

WisItalia

Meeting Minutes

10/9/10

Present: J. Stenson, D. Cicero, L. Zizzo, T. Bruno, R. Prigioni, P. Pingitore, V. Ruffolo, A. Rolandi, W. Varela-Katz

Announcements:

- The Piemonte Free Film Festival will be held in Milwaukee on November 11-12.
- Italidea is holding a Bocce and dinner fundraiser October 22-23 in Franklin Park, IL.
- We received a grant of €7,500 from the Italian government.

Treasurer's Report: Elizabeth Mitchell was unavailable to attend this meeting. However, she sent word via Al Rolandi that all checks and reimbursements have been sent.

Advisory Report: Al Rolandi has contacted Bel Gioso, Sargento, Palermo, and Jeff Fallucca for donations. He is waiting to hear back. He will also look into contacting Bob Mariano from Roundy's. Rita shared that we have seven sponsors and she is currently working on a sponsorship with an Italian car rental company.

Web Report: Rita reported that the WisItalia averages 46 visits a day. This equates to 1,476 visits a month from 1,266 visitors. The average visit is two hours and 18 minutes in length. The most viewed pages are the home page, events, clubs, jobs, links to other pages and Italian websites. Our facebook page has 344 fans, and 40 of those fans have joined since July. Rita's web update email currently goes out to 504 people.

Education Report: Giovanna Miceli Jeffries was unable to attend this meeting; however, she did email her report. She stated that the IWC has one class of elementary students being taught by Anna Rockwell. The IWC also offers three levels of adult classes that are taught by Maria Giulia Carone and Antonella Caloro. Shorewood Elementary school in Madison is also offering an after school Italian class. Giovanna has been working to recruit new teachers and is encouraging her students to consider teaching certification. She also reported that Andy Muller has expressed interest in returning to Madison to teach Italian. He is taking on the campaign to introduce Italian at the high school level.

Board Reports:

Racine – Don Cicero reported that while Lutheran High School and Prairie are both interested in adding Italian to their curriculum, they would not be able to do so unless a current language program was dropped. Don is looking for more people to join the committee for adding Italian to the schools.

Kenosha – Peter Pingitore said that Italian is now offered at all of the comprehensive high schools in Kenosha. There is also an after school program taking place at Bradford High School two days a week. This program caters to elementary students and teaches them basic Italian. Peter also said that the Mount Carmel-St. Therese School, which offered Italian as part of their curriculum last year, would be closing at the end of the 2010-11 school year. Therefore, Italian is not being offered this year.

Milwaukee – Wanda Varela-Katz reported that the Victory Emersion School is doing well. They have added a third grade class and K4 has 26 students enrolled. However, the school is facing some challenges. Due to MPS/DPI guidelines, K5 can only have 18 students. Without adding another teacher, all of the students in K4 would not be able to advance to K5. There are also concerns about busing. Previously, any students who lived in Milwaukee and wanted to attend Victory would be bused to the school. However, due to changes in MPS, now only students who live in a seven-mile radius of the school will be bused to the school. This only affects Victory, not any of the other specialty schools. Tom Balistreri is working to resolve the issue.

Liz Zizzo reported that Victory received money from NIAF. This money was given as scholarships to four Victory students who attended the Lago del Bosco language camp. There were over 100 Italian students from all over the country at the camp this summer. Liz will be marketing the camp next spring for the summer program.

Madison – Tony Bruno reported that the Italian program at Wright Middle School has been discontinued. The Madison School District, WisItalia, and Italidea have all agreed to fund the teaching position at Spring Harbor so that the 8th grade students are able to complete the Italian curriculum. While there is no Italian program for the 6th and 7th grade students, Giovanna Miceli Jefferies is trying to mobilize parents in order to keep the program alive for all the students.

Green Bay – There was no report from Green Bay.

Membership Requirements/Definitions: Tony and Rita have been working on membership requirements and definitions. They have come up with a level system. Anyone who wishes to become an active member of WislItalia would pay an annual membership fee of \$25. Members would be entitled to certain benefits such as voting on issues, being elected to positions, and receiving web updates. Anyone wishing to join at a Level 2 membership would make a donation of any amount under \$25, but would not receive voting privileges. Students could also join WislItalia for a \$10 fee. This would be a one-time fee, paid while the student is in school, and lasts for the entire time the student is in school. Suggestions offered at this time include giving students who join a certificate of membership, creating a lifetime membership, and offering some way to show gratitude for people becoming members, such as a pin or a patch. Tony asked that we all look at the requirements and give suggestions about them by mid-November 2010. (Proposed Membership Requirements attached.)

Other Business:

- We will create an annual meeting, which all members would be required to attend.
- Liz Zizzo accepted the position of chair of the Marketing Committee.
- We will look into the possibility of holding meetings in a central location instead of meeting in different cities.
- Vince Ruffolo asked that we make a formal statement against the making of a movie about the life of John Gotti. Tony will write it and Al will deliver it to the Conference of Presidents Membership.
- Tony will send out an email listing potential meeting dates for next year.

Notes submitted by Joanna Stenson

Special Note: The WislItalia Board commends Joanna Stenson for her work during the last 2 ½ years as the WislItalia Secretary. Joanna has been Secretary since April 12, 2008. Beginning in January 2011, Rita Prigioni will assume the Secretary duties for WislItalia. Brava, Joanna!

WisItalia Membership DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT

Membership in WisItalia is open to anyone who is interested in Italian culture. Get involved in a variety of committees and activities to foster the teaching of the Italian language in Wisconsin, as well as promoting the Italian culture.

Membership Levels

1. **Active Member:** Any person who is, or wishes to be, involved in WisItalia's operations and activities on a regular basis.
 - a. Dues: \$25 annually, payable in January each year, or upon new membership.
 - b. Benefits:
 - i. Included in the "WisItalia web updates" email group
 - ii. Participation in committees and activities
 - iii. Voting rights on various issues
 - iv. Eligible to run for elected officer positions, area representatives and committee chairs
 - v. The first \$25 of a Level I or Level II sponsorship can be designated as an individual membership for one person

2. **Advocate and Friend:** Any person who is supportive of WisItalia's goals, objectives and activities, but is not able to participate directly in its operations or activities.
 - a. Dues: Any amount less than \$25 annually, payable in January each year, or upon new membership.
 - b. Benefits:
 - i. Included in the "WisItalia web updates" email group
 - ii. Eligible to attend meetings and activities
 - iii. No voting privileges

3. **Student:** A college or university student (undergraduate or graduate student) who is currently enrolled in Italian courses or has an interest in Italian culture.
 - a. Dues: A one-time fee of \$10, payable upon new membership.
 - b. Benefits:
 - i. Included in the "WisItalia web updates" email group
 - ii. No annual membership dues for as long as the student is enrolled at the college or university
 - iii. Eligible to attend meetings and activities
 - iv. No voting privileges

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Comments due by November 15, 2010, to wisitalia.info@gmail.com

WisItalia Governance

Board of Directors: sets the policy direction for the organization.

1. Executive Committee
2. Area Representatives
3. Committee Chairs

Executive Committee: elected officers, serving 2-year terms.

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Treasurer
4. Secretary

Area Representatives: represent the concerns of the geographical community in promoting the Italian language and culture.

1. Green Bay
2. Kenosha
3. Madison
4. Milwaukee
5. Racine

WisItalia Committees

1. **Advisory Committee:** provides advice to the Board of Directors.
2. **Education Committee:** promotes educational opportunities or resources to Italian educators/students (committee members need to have prior experience in education).
3. **Funds Development:** seeks ways to raise money for the WisItalia organization through verbal and written contacts (e.g., from major or minor sponsors, businesses or individuals) for direct donations for the general budget, or to fund items of specific interest.
4. **Grants/Scholarships:** seeks grant or scholarship opportunities for the WisItalia organization by writing proposals to apply for those monies. Involves researching government agencies or private sources that have funds earmarked for specific purposes. Funds would be used for Italian educator expenses, supporting the Italian language programs, or special projects.
5. **Marketing:** promotes the activities of WisItalia to the public.
6. **Public Relations:** interacts with the media to promote a positive image of WisItalia and the Italian language programs in Wisconsin.
7. **Website:** researches and develops web content, reviews the site for out-dated material, and checks for broken links for the WisItalia website www.wisitalia.org and its public Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/pages/WisItalia-Inc/84589159502>