosa met a young American stationed at the U.S. airbase. Lowell Brekke, a dentist from North Dakota and Maria Rosa were married in Tripoli, in 1958.

Lowell had already decided he wanted to live in Oregon or California and after he finished dental school at Northwestern, took and passed his boards in Oregon. This is how the newlyweds ended up here. Soon they were joined by two daughters.

Maria Rosa continues to demonstrate her many passions and interests. Fluent in French, Italian, and English, she has often been called upon to provide translation and interpreter services, and is an avid reader in all three languages, as evidenced by the contents of her bookshelves. She has long been involved in promoting Italian culture and relations. In 1971 she was director of the Cultura d'Italia, a foundation at PSU that sponsored Italian cultural events, including lectures, films, art, and a Renaissance costumed ball. In 1972, Maria Rosa orchestrated the purchase by the Cultura d'Italia of the 1642 Galileo book, *Dialogo*. The book was donated to the PSU library where it still resides. In the 1970s, Maria Rosa, after reading novels by Anais Ninn, wrote to the author and thus began a

correspondence that lasted until Ninn's death. Long interested in politics, in the 1960s she participated, with Vera Katz and others, in the formation of the Kennedy Action Corps, which lobbied for gun control. She was recently immersed in the Italian elections and avidly watched Italian television for the latest news. No surprise that she is happy with fellow Bolognese Romano Prodi's win! As an Italian mother, Maria Rosa is perhaps most passionate about her family.

And Bologna? Maria Rosa still visits family there, usually once a year. In her living room is a framed photograph of her and one of her daughters, taken recently in front of the Via Turati apartment.

A few Maria Rosa mode di dire:

Parla poco, ascolta assai e giammai non fallirai (speak little, listen a lot, and you won't make a mistake)

Tela vendo come l'ho comprata (I'm telling you the way I heard it)

BOLOGNA IN PRINT

Bologna and Emilia Romagna have been featured recently in publications from April's *Gourmet* ("Mario's Excellent Adventure: Five Days in Bologna, 62 Courses") to Costco's February newsletter ("Fatto in Italia" which details Italian products that Costco carries, including parmigiano cheese and balsamic vinegar from Modena). We would also like to let you know of books that feature Bologna, available to check out from PBSCA. *NOTE: if you would like to borrow one of these, or if you have any books to contribute to our small but growing library, please contact bologna@pdx.edu or call Sally Hudson at 503.725.5061.*

Silence on Monte Sole: Author Jack Olsen, a journalist and author of true-crime novels, spent several months in Bologna to research the massacre of nearby Monte Sole by retreating Nazi soldiers in the fall of 1944. More than 1800 Italian civilians were murdered in this mountainous area 15 miles south of Bologna. From hundreds of interviews and in spare prose, Olsen captures the heart and soul of the inhabitants of this area, their simple peasant lives and passionate resistance. A timely read as Bologna celebrates Liberation Day on April 25.

Bologna for Kids: Produced in 2000 by the *comune* of Bologna when Bologna was designated one of Europe's cities of culture, this guidebook is chock full of anecdotal and helpful information. Though its audience is the younger visitor, it is a great resource for all ages of Bologna explorers.

Cadogan Guide to Bologna and Emilia-Romagna. This is one in a series of Cadogan travel guides which does a good job of providing visitors detailed information on the area, from practical help to historical context.

The Broker: John Grisham's latest book, *The Broker*, is set in Bologna. It is clear, to those who know the city well, that Grisham spent time in Bologna; he captures the city well.

Fall of the Sparrow: Set in Bologna, Robert Hellenga's *Fall of the Sparrow* tells the story of an American father whose daughter was killed in the bombing of the Bologna train station in 1980.

BOLOGNESI FAMOSI

Aside from our own Maria Rosa Martelli Brekke, Bologna is the birth place of many notable Italians – e.g., Pier Paolo Pasolini (writer and film director), Lucio Dalla (songwriter), Guglielmo Marconi (scientist and inventor), Giorgio Morandi (painter), Ottorino Respighi (composer) and Pupi Avati (film director) whose films, *A Heart Elsewhere (Il Cuore Altrove)* and *The Second Wedding Night (Il Secondo Notte di Nozze)* were shown at the Portland International Film Festival last year and this year respectively. We thought we could take some newsletter space to introduce Portlanders to some of these illustrious Bolognese. Since many of you have seen his films, we'll start with a brief profile of Avati.

Giuseppe Avati, better known as Pupi Avati, was born in Bologna in 1938. After dabbling in Political Science and Veterinary Science at the University of Bologna, he joined a jazz band as a clarinetist. In 1964 he formed a film production company with his brother and a colleague, thus embarking on a film career that has launched several award-winning films, including *Bordella*, *The History of Boys and Girls*, *The House with Laughing Windows*, and *The Best Man*. More recently, his 2003 film, *A Heart Elsewhere*, received the David di Donatello Award for Best Director (the Italian equivalent of the Oscar award). This story, which takes place in the years between the world wars, follows the story of a shy man sent by his father to Bologna, who hopes he will meet a woman and fall in love; he does ... but not to the kind of woman the father expects. Avati's most recent offering, *The Second Wedding Night*, set in post-war Italy, revolves around a desperate war widow, Liliana, from Bologna and her ambitious grown son, Nino. Nino discovers that his father's family has an estate... and its proprietor is his uncle who was once infatuated with Liliana. Nino sees this as their ticket out of Bologna where they've been living under the porticoes. The story is gentle and comedic, and beautifully photographed.

For those interested in films by Avati, Movie Madness on S.E. 43rd and Belmont has *The House with Laughing Windows* and *The Best Man*. Netflix, the online movie rental store, has *A Heart Elsewhere*.

WHAT'S NEW IN ITALIAN LANGUAGE STUDY

- **Scholarship from the Italian Businessmen's Association.** The Italian Businessmen's Association is in the process of changing the Charter of its Foundation in order to establish a scholarship to benefit the Italian Language Department at Portland State University. We are grateful to the Association for their interest and support in the pursuit of Italian language study at PSU.
- **PBSCA Support for Academic Exchange with the University of Bologna.** PBSCA has agreed to share the cost with PSU for an initial faculty exchange between PSU and the University of Bologna next academic year. The agreement requires the hosting university to pay a small stipend toward housing and living expenses, whereas the sending university pays the airfare. We hope that our first exchange will take place in the 2006-07 academic year.
- **Italian for Children.** The PBSCA has teamed with the Azzurri Club of Portland to assess the interest in an Italian course for children starting next September. The purpose of the course is twofold: 1) to teach Italian to beginners, and 2) to promote Italian reading and writing for children fluent in Italian. Enclosed is a questionnaire we'd like those of you who are interested, to fill out and send back to us at Portland Bologna Sister City Association, c/o Portland State University, PO Box 751 - CLAS Dean's Office, Portland OR 97207-0751. (Alternatively, the questionnaire is available on the Azzurri Club's website: www.azzurriportland.com). Deadline for the form to be received is April 30th, 2006. We also encourage you to pass this along to anyone you think would be interested.
- **International School Italian Summer Camp.** The International School is once again offering summer language intensive camps, including Italian, for children ages three through fifth grade. For more information, see their website: www.inlschool.org or call 503.226.2496.

MEMBERSHIP

The Portland Bologna Sister City Association is open to all Portland residents who possess an interest in Italian culture and would like to help foster the relationship between the two cities as “Amici di Bologna.”

Amici are entitled to:

- Two official PBSCA dinners at reduced cost to members
- Two cultural events, free to members
- First notice on additional events sponsored by PBSCA
- Four newsletters a year
- Invitation to the annual May open board meeting
- Opportunities to become involved in one of the association committees (education, economic development, culture, and strategic planning)

Of course, being a member never precludes contributions beyond annual fees! Additional contribution levels include:

- Torre: Gifts of \$5,000 or more
- Portico: Gifts of \$2,500 or more
- Piazza: Gifts of \$1,000 or more
- Nettuno: Gifts of \$500 or more
- Mercato: Gifts of \$250 or more

To join the *amici*, please fill in the membership coupon below and send to the PBSCA with your check. Grazie mille!

PBSCA 2005-2006

The Executive Committee:

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