



AUGUST GOLF OUTING

On Friday, 20 August, the Club held their annual Golf Outing at Erie Shores Golf Club in Madison, Ohio. The weather was great, the camaraderie was great, and the food was great. Everyone had a wonderful time.

A special thanks goes out the following hole sponsors:

- Rounder's Lounge
- Zappitelli Enterprises
- Eden off the Avenue Salon
- Newsome Painting
- OH Health Insurance
- Zappitelli Restaurant, Mentor
- Zappitelli Restaurant, Red Hawk
- Friends of Jerry Cirino
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- Tom Heckman Excavating
- Judge Paul Malchesky
- Lallo & Feldman Attorneys at Law
- Fioritto Funeral Services
- Klammer Law Office
- Goodtime III

Another special thanks goes out to the following lunch and dinner sponsors:

- Fioritto Funeral Services
- Rick Osborne Jr.
- Remax, Concord Office

And finally, a extra special thanks goes out to Luigi DiCarlo and his crew for their creativity, their attention to detail, and the hundreds of hours they put in toward the success of this event.

AUGUST MEETING

Riunione agosto

Our guest speaker was Ms. Pamela Dorazio Dean, the Director of the Italian American Museum of Cleveland, and the Curator of Italian American History at the Western Reserve Historical Society. We all learned a little more about the roles our Italian's forefathers played in the early days of Cleveland.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Prossimi eventi

SEPTEMBER settembre

29 September

Wednesday – Membership Meeting

6:30p at Pine Ridge Country Club. Our speaker will be one of our newest members, Chris Tucci, Lake County Juvenile Court Magistrate.

OCTOBER ottobre

1 October

Friday – AIHC Fund Raiser

LaVera Party Center in Willoughby Hills.

- The event will be called "Opera Night in Tuscany" (Serata opera italiana in Toscana).
- The time will be from 6:30p – 11:30p
- All boards and raffles will occur between 6:30p and 7:30p.
- At 7:30p everyone will be seated for dinner.
- There will be 3 opera singers performing throughout the evening (ala Cask 307).
- There will be 30+ baskets on which we can bid.
- There will be only 200 people seated at 25 8-top tables.
- The cost will be \$70.00 per person.
- Contact Bill Petrello for additional tickets.

27 October

Wednesday – Membership Meeting

Club Clam Bake at Pine Ridge Country Club.

Reservations and pre-payments are required. See Attachment 1 for more information and the Sign-up Sheet.

NOVEMBER novembre

17 November

Wednesday – Membership Meeting

6:30p at Buona Festa Social Club. Our speaker is yet to be determined.

Note, this is a week earlier than usual because of Thanksgiving.

DECEMBER dicembre

Club Meetings

Note, there is no Executive Committee Meeting or Membership Meeting in December.

12 December

Sunday – AIH Club Family Christmas Party

at Pine Ridge Country Club, 12:00p – 4:00p. The Event Committee is Bob Andreano, Gus Paolucci and John Perrotti.

- Parents bringing children to meet Santa must buy, wrap, and turn over their presents to the Committee before the event, so Santa can distribute them to the children.
- There will be brunch served at stand-up tables.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Compleanni di settembre

Vinny Cicconetti	6
Dom Palermo	6
Don Ramacciato	10
Luigi DeCarlo	16
Fran Rozzo	22
Dave Vegh	23
Rio DeGennaro	26

When you see these members this month, be sure to wish them buon compleanno.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

salute e benessere

Committee Chair Richard O'Keefe reported the following at the August Meeting:

Bob Studnarz's cousin, Joe Jerome, passed away recently and Art Montoni's wife's mother, Abbondanza Pilla, 93, passed away on recently. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

SPECIAL DAYS IN SEPTEMBER

- 04 Sep: Eat an Extra Dessert Day
- 06 Sep: Read a Book Day
- 12 Sep: Chocolate Milkshake Day

Americans of Italian Heritage

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER settembre 2021

19 Sep: International Talk Like a Pirate Day
21 Sep: Miniature Golf Day
28 Sep: Ask a Stupid Question Day
30 Sep: Hot Mulled Cider Day

*The above information was obtained from
timeanddate.com/holidays/fun*

LABOR DAY 7 SEPTEMBER

Beginning in the late 19th century, as the trade union and labor movements grew, different groups of trade unionists chose a variety of days on which to celebrate labor. In the United States, a September holiday called Labor Day was first proposed in the early 1880s. Alternate stories of the event's origination exist.

According to one early history of Labor Day, the event originated in connection with a General Assembly of the Knights of Labor convened in New York City in September 1882. In connection with this clandestine Knights assembly, a public parade of various labor organizations was held on September 5 under the auspices of the Central Labor Union (CLU) of New York. Secretary of the CLU, Matthew Maguire, is credited for first proposing that a national Labor Day holiday subsequently be held on the first Monday of each September in the aftermath of this successful public demonstration.



An alternative thesis maintains that the idea of Labor Day was the brainchild of Peter J. McGuire, a vice president of the American Federation of Labor, who put forward the initial proposal in the spring of 1882. According to McGuire, on May 8, 1882, he made a proposition to the fledgling Central Labor Union in New York City that a day be set aside for a "general holiday for the laboring classes". According to McGuire he further recommended that the event should begin with a street parade as a public demonstration of organized labor's

solidarity and strength, with the march followed by a picnic, to which participating local unions could sell tickets as a fundraiser. According to McGuire he suggested the first Monday in September as an ideal date for such a public celebration.

In 1887, Oregon became the first state of the United States to make Labor Day an official public holiday. By the time it became an official federal holiday in 1894, thirty U.S. states officially celebrated Labor Day. All U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and the United States territories have subsequently made Labor Day a statutory holiday.

Information taken from 2021 Living Language Calendar

9/11

The September 11 attacks (also referred to as 9/11) were a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks by the Islamic terrorist group al-Qaeda against the United States on the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001. The attacks killed 2,996 people, injured over 6,000 others, and caused at least \$10 billion in infrastructure and property damage. Additional people died of 9/11-related cancer and respiratory diseases in the months and years following the attacks.



Four passenger airliners operated by two major U.S. passenger air carriers (United Airlines and American Airlines)—all of which departed from airports in the northeastern part of the United States bound for California—were hijacked by 19 al-Qaeda terrorists. Two of the planes, American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175, were crashed into the North and South towers, respectively, of the World Trade Center complex in Lower Manhattan. Within an hour and 42 minutes, both 110-story towers collapsed. Debris and the resulting fires caused partial or complete collapse of all other buildings in the World Trade Center complex, including the 47-story 7 World Trade Center tower, as well as significant damage to ten

other large surrounding structures. A third plane, American Airlines Flight 77, was crashed into the Pentagon (the headquarters of the United States Department of Defense) in Arlington County, Virginia, which led to a partial collapse of the building's west side. The fourth plane, United Airlines Flight 93, was initially flown toward Washington, D.C., but crashed into a field in Stonycreek Township near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, after its passengers thwarted the hijackers. 9/11 is the single deadliest incident for firefighters and law enforcement officers in the history of the United States, with 343 and 72 killed, respectively.

Above information obtained from Wikipedia, 2021

HOW DID THE CLEVELAND CLAMBAKE BECOME A THING?

Autumn in Cleveland is marked by three things: 1) the Browns losing and Buckeyes winning, 2) crisp weather, and 3) the return of clamcakes. Despite the fact that the city rests on the shores of a freshwater body of water, the seafood-centric feast is a fall staple.

Of course, a Cleveland clamcake is unique and distinct in both process and composition from those held elsewhere. Instead of being prepared the New England way -- on a beach or near water, using a tedious process involving fire pits, rocks, and seaweed -- all the components are simply thrown into one pot and steamed together. And Cleveland's variation is characteristically hearty: a dozen clams, half a chicken, an ear of corn, a sweet potato, rolls and butter, and coleslaw.



"That's been the staple of clamcakes forever," says John C. Young, president of Euclid Fish Company.

He would know, his grandfather, chef John J. Comella, helped kickstart the clamcake as we



now know it in Cleveland by formalizing the menu and making the bakes more accessible and portable through the family catering business.

"We feel that my grandfather really said, 'OK, here's the clams, half-chicken, ear of corn, sweet potato, rolls and butter, coleslaw. Let's put it all together,'" Young says." He loved to cook, loved to talk about food, loved to talk about making people happy through cooking food. He did a lot with churches, and the community."

By all accounts, Comella developed this passion early. He spent his childhood in San Francisco shadowing his own father, a fisherman and produce dealer. The family eventually moved to Cleveland. Sadly, Comella's father passed away when he was 12. The young man shouldered the responsibility to support his family during the Depression -- first by selling waffles from a wagon, and then by peddling clams and oysters. Interestingly, his "first love" was actually baseball, Young notes." He actually was going to play for the Indians but couldn't pull it off because his family was totally dependent on him."

In 1944, Comella opened a market at East 185th Street in Euclid, Ohio, under the name Chef Comella's Fish and Clambake Company. This eventually evolved into the Euclid Fish Company. For the chef, clambakes were a family affair. In fact, Young says his uncle remembers being at Comella's house on Hiller Avenue in 1944, "going up and down the steps, husking corn and washing clams" from the basement.

"When I was a kid, it was a real small house, but everything in the planet took place in that basement," Young says." Like a lot of Italian families, everything revolved around the basement, cooking, and food." Things started progressing outside of the house after World War II ended. Comella traveled to Toledo and bought some army surplus aluminum pots, which expedited the growth of the catering business.

At this point, however, the clambake phenomenon wasn't new to Cleveland. In fact, geography, population, and even our mild autumn weather made the region a natural place to have them. "If you think about fall and the tradition of a clambake, it comes into play

with how the product got here in the first place," Young says.

Back in the day, seafood traveled by trains, originating in New York City and moving west through the Great Lakes cities -- Albany, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, Cleveland, and eventually Chicago -- where it would be re-iced. During certain eras, when shellfish such as clams and oysters arrived in Cleveland, they would often be directed to Lake County, where many of the city's elite families had summer homes and would throw parties on Little Mountain.

"Guys would bring out clams and oysters to the Rockefellers and all the big-name people in town, because that's what they were looking for during the summertime," Young says.

Still, pinpointing the exact moment when Cleveland clambakes became a Thing is tough. References to these types of events pop up in the *Plain Dealer* archives going back to the 1860s. On October 15th, 1866, an article titled "Great Clam Bake at Camp Gilbert, A 'Running Account' of it" included everything from guests taking generous doses of cholera medicine in between artillery practice to the anonymous author being told a "history of clams and clam bakes," hinting that the parties were already ingrained. His verdict of the day ended with the "firm opinion that clam bakes were glorious institutions."

A *Plain Dealer* account of the following 1867 Camp Gilbert feast confirmed this characterization: the paper printed a gluttonous clambake menu featuring a staggering amount of seafood, meat, vegetables, and a spread of pies for dessert. A July 15th, 1878, article, meanwhile, references "a grand clam bake" in the works for September at a Euclid Avenue house.

In the coming decades, clambake references continued to appear regularly, both in the society pages and event listings. (From the September 25th, 1938, *Plain Dealer*: "Lindsay's Sky Bar will have a musical clam bake on Oct. 6.") They became favorites of local companies and political figures, as archival photos, papers, and letters at the Western Reserve Historical Society's Research Library reveal.

Black-and-white photographs dated from 1941, 1945, and 1949 show employees of the Halle Bros. Co. having a grand old time at a

clambake while playing horseshoes or tug of war or chowing down on food. Posed shots reveal men in dress shirts looking raucous and slightly ruffled, perhaps because some of them were holding what looked to be beers.

Further digging revealed that at least some of these Halle clambakes pictured were for men only. "WEATHER FINE...FOOD SUPER...FOR THIS YEAR'S STAG CLAMBAKE," went the headline of a two-page spread featured in the October 2nd, 1950, in-house staff newsletter *The Halle Bulletin*. That year, the bake took place at Mala-Cechi farm near Chardon, and featured baseball, football, and door prizes.

In light of such historical references, it's no wonder that by the time Randall Ruhlman wrote his article for *The Clevelander*, a monthly magazine published by the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, in 1950, clambakes were popular enough for him to be cheeky about their ubiquity.

"Clam bake season, the period of the expanding belt line, has come to an end for 1950," he wrote. "It's a mighty important period in our scheme of living and it runs concurrently with the corn-on-the-cob season in these parts. The average businessman, trade association member, lodge brother, union member, butcher, baker and candlestick maker attend at least two or three clam bakes a season."

More library research shows that these weren't necessarily always sedate affairs. The October 1957 Cleveland Clinic newsletter touted its annual clambake sponsored by the professional staff -- whose 100 attendees reportedly "devoured" more than 1,500 clams -- like so: "Clams and clam juice, lobster, sweet potatoes, chicken, pie, ice cream and strained ligaments met 100 members of the medical and administrative staff on Saturday afternoon, September 14, at Cyrus Eaton's Acadia Farms in Northfield. And, of course, a dignified amount of beer."

A separate letter written a few days after the bake by Jay, Eaton's grandson, casually mentioned: "I am pleased to report that Mr. Becker, our only casualty, felt fine the next day and apparently did not have any serious problem. It was a great help to have Steve drive him into the hospital."



Naturally, clambakes in Cleveland could have their political inclinations, going by former mayor Ralph J. Perk's papers at the WRHS Research Library. In 1967, the then-Cuyahoga County Auditor had a sizable election deficit from the previous year that he was trying to reduce by holding "card parties and other functions" -- for instance, a clambake. The Friends of Perk Committee sent out hard tickets to the bake with a letter referencing how much he still had to raise (\$9,887.50, down from \$21,000) that also touted how Perk was "one of the few public officials in modern times who refuses to have a 2% kick-back fund from his employees to pay his expenses."

The strategy was brilliant: judging by the stack of responses from law firms, banks, and individuals, many people who regretfully couldn't attend often donated money to Perk's cause anyway and also sent back tickets -- which could be given away to other people, especially senior citizens, so they could attend.

For example, one handwritten note on letterhead for Mrs. Gilbert W. Humphrey read: "Enclosed are the tickets to the clam bake on September 16th which we will be unable to attend. Also enclosed is a check to cover same, as a donation. Perhaps you will want to give the returned tickets to some friends of the Republican Party -- I hope so!!"

According to meticulous records, Perk kept up the clambake for years to come, and turned it into an annual fundraiser for his various political campaigns. In 1970, the Friends of Ralph J. Perk Committee sent out tickets with a not-so-subtle bit of messaging: "You will show your appreciation to Mr. Perk for his continuing devotion to public service and his excellent record as County Auditor by properly distributing the enclosed tickets to your many friends. If you desire more tickets, they are available, and we will appreciate any additional effort to make this an even greater success than in previous years."

And a 1971 bake in advance of his successful mayoral run was promoted with a more sanguine nudge: "As you know, Ralph Perk is a candidate for mayor of Cleveland this year, and the support of his friends is greatly needed in his campaign to bring experience and integrity back to this city."

Today, Euclid Fish Company honors its founder by proudly selling chef Comella's Original Clambake, complete with a returnable steamer. But Young knows that clambakes are malleable -- in fact, this year the company is also offering three different seafood boils: Low Country, Portland, and Mid-Atlantic.

Michael Symon has touted a variation on a Cleveland clambake, which features shrimp and kielbasa in addition to clams. Andy Dombrowski, the corporate chef for Zack Bruell Restaurants, says the company did a "pretty traditional, straight-up" clambake at Platform Brewery back in August to celebrate the brewery's Yammy Yammy beer, but Bruell's Alley Cat Oyster Bar is planning a clambake in October which will utilize salmon in addition to the usual seafood offerings.

To Dombrowski, the appeal of clambakes is obvious. "To me, a clambake is more of a backyard thing than necessarily a restaurant thing," he says. "I think it's a time to get together and have a party in the fall, eat and drink, and have a good time with your friends and family."

It's also ideal for a party since clams "hold up to being cooked," he notes. "It's not like something like a lobster or mussels or other kinds of shellfish, like shrimp, that if you cook them and they hang out for 45 minutes, they're tough and not very good. Clams are fine -- you dip 'em in butter, and they're good to go."

At the end of the day, despite the winding history of clambakes, the appeal is simple.

"It's all about being outside," Young says. It's all about being with your friends, and all about enjoying food. I think that's what my grandfather really believed in."

The above information was obtained from www.thrillist.com/eat/cleveland/cleveland_ohio_clam_bake

A LITTLE LIGHT TRIVIA

First of all... I apologize for duplicating the July Light Trivia items in the August Newsletter. Oops.

Why do we say that someone with a hidden agenda has an "axe to grind"?

As a boy, Benjamin Franklin was sharpening tools in his father's yard when a stranger carrying an axe came by and praised the boy on how good he was with the grindstone. He

then asked Franklin if he would show him how it would work on his own axe. Once his axe was sharpened, the stranger simply laughed and walked away, giving young Franklin a valuable lesson about people with "an axe to grind."

The above information was obtained from The Little Book of Answers by Doug Lennox.

MISSION STATEMENT

dichiarazione di missione

The purpose of this Association is to promote the moral, social, and civic advancement of its membership, and to perpetuate the customs and cultural aspects of Italian Heritage.

Article II, Section 1 of the AIH Bylaws

AMERICANS of ITALIAN HERITAGE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1 July 2020 – 30 June 2022

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- Trustee (Immediate Past Pres.) David Vegh

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Clam Bake Sign-up Sheet

COMMENTS TO THE EDITOR

If you have any questions or comments about, or suggestions for this newsletter, please put your thoughts in an email and send them to me at GPizzuti@GlennPizzutiArchitect.com