



UNICO NATIONAL

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

Monthly Minutes November 13, 2024 ~ 2nd Wednesday

Date November 13, 2024
Place Holy Cross Church, Woodland Park, NJ
Prayer 7:10 pm John Morano
Flag Salute 7:11 pm John Morano
Dinner/Meeting 7:15 pm Dinner / 8 pm Meeting

Members & Guests in Attendance

Members (59) at meeting 21
Guests at meeting 6
Member % at meeting 36%

Executive Board

<u>Attendance at meetings</u>		9/24	10/24	11/24	12/24	1/25	2/25	3/25	4/25	5/25	6/25
President:	Criscione	x	😊	😊							
1 st VP:	J. Benvenuti	😊	😊	😊							
2 nd 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	x	x
Carmen Gaita	😊	x	x
Bruce Ponchak	😊	😊	😊
John Barbieri	😊	x	😊
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	😊	x	😊							
Sal Benvenuti	😊	😊	😊							
Carmen Criscione	x	😊	😊							
Carmen Gaita	😊	x	x							
John Morano	😊	😊	😊							
Steve Pelonero	😊	😊	😊							
Bruce Ponchak	😊	😊	😊							
Chuck Russo	😊	😊	😊							
Angelo Verrone	😊	😊	x							
Eileen Wood	x	x	x							

Opening Remarks

- **President Carmen Criscione**
 - President Carmen thanked everyone for attending the 1st meeting of his year at Holy Cross Church. Carmen also thanked everyone for bringing the extras: desserts, etc
 - Carmen introduced our UNICO National 2nd Vice President Steven Calantone from the Wayne Chapter and also his wife Jules
 - Carmen then welcomed and introduced four (4) new prospective members; Thomas Brietwieser, Matthew Garamone, Ken Kribs, and Christopher Manzi
 - Carmen then proceeded to swear in a new member, Michael Russo
- **1st VP Joe Benvenuti**
 - Joe welcomed everyone and thanked our 4 prospective members for considering joining
 - Joe also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving
- **2nd VP Chuck Russo**
 - Chuck also welcomed everyone, especially the 4 new prospective members. Keep it going



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Secretary Minutes

Secretary: Steve Pelonero PNP

- Steve noted that the minutes were sent to everyone in an email from our October meeting.
- He also noted that they are on our chapter website.
- Motion to accept was made by:
 - 1st Joe Agresti
 - 2nd 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 and on our CD.
- Motion to accept by:
 - 1st Sal Benvenuti
 - 2nd Joe Benvenuti
- All were in favor.

Bills and Communications: John Morano

- A thank you was received from UNICO National for our donation to the Flood Disaster Fund
- Ramsey UNICO mailed a flier announcing their chapters' 20th anniversary. If anyone is interested, please contact them

Chapter Budget

- N/A

Chapter Elections: Nominating chair to be appointed by Chapter President

- N/A



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Fundraising Committees

- **Community Service Day: Chuck Russo**
 - Our next ShopRite Food Pantry Drive is Set for Saturday April 26, 2025. We help eight pantries
- **Corn Hole: John Barbieri**
 - No Update yet, but John did note that he would be looking at again, the Totowa PAL Facility
- **Fifty/Fifty: Claudine Stefanelli**
 - Claudine reported that all the paperwork is now ready. We just got our Gaming License renewed and said that she would now present a copy of the raffle ticket for the permit to start selling them. We are hoping to pull the winning ticket in March of 2025. Claudine noted that there will be a \$10.00 ticket price and hoping that 500 printed tickets can be sold
- **Food Pantry: Carmen Gaita, Patricia Pelonero**
 - Patricia reported that she visited both St. Agnes and Holy Angels with some food and ShopRite gift Cards. Pat advised them to utilize the UNICO National Food Grant Application.
 - Pat reported that St. Agnes gives out theirs the 1st Wednesday of the month. Holy Angels said that they are now 3 times a day. Food is always needed.
 - St. Agnes has the capability of giving out Turkeys and if anyone has one that they can drop it off. There is a freezer there that they can be put in.
 - Claudine Stefanelli said that she would post on Facebook more about the pantries. Pat said that she responds to St. Anges and Holy Angel's on their FB feeds
 - Joe Agresti made a motion, and it was 2nd'd by John Barbieri, that we donate \$200 for give cards to be give to the pantries. All were in favor
- **Golf Outing: Joe Barone**
 - Joe reported that our 2025 Golf Outing has been booked at Crystal Springs Golf Course



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On June 23rd Monday. \$175 per golfer. \$60 just for dinner. 9:00 am shot gun start. BBQ lunch from 2pm-6 pm. Prizes and gifts. Joe thanked all of the sponsors from our 2024 outing. A flier will be coming out soon.

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

- Sal reported donations have already been received and that our chapter again has budget \$1,500 for special family's this Christmas season. Gift cards are usually given to the families to help them get Christmas Gifts for their families
- It was brought up that we should think about helping the two families who recently lost everything in their house fires in Woodland Park

- **Overseas Soldier Program: To be appointed**

- Evelyn Tosi reported with her update that her two grandchildren will both be back in the states for the Christmas holidays

- **Scholarship: Chuck Russo**

- Chuck reported that it is too early to report, but that he is planning on our scholarship dinner again in June.
- Chuck said that he will again be doing a few fundraisers so that we can give more scholarships

Non-Fundraising Committees

- **Good & Welfare: Joe Benvenuti**

- John Morano reported that Joyce O'Hara recently went for Carpel Tunnel surgery. All is OK
- John Morano thanked all of the Veterans at the meeting
- Camren Criscione acknowledged that there was not only a current UNICO National 2nd Vice president in the room, Steve Calentone, but also in our chapter we have in attendance to Past National Presidents (PNP's) Joe Agresti and Steve Pelonero



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- **Italian Flag Raising: Steven Pelonero PNP**

- Steve reported that our Annual Italian Flag raising was well attended with not only members, but a newspaper reporter and some UNICO National Officers in attendance.
- Carmen reported that after the flag raising our chapter was presented with a town proclamation noting that October is Italian Heritage month in Little Falls. Carmen showed the proclamation and noted that it would be hung in the Little Falls Civic center next to all of our other notable items
- Steve Pelonero acknowledged Jules Calantone from the Wayne Chapter and also the wife of 2nd VP Steve Calantone. Jules painted and printed our name on a board so that it can be hung over all of our awards. Steve presented it to our chapter to be hung

- **Italian Heritage: Angelo Verrone**

- In Angelo's absence, Carmen noted that in our chapter newsletter there usually is a town in Italy noted to be the homeland of one of our members. Steve asked if a member would like to see a page dedicated to their heritage to please let him know.
- Joe Agresti talked about the Nutley chapter where they have at a Veterans Day Dinner to talk about their life history.
- Joe Agresti reminded everyone about the NYC Bus Ride to Mulberry Street for a dinner at Puglia's and also a tour of the newly renovated Italian American Museum. Joe said that the museum has Italian statues and puppets and will have interactive computers to research your ancestry
- Carmen Criscione reported that possibly in the spring of next year that maybe we can get a trip to Mulberry street and also get a tour of the museum

- **Italian Studies: Cav. Joe Agresti PNP**

- Joe Agresti reported that our Italian Studies Grant Recipient is still in Italy and hopefully he will be able to visit our chapter in 2025

- **Membership: John Barbieri**

- John reported that we are at 59 members and at this meeting there were still 9 members who have not yet paid their annual dues. There is a deadline to pay the dues at this November meeting. Our average age in the chapter is 74 and John wished our November Birthday members a Happy Birthday



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- **Newsletter & Website: Steve Pelonero PNP**
 - Steve reported that everything is in order with the newsletter and chapter website.
 - The website is now at 92,477 visits
 - All dates of our events, photos 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**
 - Chapter President Carmen thanked Christina and Roni for the excellent coverage getting out to the local papers.
 - Christina and Roni both said that the Flag Raising, with photos, appeared in both the Passaic Valley Today and Italian Tribune papers
 - Carmen noted that on Sunday, November 17th, that some of the members would be visiting the Roma Club in Woodland Park: just to meet and introduce ourselves

District and National Events

- **National News**
 - 2nd VP Steve Calantone reported that at the Eastern Regional Meeting in Mystic CT that 4 people stepped up to run in the election for the next year's 2nd VP: Gary D'Uva (Sparta), Allan Focarino (Garfield), Frank LoRe (Highland Breach, FL), Geri Samuel (Scotch Plains)
 - There will be a Cigar Fundraiser at the Brickhouse on November 20th (pre-pay mandatory)
 - Steve reported that one of the topics of discussion at the Eastern Region meeting was that there needed to be more communication: all the way down the line and even within chapters and districts
- **District News**
 - There will be our District Christmas Party on December 3rd, 2024 at The Brownstone in Paterson. \$60 per person family style. It was reported that the dinner was already sold out.
 - There is also the District IV Bus Ride, on December 7th, to Mulberry Street and to the Italian American Museum. Seats are still available on the bus and with dinner at Puglia's for \$110 each
 - 2nd VP Steve Calantone noted that this Bus Ride supports our NY District IV Scholarship



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Old Business

- Chapter president Carmen remarked that everything our chapter talks about at all of our meetings is usually the same scenario in all of the chapters across the country. We are all trying to make a difference in our communities and also nationally

New Business

- There will be no December meeting as we have our Christmas Party that month. Our dinner party will be at Brownstone.
- Our January meeting has already been booked to be at a new local restaurant “Evolution” in Woodland Park. Another reminder will come out

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn was made at 9:07 pm by:
 - 1st John Barbieri
 - 2nd Joe BenvenutiAll were in favor.

Respectfully Taken by

Steve Pelonero PNP / Chapter Secretary

Meeting Attendance

The year's meeting attendance
See next page >>>



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		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Total	Members	24	16	21	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	
1	Agresti Joseph	1	1	1								3
2	Bacchioni Christopher											0
3	Barbieri John	1		1								2
4	Barone Elaine											0
5	Barone Joseph	1		1								2
6	Barone Nicholas											0
7	Benvenuti Joseph	1	1	1								3
8	Benvenuti Salvatore	1	1	1								3
9	Bergamasco Giavonna											0
10	Bifalco Mark											0
11	Campagna Juliana											0
12	Campan Domenico	1										1
13	Capalbo Frank	1	1	1								3
14	Carbonelli Michael	1										1
15	Castillo Christina	1	1	1								3
16	Castillo Sara											0
17	Cervino Peter											0
18	Cestone James		1	1								2
19	Chomko Jean	1	1	1								3
20	Corrado Roni	1		1								2
21	Corsetto Brianna											0
22	Criscione Carmen		1	1								2
23	DeLuccia Alexander	1										1
24	Dransfield Daniel											0
25	Eoepochino Kyle											0
26	Ermolowich William											0
27	Gaeta Gerardo	1										1
28	Gaita Jessica											0
29	Gaita Jr Carmen	1										1
30	Kazmark Keith											0
31	Klosik Emilia											0
32	Kribs Damian											0
33	Longo Pete			1								1
34	Lynch Peter											0
35	McInerney Cielle											0
36	Meletta Connor											0
37	Morano Christina Lee											0
38	Morano John	1	1	1								3
39	Nicora Peggy Ann											0
40	OHara Joyce	1	1									2
41	Orlando Anthony											0
42	Orlando Jack											0
43	Panicucci Marisa											0



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44	Peloner	Patricia		1	1							2
45	Peloner	Steven	1	1	1							3
46	Polizzotto	Philip										0
47	Ponchak	Bruce	1	1	1							3
48	Ragusso	Michaela										0
49	Russo	Alyssa										0
50	Russo	Chuck	1	1	1							3
51	Russo	Michael	1		1							2
52	Sisti	Gisella	1	1	1							3
53	Stefanelli	Alexandra										0
54	Stefanelli	Claudine			1							1
55	Strippoli	Alyssa										0
56	Tosi	Evelyn	1		1							2
57	Verrone	Angelo	1	1								2
58	Wood	Eileen										0
59	Youngster	Henry	1									1

Total	Members	24	16	21								
Total	Guests	1	0	6								
Total at	Meeting	24	16	27								
Meeting	Location	Casa	Casa	HCC								
Percent	at meeting	42%	27%	36%								

Guests												
DeGennaro	DG Anthony	1										
Calantone	Steve 2nd VP			1								
Calantone	Jules			1								
Brietwieser	Thomas			1								
Garamone	Matthew			1								
Kribs	Ken			1								
Manzi	Christopher			1								

x