

# NUTLEY UNICO

(*nutleyunico.org*)

## JAN. 2023 NEWSLETTER

**Annual Chapter Raffle** - It is important that all tickets to our annual \$100 raffle be sold to maintain the full prize for the winners. This is our largest fundraiser and requires the efforts of all of our members. If you are having a problem with your tickets, or have misplaced them please contact Tom Sposato (tspit@aol.com), Sal Ferraro (salferraro@msn.com) or Mark DiMaggio (mark.dimaggio@messer-us.com) asap. The drawing will be next Thursday, Feb. 2, at our dinner meeting. Members are reminded that this dinner meeting will be held at **Nanina's in the Park**. As in past years the change in venue requires that all members who attend contribute an extra \$10 to offset the higher cost for this venue. Guests will be assessed \$40.

### January Dinner Meeting

The January meeting featured presentations of our 2022 annual awards. This was put off for a year due to the unavailability of awardees. Lorraine Kucinski was our 2022 Unican of the Year, Maurice Ferraro received the Mille Grazie Award and Phil Cuzzi was our 2022 Lifetime Achievement recipient. Phil spoke of his experiences as a major league baseball umpire, his strong connection to his Italian-American heritage and his decades of work raising funds for ALS ("Lou Gehrig's" disease) research in memory of his good friend, Robert Luongo, who passed away from this disease.

Dan Marucci's Culture & Heritage presentation dealt with the largest exports from Italy. No, not pasta, not tomatoes, not olive oil, but pharmaceuticals, leather, wine and autos. The meal for the night was excellent, featuring a ravioli medley and a great farro dish.

New members sworn in were Joseph Trentacost, William Cutillo and Sharon Balsamo.

### Good & Welfare

- Jerry Del Tufo's Mom, Cecelia, passed away just weeks before her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### Executive Committee

The committee met on Jan. 18.

- National Business

--Mid-Year Board Meeting will be March 24-26 at the Embassy Suites in Alexandria, Va.

--National Awards Submissions due on Feb. 1.

- District VII Business

--District VII Recognition Dinner will be hosted by our chapter on May 23. Past President and 2022 District Governor, Marie Solimo, will be recognized at this dinner. Details to follow.

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- Chapter Business

- **Our next dinner meeting is Thursday, Feb. 2, at 7:00 pm at Nanina's.** This will include the drawing of our raffle prizes. The Unico National President, Peter Pettinato, and his wife, Maggie, will be in attendance, in addition to the Unico National Executive VP, Ralph Contini and his wife, Maria Rose.

The guest speaker will be Stefano Meton, Italian Consulate Attorney. Please note that Signor Meton will not be there in an official capacity to respond to any legal questions. His appearance is **informational only**.

- Forms will be distributed at the Feb. meeting for nominations for the 2023 Unican of the Year and Lifetime Achievement recipients.
- Cathy Marucci reported that we now have 177 members. There are still several members who need to address their 2022-23 dues.
- The Chapter will continue to recognize members who had 25, 35, 40, 45 & 50 years of continuous membership, including those who achieved the 25 year milestone during the covid years. This will take place at our spring meeting when the major scholarship recipients are presented. Those to be recognized for the 25 years are Pat Ritacco, Dan Geltrude, Anthony Biondi, Alan Genitempo, Greg Tolve, Joe Cervasio, Barry Maurillo, Tom Sposato, Tom Tucci, Mark DiMaggio, Mario Cocchiola, Lenny Guglielmello, Joe Zarra, Gerard Tolve, Anthony Mascolo and Mauro Tucci
- 2022-23 calendar:

### **Upcoming Events**

Feb. 2 meeting – At Nanina's

March 2, April 6, May 4, June 1 – Dinner Meetings

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CULTURE & HERITAGE (The story of Dr. Virginius Mattia's grandfather's recorded exploits in settling in Newark will continue this year.

As noted in previous newsletters, I recently came into possession of a manuscript titled, *The Early Italian Settlers in Newark*. This is a compilation of the writings of the grandfather of Dr. Virginius Mattia, Jr., who resided in Nutley and was the former President/CEO of Hoffman La Roche. Dr. Mattia's grandfather, Peter/Petrino Mattia, came to this country from Calabritto, a province of Avellino, with his family as a little boy and settled in Newark in 1873. He began to write about his experiences, and those of the other early Italian immigrants who came to Newark in the 1880's. His papers were passed on to his granddaughter, Jessie Mattia Rosa, Dr. Mattia's sister, in 1953 upon his passing. They laid dormant for the next 32 years until Senora Rosa's husband transcribed them into a 91 page manuscript in 1985 describing Petrino's recollections, experiences, the problems facing the Italian immigrants, the "firsts" (first school, first macaroni factory, first wedding, first dance in a public hall, first hotel, etc.), problems with the Irish, politics, development of the "colonies" (wards), Branch Brook Park, and many more vignettes.....

I want to continue to provide you with some interesting sections of the manuscript.

INTRODUCTION

*"I am writing this, my second history of the early Italian settlers of Newark, NJ.....I had no thought of writing a history – I did it to make it easy for me to answer questions. As we came from the different towns and provinces of Italy, people would ask me, ' Who is he and where did he come from'. So, I got it down in the best way I could to give their names. Later I made memorandums of happenings in the 'colonies'. I felt sorry for the single men and those that left their families back home. I could see them with tin pails go to get food and take it to their lodgings to eat.*

**Chapter Twenty-Two**  
*"The Sixth Italian Colony"*

*The sixth was the last of the colonies to come into being. It is in the vicinity of Summer and Verona Avenues. The colony has many well-built homes. It has no shanties.*

*"The First Italian to be Killed by a Train"*

*This was a woman from San Fele. She lived on Drift St and was killed by a train on Nesbitt St. This was in 1880.*

*"Mr. James Tremble. The Italian Lawyer"*

*Mr. Tremble was known as the "Italian lawyer" He was an American who came to this country when he was very young. His father was the American Consul.*

**Chapter Twenty-Three**  
*"Newark from Central Ave. to the Belleville/Newark Line"*

*I will start from the Newark and Bloomfield line, on Bloomfield Ave. An open brook divided the two towns. There was a stone bridge over the brook. To the north was the Sun Fish Pond. In 1890 Geraldo Maiorano started the Silver Lake colony which is partly in Belleville and partly in Bloomfield. On Bloomfield Ave. where Schools Stadium is was Johnnie Erbes Half-Way House. There were very few*

houses on Roseville Ave. All were small farms. All of the houses north to Park Ave and from the Bloomfield/Belleville line to 3<sup>rd</sup> St were built with Italian hard-earned dollars. There was a cabinet factory making office furniture on 3<sup>rd</sup> St, north of Bloomfield Ave. known as the Licorice Works which extracted licorice from wood. Now it is Dugan's Bakery.

East of the canal and north of Bloomfield Ave. was Charles Pond and Woods. Later it became part of the lake in Branch Brook Park. On the south east corner of Lake St, where the bus garage is, was the horse-car barns of the old Bloomfield horse car line.

#### **Chapter Twenty-Four** **"Horse Cars and Their Colors"**

Each car line was owned by different owners and no cars went on Broad St south of Market St. The Bloomfield cars were painted yellow. At the corner of Bloomfield Ave. and Belleville Ave, (now Broadway) was always a horse to help the cars up the hill to Clifton Ave. In the 80s a small locomotive was tried out to tow cars, but it scared the horses and was discarded. The Broad St cars were painted red, ...the Orange St cars green, the South Orange Ave cars blue and the Springfield Ave cars yellow. All the cars were drawn by two horses and had a conductor and driver. The colors were a great help to those who could not read English. In fact very few could read at all.

#### **Chapter Twenty-Five** **"Back to the Description of Newark"**

North of Bloomfield Ave., almost all streets, except Mt. Prospect, were not cut through and were dirt streets. Only a few were paved, like Broad and Market Sts. They had cobble or field stones for pavement.

The Forest Hill section of Newark was well named. It had many terraces and plenty of trees. On the corner of Bloomfield Ave and Clifton Ave where there is now a church there was a little stone quarry, later filled as the brownstone was of poor quality. Where the Sacred Heart Cathedral is nearby was a large and deep brownstone quarry. It was filled when Branch Brook Park started in about 1897.

#### **Chapter Twenty-Six** **"The Branch Brook Park"**

The park was suggested by the Mayor of Newark, Joseph E. Haynes. He had been the Principal of Morton St. School. It was his pet idea. Between 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. (now Park Ave) on all that land from the old Morris Canal to Clifton Ave were only two streets, each only about a block long, The entrance to the park is at 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. In front of that was the largest weeping willow tree in the State. The pond, now the lake, was only used in the winter for skating and for ice cut into large cakes. It was very deep. In 1884 on a sunny Sunday after a young man by the name of Rizzolo drowned there.

After the Essex County Park Commission was formed it acquired the pond and woods owned by Mr. Clark, the owner of Clark Thread Mills. The two ponds joined into one, forming the present lake.

*To be continued.....*  
F. Cocchiola

Please forward any changes in email addresses, good & welfare items, questions for the Executive Committee or questions concerning the newsletter to me at [fcoch@aol.com](mailto:fcoch@aol.com) (Frank Cocchiola)

