

Summer 2002 Session

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Spannocchia Farm Program

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Corn Poppy and Sunflower, Spannocchia, June 2002

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The vineyard by Capannone in the early a.m.

Benvenuti!

Welcome to the Summer 2002 edition of *Il Pennato*! This Summer, five Farm interns and two Garden interns enjoyed playing and working hard at Spannocchia. Inside this issue, you'll read about molte cose, including a day in the life of Jen Cirillo, garden intern, and the life lessons Scott Lamer has acquired as Spannocchia's Summer shepherd. Ongoing Summer projects included guest services oriented tasks such as landscaping and building renovation, the construction of new gates for the pigs and sheep, stone wall building, copious amounts of weeding nell'orto e nella vigna, caring for the animals, and harvesting lots of vegetables for our dinner table.

In addition to the Farm Program's presence, Spannocchia was a buzz of activity this Summer with program groups such as the KU architecture group, Jane Whitehead's archeology group, The Fontbonne art group, and The Vartan mural painting group. To learn more about this Summer's happenings, please read on. We hope you enjoy this issue of *Il Pennato*!

Who Won the Palio?



The Chiocciola Contrada's Flag, July 2nd

Special Points of Interest:

- Who are the 2002 Farm Interns?
- Scott's Sheepshearing tales
- Summer 2002 photos
- What is Sara's bagno favorito?
- What sound does an Italian rooster make?
- Moustache Day!

On July 2nd, the Summer 2002 interns took a field trip to watch the famous Palio horserace. In Siena's Campo, we joined an estimated 60,000 fans and onlookers. After 30 minutes of jockeying for position and realignments at the mossa (starting line), the horses were off. Spannocchia's favorite, the Chiocciola contrada, was in the lead for almost one lap, and then fell back to third place. As usual, horses lost their riders, and it was a hair-raising, less-than-a-minute race! Below is a list of the contrade that participated in the July 2nd and the August 16th Palios, and the winning contrade:

July 2nd Palio contrade: Pantera (panther), Bruco (caterpillar), Onda (wave), Istrice (porcupine), Oca (goose), Valdimontone (ram), Lupa (she-wolf), Aquila (eagle), Chiocciola (snail), Torre (tower). **July 2nd winning contrada: Istrice.**

August 16th Palio contrade: Pantera (panther), Selva (forest), Bruco (caterpillar), Valdimontone (ram), Oca (goose), Leocorno (unicorn), Onda (wave), Tartuca (turtle), Lupa (she-wolf), Drago (dragon). **August 16th winning contrada: Tartuca (Chiocciola's adversary!)**

Saturday Morning *by Jen Cirillo, Garden Intern*

This morning the skies have cleared after two days of torrential rains. The sunlight has crested over the top of the tower and is streaming into the garden forming perfectly defined rays of light. The rest of the interns are tucked into their beds - this morning it is just me and the chickens. From where I stand I can see Capannone and the vineyard shrouded in the mist. The roosters are having a contest across the valley; who can crow the loudest. The hens don't seem to notice and continue pecking at the ground picking up flecks of grain. I am watching black clouds building and the rumble of thunder carries with it the threat of another storm. The plants don't seem to mind this weather and the snails love it. Under each bean bush I find another snail trying to escape me; but to no avail - they are chicken food now.

This past week has been a virtual wild kingdom down here beyond the walls. As we were planting leeks



Garden Manager John Iott watering Sunflowers in the orto, August 2002



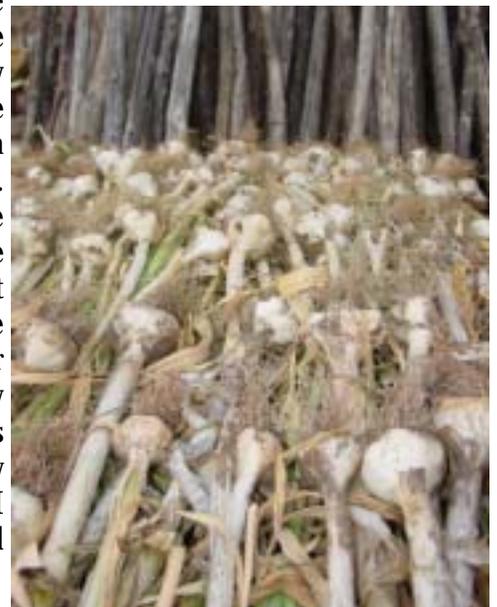
Harvest Box, June 2002

a fox ran by nearly knocking Polly off the stairs. And something has been eating tomatoes, melons, and zucchinis right off the vine. Perhaps we have a vegetarian fox or a voracious porcupine that has waddled its way under the frutteto fence. Yesterday as we were moving the irrigation off the storage

beans on the Piano I looked up to see a deer grazing at the end of the field. She didn't startle but rather continued eating ceci. Her tracks stop at every plant and she has eaten more than half the beans off every bush. And the porcupines have visited here too little piles of scat line the paths in between the corn and cannellini. Maybe good fences make good neighbors but they don't keep the wildlife out.

With the garden thievery occurring I am surprised at how much we have been able to harvest this season. July was a record harvest bringing in over 1,000 Kilograms of vegetables to be cooked, canned, or dried. The tomato canning season has begun and from here it is hard to believe it will ever end with the way the plants are producing. No one will be with out sauce (or pickles, potatoes, onions, or jam) this winter.

The crowing contest is over. The chickens noticed before me that they best find shelter. I look up and realize the rain clouds have made their way over and are now settling in for a long day. Perhaps it is the beauty of the garden that keeps them here so long. Or maybe they heard my wishes for a rainy weekend so I can stay in bed and read.



Aglia!!! 74.3kg of garlic were harvested in July, 2002.

Pecore and I *by Scott Lamer*



Summer 2002 Shepherd Scott Lamer with sheep in the early morning light

One could infer for what I've done for employment the past few Summers simply by examining my clothes: life guarding has forever left sand in the abyss of my bathing suit pockets, scooping ice cream has yielded chocolate stains on my shirt, and now my pants will forever smell like sheep. The reason for this is because I came to Tuscany, Italy this past May to join the ranks of an elite group of laborers, known only as shepherds. It is an age-old profession, which cannot easily be learned by just any layperson off the street. But this American layperson flew thousands of miles, and in three months, advanced from budding shepherd to the title of "Professional Shepherd". The various smells and stains on my clothes as well as the brand new disposition of the entire flock, give testimony to the time and care I've put in at the sheep stables near Capanonne. In all seriousness, there have been several interactions with Spannocchia sheep, which have made my Summer quite meaningful and broken in this greenhorn to life on the farm.

First, was the annual shearing of the sheep, also known as Amateur Night at the Sheep Stables. Mike (another intern) and I spent three days running this wooly salon for 27 quite involuntary, terrified, blank-eyed customers. We spent three days dressed in coveralls, wielding clipping shears, reminiscent of the Crayola safety scissors I used in kindergarten. One by one the sheep were tackled to the ground, bound by

their legs, and given one choice of hairstyle: butchered and dyed pink from all the disinfectant used after a few shearing mishaps (like I said, it was amateur night at the stables). In the end, regardless of their ridiculous appearance, the flock was now equipped to safely enjoy the hot Tuscan weather. In addition, the sheep spent the rest of the Summer giving birth to several lambs, and provided me with two noteworthy and opposing experiences in the lifecycle of all animals: birth and death.

There are two types of spiritual occurrences people can have: one is joining a congregation in song after a minister's sermon, and the other includes holding a baby lamb immediately after birth and passing. The former I experienced one day after leading the sheep to pasture and heard crying in the back of the stable. The mother, set in the daily routine of changing pastures, and an innate need to follow the flock, left her newborn baby. I picked up the still bloody and placenta-covered lamb in my arms and spent the first crucial minutes in any baby's life comforting the lamb, while Susanna, Spannocchia's agronomist, helped call the others back to the stable.

The latter experience occurred yesterday when I found the newest lamb, identified by the black ring around its eye, laying in the middle of the pasture laying in blood, tail missing, and fang (*continued on Page 4*)



Pizza Night! L to R: Scott Lamer, Stefano Valenti, Kim Wynn.

Pecore and I *by Scott Lamer—continued from Page 3*

"We spent three days dressed in coveralls, wielding clipping shears, reminiscent of the Crayola safety scissors I used in kindergarten."

marks in its neck. The poor fellow was most likely a survivor of a dog or fox attack, and so I carried her back to a comfortable bed of straw in the stable, with its worried mother in tow. Both Susanna, me, and the lamb's mother, spent the morning nursing the lamb back to health. Unfortunately the lamb passed away by late afternoon, and tomorrow I will bury it in the forest.

These several experiences have given me another perspective on the many forms that simplicity and beauty take in this world. In addition, such eventualities as shearing the sheep and chasing the skittish little creatures around their stable have humbled me in a way if not helped me to laugh at myself. After learning how to shepherd in Italy, I can say that I have indeed joined the ranks of one of many important and self-fulfilling jobs in this world. Thanks to all those who gave me this opportunity.



Mike Carr happily shearing one of the sheep, June 2002

Parlando Italiano con Giulio

This Summer, Spannocchia has a new maestro d'Italano: Giulio Guerrini. Giulio was born and raised in Rome. After earning a degree in Classic Philology, he spent a few years abroad where he taught Italian to foreigners. He then went back to Italy and taught in Rome for three years. Although he was in deep love with Rome, his dream was teaching Italian in the Tuscan countryside. Giulio moved to a small town 10km outside of Siena a few years ago, and seems to have finally accomplished his dream. He really enjoys teaching in a rural environment and sharing with other people the many good things offered by the country life. His way of teaching is simple and direct and - he hopes - effective.

Giulio teaches the interns Italian twice a week



in the Sala D'Accoglienza. His classes at Spannocchia focus on acquiring useful vocabulary for traveling and working on the farm, and the classes are approximately 90% conversationally based. All interns think that Giulio is a gifted teacher and truly enjoy his classes. He is a tremendous asset to the Farm Program.

Bagni di Toscana:

Meghan and Sara's Small Bladder Guide to Bathrooms

Being born with a small bladder is no laughing matter - as anyone with a small bladder will surely attest - especially when in unfamiliar environs in the heat of the Summer months. The dilemma: Hydrate or die. The subsequent problem: Find a bathroom quickly, or go home early with soggy pants.

The first step to dealing gracefully with this unfortunate situation is familiarizing oneself with the location and quality of restrooms in the surrounding area. Having scouted out, sampled, and conducted a thorough analysis of thousands of bathrooms throughout Tuscany and beyond, we have compiled this list of the most memorable bathrooms of the Summer, from the best to the absolute worst. We hope this list will help others to avoid embarrassing and/or potentially harmful situations while living and working at Spannocchia. Good luck, and remember: Not drinking is not an option.

1. Fattoria Bathroom

The view over the frutteto to Pallaze Torre and Logge and the Tuscan hills beyond, as well as the warm and slanted afternoon light, make this throne the gem of Spannocchia.



The authors' favorite: Upstairs Bathroom in the Fattoria at Spannocchia

2. Villa Bathroom

(across from the supply closet)

Similarly pleasing filtered sunlight and excellent spatial configuration, a spotless sink and clean fluffy towels - truly an elegant experience.

3. Assi Bar (Rosia)

Clean and comfortable, light and airy. Their signature sweet-smelling soap gives this one a spectacular finish.

4. Boboli Gardens (Palazzo Pitti, Firenze)

Modern and refined with polished wooden doors for a traditional, yet charming, country flare. Expect a line, as the quality is superb and the gardens are packed.

5. Cinema in Ferrara

This unexpected find boasts a warm and welcoming staff as well as top-notch facilities. Check it out, even if you're not in the mood for popcorn and a show.

6. Truck Stop off the Autostrada (somewhere between Spannocchia and Ferrara)

This pit stop is an emergency-only "bathroom." It's in the bosco folks, and there isn't much bosco to speak of, so find a tree and be quick about it.

7. Circolo Arci (Rosia)

Dank and dingy - the darker side of The Circ doesn't offer a pleasant space for relaxation or contemplation, but nonetheless, it gets the job done so you can turn your attention more fully to the tasks at hand - eating, drinking, and merry-making with friends.

8. McDonald's (Piazza Matteotti, Siena)

The exhaust from the fry-o-lator makes the wait a hot and aromatic one, coating those in line with that special Mickey D's scent of "Fried - Number 9" and "Hospital Disinfectant - Number 142." Wear cool, loose-fitting clothing, and don't even think about sitting. This experience is a convenient choice and free of charge.

9. Siena Hospital - Floor 6 (Siena)

Speaking of hospital disinfectant, they could stand to purchase a few hundred gallons for this unsavory option at Siena's medical care center. Bring your own soap, and whatever you do, don't forget your shoes.

(continued on Page 6)

Un Giorno Buffo! Spannocchia's First-Ever Moustache Day

For two weeks, a few fearless men at Spannocchia worked long and hard at growing moustaches for the first-ever "Un Giorno Buffo!". Those who couldn't take the pressure dropped out (rumor has it that Daniela wouldn't let Riccio grow a moustache, and whatever happened to Mike?). The reward for the participants: Being the butt of jokes, and this "tough guy" photograph in *Il Pennato*. Most participants couldn't handle looking ridiculous for too long and shaved their moustaches off just minutes after this photograph was taken. However, despite Mady's threats to kick him out of the house if he didn't shave, Rusty decided he likes his new Hell's Angels look and is keeping his moustache!



The brave moustache men: (L-R) Rusty Lamer, forester Angelo Parini, Scott Lamer, John Iott.

Bagni di Toscana by Sara Cogan and Meghan Wagg *Continued from Page 5*

10. San Gimignano (public squatter)

Somewhat hard to find, but recognizable by the line.



Jen Cirillo (center) showing Sara Cogan (L) and Meghan Wagg (R) how to lay down irrigation tape in the Tower Field

Recommended footwear: Rubber Boots.

11. Irish Pub (Piazza Gramsci, Siena)

Small and cramped with a fairly foul odor; sitting is strongly discouraged. Reading the graffiti on the back of the door helps to pass the time and keep your mind off of the scary old drunk man you ran into in the stairway on the way there.

12. Follonica Water Park

This bathroom would be better off walled up and turned into an above-ground septic tank. Do yourself a favor – use the bosco, or go in the pool.

13. Rome Subway

Absolutely schifo! No toilet paper, seats, soap, or working flush, so don't even think about touching anything. This is only for utter desperation and requires a shower immediately afterwards.

Summer 2002 Special Projects

Special Projects are an important part of the Farm Program. All interns can devise a project that enables them to use their skills or develop new ones, with the end goal to produce something that is beneficial for the Spannocchia community. The Summer 2002 interns did not have much work time to spend on their Special Projects as the session was only 12 weeks long, however each intern devoted a significant amount of time outside of the work day to his or her Special Project. The following is a list of the interns and their respective projects:



Each week the interns attend an educational presentation or discussion. Here are photos of Stefano's Bread Baking Class: Farm Intern Sara Cogan (L); Stefano Valenti, Garden Intern Polly Hatfield (R).

Kim Wynn: Horses and Trails. Kim spent the last 3 years working on an Andalusian horse farm in NY, where she trained colts. This Summer, she spent a lot of time training and grooming Spannocchia's horses. Kim also cleared Spannocchia's trails and painted trail-head signs.

Meghan Wagg: Welding. Meghan's background in jewelry making and metalsmithing helped her to design and weld a superb shelter for the electric fence battery.

Mike Carr: Land Use Project. Mike developed a future agricultural land use and development plan which will assist the Spannocchia Foundation in reaching its goals of sustainability, research and education.

Sara Cogan: Garden Carpenter. Sara built a new propagation table for l'orto and reinforced existing prop tables. She also acted as the garden photographer, and her slides of the garden are a nice complement to Spring 2002 intern Nina Fink's slides of the garden in the springtime.

Scott Lamer: Shepherd Carpenter. Scott saw a need for a new sheep gate as several pecore escaped through sections of the old gate and predators could easily enter. He built and installed a beautifully crafted gate near the sheep stables at Capannone.

Animal Sounds in Italian

The Spannocchia farm experience is not complete until you learn some animal sounds, Italian-style. Here are a few that Sylvia and Daniela taught us (spelled phonetically in Italian and English):

Rooster: chicchirichi! (kee-kee-ree-kee) **Chicken:** coco-de! (coco-day)
Baby chicks: Pio pio! (pee-pee-pee) **Dog:** bau bau (baaww-baaww)
Turkey: glu glu! (glue-glu!) **Frog:** cra cra! (cra-cra!)
Birds: Cip! Cip! (cheep cheep!)



Calvane! Moo!

Farm Program & Volunteer Alumni!

Please drop us an e-mail and let us know what you're up to! Send all updates to farmprogram@spannocchia.org.

Information about the 2003 Farm Program (including the Garden Internship) will be posted online in October, 2002. For more information, please contact Madeline Yale at farmprogram@spannocchia.org

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Who are the Summer 2002 Interns?

Mike Carr, Fredericton, New Brunswick Canada

Jen Cirillo, Burlington, VT USA

Sara Cogan, Maui, Hawaii USA

Polly Hatfield, Seattle, WA USA

Scott Lamer, Cape Elizabeth, ME USA

Meghan Wagg, Gander Bay, Newfoundland Canada

Kim Wynn, Galway, NY USA



The Summer 2002 Farm Program L to R: Rusty Lamer, Farm Operations Coordinator; Madeline Yale, Farm Program Director; Scott Lamer, Farm Intern; John Iott, Garden Manager; Polly Hatfield, Garden Intern; Jen Cirillo, Garden Intern; Sara Cogan, Farm Intern; Erin Filsinger, Guest Services Intern; Kim Wynn, Farm Intern; Meghan Wagg, Farm Intern; Mike Carr, Farm Intern.

Many Thanks to this Summer's Volunteers!

Julie Rose, Michelle Gagnon & Johanna, Melanie Royster, and Kathy Wynn.