

Fall 2002 Session  
Volume 1, Issue 5

## Spannocchia Farm Program

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## Benvenuti!

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### Special points of interest:

- Who are the fall 2002 interns and volunteers? See page 7
- How much olive oil did we produce this year?
- Learn the catch phrases for the season in "Hot and Not"
- Who got married? Page 3

Welcome to the Fall 2002 Issue of *Il Pennato*, the Farm Program's Newsletter for Interns, Intern Alumni, and Volunteers.

The fall session was full of activities. The interns devoted much of their time to the various harvests: the Vendemmia (grape harvest), chestnut harvest, and olive harvest (which lasted 6 weeks!). In addition to time spent working on the farm, the interns pursued their own interests such as welding, cooking, papermaking, philosophizing, and taking Tai Chi classes in Rosia. Memorable moments for the session include trips to Venezia, Firenze, and Roma; Festa Ambiente; Halloween; BBQs; watching Giulio eat 4 cups of hot ricotta at the cheese farm in Monteperti; and dancing to local Tuscan folk bands at the Riccios and at the goodbye festa in the Sala d'Accoglienza.

The Fall Session devoted a lot of their time to making Spannocchia a better place to live and work. All interns chose to participate in after-hours discussions about the importance of Spannocchia in their lives, and how best to describe the Internship Pro-



*The Castle Tower hit by the setting sun and tables set up for pizza night below.*

gram to potential applicants. Everyone helped to revise the new program information and application, and intern Rich Statter sat on the Selection Committee.

The interns' insights, hard work, positive attitudes, humor, and new ideas rejuvenated the entire community, and helped us all to better appreciate Spannocchia. We thank them for making our lives a little richer, and hope they return to Spannocchia some day soon!

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy this issue of *Il Pennato*!

- Madeline Yale, Farm Program Director & Rusty Lamer, Farm Operations Manager



*Fall 2002 Intern Nikki Conzo picking white grapes this*

## The Sacred Olive *by Nicole B. Conzo*



Today there are 800 million olive trees in the world. Six hundred of those thrive here, at Spannocchia.

When we began our olive harvest, we were told that each and every olive was sacred. We promptly came to understand why.

The harvest is an immense expense of manual labor. For five weeks everyone was busy with some facet of the harvest. Each morning, once the sun had dried the dew from the olives, we would set out for the olive groves with our buckets, ladders, and nets. The nets were laid out beneath the trees to catch the rain of olives that would soon begin to fall. Some set up ladders, and some would act as *scimmi*, monkeys, climbing through the strong branches of the trees. Then using only our hands we would strip the branches of all the olives, black and green, in a motion many recognized as similar to milking a cow. Then the nets laden with olives would be gently emptied into the waiting crates, and we would move on to the next tree.

Not only is this a labor intensive job, but we would need at least 300 kg, (660 lb.) of olives to go to press each week. This year we made 6 trips! In total 2,100 kg, (4,620 lbs), of olives were harvested and 320 kg, (704 lbs), of oil was produced. That is approximately 15 % of the original weight!

“Olives have permeated every Mediterranean culture from prehistory to last week. Aristotle philosophized about them, and Leonardo invented a modern way to press them. Egyptian pharaohs were sealed into pyramids with golden carvings of olives. Greeks used so much oil to lubricate their athletes they devised a curved blade, the *strigil*, to scrape it off. Conquering gladiators, like the Roman Emperors, were honored with olives. The earliest Olympic flame was a flaming olive bough. Christ was seized on the Mount of Olives and nailed to an olive wood cross. When Jews declared the miracle of Hanukkah because their eternal flame flickered on empty for eight days and nights, their fuel was olive oil. And ever since a dove brought an olive

### FUN FACTS ABOUT OLIVES

# of Olive Trees at Spannocchia: 637 (approximately 60% bore fruit this year as many are young trees)

Total 2002 Spann. Olive Weight: 2,100 kg

Total 2002 Spann. Olive Oil Weight: 320 kg

Percentage Yield: approx. 15%

Total 2001 Olive Weight: 1,247 kg

Food Consumed at Olive Oil Festa at the Frantoio: salami, aglio, grasso, acqua, mele, formaggio, clemantine, pomodorini, Baci, vino rosso, pane ed il nuovo olio!

Fun Facts: Olive oil production accounts for at least 200 million workdays each year, and each year the world consumes nearly two million metric tons of oil. (Mort Rosenblum)

“sprig back to Noah’s Ark it has meant peace ....” (Rosenblum, Mort)

Some days I would be at the very top of a tree, precariously balanced, reaching and stretching as far as my body, *and* the tree would allow me, trying to reach that last olive. Then a huge gust of wind would blow, and I would wrap my arms and legs around those ancient branches and wait for the gust to pass, and I would think,

*“Is this worth it, for just one last olive?”* My answer to myself was always, “YES!” ■

source: Rosenblum, Mort. 1996. *Olives* North Point Press, NY.



*Fall Intern Mary Dodge picking olives in the Torre field.*

## 26 Things About Spannocchia That Make Me Smile *by Emily Haney*

1. Fumo nuzzling his head into arm nooks
2. Beltbuckle Surprise with Todd and Rusty
3. The motion of olive picking being like that of milking cows
4. Riding a bike down the driveway in the Autumn
5. Jessica's Common Room fires
6. Sitting on the wall in front of the Villa looking at where I live
7. Carmen
8. Nikki's after work mozzarella ball
9. Sally's wiggly butt when you get really excited to see her
10. Francis the pig taking two hours to eat her food
11. Happy Bear Cowboy – Rich on Halloween
12. Prosciutti gathering... always
13. The colors in the morning of the piano
14. Still having dirty fingernails from Vendemmia
15. Dancing in the Pulcinelli kitchen
16. Mady and Rusty's hipness
17. Risking your life for the one olive at the end of the branch
18. Lighter slop buckets making happier mornings
19. Sasha and Gabriel...always being there
20. Team Animali: Mary, Jess, me, Riccio
21. Salsa Verde (to be said with a lisp)
22. The sound of people down in the valley from the garden
23. Clipping (cutting) Bufalo's toenail
24. Salami Dolce made by Nikki
25. Fresh pasta with funghi
26. A warm welcome from everyone two weeks into the program ■



### BBQ!

This fall was the season of BBQs. A great BBQ was hosted this Nov. by Carmen, Spannocchia's Garden Manager. Above (L-R): Emily, Jessica, Nikki, and Carmen. Below (L-R): Rich, Mady, and Todd.



## Alumni News

- Former KU Architecture student and Farm Program alum (1995-6) Mike Whitchurch married Alessandra on Sept. 8th in Rome. Lily Stratton was the ringbearer.
- John Ryan (spring 1996) visited us with his family for one week in October.
- In November, John Twiss (fall 2000, spring 2001) paid a visit to his cousin, fall 2002 intern Jess Chatfield. John has definitely earned the rank of "shameless Spannocchia promoter" (thank you John!) as he has sent us numerous enthused Internship Program applicants.
- The interns' last field trip of the session was to Rome, where we met up with Roma tour guide and Farm Program alum Matt Coonan (fall 2000).

Alumni! Please drop us a line and let us know what you're up to. Reach us at [internships@spannocchia.org](mailto:internships@spannocchia.org).



*Above: Fall 2002 Intern Jess Chatfield and her cousin, alum John Twiss. Right: Matt Coonan leading a tour for the fall 2002 interns in Rome.*



## Passeggiata *by Rich Statter*

Sometime around seven at night, the young people of Siena take to the streets for their evening passeggiata. The passeggiata is an institution kept by everyone here, a stroll about town after a day’s work, but as it applies to the Sienese youth, the tradition has little to do with a contemplative walk to loosen things up. It’s a time to get together with friends and crowd the main street with denim and leather.

Though I’ve been in Siena for the passeggiata hour, I’ve never really felt part of it. I was sidelined by the scene, an observer, not a participant. It came down to fashion. The passeggiata is a catwalk, and I’d been alienated by my roomy clothes. Last weekend I finally did something about it. I ponied up at the counter in



Halloween: Nikki, Emily, Mady, Rusty, Todd, Mary, Matt, and Rich

Piazza San Tightpants and bought myself some new threads.

I went for a whole relaunch: shoes, pants, shirt, sweater. And I went for the local look. Clothes that grip. The philosophy is straightforward: give the crowd a clothed impression of your naked self.

I can’t say I feel comfortable in the new look. I took it out for a testdrive the next day and felt like an exhibitionist. The self-consciousness, however, is kept in check by a new feeling. Acceptance. I walked down the street in my new denim wetsuit, and Italians mistook me for one of their own. I can’t say exactly what it was that gave this impression—the assumption in cafes and gelaterias that I speak the language, the solicitation by a stranger for a bus schedule, or the recognition in a passing glance. But after a few months of wandering about on the outside, I finally found my way in. For better or worse, I’m part of the passeggiata.

Booyah. ■

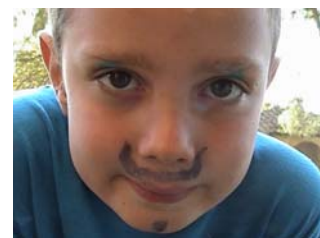


Pastamaking Class in the Villa Kitchen with chef Gina Stipo: (L-R) Interns Todd, Mary, Nikki, Matt, and Emily

## Un Giorno dei Baffi! Parte 2



The men of Spannocchia just can’t seem to satisfy their affliction for moustaches. In honor of the cause, Rusty organized the second Spannocchia “Giorno dei Baffi” Day, which took place in October. Pictured left are diehards Rusty, Matt, and Rich. Sympathetic moustache growers Sasha (top right), and his brother Gabriel (below right) were so proud of taking part in moustache day that they sported their new (washable) looks to school! ■





# Vendemmia 2002 Photo Album



Matt, Jessica, Natalie (Guest Services), Rich, Stefano, and Riccio.



Rich, Jessica, Natalie, and Matt getting ready to pick.



Stefano & Ruggero putting white grapes into the machine that removes the stems.



Rusty picking grapes.



White grapes going through the press.



Stefano emptying out the press of red grape skins.



Angelo cleaning out an oak barrel after the 1st fermentation process.



Stefano cleaning the sludge from 2001 vino rosso oak barrel.

## Who are the Fall 2002 Interns?



**Matt Bastide:** Falmouth, ME. Matt works with Angelo in the forest and will start college at the Univ. Of Southern Maine in January.

**Jessica Chatfield:** San Francisco, CA and Mt. Kisco, NY. Jess works with the animals (named “Team Animal!”), and is an excellent chef!

**Nicole Conzo:** Westboro, MA. Nikki has a background and degree in Sustainable Agriculture and is a wonderful contribution to the orto (vegetable gardens). Nikki will live at Spannocchia in Jan. and Feb. as a volunteer.

**Mary Dodge:** Naushon Island, MA. Mary is the shepherd and assists Angelo with forestry operations. After she’s done chasing sheep who keep knocking down the stone walls, she will move to Kennebunkport, ME in January.

**Emily Haney:** Bangor, ME. Emily is the second half of “Team Animal!”. She recently spent time making cheese on a farm in Wales, and will stay at Spannocchia in Jan. and Feb. to volunteer.

**Rich Statter:** San Francisco, CA and “Jersey”. Rich works in the garden and in the officina (metal shop). He will continue to pursue his writing goals upon completion of the program.

**Todd Kundla:** Jackson, WY. Our 2-month-long volunteer/intern Todd made our lives a little easier this fall with his hard work, generosity, and humor. Todd returned to Jackson to continue woodworking and construction projects, and to ski.

Top Row L-R: Internship Program Manager Madeline Yale, Farm Operations Manager Rusty Lamer, Mary Dodge, Emily Haney. Bottom Row L-R: Matt Bastide, Italian teacher Giulio Guerrini, Rich Statter, Nicole Conzo, and Jessica Chatfield.



L: Matt and Rusty cleaning the caldaia. R: Rich and his self-designed special project table for Pulcinelli.



## Thank You Fall 2002 Volunteers!

Domenica Catelli (Women’s Chefs and Restaurateurs Scholarship Recipient), Judith Arends, Michelle Von Wald, Todd Kundla, Cathie and Fred Dodge, Carly Berube, Lucy Georgeff, Thayer Phelan, and John Twiss.