

## **The Holiday's Family Style**

By Silvana LaFerlita Gullo

If we are fortunate enough to have a family, each of us has special stories to tell of the holiday season. I grew up in a traditional Italian family with big family dinners on Sundays, usually at my grandparents' house, whose back porch I could see from my kitchen window. The holidays were marked with special meals beginning with my Aunt Mary's baked clams and breaded shrimp as appetizers. On Christmas Eve, my mom, Aunt Josie and my grandmother would start early cleaning the fish. Someone was in charge of handling the live lobsters, my mom baked her almond cookies, my grandmother made rolled honey cookies with a pinch on top from one of the kids, Aunt Josie baked a traditional ricotta pie, and Aunt Barbara would bring a special bakery item. Uncle Jack and Uncle Joe were in charge of decorations and of buying and setting up the giant live Christmas tree in Mama Theresa and Papa Nino's house. Each family came prepared with presents for the tribe of kids, hiding them until midnight when Santa arrived. Music played, we danced, played cards and dressed in our best clothes, and the next day we celebrated all over again!

Here at the Center, we plan family-style holiday celebrations for you complete with all the trimmings. Our hope is to bring each of you a serving of holiday cheer to let you know how much you mean to us. Chef Anthony and Mary prepare the holiday menus and his crew of elves Ebert, Lynne, Andrew and Marion carefully prepare each item for your enjoyment. Fresh pies are ordered for the Center and for Members to take home for their own holiday celebrations. Mary and Nancy will plan music, guests, and treats to make this year's holidays memorable.

To bring cheer to our Members, the Center is lovingly decorated by the Senior Advisory Board and special friends. Three trees are trimmed for your pleasure.

Gifts come in the form of a wish: We wish you good company, not just on the holidays but every day. We wish you joy, and will continue to improve our programs for your entertainment; we wish you happiness and good health, and pray for your well-being. And we promise that you will always be in our thoughts as we plan for the future.

Happy Holidays this Season and Always.

*Silvana LaFerlita Gullo, Executive Director*