

VOCE DI GCICS

GULF COAST ITALIAN CULTURE SOCIETY, INC.

P.O. BOX 2591, SARASOTA, FL. 34230 WWW.GCICS

March 2022

Mary Rinaldi, Editor



Happy St. Joseph Day

President's Message By Julie Bondarenko

March is a time for welcoming a change of seasons. The past few weeks have been a bit nippy and have caused some of us to grab a sweater or jacket as we leave our homes. I have seen some wearing boots, an article of clothing I gave up when I left NJ and thought it would never be a necessary part of my FL wardrobe.

In addition to welcoming spring, March is "International Women's Recognition Month." It is a time to celebrate women's achievements and accomplishments throughout the world. We can appreciate what women have achieved in many fields that have affected everyone in positive ways; in the sciences, arts, business, and contributing to the welfare of women and children. The women's perspective established their need to be worthy contributors to society. These women identified the need and/or recognized their passion and set a plan in motion. Let us not forget that their accomplishments happened despite a male-dominated society. I am mentioning several women of noteworthy recognition. As I write the President's Message, it is fitting that I report on American women of Italian heritage. I mention a few who might not seem the most newsworthy in the grand scope of the world, but as I did my research, I learned some interesting facts. The following only represents but a few. For additional women, simply Google "Salute to Italian Women in America."

Rabbi Barbara Aiello (b.1947, Pittsburgh, PA) of Italian Jewish heritage and first and only female rabbi in Italy, as Italy's first non-Orthodox rabbi. (Note: former GCICS member.) WOW!

Angela Bambace (1889-1995) In 1956, she became the first Italian American woman elected vice-president of the ILGWU.

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St. Frances Xavier Cabrini (1850-1917) Founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; major support to Italian immigrants; first naturalized citizen of the USA to be canonized by the Roman Catholic Church (7/1/46).

Patricia Russo (suggested by Noni St. Amand) (b.1952, Trenton NJ) first woman to become CEO of Lucent Technologies; currently serving on the Board of Directors of General Motors, Merck and Co. and Arconic, Inc.

Eleanor Marie Cutri Smeal (b.1939) activist, grassroots organizer, president, and cofounder of National Organization for Women (NOW); coined the phrase “gender gap.”

Congratulations go out to Tom Hurban for another successful Bocce Invitational at the Cascades. Tom, you did a fantastic job! We all felt as you said, “we are here to have fun” and that is what it is about. I look forward to next year. A returning member commented on how much she was enjoying herself. That is on you Tom, fantastic job. Thanks for your arduous work!

To date we have received 10 applications for our 2022 scholarship awards. The committee will meet in the coming days to select those who will be interviewed. These applicants are all bright and meet our criteria. All are of full or partial Italian heritage. These necessary ingredients make anyone of them worthy recipients of our scholarships. It is an exciting time! I look forward to seeing you at our Scholarship Festa at Stoneybrook GCC on 4/9/22. At this event, you will hear from our scholarship recipients and realize how your contributions helped in meeting GCICS's mission.

I wish to express my gratitude to George Arfield, Social & Cultural Chair. George, you find the most interesting people to address our members. Dr. Tanasi gave an exhilarating lecture entitled “Around the Roman Table: Tidbits from Ancient Sicily.” I heard nothing but praise from members for George and Dr. Tanasi. Thank you, George!

GCICS Secretary Ellen Roderick was responsible for publicizing the event, taking reservations, and acquiring Selby Library auditorium. Ellen keeps us informed on events, what to expect, and how to register. She also keeps track of the number of participants and the “no shows.” Please, I know there are times when things just slip. I would not be a truth teller if I said, “it never happens to me.” Please keep your calendar up to date and check it. It disappoints our speaker after we have informed him/her of how many to expect. If you cannot make it and need to cancel notify us ahead of the event. Thank you so much for understanding. And thank you, Ellen, for helping in making this event the success it was.

February 24 marked the first in-person event taking place indoors in two years. I was extremely happy to welcome members and guests who have not been seen in a long time. I am hopeful if not confident that we can now enjoy all coming events indoors or outdoors.

Friday, March 4, is our Annual Meeting at Peridia GCC. Ellen has re-confirmed attendees. I ask you to make sure it is part of your itinerary for that day. GCICS has paid for 70 guests. If you cannot make it, let Ellen know no later than 24-48 hours prior so that she may offer a vacant seat to another member.

I thank our Board for its cooperation and dedication throughout these past many months. They are the reason we function successfully. Let us remember to be kind to one another and may God bless us all at this time of continued uncertainty during this security and freedom. [RETURN](#) global threat to our



St. Joseph Day Celebration



The Board is delighted to announce our annual St. Joseph's Feast Day Celebration Luncheon. Don't delay in registering (see process below). We are presently at 145 members, so it is imperative that you register early if you plan to attend. The information is below. Mark your calendar, pay online or write your check, specify your entree order(s), and that takes care of it.

Then you can rest assured that you have a seat for the celebration. We hope our "Joseph's" and "Josephine's" will be with us; we love honoring them.

- *Event: GCICS St. Joseph's Feast Day Celebration Luncheon
- *Date/Time: Sunday, March 20, 2022, 11:30-2:30 pm
- *Location: Cafe Baci, 4001 So. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34231
- *Cost: \$42 (includes gratuity; no tax needed)
- *Payment:

You Are encouraged to pay online using our website. Directions are below. It takes only a few moments.

If not, mail a check (payable to GCICS) to Ellen Roderick, 770 So. Palm Ave, #1003, Sarasota, FL 34236 and specify menu entrée next to each name. I need to know who is eating which entrée.

*Deadline: Must register online or I must have your check in hand by Tuesday, March 15, 2022.

*Guidelines: You are asked to attend ONLY if you have been fully vaccinated (booster not included) and remain symptom-free. Your cooperation is appreciated. We want everyone to remain healthy in these unusual times and beyond. Understand that neither GCICS nor its directors are liable for health-related events at GCICS events.

*Wear: Red in honor of St. Joseph; and name tag.

Menu

- *Pasta with Marinara Sauce
- *Baci Harvest Salad
- *Italian Bread with Dipping Sauce
- *Entree Choices (select one)
 - Flounder Alla Francese: dipped in egg batter, lemon, and capers
 - Chicken Marsala with marsala (wine) sauce & mushrooms
 - Eggplant Parmigiana
- *Dessert: Homemade Tiramisu
- *Beverages: Coffee or Tea
- *Cash bar available (\$7 for glass of wine or beer)
- *Questions: Call (Cell: 301-775-1344) Ellen Rodrick or email: itrain@erols.com

STEPS FOR PAYING ONLINE

*Go to our website using this address:

<<http://www.gcics.org/payment>> 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 "St. Joseph" and list the name(s) of the person(s) for whom you are paying & their entrée choice. 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 or so once you have completed the transaction.

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BOCCE CORNER NEWS



The bocce invitational held at The Cascades on Saturday, Feb. 19 was very successful. GCICS fielded eight teams of four. Many of our games were close but none were won. Play was from 1—4 with three matches for each team. The Cascades Italian American Organization [CIAO] was both gracious and courteous throughout the day. This continued to the trophy presentation as the score was not mentioned.

I should state that we played under a handicap as the courts are very different, being very hard and fast, unlike the court we use. We also had many new players. CIAO team members play very regularly! No complaints, we entered this competition fully knowing that we would be out gunned and that it was to be for FUN, and it was! Thank you to our brave players!

GCICS had over 50 attendees as others joined the cheerleading and pizza party which followed. The Cascades recently redecorated their large meeting hall where we enjoyed music, food and dancing. This was an excellent time to socialize! Everyone enjoyed antipasti, two types of pizza, wings, beer, wine, and soft drinks. Our members provided the desserts. We filled three long tables with delectable homemade delights. Maybe we should challenge them to make the desserts next time? I say we would win that match!

Come join us playing bocce from 2-4 on Sundays at the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast grounds at 400 Palmetto Ave. in Osprey.

Questions?

Tom Hurban, Bocce Chair

908 507 3048.

doristom@gmail.com



Standing: Vince Amato, Julie Bondarenko, Mike DiMichele, Josephine Fontana
Sitting: Carol Wilson, Lucille & Larry Samartin



Tom Hurban



Carol DiCostanzo & Barb Scalise



Janet DeAngelo & Vikki Altobelli



Special cake: Rosie Lumetta designed/Publix made



Ellen Roderick & Rosie Lumetta



Vern & Noni St. Amand



Julie Bondarenko & Vin DeNicolas



George & Carol DiCostanzo



Sheryl Lazzarotti with Bocce Ball [RETURN](#)

Dr. Davide Tanasi Lecture

Review by George Arfield



Were you to join the dinner table at the home of an aristocrat in the days of the Roman Empire you might be expected to feast on delicacies such as tongues from flamingoes (yes, those leggy, pink-feathered birds) and choice cuts of giraffe, camel and other such beasts that roamed the north of Africa in days of yore. Absent were many seasonings we now take for granted. Much of the food was accompanied by sauces and condiments that can best be described as stomach-turning. But times change and so do tastes.

Those were among the fascinating details provided by Dr. Davide Tanasi during his 90-minute-long presentation to GCICS members and special guests on February 24 at the Auditorium of Sarasota's Selby Library.

His illustrated lecture included closeups of magnificent mosaics that have been uncovered in Sicily, mainland Italy and North Africa.

Mosaics, Dr. Tanasi has said, "are among the most suggestive examples of ancient figurative art and they play a crucial role in the study of artistic trends, popular culture and daily life especially in Roman civilization."

The professor's groundbreaking techniques, combining archaeology with leading-edge digitalization, "have drastically changed the perspective of archaeologists and art historians on mosaics." The latter can provide illustrations of multiple aspects of life during those ancient times. Among the most important mosaics uncovered to date are "the outstanding ...complexes from Roman imperial villas of Sicily and Malta, such as the Sicilian sites of Villa del Casale at Piazza Armerina, Villa di Durruei at Realmonte and Villa di Catteddi at Noto and the Roman Domus of Rabat in Malta." A recurring theme is the procurement and consumption of food.

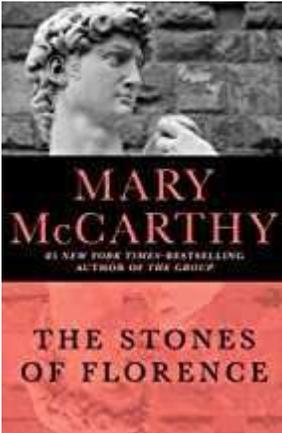
As noted in a publication by Dr. Tanasi, "from prehistory through the information age, food has been the foundation of economies." He noted that "the consumption of food is an unbroken reality of human history. It has touched everyone regardless of age, gender, race, class, or nationality. Despite this continuity of consumption, much has changed from how the ancient Romans baked their bread to how we purchase ours at the nearest Publix."

Now, using written, iconographic and archaeological sources combined with contributions from biomolecular chemistry, Dr. Tanasi brings the past to life. His pioneering work at the University of South Florida has been recognized by the University of South Florida where he is now a tenured full professor at USF's Department of History.

It is worth noting that as in past presentations, Dr. Tanasi appeared "pro bono," which allowed us to keep his presentation free of charge. GCICS members wishing to contribute to Dr. Tanasi's innovative work to uncover and preserve key aspects of Italy's early history can do so by visiting giving.usf.edu/online/gift/f/420187, a USF Foundation website. Donations are tax deductible. [RETURN](#)



Italian Book Shelf



The Stones of Florence, by Mary McCarthy

2013, 231 pages

Review by Leita Kaldi Davis

When we went to Florence a few years ago, I was so grateful to have this book with me. Mary McCarthy (1912–1989) was an American literary critic and author of more than two dozen books including the 1963 New York Times bestseller *The Group*. She was also an astute scholar of Italian art and architecture with insights that often shocked me.

In her amazing book, *The Stones of Florence*, at first, I thought she was quite cynical about the fabulous city.

“‘How can you stand it?’ This is the first thing the transient visitor to Florence, in summer, wants to know. ... He means the noise, the traffic, and the heat, and something else besides, ... the fact that Florence seems to him dull, drab, provincial.”

What? I mean, the Renaissance began here; art and architecture flourished, not to mention commerce and banking. The Italian language was adopted from Tuscany! However, by the time I finished her book, I was awed by her incredible knowledge not only of Florence, but of all of Tuscany and, particularly, about Renaissance history and art. “With the discovery of perspective, itself a wizard science of numbers, painting, especially in Florence, where everything was pushed to extremes, became more and more a black art.”

McCarthy writes that the newly discovered, secret oil process “...seems to connect painting even more closely with witchcraft.” An element of sorcery even affected Leonardo, as she cites his self-portrait with white hair and beard, looking like Merlin or a druid image. Even the Mona Lisa, “... smiling her enigmatic smile, is certainly a witch.”

McCarthy offers fascinating bits of trivia: There are no ruins in Florence because the Florentines aren’t sentimental about their past. From Michelangelo to the Medicis to the story behind a statue’s missing head, *The Stones of Florence* is Mary McCarthy’s hymn to this unique city. [RETURN](#)

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Since 1987, the United States formally recognizes March as National Women's History Month.

The National Women's History Alliance was started by a coalition that successfully lobbied Congress to designate March as Women's History Month, which is now celebrated across the country.

Each year 16 women are nominated to be celebrated. This year they are:

- 1) Susan B. Anthony, Suffrage Movement
- 2) Sally Ride, First women in Space
- 3) Serena Williams, Tennis Star
- 4) Edith Wharton, Novelist
- 5) Aretha Franklin, Singer, Songwriter
- 6) Amelia Earhart, First women pilot
- 7) Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Supreme Court Justice
- 8) Kamala Harris, First Black and South Asian VP
- 9) Ava DuVernay, Filmmaker
- 10) Patsy Takemoto Mink, first women of color elected to Congress
- 11) Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Women's Rights Movement
- 12) Eleanor Roosevelt, longest serving first lady
- 13) Michelle Obama, lawyer and first woman of color to be first lady
- 14) Maya Angelou, author
- 15) Sonia Sotomayor, first Hispanic Supreme Court Justice
- 16) Katherine Graham, led the Washington Post for 30 years

