

# NUTLEY UNICO

(*nutleyunico.org*)

## APRIL 2022 NEWSLETTER

**Next Dinner Meeting**  
**Thursday, May 5, 2022, 7:00 pm**  
**at**  
**Mama Vittoria**

### April Meeting

- The Nutley UNICO \$4,000 Academic Scholarship was presented to Nicholas Russo. Alessandra and Liliana Ferraro also each received an Academic and Pride in Achievement Scholarship. Congratulations to them and their families, and thanks to Alan Genitempo, committee chair, and the Scholarship Committee for their work selecting these recipients and those to follow.
- Nicholas Russo also received a special \$1,000 John DiDomenico Memorial Scholarship presented by Nick Palma on behalf of his friend John DiDomenico, who recently passed away due to pancreatic cancer. Nicholas wrote a four page essay explaining the discrimination and oppression suffered by Italian immigrants in the nineteenth century focusing on the PADRONE ACT, signed by President Grant on June 23, 1874, outlawing Italian slavery. The essay also referenced the lynching of 11 Italian (Sicilian) immigrants in New Orleans in 1891, the largest mass lynching in American history.
- The **Unican of the Year** was presented to Lorraine Bini Kucinski. Lorraine's efforts to keep the Chapter functioning during the Covid months and years was critical to keeping our members involved and safe.
- The **Lifetime Achievement Award** will be presented to Phil Cuzzi in the fall.
- Tom Sposato presented the Nominating Committee's recommendations for the slate of officers for the 2022-23 year. They are: Dan Carnicella (President), Danielle Manganello (1<sup>st</sup> VP), Pasquale Pisani (2<sup>nd</sup> VP), Frank Russo (3<sup>rd</sup> VP), Tom Sposato (Treasurer), Cathy Marucci (Secretary) and Members-at-Large, Lenny Guglielmello and Anthony Biondi, Jr.
- A moment of silence was observed in memory of the passing of Anthony Biondi, Sr. Thanks to everyone who attended the special Unico ceremony at Biondi's Funeral Home during the services for Mr. Biondi.
- Cathy Marucci announced that we now have 165 members.

### Culture & Heritage

Dan Marucci highlighted the efforts of Pelligrino Artucci who wrote the Italian cookbook, *Gospel*, all original recipes which became the bible for Italian cooking.  
(An additional Culture & Heritage item will be found at the end of this newsletter.)

## Good & Welfare

- The District VII Brian Piccolo Awards Dinner was held on April 5. Our male Piccolo recipient is Mathew Harbison. Mathew did an excellent job with his acceptance speech. He will receive our Piccolo Scholarship on Sunday, May 15, at our Piccolo Breakfast.
- Steve Picciano is recovering from a recent surgical procedure. Get well soon!

## Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met on Thursday, April 21. Among the items discussed were:

- Unico National News  
The Unico National Convention is scheduled for Wednesday, July 27 – Sunday, July 31, at the Omni Royal in New Orleans.
- District News (The District Governor is our Past President Marie Solimo).  
The next District VII meeting is Tuesday, May 24 at Tiramisu, Saddle Brook.
- Local Chapter Business

The Committee discussed having a special night at our October meeting where members would bring a son or daughter to the meeting. This would be a family celebration for Italian-American Heritage Month, while possibly attracting new young members. More on this to follow.

The Chapter by-laws are still in the process of review. Once the committee agrees on a final draft they will be presented to the membership for approval.

The Chapter will donate \$100 to the Unico National Ukraine Relief Fund

The Community Service event for the collection of items for the Ukrainians was cancelled due to logistical issues with sending materials to the Ukraine. Another activity will be held at a date to be announced.

## Upcoming Events

- **May 5** – Chapter dinner meeting. Twenty-five year pins will be presented to Pat Ritacco and Joe Cervasio.
- **May 15 (Sunday)** – Chapter **Brian Piccolo Scholarship Breakfast** at the Chandelier at 9:00 am. Male (Mathew Harbison) & Female (Nicole Cichetti) Piccolo Scholarships will be presented along with the Tina Battaglia Scholarship (Alexandra Twomey), Joseph Battaglia Scholarship (Aidan Scarpelli), PZCPG Male Scholarship (Chris Cugliari), Frank Cocchiola, Sr. Scholarship (Jen Garner), Arcuti Family Scholarship (Luca Blancato) and the Martini Scholarship (Stephanie Luberto). **SAVE THE DATE.**

We are soliciting gifts/baskets to raffle off at this event. Please notify Marie Solimo or me if you have any items. We are encouraging all members to make an attempt to attend

this event. Let's show the students and their parents what we are all about. Admission is \$35. Flyers have been sent via email and will be available at the May meeting.

- **May 22** (Sunday) – Columbus Parade Dinner at Parks & Rec. \$40.
- **May 30** (Monday) – **Memorial Day Parade**. Our participation level at the St. Patrick's Day Parade was very light. Let's have a better showing for our veterans. We will assemble at the Park Oval at 10:30 am with an 11:00 step off. Cars are welcome. If you plan on bringing a vehicle please let us know.
- **June 14** (Tuesday) – Special Scholarship presentations. This will be at 7:00 pm at Mama Vittoria. Refreshments will be cake, pastries, fruit, coffee, tea and soda. There will be no additional charge to members or guests.
- **June 26** (Sunday) – Bus ride to AC (Details to follow)
- **July 13** (Wednesday) – Christmas Eve in July. Save the Date! Details to follow.
- **August 24** (Wednesday) – Annual Golf Outing (Hendricks)

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## CULTURE & HERITAGE

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 Two (excerpts) - continued *"How Did Your Father Know That There Was a Newark?"*

*While father was in Newark for a week his brothers-in-law and friends were worrying about him. The mere thought of the docks and a watery grave gave them a chill. The police had no record of anyone drowning. ....Everyone was on the lookout. During that week father was also worrying.....all he knew*

of the family was Crosby St., but Crosby St was long with many tenements on it. Father did not know the number of the house....On Saturday he quit work at noon. He wrote the name of the RR station. Arriving in Hoboken, he wrote the name of the ferry and did the same in NY. On that afternoon all his friends were in Pietro Rizzolo's yard, where father lived. All of a sudden young Carmine Filipone went to the yard and yelled, 'Uncle Angelo is coming....Uncle Angelo is here'...Just then father walked in. He narrated what had occurred. He showed them the money he earned in four days work. One hundred and ten lire (\$11.00). Father said, 'Come here and see. Here people are starving. In Nevarka (that is what the Italians called it), people all seem to have plenty of work'. Someone asked, 'Are there any Italians there?'. 'I haven't seen any', he answered.

On Sunday afternoon Pietro Sabatino, Angelo D'Alessio, Giuseppe Capuana and Arsenio Costa went with my father to the ferry to buy tickets to Newark. They were disappointed to learn that the Morris and Essex Railroad ran no trains on Sunday. But on Monday morning the five came. Sabatino and D'Alessio remained with father to work in the yard and Capuana and Costa looked around the old 15<sup>th</sup> ward for a suitable place to start a junkyard.....they looked around and found one on River St. They rented it and went back to NY, sold out and came here. Giovanni Franchi who had the store on Spring St. also sold his place. He came to Newark and opened the first Italian fruit and confectionary store near where the Newark Public Library is now.

Franchi, who later become known as John Frank, was the maternal grandfather of Peter Zazzali, Asst. Tax Assessor of Newark. He started the third colony, that of the Bank St. section. Pietro Sabatino, who was also a barber, started the first Italian barber shop at 24 Boyden St.

I doubt very much that there were any other Italian colonies in this country that had more of a dramatic beginning than ours. It would seem more like a fantastic dream than reality that a man lost in a meadow could find himself in a city that was to be a heaven for us.

### **Chapter Three**

Chapter Three consists of a four page list of "The First Italians in Newark to Start in this or That" This list include Italian "firsts", with names, dates and locations, such as who started the first junkyard, tailor shop, the first saloon, boy to enter public school, painter, blacksmith, jewelry store, musical band, macaroni maker, bridge engineer, funeral director, mason, lawyer, college professor, medical doctor, meeting hall, person to drown, baker, pharmacist, etc.

### **Chapter Four (exerpts)**

*"I gave my Father an Argument and I Lost"*

When I wrote the first history of the early settlers of Newark in the mid 1880's I would ask my father questions about the early settlers. One day I said, 'Father how does it feel to be the first of the Italians?'. He snapped back, 'I was not the first and don't you write it either if you know what's good for you'. He said there was a family here but he didn't know their name. I did all I could to get some information about the family but failed. In 1889 I made the acquaintance of Mr. William Richmond, the first organist of Saint Philiop Neri's Church, the first Italian-speaking Roman Catholic Church. I met Mrs. Richmond ....who was born in Italy of Italian parents and spoke Italian. I said, 'My father was right'. 'Right about what', she asked. I said, 'father insisted there was an Italian family here when he arrived in Newark in 1873'.

'Your father had reference to another family that is here', her son told me. ....I'd forget about the family. Catallani is their name. They are very fine people...but they never associated with Italians.

*Doctor Richmond was not Italian, but Mrs. Richmond's maiden name was Victoria Avezzano. Besides William they had four daughters, Fillitta, Victoria, Rosa and a fourth who I can not recall. William became a well known priest in the north section of Newark. The Rev. William Richmond was the founder of the Church of Our Lady of Good Counsel, on Summer Ave.*

*(continued next month)*

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)