
La Voce della Dante

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Buon Anno!



President's Message

January 1, 2021

Ciao a tutti!

Arrivederci (or more like, "good riddance") 2020!!!!!!!

That's the best news, isn't it?

I hope you and those you hold dear are well and that the blessings of the Holiday Season are yours throughout our new year.

As we continue our season of online gatherings, be sure to check out the offerings for January 13

(English) and January 27 (Italian). Dan has great programs lined up for this month and throughout the spring.

There are also several things coming up on the proverbial “plate” of your Board of Directors in the coming weeks... we meet again as a Board on January 6th and reports/actions will be sent out after that. Some of our discussion items include **Membership Renewals**, finding a new storage place for our **Presepio** figures, the membership vote we still need to take on our **Governance Document Updates**, news from **CASA Italiana**, and plans for our March **Dantedì** observances online.... Plenty to do!

Many of you have written very kind notes thanking me and us for the online content this year. Please know how deeply those remarks are appreciated. **Continued participation in our online gatherings** is one great way to stand strong with our Dante community until we can meet in person.

Here's to 2021, the vaccine, the new energy of fresh starts
all around us.....

A presto!
Joyce

January & February Programs

January 13, 2021 English Meeting



Walking Through History in the Veneto

By Janet and John Lenart

Anywhere you walk in Italy you find history. You generate all sorts of questions about the origin of the sights. If you're lucky you also find people living in the area who are eager to answer your questions. We will share our enthusiasm for the 52 Tunnels hike, the Dolomites and the city of Vicenza. Then we'll look back on World War I and II history and recount stories from locals to explain the sights and the impact on people today.

Janet (a retired Nurse Practitioner) and John (a retired engineer) moved to Vicenza, Italy in 1994 to work as

civilians on a U.S Army post. They lived in the Vicenza community for almost 19 years and then returned to Seattle. They spend every Fall in Vicenza, except when there is a worldwide pandemic.



Photos: The 52 Tunnels Trail, Piazza dei Signori, Vicenza, The Dolomites

January 27, 2021 Italian Meeting



From the Apennines to the Cascades Pursuing Scientific Excellence

Dr. Lorenzo Giacani

My talk will focus on the path that brought me to the US from Italy, and the work that I currently do at the University of Washington on one of the oldest known sexually-transmitted infections, syphilis.

Dr. Lorenzo Giacani earned a BS in Molecular Biology magna cum laude at the University of Bologna (Italy) in 1998. His interest in STIs and syphilis began after being drafted into the Italian Army, where he was tasked with testing soldiers for syphilis. Following his service, Dr. Giacani enrolled in a Ph.D. program in Medical Biotechnology also at the University of Bologna, graduating in 2005. As a graduate student, Dr. Giacani focused primarily on the study of the virulence factors of the syphilis agent. In 2002, he accepted a position as an exchange scholar and moved to the University of Washington, where he is currently an Associate Professor in the Departments of Medicine and Global Health, where he keeps studying syphilis pathogenesis and evaluating vaccine candidates for syphilis. Throughout his career, he has received the ASTDA Developmental Award and the Vallesina Award for his scientific achievements.



A medical illustration attributed to Albrecht Dürer (1496) depicting a person with syphilis.

February 10, 2021 English Meeting



The Innocents at Home

Rob Pruffer

My presentation will consist of a video I made for the Bellevue Art Museum that explores Florence's remarkable Renaissance institution the Hospital of the Innocents. We'll trace its life from its creation as a civic orphanage in the early 15th century all the way up to its associated institutions today. We'll investigate the story of its founding patron and attempts by directors through the centuries to secure adequate funding by commissioning art for the orphanage. And of course we'll appreciate the remarkable architecture by Brunelleschi and the darling terra cottas by the della Robbia family.

Rob is well known to most Dante members as a member himself, a former Vice-President and a frequent presenter at our meetings. In addition to his day job teaching art history and history at Newport H.S. in Bellevue, Rob used to lecture on art history in the community, particularly at Dante and the Bellevue Arts Museum's Loggia Lecture Series. Since the pandemic, however, adapting education to a remote environment has been all-consuming. *The Innocents at Home* was the last art history project he created, a whirlwind effort in March and April as an expression of gratitude to all the healthcare workers in our community.

February 24, 2021 Italian Meeting (TBD)

Italian Language Program News

By Giuseppe Tassone
Italian Language Program Director

The Italian Language Program of the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington resumes on January 7th 2021 after the winter break. Thanks to the good retention in all levels and a few new students, we are going to offer the same number of sections as in the fall quarter

Some students still need to register and we are anticipating a total of about 70 students with an ideal average of student per class for online courses. The online format, according to the end of the quarter evaluations, has been confirmed as a student favorite. A student in the A1 level wrote: *I humbly beg you to continue online courses after the pandemic ends, I would absolutely continue my studies and my daughter's study through B2 but we cannot continue if they are only offered in person.*

Other comments:

The Zoom option is great and allows us to learn from the comfort of our home. I prefer online courses. They seem to function better, are more flexible, and save time.

I will certainly continue with online instruction since I simply live too far for in person classes. I found the course to be high quality and very similar to in person instruction that I received in the past, and I had little difficulty with the course. I was able to organize a study group and so the socialization was excellent.

Online, definitely! You get to see the other students faces instead of all facing the teacher. The time saved commuting can be used for studying. I would not drive to Seattle U at night from the eastside.

I took Dante classes at Seattle U years ago, but probably wouldn't have signed up this year if I had to drive over there. But would enjoy meeting instructor and other students in person at least once.

On the other side, a few students commented: *Loving the classes, hoping one day post-COVID we can have class in person.*

I would much prefer physical classes as they provide a more fluid conversation and allow us to make friends who share our passion for the language.

I would personally like in-person, I feel like I would just learn better in that format.

The 38 responders to the evaluation praised their teachers and the overall program in addition to providing constructive feedback in our effort to provide an even better Italian language program. Students, among others, answered questions about the instructional activities and tools that they find especially effective for their learning process, instructional methods, textbooks, their main reasons for learning Italian, how the language program compares to similar language programs, expectations/goals for the next class and the reasons not to continue or barriers to continuing.

We also asked if they would like the class to be held in only Italian, in Italian with some English or in English with some Italian with 43.2% saying only in Italian, 43.2 % in Italian with some English and 13.5 % in English with some Italian.

One question was about the use of Google Drive to access shared supplementary and optional material that we implemented last quarter. Students overwhelmingly found it very useful. It is therefore our priority in the next quarters to enhance it.

The use of Google Drive was very helpful! If it's not too much work, it might be great to continue even when classes return to in person.

I think the shared drive works quite well. I was using good notes on my ipad so I was downloading any PDF material that was shared, so it worked for me.

Google Drive is a great choice! It was very easy and organized.

Google drive was useful, I learned from the materials shared there. I would like to see more practice materials, plus more audio files.

It was wonderful to have supplementary worksheets and activities through google drive.

Very useful, I might add more visual graphics with vocabulary and or grammar

To conclude, I would like to share one comment for each instructor to whom our appreciation for their excellent work and dedication.

A1

Professoressa Laura is a gifted instructor with good interpersonal skills with her students. She is well-prepared for class, provides patient clarification on difficult grammatical material, and is always receptive to student questions. I have enjoyed learning more about Italian customs from impromptu discussions.

I think Nicla is an excellent teacher, and is always well prepared and has time for questions, clarifications, etc. She shared some interesting anecdotes about Italian history and culture which deepens our learning, and her grammar and teaching methods work well.

A2

First of all, this was a great class! Everyone seems to have a good desire to learn Italian and most have a great understanding already, I'm envious. I appreciate how you have organized the folders and study materials, it is very user friendly. The way you are able to manage all the documents, chat, and Zoom is impressive, well done! You provide a good balance of keeping the class on track but allowing a little time to answer questions or other tangents. The pace is perfect! I like the blend of reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Francesca is a great teacher!

Damiano is a phenomenal teacher! He is always so well prepared and constantly brings new and creative activities to expand our learning.

B1

Absolutely wonderful! Paola did a terrific job of engaging every student and helping each of us along.

B2

Roberta is great! She is caring, stays on track with the syllabus and encourages participation. Her classes are

interesting as she varies the lesson, sometimes using video, reading or written exercises as well as the regular grammar work.\

Thank you for reading this news and *Tanti Auguri di Buon Anno* a tutti

La Voce Reaches an International Audience!



Dear Joyce and Andrea,

Maurizio Tomasi, the editor of the magazine *Trentini Nel Mondo*, saw my essay "Trentino: Where the Cows Do Come Home" in the November issue of *La Voce* (thank you Andrea Aldrich!) and asked me if they could publish an article about it. *Trentini Nel Mondo* is published in the city of Trento, where they are headquartered, and sent to over 200 Trentino Clubs ("circoli") around the world, located in places where immigrants from Trentino have gone. <https://www.trentininelmondo.it/i-circoli/circoli-nel-mondo.html>

In their article in the November/December issue, they write about the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington, show the header of *La Voce* and how the article appears in it, and include excerpts from the essay that I sent them. It's interesting for me to see the Italian translation of some of the things I wrote. https://issuu.com/rivista_trentininelmondo/docs/novembre_dicembre2020?fbclid=IwAR093fFj_3zQT9WgUzEdYiPeyZl1SLldhXkn0ekaV444gMWIs_C0BOyVA (See page 26.)

I'm really delighted for the recognition of our local Dante Society back in Trento – where a statue of Dante appears, by the way, in Piazza Dante! https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monumento_a_Dante

Thank you both for all you do! I know it's a lot of work, and now, more than ever, it makes a difference!

My best and Buon Anno Nuovo,
Mary Beth Moser

Longing for Italy? Check Out These Live Web Cams

Venice

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P393gTj527k>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_Vq94nBiaY
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ph1vvnYlxJk>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HpZAez2oYsA>

Rome

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pcUTBlzIn0>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXYQoWAKgFE>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mvfjT3z115g>

Florence

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXFAir8R7vw>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ditXBG3sH14>

Dolomites

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iC9bUa7J2Ds>

For current travel information log onto the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs website:

<https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/>

A "Gingerbread House" Italian Style



What the Hole Is Going On?

The very real, totally bizarre bucatini shortage of 2020.

Follow this link to learn about the mystery:
[Why Is There a Bucatini Shortage in America? \(grubstreet.com\)](https://www.grubstreet.com/2020/01/why-is-there-a-bucatini-shortage-in-america/)

Buon Anno Nuovo a Tutti!
Fuori il vecchio e dentro il nuovo!



The Dante Alighieri Society of Washington is a nonprofit corporation organized to promote Italian language and culture within the state of Washington. Membership is open to anyone interested in the goals and ideals of our society regardless of ethnic origin. La Voce della Dante is published eight times a year by the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington. All rights reserved.

Dante Alighieri Society of Washington
Società per la diffusione della lingua e della cultura italiana nel mondo

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