

Maggio 2016

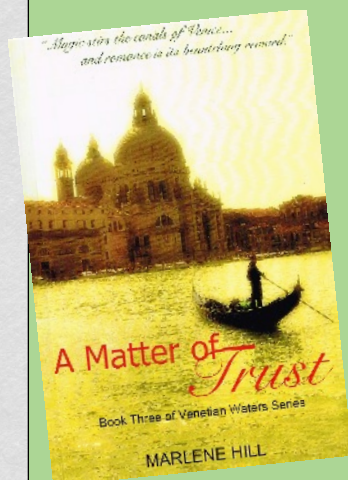
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## A WRITER'S CONVERSATION ON MAY 15

How do you write a book? Where does the story come from? Can an author's real-life experiences be expressed in fiction? And maybe most of all, *Where do you come up with those steamy love scenes?*

These are some of the topics we'll explore with Tuscan Association member and author Marlene Hill (below) at our monthly meeting on **May 15 at 3:30pm at Carvlin Hall**. Marlene has just published the third volume in her Venetian Waters Series, *A Matter of Trust*. We'll gather around (literally), led by Jimmie Moglia and Ken Kane, and explore the writing process with Marlene. Excerpts from the book will be shared and copies will be available for purchase for \$15. Marlene will also have copies of her two previous books for purchase.



Marlene's books are fun, quick summer reads. Mixed in with the romance and intrigue are descriptions of famous and not-so-famous Venetian sights and paintings. Food and wine are also featured, so let's just say Marlene's stories will satisfy you in more ways than one!

**The other main item on the May 15 agenda is the recruitment and election of our next club president.** As Jimmie's column to the right says, it's time for the legacy of the Tuscan Association to continue under new leadership ... *perhaps you!*

NEXT MTG:

SUN., MAY 15.

3:30PM

CARVLIN HALL, 2408 SE 16<sup>TH</sup> AV.

COME JOIN US!

## DAL PRESIDENT PASSING THE GAVEL

BY JIMMIE MOGLIA  
PRESIDENT



The time has come for a change in the position of President of our beloved Tuscan Association of Oregon.

As mentioned on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, it has been an honor to serve in this capacity for the last two years.

As you know, the Association is a living example of cooperative effort. The main responsibilities of the President are to coordinate (and directly participate) in the planning of the meetings, and in a few other

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# OF PINOCCHIO, PINCHBECK AND PRINCISBECCO

BY JIMMIE MOGLIA

During a recent phone conversation, an Italian friend of mine told me of an exchange with a government bureaucrat. He, to my friend's question on a procedural issue, gave him an answer that left him astounded. To express the astonishment, my friend used a sentence I had not heard for decades, "*Sono rimasto di princisbecco*." (Literally "I remained of *princisbecco*.")

But who or what is *princisbecco*? Most Italians would (probably) know what the sentence means, if not else because it appears in the novel *Pinocchio*.

How and why *princisbecco* and what does it mean? There is a history in all men's lives, as well as words. Though Carlo Collodi made the word, within limits, popular, it came into accepted usage in the mid-1850s. It was also used by the fine Tuscan poet Giuseppe Giusti, and later by the Sicilian Luigi Pirandello and others.

*Princisbecco* refers to an alloy of copper, zinc and tin, similar in appearance to gold. It was invented by an English watchmaker named Christopher Pinchbeck, (1670-1732). The alloy had considerable commercial success, being almost indistinguishable from gold.

Hence it was impartially used for fraud and decoration.

*Princisbecco* has a fine and funny sound. The original English name was purposely altered in Italian to make it more pleasing to the ear. A similar fate happened to the English medieval mercenary John

Hawkwood, painted by Paolo Uccello in a fresco found in Florence's Cathedral. Italians called him Giovanni Acuto (John Acute).



"*Rimanere di princisbecco*" can be used, for example, as a reaction to generic BS. That is, a response to utterances made by someone who repeats buzzwords and platitudes with little or no understanding of the issues involved. Or to express amazement at a statement simultaneously made and denied.

For example, a reporter recently questioned a Department of State spokesperson, who announced the deployment of US "boots on the ground" in Syria. The reporter told the spokesperson that only recently the President said that there would be no "boots on the ground" in Syria. The spokesman denied that the President said so.

An Italian reporter would probably think or say, "*Sono rimasto di princisbecco*." ("I was astonished.") Implying that what was given as gold – No boots on the ground – was actually a fake (*princisbecco*).

In the *Pinocchio* novel, the puppet, while in the country of the "Acchiappacitrulli" (Catch-the-Suckers), denounces the Cat and the Fox for theft. He is amazed that, on hearing the case, the judge actually condemns him.

"The puppet, on hearing of this sentence fallen between his head and his neck, remained of *princisbecco* and wanted to protest. But the cops, to avoid a loss of time, corked his mouth and brought him to jail." ("*Il burattino, sentendosi dare questa sentenza fra capo e collo, rimase di princisbecco e voleva protestare: ma i giandarmi, a scanso di perditempi inutili, gli tapparono la bocca e lo condussero in gattabuia.*")







## “DAD NEVER MET A STRANGER.”

Those words came from a loving daughter about our friend Mario Monti. Jan Monti eulogized her father at his funeral on March 19. (This picture of Mario and his wife, Jo, was taken at our Christmas potluck on Dec. 20, 2015 by Jack Huffstetler.)

“His laughter was personal, his interest in others and their lives sincere and caring. People felt richer for having been in his presence,” Jan said. “He responded to their kindness and returned it multiplied.” Read more of Jan’s tribute here: [https://oregontuscans.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/mario\\_monti\\_eulogy.pdf](https://oregontuscans.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/mario_monti_eulogy.pdf)

## WHO WILL TAKE THE LEAD?

*(continued from page 1)*

tasks, particularly, maintaining contact, when needed, with the Coordinating Office for North American Tuscan Associations in Montreal and with the Central Office in Florence.

Most members have had direct experience in what is involved in running the monthly meetings. There is (and we will make available) a specific [list](#) of the responsibilities connected with the function of the President. The term of office is two years and is renewable.

We will discuss the matter at the May 15 meeting and seek nominees. In the meantime, I would like to ask any members interested in the position to think about it, and contact me for more information, so that the Association can decide accordingly.

Thank you,

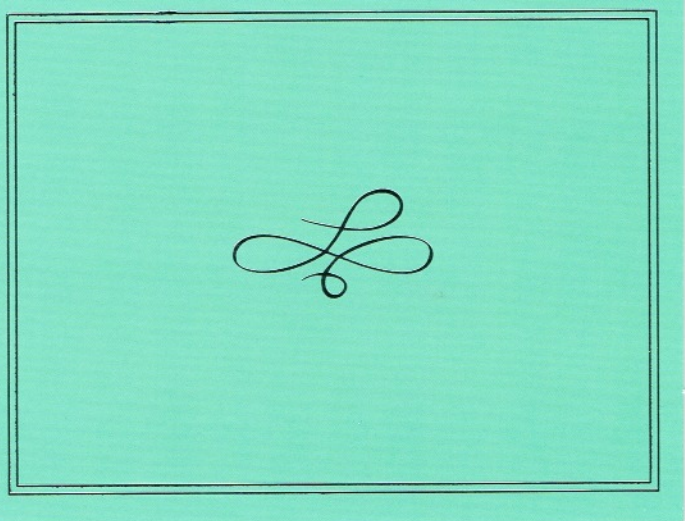
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**La Lettera Toscana**  
is published monthly during the  
Tuscan Association meeting year.

Ken Kane edits the newsletter. If you have ideas, articles, photos or feedback for the publication, please send them to Ken via the club’s e-mail address, [OregonTuscans@gmail.com](mailto:OregonTuscans@gmail.com).

Or do as the Lamanos did (right) – snail-mail it to: 37 SW Canby St., Portland, OR 97219



April 28, 2016

To those of you who planned and worked on our Tuscan Association's 20th anniversary celebration:

Thank you!

Thank you!

Thank you!

You could not have planned a better party for our very special Tuscan Association.





## L'ANGOLO ITALIANO

DI CARLO ILIO MANNOCCI

*E così' siamo arrivati al 20mo anniversario, traguardo che mai avrei sognato o immaginato venti anni or sono quando nel locale dedicato agli italiani di Enzo Lanzadoro si riunì un gruppetto di toscani e nacque l'Associazione Toscana dell'Oregon.*

*Di strada ne abbiamo fatta e risultati ne abbiamo ottenuti, appariscenti o meno. E'; stato bello ricevere via video il ringraziamento e la gratitudine di quattro studenti, tra i quali i primi due inviati in Toscana per scoprire per la prima volta la terra degli avi. Atmosfera di gioia e soddisfazione condivisa da tutti i presenti.*

*Un grazie a tutti gli intervenuti e uno speciale a Jimmie Moglia, Ken Kane e Audrey Perino per l'enorme lavoro svolto per assicurare il successo!. Adesso pensiamo al 2021 quando celebreremo il quarto di secolo!!!*







## PARTY FAVORS

BY JIMMIE MOGLIA

I can say, with unanimous consent, that the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Tuscan Association of Oregon on April 17 was a success. After the event, everything in retrospect seems easy. But, as the participants can testify, it was the classic cooperative organizing effort, where all contributed with their time and creativity to ensure that the Anniversary will remain in our mind as a pleasurable memory.

Of course, we were particularly pleased to have Carlo and Shirley with us. Which also gives me the occasion to thank, in print, Carlo for the generous contribution of the excellent wine.

As Carlo pointed out to me, the wine we drank (labeled *Lagone – Aia Vecchia*), comes from the Tuscan region near Bolgheri, by the sea, the “Coast of the Etruscans.” Which also happens to be, coincidentally, the geographical area mentioned in the poem *Davanti San Guido* by the Tuscan poet Giosu  Carducci – some lines of which were quoted in April’s newsletter.

The wine, experts say, “...is deep ruby with purple hues. On the nose, the wine is delicate with notes of cherry, vanilla, raw beef and herbs. On the palate, it is dry, structured and elegant with flavors of plum, ripe cherries, wild berries and a hint of spice, followed by a lengthy and smooth finish that begs for food.” Couldn’t have said it better myself...

Worth mentioning, I think, Piazza Italia’s excellent lasagnas, with pasta al pesto as a side dish, which also pleased the non-vegetarians. And the equally excellent cake, of whose selection, Audrey gets the merit. The music by the Dennis Costi Combo (also Audrey’s idea) added another good touch.

As the saying goes, the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Tuscan Association of Oregon was “one for the books.” Thank you all for participating.