

GALA INFORMATION (P. 5)

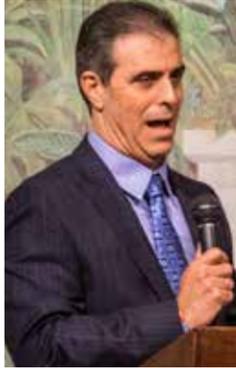
Winter 2017

La Circolettera



NATALE IN FAMIGLIA (P. 6-7)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Paul Finizio, President

AMICI OF IL CIRCOLO,

We hope your holidays were healthy and memorable and that your new year is the best.

Your officers, board members and volunteers are dedicating themselves to a year of wonderful programs with our March 26th gala promising to be a one-of-a-kind event with three honorees from the entertainment and sports worlds. Be sure to make your reservation immediately as this will sell out!

As your President, I continually look for opportunities to fulfill our mission to preserve our heritage in a multigenerational way. If anyone has suggestions or ideas, please communicate with any board member or me directly. Imagine Il Circolo with 10 times as many members and dollars to provide more scholarships and programming. What an impact and accomplishment that would be! It can be done with your involvement. It's all about connectivity and enthusiasm for the mission.

As you plan for the year, the gala and the programs you may attend, please think along the lines of inclusiveness and invite your younger and extended family members and friends. This extended reach will provide a positive impact on our community as the "italianismo" that we all enjoy daily makes its way to so many more.
Avanti!

– Paul Finizio



The Italian Cultural Society
Ilcircoloflorida.com

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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

MARCELLO FIORENTINO



Many readers may know Marcello Fiorentino as the chef/owner of the world class *La Sirena* restaurant in West Palm Beach, but we are happy to share with you a little bit about the family, its roots, accomplishments and over 40 year history with Il Circolo. It began with Marcello's father who was one of the early supporters of the "500 Club," Il Circolo's first scholarship program.

Marcello Sr. emigrated as a young chef from Capri to Palm Beach via England where he met and married Ann. After a spell in Palm Beach, they relocated to Vermont and then to Long Island where Marcello and his siblings were born. However, the lure of Palm Beach prevailed and the young family returned to make its life here.

Together with his father, the young Marcello spent many years running a retail seafood market and Italian specialty food distributorship in Lantana and eventually, in 1986, his parents opened *La Sirena*. When his father died, his mother needed help to run the business. Enter Marcello! He was the logical one since he learned the restaurant business at a very early age from his father. After several years of struggle, hard work and perseverance, it survived and today, along with his wife, Diane, he has developed the business into one the premier restaurants in South Florida with consistent great reviews. The ultimate honor and most recent acclamation comes from the Wine Spectator with its esteemed Grand Award in 2015 and again in 2016 for *La Sirena's* highly developed, outstanding wine collection.

Not only did he learn the restaurant business from his father, he also learned the love of family, food, Italian culture and charity. Although his father passed in 1994, these values live on in Marcello, known for his support of many charities, beginning with fundraisers for the 9/11 firefighters from Engine Company 23 in NYC and including many local charities, most recently *Vinceremos* Therapeutic Riding Center and *Red Sneakers* for Oakley.

Marcello, the man, is a strong believer in mentoring, sharing success, rewarding achievements and enjoying the best life offers with family and friends.

He has 4 children, one of whom, Sabrina, follows in family business and is already an accomplished pastry chef. Ryan is a respected RN, Isabella at 13 likes to help dad in the kitchen and Marcello (9) is an aspiring actor.

PUGLIESE REGIONAL LUNCHEON



This was my first Il Circolo event. Rose De Angelis is my Mom so I can't be impartial but that being said, she and co-chair Regina Peters displayed amazing attention to detail in their planning for this event. They chose Cafe Saporì for its ability to recreate a truly Pugliese experience with food and wine and then the ladies complemented the menu with festive centerpieces featuring *la bandiera Italiana*, postcards from Puglia and lots of glitter.

Guests dined on *orecchiette* with garlic flavored broccoli rabe, topped with ricotta salata, European sea bass with chickpea cake and mixed greens and *Pasticciotto Leccese* with almond ice cream for dessert. Gravina 2015 and Salice Salentino 2014 wines complemented the sumptuous menu.

During a delicious 3-course dinner, Joe Spadaro circled the tables with his mandolin, Joe Carriero sang familiar Italian tunes and renowned operatic tenor, Carl De Antonis, ignited the room with his voice and style.

Several area Italian-American clubs were represented. The Presidents of Unico, Sons of Italy and, of course, our President detailed upcoming events and programs offered by their clubs. To add to the Puglia experience, Eufasio Volpe regaled us with his experiences as a child in Puglia.

The event was a resounding success, as evidenced by the faces of the attendees. Great food, incredible entertainment and friends, the true Italian experience!

— Robert De Angelis



Viaggio Italia

THE 41ST ANNIVERSARY GALA

Sunday, March 26, 2017
The Breakers Hotel, Palm Beach

6:00 p.m.

Cocktails and Tuscan Antipasto

7:00 P.M.

Dinner and Dancing to The Gino DeMarco Band

Event Chairs

Marie & Bob Silvani

(561) 371-4517 or (561) 371-6768

Special Honorees:

Tony Lo Bianco

Actor, Writer, Director, Producer

Giada Valenti

Singer, Songwriter

Rollie Massimino

Keiser University Men's basketball coach

FOR INFORMATION, VISIT ILCIRCOLOFLORIDA.COM





Il Circolo celebrated Christmas at a "Natale in Famiglia" luncheon in the festively-decorated Boca West Country Club and enjoyed a splendid Italian buffet, thanks to board member Loretta Jungreis who made the arrangements.

During the afternoon, guests were entertained by the music of Gino De Marco and a special appearance by soprano Virginia Mims (godchild of renowned soprano Virginia Zeani) who was accompanied on piano by Sergio Salani. Babbo Natale made a surprise visit with gifts for the children — and there was dancing, a round of tombola (Italian bingo) and a group sing-along to "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and "Dominick, the Italian Donkey."

Everyone had a great time, but the highlight of the event was when board member Marco Capoccia addressed the crowd about the importance of preserving and passing the Italian culture down through the generations and, as expression of that commitment and love, he asked all the 90+ year olds in the crowd to raise their hands while the 6 children in attendance joyfully scurried from one to the other giving their elderly 'nonni' a hug.

It was a heartwarming moment. It was Natale in Famiglia. It was what Il Circolo is all about. Bravo!



Long Lost Cousins

Pictured here are four family members reunited through Il Circolo. Just by chance, at a Teachers College reunion at Columbia University in New York, Sally Valenti met the Director of Planned Giving whose name is Louis Lo Ré. Being Italian, he was aware of Il Circolo's mission from what he had read in the papers. A conversation ensued and Sally told him that we have a member by the same last name, Frank Lo Ré. "Impossible," he said. "That name is so unique, any Lo Ré has to be related to me." A phone call to Frank encouraged a follow-up and the result is they are cousins — who never met!

During Louis' recent visit to Florida, a meeting was arranged at Banyon Restaurant in Delray Beach and Louis met Frank, his sister, Sofia, and his son, Joseph. Frank came prepared with a partially-filled family tree he made which Louis promises to fill in. Along with Sofia's help, they managed to recall names of grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins; and places where each grew up, etc. As an observer, you could sense the joy and excitement each felt and the firm feeling of family unity.

Once again, Il Circolo strikes a familiar chord!



Paul Finizio with Jay Fuller, Pres of Italian American Club at National Italian American Bar Association in Phoenix, AZ



Virginia Long, Tenor Carl Di Antonis and Sally Valenti at Cafe Med in Deerfield Beach.

Sister Cities

Tony Phillips (R), Italy Chairman & Treasurer of Greater Pompano Beach Sister Cities, and Il Circolo President, Paul Finizio (L), at event declaring San Clemente del Tuyú (Argentina), Itajaí (Brazil) and Tremolo (Italy) "sister cities" in the furtherance of economic development, art and cultural exchanges, and youth and educational programs.



Gianni Schicchi

Puccini's Gianni Schicchi, a one-act comedy, sung in English, was performed on November 13, 2016 at Palm Beach Atlantic University. It was directed by renowned Metropolitan Opera soprano, Marilyn Mims, under the able baton of Palm Beach Opera's Chorus Master and conductor, Greg Ritchey. Students of the university's Opera Workshop gave a stellar performance enthralling the audience, not only with their beautiful voices, but with their outstanding acting and facial expressions. The laughter and reactions of the audience only encouraged them more.

Mark Aliapoulis, the only professional, sang the major role while all the others were either his students, those of Marilyn Mims, Byron Grohman or Lloyd Mims. The true pleasure of the afternoon was to see and hear our youth enjoying one of the finest art forms and sharing their joy with a most appreciative audience, among whom was Virginia Zeani, the world's most famous La Traviata soprano, who was so impressed she said, "This is one of the best performances I have ever seen of Gianni Schicchi." Enough said!



Golf

Il Circolo held an Italian Open Golf Tournament on November 18th at the Palm Beach Par 3 Golf Course in Palm Beach. Pro, Tony Chateauvert, welcomed all and hosted a 15-minute clinic to start.

1st place winners: Michael Anderson, Bob Brunjes, and Frank Williams.

2nd place team: Teresa and Richard Palmano.

3rd place team: Regina and Ronald Venner and Nancy and Jack Sollazzo. What a great day and a win-win event for Il Circolo and *Golfino!*



Uffizi Lecture

Many members attended a Friends of Uffizi-hosted luncheon/lecture at Arturo's Restaurant in Boca Raton on January 7th.

Rocky Roggiero, who teaches in Italy and lectures in many universities gave a slide presentation depicting celebrated art works with significant comments enhancing their appreciation. His passion for Florence's wealth of art and his love for sharing his knowledge are both gifts that he shares with anyone, not only university students.

Thank you Lisa Marie Browne, Executive Director, for arranging this event which not only enriched the appreciation of the art in Florence, but inspired further exploration of this exquisite form of Italian culture.





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Program Chairperson
MARCO CAPOCCIA
 614-207-1002

Feb 25
 4-10:00 p.m.

Italian Fest
 Sanborn Park,
 Boca Raton

Chairperson:
 Marco Capoccia
 614-207-1002



Apr 9
 2:00 p.m.

Italian Cinema TBA
 Palm Beach Atlantic
 University

Chairperson:
 Dr. Myriam
 Ruthenberg
 561-833-0944



Mar 12
 2:00 p.m.

**Pane e Vino
 (Italian Picnic) &
 Bocce**
 Doris Italian Market

Chairperson:
 Marco Capoccia
 614-207-1002

Jim Nicholas
 561-523-4855



Apr 23
 2:00 p.m.

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

Chairperson:
 Tony Phillips
 954-975-0578

Mar 26
 6 p.m.

**41st
 Anniversary
 GALA**

The Breakers,
 Palm Beach

Chairpersons:
 Robert and Marie
 Silvani
 561-371-6768

Lunch Special
 \$2.50 slice Margherita

**FREE
 Pizza on
 Birthdays**

Authentic Italian Pizza baked in WOOD-burning oven

Live music on Saturdays

March 8. 6 pm - Italian Conversation group
 March 21. 6 pm - Dinner in Toscana
 March 27. 6 pm - LIVE performance
 by Franco Corso, in Italian & English

Pizzeria That's Amore

8918 Lantana Rd.
 Ste D, Lake Worth
 SE Corner Lyons & Lantana

561-660-5624

**\$5.00
 OFF**

on \$25 or more spent
 Exp 03/30/2017

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**If you are interested in advertising in
 Il Circolo, please contact Marie Silvani**

561-371-6768

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