

cestral town and say a prayer for him. So I got on a plane, went back to Tre-castagni, and I said a prayer for him and a prayer for his father. And every molecule in my being told me that this was where I belonged. I'm happy I did it. I live in Sicily eight months out of the year and I spend four months of the year (in America) to fulfill my law school obligations and to visit my kids and my grand-kids.

FN: When you look back at your legal career, what accomplishments give you the most satisfaction?

AZ: I started a law school — me and Thomas Jefferson! [Laughs.] It started in 1988; it's one of 232 law schools in the United States and it's thriving. That was my first experience as an academic. Then I opened a company that trained graduates of law schools to pass the bar exam. I've been on the faculty of several law schools, but I love Northeastern University School Law, where I've taught for the last 20 years. It has an outstanding reputation, and they work to make changes in

society. Always. My grandfather Gaetano used to say, "Do good and forget it, do bad and regret it."

FN: It sounds like there's a strong link between that impulse and the one that got The Sicilian Project started (thesicilianproject.com). How long have you had that cause going?



AZ: This is the beginning of our third year. We're just beginning to make noises, and we're into four different communities now. I raise the money with my organization, and we give out the grants to the Babilonia Language School in Taormina. Our budget this year will be \$25,000. Everyone on the board is a volunteer; no one is taking a salary.

FN: Where does the money come from?

AZ: It's all done with donations from Italian Americans. There are twice as many of us here in the United States as in Sicily: 12 million of us can trace our ancestry there, and only five-and-a-half million people live in Sicily. I'd really like to see the American Sicilian population become for Sicily what the American Jewish population is for Israel.

FN: Getting in touch with your Sicilian roots changed your life, and is changing lives. How would you encourage Sicilian Americans who might want to explore their roots further?

AZ: "Sangue di mi sangue: blood of my blood." You've got 2,000 years of genealogy in Sicily and you're a member of that tribe. If I had any advice for my fellow Sicilian Americans, it would be to put the cannoli down and get on the Internet. Start by getting online and learning about Sicily. You'll be surprised at what you find there.

Alta Villa's Mother's Day Champagne Brunch

Sunday, May 11, 2014

11:00 am - 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm,
Reservations Required

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Cost is \$35.00 per person Complete Adults • \$20.00 per person Complete Child 4-12 (Champagne included, other beverages additional)
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