



# 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  
 May 8, 2024 ~ 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday

**Date** May 8, 2024  
**Place** Casa Arturo. Little Falls, NJ  
**Prayer** 7:00 pm John Morano  
**Flag Salute** 7:01 pm John Morano  
**Dinner/Meeting** 7:02 pm Dinner / 7:30 meeting

## Members & Guests in Attendance

Members (49) at meeting 23  
 Guests at meeting 0  
 Member % at meeting 47%

## 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    | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | X     | 😊     |       |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> VP:           | Criscione    | 😊     | 😊      | 😊      | n/a    | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     |       |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> VP:           | J. Benvenuti | x     | 😊      | x      | n/a    | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | x     |       |
| Secretary:                    | Pelonero     | 😊     | 😊      | 😊      | n/a    | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     |       |
| Treasurer:                    | Ponchak      | 😊     | 😊      | 😊      | n/a    | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     |       |
| Sgt.At-Arms:                  | Morano       | 😊     | 😊      | 😊      | n/a    | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     |       |

## Delegates at Meetings

|                  |   |   |   |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
|------------------|---|---|---|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1. Sal Benvenuti | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | n/a | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 |   | x |  |
| 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 | x | x | x |   |  |
| Carmen Gaita   | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | n/a | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | x |  |
| 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    | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | x     |       |
| Carmen Criscione | 😊     | 😊      | 😊      | n/a    | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     |       |
| Carmen Gaita     | 😊     | 😊      | 😊      | n/a    | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | 😊     | x     |       |
| 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     | x     | X     | x     |       |

## Opening Remarks

- **President Dominick Bucci**
  - Dominick thanked everyone for the get well wishes, It was a long road with some still to go. He was looking forward to going to the cornhole fundraiser, but circumstances took over.
- **1<sup>st</sup> VP Carmen Criscione**
  - Carmen thanked everyone for attending the meeting with one more to go on June 12<sup>th</sup> at Holy Cross Church ... This is our traditional year end pizza and mussels meeting.
  -
- **2<sup>nd</sup> VP Joe Benvenuti**
  - No report (absent)



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## **Secretary Minutes**

Secretary: Steve Pelonero PNP

- Steve noted that the minutes were sent to everyone in an email from our April meeting.
- He also noted that they are also on our chapter website.
- Motion to accept was made by:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Patricia Pelonero
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Christina Castillo
- 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> Joe Agresti
- All were in favor.

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

- A thank you card was received from chapter member Jay Sisti

## **Chapter Budget**

- (N/A)

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

- 1<sup>st</sup> VP Carmen Criscione noted that the board put forth the following slate of officers for the 2024-2025 year: For president Carmen Criscione, for 1<sup>st</sup> VP Joe Benvenuti, for 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Chuck Russo. For Treasurer Bruce Ponchak, for Secretary Steve Pelonero, for Sgt.At-Arms John Morano. Carmen then asked if anyone wanted to step up for one of those positions. With no volunteers, Secretary Steve Pelonero cast one vote for the above mentioned. All were in favor.



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## Fundraising Committees

- **Community Service Day: Chuck Russo**
  - Chuck reported the April 16<sup>th</sup>, Saturday Food Pantry Drive was a huge success. It was a beautiful day and Chuck thanked everyone for their help. Seven pantries were supplied. He was initially concerned with the hard times that some people faced but as in past years we met and surpassed both with the goods and with the money. Workers were there from 7:30 am – 2:45 pm. Some PVHS students were there to help. Last year's cash donations were \$910. This year was \$1,065.
- **Corn Hole: John Barbieri**
  - N/A
- **Food Pantry: Carmen Gaita, Patricia Pelonero**
  - Pat Pelonero gave thanks to those that brought food pantry items to the meeting. Pat said that she will be working soon in getting the pantries the UNICO National Grant forms so that they might be able to receive money from National.
- **Golf Outing: Joe Barone**
  - Joe reported that things were moving slowly. At the present, there were 13 golfers paid and 19 sponsors.
- **Holiday Cheer: Joe Benvenuti, Sal Benvenuti, Carmen Gaita**
  - N/A
- **Overseas Soldier Program: To be appointed**
  - Roni Corrado reported that Evelyn Tosi's grandson was now in Syria and that it would be nice to send a package to him to be shared with the other soldiers. Small items such as peanuts, life savers, magazines. Enough that could fill up a box. Items can be brought to the June meeting.
- **Scholarship: Chuck Russo**
  - Chuck reported that the Scholarship, Brian Piccolo and Officer Installation Dinner will be on Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, at the Barnyard in Totowa. Dinner cost is \$50. There will be 8 Scholarships awarded, 1 Study Abroad and 2 Brian Piccolo. Also in the past, there will be a President Cocktail Hour for members only: 1 drink per member. Chuck will be looking and asking for commitment from those who will be going. Joe Agresti said to see him with the dinner money.



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## Non-Fundraising Committees

- **Good & Welfare: Joe Benvenuti**
  - Pat Pelonero reported that, if anyone remembered, that the quintuplet children that we donated to years ago, just recently all graduated from Montclair University.
- **Italian Heritage: Angelo Verrone**
  - Angelo reported that he is trying to get the PVHS Italian Club to put on a presentation for us in October. A letter for a donation was asked to be sent to the Coccia Institute to help supplement the cost of this event with food and beverages.
- **Italian Studies: Cav. Joe Agresti PNP**
  - Joe reported that our NJ District IV recipient for the District Scholarship was a Wayne student.
- **Membership: John Barbieri**
  - John reported that we are at 49 members.
  - There are three members whose birthdays are in May: all are shown in the May Newsletter.
  - The average age of our chapter is 74.
  - The breakdown of our chapter is:
    - 33 regular paid members ~ 7 lifetime members ~ 9 youth (25 and younger) members.
- **Public Relations: Christina Castillo and Roni Corrado**
  - Christina and Roni reported that they submitted various resources a "What is UNICO Story". Photos of the Cornhole event were sent to the PV Today paper and also to the Italian Tribune.

## District and National Events

- **National News**
  - Steve reported that the National Election form had to be filled out and sent to UNICO National.
- **District News**
  - Joe Agresti reported that the District Pasta Dinner had the largest ever turnout with over 350 people. Raised was \$13,000 but the Christmas dinner at the Brownstone usually costs us for the gifts and complimentary dinner close to \$15,000.



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## **Old Business**

- Discussion was made if an increase of \$5 to our dues was necessary seeing as how UNICO National was increasing their yearly dues to all of the chapters across the country. After discussion that the \$15 per member was necessary to cover the cost of our district assessment, chapter expenses (stationary, ink, stamps, website, deaths, ad journal donations. A vote was taken with 21 yes: 2 no. The new dues rate of \$85 a year to a regular member will start in July with the dues mailing reminder.

## **New Business**

- Our next chapter meeting will be our annual year end Pizza and Mussels dinner. It will be at Holy Name Church on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of June.
- Claudine Stefanelli said that if approved, and it was, that she would run a 50/50 raffle for the chapter.

## **Adjournment**

- Motion to adjourn was made at 9:18 pm by:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Pat Pelonero
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Frank CapalboAll 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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|    | Total      | Members       | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Total |
|----|------------|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 1  | Agresti    | Joseph        | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 8     |
| 2  | Allora     | Carmen        |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 0     |
| 3  | Bacchioni  | Christopher   |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 0     |
| 4  | Barbieri   | John          |     | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 7     |
| 5  | Barone     | Elaine        |     | 1   | 1   | n/a |     |     | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 5     |
| 6  | Barone     | Joseph        | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a |     | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 7     |
| 7  | Benvenuti  | Joseph        |     | 1   |     | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     |     | 5     |
| 8  | Benvenuti  | Salvatore     | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     |     | 7     |
| 9  | Bifalco    | Mark          |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 0     |
| 10 | Bucci      | Dominick      | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 1   |     | 7     |
| 11 | Campagna   | Juliana       |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 0     |
| 12 | Campen     | Domenica      |     |     |     | n/a | 1   |     |     |     |     |     | 1     |
| 13 | Capalbo    | Frank         | 1   |     | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 7     |
| 14 | Carbonelli | Michael       | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 5     |
| 15 | Castillo   | Christina     | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 8     |
| 16 | Cervino    | Peter         |     |     |     | n/a | 1   | 1   |     | 1   |     |     | 3     |
| 17 | Cestone    | James         |     | 1   | 1   | n/a |     |     | 1   |     |     |     | 3     |
| 18 | Chomko     | Jean          | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 8     |
| 19 | Corrado    | Roni          |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     | 1   | 1   |     | 2     |
| 20 | Corsetto   | Brianna       |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 0     |
| 21 | Criscione  | Carmen        | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 8     |
| 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   |     | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 6     |
| 26 | Gaeta      | Jessica       |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 0     |
| 27 | Gaita Jr   | Carmen        | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     |     | 7     |
| 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   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 8     |
| 35 | O'Hara     | Joyce         | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 8     |
| 36 | Orlando    | Anthony       |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 0     |
| 37 | Panicucci  | Marisa        | 1   | 1   |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 2     |
| 38 | Pelonero   | Patricia      | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 8     |
| 39 | Pelonero   | Steven        | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 8     |
| 40 | Polizzotto | Philip        |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 0     |
| 41 | Ponchak    | Bruce         | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 8     |
| 42 | Ragusso    | Michaela      |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 0     |
| 43 | Russo      | Chuck         |     | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 7     |
| 44 | Sisti      | Gisella       | 1   | 1   | 1   | n/a | 1   | 1   |     | 1   | 1   |     | 7     |
| 45 | Stefanelli | Claudine      |     | 1   |     | n/a |     | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 5     |
| 46 | Tosi       | Evelyn        | 1   | 1   |     | n/a | 1   | 1   |     |     | 1   |     | 5     |
| 47 | Verrone    | Angelo        |     | 1   | 1   | n/a |     | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 6     |
| 48 | Wood       | Eileen        |     |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |     | 0     |
| 49 | Youngster  | Henry         |     |     | 1   | n/a |     | 1   | 1   |     | 1   |     | 4     |



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|----------|------------|----------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|----|
| Total    | Members    | 19       | 23   | 23   | 0    | 23   | 25  | 24   | 24   | 23   | 0  |
| Total    | Guests     | 1        | 0    | 1    | 0    | 4    | 0   | 0    | 0    | 0    |    |
| Total at | Meeting    | 20       | 23   | 24   | 0    | 27   | 25  | 0    | 0    | 0    |    |
| Meeting  | Location   | Barnyard | Casa | Casa | xmas | Casa | HC  | Casa | Casa | Casa | HC |
| Percent  | at meeting | 34%      | 40%  | 41%  | 0%   | 46%  | 51% | 51%  | 49%  | 47%  | 0% |

| Guests     |         | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | June |
|------------|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Panicucci  | Marisa  | 1   |     |     | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |      |
| DeGennaro  | Anthony |     |     | 1   | n/a |     |     |     |     |     |      |
| Carbonelli | Michael |     |     |     | n/a | 1   |     |     |     |     |      |
| Cerbo      | Michael |     |     |     | n/a | 1   |     |     |     |     |      |
| Cerbo      | Gemma   |     |     |     | n/a | 1   |     |     |     |     |      |
| Cerbo      | Michael |     |     |     | n/a | 1   |     |     |     |     |      |

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