

February 2026

Year 24

Issue 241

Passaic Valley UNICO

Our February 2026 Monthly Newsletter



Passaic Valley UNICO
PO Box 341
Little Falls, NJ 07424

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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) DeLuccia
 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 14th ~ Saturday



February 16th ~ Monday



February 18th ~ 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

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.

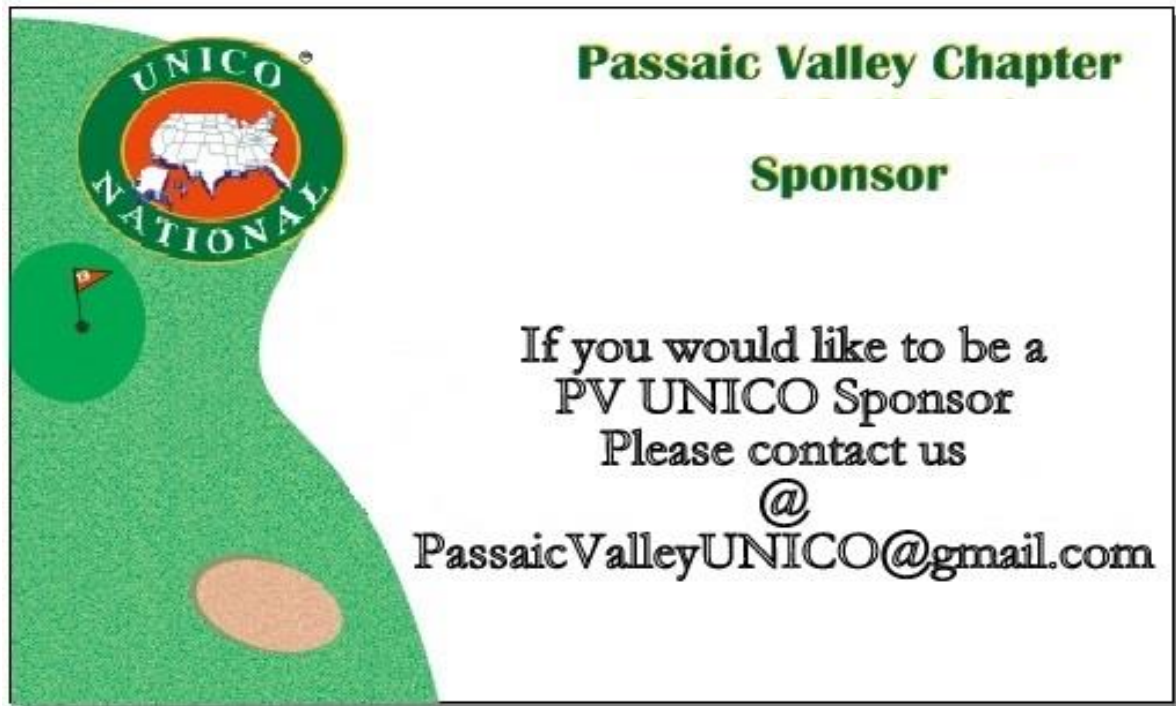
Publicity ~ Christina Castillo and Roni Corrado

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.



Our UNICO Charities

UNICO National

Armed Services ~ Columbus Day ~ Heritage & Photo Calendar

UNICO Foundation

21st century ~ Anti-Bias ~ Cancer Research & Prevention

Cooley's Anemia ~ Italian Studies ~ Mental Health

Scholarships ~ Torracco 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.

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

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

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

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