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## **IAHCSD June 2026 Newsletter** **(IAHCSD bollettino mensile di giugno 2026)**

### **Message from the President (Messaggio da la Presidente)**

Cari Amici,

Already half the year is over and I must say we've had quite a fluctuation in weather. So much so that a few of our events had to be cancelled, but hopefully our future events will go on without a hitch.

June 18<sup>th</sup> is our AMERICA's 250th Birthday BBQ and we are ready to celebrate!

There are no events scheduled for July, however a Rock the Boat event at the Cape May-Lewes Ferry is scheduled for August 7<sup>th</sup>, weather permitting, and it will be at everyone's own expense.

September is our Annual Picnic at Holtz Landing Park. October is our Annual Fund Raiser and this year we will entertain with the great Dan Gaffney, Mind Mentalist. Further information will be coming. November is our nominations for board members and December 10<sup>th</sup> is our Christmas Party again at the Hyatt Place Hotel.

The Board works very hard to ensure that our members have a great time at every event and enjoys the camaraderie among the group.

We look forward to the coming months and hope you all have a wonderful summer.

Thank you all for your continuing support towards our club and foundation.

Grazie Molto, Maria

"TOGETHER LET US DO GOOD"

## IAHCSCD FOUNDATION Updates

### IAHC Scholarship Awards

On May 26, 2026, during the awards ceremony at Cape Henlopen High School, the Italian American Heritage Club (IAHC) awarded \$2,000 scholarships to two outstanding and deserving students, **Isabella Mekulski** and **Benjamin Gaito**. Both recipients are enrolled in the Italian language program at Cape Henlopen High School. The scholarships were presented by Maria Diaferia and Grace Plantamura on behalf of the Italian American Heritage Club.

**To help our members get to know this year's scholarship recipients, we are pleased to share a few personal excerpts from each student's biography.**

**Isabella** .... Despite her Polish-sounding last name, Isabella Mekulski is quick to point out that she was raised with strong Italian traditions. Growing up, she learned that authentic Italian recipes were a family treasure and that store-bought versions simply wouldn't do. Her grandmother's family hails from the regions of Calabria and Abruzzo, and those roots remain an important part of her identity.

One of the highlights of Isabella's family year is sopressata-making season—or "Soupies" season, as she affectionately calls it. The annual tradition brings family members together to celebrate their heritage, preserve family recipes, and continue customs passed down through generations.

Isabella will be visiting us at the **June 18, Thursday ... USA 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday BBQ** (see info in Save the Date section).

**Benjamin** ... Benjamin's family heritage reflects the rich traditions of Tuscany, Naples, and Potenza. Proud of his Italian roots on both sides of his family, he cherishes the legacy passed down through generations. His ancestors were successful landowners who cultivated olive groves and produced olive oil and cheese. To Benjamin, this heritage is more than family history—it is a foundation that continues to shape his family's values and daily life.

The kitchen is where his family keeps those traditions alive. Sunday gatherings are a cherished family custom, centered around his grandmother's famous meatball recipe. As they cook together, she teaches the next generation the art of Italian cooking, including the proper way to measure ingredients by hand—a skill passed down through the family and preserved with pride.

### Dine to Donate at Mio Fratello

Our Dine to Donate fundraiser at Mio Fratello was a great success! Thanks to the generous support of everyone who attended, the IAHC Foundation raised \$560.

These proceeds will be allocated to next year's scholarship fund and other community outreach initiatives. We extend our sincere thanks to all who participated and helped support the Foundation's mission and charitable efforts. Your continued generosity makes a meaningful difference in our community.

**NOTE TO MEMBERS:** *The IAHCSCD Foundation always considers non-profit donations. If you volunteer or donate at a non-profit in Sussex County, please send information (name, contact, background, how the organization supports Sussex County communities & your involvement) to [www.iahcsd.com](http://www.iahcsd.com) and the Foundation will consider adding to our growing list of non-profits to support.*

## New IAHCSCD Members (Nuovi membri IAHCSCD)

No new members this month.

Total IAHC MEMBERS ... 84

## June Birthdays (compleanni di giugno)

**Buon compleanno!** 🎂

Michael Valone ..... June 1  
Barbara Dutch ..... June 11  
Lisa Vernola ..... June 11  
Francesca Carbone ... June 23  
Bert Hennessy ..... June 28

## Upcoming Meetings, Dine & Donate & Events SAVE THE DATE!

### June 18, Thursday ... USA 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday BBQ

- Maria's backyard, 27409 Covered Bridge Trail, Harbeson
- 3:00pm
- Catered by Bethany Blues
- \$30.00 per person
- BYOB

### August 7, Friday ... Rock the Boat on Lewes Ferry

- Tickets are purchased through Lewes Ferry at member's expense
- Must be at terminal by 3:45pm, 4:45pm departure
- Email will be sent with more information

### September 13, Sunday ... Annual IAHC Picnic

- Holts Landing State Park, 27046 Holts Landing Rd, Dagsboro
- More information to come!

### December 10, Thursday ... Festa Di Natale

- Hyatt Place Hotel, Dewey
- Entertainment by Vincent Varrassi
- 5:00pm – 9:00pm
- More information to come!

## For your conversations (Per le tue conversazioni)

Italian with Maria .....

### LEARN ITALIAN

@italian daily dose

Biscotti  .....  ..... Cookies

Latte  .....  ..... Milk

Marmellata  .....  ..... Jam

Cornetto  .....  ..... Croissant

Tè  .....  ..... Tea

Caffè  .....  ..... Coffee

Cereali  .....  ..... Cereal

## Italian History and Culture (Storia e cultura Italiane)

### A little Delaware History

(From the Italian American Herald, Tina Irgang)

With all the excitement of the 250 celebrations this year, I thought I would take a break this month from the usual Italian history. To those who have adopted and now live in Delaware, this is a little bit of our history. I would suggest a trip to New Castle, Delaware for their Separation Day events, June 12-13. If this is of interest to you, visit the New Castle Historic Society's visitor center for more information. My son, Michael, works there and is knowledgeable in the history of New Castle. <https://www.newcastlehistory.org/the-arsenal>

On June 15, 1776, Kent County native, **Caesar Rodney**, chaired a meeting in New Castle that would go down in history: it was the occasion on which Delaware declared its independence from both Pennsylvania and the British Crown.

During the more famous meeting in Philadelphia in early July, Rodney was busy dealing with Loyalist unrest and, as a result, wasn't going to attend. His plans changed on July 1 when he received an urgent message from Delaware delegate, **Thomas McKean**, informing him that he was deadlocked with the state's other delegate, **George Read**.

According to legend, Rodney set out from Dover and rode more than 70 miles to Philadelphia, arriving just in time to break the tie.

In 2026, the 250 Ride re-enactment event will re-create this remarkable journey from Dover to Philadelphia. The re-enactment will take the form of a carriage ride, which will set off from Dover on Friday, June 12. After a stop in Delaware City, the ride will arrive in New Castle later the same day, coinciding with New Castle's annual Separation Day celebration.

The event's organizers are so grateful to the city of New Castle for making them part of their Separation Day. They are planning a re-enactment rally that is open to everyone. Reenactment costumes are not necessary, but they are encouraging it.

On Saturday, June 13, the ride will continue to its endpoint at Independence Hall in Philadelphia.

## From the Italian Kitchen (Dalla cucina italiana)

### Favorite Italian Summer Foods to Make at Home

When summer rolls in with its long sunny days, there's no better way to celebrate the season than with light, flavorful, and refreshing Italian food. From ripe tomatoes, to fragrant basil, juicy peaches to icy *granita*, Italy's summer cuisine is built around the freshest seasonal ingredients and simple preparations that bring out their best. Great for a backyard lunch, a picnic at the beach, or just looking for something delicious and easy to make after a hot day, here are ten of the best Italian summer dishes to enjoy at home. No sweating required!

**(To keep things brief, I will highlight 5 recipes in June & the remaining 5 recipes in July. I know you have better things to do this summer than read a lengthy article!)**

#### Caprese Salad (Insalata Caprese)

**Ingredients:** Fresh mozzarella, vine-ripen tomatoes, basil leaves, extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

One of the simplest and most iconic Italian summer dishes, Caprese Salad is all about quality ingredients. To make the Caprese Salad, slice fresh mozzarella and ripe tomatoes into rounds or quartered. Arrange them on a plate, layering with fresh basil leaves. Drizzle everything with high-quality extra virgin olive oil, then season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

**Pro tip:** Try adding a splash of balsamic glaze or a few slices of prosciutto for a twist.

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#### Panzanella Salad (Tuscan Bread Salad)

**Ingredients:** Day-old bread, tomatoes, cucumbers, red onion, basil, olive oil, vinegar

Panzanella is a rustic salad from Tuscany that makes the most of day-old bread. Start by soaking stale bread cubes briefly in water, then squeeze out the excess moisture. Chop fresh tomatoes, cucumbers, and red onion, and toss them with the bread in a large bowl. Add basil leaves, season with salt and pepper, and dress with extra virgin olive oil and red wine vinegar.

**Pro tip:** Let it sit for 30 minutes before serving so the flavors develop beautifully.

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#### Caprese-Style Tortellini Salad (Tortellini alla Caprese)

**Ingredients:** Fresh or dry tortellini, fresh tomatoes, mozzarella, basil, olive oil, garlic

Think of this as the warm cousin of Caprese salad. Boil your preferred fresh or dry tortellini until fully cooked. (Be sure not to overcook or they will open!) In a serving platter, add the tomatoes, garlic and extra virgin olive oil and mix, let stand a few minutes until they release their juices. Toss the warm tortellini with the tomato mixture, then stir in mozzarella cubes or bocconcini (small, bite-sized balls of fresh mozzarella cheese, meaning "little mouthfuls") and fresh basil leaves. It's a no-fuss dish that's satisfying without being heavy.

**Pro tip:** Serve it lukewarm or even chilled for a picnic-ready pasta.

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#### Prosciutto and Melon (Prosciutto e Melone)

**Ingredients:** Ripe cantaloupe or honeydew melon, thinly sliced prosciutto

Sweet meets savory in this effortless classic. Peel and slice a ripe cantaloupe or honeydew melon into wedges. Wrap each slice with a thin strip of prosciutto. Arrange on a platter and serve chilled as an appetizer or snack.

**Pro tip:** For a little extra zing, try adding a little black pepper or a drizzle of lime juice for a modern twist.

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## Tomato Bruschetta (Bruschetta al Pomodoro)

**Ingredients:** Rustic bread, ripe tomatoes, garlic, basil, olive oil, salt, pepper

Simply toast slices of rustic Italian bread until golden. While warm, rub the top of each slice with a cut clove of garlic. Dice fresh, ripe tomatoes and mix with chopped basil, a splash of extra virgin olive oil, salt, and pepper. Spoon this mixture onto the toasted bread and serve immediately. The key is using ripe summer tomatoes.

**Pro tip:** Let the tomato mixture sit for 10–15 minutes before assembling for maximum flavor.

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## Final Thoughts: La Dolce Estate

Italian summer cuisine is a celebration of simplicity, freshness, and the joy of eating with others. Whether you're making a meal for just yourself or preparing a spread for a backyard gathering, these dishes bring the spirit of Italy to your home kitchen.

Here are a few tips to make the most of your Italian summer cooking:

Buy in season: Shop at local farmers' markets if you can. The quality of ingredients makes all the difference.

Keep it simple: Don't overload dishes with too many elements. Let each ingredient shine and take it easy on yourself. It's summer!

Serve at room temperature: Many Italian summer dishes taste best when not too hot or too cold.

Pair with the right drink: Try chilled white wine, a light rosé, or a sparkling Spritz.

Buon Appetito! Enjoy your Italian summer feast at home—no passport required!

**Please share your Italian recipes with other IAHCSCD members.**

\*\*\***Email your favorite recipes to Tina @ [www.iahcsd.com](http://www.iahcsd.com) & title the email "RECIPES"**



## Proverb of the Month

**"Chi va piano, va sano e va lontano,"**

*"He who goes slowly, goes safely, and goes far."*

**Meaning:** This beautiful proverb perfectly sums up the Italian approach to life. It encourages patience, reminding us that rushing can lead to mistakes, whereas a steady, thoughtful pace is often the key to long-term success, safety, and well-being.

## QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Please contact Tina Donofrio, Newsletter Editor

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