



# 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

February 21, 2024 ~ 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday (due to snow on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday)

**Date** February 21, 2024  
**Place** Holy Cross Church  
**Prayer** 7:00 pm  
**Flag Salute** 7:01 pm  
**Dinner/Meeting** 7:00 pm Dinner / 8 pm meeting

### Members & Guests in Attendance

Members (49) at meeting 25  
Guests at meeting 0  
Member % at meeting 51%

### Executive Board

Attendance at meetings		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	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	x				

### Opening Remarks

- **President Dominick Bucci**
  - Chapter President Dominick welcomed everyone to the meeting.
  - Dominick welcomed new member Michael Carbonelli to the meeting and continued to swear him in and welcomed him to our UNICO family.
  - Dominick noted that the food was from Viva La Pizza and it is \$10 per person.
- **1<sup>st</sup> VP Carmen Criscione**
  - Carmen welcomed everyone and wished everyone a Happy Valentines Day.
  - Carmen thanked those that brought desserts to the meeting.
  - Carmen congratulated Mickael Carbonelli as a member to our chapter.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> VP Joe Benvenuti**
  - Joe welcomed everyone and congratulated Michael Carbonelli as a new 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 January meeting.
- He also noted that they are on our chapter website.
- Motion to accept was made by:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Carmen Gaita
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Angelo Verrone
- 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
- There were no expenses in January, just a few in February.
- Bruce noted that in addition our checking balance that we also still had a \$ CD
- Bruce said that he would close out the PNC bank account now that we were with Valley
- Motion to accept by:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Joe Agresti
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Joe Benvenuti
- All were in favor.

### Bills and Communications: John Morano

- President Dominick reported that a Thank You was received from the Association for Humane Services to Animals: in memory of our \$50 donation in the name of past member Joseph McGill.

### Chapter Budget

- (N/A)

### Chapter Elections: Nominating chair to be appointed

- N/A



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### Fundraising Committees

- **Community Service Day: Chuck Russo**
  - Chuck reported that our UNICO National Service Day will be on Saturday, April 27, rain or shine, at ShopRite. Again, we will be collecting non-perishables for the local food pantries. Starting at 8 am through 3 pm. Chuck said that he would approach PVHS to see if students need credits which they could receive some for helping us help others. Chuck noted that there is no more Little Sisters of the Poor and that he would like to find another local organization that we could help out with donations. He said that we also need members to sign up for a time slot so that we can be at every door of ShopRite. He also asked that if members could make copies of the Food List.
- **Corn Hole: John Barbieri**
  - John reported that our Cornhole Tournament will be on Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at the Totowa PAL Building. The flier is on our chapter website and in the Monthly Newsletter. There is a 5.00 discount if you sign up and pay early. John asked members to get the flier and ask local businesses if we can post them in their stores. He also asked members to text the event to their families and friends. John said that he is hoping for a great turnout of at least 50 teams (two people per team). It is a BYOB event and members are asked to help out instead of playing. John asked members to ask their local restaurant, deli etc to see if they would donate a tray of food.
- **Food Pantry: Carmen Gaita, Patricia Pelonero**
  - Carmen Gaita
  - Pat Pelonero reported that she would be visiting St. Agnes with a few food gift cards. It was brought up that we stopped asking members, at every meeting, to donate money, but rather just bring non-perishables to meetings. Steve Pelonero said that in every newsletter it shows that food donations are always welcome.
  - Pat also noted that UNICO National has a Food Grant Program and that there is an application that each pantry needs to fill out on their own accord. She would try to get an application to each pantry.



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- **Golf Outing: Joe Barone**
  - Joe reported that our 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Outing will be at the Meadows in Lincoln Park on Monday, June 17, 2024. The flier is on our chapter website. Joe noted that last year we had 79 sponsors and hopes to get the same response this year. There is an 8 am registration with a continental breakfast, a 9 am tee time. And a 3 pm Beefsteak Diner at the Brownstone. We are hoping to get 72 golfers. Joe asked everyone to do their best in reaching out to friends and family to help support this event. It is \$175 to gold. \$75 just for dinner. There will be a price for closest to the pin. Schumacher Chevy is sponsors a 4-hole challenge. Joe noted that give-a-way gifts are always needed and appreciated.
- **Holiday Cheer: Joe Benvenuti, Sal Benvenuti, Carmen Gaita**
  - N/A
- **Overseas Soldier Program: To be appointed**
  - Evelyn Tosi reported that her grandson is in training in Texas and will be deployed to Syria.

## Non-Fundraising Committees

- **Good & Welfare: Joe Benvenuti**
  - Joe reported that 4 Get Well Cards were sent out to Jane Russo, Roni Corrado, Eileen Wood, and Ann Ponchak. Thank you cards were received.
  - Steve Pelonero noted that March 8<sup>th</sup> is our chapter charter anniversary from 52 years ago. Evelyn Tosi's husband was the chapter president at that time.
- **Italian Heritage: Angelo Verrone**
  - Angelo reported that he has been and will be again in contact with PVHS to see if their Italian Club would like to participate in an Italian exhibition as we have done in the past.
- **Italian Studies: Cav. Joe Agresti PNP**
  - Joe has been in contact with the Italian Program at MSU. Their response is good at this time but it still too early to report with any more information.



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- **Membership: John Barbieri**
  - John reported that there are 48 members, 49 with Mike Carbonelli being sworn in at this meeting.
  - The average age of our chapter is 74.
  - It was asked what the breakdown of our chapter was:
    - 33 regular paid members ~ 7 lifetime members ~ 9 youth (25 and younger) members.
- **Newsletter & Website: Steve Pelonero PNP**
  - Steve reported that everything is in order with the newsletter and chapter website.
  - The website is now at 91,130 visits, which is up 166 visits from January's meeting.
  - All dates of our events, and monthly minutes are also on the website.
  - Steve noted that if anyone has any UNICO or Italian heritage information that they would like put into our monthly newsletter to come and see him: ex the town where your ancestry came from, photos, etc.
- **Public Relations: Christina Castillo and Roni Corrado**
  - Christina reported that she sent the Cornhole flier to multiple local newspapers and websites.
- **Scholarship: Chuck Russo**
  - Chuck reported that our Annual Scholarship, Brian Piccolo and Installation Dinner will be on Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup> at the Barnyard in Totowa. He said that it went well last year with no conflict of other organizations having their events on the same day.
  - Chuck noted that the deadline for applications for scholarship is on April 10<sup>th</sup>. He also noted that many of our active members have grandchildren that are eligible for awards, but the students must still meet the criteria to qualify for a scholarship.
  - Chuck also reported that the Brian Piccolo Awardees are recommended by the PVHS coaches but the final decision is ours for 1 male and for 1 female student to get the award.



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### District and National Events

- National News

- Chapter President Dominick reported that we received another patch for our banner for our donation at the National Convention of \$1,000 to the Mental Health Chair.
- Steve Pelonero reported that National will be swearing in at least 15 new members for a new chapter: The McLean VA UNICO. This will be the first chapter in Virginia. Steven noted that in the past we have done this for at least 3 time as well as other chapters doing the same. Steve explained that new chapters have no money in their treasury bank account and chapter give a monetary welcome gift to kick start the chapter. He asked for a motion from the floor to donate to their chapters. Joe Agresti made a motion to donate \$200 to the McLean VA UNICO chapter with a 2<sup>nd</sup> made by Joe Benvenuti. All were in favor. Steve noted that himself as a PNP along with PNP Joe Agresti and Past First Lady and member Pat Pelonero will be driving down to Virginia for the day to swear in and celebrate our new UNICO family members. Steve drew up a letter to be presented with the check to the new chapter president.

- District News

- It was noted by Joe Agresti that our NJ District IV will be having their Annual Pasta Dinner Fundraiser with “all” proceeds going towards the Christmas Dinner at the Brownstone for our Special Need Friends. This pasta dinner is scheduled to be at the Wayne PAL building on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>. It is a very casual event and members are welcome, very welcome to help in set-up, clean-up, serving, etc. Joe noted that Steve Pelonero has the tickets, \$20 each ~ It is a BYOB events, Soda and water will be supplied. There will be DJ music, prizes and tricky tray gifts. This event subsidizes the complimentary dinner at the December Christmas Party for our Friends and their Aids. Joe requested that it is a pre-pay dinner so that we know how many people to expect.

### Old Business

- N/A



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### New Business

- Christina Castillo requested in an email for an executive decision, due to a later request, that we take an ad out in the PVHS Girls Show Ad Journal. It was approved by the board and Christina thanked us.
- Chapter President Dominick reported that Woodland Park will be having their Bunny Breakfast again this year and asked that if any members would like to participate in it so that our chapter has exposure at their event.
- Our March meeting will be on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at Casa Arturo in Little Falls. It is a BYO and cost per person is \$35.
- Joe Agresti made a motion that we again, this year, stay as a member of the Coccia Foundation with a \$150 donation to them. Steve Pelonero 2<sup>nd</sup>d the motion. All were in favor. The MSU Coccia Institute motto is "Pass The Torch".

### Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn was made at 9:10 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

### Meeting Attendance

See the next page for this year's meeting attendance





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