

VOCE DI GCICS

GULF COAST ITALIAN CULTURE SOCIETY, INC.

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

Mary Rinaldi, Editor



President's Message

It will not be long before our snowbirds leave the Gulf Coast to return to their homes in the north and Midwest. It will be disappointing when our GCICS members head north. We will miss them. The traffic that has prevented us from traveling efficiently will lighten and give way to a sense of airiness and less anxiety. We are all witness to the frantic home building that is taking place. Every acre that was once lush with natural green habitat is now replaced with building materials and excavations. The cattle ranch is gone, and I can no longer look for the cows that brought me pleasure as I drove by. They have all been replaced by new housing communities. I am sure you have your own stories, feelings of longing for what was and now missed, but this is progress or so they say. We can take pleasure in our surroundings and the enjoyment we receive from our friendships and family.

Our Scholarship Festa will take place on April 13, 2024 at 11:30 am. If you have not yet made a reservation there is still time to do so. Ellen will continue to inform our members as to how to register. Look for her emails. Thank you to so many who have made their reservations. I am grateful for

your support. You will meet our six scholars and share in their family's excitement as they witness their teenagers' accomplishments. Your generosity of time and money is the only way we are able to meet GCICS's mission. It is much more than satisfying our mission. It is how it makes us feel about ourselves. I know you have all lent a hand, answered the call when needed. Our scholarship needs continue. It is how we give back to our community. Your membership is the perfect opportunity to help our graduating seniors as they embark on a new educational journey. Our scholarship awards help relieve some of their burdens as they take those first steps in the next phase of their lives.

It is with that thought that I remind you about the "Giving Challenge" that will take place during a 24-hour period starting April 9 at 12 noon and ending April 10 at 12 noon. Every donation you make up to \$100 during this 24-hr period, using your credit card, will be matched by the Patterson Foundation. Ellen will continue to send instructions. These donations will help supplement our scholarship funds. The Giving Challenge happens once every two years and it is imperative that we approach this with generous hearts. In 2022, you donated \$4,500 during the Giving Challenge. A month later,

GCICS received a check from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County for \$9,000. I wish for GCICS to be as successful this year. I appreciate your generosity. It brings me immense joy to know we have thoughtful and faithful members.

Turning now to the work of the Board—we will meet on April 8th to do some initial program planning for 2023-2024. We hope to include some new activities along with the traditional events we enjoy. I suspect some of you may have a few ideas for innovative programs. Please do not hesitate to email any of us with your thoughts. We welcome your thoughtful suggestions. Current activities include cultural lectures, Sunday bocce, Italian language classes, happy hours, La Cena dinners, an annual meeting with a lunch

and lecture, a Welcome Back Luncheon as well as a Fall picnic, our Scholarship Festa, and our Holiday and Carnevale fundraisers.

In closing, we are always concerned with the health and welfare of our members. Heartfelt wishes to Joan Del Guidice for her continued recovery after severe injuries to her knee and femur. She has returned to her NJ home for extensive PT. Linda Ahern, a former Board member, is recovering from knee surgery. As Easter approaches, may they know our thoughts and good wishes are with them. On behalf of the Board, I wish to extend Passover, Easter, and Springtime good wishes to all.

Julie Bondarenko
President



The following establishments have donated gift cards to GCICS for our scholarship program.

Carrabba's, University Park
Seasons 52
Cassariano, Venice
Fleming's
P.F. Chang
Valentino Pizzeria Trattoria, Clark Road
Apollonia Grill, The Landings
The Reserve SRQ
Peridia Golf & Country Club
Chaz 51

St. Joseph's Feast Day Celebration Luncheon

March 10, 2024 – Bevardi's Salute, Sarasota

Article & Photos by Ellen Roderick, GCICS Secretary



Salute Restaurant welcomed 49 members and 9 guests for our annual celebration honoring St. Joseph, Patron Saint of Sicily. President Julie welcomed everyone, introduced our newest member, Carolann Garafola (NJ & FL), and invited members to introduce their guests. Mary Dalton paid tribute to St. Joseph, gifting each attendee with a small gold bag containing a St. Joseph's prayer card and "fava beans;" she gave a blessing and then led us in reciting the Prayer to St. Joseph. We dined on a 4-course meal including a selection of four entrees. After lunch, we honored six attendees celebrating their feast day: Joe Barresi, Joe Raia, Dana Joseph Dalton, Josephine Fontana and two guests, Joe Moran, and Joe Durso. The final segment of the program was titled '*Sharing Artifacts from One's Italian Ancestry.*' Members brought family heirlooms, describing their history and significance. A great big thank you to Carolann Garafola (husband's grandmother's pearl opera glasses), Joe Barresi (photo of great grandfather who helped build Brooklyn Bridge), Josephine Fontana (father's passport, mother's/her passport), Joe Moran (grandfather's Italian-English Dictionary), Sherman Shonk (photo of grandfather's handcrafted picture frame), and Michele Barsodi-Takai (Corsican family record book & statue of Virgin Mary) for opening a window into their lives through the sharing of a special artifact. The afternoon ended with three folks, Gianni Sessa, Josephine Fontana, and guest Rita Fragala leading us in singing '*Funiculi, Funiculà,*' a Neapolitan tune written to mark the opening of the first funicular railway on Mount Vesuvius. By 2:30 pm, we were saying good-bye. We will next reunite at the Scholarship Festa Luncheon, Stoneybrook Country Club, April 13, 2024, at 11:30 am to honor our student scholars.

St. Joseph Day Photos



Lucille Raia, Anna Bondi,
Joe & Olivia(Guest) Barresi



Carolann Garafola



Enza MacDonald & Rose Amato



Guest Joe Moran



Joesphine Fontana



Michele Barsodi-Takei



Joe Barresi



Sherman Shonk



Rita Fragala(Guest), Gianni Sessa,
Josephine Fontana



Ellen Roderick, Jane Stringfellow
(Guest), Joe Moran(Guest),
Josephine Fontana



Mustafa Bulut, Patty & Mike DiMiele,
Jim & Enza MacDonald

The Giving Challenge

In the March 2024 GCICS Newsletter, President Julie encouraged us to participate in the 2024 Giving Challenge (GC) by donating to our Scholarship & Grants Program. The purpose of this email is to share a reminder about the GC and to tell you how to access the online site to make your donation. So here goes:

***What is the 2024 Giving Challenge?**

The 2024 Giving Challenge returns from **Noon to Noon on April 9-10** for 24 hours of local giving. This exciting online giving day connects nearly 700 nonprofit organizations with passionate donors to support diverse causes and create enduring impact in Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte, and Desoto counties.

***How can you be a part of the 2024 Giving Challenge and support GCICS's Scholarship & Grants Program?**

1. Visit www.GivingChallenge.org from Noon to Noon on April 9-10.
2. Click on the blue rectangular box at bottom that reads "Search Participating Organizations".
3. On the next screen, under the word "Search" type: Gulf Coast Italian Culture Society.
4. Our name & logo will appear on the next screen (it reads: Englewood, FL because that is where our P.O. Box is located).
5. Click on our name, and the next screen will be "ours"; scroll down and click on DONATE.
6. Make a secure online donation from your computer or mobile device. And remember, the Patterson Foundation will match your donation of \$25 to \$100 for each unique donation.
7. Encourage friends, family, and colleagues near and far to join you in donating.
8. Your support makes a **tangible** difference. In the last Giving Challenge, you donated \$4,500 and the amount was doubled. Therefore, we deposited \$9,000 in our scholarship & grants account to support our student scholars and the Sarasota Youth Opera and Youth Ballet.
9. Call me if you have questions (301-775-1344).
10. Thank you for your generosity.

GCICS SCHOLARSHIP FESTA

***Date/Time:** Saturday, April 13, 2024, 11:30-2:15 pm

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

***Cost:** \$40 (all inclusive)

***Payment:** I encourage you to pay online using our website. Directions are below. 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. **Ellen needs to know who is eating which entrée.**

***Deadline:** Must register online or I must have your check in hand by **Saturday, April 6, 2024.**

*Menu:

*One complimentary Mimosa, Bloody Mary, or House Wine

*Entree Choices (select one)

(1) Oven Roasted Salmon with fresh dill and citrus butter

(2) Chicken Piccata sauteed with capers, shallots, white wine, fresh lemon

(3) Vegetarian (Mushroom Ravioli)

*Dessert: NY Style Cheesecake

*Beverage: Coffee/Tea or Iced Tea

*Cash bar available

*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: 4/13/24 and list the name(s) of the person(s) for whom you are paying & their entrée choice. Please make sure you take 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.

*Note: Do not be concerned about the student/parent entree if you are sponsoring one; I will be collaborating with them to secure the information

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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
Anthony Esposito	2015-2016
Sheryl Lazzarotti	2016-2020

Movie Review Cabrini



Frances Xavier Cabrini was the first canonized American saint. She was an Italian immigrant in the late 1800s and was sent by the Pope with a few of her fellow Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to minister to the poor Italians of New York. Eventually, Mother Cabrini founded multiple hospitals and orphanages throughout the country and was an advocate for social change and care for the poor. She faced sexism, racism, ableism, and anti-Catholicism, but still charged forward with a bright spirit and determined attitude.

Cabrini is a recent movie from Angel Studios. This movie tells the story of her initial trip to New York and her attempts to care for the orphaned children of Five Points, a dangerous Manhattan neighborhood populated with impoverished Italians.

Vince Amato brought attention to this movie before its release date. Noni St. Amand and Eileen Lisook saw the movie and emailed Ellen Roderick raving about it. Ellen emailed to all our members Noni's comments.

