



# UNICO NATIONAL

PASSAIC VALLEY CHAPTER  
P.O. BOX 341  
LITTLE FALLS, NJ 07424  
PassaicValleyUNICO@gmail.com  
[www.PassaicValleyUNICO.org](http://www.PassaicValleyUNICO.org)

## Monthly Minutes January 10 2024 ~ 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday

**Date** January 10, 2024  
**Place** Casa Arturo in Little Falls  
**Prayer** 7:00 pm  
**Flag Salute** 7:01 pm  
**Dinner/Meeting** 7:00 pm Dinner / 8 pm meeting

### Members & Guests in Attendance

Members (48) at meeting 22  
Guests at meeting 4  
Member % at meeting 46%

### Executive Board

<u>Attendance at meetings</u>		9/23	10/23	11/23	12/23	1/24	2/24	3/24	4/24	5/24	6/24
President:	Bucci	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
1 <sup>st</sup> VP:	Criscione	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
2 <sup>nd</sup> VP:	J. Benvenuti	x	😊	x	n/a	😊					
Secretary:	Pelonero	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
Treasurer:	Ponchak	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
Sgt.At-Arms:	Morano	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					

### Delegates at Meetings

1. Sal Benvenuti	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊
2. Jean Chomko	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊
3. Pat Pelonero	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊

### Board of Directors at meetings (6 past Chapter Presidents)

Eileen Wood	x	x	x	n/a	x
Carmen Gaita	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊
Bruce Ponchak	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊
John Barbieri	x	😊	😊	n/a	😊
Steve Pelonero	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊



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### Past Chapter Presidents in attendance at meetings

	9/23	10/23	11/23	12/23	1/24	2/24	3/24	4/24	5/24	6/24
Joe Agresti PNP	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
John Barbieri	x	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
Sal Benvenuti	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
Carmen Criscione	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
Carmen Gaita	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
John Morano	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
Steve Pelonero	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
Bruce Ponchak	😊	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
Chuck Russo	x	😊	😊	n/a	😊					
Angelo Verrone	x	😊	😊	n/a	x					
Eileen Wood	x	x	x	n/a	x					

### Opening Remarks

- **President Dominick Bucci**
  - Chapter President Dominick welcomed our Study Abroad Recipient, Michael Cerbo and his parents to the meeting.
  - Dominick swore in our newest member Peter Cervino.
  - Dominick welcomed prospective member Michael Carbonelli to the meeting.
  - Dominick welcomed everyone to our first meeting of 2024.
  - Dominick asked everyone to think about ideas for some more fundraisers which is the “C” in UNICO: Charity.
- **1<sup>st</sup> VP Carmen Criscione**
  - Carmen wished everyone well in 2024 with health, safety and peacefulness.
  - Carmen welcomed Michael Cerbo and Michael Carbonelli to the meeting.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> VP Joe Benvenuti**
  - Joe wished everyone a Happy New Year
  - Joe welcomed and congratulated Pete Cervino in his being sworn in as a chapter member.



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## **Secretary Minutes**

Secretary: Steve Pelonero PNP

- Steve noted that the minutes were sent to everyone in an email from our November meeting. And noted that there was no December meeting due to our Christmas Dinner
- Also noted that they are on our chapter website
- Motion to accept was made by:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Sal Benvenuti
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Joe Benvenuti
- All were in favor.

## **Treasurer Report**

Treasurer: Bruce Ponchak

- Bruce reported that he had sent out the treasurer's report to all members in an email.
- Bruce reported on the bank balances
- Bruce noted that in addition our checking balance that we also still had a \$ CD
- Motion to accept by:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Joyce O'Hara
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> John Barbieri
- All were in favor.

## **Bills and Communications: John Morano**

- President Dominick reported that we received a Thank You Card from deceased member Joe McGill's niece and for helping her in his funeral arrangements.
- Dominick sad that we received a Thank You Letter from UNICO National for our \$200 Booster Sponsor donation which appears in the 2024 UNICO Heritage & Photo Calendar.

## **Chapter Budget**

- (N/A)

## **Chapter Elections: Nominating chair to be appointed**

- N/A



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## **Good & Welfare: Joe Benvenuti**

- Joe reported that all is quiet
- Chuck Russo reported that deceased member Sal Nocella, that his wife Linda thanks our chapter for being there at Sal's Funeral and for especially for being pall bearers for him and the family.
- Bruce Ponchak commented that the Christmas Dinner at the Brownstone was a great idea for our chapter to celebrate there as well as for our Special Need Friends.

## **Fundraising Committees**

- **Community Service Day: Chuck Russo**
  - Chuck reported that our Community Service Day is set for ShopRite on April 27, the last Saturday of the month. We will again be doing our Annual Food Pantry drive. We have been supplying about 8 pantries in the area.
  - Workers are needed all day, if not at least part of the day. All we do is stand at the entrance and exits handing our fliers of ideas for non-perishable items that can be donated. We collected upon the shoppers exiting and contact the pantries for delivery options.
  - Chuck noted that a sign-up sheet will be at the February meeting.
  - It is a rain or shine event
  - Carmen Gaita thanked Chuck for this service to UNICO and those that could use what we collect.
- **Corn Hole: John Barbieri**
  - John reported that fliers will be available at the February meeting. He asked all members to support this fundraiser and that we need only players but workers.
  - It was suggested that we bring fliers to the District Meeting and to the Mid-Year Board Meeting in March (Atlantic City Hard Rock Casino).
- **Food Pantry: Carmen Gaita, Patricia Pelonero**
  - Carmen Gaita said that he has been in contact with Holy Angels
  - Pat Pelonero said that she recently went to St. Agnes and that she will contact the pantries with the UNICO National Grant application for Food Pantries.
- **Golf Outing: Joe Barone**
  - In Joe's absence it was reported that there is no date set, not is there a course that was decided on.



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- **Holiday Cheer: Joe Benvenuti, Sal Benvenuti, Carmen Gaita**
  - Sal reported that this year, during the Christmas season, we gave to 5 families. Three from Woodland park, two from Little Falls. Each family was given \$500 in gift cards to ShopRite and Kohls, This committee was started to support those less fortunate families so that they can also have a nice Christmas Season with gifts that they normally would not have: Unemployed, sick, disabled, single parent, etc ...
  - Sal reported that our chapter budget has allocated \$1,000 for this cause and the other \$1,500 came from donations from our chapter members.
- **Overseas Soldier Program: To be appointed**
  - Evelyn Tosi reported that her grandson James, 32 years of age (Army), will be stationed for 6-8 weeks of training soon. He will then be sent to Syria.

## **Non-Fundraising Committees**

- **Italian Heritage: Angelo Verrone**
  - N/A
- **Italian Studies: Cav. Joe Agresti PNP**
  - Joe reported and introduced our Study Abroad guest, Michael Cerbo and his parents Gemma and Michael. Nike reported with a great history of his semester in Sicily. Hopefully photos and write-up will follow for one of our future newsletters.
- **Membership: John Barbieri**
  - John reported that there are 48 members with the average age of our chapter at 73. John wished our January Birthday members a "Happy Birthday".
- **Newsletter & Website: Steve Pelonero PNP**
  - Steve reported that everything is in order with the newsletter and chapter website. The website is at 90,964 visits, which is up 268 visits from November which was at 90,696 visits.
  - All dates of our events, and monthly minutes are also on the website.



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- **Public Relations: Christina Castillo and Roni Corrado**
    - Christina reported that the Cornhole information as well as our Christmas photo of our chapter members that attended the District IV Special Needs Christmas Dinner at the Brownstone was sent to the local papers.
    - Christina noted that she handles the local papers and that Roni Corrado sends her information in to the Italian Tribune.
  - **Scholarship: Chuck Russo**
    - Chuck reported that he has book the Scholarship and Installation dinner again at the Barnyard in Totowa. It went so well last year on Sunday that he booked this year's dinner on Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>.
    - Chuck did note that this year there are at least 6-7 members who have eligible family members (children / grandchildren). The choosing of the recipients will be a grading guidelines with points. All recipients must meet the guidelines.
    - Chuck noted that it was questioned of the \$419 for the Brian Piccolo Plaque. He said that another plaque was needed for Passaic Valley H.S Hall of Fame as the other ones that are already there are filled up with names of past recipients.

## **District and National Events**

- **National News**
  - Chapter President Dominick reported that the 2024 National Convention will be the last week of July in Princeton, NJ.
- **District News**
  - Steve Pelonero reported that there is our NJ District IVB meeting on Thursday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, at Belle Napoli in Bloomfield. An email was sent to the chapter presidents that was asked to be forwarded to all of their respective chapter members.
  - Steve also reported that our NJ District IV will be having their \$20 Pasta Dinner Fundraiser on April 19<sup>th</sup> again at the Wayne PAL building. The funds raised will offset some of the costs of the Christmas Special Needs Dinner in December. 300+ people attended this dinner last April. Tickets will be available soon. There will be a Trickey Tray as well as raffle prizes.

(Continued on next page)



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- PNP Paul Alongi, representing our NJ District IV, is running a National Cancer Research Fundraiser. It will be on February 11, at the Parkway Bowling Lanes. Ideal dollar amount to sponsor a team is \$300. Because our chapter constitution states that at no meeting a vote can be taken for over \$200, a motion was made by Jerry Gaeta for \$200 and 2<sup>nd</sup>'d by John Morano. A vote was cast by a hand raiser of 4 in favor and 8 against. It was noted by Steve Pelonero that we have a budget line item for donations at the Annual National Convention of \$1,000 and that usually we allocate some of that for Cancer Research. He suggested that we look into possibly making a larger donation to Cancer Research at the 2024 Convention in July which takes place in Princeton, NJ.

### Old Business

- N/A

### New Business

- President Dominick reported that the February meeting will be on Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, in the downstairs hall at Holy Cross Church, due to Valentine's day being on Wednesday.

### Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn was made at 9:27 pm by:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> John Barbieri
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Joyce O'HaraAll were in favor.

### Respectfully Taken by

Steve Pelonero PNP / Chapter Secretary



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### Meeting Attendance

			Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
	Total	Members	19	23	23	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	
1	Agresti	Joseph	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
2	Allora	Carmen				n/a							0
3	Bacchioni	Christopher				n/a							0
4	Barbieri	John		1	1	n/a	1						3
5	Barone	Elaine		1	1	n/a							2
6	Barone	Joseph	1	1	1	n/a							3
7	Benvenuti	Joseph		1		n/a	1						2
8	Benvenuti	Salvatore	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
9	Bifalco	Mark				n/a							0
10	Bucci	Dominick	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
11	Campagna	Juliana				n/a							0
12	Campen	Domenica				n/a	1						1
13	Capalbo	Frank	1		1	n/a	1						3
14	Castillo	Christina	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
15	Cervino	Peter				n/a	1						1
16	Cestone	James		1	1	n/a							2
17	Chomko	Jean	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
18	Corrado	Roni				n/a							0
19	Corsetto	Brianna				n/a							0
20	Criscione	Carmen	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
21	Dransfield	Danielle				n/a							0
22	Eoepochino	Kyle				n/a							0
23	Ermolowich	William				n/a							0
24	Gaeta	Gerardo	1		1	n/a	1						3
25	Gaeta	Jessica				n/a							0
26	Gaita Jr	Carmen	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
27	Kazmark	Keith				n/a							0
28	Klosek	Emilia				n/a							0
29	Longo	Pete	1		1	n/a							2
30	McInerney	Cielle				n/a							0
31	Meletta	Connor				n/a							0
32	Morano	Christina Lee				n/a	1						1
33	Morano	John	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
34	OHara	Joyce	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
35	Orlando	Anthony				n/a							0
36	Panicucci	Marisa	1	1		n/a							2
37	Pelonerio	Patricia	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
38	Pelonerio	Steven	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
39	Polizzotto	Philip				n/a							0
40	Ponchak	Bruce	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
41	Ragusso	Michaela				n/a							0
42	Russo	Chuck		1	1	n/a	1						3
43	Sisti	Gisella	1	1	1	n/a	1						4
44	Stefanelli	Claudine		1		n/a							1
45	Tosi	Evelyn	1	1		n/a	1						3
46	Verrone	Angelo		1	1	n/a							2
47	Wood	Eileen				n/a							0
48	Youngster	Henry			1	n/a							1