

The Voice of **UNICO NATIONAL**
Com **UNICO**

MARCH 2013 • VOLUME 68 • ISSUE 03

UNICO *Convenes for the*
MID-YEAR BOARD MEETING



Sal
has left
The
Building



**The largest Italian American service
organization in the United States**



**“Service
above *Self*”**



**ELVIS
ENTERTAINS
UNICANS!**
Pages 24-25

**ITALY’S
ELECTION
RESULTS**
Page 39



**DR. DEFELICE
RECEIVES
MARCONI AWARD**
Page 47

WILKES BARRE, PA



From left: Mark McDade, Robert DePietro, Frank Forlin, Dominic Ortolani and Chapter President Joe Pierangeli.



From left: Ernie DeStefano, Mark McDade, Louis DiMattio, Chris DiMattio, Jim Montone, Joe Cerullo, Sal Benvenuti, Joe Agresti and Steve Pelonero.



From left: UNICO National President David Donnini, William Anzalone, Jr. and Pennsylvania III District Governor Germain DeMartinis.



From left: Tom Tidey, Bob Wilkins, Dan McGroarty, Greg Sheplock, Wilkes-Barre Chapter First Vice President, Davis Pugliese, and Gary Decker.



From left: Robert DePietro, Joe Pierangeli, David Donnini, Dominic Ortolani and Joe Donnini.



From left: Past National President Chris DiMattio, Frank Gervasi and Ernie Gatto share a toast.

2013 CALENDAR ORDER

Italian & Italian American Heritage Calendar



2013

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UNICO National 2013 Italian and Italian American Heritage Calendar

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*The Staff of the National Office is dedicated
 to serving our Members and Chapters!*

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CONTENTS

NEWS FROM UNICO NATIONAL

PAGES 4-7.....VIEWPOINT

4 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	4 EDITOR'S DESK
5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT	5 CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE
6 FIRST VICE PRESIDENT	6 SECOND VICE PRESIDENT
7 THIRD VICE PRESIDENT	

PAGES 2, 5, 7-15, 18-21, 23, 26, 29-30.....CHAPTER/DIST NEWS

PAGES 7-8, 15-16, 33.....NATIONAL REPORTS

PAGES 4, 18.....IN MEMORIAM

PAGE 17.....NEW MEMBERS

PAGES 19, 22.....BOOK REVIEWS

PAGES 24-25.....MID-YEAR BOARD MEETING

PAGE 26.....NJ DISTRICT VII CARNEVALE

NEWS & VIEWS FROM FRA NOI

PAGES 35-37.....AMERICA

35 NEWSMAKERS	35 LOU&A
35 REVIEW	36 LIBRI
37 SPORTS	

PAGES 39-41.....ITALIA

39 IN AMERICA	39 PERSONAGGI
39 IN ITALY	40 VIAGGIO

PAGE 42.....LA VERA CUCINA

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COVER PHOTOS

MAIN Top: Vastola Award Winner, Joe Agresti, celebrates with Chapter Members and UNICO friends. Standing from left: John Alati, Steve Pelonero, Sal Benvenuti, David Donnini, Pat Pelonero, Bob Appaluccio and Frank Greco, Jr. Seated from left: Linda Gail Alati, Debbie Benvenuti, Arlene Agresti and Joe Agresti. (Page 24-25)

MAIN Bottom: David Donnini, Pat Pelonero, "Elvis" and Sal Benvenuti. (Page 24-25)

SIDE BAR Top: "Elvis" entertains at the Mid-Year Board Meeting. (Page 24-25)

SIDE BAR Bottom: Dr. Stephen DeFelice receives the Marconi Award. (Page 47)

2012-2013 CALENDAR

Community Service Day	April 27, 2013	Chapter to Decide Event
Convention 2013	July 31-August 3, 2013	Marriott Harbor Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Eastern Regional Meeting	November 1-3, 2013	Villa Roma, Callicoon, New York

PRESIDENT



A Message from National President David Donnini

It seems like I just got done writing my last article for ComUNICO. I cannot believe we are publishing another issue already.

I am happy to report that our Disaster Relief Fund has raised over \$15,000. UNICO National has started to distribute aid to our UNICANs that had their primary residences affected by Hurricane Sandy. I personally want to thank each and every UNICAN and friends of UNICO who made donations. It is just a testament to our motto, "SERVICE ABOVE SELF"

Recently, I have been visiting various West Coast Chapters of UNICO. On January 17, 2013 I had the pleasure of visiting the Santa Barbara Chapter. I was hosted by President Joe Campanelli and Past President Lori Sorenson. It was held at a UNICO member's restaurant. The restaurant is called Arnoldi's. We were treated by a special presentation by Jim Nonn and David Peri owners/members of the restaurant. They talked about the history of the restaurant and how very important it was to preserve it for our culture and the community. This Chapter also does a special recognition of their members called "Member in a Minute". This month it was member, Silvio DiLoretto. Silvio is a patriarch of the community. What a resume!

On February 13th, I had the honor to attend the Marin, California Chapter. President Ron Benjamin and his wife held a Valentine's Day Dinner. It was at Marin Joe's, another iconic establishment in Corte Madera, California. The restaurant is owned by member Cavaliere Romano Della Santina. The restaurant has been there since 1954. I was blessed to be able give a nice presentation and also had the honor of installing a new member. What a great group of UNICANs.

As you are aware, the National Convention is fast approaching. This year it will be in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. I want all members to think of new ideas to help our organization prosper now and in the future. Membership is the most important part of any organization. With that said, I want everyone to think about a new type of UNICO membership.

The membership was presented a couple years ago at a National Convention and did not pass. It was called the Amici Membership. This type of membership would be for non-Italian Americans. An Amici Member would not be allowed to vote or hold an office. Many members have expressed concerns that we would lose our Italian American identity. I respectfully disagree. My point of view is that this membership will help us increase membership by maintaining our identity. Also, if you have a ready, willing, and able person who loves all things Italian, why not let them help promote and grow UNICO National?

I do not want to sound like a broken record, but, without change, there is not any progress.

EDITOR'S DESK



Editor's Comments: Pat Pelonero

Let me start by saying welcome daylight savings time and I am looking forward to spring as I am sure all of you are as well.

This year has been quite busy and confusing due to the weather events that sometimes stopped us in our tracks and made us postpone and redirect our normal scheduling. However UNICO prevailed and we still managed to get most of the regular meetings and events planned and executed.

By now I am sure most of the Membership has heard the news that Salvatore Benvenuti has resigned his position as Executive Administrator and Andre' DiMino, Past National President was appointed as the new Administrator starting April 1.

It has been my pleasure to work with Sal for the past five years. I believe that we worked well as a team and accomplished much to bring UNICO National to a new level. I want to thank Sal for all his tutelage and mentoring of myself and the staff of the National Office and we will certainly miss him.

With that said, the Staff and I are looking forward to working with Andre' DiMino. Andre' has always made himself available to the National Office and has helped us in directing the process for our computer updates, website overhaul and of course getting the ComUNICO set up in the National Office.

I am sure the transition will go smoothly as

all the staff now work with Andre' to some degree.

The other person I would like to thank is Debbie Benvenuti, as she has volunteered tirelessly at every event in the past five years. We would not have been as successful without you! I hope you and Sal will continue to be able to attend the meetings and I am not letting you off the hook that easily.

It was a pleasure seeing all of our Members at the Mid Year Board Meeting in Las Vegas. I truly love seeing and interacting with each and every one of you. I hope you enjoyed the weekend and I look forward to seeing all of you again at the Convention in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

As always I hope you enjoy this issue of the ComUNICO. There are always many great stories told both in the text that is written and the vast amount of pictures from all the UNICO events across the Nation. I wish all our members a very Happy Easter!

Until next issue Ciao!



JOSEPH COCCIA Jr.
12/6/29 - 1/3/13

To Our Many Friends:

The Coccia Family would like to express our most sincere gratitude and heartfelt thanks for all the love and support we received during the past year. Your notes, cards, letters, mass cards, e-mails, care packages, and particularly, your prayers make these challenging times in our lives a little easier. The outpouring of love experienced during these difficult times is a beautiful tribute to our father/husband Joseph's life and will never be forgotten by any of us.

In addition, thank you for the flowers, and especially the generous donations given to Coccia Foundation in honor of Joseph Coccia Jr. The Foundation, of course, will continue to promote and preserve "all things Italian," just as our father/husband did with all his heart.

Con molto affetto,
Elda and the Coccia Family

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



A Message from Executive Vice President Mike Veselka

Today I sit looking out my home office window at the snow on the ground and it happens to be raining. Winter just isn't what it used to be, but we have learned to accept it, and move forward. The same can be said of the business climate in America, but we accept it, and move forward. One thing that I refuse to accept, is the direction UNICO National is heading. We need to come together and get everyone's help to move forward. We keep hearing about other organizations losing membership because times are tough. UNICANs, as the name defines, are unique. We have always been the cream, and we need to quit accepting excuses, and rise to the top.

Having just finished the first draft of the committee room schedule for the Mid-Year Board Meeting in Las Vegas, once again I realize that we need your help. The same people are on too many committees. They, without question, are among the best members UNICO has. They serve to the best of their ability at all times, but at the Mid-Year and Convention, can only serve one committee at a time. They are spread much too thin. We need you, the members, to step up and join a committee.

The committee chairs need their committee members to help make decisions at their meetings. The attendance at the meetings, reflects what priority is given to that meeting, by committee members with more than one meeting in that time slot. This has to stop. Every committee is important to the success of UNICO moving forward. We need your help. Please consider joining one of our committees. All the committees are listed in the member section of the UNICO website.

At the Eastern Regional meeting in Wilkes-Barre, we had a total of twelve committee meetings including a District Governor seminar and a Chapter President's workshop. The meetings were conducted in three meeting rooms over a period of four hours. Once again there were conflicts in scheduling, but we did the best we could. The committee chairs gave their reports at the general session on Saturday. I thank the chairpersons for a job well done.

The 2013 Convention Committee greatly appreciates the fund-raising efforts from UNICANs throughout the country. The money we raise helps to keep down the cost of attending the Convention for each member. You can help by supporting the Convention fund-raising efforts in your area. Recent Conventions have had a problem with people registering with the hotel at the last minute. Please help the committee prepare by registering early. If for some reason you were not able to attend, you can cancel up to forty eight hours prior to your arrival date. Consider making the Convention your family

vacation. You will be glad you did. The phone number for reservations is 954-525-4000. See the Convention Ad in this issue and please make your reservation today. Happy Easter to you and your family.

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE



Chaplain's Message: Fr. Bob Wolfee

When we think about Lent, we typically think about what we are going to do to make it special. We may decide to give up certain foods or some pleasurable hobby. We may try to attend daily Mass. But, Lent is not just about what we want to do. It is also and more importantly, about what God wants us to do.

Rather than asking ourselves what holy action we want to do for Lent, the question should become what is God asking of us in this solemn season. God calls us to pray, to fast and to share with others. It is through these actions that we are led to a deeper relationship with him, to a keener awareness of his presence in our lives and to a more intense desire to respond to his initiatives.

A crucial question to ask ourselves is, "What is God trying to reveal to me so that I can have a closer relationship with him?" Anything or anyone that is important to us requires paying attention to it or them. Our relationship with God is no different. Every day, we face many distractions that can make it easy to begin to drift away from him. The Church gives us the season of Lent to help us step out of our routine and to consciously evaluate our relationship with God.

Throughout Lent, God invites us to take a few steps toward him so that he can take giant leaps toward us. He wants to bring freedom into every part of our lives. He wants his grace to surround us and penetrate us, to warm our hearts and transform our minds. He knows our needs. He knows our weaknesses. He knows our good desires and our bad ones. When we admit our weakness and frailty, he will heal us and change us.

This is a good time to examine our consciences and our hearts. Lent provides for us time dedicated to repenting for our sins and returning to the Lord. But above all, it is a time in which we are encouraged to develop a true and lasting relationship with Jesus. What will be the result? Will anyone see our efforts? Even if no one else does, we can be confident that God will see our good works and reward us. That reward might not come until we are in the glorious kingdom of heaven, but there, the rewards never end!

God bless.

HILLSIDE, NJ



The Hillside Chapter hosted its Annual Christmas party for approximately 700 primary grades and special needs students at Abram P. Morris School. From left: UNICO members: Angela Lawler (Santa's elf), Angelo Bonanno, Chapter President; Paul Drejaj, Joe Puglise, Lee Bonanno, and Nick "Santa" Drejaj.



Elf Angela Lawler and two students enjoying the party.



Playing the sax at the party are Hillside Academy's principal Phil Foti and playing the keyboard is music teacher, Alissa Valiante.

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FIRST VICE PRESIDENT



A Message from First Vice President Richard D'Arminio

Plans are currently being made to hold a second conference call with all District Governors and this time we will include Chapter Presidents as it is good to get an understanding of what is working so well in some areas while others continue to struggle.

If I am elected your National President in 2014, I will simply be BACK TO THE BASICS. All too often we find that many Chapters and/or Districts do not have a succession plan in place, a budget, committee chairs, speakers at your monthly meetings and an understanding of the duties with each respective office, etc.

So often I find that many Chapters do not invite speakers or National Officers to meetings and/or events. We try and visit as many Chapters and Districts as we possibly can. We are trying to reach out to those states that have been inactive, but seem willing to keep UNICO alive; therefore we will be making some visitations to areas such as Massachusetts in the spring.

One of the ideas given to me by a member of my Greater Ramsey Chapter was to have every one of our 65 Chapter members rotate and either invite a speaker or bring some Culture/Heritage information to the monthly Chapter dinner meetings. Just think how easy this would be and the interest it holds in all members! After it's my turn I don't have to do it for five years again but it gets everyone involved. We can talk about the Region in Italy that our families came from, show a film, invite a speaker, etc. If you have a member who speaks Italian then, consider holding Italian Classes not only for your members, but open it up to your local community. What a way to attract and retain members! After all, most of us joined UNICO to be of service to those less fortunate as well as wanting to preserve our Italian Heritage and bring back memories from the past!

I would encourage more Chapters to also get involved at this time of the year from January-April in getting more young students to apply for our National Scholarships, and our Awards that will be chosen at the upcoming Mid-Year Board Meeting. Please read about them on our website, become very familiar with them, and think of some candidates as this too will help in promoting new members and the good work that your local Chapter does.

As of this writing, I am pleased to announce that my Chapter was instrumental in sponsoring the 2013 Marconi Award Recipient. I personally e-mailed three National Scholarship packages to some of our local students. If all the Chapters and Districts promote this more in all of our schools then the outcome may be more new members and a greater awareness of UNICO in your local community.

I encourage all Chapters to get together with your District and hold a Brian Piccolo Awards Night Dinner. It is so much easier to do with your District as one big event. Many continue with this tradition and some Chapters and Districts have not yet started, but now is the time to think about it in May before the school year closes in June. If you need assistance please do not hesitate to call me directly.

Many of the Chapters received calls from our National Second Vice President Ann Walko as well as Third Vice President Dominick Nicastro and Membership Director Mark McDade. Many of the District Governors receive calls from me and will also be receiving calls from some of the District Governors as part of an outreach effort that we have organized. It is always good to hear from different National Officers and your fellow Governors. Sometimes a new voice brings new ideas.

I wish to conclude by thanking our National Office staff for their good work and assistance, and for the good work that they do with ComUNICO. If everyone takes the time to read about all the great work that many Chapters are doing across the United States then there is no question that you will pick up a new idea that may work for you.

Hope to see all of you at the Las Vegas Mid-Year Board Meeting, and make plans now for Convention 2013.

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT



A Message from Second Vice President Ann Walko

Time is going by too quickly and things are moving faster and faster as we begin to approach our Mid-Year Meeting in Las Vegas and preparations begin for our Annual Convention in Ft. Lauderdale. However, it is time to look at what this office has accomplished thus far and talk about where we are going to place our next area of focus.

One promise made was to develop **CONNECTIONS** between National Officers and Chapters. I still maintain that Chapters are the vital force behind our organization. We are meeting with success in this area through our **CHAPTER PRESIDENTS FORUM**. I am pleased with the fact that Chapters now feel comfortable enough to call and ask for assistance and I am also pleased with the invitations to share in Chapter and District events and activities. We are truly building **UNITY** which is the goal of our National President and a goal which I espouse as well. It is a part of our creed as an organization. The plan to reach out to every Chapter has been met.

A second promise was to develop training modules to help new and seasoned Chapter Presidents. We held our first successful training session at the Eastern Regional Meeting in Pennsylvania. All attendees received **Certificates of Completion**. The second module will be held at the Mid-Year meeting. In the future, these modules

will be offered through technology and training and could become a part of Chapter meetings so more members have the opportunity to participate. We are **ALL** stakeholders in the UNICO process.

Reports are coming in! More than 77 have been received which is forty + more than in the past! As you know, I read each and every report. These reports represent all the good you are doing in service to others and they show all the hard work and care that goes into helping promote our many causes.

Another promise was to support as many Chapters as humanly possible. Know that I am enjoying all the events you invite me to, they are beautifully run programs and I am enjoying the social aspect of meeting so many UNICANs who exhibit a **PASSION** for what they do in helping others. **The Tour of Chapters** is underway and the **Telephone Tour of Chapters** has also begun. I sincerely appreciate your invitations to swear in new members, they are the promise and hope for our future as an organization. Let's share our passion with the newest members of our UNICO family.

It is also the time to start campaigning again. It is my pleasure to serve as the Second Vice President. Slowly, we are making progress and we have more work to do to continue our organization as a viable one. To continue the work started and to continue moving forward, I will be seeking the position of First Vice President. We have now established a wonderful relationship between all the National Officers, we are in a good place to **MOVE INTO THE FUTURE** with strategies, the will-power, the passion, and love of people and our desire to engage in Service Above Self.

THANK YOU for all you do to make life a little bit better for others. Keep working with me to strengthen our **UNITY**, to strengthen **MEMBER INVOLVEMENT**, and provide them with the **OPPORTUNITY TO GROW** with our wonderful organization....for we are still striving for continued growth. Do not be afraid of **CHANGE**. The combination of striving for **UNITY**, being good **NEIGHBORS**, maintaining our **INTEGRITY**, continuing with our **CHARITY**, and providing **OPPORTUNITY** will lead us into the 21st century with ease and grace as we prepare for the **CHANGE** that will make us stronger in our resolve to continue to live a life of service to others.

CIGAR NIGHT



UNICO Members Frank Greco, West Essex; Steve Pelonero, Passaic Valley; Ken Broderick and Frank Paolercio, Orange/West Orange; Bob Massella, West Essex; Rick D'Arminio Greater Ramsey and Dominick Nicastro, Garfield; join honorary member John Pagoda for a night of cigars, good food and friendship.

THIRD VICE PRESIDENT



A Message from Third Vice President Dominick Nicastro

Hello everyone,

I hope this issue of ComUNICO finds everyone healthy and doing fine. It has been a little tough for some of us in UNICO that are trying to get back our normal life since Hurricane Sandy hit us.

The UNICO National Office along with the Hurricane Sandy Disaster Committee had meetings on what we can do to help our members who were affected by this storm. Pat Pelonero along with the staff have been helping everyone that applied and qualifies for help.

I want to thank the Hazleton Chapter for forming their own committee and donating their time and materials that they distributed to the hurricane victims.

Since the last issue of ComUNICO, I have not been able to meet with the colleges as I planned with our committee. With the passing of Past National President Joseph Coccia, I feel it is best to give this a little time and then we will reach out to The Coccia Foundation to put a presentation together for the students along with a survey on their opinions of what they would like to see in UNICO as a youth member. I spoke with Past National President Joseph Coccia and visited him three weeks prior to his passing. He was happy to hear about our plans for the youth members.

As for the Rockaway Township Chapter, we are making some progress and hope to have a Charter before the Convention this summer. A group of us will meet with the prospective members to explain what we have done in UNICO and how we got involved in the local, District and National levels. I will keep you posted on the progress.

I found an interesting article that was given to me in the year 2005 by a member of the Garfield Chapter. It addresses the question "What Does UNICO Do for Me"? I discussed it with Sal Benvenuti. We agreed some changes need to be made before we share it with the membership. After reading this article, there will not be any doubt in your mind. I want to thank Bill Yuppa for giving me the original article.

Time is moving rapidly. We had an excellent Eastern Regional meeting at the Woodlands Inn in Wilkes Bare, Pennsylvania. The committee meetings were held on Friday and a lot was accomplished.

In closing I would like to thank all the Chapters and Districts that have invited me to their meetings and events. It is a pleasure to be a part of your meeting night.

I look forward to seeing everyone soon.



PITTSFIELD, MA

Pittsfield Chapter Supports NAMI

The Pittsfield Chapter prepared and cooked a fund-raising dinner for the Berkshire County Chapter of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). The menu consisted of both red and white pasta, baked chicken, meat balls, sausage and peppers, salad and bread. Approximately two hundred people were served. Proceeds from this event will be used for Crisis Intervention Training (used to educate law enforcement personnel), support groups, and Family-to-Family classes. The Berkshire County Chapter of NAMI has been active in the area for twenty seven years assisting the mentally ill and their families.



Chapter Executive Vice President Wayne Ditore poses with Berkshire County NAMI Chapter President Marilyn Moran.



Chapter kitchen volunteers for NAMI dinner seated from left: Larry Salvatore, Wayne Ditore, Joe Bonacquisti, Tiki Windsor and Andy Pozzoni. Standing from left: Tony Simonelli, Fran Curley, Scott Pignatelli, Frank DiPierro and Kevin Dondi.



NAMI Directors from left: Marilyn Moran, Board President; Ruth Healy, Board Member and Carly Arambula, Board Member.

SCHOLARSHIP



UNICO National Scholarship Report: Joan Tidona Our Investment

Education is recognized as an essential investment in the future. Clearly, Dr. Vastola and the founding members of UNICO embraced this concept. Their commitment to assisting deserving young scholars was a UNICO priority from the very beginning. UNICANs continue this purpose today. Designated our "number one project," the practice of providing monetary assistance by way of scholarships, to talented students, has been expanded substantially through the years. Member dedication to this purpose is extraordinary.

While we perpetuate an original principle, our motives go far beyond tradition. As Italian Americans, we fully understand the increased opportunities education affords our youth. We recognize, value and respect the far-reaching and life changing empowerment education allows. We know that as we help gifted young students to realize their aspirations, we also encourage them to become exceptional, contributing members of society.

The financial outlay for higher education continues to spiral out of control. Not only do students and their families struggle with the cost of tuition, they face additional expenses such as books, housing and everyday necessities. Consequently, our scholarships are significant and highly sought after.

Next season, two additional programs will be included with our offerings: The Louise Torracco Memorial Doctoral Scholarship for Science and the Ralph J. Torracco Doctoral Scholarship for the Study of History/Archaeology of Ancient Mediterranean Cultures. These scholarships, made possible by the generosity of benefactor and brother UNICAN Ralph Torracco, have been approved by the Foundation. We are most grateful to Ralph for his continued support of The UNICO National Foundation Scholarship Program. Ralph could have chosen to set up these programs through many other entities. That he has selected UNICO, speaks volumes.

Newly established scholarships are fully funded by our patrons. The other programs are underwritten by interest generated by the corpus account, supplemented by Chapter donations. Owing to careful investments and Chapter support, we have been able to fully finance our programs without invading the corpus. This was not always the case. To help continue our success, all chapters are asked to donate to the National Scholarship Program. Your assistance is vital! Do what you can, but please do something.

UNICANs are committed to promoting education. Virtually every UNICO Chapter, regardless of size, confers local scholarships. We take justified pride in our National program. We work to make things better.

And as we assist young students, we have invested in the future.

MEMBERSHIP AND RETENTION



**Membership
and Retention
Director
Mark McDade**

This March Issue of *ComUNICO* is ushered in with spring. Oh Boy!! The clocks have been moved ahead, signaling the longer and warmer days to come. Skiing, ice skating and sledding are a distant memory from my past and the spring winds are a most friendly welcome for me.

Spring brings with it the fresh scent of new birth and the start of planting season. For UNICO Chapters that have not yet conducted a Membership Drive and/or Heritage Event, now is the time to implement one, before this UNICO year has completed. Now is the time to plant those seeds of enthusiasm for our Italian Heritage. Now is the time to bring new members into our outstanding organization.

What is your Chapter planning to do for April's Day of Community Service? Some of the larger Chapters conduct many projects. But, whether it is one or several outings your Chapter does, be sure to invite some new member prospects along for the ride. There is something about doing good deeds for others that is very rewarding. Including some non-members to experience the camaraderie and joy of giving and working together may be "just the ticket" to get them to join your Chapter and our GREAT Organization.

Then, there is the tried and true way of bringing in members. Running an Italian Heritage event as a vehicle for a Membership Drive has been very successful, especially when you use the UNICO Power Point presentation perfected by Past National President Andre' DiMino. This tool can be viewed and downloaded from our National website (www.UNICO.org) in the Member Section under Tools. Also available there are the UNICO Video, applications and the UNICO Color Brochure. At your request, the office can send you any recruitment materials you would need for success. The UNICO Office Staff (973-808-0035) is there and ready to serve, as are ALL of the National Officers.

Have you ever wondered who the top ten Chapters are in total Membership? Taken from the current (February 1st) National Membership Report, here they are, with their totals and starting with #10: Waterbury-95; Point Pleasant Beach-107; Weathersfield-108; Pittsfield-120; Clark-123; Kansas City-128; Hackensack-136; Keystone-141; Nutley-142; and way ahead of everyone is Pennsylvania District II Scranton Chapter with 357. There are a number of close ties in this group. I wonder who the top ten will be on July 1st, when the end-of-the-year's rosters are sent in. As you can see from this, it is possible to increase your membership. Let's set some Membership goals in your Chapter.

Remember, it is up to you to bring in new members. All you have to do is ask!

KANSAS CITY, MO

The Kansas City Chapter of UNICO National is well along in finalizing plans for its annual Fiesta Italiana. Last year the Festa attracted 103,500 people and UNICO Scholarships were awarded in the amount of \$54,000 to most deserving high school seniors to assist their education. For the third consecutive year the Kansas City Chapter will award over \$50,000 in scholarships.

SCRANTON, PA

St. Joseph's Center Baby Pantry Collection

UNICO Scranton Chapter held its Annual Christmas Meeting and Party on December 11 at Fiorelli's in Peckville. At the gathering, baby pantry items were collected for the St. Joseph's Center Baby Pantry. The Chapter collected donations of diapers, clothing (newborn to size 6 toddlers), baby wash and wipes, beautiful baby blankets handmade by the Knit and Crochet Group at Big Bass Lake, and numerous other baby items. The Chapter has contributed over \$3,000 to St. Joseph's Center this past year. St. Joseph's Center Baby Pantry is available to the entire community and accepts new and gently used items. The Pantry depends on the generosity of volunteers and donors from the community.



Standing from left: Chris DiMattio, Past National President; Ann DiMattio; Sal Mecca, Chapter President; Sister Maryalice Jacquinot, IHM, President and CEO of St. Joseph's Center and Palma Yanni, President of the Scranton UNICO Board of Directors.



UNICO National Scranton Chapter presents a \$1000 check to the Scranton Boys/Girls Club during the Annual Christmas Party. The Scranton Chapter served as volunteers for the party. First row from left: Eric Bromage Michael Bromage, Lorna Lynch and Mayleen Matos. Back row from left: Laura Gentile, Club Director of Operations; Chris DiMattio, Past National President; Tricia DiBiasi Thomas, Club Executive Director; and Sal Mecca Scranton Chapter President.



The Scranton Chapter welcomed new members at the December Membership Meeting. Kneeling and seated from left: Chris DiMattio, Past National President; Virginia Gowden, Ed Pricci, Mary Ann Wetzel and Patti Grande-Reider. Standing from left: Jeanne Trunzo, Mary Gisolfi, Mary Marrara, Maryann Healey, Bonnie Blasé, Doris Lindsley, Rosalie Prizzi, Diane Alberigi, Linda Malinoski, Membership Chair; Joe Grandinetti, Jim Brogna and Sal Mecca, Scranton Chapter President.

SAN ANTONIO, TX



The San Antonio Chapter and The Christus Foundation Celebrate the Spaghetti Dinner held at Columbus Hall, January 27, 2013.



Great Meatball Meat Mixers from left: Buddy Forestello, Bill Kelly, Dinner Chairman and Carlos Fernandez, Mixer Extraordinaire!



Kathryn S. Forestello, Granddaughter of Charter Member Buddy Forestello--" We're starting them YOUNG!"

REHOBOTH AREA, DE



Theresa and Salvatore Giove celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary on December 18, 2012. Fellow UNICANs extended their best wishes to the couple as they were in attendance at the Rehoboth Chapter Christmas party on December 18th at the Kings Creek Country Club.

MONTCLAIR, NJ



Dr. Margaret Brisco (right) a member of the Montclair Chapter made a presentation at the Chapter's January meeting. She read passages from her latest book titled "The Way it Was - Memories of a Woman Doctor" Dr. Brisco, one of the first women to be an intern and resident at Newark's Martland Medical Center, eloquently captures the challenges of female doctors in the late 1950's and 1960's and how she sought equality within the medical profession. Dr. Brisco has also written other books, namely, "Women in Transition - I am a Wanderer" and "Metamorphoses: The Stories She May Tell" Also pictured with Dr. Brisco is Angela Meola, her publicist.

PITTSFIELD, MA

Community Service Event Bell Ringing for the Local Salvation Army

Every December, members of the Pittsfield Chapter of UNICO volunteer three days of their time to ring the bells at the Salvation Army collection kettle in front of the local Walmart. They work in two hour shifts from nine in the morning to nine at

night. Usually the temperatures are below freezing and the wind is blowing.

This volunteer time is very productive for the Salvation Army as about twenty six hundred dollars was collected. The proceeds are used by the Salvation Army to fund their various community support programs which usually depend entirely on donations.

This event is one of several conducted by the Pittsfield Chapter in December.



One of the late afternoon shifts manned by Chapter Members Dan Bianchi, Mayor of Pittsfield and Bob Quatrocchi.



One of the early evening shifts manned by Chapter Members from left: Cathy Faggioni, Dom Sacco and Sue Carmel.

MONTVILLE, NJ

On Tuesday, January 21st at the Columbia Inn, Montville UNICO had a special program at its general meeting featuring Kathy Fisher, Director of the Montville Historical Society. Ms. Fisher spoke briefly about the history of Montville from the pre-revolutionary war era to the present and focused on the abundance of notable historical homes, graveyards, and important crossroads from the past. Currently, the society is in the process of restoring local grave sites of importance to the town and history of local settlers. In accordance with Montville UNICO's support of local worthwhile activities, the Chapter donated \$1000.



From left: Tutty Giordano, Chapter Program Chairperson; Kathy Fisher and Michele Maddalena, Chapter President.

NEW JERSEY DISTRICT IV



From left: Russell Mollica, Angelo Pomerico, Dave D'Arco, Paul Alongi, Dominick Nicastro and Rick D'Arminio.



From left: Donna Morse, Gary Legrenzi, Anna Dianuzzo, Sal Ingallina, Betty and Perry Russo, Pat Pelonero and Maryanne Ingallina.



From left: John Borgese, Rich Orsini, John Morano, John Barberi and Bruce Ponchak.



From left: John Myers of Funkdafied Entertainment, Mike Napolitano, Al Crincoli, Tony Romano Perry Russo and Ray Conti.



From left: Vincent Calabrese, John Myers holding poster, his associate at Funkdafied Entertainment, Michael Grillo, Roberto Casale, Kara Pontrelli, Steven Calantone and Robert Calantone.



OAKVILLE/ WATERTOWN, CT



The Oakville-Watertown Chapter of UNICO National hosted its Annual Pasta Supper for the Watertown Area Association for Special Citizens headed by Rocco Calabrese on Thursday, December 13, 2012 at the VFW in Oakville. Pictured from left: Mike Daddona, Stanley Masayda, Rick Sarandrea, George Sacchi, Paul Rinaldi and Elaine Orsini Cieslewski, Chapter President.

SECAUCUS, NJ

Secaucus Murder Mystery Dinner

At Secaucus UNICO's First Annual Murder Mystery Dinner the Booby Prize was awarded to The Wisenheimer Table. The super sleuths who solved the mystery were seated at The Anxious Arena Table and included Joe and Marianna Marra, Ann Arena and Ken Vollweiler, Shari and Jeff Brennan, Ben Ramadan, Cathy and John Follo and Patti and Greg Mondadori. A big thanks to Nancy Mateo and her committee for a great job in putting it all together. Because of the support of everyone in attendance we were able to donate to the Fireman's Mutual Fund and to a resident in need of heating oil. Please send any requests for a resident in need to Secaucus UNICO PO Box 1182 Secaucus, New Jersey 07094.



The Anxious Arena Table from left: Cathy and John Follo and Patti and Greg Mondadori.



The Wisenheimer Table both masked and unmasked includes front row from left: Agnes Arena, Joe Arena and Greta Marra. Back row from left: Lucia Kazmierski McKeeby, Gerard Marra, George and Connie Shoenrock and Susan Marra.



The Wisenheimers unmasked!

GREATER BINGHAMTON, NY

Rescue Mission-Whitney Place

On January 9, 2013, the Greater Binghamton Chapter held their monthly meeting at Grande's Bella Cucina Restaurant in Binghamton. Guest speakers were Rebecca Rathmell, Program Manager and Vikki Collazo, Donor Relations Representative from The Rescue Mission's Whitney Place. Whitney Place serves as a homeless shelter, with the goal of helping the residents return independently to the community. As part of the Greater Binghamton's Winter Charities projects, members brought perishable and non-perishable items to fill the pantries of Whitney Place. UNICANs filled the room with donations for this worthy cause. Under the direction of UNICAN Marco Cuda, the members of Greater Binghamton will participate in the Whitney Place's Homeless Walk "Walk a Mile in My Shoes" on February 9, 2013. Team UNICO will help in raising funds for Whitney Place.



From left: Vikki Collazo, Donor Relations Representative; Marc Cuda of the Greater Binghamton Chapter and Captain of Team UNICO and Rebecca Rathmell, Program Manager Whitney Place.



On January 9, 2012, the Greater Binghamton Chapter of UNICO welcomed their newest member John Isenberg to the Chapter. From left: President Rob Salamida, new member John Isenberg, and First Vice President Barbara Wahila.

WAYNE, NJ

The Wayne Chapter is getting quite busy for this year's events. Preparation for our Beefsteak and Golf Outing are already under way and will be held in the next several months. We just completed our second year and are doing quite well. New officer installations were conducted on January 8th at a gathering held at Anthony Franco's on Hamburg Turnpike, Wayne, New Jersey. The night was marked with good food and home-made wine. Outgoing President Fossati was given a gavel mounted on a plaque, from the membership, in appreciation for starting the Wayne Chapter and seeing it through its early days.



From left: Steve Calantone getting sworn in as the newly elected President by New Jersey District IV Governor Perry Russo, while outgoing President Jeff Fossati looks on.



From left: Helder Rebelo, Second Vice President; Jeff Fossati, Past President; Steve Calantone, President; New Jersey District IV Governor Perry Russo, Anthony Degenaro, First Vice President; Rob Calantone, Treasurer and Joe Zisa, Sergeant-at-Arms.

The Wayne Chapter had a food bank fundraiser held on December 8, 2012 in front of the A&P on Valley Road, Wayne, to help the severely depleted WIN (Wayne Interfaith Network) food bank. Eleven boxes of canned and boxed foods were collected. There were also donations of cash that were given by check to WIN.



From left: Vice President Anthony DeGennaro, President Steve Calantone, Gwenn Eckstein, Trustee of WIN and UNICO member Bill Bianculli.



ELIZABETH, NJ

The Elizabeth Chapter Citizen of the Year

The Elizabeth Chapter selected Detective Vito Tropeano as its UNICO Citizen of the Year for 2012. The contributions and ad support for Vito's dinner was overwhelming. With nearly 500 dinner tickets sold and hundreds of ads taken out congratulating him, the event was a tremendous success.

Special thanks go out to George Marretta and Sal Coppa for their tireless efforts in putting together this special event.

Vito has built his life and reputation around Service. It was his desire to help others that prompted his career in law enforcement with the Elizabeth Police Department. During his 20 years of service, Vito grew through the ranks. In 2000, he was promoted to Detective and currently heads the Community Relations Division, doing what he does best, servicing the citizens of Elizabeth!

A special part of the evening was when Vito's daughter, Daniela, performed The Star Spangled Banner. On this memorable occasion, the Tropeano family had plenty to be proud of and truly was part of our UNICO family.

Vito said it best when he stated, "UNICO represents everything that I stand for. The service organization began as a way for Italian Americans to do charitable work and to help others. To me, that is what life is all about."



From left: George Marretta, Vito Tropeano, Chapter President Courtney Villani and Sal Coppa who nominated Vito for the Citizen of the Year Award



Vito Tropeano's daughter Daniela sings the National Anthem.



From left: Paul Rinaldi, Pat Arena, Joe Marretta, UNICO National Second Vice President Ann Walko, Vito Tropeano, Chapter President Courtney Villani, George Marretta, Sal Coppa and Lou Bani.



2012 Citizen of the Year Vito Tropeano is pictured with 2010 Citizen of the Year John Papetti.

Elizabeth Chapter Annual School Christmas Party

The Elizabeth Chapter took great pleasure in donating to three schools in Elizabeth. With the approval and support of the Board of Education, the schools that participated in the Annual Christmas Party were Schools #30, #1, and #12. Each school had a designated teacher who coordinated the party and purchased gifts for the students. The organizers deserve special recognition for the time spent to make this day a memorable one. The teachers are Vanessa Bierbach at School #30, Sabrina Burnett Williams at School #1 and Debbie McCann at School #12. Thanks also goes out to Brigid Bani who helped coordinate the event.

While we visited school #12, Santa Claus made an appearance to hand out the gifts to each child. The joy and happiness from their smiles spread across the room. The school Principal, Mr. Gomez, expressed his thanks to UNICO for making the day a special one for his students and staff. Following the gifts, a pizza party was hosted by the school. Each school made our members feel at home and they were extremely appreciative for the generous donation made to their school.



From left: Elizabeth UNICANs Joe Chiari, Tom Fowler, Lou Bani, Principal Gomez, and Paul Rinaldi with Santa.

WESTWOOD, NJ

Westwood Chapter Holds Annual Christmas Party

On Sunday December 16, the Westwood Chapter held its annual Christmas Party at the The Florentine Gardens in River Vale, New Jersey. The afternoon party was well attended, with approximately 125 adults and children enjoying an Italian buffet of delicious hot and cold foods. Raffles and tricky-tray auctions of merchandise baskets kept the attention of the adults, and the children enjoyed the music provided by a local DJ. But the highlight of the day for all was a visit by Santa Claus, who enthralled the children with his tales of travel from the North Pole. After giving gifts to all the children, Santa bid all a Merry Christmas and sped back to the North Pole. By then the children were in a festive mood, in spite of Santa's departure, as they danced to the songs of the DJ and competed in a limbo contest. The party was a great success for the Westwood Chapter, as it raised funds to help with planned charitable efforts in 2013.



The Westwood Chapter is reaping benefits from a regional open "Italian Heritage" outreach meeting held in October, and is attracting new members. From left: New Member John Ruocco, Chapter President Ralph Spataro and New Member Angela Ruocco are presented with their official membership certificates at the Chapter's January dinner meeting. Other members who have recently joined are Michael Monti and his wife Enza Monti.

VERONA, NJ



Verona President Bonnie Sharkey installs new member Michael Di Rocco. From left: Bonnie Sharkey, Frank DiRocco, Michael DiRocco and Barbara DiRocco.

ELIZABETH, NJ

Elizabeth Scholarship Committee - A Job Well Done

As we are fast approaching 2013 Annual UNICO Scholarship season, special thanks and recognition goes out to the Elizabeth Chapter's Scholarship Committee. The Committee consists of Tony Zengaro, Deacon Joe Caporaso, Steve Rinaldi and Rocco DiPaola. It is through their efforts and dedication that our scholarship program continues to be so successful each year. The Committee has done a fantastic job. We anticipate that this year will also be very successful thanks to their efforts.



The Scholarship Committee from left: Tony Zengaro, Deacon Joe Caporaso, Steve Rinaldi and Rocco DiPaola.

POINT PLEASANT BEACH, NJ



The Scholarship Committee of the Point Pleasant Beach Chapter present new youth members to President Debbie Vaccaro and Vice President Grace Gynn. From left: Janice Onorato, Claire Durso, Debbie Vaccaro, Tony Vergari, Ally Kreutzer, Keri-anne Vogler and Grace Gynn.

Point Pleasant Beach Chapter's Journey Through the Storm:

UNICO Members and Chapter Banner Survive Hurricane Sandy

Sunday October 28, 2012: The Point Pleasant Beach Chapter of UNICO was ready to host a Dinner Dance event at the White Sands Hotel to raise monies for UNICO Charities. Tickets were sold out, food ordered and gift baskets ready. But at 3:00 pm, President Debbie Vaccaro got word that the town of Point Pleasant Beach had a mandatory evacuation notice for 5:00 pm due to impending Hurricane Sandy. The event was cancelled and all prepared their homes and property for The Storm. Like most East Coast communities, windows were boarded but since our area is surrounded on three

sides by water, the Bay, River and Ocean-many members and families left their homes and took shelter elsewhere. However some remained.

Monday, October 29th: Evacuations continued in many areas and by 4:00 pm all power was lost, trees were down and most roads closed. Then the wind and flooding began. The spray from the ocean could be felt miles inland, and the waves pounded the coast, taking with it our neighboring towns of Bay Head and Mantoloking. The bay surged and flooded lagoon areas in Point Pleasant Boro and Brick. Cut off from the news and television the 107 members of our Chapter had no idea of the destruction immediately around them. By 10:00 pm, President Vaccaro's first floor of her home was already flooded so she and her family retreated to the second floor. Chapter Secretary Donna Grassano was warned by another member Paul Viggiano that flood water was approaching her home and he immediately got her and her two daughters in his car and to safety to a nearby town. There were many close calls that night, but thanks to family, friends and first responders all were relocated in time.

Tuesday, October 30th: we awoke to the devastation of Superstorm Sandy. Some members who lived on the barrier islands realized it would be months before they could return home, if there was a home still standing. Entire contents of houses were destroyed, hundreds of cars, boats and personal property lost. But UNICO rose to action. Members who barely knew each other took displaced members into their homes. Sara Chmielewski found room for Rose Iantosca, Evelyn Cottone invited Dominick Fiumano and Patti to live with her and my sister Diane Grabowski had several families staying with her. She provided dinners from all defrosted food for family and UNICO members each night, by candlelight of course. It would be several days without power and heat but like many on the East Coast, we learned to survive, helping each other.

Thursday, October 31st: Provided with our membership list, Diane along with Janice Onorato, Laura Lenhart and Vin Levito contacted each member in our Chapter to see if they were safe, had a place to live, or needed any assistance from our UNICO Chapter. A list of their findings was forwarded to officers who reviewed, acted upon and requested relief from the UNICO National Hurricane Relief Fund. Several members of our Chapter have since received assistance checks from National, for which we are grateful. And later that day, Trustee Victor Damato searched his flooded basement for our UNICO Banner which he finally found damp and wrinkled but intact.

When power finally was restored an outpouring of e-mails and offers of support came from the UNICO National Office and Chapters around the country. The Hazelton Chapter ran a drive just for our Chapter that week, but since the National Guard closed many roads; their truck was unable to come to Point Pleasant. However just knowing that all 6,000 members of UNICO were out there if we needed them was the biggest help of all, at such a devastating time

December 2012: The Shore was slowly reviving. However, several businesses of members were lost or heavily damaged, but the Storino's were already at work rebuilding the boardwalk and saving the Aquarium. The Chiaia Family, trustees and Charter Members who own the White Sands, saw their entire Banquet facilities destroyed, but opened the hotel to displaced FEMA families and are in the process of restoring and improving their facilities.

In the spirit of the season, President Debbie decided to go ahead with our Annual Christmas Dinner in honor of our Junior Chapter and Youth Members. We came together to celebrate the Birth of Jesus and blessings we received as a UNICO Family.

On January 22, 2013 the first monthly meeting of the Point Pleasant Beach Chapter since September was finally conducted with over fifty members in attendance. A new restaurant opened on the second floor of White Sands and Finestra provided a fabulous Italian dinner. At this meeting we regrouped and even installed two new members. Nothing stops our Membership committee!

President Debbie and several members are still displaced and living elsewhere. There is sand and debris in piles along the boardwalk and the Army Corps of Engineers is still here. The towns surrounding Point Pleasant Beach are slowly coming back to life. But more importantly the members of our Chapter of UNICO -their integrity, charity and neighborliness, never left all through the storm and we are now as strong as ever, "Jersey Shore Strong!" Hope to see you all at the Convention! Grace



Donna Papa and Grace Gynn thank Trustees Frank and Cathie Chiaia for restoring the White Sands Hotel for Point Pleasant Beach Chapter Dinner Meetings.



Secretary Donna Grassano Gallina and Paul Viggiano are glad to be back at UNICO meeting after a long absence due to Hurricane Sandy.



Point Pleasant Banner Survives Sandy-Vin Levito, Diane Grabowski and Laura Lenhart of the Chapter's Relief Committee hold rescued Chapter Banner with members Sara Chmielewski, Rosemarie Iantosca and Trustee Victor Damato.

CLARK, NJ



New Members are sworn in at the Clark Chapter's New Year Kickoff Meeting which was attended by 45 of the 127 members of the Chapter. Taking the UNICO oath are new members Bill Smith, Louise Lipari, Paul Palmucci, Antonio Leone, Josephine Calandro, Claudio DiNucci and Chris DiNucci.



Clark Chapter President Ralph Bernardo swears in the new members.



New Year Kickoff meeting attendees from left: Sal Bonaccorso, also the Mayor of Clark, New Jersey; Carmen Brocato, Mike Savvis, Dino Calabrese and Tony Ginesi.



New Year Kickoff meeting attendees from left: Dave Panetta, Bill Smith, Greg Randazza, Rosario Cundari, and Joe Grazio.



President Ralph Bernardo hands out donations from the proceeds of the Italian Feast held in the fall. At the Council Meeting, Ralph hands Melissa Purcell a check for \$1000 for Project Graduation.

PLAINFIELDS', NJ

PLAINFIELDS' UNICO PAST PRESIDENT ANTHONY BENGIVENGA MARKS SISTER CITY PROGRAM IN ITALY

It has been four years since Plainfields' sister city program with Terno D'Isola in Bergamo Province was held. Plainfields' UNICO and the surrounding communities of South Plainfield have fond memories of all the events shared four years ago in both Italy and our communities.

Recently at the commune center (town hall) of Terno D'Isola, Anthony Bengivenga, Plainfields' UNICO Past President, was invited to a small ceremony in honor of this program with UNICO and all the towns who participated. The current mayor and vice-mayor of Terno D'Isola along with the council and running club hosted him for several hours and shared a cultural exchange. They spoke of how proud they are that UNICO National is continuing to promote the Italian language and culture through the many committees of the UNICO Foundation. Anthony Bengivenga explained how budget constraints are hampering the study of the Italian language at the local level in high schools but every effort is being made to continue these programs.



From left: Giacomo Pedrini, head of the Terno D'Isola sister city committee; Anthony Bengivenga, Corrado Centurelli, Mayor of Terno D'Isola; Antonio Butti, Vice Mayor of Terno D'Isola; Alessandro Sorzi, representing the running club of Teremotata (of Terno D'Isola). In the background are the official banner of Terno D'Isola and Italy.

On Sunday January 27, Anthony Bengivenga won the coveted First Prize Trophy in the Annual Woodcliff Lake Meatball Smack-down Contest. The First Prize was a meatball trophy along with a copy of Mary Ann Esposito's cookbook "Ciao Italia" and a brunch for two at Jack's Cafe in Westwood, New Jersey.



From left: Andre DiMino, Donna Brown, Maria Jannicelli, Joe Valenzano, Third Place Champ, Ramsey UNICO; Anthony Bengivenga, First Place Champ, Plainfields UNICO; Jan Mansley, Second Place Champ, Ramsey UNICO; Manny Alfano, Judge, Sharon Falinski of Triboro Ambulance and Joe Agresti, Judge.



National Officers of UNICO join in congratulating Anthony Bengivenga of Plainfields' UNICO after being awarded the first prize and trophy in the Woodcliff Lake Meatball Smack-down contest. From left: Gerry Heytink, New Jersey District IX Governor; Rick D'Arminio, UNICO National First Vice President; Anthony Bengivenga, first place Champion Meat Ball Smack-down; Ann Walko, UNICO National Second Vice President; Mike Colucci, Plainfields' UNICO; Deanna DeMarco of North Plainfield and Joe Agresti, Past National President.



Plainfields' UNICO invited several prospective members who were interested in joining the organization to attend its' recent meeting at Giovanna's in Plainfield, New Jersey. From left: Plainfields' President John G. DeAndrea, Carol Santore, Mary Ann Cuneo, Frances Agnone, Josephine Salerno, and Robert Bengivenga, New Jersey District X Governor. Some of the prospective members had read about the open invite to the meeting on the social application, "Meetup", and decided to come to the meeting.



Members of Plainfields' UNICO attended the recent Westfield UNICO pig roast in Garwood at the Knights of Columbus. From left: Renato Biri-bin, Past National President, Rick McNally, Anthony Bengivenga, Robert Bengivenga, New Jersey District X Governor and Robert Tarte, member of Westfield UNICO.



If you would like to see a book reviewed, please contact the UNICO National Office at 973-808-0035 or

comunico@unico.org for consideration!

GREATER ATLANTIC CITY, NJ

Ciao Unicani!!

We along the Jersey Shore are most eagerly awaiting spring's arrival after a difficult winter of quite immoderate weather. Sandy, nor'easters, wind and rain, snow and sleet, erosion, destroyed property and displaced lives all contributed to a great deal of suffering for us. Through it all, though, we are Jerseyites, irrepressible and tough. We accept challenges, roll up our sleeves and get to work rebuilding and rejuvenating. We're coming back stronger and better than ever!

Our Atlantic City Chapter, true to our mission of service, saw how many in the Atlantic City area were in need of life's basics after Sandy destroyed their homes. Many lost their homes and possessions. Our Chapter used over \$3500 of its resources to purchase school uniforms for several grade levels of children at the Texas Avenue School in Atlantic City. The school is situated in an area of town that suffered much loss. The students, teachers and administration were extremely grateful for this help. A team of student representatives and staff members met in a ceremony with Chapter Officers to receive and model the handsome new uniforms. Grateful smiles graced the faces of the students as sincere thanks to Atlantic City UNICO were shared. Leading the effort to secure, size and order the uniforms were Chapter Officers, President Andrea Longo-Wescoat, Bo Christian, Nick Russo, Sr. and son Nick III, and Tina LoBiondo in coordination with School Counselor Richard Prince.

Upcoming events in the works for our Chapter include our Annual Spaghetti Dinner and raffle in April and our Fall Golf Tournament. Atlantic City UNICO Scholarship applications will soon be available to students in need as well as the high achievers. Our Chapter has, over its 30+ year existence, given hundreds of thousands of dollars to deserving students. Also, we are seeking to advance our unique cultural heritage with member presentations at our monthly meetings. There is, indeed, so much to share about our rich Italian heritage!



From left: Bohdan Christian, Tina LoBiondo, Nick Russo, Jr., Andrea Longo, Nick Russo III, Carmine Bonanni, Jr. and students from the Texas Avenue School.



REHOBOTH AREA, DE

Rehoboth Beach Celebrates the Arts

The Rehoboth Beach Chapter began 2013, "The Year of Italian Culture" by celebrating the arts. On January 22 the group viewed 'Cinema Paradiso' in a private room at the local movie theater. Before the movie several of the male members shared their culinary talents and prepared a light supper.

The group's book club met on February 7 and discussed Laurel Corona's book, 'The Four Seasons: A Novel of Vivaldi's Venice'. After reviewing the book, members listened to 'The Four Seasons', Vivaldi's most famous work.

Plans for future cultural events for the Chapter are underway.



Tom Deets, Bill Bernardi, Ed Mason and Joe Torres prepare to serve their Italian specialties to those attending movie night sponsored by the Rehoboth Beach Chapter.

GREATER BINGHAMTON, NY

On February 9, 2013, members of the Greater Binghamton Chapter braved the elements of the blizzard, to participate in "Walk A Mile in My Shoes." First hand, people were able to see what it is like to be homeless and in the elements, thanks to Mother Nature's cooperation. The walk will benefit Rescue Mission's Whitney Place on Binghamton's East Side, which offers housing for up to 32 men and helps them re-enter society. This was the second year that Team UNICO supported this worthy cause. Also Team UNICO had one of the largest numbers of participants and was one of the top fund-raisers for the rescue Mission, supporting the UNICO motto of "Service Above Self". Captain Marco was extremely pleased on how the members of Greater Binghamton really pulled together to support the Rescue Mission. Special THANKS goes to Team Captain Marco Cuda, who graciously put the team together!



From left: Mark Doolittle, Captain Marco Cuda, Maria Pezzuti and Joe Doolittle members of Team UNICO.

KEARNY, NJ



New Jersey District VII Governor Patty Hirsch congratulates Angela Varano and Nat Amadeo after installing them as members at the Kearny Chapter's January meeting.



From left: New Member Angela Varano, Theresa Trucillo, Jo Ann Mitchell, Ida Nigro, Pearl Yaszczewski, Jean Sansone, Celeste Pandolfi, Joe Sgalia, Judy Hyde, Lou Pandolfi, John Josso and New Member Nat Amadeo.



Mark Marinielli of the Bloomfield Chapter and others going on the trip enjoyed coffee, tea, juice, buttered rolls and Dunkin' Donuts inside the American Legion hall prior to the bus' departure for the Tropicana Casino in Atlantic City.



"Let the games begin" – the bingo games that is. Dana and her mom, Marilyn enjoyed playing the various games on the bus ride to Atlantic City.

"V" FOUNDATION



Frank Paolercio
"V" Foundation
Chair

This has been a busy year with a lot of interesting happenings in cancer research. UNICO's \$ 50,000 grants over the years for Prostate, Breast, Lung, Cancers of Undetermined Origins, etc. have helped researchers to find less evasive treatments and a step or two closer to cures.

Information on Breast Cancer Mammographic density and radiotherapy interact:

Assessing mammographic density (MD) may identify women that should receive radiotherapy (RT), as high MD is linked to reduce mortality in women treated with RT and an increased risk in those who are not.

Novel biomarkers for early detection identified:

Methylation of ITIH5, DKK3 and RASSF1A gene promoters recently identified as novel biomarkers for blood-based breast cancer screening could aid in early detection of breast cancer.

Genetic testing in TNBC:

Women up to 35 years old with triple negative breast cancer (TNBC) may benefit from genetic testing, however, prevalence of BRCA mutations was similar in TNBC and Non-TNBC patients 36-50.

Luminal cell compartment heterogeneity:

The identification of luminal cell progenitors of varying levels of differentiation and proliferative capacity in the mammary epithelium is more complex than initially thought.

Tumor morphology predicts familial cancer risk:

Wide variation in familial risk based on tumor characteristics of women with early-onset breast cancer may be of clinical value and aid identification of new breast cancer susceptibility genes.

UNICO still needs help completing our grant for St. Jude Children's Hospital For Pediatric Cancer Research. Help us Help the Children. If your chapter has not sent your check yet, please send it now. Any size donation will help!

SAVE THE DATE: September 22, 2013.....The UNICO National Bocce Series for Cancer Research at Montville, New Jersey.



NUTLEY, NJ

At its January meeting, The Nutley Chapter was treated to a presentation by Carolyn Stellatella whose message was goal-setting, which she did in response to losing her mom, Lucille, to leukemia. She dedicated herself to raising money for all blood cancers. Her story is one of "service and commitment", a theme of UNICO. Her commitment manifested itself in her training for a marathon, and the Ironman Triathlon. She reached her goal and was successful in both, and is now training triathletes.

Member Dan Maurucci changed the flavor of his "Culture and Heritage" presentation from one of Italian food to introducing us to the Italian American Sports Hall of Fame. This organization started as an Italian American Boxing Hall of Fame in Chicago in 1977; then expanded to other sports. Among the 233 inductees are some familiar names such as DiMaggio, Arcaro, Lombardi, Marchetti, Berra, Mosconi, Piccolo, Esposito, Ameche, Sammartino, Campanella and Mancini in addition to some lesser known athletes such as Luis Pisano, the first Italian American to play major league baseball, Angelo Popo who set a world record of 633 sit ups in 4 hours and Lou Zamparini, whose experience as a prisoner of war is featured in the book, Unbroken.

The February meeting was a special event as it was held at the beautiful Park Savoy in Florham Park. In attendance were Ann Walko, Dominick Nicastro, Frank La Catto and Robert Tart. Past President Steve Mairella introduced the featured speaker, Peter Fusaro, Chairman and Founder of Global Change Associates. Mr. Fusaro is the author of 16 books, including the best seller "What Went Wrong at Enron". He explained his deep Italian roots and commitment to perpetuating his Italian heritage. He gave the members a brief explanation of the "Green Movement", renewable energy and clean technology. His message was clear, "This is a country deep in innovation, imagination and risk-taking with a promising future in this field."

Those in attendance were also treated to several vocals by international recording artist and PBS host Christina Fontanelli. She performed the National Anthem, Italian National Anthem and O Sole Mio.

The main event of the evening was the drawing of the winners of the annual raffle. These funds are used to finance Chapter Scholarships. This year the Chapter, with the cooperation of several family and business donors, will award 25 scholarships to Nutley graduates totaling \$30,000. Winners were: Frank and Joe Russo, 1st prize; Johnny Flood, 2nd prize; Tom Pucci, 3rd prize and Joe Scarpelli, 4th prize.



Nutley Chapter President Anthony Malfitano and First Vice President Phyllis Coldebella with January guest speaker Carolyn Stellatella (center).



Nutley Past President Steve Mairella (left) and President Anthony Malfitano (right) welcome February guest speaker Peter Fusaro.



Present for the February Nutley Chapter meeting were Christina Fontanelli (center), Chapter President Anthony Malfitano and UNICO National Second Vice President Ann Walko, Past National President Frank La Catto, Robert Tart and UNICO National Third Vice President Dominick Nicastro.



UNICO National Second Vice President Ann Walko assists Nutley UNICO Raffle Chairpersons Tom Sposato and Sal Ferraro in selecting the winner.

The DEADLINE for the May Edition of ComUNICO is Monday, April 15, 2013
Send Chapter news to the UNICO National Office: comunico@unico.org.

Please call (973) 808-0035 with any questions.



OUR STORY

Show Pride in Your Italian Heritage

We have some of the most wholesome people in our Community. They are doctors, attorneys, professors and political leaders who have unblemished reputations. They are devoted to their families, to their churches, to their community and to their country. In spite of truly admirable character, many have not escaped disparaging innuendos, subtle accusations, and downright insults regarding their ethnicity.

When I hear those who say we must be positive, I hear a call to apologize for not living up to a standard of perfection that does not exist for all. We are indeed imperfect like all of humanity, but, we are also unique as no others who express love for friends and family more openly, and with deeper sincerity. No others have reason to feel greater pride in what their forebears have given to the world, and what we, as their offspring have given to our beloved country, particularly, our devotion, loyalty, and unsurpassed patriotism.

We owe no apologies for who we are, but we are indeed owed apologies for the indignities suffered; for being forced to attend mass in church basements, for being lynched in New Orleans, for the malicious executions of Sacco and Vanzetti, for the bullying of our young people owing to the constant sorrowful media portrayals of who they are not.

We are Americans who have descended from a society that has enriched this world with art, literature, music, science and a culture that was once sought to be immersed in. We have signed the Declaration of Independence, have fought in the Revolutionary War, fought in the Civil war, we were at the side of General Custer at the battle of Little Big Horn, have served with extraordinary valor in two World Wars, have adorned a nation's capital with architectural beauty, and we have given our great nation the beautiful name of America.

The question then begging for a comprehensive explanation is, why does Italian America continue to be maligned in virtually every form of media? This is a question to be answered by an assembly of philosophers, historians and sociologists who are in tune with present day issues and a perversion that persists. For the naysayers among us who deny the existence of Anti Italianism, I urge the reading of books by that title written by Henry Heller who describes the 16th century genesis of the immorality, and one co-authored by Professors William Connell, and Fred Gardaphe.

While it is critically important to understand the root cause of Anti Italianism, it is far more important to acknowledge the damage that it causes. Too little attention has been afforded to the insidious effects, and the resulting diminished quality of life imposed on those who have been painfully affected. The great Vince Lombardi who was denied a head coaching job because his name ended in a vowel, the returning veteran who offered an opinion on foreign policy who was told he had no right to such opinions since he was not truly an American, a paperboy who was told Italians were not allowed on a woman's property, and the young girl who cries every day for being taunted because her appearance is distinctly

Italian, are but a microcosm of the sorrowful stories that can be told.

Perhaps it is overly simple to believe that we are deficient in demonstrable pride, and that possible deficiency has empowered our detractors, but that is certainly to be considered. Posting bumper stickers saying, "Kiss me I am Italian" will not gain respect. On the contrary, ill will may be generated. "I am a proud American of Italian heritage", would send a more resounding message. It will more prominently define a breed of Americans proudly stating their ethnic origin. Super Bowl gatherings are a wonderful American tradition, but inviting friends from outside of our Community to Columbus Day parties celebrating the historic accomplishments of the, "Admiral of the Seas", would not only be an expression of pride, but it would offer an opportunity to talk about his humanity at a time in history when so little humanity existed. It would allow a platform to denounce present day efforts to remove his good name from holidays, and history books. Teaching our children, regardless of age, to express pride in who they are, and respect for their identity would be a precious gift, and a powerful weapon in responding to attempts to tarnish their image.

Speaking out with indignation against words and actions to marginalize our place in American Society is not only imperative, it would demonstrate our tolerance has ended, and a new era of Italian American pride has been born.

Submitted by Tom DeGenaro, Belleville Chapter

HERITAGE AND CULTURE



Heritage and Culture Chair Sal Mangano

The History and Tradition of Easter in Italy

The historic event that decided when we celebrate Easter in the Catholic tradition was the First Nicean Council of Christian Bishops in 325 A. D. Roman Emperor, Constantine, convened this council in Nicaea which is a part of Turkey. It was here that the decision was made to celebrate Easter on the first Sunday after the first full moon to rise after the Spring Equinox; unless the first full moon also rose on a Sunday, in which case Easter would be celebrated the Sunday after that. Wow, I hope you understand that because I am not sure I do. Anyway, let's continue.

For over 1600 years, we have continued to mark the celebration of Easter based on these calculations.

Although Carnevale officially starts in January and lasts up until Ash Wednesday, the last three days before lent are especially festive. Carnevale is best compared to Shrove Tuesday, Marti Gras and Martedì Grasso.

Pancakes are a traditional Shrove Tuesday

feast food in Italy. Older Church Doctrines decreed that Catholics give up more than meat dishes for Lent. Eggs, milk and even fats were also restricted for the observant. Because Shrove Tuesday is the last day that people could spoil themselves until Easter, Pancakes soon became a traditional Food for the feast. There was also a practical reason for it. The people needed to use the dairy products and fats so they wouldn't go to waste, the same as meat, because for the next 40 days they were fasting from these foods. The refrigerator freezer would not be invented for centuries, but the tradition continues.

Lent (Quaresima), marks the forty days of fasting and abstinence before Easter. Lent is also marked with the feast of St. Joseph (La Festa Di San Giuseppe) on March 19th and Palm Sunday (Domenica della Palme). On Palm Sunday, many Churches in Italy still follow the tradition of having the priest knock three times from the outside of the Church doors to symbolize Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

Holy Friday (Venerdì Santo) is often marked in the churches with a ritual of washing the feet, with the priest symbolizing the role of Jesus and twelve church members symbolizing the role of the Apostles.

Easter Sunday begins with a bang in Florence, quite literally. The three hundred year old traditional "Explosion of the Carte" (Scoppio del Carro) has roots in the pagan ritual of ensuring a good harvest. Today it is considered a spreader of good luck for the city of Florence.

Traditional Easter meals vary from region to region, but eggs and roasted Lamb are common staples everywhere. Eggs represent life, fertility and renewal. These are all essential symbols of Easter. Dyed eggs grace many tables and they are found in soups and in the traditional Easter pie (Torta Pasqualina).

Roasted lamb is the symbol of birth and the Sheppard. Chocolate bunnies are not common in Italy but beautifully decorated chocolate eggs are a traditional Easter treat and gift.

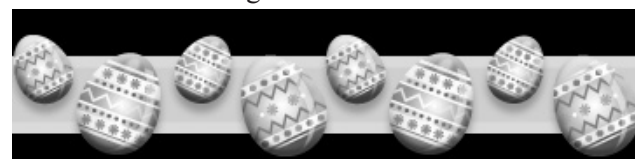
The official Easter cake is the Eastern Dove (Colomba) that represents peace. Pizza Rustica, Pizza Gaina, Pastiera di Grana, Pastiera di Riso etc. are all Easter specialties from the Southern part of Italy. One of the more exotic desserts of Easter is the Neapolitan, Sanguinaccio (Chocolate Blood pudding made with pig's blood and hazelnuts).

Easter Monday, also known as Little Easter (Pasquetta) is also an official Italian Holiday. It is often spent enjoying the spring weather with family and friends at picnics. The "Racing of the Egg" (Palio dell'Uovo) is a traditional Easter Monday game in the town of Tredozio in the Emilia-Romagna region. In Barano d' Ischia, a traditional Island dance called the "Festa della Ndrezzata takes place on the same day.

So, as in all Italian holidays, Easter is a lengthy holy and festive time in Italy with much praying, eating and merriness. Italians are certainly a people who love to party. We should be proud to call ourselves Italian Americans.

Buona Pasqua

Gathered from various Internet sites. Adapted and submitted by Salvatore J. Mangano, PNP., 2012-2013 Italian Heritage and Culture Chair.



UNICO WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Congratulations and welcome to UNICO National-the largest Italian American Service Organization. The National Office Staff looks forward to meeting all of you in the near future.

We apologize in advance for anyone missed, or names misspelled. If you notice a new member missing or name misspelled, please notify the National Office.

JANUARY

BETHLEHEM
Daniel Del Grosso

GARFIELD
Richard Derrig

HACKENSACK
Frank Gallitano
Roger Mattei

LIVINGSTON
Michael Anello

MARIN
Christine Anastasi

MARLBORO
John La Mela, Jr.
Anthony Poroiglia

MONTCLAIR
Michael Arminio, Jr.

NORTH SHORE
Leah Luddine
Paul Luddine
Giovanni Palmeri

ORANGE/WEST ORANGE
Marc Miceli

PITTSFIELD
Alan Lussier

RARITAN VALLEY
JoAnn Liptak
Victor Nazario

RUTHERFORD
Alberto Infante
Robert Rizzo

SAN JOSE
Michael Ansuisi
Joseph Ventura

SANTA BARBARA
Christy Swider

SPRINGFIELD
Frank Arduino

VERONA
Michael DiRocco

WATERBURY
Joseph Mengacci

WEST ESSEX
Christopher Massaro

WILKES BARRE
Anthony Recupero, III
Daniel Saporito

FEBRUARY

AVON
Caroline La Monica

BRICK
Linda Pagano

CEDAR GROVE
Melinda Galizia
Modesto Inzani

CHICAGO WEST SUBURBAN
Patrick Jones
Reverend Carl Morello
Jim Moynihan

HAZLETON
Robin Rimsky

MARIN
Paul Seaward

ORANGE/WEST ORANGE
Gerard Guarino

PHILADELPHIA
Louis Galdo, Sr.
Suzanne Revello
Rocco Ruguetta

PLAINFIELDS'
Francesca Gervasi
Josephine Salerno

SANTA BARBARA
Peter Lampasona

SCRANTON
Laura Ducceschi

STAMFORD
Michael Altamura
Nicholas Hanzlik, Jr.
Melissa Papallo

WELCOME TO
UNICO
NATIONAL!

Italian Heritage Night and Open House – The Concept

- Appeal to interest in Italian heritage
- Provide a community event at no charge
- Stimulate a desire to preserve heritage
- Show how UNICO is the way to do it.

Get "motivated" new members!

Italian Heritage Night and Open House – Implementation

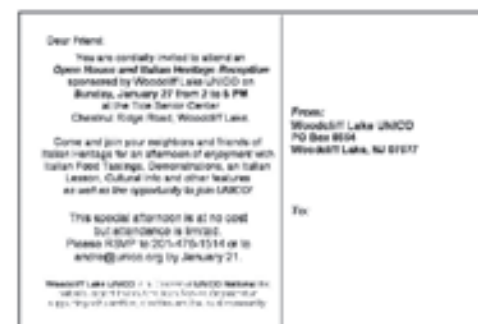
Six steps to success!

1. Establish Timetable and Choose Venue
2. Identify Targets
3. Prepare Marketing Materials
4. Organize event details
5. EXECUTE!!!!!!
6. Follow-Up, Follow-through, *Close!*

Quality, Glossy Post Card
www.printrunner.com \$70 for 1,000



Quality, Glossy Post Card
www.printrunner.com \$70 for 1,000



Agenda

- 50 Minutes Free Time
Welcome, Sign-in, Browse, Finger Foods, etc.
- 50 Minutes Program – **NOT LONGER!!!**
Welcome, Italian Lesson, Singer, UNICO Video, Q&A
- 50 Minutes to Mingle
Serve Dessert & Coffee, Make Contact, Join?
- 30 Minutes for Wrap-Up
Giveaways, Applications, Info, Clean-up

IN MEMORIAM



Antonio DeGravina passed away on November 28, 2012. Mr. DeGravina was born in Los Angeles on November 10, 1928, to the late Luigi and Carmella DeGravina. He graduated from Garfield High School in Los Angeles the enrolled in East Los Angeles Junior College and completed his education at California State University.

In 1986, Tony joined UNICO National, San Gabriel Chapter, and rose through the chairs, serving as president for two years. During this time, the Chapter's membership increased by 70%. He then moved on to California District I and served as District Governor for two years.

He was the recipient of the Outstanding District Governors' Award for two consecutive years, the first time that occurred in 20 years. He also served as Western Regional District Governor, Presidential Aide to then National President John Botti, was a member of the Executive Committee for five years and served on the Board of Directors for six years. At the national level, Mr. DeGravina served on numerous committees and remained active in UNICO. In 2000 Tony received the UNICO National Joseph P. Cianci Humanitarian Award.

Mr. DeGravina was a charter member of the Friends of the California State University, Long Beach, which came together to establish a permanently endowed chair in Italian Language. He served for three years as secretary and subsequently headed the committee. This group became the backbone for UNICO's efforts to establish the George L. Graziedio Chair.

Mr. DeGravina is survived by his wife of 60 years, Jo; his children Louis, Donna and Anthony Jr. six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.



Elizabeth LoMauro, 72, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, January 15, 2013. "Betty Jane" was surrounded by her loving family, in the comforts of her home.

She was "CFO" for Colonial Appliance, New Providence, New Jersey and a member of the Berkeley Heights/New Providence Chapter of UNICO National.

She is survived by her beloved husband of 55 years, Leonard LoMauro, her three daughters, Donna Lynn Spolizino, Angela Barszcz and Karen LoMauro, and her son, Carl.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to St. Vincent de Paul RC Church, Bebout Avenue, Stirling New Jersey or Stand Up To Cancer, File 1224, 1801 W. Olympic Boulevard, Pasadena, California 91199-1224.

Leonard J. Del Gallo, Sr.

Leonard J. Del Gallo, Sr., 74, of Avon, loving husband for 50 years of Marlene (Bisciotti) Del Gallo, passed away Wednesday, January 9, 2013. Born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, on May 30, 1938, he was the son of the late Achielle and Norma (Recchia) Del Gallo. He graduated from St. Joseph's High School in Pittsfield, Massachusetts and received a BA in Business from Bryant College in Providence, Rhode Island. For several years, he was employed at Liberty Mutual. He joined BS&D Insurance and ultimately, with his son Michael, purchased the company now known as AG Insurance and worked there until his retirement.

He was Past President of Simsbury UNICO, Past District Governor of UNICO National, and member of Prince Thomas of Savoy Italian Club. For two years, he was the President of Golf Club of Avon and currently was a member at Farmington Woods Golf Club. Involved in his community, he was chairman of Avon Days for many years and was on the Avon CERT Committee. Besides his wife Marlene, he leaves two sons, Michael R. Del Gallo and his wife Susan and Leonard J. Del Gallo, Jr. and his wife Suzanne, all of Avon and five grandchildren.

Memorial donations, in memory of Leonard, may be sent to Avon Special Needs Fund, c/o Avon Social Services, 60 West Main St., Avon, Connecticut 06001, because this was the charity Avon Days supported during Len's leadership. For online condolences, please visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com.

UNICO of Roseto Loses Two Valuable Members

Carmella Carrescia, 76, of Roseto passed away September 20, 2012. She was born January 3, 1936 in Roseto, daughter of the late Philip and Millie Tumalo Carrescia.

Carmella was a 5th grade teacher and reading specialist for Nazareth School District for 32 years, retiring to care for her family in 1989. She was a graduate of Moravian Collage in 1957 with a degree in Elementary Education.

She was an active member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and member and leader of several education and Senior Citizens' groups where she served as President. Carmella was an active, dependable member of UNICO National, serving as Secretary for at least the last 10 years along with spearheading the Scholarship Committee for the Chapter for many years. She was also Past President of Ladies of UNICO and friend who will be will be sadly missed.

Daniel S. Martino, 88, of Roseto passed away December 14, 2012. He was born June 12, 1924 in Roseto, the son of the late Salvatore and Jennie DePalma Martino. He was married for 65 years to his beloved wife Rosie, also a UNICO member.

Dan grew up running his family's general store with his mother, served in the military in WWII, and then became a mill owner. He was an avid gardener and wine maker. A devoted family man, Dan leaves 2 daughters, Joanne and Philomena and his son Donato and their families.

Dan was an active charter member of the Roseto Chapter of UNICO and the Chapter Treasurer for 44 years. He was dependable and steady, a true friend of UNICO.



In a most sad note, Tom Rago, long time Kansas City (over three decades) Chapter Member, former Chapter President and Treasurer, passed away in January. Tommy was a most proud UNICAN making countless contributions, could always be counted upon, and gave more than his fair share upholding UNICO's motto, "Service Above Self". Tommy never missed a UNICO event even though he was suffering complications from diabetes. Fellow Kansas City UNICAN Anthony Pace said it best "Everyone loved Tommy".

CALTECH CHESTER CARLSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Caltech Chester Carlson Memorial Scholarship

Sons and daughters of UNICO members are offered the opportunity to apply for the Caltech Chester Carlson Memorial Scholarship. Funded through the efforts of individuals in the copier industry, this scholarship has been made available to UNICO owing to the initiative of Past National President Frank Cannata. Upon applying to and being notified of acceptance by Caltech, a student should immediately request the scholarship application. Forms will also be accessible on line. **When submitting the completed application, the student must indicate that a parent is a member of UNICO National.** This scholarship, valued at a minimum of \$17,750, will be awarded for the fall class of 2013. Past National President Cannata has long been a strong supporter and proponent of the UNICO National Scholarship Program. We thank him for making this exceptional opportunity available to UNICO daughters and sons.

KEYSTONE, PA



Keystone members gather to plan an Italian Pig Roast to celebrate the Chapter's first Anniversary. From left: Carmela Iannetta, Mark McDade, Ted Riggi, Jim Mack, Val Riggi, Mary Mack, Peter Noto, Sally Noto, Shirley Siragusa, Joe Sadowski, Ray Tropeano, Gloria Rizzo and Michele McDade.

MEDIA, PA

FIRST ANNUAL Beef and Beer

The Media Chapter recently threw its First Annual Beef and Beer. Approximately 162 family and friends came out and shared this lovely night. It was filled with great laughs and even Ron Stewart (an impersonator) showed up and provided live music. We also had 50/50 prizes, an assortment of drinks, and of course a great variety of authentic Italian foods.

More importantly, everyone attended because they knew the function was to raise money for charities that the Media Chapter has been donating to for many of years. The Media Chapter was able to raise approximately \$2,600 to distribute to various charities. Thank you to everybody that attended and everyone that helped sponsor this special event.



The evening's dessert!



Chapter Members and guests are pictured having a good time!



"Rod Stewart" entertains the crowd.

The Media Chapter would like to proudly announce our newest member Jim Sandone. Jim recently joined the Media Chapter and we all are extremely excited in the enthusiasm, intelligence, and energetic attitude that Jim brings to our Chapter.

BRIDGEPORT, CT

On Superbowl Sunday the Bridgeport Chapter sponsored a party with the local Italian social club Circolo Sportivo, hosting approximately 80 friends for a tail-gate style party. Chairman Maurizio Viselli again outdid himself preparing chili, chicken wings, 5' party sandwiches, penne pasta, hot dogs, hamburgers and sausage and pepper grinders.



From left: Maurizio Viselli Jr., Steve Venditti, Joy Homa Fitzpatrick, Mario Bartoli, Louis Gallucci, Dan Bartoli, and Deacon Dan Ianello. A good time was had and our lights stayed on!!

Two weeks earlier, Chapter Treasurer Tony Tucci, Chapter President Perry Vincenzi and Perry Vincenzi, Jr. assisted UNICO friend Greg Pia pass out some clothing in Bridgeport to needy individuals. Later that day we also experienced Linda Cervero (a/k/a "the soup lady") in action passing out soup she made with food donations provided to her by the Bridgeport Chapter. Both Greg and Linda bring clothing and soup every Sunday morning to John St. in Bridgeport to a crowd of 40-60 people who are most thankful for not only the items, but for Greg and Linda's kindness.



A few of the friendly usual helpers took some time for a photo with Perry Vincenzi, Jr. on left, Tony Tucci center and Greg Pia on right.



Linda Cervero the "Soup Lady" serves the needy on a recent Sunday morning.



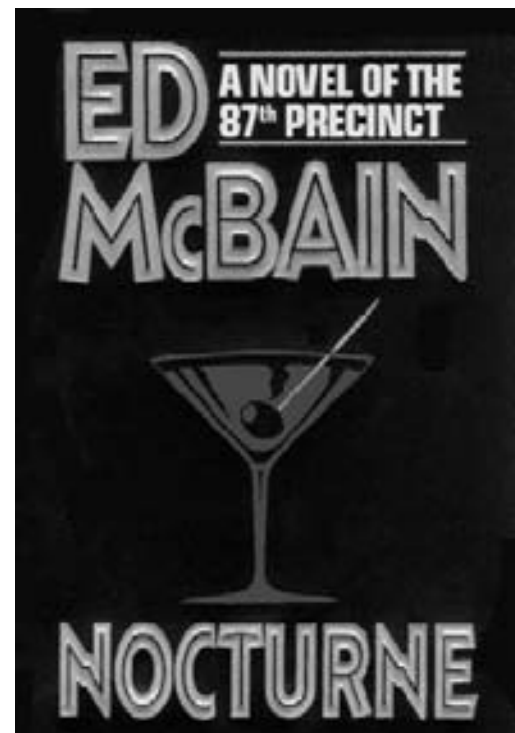
BOOK REVIEW



NOCTURNE by Ed McBain /Evan Hunter

**Reviewed by
Tony Arabia**

If you don't know the definition of prolific, you must learn about Salvatore Albert Lombino. Known to the world as Ed McBain and other pseudonyms, he was until his death in 2005, the most celebrated of police/mystery/crime authors of all time, having written 100+ novels. The book "Nocturne" was suggested to me by my lifelong author friend Dr. Barry Berkey. And with that reading, I became addicted to its author's books. "Nocturne" doesn't pull any punches. It is a tough, gritty novel about intense police work to solve a murder. The victim is an old, world renowned pianist, and the 87th Precinct crew goes all out to solve the crime. Detectives Carella and Hawes encounter a web of personalities as they proceed to find the murderer of Svetlan Dyalovich. She had great fame as a concert performer around the world, but now she lay dead from gunshot wounds on a cold apartment floor beside a broken bottle of liquor. As in all comparable novels, the case is a whirl of interesting characters and curious situations that are finally drawn down to a fascinating conclusion. McBain's wonderful descriptions and earthy dialogues help to make this an exciting page turner. The mystery for me about the author was that early in his career, he was known as Lombino, but he may have been convinced by literary agents and editors to use other names. This may be a criticism by some Italian Americans, however, in the latter pages, with great flourish; he uses Italian and Jewish words effectively. Adding to his fame were his movie credits for writing the scripts for "The Blackboard Jungle" and "The Birds." You may not find this novel in a book store, but I am sure you will find it in the mystery section of your library and certainly, you will find Salvatore Albert Lombino to be your first step into his amazing world!



ORANGE/WEST ORANGE, NJ



The Orange/West Orange Chapter installed its newest member Marc D. Miceli at their January General Monthly meeting. Mr. Miceli was sponsored by long standing members Ben A. Stanziale, Jr. and Carmine D. Campanile. The program for the meeting included a presentation by Dr. William Connell on the book being written on Italian American History. The Livingston Chapter attended for the presentation and held a joint meeting on the same evening.



Dr. William Connell.

MARIN, CA



Standing from left: Lou Napoli, Bob Ravasio, Chapter Secretary; Jason Moreci, Ron Benjamin, Chapter President and Jim Scatena. Seated from left: Gene Bertorelli, UNICO National President David Donnini and Romano DellaSantina, Owner of Marin Joe's.



OUR STORY

The Real Italian American Story

By Richard Muti

Christmas morning felt like a Sunday to me, reinforced by my sleeping late and having a big breakfast. But the papers were a lot thinner than Sunday papers and my favorite television news programs were not on. So, I spent more time with the papers, including the obituaries.

Since crossing the age 60 threshold, reading the obits has become a habit. Before, I never bothered with them; now, I need to see if friends or acquaintances have died. As a history buff, I also read with sadness the growing number of entries that mark the passing of yet another World War II veteran. We're losing thousands each year.

As a boy in the 1940s, I remember reading an article in the *New York Daily News* about the last surviving Civil War veterans and lamenting the fact that Confederates outnumbered Union soldiers. There were five or six of the Rebels left and only one or two of the "good guys." Most had been 14- or 15 year old drummer boys. It's a wonder any drummers survived, marching as they did at the forefront of every skirmish and beating a cadence to encourage their older comrades onward.

In 15 years, give or take, we'll be honoring the last of the World War II vets—all of them good guys.

I'm taking a long time to get to the point of telling you about one obituary I read. It caught my eye because of its unusual length—two full columns. I don't recall ever seeing an obituary that long, especially since newspapers charge by the column inch to publish them.

Under a striking picture of an elderly gentleman who could have been the beloved father or grandfather of any of us, these words spurred me to read the entire obituary: "GIANNELLA, Silvio Vito – World War II Hero and Founder of the Giannella Baking Company in Paterson, NJ."

Silvio Vito was born in Italy in 1921, the youngest of nine children. His father Raffaele, an Italian army veteran of the First World War (when Italy fought on the side of the Allies), had emigrated from their poor fishing village before Silvio's birth to seek a better life for his family in America. Italians who fought with the Allies in WWI were granted visas to enter the US, but not their families. So, Raffaele left his family behind, hoping to bring them over to the new country as soon as possible.

It would take 13 years. Raffaele worked long, backbreaking hours in an Italian bakery in Paterson and later opened his own business, so that he could send money back to his family in Italy and still set a little aside each week—a fund that would eventually pay for their passage to America, wife Elizabeth and all nine children. Raffaele also had to become a US citizen (which he accomplished in 1934) before authorities would allow his family to come over.

After the great influx of southern European immigrants during the late 1800s and early 1900s, mostly from Italy, United States immigration laws tightened, especially for the uneducated and unskilled. My own southern Italian grandparents, illiterate and dirt poor, came to this country in 1906

and 1907, before the exclusionary laws went into effect, thank God.

Once reunited, the Giannella family prospered. Their bakery business thrived and grew, with the children working after school and weekends alongside their father and mother. And, they became Americans. They certainly did not lose their love and appreciation for their Italian heritage, something I imagine they celebrated at every family gathering. But they became Americans, through and through. Let me tell you just how American they became.

On June 6, 1944, 22 year old Staff Sergeant Silvio Vito Giannella struggled through chest-high, blood-red water carrying 100 pounds of equipment and crawled up Omaha Beach in Normandy, just 20 minutes after the first D-Day assault wave had landed. Silvio was part of the Army's 6th Engineers, whose dangerous mission was to clear the beaches of mines and obstructions so that the tens of thousands of Allied soldiers could follow more safely.

In April 1945, half a world away, Silvio's brother, Fiore, stormed the beaches of Iwo Jima with the US Marines. It was the fiercest, most costly battle of the Pacific campaign. Fiore Giannella would die on those beaches, killed in action.

Silvio returned from the war and went back to the family bakery business. He would soon meet Sylvia Martelli, who became his wife and mother of his six children. Silvio and Sylvia, through their devotion to each other and their hard work, expanded the Giannella Baking Company, employing thousands of workers over the years. Silvio helped many of his employees start up their own businesses and sponsored dozens of immigrant families so they could obtain visas and experience the American dream, as he had.

Dear friends and fellow citizens—those of us with Italian blood in our ancestry. When you read headlines about mobsters whose names end in vowels and when you see movies and television stories about "Good Fellas" or "The Sopranos" or the "guidos" down by the "Jersey Shore," just remember one thing. Those stories are not your heritage.

The story of Silvio Vito Giannella, 1921 – 2009, a true American patriot and war hero—that is your heritage.

The above article is an excerpt from author Richard Muti's soon-to-be published fourth book, "Essays for my Father." The book, which Mr. Muti wrote in honor of the 100th anniversary of his father's birth, is a compilation of essays about politics, public policy, and the author's Italian heritage. Muti was Charter Member of the Greater Ramsey Chapter of UNICO and is a former mayor of Ramsey, New Jersey, his hometown. He was a Navy pilot in the late 1960s and a career prosecutor, before devoting his attention to politics, teaching at the college level, and writing. Muti welcomes e-mail inquiries about his books. Contact him at richardmuti@aol.com.



PLAINFIELDS', NJ



Members of Plainfields' UNICO attended an event at the Hilton in Hasbrook Heights to reelect Renato Turano to the Italian Senate. From left: Past National President Renato Biribin, Giovanni Rapana, Italian Senator from Canada; Fortuna Notino, Susie Leonardis, Renato Turano, Italian Senator from the United States; New Jersey District X Governor Robert Bengivenga, Giuseppe Razzano and his mother Anna Razzano.

KEYSTONE, PA

Saint Valentine's Day Social

The Keystone Chapter held a Saint Valentine's Day Social on February 14th at Mike Catalano's Al Mia Amore in Dickson City. A full Italian buffet was served and entertainment was provided by singer Jim Cerminaro throughout the evening. Each guest received a Valentine favor from the Chapter President. Proceeds from this event will be used to fund the Chapter's Scholarships and other charities.



Among those attending the Keystone Chapter of UNICO National Saint Valentine's Day Social are front from left: Glenn Pettinato, Past National President and his First Lady Terri Pettinato, both Carbondale Chapter Members; Jeanette Chiavacci McCormack, newly installed member; Cathy Bianchi, Chapter Membership Director and Mark E. McDade, Chapter President. Back row from left: Anthony Medici, Joe Sadowski, Mary Ann Stoppini and Francesco Stoppini, Italian Consul for North-east Pennsylvania.

SANTA BARBARA, CA



New Member Christy Swider, UNICO National President David Donnini and Chapter President Joe Campanelli.



From left: UNICO National President David Donnini, Members Jim Nonn and David Peri giving a presentation on their restaurant, Arnoldi's, Chapter Vice President Jim Barbabella and Joe Campanelli.

RARITAN VALLEY, NJ



From left: Raritan Valley President Jerry Maddaluna and new members Victor Nazario and JoAnn Liptak.

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271 US Highway #46 West
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Fairfield, NJ 07004**

PAGE 32 CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ACROSS

1. What does the O in UNICO stand for? (opportunity)
3. What does the N in UNICO stand for? (neighborliness)
4. Where was UNICO first organized? (Waterbury)
8. Which Italian American was awarded the Medal of Honor and Navy Cross for his uncommon valor in WWII? (Basilone)
10. Who was UNICO's National Founder? (Vastola)
13. Who helped form the Scranton Chapter of UNICO in 1955 and now has a scholarship in his name? (Cottone)

DOWN

1. Which month is observed as Italian Heritage and Culture Month? (October)
2. What does the C in UNICO stand for? (charity)
5. Who began the communications revolution by creating long distance wireless transmission? (Marconi)
6. What does the I in UNICO stand for? (integrity)
7. What is UNICO's motto? (Service Above Self)
9. What is the name of the Voice of UNICO National? (ComUnico)
11. Who was the first Italian American to become our nation's first female governor? (Grasso)
12. What does the U in UNICO stand for? (unity)
14. What does UNICO mean in Italian? (unique)

PHILADELPHIA, PA



Bottom row from left: Suzanne Revello, Nick Quercetti, John Ferrara President and Santo Monticalvo. Back row from left: Josseph Cifoni, Pat Pelonero, Sal Benvenuti, Vicent Gusini, Don Sabitini, Mike Iannuzzi, Ben Ferrara, Rocco Rugnetta and John Aviccoli.



Chop Survivor Sophia Pascarella and John Ferrara, Chapter President.



From left: John Ferrara, Chapter President and Past President Ben Ferrara.

BOOK REVIEWS



The Godfather Effect Changing Hollywood, America, and Me by Tom Santopietro

Reviewed by Mary Jo Berger

This book was such a pleasant surprise. The subject matter was different from what I expected. It was well researched and written.

The opening chapter relates the story of the director, Coppola, preparing to test Marlon Brando for the part of Don Corleone. In relating this story, the author states what the first Godfather movie would mean not only to Italian-Americans but also to all Americans. The author states what is the theme of this book, “What Puzo and screenwriter/director Coppola delivered, brilliantly, was nothing less than a disquisition on the madness, glory, and failure of the American dream” (Santopietro, 2012).

The author easily intertwines his life experiences with the specific scenes from the Godfather as well as the history of the film. The second chapter opens with his explanation of his father’s background. He reminisces about a time that they spent together. This was unusual for Tom and his father because his father liked to tell stories of his youth growing up Italian-American. The author writes that he and his sister would roll their eyes when their father told these stories. The author also admits that his family was Italian and as he was growing up, he paid little attention to language, culture, or history. He also admits how he would become embarrassed when he would hear heavily accented Italian-American caricatures on television. He was embarrassed because “he did not feel Italian”.

The author admits that he never understood what it meant to be Italian until The Godfather Part II turned his life upside down. The author confirms that it was Mario Puzo and Francis Ford Coppola who helped in his understanding what it meant to be Italian.

The author relates his feeling about Italian names and his thoughts regarding his Italian heritage. He excuses that his father did not use his Italian name when he attended Tufts University, because like many Italian immigrants they wish to assimilate into the American culture and life style. He also points out that his American mother would have no need to learn Italian as a young girl in the 1930.

The author relates the Mario Puzo’s work to the political, economic, and cultural changes that were occurring in the United States. An example of this comparison is how Michael began to become more deeply involved in the family business with no way to leave; our government was immersed in the Vietnam War with no exit strategies. As Michael continues to lose his way in life, losing his family in his pursuit for power and money, Puzo compares this America’s pursuit for corporate money and profits as well as the power that goes with it. In

Puzo’s world, crime flourishes in the same way because it is “another form of private enterprise”.

The author does an excellent comparison with the book that affected his life with comparisons to our American society and its flaws; the author is awakening to his Italian heritage. He has learned to appreciate his Italian heritage especially when he hears his friends called “Tommy”. Tommy was the name that his Italian grandfather called him but he also hears his grandfather calling him when he reads the very first words of “The Godfather”. “ I believe in America!” Read this book about Tom Santopietro’s journey. It is necessary read. I loved it.



My Sicily: Life in the Cusp of the Mediterranean Sea by Francesca V. Mignosa

Reviewed by Charles Russo

My Sicily: Life in the Cusp of the Mediterranean Sea by Francesca V. Mignosa is a fascinating guide of the beautiful island of Sicily which turns out to be so much more than the traditional travel guide book. Ms Mignosa has compiled an extremely pleasant tour of Sicily which serves a number of useful and enjoyable purposes. For, beyond just the usual geographic tour, the reader is treated to Sicilian culinary adventures as well as delightful lessons in history and language, along with a wealth of little known facts and interesting tidbits of information about the island.

Ms Mignosa is the perfect chaperon to wondrously transport the reader to Sicily. She was born in Augusta on the eastern coast of the island and spent the formative years of her life there. Subsequent to her and her family immigrating to the United States in 1997, she has made a number of trips back to her home island and thus shares with the reader a very personal and insightful perspective of Sicily. Having inherited her passion for writing from her grandfather, Nonno Giuseppe, Ms Mignosa elegantly demonstrates her ability to communicate through the written word in a number of creative ways. In addition to this book, she has written articles, short stories, screenplays and was honored as the recipient of the prestigious Italian literary award, “Sicilia Mondo”, both in 2007 and again this year.

One of the joys of Ms Mignosa’s publication about Sicily is that it gives the reader, especially those of us of Italian and/or Sicilian heritage, so much more than the “bricks and mortar” of the typical guide book. Demonstrating her Sicilian passion, she writes in a very personal manner about this gate of the Mediterranean and makes the places and people that we visit come alive in a very sensuous way by urging us to employ all of our senses to truly experience Sicily. This is obvious immediately, for in the first few lines of the preface we are urged to close our eyes as the author does and capture a mental image of the places described. We are gently exhorted throughout the book to continue this ambrosial relationship with Sicily by experiencing fragrances and tastes as well as the

visual picture of this island paradise that she has painted with her words. Adding to the joy is the fact that each chapter is prefaced by a poignant Sicilian adage followed by the literal translation as well as the figurative meaning.

Using a reference to food as the author so often does, Ms Mignosa has created a delectable Sicilian salad by tossing together the aforementioned mix of history, language, trivia, and personal experiences so that we gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of this special place. While it could never be possible to duplicate the bliss of an actual visit to the warm and welcoming island of Sicily, with Ms Mignosa’s help, we have the next best thing. For those who have not been fortunate enough to have made the trip, reading this book truly “takes one away” to the island and makes it come to life to such a degree that it will suffice until you get there.

On the other hand, if you have had the great fortune of having been to Sicily, this book will resurrect so many great memories. However many of the morsels of information and “secrets” about Sicily which are revealed by Ms Mignosa may make those of us who have been there upset that we missed so much. For Ms Mignosa has created an intensely interesting and sometimes quirky view of her home island including many things of which the average visitor would not be aware. For example, we join the procession in Catania of *I ceri di Sant’ Agata* (the Candles of Saint Agatha), attend *Festa di San Giuseppe* on Saint Joseph’s Day which features a cane-shaped bastone as tall as a man, observe festivals which consist entirely of boats on the Mediterranean, witness a *mattanza* (tuna harvest) on the Aegadian Islands, sample, in Bronte, the delectable *cannoli di ricotta* which are covered in pistachios, sunbathe at Fontane Bianche, referred to as the “Secret Lagoon” by Ms Mignosa, and tour a number of UNESCO world heritage sites on the island. And who knew things like the main church in Marsala is dedicated to St. Thomas Becket of Canterbury, England or that the name Marsala is of Arab origin – *Marsa Allah*, the port of Allah? All of these places can be known so intimately and described in such an interesting manner only by someone with Sicily in her blood. The fact that there are so many references to the tastes of Sicily and the religious festivals and cathedrals, Ms Mignosa is right on target when stating that Sicilians and Italians in general really do “associate almost everything with food and saints”.

So from each of the three points of *Trinacria* (the Sicilian Triangle) and everything in between, including the smaller surrounding islands, Ms Mignosa takes the reader on an enjoyable and unforgettable journey. She has given us a guide book, a postcard, and an invitation. If you are planning a trip to Sicily, be sure to pack this book. If the trip is not yet on your calendar, *My Sicily* will motivate you to start planning that trip now. In the meantime, “visit from afar” by allowing your senses to experience all that Sicily has to offer with Francesca Mignosa as your guide.



SCRANTON, PA



Scranton UNICAN of the Year Dr. Peter Cognetti and his wife Marianne.



The evening's Master of Ceremony, Past National President Chris DiMattio.



Pictured at the Gala are: Seated from left: Ron Quattrone, Sal Manago and Ron Natoli, Standing: Entertainers Lou Cossa and Nancy Graziano, Joanne Quattrone, Gail and Paul DeAntona, Pat Manago and Marie Natoli.



Pictured with honor Dr. Peter Cognetti are Past Presidents of the Scranton Chapter; from left: Current President Sal Mecca, Jack DeLeo, Frank Blasi, Sam Prudente, Joe Lorenzetti, Dr. Cognetti, Pat and Palma Yanni, Charles Spano, Dominick Nicastro, UNICO National Third Vice President, Frank Castellano and Chris DiMattio.



Seated from left: Norma Parri, Joyce Lomma, Mary and Phil Marrara; Standing from left: Bruce Parri, Diane and Melissa Mellow, Patty Grande Reider and Jeff Reider, and Steve Parulski.



Past Scranton Chapter "UNICAN of the Year" recipients. Seated from left: Joe Lorenzetti, this year's honoree Dr. Peter Cognetti, The Honorable. Judge S. John Cottone and Pat Yanni. Standing from left: Chris DiMattio, Frank Gervasi, Frank Blasi, Frank Castellano, Angelo Genell and Jack DeLeo.



Presenting the plaque for the National Office in honor of Alfred Dante are from left: UNICO National Third Vice President Dominick Nicastro, Lisa and David Bieri, UNICO National Office Manager Pat Pelonero, Past National President Chis DiMattio, UNICO National Second Vice President Ann Walko and Past National President Joe Agresti.



Basket Committee members, from left: Mary Marrara, Event Co-Chair; Lori Nozzi, Diane Alberigi, Gayle DeAntona and Patti Montalbano.

DR. M. ANN WALKO FOR FIRST VICE PRESIDENT~2013



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SCHOLARSHIP

**RECIPIENT: DISTRICT X AMERICANISM
AWARD**

**GRAND PATRIOT AMERICANISM
AWARD-NATIONAL LEVEL**



UNICO NATIONAL



From left: Frank Paolercio, Sal Benvenuti, Bob Apaluccio, John DiNapoli and Vinnie Laborim.



From left: Sal Benvenuti, Nina Held, Dominick and Alina Nicastro and Joe and Gloria Anne Cerullo.



From left: Frank and Joan Tidona, Geri Lipari and Barbara and Vinnie Laborim.



From left: Carmine Campanile, John DiNapoli, Francine Nido, Paul Domico, Nina Held, Jim DeSpenza and Peter Pettinato.



From left: Kathi Strozza, Pat Pelonero, Annette Vitelli and Linda Gail Alati.



From left: Nina Held, Mike Pisano and Andre' Di-Mino.



From left: David Donnini, Matt Risi, "Elvis" and Frank Caperino.



From left: Ron Giometti, Annette Vitelli, "Elvis" and Kathi Strozza.



"Elvis and the Donnini's, David, Deanna and Joe.



From left: Bob and April Bengivenga, "Elvis" and Renato Biribin.



From left: Tom Vaughan, "Elvis" and Francine Nido.



From left: Bob Tarte, Ann Walko, "Elvis" and Ron Giometti.



Welcome back Joe and Patsy Monaco!!!



Pat Pelonero, Matt Risi and Jim DeSpenza

Foundation Members Frank Blasi and Francine Nido.



MID YEAR BOARD MEETING



From left: Joe, Deanna and David Donnini.



The ladies in Black and White from left: Barbara Paolercio, Angela DiNapoli, Geri Lipari and Barbara Laborim.



Standing from left: John Alati, Steve Pelonero, Sal Benvenuti, David Donnini, Pat Pelonero, Bob Appaluccio and Frank Greco. Seated from left: Linda Gail Alati, Debbie Benvenuti and Arlene and Joe Agresti.



From left: Angela DiNapoli, Frank and Barbara Paolercio, Stephen DeFelice, Paula and Joe Marino, Pat Park and John DiNapoli.



Standing from left: Jim DeSpenza, Nina Held, Mike Spano, Kathi Strozza, Lou DiRico and Frank Capertino. Seated from left: Annette Vitelli, Ron Giometti Rose Falocco and Las Vegas Chapter Member.



Standing from left: Bob Tarte, Gerry Heytink, Anthony Bengivenga, David Donnini, Ann Walko, Mike Colucci and Peter Pettinato. Seated from left: Geri Lipari, Vinnie and Barbara Laborim, Maggie Pettinato and Joan Tidona.



Standing from left: Joe Monaco, Renato Biribin, Tony Arabia, David Donnini and Bob Bengivenga. Seated from left: Patsy Monaco, Rose Marie Arabia, Las Vegas Chapter Member and April Bengivenga.



From left: Paul Domico, Marlene Veselka, Nikki-Mayer Mike Veselka and Bob Mayer.



From left: Steve and Pat Pelonero, Stephen DeFelice and Jenny and Andre' DiMino.



From left: Gerry Heytink, Rose Falocco and David Donnini



From left: Kathi Strozza, Lou DiRico and Nina Held.



Arlene Agresti congratulates her husband, Joe, for being named the Vastola Award Winner for 2013.



NEW JERSEY DISTRICT VII CARNEVALE



Welcome to the King and Queen of Carnevale, Marie-Rose and Ralph Contini.



UNICO National First Vice President Rick D'Arminio is pictured with Marie-Rose and Ralph Contini.



From left: Marie Rose Contini, Bob Bengivenga, Renato Biribin, and Ralph Contini.



From left: Marie-Rose Contini, Mike D'Arminio and Ralph Contini.



From left: Ralph and Marie-Rose Contini and New Jersey District VII Governor Patty Hirsch.



Guess Who? From left: Sal Benvenuti, Frank Greco and Joe Agresti.

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Members of the Hackensack Chapter gather for a picture.



Criss Mangano and Phyllis Coldebella select the raffle winners!



Joe Ruggiero congratulates the King and Queen.



UNICO NATIONAL CONVENTION NEWS



Catch A Wave In Fort Lauderdale

Our 2013 National Convention is slowly coming up on the horizon. We respectfully suggest you make your travel plans as soon as possible. In checking the cost of air travel we have found the following:

Newark to Fort Lauderdale:	\$240
Chicago ORD to FLL	\$450
San Diego to FLL	\$469
Los Angeles to FLL	\$474

If it is convenient fly SouthWest or Jet Blue as they will afford you the lowest fares from outside of the East Coast. Just go on line and begin tracking. When you are comfortable with the cost, book it. If nothing else you can begin the process of budgeting for the convention. Fort Lauderdale is known as the “Venice of America” because of its expansive and intricate canal systems. Summer is considered the best season in this part of the world with average temperatures of 86 – 90 degrees Fahrenheit. You will usually experience some thunderstorms in the evening but not enough to spoil the fun activities that are available.

We suggest you plan on arriving Tuesday, July 30th (before 2:00 PM). Check into the hotel and say hello to some of your fellow UNICANs at the pool-side bar. Then get ready for a night of gambling and dining at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino which is located in Hollywood, Florida and just a short ride from the hotel. There will be a very low cost for the bus but you will have a great night to gamble, play the slots and enjoy one of the many upscale restaurants on the property.

Return to the Harbor Beach Marriott Hotel & Spa, your home for the next 5 days. Congregate at the inside lounge and say hello to some of your many friends from around the country. That is always a special time at UNICO Conventions.

This beautiful facility offers everything you could want for a family vacation stay. If you have any questions about this property please call them directly at 954-525-4000. If you are a member of Marriott Rewards use the 800 number listed in the back of your card. Wednesday morning the registration desk will be open. Pick up your badges and check the schedule for any committee meetings you may have to attend. Your convention committee continues to work hard to provide as many amenities as possible. A great deal depends on the amount of money we will be able to raise from sponsors. We will keep you posted.

Wednesday there is an afternoon tour of the Everglades. This is something you will not want to miss. We have an on-site tour company that will make all your arrangements. In the next issue of ComUNICO we will have complete details on this very special experience.

If you like baseball and are a Mets Fan they play the Miami Marlins on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights at 7:10 PM. The stadium is located in Miami Dade which is not that far from the hotel. I am a Mets fan and anyone who wants to join us I suggest you come in Monday, late morning and plan on going to the game. If you are not into casinos, you can do the baseball game on your own, Tuesday night. We will get the ticket prices and transportation all set up for our next article on the convention.

Wednesday night get ready to party as we will have our welcoming ice breaker. Thursday afternoon is free time and for those late arrivers they can begin the process to “Catch A Wave.” If they have a little of that shopping spirit Fort Lauderdale is home of the Swap Shop, a large indoor/outdoor flea market. A fun place to shop and enjoy lunch.

If you are unable to make the Casino Tour on Tuesday night you can go on your own and partake of all the pleasures that are available, in terms of dining and gaming. Information will be available at the registration desk.

For those who are more adventuresome we suggest you come in on Sunday and plan a trip to Key West and spend Monday night at one of the hotels made famous by Ernest Hemingway. Return on Tuesday and pick up the schedule we have planned for the rest of the week. Those of you interested please let us know and we will provide all the necessary information.

This convention is about attending UNICO’s most important event of the year. As Chapter Presidents and District Governors it is your duty and indeed responsibility to your constituencies to attend. The constitution stipulates that those officers representing the chapters and districts be provided with a stipend consistent with your budgets. Chapters and Districts that do not send their representatives are essentially disenfranchising the members. We hope that you will give this serious consideration and plan on attending.

On Friday afternoon there is our Awards Luncheon and time to relax and enjoy the pool and beach before you head out to dinner to one of the many fine restaurants in the local area. We will provide you with a list of the establishments that we suggest you attend.

Saturday we inaugurate our new national officers and have the changing of the guard. We will hear from our outgoing president and welcome our incoming president. Saturday afternoon is a good time to enjoy more of the local sights and sounds and prepare for our Gala Dinner where we honor our National Awardees.

We will keep you posted as we develop the tours, highlights and events that will be available to you, in Fort Lauderdale. We look forward to seeing you there. If there are any questions please contact our national office and they will forward them to the appropriate convention committee person to respond.

Please make your hotel reservations at your earliest convenience. There is no charge if you cancel 48 hours prior to attending. The earlier you book the better the committee will be able to plan for your arrival and offer amenities that require us to achieve a certain number of room nights. This is extremely important and right after that register. Here again, if you are unable to attend the money will be refunded.

We want you to attend, we need you to attend. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to facilitate your joining us at our 91st Annual Convention. In 9 years we will have completed a century of charitable activity that few service organizations can equal. It is at our conventions where we come together to make all these good things happen.



UNICO NATIONAL 91ST ANNUAL CONVENTION – 2013

The dates for the Convention are:
Wednesday, July 31, 2013 to Sunday, August 4, 2013

Marriott Harbor Beach Resort & Spa
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Reservations must be received on or before Friday June 28, 2013

All reservations must be guaranteed with a major credit card. Record your confirmation number or ask to have it sent to you by providing your E-mail address.

If you wish to extend your stay, you can take advantage of the same great UNICO Group rate up to three nights prior to or the three nights following the convention, based on availability, of course.

Next - fill out your convention registration form and mail it along with your payment to:

UNICO National
271 US Highway 46 west, Suite F-103 Fairfield, NJ 07004-2458
Phone: 973-808-0035 Fax: 973-808-0043 e-mail - uniconational@unico.org



2013 UNICO NATIONAL 91th Annual Convention Registration Form HARBOR BEACH MARRIOTT RESORT & SPA 3030 HOLIDAY DRIVE, FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida 33316-2414 July 31st- August 04th, 2013

Name _____ Nickname _____
Spouse's Name (If spouse is a member please complete a separate form), if attending _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Children Attending - Name and Ages _____

Chapter _____ District _____ Office Held _____
(i.e., National, District, Chapter, Delegate, Trustee)
FEES AND CHARGES UNICO NON Attendees not reserving
MEMBERS MEMBERS their rooms from the
MEALS and ENTERTAINMENT \$ 275.00 \$ 275.00 "UNICO room block"
Islandmaker, Hawaiian Luau, themed \$400.00
Buffet Luncheon
Gala Dinner

Registration (UNICO Members only) \$ 100.00 N/C

TOTAL with registration: _____

Total amount of check enclosed or to be charged: \$ _____

Make check payable to: "UNICO NATIONAL Convention 2013" or, if you prefer, use one of the following credit cards:
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Completed form should be mailed or sent by facsimile to:
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271 US Highway 46 West, Suite F - 103
Fairfield, New Jersey 07004-2458
Tel: 973-808-0035 Fax: 973-808-0043 or email to: uniconational@unico.org

HERITAGE EVENT

“Heritage Event Developed by UNICANs Who are College Fraternity Brothers”

A special Heritage event is being planned for the April 25, 2013 at Manhattan College that will present the guest speaker, Jasha Levi, a journalist and survivor of the racism and bigotry for most of his life. He fought against a Pro-Nazi government in his native land in his early adulthood and escaped the Holocaust during World War II with the aid of local Italians who shielded him from the Nazi's. This is one of many untold stories of Jew's that were spared from Holocaust atrocities by Italians. The Italian's saved far more Jew's from persecution than the more highly publicized story of “Schindler's List”.

This event has been in the planning stages for several years and had its genesis as part of an Outreach Program by the National Italian American Fraternity, Alpha Phi Delta (APD) to other Italian American organizations. Two fraternity brothers met each other through their fraternity networking that was organized as an outreach to senior APD alumni for their upcoming Centennial celebration. Mickey D'Addato and Al Branchi met during an introductory telephone conversation; both, were fraternity brothers from the same chapter at Manhattan College. Being 4 years apart, they never met during college days meeting nor during their next 55 years of family and professional lives.

Prior to the call, neither knew where they lived. Amazingly, they were less than 4 miles apart; one in Parsippany and one in Fairfield, New Jersey.

Needless to say they quickly arranged to have lunch and that led to the discovery they were both UNICANs. AND, both were presidents of their respective Chapters: Mickey D'Addato at Montville and Al Branchi at Livingston. As they both reminisced about the core values of their fraternity that are steeped in Italian Heritage and Culture, it became apparent that they are the same values we hold dear to us as UNICANs. Very similar organizations with focused “Service Above Self”; UNICO from an adult standpoint and APD from a college undergraduate standpoint.

Mickey and Al were determined to try and bring the two organizations closer together so that each could be enhanced synergistically from the other because of the same core values that motivate them. They arranged to introduce Chris DiMattio, the then National President of UNICO and Nicholas Franki, National President of APD, at a luncheon in New York City. It became quickly obvious that the two organizations and the two presidents had many things in common.

Following a review of each organization, that highlighted the similarities between the two organizations, Chris DiMattio mentioned a Kansas City event UNICO sponsored in Kansas City by the author of a book, “It Happened in Italy”, that details the saving of thousands of Jew's from the Nazi's in Campania, Italy. The author presented stories of individual heroism by local Italians in the region who safeguarded Jews from the concentration camps in Germany. It included survivors who told first hand accounts that brought tears to many of the audience.

UNICANs and Brothers Branchi and D'Addato thought this was a wonderful story that should be presented to the membership of both Italian American organizations and started to work on a plan for local presentation in the New York City area when Mickey D'Addato was told that Manhattan College has a Holocaust, Genocide and Interfaith Center (HGI), A perfect location for a joint Heritage Event.

Meetings were held with the Director of the HGI Center, Dr. Mehnaz Alfridi, and William Clyde, Executive Vice President and Provost of Manhattan College, to present the idea of such an event and it was agreed that the school would support such an event. Although they have certain criteria for speakers at the college, they would support such an event with their facilities and assist in promoting the event through their networking channels.

When Manhattan College vetted the book, certain concerns were found so they suggested another speaker with a similar history. Again through the tenacity of Mickey D'Addato, he heard of similar speaker through his connections with the Son's of Italy, Jasha Levi.

This speaker was found to have the proper scholastic credentials and the joint event will finally materialize on April 25th. Although 92, Mr. Levi is an active speaker with a lifetime of tales to tell before, during, and after the Holocaust; over continents, through wars and peace, hatreds and brotherhoods, successes and hardships, uprootings and setting up roots again.

It was a particularly winding and arduous road for Jasha Levi, from the 1940 student revolt that toppled the Pro-Nazi government in pre-war Belgrade to the 1941 escape in Sarajevo and a three-year confinement during WWII in Asolo, Italy. He went on to become a journalist and advocate for anti racism and bigotry for the remainder of his life.

This event will be the culmination of many meeting to enhance the depth of feeling for our Italian Heritage and will draw two Italian American heritage organizations closer together, APD and UNICO. Each will help in sponsoring, promoting and participating in the presentation. For UNICO, the APD brothers are a perfect source for new UNICANs.

In retrospect, this was an interesting, weaving and obstacle ridden voyage that will culminate in an inspiring Heritage event for both organizations.



From left: Nicholas Franki, National President of APD; Al Branchi, Livingston Chapter President and Chris DiMattio, Past National President.



PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICT I



Matt Prosseda, President Berwick Chapter; the hosting Chapter and Chris DiMattio, Past National President talk about the upcoming District Governor's meeting at Berwick.



Chris DiMattio pins Past President pin on Catharine Metrokowski from the Berwick Chapter.



Gloria Cerullo, first women accepted in the Hazleton Chapter is installed by President David, assisted by Chris DiMattio Past National President. She was pinned by Dan DiMelfi, President of Hazleton Chapter alongside is Joe Cerullo, Pennsylvania I District Governor.



David Donnini, UNICO National President addresses the attendees at the Pennsylvania I District Governor's meeting.

NEW JERSEY DISTRICT X



New Jersey District X Governor Robert Bengivenga held the District X meeting at Carpaccio's, Middlesex, hosted by Raritan Valley Chapter and Hillsborough Chapter. From left: Joe Almeida, Geri Samuel, Robert Bengivenga, Courtney Villani and Ed Danberry.

SAN DIEGO, CA



Giovanna and Tony DiBona arrive at the San Diego Chapter brunch with their homemade specialties.



From left: Marianne Lalli-Regan, Patty Mical and Barry Masci.



From left: Chapter Vice President Valerie Orsini and Sandro Piancone.



From left: Guest Anthony Papaleo and Chapter President John Orsini.



From left: Joe Cortese, Maria and Carl Caccamise and Angela Cortese.



Roger Maury, center, pours his homemade Limoncello and Mandarinetto for Marianne Regan and Past National President Frank Caperino.



From left: Jim DeSpenza and the brunch host Bob Gaglione.

HAZLETON, PA

Members of the Hazleton Chapter of UNICO National participated in the American Cancer Society telethon on Saturday, February 23 at the Laurel Mall. UNICO members were on hand to answer phones during the event, which was broadcast on WYLN-TV 35. The club also made their annual \$500 donation to the ACS.



From left: Andy Mehalshick, news anchor from WBRE-TV; Lisa Schugardt, news anchor from WYLN-TV; UNICO Hazleton President Daniel DeMelfi and Bill Waschko, Kim Zboray, and Joe Clark, all of WYLN.



President Dan DeMelfi and Gloria Cerullo on the phones for cancer.

UNICO Hazleton presented a \$500 donation to the family of Gianna Miller, who is in need of a trained seizure response dog. The presentation was made during a fund-raiser held at the Citizens' Fire Company in Weatherly on Saturday, February 23.



From left: Rebecca Ravina, Gianna's mother; Daniel DeMelfi, President of UNICO Hazleton; UNICO member Gloria Cerullo and Pennsylvania I District Governor Joe Cerullo.

CARBONDALE, PA



At the monthly meeting of the Carbondale Chapter two new members were installed. From left: Membership Chair Jerry Arnese, new member Pat Morell, President Tom Gretzula and new member Angela Geyer.



OUR STORY

James A. Fornelli was born in Chicago in 1921 and was the seventh of eight siblings. His father arrived in the United States for the first time in 1907, but returned to Italy twice before returning with his wife Rose and four children in 1914. Processed through Ellis Island, they lived in New York for a year before settling permanently in Chicago in a predominantly Italian neighborhood just west of downtown.

Growing up during the harsh times of the Great Depression when jobs were scarce, young Jim Fornelli lied about his age and joined the National Guard at age 16. When the war broke out in 1941, he was called up immediately for deployment in the Pacific Theatre. Before shipping out he married Margaret Vito Anderson.

War in the Pacific

In 1943, Staff Sergeant Fornelli was among the first wave of Army troops to storm the beaches at Guadalcanal. The island was a Japanese stronghold, heavily fortified by battle tested Japanese soldiers more than willing to die for the Emperor. Guadalcanal was one of the bloodiest battles in the annals of American warfare, and a stepping stone that was essential to turning the tide of war in the Pacific.

Jim Fornelli was a soldier serving on the front lines who had a young wife, loved music, possessed a fine singing voice, and loved to dance. On January 1, 1943 Sergeant Fornelli was forced by circumstances not of his choosing to lead three merged platoons to secure a decisive position at Mt. Austen on Hill 27. Under heavy fire from Japanese who held the high ground, firing down from trees at the crest of a hill, and from a well concealed machine gun nest, they caused numerous American casualties. After three days of intense combat it became apparent to Fornelli that he was now the senior NCO and the only platoon leader left. "I don't know about other companies, but there wasn't an officer in sight in my area. They were non-existent, period."

Forced into making a command decision, Sergeant Fornelli led a fearless assault on the hill. His incredible display of courage and amazing strength of character saved the lives of many while risking his own. For gallantry in action he was awarded the Silver Star.

At Home

Following the war, he and Margaret started their family life together. He worked for Kraft Foods and was offered a substantial promotion, but was told he had to take the vowel off his name. But, Jim Fornelli was proud of his Italian heritage and rather than do that, he resigned and started his own business as a builder and remodeling contractor. "My dad was a quiet man and never spoke about the war" said his son Jerry. His family knew little about his war record because he chose to keep it to himself. His friends found out, but only because of the publicity attached to his homecoming. "They respected my privacy and when the limelight subsided, that was that" he said.

But for years he was haunted by nightmares of dead Japanese soldiers and for over 40 years he kept the war experiences to himself. As the years passed, the awful dreams subsided as well. But in February of 1986 he received a copy of the book

"Orchids in the Mud", written by Dr. Robert C. Muehrcke in which his exploits on Guadalcanal were prominently featured. He was stunned and became angry to read false testimony of some alleged accounts by men who he knew to have cowered when the real fighting took place. Upon reading the book Fornelli felt compelled to reveal the real reason why no officers were present on Hill 27 on January 1, 1943.

Fornelli responded by writing a 24 page letter to the author. "Your book was beautiful to read until I reached the part where misstatement of facts were given to you by individuals who told you flat out lies. I must be candid and say that valor is a two sided coin. Cowardice and dereliction of duty are the other side of the coin" he said. "You speak gloriously of valor, courage and heroism in the face of the enemy" Fornelli continued. "I know my revelations will not be popular and will not endear me to some people, but what the hell, I know I'll sleep better".

"I do this partly in protest, and mostly because I have to clear my mind of past ghosts and the real unsung heroes; those that perished". "Mine are bitter memories", he said, revealing the cause of his dismay during the advance on Mt. Austen, Hill 27. Fornelli realized the GI's were absorbing heavy losses from sniper shots and a machine gun nest that had to be taken out. With enemy fire cracking down upon them, the 1st lieutenant broke down at the sight of blood, sat down and began to cry, necessitating his evacuation. Fornelli went on describing to the author more reasons for officers not present at the time of severe crisis.

False Claims

"In your book, you mentioned certain individuals who received the Purple Heart. I can tell you that one of the recipients gained his Purple Heart while running away from the battle. He got shot in the heel." The second recipient received his Purple Heart from falling rocks and debris caused by the fleeing first recipient scrambling away above him," Fornelli said. "The rest of us who survived are very fortunate indeed" he wrote. "There were some individuals who survived only by hiding and later emerged telling great war tales," Fornelli added.

Sergeant Fornelli stated he could name these people but did not want to belittle or embarrass them. "It seems these people had to come to terms and peace with themselves by rationalizing their own inactions" Fornelli said. He emphasized he was not sitting in judgment, and would leave that to a higher authority. He went on to say he knew and understood about fear. "I remember one instance I was so paralyzed with fear that I could not bring my rifle up to bear," he said. But fortunately that crisis passed without incident. "Pride overcame my fear. Therefore I survived" he said. "There had to be a guardian angel looking over me. All of my senses were heightened to a fine degree and something within me told me when to move or hold my position".

Saving Lives

Fornelli stressed that saving lives was far more important than taking them. He held the highest respect for men who performed heroic deeds as acts of duty; who never received or asked for recognition. On Guadalcanal, near Hill 27, Fornelli and two other soldiers viewed a dogfight between American and Japanese aircraft flying above them. One of the American planes, streaming smoke, made a crash landing on the beach. Without hesitation the three soldiers rushed to the crash site.

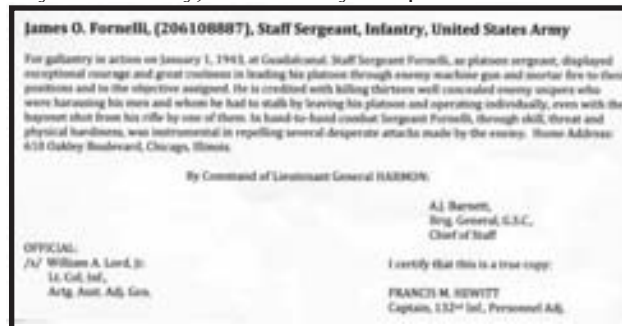
They pulled the wounded pilot and gunner from the wreckage as the ammunition on board the plane started going off in all directions. They retreated quickly, just before the plane exploded. On another occasion on the Island of New Caladonia, Fornelli swam to the rescue of a soldier who fell from a docked ship as he was unloading supplies and was floundering desperately in the water.

When Fornelli wrote to Dr. Robert Muehrcke, he in no way meant to offend him personally, because the author only reported what had been told to him, and had been victimized by a few men grasping for some sort of glory they were not entitled to receive.

Truth is the First Casualty of War

By Staff Sergeant James A. Fornelli revealing the truth, he attempted to describe the way events actually unfolded during the battle to scale Mt. Austen. He firmly believes that ignoring his legitimate frustrations would be altogether inappropriate. Mr. Fornelli was forced to cross a delicate line between history (facts) and by what some misinformed people think should have happened. Mr. Fornelli passed away in 2004 after attending the World War II Dedication Memorial in Washington D.C. Mr. Fornelli was unequivocally an American hero.

By Jim Murray, Kansas City Chapter



Sergeant James Fornelli pictured with his wife Margaret.



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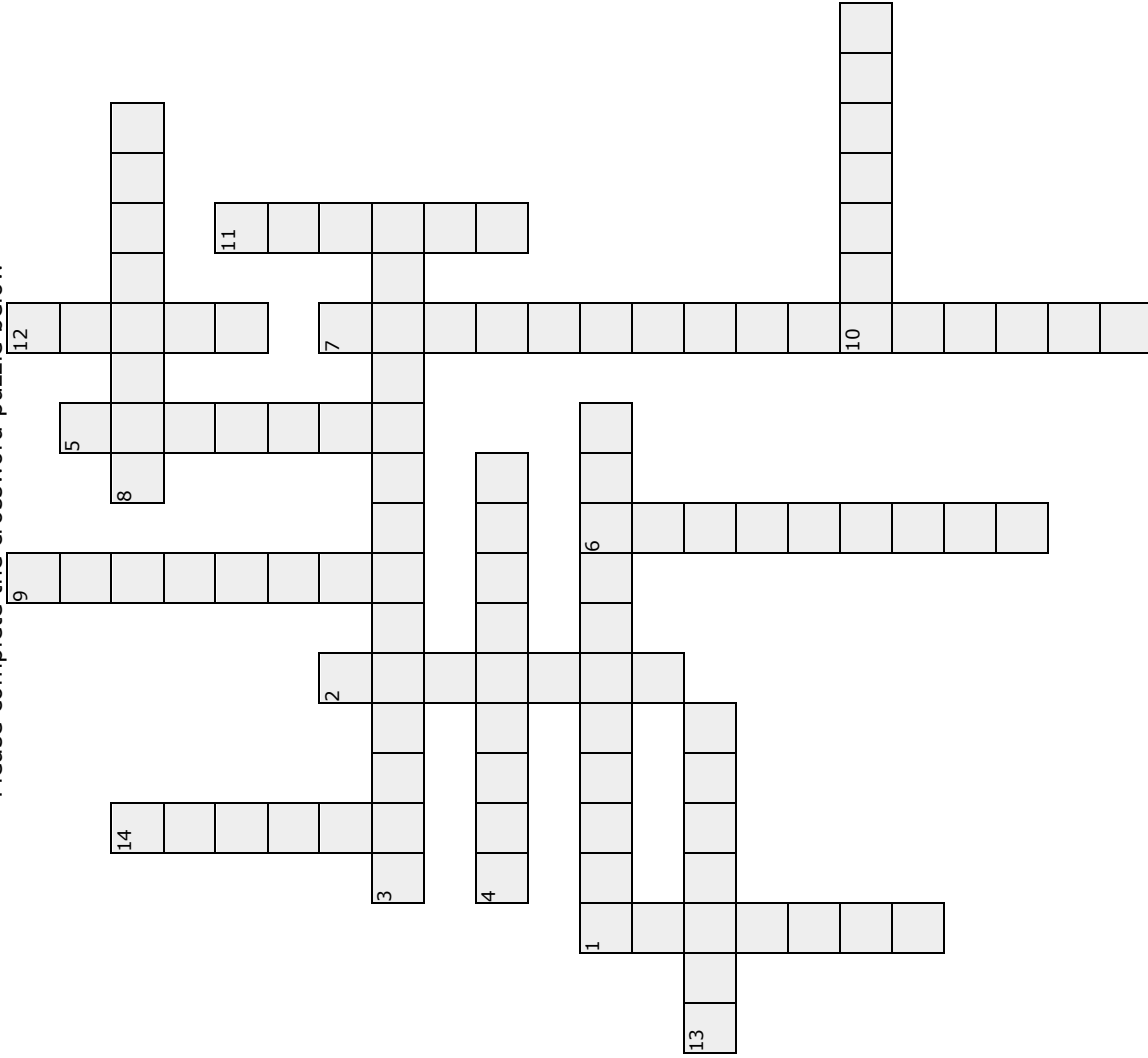
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UNICO

Please complete the crossword puzzle below



Across:

1. What does the O in UNICO stand for?
3. What does the N in UNICO stand for?
4. Where was UNICO first organized?
8. Which Italian American was awarded the Medal of Honor and Navy Cross for his uncommon valor in WWII?
10. Who was UNICO's National Founder?
13. Who helped form the Scranton Chapter of UNICO in 1955 and now has a scholarship in his name?

Down:

1. Which month is observed as Italian Heritage and Culture Month?
2. What does the C in UNICO stand for?
5. Who began the communications revolution by creating long distance wireless transmission?
6. What does the I in UNICO stand for?
7. What is UNICO's motto?
9. What is the name of the Voice of UNICO National?
11. Who was the first Italian American to become our nation's first female governor?
12. What does the U in UNICO stand for?
14. What does UNICO mean in Italian?

EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR



**Salvatore Benvenuti,
Executive Administrator**

It is never an easy decision to leave a job that you love; however, due to family priorities, I tendered my resignation as Executive Administrator of UNICO National effective March 31, 2013.

I was appointed to this position by our first female President, Kathi Strozza in August 2008. This was supposed to be a three month assignment until such time as they found a permanent Administrator. As you can see the three month temporary assignment lasted four and one half years.

You might wonder how a three month detail could have resulted in four and one half years of employment with UNICO National. The answer is easy; it was because of the UNICO members and the organization. Being involved with UNICO on the national level, I have met so many wonderful people from all over the country. Working with the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors has been a challenge and rewarding experience.

I am not going to list all the accomplishments during my tenure as your Executive Administrator; however, the one thing I am most proud of is that we brought integrity and professionalism to the National Office. Also the National Office became your office and was open and available to our members. As the staff became more experienced, we took on more duties and responsibilities and at the same time made sure that we were servicing our membership.

The progress we have made would not have been possible without a great staff that did whatever was asked of them to get the job done. I would like to thank each one of them for their service and dedication to me personally and the organization:

Pat Pelonero (my "Office Wife") – Pat was hired a few months after I took over as the Administrator as the Office Manager. She quickly caught on as to what had to be done and also developed great relationships with our members. Pat and I spent so much time together that many people actually thought we were married to each other.

Joyce O'Hara (our Bookkeeper) – Joyce started working for UNICO in the spring of 2009 as our Bookkeeper. She worked for no compensation for almost one year while collecting unemployment. Joyce epitomizes the UNICO motto of "Service Above Self" by donating almost one year of service as our bookkeeper without compensation.

Lisa Adubato (Administrative Assistant) – Lisa came to us in 2011 and immediately took over some of the more difficult tasks dealing with our website and the ComUNICO publication. In addition to her administrative duties, she also handles the bookkeeping for the UNICO Foundation.

Sue Anzelmo (Administrative Assistant) – Sue is our most recent employee and started working with us in the spring of 2012. Sue is quickly learning the various tasks and she is developing into a seasoned employee.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention our intern Stephanie Figurelli. After her internship, we were able to keep her on for a few hours each week. Stephanie is a true worker and performed a variety of jobs for the office.

To my staff, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the support that you gave me and the organization. You are truly a remarkable staff and I am sure that you will continue in your hard work and support with the new Administrator.

There is one other person that I want to recognize and thank. I could not have done this job without the support of my wife, Debbie. She enjoyed going to the many UNICO meetings and functions and meeting such wonderful people. I think she will miss this job more than I will.

There are so many people within the UNICO organization to thank for helping me; however, it would be impossible to list each and every one. You know who you are and I truly thank you for your advice, guidance, and respect that you have given me.

I received the greatest compliment at the Mid-Year Board meeting when my letter of resignation was read. I am not referring to the standing ovation, but instead to the looks on the member's faces and the tears in their eyes. I am not sure if these were tears of sadness or joy, but I think they were both. They were glad for me personally that I now have the time to take care of my family obligations, but sad to see me leave the National Office.

On April 1st (no fooling), Andre' DiMino will take over as the Executive Administrator of UNICO National. I am confident that I am leaving the position in good hands. Andre' has a wealth of knowledge and background that he brings to the position. In addition, I am not going away and will be available to consult and assist Andre' and the staff.

I have been a UNICO member since 1985 and plan to continue to be an active member on both the Chapter level and also on the National level. It has been a great run, I thank you for the "opportunity to serve" this great organization.

God Bless UNICO and those who contribute to its cause,

Sal Benvenuti

ANDRE' DI MINO



**Andre' DiMino,
Past National President**

What a great opportunity! I am so pleased to now be able to serve our organization as Executive Administrator. I appreciate our National President, David Donnini giving me this opportunity by appointing me to this position during our National Board Meeting recently held in Las Vegas. I can assure you that the decision to accept this position was one that I did not take lightly. Sal Benvenuti has done an outstanding job during his tenure as Executive Administrator. He has organized a well-run, financially-sound and respected National Office operation that has made major and beneficial strides over the past several years. We are very fortunate to have had such a professional and dedicated person serving in this position. And, thanks to his leadership, we have an efficient and professional office staff that serves our organization very well. I am looking forward to working with them!

It is precisely due to Sal's efforts that I am enthusiastic about taking on this new role and was a crucial factor in my decision to accept the appointment. With such a sound operational foundation for our organization managed by Sal over the past several years, it provides the opportunity to now build upon that foundation. As Executive Administrator I consider this to be an opportunity to apply my business experience to expand the efforts of our National Office in assisting our organization in many aspects. I am very enthusiastic about the possibilities. We can explore new and better ways for our National Office to support our members, Chapters and Districts in all aspects of their dedication to our motto of "Service Above Self."

I hope that all of you will join with me in my enthusiasm for the future of our organization. I believe UNICO National is the premier Italian American organization in America. While serving the community, on both a local and national basis, we enjoy the satisfaction of providing that service with people of our own heritage and culture. That is an unbeatable combination! That is why the name Dr. Vastola chose for this organization is still so appropriate - we are unique!

As your new Executive Administrator I want you to feel free to contact me at any time for anything that you may need. I also ask that if you have any ideas or suggestions on how the National Office can serve you better, please let me know. The National Office is here to help you in your efforts, so please be sure to let me know if there is anything else we can do to support you. Thanks!



*Happy Easter to all of our
Members from the Staff of
UNICO National!*



Convention
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Paul Domico
ppdomico@
gmail.com

Vice Chair:
John Alati
jmalati@aol.
com

Ad Journal
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GINA BARRECA: A trailblazer in the rarified world of academia, she is as funny and down-to-earth as she is learned and accomplished.

LOU&A

by Louis R. Carlozo

Life in the farce lane

Though Dr. Gina Barreca wears many hats — academic, humorist, best-selling author — she's also blazed trails right from the moment she set foot on campus at Dartmouth College in the 1970s. Back then she was one of that Ivy League school's first Italian-American female students (and the first female Alumni Scholar).

Today, Barreca is a force to be reckoned with, combining feminism and funny, searing intellect and selfless dedication to her students. As an English and feminist theory professor at the University of Connecticut, she won that institution's most distinguished teaching award. Did we mention she's also a columnist with The Hartford Courant, and that fellow humorist Dave Barry has described her as "very, very funny ... for a woman"?

To interview Barreca is to risk becoming the straight man as she doles one-liners and

(See Lou&A on Page 44)

NEWSMAKERS

Mismatch made in heaven

by Jim Distasio

For Italian-American talk show titan Kelly Ripa, the past few months must feel like history repeating itself.

The longtime co-host of "Live with Regis and Kelly" and later the sole host of "Live with Kelly" for a year following the 2011 retirement of Regis Philbin, the 42-year-old Ripa recently welcomed a new man into her TV life — former New York Giants defensive end Michael Strahan.

Strahan was chosen as Ripa's new co-host after an exhaustive search, which included reported contenders like singer Josh Groban and "Saturday Night Live's" Seth Meyers. It was an unexpected and inspired choice. Strahan, who towers more than a foot above Ripa, is sweet and quick-witted, with maximum charis-

ma and minimal TV experience.

"We're having the best time," Ripa told Katie Couric of her on- and off-screen rapport with Strahan.

The seemingly mismatched duo has turned out to be a ratings smash, recently edging out reigning No. 1 daytime contender "Dr. Phil." But what might be more fascinating is how the search to find Ripa's perfect on-screen sidekick mirrored her own ascension to the top of the daytime TV food chain more than a decade ago.

When Ripa was chosen to replace Kathie Lee Gifford as co-host of "Live with Regis and Kathie Lee" in early 2001, the decision felt more like a roll of the dice than the no-brainer it eventually became.

(See Newsmakers on Page 44)



KELLY RIPA: An adept hand at defying the odds, she once again scored big with her show's inspired choice to replace her legendary co-host, Regis Philbin.

REVIEW Renaissance musician

by David Witter

Performing with the likes of Frank Sinatra, the Buddy Rich Band, Herbie Hancock, Yo Yo Ma, Andrea Bocelli, Sting, Steven Tyler, Paul Simon and Jovanotti, Chris Botti transcends such labels as "smooth jazz," "popera" and "classical." Instead, this multi-Grammy-nominated trumpeter harkens back to the Italian Renaissance, when creative souls felt compelled to express themselves in a variety of media.

It should come as no surprise, then, that Botti also has dedicated himself to celebrating not only the music, but the entire culture, of the nation he proudly calls his second home.

"My father was a professor of Italian at Oregon State University, and growing up,



CHRIS BOTTI: Classically trained and dizzyingly eclectic, he is as dedicated to the land of his ancestors as he is to the instrument that has brought him so much renown.

we spoke mostly Italian in our home. Then, when I was in second or third grade, we lived in Italy for a year, so the connection began when I was quite young," Botti says. "There is something special about Italy — the clothes, the food, the fact that the people are so knowledgeable about jazz. I now have a home in Tuscany, which is my favorite place in the world."

The gift of music was bestowed upon Botti by his mother, a classically trained pianist who introduced him to the trumpet at the age of 9. At 12, he discovered jazz.

"I was influenced by the styles of Miles Davis, especially in the early 1960s, during his 'Miles Ahead' period," Botti says. "I believe that Davis, especially on songs like 'My Funny Valentine,' was responsible for turning the instrument inward, softening it and giving it a more introspective sound."

Like most jazz titans, Botti was a prodigy, and was selected to perform in the McDonald's All-American High School

(See Review on Page 44)

LIBRI The other Sicily

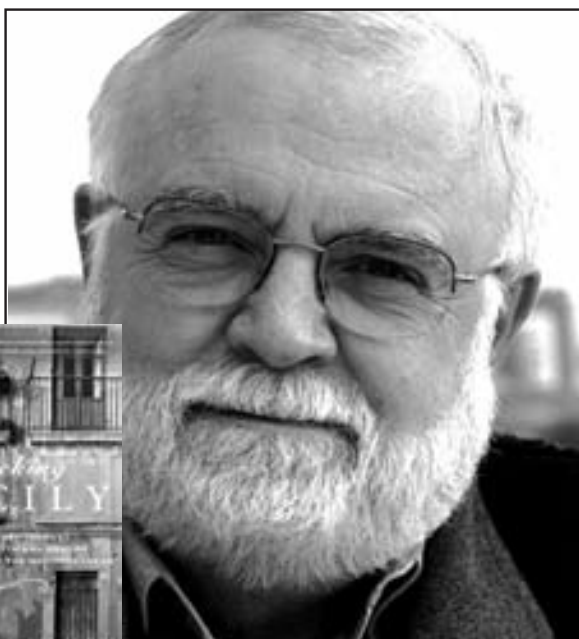
by Judith Anne Testa

If you want a guide to sights in Sicily, look elsewhere, but if you want a book that takes you into the history and heart of the beautiful, often tragic, occasionally brutal and ultimately mysterious island at the toe of Italy's boot, then you'll love this book. Ignoring tourist destinations, the author drove Sicily's back roads, visiting small towns and remote villages, staying in tiny B&Bs, eating at modest trattorie and chatting with local inhabitants, sometimes in his rudimentary Italian and other times with the help of a more fluent traveling companion. Keahey's combination of courtesy, humility and genuine interest made the often-guarded rural Sicilians willing to talk with him.

He did his homework; the book has a lengthy bibliography helpful to anyone wishing to learn more about Sicily's long and eventful history. A fair amount of the book is devoted to Sicilian history, which is a narrative of successive invasions, each of which left its mark on the island. The author concludes that Greeks and Arabs were the ones who made the deepest impression.

Despite attention to history, the book rambles pleasantly, as the author himself does, and it's organized by topic and by where the author happens to be on the island rather than by chronology. He begins in Palermo, in the ruins of Palazzo Lampedusa, home of Giuseppe Lampedusa, author of "The Leopard," among the most famous books by

a Sicilian author. Still in Palermo, he devotes a chapter to the nearly lost Sicilian art of cart painting, spending time with the last such artisan left in the city. He keeps returning to Racalmuto, the tiny hometown of Leonardo Sciascia, another of Sicily's great writers, although one less known in America. Not content to be a sightseer, he makes contact with Sciascia's relatives, with whom he discusses the author's works and the insights they offer into the Sicilian character — what Sciascia called "sicilitudine."



"Seeking Sicily" by John Keahey
Cost: \$18.47 (hardcover) | Pages: 312
ISBN: 978-0-312-59705-4

No conventional travel writer would mention, much less discuss at length, a truly hellish aspect of Sicilian life that existed as late as 1975: sulfur mines where men, along with boys as young as age 7, labored all day under such inhumane conditions that the African-American educator Booker T. Washington, visiting in 1910, declared that "the condition of the colored farmer in the most backward parts of the [South] ... is incomparably better" than that of Sicilian sulfur miners. A long chapter follows on the horrors of the Inquisition as carried out by the Catholic Church when Sicily was under Spanish occupation. In the chapter "Never in Control," the author discusses Sicily's occupiers, not all of whom were completely bad. During the 11th century, under Norman French rule, Sicily was briefly a place where different races and religions co-existed in mutual respect. In chapters on food, the Mafia and traditional folk rituals, the author explores still more aspects of the island.

Myth lies just below the surface of Sicilian life, and many ancient Greek myths describe events that took place in Sicily, which was colonized and occupied by the Greeks almost 3,000 years ago. Some of these places are still identifiable, such as Lake Pergusa, where Pluto kidnapped Persephone and dragged her to the underworld. Such stories are still part of Sicilian life.

BOB BENGIVENGA for First Vice President



District X New Jersey Governor
★ Former President,
Plainfields' New Jersey Chapter
★ Army Veteran ★ American
Legion Vice Commander ★
Board of Directors, Edison
Valley Playhouse ★ South
Plainfield Public Library Trustee
★ Former Member, South
Plainfield Police Reserves ★
UNICO National Board Member
★ National Chair, Community
Service Day (2010-2011) ★ 20-
Year Member, Plainfield Rescue
Squad ★ Chair, John Basilone
Parade, Raritan, NJ

A True Team Player

- Increased membership by 25% while President of the Plainfields' Chapter.
- Established Italian language class for Unicans and community members.
- Helped spearhead "Sister City" relationship with Terno d'Isola Italy.
- Increased participation in the Brian Piccolo Dinner—with over 200 guests attending—while District X Governor.

UNANIMOUSLY NOMINATED BY THE PLAINFIELDS' CHAPTER

What are ***YOU*** looking for in a Leader?

As we begin to prepare for another election- it is critical that we think about where we want to be and how we are going to move forward as an organization focused on Service to Others.

If you are looking for a candidate who is a **VISIONARY** and who has a **PLAN OF ACTION** to move UNICO into the 21st century- then you are looking for **ANN WALKO**, candidate for **1st Vice-President**.

If you are looking for a candidate with more than **forty years** of leadership experience and who has a **proven track record of success**, who exhibits **attention to detail**, has a **sense of humor** and a **sense of self** — then you are looking for **ANN WALKO**.

If you are looking for a **team player**, a **leader of leaders**, an **innovator**, a **problem-solver** and a **decision-maker** — then you are looking for **ANN WALKO**.

If you are looking for someone who has **patience**, **good listening skills**, a **mentor to others**, who exhibits **integrity** and **maintains a professional demeanor** — then you are looking for **ANN!**

**Vote for ANN WALKO for
1st VICE-PRESIDENT-UNICO NATIONAL
SHE IS WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR IN A FUTURE LEADER!**

SPORTS Unstoppable force

by Elena Ferrarin

Two things happened when Paralympic athlete Anthony Pedferri got his first handcycle about four years ago.

One, Pedferri — a former triathlete who was paralyzed from the chest down after he was hit by a drunk driver in 2007 — realized how hard it was to make the bike move by just pumping his arms.

"I couldn't even make it across the parking lot," says Pedferri, a native of Washington state who now lives in California.

Two, he couldn't believe how antiquated the handcycle was. "I was kind of shocked when I got my bike. It was like, 'This is really what you guys race on?'" he says. "It was technology from the '90s."

Pedferri, who turns 43 on April 7, is now a top paracycling racer, placing fourth in the time trials and fifth in the road race in the H1 division at the 2012 U.S. Paralympics in London.

He also was a three-time U.S. national champion (in the road race, time trial and criterium) in 2012. The year before, he was the U.S. national champion for road race and took silver in the time trial.

Pedferri's world changed in 2007, when he was on the job as a California Highway Patrol officer and was hit by a drunk driver while performing a traffic stop.

Though he's come a long way, depression always lurks around the corner, he says.

"You still have days or hours when you ask yourself, 'Why is this so hard?'" he says.

"But it's not weeks on end anymore. Everybody has [depression cycles]. It's kind of the nature of the beast."

A major turning point came in winter 2009, when he learned to load his handcycle on his own in and out of his Ford Flex.

"I was completely independent, I didn't need anybody to go work out," says Pedferri, who competed in his first race in June 2010.

Pedferri knew all about an athlete's discipline and hard work, having competed as a Category 1 road cyclist and in several Ironman World Championships.

Still, after his injury, he had to adapt to

new biological challenges, such as the fact his body doesn't sweat, or that his heart rate doesn't rise beyond a certain point.

These days, his workouts consist of riding his handcycle, lifting weights and swimming in the local pool, which he does by strapping his legs in straight braces.

"People always ask me, 'What do I bench?' It wouldn't be a lot, but I could bench a little, forever," he says. "Aerobically, I have a big motor. I kind of keep going and going and going, [without getting] tired. I can go for five-and-a-half or six hours, which is a lot."

Pedferri, who is married and has two daughters, is now training for the international Paracycling Open, to be held later this month in Greenville, S.C.

In July, he'll compete in the paracycling road national championships in Madison, Wis., whose results will determine who will represent the United States at next year's world championships in Canada.

Pedferri never lost sight of his initial reaction to the disappointing technology of handcycles, and recently started a business with the goal of manufacturing his own brand of lighter-but-stronger handcycle.

Pedferri says his experience at the London Paralympics taught him that in Europe, people view disabled sports just as they do regular sports — as pure competition, and not just inspirational feats colored by the athletes' stories of hardship.



ANTHONY PEDEFERRI: Blessed with a "big motor," he has battled to the top of the paracycling world in four short years.

37 AMERICA

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BIAGIO ANTONACCI: Rather than grabbing for the easy money during his rise to prominence, he has carefully guarded his reputation and is reaping the full benefits of superstardom.

PERSONAGGI

by Nicola Orichuia

True to himself

Like the best of red wines, Biagio Antonacci just keeps getting better as he matures and develops into the songwriter he has always dreamed of being. At 49, the singer has reached the pinnacle of musical stardom in Italy, and is now ready to cross the Atlantic Ocean and share songs from his latest album, "Sapessi dire no" (If I Knew How to Say No) — 14 original gems that range from epic pop ballads to pizzica-infused hits, interspersed with romantic serenades.

The album was originally released one year ago in Italy and quickly reached multi-platinum status, remaining on the top of the charts for dozens of weeks with the singles "Ti dedico tutto" (I Dedicate Everything to You) and "Non vivo più senza te" (I Don't Live Without You). Now, thanks to Sony Music, it is available in the United States as well, both in digital format and CD.

(See In America on Page 45)

IN AMERICA Watch out, Rome

by Paul Basile

Renato Turano is back.

The Chicago-area business and community leader took the February elections by storm, racking up nearly 10,000 preferences in his bid to return to the Italian Senate. In the process, he helped propel his Partito Democratico to a resounding victory in North and Central America.

Battle-hardened by a grueling campaign, he now travels to Rome armed with an agenda aimed at cutting through the dysfunction that pervades Italian politics.

"My top priority will be to fix our badly broken electoral system, which gives more power to the party than to the person being voted for," he notes. "We also need to improve consular services, promote Italian language and

culture abroad, and make it easier to reclaim Italian citizenship."

Turano's success should come as no surprise. A titan of American business with a sterling track record as a community leader and coalition-builder on both sides of the Atlantic, he offered a message of hope and change that resonated with his constituents.

He's also a proven vote getter, garnering the most preferences in his previous two races, and only losing the last time around because his party fell short. Taking his cues from the past, Turano put his party first on the road to victory.

"We told voters to be sure to put an 'X' through the PD logo and not to worry so much about writing in Turano

(See In America on Page 44)



RENATO TURANO: Ushered into office by a wave of grassroots support, he is poised to continue the work he started when he first served as an Italian senator half a decade ago.

IN ITALY Political turning point

by Nicola Orichuia

When comedian Beppe Grillo announced his campaign would be a "tsunami," he wasn't serving up one of his trenchant jokes. He was dead serious. And although most Italian politicians laughed him off, they nervously awaited the results of the Feb. 24 and 25 parliamentary elections. What hit them was much more than a tsunami: It was a political earthquake that shattered the status quo.

With more than 25 percent of preferences, Grillo's 5 Star Movement (M5S) took home more than 100 deputies and more than 50 senators, an unprecedented feat for a brand new political party. In fact, the M5S received more votes than any other single party, trailed closely by the Partito Democratico of Pier Luigi Bersani and the Popolo della Libertà of Silvio Berlusconi. However, votes are counted based on coalitions, so the PD and its smaller allies ended up prevailing in the Chamber of Deputies with 29.5 percent of preferences and an automatic majority

award of 55 percent of the seats. Surprisingly, Berlusconi's rickety ensemble of parties almost came away with a steal, ending up with 29.1 percent of the

vote.

Things got even more complicated in the Senate, where majorities are awarded on a regional basis, as opposed to the national criteria used for the Chamber. Berlusconi's victories in the northern strongholds of Lombardy and Veneto, as well as in key southern regions like Campania and Sicily, produced almost as many senators as the PD (117 versus 123). A minimum of 158 seats is necessary to have a majority in the 315-seat Senate. Forget about Prime Minister Mario Monti's extremely disappointing 19 seats, which wouldn't be enough to attain a majority in concert with either of the two main coalitions. The "magic number" only can be reached with the help of the M5S's 54 senators.

The picture is still very unclear at press time, but there are three major assessments that can be made after such

(See In Italy on Page 45)



BEPPE GRILLO: Having swept away a huge swath of the old guard, his 5 Star Movement has opened the door to an overhaul of Italy's dysfunctional electoral process.

VIAGGIO Up from the ashes

by Judith Anne Testa

The Benedictine abbey of Montecassino perches atop a mountain so high and steep that it seems as if the buildings had been planted there by the hand of God, dropped down directly from heaven. If only the abbey's history were that simple and peaceful! Although Montecassino is among the oldest abbeys in the Western world — begun in 529 by order of St. Benedict himself, the founder of European monasticism — its history is one of repeated destruction followed by determined rebuilding.

Despite its seeming remoteness, Montecassino occupies a strategic spot about 55 miles north of Naples, overlooking the convergence of several river valleys and, even more important, the road to Rome. For this reason many different powers over centuries and millennia have coveted the site, and even in pre-Roman times the mountaintop was fortified. It later held a Roman fortress and a temple dedicated to Apollo, but the fortress was abandoned after the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the late 400s. According to Christian legend, the temple to Apollo continued to be the site of pagan worship into the 500s, but as soon as St. Benedict acquired rights to the site from the father of one of his early followers, his first act was to personally smash the image of Apollo and destroy the altar of the temple. He then had a church built on the site. The saint, who preferred the life of a hermit, took up residence in one of the towers that remained standing in the ruins of the Roman citadel. Once Benedict had established himself and his small community of followers, he never left. There he wrote the Rule that would form the basis of all monastic communities in the Western world. He died at Montecassino in 543 and was buried in a tomb on the abbey grounds.

The little monastic community survived until 580, when it suffered the first in a series of destructions — it was pillaged and burned by the invading Lombards. The surviving monks fled to Rome, where the Benedictine community remained for the next 130 years. Their original mountaintop site fell to ruins and wasn't restored until 718, when a group of monks from Rome settled there and built a new church over the tomb of St. Benedict. It was consecrated in 748. Thanks to a donation from a local lord, in 744 the abbey had taken control of a large tract of secular land below



MONTECASSINO ABBEY: Wiped off the face of the map during World War II, it was lovingly restored thanks to the zeal of the monks who had made it their home for centuries.

the monastery, a territory subject to the abbot and nobody else other than the pope, which made the monastic establishment something close to an independent state. For the next century, Montecassino flourished, but toward the middle of the 800s it was sacked again, this time by the Saracens, Islamic invaders from North Africa who briefly overran southern Italy. Again the monks fled, but this time a few of them returned just a couple of years later; the rest came back in 949. During this period, the autographed copy of St. Benedict's Rule perished in a fire, but by that time many copies existed, so the loss wasn't fatal.

The abbey was again rebuilt and enlarged, reaching its peak of influence in the 11th century, during the long reign of Abbot Desiderius (1058-1087), one of the most distinguished churchmen of his time. The number of monks increased to more than 200, and the manuscripts copied and illustrated in the monastery's scriptorium became famous throughout Europe. Abbot Desiderius brought in the best artists — architects, sculptors, fresco painters and mosaic makers — from Italy and even from as far away as Constantinople. The new abbey church

was consecrated in 1071 by Pope Alexander II, assisted by 10 archbishops, 44 bishops and such a vast crowd of abbots, monks from other abbeys and members of the nobility that an enthusiastic chronicler declared: "It would have been easier to number the stars of heaven than to count so great a multitude." For a few decades, the abbey of Montecassino was a political and cultural center unequalled in all of Europe.

But not long after this time came decline and destruction. The perpetually unsettled condition of Italy, combined with the great strategic value of the mountaintop site, involved the abbey in the constant political struggles of the 1200s and 1300s. The monks were driven out several times, but each time they were allowed to return. In 1321, Pope John XXII made the church of Montecassino a cathedral, which was a great honor in theory but a disaster in practice. The seat of the papacy had moved from Rome to Avignon in the early 1300s, and the bishops of Montecassino, nominated in France, were secular princes who never set foot in the monastery, but who appropriated its revenues for their personal use. The number of monks dwindled, the Rule of St. Benedict was almost forgotten, and after an earthquake in 1349, the splendid monastic buildings fell into disrepair and disuse. In 1504, Pope Julius II finally came to the rescue of the crumbling establishment, uniting it with a Benedictine congregation in northern Italy and ordering the restoration of the abbey's buildings. The monastery flourished again until 1799, when the troops of Napoleon sacked it during their invasion of Italy. In 1866, the monastery was "suppressed" — in common with all other Italian religious houses — by the anti-clerical government of the new Kingdom of Italy. At present, the abbey is officially the property of the Italian state, but it has been returned to Benedictine hands. Its abbot is recognized as its guardian and the monks as its custodians.

The severe and massive buildings a visitor sees today appear to date from the 16th and 17th centuries, but they don't — they're the product of an extraordinary



20th-century rebuilding campaign made necessary by a terrible World War II battle, a clash that left the abbey a pile of shattered and smoking ruins. The Battle of Monte Cassino, which lasted from January until May of 1944, was in fact a series of battles fought by the Allies against German forces, with the goal of breaking through the German lines and advancing northward toward Rome. I'm no military historian, and this isn't the place to describe the Battle of Monte Cassino in detail, but it helps to keep in mind the strategic location of the abbey, which made its site of value to both sides. (See the book review on page 21.)

In the mistaken belief that the Germans had occupied the monastery and were using it as a lookout post, on February 15, 1944, the Americans dropped 1,400 tons of bombs on the site, reducing the abbey to rubble. By that time most of the monks had fled (although the 79-year-old abbot, Gregorio Diamare, remained), and the only casualties were Italian peasants who had sought refuge in the abbey. The bombing aided the Germans, who then used the ruins as a defensive cover. It took the Allies another three months and three more costly offensives before they finally drove out the Germans on May 18, 1944. They could then take command of the ruins and with them the road to Rome.

Before the war, the abbey had contained an enormous and irreplaceable collection of priceless objects: illuminated manuscripts, books, historical and archival documents, as well as many paintings and sculptures. All of these certainly would have been destroyed in the bombing if it hadn't been for the great foresight of two German officers: Captain Maximilian Becker (a Protestant) and Lt. Colonel Julius Schlegel (a Catholic), both members of the Panzer Division Hermann Goering. Given their boss' notorious looting of both private and public artworks for his own collection, we might have expected the two officers to be following Goering's orders and taking Montecassino's treasures to one of the Nazi leader's numerous depositories. But instead these two men, aware that Montecassino's strategic position made it vulnerable, managed to have the abbey's treasures smuggled out on German army trucks and most of them transferred to the safety of the Vatican before the bombing took place. Both survived the war and were later honored for their achievement by the post-war Italian government as well as by the Benedictine order.

Within months of the war's end, planning began for rebuilding the monastery. As with each of the previous destructions, the Benedictines resolved that, as far as possible, everything should be restored to the way it had been before. Abbot Diamare — who had survived the siege by taking refuge in the underground portion of the abbey — adopted the motto: "Dov' era, com' era" (Where it was and as it was). By some incredible stroke of good fortune, a thorough campaign of photography, measurements and sketches had been conducted at

the monastery in 1942 — perhaps someone had realized that this high and therefore strategic spot might become a bone of contention in the looming war. This allowed a complete and accurate reconstruction, carried out mostly with funds from the Italian government, but also with private contributions and others from religious organizations both Catholic and non-Catholic.

Today, Montecassino is an austere beautiful and peaceful place: a site for pilgrimages and meditation as well as tourism. From the outside, and especially when viewed from the valley below, the place appears extremely forbidding and severe, but the beauty of the interior quickly dispels

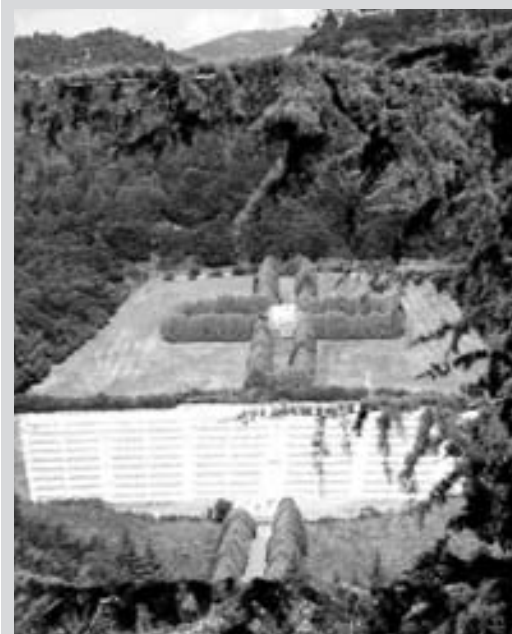


that impression. The entrance gate leads into a series of courtyards, and from the outer edge of the middle one, called the Loggia del Paradiso, there's a spectacular view across miles of valleys and distant mountains. From there, an immense flight of steps leads up to the forecourt in front of the entrance to the abbey church. In the forecourt is an arcade once held up by ancient Roman columns, among the few survivals from the 11th-century church of Abbot Desiderius, and once probably part of the temple of Apollo that had originally occupied the site of the church. These 2,000-year-old columns, which had survived all previous pillages of the abbey, were destroyed in the 1944 bombing.

The design of the present church, the fourth on the site, is from the mid-1600s, and it was consecrated in 1727. It's in the form of a cross with a dome, and the high altar is located under the dome, at the crossing of the north-south and east-west aisles. Both the church and the large crypt beneath it are richly decorated with paintings and mosaics, although when viewing these works of art, travelers should remind themselves that everything they're seeing is a 20th-century reconstruction. In the left transept there's a monument to Piero de' Medici, Lorenzo il Magnifico's ill-fated son, who drowned in 1503 as he retreated from a battle on the shores of the nearby Garigliano river. Even though Piero's body was never recovered, his brother, Pope Leo X, ordered a monument to his memory built in the church of Montecassino. It, too, is a modern reconstruction, the original having been pulverized along with the rest of the church in 1944. Poor Piero — he never had any luck.

Although only 20 Benedictine monks currently reside at Montecassino, they continue to follow their founder's nearly 1,500-year-old Rule. Despite repeated destruction and reconstruction, wars, pillages, peace, pilgrims and tourists, tradition keeps certain things the same up there on that spectacular, strategic and sacred mountain.

TRAVEL TIPS



HOW DO WE GET THERE?

There's no easy way to reach this walled monastery perched on the top of a 1,700-foot-high mountain. The best way is to go by car. There are trains from Naples that stop at the modern town of Cassino, at the foot of the hill, but from there you'll have to take a cab. Don't even think about walking up from the station!

WHAT SHOULD WE SEE?

The monastery is enormous, but as it is still in use by a small community of Benedictine monks, not all of it is open to the public. The great courtyard offers a spectacular panorama across miles of open countryside that's considered one of the finest views in Italy. The church within the monastery and the crypt below it are both adorned with colorful frescoes and mosaics. Everything you see, however, is a modern reconstruction, since the entire site was destroyed during World War II. Montecassino also hosts a small museum, although most of the objects it contains are either fragmentary or very small. Of greater interest is the collection of photographs there that documents the appalling destruction the site suffered during World War II.

WHAT ELSE IS NEARBY?

Nearby are three cemeteries for soldiers killed in the battle for Montecassino: one Polish, one British and one German site. Montecassino is about 55 miles north of Naples. Despite that city's current reputation for garbage and gangsters, it has several first-rate museums and some major archeological sites on its outskirts.

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RECIPES A complete Easter feast

by Dolores Sennebogen

Easter is an elaborate celebration throughout the Italian peninsula, but in Florence it begins with a pyrotechnic display with roots back to the Crusades. A cart or wagon, decorated with flowers and accompanied by flag throwers, musicians and Florentines dressed in historic costumes, is pulled through the streets by oxen until it reaches Piazza del Duomo. The three-tiered cart is laden with fireworks and connected by a wire to a mechanical dove that is aimed straight at it. After Easter Mass, the dove is released from the Cathedral by the archbishop, culminating in the main event, Lo Scoppio del Carro, the explosion of the cart. The spectacular display that follows is said to represent good luck and a good harvest for the citizens of Florence.

Ritual and symbolism play an important role in Italian Easter customs, and food traditions are no exception. Lamb is the meal most often served, along with spring vegetables. Eggs, a symbol of new life, are abundantly featured in every course. Dove-shaped cakes called colomba are given as gifts. Today, like the panettone of Christmas, these cakes are likely to be commercially prepared. But many home cooks continue the tradition of baking their family's version of sweet bread for Easter morning.

PAN DI PASQUA ALLA SILVIA (Sylvia's Sweet Bread for Easter)

4 eggs
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 stick soft butter, cut up
1 cup milk
1 teaspoon pure anise extract
1 teaspoon pure lemon extract
4 cups flour (approximately)
1 package dry yeast
Egg wash
Icing, optional (see below)
Colored sprinkles, optional

Beat the eggs until foamy and add the sugar, butter, milk and extracts. Place in a saucepan and heat until just warm, not hot. Remove from the heat and place in a warm bowl. Sprinkle the dry yeast over the mixture and stir until dissolved. Let it rest for about 10 minutes.

Add one cup of flour and beat.



Gradually add enough flour to form a soft dough, approximately three more cups. The dough may be sticky. Add additional flour as needed. Place it in a greased bowl, cover it and let it rise for four or more hours, until doubled in volume.

Punch the dough down and divide it into three portions. Shape each piece into a long rope. Form the three ropes into a braid and seal the ends. Let it rise for about two hours on a lightly greased baking sheet. Beat together one egg and a tablespoon of water to make an egg wash, and brush it over the surface of the bread. Bake in a 375-degree oven until nicely browned. Cool on a wire rack.

OPTIONAL ICING: Mix one cup of confectioners' sugar with a few tablespoons of warm milk. Add one tablespoon at a time until a thin icing is formed. Add a flavoring if you like, such as vanilla, anise or lemon extract. Frost the cooled loaf of sweet bread and decorate with candy sprinkles.

— adapted from Sylvia Caputo

CALZONE (Savory Easter Pie)

3 pounds ricotta, very well-drained
6 tablespoons grated Romano cheese
6 large eggs
6 slices salami, diced
6 slices capicollo, diced
6 slices prosciutto, diced
6 slices provolone, diced

3 links cooked Italian sausage,
skin removed and diced
Black pepper to taste
Flaky pastry dough (see below)
Egg wash

Make a large recipe of your favorite pie dough, enough for two double-crust pies. You may have a little left over.

Beat the well-drained ricotta with the Romano until smooth. Add the eggs one at a time. Fold in the remaining ingredients through the black pepper.

Set aside some of the pastry dough for a lattice top. Line a 9-by-13-inch glass dish with pastry dough. The dough should come up the sides of the dish and have a quarter-inch lip of extra pastry at the top. Pour the ricotta mixture into the lined dish. Using a fluted pie dough cutter, make half-inch strips of dough and arrange them over the filling to form a lattice top. Mix a little water with a beaten egg to make an egg wash, and brush it over the crust lightly. Bake in a preheated 375-degree oven for one hour, or until the center is set and the crust is golden.

— Ann Sorrentino

AGNELLO AL FORNO (Roasted Leg of Lamb)

1 (4- to 5-pound) leg of lamb
2 teaspoons minced fresh parsley
2 teaspoons minced fresh rosemary
1-2 teaspoons minced mint leaves
1 teaspoon dried oregano
2 teaspoons grated lemon rind
2 cloves garlic, minced
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
Olive oil

Rinse the lamb and pat it dry. Make slits over the surface of the roast with a paring knife or the point of a meat thermometer. Mix the herbs and lemon rind with the minced garlic. Make a paste by moistening the mixture with a small amount of olive oil. Insert the herb mixture into the slits on the roast. Rub the roast with olive oil and rub any leftover herb mixture over it. Season the roast with salt and pepper.

(See Recipes on Page 45)



LOU&A

(Continued from Page 35)

bizarre stories with the timing of a jazz improv artist. And while it's tough to take notes with coffee squirting out your nose, this writer can attest to the joys of spending time with Barreca by phone, as this woman exudes warmth and sparkle.

What's her secret? To hear Barreca tell it, there's something about growing up Italian that gives one a sharp wit and a skewed perspective on life — like the time her aunt found it easier to believe she was pregnant than truly heading off to college. Read on as Barreca shares all ...

Fra Noi: Tell us about your upbringing and your Italian roots.

GB: Gina Barreca: My father's family came from Sicily, from outside Palermo, a town called Castelbuono. I've been to Italy many times but not to Sicily, I have to go. My mother was French Canadian, and she died when I was pretty young. So it's my father's family that I know much more about. My mother actually came down to live with my father's family in 1951, in a three-story house in Brooklyn with two kitchens, one in the basement, and great-grandmother on the third floor.

FN: That house must've been quite the place to grow up.

GB: The downstairs kitchen was where the action was. That's where I learned everything that I needed to know, not just about humor, but gender difference, too. No one is more adored in an Italian family than a man, and if he sits down at the table and he doesn't have a fork, God forbid! All the women would rise: "Tony doesn't have a fork!" But the women were always making fun of the men; they just didn't do it in front of them.

FN: It must've been extraordinary not only to go to college, but also to wind up at an Ivy League school.

GB: I was the first girl in my family to go to college, or to graduate high school in a timely manner. The big ambition in my family was to graduate high school and not get pregnant. So when I told my aunt I was going to college in New Hampshire, she said, "Oh my God, are you pregnant?" I said no, but she pulled me aside and said, "You can always come back if you are pregnant."

FN: So what was Dartmouth like in the 1970s for a young Italian woman?

GB: They had only admitted women three years before. I enjoyed myself. The other women there looked like Gwyneth Paltrow, and on a good day I looked like Janis Joplin. And it was not a culturally diverse institution; I looked like I was there to make the bed. But Dartmouth has just asked me if they can have my personal papers as part of their collection. It's a great honor. There are lots of records of my time at Dartmouth, my life as a writer. And there will be a lot of ex-boyfriends who will be pissed off, too.

FN: What sticks out as being especially memorable from your time there?

GB: It was so interesting in terms of the culture, when the women's movement was taking place. Women finally had reproductive freedom, and without the specter of AIDS, and women were coming into their own. But if anything, I became more Italian. This was right after "The Godfather" came out, and these fraternity jerks named Skip and Chip and Trace were having "Godfather" parties. There was also a kid named Rockefeller in my class, and I said, "Wow, it must be tough to have that name, people must think you're rich." And it never occurred to me that, well, he was really a Rockefeller.

FN: Ethnicities differ in the humor; the British, for example, have a knack for word-play and zaniness a la "Monty Python." What are the hallmarks of Italian-American humor to you?

GB: It's storytelling. More than anything else, we make a story out of everything. We go back to the Commedia dell'Arte tradition, and it's not even a stretch for us. I was just admitted to the Friar's Club this year, which

was a real honor. Whether it's Ray Romano or all of the old great Italian comics, it all has to do with exaggerations — pushing it, but just pushing it a little bit. Also, Italians are great liars, and I say that with pride. We come from a people who are not part of the aristocratic tradition. We worked as sharecroppers; my grandfather worked in the mines. I'm not sure who said this, but someone said, "It's not that it's impossible to govern the Italians: It's simply useless."

FN: "Useless"? That's funny. Why useless?

GB: The reason why is that there will always be an argument when there's an Italian involved. You can't use classical education against it either because Italians argue with their wit. It's a stiletto. We live by our wits, and it's a great tool passed down in our DNA. Our timing is great, and we don't miss anything. That's the storytelling part of it. Our portals are open.

FN: How do you keep your portals open as a writer, thinker and comic?

GB: I read all the time, lots of different things. I read newspapers, not just the major papers from the U.S., but the papers from London, and see what the Telegraph, the Times, the Guardian and the Mail are saying. I read Reuters, and the weird news from the around the world. I read this story where an Italian man kidnapped his ex-wife and held her against her will, and it wasn't for sex. He made her iron. He didn't like the way the dry cleaners did his shirts. That just reminds me of an old Italian man saying, "No one can do the button holes like she does." And I eavesdrop. I listen to what people are saying.

FN: You've accomplished so much and have a vital creative life. What mountains remain for you to climb?

GB: It's always been a dream of mine to write fiction, but the older I get, the more I'm not sure I can tell the difference between fiction and nonfiction. We're storytellers. Storytellers! Let's just leave it at that ...

For more information on Gina Barreca, visit ginabarreca.com.

NEWSMAKERS

(Continued from Page 35)

For in an industry that rarely takes chances, and fears out-of-left-field choices more than it celebrates them, co-host Regis Philbin and executive producer Michael Gelman were putting their faith and stalwart franchise in the hands of a 30-year-old soap opera actress with zero talk show experience. Ripa had earned good reviews as the mentally troubled Hayley Vaughn on "All My Children," a role she happily played for more than a decade, but was untested as a live chat show personality.

The slice of America that watches morning shows has a unique, intimate relationship with its favorite hosts, especially those who have been entertaining them for more than a decade like Gifford. So it was very possible that many, upon seeing Ripa slip into the pub chair next to Philbin, would toss up their arms and exclaim: "Who is this blonde whippersnapper, and why is she replacing that delightful woman from the Carnival Cruise ads?" Plus, some TV critics were less than kind to Ripa during the revamped show's first few months, dismissing the former soap star as a "pleasant" but ultimately empty co-host.

"I think at that point 'pleasant' would have been a comfort, because some of what was written was so cruel," Ripa told Elle.

Ripa says she developed "post-traumatic talk show disorder, where I would not sleep and stayed up thinking about the show. I really just wanted to do a good job, and I was nervous."

But something special happened — Ripa clicked, big-time. Following her debut

in February 2001, the show's ratings soared. Among the coveted demographic of women age 18-34, "Live" would see an 80 percent increase in viewership, according to Variety. Only the goddess of all media herself, Oprah Winfrey, eclipsed "Live" in the ratings. Plus, for the first time ever, the show began winning Daytime Emmy Awards.

Philbin, for one, wasn't surprised by the love for Ripa.

"She's got the sense of humor, the curiosity, the spontaneity — pretty. All those qualities, and she was the right one, and boy, she was," Philbin told ABC's "20/20" at the time.

But making the leap from soap star to morning show fixture raised a few red flags within "Camp Ripa's" inner circle at the outset.

"When the opportunity came to host 'Live,' a lot of my friends said, 'You're not a talk show host, you're an actor — if you go on talk shows that will be the end of your acting career.'"

Her friends' dire predictions thankfully never came to pass. Kelly played Faith Fairfield on the ABC sitcom "Hope & Faith" from 2003 to 2006 — where, funny enough, Kathie Lee Gifford made a guest appearance — and her tenure on "Live" has been an unqualified success.

"Sometimes opportunity begets opportunity and work begets work, and you just have to take a leap," Ripa told Redbook.

Ripa grew up in Stratford, N.J., always wanting to be an actress. Her mother, Esther, was a homemaker, and her father, Joe, was a bus driver turned labor union executive, and both wanted their daughter to get a degree.

"My parents were adamant about college, so I took a few courses and then would audition for everything," Ripa told the Los Angeles Times in 2001.

After starring in a few local theater productions and making the trek from Jersey to New York City for auditions, Ripa, then age 19, was cast in a prominent role on the long-running soap "All My Children."

There she would meet the love of her life, actor Mark Consuelos, whose personality, good looks and shared heritage piqued her interest. "He is so unbelievably gorgeous, with a Mexican father and Italian mother, born in Spain and raised in Italy," Ripa told US Weekly.

Sparks flew on set, but the couple kept their relationship a secret from fellow cast and crewmembers for more than a year. "There was a fierce attraction right off the bat," Consuelos told Redbook. "But we had to work together, so we developed a friendship as well. It kind of went hand in hand."

The two eventually eloped to Las Vegas in May 1996. A little more than a year later, the couple welcomed their first son, Michael. Ripa and Consuelos, who live in New York City, are also the parents of daughter Lola Grace and youngest son Joaquin Antonio. While Ripa spends her mornings dishing on celeb gossip and talking to celebs with Strahan, she spends the majority of her day being a super mom, which includes helping her kids with their homework.

"As it turns out, I have the dream job for a working mother," Ripa told Redbook. "I get to work at 8 a.m., and I'm usually done around 10 a.m. For me, it's about being there for my family and being able to work and contribute. I really feel like I have the best of both worlds."

The happy family, which has been together nearly 20 years, is frequently photographed smiling, happy and together walking through the streets of New York City. But even with the watchful eye of the paparazzi trained on them, Ripa, Consuelos and their brood make time for important family rituals.

"We go to church on Sunday," Ripa told Good Housekeeping. "Mark and I were such lax Catholics until we had children. Then you realize you want your kids to grow up the same way you did."

Ripa says going to Mass, even if it's just for an hour once a week, is a small way to say thank you and reflect on what is, by all accounts, a charmed life.

"If anything, my life is over-blessed," Ripa told Redbook. "I have to regularly pinch myself as a reminder that all this good fortune is really mine."

REVIEW

(Continued from Page 35)

Jazz Band. In college, he received two grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, studying at Indiana University during the school year and under trumpeter Woody Shaw during the summer. He learned his lessons quickly, and after one year in school, he began his professional career.

"In 1984, I quit college to tour with Frank Sinatra," Botti says. "I can still remember sitting on the bandstand, watching him perform 'One For My Baby.' He did it with just a minimal accompaniment, and it just moved everyone."

After a stint in the Buddy Rich Band, Botti's career took a turn for the diverse when he hooked up with multi-Grammy winner and pop superstar Paul Simon. In 1991, his work with Simon was featured on the "Concert in the Park" CD. Word about his talent spread throughout the pop, rock and jazz world, and he soon was performing with an eclectic mix of musicians that included Natalie Cole, Sting and saxophonist Michael Brecker. In 1995, Botti produced Brecker's "Out of the Loop," which won a Grammy for Best Contemporary Jazz Performance. His second PBS CD/DVD, "Chris Botti in Boston," was recorded with classical artists Yo Yo Ma and the Boston Pops Orchestra.

In October 2012, Botti was chosen to perform with Barbara Streisand, accompanying her on "What Will I Do" and "My Funny Valentine." One of the hardest working men in show business, he is in the middle of a worldwide tour to promote his latest album, "Impressions," with 29 shows scheduled in the United States and Europe in March and April alone.

IN AMERICA

(Continued from Page 39)

as their preference for the Senate," he explains. "It definitely reduced my total preferences, but the end result is what matters."

The campaign was as brief as it was intense, affording parties only a month and a half to line up their candidates, marshal their resources and get out the vote.

"I've been traveling all over the country since early January, so it's been exhausting but very rewarding," Turano explains. "My network came out for me like they did the last two times. They were extremely motivated, and I have to say that they're the main reason I won."

Turano used a variety of media to get his message across, from e-blasts and newspaper ads to telephone banks and targeted mailings. But the real driving force behind his campaign was the literally hundreds of volunteers who turned out on his behalf across the continent.

"We had between 10 and 30 volunteers working the phones each day in Chicago alone," Turano notes with obvious gratitude and pride. "All I had to do was put the word out and they came out in record numbers to support me and work for me. I absolutely cannot thank them enough."

Not content to sit back and let his volunteers do the talking, Turano and key representatives fanned out across the continent for face-to-face encounters with the voters. Illinois, New York, New Jersey, Florida, California and Connecticut were on the itinerary, as were Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Windsor and Vancouver as well as Mexico. And everywhere they went, the response was the same.

"There was a lot of frustration because things are so bad in Italy, and there is a huge desire for change," Turano explains. "We were bombarded with questions about every issue imaginable, and we were able to

(Continued on the next page)



INSALATA PER PRIMAVERA (Springtime Salad)

For each person, line an individual salad plate with a variety of tender mixed greens, torn up. On each serving, attractively arrange three cooked and peeled shrimp, two black olives, two cherry or grape tomatoes, two spears of cooked asparagus and a slice of hard-cooked egg. At serving time, drizzle with your favorite homemade oil and vinegar dressing. Balsamic vinegar is especially nice with this salad.

— Dolores Sennebogen

Ricotta Filling

3 pounds fresh ricotta, well-drained
1-1/2 cups sugar
1 stick softened butter
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 teaspoon orange extract
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
6 eggs
1/3 cup chopped candied fruit
1/3 cup diced milk chocolate

Beat the well-drained ricotta in a large bowl for about five minutes, or until smooth. Slowly add the sugar, soft butter and extracts. In a smaller bowl, beat the eggs until light. Remove two tablespoons of the beaten egg and set aside. Fold the remaining egg slowly into the ricotta mixture and then add the candied fruit and milk chocolate.

Pour the filling into the pastry-lined baking dish, smoothing it out evenly. Cut the remaining dough in half. You only will need one piece to make the lattice top. The remaining dough can be saved for another use. (It is enough for a single crust pie.) Using a pie dough cutter, make quarter-inch strips of dough and arrange them in a lattice pattern over the filling. Trim the edges of the torte and press with a fork or make fluted edges.

Mix the two tablespoons of beaten egg that was set aside with a little milk to make an egg wash. Use a pastry brush to paint the pastry strips with the egg. Bake the torte in a preheated 350-degree oven for about one hour, or until the crust is golden and the filling has set. If the crust browns too quickly, lower the oven temperature to 325 degrees to finish baking. The filling will rise during baking and then settle when it is cooling.

TORTA DI RICOTTA SICILIANA ALLA ANNA (Ann's Sicilian Ricotta Torte)

Pasta Frolla (PASTRY DOUGH)

3 cups flour
1-1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup cold vegetable shortening or lard
1 cup cold butter or margarine
1 small egg
1/2 cup orange juice

Combine the dry ingredients in a large bowl, stirring well. Add the shortening and butter. Mix with your fingers or a pie crust mixer until the mixture resembles cornmeal. Beat the egg with a fork in a small bowl and add the orange juice. Stir well, then pour over the flour mixture. Stir together with a fork to combine into a soft dough. You may need to use your hands to finish. Cover and refrigerate at least one hour.

About 15 minutes before you are ready to roll out the dough, remove it from the refrigerator and let sit at room temperature. Cut the dough in half and set one piece aside. On a well-floured board, roll the half portion into a 10-by-12-inch rectangle. Fold the rectangle into thirds by taking the bottom third and bringing it up to the center of the dough. Then take the top of the dough and bring it down over the first two layers. Pat down the dough, then turn it around so the narrow end faces you. Fold the dough again into thirds as before. You now have nine folds in the dough.

Pat down the dough, and flour the board and rolling pin again. Carefully roll the dough, adding flour if needed, until you have a 12-by-15-inch sheet. Lightly fold the sheet into thirds (so it is easier to pick up) and set it in the center of a 9-by-13-inch glass baking dish. Unfold the dough and press it into the baking dish to fit smoothly. If it breaks, reseat the pieces together. Trim around the edges, leaving an overlap of about a quarter-inch.

Topping

After the torte has cooled, heat three tablespoons apricot jam over low heat to liquefy it. Use a pastry brush to paint the entire surface of the torte. Just before serving, sprinkle generously with confectioners' sugar and lightly with cinnamon.

— Ann Sorrentino

answer their questions to their satisfaction. “They wanted to be able to say that someone came to talk to them and heard them out,” he notes. “The fact that we were present in the flesh helped tremendously.”

And now the real work begins. With the Italian Senate perilously divided among three main parties, building a consensus is job one, according to Turano.

“The leaders of the three parties are going to have to sit down and actually work together for the common good,” he insists. “They’ve done enough to destroy Italy, and at this point they have to start doing what’s best for their country and its citizens, wherever they may live.”

PERSONAGGI

(Continued from Page 39)

This success isn’t taken for granted by the pop-rock superstar. Hailing from a low-income suburb of Milan, Antonacci grew up dreaming of one day being able to perform his own songs in front of an audience. He soon set aside the drums (the instrument he grew with), took up the guitar and started playing in clubs across northern Italy.

His first two albums didn’t garner much attention, and by the time his third studio recording was released in 1992, Antonacci wasn’t sure what he would do if “Liberatemi” (Free Me) also ended up in the vast dustbin of musical oblivion. Luckily for him (and for all his fans), the album was a hit. So instead of continuing his career as a quantity surveyor, he followed the road that ultimately led to stardom.

That road was full of perils, with easy money available at every turn that could have led Antonacci down a very different path. As he himself noted in an interview with TV Sorrisi e Canzoni: “When I was less rich and famous, I said ‘no’ to a number of ad campaigns, conventions and even places where I didn’t want to play,” he says. “For example, I never went to Russia to sing at weddings, and I lost a lot of money that way. Those were things that would have changed my image.”

Throughout his 25-year career as a musician, the image that Antonacci has built for himself has undergone minor changes, and that is true for his music as well. Fans have come to expect a certain homogeneity in Antonacci’s music, although every album does present a variety of approaches that always turn out to be refreshing.

This is the case with “Sapessi dire no” — an album that feeds off of the artist’s romantic soul, while also exploring the frailty of the human soul when confronted with a heartbreak. The ups and downs of a sentimental relationship are leavened with healthy doses of pop-rock. Antonacci, though, doesn’t like to describe his creations as love songs. “My songs are never declarations of love,” he told Sorrisi e Canzoni. “They’re more like declarations to life.”

For this reason, Antonacci dedicated the album to his friend Lucio Dalla, who died on March 1, 2012 — an artist who dedicated his entire life to the challenge of being artistically relevant. “Dalla was the first artist I passionately listened to,” he told Sorrisi e Canzoni. Antonacci even had the chance to tour with Dalla after his second album, “Adagio Biagio,” was released in 1991.

In the end, what distinguishes an artist like Antonacci from many others is his fierce loyalty to himself and his music. The artist has been conspicuous by his absence from the legendary Sanremo festival since 1993. “Sanremo is a festival you go to if you have a song you want to get into the charts quickly,” he says. “Instead, I work on albums. I want them to be full of singles and last a long time.”

IN ITALY

(Continued from Page 39)

a close race. First of all, one in every four voters has sent a clear message to what

many perceive as an old and decaying political system. People did not vote for Grillo because they found him funny or amusing, but rather because he railed against an increasingly self-centered system that had completely lost touch with younger generations and those suffering from draconian belt-tightening policies. The 5 Star Movement campaigned against the system, and it was rewarded for its opposition.

The second point is closely linked to the first. While the big parties still attracted a large number of votes, they have all lost millions of preferences. The PD’s crippled victory is the worst result for the party since its inception in 2007, and the conservative PdL also lost a good portion of the votes that lifted it to victory back in 2008. Some of these went to Mario Monti, although his poor performance underscores Berlusconi’s solid grip over Italy’s conservative base. Smaller parties like the Lega Nord have been cut in half, if not obliterated from the political scene like former Chamber President Gianfranco Fini’s Futuro e Libertà or Antonio Di Pietro’s Italia dei Valori. This migration of votes will push parties to deeply rethink and perhaps renew themselves. If not, this shrinkage will only accelerate.

The third and final point deals with electoral law. Known as the “Porcellum” — Piglet law — this insanely counterintuitive system created in late 2005 by the Berlusconi government has finally shown its full and devastating effects. While creating an unnaturally lopsided majority in the Chamber, the law has reduced the Senate to a shambles. No matter what the future of this fragile legislature may be, it is clear to everyone (except for Berlusconi and his allies) that a new electoral law is badly needed. If the current parties in power can’t cobble together a plan to repair their broken country, let us hope they can at least get it together long enough to restore sanity to their deranged electoral process.

RECIPES

(Continued from Page 43)

Roast in a preheated 400-degree oven for 15 minutes. Reduce the oven temperature to 325 degrees and roast for 20 minutes per pound, or until a meat thermometer reaches the degree of doneness you prefer. Recommended internal temperatures are 140 degrees for rare, 150 degrees for medium and 160 degrees for well done. Set the roast aside to rest, covered with foil. If desired, make pan gravy using two tablespoons drippings, two tablespoons cornstarch (dissolved in a small amount of water) and two cups of water. You may substitute a little white wine for some of the water.

— Dolores Sennebogen

PATATE CROCCANTI (Crispy Golden Potatoes)

- 6 large potatoes
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/3 cup butter
- Fresh parsley, chopped

Peel the potatoes and cut into quarters or sixths. Combine the flour, cheese, salt and pepper in a bag. Moisten the potatoes with water. Shake a few at a time in the bag, coating them well. Melt the butter in a 9-by-13-inch pan. Add the potatoes and bake in a preheated 375-degree oven for one hour. Turn every 10-15 minutes using a spatula. When golden brown, remove to a serving bowl and sprinkle with parsley. These work out well if baked in a Teflon-coated roasting pan.

— Prudence Dispensa



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MARCONI SCIENCE AWARD



This award was established by UNICO National at the August 1994 meeting of the Board of Directors. The intent was to honor the centennial (1895 - 1995) of the first long distance wireless transmission and to recognize the great scientific contributions made by Guglielmo Marconi to the world.

Guglielmo Marconi was the genius who began the communications revolution. His discovery of long wave, short wave and microwave transmissions ushered in the modern era. Radio and television are just two of the offsprings of his brilliant contributions. UNICO is honored to remember his legacy, which is an inspiration to those who seek to discover new truths and enrich our lives.



Dr. Stephen L. DeFelice is a graduate of Temple University and received his MD from Jefferson Medical College in Pennsylvania. He was an National Institute of Health fellow in endocrinology, diabetes and metabolic disease at Jefferson and a fellow in clinical pharmacology at St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center in New York City. He was former Chief of Clinical Pharmacology at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR). He was a member of the Harvard School of Public Health's International Faculty on the Management of Biomedical Research and the Tufts' Faculty on the Principles of Clinical Research. He was a member of the team that brought lithium into the United States and the doctor responsible for its launch. His 40 year experience with carnitine, a naturally occurring substance with multiple medical benefits, sparked his interest and determination to encourage medical discovery. Largely through his efforts it is now FDA approved as an Orphan Drug for various types of carnitine deficiencies as well as for renal dialysis patients. He is currently involved in clinical research on carnitine in ovarian cancer patients.

To assist in accelerating medical discovery, Dr. DeFelice founded and chairs the Foundation for Innovation in Medicine, a non-profit organization established in 1976 whose purpose is to accelerate medical discovery by establishing a more productive clinical research community.

His first book "Drug Discovery: The Pending Crisis" was published to alert our country to the fact that medical discovery was, and would continue to be, significantly delayed because of the formidable barriers to conduct clinical research. Another of his books "From Oysters to Insulin" explores his dedication "...to harness the vast medical potential of natural substances and put them to immediate use." He is credited with coining the concept of "nutraceuticals."

He is an accomplished researcher, scientist and developer who secured several patents for his work in applying natural substances to treat several medical conditions and diseases.



From left: UNICO National President David Donnini, Marconi Award Winner Stephen DeFelice and Past National President Andre' DiMino.



From left: UNICO National First Vice President Rick D'Arminio, Marconi Award Winner Stephen DeFelice and Past National President Andre' DiMino.



From left: UNICO National First Vice President Rick D'Arminio, Marconi Award Winner Stephen DeFelice and Steve Pelonero.



From left with "Elvis": UNICO National First Vice President Rick D'Arminio, UNICO National Second Vice President Ann Walko, Marconi Award Winner Stephen DeFelice, UNICO National Third Vice President Dominick Nicastro and UNICO National Executive Vice President Mike Veselka.



From left: UNICO National President David Donnini, New Jersey District X Governor Bob Bengivena, Marconi Award Winner Stephen DeFelice, Texas District I Governor Anthony Arabia, Patsy Monaco, Joe Monaco, San Antonio Chapter President Rose Marie Arabia and Pat Park.



The Marconi Committee from left: New Jersey District XI Governor Gino LaIacono, Mike Pisano, Passaic Valley Chapter President Bob Appaluccio, Past National President Andre' DiMino, Marconi Award Winner Stephen DeFelice, National Scholarship Director Joan Tidona, UNICO National Second Vice President Ann Walko and Matt Risi.

NEW JERSEY DISTRICT IV KARAOKE/MEET THE PRESIDENT



Chris DiMattio serenades Geri Lipari.



From left: Joe Agresti, Mike Pisano and John Alati.



Lou Mattaliano serenades Carol and Frank Cannata.



Ann, David and Joe Donnini share a song.



From left: Frank Licato, Rachel Bengivenga and Anthony Bengivenga.



Linda Gail and John Alati.



From left: Jenny DiMino, Nicki Carpinelli, Barbara DiRocco, Kathi Strozza and Linda Gail Alati.



John Alati entertains the crowd.



Frank Cannata and Andre' DiMino.



From left: Joan Tidona, Criss Mangano, Celeste Pandolfi, Ida Nigro, Barbara Laborim, Geri Lipari and May D'Arminio.



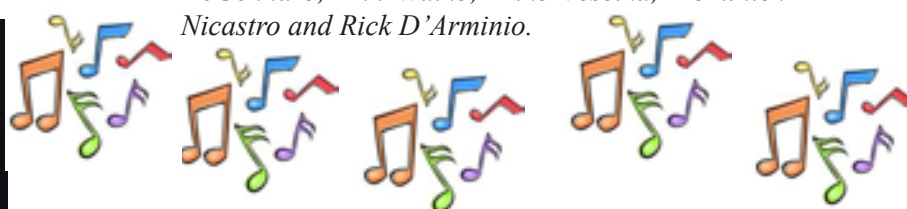
From left: Manuela D'Arminio, Anthony DeGennaro, Ann Walko, Mike Veselka, Dominick Nicastro and Rick D'Arminio.



Diane Lynch and Carmine Campanile.



Chris DiMattio and Lou Mattaliano.



From left: Rachel Bengivenga, Alina Nicastro, Ann Walko and Manuela D'Arminio.

