

Spotlight on Cristina Miller

By Lee Granger

The choice of venue, Luigiano's Restaurant, a long time Heathrow favorite, seemed fortuitous and appropriate for my interview with Cristina Miller, this month's featured Spotlight member. The lovely young woman, of Sicilian descent, endorsed the pasta dishes at the restaurant. And, she should know! She loves cooking Italian/Sicilian for her family and her father and brother co-own an Italian restaurant in the Chicago area. Among her favorite recipes are lasagna (made from scratch), chicken piccata, and just about any pasta (home made when she has the time). Her Sicilian roots and regular visits back to Italy make her keenly aware of the value of fresh ingredients. One of her earliest childhood memories was standing underneath the olive trees with her grandfather, shaking down the olives which would be used to make the next month's supply of oil. She also fondly recalls the use of other handpicked ingredients such as, fresh lemons, figs, prickly pears, and wild herbs grown mountainside. Note to self—she always uses fresh tomatoes in her sauces!



Cristina, daughter-in-law of our dear Becki Miller, joined our club earlier this year as she wanted to become more engaged in the community and give back. This will be additional participation since she is very involved in leading local mission and community outreach through her church. "I love making a difference in people's lives," she intimated. Cristina believes that Heathrow Women's Club will give her an opportunity to do more of what she loves most.

But, helping others isn't her only passion. She is a devoted wife and mother to two daughters, ages 3.5 years and 2 years! That will keep one busy! She has been married to her husband for ten years after having met on a blind date and becoming engaged only six months later. Family connections have always been central to Cristina's life. Her parents emigrated from Sicily in the 1980s and she is proud to be the first one of her immediate family to be born on American soil. She and her family still have strong ties to the old country, visiting annually, and last summer taking her girls with her for the first time. The extended family was thrilled. Cristina is bi-lingual (Sicilian-Italian) and is teaching the language to her daughters, along with some of her passed down cooking skills.

Growing up in the Chicago area, she became a hair color specialist after high school. Evidently, she still does some expert coloration on the side—if you're lucky! She pursued study at Oral

Roberts University in elementary education, before meeting her husband, Jonathan. She then moved to Ohio with him after the marriage. And, seven years ago, she and her spouse, along with Becki and her spouse, moved to Orlando to fulfill their calling. Although now in the land of Gators, Knights, and Seminoles, the Millers remain die-hard Ohio State football fans!