

'Tis the Season

La Círcoletera



PALIO PARTY (P. 8)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Paul Finizio, President

CARI AMICI,

Once again, as we embark on a new season and a new year, it's a time to reflect on the year past and our plans for the next.

During 2016, our Il Circolo family grew as we added new members, many of whom have already begun to enjoy the calendar of events for the 2016-17 season. We started with a dinner celebrating Italian Heritage month with Senator Maria Sachs attending, followed by a fundraiser at The Breakers in support of Earthquake Relief* in Italy where our treasured musical luminaries Barbara and Sergio Salani and renowned tenor Carlos De Antonis, soprano Abbey Harr and members of the Symphony of the Americas, donated their great talents. The week was capped off with our annual Welcome Back luncheon at Benvenuto.

And, it's just beginning. We have a vibrant calendar of varied events planned for members this season, including some new things like "Carnevale," similar to Mardi Gras, and "Pane e Vino", an Italian-styled picnic with bocce. We look forward to seeing you at these events and to you becoming part of our *famiglia*.

On behalf of the board, program chairpersons and all those who keep Il Circolo moving forward, we'd like to thank you for your continued support of our organization and mission to preserve our Italian culture. Gracie mille — and best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and yours.

*There have been a few more earthquakes since Amatrice. Donations continue via our association with NIAF and can be made on our website ilcicoloflorida.com.

Farewell to a Dear Friend

In the 41 years since Il Circolo was conceived by Father Nicholas Maestrini, many of our members have passed on and we cherish their memories. In June, Jane Marzelli Smith joined those whom we revere as loyal, passionate supporters of our mission. In a special way, Jane offered her professional services and hospitality to the Italian organization her father, Al Marzelli, led for 18 years. Please take a moment to remember Jane and say, "Thank you. We honor you and your family and will remember always how much you were a part of our success today."



The Italian Cultural Society
ilcicoloflorida.com

La Circolettera *La Voce del Circolo*
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Sally Valenti, Executive Editor
Joan Nova, Associate Editor and
Event Photographer

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Il Circolo is an independent, not-for-profit, non-sectarian organization, legally incorporated in the State of Florida. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

Il Circolo, the Italian Cultural Society of Florida, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and was created in 1976 with the mission to preserve and promote Italian Culture in South Florida through educational outreach and special events. To fulfill this mission, the organization each year produces a robust schedule of special events that focus on Italian art, music, culture and Italian food and wine. In addition, Il Circolo gives support to college students to study in Italy and provides funding to local school organizations that promote Italian culture, including Florida Atlantic University, Palm Beach Opera, Palm Beach Atlantic University, St. Paul Academy and St. Andrew's School.

Member Spotlight

MARIE AND BOB SILVANI

Marie and Bob met in 1984 when they were both professionals in the investment business. According to Bob, it wasn't until 1988 when he summoned up the courage to ask Marie for a date and they quickly fell in love. Following the rules of investing though, it took 8 quarters of consistent dividends and growth before they were married.

Marie, originally from Lancaster, PA, is not Italian but she learned the traditions and cooking from Bob's dad, Bart, who lived with them after Bob's mother, Kitty, passed away. Bart could find anything in the cabinet, add some sauce to it, cook up some angel hair pasta and 'badda bing' ... another great meal!

Bob is Italian and grew up in Smithtown, NY. He travelled the world at a young age working for Iberia Airlines, but left that 'good life' to work in the investment business in the 80s and became a successful "advisor to the advisors" as a Sales VP. Today, he continues to work in the investment business and advises individuals on investing and charities on fundraising techniques and programs.

Marie retired from the investment business in 1995 to take care of their family and now has an administration business, with two partners, for many non-profit organizations. Recognizing this special expertise, Il Circolo has hired her as Administrator of the organization. She not only knows her business, but keeps excellent records and is constantly seeking ways to improve Il Circolo's financial status and in so doing operate more efficiently.

The Silvanis, like everyone, have experienced ups and downs over the years. Marie tolerated Bob's decisions to change jobs. She cared for him during a bout with cancer that caused him to lose a leg and she nurtured their children as they grew up and became mature and wonderful adults. Per Bob, our "Katie girl" was known in the neighborhood as "Saint Katie" and Matt is just a big bear of a man – the gentle kind. Katie is currently studying for a PhD in Physical Therapy and Matthew is a chef in Chicago. Just good kids – all around.

Marie is the 'family organizer' and Bob is the 'idea guy'. Bob says, "like Ralph and Alice on the Honeymooners, we have had a lot of laughs – bang zoom, to the moon Alice..."

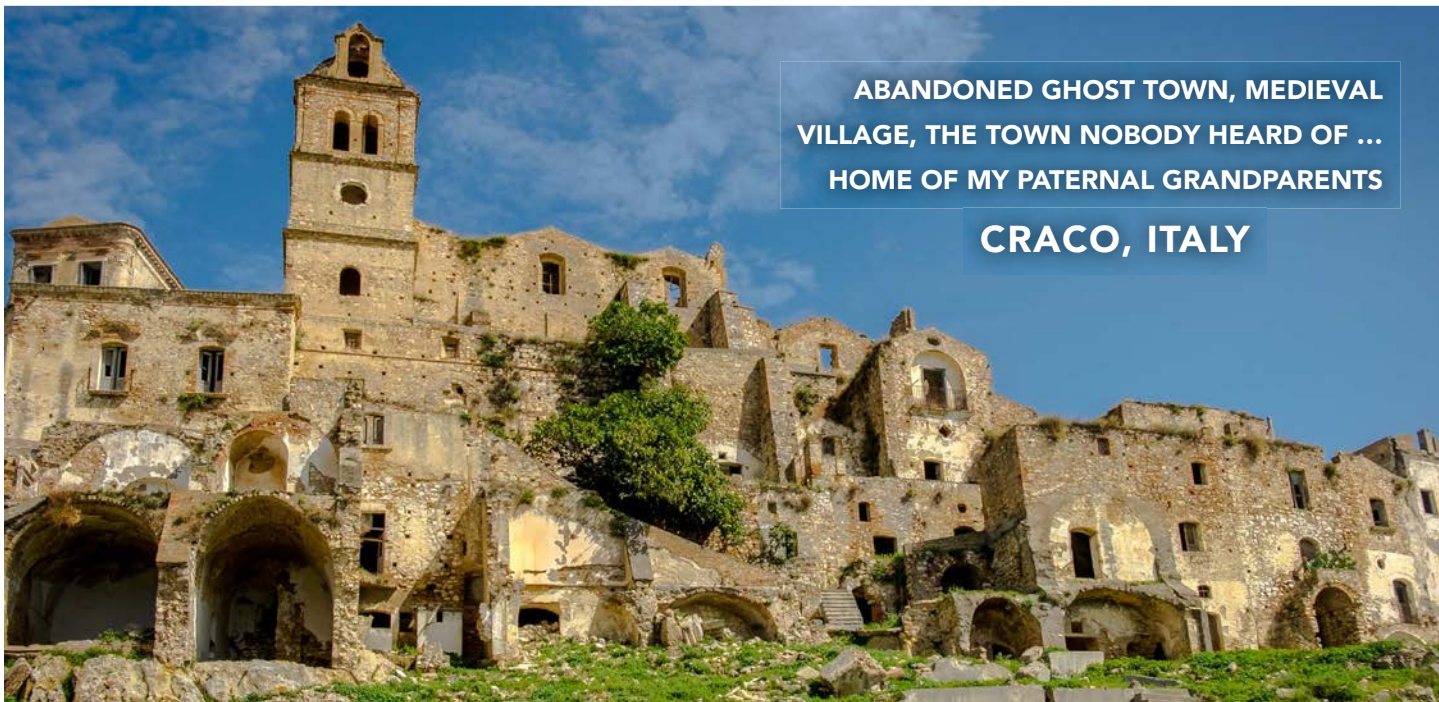
"Like everything else in our life, we play the cards that we are dealt, sometimes good ones, sometimes not, and move on to the next event whether we plan it or not. Surviving with faith, one day at a time, is our key."

Besides being a valued member of our Board of Directors, Bob will chair this year's Gala along with his lovely wife, Marie. They vow to make it the best ever!



ABANDONED GHOST TOWN, MEDIEVAL
VILLAGE, THE TOWN NOBODY HEARD OF ...
HOME OF MY PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS

CRACO, ITALY



In 1890 my grandfather, Pietro Roccanova, left Naples seaport in third class steerage for the arduous trip to America. He settled on the lower east side of Manhattan and was eventually followed by my grandmother, Maria Latorraca. Life was rough for them in America too. Here, they settled in a 4-room tenement apartment. He worked as a shoemaker; she was the homemaker taking care of their 8 surviving (of 14) children.

I never knew them. He passed long before my birth and she 6 months after, but some of their history is legend among families who emigrated to the U.S. during that era – especially those from Southern Italy which was rife with poverty and all sorts of hardships.

I recently had the opportunity to walk in their footsteps when I visited Craco, the town they emigrated from so long ago. Craco is a small commune about one hour's drive from Matera in the province of Basilicata. It's history dates back to 540AD. Over centuries, Craco's population ebbed and flowed as it succumbed to foreign occupations, plagues, famine and natural disasters like earthquakes and the gradual landslides from the 1950-70s that ultimately destroyed it completely.

In 1963, the last residents were forced to leave Craco for safety reasons and were ultimately relocated. Today, sadly, Craco remains abandoned, inhabitable and inaccessible to the public (except with permission — and hard hats!)

Although no one died due to these geological occurrences, it's been said that the real culprit was "human error" because the threat of landslides was known to scientists since 1910 and, due to political and ruling factors, proper measures were not taken to thwart it. Sad! *Triste!*

— by Joan Nova

CARRETTO SICILIANO

I knew I had a treasure in my home, owning an authentic Sicilian cart, but its value has always been a reminder of the colorful humble beginnings of my immigrant parents. They, as many other Sicilians, came to America young, poor, desperate, seeking a better life for themselves and for their families back in the old country. How beautifully those struggling Sicilians embellished their working day by creating that now famous Sicilian cart. Even the donkey who pulled it was decorated to enhance the image.

My Sicilian cart, which was originally purchased in an antique shop in Atlantic City, has moved from house to house as we did. A special construction was added to each home to provide an adequate and prominent spot for all to see as they entered the house. "This is obviously a Sicilian home," is the comment my Sicilian husband, Pat. and I often heard. Yes, I'm proud of my Sicilian heritage, but equally proud and grateful for the opportunities given to my parents in this country who succeeded in raising their 4 children, all educated on scholarships. The two boys and two girls became professionals and never cease to marvel at their parents' accomplishments. Perhaps it was that drive they learned in Sicily, to see the beauty in even the most desperate of situations, as I still see the beauty of them in my Sicilian cart.

— by Sally Valenti, shown here with her brother Charlie on their respective 90th and 99th birthdays.



The National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) held its 41st Annual Gala in Washington, D.C. on October 15, 2016. Two tables were filled by Il Circolo members and guests who witnessed and sensed an immersion of "Italianism" throughout the 3-day celebration. Prior to the big event, timely topics were discussed at the various lectures held and a huge enticing Expo Italiana showcasing the best of Italy with familiar tastes, sights and sounds of Italian American life, mingling among exhibitors, enjoying the food and drink, coffee and sweets provided by premier partners of NIAF.

As you entered this free exhibit and offering of eats beyond description, a display of the photo contest winners hit you immediately with its uniqueness of photos capturing real scenes from everyday life in Italy. The picture here is the second place winner submitted by our very own photographer, Joan Nova! Congratulations Joan. You're number one in our book!

Visit NIAF.com for more photos of the gala and details of next year's gala, a truly memorable event if you share the pride and passion for all things Italian.

"WELCOME BACK" LUNCH

Sunday, October 23rd 2016, was a special day to be a student of Italian! I had my first experience with Il Circolo. My enterprises in language study have led me on a hunt for success and glory whose outcome I would have never imagined to be so positive. Starting August 2015, I decided to register for FAU's Venice summer study program. To achieve that, it was necessary to find work, and eventually I found myself with a full time course schedule and two jobs, one as a Spanish, French and Italian language tutor, and the other as a salesman of Italian wine for an importer. Despite making great advances to fund my trip, the short time left required me to supplement my hard work and thus, I wrote six application essays for different scholarships, of which I received five, Il Circolo's included. This success, along with receiving A's in all of my Fall and Spring classes, triumphantly sealed my endeavor, and a spectacular summer in Venice, Italy became reality.

At the Welcome Back luncheon, my first meeting with Il Circolo members, was akin to being accepted into a family. They were warm, with incandescent faces at the sights of young spirits like me who want to carry the torch of their culture. I prize this honor, and I made sure I expressed the gratitude I felt. These wise members gifted me with their experience and advice, and were enthusiastic to listen to me speak about my projects.

Venice started from nothing more than a few fishermen's islets, almost nothing. Similarly, from nothing, people came to this country to realize themselves. Organizations like Il Circolo, make it possible for small islands, such as myself, who wasn't born in America, to transform into cosmopolitan marine empires like Venice did. In my opinion, the human embodiment of an empire is the Renaissance man, who develops his faculties through the aid of patrons. I am Kevin Anderson, a modern day Renaissance man, and I thank the members of Il Circolo for being my patrons.

— by Kevin Anderson



FAU students and faculty photo L-R: Kevin Anderson, Dr. Emanuele Pettener, Kelly Murillo, Helena Ramirez, Stella Alvez, Brian Gomez, and Dr. Myriam Ruthenberg

"WELCOME BACK" LUNCH



RECENT EVENTS

Il Palio di Siena 2016

The annual horse race that takes place in Siena's main piazza was re-lived again at the home of board member Sergio Salani when a group of local Il Circolo members made a party to celebrate the event, Boca Raton style.

People carried in huge amounts of food and drink for a wonderful Sunday lunch followed by a special cake made for us by our good friend, Anna Orlando, at Palermo's Bakery.

After lunch, Rebecca and Sergio tested our knowledge of the history of this historic event with a Q&A for prizes. Then we watched a tape of the race and saw Lupa come in for the win to the pleasure of Lucia, Vincent, Norma and Chris who all bet on him.

And the piece de resistance to end a wonderful afternoon was an impromptu concert with music and songs from Sergio Salani, Don Giulio Salani, Barbara Salani, Chris Salamone, Gloria Ciongoli and a chorus of all.



Symphony of the Americas

Il Circolo participated in the Symphony of the Americas' 25th Annual Summerfest celebration at Florida Atlantic University's Theater. The orchestra led by Maestro James Brooks Bruzzese and composed of musicians from all over the world entertained a full-house audience with familiar pieces, as well as originals.

Renee La Bonte, VP of the Symphony, presented a plaque in recognition of continued support to Sally Valenti, who accepted on behalf of the organization's membership. A reception followed where musicians and audience mingled.

Such an enjoyable afternoon should certainly be repeated next summer and Il Circolo looks forward to yet another delightful musical experience.



Italian Heritage Month

October is Italian Heritage Month in Florida. Senator Maria Sachs, who is Italian, accomplished this recognition in Tallahassee two years ago with our own Paul Finizio attending the ceremonies. To celebrate, members and guests had a feast at Palermo's in Boynton Beach on October 9, 2016.

Nearly 80 people filled the outdoor setting. Anna Orlando, owner of Palermo's and her affable, capable staff prepared a dinner complete with a huge antipasto, stuffed shells, chicken rollatini served with red and white wines and followed by dessert and coffee.

Senator Maria Sachs addressed the group emphasizing the importance of maintaining our traditions and remaining proud of our great heritage. Board member, Bob Silvani, told the gathering how Il Circolo continues to do that and encouraged all to participate as much as possible.

While diners chatted and socialized, Armenio sang familiar Italian songs, often with guests chiming in and dancing. The weather was perfect. The food was delicious. The music was nostalgic. The guests were family. That's Il Circolo!



Ferragosto

To commemorate *Ferragosto*, Gino's Market in Hollywood, FL held a feast on August 14 inside the marketplace with food, wine, music, entertainment and demonstrations of mozzarella-making.



FAU Concert

FAU celebrated Il Circolo's start and continued support of the Italian Studies Program 30 years ago with a concert October 26, 2016.



EARTHQUAKE RELIEF



On October 17, Il Circolo held a fundraiser at The Breakers in Palm Beach to assist those devastated by the recent earthquake in Amatrice, Italy. Concert pianists Barbara and Sergio Salani, tenor Carlos De Antonis, Palm Beach Opera soprano Abbey Harr, and members of the Symphony of the Americas generously donated their time and talents and provided a spectacular performance for attendees.

Bishop Barbarito sent a message thanking Il Circolo "for organizing this event and for all that they do to promote Italian culture and heritage in the Palm Beaches."

As one guest put it, "This is the best concert I ever attended and to think it was free! The donation I gave for the relief fund was a small token in comparison to the caliber of artists and artistic quality displayed."

The relief fund continues as much is needed to restore this community and those surrounding it to normalcy. To donate, call Marie Silvani at 561-371-4517.



Program Chairperson
MARCO CAPOCCIA
614-207-1002

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2016-17



2016

Nov. 13

3:00 p.m.

Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi" Opera

Palm Beach Atlantic University,
West Palm Beach

Chairperson:
Dean Lloyd Mims
Sally Valenti
561-736-6780



Nov. 18

8:30 a.m.

Italian Open Golf Tournament

Palm Beach Golf Course

Chairperson:
Debi Rodi
224-279-5920

Dec 18

1:00 p.m.

Christmas Luncheon: 'Natale in Famiglia'

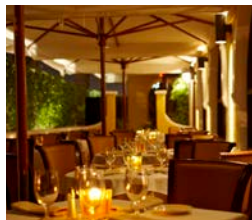
Boca West Country Club, Boca Raton

Chairperson:
Loretta Jungries
561-477-8580

Joan Nova
561-637-6937



Cathy & Vinny Scanio invite members to view their annual Presepio (nativity) at their home in Delray featuring pieces acquired and built over 20 years. Anytime between 12/1-1/6. Call first 561-249-2547.



2017

Jan 29

2:00 p.m.

Luncheon: Gastronomia Pugliese

Cafe Saporì, West Palm Beach

Chairpersons:
Rose De Angelis
561-278-6220

Regina Peters
954-254-3598

Feb 12

1 p.m.

Carnevale

Intracoastal Park Club House,
Boynton Beach

Chairperson:
Sally Valenti
561-736-6780

Joan Nova
561-637-6937

Feb 25

4-10:00 p.m.

Italian Fest

Sanborn Park,
Boca Raton

Chairperson:
Marco Capoccia
614-207-1002



Mar 12

1:00 p.m.

Pane e Vino (Italian Picnic) & Bocce

Arturo's,
Boca Raton

Chairperson:
Marco Capoccia
614-207-1002

Jim Nicholas
561-523-4855

Mar 26

5:30 p.m.

41st Anniversary GALA

The Breakers,
Palm Beach

Chairperson:
Robert Silvani
561-371-6768

Apr 9

2:00 p.m.

Italian Cinema TBA

Palm Beach Atlantic University

Chairperson:
Dr. Myriam Ruthenberg
561-833-0944



Apr 23

2:00 p.m.

Luncheon: Alla Prossima (see you next season)
Ristorante Paradiso,
Lake Worth

Chairperson:
Tony Phillips
954-975-0578



FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Photos from each event are now being posted on ilcicoloflorida.com under the "events" tab dropdown to "past events".

Please enjoy them at your leisure.

Note: Dates or venues may change. Full details and price for each event will be sent to all members.



PAUL FINIZIO

SALLY VALENTI



CAESAR CORA



TONY PHILLIPS



VIRGINIA LONGO



DEBI RODI



MARCO CAPOCCIA



LORETTA JUNGREIS



BARBARA CIONGOLI



CLAIRE GIANNAMORE

BUON NATALE E FELICE ANNO NUOVO



EMILIO PETTI



ANTOINETTE VIGILANTE



LUCIA MAGGIORE



ANTONIETTA BALZANO



ROBERT SILVANI



MICHAEL ANDERSON



LORI MUGAVERO



MYRIAM RUTHENBERG