

## BOLETIN

### BOGIANEN IN ACTION

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#### Pier Giorgio Frassati

He was supposed to be canonized by Papa Francesco *di santa memoria*, but then something intervened to make the poor pope *di santa memoria*. On Sunday, September 7th, his successor Leo XIV raised Pier Giorgio to sainthood, along with the millennial IT influencer Carlo Acutis.

We highlighted Frassati in the Fall 2024 *Boletin*. Enclosed is a holy card commemorating the saint, courtesy of our member Vincent Fausone. In Italian, such cards are called *santini*. My mother used to call them *mistà* in Astigiano, which also refers to roadside chapels dedicated to the Madonna.

(P.S. Unfortunately, due to limited supply, not everyone on our mailing list will receive a holy card. Sorry.)

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#### How do you Say *Froot Loops* in Piemonteis?

Globalization is a two-way street. Remember the purchase of Bialetti by a Hong Kong family fund reported in the last issue? Well, now it turns out that the Ferrero Group of Alba is buying the Kellogg Company of Battle Creek, Michigan, for 3 billion dollars. Ferrero, a closely-held family business founded in 1946, is known worldwide for products such as Nutella, Rocher, Mon Cheri, and Tic Tacs. In 2018 it bought all the Nestle candy brands in the U.S. including Butterfinger and Sweet Tarts. In fact, even before this latest purchase, Ferrero already had 14,000 employees in North America. The iconic American cereal maker will retain its name. Really, what is more American than Kellogg's corn flakes?

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#### La Strada with Giulietta Masina and Anthony Quinn

Great movie! One of Papa Francesco's favorite films. Only, we're actually talking about La Strada Restaurant in San Pablo, venue of our successful luncheon on Sunday, September 14th, organized by our past president Susan Pricco. The owners Martino and Adriano presented an excellent menu, including assorted antipasti, gnocchi with *sugo alla bolognese*, one half of a roast chicken, and tiramisù, all washed down with regional Piedmontese wines, Arneis and Nebbiolo. There even was grappa for those who wanted a *caffè corretto*. Around 30 of our members and supporters were present.

Gino Mirabella, a singer with Las Vegas bona fides, led them in popular a cappella songs, including the nostalgic and borderline misogynist *Piemontesina Bella*. We all know what happened to Totino, "l'allegro studente." He got his medical degree and does pro bono work for the poor. But what about his erstwhile girlfriend? They used to make out at night in the Valentino Gardens. What ever happened to her? Did she get pregnant? Did she get a job in the city, perhaps in the needle trades as a *caterinetta*? Did she go back home to some godforsaken provincial *cascina*? We don't know...and we don't even know her name!



#### *Check-Out our Website!*

We have a newly remastered and updated website: [www.piemontesica.com](http://www.piemontesica.com). There, you will find information on our region, our organization, articles from back issues of the *Boletin*, regional recipes, and how to become a member.

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## Segusini in the News

Apparently there wasn't much emigration from the Val di Susa to Central and Northern California. Through our membership list, past and present, we can name just a few families: the Favros, the Guglielmos of winery fame, the family of Vince Fausone on his mother's side, the family of our past president Joseph Tonda.

A multi-generational family with roots in Susa was highlighted in the Summer 2025 issue of *Jesuits West*, the official organ of the Society of Jesus in the Western U.S. The appreciative 3-page feature article devoted to them was certainly well deserved, since the family's charitable foundation made the largest donation ever to Santa Clara University, a \$100 million gift to build the Sobrato Campus for Discovery and Innovation.

The family's fortune was made in a serendipitous way. The patriarch, Giovanni Massimo Sobrato, a native of Susa and World War I American doughboy, started a successful restaurant in San Francisco's North Beach called John's Rendezvous. During World War II, he and his wife Anna Ainardi bought property in Atherton to grow produce and raise poultry for the business. After the war, they sold one of the parcels for a considerable profit. In fact, when the husband died in 1952, Anna sold the restaurant and used the proceeds to buying more land. The rest is history. The Sobrato family enterprise is now one of the largest developers and owners of commercial real estate in Silicon Valley.

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## Topolino

In Italian, Topolino means Mickey Mouse, but it's also the title of a weekly comic book based on Disney characters dating back to 1932. Apparently, the Fascist authorities didn't find anything objectionable back then, and to this day the series has avoided political commentary. A recent issue of *Topolino*, No. 3619 in 2025, features a story in Turinese. You have to understand that *Topolino* isn't just for children, but it's sort of the equivalent of the TV series *The Simpsons*, whose appeal is trans-generational.

The editors of the magazine have decided to highlight the diverse regional languages and cultures of Italy. To this end, they've published comic book sections in Pugliese, Laziale, and Venetian. The number under review has a preface by a Turin University professor explaining the spelling and pronunciation of our regional lingua franca, based on that spoken in the capital.

Giari Michlin (aka Topolino) has rented a summer home, which had been the restful getaway of a famous writer, Nina Costa. (Remember the poet Nino Costa?) However, it was also a smugglers' hideout. After a series of comical misadventures, the crew finds a lost Costa manuscript and has the miscreants duly arrested.

Below you will find two panels of the comic book in Turinese.

