

VOCE DI GCICS

GULF COAST ITALIAN CULTURE SOCIETY, INC.

1811 Englewood Rd., #317, Englewood, FL 34223 WWW.GCICS.ORG March 2025

Mary Rinaldi, Editor



St. Joseph



Women's History Month

President's Message

I feel certain we are on the road to sunshine-filled days. Warmer temperatures are on the horizon....

My sincere thanks to all who volunteered their time on 1/24/25 to attend the organizational meeting of two new GCICS committees: Membership/Marketing & Programs. I am enthusiastic and confident that we are on the right path, although much needs to be done. Camille Kramer, Program Committee Chair, has already announced two new events – tours at the Sarasota Opera House and the Historic Asolo Theater and Glass Pavilion. Her committee, Phillip Gordon, Bunnie Eccleston and Patty DiMichele, is looking ahead to scheduling future lectures and tours. We appreciate their voluntary efforts not only in introducing innovative programs but also in securing new venues.

GCICS has recently gained several new members. Thanks to the efforts of Phil Miner, Membership/Marketing Committee Chair, we are on track for a steady influx of individuals eager to join our GCICS family. Phil and his committee, Laura Heald and Jolene Ruffo, are collaborating on securing a banner to display at venues where we will market the Society to the greater Sarasota community.

Several of our newest members have come into our fold because of recommendations from current members who understand the value of GCICS. Ellen is frequently the first to make contact and interact with those seeking information about our Society. She must be conveying information positively because most are eager to sign up, hoping to attend upcoming events. Thank you, Ellen!

During our 11/19/24 Brainstorming Session, a member suggested that GCICS organize a trip to Italy. Please consider if you would like to assume responsibility for taking the lead on this, working with a travel agent. If this is something you would like to volunteer for, please email Ellen (itrain@erols.com). We would then ask you to join us at the next Board meeting where we would jointly set up some guidelines as you pursue this task.

We will gather for our Carnevale celebration at Patty and Mike DiMichele's home on March 4th. It is a scholarship fundraiser, and a few spots are still available. A \$40.00 donation and a dish to share are required, as well as wine or alcohol of your choice. If you are interested, contact Ellen ASAP. Costumes are welcome but not necessary. If you have a mask or other Mardi Gras enhancements, please feel free to wear them. We will have a photo booth, beads, and music. We have

additional March events that are described in this newsletter.

The Board extends well wishes to Doris Hurban who has been facing some health issues and was unable to attend the Bocce Picnic. A great big thank you to Tom Hurban for organizing a most successful picnic and bocce tournament. And we so appreciate the support received from Phillip & Marianne Gordon, whose facility we enjoyed so much. And finally, thank you to our members who came out to support our many events. Without you, our events would not be the wonderful experiences they are.

Julie Bondarenko

President



Cultural Event: Sarasota Opera House Tour

March 24, 2025



The Sarasota Opera House

INVITATION: The Board is pleased to invite you to the first cultural event planned by our newly established GCICS Program Committee.

BACKGROUND: The mission of the Sarasota Opera House is “to entertain, enrich, educate, and inspire a life-long love of opera in our diverse and growing communities.” Its 1926 historic building is, in and of itself, a world-class cultural gem. Filled with fascinating facts, backstage “secrets,” tales of the past, and vision for the future, a tour of the Opera House will captivate you. It does not matter how many times you have taken the tour; each is unique and entertaining! Please join us for a private tour of the Sarasota Opera House led by knowledgeable staff and opera aficionados. You will learn about the building, the architecture, the productions, and hear intriguing anecdotes. You do not need to be an opera-lover to love the tour. But who knows, you may become one afterwards!

DETAILS

WHAT: Sarasota Opera House Private Tour
WHERE: Sarasota Opera House, 61 N Pineapple Ave, Sarasota, FL 34236
WHEN: Monday, March 24, 2025
TIME: Arrive by 1:45 pm at the latest in the lobby; Tour begins at 2:00 pm.
DURATION: 1 hr. - 1 hr. 15 min.
WHO: Members (please wear your badge) & Guests
COST: \$15.00; **exact cash at the door;** no credit cards/checks
RSVP: ASAP to avoid disappointment but no later than March 17 to Camille Kramer: camilleakramer@gmail.com

You will receive a confirmation email.

TO CANCEL: E-mail Camille Kramer (see her email above)

PARKING:

*Palm Ave Garage, 1289 No. Palm Ave. (NW of Palm Ave/Main St intersection, behind Opera House) (1st hr. free; approx. \$2 for hours 1-2; \$1 for each hour thereafter)

*2nd Street Garage, 1400 Block of 2nd St, across from Whole Foods (Public parking access ramp located on 2nd St. near the corner of Central Ave.) (Levels 2 & 3: N/C; 4-hour limit)

Camille Kramer
GCICS Program Chair

GCICS Cultural Event: The Sicilian D-Day

March 28, 2025



The liberation of Western Europe from the grip of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy began in the summer of 1943 in Sicily --nearly a year before the D-Day landings on the beaches of Normandy, as frequently believed. It was the critical first stage of an arduous campaign that ended in 1945 with the fall of Berlin. You won't want to miss revealing details of this oft-overlooked historic episode to be presented by "GCICS's 2023 Italian American of the Year," **Professor Davide Tanasi** on Friday, March 28 at 2:00 pm in the auditorium of Selby Public Library in downtown Sarasota.

Prof. Tanasi's summary of the presentation:

"The Sicilian D-Day (7/9/1943) – Operation Husky and the Allied Liberation of Sicily Step back in time to uncover the thrilling saga of WWII's pivotal invasion, brought to life through previously unpublished primary sources! This lecture delves into the pivotal role American troops played during the invasion of the Island, capturing the dramatic interactions between the liberators and the local Sicilian population. Operation Husky, essentially a rehearsal for the iconic Normandy landing, was crucial for the subsequent retaking of Italy and Europe. Experience the war through the eyes of those who lived it, with insights drawn from oral history interviews and memoirs of American soldiers and Sicilians. Discover how these encounters forged enduring cultural bonds, reshaping Sicilian society and leaving a lasting American imprint. Join us for a unique historical journey, where personal stories bring the past to life, revealing the profound and lasting impact of Operation Husky on Sicilian culture and its pivotal role in the broader Allied victory."

Here are the details:

WHAT: The Sicilian D-Day, Operation Husky and the 1943 Allied Liberation of Sicily

WHEN: Friday, March 28, 2025, at 2:00 PM. Est. running time 1h 45m

WHERE: Auditorium on the Ground Floor of Selby Public Library, 1331 First St., Sarasota, FL 34236

PARKING: Library lot (Free, max. 2 hours), plus on the street and nearby Municipal Parking Garages.

An early arrival (1:45 pm) is suggested so the event can be completed within Library parking time limits.

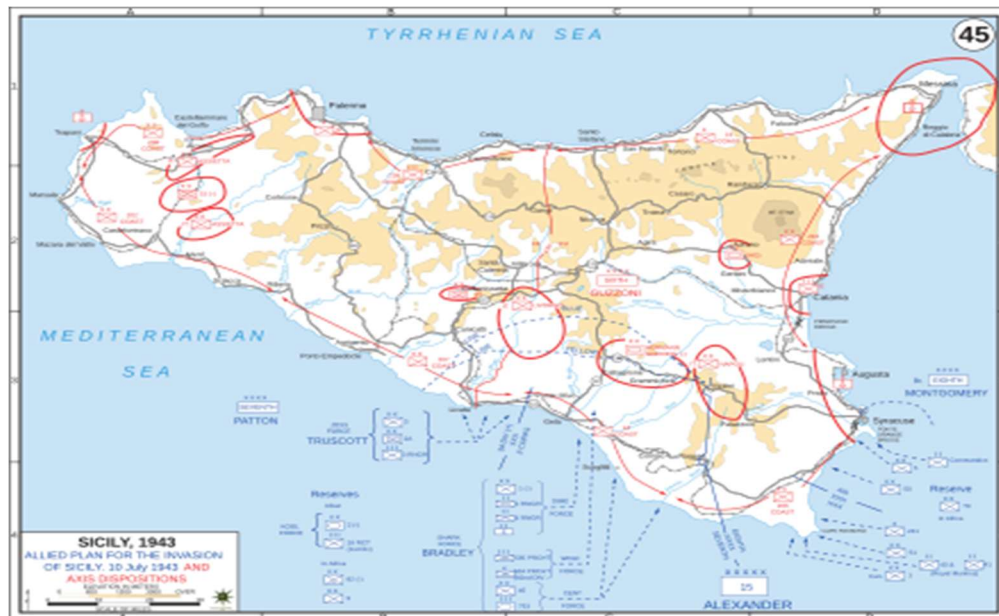
ATTENDEES: This event is free for GCICS members and guests who are most welcome to join us.

RSVP: Please reserve your seat with Ellen Roderick (itrain@erols.com). Provide all names in your email. Thank you.

Dr. Tanasi is Professor in the Department of History and Affiliate Faculty in the Department of Anthropology of the University of South Florida. He is a specialist in the archaeology of ancient Sicily and Malta and in the application of scientific techniques and digital methods for the documentation, characterization, interpretation and global dissemination of archaeological and historical material culture and an expert of popular science and public archaeology.

We look forward to your participation in this event!

George Arfield
GCICS Cultural Chair



The Olive...Now A Superfood

Excerpt from the Italian Tribune, Sept. 12, 2025



More than 2,500 years ago, the olive oil was described as ‘liquid gold’ in Homer’s Iliad. Renowned for its health benefits, it is not only delicious but is an anti-inflammatory, good for digestion, beneficial for the heart and may even help us feel happier and live longer.

Scientists are now turning their attention to the murky, brown and previously discarded by-product of its production called olive mill wastewater, or OMW for short. They have discovered it may be an even more powerful superfood. OMW is left over after olives have been ground and their oil separated. It is a water residue squeezed out from the remaining mulch. It was previously considered a bit of a nuisance; however, it has now attracted the attention of the scientific community for its protective and anti-inflammatory potential.

After hearing reports of olive farmers who had taken to drinking it for health reasons, researchers became intrigued and started investigating the waste product. They found that instead of being useless, this dark bitter

and cloudy liquid is even more nutritious than olive oil itself.

OMW is full of healthy plant-based compounds, such as polyphenols that contribute to gut health, among other benefits. In fact, OMW contains ten times the amount of these compounds that is found in extra virgin olive oil, which itself is a rich source.

OMW has been found to be helpful in both the prevention and treatment of certain cancers, including those of the lung, prostate, colon and breast. Other research has shown that OMW supports exercise recovery, improves metabolic markers and has the potential to help cardiovascular and neurological conditions.

Eating food rich in beneficial plant-based compounds like those found in the Mediterranean diet is linked to a decreased risk of developing diseases. A one ounce shot of OMW contains more polyphenols than 40 ounces of extra virgin olive oil. It is just another illustration of how nature truly does not create waste.

BOCCE CORNER NEWS

Our Society still gathers at the bocce court each Sunday from approximately 2-4. We normally have 8-12 players, games being friendly and informal. New players are always welcomed! The address is 400 Palmetto Ave. Osprey. I can be reached at the following phone number: 908 507 3048.

We combined the Welcome Back Picnic, held in October, with the Bocce Invitational, formally held at The Cascades in early February.



Hosts: Marianne & Phillip Gordon

On Saturday February 15, forty GCICS members gathered at The Hammock Preserve to enjoy the combined venues. Bocce play began after 1 pm. The eventual winners were the team of Joan & Jack Ferrante and Blanche & Joe Barresi. It was a hot day and thankfully there was a cover on each end. It was great to have newcomers participate and ENJOY. The games were shortened later so we could finally go inside to eat. Once again, our members provided GREAT food to share with others. The appetizers were devoured by the courts and the salads, main course and desserts inside. This event was made possible with the EXCEPTIONAL help of Marianne and Phil Gordon, who are residents there. The accommodation was just wonderful! MANY thanks to them! My wife Doris had just had a mild heart attack and was at SMH. Needless to say, I was a little behind on time and lacked her help with handling the food. Our GCICS ladies stepped up to the plate and without any direction from me handled all the food and kitchen magnificently. Thank you, thank you!

Tom Hurban
Bocce Chair



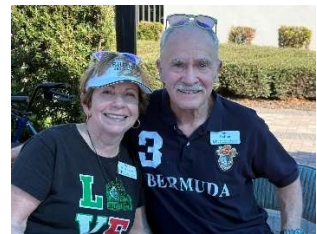
Gene & Barbara Barattini and
Joe & Lucille Raia



Ellen Roderick



Mary Kay & Merle Sogge



Mary & Dana Dalton



Let the play begin!



Watching the play.



Winners: Tom Hurban presenting medals to
Joan & Jack (not pictured) Ferrante and
Joe & Blanche Barresi

Big Waters Land Trust

Article by: Tom Hurban

Many members are aware of the symbiotic relationship we have enjoyed with the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast. We physically maintain the bocce court on their property and have exclusive rights to play there on Sunday afternoons.

Because of this, GCICS makes a \$100 contribution to them each year. The Foundation's purpose and function is to purchase land or easements to save and protect land from development FOREVER! At a large gathering last fall, which Doris and I attended, they made two major announcements. The first was that with a recent 24-acre purchase, they have

now saved over 20,000 acres. A formidable feat indeed which took many donations. The second was that they were changing their name to Big Waters Land Trust. This was done to make people realize that their land preservation efforts were not limited to only our Gulf Coast.

It has been brought to my attention that some of our members were not aware of their purpose and would also like to become contributors. If you are interested, their address is Big Waters Land Trust, PO Box 902, Osprey FL 34229.

Tom Hurban
Bocce Chair
Liaison to Big Waters Land Trust



*GCICS Cultural Event:
Historic Asolo Theater & Kotler-Coville Glass Pavilion
April 9, 2025*

The Board is pleased to invite you to the second cultural event planned by our newly established GCICS Program Committee.

BACKGROUND: The Historic Asolo Theater, on the grounds of the Ringling Museum, is often referred to as a “beautiful jewel-box theater.” Its interior was originally constructed in 1798 inside a Renaissance-era palace in Asolo, Italy about 30 miles from Venice. To access the Historic Asolo Theater, go through the Kotler-Coville Glass Pavilion which houses the Ringling’s growing collection of vibrant studio glass. In its collection are several outstanding Italian pieces. Please join us for a unique tour of the Historic Asolo Theater led by knowledgeable staff followed by a tour of the Italian glass masterpieces in the Kotler-Coville Glass Pavilion.

DETAILS

WHAT: Private Tour of Historic Asolo Theater & Kotler-Coville Glass Pavilion

WHERE: Kotler-Coville Glass Pavilion 5401 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota, FL 34243 (located at entrance to The Ringling but before entering the actual Ringling ticket area) The Pavilion serves as the entry point for the Historic Asolo.

WHEN: Wednesday April 9, 2025

TIME: 2:00 pm (arrive by 1:45 pm); tour is less than 2 hours

COST: \$10.00 per person for members & guests (non-refundable but transferable)

PAYMENT: I encourage you to pay online using our website. The directions are below. If not, mail a check, payable to GCICS, to Ellen Roderick, 770 So. Palm Avenue #1003, Sarasota, FL 34236

DEADLINE: ASAP to avoid disappointment; must register online or Ellen must have your check in her mailbox no later than Monday, **March 31, 2025.**

PARKING: The Ringling lot has plenty of parking.

NOTE: This private tour does NOT include admission to the Museum of Art, the Circus Museums, nor the Ca’d’Zan mansion.

STEPS FOR PAYING ONLINE

*Go to our website using this address: <http://www.gcics.org/payment>

*On 1st page, check "Member", enter first & last name, email address, phone # and click on the blue block.

*On 2nd page, enter the total amount of your payment, then enter in the block directly below the name(s) of the person(s) for whom you are paying. Click PayPal checkout and the next page will come up. Complete what is needed.

*Note: You do not need a PayPal account to pay for GCICS events. PayPal will accept your credit card directly. You will receive a confirmation email within an hour or so once you have completed the transaction.

Camille Kramer
GCICS Program Chair

Scholarship Luncheon

April 12, 2025



You are invited to our annual **Scholarship Festa (Luncheon)** where high school seniors are awarded GCICS college scholarships. We will welcome the student scholars and their guests. You will meet and hear from these college bound local Italian American high school seniors. **If you wish to sponsor a student or parent for the luncheon, include that fee (\$40) in your payment and indicate that information online or in your note that accompanies your check.** The student whom you sponsor, along with his/her parents or family members, will be seated with you.

***Event:** GCICS SCHOLARSHIP FESTA

***Date/Time:** Saturday, April 12, 2025, 11:30-2:15 pm

***Location:** Stoneybrook Gulf & Country Club, 8801 Stoneybrook Blvd, Sarasota, FL 34238

***Cost:** \$40 (all inclusive; non-refundable) + one complimentary Mimosa, Bloody Mary, or House Wine

***Menu:** Enhanced buffet including salads, flatbread, poultry, fish, and vegetarian options, vegetables, dessert, coffee & tea.

***Payment:** I encourage you to pay online using our website. The directions are below. If not, mail a check (payable to GCICS) to Ellen Roderick, 770 So. Palm Ave, #1003, Sarasota, FL 34236 and provide the name of each attendee (and if you are sponsoring a student or parent).

***Deadline:** Must register online or I must have your check in hand **by Saturday, April 5, 2025.**

***Cash Bar:** Available

***Seating:** You will receive a table assignment close to 4/12/25; this must be done to sit members sponsoring a student or parent with a family.

***Questions:** Call (Cell: 301-775-1344) or email me itrain@erols.com

STEPS FOR PAYING ONLINE

*Go to our website using this address: www.gcics.org/payment

*On 1st page, check "Member", enter first & last name, email address, phone #, and click on the blue block.

*On 2nd page, enter the total amount of your payment, **then type in the block directly below: 4/12/25 and list the name(s) of the person(s) for whom you are paying.** Please make sure you do this step.

*Click PayPal checkout and the next page will come up. Complete what is needed.

*Note: You do not need a PayPal account to pay for GCICS events. PayPal will accept your credit card directly. You will receive a confirmation email within an hour.

Ellen Roderick
GCICS Secretary

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Marie Corsentino	2007
Mary Amabile Palmer	2008-2010
William Korp	2010-2014
Anthony Esposito	2015-2016
Sheryl Lazzarotti	2016-2020



The U.S. Mint has revealed the five historical female figures who will appear on the reverse sides of quarters for 2025.

2025 will mark the fourth and final year of the program, which will have issued 20 new quarters featuring the images of trailblazing figures from diverse ethnic, racial and geographic backgrounds. The head side of the coins feature Founding Father George Washington.

- [Ida B. Wells](#): Journalist, suffragist, and civil rights activist who fought against violence against African Americans
- [Juliette Gordon Low](#): Founder of Girl Scouts of the United States of America
- [Dr. Vera Rubin](#): Astronomer who pioneered research on galaxy rotation
- [Stacey Park Milbern](#): Activist for people with disabilities
- [Althea Gibson](#): Tennis player who broke the color barrier at the highest level in the sport

