

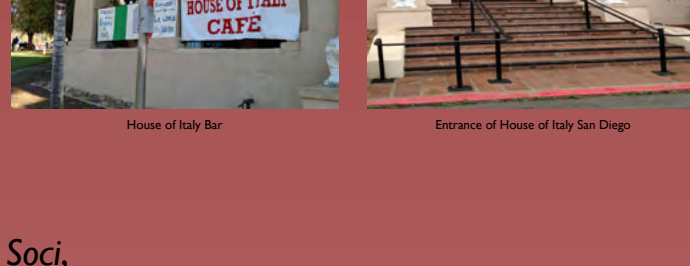


# NAVIGATOR

JANUARY 2024

## THE HOUSE OF ITALY (HOI) MISSION:

Our mission is to offer to its members and the public through its cultural and social programs, an understanding and appreciation of the history and culture of Italy. Our vision is that our HOI members celebrate their Italian heritage and culture with the people of San Diego.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE HOI PRESIDENT

*Carissimi Soci,*

**Buon Anno Nuovo!** Happy New Year! Wow, what a year we had in 2023 and December was no different. Not only did we survive the International Christmas Festival, we served **71 ladies** at the December Ladies Auxiliary Luncheon and closed the year with a wonderful member meeting of good food, drink and the voting in of the 2024 slate of Board members. And let's not forget **Tombola!** And now we say hello to 2024. As I was excited for 2023 I am more excited as we approach 2024. We have some interesting presentations planned for you, our members. I want to thank all of the board members who served in 2023 and I appreciate them even more as they have agreed to serve again this year. We welcome also *Diane Napoliello Kenney* as a new board member. I thank you, members, for giving us again your vote of confidence. We shall not disappoint you and will continue our quest to make the House of Italy a thriving organization.

I want to thank all the volunteers who worked the International Christmas Festival (December Nights) this December. Wow what a labor of love! We appreciate you volunteers and your hard work. A big thank you to all of the members who made cookies for our cookie tent! And let's not forget the cannoli makers! Mike Ricciardi and the cannoli team worked the machine to make **over 1600 cannoli** in two days! Wow what a feat!! Considering all expenses, this year's net profit was near **\$10,000**. As has been done in the past, we shall celebrate together an evening of "ringraziamento". Stay tuned for the date, time and place.

Speaking of giving thanks, I want to thank Don Santamaria for his many years of producing the Navigator, the House of Italy's newsletter. His tireless efforts are very much appreciated and we cannot thank him enough. Sara Venneri has volunteered to assume production of the Navigator and we are excited for her enthusiasm in this endeavor.

We are working on this year's calendar for presentations and have quite a line up for the first six months of 2024. Our first meeting will be on **Sunday January 21, 2024**, starting at **5:00 pm**. Jim McSweeney will speak about immigration and the lost mural of Ellis Island. His website is <https://www.thelostmuralofellisland.com/>.

The events for Feb through June are listed on the event page of the Navigator. Don't forget to sign up to host the house on either Saturday or Sunday. For those of you who do not have a food handler's certificate it is easy to attain one and will enable you to serve our food and drink items to Balboa Park visitors. The websites to take the course and obtain a food handler's certificate are:

[www.cafoodhandlers.com](http://www.cafoodhandlers.com), course takes 75 minutes, cost is \$7.95.

[www.premierfoodsafety.com](http://www.premierfoodsafety.com), course takes 90 minutes, cost is \$9.95.

The House of Italy is your organization and your input is valuable. Do not hesitate to contact us by email with any ideas or suggestions.

Let's make this another memorable year! I wish all of you a year of health, happiness and peace.

See you Sunday January 21st!

Carol

*President:* Carol Gratzke

*President emeritus:* Richard Tomasello (delegate)

*1st Vice President:* Rich LaRocca (delegate)

*2nd Vice President:* Mike Montgomery (delegate)

*Secretary:* Mike Ricciardi

*Treasurer:* Barbara LaRocca

*VP Communications:* Don Santamaria (delegate)

*VP Hospitality (Member meetings):* Angela Campanella

*VP Weekly Hosting Activities:* Carol Gratzke (temp)

*VP Membership:* Diane Kenney

*VP Webmaster:* Claudia Verano DaMetz

*VP – Legal Matters (By-Laws):* Ken Rose (delegate)

*VP – Calendar:* Mike Ricciardi

## In Memory of Cristiane Ronconi Asiano 1960 to 2023

She was a rare combination of intelligence and beauty with determination and enthusiastic energy. She was born on a farm in the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil. Her father, Wilson Nunes de Macedo, and her mother, Zelia Roncon, raised the family, risking everything to defy the military regime and help bring about democracy.

Cristiane's mother was beautiful with enough Italian ancestry for Cristiane to get an Italian passport. Cristiane won academic awards and graduated from the Catholic University in Campinas, Brazil.

After suffering a near-fatal motorcycle crash that left her disabled for the rest of her life, she traveled the world, ending up in San Diego.

Her parents both died in their 50s and never saw their lovely granddaughter, Dana, born and raised in San Diego.

She was a vegetarian for over 30 years and raised her daughter as one. Cristiane is survived by her sisters, Zelinda, Zelian, and Rosana, and by her brothers, Fernando and Daniel, as well as by her husband, Philip, and daughter, Dana.

She lived for many years in an apartment on Pacific Beach's boardwalk where she became a naturalized U.S. citizen. In 2002, she met the love of her life, Philip Asiano, marrying him in March 2004 and sharing their Golden Hill home until the end.

Diagnosed with glioblastoma, she survived 26 months, a year longer than most with this terrible brain cancer. Cristiane earned her associate degree at City College and a second college degree at National University. She got her real estate agent's license and notary license. She was fluent in English, Portuguese, Italian and Spanish. She loved traveling with her husband, the last three trips being Kauai, Brazil, and Italy, the last two after her diagnosis. Cristiane loved meeting new people from all over the world and became an Airbnb Superhost. She also loved gardening and volunteering for Comicon and the House of Italy.

Cristiane's life was celebrated with a big party with 56 attending, all treated to live jazz and vegetarian food.

*In lieu of flowers and to honor her memory, please donate to her favorite charities or to your own choice:*

[House of Italy](#)

[The World Beat Center](#)

[Alliance for African Assistance](#)

Or fight Glioblastoma by donating to Glioblastoma research as follows:

<https://givetv.ucsd.edu/giving/home/add-gift>

Search for "Piccioni," then select "Brain Cancer Research." Dr. Piccioni was Cristiane's doctor through this ordeal and one of the principal researchers in the world searching for a Glioblastoma cure.



**Out of Many, One**

On January 21 2024, Jim McSweeney will introduce you to Presidents, war heroes, bootleggers, pop culture icons, scientists, heroes of the Civil Rights movement, and a **famous Italian** or two!!

To **RSVP** please email [houseofitaly@houseofitalysandiego.com](mailto:houseofitaly@houseofitalysandiego.com)

- February 18, 2025 Singer **Iris Moné** with perform Italian hit songs as well as her own
- March 17, 2024 **Franca Barricelli** presentation on Brunelleschi vs Ghiberti and the start of Rinascimento
- April 21, 2024 tentative presentation by personnel of the **San Diego Opera**
- May 19, 2024 **Antonio Iannotta** Italian Films and the ristretto awards
- June 16 Father's Day Possible Karaoke night

# Madama Butterfly

## San Diego Opera

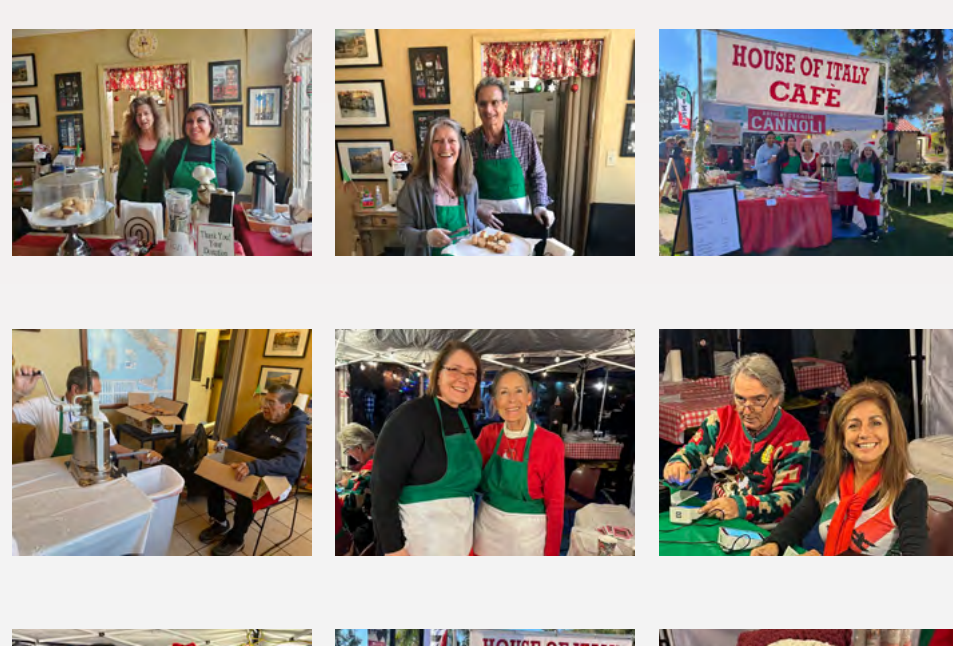
HOI is planning a day at the opera on **Sunday April 28, 2024 at 2pm** to see Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. We have been offered a 20% discount on all tickets.

If you are interested **follow the link below** to purchase tickets. The HOI discount should come at the end, at the time of purchase.

**If you do purchase tickets and want to join us for dinner afterwards, email Barbara LaRocca at [blarocca@gmail.com](mailto:blarocca@gmail.com)**

For ease, the link that takes you directly to the offer to purchase tickets is:

<https://tickets.sdogera.org/events?promo=HOI20>



## 2024 HOUSE OF ITALY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## ANNOUNCEMENT



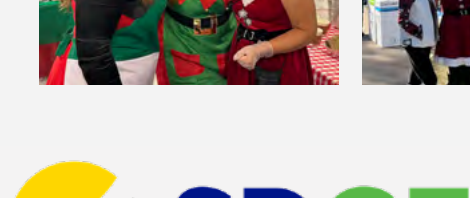
## JANUARY EVENT



## UPCOMING EVENTS

## PAST EVENTS

## DONORS AND PARTNERSHIPS



SDG&E recognizes the House of Italy as a collaborating partner and as such information is sent monthly to you, our members, to ensure you are updated on the latest SDG&E products, services and resources. Additional information is also available at their website <http://www.sdge.com/residential>

## CONTACTS

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