

Novita' MAY 2022



P.O. BOX 1986

VENICE, FLORIDA 34284-1986

941-486-1492

www.italianamericanclubofvenice.com



EXECUTIVE BOARD

President	Josephine Mihalopoulos	485-1042
First VP	Bill Meyers	468-6288
Second VP	Ann Brozosky	918-1805
Treasurer	Linda Falco	323-4214
Rec. Sec.	Tony Marchesano	518-821-8038
Corr. Secretary	Joe Bird	468-7981
Past President	Ron DeBacco	497-4046

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Bar	Lou Piazza	577-6303
Building	Bill Charboneau	468-7058
	Dino Tommasi	973-296-8555
Cultural	Tony Greco	914-720-7923
Dining Room	Sandi Prunty	724-584-1109
	Dee Galante	586-726-8786
Feast	Ann Brozosky	918-1805
Grievance	Anthony Rondello	483-1050
Historian	Jean Trapani	203-606-9459
Hostess	Carol McIvers	493-9820
	Sally Sentner	814-229-3501
Membership	Kathy Carbone	928-0902
NEC	Anthony Rondello	483-1050
Novita'	George Palmer	451-8744
	Lina Decrescenzo	609-742-4593
Parliamentarian	Lou D'Amico	208-5652
Public Relations	Sandi Chance	513-673-0586
Rental Agent	Bill Meyers	468-6288
Sgt. at Arms	Mike Roselle	408-7450
Scholarship	Marion Capecci	493-5571
Social	Jackie Briguglio	630-269-8692
Sunshine	Donna Sherman	587-1058
Travel	Grace Robbio	492-2266

See Pg 4 for Activity Coordinators

Novità



Volume 5

www.italianamericanclubofvenice.com

MAGGIO 2022

Parola del Presidente

Buon Giorno a tutti! It's May already and time seems to be *flying* by! The excitement that comes with each of our events causes me to smile whenever I stop to think about them. It's just so satisfying to see our Club Family having fun together. And speaking of our membership, did you know that we are at capacity? That's right, Kathy Carbone, our membership chair, reported during the last general meeting that we have filled our Club rolls to the maximum. I like to think that may be because we're doing something right. We're making membership in our Club mean something. There are a lot of reasons why people are joining but the one I hear very often is: "I want to re-connect with my roots."

Roots are very important and that's why we'll be introducing a new feature in our newsletter soon. We'll try to look back toward the beginning of the Club's history and try to paint the picture of how we got to where we are today. Look for those articles soon, and be sure to check out our interview with the Martoranas beginning

on page 8. Ciao, Josephine



Piacenza



Ravenna



Taormina Sicily street scene.

Novità

Your Cultural and Social Newsletter

Italian American Club of Venice, Inc.

1375 Ringling Dr., Venice, FL 34285

George Palmer & Lina Decrescenzo,

Editors

Web: italianamericanclubofvenice.com

email:

president@italianamericanclubofvenice.com

All rights reserved, Copyright © 2022

Italian American Club of Venice, Inc.



Follow us on
facebook



A view in the Abruzzi region

Buon Compleanno!



May Birthdays!

Kate Antico **15th**, Jackie Briguglio **31st**, Karen Broughton **28th**, Dick Cattelona **25th**, Rich Corso **4th**, Paul Cosenza **21st**, Jean Cote **4th**, Lou D'Amico **28th**, Bob Errico **4th**, John Ferrara **10th**, Jim Filitto **21st**, Mary Germaine **25th**, Johanna Giordano **23rd**, Wayne Gray **19th**, John Hock **21st**, Mafalda Hord **18th**, Dennis Kaps **14th**, Norm Kline **30th**, MaryAnn LoBalbo **7th**, Jan Lombardo **29th**, Anita Massoglia **29th**, Laura Mazzilli **23rd**, Dee Meyers **30th**, George Murphy **19th**, Gene Orientale **2nd**, Ben Petrone **13th**, Leonore Pirrotti **2nd**, John Pisano **16th**, Claire Piscione **12th**, Jim Portesi **10th**, Robin Vaccai **26th**, Madelyn Vickers **9th** and Andy Viscuso **30th**.

Contact **Membership Chair Kathy Carbone** to update your info if you were missed.

Free small carafe of wine during your birthday month

Volunteers Needed!

Come help us clean out the shed

Saturday May 21st at 8:30am

Contact Bill Meyers

At 468-6288



May Facts

May is named for Maia, the Greek goddess of fertility. May's zodiac signs are Taurus and Gemini. Famous May birthdays include: Catherine the Great, Queen Victoria and more recently, Cher.

General Meeting N to Z please bring a dessert to share, store bought or homemade.

Maggio 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29		31				

Notable May Dates

- May 5th - General Meeting 7pm
- May 8th - Mother's Day Breakfast 10am
- May 12th - BINGO 7pm
- May 14th - Feast appreciation luncheon 11:30am
- May 15th - Armed Forces Day
- May 15th - VHS Baseball Dinner 6pm
- May 19th - Movie night *Moonstruck* 7pm
- May 21st - Shed cleanout day 8:30am
- May 26th - Executive Board Meeting 6pm
- May 30th - Memorial Day

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

GENERAL MEETING 1st Thursday 7pm

BOCCIA Mondays and Tuesdays 8:30am Thursdays and Fridays 10am

MAH JONG Wednesdays 1-4pm

POKER Wednesdays 7pm-11pm

BINGO 2nd Thursday 7pm

CULTURAL EVENTS 3rd Thursday 7pm

June - Save the Date

- June 2nd - General Meeting 7pm
- June 9th - BINGO 7pm
- June 12th - Birthday/Anniversary celebration 4pm
- June 16th - Movie Night 7pm
- June 19 - Father's Day Breakfast 10am
- June 30th - Executive Board Meeting 6pm



Bologna from the heights

Benvenuti'

Welcome New Members: Rene Escobar, Louis Amato, Marianne Westervelt, Reed Kelly and Tony DiMarco, , .



Member of the Month



Julie Packard has been singled out for the honor this month. An "Up Maine" girl, Julie is no stranger to hard work. Her father was a farm equipment dealer and she carried his lessons with her into a twenty-nine year career in Emergency Medicine. She has three children and five grandchildren.

She chose Venice over the harsh winters of Maine because her parents had a house on Lemon Bay. Moving here full time in 2006, (she still has a home on Moosehead Lake that she visits during the summers), she was first attracted to the IACV because her boyfriend was a member.

She smiled proudly as she related the fact that she was the **first woman** to be allowed to work in the kitchen. "I was the first woman to graduate from the 'Joe DiMarco school of breadmaking.' When he was sure I knew his secret to baking the bread I was accepted." Julie was also the one who pulled our fat out of the fryer when the Club restaurant's operations were in imminent danger of being closed. Julie took on the demanding self-study course and passed an arduous exam to become our only Certified Kitchen Manager at that time. She is also our hard-working Kitchen Scheduler, managing the effort to bring together smoothly functioning kitchen crews. Those meals that come out on Friday Nights wouldn't be possible without Julie's thoughtful combining of our volunteers. She juggles their skills (and personalities!) to keep us all working together. Her secret? Simple. She's a meticulous organizer and she has a great heart.

Thank you Julie for all you do! You help us perform as a team.

ACTIVITY & SPECIAL EVENT COORDINATORS

Appreciation	Donna Sherman	587-1058
Bocce	Marino Roncari	735-1071
	Lou Piazza	941-577-6303
	Patsy Santaguida	475-0584
BINGO	Linda Falco	323-4214
Mah Jong	Ralph Maccarone	234-0300



Second Thursday of the Month

May 12th Doors open at 6:45 pm

Early Bird Game at 7 pm

10 Games - 2 are Winner Takes All!

Info: Linda Falco

LGFalco1120@gmail.com

941.323.4214



On Tuesday, April 5, the club hosted Chef Robert Gaglio and his team for a special lunch event: Searching for Italy.

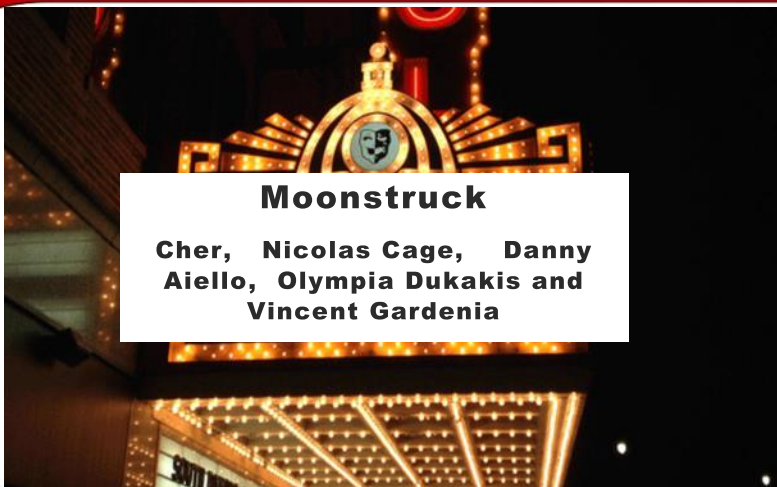
About 40 members attended and were treated to a fascinating and fun afternoon steeped in Italian culture and history, along with amazing food and beautiful opera. Chef Robert showed the episode of the CNN series "Searching for Italy with Stanley Tucci" that focused on Naples and the Amalfi Coast. He served a lunch that featured ingredients and recipes from the region, starting with a cheese and salami appetizer with a crostini topped with tapanata, followed by lentil soup, and an entree of eggplant rollatini and salad. The meal ended with a fantastic homemade tiramisu, all beautifully prepared by Chef Bruno Wu, and served by two members of Chef Robert's team.

In between video segments, Chef Robert talked about some of the history and culture of the region and its food, showed his photos of beautiful places to visit that are not on most tourist itineraries, and gave a demonstration of how to cook the eggplant rollatini with volunteers from the club helping. The program included a selection of opera music from the region, performed by Joy Leitner, who talked about the music and the composers, and whose beautiful voice brought the music to life.

We hope to bring Chef Robert and his team back to the club in the fall or winter.

Photos of the afternoon fun





Moonstruck

Cher, Nicolas Cage, Danny Aiello, Olympia Dukakis and Vincent Gardenia

Movie Night

Thursday May 19th at 7 pm

The 1987 romantic comedy smash that won Cher her Oscar. While waiting for her fiancé, Johnnie, to decide between her and his mother, Loretta falls in love with his brother, Ronnie. Hilarious!

Tony Greco hosts.

Free snacks provided BYOB

Interested in the Opera?



We are conducting an informal poll to gauge club members' interest in an opera-related event. Several members have asked about the possibility of doing such an opera event, such as organizing a trip to the Sarasota Opera or bringing an opera group to perform at the club. If you are interested in attending an opera event, please let Cultural Committee chair Tony Greco know via email at: teegee654@gmail.com or by text message at 914-720-7923.

Please note, there is no obligation to attend or buy a ticket to any event, as we do not have anything scheduled at this time. We are simply trying to get a sense of whether there is enough interest among club members to look into organizing something. Thank you.

The Armchair Traveler visits: MATERA

This UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of the oldest cities in the world, inhabited since 7000 BC. The Sassi of Matera are ancient cave dwellings cut into the side of cliffs. It's a fascinating place with an incredible cultural legacy, and it's a little bit Hollywood as well! Let's check it out!

Click here



**Our Picnic in the park on April 10th was a hectic but fun time for everybody,
check it out!**



The setup is underway.



The crowd arrives.



The desserts are ready.



Friends are having a good time all over.



The food is good, the drink satisfying, too. Everybody has an appetite and a smile!



The music is loud and the dancing starts with a classic, YMCA. Life is good!



The games were fun and there was plenty to do for everyone. Come join us next time!

Photos by Barbara Okun and Lina Decrescenzo

An Afternoon with the Martoranas

One of the best things about being *Novita*' editors is that we get to talk with our members about themselves and the Club. Of course we get inputs and requests from many Members but most of those are for little things (e.g., put in some pictures of this or maybe do a little of that), mostly little things. So when the same request came from several different Members and they wanted us to do a story on a couple who are *revered* Members, we paid attention.

I had never met the couple I was going to sit down with and I was more than just a little anxious. After all, the Martoranas are *beyond* legendary within the IACV. I gathered a few facts about them and started doing my homework.

Members since the early 80s. Holy smoke, that means *the Club was built around them!*

They celebrated their *Seventy-First* wedding anniversary on April 21st (Tom was 95, ten days before and Dee is 5 years younger).

A 23-year US Navy veteran and a totally supportive Navy Wife! Obviously they would have a ton of great stories about their lives together. I just hoped I would know what questions to ask so they would share them with us.

I was filled with trepidation when I reached out to ring their condo doorbell earlier last month. But I was quickly made to feel at ease by the reception I got from the lovely Dee. She ushered me into their dining room and Tom joined us at the table with a great smile and a handshake worthy of a twenty-year-old. For the next hour and a half I was transported back in time to when things were much simpler.

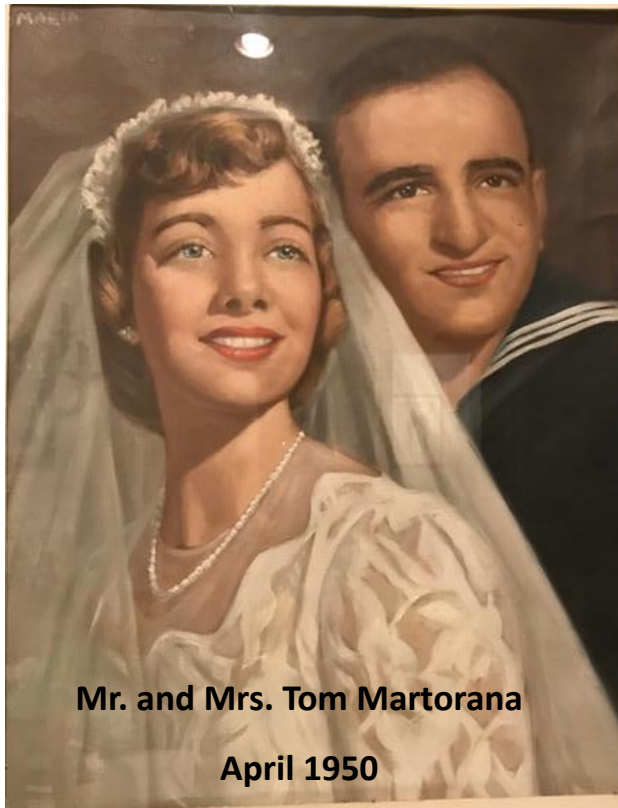


The Martoranas at home

April 2022

Tom's roots are in Sicily while Dee's are in *Napoli*. Having spent a while there myself and having had some experience with the passionate natures of both *Neapolitanos* and *Sicilianos*, I was eager to find out how their relationship came about. Tom related how they'd met.

He was dateless for an upcoming dance in Bayonne, New Jersey during the 1949 holiday season and he thought he'd swing by the Naval Supply Depot at Bayonne to pick up one of the girls who regularly hung out around there. But his friend had a better idea and introduced him to Dee. She was 18 at the time and wasn't sure how a blind date with a 23-year-old sailor might work out, but she discovered he was a fantastic dancer (and he cleaned up *really* well in his Navy uniform!).



Mr. and Mrs. Tom Martorana

April 1950

They couldn't remember which of the Dorsey brothers supplied the music that night but it didn't matter. From then on they were an item. When I asked him what had first attracted him to her (I was going for eyes but would have understood legs or hair) and he said. "Well, *just look at her!*"

Later, when Dee showed me their wedding photo I wondered if Grace Kelly and Clark Gable (sans mustache of course) hadn't posed for it. They married that April before Tom's ship deployed to the Mediterranean and Dee followed him overseas that fall.

The newlyweds set up their first home together in the *Vomero* district of Naples, Italy and Dee learned to be a supportive Navy wife. Their firstborn, a daughter, arrived during their two year tour and a son would follow a few years later. They would move many times during Tom's Navy career. He retired

from the service as a decorated Chief Petty Officer having served his country through three wars. Afterward he became a Defense Department civilian taking over essentially the same job he'd left when he hung up his uniform.

They discovered Venice in 1980 and it didn't take long for them to make it their permanent retirement home. Tom says that one look at the trees along Venice Ave. was all it took, that and the incredible welcome they received from the nascent IACV. I asked him how it was in "the early days". His eyes rolled back and his smile grew wide. "It was hand-to-mouth back then. We served our dinners in church basements and finally in a storefront (where Lowes is now) until we could raise enough money to buy the land the Club is on. Then, we worked like crazy ripping out the innards of the old building and refurbishing it to make it a modern, comfortable place for us. And at the same time we were building our reputation here with the town. It was hard work but it was fun and the warmth and camaraderie inside the Club is what got us through it all."

Dee was quick to add. "We made many wonderful friends within the Club. We did all the jobs and Tom was even President for a while."

They both talked about being involved in the Feasts. Tom remembers the fun he had running the "spaghetti wagon" and the pizza frita and likened it to the time when he'd complained about the food they served aboard one of his ships. He'd been challenged about that and ended up cooking a real Italian spaghetti meal for the whole ship's company. I could tell he'd had fun impressing them all.





Tom was a bit reluctant to tell me about the biggest “scandal” he could remember within the Club but he did recall that, early on, some members split off from the IACV to form their own organization, a chapter of the “Sons of Sicily.” Many realized they had made a mistake in leaving the Club, but only some were readmitted. We talked about the Club as it is currently, the consensus being that it has grown into a vibrant organization filled with warm and giving members. The only thing we agreed that could be improved upon is the meatballs.



My time with the Martoranas wasn’t just fun it was *enriching*, and I left that afternoon with the feeling that this charming couple really had it all: two successful children, four grandchildren and six wonderful great-grandchildren, dozens of admiring friends (including *this new one*) within the Club and the Church. But *best of all*, they have each other.

George Palmer editor at large

Photos from our April Birthday - Anniversary celebration



See lots more online at:

<https://venice.smugmug.com/Birthday-and-Anniversary-Monthly-Dinners/202204-Birthday-and-Anniversary/>

Scritto dagli studenti della classe 'Conversation Italian.'

Una delle ragioni principali perché molta gente si trasferisce a Venice, Fl. è la vita meravigliosa che essa ha da offrire, quando si vive a Venice, ogni giorno diventa un sogno. Si ha accesso illimitato alle più belle spiagge del mondo, e ai sentieri lunghi e ombreggiati nei parchi vicini per escursioni e biciclettate.

Per noi non è stato difficile scegliere il posto per vivere la nostra vita da pensionati.

Eravamo felici nei Stati del nord, avevamo figli, nipoti e vecchi amici da visitare o da curare, ma le artriti alimentate dal freddo e dagli anni ci riempivano di dolori che attribuivamo alla vecchiaia, ma ci bastò un viaggio qui a Venice per farci cambiare idea.

Venice era il luogo dove volevamo soggiornare, dove il caldo ci avrebbe ringiovaniti.

Appena trasferiti in questa città, come per incanto le artriti si affievolirono, siamo diventati attivi, abbiamo cominciato a camminare per i viali, a jogging nei parchi, a fare amicizie, a nuotare nel golfo del Messico, insomma a vivere la vita che ogni pensionato ha diritto di vivere.

È bello poter meditare contemplando le onde che incessantemente si abbattono sulla riva, o a passeggiare in città dove l'architettura, il gelato e i nomi delle strade come Milan Ave... Turin... Venice... ci riportano in Italia nel paese dei nostri antenati!

Pensavamo di essere troppo vecchi, con dolori cronici, o facesse troppo freddo per svolgere le nostre attività preferite. Trasferisci in Florida è stato come ritrovare la nostra gioventù, ci trovate fuori a giocare a bocce, pickleball, tennis, o semplicemente seduti di fronte a un ristorante a mangiare e a chiacchierare e a sera a ballare.

Non crediate però che siamo diventati egoisti pensando solo a divertirci, noi continuiamo a coltivare i nostri sogni da giovani, il nostro dovere da cittadini, ci prendiamo cura dei vicini, cerchiamo di raggiungere una delle mete che ancora rimane nella nostra lista come imparare l'Italiano o usare il computer, dipingere quel quadro, scrivere quel libro, studiare la scienza spaziale, coltivare fiori senza aspettare la stagione giusta, fiori che sbocciano tutto l'anno senza deluderci.

Ma soprattutto diventare soci del club italiano di Venezia, per promuovere e preservare la cultura italiana per la nuova generazione.

Why live in Venice, Florida?

Written by the students of the 'Conversation Italian' class

One of the main reasons many people move to Venice, Fl. is the beautiful life it offers. You have unlimited access to the most beautiful beaches in the world and the long, shady trails in the nearby parks for hiking and biking. When you live in Venice, every day becomes a dream.

It was not difficult for us to choose the place to live our life as retirees.

We were happy in the Northern States; we had children, grandchildren, and longtime friends to visit or care for, but arthritis fed by the cold and the years caused us so much pain, which we attributed to the old age, but a trip here to Venice was enough to make us change our minds.

Venice was where we wanted to stay, where the heat would rejuvenate us.

As soon as we moved to this city, as by magic, arthritis faded, we became active, and we began to walk the avenues, jog in the parks, make friends, swim in the Gulf of Mexico, in short, living the life that every retiree has the right to live.

It's nice to be able to meditate, contemplating the waves that incessantly fall on the shore, or walk in the city where the architecture, the ice cream stores, and the names of the streets like Milan Ave... Turin... Venice.... take us back to Italy in the country of our ancestors!

Moving to Florida was like being young again. You find us outside playing bocce, pickleball, tennis, or just sitting in front of a restaurant eating and chatting and in the evening dancing. We thought we were too old with chronic pain or it was too cold to do our favorite activities.

However, don't believe that we have become selfish, thinking only about having fun. We continue to cultivate the dreams of our young age, our duty as citizens. We take care of the neighbors in need. We try to reach one of the goals that remain on our wish list, such as learning Italian or using the computer. Painting that picture, writing that book, studying space science, and growing flowers without waiting for the right season. Flowers bloom all year round without disappointing us.

Above all, be a member of the Italian club in Venice to promote and preserve the Italian culture for the new generation.



Mille Grazie to Patti and Bob Gillless for donating a vacuum cleaner to the Club.

Former member Mary Indovino has moved to the Atlanta Georgia area to be with her daughter and grandson. She fondly sends her best wishes to all her friends in the IACV.

Editor's note: To request the Club Photographer's services for events contact Angelo Tulumieri at 244-0929.



Emma knows her sausage!

Send in your caption to this photo and win our next contest. Send your entries to Lina at: carefor.you@aol.com

Congratulations to Matt Palucci for his winning caption to our last photo contest. His entry :

Queen Peperone Rosso and her **minions** wins a free ticket in our next 50/50 drawing.



Roman aqueduct in Gaul



Our student greeters



Scenes from ECOS

Spirit Night



Al heating the plates



Our student seaters

Our Italian Adventure

Episode 6: The best car I ever owned!

We got “cabin fever” living in the hotel and the arrival of our furniture was months away. We were on the list for a villa and knew I’d need to commute daily to work so we got help buying cars. We hadn’t brought an American car over (gas was *expensive*, Naples streets are narrow, and if you needed parts ... Detroit was awfully far away).

We needed a reliable car so our sales agent arranged a new Fiat sedan for Gail. She needed an automatic transmission and quickly got used to it. We had a “Devil Dog” car alarm and an AFI (Allied Forces Italy) license plate installed. I found a tiny, Fiat *cinquecento* for \$500. It was a steal because it was in perfect shape, used hardly any gas, and was ideal for *Napoli’s* steep, winding streets. I drove it the whole time we were there and sold it (for \$500!) when we left.

Our first solo foray into downtown *Napoli* was probably the scariest drive of our lives. We’d already witnessed a street riot with our sponsors when two cross streets full of cars had exploded in a monumental fistfight. A stopped driver had used the two-fingered (*Cornuto!*) gesture on a passing scooter driver who jumped off his machine, dragged the gesturer from his car, and rained blows upon him. Then, dozens of other drivers leapt from their cars and began pummeling each other. It took the poor traffic cop an hour to restore order. A quiet Sunday morning gone wrong.

We passed through a 5-street intersection Americans called: “Chicken Corner” where traffic snarls were legendary. The locals ignored the modern traffic light, (*il semaforo stupido* is only from today! The streets are here *since the Romans!*). Instead, right of way depended on the size of the vehicle (immense *Calabrese* trucks win), the age and shininess of the sportscar, and the color of the young woman driver’s hair (blondes zipped right through).

The noise! (apparently Neapolitan auto horns are made many decibels louder than anywhere else), the cursing of the drivers (the *most impressive* swearing vocabularies, bone-chilling *maledizioni*, and a dizzying array of very expressive hand gestures), stalled us until Gail managed to dodge around. By the time we finished our first “downtown” trip we were so shaky we needed a couple of bottles of *vino* to unwind. We survived our baptism by fire ... but only just, and Gail learned some driving moves that make Mario Andretti look timid by comparison.

Ciao for now. Next Month: Moving to our “Country Villa.”

George Palmer

