

Passaic Valley UNICO

Our February 2026 Monthly Newsletter



Passaic Valley UNICO
PO Box 341
Little Falls, NJ 07424

Serving
Little Falls
Totowa
Woodland Park

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Chapter Website	www.PassaicValleyUNICO.org
Chapter Website	www.UNICOMembers.com
Facebook Page	www.facebook.com/PassaicValleyUNICO
Instagram Page	www.instagram.com/PassaicValleyUNICO
District Website	www.UNICONJIV.yolasite.com
National Website	www.UNICO.org
Chapter Email	PassaicValleyUNICO@gmail.com

A Message from our Chapter President

Ciao everyone

January - COLD -- February More COLD -- Don't worry it will warm up soon - And when it does, we all will have smiles on our faces.

Kudos to Claudine Stefanelli for putting together another successful 50/50 raffle. The funds we received put us in a positive mode moving forward. TY you again.

Wish to thank Anthony Sabatini and his crew for organizing a successful "Toys for Tots" program. First time out of the box open the eyes to the community of what we are about as an organization. Special thank you to Christina Castillo and Ronnie Corrado for their efforts as well as we received a newsworthy article in the "Passaic Valley Today" publication. Nice job all. I love our team

Coming up shortly will be our annual Super Bowl pool. Chuck Russo has put a lot of time in to manifest another successful event. Tickets are still available. Please call Chuck to pick up a few more.

Our Feb meeting will be held at Holy Cross Church, Woodland Park, Wednesday, February 11th. John Barbieri will be sending out a notice. Please confirm attendance. His software program is now up and running and will be a positive attribute going forward.

In closing - We as a board wish everyone a Happy Valentine's Day which is celebrated annually on February 14th. Keep your loved ones in your heart during this celebration of Romance and Love.

Respectfully Carmen Criscione- Chapter President



February Birthdays

02-02 Church Russo
 02-02 Jay Sisti
 02-06 Julianna Cestone
 02-12 Joyce O'Hara
 02-15 Jim Cestone
 02-19 Peter Lynch
 02-21 Fred DeMarco
 02-22 Alex (Lex) DeLucia
 02-22 John Morano
 02-24 Tom Brietwieser

Photo Albums

All our chapter event pictures can be seen on our website ... Additional pictures from our "NJ IV District" and also a lot from our "UNICO National" events can also be seen on their websites.

www.PassaicValleyUNICO.org
www.UNICO.org
www.UNICONJIV.yolasite.com

Food Pantry

Please do not forget about our UNICO Phil Arena and our many other Food Pantries ... Your non-perishable donation will help restock them.

Please contact our Food Pantry Chairs, Carmen Gaita, or Patricia Pelonero on how you can help. Or please just bring your items to any chapter meeting

Upcoming Events – Local and National

February 11, 2026 ~ 2nd Wednesday ~ Monthly Chapter Meeting at Holy Cross Church, Woodland Park ~ 7 pm dinner ~ 8 pm meeting ~ BYO

February 14, 2026 ~ Saturday ~ Valentine's Day

February 16, 2026 ~ Monday ~ Presidents' Day

February 18, 2026 ~ Ash Wednesday

~~~~~



February 14<sup>th</sup> ~ Saturday



February 16<sup>th</sup> ~ Monday



February 18<sup>th</sup> ~ Wednesday

## Below are our UNICO's CORE VALUES

If you know of someone who has them and would like to help us make a difference, please invite them to a meeting and possibly have them join our chapter as a new member.

**U – Unity**

**N – Neighborliness**

**I – Integrity**

**C – Charity**

**O – Opportunity**

**"Service Above Self"**



## UNICO Charities

### Foundation Charities

- ... Cancer Research
- ... Cooley's Anemia
- ... Food Bank
- ... Italian Studies
- ... Mental Health
- ... Scholarship
- ... St. Jude's Hospital

### National Charities

- ... Anti Bias
- ... Armed Forces
- ... Columbus Day
- ... Heritage Calendar

## Italian Lesson

|            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| The house  | La casa   |
| The car    | L'auto    |
| The dog    | Il cane   |
| The school | La scuola |
| The friend | l'amico   |
| To sleep   | Dormire   |
| To drink   | Bere      |
| Beautiful  | Bello     |
| Cold       | Freddo    |
| Hot        | Caldo     |

... (More on page 4)

## ComUNICO

You can now read the  
Com-UNICO magazine on  
the internet  
Just click or go here >>>  
[www.unico.org/comUNICO](http://www.unico.org/comUNICO)

## Who's Who

### Our 2025-2026 Executive Board

|                         |       |                  |
|-------------------------|-------|------------------|
| President               | ..... | Carmen Criscione |
| 1st Vice President      | ..... | Joe Benvenuti    |
| 2nd Vice President      | ..... | Chuck Russo      |
| Treasurer               | ..... | Bruce Ponchak    |
| Secretary               | ..... | Steve Pelonero   |
| Sgt. At-Arms            | ..... | John Morano      |
| Corresponding Secretary | ..... | John Morano      |

### Our 2025-2026 Board of Directors

|                |                        |             |
|----------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Steve Pelonero | Past Chapter President | 2010 & 2011 |
| John Barbieri  | Past Chapter President | 2014 & 2015 |
| Bruce Ponchak  | Past Chapter President | 2016 & 2017 |
| Carmen Gaita   | Past Chapter President | 2018 & 2019 |

### Our 2025-2026 Chapter Delegates

President Carmen Criscione ... 47 Members (President +3)

Delegate: Sal Benvenuti

Delegate: Patricia Pelonero

Delegate: open

Delegate: Joseph Agresti as PNP

Delegate: Steven Pelonero as PNP

(Delegates represent our chapter and are urged to attend our district, regional, and national meetings, especially if a vote is called for)

### Our 2025-2026 Fundraising Committee Heads

|                                      |       |                                            |
|--------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------------|
| Food Pantry                          | ..... | Carmen Gaita and Patricia Pelonero         |
| Golf Outing                          | ..... | Fred DeMarco                               |
| Holiday Cheer                        | ..... | Carmen Gaita, Joe Benvenuti, Sal Benvenuti |
| Overseas Armed Service Care Packages | ..... | Roni Corrado, Evelyn Tosi                  |
| Raffle ~ 50/50                       | ..... | Claudine Stefanelli                        |

### Non-Fundraising Committee Heads

|                                  |       |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| Community Service Day (April)    | ..... | Claudine Stefanelli               |
| Good and Welfare                 | ..... | Joe Benvenuti                     |
| Heritage                         | ..... | Angelo Verrone                    |
| Italian Flag Raising             | ..... | Steve Pelonero PNP                |
| Membership                       | ..... | Christina Castillo, Roni Corrado  |
| Newsletter                       | ..... | Steve Pelonero PNP                |
| Publicity                        | ..... | Christina Castillo & Roni Corrado |
| Scholarship / Brian Piccolo      | ..... | Michael Russo                     |
| Study Abroad College Grant Chair | ..... | Cav. Joseph Agresti PNP           |
| Website                          | ..... | Steven Pelonero PNP               |
| Website Member Section           | ..... | John Barbieri                     |

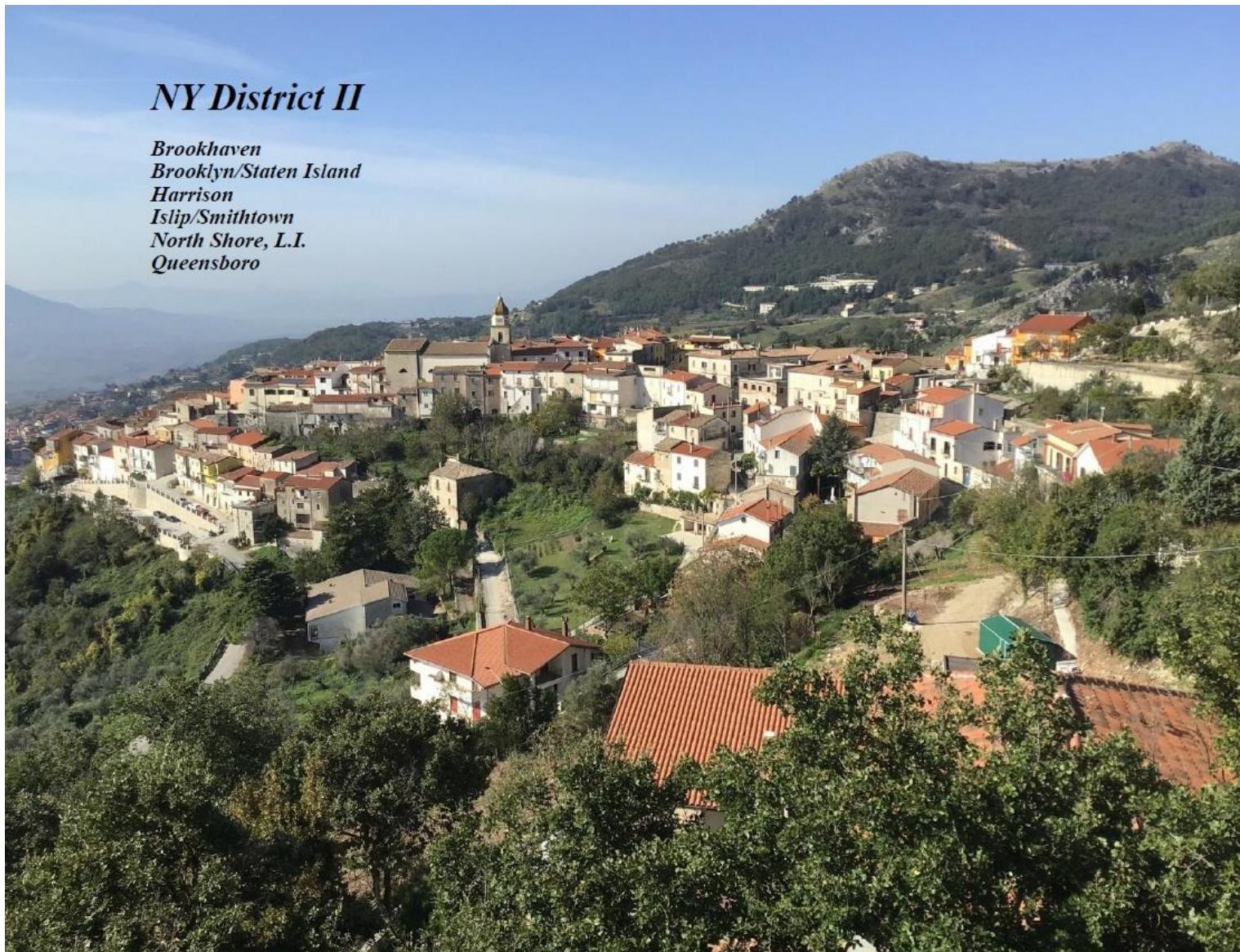
# *Italian Language Lesson*

|                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Good Morning</i>       | <i>Buongiorno</i>      |
| <i>Hi</i>                 | <i>Ciao</i>            |
| <i>Hello (formal)</i>     | <i>Salve</i>           |
| <i>Good Afternoon</i>     | <i>Buon Pomeriggio</i> |
| <i>Good Evening</i>       | <i>Buona Sera</i>      |
| <i>Good Night</i>         | <i>Buona Notte</i>     |
| <i>Bye Bye (formal)</i>   | <i>Arrivederci</i>     |
| <i>See you soon</i>       | <i>A presto</i>        |
| <i>Bye Bye (Informal)</i> | <i>Ciao ciao</i>       |
| <i>Wife</i>               | <i>Moglie</i>          |
| <i>Husband</i>            | <i>Marito</i>          |
| <i>Grandma</i>            | <i>Nonna</i>           |
| <i>Grandpa</i>            | <i>Nonno</i>           |
| <i>Aunt</i>               | <i>Zia</i>             |
| <i>Uncle</i>              | <i>Zio</i>             |
| <i>Cousin (male)</i>      | <i>Cugino</i>          |
| <i>Cousin (female)</i>    | <i>Cugina</i>          |
| <i>Enough !</i>           | <i>Basta !</i>         |

***Italian Heritage Photo***  
***From the 2026 UNICO Heritage Calendar***  
***Celebrating the month of February***

***NY District II***

*Brookhaven  
Brooklyn/Staten Island  
Harrison  
Islip/Smithtown  
North Shore, L.I.  
Queensboro*



***The Church of San Lorenzo Maggiore, Naples***

*This photo was taken by a UNICO Westfield Chapter Member*

*The church also now has a museum on premises as well as a market below the church.*

*The church's origin comes from the presence of the Franciscan order in Naples during the lifetime of St. Francis of Assisi. San Loranzo is both a church and a monastery and the new museum takes up three floors above the courtyard.*

# Where is your Family From?



## Committee & Comments

### Food Pantries ~ Carmen Gaita and Patricia Pelonero

*Let's continue helping others. Please consider bringing one or more non-perishables to any chapter meeting, or to one of our Volunteer Food Pantries or just contact our committee (Carmen and/or Patricia) ~~~ "Let's always help others"*

### Over Seas Soldiers ~ Roni Corrado and Evelyn Tosi

*Major Joshua Tosi thanked the chapter for the snack packages sent to him.*

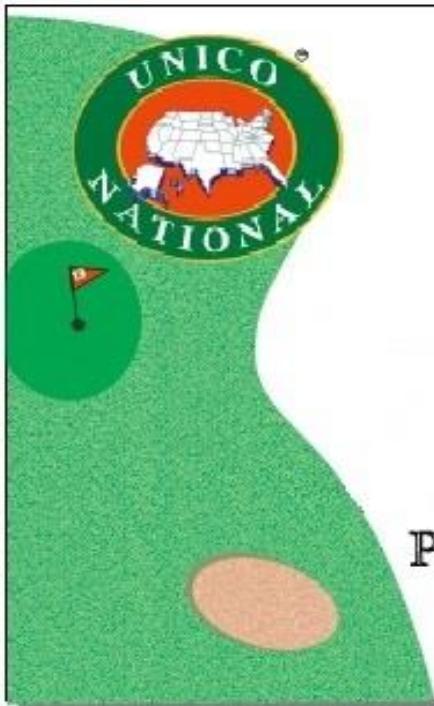
### Publicity ~ Christina Castillo and Roni Corrado

*Roni ~ The Italian "Tribute continues to publish all Passaic Valley UNICO articles and pictures sent to them. Most recently they published the picture/articles of our Holiday Toy distribution and the induction of new member Anthony Sabatino.*

### Sponsors ~ Please try to support all of our supporters. They are all listed on the following pages.

### Website Member Section Update ~ John Barbieri

*The Member Section of the Chapter website is back up and running. Please go to the chapter website and click on the "Member Section" and sign in to see a lot more than what is on the website.*



## Passaic Valley Chapter

### Sponsor

If you would like to be a  
PV UNICO Sponsor  
Please contact us

@  
PassaicValleyUNICO@gmail.com

### Our UNICO Charities

#### UNICO National

*Armed Services ~ Columbus Day ~ Heritage & Photo Calendar*

#### UNICO Foundation

*21<sup>st</sup> century ~ Anti-Bias ~ Cancer Research & Prevention  
Cooley's Anemia ~ Italian Studies ~ Mental Health  
Scholarships ~ Torraco Food Bank/Shelter*

**About UNICO** ~ UNICO is the largest Italian American Service Organization in the United States  
Unity, Neighborliness, Integrity, Charity, Opportunity

UNICO was founded on October 10, 1922, in Waterbury, Connecticut. A group of 15 men, led by Dr. Anthony P. Vastola, came together to create what has become a very special and very proud organization. It was Dr. Vastola's dream to create an Italian American service organization to engage in charitable works, support higher education, and perform patriotic deeds. Our motto is "Service Above Self".

Each year, the UNICO Foundation and the UNICO National Chapters across the country donate approximately \$1 million to various charities. Scholarships continue to be the primary focus of UNICO, as roughly one-third of all monies raised goes to deserving students from all the chapter locations throughout the chain.

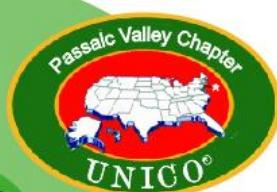
UNICO National has funded major research in Cooley's Anemia and Mental Health. Through its association with the Jimmy Valvano Foundation, it has funded over 10, \$50,000 grants to help find a cure for Cancer. These worthy areas continue to receive generous support from the chapters and its members for these worthy causes.

If you would like to attend one of our meetings to see if you might be interested in joining UNICO, please contact us through any member, or through our email. We would be honored to have you as a member of our Passaic Valley UNICO Chapter.

# Our 2025/2026 Sponsors

(From July 1, 2026 ~ June 30, 2026)

**Thank you to “All” of our Sponsors**  
**Platinum Corporate Sponsor**



1244 McBride Ave.  
Woodland Park

**Passaic Valley Chapter  
Annual Golf Outing  
Sponsor**



[www.LegalLeafNJ.com](http://www.LegalLeafNJ.com)



973-339-9477

## Gold Level Sponsors



**Coccia  
Foundation**

**Best Wishes  
UNICO**



Peter Graziano



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Andover NJ

973-398-2670

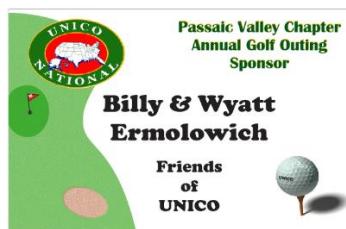
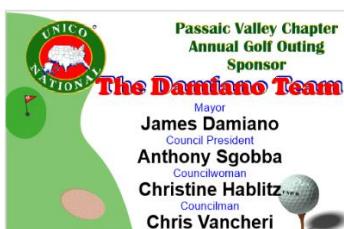
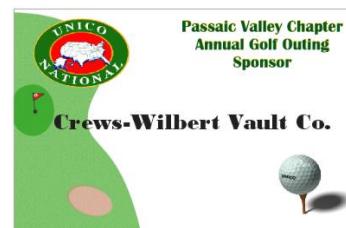
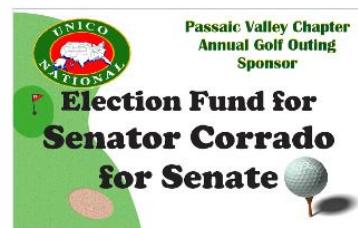
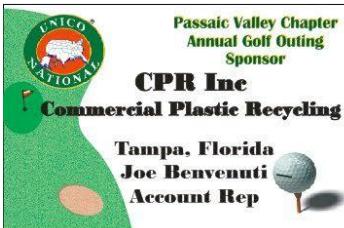
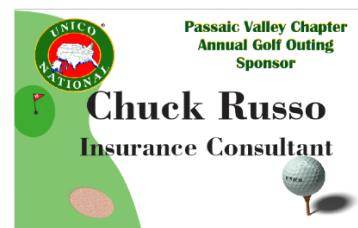
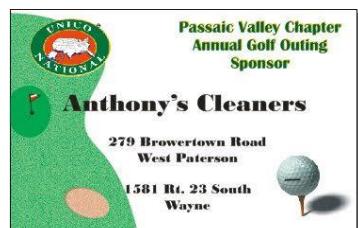
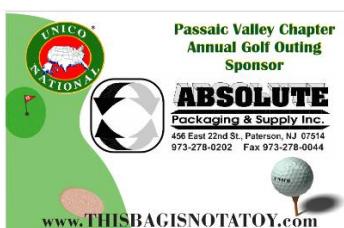


# Our 2025/2026 Sponsors

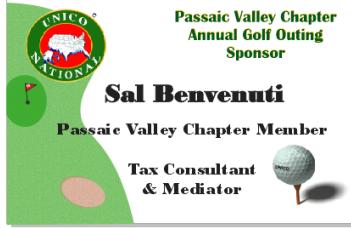
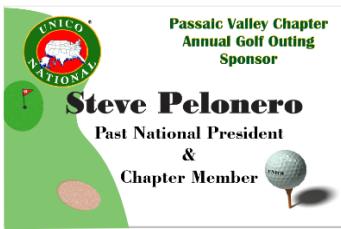
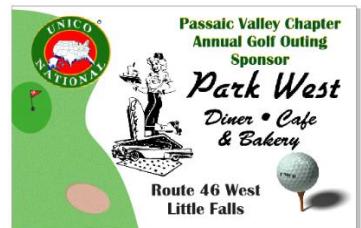
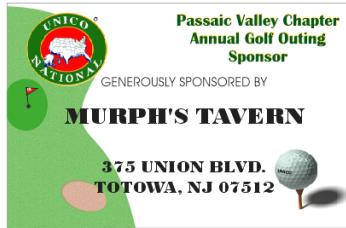
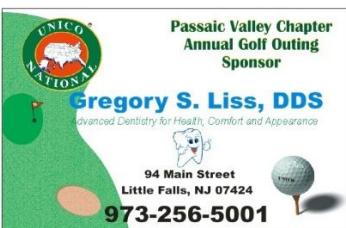
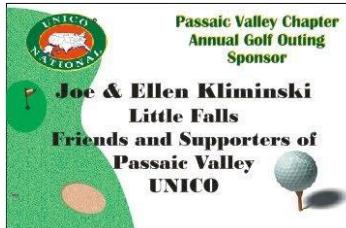
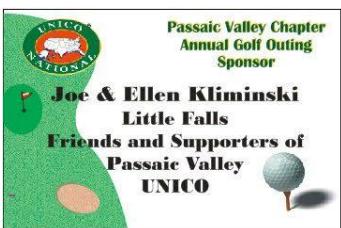
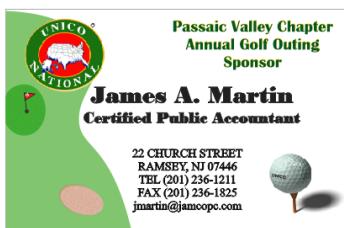
You too can be a proud sponsor of our Passaic Valley UNICO Chapter  
It is never too late.

You will be in every newsletter for our 2024-2025 year.

And, if received early enough, you will also have a sign on one of the 18 holes at our Annual Golf Outing



# Our 2025/2026 Sponsors



# Our 2025/2026 Sponsors

