

# LYNNSight

Building a better world with our students.



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Joyce Shelfo

## A note from the editor

I'll never forget the first time I stepped on Lynn University grounds. I had been on the job as society editor of the *Boca Raton News* for only a few weeks when I was invited to a luncheon in The Christine Room (since revamped as Christine's, a market-fresh bistro).

As I got out of my car, I thought, "Wow! What a gorgeous campus!" It was that feel-good sensation of being surrounded by beauty and welcomed by a loop of international flags that made me think that this place is special. Six years later I thought, "Wow! I work here now!"

After 11 years at Lynn, I'm retiring to pursue the next phase of my life. For that reason, I'm considering this Winter 2016 issue of *LynnSight* to be my "swan song." Please indulge me a few parting words.

During my tenure as editor, we've published 30 issues of this philanthropy newsletter. We've had plenty of good news to share when it comes to our benefactors, their gifts and the impact those gifts have on our students, faculty and the campus.

I've learned that the reasons people give to Lynn are as varied and diverse as our donors. In these pages, you'll read how an arts lover's passion for music prompted her to establish an endowment for piano students; how sports enthusiasts provide for comfortable, collaborative spaces befitting our champion student athletes; how a world traveler creates an endowment for the maintenance of one of the Lynn campus signatures—the circle of international flags; and why an educator makes annual gifts to help students with learning challenges. With donor support, we dedicated a new intramural field as well as a non-denominational spiritual center last fall.

All varied and diverse, yes, but one thing our donors have in common: They recognize the power their gifts have in taking Lynn to the next level.

The physical transformation that has taken place on campus is nothing short of astounding. Since 2009, five new buildings have been constructed and two major projects (Remembrance Plaza and two new entrances) were completed—all enhancing students' living and learning environments.

And speaking of construction ... one of the most exciting things to happen recently is the announcement of a \$15 million challenge grant by Christine E. Lynn, the university's namesake and chair of the board of trustees, to build a much-needed university center at the heart of campus.

Of course, none of this could have been possible without the generosity of those who share in Lynn's mission to provide a quality education that prepares students for success in this world; and vision to be recognized as one of the most innovative, international and individualized small universities in our nation.

On behalf of the students, faculty and staff of Lynn University, I thank our beloved donors from the bottom of our collective heart. You are our heroes.

As an interested neighbor and former employee, I will watch Lynn with great pride and affection as it continues to grow its active, vibrant campus—a great asset to our community.

See you at the beach!

Joyce Shelfo  
Communications Manager  
Office of Marketing and Communication

## Christine E. Lynn gives largest gift in university history

President Kevin M. Ross' surprise announcement at the annual State of the University address last October received a standing ovation: **Lynn had just received the largest gift in its history to construct a much-needed university center at the heart of campus.**



Christine E. Lynn, Kevin M. Ross



Christine E. Lynn University Center—preliminary architectural renderings by Gensler



Christine Lynn and Greg Malfitano, senior vice president for development and administration, review plans for the new university center that will bear Mrs. Lynn's name.

**Christine E. Lynn, chair of the board of trustees of Lynn University, and one of the country's leading philanthropists, has given \$15 million for the construction of the Christine E. Lynn University Center.**

This gift empowers the university to accomplish its *Lynn 2020* strategic objectives two years early, and propels total fundraising in support of the master plan in the last 10 years to more than \$100 million.

Mrs. Lynn's leadership gift provides other visionary individuals an opportunity to participate in this transformational project. Her gift will match every dollar donated up to \$15 million.

By supporting this critical addition to the campus, donors who step forward to meet the match not only demonstrate their commitment to Lynn University, they also honor Mrs. Lynn.

A native of Norway, Christine E. Lynn was trained as a registered and surgical nurse in Oslo. In 1979, on a Norwegian cruise ship working

as a head nurse, she met Boca Raton insurance magnate Eugene M. Lynn. They married in 1980, and she began longtime residency in Boca Raton.

Eugene Lynn's friendship with the university and then-President Donald E. Ross started back in 1974. He received an honorary degree in 1978 and served on Lynn's board of trustees from 1989 until his death in 1999.

In 1991, the College of Boca Raton was renamed Lynn University in honor of Eugene and Christine's many years of generous support. That same year, Mrs. Lynn received an honorary degree.

The Lynns' generosity has been responsible for the construction of several major buildings on the Lynn campus, including the College of International Communication, which opened in 1998; the Eugene M. and Christine E. Lynn Library; the E.M. Lynn Residence Center; and several other facilities across campus.

Mrs. Lynn has supported numerous healthcare and community organizations and has been recognized with various honors and awards including the Rotary International Outstanding Philanthropic Award for Leadership and its Paul Harris Fellow

Award; The Signature of Life from The Wellness Community; admission to the Gables Society of the University of Miami; and the National Jewish Medical and Research Center Humanitarian Award.

In 2013, she received the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor, which pays homage to the immigrant experience as well as for individual achievement. It is given to a distinguished American citizen who exemplifies a life dedicated to community service, and who makes a better world for all of us. Past medalists include six U.S. presidents, Nobel Prize winners and leaders of industry, education, the arts, sports and government, along with everyday Americans who have made freedom and compassion part of their lives' work.

In addition to being the chair of the Lynn University Board of Trustees, Christine E. Lynn serves as chair of the board of Lynn Insurance Group and the Boca Raton Regional Hospital Board of Trustees.

## Lynn dedicates Perper field

**Students, faculty and staff gathered to dedicate the new Mary Ann and Harold Perper Intramural Field during a special ceremony on Oct. 1, 2015.**

This gift is one of many by Mary Ann and the late Harold Perper that has made an impact on the quality of campus life over the past 25 years.

Mrs. Perper was honored with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and speeches by President Kevin M. Ross and students Evan Hargrove, class of '17, and Jordyn Turner, class of '16.

"The Perpers' generosity impacts every student who steps foot on our campus, and it's an honor to have their name on our intramural field," said Ross. "We are grateful for Mary Ann's continued and extraordinary commitment to enhancing students' lives on campus."

The new intramural field features upgrades such as a scoreboard and lights that allow Lynn's Fighting Knights and club sports teams to practice and compete day and night.

Mrs. Perper's generous gift supports the pursuit of master plan *Lynn 2020*, which includes building new residence halls in the space the former intramural field occupied.

The soon-to-be-built Mary Ann and Harold Residence Center also supports that university initiative.

"The Perpers' generosity impacts every student who steps foot on our campus, and it's an honor to have their name on our intramural field." —President Kevin M. Ross



Greg Malfitano, President Emeritus Donald E. Ross, Mary Ann Perper, President Kevin M. Ross



Other gifts the Perpers have given to the Lynn community include:

- Mary Ann and Harold Perper Grandstands at Bobby Campbell Stadium
- Perper Tennis Complex
- Mary Ann and Harold Perper Orchestra and Mezzanine Seating in the Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center
- Mary and Harold Perper Plaza
- Perper Mailroom
- Harold and Mary Perper Testing Center in the Institute for Achievement and Learning
- Perper Coffee House
- Perper Communication Center
- Scholarships and annual gifts



Players from the women's soccer team and Fighting Knights mascot Lance present Mary Ann Perper with flowers as a gesture of appreciation for the campus' new intramural field.



Jamie and Stephen Snyder with Therese and Barron Snyder and children Phoebe and Luke



Snyder Sanctuary

## Snyder Sanctuary serves campus' spiritual needs

A recent survey conducted at Lynn noted that 75 percent of incoming students identify themselves as spiritual.

Thanks to Stephen F. Snyder, vice chair of Lynn's board of trustees, and wife Jamie, students and staff of all faiths and beliefs now have a special place on campus to serve their spiritual needs.

"It seems that there is a need for a non-denominational place on campus where our diverse, international student community can come together to explore values and beliefs, search for meaning, meditate, enjoy music and celebrate life's events," says Stephen Snyder.

Lynn dedicated the magnificent Snyder Sanctuary on Nov. 12, 2015. This sacred place is the creation of Newman Architects, the same firm that designed the campus' Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center and the Eugene M. and Christine E. Lynn Library.

"Regardless of our individual religious beliefs, we all have a sense of spirituality that affects us. [The Snyder Sanctuary] is a place of wonder and awe and fosters interchange and understanding of those shared ideas and feelings of spirituality and celebration of our diversity," says Herbert Newman.

The origin of the design of the sanctuary can be found in the growth patterns of animals and plants. This hidden geometry of nature is related to the mathematical sequence of Fibonacci numbers—sometimes called nature's numbering system—seen in everything from the spiral shapes of seashells and leaf and petal arrangements in plants to galaxies and hurricanes.

Seven walls form the space. Each wall leans on the one adjacent to it—altogether forming a strong, stable structure.



Stephen F. Snyder, Herbert Newman

"Regardless of our individual religious beliefs, we all have a sense of spirituality that affects us. [The Snyder Sanctuary] is a place of wonder and awe and fosters interchange and understanding of those shared ideas and feelings of spirituality and celebration of our diversity."

—Herbert Newman, architect

The walls are a metaphor for how we need to rely on one another for support. Although each wall is facing a different direction, joined together they and we create a sense of unity and shared purpose of community.

Light enters through glass openings between the walls. The light changes as the sun moves across the sky between sunrise and sunset. The triangular glass is translucent at the ground in part to restrict views of the sanctuary's setting, focusing attention within the space. The glass walls become transparent as they rise to the ceiling, allowing views of the outside trees and sky, rooting the experience of the sanctuary in time and space.



Yvonne S. Boice Circle of Flags

## Circle of flags named in honor of Yvonne S. Boice

**One can't help but notice the impressive ring of flags that greets visitors, students and staff as they enter Lynn's beautiful campus every day.**

This powerful symbol of the university's international character, originally conceived by Yvonne S. Boice, is now named in her honor.

Boice, a renowned philanthropist and world traveler, suggested the idea of displaying the flags—representing Lynn's global student body and their more than 100 nations—during a planning meeting for Lynn's 40th anniversary in 2002.

She has now created an endowment to provide for the ongoing maintenance of the Yvonne S. Boice Circle of Flags, a campus icon that was broadcast internationally during the final presidential debate held on campus in 2012.

"The flags are a glorious emblem of the university's global diversity while also being a unifying symbol for the sharing of cultural experiences," says Boice. "Having traveled to 150 countries and visited all seven continents, I understand the importance of fostering cultural awareness in our youth, and I am honored that the Yvonne S. Boice Circle of Flags will continue to represent that mission for years to come."

"Yvonne is a person of big ideas, and she delivers on them," says President Kevin M. Ross. "This is an especially fitting gift because this representation of our diversity was her concept. Lynn continues to be recognized as one of the most international schools by *U.S. News & World Report*, and we are so grateful to have Yvonne honor our global spirit in such a meaningful way."

As the former owner of Fugazy International Travel in Boca Raton, Yvonne Boice appreciates the personal and intellectual enrichment that comes with international travel. In 2004 she created the Lynn University Boice Scholarship to enable deserving students in the College of Business and Management to participate in life-changing study abroad experiences.

As a philanthropist, Boice is a champion of arts, culture, education and women's rights initiatives. She is currently the chair for the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the National Endowment of the Humanities, the chair of the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) at Palm Beach State College and chair emeritus for the Palm Beach International Film Festival.



Yvonne S. Boice

Yvonne S. Boice has been a consistent and loyal friend to Lynn.

Over the years, she has given her expertise and financial support for important causes across campus:

- As the Excalibur Society's Scholarship Committee chair, she devised a highly effective evaluation system for awarding the fundraising group's scholarships.
- She chaired the Lynn University gala, "TravelLYNN to Tasmania: A Journey Down Under," in 2003; and as a member of the university's board of overseers, she provided expert leadership and counsel.
- Her leadership gift named the Yvonne S. Boice Box Office in the campus' state-of-the-art Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center.

"This is an especially fitting gift because this representation of our diversity was her concept. Lynn continues to be recognized as one of the most international schools by *U.S. News & World Report*, and we are so grateful to have Yvonne honor our global spirit in such a meaningful way."

—President Kevin M. Ross

As a businesswoman, she ran two very successful enterprises in Boca Raton: The Shoppes at Village Pointe and Fugazy International Travel. During her many years at the helm of these companies, she made it her vocation to mentor women in business, both here and abroad.

In recent years, Boice was selected to represent the U.S. at four high-profile women's international business conferences. She was chosen as one of six delegates to the Middle East and North African Women's Conference held in Abu Dhabi, and was appointed to attend the Global Summit of Women in Berlin and Hanoi. She also was appointed a delegate to educate women to become entrepreneurs in Bolivia, South America.

She has been honored with many prestigious awards for her tireless devotion to numerous important causes, and currently serves as a board member on the Trust of the National Endowment of the Humanities.

She is married to attorney Al Zucaro, founder of World Trade Center Palm Beach. Her daughter, Lauren, is a practicing attorney living in the Boston area with husband Randall Knowles Smith, world-renowned astrophysicist.

## Educator's philanthropy helps IAL students



Sandra Slomin

“It’s because of those thank you letters that I continue to give to this scholarship each year ... I love hearing from the students.”

—Sandra Slomin

**Lynn University has had the pleasure of Sandra Slomin’s friendship since 2008, when she created the Heart Award for the Comprehensive Support Program at Lynn University.**

The need-based Heart Award covers tuition, fees and books for a freshman who shows potential for success, wants to take part in Lynn’s Institute for Achievement and Learning (IAL), but otherwise could not afford the cost of the specialized program.

Slomin also has served as the presenting sponsor for Lynn’s Transitions conference, an annual event for education leaders, guidance counselors, teachers, parents and students. It includes a wide range of topics to help students find the right college “fit” in order to make a smooth transition from high school to higher education.

“I appreciate the work of the Institute for Achievement and Learning ... taking kids with special needs who don’t easily fit in an educational setting,” says Slomin. “I get them when they’re babies, and you [Lynn] get them when they’re ready to go out into the real world.”

Slomin is the founder/CEO of the Slomin Family Center in Delray Beach, Florida, which she calls “a safe haven where all feel welcomed and accepted, regardless of their differences.” The center opened its doors in July 2013 to provide educational, recreational and support services to individuals and families touched by autism and related disabilities.

Heart Award recipients express their appreciation through thank you letters. “It’s because of those thank you letters that I continue to give to this scholarship each year,” says Slomin. “They mean so much to me. I understand how important scholarships are and how costly it is to attend the program. I love hearing from the students.”

Slomin is an avid football fan and ardent supporter of her alma mater, Ohio State University. “It just seemed right that I also get involved in my community, so I support our local colleges too. I know the difference it can make.”



Piano students Sohyun Park, Matthew Calderon and Hikari Nakamura gather around Nettie Birnbach in a show of gratitude for her newly created endowed scholarship.

## Music lover endows piano scholarship

**Delray Beach resident Nettie Birnbach loves all the arts. That’s lucky for Lynn as she has recently established the Nettie Birnbach Endowed Scholarship for Piano Education —the first named scholarship for piano students.**

“This is something I’ve wanted to do for a long time,” she says. “I just love the music that comes from a piano.”

Birnbach was a supporter of the music division of the Harid Conservatory, which became part of Lynn University in January 1999. She has remained a loyal patron of Lynn’s conservatory by making an annual gift every year since 2006.

She attends most of Lynn’s afternoon concerts and master classes. “I appreciate the musicianship of the students. I have no musical ability at all. I can whistle and sing in the shower, but I’m not even singing in the shower so much anymore,” she quips.

“Lynn’s conservatory is marvelous. It has a phenomenal philharmonia orchestra director in Guillermo Figueroa. I love the talks he gives before each concert so the audience can better understand the music that is about to be played.”

Before moving to Florida with her husband in 1994, the native Manhattanite took full advantage of New York City’s cultural offerings: opera at Lincoln Center, symphonic concerts at Carnegie Hall and exhibits at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

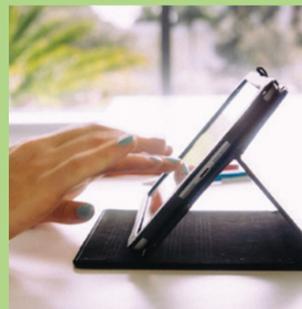
“I’ve always loved the arts. Music has been so important to my life since I was a young teenager.”

Nettie Birnbach, who holds a doctorate in education, is a registered nurse and a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. She was described as a “Renaissance woman” by those who nominated her for induction into the American Nurses Association Hall of Fame in 2010.

As a student at Kings County Hospital School of Nursing in Brooklyn, New York, she enrolled in the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps, a program established in 1943 by order of U.S. Congress to alleviate the critical shortage of nurses during World War II. The student nurses pledged to serve in civilian, military or federal government services.

Throughout her career, Birnbach made many contributions as a practitioner, educator, researcher and extraordinary volunteer with a great vision for nursing.

She is the proud mother of three daughters, who have given her six grandchildren and six great grandchildren.



## Technology helps students with learning differences

“Students, coaches and tutors of the Institute for Achievement and Learning have benefited from the iPad initiative,” says Shaun Exsteen, executive director of IAL. “Coaches have been able to have coaching sessions via FaceTime. The many imbedded assistive technological features—such as being able to listen to their books, record lectures while taking notes, translate speech to text—allow our students to have learning tools available to them at all times and not just within the IAL center.”

## Sports fans furnish locker rooms

Larry and Elaine Smith, longtime supporters of Lynn athletics, have stepped forward once again to champion a Fighting Knights cause.

The Smiths' most recent gift furnishes five locker rooms—two in the gym and three in the new Bobby Campbell Stadium—that create an inviting space and motivating atmosphere for student athletes, while providing gathering areas for collaboration and rejuvenation.

"Larry and Elaine's generosity enables our students to bond in a comfortable locker room space," says Athletic Director Devin Crosby. "Relationships are a vital attribute in successful teams, and Larry and Elaine's gift enables our students to strengthen their time with each other in their locker rooms."

The Smiths also named the Larry and Elaine Smith Women's Home Locker Room in the Bobby Campbell Stadium.

Larry Smith was raised in Chelsea, Massachusetts, where he spent most of his time playing sports and working summers at Fenway Park as a vendor. "I love sports. I knew a lot of the professors at Lynn so we started to go to a lot of sporting events on campus," he says.

As president of the Blue & White Club, 2004–2006, Larry led the club in supporting Lynn's student athletes academically and in the community. Funds raised through donations to the club are earmarked for scholarships, excellence programs and team equipment needs. "I still go to all the meetings," says Larry.



Larry and Elaine Smith

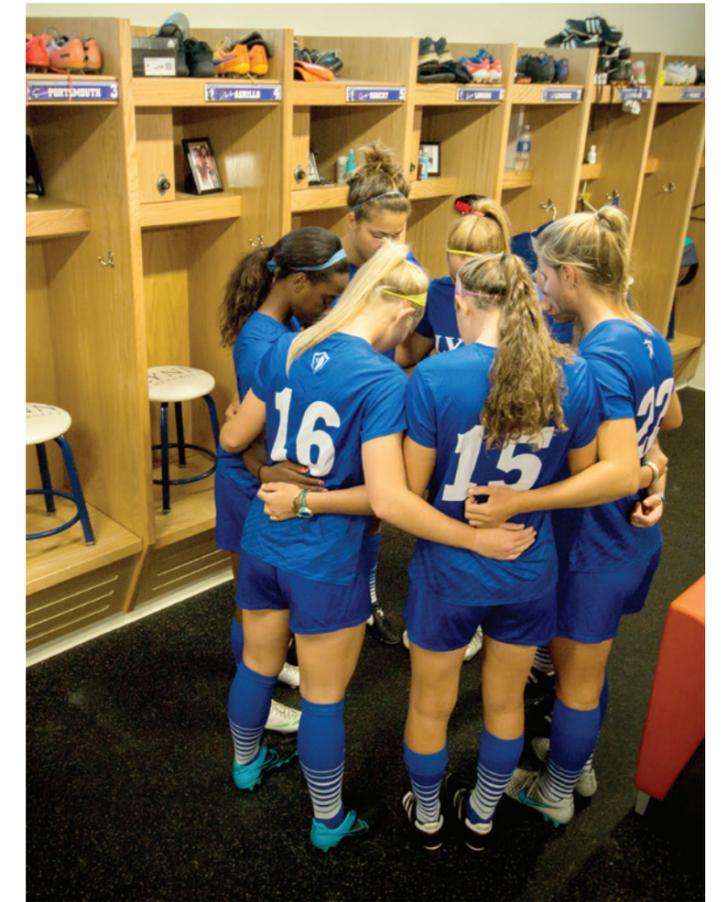
The Smiths are also the lead sponsors for Lynn's Tennis Collegiate/AM, an annual fundraising event that pits collegiate players against members of the local community in a friendly challenge.

"Lynn student athletes and our tennis program have been privileged to have Larry and Elaine as donors and friends," says Michael Perez, head coach of men's and women's tennis. "Their presence at so many of our contests and events shows their commitment, and we are deeply appreciative of their generosity."

It's not only athletics that Larry likes about Lynn. "I love the cafeteria. It's one of my favorite places. I eat there with the students at least once a week. The people on campus are great ... kind, nice. They do good things, and I enjoy working with them. Whenever they need anything, I try to give it to them."

Larry Smith received his B.A. and B.S. degrees from Suffolk University, where he attended on a basketball scholarship. After graduation, he entered the Massachusetts National Guard and also went into the insurance business with his brother. In 1978, they relocated to Florida and continued their partnership as co-founders of the Nation Safe Drivers Group in Boca Raton. After 52 years in the business, the brothers sold the company to their 145 employees.

Larry and Elaine Smith have been married for 45 years and currently reside in Boca Raton. They have three children and seven grandchildren.



Members of the women's soccer team huddle before a game.



Dr. J. Donald and Joan Wargo

## Lynn University mourns loss of former board member

The Lynn community is saddened by the loss of Dr. J. Donald Wargo, a Lynn University board of trustees member from 1987–2008, who passed away on Sept. 20, 2015.

"Don's leadership and wise counsel served us for many years," says Lynn President Kevin M. Ross. "We deeply appreciate how he helped shape our university into what it is today."

Born in Allentown, Pennsylvania, Wargo attended preparatory school at Valley Forge Military Academy and Allegheny College. After graduate study in cardiovascular physiology at the University of Minnesota, he received his M.D. from Temple University School of Medicine.

Wargo moved to Miami, Florida, in 1955 to complete an internship and residency, and specialty training in obstetrics and

gynecology at Jackson Memorial Hospital. He established an OB/GYN practice in 1959 with offices in Boca Raton and Delray Beach, retiring in 1994. He served his country in the U.S. Army Medical Corps as chief of obstetrics and gynecology at the American Hospital in Paris, France.

Wargo was one of the 25 founding members of the medical staff of Boca Raton Regional Hospital, of which he was president from 1969–1971 and chief of surgery from 1975–1977. He served on the hospital's board of trustees from 1972–1997.



## All styles of giving

**Ronald Harrar '01**

Ronald Harrar has chosen to “pay it forward” with other alumni to endow a scholarship for first-year students.

### Hospitality alum ‘pays it forward’

A native of Caracas, Venezuela, Ronald Harrar graduated from Lynn with a B.S. in business administration in 2001. He went on to receive a master’s degree in hospitality management from New York University in 2002.

While a student at Lynn, Harrar spent a semester in Ireland at American College Dublin. “That’s where I got interested in the hospitality industry. We toured all the best hotels and castles in Ireland. It was a great experience.”

Harrar collects and sells contemporary pieces by such art-world giants as Kusama, Fontana and Calder—with works ranging from paintings and sculptures to photography.

His loft, in the Chelsea section of New York City, houses works that sell for hundreds to millions of dollars. The most expensive piece he has sold is by Italian sculptor Lucio Fontana, the first European artist to truly promote “spatialism” and the idea of performance art.

Harrar’s fondest memory of his time at Lynn? “... That it was always on the cutting edge of new technology. Back in 1998, we didn’t have the technology that we do today. eBay was just being created ... nobody really knew what it was. We’d have classes on how to sell an item over the Internet, but there were no digital cameras and eBay couldn’t upload the photos. Everything was so complicated. But I did actually sell an item. The professors brought the current technology into the education.”

Harrar is a member of the Lynn University Leadership Society, and he was recently invited to join the President’s Alumni Advisory Council—a hand-selected, prestigious group of alumni leaders who provide President Kevin M. Ross with feedback and ideas for the university.

Residents of New York City, Harrar and wife Valery have a 7-year-old son, Yves, and 5-year-old twin daughters, Clara Alessia and Stephania.