

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

JANUARY 2014 • VOLUME 69 • ISSUE 02



**“Service
above *Self*”**



UNICO *Commemorates*
A NEW CHAPTER & THE CHRISTMAS SEASON!



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



**VERONA FAIR
IN THE SQUARE**
Page 14

**SHE'S THE BOSS
ALYSSA MILANO**
Page 35



**NATIONAL OFFICE
OPEN HOUSE**
Page 24

MANHATTAN, NY CHARTER



From left: Tom Vaughan, Dominick Nicastro, Ann Walko, Vincent Pileggi, Michael Veselka and Rick D'Arminio.



Presentation of the Charter. From left: Michael Veselka, Vincent Pileggi and Tom Vaughan



Ann Walko swears in Chapter Officers.



UNICO National Officers welcome the Manhattan Chapter Officers.



Charter Members and UNICO National Officers.



Islip/Smithtown Chapter President Elizabeth Hansen and Vincent Pileggi.



From left: Rick D'Arminio, Michael Veselka, Joseph Petito and Vincent Pileggi.



Welcome Charter Members!



The presentation of the Chapter Banner.

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2014



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

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ComUNICO

For ComUNICO advertising information call (973) 808-0035

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

Title of Publication: ComUNICO Publication No. 00647700. Filed 11/15/13. Frequency of Issue: Every Other Month
 No. of Issues Published Annually: 6. Annual Subscription Price: \$25.00. Mailing Address of Office of Publication,
 Headquarters, and Publisher: 271 U.S. Hwy. 46 West, Suite F-103, Fairfield, NJ 07004. Editor: Pat Pelonero. The pur-
 pose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes has
 not changed during the preceding 12 months. ComUNICO is the official publication of UNICO National. Pages 1-34
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Volume 69, No. 2 • ComUNICO (ISSN-1044-7202) • Total Circulation 7,000+

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Periodical postage is paid to Caldwell, NJ and additional offices.

Postmaster, please send Form 3579 and all address changes to:
 271 US Highway 46 West, Suite F-103, Fairfield, NJ 07004-2458

COVER PHOTOS

Main Top Picture- Members of the brand new Manhattan, New York Chapter celebrate after being sworn in. (Page 2)

Main Bottom-The St. Louis Chapter celebrates Christmas with a party that included the National President and First Lady. (Page 31 and Back Cover)

Side Bar Top Picture-UNICO National President Michael Veselka attends the Verona Fair in the Square. (Page 14)

Side Bar Bottom Picture-UNICO National Celebrates Christmas with an Open House at the National Office. (Page 24)

2013-2014 CALENDAR

Mid Year Board of Directors Meeting	March 28-29, 2014	Embassy Suites, Chicago, Illinois
Community Service Day	April 27, 2014	Nationwide
92nd Annual Convention	August 4-10, 2014	The Breakers, Palm Beach, Florida

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



A Message from National President: Michael Veselka

I hope you had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. One of life's pleasures is knowing that you have made a difference in the life of someone less fortunate than you. Fortunately as a member of UNICO National, I know that you make a difference in people's lives throughout the year, and we thank you for it. The hustle and bustle of the holidays is over and I must now ask the Chapters and members to help UNICO with this year's growth initiative. Our future as the premier Italian American service organization depends on you.

The members of UNICO also need to reenergize the 21st Century Campaign Fund. The campaign was started in 2002 when John Alati was President. With the help of co-chair Past National President Paul Alongi, the campaign got off to a good start. Our goal was to raise one million dollars and use the interest on that money to support our various UNICO charities. The one million dollars would be the corpus fund. Any contribution to the 21st Century Fund will receive a tax deduction because the fund is a part of the UNICO Foundation, a 501 (c) (3) corporation. Please consider a donation to this fund as a proud member of our organization.

The Vice Presidents of UNICO are working hard trying to compile the amount of donations each Chapter gives either to UNICO National or their local charities. This will help us get the word out as to what UNICO does collectively. You will then be able to get this published locally in order to bring attention to your Chapter and UNICO National. Hopefully, with this initiative, you may draw new members and sponsors.

On October 24th, I attended the Manhattan Chapter Charter Night. Vice President Rick D'Arminio and Expansion Director Tom Vaughn were instrumental in forming this Chapter along with charter Chapter President Vincent Pileggi. Also in attendance were Vice Presidents Ann Walko and Dominick Nicastro, Executive Director Andre DiMino, and Office Manager Pat Pelonero. Members of Islip/Smithtown, the sponsoring Chapter, were also in attendance. We are proud to welcome you to the UNICO family.

October 30th was "Meet the President" for

New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. There were a lot of UNICO members in attendance and First Lady Marlene and I thank you for taking the time to visit with us. We would also like to thank you for your generous gifts and also to the UNICO charities in our name. I did not get to see the invite, but Chair of the event, Past National President Sal Mangano, must have promised you something other than me to get so many of you to attend. Thank you, Sal.

On October 31st, Halloween, Pat Pelonero, Past National President Anthony Fornelli and his wife Lupe, along with Marlene and I, arrived at the Villa Roma. On Friday, November 1st, we began the Eastern Regional with committee meetings. Saturday began the general session. The Eastern Regional portion of the meeting was run by Eastern Regional District Governor Chair Perry Russo. During Perry's portion of the meeting, we presented the Mille Grazie Award to New York Governor, Andrew Cuomo, who sent Thomas Scaglione to accept the award.

The Executive Committee meeting featured guest speaker Joseph Valenzano. Joseph spoke about "A Life Like Yours" making a positive difference in the lives of people with disabilities. Mr. Valenzano was awarded the Philip Mazzei Americanism Award at our UNICO Convention this past August. The perfect awardee, thank you Joe. Throughout the day, we worked on the business of UNICO. The evening featured a concert by Michael Amante. The recurring theme of UNICO: we work then we play.

For those of you who attended the office Christmas party on December 6th and 7th, I wish to thank you again. Also I wish to thank Pat, Lisa, Sue, Joyce, and Jenny for putting the party together. It was good to meet the Rockaway Township Chapter President, Matt Mustachio. Also new Chapter, St. Joe's H. S. Montvale, represented by Chapter President Robert Kievit with his wife and daughter.

On Friday evening, December 6th, I attended the Plainfields' Chapter's Pig Roast. In attendance were Past National Presidents Frank Licata and Renato Biribin, Vice Presidents Ann Walko and Dominick Nicastro. Ann brought along some of her homemade treats. Chapter President Jason Risoli was in charge of the roast, which I must say was excellent. Thank you to the members of the Chapter for inviting me as your guest.

On Saturday, December 7th, I attended the 10th anniversary of the Islip/Smithtown Chapter along with Vice Presidents Rick D'Arminio, Ann Walko, and Dominick Nicastro and his wife Alina. This Chapter knows how to throw a party. Sisters Roseanne Buckleman and Elizabeth Hansen and all the members of the Chapter welcomed us as family and we really appreciated your hospitality. We wish you many more years of serving your community in the name of UNICO. Speaking on behalf of the Vice Presidents, we wish to thank you.

On Saturday, December 14th, Past National

President Tony Fornelli along with his wife Lupe, and Marlene and I, attended the St. Louis Chapter Christmas Party and donations to charity. National Secretary Nina Held did an excellent job putting this event together. She seemed to be a one woman show. Greeting guests at the door, running the program, and dealing with the banquet personnel. Thank you Nina, you truly live the motto "Service above Self". I was proud to present a Presidential Award to Chapter President Gabe Lancia and also to the St. Louis Chapter for supporting me and making me a part of their family over the years.

In closing I would like to ask that you remember in your prayers the UNICANs that have gone to their reward of everlasting life in heaven. Especially Toni Alongi, wife of Past National President Paul Alongi. Frank Greco Sr., father of National Sergeant-at-Arms Frank Greco Jr., also my friend Angelo Lucchesi. Words cannot express how Angelo inspired me and countless others by his words and deeds.



Carmine Campanile continues to help "Italian-Up" the National Office. At the Open House Christmas Party he presented Michael Veselka with a replica of Michelangelo's Piata from the 1964 World's Fair in New York City.

ERRORS AND OMISSIONS

**ComUNICO November 2013,
Volume 69, Issue 01**

Page 17- October New Members: The following members were listed as new in the Kearny Chapter instead of members of the Keystone Chapter: Paul DeBarry, James Malone, Nancy Malone, Mary Pastore and Mary Angela Sileo.



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



A Message from Executive Vice President: Rick D'Arminio

As we prepare to wrap up 2013, my wife Manuela and I wish every member a Blessed Christmas and a very healthy and prosperous New Year filled with much happiness as we continue to serve the needs of those less fortunate in our motto of "Service above Self".

I joined UNICO in 1979 when I graduated college. This means that I have been a member for 34 years! When I joined I took an oath like all of you. I knew that there would be highs and lows, very active members and some not so very active. I knew that some would join and possibly remain a member for a long time like me, and that some would probably join but not be around for too long. I knew that we would have some good years in our fund-raising and possibly some not so good years. I guess what I am trying to say is that we as a people of Italian Heritage initially join for the same reasons, but over time people and the world around us changes.

Like anything in life one needs to be passionate about something in order to be good at it. One needs to be involved in order to stick around as long as I have and thank God that we have the opportunity to be of service to others.

As we move forward together I hope that I have earned your trust and confidence all these years. I want to build a stronger UNICO and build on the foundation that our current President Mike Veselka and all of the Past National Presidents before him have started. In order to do this, UNICO needs all Chapter Presidents and District Governors to lead and attend our meetings and Conventions. We need ALL members to be passionate and involved in some capacity. We value your opinions and need you to voice them.

As Executive Vice President I am working with many of the committee chairs in getting ready for the upcoming Mid Year Board Meeting. This is where we conduct much of our business and announce the award winners of our many distinguished awards given out at our National Convention. I hope and will ask one more time that ALL committee chairs keep in touch with all members via e-mail and tell the members about their respective committee, their goals, and encourage all members to participate. Please e-mail all Chapter Presidents and ask them to share this information and invite you to a meeting.

I have also visited Chapters at their various events by representing President Mike Veselka, but also had the opportunity of going to some functions together. One of the recent honors that all of the Vice Presidents had was attending the 10th anniversary celebration of the very active Islip/Smithtown Chapter on December 7, 2013 with President Mike. My wife Manuela and I also

had the opportunity of attending for the first time the Greater Philadelphia Chapter's Annual Citizen of the Year Dinner under the great direction of Lee Norelli. Lee is always present at our Conventions and he and the Chapter certainly deserved our National presence to wish them well and offer our ongoing support.

We Vice Presidents are here for you. Please call and e-mail us. Please be involved as an active member, a committee chair of your own Chapter, a National Committee Chair, a Chapter President, a District Governor, and/or a National Officer.

I look forward to seeing you at the Mid Year Board Meeting in Chicago on March 28-30, 2014.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT



A Message from First Vice President: Ann Walko

I would like to begin this column with an inspirational quote that I received from Steve Maraboli "Look around you. Everything changes. Everything on this earth is in a continuous state of evolving, refining, improving, adapting, enhancing and changing. You were not put on this earth to remain stagnant."

UNICO is in the process of CHANGE. We are in the throes of changing the way we do business and I am so proud of the way you are embracing this theme. Change is always slow, but if we do not move more quickly today there might not be a tomorrow. This year will be fast-paced and we all need to be prepared to refine, improve, and adapt to new ways of enhancing our image. Communication is going to be a key part of our work.

What do we need to do in order for us to keep evolving? First, heed all the calls for action from your officers. We are busy with supporting the efforts of Districts while engaging in strategies to keep UNICO solvent. The first order of business is to make sure that all District Governors send in their self-assessment forms. We cannot help Districts unless we have your input. The second is to make sure your reports come in on a timely basis.

We are now engaged in an aggressive public relations campaign. We need your input...YOU NEED TO BE A PART OF THE PROCESS. We need the data from the forms that were e-mailed and posted by mail so that we can prepare for a massive sweep of the country to highlight all the charitable work that we do.

We are also engaged in a new Growth Initiative. Kudos to all of the Chapters that have attracted new members to our organization. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the installation ceremonies. Now the job is to keep those members involved and help them evolve around the five pillars of UNICO. Turn them on to UNICO through your modeling of what this organization is all about.

We are preparing for the Mid-Year Board Meeting. The second inter-active training module for District Governors will be offered. This module will focus on problem-solving and we will come to

a consensus as to how we can accommodate your concerns.

Getting us through this New Year will take the commitment of everyone. District Governors you are the stewards of your Districts. Chapter Presidents you are the stewards of your Chapters. As officers we are the stewards of the entire organization in order to get results. We are creating a positive climate where everyone collaborates on decisions and navigates the change we need together. This second inspirational quote gives us some direction "We must discover the joy of each other, the joy of challenge, and the joy of growth!" Continue to be the Patriots of Humanity. YOU are the catalysts for the common good. I appreciate all that you do to make life a little bit better for others and thank you for inviting me to share in your Service above Self efforts.

RUTHERFORD, NJ



The Rutherford Chapter presented the 2013 Mille Grazie Award to Louis and Celeste Pandolfi in recognition of exceptional service to their community and UNICO National. The Rutherford Mille Grazie Award was established in 2000 to acknowledge and honor the efforts of individuals who have, in some way, promoted the true and positive image of Italian Americans. Lou and Celeste Pandolfi, through their commitment to assisting others with no expectation of personal gain, exemplify the very best that is Italian American. Mille Grazie Lou and Celeste. You make us proud! From left: Joan Tidona, Louis and Celeste Pandolfi and Frank Tidona, Chapter President.



Rutherford Chapter's Thanksgiving and Christmas donations for the Rutherford Food Pantry were presented to Social Service Director Genevieve Kacmarcik. From left: Barbara Laborim, Genevieve Kacmarcik and Joan Tidona.

THIRD VICE PRESIDENT



A Message from Second Vice President: Dominick Nicastro

Hello everyone, I hope all of you had a Merry Christmas and a Happy Healthy New Year. Many of us prepared our Christmas Eve dinner with our traditional seven types of fish. Christmas Day, New Years Eve and New Years day include more good food, drinks, gifts and most of all our family. I ask you, who does it better than Italian Americans?

The year is moving fast. Before you know it we will be in Chicago for our Mid-Year Meeting. The Executive Committee has had meetings and phone conferences to stay on top of UNICO business. Membership and Retention remains an important issue. Please help to recruit a new member before this year ends. If every member gets one person we double in size. This is so important. Our membership is still decreasing. No one person can make this work. But together we can make it happen. President Veselka has asked the Executive Committee to work hard on the growth of UNICO.

I ask all of you as members to help us do this. We are here to work for all members. So do not ever feel an idea may not be good. If you have something you would like to promote let us know. I promise you it will be addressed and an answer will be provided.

Chapter Presidents, call on me to assist you in any way needed with your Chapter. Also call our Executive Director Andre' DiMino and ask him about his Heritage Program. It works. I have seen it work in my District. Put an ad in a local paper telling about your Chapter and what we do. That works. Most of all word of mouth gets you great results.

Besides getting members we must retain them. You have to encourage new members to become active in your Chapter. Make them feel welcome and a part of our UNICO Family. Encourage them to attend their District meetings and National Conventions.

I will be calling on the West Coast and Mid West to ask for more views on their area and what can be done to build those Chapters up. I have already started calling some and will be continuing making visits to as many Chapters as time permits. Please keep sending your Chapter Report to the Office and your District Governor. If there is something you want me to work on for you highlight it in the report and together we can fix it.

In closing I want to thank everyone for the beautiful Christmas cards. Thank you for all the invitations to the Chapter Meetings and Christmas Parties.

Let all of us remember the letter U in UNICO stands for Unity, (Unique one of a kind) all of us are that and we should never let anyone make us feel any other way. This is just one of many reasons why we need this organization to build and keep getting stronger.

God Bless and see you soon.

MEMBERSHIP AND RETENTION



Membership and Retention Director: Francine Nido

Our recent Membership Report shows a dramatic drop in membership for UNICO National. This is disturbing for us all as the membership is the core of our existence. What is even more disturbing is the fact that UNICO is not the only organization facing such an issue.

Research shows service/civic/fraternal memberships have declined by 58% in the past 25 years. So what's going on with these voluntary associations? Who's to blame for the decline? Is it the fault of the clubs for not keeping up with the times and attracting younger members? Is it the residents of our communities who are into themselves and have lost a sense of civic duty? Or is it something bigger than that?

The reasons for the falloff in service-club participation are many, varied and troubling for society.

• **Pressures on young executives' time.** Many report that in today's dog-eat-dog economic environment, it's hard for what one observer called "the anxious [and shrinking] middle class" to justify heading off for a meeting once a week, let alone taking the time to recruit other members.

• **Money pressures,** even though the cost of membership in service organizations is nominal. A lot of belt-tightening businesses no longer pick up that cost, let alone executives' lunch or bar tabs.

• **Businesses aren't as "local."** More and more banks, real-estate firms, insurance companies and such have become branches of far-flung chains. "Community spirit" doesn't simmer quite as vigorously in executives who are cycling in for a short time, then shuffling out of town.

• **Fewer young executives work where they live.** As small towns struggle, their "best and brightest" often must commute to jobs in larger cities. It's hard for them to get involved in their towns' service-club lunches and projects, even if they'd like to.

• **Service clubs get "stuck in their ways."** As one disgruntled member commented, "The 'old' members don't want anything to change, and the 'new' members get rebuffed at every suggestion they make. So they leave and tell their friends, and soon, guess what . . . no more new members come to try their luck!!!!"

• **There are newer, easier, and cheaper ways to "network."** People are living their lives online now more than ever, sometimes at the expense of real-life activities. Unfortunately for service clubs, people can get involved in civic causes without having to spend time at meetings, fund-raising events, and visits to the underprivileged.

• **And Americans' fondness for "joining" has narrowed.** Membership in service clubs is down, but there have been big gains on the rolls of "interest groups". These organizations demand relatively little of their members' time.

So where do we go from here? With

President Veselka's platform of "Growth", we are all working diligently to gather new members and increase participation on all levels. With the help of Executive Vice President D'Arminio, I will be contacting all Regional District Governors to ensure that their District Governors have a strong Membership and Retention Director in place and brainstorm on ways to increase membership. It's up to each of us to get this organization back on track. To quote Gandhi, we have to "Be the change that we wish to see".

EDITOR'S DESK



Editor's Comments: Pat Pelonero

Happy New Year! Hopefully by the time you receive this issue of ComUNICO we will be out of our deep freeze and edging closer to spring. The weather although severe never stops our UNICANS from holding their meetings and events, continuing to do all the good work and charitable fund-raising for those less fortunate. God bless you all.

Please remember that we are preparing for the Mid-Year Board Meeting to be held in Chicago on March 28 and 29, 2014. At that meeting we will talk more about which format ComUNICO should be published in, the current version, or the past glossier version. There is a lot to consider in making this decision, first being the additional cost and second the content that all our Members wish to see.

I would be remiss without mentioning two UNICO Members that passed away recently. The first is Toni Alongi, Past National First Lady and the second is Angelo Lucchesi, Member of the Memphis Chapter. When I was new to UNICO both of these individuals made me feel welcomed when in their company. Both Toni and Angelo were loving and caring people and I will miss them dearly. They both personified "Service Above Self".

There is much information in every article of ComUNICO. Please take the time to read through each, as the person it comes from puts a lot of effort to bring you the news and tools needed to keep you abreast of all that is occurring around UNICO National. Please support our advertisers in ComUNICO as they help defray the cost of the publication.

Wishing you all a Happy New Year, stay warm and healthy!



CHAPLAIN



Chaplain's Message: Fr. Bob Wolfee

The following, which was written by a good friend, speaks for itself. We are reminded that no matter how bad things may be, there can always be someone else, who might be dealing with worse things than we are.

"I am writing this to hopefully help other people who have been through similar situations as I have. I am a survivor of a medical condition as well as of physical and sexual abuse. I was born with a hole in my heart. The doctors told my mom not to expect me to live past three years of age. As my Dad told me, I beat the odds because of my feistiness. Unfortunately, Mom hated me because of my illness, just as she hated my brother because he was born deaf.

When I was very young, Mom and Dad started fighting more and more. Eventually, Dad had enough of it and left my brother and me. Mom started to drink heavily and take it out on us. If we didn't do things her way, she punished us. Over the years, my brother and I dealt with emotional, physical and sexual abuse from Mom. Without my brother, I would have never survived the years of abuse. He went through it just as much as I did.

As we got older, it got worse. Mom made it so bad for us that at times we didn't get any food for several days. There were many times that she kept us in separate rooms and told both of us that the other one was dead. We would not see each other for several days. For fear of being punished, we wouldn't dare ask what happened to the other. There were many times we thought we were going to die.

The physical abuse I could always handle, because the pain would eventually go away. However, the sexual abuses or as Mom would call them --- the punishments --- were the worst. Mom knew how to "play the game." If someone got close enough to question us or if someone suspected that Mom was abusing us, she made us move. Eventually, we told an adult about the abuse.

Dad came back, with a court order, to get us. We lived with him until he was killed in a car accident caused by a drunk driver a few years ago. Then our grandfather took us in and we lived with him. Unfortunately, he was sick with cancer and later passed away.

My brother and I now own our grandfather's house. I am twenty years old and am working toward a certification to be an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter. My inspiration is my dad, who was deaf, and my brother. My brother is eighteen years old and studying Art at the Rochester Institute of Technology. He is on the honor roll.

We both have a great support system of friends and family. I am writing this because I want to help people and let them know that things can change for the better. Never give up. No matter what you've been through, you can always come out as a survivor. All you have to do is have a dream and go for it."

SCHOLARSHIP



Scholarship Director: Joan Tidona

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Although it doesn't seem possible, UNICO National Scholarship Season 2014 is well underway.

Hard copies and e-mail attachments of application forms were distributed to District Governors, Chapter Presidents and Scholarship Chairs last November. Applications for our initial Torracco Ph.D offerings in science, music and Mediterranean history/archaeology were included. Additional hard copies may be requested.

Several modifications are reflected in the updated forms (Revised 2013- 2014). Most changes simply clarify requirements. However, in the attempt to address serious difficulties encountered by some of our Chapters last season, we have somewhat broadened the submission procedure.

Candidates **MUST** meet qualifications as stated on specific applications. Every UNICO Chapter, in good standing, may submit nominations. If a Chapter is unable to accept a candidate, they are asked to refer them to the District Governor (if they agree) or the National Office. As before, UNICANS and their family members are eligible to apply through their respective Chapters.

The Chapter letter of endorsement is now optional. This provides the Chapter an opportunity to support their candidate.

It is essential to avoid distributing obsolete applications. When you provide your area schools with the current form, please ask them to **return all applications they have on file.**

Undergraduate candidates should be encouraged to apply for all four scholarships. To do so requires the original application and three complete copies, including attachments. Multiple copies are necessary because the scholarships are judged at different locations. **Copies cannot be made by the office staff.**

An application must be completed in its **ENTIRETY**. The UNICO representative is asked to check the form, prior to submission, to make certain all is in order. Submission deadlines, as listed on applications, must be met.

The initial offering of a scholarship usually receives a poor response. We are asking members to promote awareness of the Torracco Doctoral Scholarships by e-mailing applications to the Financial Aid Department of your nearby learning institutions. Please send them all other appropriate applications as well.

Marconi University of Rome, Italy, is providing **four online** scholarships to qualified UNICANS and/or their family members; **one for each of the following programs:** Master's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Certificate, and Single Course. Subjects eligible for study are Computer Engineering, Political Science, Cinematic Arts, Film and Television Production and Italian Language and Culture. UNICO membership, for a minimum of one full year, is required to apply. Recipients will be determined by lot, at a public drawing.

Accredited by the Italian Ministry of Education and the equivalent European Union agency, Marconi University is currently pursuing accreditation in the United States. Enrollment is open; there are no GPA or achievement test (SAT/ACT) requirements. Admissions are rolling; not restricted to traditional semesters. Courses are available in Italian and English.

Marconi University is also offering discounted Online Courses to UNICO members. Access their website at www.marconiuniversity.org for further information.

The UNICO National Scholarship Program continues to be a great success only because of the commitment and support of our members. Thank you.

SADDLE BROOK, NJ



On Monday, December 9, 2013, The Saddle Brook Chapter and the Coccia Foundation jointly presented the Saddle Brook School District a check for \$5000 to continue the Italian Studies program that began two years ago. This will help to continue the program further. We are very proud of this feat. The preservation of our rich heritage is very important to us. From left: Joseph Coccia III, Elisa Coccia, Joseph Nassello, Chapter President; Phil and Carol Sergio and Jerry and Ann Taylor.



From left: Dr. Richard Katz, School Superintendent; Joseph Nassello, Chapter President; Elisa Coccia and Joseph Coccia III.

GOT FACEBOOK?

If you have any questions about social media or want an event posted on Facebook, please contact the National Office at uniconational@unico.org
The staff will be more than happy to help you get your information out there!

SCOTCH PLAINS/ FANWOOD, NJ

Famed Sculptor Visits Scotch Plains-Fanwood UNICO

On October 12, 1998 a monument to honor Christopher Columbus was unveiled in front of the municipal building in Scotch Plains. The four ton monument was funded by contributions from the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Chapter of UNICO, The Scotch Plains Italian-American Club and the local chapter of the Knights of Columbus. The project was completed by award winning, Hungarian born sculptor Gheorgi Filin in Italy and brought to the United States.

For the first time since completing the work Mr. Filin visited his statue in Scotch Plains and met with the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Chapter of UNICO at a recent meeting. Also in attendance for the dinner was Scotch Plains Mayor Kevin Glover and Tom Donatelli, whose father Joe chose the marble that was for the monument back in 1998.



From left: Alfonso Gialanella, Frank Russo, Steve Steinbergher, Tom Donatelli, Gheorgi Filin and Paul Raphael.

Scotch Plains Columbus Day Celebration

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Chapter together with the Scotch Plains Italian American Club and the Knights of Columbus held a Columbus Day celebration in Scotch Plains.

Father John Paladino, led with the opening prayer. The flag salute was given by Tom Donatelli of the Italian American Club. Marianna Biribin-Viel sang the American and Italian National Anthems.

Scotch Plains-Fanwood Chapter President Geri Samuel, acknowledged two essay contest winners. They were 8th grader Hanna Guarnuccio and 7th grader Kaia Scharf, both of St. Bartholomew's Academy.

Tom Donatelli spoke about the origin of the Christopher Columbus monument. Mr. Donatelli indicated that a contest was held for the design of the monument and the winning entry was to model the monument after the hand of Christopher Columbus holding an orange, explaining to Queen Isabella that the world was not flat. The marble used for the monument came from the same area in Italy that Michelangelo used for his sculptures of David and the Pieta.

The keynote speaker was Past National President Renato Biribin, who gave a great talk on a daring and confident Columbus. A man able to make his way to a "new land" in a round world and still be able to make his way back home by following the stars. Renato went on to say how the Columbus discovery of America was not just for Italians, but for all people to make it truly America.

A wreath was then placed at the monument

by representatives of the three sponsoring organizations. Following this, the crowd was entertained with music performed by the Westfield Symphony Community Band – Brass Ensemble. Refreshments were provided by the Italian American Club and by the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Chapter. Emcee John Perrotta thanked everyone in attendance. The event was co-chaired by Marianne Spinella and Carmen Ponzio of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Chapter.



From left: Bob Bengivenga, Geri Samuel and Courtney Villani.



"Here we Grow Again"! Three new members are sworn into the Chapter. From left: Chapter President Geri Samuel, Vincent Russo, Guy Barretta, Joe DiFrancesco and Past National President Renato Biribin.



Recently the Chapter co-sponsored the 39th Annual St. Barts/UNICO Italian Festival. Despite some weather challenges thousands of people came out for the event which featured nightly entertainment, food, rides games and a mass in Italian followed by a procession honoring San Nicola di Bari. From left: John Ritter, Dave Cacciatore, Jeff Blanck, Guy Barretta and Ron Del Prete.



The Chapter recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. From left: Carmen Ponzio, Romano Del Roio, Past National President Renato Biribin, Charter Member Joe Viteri, Chapter President Geri Samuel and Charter Member John Appezato.

GREATER BINGHAMTON, NY



The Greater Binghamton Chapter held a "Sauce-Off" Fund-raiser. Amateur chefs created their best red, white, and green sauces, while members and the public were invited to taste and judge. From left: Grace Pezzuti, Mariana DelBrocco, Geri Harris, Pierre, Cathy Fredella, Marco Cuda, Joe Doolittle, Lorraine Rogers, and Barbara Wahila serve the scrumptious sauces to guests.



Our amateur chefs made their best sauce, or is it gravy? The competition was difficult, because all sauces were wonderful!! Winners included: George Haus, White Sauce Category; Mark Zimmerman, Green Sauce Category and Tatiana Anderson, Red Sauce Category. George, Tatiana, and Mark will have the title and bragging rights until the next Sauce-Off, which is scheduled for 2014. Congratulations to all!!



Several members of the Greater Binghamton Chapter attended the Eastern Regional Meeting. A fun filled informative weekend was enjoyed by all!!



At a recent meeting members and guests were treated to olive oil and vinegar tasting by F. Oliver's Oils & Vinegars. Penelope informed us that we were the first group that she didn't need to explain what to do with olive oil and specialty vinegars. Imagine that from a group of Italian Americans. A tasteful evening was had by all!! From left: Sara Wagner, Owner of F. Oliver's Penelope Pankow and Liz Wagner.

KEARNY, NJ



At their recent Chapter meeting, members of the Kearny Chapter welcomed Jim Pecora into the Chapter.



At a recent Chapter meeting New Jersey District VII Governor Elyse Buonomo installed Anthony Campano as the Chapter's newest member.



Kearny Chapter member Libby McInnis shopped for all the "fixin's" for the Thanksgiving baskets.



The Basket Delivery Team from left: Jim Pecora, Anthony Campano, Jim Cifelli and Anthony and John Josso.



Celeste Pandolfi picked out the turkeys.

HERITAGE AND CULTURE



**Heritage and Culture
Chairman:
Sal Mangano**



Italian Culture and its Effect on the Entire World

From antiquity until the 17th century, the inhabitants of Italy were at the center of Western culture, beginning with Ancient Rome and continuing with the Roman Catholic Church, Medieval Times and the Renaissance.

Contributions to science and technology were given by Italian scientists. Galileo Galilei has been called the "father of modern observational astronomy". Because of his discovery of the telescope and the fact that the earth revolves around the Sun, he has also been called the "Father of Modern Science". Among the technological innovations on which today's information and communication technologies are founded, are these other great Italian scientists: Inventor of electric batteries (Alessandro Volta), the radio (Guglielmo Marconi), the telephone (Antonio Meucci), the nuclear reactor (Enrico Fermi), and, more recently, the microprocessor (Federico Faggin).

Italy became a seat of great formal learning in 1088 with the establishment of the University of

Bologna, the first university in Europe. Many other Italian universities soon followed. For example, La Schola Medica of Salerno, in southern Italy, was the first medical school in Europe. These great centers of learning foretold the coming of "il Rinascimento". The European Renaissance began in Italy and was fueled throughout Europe by Italian painters, sculptors, architects, scientists, literal masters and music composers. Italy continued its leading cultural role through the Baroque period and into the Romantic period, when its dominance in painting and sculpture diminished but the Italians reestablished a strong presence in music.

Italian explorers in the 15th and 16th centuries left a perennial mark on human history with the modern "discovery of America", due mainly to Cristoforo Colombo and let us not forget others such as Giovanni Verrazano and Giovanni Caboto. Furthermore, the name of the American continents derives from Amerigo Vespucci's first name.

Due to late national unification, and the historical autonomy of the regions that comprise the Italian peninsula, many traditions and customs of the Italians can be identified by their regions of origin. Despite the political and social isolation of these regions, Italy's contributions to the cultural and historical heritage of the Western world remain immense. Famous elements of Italian culture are its opera and music, its iconic gastronomy and food, which are commonly regarded as amongst the most popular in the world, its cinema (with filmmakers such as Federico Fellini, Michelangelo Antonini, Dino DeLaurentis, Mario Monicelli and Sergio Leone) collections of priceless works of art and its fashion. (Milan and Florence are regarded as some of the great fashion capitals of the world).

It is estimated that the country is home to half the world's greatest art treasures.

Over 80 million people of full or partial Italian descent live outside of Europe, with nearly 50 million living in South America (primarily in Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay), about 18 million are living in North America, primarily in the United States and Canada, and 850,000 live in Australia. Millions of others live in other parts of Europe (primarily France, Germany and Switzerland).

For such a small country, Italy's culture and heritage has spread throughout the world. In each country where there are large numbers of Italians, we have contributed to the betterment of our adopted countries. We have made our mark wherever we have migrated to. We have melded into our adopted country's culture but we have not forgotten our ancestors and the rich culture that we can call ours.

Belonging to organizations like UNICO can help us in this endeavor.

We must all take pride in what we are and what we as a people have contributed, not only to America, but to the entire world.

"Let us never forget".

Researched and Submitted by Salvatore J Mangano, PNP



PITTSFIELD, MA

Pittsfield Chapter Baseball and Softball Hall of Fame

The Pittsfield Chapter inducted six new members into its Berkshire County Baseball and Softball Hall of Fame. This particular ceremony was special as Past Chapter President Joe Bonacquisti was inducted. Joe was the originator of the UNICO Berkshire County Baseball and Softball Hall of Fame concept and the Chapter and the community are very grateful for this, as it has raised many thousands of dollars for local scholarships since its inception. This is the eighteenth year of the Baseball and Softball Hall of Fame. Former baseball and softball players (men and women), as well as contributors and coaches to both sports, from Berkshire County are nominated and sponsored by family, friends, former team mates and coaches for induction. The Chapter's Hall of Fame committee reviews and approves the nominations after which the sponsors conduct a fund-raising event for a donation to the Baseball and Softball Hall of Fame scholarship fund.

Any graduating senior in Berkshire County, who has played baseball or softball for their respective high school, may apply for the scholarship. The Chapter's Scholarship Committee makes the selections.



Pittsfield Chapter Berkshire County Baseball and Softball Hall of Fame Class of 2013 inductees from left: Joe Bonacquisti, Erica Barschdorf Roccabruna, Brian Traversa, Don Cormier and Dick DiOrio.

ORANGE/ WEST ORANGE, NJ



Members of the Orange/West Orange Chapter gather for a night of bowling after one of their general meetings.

ST. LOUIS, MO

St. Louis Chapter Receives Siteman Cancer Center Recognition Award

The St. Louis Chapter of UNICO was recognized as a supporter of the Alvin J. Siteman Cancer Center at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine. Nina Lancia-Held, St. Louis Chapter Treasurer and Aggie Santangelo, St. Louis Chapter Secretary, on behalf of the St. Louis Chapter were presented a 2013 Alvin J. Siteman Cancer Center plaque by Dr. Timothy Eberlein, MD, Director of Alvin J. Siteman Cancer Center.

This token of appreciation was in recognition of the St. Louis Chapter's monetary donation from the Alphonse Lordo Memorial Golf Tournament. The St. Louis Chapter's donation will support The Director's Discovery Fund at Siteman Cancer Center. The Director's Discovery Fund supports *All* cancers. This fund is critical because it provides flexibility to Siteman leadership, allowing them to direct funding where it is needed most urgently.



From left: Aggie Santangelo and Nina Lancia-Held receive Siteman Cancer Center recognition plaque on behalf of the St. Louis Chapter of UNICO.



Dr. Timothy Eberlein, of the Alvin J. Siteman Cancer Center.

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e-mail at comunico@unico.org**

**Have you filed your 990
with the IRS?**

RARITAN VALLEY, NJ



Raritan Valley UNICO recently swore in new member Terri Gambino Sapp. From left: John Pacifico, Terri Gambino Sapp, Jerry Maddaluna and Chapter President Ed Danberry.



Raritan Valley UNICO hosted a "Harvest Moon Dance" held at the Manville VFW. This event was a big success. Live music, Dancing, Dinner and a Basket Raffle, made for a great time for all. From left: Gerry Cicero, Bev Minetti, Sharon Forte, Maria Danberry and Dawn Wilde.



Joe Ferrera chats with a guest.



Members are joined by Class of 1966 Bridgewater Raritan Classmates Sharon Gerard, Linda Dineen, Anne Delin, Roger Delin, Ed Minetti, Donna Lish, Simon Kokinda, Ed Danberry, Anna Ferrera, Joe Ferrera, Joe Forte, Gerry Cicero.



Little Jimmy and the Starlites perform.

IN MEMORIAM



Antonette "Toni" Alongi
Devoted Wife, Mother, Grandmother,
Sister and
Disciple of St. Theresa the Little Flower

Toni left this Earth for an immediate place in Heaven. She will be missed by her family and friends very much as her presence in all the lives of those she touched was loving and meaningful.

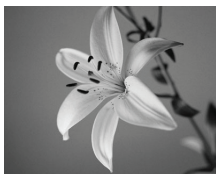
She was a person of extreme faith, an avid parishioner of St. Thomas the Apostle Church, and deeply beholden to St. Theresa. Toni was able to channel her faith and prayers to all who needed help and comfort. Her belief was overwhelming and most times proven to be rewarding for those in need.

Besides her deep love for her husband, son and daughter in law, daughter and son in law, and sisters, her six grandchildren were the main focus of her life. She was a loving and caring grandmother to them all.

Toni (nee Spano) is survived by her husband Paul of 57 years, son Paul A. and Kim, daughter Gina and Tom Ring, sisters Frances S. Schiafone and Lynda Cook, sister in laws Julie Palma and Marianne Alongi, brother in laws Anthony Alongi, Sebby Alongi, and Bob Surdi, her beloved grandchildren, Kara, Michael, and Matthew Alongi, and Ryan, Jack, and Eric Ring, and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her parents, Rose and Joseph Spano, sisters Jo Surdi, Angela Spano, and Ginny Surdi, and brother in laws Bruno Schiafone, Vincent Surdi, Bill Cook, and Frank Palma.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Bloomfield UNICO for the "Toni Alongi Scholarship", P. O. Box 1007, Bloomfield, New Jersey 07003.



SAN ANTONIO, TX



Basilone 2011 Awardee/Bride Valene Bummara Johnson, her husband Kaleb and parents with San Antonio UNICANS October 19, 2013.

CONVENTION



"We Are Going Back To The Breakers"

It is not too early to begin making plans for the 2014 Convention that is scheduled for the Breakers, Palm Beach, one of America's finest resorts.

If you have never been to a Convention then this is the one to attend! For those of you that remember the 1997 Convention at The Breakers, you know what I mean.

The Breakers, Palm Beach is one of America's most legendary resorts. It features a host of enticing amenities and services: Private Oceanfront Beach, Four Oceanfront Pools, Five Whirlpool Spas, Two 18 hole Golf Courses, (one on the property), Nine Restaurants and Nine Bars and much, much more.

There are also many restaurants within walking distance that can fit any budget. We will supply all attendees with a list of nearby restaurants.

The Wednesday Night Ice Breaker, scheduled for August 6, 2013, will have the theme of "Havana Nights". We are planning an evening of Latin dancing and music along with plenty of good old American songs and maybe even some Italian songs. Of course there will be a great Cocktail hour and sit down dinner.

On Thursday morning we will begin the business portion of this event with opening ceremonies. On Thursday night we are on our own and may choose a restaurant that pleases you. There will be hospitality suite hosted by the incoming President. Times will be announced at the Convention.

On Friday morning we will continue with Convention business as we will begin our election process. We will break for lunch and we will be served a barbecue style lunch. After the lunch you can attend the Awards Ceremony. Some of the awards that will be made are Outstanding and Distinguished District Governor, Chapter Achievement Awards and Chapter Scrapbook Awards. We are on our own again Friday night for dinner.

On Saturday morning, we finish Convention business and swear in our new officers for the coming year and then, finally, Rick D'Arminio will be sworn in as our new President by outgoing President Michael Veselka. Immediately following that the Board of Directors meeting will commence. This meeting should be attended by all District Governors, Deputy District Governors, all National Officers and all Past National Presidents. It is truly important for all these members to attend the Board Meeting.

On Saturday evening the UNICO Gala is scheduled. This is the finale of the Convention. The evening starts with a cocktail hour and a full course dinner. There are honored guests and there will be live music and dancing. This is great way to end

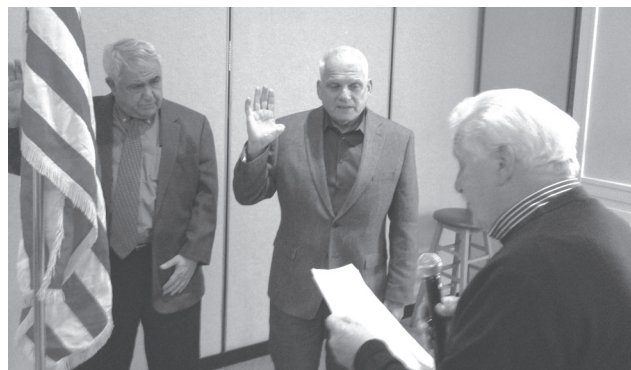
your Convention experience.

For those who have never attended Conventions, let me say "This is one the greatest experiences for UNICO Members to be a part of. Not only will you learn how UNICO really works but you will meet members from all around the country and the possibility of forging new and lasting friendships is very high". My wife, Criss, and I can attest to this.

So please make plans to attend the UNICO Convention 2014 at The Breakers, Palm Beach. You will be glad you did.

MERRIMACK VALLEY, MA

The Merrimack Valley Chapter is celebrating its 24th year as a Chapter of UNICO National and recently announced that it has raised and distributed over \$800,000 to local charities. Merrimack Valley currently enjoys the fellowship of approximately 60 members.



Ken DeBenedictis (right), president of UNICO Merrimack Valley installs William Novelline (left) of North Andover and Arthur Sordillo (center) of Stoneham.

CRESSKILL, NJ



Cresskill Chapter member Vincent Tedeschi (right) received the New Jersey District IX UNICAN Of The Year Award from Cresskill Chapter President Marty Lucibello Jr. Vincent currently serves as Chapter Secretary and has been the Cresskill Chapter Santa Claus for several years at our Christmas party held annually to benefit local groups of children and adults with disabilities. He has been a member of the Cresskill Chapter for 23 years.

KEYSTONE, PA



The Keystone Chapter attended the Columbus Day Dinner of Lackawanna County, which honored UNICO Member Judge Thomas Munley. Pictured with Judge Munley are members of the Chapter.



The five winners from the second grade class at Saint Mary's Parochial School and Dunmore Elementary Center in Keystone Chapter's Columbus Day Coloring Contest are Christopher Petrucci, Saint Mary's Elementary School and Mia Capooci, Brynn Kochis, Lipika Mallick and Brett Monelli from the Dunmore Elementary Center. For their winning drawings, they were given back their entries professionally framed along with a \$25 gift card to Toys R Us. Front row from left: Carolee McDonald, teacher at Saint Mary's; Christopher Petrucci, contest winner and Mary DePalma, Keystone Chapter President. Second row from left: Mark E. McDade, Kathleen Hubert, Principal at Saint Mary's and James Mack.



Front row from left: Brett Monelli, Mia Capooci, Brynn Kochis and Lipika Mallick, all second grade Dunmore Elementary School contest winners. Second row from left: Second grade teachers Mrs. Walsh, Mrs. Cordaro and Mrs. Amendolaro. Third row from left: Mark E. McDade, Mary DePalma, Keystone Chapter President and James Mack.



The Borough of Dunmore recognized the contributions of Italians and Italian Americans and the Keystone Chapter by naming October Italian Heritage and Culture Month. Among those present at Borough Council for the reading of the proclamation are these members of Council and Keystone UNICO members.



The Keystone Chapter co-sponsored the VIP meet and greet for Dani-elle Kleha's "ELEVEN" CD Release Party. Dani-elle shows great promise in becoming a professional Country Singer and we wish her all the best. From left: Mary DePalma, Chapter President; Debbie Kleha, Dani-elle's mom; Singer/Songwriter Dani-elle, Basil Kleha, Dani-elle's dad; Tom Carlucci, Michele McDade, and Mark McDade. Marley's Mission was the featured beneficiary of the proceeds from this event.

NUTLEY, NJ

The Nutley Chapter completed the 2013 calendar year with its Annual Christmas Party at Nanina's in the Park. Over 80 guests attended and the ladies participated in the fun grab bag, "Select or Swap". The event was coordinated by Debbie Bellucci and Carol Scavone. Entertainment was provided by member John Cafone.

The October meeting was built around the theme of Italian Heritage Month. Our dinner meeting guest speaker was Richard Muti, author, lawyer and former Mayor of Ramsey, who wrote "The Unsopranos", which promoted the many positive traits of Italian Americans in the N.Y. Times. In addition, our annual guests, three members of the Italian Carabinieri, were also in attendance. Dan Mauricci continued his "It's All About the Food" segment with a discussion of porcini mushrooms. He spoke of how they can be used with pasta, risotto, soup, bruschetta, etc. The Columbus Day ceremonies began with a ceremony at the Columbus statue, dedicated by the Chapter, at the Nutley Town Hall, and was followed by the Nutley-Belleville Columbus Day Parade. Over 30 members marched in the parade.

The Chapter's November meeting focused on honoring our veterans. Each Chapter member who is a vet was individually recognized at the meeting.

Two Chapter members were recently honored for their many years of public and professional service. Carmen Orecchio, a charter

member of the Chapter, was honored by the Belleville Italian-American Civic Association for his decades of public service, including the Nutley Commission, Mayor of Nutley and New Jersey State Senator. New member Anthony Iannarone was inducted into the Nutley Municipal Hall of Fame for his work as a chemist and attorney.

The Chapter's major fund-raiser, the \$100 ticket raffle sale, is underway. 350 tickets are sold with the winners being selected at a special February meeting.

The Nutley Chapter wishes all a healthy and happy 2014. *Felice anno nuovo!*



Nutley UNICO members who are veterans were honored at the November dinner meeting.



Debbie Bellucci calls out raffle winners at Nutley UNICO Christmas Party.

PLAINFIELDS', NJ



Plainfields' UNICO installed a new member, Jaclyn Bednar, at their recent monthly meeting. From left: Chapter President Jason Risoli, Bob Bengivenga, Janet DeAugustine, Jaclyn Bednar, John G. DeAndrea, Past National President Renato Biribin, and Giuseppe Razzano.



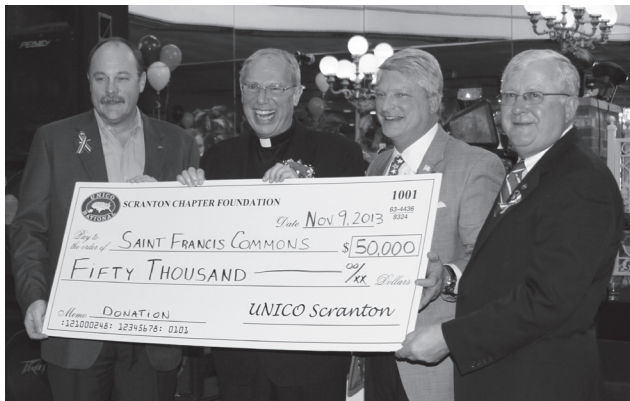
SCRANTON, PA

Scranton Chapter, POETS Band raise \$50,000 for Homeless Veterans

The POETS, a regionally and nationally known band, and the Scranton Chapter partnered for the 50th Anniversary of the band to raise funds for St. Francis Commons, a homeless shelter for honorably discharged military veterans now being constructed in downtown Scranton. The event was held at Genetti's Banquet Manor in Dickson City and featured plenty of music, basket raffles and a fifteen minute presentation on St. Francis Commons by Monsignor Joseph Kelly, Director of Catholic Social Services for the Diocese of Scranton. Over 800 people attended.



From left: Christopher DiMattio, Chairman of the event; The POETS: Frank Gervasi, John Hollenbaugh, Toby Naro, Pat Luongo, Allan Shields, Nick Luongo and Monsignor Joseph Kelly.



From left: Dave Bieri, Chapter President; Monsignor Joseph Kelly, Chris DiMattio, Past National President and Sal Mecca.



The Scranton Chapter's James Minicozzi Memorial Run/Walk donated the proceeds from the event held during LaFesta Italiana to the Boys and Girls Clubs of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Back row from left: Jack Trapani, Leslie Minicozzi Galacci, Sal Mecca, Germaine Helcoski and John Trapani. Front row from left: Kylie Woodard, Cody Mattison, Aiden Ly and Tricia DiBiasi Thomas, Executive Director of the club.

Scranton Chapter and Raymour & Flanigan hold event to benefit St. Francis Commons

The goal was to raise awareness and collect donations to benefit the St. Francis Commons Veteran's Homeless Shelter which is being built in Scranton. This Special event was held at the Dickson City Raymour & Flanigan Showroom. Raymour & Flanigan donated \$1,000 to St. Francis Commons and additional donations from the community were accepted at the door.



From left: Joanne Quattrone, Dan Herring, Regional Manager; Michael Semian, Commandant Gino Merli Center; Charles Drummond, Store Manager; Monsignor Kelly, St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen and St. Francis Commons; Aaron Yeager, Showroom Manager; Chuck Steele, Showroom Manager; and Lori Nozzi.

ORANGE WEST ORANGE, NJ

Anthony Vecchio, member of the Orange-West Orange Chapter, was recently promoted to Deputy Chief of the West Orange Fire Department. Anthony, who joined the West Orange Fire Department in 2001, graduated West Orange High School in 1984. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications from the University of Maryland and is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Science Fire Science program at New Jersey City University.

His professional certifications currently include Firefighter I, Firefighter II, Hazardous Materials Operations. Confined Space Operations, Emergency Medical Technician-B, Incident Command System I-300, National Incident Management System I-700, Fire Officer I, NJ Division of Criminal Justice Arson Investigator, NJ State Fire Inspector and NJ State Fire Official.

Tony is also a member of the West Orange Chamber of Commerce and coaches traveling Little League. Tony has been married for 20 years to his lovely wife Anita and they have three great children, Alexandra, a sophomore at Penn State, Anthony Jr. and Austin. It took Anthony, only 12 years to achieve this great accomplishment.



Chapter President Frank DeMaio and Anthony Vecchio.

21st CENTURY



21st Century Chair John DiNapoli

21st CENTURY CAMPAIGN

I would like to thank President Michael Veselka for appointing me Chairman of the 21st Century Committee.

I want to summarize to the best of my knowledge what happened in this campaign. It is important that everyone is aware, especially our newer members, of this outstanding UNICO Project. The Campaign was started in 2002 under the direction of then UNICO National President John Alati. The goal was to raise ONE MILLION DOLLARS to support all of our endeavors. That includes Italian American Heritage, Education, Anti-Bias, Public Relations and ComUNICO. At that time, the plan was that if every UNICAN pledged \$300 over three years, the Campaign would be funded with \$1,800,000. That goal was never met. As of November 30, 2013 the balance in the fund was \$711,178.

Several years ago the Board of Directors of UNICO National passed a resolution that only the income from the fund may be used to spend on our projects and the Campaign must be funded with \$1,000,000.

We are trying to complete this project. In order to accomplish our GOAL, we need every UNICAN, CHAPTER AND DISTRICT to consider a pledge over three years. We would like to hear from the members who have not yet contributed, however all donations will be appreciated.

Individuals will receive a tax deduction, since the Campaign is part of the UNICO Foundation, a 501 (C) 3 Corporation.

We would like to thank everyone who has made a contribution to this worthwhile project. In order to reach our GOAL, we need some additional support from everyone.

Please contact the National Office to arrange for any pledges and/or donations.

Thank you again for all your generosity and we are looking forward to completing this Campaign during the Presidency of Michael Veselka.

Donations to UNICO Charities are tax deductible! Send your check made payable to UNICO Foundation:

**UNICO Foundation
271 US Highway #46 West
Suite F-103
Fairfield, NJ 07004**

CLARK, NJ



The Clark Chapter participated in the first Trunk or Treat for the residents of Clark, New Jersey. Over 60 cars decorated their trunks and filled them with candy with over 500 children Trick or Treating. The Chapter supplied enough candy for six cars. Back row from left: Donna Cacchione, Henry Trani, President Ralph Bernardo, Bill Smith and Chris De-Lauro as Tiger. Front row: Valerie Coccia, Angie House and Terri Spingola.



The Clark Chapter celebrated with their Annual Christmas party on Friday, December 6th, at Ali-perti's in Clark. Special thanks to Vice President Greg Menza and Clark Chapter member Patti Ashmont for putting the entire night together. Clark member Henry Trani played a fantastic Santa Claus.

CARBONDALE, PA



The Carbondale Chapter recently held their annual Stuffed Pepper Dinner. Members helped prepare and serve the meal.



CALL TO MID-YEAR BOARD MEETING

The Mid-Year Board of Director's Meeting will be held March 28-29, 2014 at the Embassy Suites Chicago O'Hara Rosemont, 5500 North River Road, Rosemont, Illinois 60118. All members of the Board of Directors should make every effort to attend. Registration form and hotel information may be found on page 33 of this issue.



VERONA, NJ



Members of the Verona Chapter manned the Moon Walk at the Verona Fair in the Square. They were joined by the Deputy Mayor, Mayor and UNICO National President. From left: Michael DiRocco, Deputy Mayor Jay Sniatkowski, Linda Gail Alati, UNICO National President Michael Veselka, Mayor Bob Manley, John Alati, Larry Colombo and Joan Patella.



UNICO National President greets a performer at the Verona Fair in the Square!

BOOK REVIEW



Ten Seconds Can Change Your Life Forever
by
Bobby Petrocelli
Reviewed by
Tony Arabia

This book is one of the most inspiring nonfiction items I have read in recent years. Originally a 2005 publication, it had its fifth printing in 2008. It is a detailed account of his personal life, his principles and faith in overcoming a devastating tragedy he and his wife faced.

As a young person of Italian Norwegian heritage, he knew family values. In his marriage with Ava, he set a high level of faith, work and educational service as counselor-teacher-coach.

One day, a terrible event was dealt him and his wife as they were sleeping. A heavy truck driven by a drunk crashed into their brick home bedroom, killing his wife and inflicting critical injuries to him. His painful convalescence was over many sad months. In all of this, his faith in God made him survive. Rebuilding his life, he explains that most decisions made in a very short time can influence life altering directions. Finding love and marriage again gave Bobby the inspiration that he has shared with thousands of people needing hope to turn their lives around!

An Honor Net Publication.

GREATER PHILADELPHIA, PA



At their Annual Citizen of the Year Dinner, Executive Vice President Rick and Manuela D'Arminio visited the Greater Philadelphia Chapter. The Chapter raised funds to support their annual Thanksgiving Turkey baskets, Scholarships, and taking 125 children shopping for Christmas! From left: Chapter President Lee Norelli, Debbie Bailey, Past National President Nicholas Quercetti and his wife Marie, Executive Vice President Rick D'Arminio and Manuela, Erika DeMartinis and Pennsylvania III District Governor Germaine DeMartinis.



EXPANSION



**Expansion
Director:
Thomas Vaughan**

At the Eastern Regional Meeting someone said it was great to expand UNICO, but it is more important to retain members. Of course, I think both are essential, but I understand the point.

Every Chapter that has chartered while I have served as Expansion Director is important to me. As Expansion Director I think it is one of my responsibilities, and I have made it one of my missions, to help these new Chapters succeed. That leads up to a preview of an article I am writing for the next issue. I am going to give you an update on these Chapters, interview some of the members, and let them tell you in their own words how they are doing. I am curious to hear their thoughts about UNICO, their successes and struggles. They probably have good ideas on how to attract members, and they can bring a fresh perspective on expansion and retention. Look for it in the next issue of ComUNICO!

Chapter Presidents recently received a request from the National Vice Presidents for information to determine how much, as a national organization, we raise and donate every year. This information will only be used to promote our organization and not to get into a Chapter's business. When I can go to a group that is interested in forming a Chapter and say "UNICO National raises and donates a million dollars a year to local and national scholarships," that is impressive to people. This information will be a great tool to publicize our organization and will help with President Veselka's Growth Initiative. I encourage all Chapters to respond to the request.

Back to Expansion news, I will soon be able to present a Charter application for a Washington D.C. area Chapter we are calling D.C. Metro. After that we can begin plans for a Charter night in our Nation's Capital. John Marino of Marconi University is spearheading this effort and Past National President Chris DiMattio has helped get this going.

We have interest in starting Chapters from people in Westchester, New York, Atlanta, and the Dallas area. I will keep you updated. I would really love to hear from someone about expansion. Send me an e-mail at unicotomv@gmail.com.

**The DEADLINE for the March Edition of
ComUNICO is
Monday, February 3, 2014
Send Chapter news to the UNICO
National Office: comunico@unico.org.**

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

FARMINGTON, CT



Farmington UNICO welcomes three new members installed at the November meeting. From left: Newly installed members Mike Demicco, Enrico Mangiafico, Paul Papa and President Frank Dolce.



The Farmington Chapter held its 44th Annual Pasta Dinner. Once again the teamwork of our members under the direction of Sal DiMauro for Meatball Night and Enzo DeDominicis for the Pasta Dinner resulted in a very successful fund-raising event with over 400 dinners served.



Welcoming guests to our 44th Annual Pasta Dinner from left: Geno Avenoso, Frank Dolce, Jim Kane, Bob McNally, Enzo DeDominicis, Jim Mugavero, and Bruno Macaro.



Sal DiMauro checking that the meatballs are just right!

SPARTA, NJ



Sparta members collected and donated twelve turkeys to The Manna House in Newton. From left: Ken Carafello, Chapter President; Glen Vetrano, Laura Lippencott, (baby) Zachary Eller, John Campbell, Gary D'Uva and Tony Torre.



In addition, the Sparta Chapter also donated an additional twelve turkeys to the Bohdi Food Pantry in Lafayette. From left: Ron Pondiscio, John Campbell, Glen Vetrano and Tony Torre.

RUTHERFORD, NJ



Rutherford UNICO members present the Chapter Christmas donation for Social Concerns to Father Michale J. Kreder, Pastor, Church of St. Mary. From left: Jim Basile, Dolores Gennaro, Barbara Laborim, Father Mike, Shirley Tokarz, Nella Basile and Vinnie DeCesare.

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!

LIVINGSTON, NJ

The November meeting of the Livingston Chapter was attended by First Vice President Ann Walko, Second Vice President Dominick Nicaastro and New Jersey District XI Governor Carmine Campanile. They were guests of the Chapter to facilitate in the installation of five new members and provide National and District overviews for the Livingston Members. Also, they participated in the Chapter's Bi-Monthly Heritage Meeting; this month featured a round table discussion on what it's like "being raised in an Italian American family during the Thanksgiving Holidays."

First Vice President Ann Walko presided over the installation of the new members. She enhanced the ceremony and gave it a special touch with a complimentary book ("The Story of Italian Immigration – Passage to Liberty") to each new member. This made the ceremony special and will be a memory they cherish for a long time.

During October, a special fund-raiser was held to honor the town's best examples of "Service Above Self", the volunteer Fire Department and First Aid Squad. In conjunction with a local Italian Restaurant, Calabria's, 30% of the proceeds for the day were donated to Livingston UNICO to be shared between the two volunteer groups.

Lastly, a special donation was given to Sister Barbara for her outstanding contributions to the community and her special charity, CHOW, that provides food donated by local restaurants and super markets to local food pantries. This donation was provided by the Chapter as a special "thank you" for accepting our honorary membership.



Back row from left: John Groome, Kevin Francione Assistant Fire Chief; Al Branchi, Chapter President; UNICO National First Vice President Ann Walko, UNICO National Second Vice President Dominick Nicaastro and New Jersey District XI Governor Carmine Campanile. Front row from left: Sister Barbara Howard and Marilyn Groome.



From left: Chapter President Al Branchi, Craig Melhorn, First Aid Squad Chief and Kevin Francione, Assistant Fire Chief and new UNICAN.



From left: Al Branchi, Chapter President; Sister Barbara, CHOW Director and new Honorary UNICAN and Matt LaDolcetta.

MIAMI, FL

The Miami Chapter had an extremely busy year as we substantially helped Habitat for Humanity, Camillus House, which feeds the homeless and we provided scholarships to needy local students.

The Chapter had our annual Christmas party on Thursday, December 12, 2013, at one of the best restaurants in Miami, Caffè Abbracci. This was our 25th UNICO Christmas Party. Once again we were honored to have the Consul General of Italy, Adolfo Barattolo and his wife attend.

We had the distinct honor of also having the prior Consul General of Italy, Marco Rocca (now retired and living 6 months in Miami and 6 months in Italy) also attend our Christmas Party as he and his wife had done for many years while he was in office. In addition two United States Marines attended, as our Chapter again supported the US Marines Toys for Tots Program with scores of toys for needy children.



Consul General Barattolo addresses our group. Seated are Chapter President Joseph Martucci and Paolo Benassi.



Chapter President Joseph Martucci and Retired Consul General Marco Rocca, are flanked by two United States Marines.



Two lifetime members of the Miami Chapter Phil Ludovici (seated) and Rick Ciravolo.

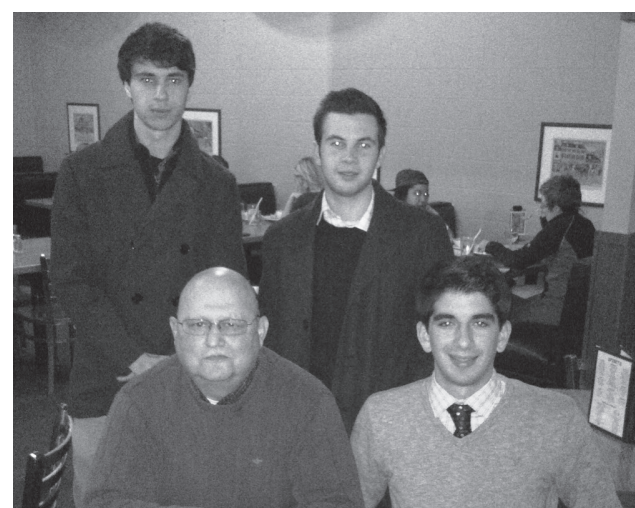


Lifetime member Nick Salce.



Gerry Tiziani poses with the two Marines.

HAPPY VALLEY, PA



The Happy Valley Chapter held a planning meeting for the upcoming Italian Heritage Night. Top row from left: Dan Labukas, and Mike Bouselli. Bottom row is Past National President Joe Agresti and Jim Sagona.

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.

NOVEMBER

CHICAGO AMERITAL

CHRISTOPHER BAMBULAS
GUADALUPE CERILLO FORNELLI
SALVATORE GALIOTO
WILLIAM GALIOTO
RICHARD GATTO
JOHN KOROYANIS
DINO MARINO
SAM NATALE
FRANK STELLA

CHICAGO WEST SUBURBAN

MARK MONTALBANO

CLARK

JOSEPH BELTRAMBA
JOAN CIVILE
DEBORAH DE FELICE
JOHN DIORIO
ANNA PACE
VINCENT PACE
FINA SINICROPI
SUSAN PANETTA WELLS

DENVILLE

RYAN VITO ASCONE

FARMINGTON

WILLIAM BECKERT
MICHAEL DEMICCO
ENRICO PAOLO MANGIAFICO
PAUL F. PAPA II
BETH STICCA

GARFIELD

ALFONSA FRANCES CARAVELLO
MARIA L. NICASTRO CONN
VALERIE MILITELLO
NICHOLAS JOSEPH NICASTRO

KEYSTONE

CARMEL ANN BIKO
DOMINIC L. VERRASTRO

LIVINGSTON

KEVIN FRANCIONE
JOHN W. GROOME
MARILYN C. GROOME
GARY W. MARSHUETZ

PARAMUS

MICHAEL DE BENEDETTO
MICHAEL J. SLUKA

PITTSFIELD

RANDALL FISHER

PLAINFIELDS

ROSALINDA DE LUCA
ELENA NEMEZIO

ROSETO

ADRIENNE MC KINNEY

SADDLE BROOK

DONNA MARIE FISHER
ANTONIETTA LOMBARDI
HUGH SYME

ST. JOES HS MONTVALE-ACES

CATALINA BENIPAYO
ANTHONY D'APOLITO III
STEPHANIE DOHENY
JUSTIN FIUME
DANIEL GULLI
JOSEPH MALFA
SHANE MCDONOUGH
CARMINE PALUMMO
CHRIS RUPPERT

ST. LOUIS

JOSEPH A. TORTORICI

WATERBURY

ANNA ASCIONE
WILLIAM DE MAIDA
MARIE DELAGE
SANDRA G. HARRISON
KENNETH LAMBERTI
PATRICIA A. VARANELLI
RONALD VITARELLI

WESTWOOD

JOSEPH A. FAVORITO

WELCOME
TO UNICO
NATIONAL!

DECEMBER

BRICK

SANDRA LAZZARO
SHARON CANTILLO

BRIDGEPORT

ANGELA M. VINCENZI
LISA GALLUCCI
LUCILLE DE NARDO
ROZANNE LANCIA
VINCENT BARTOLI

CARBONDALE

LENA GRAZIANO
MARY GIGLIOTTI MONAHAN

CEDAR GROVE

JANET PERRETTA

CHICAGO AMERITAL

DOMINIC CANDELORO

DELMARVA

ANNA DANIELLO
CAROL LUCIA-PASSO
DUANE QUINTANA
GERALD DANIELLO
JOHN MYURA
JOSEPH L. CURZI III
PAULA M. CORSO

GARFIELD

STEFANINA GERVASIO

GRANBY

ROBERT GANGI

GREATER PHILADELPHIA

ANTHONY DELGOTT
ERNIE DELLA PIA JR.
ERNIE DELLA PIA SR.
MICHAEL V. GIUDA
SONNY DI CRECCHIO

GREATER RAMSEY

ROGER W. TAVOSO

ORADELL

NICHOLAS J. PALERMO

PHILADELPHIA

DINO DI FILIPPO
JOHN AVICOLLI
JOSEPH HEINBACH
ROSA AVERSA

PITTSFIELD

ROMANO J. FRATTAROLA

PT. PLEASANT BEACH

ALYSSA FELICE
AMANDA MURPHY
DONNAMARIE ADELIZZI-DIAZ
ELIZABETH MORRONGIELLO
JOHN MORRONGIELLO
JOSEPH ROSARIO
JOSEPH TOMCHAK
KYLE SAMARITANO
LAURA FREIWALD
LENORE MILLAN
LINDA PULITANO
LOUIS RENDEMONTI
MARENA LOBOSCO
MARILYN GRABOWSKI
NICHOLAS FECCI
NICOLE MEYER
ROSE MARIE POSELLA
SANDRA L. DASCOLI

ROCKAWAY TOWNSHIP

GREGORY DE PAOLO
JOHN LA VALLE
KATHLEEN LA VALLE

SAN ANTONIO

JACQUELINE ANN EGIDIO
RICHARD JAMES LANIGAN

SAN DIEGO

ANGELA FUSCO
ANTHONY FUSCO
BRIANNA CACCAMISE
VIRGINIA INCORVIA

SAYRE

GARY E. FURMAN

SOLANO

GAETAN GALANTE

SPARTA

GLEN VETRANO

ST. JOES HS MONTVALE-ACES

MATTHEW CARPENTIERI
KYLE DELAHANTY
ANTHONY FUGNITTI
BRIAN KEARNS
SCOTT LOVEWICH
JOEY NICOLUCCI
SAL PALMIERI
LUKE THOMPSON
AUSTIN TRIGLIA

ST. JOE'S H. S. MONTVALE, NJ

While the St. Joseph H. S. Montvale Chapter is in its infancy having been chartered in October of 2013, we have hit the ground running. Our regular membership is over 60 members and our ACES group has taken on over 50 members from students at St. Joseph Regional High School as well as Immaculate Heart Academy in Washington Township. We are proud of currently having the largest group of ACES of any Chapter in UNICO. Our ACES group has been on the move with its election of officers and its first official charitable event. A collection of frozen baked ziti from families was conducted alongside the school's annual Thanksgiving food drive for the needy. In one morning, 78 trays of ziti were collected and distributed to needy families in a nearby community.



Members proudly display trays of ziti they collected.



On November 9, 2013 the St. Joe's Montvale H. S. UNICO Chapter's ACES held elections. From left: Joe Malfa, Membership Chair; Calvin Masella, Secretary; Anthony LaRegina, First Vice President; Mark Matthews, President; Vincent Ferrara, Second Vice President; Matthew Casterella, Treasurer and Deacon Joe Sisco, Chaplain.

KEYSTONE, PA



The Keystone Chapter had the opportunity to volunteer "Ringing the Bell" for the Salvation Army Kettle campaign at Wal-Mart. Twenty-three members signed up for the assigned shifts and an amazing experience. From left: Dorothy Mariani, Mary Ann Coviello, Frank Coviello, Nancy Malone and Jim Malone.

SCRANTON, PA



The Scranton Chapter welcomed a new member at the December Christmas Party/Meeting at Fiorelli's Restaurant. From left: Eileen Soranno, Terri Sallo, Dave Bieri, Chapter President; Jerry Healy, and Chris DiMattio, Past National President.



From left: Gene Peters, former Scranton Mayor; Chris DiMattio, Past National President; Sheriff John Szymanski, Gloria Marta, Joe Guido, Dave Bieri, Chapter President and Ashley T. Yando.



Joan Dzanko, left, Chair of the Wreath Committee for St. Francis Commons and Mary Marrara display the wreath donated by the Friends of the Poets for the Homeless Veterans Shelter at the 50th anniversary of the POETS.



The Scranton Chapter Charity Ball will be held Saturday, February 1, 2014 at Fiorelli's. This year's honoree is Palma Yanni. Committee members are pictured at a planning meeting.

TORRINGTON, CT



Chapter President Bob Summa with Dave Vaill and Bill Mascetti during Pancake Breakfast held at Saint Peter's December 1st.



Chapter President Bob Summa presents checks to the Torrington Soup Kitchen, Friendly Hands Food Pantry & Fish Food Pantry & Homeless Shelter at the November meeting.



President Bob Summa welcomes new member and Chaplain Father John Granato.



From left: President Bob Summa, SANTA and Chairperson of the event George Pollick..

IN MEMORIAM



The Sparta Chapter is very sad to announce the passing of our beloved brother and charter member Jack Schaaf who passed on to eternal life. As a charter member and charter vice president Jack proved to be one of our most valued members. He stepped up for every committee and held almost every office. He exemplified our motto of "Service Above Self". As a charter member of Sparta UNICO, Jack proved to be one of our most valued members. He never wavered from his commitment to UNICO. All of our events and efforts became easy when he was involved. Anything we needed he already thought of. If we forgot something, he had it. He was committed to our mission from the beginning. He helped us get Sparta UNICO started and proved to be the cornerstone of our organization. We have a huge void to fill. It's not going to be easy without him. As Sparta UNICO ventures forward it will be in his honor, he will always be in our thoughts and prayers.

Surviving are his immediate family, his loving wife of 38 years Pat, his son Michael and his daughter Jessica.

Rip brother, we will miss you.....

BINGHAMTON, NY



Only Santa knows if these boys have been naughty or nice!! From left: John Barberi, Richard Wahila and George Haus.



Greater Binghamton celebrated the Christmas season with a gathering of family and friends at Traditions at the Glen. From left: Joshua Walsh and Patty and Billy Tabek enjoy the evening's festivities.

KANSAS CITY, MO

OVERWHELMING GENEROSITY

On Saturday evening, December 7th, the Kansas City Chapter held its annual Christmas dinner at the Aladdin Hotel in downtown Kansas City. The Chapter annually budgets to spend \$5,000 in support of local charities and families. The 2013 donations were made to the Salvation Army and Artstech Breakfast with Santa. In addition, the Chapter selects four primarily Italian American families to adopt for Christmas valued at \$1,000 each with grocery and gift cards.

Chapter President Michael Cucchiara addressed a crowd of over 100 UNICANs, family and friends in attendance. President Cucchiara expressed concern that the usual number of four families had risen to seven creating a dilemma of dividing the \$4,000 allotted in smaller amounts spread evenly among the seven families. When Chapter members were advised of this potential shortfall, an amazing out pouring of generosity followed. In an extraordinary show of UNICO spirit, care, and giving, members of the Kansas City Chapter began to make individual pledges to help support all seven of the needy families at the full \$1,000 level of support. The impact of this overwhelming generosity prompted a quote by legendary college basketball coach John Wooden: "Don't let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do."

Michael Cucchiara also confirmed that over \$50,000 would be donated to recipients of UNICO scholarships again in 2014 at the annual Festa Italiana in June.



Frankie Bellucci (r) and her guest.



Chapter President Michael Cucchiara and wife Sarah.



Current Chapter President Michael Cucchiara and Past President Michael Mange.



From left: Joe Privitera, Frank Cherrito, and Ross Passantino.

MONTCLAIR, NJ

The Montclair Chapter held a fund-raiser with a presentation by Maria Mazzotti Gillan. Maria, who is a local poet, tells of her growing up in an Italian family in Paterson, New Jersey. Her documentary was shown, followed by readings by Maria from several of her books, a question and answer period and finally refreshments for all those who attended. Bob Evan, the musician in the documentary also played his guitar and sang the theme song "Crows of Paterson".



Stationed at the door to greet the guest for the event are from left: Michael Caggiano, Angelo Pomarico, Chapter President and Raymond DeCarlo.



From left: Bob Evans, documentary musician, Mark Hillinghouse, film director, Maria Mazzotti Gillan, poet, Stephen Ruccio, Adriana O'Toole and Angelo Pomarico, Chapter President.

WESTFIELD, NJ



Officers of the Chapter present the annual donation to the Westfield Volunteer Rescue Squad. From left: Reid Edles, Westfield Rescue Squad; Gino Jannotti, Bob Tarte and Anthony Bengivenga, Chapter President.



Members of the Union and Westfield Chapters visit with UNICO National President Michael Veselka at Meet the President Banquet.



Westfield, Union and Roseto Chapter Presidents enjoy the mountain air at the Eastern Regional. From left: Anthony Bengivenga, Westfield Chapter President; Joan Tidona, Frank Tidona, Past National President; Frank DeFrank, Roseto Chapter President and Joe Almeida, Union Chapter President.



Chapter President Anthony Bengivenga enjoys a break with Mary Ann Re, Director of the Coccia Institute and Jeffrey Gall, Director of Cali School of Music of Montclair University at the New Jersey Italian American Heritage Commission's 10th Annual Congress held at Rutgers University.

SAN DIEGO, CA



Sam Adrignola with the last remaining flying B-29 Boeing Superfortress. Sam served in the Army Air Corp. during WWII as well as a Navigator on a B-29 Bomber during the Korean War. The photo was taken at Brown Field by San Diego UNICAN and San Diego Experimental Aircraft Association member Joe Russo. Sam has served as our UNICO National Scholarship Chairman for many years.



Santa and a happy child (Frank Caperino is Santa.)



San Diego President Valeri Orsini wishes all a Merry Christmas.



Santa and his helper Jennifer DeSpensa and an excited child.



Happy campers Nick Gistaro and Joe Russo.



Valeri Orsini, Ingrid and son Gavin, husband Steve and baby Aria sleeping out of sight, nearby.



Patty and Ben Mical at the Christmas Party.



Angela and Joseph Cortese enjoy the party.

GREATER ATLANTIC CITY, NJ



Greater Atlantic City Chapter celebrates Christmas with their families and a visit from Santa Claus.



"V" FOUNDATION



**"V" Foundation
Chair:
Frank Paolercio**

Treating Lung Cancer

Lung cancer accounts for almost 14% of all cancer diagnoses, with an estimated 226,160 new cases in 2012 alone. That is why doctors and scientists have been working tirelessly on lung cancer treatments that minimize risks and side effects. There are many different options available to treat lung cancer. Proton therapy is one of the most revolutionary methods of treatment, especially for stage III non-small cell lung cancer (NSLC).

PROTON THERAPY OFFERS:

- ~ Similar efficacy to other forms of radiation.
- ~ Less unnecessary radiation to your heart, lung, and esophagus.
- ~ Significantly lower rates of pneumonitis and esophagitis (less inflammation of the lungs and esophagus) compared to x-ray radiation.

ADVANTAGES OF PROTON THERAPY OVER X-RAY RADIATION IN STAGE III NON- SMALL CELL LUNG CANCER

Too much radiation to the healthy tissue surrounding the tumor can increase the risk of side effects. This is a major concern when it comes to radiation treatment for lung cancer because the cancer may be close to your heart, healthy lung, and other critical organs. The unique properties of protons allow proton radiation to better conform to your cancer, reducing excess radiation to the healthy tissues and organs around it.

Proton therapy provides the precision to target your tumor while avoiding the healthy tissue and organs around it. This is especially important when it comes to lung cancer because the cancer may be close to your heart, uninvolved lung, and other vital organs.

UNICO NATIONAL CANCER RESEARCH UPDATE:

UNICO has completed and funded our 11th Memorial \$50,000 grant to St. Jude Children's Hospital for Pediatric Cancer Research. THANK YOU!

Now we have embarked on our 12th. Grant for cancer tumors of the brain. As in the past UNICO is asking for your help. \$50,000.00 is a lofty goal each year and it is with your help and support to raise awareness and funds for cancer through research to "HELP FIND A CURE".

Please send checks to: UNICO National
Payable to: UNICO Foundation
Earmarked for: Cancer Research

Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year!



ELIZABETH, NJ

Elizabeth Chapter Celebrates Christmas

On Sunday, December 15, 2013, the Elizabeth Chapter celebrated Christmas at Costa's Restaurant. The annual dinner dance was attended by over one hundred people including Chapter members, family and friends from the Ribera Italian Club in Elizabeth. The owners and staff at Costa's were very accommodating and made everyone feel welcome.

There were also two special service awards presented by Chapter President Lou Bani to George Marretta and Ralph Abbate for their outstanding service in making the 50th Anniversary Dinner such a success. The other members of the Chapter were also recognized for their time and commitment towards making it such a memorable occasion. Everyone also brought toys or gifts for children to be donated across the city including St. Anthony's Church, Josephine's Place and St. Joseph's. It is great to know that we will bring smiles to the faces of so many needy children this Christmas.



Lou Bani(center) presents Service Awards to Ralph Abbate and George Marretta.



Chapter members welcome Santa to the party.

Elizabeth Chapter Children's Christmas Party

The Annual Children's Christmas Parties were once again held at four Elizabeth schools where holiday cheer and presents, brought smiles to the faces of autistic children across the city.

In keeping with our Chapter's tradition, donations were made to each school for the purchase of toys and snacks. Chapter members including Lou Bani, Joe Chiari, Dino Amato, Carol Cascio, Vito Tropeano, Tony Zengaro and Paul Rinaldi, attended the Christmas parties. The teachers and aides who set up the parties were wonderful hosts and even principals and district staff members stopped by to

say hello and support the event. UNICO members distributed the gifts to the smiling children, acted as Santa's helpers at School 12, and told Christmas stories to the wide eyed, excited boys and girls. Thank you to all who were involved that helped to make this a very special Christmas!



Teacher Danielle Teplicky (center) with UNICANS Vito Tropeano and Paul Rinaldi.



UNICO Members and School #12 Teachers, Aides and Staff.

HILLSIDE, NJ



The Walter O. Krumbiegel School Choir entertained with its "Sounds of the Season" recital at the Hillside Chapter Party.



Isabella Pinto and Nasir Potts seemed pleased to have met Santa and his Elf!

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY



From left: Lawrence Inserra III, Dr. Marietta Morrissey, Dean of MSU's College of Humanities and Social Sciences; Lawrence Inserra, Jr., Dott. Carlo Davoli, Director of Education for the Consulate General of Italy in New York and Joseph Agresti, Past National President and Coccia Institute Advisory Board.



From left: Commendatore Peter Caruso, Mary Ann Re, Director; Coccia Institute for the Italian Experience in America; Marisa Trubiano, Professor of Italian and Joseph Agresti.

WESTWOOD, NJ

Westwood Holds Annual Christmas Party

On Sunday, December 15, the Westwood Chapter held its annual Christmas party at the The Florentine Gardens. The afternoon party was well attended, with approximately 135 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 DJ. But the highlight of the day for all was a visit by Santa Claus (aka Gerry Heytink, New Jersey District IX Governor.) After giving gifts to all the children, Santa bid all a Merry Christmas and sped back to the North Pole, leaving the children to dance to the songs of the DJ and revel in the excitement of musical chairs. The party was a great success for the Westwood Chapter, as it raised funds to help with planned charitable efforts in 2014.



The children rock to the DJ!

ORANGE WEST ORANGE, NJ

The Orange/West Orange Chapter had a "Sunday Macaroni Dinner" as their Christmas Party celebration this year. The menu included all the wonderful food you imagine when you think of a traditional Sunday macaroni dinner and was all deliciously homemade. Santa, played by District XI Governor Carmine Campanile, made it a festive evening by helping to hand out grab bag gifts to the members. It was truly a fun family celebration.



Santa and Mary Scholl.



Standing from left: Joe Calderone, Anna Marie Russo, Camille DiLorenzo, Mary Jo Picone and Tony Picone. Seated from left: Chris DiLorenzo, Jeff Menkes and Michele Feldman.



Santa and John DiNapoli.



The Orange/West Orange Chapter added a beautiful plaque in honor of deceased member, Nick Vecchio to the Nicholas R. Vecchio Memorial UNICO Garden for the Exceptional Person. The garden was built in 2007, as a special project initiated by Nick, from funds donated by the Orange/West Orange Chapter. It serves as a garden for handicapped individuals in the community. It was dedicated to Nick in 2011.

MONTVILLE, NJ



Montville UNICO Chaplin, Father Herb, from St. Peter's Church, Parsippany received a check from Chapter President Nick Conturso for monies donated at our San Gennaro Festival in September.

Pictured below are the youngsters from the Turkeys 4 U Program giving out 1100 12-15 pound turkeys to Market Street Mission, Father English Food Pantry, Community Soup Kitchen of Morristown and Kinnelon Food Pantry as they have done for the past 16 years with the help of the Montville UNICO Chapter. In addition 12-15 local Montville families and 10 families from St. Peter's R.C. Church in Parsippany received close to \$2000 in Shop Rite Food Market Gift cards with their turkeys.



On Saturday, December 14, 2013, Montville Chapter once again tried to make the holidays a little easier for families in need. They distributed gifts of clothing and toys and gift cards to 14 families in the local area bringing Christmas spirit to some not so fortunate. From left: Chapter President Nick Conturso, Grace Chimento and Paul Henke.



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UNICO NATIONAL CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE



Pat Pelonero and Giuseppe Pampena.



Sue Carol and Jim Scannelli chat with Carl Sposato.



Jane Morano, Jenny DiMino, Pat Pelonero and Rosa DiCapua.



John Morano, Carlo Calabrese and Joyce O'Hara.



Anthony Bengivenga, Matt Mustachio, Geri Samuel and Kathy Caruano.



Deanna DeMarco, Mike Colucci and Andre' DiMino.



Patty and Gus Garofano chat with Joe Almeida.



Perry Russo, John Morano and Mike Veselka.



Jenny DiMino, Sue Anzelmo and Rosa DiCapua.



Sal Mangano, Larry Colombo and John DiNapoli.



Frank DiRocco, John Alati and Michael DiRocco.



Sal Benvenuti, Sal Mangano, Dominick Nicastro, Criss Mangano and Jerry Passano.



Frank and Joan Tidona visit with Mike Veselka.



Debbie Benvenuti, Criss Mangano, Lisa Adubato, Pat Pelonero and Sal Benvenuti.



Joyce O'Hara greets Tony and Jay Sisti.



Linda Gail Alati, Barbara DiRocco and Nick and Frank DeFrank.



Stephen Gulla and Carmine Campanile.



CHRISTMAS WITH THE CHAPTERS



The West Essex Chapter once again hosted a party for the Mentally and Physically Handicapped.



The North Shore Chapter hosted a Christmas Party that was attended by members of the District. From left: New York District II Governor Joe Corsini, Roseanne Buckleman, Phil Joseph, Queensboro President; Ellen Leone, North Shore President and Elizabeth Hansen, Islip/Smithtown President.



From left: Joe and Arlene Agresti, Patty and Mary Lou Fitzgerald and LynnAnn and Al Cappello at "The Tree at Rockefeller Center" after the Passaic Valley Chapter Christmas Dinner.



On Sunday, December 15th, the San Antonio Chapter enjoyed their Annual Christmas Luncheon. How wonderful that we could celebrate this season together.



Woodcliff Lake members gather for a picture with Santa after their Annual Pizza with Santa Party.



Dino Amato (right) and Lou Bani are Santa's Helpers at the Elizabeth Chapter party.



Farmington UNICANs gathered at Matthew's Restaurant for a wonderful Christmas Party on December 11th. Members brought gifts to be donated to the Klingberg Family Center. From left: Ralph Arcari, and Lea Marcello.



At its annual Christmas Party, the Garfield Chapter honored Sal Militello as the Chapter's Man of the Year for his years of service to the organization.



Waterbury members gather around a Christmas tree with donated toys.



Nearly 700 children enjoyed the Hillside Chapter's Annual Christmas Party. The party was hosted at the Abram P. Morris School. All the children were treated to cupcakes, beverages, candy canes, live music, and of course Santa and his Elf. From left: Phil Foti, Hillside Academy; Angela Lawler, Chapter President Angelo Bonanno and School Principal April Lowe.



Santa and his helpers enjoy a photo-op at the Kearny Chapter Christmas Party for Mentally and Physically Challenged Individuals.



Members of the Orange/West Orange Chapter celebrate Christmas. Standing from left: Lou Rossi, Amelia Rossi, Chapter President Frank DeMaio and Past National President Frank Cannata. Seated from left: Rachel DeMaio, Angela DiNapoli, UNICO National Foundation President John DiNapoli and Carol Cannata.





This Christmas all Point Pleasant Beach Youth and ACES Chapter members were invited to a special Holiday Dinner in their honor along with members and their families in appreciation of all their efforts. Past National Youth Chairperson Marissa Gynn Ricafort is pictured with officers of Point Pleasant Beach Youth Chapter.



Santa Claus (aka Gerry Heytink) entertains the children at the Westwood Christmas Party.



Rita Bareado and First Lady Maria Summa with Santa during the Torrington Chapter Pancake Breakfast held December 1st.



Attendees at the San Diego Christmas Party from left: John Orsini, Ben Mical, Frank Caperino and Steve Codraro.



During the Scranton Chapter Christmas Party members brought donations for the St. Joseph's Baby Pantry. From left: Palma Yanni, Ruma Marshall, Director, Mother Infant Program; Dave Bieri, Chapter President; JoAnn Verduce, St. Joseph's Center; Mary Marrara, Patti Montalbano and Nancy Lovaglio.



Keystone held its Annual Toys for Tots Drive in conjunction with their Christmas Party. Jim Cerminaro provided entertainment for listening and dancing. From left: Mark McDade, Carol Scrimalli, Ernie DeStefano, Marine Sergeant, James Constantine, Chapter President Mary DePalma, John Mecca, Ann Summa and Dolores Mecca.

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POINT PLEASANT, NJ

POINT PLEASANT BEACH: UNICO Youth Servicing Our Community

One of the major goals of the Point Pleasant Chapter has always been to involve young people in UNICO. Each year local scholarship winners are given a Youth membership and invited to monthly dinners and to serve. College students communicate and plan events when they are on winter and spring break. Their most successful project is running a Clothing Drive. Proceeds from that project enable them to give their own Youth Scholarship. Although some youth members drop out after the second year, many have stayed with UNICO until they turn 25 and then request regular membership. Several members have attended UNICO National Conventions and one was chosen as a delegate for the Point Pleasant Beach Chapter.

In 2005, this Chapter decided to add an ACES Chapter. These students participated in Community Service Day and several other Chapter events. These youngsters were such a positive presence in the community that many new members joined due to their popular service projects. As the Aces graduated high school, many received UNICO scholarships and returned as Youth members.

This September our ACES took a huge step forward thanks to member Marena Lobosco, Italian Teacher at Point Beach High School. A group of 30 young people joined UNICO to do community service projects with our Chapter. In November over 20 students and parents attended the Chapter's heritage dinner meeting and introduced themselves, IN ITALIAN, to our members. That evening author Richard Muti was the guest speaker and these young people listened to interesting stories on Italian immigration and heritage. Later in the evening the ACES Chapter and members performed an "Italian" dance.

But more importantly in the past few months these young people took on three major community service projects. Students broke up into groups and designated project leaders who made phone calls and arrangements with local charities. This was a totally student run undertaking.



ACES members donated food to St. Gregory's Pantry for Thanksgiving. They found out items needed and decorated baskets to be delivered. Italian Teacher Marena Lobosco gives thanks for baskets of food for the needy.



Members of the Point Beach ACES gather with leader Marena Lobosco to plan community service projects. Projects included gathering small new or recycled gifts from members to donate them to the Valentine House so that residents could do their own Christmas "shopping".



Point Pleasant Beach ACES get ready for the Youth Clothing Drive. Over 100 bags of clothes shoes and toys were gathered and donated to needy families.



New Jersey District VII Governor Elyse Buonomo visits with Point Pleasant Beach members Ron and Linda Agresta, Diane Grabowski, Grace and Bob Gynn, Claire and Ron Durso, Tony and Eileen Scardaville and Mario Simeone at Villa Roma dinner.

KEARNY, NJ

KEARNY CHAPTER HOSTS CHRISTMAS PARTY

On Friday evening, December 6, 2013, the Kearny Chapter hosted a Christmas Party for Mentally and Physically Challenged Individuals at the Lithuanian Catholic Community Center. Working with Pathways to Independence, the Kearny Chapter, in conjunction with American Legion Post 99, provided 150 guests with food, music by a DJ and gifts from Santa. Chapter members decorated the hall, served food to the guests and also served as Santa's helpers.

Chapter President Lou Pandolfi, American Legion Commander Nino Capitti (also a member of the Kearny Chapter) and Kearny Mayor Alberto Santos welcomed everyone to the party. Council members Albino Cardoso and Susan McCurrie also attended the party. Applebee's of Kearny, once again, provided all the hot food for the party and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Fiore of Bedrock Stone

generously provided the gifts that were distributed by Santa. Additional community support for the party came from Schuyler Savings Bank, American Legion Post 99, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Tully of Kearny Shop-Rite and Lawrence Inserra of Shop-Rite of Lyndhurst.

The party was a great success as everyone enjoyed the food, dancing to the music and of course, Santa's visit.



Guests at the party enjoying their food.

GARFIELD, NJ



At the November meeting, the Chapter swore in new member Claudine DeLuca-Cacaco as its newest member. She was sworn in by UNICO National Second Vice President Dominick Nicastro, New Jersey Deputy District VII Governor Joe Kovacs and Chapter President Allan Focarino.



The Garfield Chapter hosted Bergen County Surrogate Judge Michael Dressler at its November meeting. Dressler discussed the Surrogate's Office and presented members with information related to estate planning, wills, the probate process, powers-of-attorney, and living wills.



The Chapter installed new members at its Christmas party and enjoyed a visit from Santa.

TEMECULA, CA

Temecula Chapter Aids Local Women's Center

The members of the Temecula Chapter contacted Rachael's Women's Center in downtown San Diego and offered to supply pre-stamped, blank holiday cards for all participants of the Center. Marianne Regan, Temecula Vice President delivered 140 pre-stamped cards for the women to send to friends or family to let them know they are okay. Clarissa N., temporary front-desk clerk, accepted the cards and expressed the Center's gratitude. "We receive many things during the holidays, but no one has thought of giving us stamps. This is a very thoughtful gift."

In addition, Kathi Strozza, Past National President, holds an on-going drive at her law firm to collect much needed hotel-sized toiletries for Rachael's. The firm delivers a boxful of such items about every six weeks. Kathi has been doing this for over 25 years now.

Rachael's Women's Center, run by Catholic Charities, provides homeless and formerly homeless women with opportunities to develop their independence, sense of self and hope by offering safety, shelter, food, showers and laundry in a nurturing, homelike environment. Case Managers help women reach their potential through intensive programs that empower them to take control of their lives and advocate for themselves. Rachael's also reaches out to individuals living on the streets, enabling and encouraging them to access services and benefits available to the homeless. One of their most successful collaborations is with "The Tomorrow Project," another endeavor of Catholic Charities which provides work readiness training for homeless women. This social and entrepreneurial program was developed in 1994 to give homeless women opportunities to change or to improve their circumstances by earning wages.



From left: Marianne Regan and Past National President Kathi Strozza prepare Christmas Cards for the shelter.

WATERBURY, CT

The Waterbury Chapter celebrated our Italian heritage with its first Italian Heritage Night at the TimeExpo Museum in Waterbury. The event was attended by over 300 people from the greater Waterbury area. They were treated to various displays, including: Italian Renaissance art, wine making by member Carmine Paolino, Italian citizenship process, Italian author/therapist, Raeleen D'Agostino Mautner. Food was provided by various local Italian eateries and music was provided by local musicians. Area Italian social clubs also made presentations.

Additionally, we were fortunate to have Andre' DiMino attend the event and deliver his presentation on the history of UNICO National, Italian heritage and promoting membership in UNICO. Andre' remarked that it was one of the best attended events that he has ever participated in.

On Sunday, December 8, 2013, the Chapter sponsored its annual Christmas party for Waterbury Association of Retarded Citizens (WARC) at the Waterbury Elks Lodge. WARC services intellectually disabled clients in the greater Waterbury area. The event was attended by over 100 clients from WARC. UNICO members served soda, pizza, and ice cream to the WARC clients. A DJ provided music which motivated clients, staff and UNICO members to dance the afternoon away. The clients and the staff of WARC commented that they loved the event.

On Wednesday, December 11, 2013, the Chapter had its Annual Christmas Party at Juniper's Restaurant. Toys were collected for the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Waterbury. During the evening, a number of members provided entertainment. Carmine Paolino sang "Tu Scendi Dalle Stelle" ("You Come Down From the Stars") accompanied by Maureen Donnarumma with Ralph Belvedere, Jr. at the piano. Ralph is a former scholarship winner. In addition, Angela Buzzelli provided a live rendition of La Befana: In Italian folklore, Befana is an old woman who delivers gifts to children throughout Italy on Epiphany Eve (the night of January 5) in a similar way to Sinterklaas or Santa Claus.



Carmine Paolino, Ralph Belvedere (at piano) and Maureen Donnarumma.



Top and Bottom pictures taken at the Italian Heritage Night.



Angela Buzzelli is La Befana.



The Waterbury Chapter swore in five new members. They joined as a result of the Italian Heritage Night held at the TimeExpo Museum in Waterbury. From left: Marie Delage, Anna Ascione, Bill DeMaida, Sandra "Sandie" Gelada Harrison, and Patricia Varanelli.

**The deadline for the March Edition of ComUNICO is
Monday, February 3, 2014.**

**Send Chapter news to the UNICO National Office: comunico@unico.org.
ComUNICO will only accept high resolution digital photos
and text in MS Word or in the body of an e-mail.**

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

GARFIELD, NJ



On Sunday, December 8, the Garfield Chapter delivered its annual Christmas Baskets to families throughout the Garfield community. The Chapter packaged and delivered 50 baskets containing more than \$100 in food in each basket.



Garfield members who helped with the annual Christmas Basket collection and delivery.



At its annual Christmas Party, the Garfield Chapter honored Sal Militello as the Chapter's Man of the Year for his years of service to the organization.



The Militello Family.

OAKVILLE/ WATERTOWN, CT

Oakville-Watertown Chapter Holds First Annual Pizza Contest Pit Road Pizza Takes Title in Pizza Contest Wins in Five of Six Categories

The inaugural UNICO Watertown Town-wide Pizza Contest garnered a lot of positive feedback from those involved, from the contestants to judges.

Event Director and Chapter President Bob Ruscitto was happy with the turnout, saying he felt the evening was a "big success."

"For the first time out, the night was great," he said. "About 40 to 50 people came out in support. Some people came with their families, which was nice to see, since many of the contestants were generous enough to provide pizzas for attendees to enjoy during the contest."

Judges for the blind taste-testing included Watertown Town Manager Chuck Frigon, Gayle's Farm Shoppe of Watertown Owner and Chef Gino Clark, Miss Greater Watertown 2014 Krystie Seese, Board of Education Chairman Guy Buzzannco, and members of the public, Chuck Frigon's daughter from New York, Liz Frigon, Jim Bowden of Thomaston and Mike Russo from Watertown. Mr. Buzzannco had to leave early, so Judi Lauriat stepped in to finish the judging.

In total, 11 businesses entered the contest, which consisted of an anonymous tasting of one cheese pizza and one specialty pizza.

Watertown and Oakville pizza restaurants that participated included: Paradise Pizza, Dimitri's Pizza, Anthony's Pizza, 3 Guys Flippin Pies, Rizvani's Pizza Restaurant, Pizza Hut, Pit Road Pizza, Martino's Pizza, Pasta Heaven, Nonna Lucia's and Oakville Pizza.

Pit Road Pizza was the sleeper winner, taking five of the six titles. Winner for Best Pizza Crust was Pit Road Pizza, runner up was Pasta Heaven; winner for Best Tasting Pizza was Pit Road Pizza, runner up was Oakville Pizza; winner for Best Cheese Pizza was Pit Road Pizza, runner up was Nonna Lucia's; winner for Most Unique Pizza was Martino's, runner up was Anthony's Pizza; Best Pizza Sauce was Pit Road Pizza; runner up was Nonna Lucia's; and winner of Best Overall Pizza was Pit Road Pizza, runner up was Pasta Heaven.



The judges of the Pizza contest from left: Jim Bowden of Thomaston, Krystie Seese, Miss Greater Watertown 2014; Liz Frigon, Mike Russo, Chuck Frigon – Town Manager, Gino Clark, Gayle's Farm Shoppe of Watertown and Guy Buzzannco, President of the BOE of Watertown.



Chapter President Bob Ruscitto (left), awarding Pit Road Pizza Owner Steve Forino with multiple wins from the 2013 Watertown Town-wide Pizza Contest, along with contest judge and Town Manager Chuck Frigon. Pit Road Pizza was the winner for Best Pizza Crust, Best Tasting Pizza, Best Cheese Pizza, Best Pizza Sauce and Best Overall Pizza.



Chapter President Bob Ruscitto (left) awarding Martino's Pizza Owner Tom DeMatteis with the Most Unique Pizza for his entry of their chicken bacon ranch pizza, along with contest judge and Town Manager Chuck Frigon.

CRESSKILL, NJ

The Cresskill Chapter held its annual Christmas Party on December 6, 2013, for local groups of children and adults with disabilities. The groups are treated to a hot lunch, a visit with Santa and a gift. Following lunch, there was music and dancing provided by one of the Chapter members, who is a professional DJ.

This is one of several events held annually by the Cresskill Chapter to benefit the disadvantaged in the area.



Members of the Cresskill Chapter set up for the annual Christmas Party. Front row from left: Ann Fischer, Alice Laurita and Angela Caserta. Back row from left: Louis Laurita, Al DiDonato, Alice Apice, Barbara Mann, Dale Lucibello and Ed Fischer.



Jenna Lucibello on the left and Ann Fischer on the right keep Santa, Vincent Tedeschi, company while the kids are eating lunch.

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The Count Down Begins

Frank G. Cannata PNP, Convention Ad Journal Chair

The countdown has begun for our 92nd Annual Convention, at the beautiful Breakers Hotel, in Palm Beach, Florida. The first order of business should be for your Chapters, Districts and National Officers to place their ads in the Commemorative Journal. The fee structure remains the same and your support is a critical part of conducting our Conventions.

We rely heavily on the revenue generated to subsidize the cost of conducting the business of UNICO. Everyone should consider it not only an obligation but a means of ensuring that the Convention Committee can reduce the burden of the cost associated with attending these important meetings.

Conventions are essential for maintaining the viability of our National Charities where the attending delegates convey their respective Districts and Chapters donations to Scholarship, Cooley's anemia, Mental Health, “V” Foundation, St. Jude's Hospital, Armed Services and Italian Studies.

Think of a three legged stool. If one of the legs is broken the stool is useless. The three legs of a UNICO Convention are Corporate Sponsors, Ad Journal and Registration Fees. Your Convention Committee is working very hard to ensure that every attempt is being made to reduce the cost for the delegates. The Convention Ad Journal is an important part in that objective. We sincerely hope you will place an ad that will let everyone know that you truly support the aims, purposes and the high ideals of UNICO National.

PLAINFIELDS', NJ

Plainfields' UNICO held its annual Pig Roast at the Italian American Hall in Scotch Plains. The event was once again a great success in raising funds for many of the philanthropic endeavors the Chapter engages in during the year. More than 150 people attended, and enjoyed a meal of roasted pig, chicken, Italian-style potatoes, peppers, Sufrite, and more. UNICO National President Michael Veselka also joined in on the festivities.



From left: Plainfields' UNICO President Jason Risoli joins with Plainfields' UNICO members, Lena Esposito, who prepared the food, Stephanie Bartfalvi, who coordinated the Pig Roast, and Suzi Leonardis, who also prepare the food.



The preparations begin!



Members and guests enjoy the feast!

CALL TO MID-YEAR BOARD MEETING

The Mid-Year Board of Director's Meeting will be held March 28-29, 2014 at the Embassy Suites Chicago O'Hara Rosemont, 5500 North River Road, Rosemont, Illinois 60118. All members of the Board of Directors should make every effort to attend. Registration form and hotel information may be found on page 33 of this issue.

ISLIP/SMITHTOWN, NY



Charter members: Nick and Mena Romano with newest members Karen and Neil Porretto.



From left: Ann Walko, Roseanne Buckleman, Rick D'Arminio, Chapter President Elizabeth Hansen, Mike Veselka, Dominick Nicastro and Alina Nicastro.



From left: Cindy Frederico, Patti Lewis, Fran Rosmini, Marie Sesti, Lou and Diane DeBenedittis, Faye and Mat Fortunato, Mike Frederico and Frank Lewis.



Al Mellina and Mike Veselka.



Arlene Mellina, Mrs. and Mr. Foldessy, Mrs. and Mr. Mehalick, Mrs. and Mr. Rieh, and Al Mellina.



Arlene and Al Mellina.

ST. LOUIS, MO

St. Louis Chapter Christmas Party

The St. Louis Chapter's Christmas Party was held at Spazio's Westport, on December 14th. The St. Louis Chapter was honored to welcome UNICO National President Mike Veselka and UNICO National First Lady Marlene Veselka, UNICO members and guests. We had a wonderful evening with lots of great food, music and holiday cheer.



Chapter President Gabriele Lancia presented a check in the amount of \$5,000 to Scott and Kathleen Hummel, Our Little Haven. From left: UNICO National President Mike Veselka, Chapter President Gabriele Lancia, Scott Hummel and Kathleen Hummel.



From left: Nina Lancia-Held and Marlene and Mike Veselka.



Chapter President Gabriele Lancia presents Chapter Secretary Aggie Santangelo with the St. Louis Chapter's Member Of The Year Award. Congratulations Aggie and thank you for all of your hard work, it is very much appreciated! From left: Aggie Santangelo, Gabriele Lancia and UNICO National President Mike Veselka.



UNICO National President Mike Veselka and Nina Lancia-Held installed two new members, Joe Tortorici (St. Louis Chapter) and Lupe Fornelli (Chicago Chapter). Congratulations Joe and Lupe and welcome to UNICO! From Left: Nina Lancia-Held, Chapter President Gabriele Lancia, Lupe Fornelli, Joe Tortorici and UNICO National President Mike Veselka.



Chapter UNICO Member of the Year Aggie Santangelo and Family.



Josephine and Gabriele Lancia are pictured with Mike and Marlene Veselka.

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The Passaic Valley Chapter.



The Passaic-Clifton Chapter.



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The Passaic Valley Chapter.



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Mid Year Board Meeting March 28 - 30, 2014

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DR. RITA BALICE-GORDON: A pioneer on the frontiers of neuroscience, she has never forgotten her humble roots.

LOU&A

by Louis R. Carlozo

Soul of a scientist

In Dr. Rita Balice-Gordon, the worlds of science, service and selfless humility intersect with class and intelligence. As vice president and head of integrative and circuit neuroscience at Pfizer Inc. in Boston, this Chicago-area native leads a team working to improve mental health and treat a host of psychiatric diseases. It's highly likely the list will hit home, as you consider a friend or loved one who suffers from depression, Parkinson's disease, dementia or age-related cognitive decline.

Thanks to Balice-Gordon, who is also a professor of neuroscience at the University of Pennsylvania), bold steps are being taken to understand, treat and hopefully arrest these life-robbing ailments. Yet this dynamic doc has never forgotten her Italian roots, as she speaks in respectful, grateful terms

(See Lou&A on Page 44)

NEWSMAKERS

She's the boss

by Jim Distasio

Thirty years.

That's how long it's been since actress Alyssa Milano was introduced to America as the plucky preteen Samantha Micelli on the hit ABC sitcom "Who's the Boss?" Playing the only daughter to Tony Danza's retired-ballplayer-turned-housekeeper character, Tony Micelli, Milano charmed audiences with her effervescence, and became something of a

teen idol during the show's eight-year run, which culminated in 1992.

But perhaps most impressive is how the Italian-American actress, now 41 years old, spent the intervening years sidestepping the landmines that have ruined other child actors while still keeping her professional life vibrant and varied. Today, Milano is a true working multi-hyphenate — an actress, producer, author, fashion designer, activist and doting mom.

"I grew up in a time where child actors weren't really taken seriously and couldn't make the transition into adult actors," Milano told AskMen. "Most of the child actors of my generation didn't continue to work. So I'm obviously proud to still have that career."

In fact, Milano's professional life has never been better. Last summer, she co-starred in the ABC prime-time soap "Mistresses," which was renewed for a second season slated to air in 2014. She's also the newest host and judge of the fashion design reality competition "Project Runway All Stars," which debuted its third season in late October 2013 and airs its final episodes this month.

"It was such an amazing experience! I loved it!" Milano told Shape magazine of her new duties. "It was a little scary at first, because I've never hosted a show before. But it was so fun just to be surrounded by all that young talent. It's so inspiring to

(See Newsmakers on Page 44)



ALYSSA MILANO: Having dodged the landmines that have ruined other child actors, she has built a multi-faceted life for herself that includes everything from acting, producing and writing to fashion designing, activism and motherhood.

MUSIC REVIEW Musical rescue mission

by Lou Carlozo

The story of the Roman Jews during World War II isn't widely chronicled in print, let alone music. But that didn't stop Barbez leader Dan Kaufman from traveling to Rome for 10 days to learn all he could about a musical remnant that time and history nearly forgot.

Kaufman describes one of the most striking discoveries of his trip: "I was walking down a street called the via Rasella and I saw this bullet-riddled building that's still standing; they've deliberately left it that way. It's a testament to one of the most famous partisan actions of Europe." That action occurred on March 23, 1944, when the partigiani attacked a column of more than 150 SS officers with a home-made bomb and mortar shells. Thirty-

three German troops were killed, and in response, the Germans murdered 335 innocent Italian men and teenage boys, including more than 70 Roman Jews.

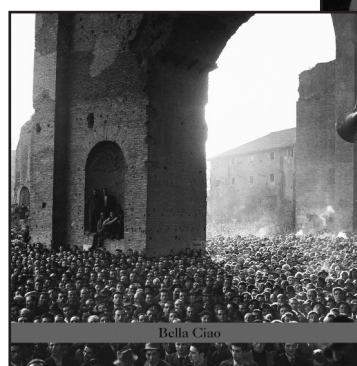
Events like this, and the melodies

the Roman Jews cherished even as their identity and culture faced extermination, inform "Bella Ciao." It's an album weaved around fragments of Roman Jewish melody that may in fact date to before the time of Christ. The Jews of Rome settled there during the second century B.C., and their liturgical music was almost lost for the first time at the turn of the 20th century. Changes associated with the rebuilding of Rome's main synagogue made many of the ancient liturgical melodies obsolete.

Still, the older Jews of Rome treasured them, and an Italian ethnomusicologist named Leo Levi (the Alan Lomax of Italy) recorded elderly Roman Jews singing these rites after World War II. If Levi felt a sense of urgency during his mission, it was understandable: The Nazis did everything they could to kill off the Roman Jews, and they nearly succeeded.

Kaufman discovered these melodies while at the MacDowell Colony in 2009, the oldest artists' colony in the United

(See Music Review on Page 44)



BARBEZ, "BELLA CIAO" (TZADIK RECORDS)

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LIBRI Dialogue with the dead

by Fred L. Gardaphe

What if your mother handed you a novel she had written before she died and you read it, only to realize it wasn't publishable? Most people would have set it aside with her effects, leaving it for future generations to peruse. Not Lawrence DiStasi. As he read his mother's fiction, he began to respond to it with questions, comments, clarifications, compassion, outrage and joy.

In a brilliant and original move, Lawrence decided to publish his mother's novel along with his reactions to the stories. The result is a bold and innovative work titled "Esty," the gathering of family voices first envisioned by Margaret Weisz DiStasi. Margaret is the daughter of "Esty," a Hungarian Jew who, despite an arranged marriage, manages to consummate an affair with Vonny, her first and perhaps only love, while her husband escapes to the U.S. to avoid World War I. The tryst results in Margaret's birth, or so the story goes. But is this fact or fantasy?

This is only one of the questions that Lawrence tries to answer as he moves through his mother's story. Along the way, he offers additional insights he had while conducting his research for the novel. At times, Margaret stays with the fiction, but at other times, she strays into the

reality, all the while maintaining that whatever anyone thinks, this is her story, and she's sticking with it.

Margaret was long dead by the time Lawrence had the idea for the book, but he resurrects her now and then to respond to what he has written. This is where the excitement builds, as mother scolds son for the liberties he takes, and son let's mother know that he isn't always on her side. This interaction, along with the voices of other key figures, such as Margaret's abusive (and possibly alleged) father, marks the brilliance of Lawrence's work.

Like Esty, Margaret is forced into a marriage. However she escapes with the Italian

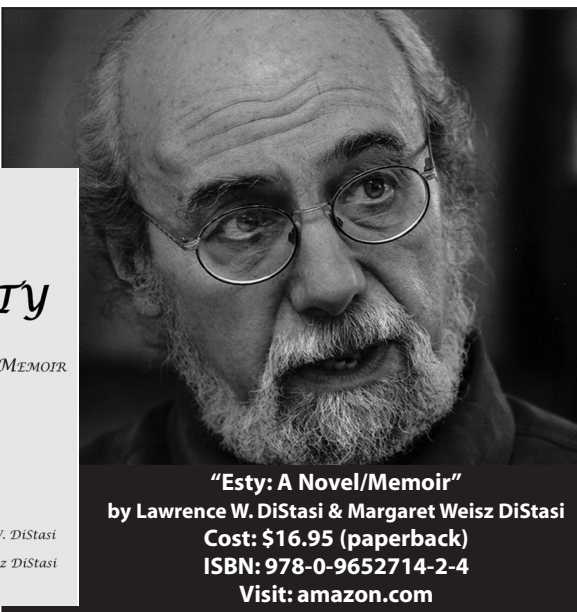
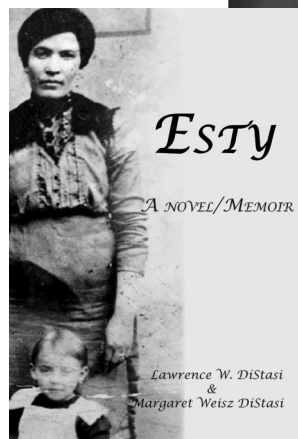
man of her dreams, and he protects her from her father's attempts to force her to return to her Jewish husband. Margaret converts to Catholicism and raises her family out of the shadows of her past. The excitement returns when those shadows are recast later in her life, and she must explain them to her children.

Lawrence keeps the voices separate by leaving his mother's writing in the conventional format of capital letters at the beginning of sentences, while his input appears in lower-case letters:

"the question we keep wanting to iterate is: what?" he queries. "what was the irreducible and unadorned fact that leads to this story? or that this story leads to? ... because it's the story here, that keeps us boxing with shadows."

Margaret's imagined voice after her death in italicized sentences as well as lower-case letters: "no, but couldn't I at least have got a son to help me with instead of — my god, don't you see what you're doing? hasn't my life been misery enough, and writing it more of a misery, isn't that enough without you making it worse? isn't it? would it be so hard to just let it be?"

The result is one powerful and engaging read that makes us rethink our own family histories and their relationships to the forces that have shaped not just our present, but also the very way we look at the past.



"Esty: A Novel/Memoir"
by Lawrence W. DiStasi & Margaret Weisz DiStasi
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ISBN: 978-0-9652714-2-4
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SPORTS Life at the top

by Elena Ferrarin

It's easy being the man who advises the person in charge. It's much more difficult to be the one who shoulders all the responsibility.

That's the realization that new Sacramento Kings general manager Pete D'Alessandro — now seven months into the job — has come to.

"It was always really easy to tell my boss, 'This is what you should do,'" he says. "Now that I'm the one who has to make the decisions, I kind of think, 'What a jerk I was.'"

His favorite motto is one he learned from Salvatore Moncada, president of the Italian basketball team Fortitudo Moncada Agrigento, when they met at the NBA's Summer League in Las Vegas.

D'Alessandro told Moncada how much he had on his plate — what with managing players, staff and media demands — and Moncada quipped: "Hai voluto la bicicletta, adesso pedala." (You wanted a bicycle, now pedal.)

"That's the expression that was always in my heart, but I never knew it," says D'Alessandro, who had the phrase stenciled and framed for his office.

Not that he regrets his choice in the least. In fact, he's full of enthusiasm for the future of the Kings.

"I was so taken by the new owner [Vivek Ranadivé]," he says. "He's got such a big-thinking personality. With his vision and the way he speaks, I just know this is destined

for success."

Before moving to Sacramento with his wife, Leah, and their two children, D'Alessandro was assistant general manager for the Denver Nuggets, and then vice-president of basketball operations for the Golden State Warriors.

It was his wife who encouraged him to follow his dream of working in basketball



PETE D'ALESSANDRO: As a general manager who once represented players, he sees both sides of the coin as he embarks on his first year atop the Sacramento Kings' organization.

in the 1990s, when the two were dating and he was a political campaign manager.

"She said, 'Why would you do this if you don't enjoy it?'" he recalls. From there I just took the plunge."

D'Alessandro, who has a law degree from Nova Southeastern University in Florida, worked for a sports agency representing basketball players from 1997 to 2004.

He was hired by Golden State as director of basketball operations and promoted two years later. He joined the Nuggets in 2010.

D'Alessandro is quick to express gratitude for those who believed in him, such as former Golden State general manager Chris Mullin. "He allowed me to spread my wings," he says.

He also credits his father, who pointed to examples of great Italians such as Enrico Fermi and Antonio Meucci while teaching him to work hard and aim high.

"It impressed me as a kid that, as an Italian American, you don't need to be like that image of Italian Americans in the mob," he explains. "My dad tried to take the focus away from that."

As a general manager who once represented players, D'Alessandro sees both sides of the coin.

"You empathize more with what players are going through in their lives," he says. "I'm not necessarily conflicted, but I may see a deeper texture to an issue."

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FROM ROME

by Senatore Renato Turano

The tie that binds

There are 4 million Italian citizens living abroad today, to which one must add the countless millions of citizens of other countries around the globe who share an Italian ancestry. These are the day-to-day representatives of Italy in the world, contributing to the spread of our language, culture and products, and positively impacting our economy and image.

In recent years, however, a new migration has emerged: college students and young academics, professionals and entrepreneurs who are interested in a circular relationship with their home country. They are Italian nationals who possess a high degree of mobility and who have not ruled out the possibility of returning to Italy to build on the experience and knowledge they have gained abroad.

These citizen migrants represent a valuable economic, cultural and political resource, as well as a boundless reservoir of potential solutions to the great economic,

(See From Rome on Page 44)

CINEMA An artist's artist

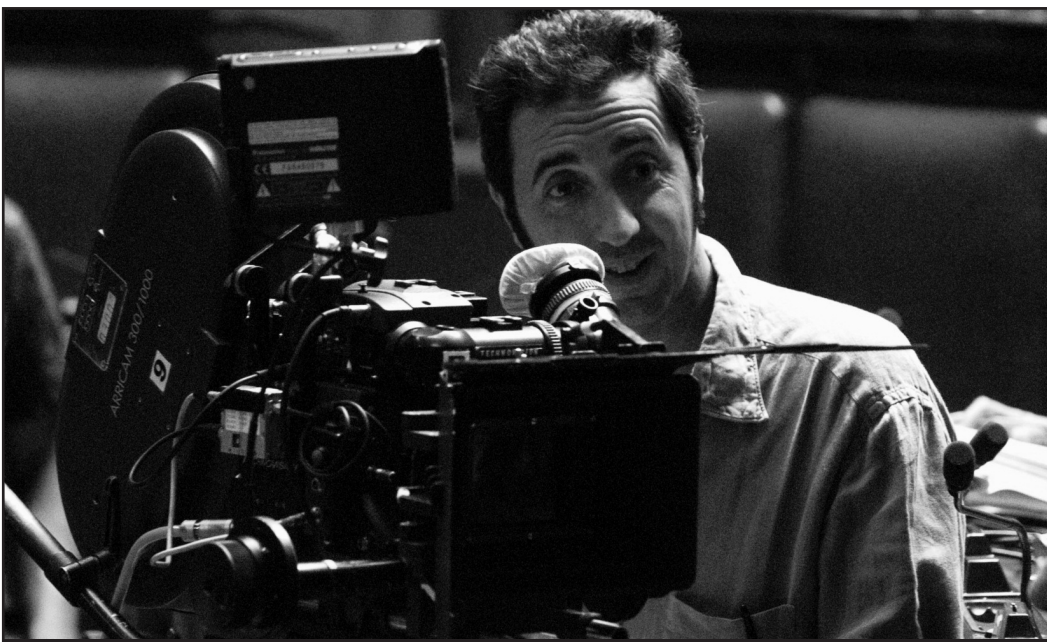
by Jeannine Guilyard

Paolo Sorrentino's roots run deep into Neapolitan soil, but his reach is worldwide. Born in Naples in 1970, the 43-year-old director makes powerful, socially relevant films that offer an unblinking view of scandalous worlds that most Italians would rather not discuss. In doing so, he offers original and fascinating perspectives on some of Italy's darkest times. An artist's artist, Sorrentino tells stories of complicated, layered characters faced with morally challenging choices. He creates to satisfy his own vision and passions, and in doing so makes films so strikingly honest and politically incorrect that you can't help but appreciate them. His characters have ranged from rock stars to political icons and criminals, all of whom are on soul-searching journeys to come to grips with the choices their flawed natures have compelled them to make.

Early in his career, Sorrentino teamed up with fellow Neapolitan filmmaker Toni Servillo, and the two have collaborated on several projects that explore society's dark underbelly. Be it organized crime or the Roman club scene, these netherworlds are discussed in hushed tones but rarely acknowledged publicly in polite company. Sorrentino dives right in, scrutinizing the character and motives of the denizens of these worlds.

His 2001 debut film, "L'uomo in più" (One Man Up), is set in the 1980s and tracks the parallel lives of two different men with the exact same name. One is a successful pop singer, played by Servillo, and the other is a top soccer player. Both experience the height of success and the depths of failure, walking an often poignant line between dream and reality. Sorrentino

(See Cinema on Page 45)



PAOLO SORRENTINO: Driven to create by his own vision and passions, he consistently offers original and fascinating perspectives on some of Italy's darkest times.

SNAPSHOT Winter wonderland

by Nicola Orichuia

There are many locales that Italians turn to for winter diversion. Scattered among more famous destinations like Cortina d'Ampezzo and Madonna di Campiglio are several lesser-known gems like Bormio.

Strategically located just a few miles from the Swiss border, the town of 4,000 is well known for its slopes as well as its thermal baths — an amenity that drew the attention of the Roman aristocracy when the area was little more than a military encampment. Throughout the Middle Ages and up to the 16th century, Bormio flourished as an independent entity, imposing tariffs upon anyone passing through from northern Europe to Venice. An outbreak of the plague in 1512 devastated the town's

population, forcing it to relinquish its independence in favor of the protection and sustenance offered by the Sforza family.

Nowadays, Bormio is a little slice of

paradise for lovers of skiing, sledding and skating in the winter, as well as hiking, biking and even golfing in the summer. Whichever activity you prefer, a thermal bath at the end of the day is a

must. There are two separate thermal facilities: The Bagni Vecchi date as far back as Roman times, while the Bagni Nuovi were built in 1835.

If you're looking to replace some of the calories burned off during your visit, don't leave town without sampling a hearty dish of Pizzoccheri, a flat pasta made of semolina and buckwheat, and served with potatoes, butter and a healthy dose of Casera cheese. If a quick sandwich is what you crave, grab yourself a bresaola, stacked high with a cold cut made of cow meat.



VIAGGIO

Italy's Westminster Abbey

by Judith Anne Testa

Santa Croce is much more than just a church. Along with being the largest Franciscan church in the world, it's the Italian version of Westminster Abbey, filled with monuments to Italy's famous men. Around its altar end are 16 chapels decorated by leading artists of the 1300s, and at the back of the first of its two large cloisters stands a renowned building of the early Renaissance, the Pazzi Chapel. The dining hall of its monastery, along with adjoining rooms, serves as a museum, and the building where the monks used to live now houses a school that teaches the traditional art of leather-working. As if this weren't enough to draw the visitor's attention, its facade displays at its highest point a huge, multicolored Star of David, an image as unexpected as a crucifix on a synagogue.

Located on the southeastern edge of the medieval city, Santa Croce was outside Florence's now-vanished walls. In the 1200s, this was open land, with property values low enough that the Franciscan order could afford to buy a large tract. Beginning in 1294, they constructed a complex of buildings that included the third-largest church in Florence, its size exceeded only by the cathedral and the earlier church of the Franciscans' monastic archrivals, the Dominicans. It's no accident that Santa Croce is so far to the southeast — that was to ensure maximum distance from the Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella, located on what was once the northwestern outskirts of the city.

The Franciscans didn't have to come up with all the funds needed to build their monastic complex. Florence's city government provided major subsidies, as did wealthy families. Private individuals and



SANTA CROCE: Rich with chapels decorated by the leading artists of the 14th century, it also serves as the final resting place of some of Italy's most famous men.

families also paid for the original interior decoration. Santa Croce (and its Dominican equivalent across town) were civic monuments as well as churches, proud indications of the city's prosperity and thriving religious life. When Santa Croce was still unfinished in 1430, well over a century after its founding, city officials grumbled about how poorly this delay reflected not on the Franciscan order, but on the city as a whole. The church was finally consecrated in 1442 by Pope Eugenius IV.

Santa Croce stands in the biggest and one of the most famous Florentine piazzas. The long rectangular shape makes it a perfect place to hold large-scale events. In the Renaissance, those ranged from jousts and tournaments to an annual roughhouse game similar to that modern Italian passion — “calcio” — the sport we call soccer. This event is still reenacted in the piazza every spring.

The front of Santa Croce is so perfectly symmetrical and authentically Gothic in appearance that it comes as a surprise to learn it was constructed in the 19th century. It's the work of an Italian Jewish architect named Niccolò Matas, and dates from 1857 to 1863. Matas worked a prominent Star of David into the central pinnacle without any objections, although the church was then still in Franciscan hands. The most likely explanation is that, in the mid-1800s, the Star of David as a symbol of Jewish identity wasn't well-known outside Jewish circles, and it didn't become universally recognized as such until the State of Israel adopted it as the emblem for the new nation's flag. But by then, the front of Santa Croce was nearly a century old, and nobody expressed any desire to change it.

The Franciscan order emphasizes poverty and austerity, traits not much in evidence at Santa Croce. The church is 325 feet long, with a floor plan in the

shape of a Tau cross — a short-armed “T” that was a symbol of St. Francis. The great size of the church, which creates a cavernous, barn-like effect, reflects the large congregations that came to hear the order's preachers. The wooden truss roof and plain lancet windows at least try to project an image of austerity, although on a monumental scale. To the south of the church was a monastery. Most of the monastic buildings still survive, although they're no longer used by the Franciscan order. The monastery was “suppressed” in the late 1800s as part of the anti-clerical policies of the new Italian

State, and the complex is now owned by the State. Nonetheless, Santa Croce still functions as a church, and masses are held there regularly.

The interior of Santa Croce qualifies as an art museum, particularly for works of the 1300s. Each of the 16 tall, narrow chapels displays frescoes by leading masters of that century, most of whom, however, are little known today. The one exception is Giotto (1267-1337), considered to be one of the greatest and most influential Italian painters. His work can be found to the right of the altar, in the Bardi and Peruzzi chapels. Unfortunately, those in the Peruzzi Chapel are poorly preserved, but those in the Bardi Chapel, although damaged, give some idea of why Giotto was the most renowned painter of his time. Have a close look at the “Death of St. Francis,” painted ca. 1330. Gathered around the saint's body, his fellow monks express their intense grief, crying piteously, tenderly holding their leader's hands and turning their despondent gazes toward his dead face. Giotto was the first western artist to effectively convey such deep emotions.

He was the leading painter of his time, in demand all over Italy, and he didn't come cheap, so it's not surprising to learn that the Bardi and Peruzzi families, both involved in banking, were among the wealthiest in Florence. (This was a century before the Medici came to preeminence in the city. By the time they could afford a chapel, there was no more space near the altar, and therefore their 15th-century chapel is located at the end of a long corridor leading out from the right transept.) If you want to get a sense of how influential Giotto was, stroll through the other chapels — at first glance, they all seem to have been painted by Giotto, but that's because every painter in Florence eventually began imitating Giotto's style.

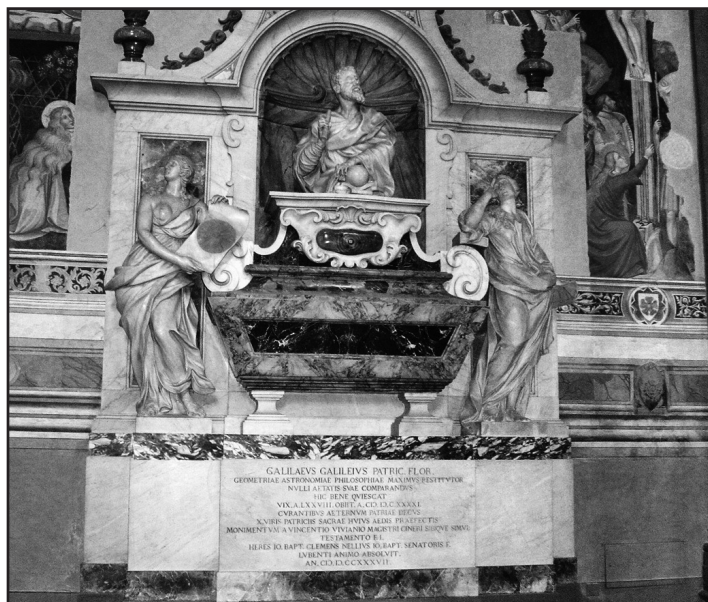
Among the most interesting attractions inside Santa Croce are the tombs and mon-



uments commemorating 500 years' worth of famous Italians. Here are some of the most prominent:

MICHELANGELO'S tomb is the first one on the right as you enter. Michelangelo died in Rome in 1564, and the Florentines were so determined not to let his adopted city have him that a group of them broke into his tomb in the church of the Santissimi Apostoli, stole his body and smuggled it back to Florence under bales of hay. The gaudy, multicolored grave-marker for the greatest artist of the Italian Renaissance was designed in 1570 by Giorgio Vasari. I'll bet Michelangelo would have hated it.

Directly across the nave is the monument to GALILEO (1564-1643.) Born in Pisa, the great astronomer spent the latter part of his life in Florence under the protection of the Medici dukes, after the Roman Inquisition had intimidated him into recanting his conviction that the earth revolves around the sun. When he left the Inquisition chamber, he was heard to mutter, "Eppur, si muove." (Nonetheless, it moves.) His monument was set up in 1737, when his remains were finally allowed a Christian burial. It took the Catholic Church another two and a half centuries to formally admit that Galileo was right — he was at last granted full rehabilitation in 1992!



The next monument on the right side, past Michelangelo's tomb, is a 19th-century tribute to the poet DANTE, who is buried in Ravenna. Exiled from Florence for his political activities in 1302, he was never allowed to return. He died in Ravenna in 1321, and the city has always refused to let Florence reclaim his body. The Florentines' unseemly haste in making off with the body of Michelangelo and bringing it to Florence no doubt reflects their determination not to lose possession of the remains of their major artist the way they'd lost the chance to bury their greatest poet.

Continuing along the right side of the nave, past a monument to the 18th-century poet Alfieri, you'll come to the tomb of the brilliant Italian statesman and political analyst MACHIAVELLI. Although he died in 1527, he had to wait until 1787 for his monument. Despite his reputation for cynical political calculation, Machiavelli was a scrupulously honest servant of the Florentine state, a man who could have enriched himself by taking bribes, but who never did so, and who left his family in poverty. An English admirer of Machiavelli's writing convinced Grand Duke Leopold of Tuscany to have a monument erected over the obscure tomb of Machiavelli, which had remained unnoticed for two and a half centuries. This monument, executed in marble by the sculptor Spinazzi, bears the following Latin inscription: "Tanto nomini nullum par eulogium." (No elegy is equal to such a name.) As Machiavelli might have quipped:

Better late than never.

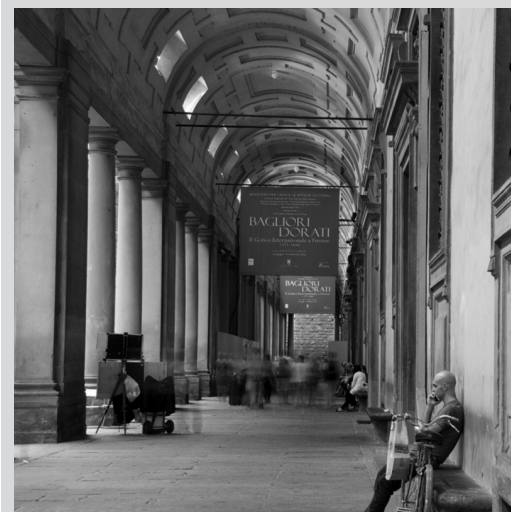
Directly across the nave from Machiavelli is the simple memorial to LORENZO Ghiberti, the artistic genius who created the two sets of bronze doors that adorn the cathedral baptistery. A slab on the floor with the emblem of an eagle on it marks the grave.

Back on the right side of the nave again and continuing past the tomb of Machiavelli, a beautiful gilded relief sculpture of the Annunciation by Donatello and an entrance to the main cloister, you'll come to the tomb of LEONARDO BRUNI, one of the finest examples of an early Renaissance sculptural ensemble. Bruni, who died in 1444, was among the most eminent men of his time. He translated Plato and Aristotle from Greek into Latin and wrote a famous history of Florence, as well as being a renowned orator, diplomat and chancellor of the Florentine republic in 1427. He wanted a funerary monument "in the antique manner," and the sculptor Bernardo Rossellino provided it. The only Christian image is the Madonna and Child at the top; all the other imagery is derived from ancient Roman art. Crowding in right next to Bruni's tomb to the left is a near-copy: the tomb of the opera composer ROSSINI.

Retrace your steps past Bruni's tomb and turn left into the passageway leading to the larger of the two cloisters. Immediately on your left is the Pazzi Chapel, designed in 1429 by Brunelleschi on commission from Andrea de' Pazzi, and intended to serve as the monks' chapter house — the meeting room for the governing body of the monastery. Although Brunelleschi, the brilliant architect of the cathedral dome, produced the initial plan, the chapel was constructed and decorated by a variety of architects and sculptors and wasn't completed until the 1470s. Despite its fame, the chapel is something of a hodgepodge that — to this viewer at least — doesn't quite come together properly.

The Museo dell' Opera di Santa Croce (Museum of the Works of Santa Croce) occupies the former refectory, or dining hall, of the monastery and several nearby rooms. Most of the works displayed are fragmentary and forgettable, but the refectory contains one major work: Cimabue's magnificent but ruined "Crucifix," an over-life-size painting of the late 1200s and the most important work of art destroyed in the 1966 Arno flood. Even the best efforts of restorers couldn't save much of the original paint. As I stood gazing at it not long after it had first been put on display, I heard an odd sound next to me, which proved to be an elderly Italian man who was gazing at what was left of the painting and weeping. For those who love it, the destruction of a great work of art is as intimate and tragic a loss as a death in the family.

TRAVEL TIPS



WHERE IS IT LOCATED?

Santa Croce stands at the far end of a large, rectangular piazza on the southeast side of Florence, very close to the Arno River, which is why the flood of 1966 did so much damage there. If you're in Piazza della Signoria, the civic center of Florence, exit on Borgo dei Greci, which will take you directly into Piazza di Santa Croce.

WHAT'S NEARBY?

Florence is such a small city that you're never far from its major sights. As noted above, you're only a few blocks from Piazza della Signoria, and that is right next to the Uffizi Museum. A comprehensive ticket for Santa Croce — yes, it's a church you have to pay to enter — also grants admission to the Casa Buonarroti, a block away. This house was owned by Michelangelo's family, although the artist himself never lived there. It contains documents and some of Michelangelo's early works. Piazza di Santa Croce itself is a lively place that is often the site of street markets and mini-festivals devoted to local artisans and popular music.

At via San Giuseppe 4r, around the left/north side of the church, there's a corridor that leads through the gift shop and into a school that teaches the Florentine art of leather-working. The prices are fixed and the leather goods sold there aren't cheap, but they're of reliably excellent quality. If you want cheap stuff and you enjoy haggling over prices, visit the San Lorenzo outdoor market instead.

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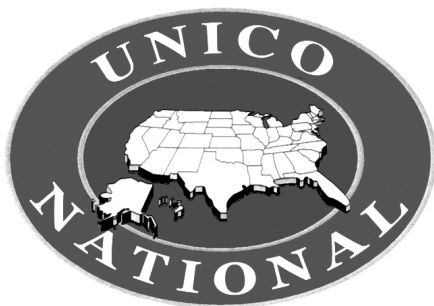
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RECIPES Food for the soul

by Dolores Sennebogen

There is something soothing about the substantial recipes we turn to in winter. Pots simmering for hours on the stove or baking in the oven send homey aromas throughout the house and signal a shared meal. As a bonus, they are often dishes that can be cooked in a single pot and are designed to create leftovers.

Just as you bundle up in winter by wearing layers of clothing, these dishes offer layers of complex flavor that go well together and do a body good. They also restore the spirit during the months that the world goes dark before suppertime. Until spring comes, it's a wonderful way to warm up.

GADDINA AGGRASSATA

(Sicilian Potted Chicken)

1 (3-1/2 pound) chicken, cut-up
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1-1/2 pounds Yellow Finn or Yukon Gold potatoes
2 medium onions, peeled and sliced
1/2 cup dry white wine
Sea salt
Black pepper
3-4 cups boiling water
3 sprigs fresh rosemary

Wash the chicken and pat it dry. Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a heavy pot or skillet that will hold the chicken in a single layer. When the oil is very hot but not quite smoking, sauté the chicken, turning the pieces until they are well browned on all sides, about 20 minutes. Remove the chicken from the pot and set it aside. Peel the potatoes and cut them into 1-1/2 inch chunks. Brown the potatoes in the same pot and set them aside. Sauté the onion until it is a deep golden brown color but not burned, about 10 minutes. Use a wooden spoon to keep the onions moving and to scrape away any bits that are stuck to the pan. When the onion is browned, remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.

Turn off the heat and carefully pour the grease out of the pot. Return it to the stove, pour in the wine and deglaze the pot by using a wooden spoon to scrape up any remaining bits stuck to the bottom.



Turn the heat to medium-low and continue to deglaze for 2 or 3 minutes. Return the chicken to the pot, cover it with half of the onions and season with salt and pepper. Add the potatoes in a single layer and then the remaining onions. Season again with salt and pepper. Pour enough of the boiling water into the pot to barely cover the contents. Add the rosemary sprigs. Slowly bring the contents to a boil, then reduce the heat to very low. Simmer with the cover askew for 45 to 60 minutes, or until the chicken is almost falling off the bone. This is a rustic dish that can be brought to the table in the pot. Serve the chicken with the potatoes and onions in pasta bowls.

— adapted from Vincent Schiavelli

SPEZZATINO DI VITELLO CON LO ZAFFERANO

(Saffron Veal Stew)

1-1/2 pound leg of veal, cut up
1/4 cup olive oil
4 tablespoons butter, divided
1 small onion, minced

2 cloves garlic, minced
3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
1/2 pound sliced fresh mushrooms, optional
1/2 cup dry white wine
Hot water
1 beef bouillon cube
Salt and pepper
1/8 teaspoon powdered saffron
3 medium carrots, cut into strips
1 (10-ounce) package frozen peas
1/2 teaspoon sugar, optional
Onion salt
1/2 pound linguine
3 tablespoons grated Romano cheese
Paprika
Parsley for garnish

Cut the veal into 1-1/2 to 2-inch cubes. In a Dutch oven, heat the olive oil and 1 tablespoon of the butter. Brown the meat on all sides over medium-high heat. Push the meat to one side, add the onion and cook about 1 minute while stirring.

Add the garlic and continue cooking until the onion begins to take on some color. Be careful that the meat does not scorch. Add the chopped parsley and optional mushrooms and stir for another 3 minutes. Add the wine and enough hot water to scarcely cover. Stir in the bouillon cube, salt and pepper to taste, and the saffron. Bring to a boil, turn down to a very low simmer, cover and cook for about one hour.

Cut the carrots into thin strips about 3 inches long. Push the meat to one side and add the carrots to the pan. Cover the pan and cook for another 30 to 35 minutes, or until the meat and carrots are cooked. If necessary, add a little hot water from time to time to keep the meat covered.

Cook the peas according to the package directions. Season them with the optional sugar, onion salt and a little pepper. Set aside and keep warm. Cook the linguine slightly al dente, drain well and return to the pot. Add the remaining 3 tablespoons of butter and the grated cheese. Toss well.

Place the linguine in the center of a hot platter and surround with sections

(See Recipes on Page 45)



LOU&A

(Continued from Page 35)

about the honor the Cegliei Italo-American Association bestowed on her back home in Chicago in October.

In her awards dinner remarks, she mentioned another noble goal: She hopes to someday make a focaccia as good as the one made by her mom, who was in attendance. She saluted previous generations, too, as she declared: "I stand before you as a reflection of those who came before me: the descendant of immigrants from Ceglie."

What makes this neuroscientist go? And what role did her family and her roots play roles in making her the woman of distinction she is today? Fra Noi was determined to find out, and the answers might surprise you. Even though Balice-Gordon could easily have bragged about her accomplishments, she instead talked with passion of all the work that lies ahead, and the path that brought her to this point in her esteemed career.

Fra Noi: Some Italian Americans might not know much about the part of Italy whence your family came. Tell us about that.

Dr. Rita Balice-Gordon: Both my mom and dad are from Ceglie del Campo, which is a small town outside of Bari. My father grew up there, and my mother's family grew up just a few streets away, even though they didn't know each other. My mother was born in the U.S.

FN: If they grew up half a world apart, how did they meet and marry?

RBG: My Uncle Peter, my dad's brother-in-law, grew up with my mom in the Italian community on Taylor Street in Chicago. He knew my mom, and made my mother promise on his deathbed to meet this man, his brother-in-law. He told her that they'd be perfect for each other. And they were. They started writing each other because she took this promise very seriously. Then they fell in love and got married.

FN: You returned to Chicago to receive this award from the Cegliei Italo-American Association. You could have just as easily stayed in Boston, where you're working, but being there was very important to you. What was it like to speak before your community and family?

RBG: When the Cegliei Italo-American Association reached out to me, I was speechless. I look around the Cegliei community, the Italian community, and I see so many accomplished people. And to accept the honor in the presence of my family was incredibly personal and meaningful. Just to be recognized in whatever way for my small contributions in front of my family, that really knocked me out. And to address the work I do in terms of how I was raised, the work ethic I learned, the importance of education, and to tie that to what family means — that was incredible. I wanted to make my parents proud, too. [Chokes up.] They were there. My whole family.

FN: Your family encouraged you greatly in your life and career path. When did the light bulb first go off that you wanted to pursue science in general, and neuroscience in particular?

RBG: I've always had an interest and an aptitude for science. In eighth grade, I had a science teacher at Hauser Junior High School in Riverside, a Mr. Erickson. He was a life-changing teacher. He focused on the scientific method — making observations and forming conclusions — as opposed to just listing facts. He gave me my first taste of how the brain works. By the time I got to my senior year at Riverside Brookfield High School, I had an advanced placement, lab-based class that was exploratory and based on self-driven inquiry. Once I had a taste of that, there was no turning back.

FN: Now you're in Boston, and the work you're doing at Pfizer sounds like an incredible opportunity. What does it entail?

RBG: The work we do at Pfizer is to develop drugs that help people with various illnesses. My work links what's going on in the brain with behavior, translates studies in animals to humans, and tries to figure out what goes wrong in disease, and how the drugs we develop might improve brain function. But when you look at our understanding of the brain, to put it one way, we're still in kindergarten. We can go only so far with treating psychosis, Parkinson's, autism, depression and cognitive disorders, because there's so much we still don't know. And we learn from patients who take the drugs, and that learning gets plowed back into basic research, which leads to even better drugs. We need people working on these problems who are fascinated by neuroscience. Of all the organ systems in the body, the brain is the most challenging — it's very much a black box.

FN: At the University of Pennsylvania, the work was mostly academic, and research-based. It sounds as though you may be making the transition from full-time academia to full-time industry. Would it be easier to learn more about the brain if you stayed in the university research environment?

RBG: There's one very critical similarity between the work I do — and I'm one small soldier in an army — between academia and industry. While ideas are driven by an individual, advances are driven by a team. And at Pfizer, the team is even bigger and includes chemists, pharmacologists, modelers and technicians. I love coordinating this team approach to cracking tough problems. You can't do it alone. I love leading and working in a matrixed, team environment.

FN: Some people stress the roles of talk therapy, exercise, diet, and even prayer as equally critical to restore mental health as prescription drugs, if not more so. What are your views on this?

RBG: I view drugs as one tool in an arsenal when you're fighting the battle of neurological disease and hoping to achieve optimal mental health. They can help alleviate symptoms under the care of a medical professional, and help you lead a healthier life. But it's just one tool. So is family support, diet, exercise, all of that. If we're in kindergarten for understanding how the brain works, we're still in the cradle as far as understanding how the rest of the body affects how the brain works. You have to appreciate the interconnectedness.

FN: The blazing speed at which neuroscience is changing would intimidate a lesser scientist. Yet you seem excited. Why?

RBG: Every single day, every single day, I learn something new. I'm just continually trying to use that foundation, and add to it, and enable me to make a breakthrough that contributes to other people's lives. I love being a lifelong learner. It's a privilege to do this work. I love it.

NEWSMAKERS

(Continued from Page 35)

be part of the reality show and realize how real and raw the emotions of a contestant are, and how much they have at stake. You hold their fate in your hands as a judge!"

The hosting gig is apropos for Milano, who calls herself a longtime lover of fashion. She has her own clothing line, Touch, which creates licensed professional-sports apparel for women and strives to capture both femininity and team spirit. Milano — a baseball enthusiast who wrote a book, "Safe at Home," in 2009 about her love

affair with the sport — creates shirts, handbags and other gear bearing the insignias of teams in the NHL, NFL, MLB and more. (If you visit the online apparel shop Fandalia.com, you can actually see Milano model much of the collection.)

But perhaps more important than rubbing shoulders with sartorial titans like Isaac Mizrahi and Zac Posen, hosting "Project Runway All Stars" gave Milano the chance to spend more time with her 2-year-old son, Milo Thomas, the first for Milano and her Italian-American husband of four years, David Bugliari.

"The baby is still young enough where I can bring him with me everywhere and not have to worry about school," Milano told USA Today. "It was exciting to be able to take him to New York for a couple of months. It just all seemed to work out."

Beyond mommy-and-son bonding, Milano sheepishly admits working on the show was chock-full of the kinds of perks you'd expect from a hit TV show about fashion and glamour.

"In a selfish, sort of girly way, it was so, so cool to be able to go into work every day and be made up by the best hair and make-up teams in New York and have the best wardrobe; all of that stuff was so fun," Milano told USA Today.

The show's locale is also a nice homecoming for Milano, who grew up in an Italian-American family hailing from Brooklyn and, later, Staten Island. Her father, Thomas, was a film music editor, and her mother, Lin, was a fashion designer, and both parents were wary of their daughter's foray into acting when she secured a role in a touring company production of the musical "Annie." But the appeal of performing proved too strong, even at a young age.

"I heard the applause, and right then it was all over ... I knew to myself, this is it, forever," Milano told Bio.

Following her decade on "Who's the Boss?," Milano worked steadily in TV and film, most notably co-starring in the series "Charmed" as part of a trio of modern-day witches for eight seasons. She had notable runs on "Melrose Place," "My Name is Earl" and "Castle" as well.

Milano's TV resume is eclipsed only by her real-life activism and philanthropic efforts. Milano is committed to global causes such as animal rights and combating AIDS in Africa, and she says her decade-long relationship with UNICEF has changed her life. Her charitable work has taken her to South Africa, where she lived for three months, as well as to India, Kosovo and Angola. In 2003, she was named a UNICEF Ambassador, and has since used her sizable social media presence to raise money for the organization, including hosting a "virtual baby shower" for Milo in 2011 with all the proceeds going to the organization's mission to help children worldwide.

"I think I'm most proud to be an ambassador for UNICEF," Milano told Bio. "It's very humbling and wonderful."

Milano's also not afraid to weigh in on hot-button issues, such as Internet privacy and even the portrayal of Italian Americans on television. She was one of the first and most vocal celebs to speak out against MTV's "Jersey Shore" and its shoddy portrayal of Italian Americans. Before the show's premiere in 2009, she was quoted as saying to Us Weekly, "My husband actually showed me the trailer on YouTube last night, and I got upset. It upset me. I was like, 'Turn that off!' So no, I don't think I'll be watching that!"

For many celebrities who dabble in politics and activism, there's often a common refrain from fans and foes alike: "Shut up and stick to acting!" But Milano has managed to rise above the fray. Her Twitter feed is a remarkable peek into her daily life as well as the personal passions and issues that motivate her. She's happy to share, and even happier to use her fame to move the needle just an inch for the causes she believes in.

"It's part of my pride and joy, and I feel blessed to use my voice to affect positive change," Milano told CBS News.

MUSIC REVIEW

(Continued from Page 35)

States. There he met composer Yotam Haber, a 2005 Guggenheim fellow and a 2007 Rome Prize winner in music composition. "He'd been in Rome for a year, and his project was to write a piece incorporating this Roman Jewish music," Kaufman recalls.

Drafted to play guitar on some of Taber's recordings, Kaufman was smitten with the music: "I fell in love with the melodies and decided to try to reimagine them in my own way."

Kaufman and Barbez walk the tightrope between ancient tradition and modern invention with panache. Yet Kaufman wants the listener to discover what feelings and images "Bella Ciao" might evoke. "It's fun and exciting music on its own terms, but I hope to give off more of a story or resonance without preaching anything," he says. "I like to throw these things out there and see what happens — and do something different with music, find different ways to make an album."

And as is so often the case when the inspiration is epic, the artist writing the music says that the music in turn rewrote some of his life's pages. "It deepened my understanding of how music is born in culture, of a particular time and place," he says. "I also wanted to weave in the great tragedy of what happened to the Roman Jews. From Rome, 2,000 or so Jews were deported to Auschwitz. And only 16 survived."

REVIEW

Barbez, "Bella Ciao" (Tzadik Records)

As an eclectic album and an artistic statement with a literary arc, "Bella Ciao" sets a high bar for itself, and leaps over it on wings of musical and imaginative daring. On the opening track, "Shema Koli," Barbez leader Dan Kaufman and crew dish a shambling mix of drums, clarinet and vibraphone. It thrills like an action movie theme spied through the keyhole of a wartime safe house. Yet if this album equates to some lost soundtrack, it's for the film no director has yet to make: the story of Roman Jews struggling to maintain their cultural identity amid the chaos and anti-Semitism of World War II. Barbez brilliantly rescues threads of Roman Jewish melody — some perhaps thousands of years old — and runs them through the eye of an avant-rock needle to create a largely instrumental tapestry that's fresh, bracing and often mournful. "Yoshev Beseter Elyon" mixes spaghetti Western guitar, minor key violin and distant, marshal snare rolls fit for a funeral procession, until tribal drums lift the melody like a diver bobbing up from the depths. Among the vocal tracks, "Bella Ciao" sounds like a collision of Italian pop balladry and hippie folk. Not quite rock, not quite free jazz, not quite like anything you've ever heard, "Bella Ciao" is music made for closing your eyes and opening your mind. Listen to it with headphones on a rainy Saturday — the Sabbath, after all — and it will take you to places history and literature forgot, but places that we'd do well to honor and remember.

FROM ROME

(Continued from Page 39)

cultural and social problems we face in an increasingly interconnected world.

Despite the punishment the Italian economy has endured during the country's worst post-war crisis, there are sectors that defy the trends and continue to contribute to the bottom line. I'm referring to exports, with established strengths in the areas of food,

wine, fashion, design and a host of luxury items, as well as new areas of excellence such as mechanical engineering, new technologies and aerospace components.

In many instances, the tie that binds these disparate threads and connects them to the homeland is Italy's diplomatic network. Italy is represented in the world by embassies and consular offices that play an important role in political, economic, cultural and scientific cooperation. They also provide many valuable services to Italian citizens who are living and working abroad.

It is important to emphasize the quality of the work done by the Italian diplomatic corps in recent years, both in terms of promoting the Italian economy and protecting the rights and interests of Italian citizens, especially given the budgetary reductions brought on by the ongoing economic crises on the domestic and global fronts.

In light of the above, I am proud to announce that 5 million euros have been recovered for Italians abroad by way of amendment 11,179 to the government's recent Law of Stability — an amendment signed by me and my fellow Democratic Party senators Micheloni, Giacobbe and Tomaselli. Unfortunately, a first amendment that included a recovery of 15 million euros was not approved. Under such difficult circumstances, however, having unblocked 5 million euros is still a very significant accomplishment. For this, we must thank the government, speakers and other colleagues for the sensitivity and responsiveness they have shown toward Italians in the world.

The funds will be distributed as follows: 2 million euros for elections and renewals of Comites and Cgie; 1 million euros for agencies that promote courses in Italian language and culture abroad; 600,000 euros for direct and indirect assistance for Italians living abroad in poverty; 200,000 euros for the Museum of Italian Emigration; 200,000 euros for specialized agencies dedicated to print services for Italians abroad; and 1 million euros for the Italian-language press abroad.

While this increased funding is commendable, there is still so much more that needs to be done, especially given the new flow of Italian migration, and the protective and supportive services that it requires.

In October, I reported the closure of 14 consular offices around the world, including the Consulate of Newark. In addition to these posted closures, the abolition of another 23 sites has also been announced. Among these are three diplomatic representations; 11 consulates, including general consulates in Philadelphia and Detroit; seven consular branches; five cultural institutes; and eight cultural institute offices, including the one in Washington, D.C.

We therefore have filed a motion to immediately suspend all the decisions regarding the reorientation of the consular network until the situation can be more thoroughly studied and better understood. I'll keep you posted as developments occur.

CINEMA

(Continued from Page 39)

and Servillo worked together three years later on the romantic psychological thriller "Le conseguenze dell'amore" (The Consequences of Love). The film follows a Mafia accountant who is caught laundering the mob's profits. Under Sorrentino's keen direction, Servillo delivers an unforgettable performance as a lonely man who falls in love with a young barmaid and is willing to risk everything, including his life, to be with her.

In Sorrentino's 2008 international blockbuster, "Il Divo," Servillo plays Giulio Andreotti, a former Italian prime minister and fixture in Italian politics for nearly eight decades who was the subject of corruption investigations in the 1990s. In "Il Divo," the duo creates a true contemporary classic

while recounting a significant chapter in Italy's modern history. Servillo in particular earned accolades for his spot-on portrayal of Andreotti's signature rounded shoulders, slow gate and strong inner energy.

Sorrentino's first English-language project, "This Must Be the Place," stars Sean Penn and Frances McDormand. Shot in Ireland and Italy as well as stateside in Michigan, New Mexico and New York, the film follows an aging punk rock star on a journey to settle unresolved issues concerning his father. It premiered at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival and made its way to American shores last year. Sorrentino's highest profile project to date is "La grande bellezza" (The Great Beauty). (See Page 9.) A multi-award winner at last year's European Film Festival and a nominee at this year's Academy Awards, the film features Toni Servillo (no surprise) and an A-list cast that includes Rome natives Carlo Verdone and Sabrina Ferilli. The setting this time is the Eternal City's underground club scene, with Servillo playing Jep Gambardella, a dissolute journalist who ends up caught in a web of superficiality, disillusionment and corruption. Sorrentino described "La grande bellezza" as "a film that probes the contradictions, the beauties, the scenes I have witnessed and the people I've met in Rome: a wonderful city, soothing yet at the same time full of hidden dangers."

We can certainly expect more cinematic treasures from this Neapolitan maestro. Many of his films are available stateside, particularly through Amazon and Netflix.

RECIPES

(Continued from Page 43)

of the veal, the carrots and the peas. If desired, the liquid in the pan may be thickened with 1 to 2 teaspoons of flour or cornstarch. Spoon the sauce over all. Sprinkle with additional grated cheese, paprika and parsley. If preferred the veal may be served with saffron rice instead of linguine.

— Ann Sorrentino

SALSICCE AL FORNO CON LE PATATE

(Baked Sausage with Potatoes)

6 links Italian sausage, hot or sweet
2 large green bell peppers
2 large red bell peppers
3 large potatoes, peeled and cut in 6 chunks
2 medium onions, peeled and cut into wedges
1-2 tablespoons olive oil
2 cloves garlic, cut in half
1/2 teaspoon dried basil
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
Salt and pepper to taste

Line a very large roasting pan or half-sheet pan with aluminum foil. Cut each sausage link into 3 pieces and bake them in a preheated 425-degree oven for 15 min-



utes. Stir them around if they start to stick. Seed the peppers and cut them into 1-1/2- to 2-inch chunks. Coat the peppers, potatoes and onions with the olive oil and add them to the sausage along with the garlic. Mix everything together and add the seasonings. Stir again. Continue to bake for 45 minutes or until the potatoes and onions are tender. Stir gently every 10 minutes or so. If the garlic halves begin to burn remove them. Serve with crusty bread.

— Dolores Sennebogen



BRODETTO DI PESCE

(Fish Stew)

3 to 4 pounds assorted fish (see text)
5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes or to taste
1 small onion, minced
1/4 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley, minced
1 cup dry white wine
2 cups fresh plum tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
1 tablespoon tomato paste
Salt and black pepper to taste
1/2 cup water
Slices of grilled country bread

You may combine whatever non-oily fish and shellfish that are available. The fish should be firm-fleshed fillets cut into chunks, and any shellfish should be thoroughly cleaned. Discard any shellfish that are open and do not close to the touch while you are cleaning them. Some suggestions: monkfish, turbot, red snapper, whiting, squid, shrimp, clams or mussels. Pour the olive oil into a large saucepan over medium heat. Sauté the garlic and red pepper flakes for 2 minutes or until the garlic is golden. Remove the garlic from the pan and discard it. Add the onion and sauté until translucent. Sprinkle in the parsley and add the wine and simmer until it reduces slightly. Add the tomatoes, tomato paste, salt and pepper. Simmer about 10-15 minutes longer. Add the water and heat through. Start adding the cut-up fish at intervals, beginning with the ones that take longest to cook. Add shellfish and a little extra water if the sauce is too thick, and a little extra tomato paste if it is too thin. You are aiming for a stew and not a soup. Continue cooking until the shellfish open and the fish is opaque throughout, about 5 minutes more. Discard any shellfish that do not open. Rub slices of grilled bread with a clove of cut garlic, if desired, and place each slice in a warmed bowl. Ladle the brodetto over the bread and serve. Place extra bowls on the table for the discarded shells.

— Dolores Sennebogen

MINISTRA D'ESCAROLA E LENTICCHIE

(Escarole and Lentil Soup)

1 medium onion, chopped
1 large or 2 small cloves garlic, minced
1/4 cup olive oil
2 quarts water
2 sprigs fresh parsley, chopped
1/2 teaspoon oregano, or to taste
1/2 teaspoon basil
Salt and pepper to taste
1 pound lentils

1 head escarole
Romano or Parmesan cheese, grated

Sauté the onion and garlic in the oil in a large saucepan. Add 2 quarts of water along with the parsley, oregano, basil, salt and pepper. Rinse the lentils and add them to the pot. Cover and cook slowly for 1 hour or more, until the lentils are done.

Discard the yellow and tough outer leaves of the escarole, cut the inner leaves into 1-inch pieces and wash them thoroughly in cold water several times. Cook in a small amount of water in a covered pot for 15 minutes. Stir once or twice while cooking. Drain the escarole and add it to the lentils. Heat through. Serve hot with the grated cheese and crusty bread.

— Angela Giunta

SGUAZETO ALLA FRIULANA

(Lamb Stew, Friuli Style)

2-1/2 pounds leg of lamb, cubed
4 tablespoons olive oil
3 tablespoons butter
2 strips bacon, chopped
1 sprig rosemary
1 onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic
Salt and pepper to taste
A pinch of ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons tomato paste
2/3 cup beef stock
1/4 cup dry white wine



Rinse the meat and pat dry. Heat the oil and butter together in a large pan and sauté the bacon, rosemary sprig and onion for 5 minutes. Add the garlic and continue sautéing until the onion is golden. Discard the rosemary sprig and garlic and add the pieces of lamb. Season with salt, pepper and cinnamon. Brown the meat well, turning it over to ensure even browning. Dilute the tomato paste with the stock and wine and add to the pan. Cover, reduce heat to the lowest possible simmer and cook until the meat is very, very tender and the sauce is thick, about 1-1/2 to 2 hours. Good served with polenta.

— adapted from Ada Boni

COOK'S TIP

Yellow-fleshed potatoes have been popular in Europe well before they gained popularity here. The Yellow Finn potato, for example, is considered a gourmet potato by some. They have a good balance of sugar and starch, a creamy texture and a buttery flavor. If they are not available, Yukon Gold potatoes, which were developed in Canada in the 1960s, are an acceptable substitute although they are not as sweet.





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April-John LaForgia.



May-Walter Pozaryski.



June- Steve Pelonero.



July-Sal Nocella.



August-Anthony Bengivenga.



September-Sal Nocella.



October-John LaForgia.



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OUT AND ABOUT WITH THE PRESIDENT

PLAINFIELDS' PIG ROAST



UNICO National President Michael Veselka attended the Plainfields' Chapter Pig Roast. Joining Mike were seated: UNICO National First National Vice President Ann Walko and Past National President Frank Licato, Standing from left: Past National President Renato Biribin, Plainfields' UNICO President Jason Risoli, John DeAndrea, Lena Esposito, Stephanie Bartfalvi, UNICO National President Michael Veselka, and UNICO National Second Vice President Dominick Nicastro.



From left: George Bengivenga, John Gibriano, Mike Colucci, Joe Almeida, President Union Chapter; Al Lordi, Mike Veselka, UNICO National President; Ann Walko, UNICO National First Vice President; Dominick Nicastro, UNICO National Second Vice President; Steve Banitis, Bob Tarte and Anthony Bengivenga, President of Westfield Chapter.



From left: Renato Biribin, Past National President; John Bednar, Elena Dubas, UNICO National President Michael Veselka, Jaclyn Bednar and UNICO National Second Vice President Dominick Nicastro.



ISLIP/SMITHTOWN 10TH ANNIVERSARY



UNICO National President Michael Veselka attended the Islip/Smithtown 10th Anniversary Dinner. From left: Rick D'Arminio, Ann Walko, Al Mellina, Mike Federico, Mike Veselka, Roseanne Buckleman, Lou DeBenneditis, Dominick Nicastro, Joe Corsini and Elizabeth Hansen.



UNICO National President Michael Veselka presents Chapter President Elizabeth Hansen with the Presidential Certificate.



Charter members, Past Chapter Presidents, UNICO National President and Executive Committee Members gather for a picture.

ST. LOUIS CHRISTMAS



UNICO National President Michael Veselka and First Lady Marlene Veselka joined the St. Louis Chapter to celebrate Christmas.



UNICO National President Mike Veselka presented Chapter President Gabriele Lancia with a Certificate Of Recognition for his dedication to UNICO National and ongoing support of the President. Mike Veselka then presented the St. Louis Chapter with a Presidential Award Certificate for distinguished service.



From left: Sharon Baldassare, Joe Grizzell, Nina Held, Michael Veselka, Anthony Fornelli, Marlene Veselka and Lupe Fornelli. Standing: Cecilia Lancia, Gabriele Lancia and Josephine Lancia.

