

# La Circolettera

Year-End 2022



**46TH ANNUAL GALA**  
THE BREAKERS RESORT, PALM BEACH | MARCH 5, 2023

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Paul Finizio, President

### AMICI OF IL CIRCOLO,

First and foremost, *Buon Anno* to all! It has been a long time since Il Circolo has had the opportunity to enjoy the "normal" atmosphere that existed before the pandemic. However, not to be deterred, Il Circolo has carried out its mission throughout 2022 admirably. Thanks to the dedicated behind-the-scenes, at home and online work of board members, officers and our beloved administrator Robert De Angelis, our program lunches, annual 'welcome back' event and wonderful Christmas party all took place. This sets the stage for being all we can be in 2023!

In the words of our wonderful "regina", Sally Valenti, who while living in NJ now, and at the age of 96, is a fired-up online supporter, motivator and leader, "*avanti e celebrare!*" In that spirit, we are seeing the expansion of the FAU Italian Studies program which started over 35 years ago with our support and the creation of student exchange programs currently orchestrated by Ilaria Serra and Barbara Salani.

Additionally, board member John Di Prato created the Deerfield beachfront Italian Festival this past October and has another one scheduled for April of 2023. Both events increase our visibility and connect us with Italian clubs in Broward and Palm Beach County and are attended by the officers of FFIAC (Florida Federation of Italian American Clubs). John's vision is to dovetail these events into an FAU October Italian Festival for thousands to attend and celebrate music, theater, language, art and food while raising the funds necessary for the pursued \$1,500,000 endowment needed for the Italian program. Let's all rally and support John and these events with sponsorships, attendance and connections with others to reach our goal as soon as possible!

As your president, I honor those who dedicate and have dedicated themselves to our mission. Throughout the years, the people who have worked with us have created relations with great dynamism and energy. Again, I ask you consider participating with our board as a member, or program chair or support in any way, to help us continue for the next 50 years!! You are awaited with open arms and with Italian love, affection and gratitude. Your support "is" what makes Il Circolo succeed in its mission.

*May 2023 be one of famiglia, peace and wonderful memory-making for all.*  
– Paul Finizio



**The Italian Cultural Society**

Ilcircoloflorida.com

#### **La Circolettera** *La Voce del Circolo*

Enzo Forte, Founding Editor

Sally Valenti, Executive Editor

Joan Nova, Associate Editor and  
Event Photographer

#### **Officers**

Paul Finizio, President

Sally Valenti, Executive Vice President

Chris Salamone, Vice President

Robert De Angelis, Administrator

#### **Directors**

Antonella Brancaccio-  
Balzano

Claire Giannamore

Gloria Ciongoli

Loretta Jungreis

Laura David

Paolo Mangia

Rose De Angelis

Tony Phillips

John De Prato

Ilaria Serra

Lou De Prima

Antoinette Vigilante

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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.



Lou is third generation Italian ... "100%". He became a member of Il Circolo 4 years ago after being introduced to the organization by Paul Finizio and was elected to the Board of Directors this year.

Originally from Bethpage, LI, NY, Lou served 5 years in the Air Force and spent the 1969-71 period at the Homestead Air Force Base. In 1974 he became a permanent resident of Florida. He and his wife, Catherine, live in Deerfield Beach and enjoy a blended family with his 3 sons and her son and daughter.

A graduate of the College for Graphic Arts & Advertising, Lou was in the color printing business for 30 years until a lightning strike hit the company's building resulting in a long insurance claim dispute which was ultimately resolved by a Public Adjuster.

As a result of that experience, Lou became a Public Adjuster in 2005 and is currently the President of Horizon Public Adjusters with a staff of 30 adjusters, estimators and office personnel, all serving residential and commercial policyholders to be sure they receive a fair and maximum adjustment from their insurance company after suffering a loss.

In his spare time, Lou enjoys boating and fishing, travel, and lending a helping hand on many projects. Included in these many projects has been his desire to help preserve and promote our Italian culture and to bring Il Circolo to its full potential. Per Lou, "I would like to see the next generation of Italian-Americans become members and be active in Il Circolo".

And, in this regard, Il Circolo is very pleased to announce that Lou has joined Antoinette Vigilante as Co-Chair for the 46th Annual Gala scheduled for March 5, 2023 at The Breakers Resort.

His expertise and connections in design and color printing are responsible for our association with a new printer who is meeting all our publishing needs, including this newsletter and all the promotional material for the Gala which you will see on other pages in the newsletter.

Lou is an all-round 'nice guy' and Il Circolo is happy to have him as a member and director.



46TH ANNUAL GALA



HONOREE

**Dr. Antonio Giordano**

Oncologist, Pathologist, Researcher & Philanthropist

President and Founder of the Sbarro Health Research Organization (SHRO), which conducts research to diagnose, treat and cure cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other chronic illnesses.

Born in Naples, Italy, Dr. Antonio Giordano is a Professor of Molecular Biology at Temple University in Philadelphia and a 'Chiara fama' Professor in the Department of Pathology & Oncology at the University of Siena, in Siena, Italy. Dr. Antonio Giordano is also the Director of the Sbarro Institute for Cancer Research and Molecular Medicine and the Center for Biotechnology at Temple's College of Science & Technology.



HONOREE

**Deana Martin** is an influential American singer, actor, and performer playing to sold-out audiences worldwide ... and, she's the very proud daughter of iconic entertainer Dean Martin.

She's also a best-selling author, nationally-syndicated radio host, licensed pilot, entrepreneur and a noted figure in the pantheon of The Great American Songbook.

As a celebrated author, Deana Martin found herself on the New York Times' coveted Best Seller list with her 2004 memoir, *Memories Are Made of This*:

*Dean Martin Through His Daughters Eyes.*

Like her Dad, Deana makes it all look so easy, and audiences can't get enough.



**CO-CHAIRS**

Antoinette Vigilante  
Lou DePrima



**SPONSOR LEVELS**

**PRESENTING SPONSOR \$30,000**

One (1) named Italian Studies Scholarship  
Two-page center spread ad in program book  
Two (2) tables of ten (10) seats for total of twenty (20) seats with premier seating  
Name or Logo linked to our website [ilcicoloflorida.org](http://ilcicoloflorida.org)

**PLATINUM SPONSOR \$20,000**

Full-page ad in program book: back or inside cover  
One (1) table of twelve (12) seats + four (4) additional seats with premier seating  
Name or Logo linked to our website for one year [ilcicoloflorida.org](http://ilcicoloflorida.org)

**GOLD SPONSOR \$15,000**

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**SILVER SPONSOR \$10,000**

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**TABLE HOST \$5,500**

One (1) table of eight (8) seats with priority seating  
Listed program book




**INCREDIBLE ITALIAN ADVENTURE**

3 nights in 4-star hotel, includes  
2 round-trip coach tickets  
**\$100 per ticket or four (4) for \$300**  
Drawing March 5, 2023 | Winner need not be present.




**INDIVIDUAL TICKETS**

Member: \$550.00 | Non-Member: \$675  
Purchase online at [ilcicoloflorida.org](http://ilcicoloflorida.org)  
Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover  
Questions? [admin@ilcicoloflorida.org](mailto:admin@ilcicoloflorida.org) or  
561-200-6300

## SEASON EVENTS

### "Welcome Back"

official opening of season and welcome with FAU students who benefitted from Il Circolo's annual funding of summer study abroad program in Italy

**Benvenuto's, Boynton Beach**



### Italian Heritage

celebrating the cuisine of Genoa in honor of Christopher Columbus

**Café Sapori, West Palm Beach**



**Italian Festival**

beachfront festival celebrating street food & music  
**Café Med, Deerfield Beach**



## SEASON EVENTS

### Buon Natale

annual Christmas party with extravagant buffet and holiday cheer

Boca West, Boca Raton





# SEASON EVENTS



## FAU ITALIAN STUDIES

Il Circolo has been contributing to FAU Italian Studies since its inception in 1986 when Dr. Myriam Ruthenberg started the program, thanks to a \$5,000 grant from Il Circolo. The Program has since flourished due to these donations that funded:

- Many student trips to Italy for summer study abroad in Florence (2000-2008) and Venice (2009-present);
- Concerts and musical events, like "L'Italiano sul Palcoscenico" in 2019; "La Traviata virtual choir" in 2020; and "Concerto per Myriam" in 2021;
- Barbara Salani and Carlos De Antonis's teaching modules of Italian through Music;
- The Pat Valenti Film Series (2012-2017), now called Michele D. Serra New Italian Cinema Series.

This past summer, Il Circolo funded 6 weeks in Italy for 6 students. Three of these students added a week in the Tuscan Castle to study poetry and music with Dr. Serra and Dr. Pettener (a new liaison created by FAU Italian Program, thanks to Barbara Salani's PhD research).

Our graduates are now successful in different fields; to name a few:

- Richard is teaching in a Lombardy high school (thanks to FAU-SITE liaison) for a year;
- Isabella has just been hired at the Italian Consulate General in Miami;
- Zachary is Artist in Residence at the University of Oklahoma;
- Odra was accepted at Ohio State University PhD program;
- Viviana is now teaching at the University of Miami;
- Marianna won the FATI award as best Italian teacher in Florida and is coordinating a large program at West Boca High School.

**FAU Italian has 'open doors' for Il Circolo members and you are invited to many activities.** Look for our invitations and browse our website for updates and information: just google "FAU Italian." The "Club Insieme" page has an updated list of our events – all open to the public.

Join Club Insieme mailing list: [clubinsieme@gmail.com](mailto:clubinsieme@gmail.com)



**Ilaria Serra**  
Professor of Italian and Comparative Studies





**All in la famiglia:**

See Boca Magazine cover and multi-page article of the Gismondi family, our friends and owners of Arturo's in Boca Raton. Beautiful photos and story about how they celebrate Christmas and embrace Italian traditions.

[https://issuu.com/jespublishing/docs/bm\\_nd22\\_digital\\_edition/60](https://issuu.com/jespublishing/docs/bm_nd22_digital_edition/60)



**Message from Sally Valenti**

"Brrr! It's cold here in New Jersey. Remembering the comfort of the Florida sun and the warmth of my Florida family of friends, I smile as I wrap the blankets tighter to my aging body. How blessed am I to have such beautiful memories?"

Now, surrounded by my loving family, I try to enjoy each day and find ways to be useful. My daughter, with whom I now live, works for a pharmaceutical company where her specialization is in cancer research. As a result,

she often visits hospitals and sees patients whose cancer treatment has left them bald. Seeing the hairless women inspired her to give me a job! "Mom, how about crocheting pretty hats for these nice ladies?"

Thus started "Sally's Crochet Salon". After making blankets for family, friends and new-born babies, I now crochet pretty hats to cover those shiny heads waiting to regrow new hair. Not only do these hats cover the head and ears, but an attached lacy flower makes them more feminine."



**In Memoriam**

It is with saddened heart that we inform you that Virginia Longo, the last surviving charter member of Il Circolo, has passed.

Together with Father Maestrini, she, and a small group of Italians living in Palm Beach, sought to bring community awareness to the outstanding cultural contributions made by Italians. They organized lectures and other events, inviting all guests to demonstrate these contributions in the arts, literature, cuisine etc.

Virginia's dedication to Il Circolo's mission was exemplary, inspiring members, both old and new, to stand steadfast and proud while pursuing the mission with dignity..

Virginia Longo, may you rest in peace and continue to inspire us from Heaven.

**Antonella Braccio-Balzano** with the distinguished Ambassador Mariangela Zappia on October 28 at Villa Firenze, the Ambassador residence in DC.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2023

2023	Event
Jan. 22 1:00 pm	<b>'Gastronomia Italiana'</b> a regional trip around Italy from north to south Sunday luncheon at Cafe Sapori, WPB
Feb. 4 3:00 pm	<b>Palm Beach Opera Young Artists</b> performance by young artists in residence Vera Lea Rinker Hall, West Palm Beach
Feb. 9 5-7:00 pm	<b>L'Aperitivo</b> mingle and network social with cocktails, "stilo Italiano" La Masseria, Palm Beach Gardens
Mar. 5 6:00 pm	<b>AMORÉ 46th Annual Gala The Breakers Resort Palm Beach</b> Music by LEGENDS Co-Chairs: Antoinette Vigilante and Lou DePrima  INDIVIDUAL TICKETS Member: \$550.00   Non-Member: \$675 Purchase online at <a href="http://ilcircoloflorida.org">ilcircoloflorida.org</a>
<b>COMING*</b>	
March	<b>Festa delle Donne</b> celebration of International Women's Day
April	<b>Italian Festival</b>
May	<b>Alla Prossima</b> farewell to season - arriverdverci!

\*details to be announced

**Notes:** Events are subject to change.  
You will be notified when registration opens for each  
event via email blast, flyers and the website.



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