UNICO NATIONAL

PASSAIC VALLEY CHAPTER
P.O. BOX 341
LITTLE FALLS, NJ 07424
PassaicValleyUNICO@gmail.com
www.PassaicValleyUNICO.org

Monthly Minutes
November 11, 2026 ~ 2nd Wednesday

Date	**November 11, 2026 – 2nd Wednesday**
Place	**Holy Cross Church, Woodland Park**
Prayer	**7 pm John Morano**
Flag Salute	**7 pm John Morano**
Dinner	**7 pm**
Meeting	**8 pm**

Members & Guests in Attendance

Members (53) at meeting	**28**
Guests at meeting	**2**
Percent % at meeting	**53 %**

Executive Board

Attendance at meetings		**9/'26**	**10/'26**	**11/'26**	**12/'26**	**1/'27**	**2/'27**	**3/'27**	**4/'27**	**5'/27**	**6/'27**
President:	J. Benvenuti	😊	😊	😊							
1st VP:	Fred DeMarco	😊	😊	😊							
2nd VP	Chuck Russo	😊	😊	😊							
Secretary:	Pelonero	😊	😊	😊							
Treasurer:	Ponchak	😊	😊	😊							
Sgt.At-Arms:	Barbieri	😊	😊	x							

Delegates at Meetings

1. Sal Benvenuti	😊	😊	😊
2. Pat Pelonero	😊	😊	😊

Board of Directors at meetings (6 past Chapter Presidents)

Carmen Criscione	2024	😊	😊	x
Carmen Gaita	2018	😊	x	x
Bruce Ponchak	2016	😊	😊	😊
John Barbieri	2014	😊	😊	x
Steve Pelonero	2010	😊	😊	😊
Sal Benvenuti	2006	😊	😊	😊

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Past Chapter Presidents in attendance at meetings

	9/'27	10/'27	11/'27	12/'27	1/'27	2/'27	3/'27	4/'27	5/'27	6/'27
Joe Agresti PNP	☺	☺	☺							
John Barbieri	☺	☺	x							
Sal Benvenuti	☺	☺	☺							
Carmen Criscione	☺	☺	x							
Carmen Gaita	☺	x	x							
John Morano	☺	☺	☺							
Steve Pelonero	☺	☺	☺							
Bruce Ponchak	☺	☺	☺							
Chuck Russo	☺	☺	☺							
Angelo Verrone	X	☺	☺							

Opening Remarks

- **Chapter President Joe Benvenuti**
  - President Joe thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He thanked the Veterans at the meeting. He thanked Chapter member Gina Bucci for supplying and bringing the pastries to the meeting. And he thanked those members who brought toys for the Christmas float and that the toys will be donated at the Christmas Parade on Thanksgiving weekend. He asked that if anyone still had toys that they could also bring them to his house.

- **1st VP Fred DeMarco**
  - Fred wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and also thanked the veterans in our chapter

- **2nd VP Chuck Russo**
  - Chuck also thanked the veterans in the chapter and noted that this is the 1st chapter meeting since Veterans Day in 1998 that was held on our chapter meeting day. The next chapter meeting to again be held on our chapter meeting day will be in 2027.

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Secretary Minutes

Secretary: Steve Pelonero PNP

- Steve noted that the minutes are on the chapter's website and were also emailed to all the members and also to the National Office and to the National Officers.
- With no questions, motions to accept were from:
  Joyce O'Hara and Pat Pelonero
  All were in favor

Treasurer Report

Treasurer: Bruce Ponchak

- Bruce noted that the treasurer's report was sent out to all the members.
- Bruce reported that there was no activity in October.
- Bruce reported that there is $37,435.00 in the checking account.
- Bruce noted that all of outr scholarship grants are paid .
- He said that he is going to transfer and start a 6 month CD with $20,000.00 from the account.
- With no questions, motions to accept were from:
  Frank Capalbo and Steve Pelonero
  All were in favor

Bills and Communications: John Barbieri

- In Johns absence there was no report.

Chapter Budget

- N/A

Chapter Elections: Nominating chair to be appointed by Chapter President

- N/A

Fundraising Committees

- **Community Service Day: Claudine Stefanelli**
  Claudine reported that our community service day will again be at ShopRite Little Falls to help collect items for our local Food Pantries. It will be the 3rd Saturday of April, which is April 17th from 8 am – 4 pm

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• **Fifty-Fifty: Claudine Stefanelli**

- Claudine reported that the 50/50 raffle drawing will be at the Ties in Singas on December 16th. She said that all members are welcome to attend and witness the drawing. She asked that all members return to her their sold and unsold tickets as soon as possible. She noted that if all the tickets were sold, that the winning prize would be $2,500.00

• **Food Pantry: Carmen Gaita, Patricia Pelonero**

- Patricia thanked all the members for their donations made at the meeting which will definitely help those in need for their Thanksgiving dinners.

• **Golf Outing: Fred DeMarco**

- No report

• **Holiday Cheer: Joe Benvenuti, Sal Benvenuti, Carmen Gaita**

- Sal reported that he was again hoping for donations, along with the budgeted $1,500 from the chapter, to be able to give again to five families, each $500 in gift cards from ShopRite, Kohls and Target.

- **Italian Studies: Cav. Joe Agresti PNP**
  - Joe reported that he was in contact with seton Hall University and that they were looking for support in their Study Abroad Program. Joe said we would need to know before January 1st if they have a student that they would suggest that we help with our $1,000 to go towards their semester in Italy

- **Overseas Soldier Program: Evelyn Tosi / Roni Corrado**
  - Evelyn reported that her family are all in the states
  - Pat Pelonero said that in the St. James Church Bulletin they list all of the service people that are overseas
  - Chuck Russo said that it is a great gesture that makes a soldier feel nice that someone thought of them when they receive a package

- **Scholarship: Mike Russo**
  - Michael said that there was no report but that he would like the committee to stay for a short meeting after this chapter meeting was adjourned.

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Non-Fundraising Committees

- **Flag Raising: Steve Pelonero PNP**
  - No report

- **Good & Welfare: Joe Benvenuti**
  - Joe thanked everyone for the thoughtfulness received when his brother Frank passed away. He lived in North Carolina but said that there would be a celebration of life at the Gaita Memorial Home on November 29th. He said that donations to the police, fire, and ambulance departments would be appreciated.

- **Italian Heritage: Gina Bucci / Pat Pelonero**
  - Gina brough Italian Pastries to the meeting and talked about the origin of each

- **Membership: Christina Castillo, Roni Corrado**
  - Christina reported that we have 53 members. She wished our November birthday members a happy day: Jerry Gaeta, John Barbieri, and Sal Benvenuti
  - Christina noted that the average age of our chapter is now 67 years. Christina added that attendance at this meeting was at 53%.
  - Christina also noted that 6 youth members have not yet paid their annual $12 dues and that they will be dropped from our roster at the end of the month. One regular member also has not yet paid but Joe Benvenuti said that he would see that person over the weekend
  - There was a special presentation made by Christina to 11 members who have 25+ years of service to our chapter: Angelo Verrone 30 years, Joe Agresti 34 years, Carmen Criscione 36 years, Carmen Gaita 39 years, Sal Benvenuti 39 years, Joe Benvenuti, 41 years, Frank Capalbo 41 years, Chuck Russo 41 years, Phil Polizzotto 41 years, John Morano 42 years, Jerry Gaeta 45 years

- **Newsletter & Website: Steve Pelonero PNP, John Barbieri**
  - Steve Pelonero reported that all minutes and newsletters are on the chapter website. Steve also noted that the chapter website is now at 21,928 visits, which is up 92 visits from the last meeting. Steve also noted that he is now working on the December Newsletter.

- **Public Relations: Christina Castillo, Roni Corrado**
  - Christina reported that all of our chapter photos are being sent to both the Italian Tribune and Passaic Valley Today newspapers. They are all being printed and published

District and National Events

- **District News**
  - Joe Agresti reminded everyone that our NJ District IV was again doing the bus ride to NYC. The first stop will be to see the Rockefeller Tree and then off to Puglia's Italian Restaurant in the Little Italy section of NYC just off Mulberry Street. The fliers were on the tables at the chapter meeting and are also on the chapter website
  - Joe Agresti also talked about the NJ District IV Annual Christmas Dinner for our Special Need Friends. The flier was on the tables at the chapter meeting and on the chapter website. Joe said that this year there will be special younger children at the dinner

- **National News**
  - Steve Pelonero talked about the 2027 UNICO National Convention which will be the last week of July, Wednesday through Saturday, July 28, 29, 30, and 31. At $269.00 Steve did talked about the agenda and that the fliers will be on the UBNICO National website soon, along with the reregistration slink to book a room

Old Business

- An update on the Christmas Parade float: It will start at PVHS on Friday, the day after Thanksgiving. All are invited to ride on the chapter UNICO Float

New Business

- President Joe reported that he got a quote for our Chapter Christmas Party at Pizza City in Woodland Park. Joe passed a sign-up sheet around to see who would be interested in going. Price would be for 50 people at $50.00 per person, BYO. He did reserve a date of December 9th with more information to follow

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn was made at 8:45 pm, by Jerry Gaeta and Pagt Pelonero
  All were in favor.

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Respectfully Taken by

Steve Pelonero PNP / Chapter Secretary

Meeting Attendance

The year's meeting attendance on the following two pages >>

			Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
	Total	Members	29	29	28	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	
1	Agresti	Joseph	1	1	1								3
2	Barbieri	John	1	1									2
3	Barone	Joseph											0
4	Barraco	Robert	1	1	1								3
5	Benvenuti	Joseph	1	1	1								3
6	Benvenuti	Salvatore	1	1	1								3
7	Bifalco	Mark											0
8	Breitwieser	Richard	1	1									2
9	Breitwieser	Thomas	1	1									2
10	Bucci	Gina	1	1	1								3
11	Capalbo	Frank	1	1	1								3
12	Capizzi	Gerard			1								1
13	Carbonelli	Michael		1									1
14	Carrubba	Michael	1	1	1								3
15	Castillo	Christina	1	1	1								3
16	Cervino	Peter											0
17	Cestone	James			1								1
18	Cestone	Julianna											0
19	Chomko	Jean	1	1	1								3
20	Corrado	Roni			1								1
21	Criscione	Carmen	1	1									2
22	DeLuccia	Alexa											0
23	DeLuccia	Alexander			1								1
24	DeMarco	Fred	1	1	1								3
25	Dransfield	Daniel											0
26	Dransfield	Grace											0
27	Eopechino	Kyle											0
28	Ermolowich	William											0
29	Gaeta	Gerardo	1		1								2
30	Gaita	Jessica											0
31	Gaita Jr	Carmen	1										1
32	Good	Duane	1	1	1								3

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33	Klosik	Emilia	1		1								2
34	Kribs	Ken	1	1									2
35	Longo	Pete											0
36	Lynch	Peter											0
37	Morano	John	1	1	1								3
38	OHara	Joyce	1	1	1								3
39	Pelonero	Patricia	1	1	1								3
40	Pelonero	Steven	1	1	1								3
41	Polizzotto	Philip											0
42	Ponchak	Bruce	1	1	1								3
43	Ragusso	Michaela											0
44	Ricca	Carl	1	1									2
45	Russo	Chuck	1	1	1								3
46	Russo	Jillian											0
47	Russo	Michael	1	1	1								3
48	Sabatino	Anthony	1	1									2
49	Sisti	Gisella	1	1	1								3
50	Stefanelli	Claudine		1	1								2
51	Tosi	Evelyn			1								1
52	Verrone	Angelo		1	1								2
53	Youngster	Henry											0

Total	**Members**	**29**	**29**	**28**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total	**Guests**	**0**	**2**	**0**							
Members at	**Meeting**	**29**	**31**	**28**		**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Meeting	**Location ***	**CA**	**MB**	**HCC**							
Percent	**at meeting**	**55%**	**55%**	**53%**	**n/a**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**

Guests											

CA = Casa Arturo
MB = Monte Bello
HCC = Holy Cross Church