

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

NOVEMBER 2010 • VOLUME 66 • ISSUE 01



The largest Italian American service organization in the United States



**"Service
above *Self*"**



INDY'S GOLDEN BOY

Page 41

**COLUMBUS DAY
CELEBRATED!**

*Pages 2, 5, 19, 26-28,
31, 35-36, 51-52*

**ONE VOICE
SAYS 'BASTA!'**

Pages 7, 24



**EMBRACE THE
2011 CONVENTION**

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2010 CALENDAR

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Eastern Regional Meeting | November 5th and 6th, 2010 | Scranton PA |
| Meet the President- West Coast | Saturday, January 22nd | San Diego CA |
| Mid Year Board Meeting | March 11th and 12th, 2011 | Kansas City MO |
| National Convention | August 3-7, 2011 | Marriott Crystal Gateway Arlington VA |

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK CHRISTOPHER DIMATTIO



*National President
Chris DiMattio ad-
dressing the crowd
gathered at the annual
Union County Flag
Raising on October 8th
in Elizabeth, NJ.*

Sharing our Italian American Pride!

Just as Catholics renew their faith during Easter, Italian Americans renew their spirit for their heritage on Columbus Day. And do we ever.....

Participating in many Columbus Day events during October including grand parades, Italian festivals, formal and casual dinners, monument wreath laying and flag raising events I was reminded, motivated and proud to be Italian American! One thing that was constant throughout all the celebrations? A proud focus on "La Famiglia"!

All of us can certainly relate to what it means to be an Italian American! For me, growing up as a child meant discovering and appreciating the traditions of the province of Enna in Sicily where my grandfather Joseph DiMattia was born and the province of Potenza, specifically the town of Avigliano where the Summa's, Lovallo's and Zaccagnino's (the remaining three-quarters of me) were from. That little town in southern Italy lives today in my mom's recipes. In fact, nearly all our neighbors on "The Hill" in Dunmore, PA come from Avigliano as evident in our parish census in St.. Anthony of Padua Church. Neighbors would say that I looked American 'cause of my blonde hair (that's the color under the gray) and blue eyes - ah, but I knew I was Italian! Mom's cooking reminded me of it every night and Grandpa's accent reminded me of it every Sunday! May we all take some time this season to remember those who labored long in our lives so we can experience our heritage. I hope you continue to spread the traditions and memories for others to appreciate.

Appreciatively, this note could not be complete unless I acknowledged UNICO District X for their active involvement in the John Basilone Parade in Raritan, New Jersey. That event was truly humbling for me and the entire day's events gave

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my family an experience we will never forget. For the first time in his young life, I believe my son Louis really felt proud to be an American. I thank everyone who had a part in it and encourage those who have never seen it, to make the trip next year... a remarkable experience celebrating the sacrifices and life of a true Italian American hero.

A sincere offer of congratulations from all of us at UNICO National to the many members who received special awards for their active participation in their respective Italian American communities. Of equal importance, I wish to truly thank those chapters or groups who sponsored or planned their first Columbus Day or Italian Heritage day event. A special "Mille Grazie" goes to Manny Alfano. The UNICO Anti-Bias Committee and to all who signed a petition, phoned, e-mailed or sent a letter to their your representatives in Congress or legislators asking support for "H Con Res 1705" - the Resolution that will permanently proclaim the month of October as "Italian American Culture and Heritage Month" - long overdue in this country.

So, on behalf of my family - Ann, Louis and baby Robert, I applaud the efforts of Ralph Contini, Chair of UNICO National's Columbus Day committee, especially all those from across the country who planned activities, baked the cookies, ironed the flag, played in the band, marched, sang, cooked, or just simply thanked God for having Christopher Columbus discover this great land we call AMERICA!

The deadline for the January Edition of ComUNICO is Monday, November 29th, 2010

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EDITOR'S DESK MATTEO RISI



*ComUNICO Editor
Matteo Risi (R)
with Marco Li-
Mandri of the San
Diego Little Italy
Association. Marco
organized the Co-
lumbus Day Festa
that attracted over
100,000 visitors
who enjoyed Ital-
ian food, music and
culture.*

Hearing Saint Paul

As Italian Americans and UNICANS we defend our heritage at the risk of being seen as silly or pompous. A letter to the editor that appears in this edition of ComUNICO sums up the feelings of many who wonder why we protect our Italian American heritage with such intensity.

UNICO is fortunate to have warriors as fierce as Joshua from the Old Testament who stood on the front line of anti-defamation. Dr. Manny Alfano serves as our tireless anti-Bias Chair and Immediate Past National President André DiMino is our new Italian-American One Voice Coalition leader. Both Manny and André battle on a daily basis to correct the unjust stereotyping of Italians in pop culture and the media.

ComUNICO exists to showcase the achievements of our UNICO community. Every issue documents our spirit of love and charity. In ComUNICO, we read about chapters large and small that raise money for charity and help others with hands on projects. Our collective efforts are staggering and demonstrate the essence of our Italian American spirit.

I was struck at Mass recently by the Second Reading which was a letter from St.. Paul to Timothy. St. Paul proclaims: "be persistent weather it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and courage."

If we hear St. Paul, then we must continue to defend our heritage as we at the same time demonstrate through our actions that Italian Americans work to make the world a better place for all mankind.



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

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ComUNICO

Matteo Risi.....Editor
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COVER PHOTO

Proud Unicans celebrate their heritage at the John Basilone Parade on Sept. 26 in Raritan, New Jersey. President Chris DiMattio and First Lady Ann share the UNICO float with sons Louis and Robert. (See Page 27)

IL POSTINO



IS UNICO SILLY?

I'm tired of all these silly Italian American groups like UNICO whining and trying to censor everything. Get over yourselves. If they all had their way we would live in a mindless society. I'm so happy Take-Two chairman Strauss Zelnick is taking a stand and going ahead with the release of Mafia 2 despite UNICO wanting it banned.

This is why I love this country, Take-Two had every right to create this game, UNICO has a right to say they don't like it, but in the end consumers decide. This game is about organized crime in the 1950's when the Italian American mafia was booming. What is Take-Two suppose to do- set it in America, call it Mafia 2, and not make them Italian? No one will want to play it then.

André DiMino calls the game racist. Is this guy for real? It's not racism, it's history. The Mafia is a historical fact, and the history is rich and interesting to boot. From Capone to Gotti, Italian organized crime is the most fascinating of the lot. They are so popular that most of the newer crime groups model themselves after Italian mafia families.

UNICO's André DiMino also quotes: "When you look up 'mafia' on Google or Wikipedia, you see there's a list of all types of mafias" André, this is the exact reason why the game needs Italian references. Mafia's are various criminal entities made up of members who share the same ethnic background and it's their ethnic background which clarify what mafia they are associated with. Mafia 2 is about the Italian mob in the mid-1900's so the game needs Italian references so we (the players) know it's the Italian mob, not the other mafias that are listed on Wikipedia.

Everyone wants to take on the Italian Mafia, not all these other fake mafias on Wikipedia. The real Mafia is Italian and UNICO MUST realize and accept this.

Take-Two does a great job with their games and I can't wait for Mafia 2.

Mark.

Editor: This letter is alarming and reminds us that the battle to defend our culture and heritage is daunting. I hope that this letter to ComUNICO inspires every reader to action!

FAMILY FUN IN HERSHEY PA



My grandchildren, Sebastian, five, Gabriella, seven, and Anastasia, ten, had a great time at Friday night's picnic at Hershey Park. They were thrilled to meet and dance with "Hershey" and "Reeses."

Regards,
Ellen Leone

GOOD BYE COLUMBUS! IN CLIFTON NJ

The Passaic-Clifton Chapter of UNICO National is very disappointed in the Clifton Board of Education's decision to eliminate "Columbus Day" off, for students, from the school year calendar. Although technically a "workshop" day for teachers, traditionally children have been off on this most important day. Although hailing from Genoa, Italy, "Columbus Day" is more of a "Worldly" holiday because due to his courage, skill and perseverance, the "New World" was discovered. Most notably, this feat has been recognized by the Founding Fathers of our County who dedicated the naming of our Nation's Capital, the "District of Columbia," in honor of Columbus. Countries, cities and hundreds of schools in our nation and worldwide are named after him. Even a Clifton Middle School bears this most celebrated man's name. The district's decision to sacrifice "Columbus Day," to make room for "Eid al Fitr" is disgraceful. We in no way minimize the importance of this day to the Muslim community, we just feel that some other concession should have been made by the administration instead of eliminating this national and worldly holiday.

David D'Arco
President of Passaic-Clifton UNICO

Past National President Video Project

At the Hershey PA National Convention, the Historical Committee met and discussed the PNP Video Project. If all our PNP's cooperate and do their videos, the result will be an excellent chronological story in a DVD of how our UNICO National developed over the years. President Chris DiMattio and several PNPs have endorsed the effort and PNP Anthony Fornelli has already had his DVD produced. Committee member PNP Joseph Coccia is assembling guidelines for the PNPs to follow in preparing their video contributions. All PNPs should feel free to contact PNPs Coccia and Fornelli or Dr. Tony Arabia who chairs the Historical Committee.

Thanks, PNPs!
Dr. Tony Arabia- San Antonio Chapter
tarabia841@aol.com

ELLA T. GRASSO LITERARY AWARDS 2010 WINNERS

Congratulations to the winners and all who participated. We wish you success in your future literary endeavors.

Marianne Peri-Sack
Ella Grasso Literary Award Chair

- First Place- Louis Maffe from Denville, NJ
To Be Italian American
- Second Place- Robert Iannacone from Portland OR
My Dad and Mrs. Beard's School Garages
- Third Place- Daniel DeMelfi from Hazelton PA
A Positive Italian American Experience

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE



Some people simply do not like to ever ask anyone for help. They would rather try to do everything by themselves. Unfortunately, that does not always work. Similarly, there are times when we need

God's help but we do not want to ask for it. We would rather rely on our own resources rather than turn to him. In 1994, Pope John Paul II said, "Specific moments must be expressly devoted to prayer, following the example of Jesus, who even in the midst of the most intense messianic activity withdrew to pray." He went on to say that in these daily pauses for prayer, we can find "inspiration, energy, the courage to face difficulties and obstacles [and] balance..."

There is so much that we need to pray for. All we have to do is look around us. We do not have to go very far to find people who are hungry or who are homeless. We are faced with sickness, death, violence and fear of terrorism, just to name a few things. In addition, each of us has our own concerns and needs. There is only one way to address all of these things, and that is through the Lord. However, we cannot just ask God once and forget about it. Jesus urges us to be persistent, to never give up in our prayer. He tells us that our heavenly Father never gets worn out by our prayers. Sometimes, we can be tempted to think that our prayers are just weak requests that have very little chance of getting through to God, but that is not true.

We may get tired of asking God for the same thing every day. Frustration may tempt us to stop praying. This is especially true when it seems like nothing is happening in response to our prayers. That is because we want answers to our prayers and we want them now! Perhaps we may have to consider that God has other plans for us. He might answer our prayers in some unexpected way. Just because we ask God for a particular thing does not mean that He will give us that thing. While He does not give us everything we want, He does give us what we need.

Even though we know that we cannot live very long without air to breathe, we often take the air around us for granted. Just as air is essential to our physical well-being, prayer is essential to our spiritual well-being. Unfortunately, we might take prayer for granted until we face a crisis. Persistent prayer keeps us focused. It makes our relationship with God stronger. Prayer keeps us mindful of who we are and who God is. Sometimes, God surprises us and gives us far more than we ask for.

God Bless,
Fr. Bob Wolfee, National Chaplain

GOT FACEBOOK?

If you have any questions about social media or want your event posted on Facebook, please contact Clelia Alfano at the national office: calfano@UNICO.org

SAN DIEGO CA

COLUMBUS DAY FESTA

San Diego UNICO sold bottles of ice cold water to the thirsty crowds at the Little Italy Columbus Day Festa. The event is run by the San Diego Little Italy Association and attracts over 100,000 visitors. There was live music on three separate stages and a street chalk art festival. Bancarellas offered up Italian merchandise as well as an amazing array of street food.

San Diego promoted membership by meeting local Italian Americans and inviting them to a follow up pizza party membership night.



Giovanna DiBona of San Diego UNICO leads a parade down India Street in Little Italy during the Columbus Day Festa.



(L-R) Western Regional District Chair Jim DeSpenza, San Diego Vice President Michael Monaco and new San Diego member Don Piccolo at the San Diego UNICO Water and Membership Booth.



(L-R) Sandro Piancone of San Diego with new Los Angeles member Mike Dotta.

MONTVILLE NJ

Montville at the Hershey Convention

The Montville Chapter of UNICO attended the 2010 convention in Hershey Pennsylvania. Mickey D'Addato President, Carole D'Addato, Frank Suppa, Kathy Suppa, Dottie Hilkman, Buddy Hilkman, Paula Marino, Joe Marino, Gene Maddalena and Michele Maddalena represented the Montville Chapter.



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BRICK NJ

Italian Heritage Night

The Brick Chapter of UNICO celebrated Italian Heritage Night with the Lakewood Blueclaws Baseball Team at 1st Energy Park in Lakewood, NJ. The event helped promote Italian American Heritage and raised money for the Seaside Heights NJ Columbus Day Parade and Festival.



(L-R) President Alan Floria, Tony Sclafani, and Ken Moglia.

WILKES-BARRE PA

Bocce Tournament



Members and guests participated in the Annual Bocce Tournament sponsored by the Wilkes-Barre Chapter of UNICO in August. Pictured with Chapter President Leo Sperrazzo (far right) is National President Chris DiMattio and son, Louis Carlo.

PASSAIC-CLIFTON NJ

Passaic-Clifton Chapter Presents Scholarships



FOUNDATION REPORT



The Board of Trustees met on Thursday, July 29, 2010 in the fabulous Board Room of the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, PA. The meeting was arranged by Chris DiMattio.

Treasurer Michael Spano reviewed the Treasurer's report and updated everyone with the balances in the various accounts of the Foundation. He spoke about the \$20,000 administrative fee that the Foundation paid to UNICO National. The various accounts in the Foundation were assessed a fee of 3.5% in order to pay this. We will look into doing other fundraisers in order to cover the administrative fee.

The Board received eight grant requests totaling \$107,500.

The following Grants were approved.

1. Down's Syndrome Foundation dba Terri's House in Staten Island, NY \$5000.
2. Main Street Counseling Center in West Orange, NJ. \$2500.
3. Madonna Learning Center in Germantown, Tenn. \$5000.
4. Friends Of The ARC Auxiliary in Scranton, PA. \$1500.
5. Seton Hall University- for the Martin G. Picillo Endowed Scholarship. Martin Picillo was a Past National President of UNICO National. \$5,000.

The Trustees met in Executive Session and approved an agreement prepared by legal counsel, Carmine Campanile with Ralph J. Torracco, to establish a \$250,000 scholarship in the name of his parents, Bernard & Carolyn Torracco. The scholarship will be for nursing. Bernard Torracco was a Past National President of UNICO National. This was an historical event for the UNICO Foundation and all of the Trustees were very thankful to Ralph Torracco.

On Friday, July 30th, the election for five positions on the Board of Trustees was held. There were eight candidates on the ballot. Three current Trustees were re-elected for a three year term. They were:

John J. DiNapoli -NJ

Michael Spano-TN

John Alati-NJ

Two new Trustees were elected for a three year term.

Joann Gallo—OR

Joseph Cerullo-PA

The Trustees met to elect the officers for the coming year. The results are as follows:

John J. DiNapoli- President

John Alati- Vice President

Michael Spano- Treasurer

Peter Pettinato- Secretary

The Foundation raffle netted \$21,000. On Saturday July 31, 2010 UNICO National President Chris DiMattio picked the following winning tickets:

1st Place Bea Ceraso, Milwaukee, WI. \$5,150

2nd Place Grace Ann Senofante, Dunmore, PA.

\$3,090

3rd Place Dave Bieri, Scranton, PA \$1,545.

4th Place Shirley Tokarz, Rutherford, NJ \$515.

Thank you to everyone who purchased tickets for the Foundation raffle.

I would like to thank the Trustees for re-electing me as president of the UNICO Foundation. **It is truly a privilege and an honor to lead this organization.**

If anyone has any questions or comments regarding the Foundation, please do hesitate to contact me.

Yours in UNICO,

John J. DiNapoli

UNICO Foundation President

SADDLE BROOK NJ



Saddle Brook Chapter Members enjoying the Gala At the Hershey Convention. (Seated L to R) Elda Coccia, SB Foundation President Angela LaFace, Chapter President Criss Mangano, Babe Esposito, Jean Cook and Teresa Cali. Edie Giampapa Falano and her husband Bruce also attended the convention. (Standing L-R) PNP Joseph Coccia, PDG Rocco DiStefano, Anthony La Face, PNP Salvatore Mangano, Joe Iula, PDG Carl Esposito, PDG John Cook, Past Chapter President Rosario Cali.

MANCHESTER CT

Fighting Breast Cancer

The Bridgeport, CT Chapter of UNICO held its first benefit in support of ECHN (Eastern Connecticut Health Network).

The Manchester Chapter donated the proceeds, \$6,100, from their annual Breast Cancer dance to the John A. DeQuattro Cancer Center. The center is the home of the Eastern Connecticut Cancer Institute. So far, this program has helped over 1,000 women.



(L-R) Manchester UNICANS Jeff Gentilcore and Joe Hachey. ECHN VP of Operations Kate Sims and ECHN employees Kathy Porter, and Kris Popovitch. Peter Miller of Manchester UNICO is at the far right.

UNICO DISTRICT X

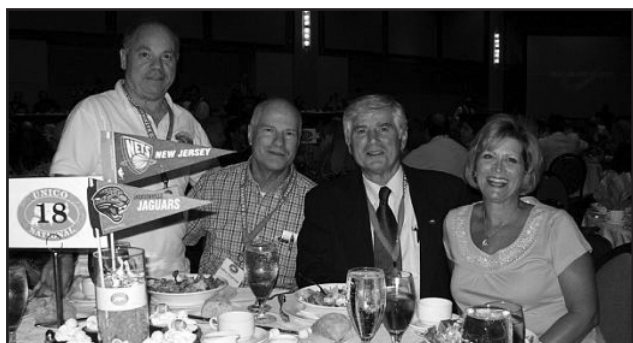
Hershey PA Convention



(L-R) Kearny Chapter President Lou Pandolfi, VP Plainfields Chapter Mike Colucci, Deputy DG NJ X Bob Bengivenga, President Plainfields' NJ Chapter Anthony Bengivenga, Kearny Chapter member Celeste Pandolfi, and DG NJ X Bill Hearon.



(L-R) President Plainfields Chapter Anthony Bengivenga, UNICO National Standardization Director Giuseppe Pampena, Deputy DG NJ X UNICO Bob Bengivenga.



(L-R) Vice President Plainfields Chapter Mike Colucci, President Plainfields Chapter Anthony Bengivenga, Deputy DG NJ X Bob Bengivenga, and Bob's wife April Bengivenga.



(L-R) UNICO Past National President Renato Biribin, Vice President Plainfields Chapter Mike Colucci, Deputy DG NJ X Bob Bengivenga, and President Plainfields Chapter Anthony Bengivenga, at the stage of UNICO's picnic at Hershey, PA.



(L-R) Colly Carotenuto and Bettina Dubas of the Plainfields Chapter enjoying dinner with their mom Mrs Carotenuto.

UNICO YOUTH



It was so exciting to end my first year as National Youth Chair by attending the UNICO Convention in Hershey, PA. I was glad I had the chance to meet so many of you and I was more than honored by being introduced by outgoing President DiMino to speak at the General Session. I was also able to take part

in a wonderful presentation where a few young members of UNICO helped swear in new youth member Louis Nicastro in front of our entire UNICO family. In addition, I was pleased to welcome my new Co-Chair Katie Corrado, who will be working and reporting on Youth in UNICO.

For all the chapter presidents who were there and for all of you reading this article, I hope you accepted my challenge to add new youth members to your chapters. As I said in Hershey, you need to find a full member to take on the responsibility to be your local chapter's Chairperson for Youth and ACES, if you do not have one in place already. Please contact me or Katie if you would like more help in completing this task.

At the Youth Committee workshop in Hershey, many good points and ideas were discussed by our young people who are really interested in getting more involved with UNICO National by becoming more active members. For now, I have been asked to represent these youth proposals for the Convention in 2011. I will also be working with the national office to register all ACES and chart youth membership progress and trends. Stayed tuned for more information regarding membership registration procedures for ACES.

In September, Katie and I had the opportunity to present our plans for the Youth of UNICO at the Eastern Regional District Governor's meeting in Mahwah NJ. Everywhere we go so many people are interested in more young people being involved in UNICO. Katie and I stress the point that you must not only actively seek young members but give them a role and responsibilities as well. Young people can be your best asset in fund raising and community action activities. We must also make UNICO youth-friendly. Katie and I are going to give some ideas to the national office for the next convention but you can work on a local level to plan youth-friendly meetings and activities for your chapters. Remember youth does not mean "kid" so keep your tweens, teens and young adults in mind!



ACES IN ACTION: National Youth Chairperson Marissa Gynn helping Aces President Dan Richiuso and Paul Florio set up UNICO Booth for Seafood Festival in Point Pleasant Beach - All proceeds go towards ACES community service projects

STANDING UNITED

MAFIA II "PARTY" FIZZLES ITALIAN AMERICANS STAND UNITED

New York --- Claiming a clear victory in a long battle, André DiMino, who is leading a coalition of groups and individuals from the Italian American community, declared "I have no doubt our efforts resulted in the *Mafia II* Launch Party, at the 92nd Street Y's Tribeca Center, being a dismal failure." DiMino continued, "When we first heard about this marketing event only recently, we went into action, using our resolve to challenge an event whose purpose was to mock the Italian American community by promoting the new video game *Mafia II*."

On Saturday evening, August 28, expectations generally were that, with the massive effort Take-Two Interactive Software had made with other "parties" leading up to the big launch in New York City, where the company is headquartered, this would be a key moment in promoting the game. Instead, a sparse group of mostly young people trudged into 200 Hudson Street Saturday night. No Take-Two executives were anywhere in sight, least of all Strauss Zelnick, company chairman, who had belittled opponents of the new game.

For more than a week, Italian Americans led by DiMino pounded away at the event's host, the 92nd Street Y, to cancel the event as inappropriate for a well known not-for-profit institution. Even more, Take-Two was increasingly challenged by this coalition for demeaning and stereotyping Italian Americans.

"I believe," continued DiMino, "the combined result of our activities was that, without acknowledging our efforts, both Take-Two and the 92nd Street Y became very hesitant to heavily promote ethnic bashing in this very public way. The lack of media coverage for the Launch Party is another indicator that they pulled back on promoting this event."

Mr. DiMino concluded, "For us this is one small, satisfying victory in a much longer, more sophisticated campaign within the Italian American community opposed to *Mafia II* specifically, and the continued misrepresentation of the Italian American community, generally. Take-Two and its major investors, and the entertainment industry in general, will be hearing further and forcefully from us."

A coalition of prominent Italian American advocates and organizations representing many, many members across America participated in Saturday's effort including UNICO National President Chris DiMattio; Italian American ONE VOICE Coalition founder and chair, Dr. Manny Alfano; Coalition of Italo-American Associations President, Dr. Joseph Scelsa; Commission for Social Justice of OSIA of NY President Stella Grillo; NJ Italian American Heritage Commission Executive Director Michael Genevrino; Belleville UNICO's Tom DeGenaro; Italian American Political Action Committee President James Lisa; Petrosino Lodge of the Order Sons of Italy in America President John Fratta; Italian American Advocate Marc Ameruso; and, many others. DiMino offered a special thanks to Arthur Piccolo who, as DiMino explained, "has done as much as anyone so far, along with a few other key individuals, like Dr. Alfano and Dr. Scelsa, to wage this battle on behalf of the entire Italian American community."

André DiMino is Immediate Past National President and Chief Media for UNICO and Italian American ONE VOICE Coalition President- André@UNICO.org.



André DiMino surrounded by some of the Italian American leaders who gathered Saturday evening 8/28 in front of the 92nd Street Y's Tribeca Center at the "Mafia II" Launch Party. Those pictured include (l. to r.) Dr. Joseph Scelsa, Chris DiMattio, James Lisa, André DiMino, Marc Ameruso, Stella Grillo, John Fratta and Dr. Manny Alfano

Info about the ACES Youth Program
(973) 808-0035
(973) 808-0043 FAX
UNICONational@UNICO.org

ACES — Athletic, Cultural, Educational, Social/Service.
ACES is a fun and exciting opportunity for young men and women, ages 12-17, to become more tuned in to their Italian American heritage. Members will experience the rich and varied history of their shared ancestry through social events, field trips and civic activities, while fostering friendships and giving back to the community.

LOS ANGELES CA

San Genarro Festival in Hollywood

UNICO Los Angeles sold garlic fries and had a membership drive booth at the San Gennaro Festival in Hollywood. ComUNICO is still attempting to verify that the garlic fry recipe was handed down from somebody's nonna!



First National Vice President David M. Donnini and member, Larry Guidi, passing out samples of garlic fries.



Los Angeles members Stephen Gagliano (L) and Merlin DeMartinis taking a break from the action



Like Sirens, Los Angeles UNICANs wood Italian American festival visitors over to their booth with the aroma of garlic. Booth staffers then used the opportunity to pitch UNICO.



Los Angeles President Germain DiMartinis with his two daughters. The girls don't know that this is the beginning of decades of UNICO events that will give them wonderful childhood memories! With any luck, the girls will become UNICANs themselves!

MEMBERSHIP AND RETENTION



District Governors are a Key to Growing UNICO

Dear District Governor,

Congratulations to you on becoming or continuing on as district governor of your district. We at UNICO National know and appreciate the undertaking you have already assumed in your position and we wish you great success.

If you have not done so already, you should appoint one of your most competent members to the position of District Membership and Retention Chairperson. It will be on their shoulders to devote quality time to increase the membership in your district by working closely with the Chapter Membership and Retention Chairpersons. Together they can plan and implement a Chapter Membership Drive. If your Chapters are close in proximity, you may even want to encourage some or all to run a joint membership drive.

The Chapter Presidents have already been asked to challenge their membership to each "Bring In One New Member." They have the power to double their chapter's membership by each bringing in just one "New Member" this year. All they have to do is ASK!

The next challenge you and your Membership Chairperson have is to RETAIN your membership. A very real problem in many chapters is new members are brought in, but then they are "left dangling" or "forgotten." They must feel welcome and be invited to participate in your various events. This requires a special effort. They should be invited to join at least one of their chapter's committees. It is not enough to just send out a general invite to the membership. A personal invitation can go a long way.

There are still chapters that do not have WOMEN members. Others do not have YOUTH members. You are encouraged to promote the growth of both in each chapter. Women bring in ideas with a different perspective and Younger members are our future and can be very helpful in organizing an ACE's program if a chapter is interested.

Whenever you are in need of membership materials, call our UNICO National office at (973) 808-0035. The UNICO staff is eager and ready to serve your UNICO needs and so am I. Contact me at my home (573) 343-7009 or my e-mail address mmcdade@UNICO.org. Yours in UNICO & Here for You, Mark E. McDade Membership & Retention Director

HAPPY THANKSGIVING FROM COMUNICO

WATERBURY CT

Italian Mayor for the Day Celebration



(L-R) Italian Committee Chair Dr. JoAnne D'Angelo, Waterbury Unico President Frank Travisano, Italian Mayor for the day Rev. Ronald Ferraro who serves as the pastor for Our Lady of Lourdes Church and DG CT I Francine Nido.



Waterbury Italian Radio personality Sarino Costa, Judge Richard Marano, Mrs Charles Lanza, Linda Tirado, Dr. JoAnne D'Angelo, and CT District 1 Governor Francine Nido.

SAN DIEGO CA



Stefano Dimenna of the San Diego Chapter is the guardian of the models of Columbus' three famous ships: The Nina, The Pinta and The Santa Maria. In the photo, the ships are on display at the Columbus Day Festa in San Diego's Little Italy. Stefano has many funny stories about driving the trailer towing the ships to many Italian American dinners and festivals! Stefano is also a member of the Italian American Golf Association (IAGA).

SCOTCH PLAINS FANWOOD NY

Scotch Plains Fanwood UNICO

2010 marked 37 years of community service for our Chapter. Our year began with the sad news of the passing of our founding member and Past President Frank DiNizo. Frank was very dedicated to UNICO. He was active with the Brian Piccolo Awards in District X and loved his sports. He was devoted to many charities in our community, most especially The Center for Hope Hospice. Members of the community made donations to our Chapter Scholarship Fund in Frank's memory. Our Chapter allocated additional funds so that The Frank DiNizo Memorial Scholarship could be presented. The DiNizo family selected a student who exhibited devotion to both sports and service to The Center for Hope Hospice. A \$2500 scholarship was presented to Bianca Root at our Annual Scholarship and Charity Awards Dinner in Frank's memory. Bianca starred as a high school Varsity softball pitcher and as a volunteer at The Center for Hope.

Additionally the chapter awarded four \$2000 scholarships in memory of our deceased chapter members. These Italian-American students were selected by our members on the basis of scholastic achievement, extracurricular activities and financial need. Bianca Chaves, Deanna DelBene, Oliviana Lumetta and Samantha Mannino all received scholarships towards their first year of collegiate studies. The chapter estimates that we have now presented over \$350,000 in scholarships during our history.

Our Chapter also made financial donations of \$500 to six community charities including The Center for Hope Hospice, The Lupus Foundation of New Jersey, The MacAuley School for Special Children and the Matheny Center for Special Needs Adults. Our member Paul Santo, son of deceased Chapter member Bob Santo, is a resident at Matheny. Bob received the 1977 UNICO National Humanitarian Award in 1977 and our Chapter has continued to support the Matheny Center in his memory. Our chapter makes additional charity awards during the year as requests are made.

Our Chapter selected two students from Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School to be honored at the District X Brian Piccolo Awards Dinner. Kelsey Rossi who starred on our Varsity Swim team and Matthew Alfano from our Cross-Country Track team both received \$500 scholarships from our Chapter. Kelsey is the granddaughter of one of our Chapter's founding members and the sister of a 2008 Piccolo winner.

Our Chapter calendar year always concludes with our Annual Labor Day Italian Festival. Held in conjunction with St. Bartholomew's Church and St Bart's Academy, the Festival continues to be a source of community pride and spirit since its inception.

We look forward to another successful year in 2011 and are always proud to be UNICANS!



(L-R) Pat Harrington Member SP/F Chapter & 2nd Dep. DG NJ Dist X, Renato Biribin, PNP, Bill Wilkins Member SP/F Chapter, John Appezzato Member SP/F Chapter, Eileen Di Nizo Member SP/F Chapter, (rear) Bill Marianni Member SP/F Chapter, Paul Raphael Member SP/F Chapter & Feast Chairman.



Charities Chairman Pat Harrington and Chapter President Joe Triano present a donation to Mrs. Diane Coloney, Chapter member and Vice President of the Center for Hope Hospice



Chapter President Joe Triano presents memorial plaque on behalf of our members to Mrs. Eilenn Parenti, daughter of Frank DiNizo



Our Brian Piccolo winners Kelsey Rossi and Matthew Alfano with Chapter President Joe Triano



Chapter member Pat Harrington recruits new members at our Italian Festival

ISLIP/SMITHTOWN NY



PASSAIC-CLIFTON NJ

National Convention

The Passaic-Clifton Chapter of UNICO National recently had their annual "Day at the Beach" as hordes of UNICO members and Clifton residents invaded Joey Harrison's Surf Club in Ortley Beach, NJ. In addition to live music from BROOKWOOD, CAPT. WEEJ, MONTY'S PYTHON and THE FLYING MUELLER BROS., guests were treated to a half hour set from the Pre-Teen band KAYLA'S KREW (pictured). UNICO President David D'Arco was so impressed with the band, that he invited them to play at UNICO's Annual Columbus Day Fundraiser on October 1st at the Clifton Boy's & Girl's Club. Anyone interested in attending the event can contact D'Arco @ (973)685-7479.



Advertise in ComUNICO !!

To Advertise in ComUNICO:

Contact our ComUNICO
National Office

1-800-877-1492
UNICONational@UNICO.org

EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR'S CORNER



As I begin my 3rd year as the Executive Administrator for UNICO National, I find that many members still have similar questions about how UNICO National operates. Below is a sample of the questions we get throughout the year. Should you have any other questions, please give us a call at the National Office.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Under what section of the Internal Revenue Code is UNICO National organized?

A. UNICO National is a 501(c)4 organization.

Q. Are donations to UNICO National Tax Deductible?

A. No. Donations to a 501(c)4 organization are not tax deductible. However, our UNICO Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization and donations are tax deductible.

Q. How much is the initiation fee for a new member?

A. Initiation fee is \$50 for the first year a new member joins the chapter no matter when the person joins during the fiscal year.

Q. How much are the membership dues for a regular member?

A. \$60 per year.

Q. How much are dues for an associate member?

A. \$60 per year.

Q. How much are dues for Clergy?

A. Clergy does not pay dues to UNICO National.

Q. How much are dues for youth membership (between ages 18 –25)

A. \$12 per year. Initiation fee is waived for youth members.

Q. What is Life Exempt Membership?

A. Any UNICAN who has been an active member of any chapter for more than 25 years, and has attained the age of 70. Life Exempt members do not pay membership dues to UNICO National.

Q. When are chapter membership dues payable to UNICO National?

A. One half of the chapter's annual dues are payable by July 1st and the second half are due by November 30th.

Q. What is the fiscal year end for UNICO National?

A. The year end for UNICO is June 30th. Every chapter should also be on the same year end.

UNICO 101

UNICO was founded on October 10, 1922 in Waterbury, Connecticut. A group of 15 men, led by Dr. Anthony P. Vastola, came together to create what has become a very special and very proud organization. It was Dr. Vastola's dream to create an Italian American service organization to engage in charitable works, support higher education, and perform patriotic deeds.

AN AMERICAN IN FLORENCE

By Albert J. Mellina

Past President of the Islip/Smithtown chapter

Actually I am a full blooded Italian American. I was born in NYC but moved to the outskirts of Torino, Italia at the age of five and returned back to New York City at the age of 11. Italian is still my second language. Although we spoke Italian at home on Sunday when the entire family (aunts, uncles and cousins) gathered for lunch, my parents insisted that we speak English the rest of the week. My wife Arlene and I try to practice our second language as much as possible. This summer Arlene and I celebrated our 45th wedding anniversary with a trip back home to Italia. Before visiting our relatives in Piemonte, we spent a week in Florence, our favorite city in the world, where we stayed at the Villa La Vendetta Hotel. The hotel is located across the Arno River overlooking the city a few meters from Piazza Michelangelo.

On July 4, 2010 we had dinner near the hotel and afterwards took a walk toward the Piazza Michelangelo. Across the street there is a little caffè with an outdoor seating area. A husband and wife were entertaining the caffè guest with their music and songs. We sat down, ordered our espresso and began to listen to the beautiful music. Most of the diners finished their meals and left. We were the only ones sitting there, so I asked the musicians if they would play some of the old songs that were so much a part of my growing up in Italia.

As they accommodated us by singing Pietmonsea, Massolino de Fiore and Strada Nel Bosco (this was a challenge since it was written in 1943), a group of young Italians sat at a table next to us. They were very interested in the music and began a conversation with us. Of course, they told us that those were the songs their grandparents listen to, but they really enjoyed them as well. I asked them to join us and they did. They were very pleased to hear a couple of Americans speak to them in Italian. We were having a great time, when a group of Germans arrived.

They too enjoyed the old songs and asked for more versions and they began to sing in Italian. So, naturally, we asked them to join us. At this time we had a table of over 22 people singing, talking and just getting to know each other. A British couple of our generation came along and I asked them to join us as well, then four Japanese couples joined us. They were learning Italian and happy to be practicing with the group. At this point we had over 32 people enjoying themselves.

This diverse group compared stories of growing up in different corners of the world, their marriages, their children and most of all the foods of Italy. There is no other place on earth that can boast of the quality, consistency and freshness of the food found in this country.

At this point a bus load of Americans arrived. They were with a tour group that was visiting four caffès in the area. This was their first stop. When they came into the caffè, they remarked that this was music that they never heard before and that they would only stay for a few minutes have their customary drink and depart for the next and hopefully better caffè. I introduced myself and told

them that I was also an American and asked if they cared to join us and I would explain the music. They did. We were now a large table of 52 people from all over the world.

The group was enjoying the evening, when the owner of the restaurant came over to me and asked if he could have the musicians to join him in a song to celebrate my birthday. I advised him that I was born in February, not July. He said, 'No! not your birthday. America's Birthday as today is July 4th.'

When I thanked him, he immediately went over to the musicians, raised a small American flag and announced to the group in Italian, broken English and horrible German that we should all honor America on this its birthday.

As the musicians played the 'Star Spangled Banner' with the lights of the city of Florence in the background, everyone stood, placed their right hands over their hearts and proudly saluted the little American flag. When they played 'God Bless America,' everyone stood and sang along with the Americans. I could not hold back the tears. There are people in this world that truly love and respect the USA. We should all be proud to be Americans.

As we thanked the musicians, the tour guide was ushering the American tourists back to their bus. They refused to go and instead they stood at this caffè with all of us until closing. We listened to music, this time some of the more traditional Italian songs we shared stories of growing up in our countries, our parents immigrating to America from some of these same countries and most of all we were happy we to have met and shared a wonderful evening with strangers from different corners of the globe that are now friends.

QUEENSBORO NY

Scholarships

At its August meeting, Queensboro UNICO awarded three students their Academic Achievement Award. These students were scholastically at the top of their class and wrote inspiring essays about their Italian American heritage. Jack Tomaselli will be attending Stony Brook University, Amanda Macchio will be attending Georgia Southern University and Tom Capobianco will be attending Hofstra University. The committee who selected these candidates plans on expanding the program next year to include more local students. For more information, or to apply for next year's Award, you can contact the committee chairman sal@betterloans.net. For more information on Queensboro UNICO, you can visit our website at www.queensboroUNICO.org



(L-R) GaspareMistretta, Frank Fabrico, Jack Tomaselli, Amanda Macchio, Sal Tomaselliand Tom Capobianco

SCRANTON PA

La Festa Italiana!



Some of the Scranton Chapter members at the Scranton La Festa Italiana over the Labor Day Weekend



Maggie and Sam Prudente from the Scranton Chapter at the Scranton La Festa Italiana



Current La Festa Italiana Chairmen and UNICO National President Chris DiMattio (C) with the Charter and Honorary Chairmen who started the event 35 years ago. Pat Guido (L) is a 50 year member of the UNICO Scranton Chapter and Pat Fricchione (R) is the past President of La Festa

UNICO SCHOLARSHIPS AT SETON HALL UNIVERSITY



John DiNapoli, UNICO Foundation President, presents a \$5,000 check to Gabriella Romani and William J. Connell from Seton Hall University. The Funds are a grant from the UNICO Foundation to the Martin G. Picillo Endowed Scholarship Fund at the University. Martin G. Picillo was a Past National President of UNICO National.



Jenny and André DiMino at the Scranton La Festa Italiana



(L-R) Chapter Vice-President Mario Bartoli, Nick Giaquinto, Chapter President Perry Vincenzi, and Sergeant-at-Arms Gino Venditti.



On stage at the Scranton La Festa Italiana (L-R) André DiMino, Chris DiMattio, Jenny DiMino and Frank Blasi

ComUNICO STAFF



PHOTOGRAPHER
Steve Pelonero
Passaic Valley NJ Chapter



PROOFREADER
Marianne Lalli-Regan San Diego CA Chapter



DARIEN CT

Charter Night



(Seated L-R) DG NJ XI Nicki Carpinelli, DG CT I Francine Nido, UNICO National Membership & Retention Director Mark McDade, UNICO National Scrapbook Chair Michele McDade and Tanya Brutto. (Standing L-R) UNICO National Executive Administrator Sal Benvenuti, Darien CT Charter President Nick DeMaio, UNICO National President Chris DiMattio, and UNICO National Expansion Director Bernard M. Brutto.



BRICK NJ

Second Annual Golf Outing

The Brick Chapter Golf Chairman Anthony Sclafani (R) poses with several of the winning golfers in the Second Annual Brick UNICO Golf Outing which was held on August 23rd at the Eagle Ridge Golf Club in Lakewood NJ. The Brick chapter of UNICO raised money through this event to fund their Scholarship Program and other UNICO Charities.



DENVILLE NJ

Scholarships

The Denville Chapter of UNICO awarded three scholarship this year to local students of Italian descent. This year's awards went to seniors at Morris Knolls, Morris Catholic and Randolph High Schools.



Randolph High School recipient Stephanie Belcastro being presented the award by vice president of the Denville Chapter Lou Mattaliano.

PLAINFIELDS NJ

9/11 Flag Tribute

Everyone is at attention after the flag is raised during the recent 9/11 memorial flag raising held in South Plainfield NJ. UNICO NJ District X and Plainfields' UNICO sponsored the event and were assisted by municipal officials.



Paying respects in memory of the 9/11 victims at the statue of a South Plainfield Firefighter (L-R) Plainfields' UNICO President Anthony Bengivenga, Plainfields' UNICO Vice President Mike Colucci, Plainfields' UNICO Sergeant at Arms John DeAndréa and Plainfields' UNICO founder and Past UNICO National President Renato Biribin



President of the Plainfields' Chapter Anthony Bengivenga addresses the crowd. (Back Row L-R) Vice President of the Plainfields' Chapter Mike Colucci, First Deputy DG NJ X Robert Bengivenga, Sergeant-at-Arms John DeAndréa, and founder of Plainfields' UNICO and UNICO past National President Renato Biribin.



Firefighters look on as (L-R) UNICO District X First Deputy District Governor Bob Bengivenga, South Plainfield Councilman Rob Bengivenga Jr (who helped organize the event) prepare the flag for raising while Plainfields' UNICO President Anthony Bengivenga and Vice President of the Plainfields' Chapter Mike Colucci also look on.

V FOUNDATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH



Another Convention is behind us with the business of UNICO National complete. The excitement and enthusiasm generated during the convention was reflected by the generosity of the members, chapters and districts for our National Charities.

I wish to thank everyone personally for your support for The "V" Foundation for Cancer Research to "Help Find A Cure." It was gratifying to see all of the pledges adding up to over \$26,000.

As you are aware, our goal each year is \$50,000 and to date we have \$34,000 toward this goal for our 2010 Memorial Grant in the name of Salvatore Bernardi our recently deceased member of the Scranton PA. Chapter. More help is needed and those chapters and districts who have not yet sent in donations, please do so now. Make checks payable to the UNICO Foundation earmarked for Cancer Research. UNICO has made a difference.

I visit and speak with many chapters and individual members and feel a revitalization and enthusiasm in UNICO in following our motto "Service Above Self." Please continue this excitement with renewed effort to help support all our goals! Let's continue our service to our communities, our help to our youth, our belief in God and Country and to all our principles.

2009 Grant Update

UNICO has awarded a \$50,000 grant to Anthony Heaney, M.D., Ph.D., at the UCLA Jonsson Cancer Center in memory of Frank Milo. These funds will be used specifically for Pancreatic Cancer Research.

The research at UCLA has shown a direct relationship between high fructose corn syrup, (which is in many items such as ketchup, maple syrup, etc.) and Pancreatic Cancer.

Other facts on Pancreatic Cancer Research

A Research Team has made a major breakthrough that brings scientists significantly closer to developing a blood test to detect pancreatic cancer early, when cure rates are highest. Dr Hanash and colleagues identified for the first time a set of tell tale proteins, also known as biomarkers, that are associated with early stage development of pancreatic tumors in genetically engineered mice. The same five-biomarker panel was also found to be associated with the presence of the disease in humans at an early stage, before visible symptoms occurred.

Frank Paolercio
UNICO National "V" Foundation Chairman

UNICO 101

The name UNICO was selected as best representing the nature and the character of this fledgling organization. The name is the Italian word for unique, one of a kind. The founders believed that UNICO would be the only one of its kind because it placed service to the community before and above fraternity. At the same time they hoped that the rest of society would come to know and understand the real contributions of Italian-Americans to our way of life. Its sole purpose was to unite all Italian Americans and motivate them to become more civic minded. In order to accomplish this, members would have to understand that they would have to make sacrifices, not for personal gain, but for service to others. In the ensuing years UNICO became an acronym that stood for Unity, Neighborliness, Integrity, Charity, and Opportunity

PASSAIC VALLEY NJ

Chapter Meeting



The Passaic Valley Chapter's first member of the year being sworn in by the Passaic Valley Chapter President Steve Pelonero. Next to Steve is new member Laura Lima. Pictured from the left are Laura's sponsors, Angie Honigfeld and Helen Triolo.



The Passaic Valley Chapter President Steven Pelonero (L) presenting his Past Chapter President Carmen Criscione with their chapter award from the convention in Hershey PA. Passaic Valley UNICO was honored as "Model Chapter of the Year."



The Passaic Valley Chapter President Steve Pelonero presenting member Darlene Post with their Chapter Award which was received at the convention in Hershey PA. Passaic Valley UNICO was recognized for "The Exceptional Project of the Year." Darlene came up with the idea and chaired the event which raised close to \$20,000 for a local family in need



ORANGE WEST NJ

Chapter Meeting

The Orange-West Orange Chapter swore in a new member, Barbara Paolercio, at their September meeting. Barbara was a member and past president of the chapter's Ladies Auxiliary for 30 years, and chair of many committees and charitable events, what outstanding addition to our chapter.



(L-R) Chapter president Kristine Massari, National Jimmy "V" Chair Frank Paolercio, Barbara Paolercio, UNICO Foundation President John DiNapoli and Frank DiMaio.



A future UNICAN is born! Gina Manzella daughter of Frank and Barbara Paolercio gave birth to a baby boy. Here at two weeks old sporting his UNICO colors, Ronald H. Manzella III, represents the future and our passion to help carry on our Italian Heritage.

BINGHAMTON NY

Gusto Festival

The Greater Binghamton UNICO members Debbie and Tony Marascia, Maria Pezzuti, Lorraine Rogers, Karin Cuda Mann and Frank and Angela Carro hosted a UNICO information table at the Fourth Annual "A Taste of Little Italy" Gusto Festival in Endicott, NY on August 27, 2010. This was an excellent opportunity for the Binghamton NY chapter to introduce the Italian community to our UNICO National Organization.



LYNDHURST NJ

Carnival for Children

In the Spring of 2010 Lyndhurst UNICO held their first Carnival for the Lyndhurst children who have special needs. The Carnival consisted of food, an air castle, sand art, a Magician and even Elmo made a surprise visit. The children had a great time and we are very grateful to all those who volunteered their time. Lyndhurst UNICO would like to thank Gencarelli's in Lyndhurst for their donation of Pasta, the Bagel Stop in Lyndhurst for their donation of sandwiches, and to Rita's in Woodbridge for their donation of Italian Ice. With the help of these donations and time dedicated by our members we were able to make our first Carnival a very special event.

Lyndhurst UNICO was represented at the National Convention in Hershey Park. Patty Hirsch and her brother member Damien Hirsch both attended and had a great time and made new friends. Patty and her brother also attended La Festa Italiana in Scranton where they enjoyed the food and entertainment.



(R-L) Lyndhurst Chapter Vice President Patty Hirsch and her brother member Damien Hirsch at the UNICO Ice Breaker at the Hershey PA convention.

HELP UNICO START A NEW CHAPTER IN ONE OF THESE CITIES!

MIDWEST

Cleveland, OH
Tiffin, OH
Wooster, OH
Glen, MI
Detroit, MI
Nashville, TN
Austin, TX
Houston, TX

WEST

Phoenix, AZ
Scottsdale, AZ
Tucson, AZ
Ocean County Area, CA
Sacramento, CA
San Pedro, CA
Santa Clarita, CA
Walnut Creek, CA
Denver, CO
Missoula, MT
Seattle, WA

EAST

Hershey, PA
Lincoln University, PA
Milford, PA
Norristown, PA
Pittsburgh, PA
Ocean City, MD
Weymouth, MA
Morristown, NJ
Old Tappan, NJ
Vineland, NJ
West Milford, NJ
Tampa, FL
Loudonville, NY
New York City, NY
Staten Island, NY
Cranston, RI
Columbia, SC
Greenville, SC
Burlington, VT

Contact: Bernard M. Brutto
National Expansion Director
570-573-1801 bbrutto@UNICO.org

STAMFORD CT

An Italian American Experience

The Founding Of Sacred Heart Church and Its Impact on Stamford

In the beginning...

The poet Robert Frost once said, "If you want to learn the essence of any community, study its churches." To fully understand Sacred Heart Church and its critical importance to Italians in Stamford, Connecticut, we will need to begin this story back in Italy.

Between 1880 and 1910, many Italians emigrated from southern Italy – the Mezzogiorno – regions like Abruzzi, Campania, Puglia, Lazio, Basilicata, Calabria and Sicily. Life in the Mezzogiorno was exceedingly hard – although farming was the primary livelihood, the land was mountainous and arid. There was no infrastructure or manufacturing to sustain better-paying jobs. The Italian Republic was only decades old and was concentrating its support and development in northern Italy. In order to survive, the southern Italian at the end of the 19th century could only count on himself and his own resourcefulness, his family and his faith in God and the saints.

Meanwhile, word started to filter back to the people back in Italy about better opportunities in America... You have heard the stories..."The streets were paved with gold and everyone was rich as kings!" So the waves of immigrants arrived at Ellis Island and started to spread out beyond New York City to growing communities such as Stamford, Connecticut. There were jobs in Stamford for non-union laborers who were willing to work hard – The Stamford Manufacturing Company at Cove Mill, St. John Woodworking Company, the Stamford Woolen Mills and, of course, Yale and Towne all employed unskilled or semi-skilled Italian workers.

Those first Italians settled on Pacific Street and then moved into neighborhoods on the West Side of the city. Housing was relatively inexpensive and families could rent or share apartments with their paesani. The West Side of Stamford served an important purpose. It was a kind of shock absorber. Having uprooted themselves from their old culture, Italians in Stamford needed a safe haven where they sustain their attachment to the familiar and could ease into their gradual assimilation in America. There on the West Side, they could recreate the best of what they had left behind – cuisine, culture, language and the essence of village life.

Contrary to what we might think, Stamford's West Side was an ethnic melting pot – even in the early 1900's. Italians moved into neighborhoods that had previously been populated by Irish immigrants. In fact, these Irish immigrants were moving to other parts of Stamford because they had achieved greater wealth and status. In fact, some Irish residents did not want to be associated with the newly arrived working class Italian immigrants. I make this point, not to be controversial or divisive, but merely to state the historical reality of the time and, more importantly, to set the stage for the impetus in establishing an Italian national Church in Stamford.

When Italian Catholics sought to practice their faith, they found a church organization and culture very different from their own. In fact, the Catholic Church in Stamford and in America, for that matter, was dominated by the Irish hierarchy whose concept of religion and worship was far more reserved than the Italian version. The Italian peasant of the Mezzogiorno believed in God and the saints. They also believed in the celebration of religious Festas – outward signs of faith, devotion and communal cohesiveness.

The "mother" Church of Stamford was Saint John's Church – the first Catholic Church established in the 1850's. Given its proximity to the West Side, Saint John's became the logical place for Italians to attend Mass. If some Irish-American citizens did not care to live among Italians, it would naturally follow that they might not want to worship with them either. I can vividly remember my grandparents telling the story of how Italians were relegated to the basement of Saint John's Church because they were not allowed to worship with mainstream Catholics in the upper Church.

In 1920, the long-cherished desire of Italians in Stamford to have a church of their own began to take shape. Proud of their cultural heritage and religious traditions, Italian Catholics longed for a place where they could hear the word of God spoken in their native tongue and could participate in the age-old celebrations and observances practiced in their ancestral towns. In June 1920, the Aviglianesi of Stamford celebrated for the first time, the Feast of their patron, Saint Vito. This event was so successful and sparked so much national pride, that a church committee was formed. The Committee met with Father James O'Brien, then Pastor of Saint John's Church, to inform him of their intention to found an Italian Parish and to request that Father John Kelley be permitted to serve as a member of their committee. At the time, Father Kelley was one of the priests stationed at St. John's who truly endeared himself to the Italian community. He celebrated Mass for them, embraced their culture, and even learned Italian so he could fully communicate with them.

Between 1921 and 1922, an expanded Church Committee worked hard to raise funds through collections, contributions, minstrels and other fundraisers and, of course, a multitude of feasts in honor of patron saints and various devotions to the Blessed Mother. In time, a large sum of money was raised and several sites for the new Church were explored. Sadly, some Stamford residents were less than enthusiastic at the prospect of an Italian Church in their neighborhood. But eventually, with much negotiation, the site on Schuyler Avenue was selected. This location was especially attractive because it was accessible to the majority of Italians residing on the West Side of the city.

In September 1920, members of the Church Committee drove nearly 100 miles to Hartford to meet with diocesan Archbishop John J. Nilan to make two essential requests – first, to ask his permission to create a national parish and secondly, to request that their beloved Father Kelley be named as pastor. (My own maternal grandfather, Francesco Saverio LaBella, was among the delegation of visionaries sent to meet with the Archbishop.) With the Bishop's approval on both counts, the Schuyler Avenue site was purchased from the Honorable Schuyler Merritt (of Merritt Parkway fame) for the sum of \$8,000. In February 1923, the parish was legally constituted "The Church of the Sacred

Heart." Saint John's church basement continued to host the newly formed parish until their own building could be erected.

The well-respected architectural firm of O'Connell & Shaw of Boston was hired to create the design. Early in September 1923, ground was broken and the foundation laid. On November 18, 1923, Bishop John Murray set the cornerstone and on May 11, 1924, Archbishop Nilan consecrated the edifice.

Shortly after completion, the Church, which could seat 620 people, soon proved to be too small to accommodate the growing number of parishioners. Pastor Kelley appealed to Archbishop Nilan to send him an assistant so that he could increase the number of masses being celebrated. On June 19, 1924, Father Patrick Flynn arrived in Stamford.

Father Kelley and Father Flynn lived in a rented house several blocks away while the rectory was being built. Construction began in the fall of 1924 and the priests moved into their new home in February 1925.

Church groups such as the Holy Name Society, the Rosary Altar Society and the Children of Mary worked hard to build a societal framework and to raise funds for the liquidation of the parish debt. Amazingly, in the midst of the Great Depression, the parish debt of \$75,000 was wiped out by 1931.

As the beneficiaries of their efforts, we can all be in awe of the accomplishments of our forebears. When we imagine the obstacles that our ancestors must have endured – crossing an ocean, coming to a new country, learning a new language, moving from farm to city, learning new skills so that they could earn a living and provide for their families – it is incredible what they were able to achieve.

We can only speculate on what the conversation must have been between Archbishop Nilan and that handful of proud men asking not for money but for the opportunity to build a Church for the Italian community of Stamford. Sacred Heart Church continues today as a touchstone for Italian Americans throughout the city. We can only pray that the future of Sacred Heart Church will be as promising as its wonderful past.

IN MEMORIAM

Dominick Crincoli – "Service Above Self"

On September 1, 2010 the Livingston Chapter lost a life long member, Dominick Crincoli. Dominick was a UNICO member for 50 years and served as Chapter president and treasurer. Dominick was also very active with his township and served as a Councilman for 12 years and served as mayor three times. In addition, to his service to his town and UNICO, Dom was also a March of Dimes chairman, a Leukemia trustee, a Muscular Dystrophy drive chairman, and president to the Union Chamber of Commerce.

Dominick certainly exemplified the UNICO motto.

CHICAGO UNICAN HONORED



Every society has its greatest generation. Richard Caifano is the embodiment of ours. In *The Greatest Generation*, Tom Brokaw characterized a generation of individuals who just did it and did it quietly. Many members would agree that Brokaw's assessment applies equally to Richard.

Congratulations to senior member, Richard Caifano, this year's recipient of the prestigious Justinian Award of Excellence. The award captures Richard's achievements as a professional, civic leader and father.

A graduate of St. Ignatius High School, Richard earned his Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from Marquette University and his Juris Doctorate degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law (IIT). Richard's family is from the Basilicata region of Southern Italy.

Richard has been engaged in the practice of law as a sole practitioner since 1966. For over forty years, he has represented small businesses in transactional work, real estate and property acquisitions, business organization/merger as well as in litigation involving contract disputes and construction-related matters. In 2008 he was appointed to a term on the Illinois State Bar Association's Real Estate Law Section Council.

True to his Jesuit education (Ignatius and Marquette), Richard is also an educator. He was a trial instructor at both the John Marshall Law School in Chicago and the National College of Criminal Defense Attorneys and Public Defenders in Houston. Since 1968, when he first became a member of the Justinian Society, Richard has embraced the society's mission of mentoring Italian American lawyers in the community. True to the society's mission, President Mungai was instrumental in formally establishing and nurturing the Justinian Society of Lawyers Mentoring Program, which had its roots in Richard's leadership. He currently serves as committee secretary for the Illinois State Bar Association's Standing Committee on Mentoring.

Richard inspires us to integrate our professional endeavors with pride in our heritage in a purposeful manner. He served as president and newsletter editor of the Justinian Society. In 1983 he co-founded the National Italian American Bar Association (NIABA), with the support of fellow Justinians Salvatore (Sam) Tornatore, Bruno Tassone, Jerry DePalma, and Antonio Romanucci. Richard served on NIABA's board of directors, as its historian and newsletter editor for over ten years. He was critical in the establishment of the Italian American Political Coalition. Since 1983, Richard has remained active in both UNICO National and the Chicago-West Suburban Chapter of UNICO, a service organization of Italian-Americans established in 1922 to "engage in charitable works, support higher education, and perform patriotic deeds." Interestingly, around the time of both the Justinian Society and UNICO's founding, the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti was front-page news. Both organizations helped the new Americans embrace

the cultural traditions of Italy and honor the values of freedom and economic opportunity afforded them in the U.S. It is not surprising that as a lawyer, historian and civic leader, Richard has chosen to dedicate his time and talents to the Justinian Society and UNICO, two organizations with a similar history and purpose.

The last line of Richard's CV reads that he is the proud father of Catherine Regina Locallo and Christina Marie Caifano. Both daughters are lovely and accomplished women in their own right. Their choices were likely inspired by their father's professional and civic achievements. Catherine graduated with high honors from the John Marshall Law School and currently practices labor and employment law with Robbins, Schwartz in Chicago and Christina is a respected professor of criminal justice at California State University in Bakersfield.

We are grateful for Richard's participation as a member of the Justinian Society and for his bar and community leadership and are honored that he has accepted the society's Award of Excellence.

PLAINFIELDS' NJ

Honoring Our Military

Members of Plainfields' UNICO congratulated Captain Minicozzi, winner of Lou DeFilippo Freedom Award, at the UNICO National Convention recently held in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Captain James Minicozzi is a member of the Scranton PA Chapter of UNICO. The late Lou DeFilippo of South Plainfield was a highly decorated World War II hero and a life member of UNICO National.

Captain Minicozzi was the detachment Commander/XO during Operation Iraqi Freedom and led the detachment in all operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Plainfields' Chapter officers were honored to be part of the presentation.



(L - R) Past National President of UNICO Renato Biribin, Vice President of the Plainfields Chapter of UNICO Mike Colucci, Commanding COB 55th Brigade Combat Captain James Minicozzi, Deputy DG NJ X Robert Bengivenga and President UNICO Plainfields' Chapter Anthony J. Bengivenga.

Proverbi Italiani

"Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'entrate."

Translation: "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here."

Note: inscribed above the Gates of Hell in Dante Alighieri's *Inferno* (III, 9) Also commonly written (by the students) above the entrance to examination halls in universities.

DENVILLE NJ

National Convention

The fabulous Duprees performed at the 88th. Annual UNICO National Convention at Hershey Lodge in Hershey, PA. Wait a minute, that's not the four Duprees. It's Lou Mattaliano from the Denville Chapter enjoying the evening with the guys.



Denville UNICO members enjoying the welcome reception at the National Convention in Hershey, PA. Sitting left to right are Jim Scannelli - treasurer, Sue Carol Scannelli - secretary and Vicky Clauss. Standing is Lou Mattaliano the chapter's vice president.

TORRINGTON CT

Warner Theater

Here is Torrington CT UNICO presenting another \$500 check within four months to Donna Marconi Associate Director of the Warner Theatre. The Torrington Chapter of UNICO sponsored along with the Warner Theatre, "A Taste of Opera" on Saturday September 11th, 2010. The evening program included music from Aida and many other known operatic favorites.



Co-Chairs of Torrington UNICO'S Italian Heritage and Cultural Committee Joseph Adorno and Raymond Mascetti with Donna Marconi of the Warner Theater.

SAN DIEGO CA

Italian American Chamber

Members of San Diego UNICO attended the San Diego Italian American Chamber of Commerce meeting at an Italian tile design studio *Tuo Sogno Bisazza*. The president of the chamber is Anthony Ybarra who is a new member of San Diego UNICO.



(L-R) Steve Codrero of San Diego UNICO with chapter president James Pieri Jr..



New chamber member Valeri Orsini with chamber President Anthony Ybarra. Both are members of San Diego UNICO.

BINGHAMTON NY

Buddy Walk

Members of the Greater Binghamton Chapter of UNICO took part in the "Annual Buddy Walk" to increase community awareness about the potential and the needs of people with Down Syndrome. Festivities of the all day event included a one mile walk through the Binghamton Ross Park Zoo, food, entertainment, kids games and raffles. It was a fun and rewarding time.



ISLIP/SMITHTOWN NY

Wine Tasting



Advertise in ComUNICO !!

To Advertise in ComUNICO:

Contact our ComUNICO
National Office

1-800-877-1492
UNICONational@UNICO.org

SADDLE BROOK NJ

Saddle Brook Car Show



LOS ANGELES CA

PIZZA E VINO

The Los Angeles Chapter of UNICO enjoyed a "Pizza e Vino" party! Highlights included:

*Merlin hand stretched and cooked 34 pizzas and 6 calzones - thanks!

*Thank you to Wheatland Baking for donating fresh pizza dough

*Thanks goes to "The Mozzarella Guys", Angelo and Franco, for donating their delicious fresh mozzarella and ricotta

*Giulio surprised us by bringing his nonna's homemade sausages - thank you Giulio!

*A thank you goes to Ralph for donating his amazing homemade pizza sauce

*And a special thank you to Larry and Marilyn for firing up their wood burning pizza oven and hosting the party.



EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Yogi Berra Museum and Learning Center



President DiMattio presents the "line-up" which was the agenda for the meeting. The crowd consisted of various officers and members. UNICANs came from as far away as Chicago to cheer on the winning team



Chris DiMattio's first Executive Meeting of the year was held at the Yogi Berra Museum & Learning Center on the campus of Montclair State University NJ on September 25th. Much business was discussed as the members and officers lounged in the Stadium located in the museum.



As Phil Rizzuto would say "Holy Cow", Mike and Chris discuss where they'll be having lunch.

Proverbi Italiani

A caval donato non si guarda in bocca."

Translation: "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth." Meaning: "It is not worth or right to judge a gift, just accept it."

HAZELTON PA

Membership Outing

The Hazleton PA chapter of UNICO National held a membership outing on September 21st at Hazle Township Community Park. Chapter treasurer Michael DeCosmo, Jr. coordinated the event, which included catered Italian food, refreshments, and cigars. Approximately 35 members and guests were in attendance, and many of the guests filled out membership applications.

Members and their guests also enjoyed bocce ball games on alleys built by the club for its annual Bell'Italia heritage festival, which is held at the Park every May. Member Francis DeFazio ran the bocce games.

Chapter President Danny DeMelfi welcomed the crowd and recognized Frank Ciampi for his 50 plus years of service to the club.

Also in attendance were Expansion Director Bernie Brutto and Membership Director Mark McDade, both of whom spoke to the crowd about UNICO's charitable causes.

The Hazleton chapter was the first in the state of Pennsylvania and continues to preserve Italian heritage and offer service to the community.



Proverbi Italiani

"In un mondo di ciechi un orbo è re."

Translation: "In a world of blind people, a one-eyed man is king."

Idiomatic translation: "In the land of the blind the one-eyed man is king."

SCRANTON PA

The Scranton Chapter of UNICO Inducts More New Members

The Scranton Chapter of UNICO inducted 10 new members at its September meeting held at the Career Technology Center in Scranton.

In addition, Peter E. Noto received, in absentia, a District Achievement Award bestowed by UNICO National at the national convention in Hershey.



(Front Row L-R) Sergeant-at-Arms Blaise Alan Dente, Mary Rinaldi, Maresa Ford, Rose Benzelski, JoAnn Martarano and Joe Berardelli.

(Second Row L-R) Mark McDade, Michele McDade, Chapter President Jack Brunetti, Linda Malionski, Dr. Ken Sebastianelli and Jeanette Chiavacchi.

(Third Row L-R) Bill Terrinoni, Stephanie Longo, Ron Natoli, Ron Quattrone, Marie Natoli, JoAnne Quattrone, and Diane Brunetti.

ROSETO PA



Roseto's Mayor Desiree DeNicola and Council President Michael Romano presented a proclamation declaring the month of October Italian Heritage Month. Roseto chapter president Dr. Frank DeFrank represented the Italian American community of Roseto.



UNICO
"Serving Those Who Serve"

In celebration of the contributions that our chapters and members have made to the history of our organization, UNICO National will be working with Harris Connect, LLC to create a commemorative showcase book to be released in 2011. This historical publication will feature photos and stories submitted by you the members and will be a great addition to your personal library.

We want to hear from each of you. Stay tuned for more information on how you can participate in this publication and visit the UNICO National website at www.unico.org for periodic updates.



BAYONNE NJ

Bayonne Chapter Monthly Soup Kitchen



**VISIT UNICO ONLINE
AT
WWW.UNICO.ORG**

MONTVILLE NJ

22nd Annual Golf Tournament

The 22nd annual golf outing was held on September 10th at the Meadows Golf Club in Lincoln Park NJ. The fund raiser helps the Montville NJ chapter charities. Participants get lunch, dinner, awards and prizes. It is a tradition that homemade Zeppoles were passed around at the 9th turn around hole to help energize the back nine.



Tutty Giordano preparing the homemade zeppoles.



Chairperson Susan Speciale (L) and two helpers.



It was a beautiful day for golf at the Meadows Golf Course in Lincoln NJ.



Zeppoles to go! Golfers enjoying the zeppoles on the 9th hole.

BRIDGEPORT CT

Bridgeport UNICO is on Course!

The Bridgeport, CT Chapter of UNICO held it's first Wine Tasting Night on May 27th. The event, which was held to supplement the scholarship fund, was attended by over 55 friends of the Chapter. The night was hosted by member Dominic Faustini at Tashua Knolls Restaurant. The fund raiser rewarded attendees with wines from four local distributors, great food and dessert stations, the music of Tony Riccio, a memorabilia auction and hours of laughter. Special thanks to event chairman Anthony Tucci.

On June 30th, the chapter held its annual Golf Outing at Whitney Farms Golf Club. A great day was planned by event chairman Mario Bartoli and his committee. This year's event featured a celebrity golfer, a local sports celebrity and Superbowl winner, Nick Giaquinto. Thanks to Mike Riccio for inviting Nick.

Finally the Bridgeport Chapter was honored to award 12 scholarships this year to deserving local high school seniors. The students were recognized for their appreciation of their Italian heritage for their leadership, community involvement and academic achievement. Congratulations and continued success to the following students:

Stephanie Albanese - Foran (Milford), Lia Bonacci - Lauralton Hall (Milford), Giovanna DeSisto - Notre Dame (Fairfield), Erica Intilangelo - Fairfield High (Fairfield), Kathryn O'Neill - St.. Joseph's (Trumbull), James Quish - Jonathan Law (Milford), Raiza Rossi - Central High Magnet (Bridgeport), Anthony Russo - Stratford High (Stratford), Kristen Stoller - Newtown High (Newtown), Alessia Testani - Trumbull High (Trumbull), Julia Tranquillo - Bunnell (Stratford), and Carmine Urciuoli - Fairfield Prep (Fairfield).



(L-R) Bridgeport CT Chapter VP Mario Bartoli, Nick Giaquinto, Chapter President Perry Vincenzi, and Sergeant-at-Arms Gino Venditti.

Proverbi Italiani

"In bocca al lupo."

Translation: "Into the mouth of a wolf."

Idiomatic translation: "Break a leg!"

Note: used by students to wish each other good luck before exams, the response to which is "Crepì!" ("May it die!")

"In culo alla balena!" ("Into the ass of a whale!"), sometimes added to "In bocca al lupo!", the response to which is "speriamo che non cagli!" ("hope it doesn't defecate [vulgar]!")

"In groppa al riccio!" ("On an hedgehog's back!"), the response to which is "Con le mutande di ghisa!" ("Wearing underpants made of cast iron!")

"In un mondo di ciechi un orbo è re."

SCRANTON PA

Italian Heritage Mission

The Scranton Chapter is continuing its Italian Heritage mission by once again making available its Italian Class to fellow UNICANs and to the local community. Classes are offered at the Dante Literary Society. Both a beginner and an intermediate class are available. Pictured are some of the students from both classes.



Intermediate class pictured from left to right are Carole Dougherty, Flora Ceccacci, Tony Perry, Richard Gilardi, Jim Gillotti, Paul Angeloni and Professore Joe Chindemi.



Standing from left to right are UNICO Italian class coordinator Mark McDade and students Jim Gillotti, Jeff Remas, Laurie Speranzo, Neil Malatesta, Carmela Iannetta, Richard Gilardi, Dominick Piedmont and Italian Language instructor Joe Chindemi.

SAN ANTONIO TX

Fernando (Bruni) Herrera

The legendary musician Fernando (Bruni) Herrera who played piano and guitar for presidents and kings, entertained at the San Antonio chapter's "Taste of Italy." The event was a fundraiser for the Msgs. Balty Janacek and Pablo Sicilia scholarship fund.



NATIONAL THIRD VICE PRESIDENT



First, let me begin by thanking you for the honor and privilege to continue my service to you and UNICO as I begin my 31st year as a member and my third as a National Officer after having just completed two terms as your

Membership & Retention Director.

During the past two years, I have talked with many members across the country and with many committee chairs. I look forward to working with and communicating with all of the chairs this year not just in scheduling committee rooms at the upcoming regional meetings and board meetings but in working very closely to spread your message to all members nationally.

This is a TEAM effort- **Together Everyone Achieves More** will be the message that I will carry during my year as your Third Vice President as we move forward.

I hope to see many of you at upcoming events and at the Mid-year Board meeting in Kansas City in March. Please email or call on me at anytime.

Richard D'Arminio
TEL: (201) 327-5700
rdarminio@unico.org



The Annual Hackensack Columbus Day Parade took place on Sunday, October 3rd. UNICO participants included (L-R) UNICO National Third Vice President Rick D'Arminio, Parade Co-Chairman and Hackensack Chapter President Ralph Contini and the First Family of UNICO President Chris DiMattio with wife Ann and two boys Robert and Louis.

COOLEY'S ANEMIA



A war has been waged against Cooley's anemia and genetic researchers are edging closer to a possible cure, one that uses gene therapy to repair diseased cells and replace them in the body. Cooley's anemia, also known as Thalassemia B, is a common genetic blood disorder that is

caused by an imbalance in the production of a and b globin chains. It is marked by the absence of adult b globin chains that causes severe anemia.

Recently, the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) has purchased the Illumina HiSeq 2000 machine that maps the human genome. Genomes are inherited traits of an organism. According to Richard Marchase, UAB's vice president for research, the machine will help investigators process genetic data, producing a map of the entire genome in days which once took months.

Dr. Tim Townes, Chairman of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics, has stated that the work has been in progress for years. His team has used gene therapy to cure blood disorders in mice. The purchase of the Illumina HiSeq 2000 will help put the university on the cutting edge of genetic research. The cost for genetic mapping currently runs \$50,000. The use of this machine is expected to reduce the cost of this procedure within normal routine range.

The war is still in progress but we are winning one battle at a time. Research for the cure of Cooley's Anemia requires funding. Thank you for your contributions to the UNICO National Foundation and the Cooley's Anemia Committee. It is through your continued support that research is able to continue. Our collective efforts will make a difference. Your Cooley's Anemia Committee will work hard to ensure that your dollars are invested wisely.

Grant requests will be considered at the UNICO National Foundation Meeting in Kansas City on March 25, 2011. The deadline for consideration at the board meeting is Monday, January 24, 2011. Cooley's Anemia and gene cell research programs that meet the Foundation requirements are encouraged to apply for a grant.

National Cooley's Anemia Chair
Sharon Thompson



The Columbus Day Parade in Seaside Heights NJ. Cultural and Heritage events forge strong bonds between chapter members and are key to membership expansion and retention.

EXPANSION



EXPANDING UNICO IN 2010-2011

It is with great pleasure that I begin this message on a positive note!

I am pleased to announce that we have a new chapter that has joined our UNICO Famiglia...that being Darien of District I in Connecticut on Saturday, October 2nd. The entire CT I District was the sponsor with Francine Nido as District Governor. We had a wonderful representation of national officers and UNICANs attending the Charter Night. It is only fitting to thank all who participated in any way in helping this chapter come to fruition. President Nick DeMaio and his members were happy to receive all the congratulatory and welcome letters. Thank you to all who have responded. There is still time to send your chapter's welcome letting them know that we are united throughout the country.

Our Standardization Chair, Giuseppe Pampana, invited those attending the Charter Night to join him at the Stamford, CT Italian National Parish Church to attend their Italian mass. The Stamford, CT Chapter of UNICO donated towards a pew in this church which my wife and I had the honor of sitting in during the mass. We also visited the Columbus statue in the square of Stamford.

On another note, including my committee, I have IPDG Chip Calabro as my Eastern Expansion Deputy working on past leads and presently awaiting a reply in the Pittsburgh area. DG Rich Caifano is the Mid-West a. Expansion Deputy assisting on all leads in his area. PNP Kathi Strozza is the Western Expansion Deputy with the assistance of JoAnn Gallo of Portland, Oregon. They are working diligently to help contact those that have had kits sent to them as well as working on a new chapter in the Seattle, WA area.

Presently, we are trying to follow-up on the many leads from 2007 to the present to check if anyone is still interested in starting a chapter. I have been working on updating the files as it has been three years since the process began for some and we are recontacting to try to spark up interest once again.

I have some new leads that I am working on but not promising anything until we are sure that interested people will follow through and commit to starting a chapter in a timely manner. Presently, the most promising leads are in the east. Ocean City MD is short the required 15 members to start a chapter. Hershey, PA is in the same position as Maryland at the present time. We hope to visit these locations in late October. Another lead is in the Norristown PA area which is in its initial stages at the present time. There are a few other locations that have showed some interest but their responses are slow moving. Therefore, I will only report if we have enough interested members to continue in the process of becoming a chartered chapter. We had one lead for a new chapter and 15 interested in joining UNICO at our stand at La Festa Italiana in Scranton, PA over the Labor Day weekend.

In the Mid-West, DG Rich Caifano has been a wonderful



asset to the cause. He has been very prompt in getting in touch with any leads that I have forwarded to him. Unfortunately our leads in the Mid-West are on hold mainly due to the sluggish economy. In the west, Missoula, MT will hopefully show progress this year as Peter Noto of Scranton PA is helping his daughter to formulate interest in this neck of the woods. Once again, we are short the required 15 members by a small margin to start this chapter at the present time. JoAnn Gallo and Mike Troiani were involved in manning a stand at the Seattle Festa Italiana September 25th-26th and sparked interest for a possible chapter in the Seattle area. I wish to thank them both for their help and support in the west. If anyone within driving distance can attend an introductory meeting in Seattle it would be appreciated to give JoAnn and Mike support and share in explaining UNICO and our motto of "Service Above Self" in the Seattle area.

There have been revisions to the kits that are sent out from the national office to interested people. Much thought has been put into the downsizing of the kits to make them more economically feasible and then continue to send further kits to only very interested leads. Kits will continue to contain the pertinent information that would be useful to prospective members. Kits 1 & 2 have been downsized whereas Kits 3 & 4 will stay the same as in the past.

My fellow UNICANs, It is important to remember that when a member moves he or she can transfer his membership to a chapter near his new residence. In several cases members who have relocated have been influential in starting a new chapter and old friends have helped in sponsoring that new chapter. I am counting on you, fellow UNICANs, for any leads that would seem to be very promising so that we can move forward in adding new chapters to our UNICO family.

Keep in mind...if you have a promising lead we need not only names and addresses but phone numbers and e-mail addresses in order to contact interested people.

Bernard M. Brutto
National Expansion Director
570-573-1801
bbrutto@UNICO.org

CULTURE AND HERITAGE

An Italian October



Every signature counts! Mark McDade worked the crowd at La Festa Italiana in Scranton obtaining hundreds of signatures to be sent to Congressional leaders in support of Res-1705 which would proclaim the month of October as Italian American Heritage Month. Pictured with Mark are Sal Benvenuti and Pat Pelonero from the National Office.

SCRANTON PA

RAILFEST

National President Chris DiMattio was honored Labor Day Weekend - not at La Festa Italiana - but a few blocks away at Steamtown National Historic Site. Railfest 2010 has worked with La Festa the past two years to promote the National Park and the love for the age of Steam Engines! Therefore, Park Superintendent "Kip" Hagen presented Chris with a proclamation acclaiming him as "Grand Marshal" as well as an award from the National Park Service.



"All Aboard!" UNICO National Executive Administrator Sal Benvenuti, and National President Chris DiMattio get ready for the Railfest festivities in Scranton, PA.



"Kip" Hagen presents the awards to Chris DiMattio

Proverbi Italiani

"Il mattino ha l'oro in bocca"

Literal translation: "The morning [the sun] brings gold in it's mouth."

Idiomatic translation: "The early bird gets the worm." or "He who wakes early meets a golden day." Essentially, one is more productive in the morning.

OAKVILLE- WATERTOWN CT

Clambake

On Sunday, September 26th the Oakville-Watertown chapter of UNICO hosted a clambake. It was a great day and well attended. Many raffle prizes were awarded along with a remote car starter donated by the Boomer McLoud Store of Watertown.



Pictured are Oakville-Watertown CT UNICO President Elaine Cieslewski along with master chef John Vitone (L) and Lou Finnegan, event co-chairman (R).

CARBONDALE PA

Pizza Stand



After the game, the king and pawn go into the same box. -Italian Proverb

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

Important Work



On a beautiful day in New York, the 2010 Columbus Day parade was a joyous celebration of our glorious heritage. UNICO marchers were greeted by smiles and applause as we passed crowds of people waving American and Italian flags. Every ethnic group that makes up

our great nation was "Italian" for the day.

"Thank you UNICO; you do important work," a police officer called out as we passed. I thanked him and acknowledged his important service. I felt a great sense of pride in our beloved UNICO and all that we accomplish. What we do truly matters and, more and more, people are taking notice.

After the parade we were invited to attend a Columbus Day Observance sponsored by Passaic Clifton UNICO. When President David D'Arco introduced New Jersey Supreme Court Chief Justice Stuart Rabner, the keynote speaker, he mentioned that as a senior at Passaic High School the Chief Justice was awarded a UNICO National scholarship. Of course, I was delighted to hear this. Although we know that the gifted and talented recipients of our scholarships go on to benefit society, it is always encouraging to learn of specific instances.

Chief Justice Rabner, in his remarks, noted that in 1978 he received the Alphonse Miele Scholarship. He said he was privileged to actually meet Alphonse A. Miele. At that time, the scholarship paid \$500 per year for four years. Chief Justice Rabner went on to say our scholarship was of great value to him and was sincerely appreciated. Later, I was able to tell the Chief Justice that UNICO undergraduate scholarships are now valued at \$6,000. He was impressed.

UNICO National Scholarships are highly regarded and sought after. Hardly a day goes by that we aren't contacted for application information. Our excellent program is possible only because our members are committed to keeping it strong. We recognize and thank the following Chapters and Districts for their recent contributions:

Brookhaven, NY
Brooklyn, NY
Carbondale, PA
Clark, NJ
Denville, NJ
Greater Ramsey, NJ
Hackensack, NJ
Islip/Smithtown, NY
Kearny, NJ
Kearny Ladies, NJ
Lyndhurst, NJ
Manchester, CT
Memphis, TN

North Shore, NY
Nutley, NJ
Orange/West Orange, NJ
Passaic Valley, NJ
Point Pleasant, NJ
Rutherford, NJ
Saddle Brook, NJ
San Diego, CA
Scotch Plains/Fanwood
Scranton, PA
Verona, NJ
Waterbury, CT
Westwood, NJ

Montville, NJ
New Jersey District X

Woodcliff Lake, NJ

Mille grazie to the following individuals for their support of the Scholarship Program: Bernard Brutto, Gerry Heytink, Frank Tidona, John and Carol Tidona, Peter and Pam Tidona.

Our Scholarship Program is a significant part of our identity; it's what we started out to do. As we continue to assist deserving students and honor academic excellence, it is possible that we will encourage an aspiring Supreme Court Justice. It has been known to happen.

When you think about all the money UNICANS raise to help others and consider the positive impact our contributors have made in so many areas, you realize just how accurate the police officer's comment was. Brother and sister UNICANS, you do important work.

Joan N. Tidona
Scholarship Director



(L-R) UNICO National Scholarship Director Joan Tidona, New Jersey Supreme Court Chief Justice Stuart Rabner and Passaic Clifton member Ron Giaconia.

MEMPHIS TN

Feast Day at Saint Clare

UNICANS attended Mass at the Monastery of St. Clare in Memphis, TN to celebrate the Feast Day of St. Clare. The monastery is home to five nuns who lead a cloistered life which encourages speaking in a quiet tone and frowns on leaving the grounds except for things such as doctor's appointments. The nuns have a fixed prayer schedule of six times a day. They receive about 400 prayer requests per month, which come by phone, mail and internet. The five nuns depend entirely on the generosity of the public to survive. This year the Memphis Chapter donated \$500 to the Poor Clares.



UNICANS chat with Sister Mary Anthony after attending Mass at the Monastery of St. Clare in Memphis, TN to celebrate the Feast Day of St. Clare.

CEDAR GROVE NJ

25 Years of Service

The Cedar Grove chapter of UNICO will be celebrating 25 years of 'service above self' this upcoming year and they are still growing. New members were sworn in at the September 23rd meeting this past week at Il Tulipano.



(L-R) UNICO President John Borgese, Nick Brindisi, new members June Brindisi and Judy Bianchi, Angie Fusco, Bill DiPietro

PLAINFIELDS NJ

Sister City Terno D'Isola

Anthony Bengivenga, President of the Plainfields UNICO Chapter visits Terno D'Isola, the Italian sister city of South Plainfield, NJ. After the Sept 11 ceremony in South Plainfield by UNICO and South Plainfield officials, Anthony Bengivenga flew to sister-city Terno D'Isola in the Province of Bergamo Italy where Mayor Corrado Centurelli, Vice Mayor Antonio Butti and former Councilman Giacomo Pedrini were waiting. They all had taken part in their Sept 11th ceremony in Terno at the same time as the South Plainfield ceremony on the same day. Three years ago, through the efforts of Anthony Bengivenga of UNICO and Giacomo Pedrini Councilman of Terno, a sister-city program was formed with the Borough of South Plainfield, NJ.



(L-R) Giacomo Pedrini, former Councilman of Terno; Anthony Bengivenga, President UNICO Plainfields Chapter; Antonio Butti, Vice-Mayor Terno D'Isola and Corrado Centurelli, Mayor of Terno D'Isola

KEARNY NJ

Romantic, Enchantic Atlantic City

On Sunday, September 26th, the Kearny Chapter sponsored its fall bus trip to the Showboat Hotel & Casino in Atlantic City. It was a beautiful, sunny morning as trip participants gathered in the parking lot of the Kearny Federal Savings Bank for a bit of breakfast before boarding the bus. Bingo, a 50-50 raffle and coffee and donuts served on the bus made the ride to Atlantic City more enjoyable. Once the bus arrived, everyone enjoyed a full day of gaming but the guys missed the Giants and Jets games. On the ride home, everyone enjoyed snacks, bottled water, and the "in-flight" movie – "The Blind Side." Everyone had a great time on the trip, especially the lucky winners.



Members of the Kearny Chapter and the Kearny Ladies pose by the chapter's banner before boarding the bus. (L-R) Lou Pandolfi, John Lacki, Jr., Pearl Yaszczewski, Alice Belfiore, Celeste Pandolfi, Denise Ficeto, Judy Hyde and Joe Sgalia.



Members of the Rutherford Chapter supported the trip and had a great time. (L-R) Vinnie DeCesare, Ralph LaRossa, Tony Frio, Pat LaRossa and Gloria Frio.



(L-R) Denise Ficeto and Judy Hyde selling bingo boards on the ride down to Atlantic City.

PITTSFIELD MA

Pittsfield Chapter 2010 Golf Tournament

On August 11th, the Pittsfield chapter held its 21st annual golf tournament at the scenic Berkshire Hills Country Club in Pittsfield. One hundred and seventy two golfers took part in the all day event which began at 7:30am with a shotgun start. Chapter volunteers were on hand to feed the early starters with eggs, sausage and coffee. A gourmet luncheon was provided and the day was topped off with an awards banquet featuring prime rib. Numerous prizes were also raffled off making this a fun day for both the participating golfers as well as the chapter volunteers. The chapter's twenty two member golf tournament committee as well as numerous other chapter volunteers worked together to make the day run flawlessly. This is the chapter's biggest fund raising event of the year which supports numerous local charities such as The Pittsfield Boys and Girls Club, Hospice Care, the Salvation Army, Homeless Veterans, various food pantries and many more as well as funding ten \$1000 scholarships to local high school students.

The Pittsfield UNICO golf tournament has become one of the largest and most successful golf tournaments in the region. It has established a reputation for great food and a premium raffle. It is well supported by chapter members as well as 120 local businesses.



A foursome teeing off and enjoying the hospitality of UNICO and the Berkshire Hills Country Club.



Past chapter president and golf tournament chairman Vin Marinaro (L) and current chapter president Scott Pignatelli (R), present one of many raffle prizes at the awards dinner.

Proverbi Italiani

"L'occhio del padrone ingrassa il cavallo."
Literal translation: "The eye of the owner fattens the horse."
Idiomatic translation: "Nobody takes care of one's business as does its owner."

2011 UNICO CONVENTION MAKE PLANS NOW!

Attenzione a tutta la famiglia di UNICO—our 89th Annual UNICO Convention will be held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia from August 3 to August 7, 2011. The Crystal Gateway is easily accessible to Washington, DC and its wonderful attractions. The hotel is built over a great shopping mall and the Metro for easy access to Washington.

Our annual golf outing will kick off the Convention on Wednesday morning. Look for more information in a future issue. Our day ends with our **Icebreaker** theme of “**Gone With the Wind.**” Come join us on Thursday afternoon and evening for our all new “**Taste of Italy**” tradeshow featuring a variety of vendors and special celebrity guests! Friday is our **Sports and Awards luncheon** with a special guest speaker for the event.

Throughout our days in Washington, DC, we will have a few special tours of this wonderful city and invite all our members and their guests to join us!

Saturday starts with our meeting and the installation of our new President, Glenn Pettinato, and culminates with our **Gala dinner**.

Our registration form and hotel information are in this issue. You can start planning your arrival dates with the hotel. You just need your credit card to hold the room nights. ***Nothing will be charged until your arrival!*** See our updated information at our website 2011UNICOconvention.org. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Gene Santoli at esantoli@aol.com or phone at 201-264-9282.



*The 2011 Convention committee at the Crystal Gateway Marriott the location of next years convention.
Front Row: Joe Iula, Executive VP Glenn Pettinato, the owner of CiaoDC Alyssa Ciccone, Gerry Heytink
Back Row: Members of the Crystal Gateway Marriott convention Team: Karen Wallin, Christine Bouchure, Director of Food and Beverage Brian Findley.*

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Just tell them you are with the Unico 2011 Convention

Or

You can go on our own Marriott Passkey website to
register at:

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/unico2011>

To register early all you need to do is give the
hotel your credit card information. They will not
charge your card until you arrive.

THE PRICE IS \$179.00 A NIGHT PLUS TAX

NOTE: Convention attendees NOT staying at the Crystal Gateway
Marriot will be assessed a surcharge for the Meals and Entertainment
Package as Room Nights are considered in the Resort charges for
convention activities

UNICO NATIONAL - 271 US Highway 46 West, Suite A-108 - Fairfield, New Jersey 07004-2458

MANGIA WITH MIKE



UNICO National Secretary Mike Pisano enjoys a porketta sandwich at La Festa in Scranton PA.



Porketta is slow roasted pork with special seasonings.

PLAINFIELDS NJ

Hershey PA Convention



(L-R) President Plainfields' Chapter Anthony Bengivenga with First Deputy DG NJ X Bob Bengivenga (R) and UNICO's official accordion player (C) .



(L-R) Plainfields' Chapter wins first place in the best scrapbook competition at the Hershey Convention.
(L-R) April Bengivenga, President of the Plainfields' Chapter of UNICO Anthony Bengivenga, First Deputy DG NJ X Bob Bengivenga, Elaine Biribin, and her husband, UNICO Past National President Renato Biribin.

SCRANTON PA

Porketta Tent

There were many who worked on Scranton Chapter's recent and highly successful porketta tent at the annual Labor Day LaFesta in Scranton on Labor Day weekend.



Carlo Celli and Lou DiMattio were just two of many who volunteered.



Pat Yanni was chairman of the Porketta stand and cooked all two tons of porketta!

PA DISTRICT IV



Terry & Tony Iasiello, June & Ken Vail Linda and Dr. President Roseto PA Chapter Frank Defrank, Rosalie and President of the Easton Chapter Angelo "Duice" LaDuca.

ONE VOICE COALITION



André DiMino, the immediate past President of UNICO National and the Italian American activist who led the anti-bias fight against MTV's "Jersey Shore," has been named President of the Italian American ONE VOICE Coalition.

ONE VOICE, the independent Italian American anti-bias organization, is a national network of activists that enables the Italian American community to act as one united voice when dealing with defamation, discrimination and negative stereotyping.

The organization, founded by Manny Alfano, of Bloomfield, NJ, who is also chair of UNICO National's Anti-Bias Committee, reaches thousands of members nationwide through the "Alfano Digest," an emailed newsletter that monitors media, advertisers, corporations and pop culture purveyors, for instances of stereotyping and defamation of Italian Americans. The organization also promotes positive images of Italian Americans and their culture and history.

"André DiMino has been at the forefront of the fight against bias for UNICO National, and his appointment as President of ONE VOICE will provide quite a boost in expanding and intensifying our efforts," said Alfano, who founded ONE VOICE in 1993. "The ONE VOICE Coalition feels that we now have an Italian-American leader who has a proven national identity. An individual who is recognized as being no nonsense with zero tolerance to negative stereotyping, defamation and discrimination against Italians and Italian-Americans." As one of the many goals with DiMino on as President, Alfano said he looked forward to providing complete support of the UNICO National resolution to permanently establish the month of October as Italian & Italian-American Heritage Month nationwide.

DiMino said he looked forward to assuming his leadership role and responsibilities, and thanked Alfano for his support through the years. "Manny has been an inspiration in the battle against bias for all Italian Americans," DiMino said. "I look forward to carrying this torch, fighting the good battle against bias, and promoting positive news and images about Italian Americans and our culture." ONE VOICE, DiMino noted, played an integral role in the battle against "Jersey Shore," shows such as "The Soprano's," as well as forcing various corporations through the years to stop advertisements that negatively portrayed Italian Americans. "As Manny is quite fond of saying, 'it never ends,'" DiMino said.

André DiMino Biography

André DiMino has become the recognized leader of the Italian American community in his efforts against the MTV series "Jersey Shore" since before its debut in November 2009 as well as other negative portrayals of Italian Americans in the media.

He has appeared on dozens of major TV and radio programs and his editorials and interviews have been in a wide number of newspapers, national magazines and publications. He is an articulate and outspoken advocate for Italian Americans and has championed many positive initiatives celebrating Italian heritage and culture. It has been noted by many organizations and prominent individuals that he has amassed a significant record in his contributions to the positive Italian American identity in the US.

DiMino has been a member of UNICO National since 1990 and is currently its immediate past National President. He served as National President for the 2009/2010 term and in numerous other national, regional and local positions over the past 20 years.

André is a business executive with an extensive engineering and science background. He has several issued and pending patents as well as technical publications. He currently serves as President and Chief Executive Officer of a technology-based manufacturing company. He holds a BS in engineering and an MBA in Finance. André has been actively involved in public and community service through local elective office and volunteer professional and philanthropic causes. He has received numerous recognitions and awards for his community service. In 2008, the Anti-Bias Committee of UNICO National presented André with its Mille Grazie Award, for his untiring efforts at defending and promoting Italian heritage and culture as well as combating negative stereotyping in the media and entertainment industries.

MEMPHIS TN

Operation Blue Crush

The Memphis Chapter of UNICO participates in Operation Blue Crush Challenge Day on October 1st. The purpose of Challenge Day was to raise money for the Memphis Police foundation whose goal is to enhance the effectiveness of the Memphis Police Department by providing resources that are not covered in the city's budget.



(Seated L-R) George Bond, Linda Bond, Marie Ricossa. (Standing L-R) Gloria Presley, Manette Singer, and Brenda Solomito



(L-R) Kerry Krag, Ray Ricossa, Marie Ricossa, Chapter President Sharon Thompson and PNP Michael Spano.

ORANGE/WEST NJ

Bocce Tournament

On July 21st, the Orange/West Orange Chapter of UNICO National, held its 13th Annual BOCCE Tournament at Panevino Restaurant in Livingston NJ.

Eugene LaRoche and Christopher Tomasello, the 2006 champions, beat Louis Rossi, a three time champion and his son, Matthew, in a highly competitive final, by a score of 11 to 10. Chaired by Joseph Vena, this annual event was the first monthly regular meeting of UNICO's newly installed president, Kristine Massari, who teaches Italian at West Orange High School.

UNICO is the largest community service organization in West Orange. In more than 53 years, it has raised over \$750,000, which it has given back to the community. Money has been awarded as scholarships and as grants to many organizations, primarily in Orange and West Orange, that service the various needs of those less fortunate. Grant money also promotes Italian culture and the arts. specific examples include the UNICO Garden for Children with Special needs at the Katz Center in Degnan Park and the Community Bulletin Board in front of Township Hall. The bulletin board was originally built by Orange/West Orange UNICO members.



(L-R) Chapter President Kristine Massari, the winners of the 13th Annual Orange/West Orange UNICO Bocce Tournament Eugene LaRoche and Christopher Tomasello, and Tournament Chairman Joseph Vena. Kristine and Joseph are presenting the trophies to the winners.

SAN ANTONIO TX



San Antonio Chapter President, Joe Monaco, at the Columbus Statue Wreath laying event.

BROOKHAVEN NY

New York City Excursion

On October 3rd, 36 members and friends of the Brookhaven NY Chapter traveled to New York City where they visited the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. After a great lunch in Little Italy, the group spent some time at "Eataly," a brand new Italian marketplace. Eataly was an Italian food lover's dream and the group met some celebrities who were kind enough to pose for pictures.



Charity DiVino

Thursday, November 11, 2010

7:00 - 10:00 pm

Sheraton Crossroads, Mahwah, NJ

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Buy 5 tickets, get the sixth FREE

Please visit www.grunico.org for further details.



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COLUMBUS DAY PARADE IN NEW YORK CITY



Pictured before the Columbus Day Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City are UNICO National Columbus Day Chair Ralph Contini, UNICO National President Chris DiMattio, OSIA National President Joseph DiTrapani and Past National President of OSIA Joe Sciamie.



President Chris jumped off the float to tap the famous Freddie's frying pan in memory of the Yankees great Joe DiMaggio. On Sunday, October 17th, the 85-year-old legend died of a heart attack.



Joining the parade with the National President Chris DiMattio and President UNICO Foundation John DiNapoli, (C) included Past National Presidents André DiMino, Joe Agresti, Mike D'Arminio, John Alati, Sal Mangano, and Frank Tidona.



The DiMattio family was well represented at the Big Apple parade: Nonna Silvia Celli, Carlo Celli, Ryan Kerr, Lou DiMattio, Carlo R. Celli, Lisa Dimattio Kerr, Katherine Kerr, Ann, Louis Robert and Chris DiMattio



National President Chris DiMattio and Columbus Chair Ralph Contini pose with just a few of the nearly 100 Scranton Members who marched in the New York City Parade.



Portland OR Chapter President Jo Ann Gallo proudly displays her chapter's banner. Jo Ann won the "who travelled the farthest contest" for UNICO!



Dan Lauria, star of Broadway's newest hit "Lombardi" poses with Chris, Ann, Louis and Baby Robert DiMattio before riding on the UNICO Float during the Columbus Day Parade in NYC.



Chris DiMattio meets with New York City Parade Grand Marshal Maria Bartiromo from CNBC-TV at the National Italian American Federation (NIAF) Gala in Washington DC.



SEASIDE HEIGHTS NJ



What a brilliant day and a great crowd on October 10th for the Annual Columbus Day Parade and Italian Festival in Seaside Heights NJ. National President Chris DiMattio, Columbus Day Chairman Ralph Contini, Third National Vice President Rick D'Arminio, PNP John Alati and PNP Sal Mangano. The PNPs participated along with many officers and members from New Jersey District I.



PASSAIC CLIFTON NJ



Among some of the participants at the Annual Flag Raising ceremony sponsored by the Passaic-Clifton Chapter on Monday, October 11th included National President Chris DiMattio, NJCongressman Bill Pascrell of the 8th District of NJ, and Chapter President David D'Arco.



JOHN BASILONE PARADE RARITAN NJ



Members of the Plainfields' UNICO Chapter (L-R) Anthony Bengivenga, John DeAndréa, Betina Dubas, and Michael Colucci.



(L-R) President Township of Union NJ Chapter, Joseph Almeida, Clark NJ members Henry Varriano and Robert Spinella, Vice President of Clark NJ Antonio DeiMedici V and Eastern Regional Representative Dominic Nicastro.



(L-R) William Hearon, PNP André DiMino, Mark Colucci, John De Andréa and Rae Calvo.



Laying the wreath at the Basile Statue are National President Chris DiMattio and DG NJ X Bill Hearon.



(L-R) UNICO Deputy DG NJ X Robert Bengivenga, President Plainfields Chapter Anthony Bengivenga, Chapter Treasurer Rae Calvo, Sergeant-at-Arms John DeAndréa, Vice President Plainfields Chapter Mike Colucci and Past National President of UNICO and Plainfields' UNICO founder Renato Biribin.



Robert Bengivenga, William Hearon, Renato Biribin, Hillsboro and the President of the Raritan chapter of UNICO Jerry Maddaluna.



PNP André DiMino and National President Chris DiMattio pose with DG NJ X Bill Hearon in front of the massive John Basilone Statue. The statue is cast in bronze and was sculptured by one of John's childhood friends in 1948. The statue depicts Gunnery Sergeant Basilone with the heavy .30 Caliber machine gun he used with such devastating power on Guadalcanal.



On the float (L-R) Mike Colucci, Anthony Bengivenga, President Plainfields' Chapter; John DeAndréa, Sgt-at-Arms; and Rae Calvo, Treasurer Plainfields Chapter.

Standing in front of the float left to right Bill Hearon, Governor UNICO District X NJ; Renato Biribin, Past National President of UNICO and Plainfields' UNICO founder; Chris DiMattio, UNICO National President ; and Robert Bengivenga Sr, UNICO Deputy District X Governor NJ.



Actor Jon Seda with National President Chris DiMattio on the dais. John Ceda was honored to play John Basilone in the HBO's series "The Pacific."



(L-R) Robert Bengivenga, actor Jon Seda, Marine and candidate for Freeholder Middlesex County Dick Frank and Anthony Bengivenga.



Pictured with the Marine Corps participants of the salute to Gunnery Sergeant-John Basilone include (L-R) Dom Nicastro, Chris DiMattio, André DiMino, and Bill Hearon.



UNION COUNTY NJ

Flag Raising Ceremony

Union County Freeholders presented DG NJ X William Hearon with a resolution in honor of Columbus Day during Union County's Second Annual Columbus Day Flag Raising Ceremony in Elizabeth NJ.



Helping raise the flag were UNICO National President Chris DiMattio, guest speaker Dr. Tom Bistocchi (Dr. Bistocchi is a Scranton native and Union County Vocational Technical Schools Superintendent), PNP and President of the Italian American One Voice Coalition André DiMino, PNP Renato Biribin, and Plainfields Chapter President Anthony Bengivenga.

HACKENSACK NJ



UNICANs participate in the Annual Wreath laying at Columbus Park in Hackensack NJ on October 10th. (L-R) Event co-chair Patricia Ruggiero, Hackensack Chapter President Ralph Contini, honoree Mike Melfi, National President Chris DiMattio and event co-chair and PNP Mike D'Arminio.

OCEAN COUNTY NJ



(L-R) Point Pleasant Beach members Victor Damato, Evie Cottone, Maria Whelan and Dominick Fiumano getting the banner ready for Ocean County Columbus Day Parade.

SADDLEBROOK NJ



On Saturday morning, October 9th, the Saddle Brook Chapter of UNICO gathered for their annual Columbus Day Wreath Laying Ceremony at the UNICO Welcome Park on Market Street in honor of Christopher Columbus. That same evening the chapter celebrated with their annual Columbus Day Beefsteak Dinner at the VFW on Market Street. The Saddle Brook Chapter of UNICO is proud of the great navigator and will do everything in its power to keep his memory alive and well. (L-R) Tom Liquori, Ron Cali, Chapter Past President Sue Syme, PNP Sal Mangano, Chapter President Criss Mangano, John Cappello and PDG Carl Esposito.

What Columbus Day Really Means

Written By William J. Connell

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If you think the holiday pits native Americans against Italian Americans, consider the history behind its origin.

During the run-up to Columbus Day I usually get a call from at least one and sometimes several newspaper reporters who are looking for the latest on what has become one of the most controversial of our national holidays. Rather than begin with whatever issues the media are covering—topics like the number of deaths in the New World caused by the European discovery; or the attitude of Columbus toward the indigenous inhabitants of the Caribbean (whom he really did want to use as forced laborers); or whether syphilis really came from the Americas to Europe; or whether certain people (the cast of *The Sopranos*, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia) deserve to be excluded from or honored in the parade in New York—I always try to remind the reporters that Columbus Day is just a holiday.

Leave the parades aside. The most evident way in which holidays are celebrated is by taking a day off from work or school. Our system of holidays, which developed gradually over time and continues to evolve, is founded upon the recognition that weekends are not sufficient, that some jobs don't offer much time off, and that children and teachers need a break now and then in the course of the school year. One characteristic of holidays is that unless they are observed widely, which is to say by almost everyone, many of us wouldn't take them. There are so many incremental reasons for not taking time off (to make some extra money, to impress the boss, or because we're our own bosses and can't stop ourselves) that a lot of us would willingly do without a day's vacation that would have been good both for us and for society at large if we had taken it. That is why there are legal holidays.

But which days should be holidays? Another way of posing the question would be to say, "Given that holidays are necessary, but that left to their own devices people would simply work, how do you justify a legal holiday so that it does not appear completely arbitrary, and so that people will be encouraged to observe it?" Most of the media noise around the Columbus Day holiday is about the holiday's excuse, not the holiday itself. Realizing that helps to put matters in perspective.

In a country of diverse religious faiths and national origins like the United States, it made sense to develop a holiday system that was not entirely tied to a religious calendar. (Christmas survives here, of course, but in law it's a secular holiday much like New Year's Day.) So Americans do not all leave for the shore on August 15th, the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, the way Italians do; and while St. Patrick's Day is celebrated by many Americans, it is not a legal holiday in any of the states. The American system of holidays was constructed mostly around a series of great events and persons in our nation's history. The aim was to instill a feeling of civic pride. Holidays were chosen as occasions to bring everyone together, not for excluding certain people. They were supposed to be about the recognition of our society's common struggles and achievements. Civic religion is often used to describe the principle behind America's calendar of public holidays.

Consider the range and variability of the meanings of our holidays. Certainly they have not always been occasions for celebration: Memorial Day and Veterans'

Day involve mourning for the dead and wounded. Labor Day commemorated significant hardships in the decades when unions were struggling to organize. Having grown up in the 1960s I remember how Abraham Lincoln's Birthday (now lumped in with Presidents' Day, and with some of its significance transferred to Martin Luther King, Jr. Day) took on special meaning during the Civil Rights movement and after the JFK assassination.

When thinking about the Columbus Day holiday it helps to remember the good intentions of the people who put together the first parade in New York. Columbus Day was first proclaimed a national holiday by President Benjamin Harrison in 1892, 400 years after Columbus's first voyage. The idea, lost on present-day critics of the holiday, was that this would be a national holiday that would be special for recognizing both Native Americans, who were here before Columbus, and the many immigrants—including Italians—who were just then coming to this country in astounding numbers. It was to be a national holiday that was not about the Founding Fathers or the Civil War, but about the rest of American history. Like the Columbian Exposition dedicated in Chicago that year and opened in 1893, it was to be about our land and all its people. Harrison especially designated the schools as centers of the Columbus celebration because universal public schooling, which had only recently taken hold, was seen as essential to a democracy that was seriously aiming to include everyone and not just preserve a governing elite.

You won't find it in the public literature surrounding the first Columbus Day in 1892, but in the background lay two recent tragedies, one involving Native Americans, the other involving Italian Americans. The first tragedy was the massacre by U.S. troops of between 146 and 200 Lakota Sioux, including men, women and children, at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, on December 29, 1890. Shooting began after a misunderstanding involving an elderly, deaf Sioux warrior who hadn't heard and therefore did not understand that he was supposed to hand over his rifle to the U.S. Cavalry. The massacre at Wounded Knee marked the definitive end of Indian resistance in the Great Plains. The episode was immediately seen by the government as potentially troubling, although there was much popular sentiment against the Sioux. An inquiry was held, the soldiers were absolved, and some were awarded medals that Native Americans to this day are seeking to have rescinded.

A second tragedy in the immediate background of the 1892 Columbus celebration took place in New Orleans. There, on March 14, 1891—only 10 weeks after the Wounded Knee Massacre—11 Italians were lynched in prison by a mob led by prominent Louisiana politicians. A trial for the murder of the New Orleans police chief had ended in mistrials for three of the Italians and the acquittal of the others who were brought to trial. Unhappy with the verdict and spurred on by fear of the "Mafia" (a word that had only recently entered American usage), civic leaders organized an assault on the prison to put the Italians to death. This episode was also troubling to the U.S. Government. These were legally innocent men who had been killed. But Italians were not very popular, and even Theodore Roosevelt was quoted as saying that he thought the New Orleans Italians "got what they deserved." A grand jury was summoned, but no one was charged with a crime. President Harrison, who would proclaim the Columbus Day holiday the following year, was genuinely saddened by the case, and over the objections of some members of congress he paid reparations to the Italian government for the deaths of its citizens.

Whenever I hear of protests about the Columbus Day holiday—protests that tend to pit Native Americans against Italian Americans, I remember these tragedies that occurred so soon before the first Columbus Day holiday, and I shake my head. President Harrison did not allude to either of these sad episodes in his proclamation of the holiday, but the idea for the holiday involved a vision of an America that would get beyond the prejudice that had led to these deaths. Columbus Day was supposed to recognize the greatness of all of America's people, but

especially Italians and Native Americans.

Consider how the first Columbus Day parade in New York was described in the newspapers. It consisted mostly of about 12,000 public school students grouped into 20 regiments, each commanded by a principal. The boys marched in school uniforms or their Sunday best, while the girls, dressed in red, white and blue, sat in bleachers. Alongside the public schoolers there were military drill squads and 29 marching bands, each of 30 to 50 instruments. After the public schools, there followed 5,500 students from the Catholic schools. Then there were students from the private schools wearing school uniforms. These included the Hebrew Orphan Asylum, the Barnard School Military Corps, and the Italian and American Colonial School. The Dante Alighieri Italian College of Astoria was dressed entirely in sailor outfits. These were followed by the Native American marching band from the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, which, according to one description, included "300 marching Indian boys and 50 tall Indian girls." That the Native Americans came right after the students from the Dante Alighieri School speaks volumes about the spirit of the original Columbus Day.

I teach college kids, and since they tend to be more skeptical about Columbus Day than younger students, it's nice to point out that the first Columbus Day parade had a "college division." Thus 800 New York University students played kazoos and wore mortarboards. In between songs they chanted "Who are we? Who are we? New York Universitee!" The College of Physicians and Surgeons wore Skeletons on their hats. And the Columbia College students marched in white hats and white sweaters, with a message on top of their hats that spelled out "We are the People."

So Columbus Day is for all Americans. It marks the first encounter that brought together the original Americans and the future ones. A lot of suffering followed, and a lot of achievement too. That a special role has been reserved for Italians in keeping the parades and the commemoration alive for well over a century seems right, since Columbus was Italian—although even in the 1890s his nationality was being contested. Some people, who include respectable scholars, still argue, based on elements of his biography and family history, that Columbus must really have been Spanish, Portuguese, Jewish, or Greek, instead of, or in addition to, Italian. One lonely scholar in the 1930s even wrote that Columbus, because of a square jaw and dirty blond hair in an old portrait, must have been Danish. The consensus, however, is that he was an Italian from outside of Genoa.

So much for his ethnicity. What about his moral standing? In the late 19th century an international movement, led by a French priest, sought to have Columbus canonized for bringing Christianity to the New World. To the Catholic Church's credit, this never got very far. It sometimes gets overlooked in current discussions that we neither commemorate Columbus's birthday (as was the practice for Presidents Washington and Lincoln, and as we now do with Martin Luther King, Jr.) nor his death date (which is when Christian saints are memorialized), but rather the date of his arrival in the New World. The historical truth about Columbus—the short version suitable for reporters who are pressed for time—is that Columbus was Italian, but he was no saint.

The holiday marks the event, not the person. What Columbus gets criticized for nowadays are attitudes that were typical of the European sailing captains and merchants who plied the Mediterranean and the Atlantic in the 15th century. Within that group he was unquestionably a man of daring and unusual ambition. But what really mattered was his landing on San Salvador, which was a momentous, world-changing occasion such as has rarely happened in human history. Sounds to me like a pretty good excuse for taking a day off from work.

William J. Connell is Professor of History and holder of the Joseph M. and Geraldine C. La Motta Chair in Italian Studies at Seton Hall University.

PT. PLEASANT NJ

Membership Growth? How Does Point Do It?

That's the question many people ask me when they notice that membership grew in Point Pleasant Beach Chapter from 35 members when I became Chapter President in 2005 up to over 110 in 2010.

Well, it wasn't easy and it wasn't overnight that's for sure. Now as DG I helped install eleven new members there, so maybe I can help other chapters who are seeking to build--AND retain their membership--especially the newly chartered chapters with little funds and much organizational areas to accomplish.

First the chapter needs to devise short and long range plans-and enlist motivational members to carry out some of the objectives. You can not do it alone-believe me I tried!!

The quickest but not easiest was getting out to the community, especially if you are in an area that is quite unfamiliar with UNICO.

We had a booth at every event, festival and Yes-even on the Boardwalk-handing out info and actually talking to people everywhere.

Next came our "Media Blitz" -with the help of some good photos--Thanks Bob--and terrific writing in conjunction with hounding reporters. (Thanks, Tony), UNICO articles appeared regularly in local newspapers. (Check out our articles in ComUNICO for example.)

We also appealed to the demographics of our area...a sleepy resort town that was experiencing an influx of "Up North" retirees relocating to the Jersey Shore. These people were looking for a social-yet charitable connection--and we offered just that.

But more importantly at each meeting or membership drive, each newcomer was greeted personally and made to feel welcome.

After the Chapter President greeted them, I made sure new people were seated with enthusiastic members...and that someone from Membership committee made them feel at home (Thanks, Laura and Linda). Maybe for that reason, many signed up by the end of the first meeting-and then by the second meeting they were invited to



Newly Installed Members of the Point Pleasant Beach Chapter and The Membership Committee (L-R) Donna Gallina, Nick Scarpello, Maria Whelan, Nancy Pellicchia, Sara Chmielewski, Brian Bartlett, Evelyn Cottone, MaryAnn Freiwald, Rose Iantosca, Lynne Cipolla, Steve Pellicchia, Laura Lenhart, Ray Williams and Chapter President Tony Scardaville

join a committee. This is Crucial-If members are not actively involved, interest wanes quickly.

Each meeting besides informational was cultural and a theme or purpose to come back each month was evident.

I must say a lot of Point Pleasant's popularity is credited to member Chef Joe Spano-who provides a fabulous Italian meal for us at each meeting-and The White Sands Resort is a lovely meeting place.

One of Point Pleasant Beach UNICO's biggest assets is our ACES Junior Chapter. Not only did parents and grandparents of these youngsters join-but the community service these youngsters performed made such an impact and was duly recognized as such a positive effect on our community that their activities were talked about-and published in papers on a regular basis. At times it seems these teenagers do more for UNICO than our adult membership. Please note: starting an ACES chapter takes a lot of time and effort but eventually supporting a youth group is one of a Chapter's most inspiring projects.

As to retention, that is something chapters need to focus on early each year and not just when dues are not paid. Granted our chapter has several drop-outs yearly, but some are saved before they resign. How?? Our personable Chairperson gives a wake-up call to each member we have not seen in awhile or a pep talk to those who can't make meetings. Sometimes that's all a member needs to be revitalized and reconsider (Thanks, Ray)

However I think the secret formula is reminding the membership the good we do for the community each month-and that each member is a valuable part of our UNICO family. Our members are so proud of the charities we support and the scholarships we give to young Italian Americans that they soon realize that "giving is the greatest gift." The Point Pleasant Chapter was honored with four Outstanding Membership Awards at the past national conventions and we are aiming for a fifth one at the Virginia Convention. The awards are not just shiny plaques but represent the many new friends we now have serving with us in UNICO. Please join us sometime when you take a ride "down the shore" on the last Tuesday of the month and see for yourself! If you have any questions, just send me an e-mail at grace@gynn.net

P.S. Needless to say, we are not in UNICO for the thanks. Nevertheless, recognition is always appreciated especially in the year of "Serving Those Who Serve."



NJ District Governor Grace Gynn presenting Outstanding Membership plaque received at National Convention to Point Pleasant Beach Membership Committee-Donna Gallina, Ray Williams and Laura Lenhart.



VERONA NJ

Labor Day Run

Verona UNICO held a Fundraiser and UNICO Members helped to make the 28th Annual "Labor Day 5-K Classic" a tremendous success. There were over 800 runners, 5,000 spectators and 33 corporate sponsors which contributed to this outstanding community event. The more than \$16,000 that was raised through this race enables the Chapter to grant six scholarships to local high school students and make numerous donations to local and national charities.



NJ District XI Governor Nicolina Carpinelli (R) installs the new Chapter officers of the Verona UNICO (L-R) John Alati, Bruce Snogans, Larry Colombo, Nancy Magrans, and Fred Montalbano.



Verona Chapter President Linda-Gail Alati welcomes the first new member of the year Sal Ferruggia. Sal was previously a member and even served as Chapter President 15 years ago. Looking on are his sponsors, Santi Condorelli and John Alati.



Verona UNICO Members Volunteer at the "Labor Day 5-K Classic"

Proverbi Italiani

Fra il dire e il fare c'è di mezzo il mare."

Translation: "An ocean lies between what is said and what is done."

Idiomatic translation: "Easier said than done."

BOOK REVIEW

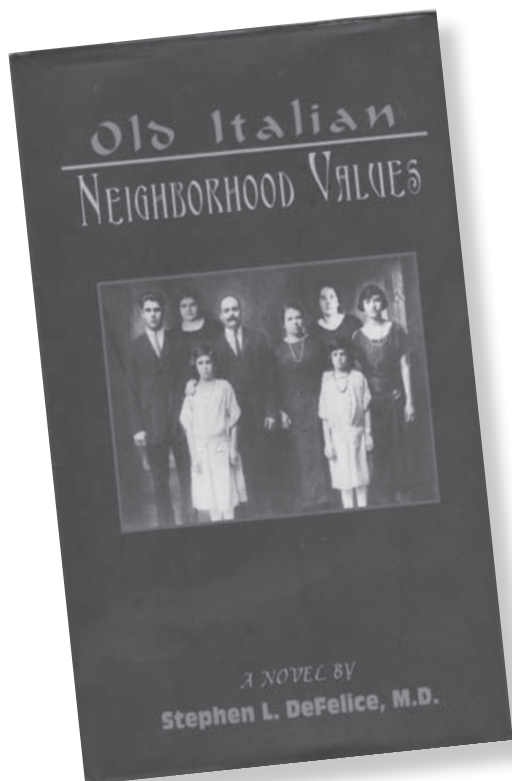


*Reviewed by
Dr. Tony Arabia
San Antonio Chapter*

“Old Italian Neighborhood Values”

If members want to find an enjoyable read about “the way it was” with an up-to-date Italian American theme in all its pepper-salt (and garlicky) seasoning, it is this book. The setting is an annual dinner gathering held at Mario’s Restaurant, attended by a variety of interesting characters from political, medical, religious, and sundry other walks of life. They are: a “madam,” a priest, a congressman, a doctor, a social worker, and so on.

The discussions, arguments and enlightening exchanges are, page after page, not only entertaining, they are also amazingly instructive and beneficial. Most readers will gain useful knowledge about several subjects and human relationships in literature, good food, music and drink. In its extent, the work is an encyclopedic adventure, a tour de force, seemingly irreverent, bombastic, and loaded with the most vile exchanges in crude language, BUT it is entertaining and enlightening on almost all subjects known to man. A first novel of 394 pages of “values,” descriptions of tantalizing food and music, its “diners” enjoy the range and depth of many views “as it was” and how it had changed in our “neighborhoods of American life.” If readers are overly sensitive about the rough language (and there are many wonderful Italian phrases) they may become alarmed, but they will be given an extraordinary amount of information to think about! From 1st Books Library, www.1stbooks.com — 1-800-839-8640



UNICO REMEMBERS HERSHEY 1980



Hershey Park, PA memories circa 1980---This year, UNICO National held its annual convention at Hershey Park, PA, where exactly 30 years ago, UNICO held its convention electing Renato Biribin (pictured) as National President. Biribin, the founder of Plainfields’ UNICO, holds the distinction of being one of the youngest National Presidents of UNICO.

IN MEMORIAM



Richard Bonanno

A Memorial Service for Richard C. Bonanno was held on Saturday, September 18, 2010 at Queen of Peace Church on Ridge Road in North Arlington, NJ. Fr. Robert Wolfec was the Celebrant.

Mr. Bonanno (1916 - 2010) passed away on August 29th while many of us were either at Convention or travelling to the convention and thus unable to attend either the wake services or the funeral mass.

Mr. Bonanno was a Charter Member of both the West Hudson (Kearny) and North Arlington Chapters. He was a Past District Governor of New Jersey District VII (1976-1977) as well as a 50 Year and Life Member of UNICO National. Mr. Bonanno was a member of the Rutherford Chapter.

Condolences can be sent to Mrs. Mary Bonanno and the Bonanno Family at 7 Carrie Road, North Arlington, New Jersey 07031.

Proverbi Italiani

“Fatti i cazzi tuoi, ca campi cent’anni.”

Translation from Calabrian: “Mind your own business, and you’ll live 100 years.”

Better: Chi s’occupa coi i suoi propri affari, va continuare per cent’anni. (Colui che s’occupa ...)

Whoever occupies himself with his own affairs will live a hundred years.

KEARNY NJ

Kearny Chapter Sponsors Flea Market

On Sunday, October 10th, the Kearny Chapter sponsored an “Italian” Flea Market at the Frank A. Vincent area of Kearny’s Riverbank Park. Members of the Chapter also conducted a 50-50 raffle to help raise additional funds for the Chapter’s charities. A membership table was set up with the Chapter’s scrapbook, UNICO National membership brochures, awards won, issues of ComUNICO and newspaper publicity received from local newspapers.



Lou Pandolfi and Gerry Ficeto getting ready to “sell those raffle tickets.”



Chapter members at the membership table – pictured (L-R) are John Lacki, Jr., Joseph Sgalia, Judy Hyde, Alice Belfiore, President of the Kearny Ladies, Denise Ficeto, Gerry Ficeto and Celeste Pandolfi. Not pictured: Ralph Confessore and Lou Pandolfi



It was a beautiful sunny day as residents enjoyed shopping for bargains at the flea market.

KEARNY NJ

Kearny Chapter Holds Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony

Members of the Kearny Chapter, Ladies Auxiliary, and members of the Town Council gathered on Saturday, October 9th at the Christopher Columbus statue in Riverbank Park to honor The Great Navigator. Dr. Richard Sorrentino, a senior Italian teacher at Old Bridge High School spoke on the many important aspects of Columbus' discovery of the New World. Following Dr. Sorrentino's remarks, a commemorative wreath was placed by the statue.



Dr. Richard Sorrentino speaking on the many important aspects of Christopher Columbus' discovery of the Americas.



(L-R) Ida Nigro, Nino Capitti, Councilwoman Carol Jean Doyle, Councilwoman Susan McCurrie, Mayor Alberto Santos, Dr. Richard Sorrentino, Joseph Sgalia, Alice Belfiore, Ralph Confessore, Gerry Ficeto and Louis Pandolfi.

Proverbi Italiani

"Fatti maschi, parole femmine."

Translation: "Facts are male, words are female."

Alternative: "Manly deeds, womanly words."

Note: Motto of the state of Maryland

ITALIAN TRIBUNE NEWSPAPER DINNER



Immediate Past National President Andre' DiMino was honored on October 8th at the Italian Tribune's 40th Anniversary Columbus Awards Gala with the 2010 Heritage Award for his efforts at promoting and defending Italian heritage and culture. He is pictured here (L) with National President Chris DiMattio on the dais at the dinner with the Heritage Award.



There were many UNICANs attending to see Andre' receive the Award. UNICO Foundation President John DiNapoli (L) Andre' and National President Chris.



Chris and Andre' with Vincent Donofrio, the acclaimed actor who's breakthrough role in "Full Metal Jacket" and who plays Detective Goren on Law & Order: Criminal Intent, was recognized as an actor's actor for his wide body of work. In his acceptance speech, Andre' complimented and thanked Donofrio for his commitment to avoid roles that negatively portray or stereotype Italian Americans.



There were a number of celebrities and dignitaries at the dinner. Here Andre' is joined by entertainer, actor and author Sal Richards who he has known for many years.

NORTH HALEDON NJ

Annual Golf Outing

New Jersey District IV, North Haledon Chapter holds its 24th annual golf outing at the Water Gap Country Club in Water Gap PA on July 9th. Pictured are members checking players on the course.



PLAINFIELDS NJ

New York City Columbus Day Parade



(L-R). Plainfields' UNICO members at Columbus Day Parade: Sergeant At Arms John DeAndrea, Tina Dubas, UNICO District X Deputy Governor Robert Bengivenga, Plainfields UNICO President Anthony Bengivenga, and Plainfields' UNICO Vice President Michael Colucci.



Plainfields' UNICO President Anthony Bengivenga stops during Columbus Day march in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral where his Eminence, Cardinal Edward Egan was greeting marchers.

FIGHTING ITALIAN AMERICAN STEREOTYPING

UNICO National Presidential Guest Lecture
Hershey, PA, August 30, 2010

Prof. William J. Connell, holder of the Joseph M. and Geraldine C. La Motta Chair in Italian Studies, Seton Hall University

Let me begin by thanking President André DiMino for his invitation to speak to you this morning, and by congratulating incoming President Chris DiMattio on what will almost certainly be an exciting and eventful year. André asked me to give what he called a “Presidential Guest Lecture.” That sounded suspiciously long and boring. So I decided that the best thing to do would be simply to tell you what I think of your President, André DiMino, and how proud you should be of what he has done this year for UNICO.

I’ve known André for probably six or seven years, and I was not at all surprised when I heard that he had joined UNICO’s Vice Presidential line-up to become National President. André is a hard worker and he brings a lot of energy and enthusiasm to everything he does. He’s been busy throughout the year visiting chapters, working with the national office, continuing initiatives like the campaign for Abruzzi Earthquake Relief that was begun under Kathy Strozza’s presidency and that Renato Biribin has been directing.

But where I would really like to congratulate André is for the way in which he took the initiative, and gave UNICO a national visibility that it has never before had, when he made the gutsy decision to take a stand against a certain television show that was targeting the Italian Americans of New Jersey in a particularly offensive way.

When MTV decided to film a reality series with a group of twenty-somethings on the Jersey Shore, they didn’t have to advertise that they were looking for a group of Guidos and Guidettes. And they didn’t have to put an Italian flag on the garage. For André, as for many of us, these seemed to be basic matters involving the offensive treatment of a particular ethnic group in our multicultural society.

As someone who has studied the images, both positive and negative, of Italians in American society, and as someone who teaches Italian American history at Seton Hall University, I am well aware of the different perspectives that different people have when it comes to issues of ethnic stereotyping in the media. I understand where people are coming from when they say that certain things need to be taken with a grain of salt, or that art and freedom of expression are involved. But I am also very sensitive to the harm that stereotyping can do in our society, especially to young people who are trying to make their way in the world by getting into good schools and landing their first jobs. I can’t believe there are many parents or grandparents here who would want their kids to be typecast by a potential employer as a “Snooki” or a “Situation” just because they happened to be Italian American and come from New Jersey.

When André DiMino decided to speak up about this television show – a show that even its fans like to describe as “entirely worthless entertainment” – he did something that was necessary. And notice that he and UNICO took the lead. Did the Italian

government protest the misuse of its flag? Did any well-known Italian American actors or directors make an issue of it? They did not, and that was in spite of the fact that so-called Reality cast members do not even make the wages of regular actors.

Part of the reason for the silence in some quarters is that there has been a long history of attempts by Italian Americans to speak up about stereotyping that have had very little impact.

Which is why it took a certain amount of courage for André—who at that point was not, or better, not yet, a well-known media figure—to take up this issue while he was serving as President. André is a good friend of Manny Alfano, and he knew what would be involved. There would be people who would criticize him personally. They would urge him to “lighten up,” and sometimes they would say worse things.

But, as I see it, André DiMino was doing something not dissimilar from what Bill Cosby did a few years ago when he decided to speak up about misbehavior on the part of certain young black Americans. There are cases involving young people where you wish their parents had given them lessons in good behavior. If that didn’t happen, and if their behavior involves the public perception of an entire ethnic group, it’s perfectly legitimate for that ethnic group’s leaders to make a public stand and to protest what is going on.

So I’d like to congratulate Mr. DiMino for his fine work. I’m glad that because of his protests MTV stopped using the word “guido” in its voiceovers. And I’m glad that the Italian flag with a map of the State of New Jersey at its center is no longer going to be on the garage door of the show’s party house in Seaside Heights.

But I’d like to remind him and to remind everyone here of the much bigger task that confronts us. We need to educate the public, through cultural programs, through films and books and websites and blogs, about the great and proud history of Italians and Italian Americans. Above all, we need to continue, in our families, at schools like Seton Hall, and through organizations like UNICO, to be sure that young people get the sort of strong general education they deserve. Our society doesn’t need any more barely-literate “Snookis” and “Situations.” We need parents and teachers to raise children who will grow up to be responsible, persuasive, well-educated, committed leaders. We want them to be like André DiMino.



Dr. Bill Connell of Seton Hall University addressed the UNICO National Convention in Hershey PA. Professor Connell holds the Joseph M. and Geraldine C. La Motta Chair in Italian Studies and explained the damage done by negative media stereotyping of Italian Americans.

**Happy Thanksgiving
From ComUNICO**

BINGHAMTON NY

New Members

At the September monthly meeting, District Governor Dr. Felix DeSio inducted six new members and two honorary members into the Greater Binghamton Chapter of UNICO. New members: Donna Carlini, Grace Pezzuti, Nancy Redolphy, Bill Tabeek, Patty Tabeek, Jeff Trioibio.

Honorary members: Donald Adams and Laurie Adams “WELCOME TO ALL !!” Mark McDade, National Membership & Retention Director provided key information to our newly formed chapter. Mr. McDade extended his congratulations to our new members and encouraged each of our members to bring a new member to our chapter.

In honor of Dr. Felix J. DeSio being awarded “Outstanding District Governor” at the 2010 National UNICO Convention in Hershey, PA. New York State Assembly woman and a Greater Binghamton Chapter member, Donna Lupardo presented District Governor DeSio with a proclamation from the New York State Assembly for showing appreciation for his dedication and service to our chapter and the PA II District. A proclamation from the Mayor of Endicott, NY and Greater Binghamton member, John Bertoni was also presented to District Governor DeSio. “CONGRATULATIONS!!”

Our guest speaker for the evening was Mr. Jim Fye representing “Little Italy Heritage Museum” located on Odell Avenue, Endicott, NY. Mr. Fye presented a slideshow of the Little Italy Heritage Museum’s development and needs. The museum mission includes obtaining artifacts and historical memorabilia. The Greater Binghamton Chapter is looking to forge a relationship with the Endicott Heritage Museum to promote the cultural and educational aspects of Italian heritage in our community.



40th Anniversary Dinner

Plainfields' UNICO Recently celebrated its 40th anniversary with a dinner and show with famed tenor Nino Rossano at the South Plainfield Senior Center.



(L-R) Plainfields' UNICO Founder Renato Biribin, Plainfields UNICO Charter Member Tom La Marca, Plainfields' UNICO Charter Member Frank Licato, UNICO National President Chris DiMattio, First Lady Ann DiMattio, Plainfields' UNICO President Anthony Bengivenga, Plainfields' UNICO Immediate Past President Robert Bengivenga.



*Plainfields' UNICO Charter members:
Frank Licato, Tom La Marca (Holding
Charter), and Renato Biribin.*



UNICO National President Chris DiMattio receives the 1st Wine by Plainfields' Chapter President Anthony Bengivenga. The wine was personally handmade and bottled by Anthony Bengivenga.



Recognition of the Italian Language teachers (L-R) Plainfields' Chapter member and Italian Language instructor Angela Barrata, President of the Plainfields Chapter Anthony Bengivenga and Plainfields' Chapter member and Italian Language Instructor Sue Leonardis.



Plainfields UNICO Past Presidents gather 'round with current President Anthony Bengivenga (right at end) (L-R) Robert Tarte, Frank Licato, Rick McNally, Robert Bengivenga, Renato Biribin, and Anthony Bengivenga.

CARBONDALE PA



The Carbondale Chapter of UNICO gathered in Memorial Park in Carbondale for their Annual Wreath Ceremony on October 10th. (Front Row L-R) Yvonne Gatto, Anthony Greto, Chip Calabro Sr., Jerry Arnese, Tom Gatto(Second Row L-R) Aaron Haley, Lucus Pollits, Joe Carachilo, Don Gibbs, Joe Masco and Tom Gretzula.

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SAN ANTONIO TX

Hershey PA Convention



Hershey Convention July/August 2010 Picnic Hershey Park



Beanery Coffee Shop Hershey, PA 2010



(L-R) Joe and Patsy Monaco, Bill & Elizabeth Kelly and Tony and Rose Marie Arabia., ,

SAN DIEGO CA

SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON



San Diego Chapter President James Pieri, Jr. presents a certificate of appreciation to Nino from Trattoria Fantastica.

NUTLEY NJ

News Fron Nutley

The Nutley, NJ Chapter of UNICO National is preparing for it's 2010-2011 year under the leadership of Marie Solimo, who is entering her second year as Chapter President. The initial dinner meeting took place on Thursday, September 2nd. A variety of activities have been scheduled in regards to Culture & Heritage, scholarship fundraising, social activities, speakers at each dinner meeting, community service and other issues confronting the Italian-American population in general. One of the activities in the midst of planning is a trip to see a new production based on the life of Vince Lombardi. Plans are also being developed to bring the ACES program to Nutley High School in the near future. Tom Sposato was recently sworn in as the 3rd Alternate Delegate to District 7.

Nutley UNICO President, Marie Solimo and Scholarship Chairperson, Anthony Malfitano are very pleased to announce the winners of our Nutley UNICO Chapter's 2009-10 Scholarship awards.

The four year scholarships (\$4,000, \$3,000 and \$2,000) offered by Nutley UNICO were awarded to Brendan Striano, Louis Saporito and Steven Filippi. In addition nineteen one time grants were also awarded for academic achievement, vocational plans, Italian language studies, art, music, food, engineering, literature and athletics. These awards were presented in a series of four award events in April, May and June. The total scholarships awarded totaled \$28,350 in 2010 which came from Chapter fundraising and donations from families and friends of loved ones. The members of the Nutley Chapter thanked everyone for the loyal support and success of this program.

The 2009-2010 year ended with a flurry of activities. The Nutley Chapter sponsored its first Little League team who went on to finish undefeated at 10-0. Chapter members were also successful themselves on the diamond by defeating the Nutley Irish-American Club by a score of 26-18 in the first annual UNICO-Italian American softball game. \$1,026 was raised from this event to be donated to the Nutley Family Service Bureau. This will be the start of a great community tradition.

Finally, the Nutley Chapter offered its condolences to the family of Larry Costello, a charter member and consistent attendee at all of our events, who passed away this past summer.



Michael Italiano, Phyllis Coldebella and President Marie Solimo at one of the newly installed signs noting the Nutley UNICO Chapter.



President Marie Solimo presents a check for \$1026 to the Nutley Family Service Bureau. The money was raised by Nutley UNICO and the Nutley Irish American Club at a charity softball game between the two organizations. UNICO beat the Irish with a score of 26-18.



Nutley, NJ Chapter Scholarship Chairman Anthony Malfitano (center) congratulating four of the scholarship recipients at the June Awards dinner.



Members of the Nutley, NJ Chapter preparing for their softball contest against the Nutley Irish-American Club. These UNICANs were victorious by a score of 26-18.

RAMSEY NJ

Cooking with Nonna

Ramsey Chapter welcomed "Cooking with Nonna" sensation Rossella Rago at our September monthly dinner at Bon Giovannis. She finalized plans with the Greater Ramsey UNICO for their upcoming annual "Charity di Vino" on November 11th at the Sheraton Crossroads.



(L-R) Vito Rago, Rossella Rago, Donna Bradshaw, Louis LaVigna, Joe Tredici

BINGHAMTON NY

Super Raffle

The Greater Binghamton Chapter of UNICO National hosted a “Super Raffle” fund raiser on July 24, 2010 at The Son’s of Italy hall in Binghamton, NY. Fabulous buffet stations complete with delicious Italian foods and specialty appetizers were offered by Debra De Lucia of De Lucia Caterers. The \$3,000 top prize was won by our caterers! Chris DiMattio, UNICO National President, was the recipient of the \$1000 second prize. Chris graciously donated his winnings back to the Greater Binghamton Scholarship Fund.

District Governor Dr Felix and Jean DeSio, Mr. & Mrs. Tom Salpino from the Sayre, PA Chapter and Pauline & Henry Sallusti from the Scranton, Pa chapter were among those in attendance. Entertainment was provided by the Sgro Brothers Harmonica Duo & Band. Large cans of San Marzano Tomato’s were donated by our Greater Binghamton member, Jeff Trofibio. Members were able to take home these tasteful center pieces.



WESTWOOD NJ



Roseann and Gerry Heytink holding the Westwood NJ Banner as we line up for this years NYC Colombus Day Parade.

ST. LOUIS MO

Columbus Day



St. Louis Chapter of UNICO Columbus Day booth. Members pictured (Front Row L-R): Kaye Quentin, Vincenzo Monteleone, Frances Regalia, Catherine Marzorati, Joseph Palazzo, Linda Stark and George Stark. (Back Row L-R): Nancy Null, Norman Marzorati.



St. Louis Chapter President and 2010 Spirit of Columbus Honoree, Vincenzo Monteleone addresses the audience at Berra Park, on The Hill. Also pictured is 2010 Grand Marshal, Michael Lombardo.



St. Louis Chapter Columbus Day booth selling their famous meatball sandwiches.

CLARK NJ

New York City Columbus Day Parade



UNICO NJ District X Deputy Governor and past Plainfields' UNICO President Robert Bengivenga tips cap as he carries Clark UNICO banner along with Henry Varriano.

BOOK REVIEW



Book Review by Marianne Lalli Regan, UNICO San Diego

“Catina’s Haircut- A Novel in Stories”

by Paola Corso
Terrace Books, Madison, WI
ISBN-13: 978-029924840-6
ISBN-10: 029924840-2

How many of us can remember sitting around the kitchen table as little kids, exhorting our parents to “tell us about the olden days.” We delighted in hearing how our elders “walked five miles in the snow” to the “one room schoolhouse” or “delivered blocks of ice out of the back of a horse-drawn wagon before sunrise.” We cherished hearing the same stories, over and over, and we would gleefully correct them if they strayed from the remembered script.

That’s what Paola Corso has done with “Catina’s Haircut.” The author has strung together all the “olden” stories of her elders, about their lives in Calabria before they emigrated as well as their adventures once they arrived in America. This was a way for each generation to connect with the one preceding it; the rich stories of the original contadini, for whom the barren, drought-cracked land in Calabria finally forced them to emigrate to a land rich in a future, but woefully lacking in a past. Corso’s relatives eventually settled in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1936, stopped being farmers and started working as laborers in the mines, in the streets, in the quarries. So much building is going on, that every immigrant can find work no matter what their skills. Each short story is a little gift of memory, so that when the family is gathered together, they can instantly relate to “when Nonno Giorgio lost his hat” or how “Zia Catina’s cappelli” had to be cut with a shovel or laugh about the time “that Nonna Aida went to buy chickens for Pasqua.”

In both the prologue and epilogue, Corso writes “a story told and retold through generations: father to daughter, grandfather to granddaughter and on to her children, each time changing details that portray the land, the worn face of Italy. Told and retold. But each time, the ending is the same.” And that’s what you have here: a treasury of memories that should inspire each of us to take pen in hand and capture them before they, like the people they are about, are gone.

Proverbi Italiani

"Fatto trenta, facciamo trentuno"

Translation: "Having made thirty, let's make thirty-one"

Note: said by pope Pope Leo X on July 1, 1517, when he created 30 new cardinals. Another priest, who seemed to him also worthy, was nominated during the ceremony.

PASSAIC/CLIFTON NJ

Columbus Day Flag Raising

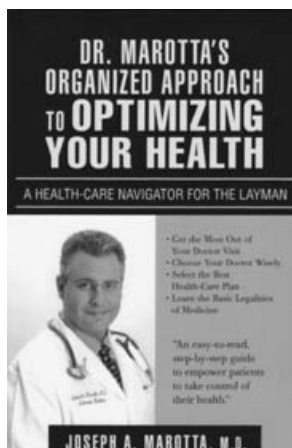


DR. ARABIA'S COFFEE TABLE



*Dr. Tony Arabia
San Antonio Chapter*

Go online to amazon.com to order these wonderful books reviewed in last month's ComUNICO by Dr. Tony Arabia.



COALITION OF ITALIAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATIONS



National President Chris DiMattio and New York City Council District One Representative the Honorable Margaret Chin were the guest speakers at the September meeting of CIAA (Coalition of Italian American Associations) held at Emilio's Ballata in New York City. Also pictured are Founder and President of the Italian American Museum Dr. Joseph Scelsa and UNICO PNP Andre' DiMino who now serves as the President of the Italian American One Voice Coalition



MANGIAMO! ANDRÉ'S SICILIAN SOUL FOOD

Sicilian Vastedda



One time in your life, you have to try a Sicilian Vastedda. It is absolutely delicious and sold from Vastedda stands all around Sicily.

It is a round homemade bun with a thick slice of ricotta secca, grated Parmesan cheese and a certain internal organ meat (which is not easily available in the US), grilled to perfection. Mmmmm! Delizioso!

I had only eaten these in Sicily but UNICO National Secretary Mike Pisano knew where to find the treat here in the states! Mike found a small Sicilian place in New York City that served them. When I took a bite it immediately transported me right back to Sicily. Unfortunately, this restaurant closed a few years back and I was completely dejected. Fortunately, Mike Pisano found another place in Brooklyn that offers vastedda! We have not gone yet and I am looking forward to my order of two Vasteddas and a dish of pasta con sardé!

Editor: I related the story of Vastedda to Frank Turlo of the San Diego Chapter. The Brooklyn transplant's face lit up and he proceeded to tell me about how popular Vastedda was in Brooklyn even in the 1970s. Incidentally, the internal organ meat used on the sandwich is spleen.

SAN DIEGO CA



New members are sworn in at the September luncheon at Trattoria Fantastica in Little Italy. (L-R) Past National President Frank Caperino, Eve Mazzarella, Anthony Ybarra and Don Piccolo.

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AT
WWW.UNICO.ORG**

HERITAGE AND CULTURE



First and foremost, I want thank our president Chris DiMattio for allowing me to continue as Italian Heritage & Culture Chair for another year. I do enjoy writing the stories for our ComUNICO magazine.

We are in the process of updating our web site concerning the stories I have been submitting, with new material. I hope you enjoy reading about Sal Mineo and Carmine DeSapio, which will be appearing in ComUNICO soon. Many of these will be available on our web site ASAP.

On a related matter, I want to stress the importance of keeping our Italian heritage alive and well through UNICO National. We have learned to use our heritage as a tool to gather new members in our UNICO Chapters. This is a tool that is reaping a great crop of new members who are proud of their Italian heritage. Once again I must reiterate that we need more programs that embrace our culture and heritage on the Chapter level. We need to remember that it is our Italian Heritage that creates the common bond that keeps us together. Every Chapter should establish Italian heritage programs from time to time, whether it is an educational event or a social event.

Every chapter in UNICO should do something to celebrate Columbus Day in their area. Many Chapters lay wreaths or have flag raising ceremonies in honor of the Great Navigator in parks or municipal buildings. Many Chapters march in local parades honoring Columbus. Others have dinner dances in his honor. There are many ways to celebrate Columbus Day. We must lead the way because others would have us forget the Great Navigator completely.

The combined Italian Heritage/Membership Drive programs that are being held on the Chapter level have met with great success. Information for establishing such programs is available from our National Office.

The Membership & Retention Committee must continue to use this tool in their quest for new members. We want to see our two Committees working together in this area. This is the new formula for success. The continued success and growth of UNICO National should always be our main goal.

As I mentioned at the Convention in Hershey in July, we want to start something new this year. If you have an interesting story about a relative who, either, migrated to the USA, stayed in Italy or was born here and was instrumental in being a part of a historic event in Italy or anywhere else, please send us a short story about the person and the event. We would like to compile these stories into a report for ComUNICO in the future. We have received two stories to date. We need more.

In closing, I want to, again, thank President DiMattio for allowing me to serve this organization for another year. I hope you all enjoy the stories as much I enjoy researching them.

“Uniti Sempre Avanti”

Submitted by: Salvatore J. Mangano, PNP, National Italian Heritage and Culture Chair 2010-2011



Carmine DeSapio Politician

Carmine Gerard DeSapio (December 10, 1908 – July 27, 2004) was an American politician from New York City. He was the last head

of the Tammany Hall political machine to be able to dominate municipal politics. Tammany Hall was one of the most powerful and corrupt Democrat organizations in the history of America. Tammany was active in New York politics for 150 years, and dominated them for 80 years.

DeSapio was born in lower Manhattan. His father was an Italian immigrant, while his mother was a second generation Italian-American. He graduated from Fordham University in 1931.

He started his career in the Tammany Hall organization as an errand boy and messenger for precinct captains. Tammany Hall was the name given to the Democratic political machine that dominated New York City politics from the mayoral victory of Fernando Wood in 1854 through the election of Fiorello H. La Guardia in 1934. He was first elected a district captain in 1939, but was rejected by the leadership in the struggle between Irish and Italian interests for control of the organization. In 1943 he was accepted as district leader for lower Greenwich Village.

In 1949 DeSapio became the youngest Boss in the history of Tammany Hall. He gained notoriety from alleged involvement with organized crime, even though he fought to distance the organization from the unsavory days of Boss Tweed. In 1953 he earned new respect for the continuing power of Tammany Hall when he led the defeat of incumbent mayor Vincent R. Impellitteri in the Democratic Party primary by Robert F. Wagner, Jr., and Wagner's victory in the general election. Then in 1954, he brokered W. Averell Harriman's victory as Governor of New York. He served in Harriman's cabinet as Secretary of State of New York.

DeSapio always seemed a personally modest man. Even though he operated out of four lavish offices, he lived for fifty years in a modest middle-class apartment on Washington Square with his wife Natalie and daughter Geraldine. His leadership ended in 1961, and with it the dynasty that was Tammany Hall. It took several years of work by Eleanor Roosevelt to bring this about. She had vowed revenge because she felt DeSapio had derailed her son's (Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr.) political ambitions by persuading him to abandon his run for governor of New York in 1954. Democrats such as Wagner, who had once praised him, found it expedient to denounce DeSapio and Tammany Hall politics and seek reform.

DeSapio reached a low point in 1969 when he was convicted of conspiracy and bribery. He served two years in federal prison (1971-1973). After his release, he never re-entered politics, but did support many community, charitable and civic causes.

He regained some of his former popularity by his skill as a speaker. In 1992 Mayor Ed Koch described him with these observations: "He is a crook, but I like him. Most politicians still like De Sapia. He always gets the most applause when he is introduced at Democratic dinners."

Among his accomplishments were support of the Fair Employment Practices Law, the New York City rent control laws, and the lowering of the voting age to 18.

DeSapio died at age 95 on July 27, 2004, at St. Vincent's Hospital in Manhattan and was interred in a private mausoleum at Calvary Cemetery in Woodside, NY. He was survived by his daughter Geraldine A. DeSapio.

PASSAIC VALLEY NJ

The Passaic Valley Chapter at the Seton Hall University Recognition Night

Pictured is the Passaic Valley Chapter President Steve Pelonero presenting an Italian Studies Abroad Scholarship to Seton Hall Italian Studies student Justin Lompado. Also pictured from the left are Joseph Agresti (PNP and Chapter Scholarship Chairman), Charles Russo (Chapter Scholarship Co-Chairman) and Seton Hall University Director of the Alberto Italian Studies Institute, Dr. Gabriella Romani.



REHOBOTH AREA DE

Helping Families Fight Cancer

On October 7th members of the Rehoboth Beach, Delaware chapter presented a check for \$1,000 to Cherie Rich who serves as the Executive Director of Oncology Services for Beebe Medical Center. The funds will be used for Tunnell Cancer Center's Cancer Patient Special Needs Fund. This fund helps patients meet if they are unable to meet their medical needs during their cancer treatment. These monies were raised through a recent fundraiser which focused on helping families deal with this disease.



(L-R) Executive Director of the Oncology Services at Beebe Medical Center Cherie Rich, Chapter Treasurer Joe Polinski, Chapter President Mary Jane Deets, Chapter Vice President Bob Palese, Chapter Secretary Rose Marie Patin, Chapter Sergeant-at-Arms Bob Schacheri and UNICO DG MD I Mary Teresa Morrison,

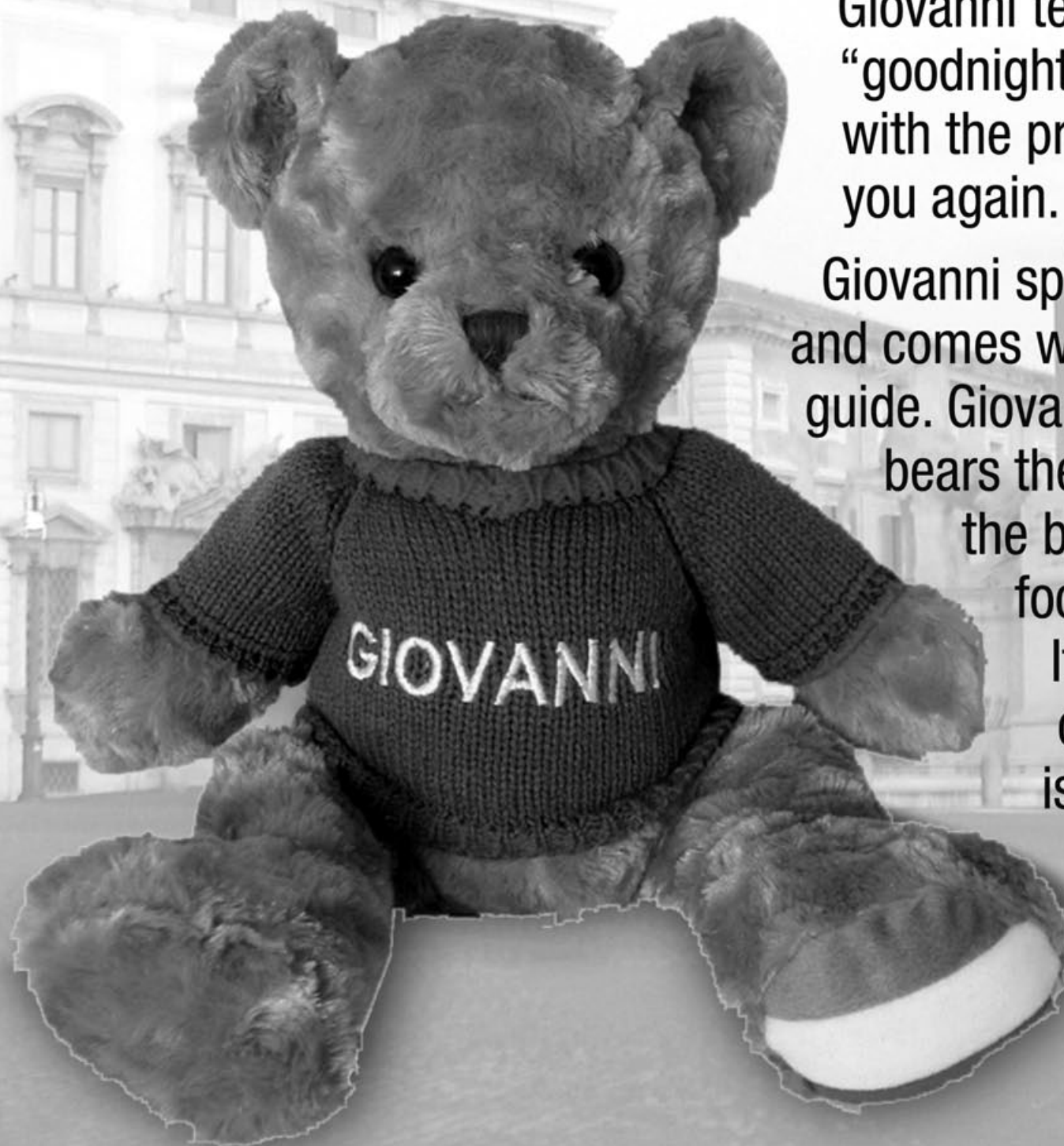
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HOT
IN
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a new sitcom

Valerie Bertinelli has rewritten the Hollywood stereotype, battling back from food and drug addictions and inspiring countless others to do the same.

NEWSMAKERS

by Jim Distasio

Comeback kid

Drug addiction. Weight problems. Divorce. A stalled career.

This sounds like the tragic resume of the stereotypical Hollywood actress who jumped head-first into the meat grinder of celebrity only to have her hardships and struggles form the basis of a cautionary tale about the pitfalls of fame and life in the public eye.

Up until a few years ago, you could argue that this described actress Valerie Bertinelli to a "T." Her life was called a cliché, or the inevitable downward spiral of a promising talent that couldn't win the fight against her personal demons.

But that label is far too simple, far too reductive, considering Bertinelli's story doesn't end there. Now 50 years old, Bertinelli is in the midst of a stellar personal and professional comeback thanks to a "hot" new TV show, a healthy relationship with her body and a new love in her life.

"Valerie is a very strong woman," friend and celebrity chef Rachael Ray told AARP magazine. (See *News-makers* on Page 49)

LOU&A Winning drama

by Louis R. Carlozo



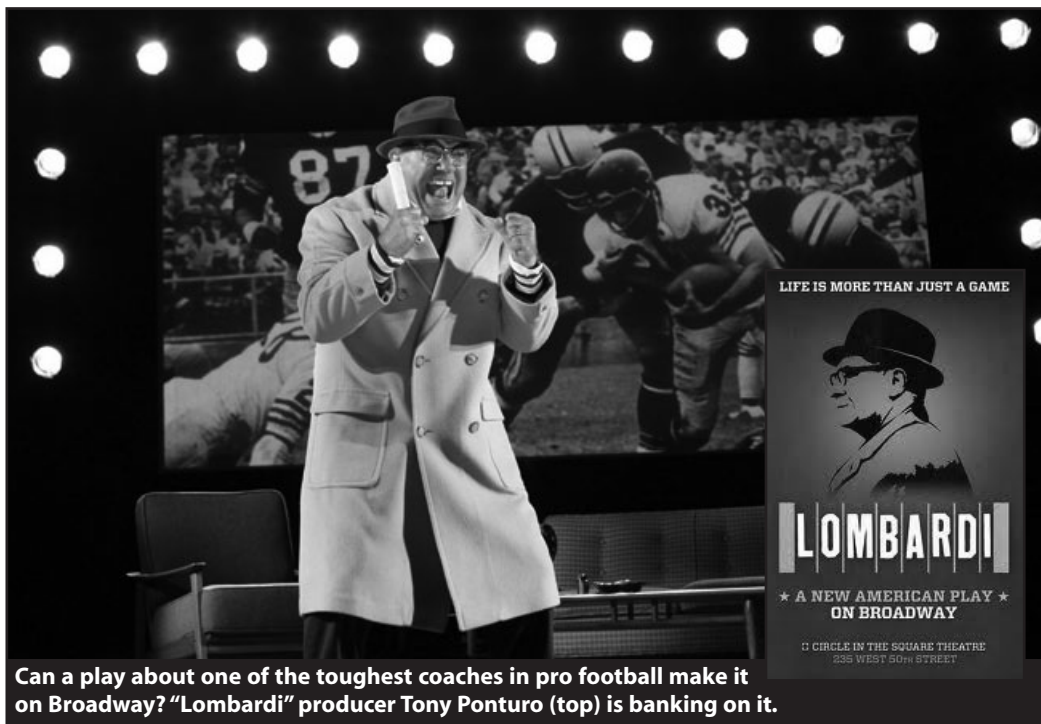
Smash-mouth football and live theater might seem to have little in common. But when the subject is Vince Lombardi — a coach who inspired fear in his opponents and fierce loyalty from his players — winning drama only requires the right vehicle for making a big score on Broadway.

Enter "Lombardi," a play which premiered on October 21 at Circle in the Square Theatre. And as befitting any production about the legendary leader of the Green Bay Packers, many of the key players are Italian Americans. Fra Noi spoke to producer Tony Ponturo, who knows what it takes to win himself. A former marketing

exec with Anheuser-Busch, Ponturo produced the 2010 Tony Award-winning musical "Memphis" and was part of the team behind the 2009 Tony Award-winning revival of "Hair," along with his wife Ruthe.

Fra Noi — What do you find compelling about Vince Lombardi?

Tony Ponturo — He had a lot of perseverance and dedication to his craft. He was a high school football coach and taught physics and chemistry until he was in his mid-30s. Then he became an assistant coach with both Army and the New York Giants. So now you have a man in his mid-40s who has not yet gone to the team he is known for, the Packers. He was frustrated at times and wondered if he'd ever make it. He even wondered if being Italian had held him back. Then at age 47, he gets a call to go to the Packers, which was very unusual. He had grown up in Brooklyn and the New York area, and he gets a call to go to the Midwest. Yet he built this

(See *Ponturo* on Page 49)

Can a play about one of the toughest coaches in pro football make it on Broadway? "Lombardi" producer Tony Ponturo (top) is banking on it.

FEATURE At home in both worlds

by Nicola Orichuia

There are bands who dedicate themselves to traveling, and then there are bands who prefer to cultivate their local roots, creating a tightly knit community around them. Negrita — a band that throws rock punches and soothes with delicate melodies, often spicing everything up with solar South American rhythms — is a unique combination of both these propulsive forces.

"We consider ourselves a bit as world travelers, constantly absorbing what is around us," says lead singer Paolo Bruni, better known as Pau, in an exclusive interview with Fra Noi. But when they're not touring the globe, Pau and the other members of the band (Enrico Salvi and Cesare Petrichich on guitars and Francesco Li Causi on bass) live with their families in the relatively quiet Tuscan province of Arezzo. "When we were young we thought about moving to Milan or Rome, where the music scene was definitely richer than in Arezzo," says Pau. "But then we realized that what is really important is to cultivate your own roots, stay close to family and friends and live in the environment you



Rock fusion phenom Negrita manage to tour the globe while remaining true to their Tuscan roots. (Photo by Alessio Pizzicannella)

feel most comfortable in." Now Pau lives in the beautiful land of Tuscany with his wife and 3-year-old daughter, Nina.

Pau and the band are ready to kick off an intense series of projects in the United States. Before that, though, Negrita will travel to El Paso, Texas, where an old friend from Arezzo owns a ranch that has been remodeled as a recording studio. "We'll start recording the new album there," says the 43-year-old singer, who speaks with a slight Tuscan accent.

"The place is great, in the middle of the desert. We'll stay there seven to ten days and lay down some basic tracks that we've been working on in the past few months."

The band will then move to Los Angeles, where they will be staying at a Hollywood house with a little recording studio inside. Before ending their trip with the New York and Los Angeles shows, the band also wants to see and maybe even land a gig in cities like Nashville and

(See *Negrita* on Page 49)

LIBRI Toddling through Rome

by Judith Anne Testa

Sometimes a book can be both enthralling and annoying. Anthony Doerr's memoir of his year as a fellow at the American Academy in Rome is that kind of book. Doerr is a terrific writer — his prose is perceptive, sensuous and sometimes so beautiful that it rises almost to poetry, but it also seems like he's trying to write two books and cram them both into a single, short volume. One is a lovely, impressionistic memoir about his year in Rome, and the other is a disjointed diary of his trials and joys as the father of twins, six months old when Doerr and his wife arrive in Rome.

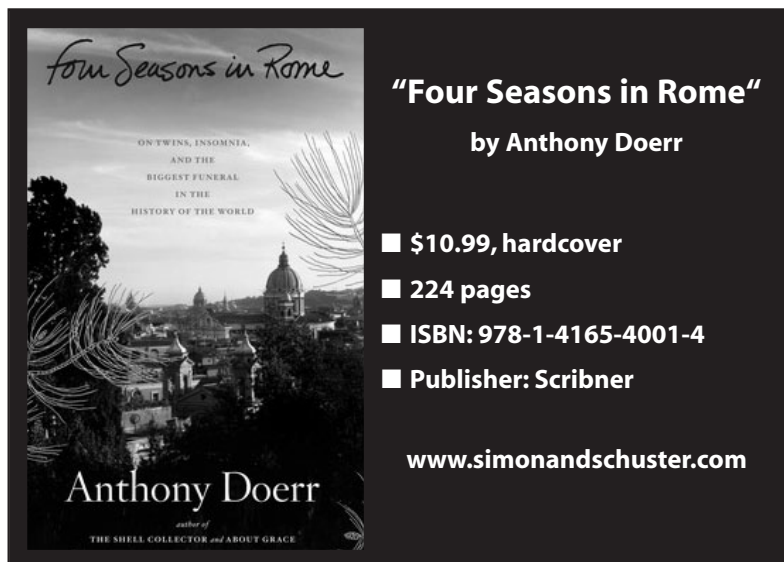
Doerr's project, for which he received his fellowship, was to write a novel about the French Resistance during World War II, but instead, the Eternal City ambushes him and the result is this book. When he's writing about Rome, Doerr is often so good that I found myself underlining passages and wanting to telephone fellow Rome lovers and read those excerpts to them. The author is humble enough to realize early on "the enormity of what I don't know about this place," and he expends some effort in trying to learn about it. On one occasion, the couple visits the Vatican Museums, racing ahead of the crowd to experience a near-empty Sistine Chapel. Here, though, Doerr's lack of familiarity with art catches up with him. In one sentence he makes three errors, describing Michelangelo as having painted the Sistine ceiling while lying on his back (it's

well known now that he stood on the scaffold); claiming the artist was left-handed (confusing him with Leonardo da Vinci); and saying the artist had big ears — I have no idea where he got that last impression from.

Doerr doesn't try to pretend he can speak adequate Italian, and he has a charming way of deflating his modest successes with the language. Having

but delicious food that he and his wife enjoy: "Only in Italy would the chocolate from an egg containing two red plastic robots taste good enough to make you want to cry." The reader can share the couple's sense of wonder as — occasionally leaving their children with a Filipina babysitter — they explore their surroundings. By chance, the Doerrs were in Rome at the time of the death of Pope John Paul II and the election of Benedict XVI, which gives the author a chance to observe the mob scenes that accompanied both events. At that breathless moment between the cardinal-deacon's announcement from the central balcony of St. Peter's — "Habemus papam" — and the actual appearance of the new pope, Doerr thinks: "Right now we're here because we want to know what will happen next, because we're most of the way through a rich and complicated story. The curtain is up, the orchestra is playing; this is the thrill of drama and the Catholic Church is the most experienced dramatist in the world." Amen to that!

My only complaint is that the author devotes way too much of the book to doting on and marveling over his children, offering self-pitying comments on his own lack of sleep due to caring for them, along with rhapsodic descriptions of the babies that rarely rise above the routine. One would expect a first-time father of twins to be preoccupied with them, but I wish he'd saved that material for a separate volume.



"Four Seasons in Rome"

by Anthony Doerr

■ \$10.99, hardcover

■ 224 pages

■ ISBN: 978-1-4165-4001-4

■ Publisher: Scribner

www.simonandschuster.com

managed to communicate his grocery order in Italian, he goes to pay at the register, only to have the woman there say something to him in the rapid-fire Italian that is so often the despair of foreigners. "Sheepishly, stepping down from my throne of fluency," Doerr writes, "I have to ask, 'I'm sorry, more slowly, please?'"

He lovingly describes the delights of the simple

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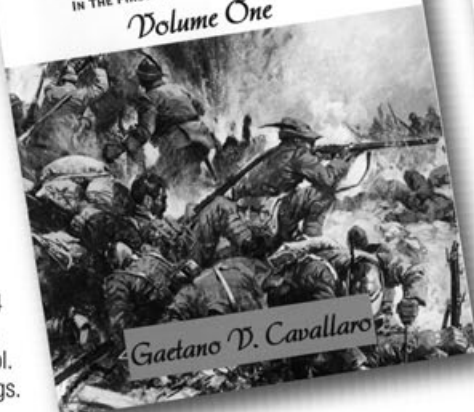
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SPORTS Indy's golden boy

by Charles P. Pecoraro

Like their drivers zipping around the track at blazing speeds, the two major forces in auto racing — NASCAR and IndyCar — are competing vigorously in the race for public attention and acceptance.

NASCAR currently holds the lead, as IndyCar struggles to overcome a sagging profile of open-wheel racing, slumping TV ratings and coverage on the Versus Network, a relatively small player in national sports broadcasting. Plus many IndyCar teams and drivers have had difficulty finding funding for the 2010 season.

To get the program back on track, IndyCar named Randy Bernard, previously head of the Professional Bull Riders, as its new boss in February. In announcing the appointment, the organization said Bernard "brings a superb sports marketing and promotion background, proven CEO skills, energy and enthusiasm."

Bernard and IndyCar couldn't have planned it any better, but got the biggest exposure and boost of the season in May when Dario Franchitti went the distance to cross the finish line first in the legendary Indianapolis 500. The event was witnessed by 250,000 spectators and millions of TV viewers.

For Franchitti, the personable Scotch Italian with movie star good looks and a movie star wife, the triumph was his second at the old Brickyard in four years and the race's 17th two-time winner. He led 155 of the 200 laps, a Sunday drive that earned him a cool \$2,752,055.

Behind the wheel of a Team Target/Chip Ganassi machine powered by a Honda engine, Franchitti cruised the first 190 laps in relative ease. Then he fought off a dramatic surge in the closing miles as the front-runners literally shifted into high gear to improve their positions.

With two laps to go, Mike Conway collided with Ryan Hunter-Reay in a violent crash that sent the out-of-control Conway slamming into the barrier. Hunter-Reay escaped injury, though Conway hurt his leg and was flown by helicopter to a local hospital. The yellow caution flag came out, but Franchitti had enough momentum to finish ahead of the pack.

For the victor, as Sinatra used to croon, it's been a very good year. "To win the IZOD IndyCar Championship and Indianapolis 500 in the same year is great," said Franchitti. "It was a relatively easy drive for 190 laps, then things got a bit testy.

"I had a dominant car, a real handful," he



With a smokin' hot wife and blazing speed behind the wheel, Dario Franchitti is helping IndyCar racing give NASCAR a run for its money.

added. "On the first lap, it was dancing around, then eventually settled down and responded with power and handling when needed. My pit crew did an excellent job of keeping me in the race." For the record, he was clocked at 161.6 MPH.

This year's victory celebration wasn't as jubilant as the 2007 event. At that occasion, Franchitti won the rain-shortened race with an ending that appeared as if it was movie-scripted. His wife, actress Ashley Judd, was so ecstatic that she ran barefooted and soaking wet along the pit road to embrace her victorious spouse as cameras clicked and TV announcers gushed.

Rain was replaced by hot, muggy conditions this year, but nonetheless Judd patiently waited until the checkered flag was waved to joyfully sprint in her sundress, hat and shoes in hand, to the winner's circle to help her man toast his triumph with ceremonial swigs of milk.

"I'm as soaked today as I was three years ago," said the vivacious Judd, referring to the rain and heat that have marked her husband's wins. "Dario and his car were in a league of their own. I'm so proud of him."

Wifely or not, it was an honest appraisal. Beginning with a first-lap pass of Helio Castroneves and Will Power (his real name),

Franchitti was the pacesetter for 155 laps, ninth most by an Indy winner.

Other drivers of Italian descent who competed in this year's 500 included Marco Andretti (3rd), Alex Tagliani (10th), Mario Romancini (13th), Simona de Silvestro (14th) and John Andretti (30th).

Born in Bathgate, Scotland, the 37-year-old Franchitti has been racing carts and cars since 1984, when he won the Karting Scottish Junior title, followed by the Scottish senior crown in 1988.

He moved up to the faster lanes in 1992, joining the Paul Stewart Racing Team. In his first year, he finished fourth in overall competition and was named the McLaren/Autosport Young Driver of the Year.

AMG Racing later signed him to drive a Mercedes C-Class in the German Touring Car championships, where he ended up fifth and third respectively. From there he moved on to drive for the Jaguar F1 team under his mentor Jackie Stewart.

Franchitti finally arrived to the big-time in 1997, making his debut in the CART Champ Car World Series where he racked up enough wins to get an offer to join the Andretti Green Team in the IndyCar series. But a back injury sustained in a motorcycle accident while vacationing in Scotland put him out of action for most of the year.

Literally and figuratively, race drivers have a reputation of not staying in one place too long. So he returned to the cockpit in 2004, and went back to Andretti Green the next year, his 10th consecutive in American open-wheel racing.

Then he switched from open to closed in 2007, making his stock car debut with NASCAR in the No. 40 Fastenal Dodge. When his Sprint Cup team was disbanded due to lack of sponsorship, he returned to IndyCar. Going into this season, his career stats are 23 wins out of 198 starts.

He and Judd were married in a traditional ceremony in Scotland's fabled Skibo Castle in 2001. When not apart for their respective careers, they reside in Franklin, Tenn. They have no children.

Whether or not IndyCar can catch up to NASCAR in America's need for speed remains to be seen. But having Mr. & Mrs. Franchitti around certainly helps to keep them in the race.

41 AMERICA

NOV 2010

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Medicine, Italian-style

Sitting at my desk in my modern Chicago office after a long day of cataract surgery, I close my eyes for a moment before reviewing my cases for tomorrow. I'm transported back to my recent surgical experience in Italy.

As I walked slowly through the waiting room over in Italy, past the patient and family, where I was fortunate to be able to witness a surgery not yet approved in America, I took the time to absorb their restlessness and body movements, clearly showing their anticipation, anxiety and fear before their surgery began. I thought about how fortunate they were to be able to have one of the most advanced surgeries performed, which promised to restore their vision and allow them to begin seeing life as though they had a brand new pair of eyes. The ability to offer this type of cutting-edge technology in medicine is exciting and very fulfilling to a doctor, as well as being able to offer hope for patients, when it seems all else has failed. Not knowing when and if this procedure would be approved by the FDA in America was frustrating, because it meant that I wouldn't be able to offer the very best possible options to my own patients back in the states, but for now, I was in my glory.

While back in Bari, Italy, I was surrounded by many family members seated at the kitchen table. We were enjoying the various, wonderful foods of southern Italy, consisting of panzerotti, focaccia, fave, chicorie, bruschetta, and mozzarella balls. After this feast was quickly devoured, it was followed by an incredible glass of homemade vino. The conversation was lively, animated, and loud, as all Italian family gatherings are. The discussion led to a request. Could I examine my cousins and

(See Bello on Page 50)

by Jeannine Guilyard

Born in Rome under the sign of Scorpio in 1974, Giovanna Mezzogiorno is an Italian maestra in the making, who has become a household name in Italy almost overnight.

Mezzogiorno was no stranger to show business growing up. Her father was the prolific television and film actor Vittorio Mezzogiorno. Sadly, he passed away suddenly from a heart attack in 1994 and was never able to witness the success of his only daughter. Her mother also acted in several television shows, mostly in the 1960s and then again in the 1990s. There

obvious to critics and audiences that she was on a fast track to stardom. Ophelia was her first role and she won her first award, the Premio Coppola-Prati 1996. That says a lot. The following year, she made her film debut in "Il viaggio della sposa" (The Bride's Journey). It has been film after film ever since, and she has become a highly respected actress all over the world.

Although Mezzogiorno was recognized for the success of her early films, "L'Ultimo bacio" (The Last Kiss) was her real breakout film. The 2001 masterpiece won its



With a commanding presence and a dizzying emotional range, Giovanna Mezzogiorno dominates any screen she occupies. (Images courtesy of the Film Society of Lincoln Center)

is no mistaking that acting is in her blood. When Giovanna Mezzogiorno arrives, she absolutely takes charge of the scene. She can carry a movie just as she can contribute to an ensemble cast. She can scream, yell and cry one moment and break into laughter the next. Her range is that impressive.

Giovanna Mezzogiorno studied in Paris at Ariane Mnouchkine's avant-garde stage ensemble. She then worked for two years at the Peter Brook Workshop (Le Centre International de Créations Théâtrales). Shortly thereafter, she began her career as an actress onstage in the role of Ophelia in Peter Brook's "Qui est là," a story based on Shakespeare's "Hamlet." The production toured Europe and it was immediately

Gabriele Muccino. It was that film that made Giovanna Mezzogiorno a household name. It was a huge success that was well deserved. Mezzogiorno took the role of Giulia and made it her own. There was not a moment in that film where you felt like Mezzogiorno was acting. She was right on with her emotions and timing throughout the entire movie. You couldn't help but empathize with Giulia's struggles and pull for that character.

Her next big film, "La finestra di fronte" (Facing Windows) directed by Ferzan Ozpetek, solidified her place on the international stage. It's a storyline with a character

(See Cinema on Page 49)

SPOTLIGHT Battling pet abandonment

by Nicola Orichuia

There's a saying in Rome that goes something like this: "Only cats remain in the city in August." Anyone familiar with Italian cities in the summer knows it's true. All shops are closed, residents are on vacation, and cats — and now more dogs, too — roam freely about the deserted city streets. As picturesque as the scene sounds, the underlying problem of stray cats and dogs has become a real concern for Italian citizens and public officials in recent years.

More than 100,000 dogs are abandoned each year, according to Italy's Ministry of Health. August is traditionally the worst month for pets, as millions of Italians embark on their summer vacations, often leaving behind cats, dogs and occasionally a reptile or rare spider. "It is during the summer period that the uncivilized phenomenon of abandonment touches a dramatic peak," Health undersecretary Francesca Martini said in June, just before inaugurating the ministry's "What race do you belong to? Human or inhumane?" campaign. "The pets are often seen by a part of the population as an object to be used for one's amusement, turning



The Italian government has launched several initiatives in recent years to counter the country's rampant inhumanity to man's best friends.

into something cumbersome once they grow old or the family goes on vacation," said Martini.

The undersecretary has also been involved in the launch of a pet-friendly tourist website called for by Tourism Minister Michela Vittoria Brambilla. The website, www.turistia4zampe.it, offers pet owners the possibility to find guides to places where their four-legged friends are welcome, as well as information on how best to travel and even legal guidance in case of accidents. In August, Brambilla also announced her plans to make all Italian summer locations accessible to dogs and their owners. "This way tourists will feel compelled to come to Italy with their pets," said the minister. "The decision won't cost municipalities anything, for all we are asking is that cities and towns dedicate a small portion of their beaches to those who want to enjoy the summer with their dogs."

The latest data available from the Ministry shows that 92,882 dogs were rescued

(See Spotlight on Page 49)

CIRCO ITALIA Alphabet soup

by Nicola Orichuia

We live in fast paced times, where information is often gobbled up without a second thought, and where opinions change with a flick of the remote control. Italian politicians know this all too well, and are used to changing sides, beliefs and symbols in the blink of an eye.

As parties change, voters have a hard time keeping up with them, but that hasn't always been the case. Before 1992, when the Tangentopoli scandal exploded and dozens of politicians were found guilty of corruption, everything was fairly simple: There was the Democrazia Cristiana (Dc), the eternal majority, as well as the Communist (Pci), Socialist (Psi) and Republican (Pri) parties and some other minor entities. After Tangentopoli, the floodgates opened and everyone scrambled to find a little umbrella to stand under.

Forza Italia, the business-model party created from scratch by Silvio Berlusconi, attracted many conservative former members of the Dc. At the same time, the fascist-inspired Movimento Sociale Italiano (Msi) underwent a transformation, adopting a more moderate approach and changing its name to Alleanza Nazionale (An). The two parties merged together just before the 2008 elections, giving birth to the Popolo della Libertà (PdL). The party served its purpose and won the elections, alongside the Lega Nord (Lnlp), which — to its credit — is the only political party that hasn't changed its name or symbol in the past 18 years. Now the PdL is about to break up, as Speaker of the House Gianfranco Fini has decided to form his own "current" within the party, naming it Futuro e Libertà (Fli).

Much more complex is the unraveling of the

Partito Comunista Italiano, which for many years was the biggest communist party in all of Western Europe. Although only marginally touched by the Tangentopoli scandal, a large number of the party's members decided to go down a more moderate route, veering toward that indistinct political magma called "the center." The Pci split in two: The Partito dei Democratici di Sinistra (Pds) included the people who believed in a more moderate approach, while the hardliners fell into the Partito di Rifondazione Comunista (Prc), which soon after broke into several smaller parties, only to vanish completely from Parliament in 2008, marking the first ever Republican chamber without a communist party. Meanwhile, the Pds

enjoyed a brief run of success, heading the government between 1998 and 2001. During that time, it dropped the "p" from its name, becoming the Democratici di Sinistra (Ds), and adopted the oak tree as its symbol.

The oak tree then morphed into an olive twig, which Romano Prodi chose to symbolize his center-left government. The second largest party in that coalition was the Margherita, the daisy, which had welcomed those Christian Democrats with a more reformist spirit. That coalition ultimately proved unsuccessful and broke up shortly after the 2001 electoral loss to Berlusconi's center-right coalition.

The Ds and Margherita members started thinking about a merger, which happened at the end of 2007, when the Partito Democratico (Pd) was born under the guidance of Rome's former mayor Walter Veltroni. For those of you at home who are keeping score, that's four acronym changes in 18 years: Pci, Pds, Ds and Pd.

Berlusconi, in the meantime, used his business skills to counterattack and create the aforementioned PdL. After losing in 2008, the Pd started losing pieces and leaders, such as party co-founder Francesco Rutelli, who started his own movement, Alliance for Italy (Api).

Italian politics continues its record run of instability, keeping pace with that of the country's governments, which usually don't make it through their first two years. So it should come as no surprise that the Unione di Centro (UdC) is now asking its voters to choose a new name and design a new symbol. They're honoring the only tradition in Italian politics that has any longevity.



Having trouble making sense of Italy's strange minestra of political parties? Here's your glossary.

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VIAGGIO Watch your step!

by Judith Anne Testa

It's pure Baroque bravura — one of those unlikely spots where disparate elements come together to create uniquely Roman magic. Already in the 1500s the space today called Piazza di Spagna was a well-known locale where artists and literary figures congregated, but it was architecturally undistinguished and the hill leading up from it — now covered by the spectacular Spanish Steps — was almost impossible to climb. And the only thing of interest at the top of that forbiddingly steep flank of the Pincio (Pincian Hill) was a great view across the city. The idea that these two elements — low-lying piazza and distant hilltop — could be united in an attractive and effective way seemed an impossible dream. But two centuries later that dream came true. Today's Piazza di Spagna with the adjoining Spanish Steps is one of Rome's most beautiful and popular destinations, and it's been attracting swarms of visitors for almost 300 years.

The names Piazza di Spagna (Spain Square) and Spanish Steps are both misnomers. The sites should really be called Piazza di Francia and the French Steps, but the sometimes-troubled relationship between Italy and France assured that those names would never take hold. For a while, the part of the piazza opening onto via del Babuino was actually called Piazza di Francia, but the name didn't endure. The names Piazza di Spagna and Spanish Steps both derive from one of the buildings off the piazza's southern end, called Palazzo di Spagna. Since 1622, it's been the residence of the Spanish ambassador to the Vatican.

Nonetheless, the French presence in the neighborhood long predates the Spanish. In the late 15th century an order of monks from France known as the Minims took over an old villa at the summit of the Pincian Hill. In 1502 they tore that down and with financial help from the French crown began construction of the church of Santissima Trinità dei Monti. Although the position of the church doesn't quite line up with the piazza below, talk of linking the church with the irregular piazza began soon after the façade of the church was completed in 1570. But nothing happened until 1661, when a senior diplomat at the French embassy in Rome died and left a large bequest for the construction of a staircase linking the two sites.

At this point Cardinal Mazarin, then the prime minister of France (try to imagine a cardinal in THAT position today!), stepped in and called on Rome's great Baroque sculptor and architect Gianlorenzo Bernini, who designed an elaborate ramp to connect the piazza and the hilltop, with the whole project intended to highlight an enormous bronze equestrian statue of the French king, Louis XIV, to be placed at the top of the stairs. This



There is no more famous stairway in all the world, and there's plenty to do nearby once you've gone up and back.

brought storms of protest from both the papacy and antiquity-loving Romans. To the pope, the artistically sophisticated and politically astute Alexander VII, such a huge, dominating image of a secular monarch, and a foreign one at that, represented both an insult and a challenge to papal authority. Furthermore, many prominent Romans objected to a statue that would compete in size and artistic grandeur with the revered ancient Roman equestrian statue of the emperor Marcus Aurelius, since the mid-1500s the centerpiece of the Capitoline Hill. In a final, fatal complication, a nephew of the French diplomat successfully contested his uncle's will, and was awarded half of the money intended for the staircase. So that project was doomed from the start.

Inconclusive negotiations, and miles of the kind of bureaucratic red tape the Vatican has always been adept at producing, meant the project was stalled for more than half a century. Finally, during the papacy of Innocent XIII in the early 1720s, the monks of SS. Trinità adopted, and the pope approved, a plan for the staircase presented by an unknown architect named Francesco de Sanctis. Work began in 1723 and the stairs, completed by 1726, were an immediate success, although the project ended badly for de Sanctis. After the steps were severely damaged by a storm in 1728, he found himself the defendant in a nasty and protracted lawsuit. He never received another commission and the stairs weren't repaired until 1737, six years after his death.

The 138 steps of the Scalinata della Trinità dei Monti — better known as the Spanish Steps — form the widest and longest stairway in all of Europe. It's really not a single staircase, but a series of separate ones ingeniously arranged to take the traveler from the piazza to the top of the Pincian Hill in gradual stages. As a comparison, consider the daunting medieval staircase from Piazza Venezia to the church of the Ara Coeli — a single, steep, straight-up, continuous flight of steps that scares away all but the most determined (or penitent) visitors. In contrast, the Spanish Steps never confront the visitor with a straight ascent; they open in and out like a gigantic fan. The Steps begin with a very broad flight of stairs interrupted twice on the way up by landings where the visitor can stop to rest or to enjoy gazing down at the piazza. The wide expanse of stairs is further punctuated by stone pillars to the left and right that divide the staircase into a broad central unit and two narrower side units. At the third landing the steps seem to pause in their ascent, offering a curving terrace where the staircase then divides into two parts, one on the left and one on the right. These in turn lead up to another and larger terrace where the steps again unite, taking the visitor to yet another small terrace where the final flights of steps on the left and right bring you to the summit of the hill. Unlike the staircase at the Ara Coeli, or such killer climbs as the ascent to the top of the dome of St. Peter's, climbing the Spanish Steps can be accomplished in leisurely stages, and by the time you reach the top you're unlikely to be sweaty and panting. Instead, you'll be in good shape to enjoy the panorama of the city from the Pincio, one of Rome's most sensational views.

(See *Viaggio* on Page 50)



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CHEF'S CHOICE

by Charles P. Pecoraro

Catelli offers a relish to relish on Thanksgiving

November is an in-between kind of month, the time when fall is fading and winter is lurking. The seasons change, but the one constant that remains true to tradition is Thanksgiving, when families and friends gather to celebrate a bountiful harvest of food and wine.

The customary turkey and trimmings feast is a routine task for most cooks, but adding a new twist and taste to the meal presents a challenge as they prepare for Nov. 25.

Celebrity chef Domenica Catelli offers some food for thought. She suggests that instead of serving cranberries the usual way, why not stimulate the tart red fruit with balsamic and mint to create a refreshing relish.

By definition, a relish is a semi-spicy, often pickle-based condiment used as a spread or side dish. It's commonly added to hot dogs and sandwiches and unlike mayonnaise, can deliver pucker power.

Making a relish doesn't have to mean standing near the kitchen stove all day fussing with canning jars and water baths. Still, given the rows of relishes stocked on supermarket shelves, many cooks facing the choice of making homemade relish are likely to sigh, "Why bother?"

Catelli assures us that her Thanksgiving relish is no bother. She says it's relatively easy to make and no cooking is needed. It's a tasty alternative to jellied or canned cranberry sauce and sparks the flavor of turkey, sandwiches, roast pork loin and other dishes.

Catelli's healthful approach to cooking has had a positive influence on the way families cook and eat. Her first cookbook, "Mom-a-Licious: Fresh, Fast Food for the Hot Mama in You," was an instant best-seller, addressing the issue of how to correct children's unhealthy eating habits.

An accomplished chef who grew up in California's Sonoma County, she and her brother Nicholas operate their family's restaurant, Catelli's in Geyersville, a town surrounded by 80 wineries. Featuring seasonal Italian fare, it was founded by their grandparents in 1936.

Catelli stays active as the national spokesperson for the Organic Trade Association, a recurring judge on "Iron Chef America," a guest on "Oprah and Friends," the Dr. Oz radio show and articles in national publications. She is among the few chefs to personally cook for such luminaries as Oprah Winfrey, Montel Williams, Thandie Newton and George and Barbara Bush.

Here's her recipe for cranberry, balsamic and mint relish:

Cranberry Relish

12 ounces fresh cranberries
3/4 cup brown sugar
3/4 cup balsamic vinegar
1/4 cup fresh mint leaves
1 tablespoon EV olive oil
1/2 inch fresh ginger, peeled (optional)
Zest of 1 orange

Place all ingredients except olive oil in a food processor. Pulse until well blended with pieces the size of rice grains. Stir in olive oil and refrigerate. Apply or serve within 1 week. Makes 1 batch.

IN VINO VERITAS

Winemaking wizard

by Dick Rosano

The tendency among wine lovers is to lock on to a handful of properties, trusting each vintage based on past experience. This is a sound policy because winemaking styles are driven by policy decisions and strategies that, once in place, can ensure reliable quality through the years.

In my columns and in my wine appreciation classes, I remind people of this policy, and I recommend it highly. If the style of Chianti from winery X appeals to you but the style of Chianti from winery Y does not, pay more attention to the estate than the vintage and you'll likely be happy with your purchase.

Another — perhaps more difficult — way to ensure that wine purchases yield consistent quality is to settle on winemakers who have thrilled you in the past, rather than just the estates that they've graced.



Few winemakers pursue their craft with the artistry of Alessio Carli of Pietra Santa.

Highly skilled winemakers are the Holy Grail of this business, those who can round out the rough edges of technology with a dose of inspired artistry, and few properties can excel without one. And when a highly talented winemaker leaves a property, the estate would do well to keep his or her strategies in place, just as the departing maestro applies those winning ways to the next venture.

It is with this respect for excellence and almost blind faith in artistry that I have followed the work of Alessio Carli over the years, first in Italy and then in California.

I reviewed his current winery, Pietra Santa, in 2003 and will update my tasting notes of some of the wines below, but I want to focus on Alessio's history and achievements, and what wine lovers around the world owe him in thanks.

Pietra Santa was owned by Joseph Gimelli when, in 1991, he hired Alessio to oversee the winemaking at the estate. At that time, the focus was on Italian varietals; however in recent years, perhaps due to the transfer of ownership to the Blackburn family, the focus has switched to Pinot Noir, with a smattering of other varietals mingled in. For example, the Pietra Santa 2007 Pinot Grigio Amore that I reviewed in these pages (December 2009) has been replaced by an estate-bottled Pinot Grigio that is a perfect fit for many dishes. I enjoyed the wine along with a plate of fried calamari, and the bal-

ance of fruit and acidity were a wonderful complement.

There's a Chardonnay, a silky Sangiovese, Sassalino (a blend of sangiovese and French grapes), a superbly balanced Zinfandel, and a smattering of other wines like Gewürztraminer and Dolcetto, although the former is being removed from the lineup. Alessio has proven he can handle all these varietals with aplomb, and his Pinot Noir is especially amazing, a wine that brings out the seductive qualities of the fine Pinot yet with more body than is common with this varietal. I tasted the Pinot Noir with blackened salmon and kept asking for more.

Under his guidance, Pietra Santa also produces three olive oils, including one flavored with rosemary and another with lemon. Alessio even has his own recipe for pizza, http://www.bevx.com/recipe/pizza_alessio,

in case you want to try your hand.

As if Alessio doesn't already have enough work to do, he's begun a labor of love by opening Alicats Winery (10 Nash Road, Hollister, CA), named after his twin daughters, Alessia and Katia. If they inherit his skill as well as his name, we can count on another generation of fabulous Carli wines. For more information, call 831-636-7311.

2009 Pinot Grigio (Cienega Valley, \$18). This is the first release of Pinot Grigio from relatively young vines. The wine has aromas of white peach and honeysuckle, with similar flavors accented with mineral notes and grapefruit. Score: 86

2009 Pinot Noir (Cienega Valley, \$18). An effusive bouquet of lavender and strawberry, this wine possesses a broad palate of strawberries, raspberries, and cherries, with coffee and black pepper on the finish. It was superb with blackened salmon. Score: 92

2007 Sangiovese (Cienega Valley, \$18). A nose of cranberry and raspberry comes first, followed by coffee and soft pepper accents. A very good representation of this Italian grape from California soil. Score: 90

Dick Rosano's wine rating system is based on quality and price and breaks down as follows: 96-100 (excellent, worth any price), 91-95 (very high quality, worth a high price if you can afford it), 86-90 (high quality, worth the price if you like that type of wine), 81-85 (moderately good, should shop around for best price), 76-80 (some defects but generally acceptable), 70-75 (of doubtful value), below 70 (not worth drinking).

RECIPES Sharing our gratitude

by Dolores Sennebogen

Thornton Wilder wrote, "We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures." Perhaps this is the reason that so many people proclaim that Thanksgiving is their favorite holiday. Despite the lavish amounts of food, the spirit of the day is simple. No one arrives bearing glittering presents, multi-colored eggs or booming firecrackers. It is not a day devoted to things, but to an idea: The idea that we should take a collective time-out, gather with loved ones, and share our gratitude. The first Thanksgiving was celebrated in gratitude for a successful harvest, and the bountiful meal we serve is an acknowledgment of this continued blessing. But as we look around the table, we value family and friendship and our extreme good fortune as American citizens. Each of us also has many private reasons to be grateful, and as we consider them this Thanksgiving, I hope our hearts will be truly conscious of our treasures.

To help you celebrate in traditional American style but with an Italian accent, here are some side dishes that the Pilgrims never dreamed of.

INSALATA DI FUNGHI ARROSTO (Roasted Mushroom Salad)

- 1 pound fresh mushrooms
- 1 pound fresh crimini mushrooms
- 12 ounces shitake mushrooms
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup sherry vinegar
- 2 tablespoons minced shallot
- 1 small garlic clove, pressed
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2/3 cup olive oil
- 6 cups baby spinach
- 1 small head radicchio, torn
- 8 ounces crumbled Gorgonzola or blue cheese

Quarter the mushrooms and combine them with 3 tablespoons of oil and 1/2 teaspoon of salt in a roasting pan. Roast in a pre-heated 450 oven for 45 minutes or until the liquid evaporates. Stir occasionally. Meanwhile, combine the vinegar and the next 5 ingredients in a small bowl. Slowly whisk in the 2/3 cup of olive oil. When the mushrooms come out of the oven, combine them with 1/4 cup of the oil and vinegar dressing and set aside to cool to room temperature. Divide the spinach and radicchio among 8 serving plates and top with the mushrooms and crumbled cheese. Drizzle each serving with some of the remaining dressing.

— adapted from
"Christmas with Southern Living

CAVOLFIORE ARROSTITE AL CAPERI

(Whole Roasted Cauliflower
with Capers and Olives)

- 1 (2-pound) head cauliflower
- Olive oil
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon salt (to taste)
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoon capers
- 2 tablespoons chopped black olives
- 1 tablespoon chopped green onion tops
- Flat-leaf parsley



(Illustration by Robert Cimbalò)

Core the cauliflower, discarding the outer green leaves. Oil the bottom of a (10-inch) glass pie plate, and place the cauliflower in it. Rub it lightly all over with olive oil and sprinkle with about 1/4 teaspoon of salt (or more to taste). Bake the cauliflower in a preheated 400-degree oven on a rack positioned in the middle of the oven. Bake it for 1 hour and 10 minutes or until the cauliflower is browned and can be pierced through with a fork. Whisk together the lemon juice and 1/4 cup olive oil. Season the juice with 1/4 teaspoon salt and the black pepper. Whisk again and taste. Add more salt if desired. Rinse the capers and pat dry. Add the capers, black olives and green onion to the lemon mixture. Transfer the baked cauliflower to a serving dish and surround it with parsley sprigs. Drizzle the lemon dressing over all and serve.

VARIATION 1: Instead of surrounding the cauliflower with parley, circle the dish with cooked baby green beans.

VARIATION 2: If your oven is in use to roast your turkey, you can use a whole cauliflower that has been boiled instead of roasted. If you do, sprinkle the dish with a little paprika for color.

VARIATION 3: You can break the cauliflower into florets and roast them (in advance) with oil, salt and pepper. Near serving time, while your turkey is resting, reheat the cauliflower and serve it drizzled with the lemon and caper dressing. The presentation isn't as distinctive, but may be more practical. — Dolores Sennebogen

RIPIENO DI CASTAGNE E PANCETTA

(Chestnut and Pancetta Stuffing)

- 1 (1-1/2 pound) loaf sourdough bread
- 1 pound pancetta, coarsely chopped
- 1 stick unsalted butter, cut up
- 3 cups chopped celery
- 4 cups chopped onions
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 4 cups peeled cooked whole chestnuts, halved
- 3/4 pound pitted prunes, quartered
- 5 cups turkey stock or reduced-sodium

- chicken broth
- 4 large eggs, lightly beaten

Cut the bread into 1/3-inch dice. You should have 18 cups of bread cubes. Put an oven rack in the upper third of the oven and preheat to 400°F. Scatter the bread in a single layer in 2 large shallow baking pans (17 by 12 inches) and toast, stirring once or twice and switching position of pans halfway through baking, until golden and dry, about 15 minutes. Transfer to a very large bowl.

Cook the pancetta in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until browned, 12 to 15 minutes. Add the butter and heat until melted, then add the celery and onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 12 minutes. Stir in the sage, salt, and pepper and cook 1 minute. Add the pancetta mixture along with the chestnuts and prunes to the bowl containing the bread. Whisk together the stock and eggs. Stir them into the bread mixture until combined well. Transfer to a buttered baking dish. Bake, loosely covered with a buttered sheet of foil (buttered side down). After 30 minutes remove the foil and bake until the top is browned, 10 to 15 minutes more.

NOTE: You can purchase precooked peeled whole chestnuts vacuum-packed or in jars. You will need 20 to 24 ounces. You can experiment with other dried fruits in addition to or instead of the prunes.

— adapted from Gourmet Magazine

GNOCCHI DI ZUCCA E SALVIA (Pumpkin Gnocchi with Sage Butter)

- 1 pound canned pumpkin
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- Salt to taste
- Freshly ground nutmeg
- 1/2 clove garlic, minced (optional)
- 4 to 6 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 teaspoon crumbled dried sage leaves
- Freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Mix the pumpkin with the eggs, flour, baking powder, salt, and a good sprinkle of nutmeg. If you add the garlic, it should not be obtrusive. Let the mixture sit at least one hour, covered with plastic wrap. To cook, bring a pot of salted water just to a simmer. Place large spoonfuls of the pumpkin mixture on a floured board and lightly roll them in a cylinder about the width of your thumb. Cut into 1-1/2 inch lengths and drop into the water. The water should never come to a full boil. When the gnocchi are done they will rise to the surface. Remove them to a plate using a slotted spoon.

Melt the butter with the sage. Do not substitute powdered sage for the crumbled leaves. When the butter starts to bubble, remove from the fire. Spread some of it in individual ramekins or a shallow baking dish large enough to hold the gnocchi in a single layer. Add the gnocchi and drizzle the rest of the sage butter over them. Sprinkle well with the cheese. These may be made ahead to this point, covered and kept at room temperature. Just before serving, place the gnocchi under a preheated broiler just until they start to bubble and take on color. Serve immediately.

— Ronald Johnson
"Company Fare"

“She pulled herself up from a tough place and came back swinging.”

Bertinelli is perhaps best known for her breakthrough role at age 15 as the mature daughter Barbara Cooper on the CBS sitcom “One Day at a Time,” which ran from 1975 to 1984. Following “Day,” Bertinelli found moderate success appearing in made-for-TV movies and in a supporting role during the last two seasons of the drama “Touched by an Angel.”

Even as she managed to stay working in front of the cameras, however, her life off screen was anything but ideal.

She tried cocaine for the first time while working on “Day,” and her growing substance abuse problems consumed her personal life as she aged. She says those addictions weren’t helped by her 24-year marriage to rocker Eddie Van Halen.

“The priest we tapped to perform the ceremony gave us questionnaires so he could get to know us better and offer more personal words,” Bertinelli wrote in her book. “As we filled out the forms at home, we each held a little vial of coke.”

The drugs weren’t the only aspect of that marriage tearing Bertinelli apart — she and Van Halen both were unfaithful during their union, which also produced a son, Wolfgang “Wolfie” William Van Halen, in 1991. The two split in 2005 and eventually divorced in 2007, though they remain on good terms after Van Halen sobered up.

“Yes, I did, four years into our marriage, cheat,” Bertinelli told “Today.” “And it was a shame and it was a guilt that I carried with me for a very long time. And I don’t like that, so I really wanted to get that out of me.”

Additionally, Bertinelli is open and forthright about the issues surrounding her body image. Over the years, the curvaceous, five-foot-four actress would lose a dangerous amount of weight — at one point she tipped the scales at just 98 pounds — and then pack on the pounds due to stress eating. By 2007, Bertinelli weighed 172 pounds and started experiencing knee pain and fatigue. Now was the time to make a change, she vowed. Bertinelli went public with her struggles that same year and joined the diet program Jenny Craig as a client and spokeswoman, dropping more than 40 pounds to achieve her current weight of less than 130 pounds.

Bertinelli documented her experiences in her 2008 book, “Losing It: And Gaining My Life Back One Pound at a Time,” and the follow-up two years later, “Finding It: And Satisfying My Hunger for Life without Opening the Fridge.”

“It’s really about what happened to me, the choices I made — good, bad, ugly — and how it changed me and how I was able to get beyond that,” Bertinelli told the “Today” show. “I figured I really had been under this facade for so long. And then when Jenny Craig called me and I was able to successfully do their diet, I thought there’s nothing left to really hide from anymore.”

Bertinelli’s candor has not only helped realign herself, but it also has inspired other women fighting similar battles.

“They’re just pieces of my life that have helped me and hopefully will help other people,” Bertinelli told Zap2It.com. “I’ve been getting great letters from people who say that they’ve been able to relate to the things I’ve gone through in my books, so that’s always the icing on the cake.”

Today, things are on the upswing. Bertinelli now stars in the hit TV Land original sitcom “Hot in Cleveland,” which recently was renewed for a second season. She plays one of a trio of single, middle-aged women who move from their native Los Angeles to Cleveland to regain their mojo. The show co-stars Jane Leeves, Wendie Malick and Betty White, and the role has returned Bertinelli to a familiar place where she can showcase her comedic talents.

“This is home to me,” Bertinelli told Zap2It.com. “I get to come and work with these wonderful women every day.”

With her career on the upswing, Bertinelli is able to enjoy her personal life, including her current beau, businessman Tom Vitale.

Bertinelli was introduced to Vitale in 2004 by her brother during a trip to her parents’ home in Arizona. A recent divorcee with four

children, Vitale bonded with Bertinelli over being divorced parents and a shared Italian heritage.

“We just understood each other completely,” Vitale told AARP magazine. “My family is her family. It wasn’t love at first sight; it was family at first sight.”

Bertinelli and Vitale’s bond was solidified on a trip to Florence in 2010, the first journey to Italy for both of them. Back in their hotel room after dinner, Vitale pulled out a ring and proposed. The two say they plan to get married very soon.

“If my life wasn’t starting to turn around, I couldn’t have welcomed him into it,” Bertinelli told AARP magazine of her relationship with Vitale.

The last few years have given Bertinelli something positive to focus on, and for that she says she’s grateful.

“I don’t want to believe the bad stuff anymore,” Bertinelli told AARP magazine. “I believe that I’m worth having a beautiful, blessed life. Every day, I thank God for it.”

PONTURO

(Continued from Page 39)

dynasty in 10 years, before dying young at the age of 57.

FN — “Jersey Boys,” another show about Italian Americans, proved men can learn to love theater. Is there a similar hope here?

TP — I think “Lombardi” will give them that opportunity, and the NFL is behind it and will help endorse it. It’s very much against the grain or what’s done on Broadway, but we feel it’s a compelling story. ... We actually had dinner last week with Sam Huff and Sonny Jurgensen, who played in Lombardi’s last year as a coach with the Washington Redskins. Here was this experience they had 40 years ago — both men are 76 today — and they talked with such passion and emotion. It was an amazing respect they articulated for this man, after working with him for one year. Sam Huff actually came out of retirement for Vince Lombardi.

FN — This must be a special show for you in that it merges two of your loves: sports and the stage.

TP — I feel very much like I’m nurturing this project. I was captain of my high school team; I played middle linebacker. Having this career at Anheuser-Busch where I oversaw sports marketing, I lived very much in that world, and with the NFL. To be able, after my corporate life, to produce a play like this is amazing. ... I’ve always been a sports fan, but always loved the theater and enjoyed the arts. So this has been a unique and fulfilling project.

FN — “Lombardi” also has some rich context to it as well.

TP — Our play takes place in 1965. You’re in the very beginnings of the ‘60s Revolution. Vietnam was coming to a head. And yet he got all these young men to work together, with everyone playing a role. He did it with a respectful process. Most people want to be part of something special — a winning and proud team — and people want to look up to someone older than them, to say, “Help lead me and help me learn.” I saw it in the corporate world. And that’s what Lombardi was able to do clearly as a coach.

FN — Yet he had his limitations, too.

TP — He had a little bit of a temper, and on reflection maybe he could’ve been a better husband and father. The play will tell you he wasn’t perfect, and that he probably put all his energy to one side of the equation. If you could talk to him today, he’d probably say he wished he could do better on the personal side. He actually went to Mass every day, praying for patience and tolerance because he knew those were not his traits. And his parents were very demanding; his mother was a perfectionist and his father a hard worker, a butcher. He was the oldest son, which also has expectations. He had a cross to bear.

FN — This show debuts during football season. Do you ever feel like you’re practicing for the Super Bowl?

TP — The audience will be all the way around the stage, so it will be like a stadium. And the lobby will be decorated with memorabilia; we’re working with the Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. One of the

things we talked a lot about was that it was important to open in the football season, because that’s when fans are focused on the game. For instance, on Oct. 31, when the Green Bay Packers came to New York and played the Jets. The night before was “Packer Night,” when the Packers and their fans made up a good portion of the audience for that performance. At the end of the day, you still have 38 shows on Broadway you’re competing with. “Memphis” is still on, too. But we feel strongly once people see it, the word of mouth will create a swell. We saw that with “Memphis,” and with “Lombardi,” we think there will be some similarities. It will be exciting to have people come and say, “It was a great night at the theater.”

NEGRITA

(Continued from Page 39)

Memphis, where their American rock roots are sure to make a splash.

Although Negrita started out as a classic rock band in 1992, its unique mix of funk, solid guitar patterns and thoughtful lyrics made a triumphant debut in 1994, with a self-titled album. Their first single, “Cambio” (Change), catapulted them into the spotlight, and some reviewers even labeled them as the Italian Red Hot Chili Peppers. But their initial success is also due to a meticulous dedication to staging captivating live shows. After touring across Italy, by their second album, the 1995 “Paradisi per illusi” (Paradise for the Deceived), the band was already crossing the Alps and playing shows in France, Switzerland and Belgium. A major shift came the following year, when the band went to New Orleans to finish recording their third and most explosive album yet, “XXX.”

Fourteen years and five albums later, Negrita present themselves as a very different band, although they haven’t forgotten their roots. “In the last couple of years we have traveled extensively,” says Pau. “We toured and played with other bands in Uruguay, Brazil, Spain. We played a lot in Argentina, where we have many musician friends like the band Bersuit. The people and the atmosphere in these countries have definitely influenced our music as of lately.”

Negrita’s latest album, the 2008 “HELLdorado,” is full of South American rhythms mixed with Caribbean beats. Everything is held together with the band’s perfected pop, still delivered with a rock ‘n’ roll attitude.

Not surprisingly, the band is very close with Roy Paci, who in recent years has become one of Italy’s most respected musicians, playing traditionally inspired songs infused with salsa and Mediterranean passion. “We’re great friends,” says Pau, “and we’ve toured together in South America recently.” The two have also gone to Africa to do humanitarian work together. “We spent three days with the Masai people of Kenya, who we helped build a well,” Pau recalls. “I received the Masai name Oloiborr, which means the tip of the Kilimanjaro. I guess I was called that way because of my height. Roy, who is smaller and buffer, ended up being Olmurani, which means ‘defender of the tribe.’”

Roy Paci played in New York this past October as part of the second edition of (H)IT Week Festival. For a week, New Yorkers were able to see great Italian musical acts such as Ludovico Einaudi, Elisa and, of course, Negrita, alongside Roy Paci & Aretuska. (H)IT Week then continued on in Los Angeles featured Negrita at the Le Rey Theatre. The Los Angeles show marked a pleasant return for the band, which played during the first edition of the festival last year. “As expected, I encountered a lot of Italians who have moved to the United States,” says Pau. “On one hand it’s nice to have fans and people who know your lyrics and can sing along. But it’s also challenging to get through to those people who might have never even heard of us. The greatness of music is that it has no boundaries, so we are able to play our music all over the world.”

As for the upcoming album, Pau can’t give away too much information. “We’re still working on finalizing the songs and I still need to write up most of the lyrics. There isn’t really a guideline. What I can tell you, though, is that it will be a great mix, full of very different styles and approaches, in which we’ll talk about life, from which we are always inspired.”

CINEMA

(Continued from Page 43)

we’ve all seen before: a wife and mother in her late 30s stuck in a routine looking back on the dreams she gave up in order to get married and raise her children. As with Giulia in “L’ultimo bacio,” Mezzogiorno took ownership of her character, Giovanna. Under Ozpetek’s direction, she gave Giovanna a new and different voice with a passion rarely seen in a character battling monotony. There was a fire in her eyes that demanded change in her life. Enter Italian maestro Massimo Girotti in the role of Simone, and true movie making magic happened. Their scenes were beautiful and decadent as Simone guided Giovanna back to her dream of becoming a pastry chef. They baked, laughed and cried together. The 2003 film won a whopping 19 awards, including Italian Oscars for Girotti’s and Mezzogiorno’s performances. It was a perfect “last act” for Massimo Girotti, as he passed away shortly after filming.

In the years following “La finestra di fronte,” Mezzogiorno worked on some high-profile international projects, including Wim Wender’s “Palermo Shooting,” Mike Newell’s “Love in the Time of Cholera” and French director Marie-Anne Chazel’s “Au secours, j’ai trente ans!” (Last Chance Saloon). All three films won her even more international acclaim and perhaps assisted in securing her seat as a member of the jury at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival, a coveted position that further validated her influence and reach beyond Italian borders.

Giovanna Mezzogiorno’s latest international success was in the hit 2009 film “Vincere,” directed by legendary filmmaker Marco Bellochio. The story travels back to a place in time right before Benito Mussolini’s rise to fame, and uncovers the secret, tragic lives of his first wife and son, whom he left just before becoming “Il Duce.” Mezzogiorno lit up the big screen along with her co-star Filippo Timi in a passionate story that called upon the skills as a dramatic actress for which she is known. She moved audiences around the globe with her heartfelt performance and signature blue eyes that pleaded and cried for the approval and acknowledgment of Ida Dalser’s Mussolini.

Giovanna Mezzogiorno’s 2010 release, “Basilicata Coast to Coast,” is currently making its way through the film festival circuit. Many of her films have had much commercial success in the United States and are available through Amazon, Netflix and Blockbuster.

SPOTLIGHT

(Continued from Page 43)

and taken to shelters in 2008. Although the number is high, it is still much better than the previous year, when almost 150,000 dogs were registered in shelters. This year it looks like the numbers might keep improving. Last August resulted in an unexpected strong decline in the number of roadside abandonments. According to AIDAA, the Italian Association for the Defense of Animals and the Environment, only 63

(Continued on the next page)

sightings of dogs on the side of the road were registered during this year's ferragosto (Aug. 15, the most sacred of Italian holidays). That's a 63 percent decrease from 2009 (174 sightings) and an astonishing 70 percent decrease if compared to 2008 (204 sightings).

The sudden reduction is due to the various efforts the current and past governments have brought forth. A 2004 law was finally enacted two years ago, forcing all dog owners to either get their pets tattooed or have a tiny microchip inserted under their skin. Both methods would guarantee stray dogs and their former owners to be easily identifiable through a pet registry. In case of abandonment, owners could face up to one year in jail and a fine of 10,000 euros (approximately \$12,500).

Although most pets are owned in northern and central regions like Piedmont (16 percent of total Italian pets), Lazio (14 percent) and Lombardy (12.2 percent), a disproportionate number of abandonments occur in the south. Campania (10 percent), Sicily (9 percent) and Puglia (7 percent) fuel this sad record. "Sixty percent of dogs left on southern highways are due to imbeciles who live in the north and abandon their dog far from home hoping no one will rescue it," says Lorenzo Croce, AIDAA's president. Between July 25 and August 15, according to the association's figures, 182 dogs were left on the streets in Puglia, Campania, Abruzzo and Calabria. As many as 107 of these were left behind by owners coming from the north. "This perverted phenomenon of taking the dog on vacation only to throw it out far away from home is hard to get rid of," says Croce.

Overpopulation is another growing concern, as more and more Italian families choose to introduce a pet in their households. The domestic feline population is over 7.5 million, while dogs are around 7 million, according to recent data by Italy's Anti-Vivisection League, known as LAV. For years the organization has been promoting TV and newspaper advertising campaigns, as well as distributing free brochures, to spread knowledge on the harm done to abandoned animals.

To fight the problem at its root, many cities around the country are starting to dedicate more resources to campaigns in favor of spaying or neutering house pets. The Feline Colony Association of Largo Argentina, in downtown Rome and just a few steps from the Pantheon, is known for taking care of hundreds of cats that live and roam the ancient temples and ruins, which include part of the Theater of Pompey, where Julius Caesar is believed to have been killed. In recent years, though, the association's volunteers have stopped accepting cats and are vigorously promoting the center's campaign to neuter and spay the animals. In 2008, the association sterilized a record 4,105 cats. The costs were covered by donations made by local residents and tourists stopping by what has become one of the eternal city's must-see attractions.

Just as in the case of abandoned dogs, summer is the worst period for cats, too. "During this season," the association writes on its Italian website, "we receive dozens of calls each day from people who have read about us or have visited us, asking us to accept abandoned kittens. If we had enough space and the financial possibilities, we'd probably be able to accept another 200 kittens. This way, we'd fill up all our spaces and would have to dedicate all our energies and resources to the kittens ... and we'd still only meet one percent of the total demand for help during the summer."

BELLO

(Continued from Page 43)

their friends who have eye problems? I sensed their pride in their tone of voice as they asked. "Of course," I replied. How could I say no? This is the Italian way. I was fortunate that a very nice lady doctor in the next small town, Valenzano, allowed me to use her office to examine my family. As I entered the large office with marble floors and walls, I

noticed it was sparsely furnished, but had enough chairs to accommodate my family and their friends. I was greeted enthusiastically by the young female doctor, who began proudly instructing me on how to use her equipment and began showing me around her office. The equipment was state-of-art and had a surgical center incorporated into the office.

After examining my family members and their friends, I could see a sense of pride in my cousins, that they were able to be examined by a family member with an American medical degree. This resulted in their trust to accept my recommendations. I was filled with a sense of humility and accomplishment, as I reflected upon my grandparents' lot in life during the 1920s and '30s. A warm smile and a sense of contentment washed over me as I pictured my nonni and genitori and all of their hard work and sacrifice. But the sacrifice was made by all, in an effort to provide a better life for their families and children. The men would leave their wives and children behind. They were Pilgrims in a strange land, unable to speak the language, trying to locate other paesani, who would hopefully help them in their scramble to find employment and lodging. The wives were left behind to care for the children and other family members, praying that their husbands would find a way to send money back home. I am privileged to now be able to offer more than just gratitude for all they have done. It is such a small price for me to give up my time to help others.

While I sit at my desk back in Chicago, I realize how blessed I am to be a doctor. I have many thanks to give to people who have helped me on my journey, including grandparents, parents, cousins and others. It takes much work and dedication, not only for me, but for the family members who suffer with me, the long hours of studying and work, and the many frustrations that go along with becoming "a good doctor." In the U.S., we are fortunate to have modern equipment and good medicine to help our patients, but that is not always the case in Italy. Many times, there are not enough beds, medical personnel, or other items that are needed to care for our loved ones while they are sick. I was reminded of this fact when my Uncle Mike was taken to the hospital, very ill. He was placed in a bed in the hallway because there were no rooms available. His blood pressure was running high and his daughter, who was standing alongside of him with a worried look over her face, stopped the doctor and asked if they could monitor his blood pressure more frequently than twice a day. The physician's response was, "You are lucky that your father even has a bed in the hallway." This is the other side of Italian medicine that exists, a side we do not want to look at.

It makes me sad to realize that Italy has so much to offer, but in the medical field, it can be very alarming. Their resources are limited, as the money is divided to provide as much as possible for the masses. Only if you are fortunate, willing to travel, and have enough money will you receive the best medical care. I have experienced the medical community in Italy through various eyes, that of a patient, a family member and a doctor. They offer cutting-edge surgery and research, and provide excellent medical care, if you have the luxury of time and money. They also have "bare bone services" provided for people who do not have that luxury, as I have experienced personally when going through their medical system. It is a system about which I feel both pride and shame. It is my observation that the Italians have a better understanding of life. They realize that nature has its course, that certain consequences are inevitable, and that not everyone can obtain a favorable medical outcome. The Italian people are also very appreciative for what they are able to receive, and have great respect for their doctors.

My dream is to combine the best of both American and Italian medicines. We must strive to keep the good and extricate the bad, much as a surgeon operates to accomplish the same.

As for now, I must return to reviewing tomorrow's cataract surgeries. This dream will continue to motivate me, so that my

patients, as well as I, can look forward to a better life.

Dr. John Bello is a Chicago ophthalmologist and founder of Advanced Vision Specialists. He will continue detailing his remarkable medical sojourn to Italy in upcoming issues.

VIAGGIO

(Continued from Page 45)

The Spanish steps are far more than just a practical way of getting from place to place in hilly Rome. The exuberant Baroque design turns what could have been an ordinary staircase and a laborious climb into a beautiful bridge from one level of the city to another. The Steps are also a successful theatrical set-piece. They give the odd, oblong Piazza di Spagna a dramatic focus and provide an elegant approach to the church of SS. Trinità dei Monti, as well as offering an irresistibly attractive gathering spot for locals, tourists and photographers, along with an unforgettable showcase for the masses of blooming azaleas set out there every spring. Little wonder that the area of Piazza di Spagna and the Spanish Steps is one of the most fashionable parts of Rome.

There are all sorts of interesting things to do and see around Piazza di Spagna. The city's most elegant and expensive shopping streets (now mostly closed to traffic) branch out from the piazza: via della Condotta, via delle Carrozze, via Borgognona and via Sistina. Not far from the foot of the Steps is the ingenious Barcaccia Fountain, the joint project in 1629 of Pietro Bernini and his more famous son Gianlorenzo. The name means "bad boat," and refers to the apparently floundering craft, which seems to be sinking into the stone of the piazza pavement. Although according to legend the origin of the fountain was an actual boat, washed up in this piazza from the distant Tiber during a particularly terrible flood in 1598, it's more likely that the sunken location of the fountain was the Bernini team's way of compensating for the low water pressure at that spot.

Two tall columns also punctuate the piazza. At the southeastern end is the Column of the Immaculate Conception,

erected in 1857 to commemorate the promulgation, by Pope Pius IX, of the dogma that Mary's conception was free of Original Sin. (This issue had been contested by Catholic theologians for almost a thousand years.) Not strictly in Piazza di Spagna, but towering above it on the Pincian Hill, is one of Rome's obelisks. Found in the gardens of the ancient Roman historian Sallust on the Pincian Hill, it was moved to its present location in 1788-89, on orders of Pope Pius VI. It's a Roman copy of an ancient Egyptian obelisk.

There's also a strong English component to Piazza di Spagna. In the 18th and 19th centuries the neighborhood was a favorite haunt of English artists and writers, as well as a fashionable spot for English aristocrats making the Grand Tour to idle away some time. As you stand facing the stairs at the foot of the Spanish Steps, on your right, in a building covered with rose-colored stucco, is the apartment where the great English poet John Keats lived for a few months, and where he died in 1821. The house is now a museum dedicated to Keats' memory, as well as that of Shelley, Byron and Leigh Hunt, all of whom spent time in Italy, and it's filled with memorabilia of the sort to touch any Anglophile's heart, including a former papal reliquary, now containing a lock of John Milton's hair. But even if you're not a devotee of English poetry, the museum is interesting as an example of a perfectly preserved, 19th-century Anglo-Roman apartment. On the opposite side of the Spanish Steps is another venerable English institution that has survived from the 19th century: Babington's Tea Rooms. Be warned — although they DO make awfully good tea and scones, they come at the cost of a meal elsewhere.

On a more contemporary note, the first McDonald's restaurant in Italy opened its doors in Piazza di Spagna on March 20, 1986. This caused howls and hand-wringing among devotees of genuine Roman cuisine, and led to the founding of the Slow Food movement three years later. As befits a restaurant (in fact, the only restaurant) in Piazza di Spagna, this is no plastic-infested Golden Arches place. There's no drive-up window, and the majestic, marble-faced interior bears not the slightest resemblance to any American member of the chain. My advice is: do NOT eat there, but feel free to go in, look around, and use their elegant bathrooms.

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RUTHERFORD NJ

Rocking Horse Ranch

Ralph and Pat Larossa report that the Rutherford Chapter organized a bus trip to the Rocking Horse Ranch in upstate NY. Along the way, the bus stopped at the Vanderbuilt Mansion in Hyde Park. On the trip home, travellers visited the West Point Academy.

A great time was had by all when the group arrived at the ranch! There were 35 attendees that enjoyed horseback riding, hayrides, mini golf, swimming (indoor pool) and the fall foliage. The highlight of the trip was the bocce tournament. Rutherford hopes to make this trip an annual tradition.



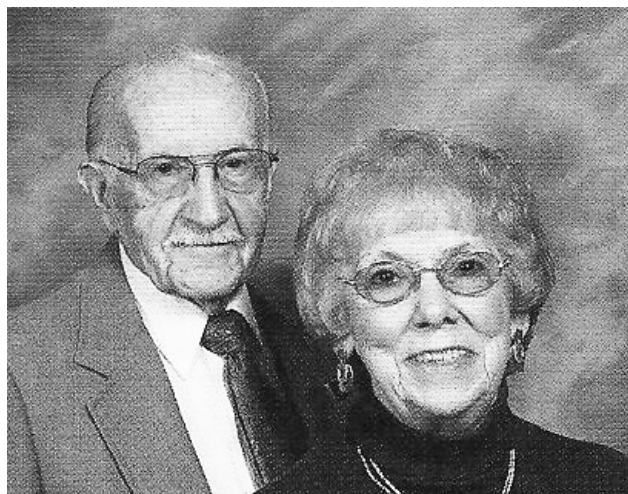
REHOBETH AREA DE

Medal of Merit St. Edmond's Parish

On September 26th, UNICO Rehoboth Area DE chapter member Charlie Tumini and his wife Terry received the Diocese of Wilmington Medal of Merit Award given for their outstanding and faithful service to St. Edmond's Parish in Rehoboth Beach, DE and to the Diocese of Wilmington. The recipients of this award were recommended by their parish pastor, Reverend Raymond Forester, and approved by their bishop, Most Reverend W. Francis Malooly, D.D.

The ceremony was held at St. John the Beloved Church in Wilmington with a prayer service where family and friends were invited to attend the ceremony and reception.

Please join us in congratulating Charlie and his wife Terry on this accomplishment.



FAIRFIELD NJ

Columbus Day Dinner Dance

The Fairfield Chapter has been also helping in the preparation in the Columbus day dinning dance held at The Valley Regency of Clifton, New Jersey. What an outstanding job in the commendations and food. Fairfield Chapter got a donation from Hollywood Restaurant for door prize, and the chapter donated an electronics gift basket for a tricky tray raffle which consisted of a 19" Flat Screen T.V. and goodies, with that, the sales of tickets generated close to \$800.00 dollars, which was donated to District 11. As President I would like to thank my members for a great turn out at that event, and hope to see them at next Columbus Day Dinning.



Chapter Sergeant-at-Arms Jeffery and Marie Overton, Bruce and Chapter Secretary Cindy Puleo, Giovanni and Louisa Gambino, Chapter President Fred and Michele Mongelli, member Daniel and Rosanne Scirica.



(L-R) Board Member John and Toni LaForgia, Second Vice President Richard and Joann DelRusso, Board Member Jerry and Barbara Longo, Head of Good and Welfare Richard and Helen Metallo, District Sergeant-at-Arms Andy and Marlene Governale.

FAIRFIELD NJ

New Members

Fairfield UNICO has been very busy this past summer. We have been helping in the preparation of the Jimmy "V" Foundation Bocce Tournament held every year at the Montville Courts. Fairfield had two teams of four members. Team #1 was Andy and Marlene Governale, Jerry Longo, Ido Sanzari, and Fred Mongelli as the alternate. Team #2 consisted of Jimmy Fede, Daniel Scirica, Bruce Puleo, Steven Tobia, and Ralph B. Giordano as an alternate. There were tons of Italian specialty foods and laughs and everyone there had a lot of fun. Maybe next year we will even try to win a game.



Fairfield Chapter Secretary Bruce Puleo is congratulated by Fairfield Chapter President Fred Mongelli as UNICAN of the Year Award. Bruce did an outstanding job for Fairfield UNICO and really deserves this recognition for all the hard work over the past year.



(L-R) Newly installed members Michael Armeno and Michael McGlynn at June's chapter meeting. In September's meeting Vincent Contuzziq and Anthony Gary Manna were installed.

ROSETO PA



Ladies of UNICO officers were sworn in during a recent dinner at the Roseto Fire Company Hall. (L-R) President Anne Marie Robertone, VP Mary Ann Mcevoy, Treasurer Gloria Martino and Secretary Marie Pullo. The ceremony was performed by Roseto Chapter President Dr. Frank DeFrank.



Roseto chapter officers were sworn in recently at the Franklin Hills Winery. (L-R) Secretary Carmella Carrescia, VP Joe DeNubio, President Dr. Frank DeFrank. The ceremony was conducted by UNICO National President Christopher DiMattio.

AROUND UNICO WITH PRESIDENT CHRIS



The Brooklyn NY Chapter's Columbus Day Dinner at Gargiulo's on October 6th. (L-R) UNICO National Office Manager Pat Pelonero, Brooklyn Chapter President Andy Manicone, National President Chris DiMattio, Jenny and André DiMino, and UNICO National Executive Administrator Sal Benvenuti.



Queensboro Chapter President Frank Fabricio (C) and chapter officers pose during a recent chapter meeting on October 5th. National President Chris DiMattio addressed the group and answered questions about the future of UNICO National.



Young Robert DiMattio never did get to enjoy the parade in New York City. He did get a nice nap in though!



Per PNP Al Dante's request, long-time La Festa Italiana in Scranton Chairman Chris DiMattio walked into the UNICO Porketta tent for the first time ever to help serve porketta sandwiches. David Cerra (L) was Chris' first customer.



Participating in the Plainfields' Chapter 40th Anniversary included: (L - R) Charter Members Renato Biribin, PNP's Thomas LaMarca and Frank Licato, National President Chris DiMattio and his wife Ann, Chapter President Anthony Bengivenga and First Deputy DG NJ X Bob Bengivenga.



Overlooking the Hudson River from the Benmarl Winery is the DiMattio family with DG NY I Joe Pesavento,



In attendance at the picnic sponsored by District X following the John Basilone Parade in Raritan NJ are PNP Frank Tidona (holding baby Robert DiMattio) and Scholarship Director Joan Tidona.



Enjoying the festivities of the New Jersey District XI Columbus Day Dinner at the Valley Regency in Clifton on October 10th are UNICO Foundation President John DiNapoli, Ann and Chris DiMattio, and Past National Presidents John Alati and Frank Cannata.



Some of the Marlboro members take a break for a photo and a laugh with PNP Joe Agresti and the DiMattio family.



National President Chris DiMattio mixes the grapes at the Franklin Hills Winery in Roseto, PA.



On September 25th at the Franklin Hills Winery, National President Chris DiMattio inducted Roseto Chapter officers. (L-R) DG PA IV Craig DeFranco, National President Chris DiMattio, VP Joe DeNubio, Secretary Carmella Carrescia, President Dr. Frank DeFrank and Past DG PA IV Ken Vail.



Attending the Mercer County Italian Festival on September 25th was National President Chris DiMattio and PNP André DiMino. The festival proudly sponsors many Italian cultural displays including this one with the Garibaldi Guard from the 39th New York Infantry Regiment.



President Chris DiMattio attended this year's Bocce Tournament for the "V" Foundation with Scranton member Gloria Bernardi who is the widow of Sal Bernardi. This year's V Foundation Grant is in memory of Sal. Frank Paolercio serves as the UNICO National "V" Foundation Chair.



Chris DiMattio poses with the two teams he sponsored for the "Bocce Classic" benefiting the "V" Foundation in September. Team captains were Silvio and Cookie Mele standing just left of Chris.



The Chapel of the Four Chaplains in Philadelphia recently honored PDG PA II Pat Yanni, and Convention 2010 Chair Karen Clifford, with the Legion of Honor Award. The award memorializes the courageous act of four Army chaplains who gave their life jackets to others when the USS Dorchester was torpedoed in 1943 drowning 672 men. (L-R) Francis X. McDonnell, Palma Yanni receiving an Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonel certificate, Pat, Karen, and National President Chris DiMattio Chris is a past recipient of the Bronze Medallion.



National President Chris DiMattio waved to the crowds along the many Columbus Day Parade routes he walked in cities across the country in October!



The Marlboro NY Chapter recently held two terrific events. The Annual Tomato Festival took place on August 8th and the Clam Bake was held on September 19th. Pictured with National President Chris DiMattio is Chapter President Dave Zambito and Chairman Russell Parks



Before marching down 5th Avenue, Ralph Contini, and Chris DiMattio kiss the cheeks of UNICO Standardization Chairman Giuseppe Pampena. Giuseppe made sure that every chapter banner used in the parade was perfect!