



# 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 September 11, 2024 ~ 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday

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<b><u>Date</u></b>	September 11, 2024
<b><u>Place</u></b>	Casa Arturo, Little Falls, NJ
<b><u>Prayer</u></b>	6:30 pm Chuck Russo
<b><u>Flag Salute</u></b>	6:30 pm Chuck Russo
<b><u>Dinner/Meeting</u></b>	6:30 pm Dinner / 8:00 pm Meeting

### **Members & Guests in Attendance**

Members (59) at meeting	24
Guests at meeting	1
Member % at meeting	42%

### **Executive Board**

<b><u>Attendance at meetings</u></b>	<b><u>9/24</u></b>	<b><u>10/24</u></b>	<b><u>11/24</u></b>	<b><u>12/24</u></b>	<b><u>1/25</u></b>	<b><u>2/25</u></b>	<b><u>3/25</u></b>	<b><u>4/25</u></b>	<b><u>5/25</u></b>	<b><u>6/25</u></b>
President: Criscione	x									
1 <sup>st</sup> VP: J. Benvenuti	☺									
2 <sup>nd</sup> VP: Chuck Russo	☺									
Secretary: Pelonero	☺									
Treasurer: Ponchak	☺									
Sgt.At-Arms: Morano	☺									

### **Delegates at Meetings**

1. Sal Benvenuti	☺
2. Pat Pelonero	x

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

Eileen Wood	x
Carmen Gaita	☺
Bruce Ponchak	☺
John Barbieri	☺
Steve Pelonero	☺



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### Past Chapter Presidents in attendance at meetings

	9/24	10/24	11/24	12/24	1/25	2/25	3/25	4/25	5/25	6/25
Joe Agresti PNP	😊									
John Barbieri	😊									
Sal Benvenuti	😊									
Carmen Criscione	x									
Carmen Gaita	😊									
John Morano	😊									
Steve Pelonero	😊									
Bruce Ponchak	😊									
Chuck Russo	😊									
Angelo Verrone	😊									
Eileen Wood	x									

### Opening Remarks

- **President Carmen Criscione**
  - N/A
- **1<sup>st</sup> VP Joe Benvenuti**
  - Joe welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced two new members who filled out their applications for wearing in at the next meeting they attend: Michael Russo and Alexander “Les” DeLuccia.
  - Joe noted that our October meeting will be at Casa Arturo. 6:30 dinner / 8 pm meeting
- **2<sup>nd</sup> VP Chuck Russo**
  - Chuck welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked that we have a moment of silence not only for our Immediate Past Chapter President Dominick Bucci, who recently passed away, but also in remembrance of the tragedy that happened on 9/11, 9/11/2001
  - Chuck noted that a service mass will be done for Dominick at his Holy Cross Church on Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup> at 10 am. Chuck also noted that our traditional plaque that is given to every past chapter president will be presented to his friend, Fran. John Barbieri said that he will take the plaque to her.



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## **Secretary Minutes**

Secretary: Steve Pelonero PNP

- Steve noted that the minutes were sent to everyone in an email from our June meeting.
- He also noted that they are also on our chapter website.
- Motion to accept was made by:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Sal Benvenuti
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> John Barbieri
- 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
- He noted that all but one of the scholarship have been paid out
- Motion to accept by:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Joe Agresti
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Carmen Gaita
- All were in favor.

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

- Steve Pelonero reported that dues notice reminders went out in an email and also via USPS
- John Morano noted that dues payments were delivered to our PO Box
- We received a thank you card from Immediate Past National President Ralph Contini
- Our gaming License was approved and was delivered to our PO Box

## **Chapter Budget**



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- Bruce noted that the Chapter Budget will be voted on at the October meeting

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

- N/A

## **Fundraising Committees**

- **Community Service Day: Chuck Russo**
  - No report needed at this time
- **Corn Hole: John Barbieri**
  - No report needed at this time
- **Food Pantry: Carmen Gaita, Patricia Pelonero**
  - Carmen said that he would bring the pantry items to the food banks
  - He noted that if anyone would like to donate cash instead of non-perishables that he would not refuse the donation
- **Golf Outing: Joe Barone**
  - Joe reported that last year's outing had 72 golfers with 4 people just attending the dinner. We had a net profit of \$11,441.00
- **Holiday Cheer: Joe Benvenuti, Sal Benvenuti, Carmen Gaita**
  - Sal report that there was no report to be given at this time but that the committee will start to look for needy families. Last year we gave to 5 different families, \$500 each in gift cards
- **Overseas Soldier Program: To be appointed**
  - Roni Corrado reported that our May package was delivered to Evelyn Tosi's grandson. She reported that he may be back home in December.
- **Scholarship: Chuck Russo**
  - Chuck reported that he saw our scholarship story in the Passaic Valley Today, but without a photo. He said that in the Cedar Grove Today paper there was the story with a photo. He noted



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that we should be sending more stories in to get more notoriety for UNICO. He also said that he was possibly going to run another fundraiser to support the scholarships.

## **Non-Fundraising Committees**

- **Good & Welfare: Joe Benvenuti**
  - Joe reported that we sent a Get-Well card to Frank Capalbo
  - A gift card will be sent to past and deceased chapter president Dominick Bucci's friend Fran
- **Italian Heritage: Angelo Verrone**
  - Angelo said that he will be reaching out to the PVHS Italian Club teacher to see if they can do a heritage night for us as they have done in the past . it is usually done one night in October which is noted as Italian Heritage Month
- **Italian Studies: Cav. Joe Agresti PNP**
  - Joe reported that our Study Abroad recipient is now doing his semester in Italy and that when he comes back, he will set a chapter meeting date so that we can meet him and hear all about his travels and studies abroad
- **Membership: John Barbieri**
  - John reported that were are at 57 members but two have filled out applications tonight to make it 59 members
  - The average age of our chapter at 73.
  - The breakdown of our chapter is:
    - 34 regular paid members ~ 7 lifetime members ~ 18 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 92,267 visits, which is up 352 since our June meeting
  - All dates of our events, and monthly minutes are also on the website.
  - The chapter website also has a member section where you can access member information.
- **Public Relations: Christina Castillo and Roni Corrado**
  - Roni reported that the Italian Tribune always prints everything that she sends them
  - Chuck Russo noted that not everyone gets that newspaper as we do get the PV Today paper
  - Joe Agresti noted that the Italian Tribune subscription is only \$1.00 week (\$52.00 per year)



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## **District and National Events**

- **National News**

- It was noted that the National Meet the President is set for Oct. 29 at the Venetian at \$110.00. Our chapter usually subsidizes this event and will take and sell tickets at the October meeting. It is a great time to meet our National President
- Steve Pelonero noted that with the next ComUNICO magazine, which is delivered via USPS, there should also be the 2025 UNICO National Heritage and Photo Calendar. Steve is the editor of the calendar and if you have been to Italy or Sicily, he is always looking for photos that members took while you were there. Steve is also always looking for dedicated proofreaders as each month is put together (see Steve if you are interested and like reading about your heritage).
- There is a National Fundraiser for the next National President. It is a Cigar and Dinner night at the Brickhouse in Wyckoff. Wednesday evening, November 20<sup>th</sup>. Ticket price is \$125.00. It starts at 6:30 pm
- The National Eastern Region Executive Board Meeting will be in Mystic CT. November 8 and 9. It is there that the Joseph Coccia Award will be presented. Joe Agresti is the chair of that event
- Columbus Day parades: Seaside NJ on Sunday October 13. NYC on Monday October 14<sup>th</sup>. For NYC, DG Anthony DeGennaro noted that there is a no charge bus that leaves from Fort Lee. It drops you off at the start of the parade and picks you up at the end of the parade and brings you back to Fort Lee.
- Sal Benvenuti report on the National Convention that was in July in Princeton. All three amendments failed. There were 400 people at the Gala. There was a \$200,000 profit which was due to the fact that many of the honored guests had many of their associates in attendance and they donated much money to our UNICO National causes.
- It was noted that at the Convention, that DG Anthony (our district) was voted "Outstanding District Gover of the Year"

- **District News**

- There is a District meeting on September 18<sup>th</sup> at the Barnyard in Totowa . \$45 per person. Starting time is 7 pm
- There is a District Breakfast which is being held for our District Friends at La Neves in Haledon. Priced at \$45. The date is September 21<sup>st</sup>, Saturday. The district is giving each chapter two complimentary tickets for their members. A motion was made by Bruce Ponchak and 2<sup>nd</sup> by John Barbier, all were in favor, for our chapter also to provide 2 addition n/c tickets to our members. A follow up email will be sent out to see who will be attending ... you can also call chapter member



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Joe Agresti (201-874-0545) if you would like to go regardless of the n/c ticket or if you need to pay. For those on Facebook, and please become a friend of NJ District IV to see the flier.

- Our NJ District IV Christmas Dinner for our Special Friends is set for the Brownstone on Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Tickets are \$60.00 each
- On December 7<sup>th</sup>, our District is having our Annual Bus Ride to Mulberry Street in NYC. Dinner at Puglia's with an option tour of the newly renovated Italian American Museum. From the discussion, there is no fee for the tour, just a voluntary donation which is how it has always been. The price for the bus and dinner is \$110.00 which is what it has been for the past few years.

### Old Business

- No report

### New Business

- Steve Pelonero reported that our chapter will be doing our Annual Italian Flag Raising to celebrate Italian Heritage Month which is the month of October. Please save the date of Monday, October 7<sup>th</sup>. It will be at the Little Falls Town Hall building. Park, starting promptly at 6 p.. You can park in the rear of the town hall and come around to the front by the flag poles. Steve hopes that many members and their friends, neighbors, children and grandchildren can attend to celebrate our heritage. Refreshments are usually served after the celebration. Again, starting time is promptly at 6 pm
- Joe Agresti noted that Dave D'Arco, the president of the Passaic-Clifton Chapter, is running a fundraiser to help find a cure for his dreaded disease Melanoma. A motion was made to donate \$200 to the fundraiser by Jerry Gaeta with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Carmen Gaira. All were in favor. Bruce asked Joe Agresti to give him the address that the check can be sent to.
- DG Anthony DeGennaro was saved last to speak (protocol). He thanked our chapter for the hospitality and noted that we are one of the few chapters that are well noted in UNICO National and withing our district. He thanked us for our service above self. Anthony also noted that we will be having a chapter presidents meeting with the presidents, withing our district, to discuss protocol and what is expected of each chapter. He noted that he loves the Italian culture and asked that we keep up the good that we do

### Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn was made at 9:00 pm by:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Jerry Gaeta
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sal BenvenutiAll were in favor.



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## Respectfully Taken by

Steve Pelonero PNP / Chapter Secretary

## Meeting Attendance

The year's meeting attendance

		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Total	Members	24	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Agresti	Joseph	1										1
Bacchioni	Christopher											0
Barbieri	John	1										1
Barone	Elaine											0
Barone	Joseph	1										1
Barone	Nicholas											0
Benvenuti	Joseph	1										1
Benvenuti	Salvatore	1										1
Bergamasco	Giavonna											0
Bifalco	Mark											0
Campagna	Juliana											0
Campen	Domenica	1										1
Capalbo	Frank	1										1
Carbonelli	Michael	1										1
Castillo	Christina	1										1
Castillo	Sara											0
Cervino	Peter											0
Cestone	James											0
Chomko	Jean	1										1
Corrado	Roni	1										1
Corsetto	Brianna											0
Criscione	Carmen											0
DeLuccia	Alexander	1										1
Dransfield	Daniel											0
Eoepchino	Kyle											0
Ermolowich	William											0
Gaeta	Gerardo	1										1
Gaita	Jessica											0
Gaita Jr	Carmen	1										1
Kazmark	Keith											0
Klosik	Emilia											0
Kribs	Damian											0





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Longo	Pete											0
Lynch	Peter											0
McInerney	Cielle											0
Meletta	Connor											0
Morano	Christina Lee											0
Morano	John	1										1
Nicora	Peggy Ann											0
OHara	Joyce	1										1
Orlando	Anthony											0
Orlando	Jack											0
Panicucci	Marisa											0
Pelonerio	Patricia											0
Pelonerio	Steven	1										1
Polizzotto	Philip											0
Ponchak	Bruce	1										1
Ragusso	Michaela											0
Russo	Alyssa											0
Russo	Chuck	1										1
Russo	Michael	1										1
Sisti	Gisella	1										1
Stefanelli	Alexandra											0
Stefanelli	Claudine											0
Strippoli	Alyssa											0
Tosi	Evelyn	1										1
Verrone	Angelo	1										1
Wood	Eileen											0
Youngster	Henry	1										1
<b>Total</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>24</b>										
<b>Total</b>	<b>Guests</b>	<b>1</b>										
<b>Total at</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>24</b>										
<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Casa</b>										
<b>Percent</b>	<b>at meeting</b>	<b>42%</b>										
<b>Guests</b>												
DeGennaro	DG Anthony	1										