

VOCE DI GCICS

GULF COAST ITALIAN CULTURE SOCIETY, INC.

1811 Englewood Rd., #317, Englewood, FL 34223 WWW.GCICS.ORG February 2024

Mary Rinaldi, Editor



GCICS CARNEVALE & SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER



Thursday, February 22, 2024, 5:30-9:00 PM

****Exciting News:*** Mike & Patty DiMichele have kindly offered their beautiful home for our Carnevale party.

****Suggested Foods:*** Suggested appetizers/desserts are listed at the end of this email. The event is not a DINNER but rather a cocktail party, with appetizers, desserts, and your favorite beverages. We're challenging your culinary skills and suggesting unique and different appetizers just for fun. The procedure for signing up for the appetizer or dessert you bring is described below.

Event: **GCICS Carnevale & Scholarship Fundraiser**

Date/Time: **Thursday, February 22, 2024, 5:30-9:00 pm**

Location: Home of Mike & Patty DiMichele, Misty Creek, Sarasota

Donation: \$40 donation per attendee (non-refundable); guests are welcome.

Bring: Your Appetizer or Dessert, wine, or other beverages to share, name badge.

Dress: Carnevale masks, beads, and perhaps costumes (all are optional)

Register Online: Please use GCICS website to register/pay (steps appear at end of email)

OR Mail Check: To Ellen Roderick, 770 So. Palm Ave., #1003, Sarasota, FL 34236; payable to GCICS; include each person's name.

Deadline for Registering & Paying: Online by **Feb 15**; or in Ellen's mailbox by **Feb 15**.

Deadline for Signing Up for a Dish: E-mail Pam Arfield ASAP after deciding you will attend.

Point of Contact: Ellen Roderick, 301-775-1344 (itrain@erols.com)

If you decide to attend, please take 2 steps:

1. Register/pay on GCICS Website or send check to Ellen Roderick (address above).
2. E-mail Pam Arfield (pamarfield3@gmail.com) with your 1st & 2nd choice of what FOOD you wish to bring (see below listing) and include your phone number in the email. **Pam will contact you to discuss and confirm.** This system leads to a greater variety of dishes.

STEPS FOR PAYING ONLINE

*Go to this GCICS 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 enter in the block directly below "2/22/24" 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.

***Food Theme: LOUISIANA CUISINE**

Here is a list of suggested foods. The menu will consist of "heavy" appetizers and delicious desserts. Please email Pam Arfield with your 1st and 2nd choices of what you would like to bring. She will confirm if the item is available as it is on a first-come basis. Pam tells me that recipes for the appetizers can be found on the web.

IMPORTANT: Appetizers should serve 30 (so 30 have a sample). If you are bringing an appetizer, please arrive by 5:30 pm because the servers will be setting up the appetizers for serving soon thereafter. If you expect to be late for the party due to a previous commitment, either send your appetizer with another attendee or choose to bring a dessert.

APPETIZERS (Need 20-30 members to bring appetizers.)

Antipasti

1. Brie/Fruit en Croute; (2) Cheese Filled Mini Peppers; (3) Tomato/Mozzarella Skewers with Balsamic Glace; (4) Pear/Brie Puff Pastry Tartlets

Fish

1. Shrimp Cocktail; (2) Garlic Schrimp; (3) Mini Crab Cakes; (4) Salmon Wellington; (5) Ahi Tuna Tartare Cups; (6) Smoked Fish Dip; (7) Crab Quiche; (8) Prosciutto-wrapped Scallops; (9) Sweet Potato Chips with Salmon.

Meats

1. Small Lambchop-lollipops; (2) Bourbon Bacon lollipops; (3) Beef Sliders; (4) Ginger/Sesame Chix Skewers; (5) Sweet Onion and Zucchini Frittata; (6) Mini Beef Empanadas; (7) Mini Meatballs; (8) Beef Tenderloin with sauce on crostini; (9) Sticky Pork Riblets; (10) Sweet Potato Chips with Pulled Pork; (11) Chicken Pot Pie Bites.

Savories

- (1) Spinach-stuffed Mushrooms; (2) Fig/Prosciutto Tart/Flatbread; (3) Spanakopita; (4) Melon/Prosciutto/Cheese Skewers; (5) Mini Potato Skins with Filling; (6) Arancini with Sauces; (7) Roasted artichokes with sauce; (8) Tomato/cheese tartlets; (9) Mushroom or another savory tart/flatbread

DESSERTS (Need 10-12 members to bring desserts.)

- (1) Bread Pudding with Sauce; (2) Chocolate Mousse Cups; (3) Tiramisu; (4) Cranberry Pie; (5) Chocolate Bourbon Pecan Tarts; (6) Apple Crisp/Whipped cream on side; (7) Limoncello Cake; (8) Pineapple Upside Down Cake; (9) Flourless Chocolate Cake; (10) Ricotta Cheesecake; (11) King Cake.



ITALIAN TRIBUNE

EST. 1931



Saint Valentine: Legend • Lovers • Marriage

During the third century, Saint Valentine, or San Valentino, became the first Bishop of Iteramma. Now renamed Terni, the town is in the region of Umbria. There are two Valentines in the Roman Catholic Church's Listing of Martyrs for the day of February 14; one was a Roman priest martyred on the Flaminian Way, while the other is the Bishop of Terni, who was martyred in Rome. Many church historians believe the holy men are one and the same individual.

Bishop Valentine of Terni dedicated his life to the community and was much beloved by the populace. He served during the rule of Claudius, also known as Claudius Gothicus, an emperor who was involved in many unpopular and bloody campaigns. Claudius was having trouble recruiting soldiers for his forces and he believed that Roman men were unwilling to join the army because they were strongly attached to their wives and families. To solve this dilemma, Claudius issued a ban on all marriages and engagements in Rome. Saint Valentine defied this order and continued to perform secret marriages of young lovers. Legend has it that he performed the first marriage between a pagan soldier and a Christian girl from Terni. Sabino, a young Roman centurion saw a girl of great beauty named Serapia and was immediately enchanted. He asked her parents for her hand in marriage but was rejected because he was not a Christian. Serapia suggested he ask the Bishop Valentino of Terni to prepare him for conversion to Christianity. While he was preparing to convert, Serapia became extremely ill. Sabino, devastated at the thought of being separated from his beloved, begged the bishop to marry them and unite them forever. San Valentino agreed to wed them and during the benediction, caused them both to fall into eternal sleep so they would be together forever.

When news of this marriage reached Rome, Bishop Valentino was sentenced to death. Common belief is that he was martyred on February 14, 273, along the Via Flaminia in Rome and was swiftly buried in order to prevent rioting by the Christians. Legend also has it that three of Saint Valentine's disciples managed to find the body and transferred it to Terni, where his remains were interred in a sacred location. The Basilica of Saint Valentino was later erected above his burial spot during the fourth century. It both honors the Saint, while invoking his protection and blessing.

The Basilica was later destroyed after a series of invasions by the Goths. Pope Paul V ordered the reconstruction of the Basilica in 1618, to coincide with the discovery of the remains of the Saint. The Basilica has been damaged by the deeds of men and nature numerous times over the centuries and was last renovated 50 years ago.

The Basilica complex is built in the Baroque style, with a great semi-circular nave and side chapels dedicated to Saint Michael and Saint Teresa. Inside is a beautiful painting by Giuseppe Cesari from the School of Raffaellino, which depicts St. Michael defeating Satan. Among other works are the invocation of the Virgin Terni, the Adoration of the Shepherds, and the Adoration of the Magi.

The Basilica di San Valentino is now a popular venue for Italian couples who plan their wedding on the most romantic day of the year. Also, many couples travel there to renew their wedding vows.

San Valentino is known all over the world as the patron saint of lovers, but he is also the patron saint of Terni. It is only natural that Terni, home to the Basilica built to honor him, is also referred to as the “City of Lovers.”

Every year on February 14, the town of Terni hosts exhibitions, fairs and cultural events which attract many tourists to the area. One of the celebrations is the Feast of the Promise, an event in which engaged couples who will marry within the year arrive from all over Italy to exchange a promise of love in front of the bishop and the mayor.

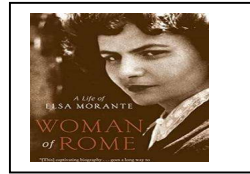


ITALIAN BOOKSHELF

A Life of Elsa Morante: Woman of Rome

By Lily Tuck

Review by Leita Kaldi Davis



Elsa Morante is a literary icon in Italy, but virtually unknown in the U.S. Her husband, Alberto Moravia, was more successful and famous. Elsa was beautiful. Moravia said "... she had beautiful eyes with the dreamy gaze of the near-sighted. She had a little nose, and a big willful mouth. A rather childish face." She had white hair since adolescence and later dyed it. There are wonderful historical photos in this book. They married in 1940. Moravia wasn't in love with her but fascinated. "... in an atmosphere of impassioned aggressiveness on her part and defensive affection on mine, we lived together for twenty-five years." Elsa's relationship with her mother was fraught. She called her *male Detta Benedetta* and left her house at eighteen, with no education or prospects. She became a prolific writer and an influential thinker. Carlo Cecchi explained her concept of the nonexistence of time as the fourth dimension of space, echoing Einstein's theory. She studied the Upanishads and was a humanist based on Benedetto Croce's idealism and a belief in history as an instrument of knowledge. Her *capo lavoro*, *La Storia*, is huge, about injustice and pessimism about art and the demise of humanity. ... an act of accusation against all the fascism of the world." Her friendship with Pier Paolo Pasolini ended when he wrote a negative review of the book.

Elsa and Alberto were Jews, Elsa on her mother's side, Alberto on his father's. She wrote "I should be grateful to Mussolini. By introducing the racist laws in 1938, he made me realize that I myself was a Jew. ... I learned a great lesson. I learned terror." They hid in a peasant hut in the mountains of Ciociaria for two years. They had nothing, not even the means to write. Elsa later commented "...in 1941 most Italians hoped they would win; by 1942 they hoped the Germans would win by 1943 they hoped they would get out of the war without too much injury; and by 1944 they hoped the Allies would win." They both excoriated Il Duce and sympathized with the Communist party which held some dominance after the war. She turned against the Communist party in the wake of their violent acts throughout Italy after the war. "...the means you are actually pursuing ... is founded on a single, basic fact: the total contempt for human beings."

After lengthy suffering and suicide attempts, she died in 1985 of a heart attack.

She thrived in the inner circle of the great artists of her era, and this book describes all of them in fascinating detail.

GCICS ANNUAL MEETING

Peridia Golf & Country Club, Bradenton, FL, January 13, 2024

Article & Photos by: Ellen Roderick, GCICS Secretary

LUNCHEON: Ellen Roderick, GCICS Secretary, welcomed 74 members, thanking them for attending this important event. Lunch was served.

ANNUAL MEETING: Ellen introduced the Board members: Linda Mercurio, VP; Mary Rinaldi, Newsletter; Gordon Bloom, Technology; Jerry Hall, Language Instruction; Sandra Russell, Scholarship; George Arfield, Social & Cultural; and Tom Hurban, Bocce. Ellen paid tribute to four members who passed away since our 2023 Annual Meeting: Pat Astore, Board member & photographer; Carmella & Clara Figari, longstanding and generous members who gave their time and talents to GCICS; and Barbara Scalise who participated in most activities offered during her brief time as a member. A moment of silence and reflection was held in their memory. Since our 2023 meeting, GCICS has acquired 34 new members, 20 of whom were in attendance whom Ellen introduced: Anna Bondi, Patricia & Mustafa Bulut, Francesca Bush, Nancy & Vin DiLella, Isabelle & Gary Eidet, Barbara Farmer, Laura & Jim Heald, Audrey Koertvelyessy, Nadine LaPira, Jolene & Joe Ruffo, Susan & Joe Stanley, Merle Waldman, and Ted & Valerie Wilson. Tom Hurban, Bocce Chair, spoke about the upcoming Bocce Invitational VIII at the Cascades on 2/3/24. He was busy forming “teams” during the gathering. All can register even if one does not play Bocce—we need cheerleaders.

TOWN HALL: In the interest of time, we did not have an open forum. The questions to be posed appear below, and the Board welcomes any thoughts you have on these matters or others. Thank you.

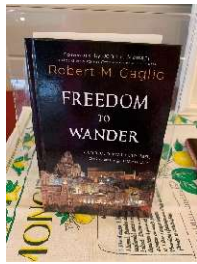
- (1) Do you have ideas for programs you would like to see in the coming year?
- (2) Do you have any thoughts on strategies the Board might use to recruit some of you for vacant Board positions?
- (3) Any thoughts on free or low-cost facilities we might use in the future?
- (4) Other thoughts?

LECTURE:



Ellen introduced our guest speaker, Robert Gaglio: Detroit native, full Sicilian ancestry, father of two, former banker, Italian chef, tour company owner & guide, teacher, author, and GCICS member. Robert published his first book, Freedom to Wander, in 2023 and shared with us stories of his heartwarming reinvention. He left banking and eventually launched Italian Culinary Tours due to some great mentors paired with his love of Italian cooking and his discovery of his roots

and family in the hills of Sicily. Robert recounted touching stories of meeting his cousins for the first time in Montelepre and learning to make Tiramisu from his dear cousin Luciana who passed away in her early 50's. Robert fell in love with life again after losing so much in the 2008 recession and is grateful to so many for guiding him along the way. Robert's website is ItalianCulinaryTours.com, and his book is available on Amazon, or you may contact him at 239-223-4548. (Note: Before Robert left Peridia, he took the time to register his sister, Roseann Gaglio, as a member—an early birthday gift to her.)



CLOSING: Ellen presented Robert with a small token of appreciation for his touching and outstanding presentation. She encouraged members to support our upcoming events including the Bocce Invitational, Carnevale, St. Joseph's Luncheon, and Scholarship Festa. The Annual Meeting adjourned at 2:25 pm.



Lucille Raia & Anna Bondi



Doris & Tom Hurban



Isabelle & Gary Eidet



Joyce & Gorden Bloom



Robert Gaglio & Ellen Roderick



Diane & Dave Johnson



Merle Waldman &
Francesca Bush



Eileen & Ira Lisook



Barbara Farmer &
Donna Carrillo

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| | |
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| Patrick Corsentino | 2001-2004 |
| Arthur Castraberti | 2004-2006 |
| Marie Corsentino | 2007 |
| Mary Amabile Palmer | 2008-2010 |
| William Korp | 2010-2014 |
| Anthony Esposito | 2015-2016 |
| Sheryl Lazzarotti | 2016-2020 |

AUDREY M. KOERTVELYESSY GCICS MEMBER



In October 2023, Audrey Koertvelyessy was recognized as a Distinguished Alumni at the University of Buffalo (UB), having acquired a BS in '62 and MS in '66 in the School of Nursing. The citation read as follows: *Koertvelyessy was raised on the Cattaraugus Seneca Indian Reservation and is a member of the Heron Clan. She completed the nursing program at Buffalo General Hospital, then earning two nursing degrees at UB. She went on to a successful career at Ohio University, where her husband Tibor also taught, eventually becoming director of the university's nursing program. In 1988, Koertvelyessy joined the U.S. Public Health Service as a nurse officer in the Commissioned Corps, following in the footsteps of multiple family members she admired. Earning the rank of Captain, she was one of the highest-ranking Native American women officers in uniformed Federal service. She was named Director and Chief of Nursing for the Indian Health Service, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, until retiring in 2009. In this role, she worked to address health disparities among Native populations across the nation.*

