

LA VOCE DI GCICS

GULF COAST ITALIAN CULTURE SOCIETY, INC.

PO BOX 2591, SARASOTA, FL 34230

WWW.GCICS.ORG

February 2015



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of GCICS,

At our Annual Meeting on January 9th we introduced the new members of GCICS and enjoyed a refreshing lunch along with a most amusing movie. To me, this meeting is just as important as the annual brunch in October.

Now I ask each of you to 'get involved' with your thoughts, ideas and service. You can call or email me or Vice President, Joe Moccia, and we will include your thoughts and suggestions at our Board meetings so that your voices can be heard. The Board of Directors wants to lead but also be a reflection of the membership's wishes. You may recall the words of former Pope John XXIII who led the church through its most dramatic changes. He said,
"Don't walk ahead of me because I may not follow
And don't walk behind me as I may not lead
But walk beside me and be my friend."

I am delighted Sheryl Lazzarotti suggested creation of Bocce team which can meet and play on a planned schedule and possibly challenge other teams in the area. It is an easy game to play and can be most enjoyable. I still remember playing Bocce with my Grandfather on Sunday's in front of his barn

in New Jersey across the street from a black Baptist church. We played while listening to their beautiful singing, and when they left the church did we get some eyes as they looked and wondered what we were playing! Bocce playing goes back thousands of years and I have played it in Great Britain as well as the U.S. Oh the memories! Let us know what you think of this idea.

GCICS is looking for someone to volunteer their backyard in order to hold a Society summer or November cookout. We will do all the work and the Society or its members will provide everything we need to make it a success. We need a place other than a county park which presents too many restrictions. It will be a lot of fun.

On another note, we need people who are computer literate to volunteer and help us with our web-site and newsletter. Mary Rinaldi has done a superb job on the newsletter for years and wants to continue but she could use some assistance.

Ciao for now,
Anthony Esposito

Valentine's Day Dance

St. Valentine



This year, Valentine's Day will be celebrated at the Lakewood Ranch home of Mary Rinaldi and her husband Jack Norman. It will be a "bring a dish event" where members will bring a bottle of wine and a dish. Mary and Jack will provide the ham, servers, and a four piece band for your dancing pleasure. There will be a nominal charge for tableware items. The type of dish that you will bring will be according to the first letter of your last name. Here are the categories that we will follow:

- A – D is assigned a side dish
- E – K is assigned a main dish
- L – P is assigned a dessert
- R – Z is assigned an appetizer



- WHAT:** Valentine Day Party
- DATE:** February 14, 2015
- TIME:** 5:30 PM – 9:30 PM
- PLACE:** The home of Mary Rinaldi & Jack Norman
- COST:** \$9.75 per person
- RESERVE:** Make check payable to GCICS and mail to:
Mary Rinaldi, 13982 Siena Loop, Lakewood Ranch, FL 34202
Phone: 941-907-9056
- DIRECTIONS:** Take I-75 to exit 213 University Parkway head east on University Parkway to Legacy Blvd. Turn left, pass the gate house until the dead end. Make a left and a quick right onto Siena. Make the first left and the house is the 4th on the left hand side of the street.

REVIEW OF TOWN HALL MEETING
LUNCH AND A MOVIE
JANUARY 9, 2015



After lunch of deli sandwiches, macaroni salad, and potato chips, President Anthony Esposito called the meeting to order. He asked that Sheryl Lazzarotti sing the “Star Spangled Banner.” Instead she sang “America the Beautiful” with a golden mellifluous voice. Then the new members who were present were introduced. Frank Coppa moved that Ellen Roderick, Pat Astore, William Korp, and Isabel Istorico be reelected to the Board of Directors, the motion passed. The meeting was then open to the membership for their input. Two ideas were put forward. The first, more lectures on places to visit in Italy, and the second, the creation of a Bocce team. Finally we settled down to see the movie.



The movie was “Johnny Stecchino” (Johnny Toothpick) starring Oscar award winner Roberto Benigni which was a comedy from Italy. Below is a summary of the movie.

Good hearted but not very worldly-wise, Dante is happy driving the school bus for a group of mentally handicapped children, while feeling he is somehow missing out on life and love. So he is very excited when after nearly being knocked down by her car he meets Maria, who seems immediately enamored of him. He is soon invited to her sumptuous Palermo villa, little suspecting that this is part of a plot. He bears an amazing likeness to Maria's stool-pigeon gangster husband and it would be convenient for them if the mobster, in the shape of Dante, was seen to be dead and buried.

GCICS CONNECTIONS
(Dr. Joseph Polizzi & Dr. Gene McLoone)
Author: Ellen Roderick, GCICS Secretary

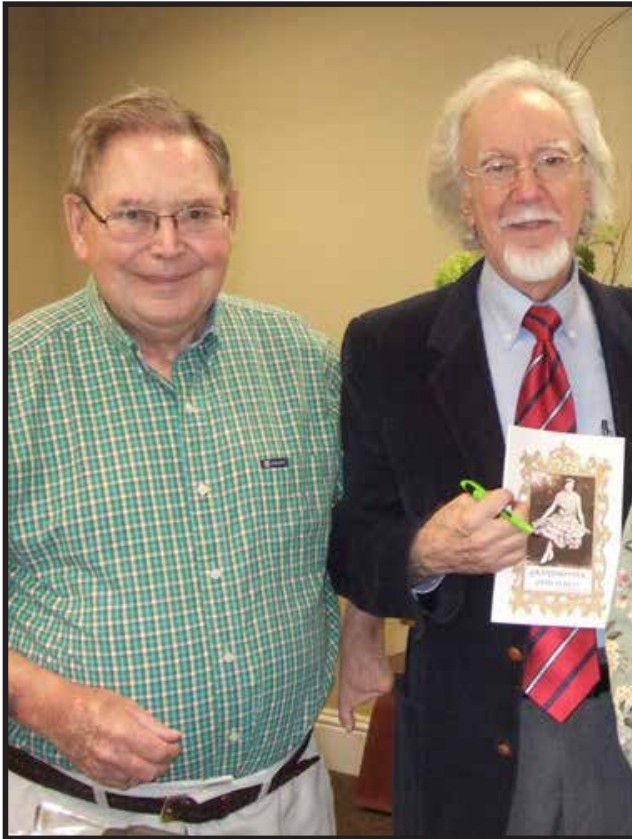
Some of you attended the terrific lecture that Dr. Joseph Polizzi gave on March 7, 2014 entitled *Italian Painters in 19th Century Paris*. Members took the opportunity to chat with Joe afterwards. Gene McLoone discovered that one of the displayed books authored by Joe was a fictionalized story about the “Banana King of Johnstown, PA.” This peaked Gene’s interest because Gene’s deceased wife, Kathy Amershek, hailed from Johnstown. He and Kathy made their home in Johnstown upon their retirement (1996) from professorships at the University of Maryland College Park. As Gene and I spoke with Joe, he told us a bit about the book and about his summers spent in Johnstown at his uncles’ homes.

There were two homes, both in the Westmont borough of Johnstown. Westmont is where Gene maintains a beautiful Victorian home. Gene and I pledged to find the two homes and photograph them since Joe had not been back to Johnstown, PA in many years. We tracked down the homes, photographed them, spoke with locals about Joe’s uncles, and then spent time on the phone with Joe learning more about the Banana King and his family.

Joe’s book about the “Banana King” is entitled *The Golden Orrery: Saga of a Sicilian in America* which tells the story of a

young Sicilian who leaves the service of a Sicilian prince to make his future and fortune

in America early in the 20th century. He settled in Johnstown, PA and built a hugely successful banana importing business. As the Puma family grew, Mr. Puma built a magnificent home. A second family home was built on the same street. Joe has so many fond memories of summers spent with his cousins, aunts and uncles in Westmont. When Gene and I spoke with Westmont residents, we learned that they recalled hearing about the famous Banana King. Gene’s wife’s friend, Kitty Ann, lived across the street from the Puma mansion and often played with the great-grandchildren of the Banana King. We met a retired priest who recalled the Puma family attending the Catholic Church in Westmont. So the descendants of the Banana King are well remembered in Johnstown along with the famous king himself. Meanwhile, Joe feels a real attachment to Westmont having spent many adventuresome summers with his relatives. Accompanying this article are three photos: one of Joe & Gene getting acquainted at Joe’s presentation; and two photos of the Westmont homes where Joe spent his summers while growing up. The houses are about a mile from Gene’s home. Talk about connections – it truly is “a small world after all.”



UPCOMING EVENTS

PLANNING MEETING

On February 17, 2015 The CCICS will hold its annual planning meeting at Café Baci in the downstairs Garden Room. Lunch will be individual checks. All members are welcome to attend. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Joe Moccia at 941-387-2039.

SAINT JOSEPH'S DAY

MARCH 20, 2015



Please mark your calendars for this year's Saint Joseph's Day celebration. Because of a confusion of scheduling, we can only get a reservation at Roskamp for March 20th.

WHAT:	Saint Joseph's Day Celeration
WHERE:	Roskamp, (corner of 13 th and US 41 in Sarasota)
WHEN:	March 20 th , 2015
TIME:	6PM
COST:	\$35/PER PERSON
RSVP:	Makes checks payable to GCICS and mail to: Connie Campisi

OFFICERS/DIRECTORS**President**

Anthony Esposito
Anth.esposito@gmail.com

Vice President:

Joe Moccia
marymoccia@verizon.net

Treasurer:

Anthony Esposito
Anth.esposito@gmail.com

Secretary:

Ellen Roderick, PhD
itrain@erols.com

Membership:

Robert Amedeo
bobnatamedeo@comcast.net

Newsletter Editor:

Mary Rinaldi
maryfrinaldi@yahoo.com

Scholarship

Sheryl Lazzarotti
slazzarotti@gmail.com

Social & Cultural:

Carmella Campisi
739carmella@comcast.net

Sunshine Lady:

Isabel Istorico
Isabelistorico585@comcast.net

Directors at Large:

Pasqual Astore
pat@21stcenturyinternational.com

Frank Coppa
fcoppa50@gmail.com

Patricia Novak
principessaitalia@gmail.com

William Korp
wrkorp@comcast.net

Coordinator

Website
 Anthony Cagliostro
gcicscholar@gmail.com

Restaurant
 Linda Ahern
lindalahern@aol.com

Past Presidents

Joseph Raffaele, PhD	1988-1992
Gabriella Thurston	1993-2001
Patrick Corsentino	2001-2004
Arthur Castraberti	2004-2006
Marie Corsentino	2007
Mary Amabile Palmer	2008-2010
William Korp	2010-2014

ITALIAN CLASSES 2014-2015 SCHEDULE

Both the language classes and the conversation classes will be held at The Landings in the Sarasota County Schools Administrative Building located at 1950 Landing Boulevard off US 41. Turn left and park in the lot in front of the blue awning building, #1950. Sweet Tomato Restaurant will be across the parking lot. Take the elevator to the 2nd floor. Classes are generally held in room 218, but check the easel each time for GCICS class location.

Basic Italian: Mondays 2:00-4:00 pm

Instructor: Patricia Novak – (Home) 941-753-8357

Text and Publisher: Italian: A Self-Guided Study by
 Eduardo A. Lèbano

John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

ISBN# 978-0-471-35961-6

February	9, 23
March:	2, 16, 23, 30
April:	6, 13, 20, 27

Italian Conversation: Wednesdays 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Instructor: Frank & Pina Pergolizzi –

Text: None

Cell: 203-583-2323

Home: 941-497-5678

February	4, 11, 18, 25
March:	4, 18, 25
April:	1, 8, 15, 22, 29

RESTAURANTS OFFERING 10% DISCOUNT TO MEMBERS

PLEASE PATRONIZE THESE RESTAURANTS

Café Americano	365-1026
Café Amici	951-6897
Café Baci	921-4848
D'Corato	330-1300
Mona Lisa	377-6562
Phila. Cheesesteaks & Hoagies	926-0441
Piatti Italian Bistro	923-5570
Primo Restaurante	359-3690
Valentino's	
Cooper Creek Blvd.	359-6400
Clark Road	921-9600

Note: Café Amalfi is now out of business

GCICS
PO Box 2591
Sarasota, FL 34230

<<First Name>> <<Last Name>>
<<Address>>
<<City>>, <<State>> <<Zip>>