



## BIDDING FARE WELL TO JOE THE BARBER

On December 3, 2011 Joe DiMaria closed the doors of his barber shop for the final time, and with it, another era of “the way things were.” Besides the dates on the magazines there was little evidence that any time has passed over the forty four years he was there. Like many old institutions, Joe's Barber Shop can not be replicated.

Joe The Barber, as he was commonly known, was cutting hair in his shop located at 293 Morris Avenue in Elizabeth for 44 years. Too much of what made it special is tied directly to Joe, his larger than life mustache and his even larger smile. The haircut was secondary to the experience of waiting to be next. No one minded if they had to wait an hour because what they got for their patience was a one man vaudeville act. His audience would be entertained by one-liners, stories and sight-gags. Once in a while he would take a break and snip the locks of the customer sitting in the chair. Many times the patron would stay after his haircut to listen to the end of a bit.

Funny is just a part of Joe's persona. What made Joe special was his compassion and generosity. He acted on both with almost complete anonymity. His involvement with St. Anthony's Church and the Knights of Columbus were noteworthy but his real spirit of giving was found in the kindness he showed individuals, those impoverished and afflicted. Joe befriends people who need help that are not particularly versed in asking for it. His friendship for these people is a Godsend.

A regular customer could get a sense of Joe's altruism by observing him interacting with the pedestrians on Morris Avenue. Lost souls would shuffle in and out of his door periodically and he would build relationships with them. If he couldn't help them directly he would direct them to a place where they could get help, it may be a bowl a soup or a call to an EMT. For some of these people, Joe was the only person to have ever helped them. Joe also made house calls and continues to do so. A service that went to the way side decades ago, but is still vital to many people who are home-bound or in a hospital. He will continue to be available for home and hospital visits in his retirement.

One person Joe helped was a fellow named Jimmy Testa, a WWII veteran. The shop became a regular hang out for Jimmy and he and Joe became good friends. When Jimmy got ill with lung cancer, Joe looked out for him, ultimately calling the Red Cross when hospitalization was inevitable. Jimmy eventually died in the Veterans' Hospital and because he had no next of kin the hospital thought it fitting to present Joe with the flag used to drape Jimmy's casket in honor of his service to America. The flag then hung from ceiling to floor in the barber shop ever since.

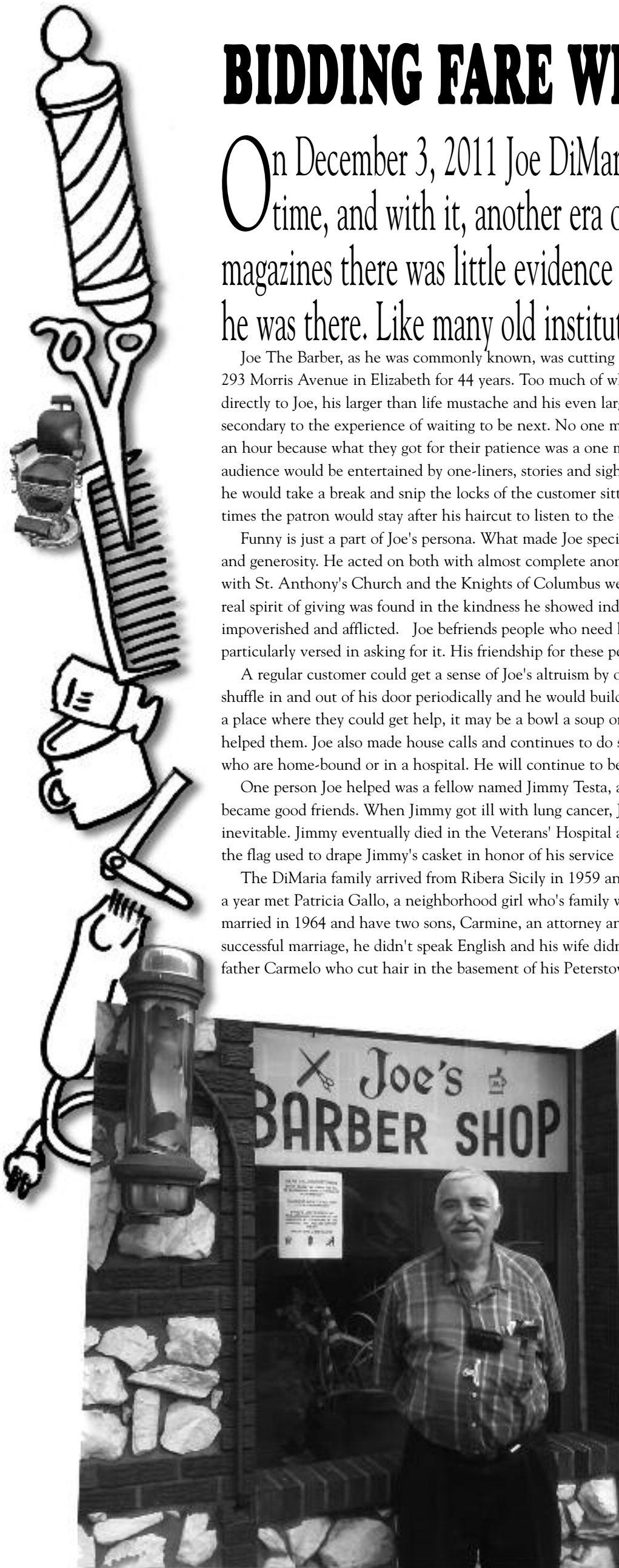
The DiMaria family arrived from Ribera Sicily in 1959 and settled in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, NJ. Joe was 21 years old and within a year met Patricia Gallo, a neighborhood girl who's family was from Vallata Italy. They have been together for the last 51 years. They were married in 1964 and have two sons, Carmine, an attorney and Nicholas who is in education. Joe says communication was the basis of his successful marriage, he didn't speak English and his wife didn't speak Italian, they never argued about anything. Joe learned to cut hair from his father Carmelo who cut hair in the basement of his Peterstown home. His first job was with LaSalle's Barber Shop where he worked until 1968 when he opened his own place on Morris Avenue.

At 73 years old Joe still has a lot of vim and vigor racing around his body. He shows no indication of slowing down but the demands of operating a shop is more suited for younger folks. Joe is happy with the thought that he's not confined to the regular shop hours. He will have more time to socialize around the neighborhood. His bellowing voice shooting out one-liners through a thick accent can wake up any mundane setting. His antics also earned him the moniker "Joe Lu Pazze", affectionately, of course, he's not really crazy.

Joe's comedy did hide his serious side to those not looking. It was fitting that the last person to leave his shop before he turned the key for the final time was an old timer named Sylvester. He sat while Joe waited for his brother Charlie to truck the final boxes away. Sylvester sat in a folding chair, the last piece of furniture left behind in the middle of the empty room. Joe was talking to him but not getting much of a response. Sylvester just needed a place to rest his legs and keep warm. Joe's Shop was able to provide that to the very end. It is a wonder where Sylvester will be the following day. Store owners around Morris and Westfield Avenues lost a great neighbor. The sense is that there will be many more lonely people around, more people looking for help who can't find any, and a lot less laughter echoing out into the streets. 🐾



(above, l-r) Working at LaSalle's Barber Shop, 1960, Tom Colicchio, Joe DiMaria and Henry LaSalle.



(left) Joe “The barber” DiMaria before closing his barber shop on 293 Morris Avenue in Elizabeth, NJ for the last time in 44 years on December 3, 2011.

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**President's Message**



I'd like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. It's tough seeing the people who have been important to us grow old and pass away. Things the way we knew them are also gone. They do live in our memories and share the experiences we had growing up with the our kids and grand kids. On th flip side of that I can't help but smile when I see the next generation grow up, get married and start families of their own. I imagine myself at their age finding my own way, thinking I had everything figured out. They too will see their worlds change and not realize it until they take time to look back. I could tell them to slow down and savor the present but they probably won't listen. If there is one thing that old folks can teach the youngsters it is the difference between what is important and what is not. In the end it's the important stuff that we remember. And that comes down to the times we spend with family and friends. The Sons of Peterstown Super Bowl Party is one of those events. I hope to see you there.

God bless,

John Sacco, President  
 Sons of Peterstown Sports Club

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**Letters**  
**to the**  
**Editor**



Joe,

What a privilege and an honor to be able to attend the St. Anthony's Memorial Dinner Dance on November 12, 2011. It was such a joy to see all my old classmates. In addition, to seeing Brother Jerry and Sister Domenica. These people trained us and helped us be the persons we are today. We owe St. Anthony's so much and we all love her so very much. We will never forget the values she instilled. I think all my classmates would agree; we love our alma mater and we want her to continue to educate and influence young minds.

Special thanks to the committee that orchestrated this great event: Ray Masters, Joe Tedde, Vicky (Carta) Miller, Jackie Salemi, Anthony Bartone, Susan (Guido) Jax, Joanne (Pareso) Megill. You all worked so hard and so tirelessly. You inspired me to do more to help others.

Everything went so well and we all had a great time.

If you are an alumnus of St. Anthony's you have a proud heritage. One that makes you special and unique. Trust me when I say we are a blessed people. May we never forget our alma mater and may we do all we can to hold her high!

God bless and Merry Christmas,  
 John Nocera  
 Calhoun, LA

It's good to see the Burg has a newspaper. Thirty years ago I lived and hung out down the Burg by Spirito's with guys like George Mallone, the Collinci's, Jo Jo, etc. I also hung outside John & Joe's Fountain Store on the Avenue. I'm 64 now, but the Burg never left my heart.

All my best,  
 Richard Tuttle  
 East Stroudsburg, PA

Dear Joe:

I received the front page of your October 2011 newspaper in a round about fashion. Mel Baker, a life long resident of Elizabeth, mailed the front page to my brother in Arizona, who in turn mailed it to me back here in New Jersey. He highlighted a portion of Jack Joyce's letter - the part about Father Hillary and Blessed Sacrament Grammar School. I attended Blessed Sacrament in 1947, before moving the following year to Jackson Avenue. While living there I attended Sacred Heart for grades 2 through 3, Lafayette for grades 4 through 9 and Thomas Jefferson for grades 10 through 12. I should also mentioned that I attended Battin High School as a junior because TJ did not offer third year Spanish. Because TJ was on a split schedule I walked to Battin for my afternoon class.

Getting back to Blessed Sacrament, I recall Father Hillary coming into our first grade class on Mondays and asking questions about the Sunday gospel. He always offered a nickel for each correct answer. While I was in the 9th grade I delivered groceries for Badel's Grocery store (near the corner of Jackson Avenue and North Avenue). Every Saturday I had a delivery to the Blessed Sacrament Rectory. Often times I had the pleasure of running across Father Hillary. He was truly a great man.

Sincerely,  
 George Miller  
 Ringoes, NJ

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**BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT:**  
**NICHOLAS & EUGENE CONFORTI**

On September 27, 2011 identical twins Nicholas Patrick Conforti and Eugene Christopher Conforti were born in Boston, Massachusetts at Tufts Medical Center. Weighing 3 lbs 5oz and 5 lbs 6oz, Nicholas and Eugene were welcomed into the world by proud, first-time parents Kristin and Patrick Conforti. Now residing in Andover, Mass, Patrick (of Toms River) is a scientist and Kristin (of Garden City, NY) is now a stay-at-home mom after working in public relations for 8 years.

The boys join a loving family including great grandmother, Theresa Colicchio Schade of Edison, grandparents, Patricia & Eugene Conforti of Toms River and Helen & Nicholas Capece of Garden City, NY as well as many adoring aunts, uncles and cousins.

**FREE JOB READINESS**  
**PROGRAM: "PROJECT READY"**

Project Ready will be accepting applications for its free six week job preparedness program on Tuesday, January 3 at 9:30 sharp. Applicants should be prepared to stay until 1:30PM. A six week program is offered to people seeking to improve their skills as they search for employment. Students receive training in basic business and computer skills. They learn interviewing skills, resume writing, Math and English. Upon completion of the program, staff assists students with job searches.

The staff of "Project Ready" consists of a staff director and several volunteers, most of whom are retired business and education professionals.

Project Ready is located within St. Joseph Social Service Center  
 118 Division St., Elizabeth, NJ  
 For more information please call (908) 353-1045, email projectreadyprg@yahoo.com or visit www.stjosephelizabeth.org



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# Editor's Opinion

*everybody has one - this is mine - by Joe Renna*

Joe the Barber always gave me the same regular boy's haircut when I was young. But when I turned thirteen and wasn't a kid any more I wanted to look cool like the older kids in high school, that meant long hair parted in the middle. I told Joe what I wanted and though my hair was not that long he parted it and I left bopping around feeling pretty good. The look was a big deal because my class trip to Washington, DC was the next day and I thought if I saw some protesters and I didn't want to give the impression that I was a square, I was ready to throw up a peace sign and join in.

The following morning I arrived at school in my bell bottoms, blue corduroy sport coat and matching bow tie with my hair blown out, parted down the middle just touching the top of my ears. Some of my classmates were boarding the bus and I went to get in line. Sister Kathleen saw me approaching and I gave her a big smile. But she frowned and pointing her finger at my head she said "Mr. Renna, there will be none of that."

Bummer. My radical hair style was denied. She made me part my hair on the side in order to board the bus. There probably was a lesson she was trying to teach me but to this day, I can't figure out what it was. Maybe she thought the hair do was a gateway to becoming a full fledge hippie burnout. We are the sum of our experiences and so I'm thankful for whatever happened to me in St. Anthony's Grammar School. The nuns who taught us were from the Salesian order. The order started by St. Don Bosco in 1859, was dedicated to helping troubled youth through education, and it showed at St. Anthony's. The nuns had a tough job and in hindsight they handled it well.

Catholic Schools are in a struggle to survive. For too many reasons, they are being phased out by the economy and competition. Measures need to be taken to combat the natural societal forces. Last year St. Anthony's Class of 1970 took up the charge and established a Foundation in memory of deceased alumni. This year they expanded their scope and included classes from all the years that the school existed, from 1958 to 2009, when it closed to

reopen as Our lady of Guadelupe Academy (OLGA). Money raised will help keep tuition affordable, since finances are the premier obstacle for families wanting to enroll their children.

The benefits to receiving a Catholic education are infinite, for the individual child and the community on a whole. I also attended Roselle Catholic High School in Roselle and must say the twelve years of Catholic schooling was a life saver. I have a moral compass embedded in me that I don't think I would have developed otherwise. I had just too many distractions to seek out the spiritual guidance that I received routinely.

The future health of our communities depends on the education of our children. Not every child has to have a religious based education but we do need a good percentage of the population rooted in the experience. Besides talent and ability people need a sense of values and ethics.

Until there is a voucher or some other system is in place to assist private schools, OLGA will have to rely on the collective efforts of the community it serves and the people who believe in their mission. I'd like to make an appeal to the Peterstown newspaper audience to join in the effort to help OLGA prosper. There are many opportunities to donate with money and services. Call Principal Joe Caporaso at 908-352-7419 for more information.

.....

Not for Nothing But...

I blame myself for  
my Catholic Guilt.

.....



*Merry Christmas  
and a have a  
Prosperous New Year*

*Thanks to all our advertisers and readers.  
Joe & Tina Renna*

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## JOE BARBER SHOP'S LAST HAIR CUT

Joe Spallino remembers his father Giovanni taking him as a young boy to go see Don Carmelo in his basement barber shop in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, NJ. Joe remembers Carmelo DiMaria as one of the finest dressed gentlemen of his day, with a sharp pressed shirt and tie and well groomed hair and an "old world" fine mustache. Italians would say that he was "un uomo di rispetto e Classe".

When Don Carmelo passed on, Joe and his dad continued their grooming with his son Joe DiMaria, known throughout the neighborhood as "Joe da barber". Joe has been Spellino's barber for over forty years. When Joe Spallino's son Giovanni was ready for his first hair cut he took him along to see Joe the Barber. It was

a very sentimental moment for the young dad.

Spallino would kid with Joe and ask "What will I do when your not around to cut our hair?" Joe would reply "There is only "ONE" Joe Da Barber and when he's gone there won't be no other."

On December 3, 2011 Spallino stood there in Joe's half empty barber shop, his son sitting on a booster seat in an antique barber chair. He reminisced about all the jokes he heard and the old memorabilia that hung on the walls. Photos of Joe with local celebrity Yankee Hall of Famer Phil Rizzuto, Boxers Rocky Graziano and Mickey Walker. Spallino felt a little sadness as Joe the barber's words were about to ring true. 📞



(above) Giovanni Spallino and his grandfather "Nonno". The photo was taken in the Ribera Club Clubhouse in front of a diplay built by the elder Spallino ro honor St. Joseph on the his name day celebration.





(top) Joe Spallino and his son Giovanni before and after his last haircut from Joe the Barber.

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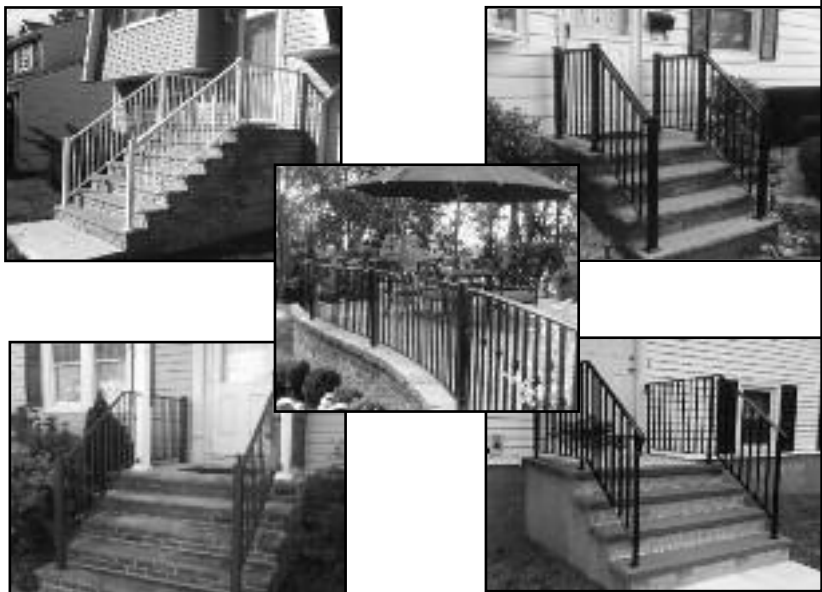
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OLGA EARLYACT CLUB SERVES UP DINNER AND WARMTH

The Elizabeth Rotary Earlyact Club of Our Lady of Guadalupe Academy, Elizabeth, donated 11 complete Thanksgiving dinner baskets to St. Joseph's Social Service Center. The baskets included turkeys, hams, and

all the trimmings. Each grade was responsible for collecting a different food item. The students also collected 20 blankets which were donated to the Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless.

MILITARY MOMS FROM ELIZABETH

The G.I. Go Fund Moms are a group of Military Moms from Elizabeth and surrounding area. The purpose of the group is to unite the military families in their struggle to support and appreciate our Troops when coming home from tours of duty. They are trying to raise awareness of these heroes that live within our community. Troops need to be acknowledged in many ways. When troops return home the transition from war to reality can be unbearable. They could use support, mentally and financially.

The group meets once a month from March to November. They support troops with care packages, letters, post cards, and personal contact through Facebook. They constantly encourage and support the unselfish dedication the troops show to serve and protect the Nation.

G.I. Go Fund Moms were incorporated and information can be found on their website [www.gigofun.org](http://www.gigofun.org).

At their 2011 Red & Blue Dinner Dance the group honored six very special families who's troop gave the ultimate sacrifice. They also appreciated 26 active soldiers from the city of Elizabeth and surrounding area. There were over 300 people in attendance and they received much support from local businesses, like Hollywood Floors, Michelinos, Tropicana Diner, Joanne's Luncheonette, Larry's Generators and DiCosmo's Ices, to name a few.

*G.I. Go Fund Moms is looking for military families from Union and Essex County to join our team, we can be found on Facebook or at [www.gigofund.org](http://www.gigofund.org).*



(above) OLGA Principal Deacon Joseph Caporaso (center) sorting food donations with students.

HUBIE BROWN VISITS HIS ALMA MATER, ST. MARY'S

In October, Hubie and Claire Brown visited St. Mary of the Assumption High School. Hubie, Basketball Hall of Fame inductee, former NBA Coach and current TV Analyst, is a 1951 graduate of St. Mary's. During his visit, Hubie attended the blessing of the statue of St. Mary on the school grounds and toured the school. He also had lunch with students and alumni, as well as the principal, Janet Malko, and other staff members. Hubie entertained everyone at lunch with his many interesting stories of his days at St. Mary's and his career. The students appreciated Hubie's encouraging words, as well as the time he spent with them.



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(above, seated, l-r) Committee members Joe Tedde, Joanne (Pareso) Megill, Sue (Guida) Jackson. (standing, l-r) Ray Masters (Mastapeter), Vicky (Carta) Miller, Jackie Salemi, Anthony Bartone.



(above, l-r) Vicki Carta Miller presenting Principal Deacon Joe Caporaso a check for \$15,000 from the St. Anthony Alumni Memorial Fund Dinner/Dance that was held on November 12, 2011.

## DINNER DANCE RECAP

*Submitted by the St. Anthony's Alumni Memorial Fund Committee*

On behalf of the St. Anthony's Alumni Memorial Fund Committee, we would like to express our sincere gratitude for the outpouring of love and support we received for our First Annual Benefit Dinner Dance honoring Deacon Joseph Caporaso.

After a preliminary accounting of the evening's events it has been determined that approximately \$15,000 was raised to help support our school, and more importantly lifelong friendships and acquaintances have been renewed and initiated. We hope next year we can go above and beyond this effort.

Many thanks go out to all alumni, family and friends, members of the clergy, The City of Elizabeth Officials, The Elizabeth Board of Education, The OLGA School Advisory Board, UNICO, and The Elizabeth PBA for

making this event a huge success. We hope we included everyone that helped make this night possible, but please forgive us if we forgot to mention anyone.

Remember after all is said and done this committee was formed to keep Catholic education alive in the City of Elizabeth and especially at St. Anthony's (Our Lady of Guadalupe Academy) where our Italian ancestors worked so hard to build such a beautiful school and church. We hope we can count on your continued support.

May St. Anthony, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the Good Lord above continue to guide us in the coming years.

We would like to hear from you. Please use this email: [staclass1970@gmail.com](mailto:staclass1970@gmail.com) if you have any questions, comments or suggestions. Thank you.

## WITH APPRICIATION FORM OLGA

*Submitted by Lorraine Cunningham, Chair of the OLGA Advisory Board*

For those who were not able to attend St. Anthony's Alumni Dinner honoring Deacon Joe, let me tell you it was a huge success with over 300 people in attendance at this well organized event.

Don't know yet how much was raised for the school, but the spirit was strong and promising. Mayor Chris Bollwage missed a family wedding to attend and, of course, Joe Renna was there with his camera.

The Dinner Journal had ads from businesses all around Elizabeth and beyond. There were 37 large baskets with gifts donated, in addition to 5 choices in a Silent Auction, a 50/50 and a Wish List.

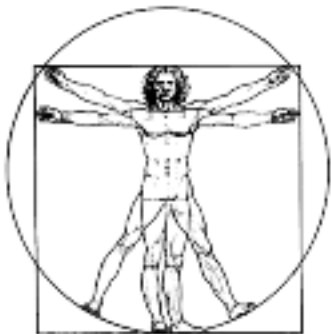
Young and old were up there dancing. I sat at the same table with Brother Jerry, a Salesian and former teacher at St. Anthony's, who came from Connecticut to join the celebration. Numerous times, alumni came up to him to introduce themselves and thanked him for

the education he helped to provide. I could see he was very moved by their appreciation...as I was just to see it.

In his acceptance speech, Deacon Joe mentioned that the Middle States Evaluation team was at the school last week and one of them commented on how happy the students looked to be there. Well maybe one day, they too will be dancing and celebrating their experience at OLGA, brought to them by the added support of St. Anthony's Alumni.

Those who volunteered their time, talent and treasure to plan and work on this event are to be highly commended. Their legacy will continue to bear fruit at Our Lady of Guadalupe Academy. Perhaps the future will bring alumni from other former Elizabeth Catholic schools to come together as well.

We can all be very proud to be part of such a wonderful team at OLGA.



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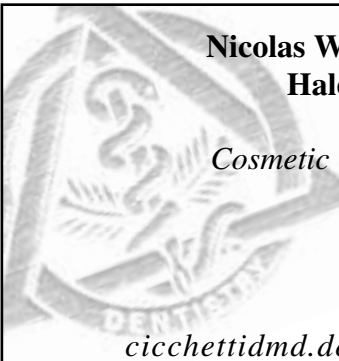
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THE PRIVILEGE OF MAKING A SPEECH

Joe Renna, Class of ‘74.

I had the privilege of saying a few words at St. Anthony’s First Annual Alumni Memorial Fund Benefit Dinner Dance. The committee thought it would be nice since I promoted the event, and through my newspaper, had a relationship with many of the folks who attended. I hope I didn’t abuse the privilege.

The evening was very nostalgic and celebrated the great times we had at school. It was a party atmosphere with the entire evening filled with laughs. I took the easy way out to be funny and made some jokes about nuns. I avoided looking at the table of nuns and convinced myself they were laughing it up. But Like Poe’s Tell-Tale Heart, weeks later the guilt it gnawing at me. I need clap erasures to make things right.

A FEW WORDS FROM JOE RENNA

I feel like Father Bosio making morning announcements. Before I read the list of families that haven’t paid this month’s tuition; Let me read the list of students who must report to detention after school.

I think it was easier to call those students who didn’t deserve detention. We would get detention for little things like playing pinball at Malta’s during recess, sneaking a sip of wine in the sacristy, not handing your envelope in during Sunday mass. The girls used to roll up the waist band of their skirts to hike the hem of their dresses up. Sister would come around with the yard stick and measure the distance form the bottom of the uniform to the top of the knee. Any more than two inches was detention worthy or one wack with the yard stick.

I liked making a choice of punishment. Of course we chose the yard stick. And I think the nuns were happy we chose the stick too. They didn’t want us after school as much as we didn’t want to be there. That goes for the lay teachers also.

You have to give the lay teachers credit because they

Not for Nothing But... jokes about nuns are the low hanging fruit of comedy.



(above, l-r) St. Anthony’s Past Principal Sister Domenica De Peri and Sister Esther from St. Theresa's in Kenilworth.

What flash backs. Of course I’m just kidding. The nuns were truly loving and caring. It is a different day and age now . . . No hitting allowed. So, of course, the nuns don’t teach any more. But Our lady of Guadalupe still has to underpay their lay teachers which is why we are here at this fundraiser. I don’t have to tell you the important roll Catholic schools have in society as a whole. Every one benefits from Catholic education. So we want to thank the class of 1970 for starting the foundation. I guess they were the class who felt the most guilt. Though we are raising money tonite the foundation will continually be soliciting funds. So let’s enjoy the night. It’s a little like the battle of the bands we had in the cafeteria dances. But that doesn’t mean tonight has to end in a fist fight, that goes for the boys too. Sister Martina told me that there will be public school girls at the dance. Don’t let them corrupt you. So every one remember to leave room between you and your partner for the Holy Ghost.

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(above) Tom Panteleo ('78), Rick LaPolla ('72), Helen Cullen ('69) and Vince Feminella.



(above) John Sacco ('64), Joe Sacco ('70), Lou LaBrutto.



(left, l-r) Class of '65 Lorraine (Renna) Kelly with her Benedictine Academy H.S. '69 classmate Sr. Roberta McDonald and her St. A's and B.A classmate Celeste Pike.



(above) St. Anthony Church Pastor Fr. Tom Provenzano with Br. Jerry Harasym who celebrated his 75th birthday at the event.



(above) Rocco DiPaoula ('74), Sr. Marris DeRose ('77) and Joe DiPaola ('74)



(left, l-r) Anthony Bartone ('70) Anthony Scicione ('72), Frank Malta ('62) Pete Renna with son Nick Renna ('72) and Danny Derosé ('66).



(above) Current teaching staff of Our Lady of Guadalupe Academy.

Special thanks go to the organizing committee -

Class of 1970:	Denise (Steele) Konca
Ray Masters (Mastapeter)	Carolyn DeRose
Vicky (Carta) Miller	Nick Marich
Sue (Guida) Jackson	Pat Mele
Jackie Salemi	Mike LaPolla
Joanne (Pareso) Megill	Cindy (Bryant) Erickson
Giuseppe "Joe" Tedde	Nancy Renna
Anthony Bartone	and many more.

Photos for this and other events can be found online at [PeterstownNJ.com](http://PeterstownNJ.com) and on Joe Renna's Facebook site.

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# Recipes

Submitted by Michelino Vastola from La Campagnola Restaurant, Kenilworth, NJ

## Chicken La Campagnola

**INGREDIENTS:**

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 2 Chicken Breasts<br>(split and pounded) | 8 spears of Asparagus<br>(blanched) |
| Oil                                      | 4 slices of nice mozzarella         |
| Flour                                    | Some Roasted Peppers                |
| 3 Eggs                                   | 1 Cup of Heavy Cream                |
| 3 Tbsp Parmesan Cheese                   | 1 / 2 Cup of White Wine             |
| 2 cups of Bread Crumbs                   | 1 / 2 cup of Onions (diced)         |
| 8 leaves of Sage                         | Worcestershire Sauce                |
|  | Salt and Pepper to taste            |

**PREPARATION:**

- 1) Coat Chicken Breasts with Flour, then Eggs, then with Bread Crumbs and Parmesan Cheese mixture.
- 2) Pan fry Chicken in oil on both sides and remove excess oil
- 3) Throw in Onions, then add the Sage
- 4) Cook until Onions are golden
- 5) Bless with White Wine, then add Worcestershire Sauce followed by the Heavy Cream
- 6) Add Salt and Pepper to taste
- 7) Top Chicken with Asparagus, Roasted Peppers and Mozzarella
- 8) Put in oven until Mozzarella melts
- 9) Plate and serve 2 people

## Pasta with Pistachios

**INGREDIENTS:**

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Onions (diced)            | Green Pistachios         |
| Pancetta (diced)          | (toasted and crumbled)   |
| Butter                    | Parmesan Cheese          |
| Heavy Cream               | Cognac                   |
| Green Pistachios (pureed) | Salt and pepper to taste |

**PREPARATION:**

- 1) Fry Onions and Pancetta blend in butter
- 2) Flame with Cognac
- 3) Add Heavy Cream
- 4) Add Puree
- 5) Add Salt and Pepper to taste
- 6) Cook Pasta (Penne suggested)
- 7) Add Paste to the Sauce and toss over fire
- 8) Sprinkle in Parmesan Cheese generously
- 9) Dish out and toss Crumbled Pistachios on top

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La Campagnola's chef Michelino Vastola is a bit modest so it took some coaxing from the owner Angelo Gencareli for him to share details of his background with lunch guests from the local Chamber of Commerce. His impressive career included cooking for Pope John Paul II and President Clinton. Two items that would top any resume but was offered casually by Michelino.

Michelino was born in Salerno Italy and grew up in Rome. He attended middle school on the Vatican property and went to culinary school after graduation. When he returned on a visit to his old school the timing was such that Michelino was available when plans were being made for a dinner for the Pope. Michelino rose to the occasion.

His culinary school was located in Monte Cassino. The timing was right again for Michelino to get a call to cook for the G8 Summit which was being held in town. He got to cook for the President of the United States and other world leaders.

In 2000 Michelino immigrated to the United States, at first living in New York City for five years before

moving to the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, NJ, an enclave of Italian Americans.


Michelino stepped in as head chef of La Campagnola in November 2011. The restaurant, located at 520 South 31st Street in Kenilworth, NJ, was opened just seven months ago. The addition of Michelino will assist Angelo in offering a unique fine dining experience.

The menu is a superb mix of specialties from Michelino's experiences in Italy and America. For instance, he has introduced pasta with pistachios to the menu. He learned to cook pistachio dishes from associates who attended a culinary school located in Nelson's Castle in Sicily, a region flush with pistachio farms. The school developed a portfolio of recipes using the local product. Michelino imports the pistachios he uses from that region.

La Campagnola is highly recommended by their cliental. Its ever changing special menu is a draw in itself. The restaurant has a full bar and will have live entertainment on Thursday evenings starting in January 2012. 🍷



(above, l-r) Staff of la Campagnola Restuarant, Head Chef Mechelino Vastola, Sous Chef Dario Cifuentes, Server Captain Angelo Ianeoli, Hostess Jessica Gencareli, Server German Torres, owner Angelo Gencareli.



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NEWEST CHAMBER MEMBER

Owner of La Campagnola, Angelo Gencareli, recently showcased his new menu including the chef's special Pasta with pistachios for Kenilworth Chamber Chairperson Isabel Coronel of Access Self Storage, La Campagnola is the Chamber's newest member. The Chamber is an affiliate of the Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce, the largest business association in the New York Metropolitan Area with about 1,500 members. For additional event information call the Chamber at 908-352-0900 or visit their website at [www.gatewaychamber.com](http://www.gatewaychamber.com) (right, l-r) Owner of La Campagnola Angelo Gencareli, Gateway Chamber Vice President Kate Conroy, Pam Baur and Isabel Coronel of Access Self Storage, and Kenilworth Library Director Dale Spindel.



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(above) Carmela and Charles Tavormina on thier wedding day, November 26, 1961. and (right) Celebrating their 50th anniversary.



## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF MARRIAGE TO THE GIRL NEXT DOOR

Charles and Carmela Tavormina celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary renewing the vows they took on November 26, 1961. Looking back over her life Carmela Davenia wonders how much divine intervention played a roll in her finding her life-long partner. She was Charlie's next door neighbor but there were a lot of things that happened resulting in her meeting Charlie.

In times of turmoil people must react to extreme circumstances and that was the case for Carmela growing up in Sicily during World War II. Carmela's family were living in the town of Ribera which was heavily bombed during the war. The area was devastated and food and water were hard to come by. America offered an opportunity for a better life but the process to immigrate was challenging.

The United States had a program that relocated orphaned children, of which there were many, to America. The other immigrants had to wait for approval before they could make the move. The system for doing so was taking years to establish, both governments not coming to terms.

Carmela's Grandmother's brother, Joe Davenia, and his wife Anna were already in America, having moved from Ribera to 33 Spencer Street in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, NJ. Peterstown was a haven for Italian immigrants since the turn of the century including many Rivilisi. In 1946 Joe and Anna received a photo from his sister of the family and they were inexplicably drawn to the image of 4 year old Carmela.

Joe and Anna offered to adopt Carmela and once established in the States she would be able send for the rest of the family. Policies in place at the time would not allow for the adoption but it didn't stop Joe and Anna from trying. It took seven years before any headway was made. It wasn't through divine intervention, but through political connections. Joe and Anna's neighbor was Carmine Bellino who was a Washington insider, an FBI investigator who became a close advisor to John and Robert Kennedy. Bellino looked into the case and even traveled to Ribera to see what glitches had to be worked out to expedite the adoption. He was successful and in 1953 Carmela came to live with her new adoptive parents. Her family though could not make the trip.

Carmela attended Battin High School, an all girls public school and when it time for her to ask a date to the class of 1960 senior prom she asked her neighbor Charlie Tavormina who lived at 37 Spencer Street. His family was also from Ribera. Charlie was two years older than Carmela and graduated Thomas Jefferson High School the all boys public school.

There was a romance blooming between the two, Charlie was the person who taught Carmela how to drive. They dated which meant going out once a week on Saturday night and being home by a curfew. A big

treat was to be allowed to go to Stewarts on Elmora Avenue during the week and have a California Burger and Root beer.

Charlie joined the Army reserve following his graduation and served at Fort Dix, New Jersey. All was going along smoothly and Charlie proposed to Carmela but not officially. It wouldn't be official until Charlie's father flew from Ribera to ask the blessing of Carmela's father. Plans were finalized for their November wedding.

In June of 1961 the Cold War with the U.S.S.R heightened with the Berlin Crisis. There was a good chance that Charlie would be called to active duty and sent to Germany. The assignment would probably last into the following year. This meant he would miss his wedding. The couple was frantic and growing more anxious as the date approached.


Since Carmela first met Carmine Bellino in Ribera she became his protégé. She reached out to him once more and described her dilemma. She thought for sure he could help her. It was October 1 and Charlie had to report to Fort Dix full time waiting for his deployment orders, orders that would never come. The crisis culminated in November resulting in East Germany erecting the Berlin Wall. Charles was still in full time service but was able to get a nine day leave for his wedding and honeymoon.

Carmela and Charlie got married in St. Anthony's Church and had their reception at Twin City located on the Bayway Circle in Elizabeth. Charlie finished his commitment in the service in August of the following year and took over the family business, County Plumbing and Heating Company. Carmela also worked in the business. They had three children Phil, Jennie and Joseph. Phil and his wife Denise took over the business after Carmela and Charlie retired in 1996.

Phil and Denise have two children Charles, and Gianna. Jennie and her husband, Edzio Tamburello, have three children, Julia, Liborio and Charlie Boy.

Carmela's biological parents never made the move to America. Over time Ribera recovered from the damage the war caused and they stayed put. Her father died young but Carmela was able to visit her mother, sister, three brothers and her nieces and nephews six times through the years. Her mom passed away in 1975.

Over two hundred people celebrated the couple's 50th anniversary at the Venetian Catering Hall in Garfield, NJ. Fr. Tom Provenzano, Pastor, and Deacon Joe Caporaso of St. Anthony's Church presided over the renewal of vows ceremony.

Through all the strife Carmela always counted her blessings. She and Charlie had a beautiful life together. She said the help that allowed them to be together was nothing short of miraculous. They could not control the world events but they did have faith to pull through, be it in Carmine Bellino or an even higher power.. 



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(above, left) Bride and groom with Carmela's parents Joe and Anna Davenia.  
 (above, right) With Charlie's parents Phil and Jennie Tavormina



(above) Battin High School 1960 prom photo of Charlie Tavormina and Carmela Davenia



(above, l-r) Carmela and Charles Tavormina wedding party on the steps of St. Anthony's Church. Donna Bellino, Claudette Martinelli, Ninfa Orlando, Nancy Orlando, Connie Tavormina, Carmela and Charles, Joe Barraco, Mike Caporaso, Tom Buckley, Joe Ferrara and Louie Formato. Ring bearer is Joey Palminteri.



(above) Carmela and Charlie's grandchildren, (standing, l-r) Charlie Boy, Liborio and Charles. (seated, l-r) Gianna and Julia.

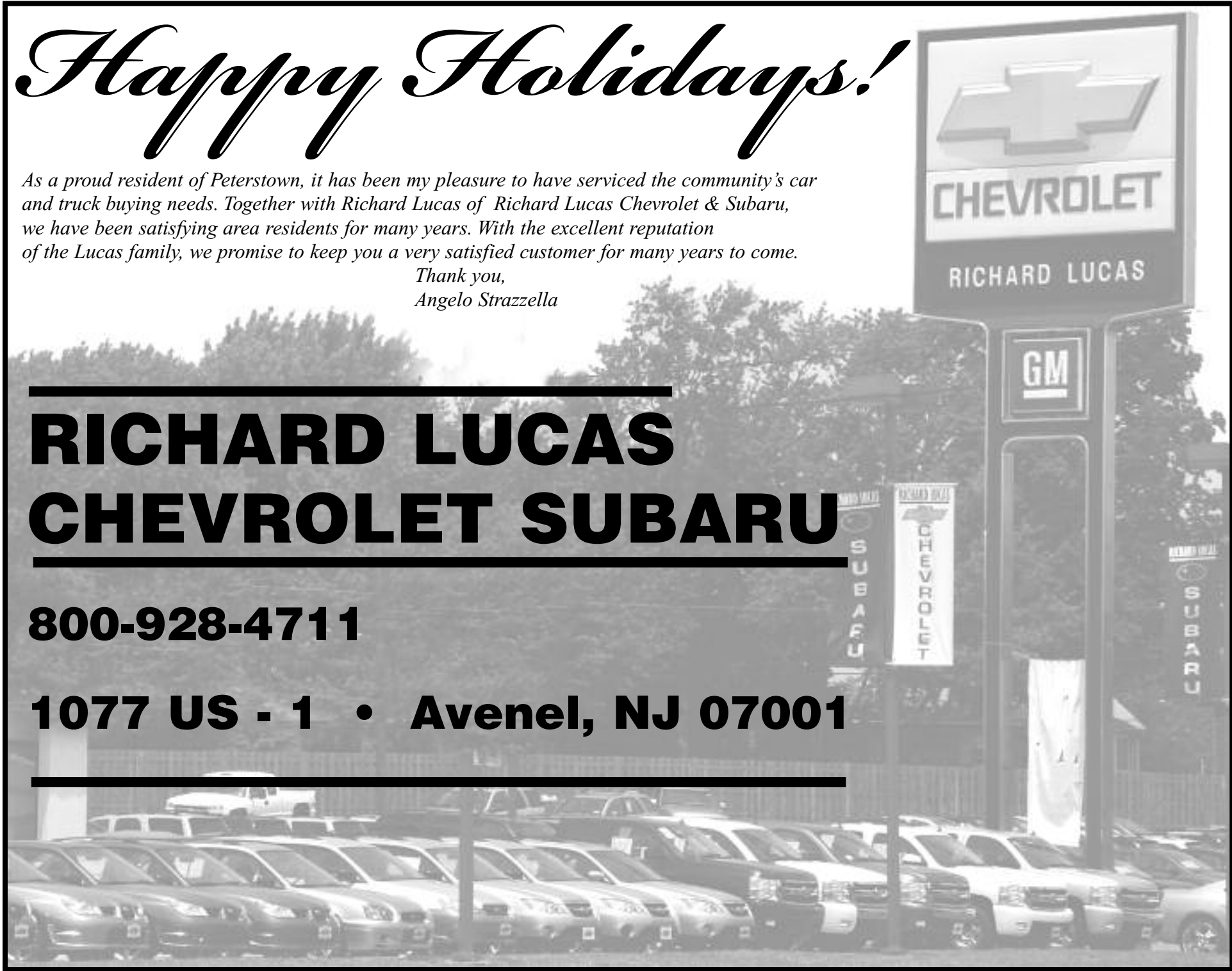
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(above) Antoinette “Dolly” Araneo Chichele.



(left, l-r) Araneo sisters Angie , Dolly, Mary and Ann in Communion Dress.

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# A BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE TO OUR MOM “DOLLY” CHICHELE

*Submitted by Pat Mirabella, Diane Petrozziello & Jim Chichele*

Antoinette “Dolly” Araneo Chichele was born on October 5, 1925. She was raised in the North End section of Elizabeth, NJ and celebrated her 86th birthday at the Clark Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, in Clark, NJ, where she has been residing since December 2009. Her children Patricia, Diane and Jimmy want to share insight into her life and what makes her so special.

Dolly was part of the Araneo clan that expanded in many directions. Her dad was one of four brothers who migrated from Pescopagano, Italy to Augusta Street in Elizabeth. Her dad Peter Araneo and mom Frances (nee Demarco) owned Araneo’s Tavern (now Terminal One) and the Sunoco Gas Station. The businesses were located on the corner of Augusta and Spring Streets (now part of routes 1 & 9). The family lived on August Street until Frances passed away in 1972. Peter had passed ten years earlier in 1962.

Peter and Frances raised five children, Mary, Angelia, Antoinette “Dolly”, John and the youngest Ann. John was in the military during World War II and so when his dad needed help with his gas station he had to turn to one of his daughters for help. Dolly who was still in high school was recruited to help in the family business. She was very resentful and embarrassed at the time, she was very young and it was an easy target for ridicule at school. Dolly persevered though and did what she had to in order to help her family. This strength in character is what her children admire in her the most. Dolly’s choice to do the right thing was tough on many levels. The personal challenge was compounded by the physical one.

Female gas attendants were unheard of at the time. She probably was among the first ladies to ever pump gas in the Garden State.

Dolly may have been resentful at the time, but she mastered the skills needed to maintain the cars. She could check oil, tire pressure, car batteries, and other fluids. It was a skill she taught her three children. No daughter of her’s was going to be stranded because of a flat tire. Her husband Rocco “Chick” Chichele took over the business after her dad. He passed from a massive heart attack on August 13, 1981 at 56 years old. It was tragic time for her, a widow at 55. Her siblings John, Mary Nahaczewski, and Angelia Bobertz have also passed away.

Going forward she dedicated herself to her children, grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. She showed how tough she is by battling physical challenges and recuperating in fine form. At 80 years of age she suffered a stroke which affected her speech. Then at 84 she had a heart attack, had stents inserted in addition to vascular surgery, surviving both surgeries spiritedly.


Three months later she fell and broke her hip. The normal survival rate at 84 was not good but Dolly rehabilitated and is doing wonderfully.

Her children give much credit for her quality of life to the care that she is receiving from her doctors and staff at the Clark Nursing Facility and more so to the love that surrounds her from her family.

All were on hand including her sister Ann Todd to celebrate her 86th birthday. 🎂



(above, l-r) Antoinette “Dolly” Chichele is seated in front of her family at the August 20, 2010 wedding of her granddaughter, Frank Mirabella, Jr. and girlfriend Lisa Villaggio, Lisa Mirabella, Diane’s fiance Fred Winter, Pat Mirabella, Diane Petrozziello, Diane’s daughter Christina and Chris Bitette, Jim Chichele, Frank Mirabella, Sr. and Carolann Petrozziello.


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## ANTOINETTE DICOSMO

Antoinette DiCosmo (nee Cardone) was born in Elizabeth, N.J., and lived there before moving to Clark 32 years ago. She passed away on Saturday, December 10, 2011 at the age of 86 surrounded by her family.

Antoinette was a member of the Ladies Vallatese Club of Peterstown and the Cameo Social Club. She was the matriarch of the family business, DiCosmo Italian Deli originally in Elizabeth before moving to Linden and then to its present location on Raritan Road in Clark.

She enjoyed cooking and socializing with her customers. Prior to helping the family business, she was employed as an assembler at Singer Manufacturing of Elizabeth.

Her husband Michael DiCosmo Sr., had previously passed. She was a devoted mother to Garry of Scotch Plains, N.J., Anthony and his wife, Linda, of Clark, and the late Michael A. DiCosmo Jr. She was the cherished grandmother of Garry, Erica, Rocco, Marissa, Nikki Anne and Michael A. III. She was predeceased by her brothers, Pasquale and Frank Cardone, and her sister, Lucy Angelone. Mrs. DiCosmo is survived by her sisters-in-law, Rose Cardone, Phyllis Loblance and Claire DiCosmo, and many nieces and nephews. 🕊️



(above) Antoinette DiCosmo and her sons Gary, Anthony and Michael.

## MICHAEL F. NIGRO SR. PASSES AT 88

15  
*Peterstown*  
Elizabeth, NJ  
Dec 11

Michael F. Nigro Sr. of Cranford, N.J., formerly of Edison, N.J., and Elizabeth, N.J., passed away on Monday, November 21, 2011 at the age of 88.

Mike lived in Edison from 1965 to 2004, before moving to Cranford. He was employed by the Middlesex County College as a career placement specialist for 15 years, retiring in 2005. Previously, he was the owner of the General Welding Supply Co. in Edison, and before that he worked in the sales and marketing department of the Airco Welding Products Co. in Murray Hill, N.J.

Michael was an Army veteran of World War II from 1943 to 1946, and served in Panama as a welder. He was an over 50-year member of the Westfield YMCA, where he was an avid handball player. Michael was a former lector and Eucharistic minister at St. Helena's Church in Edison, and a member of the Vallatese Society in Elizabeth, and the United Way, and Local 486, Elizabeth.

Michael was predeceased by his wife Margaret "Midge" (Pfund) Nigro who he was lovingly devoted to. He was the loving father of Irene Mitta and her husband, Morad, Michael F. Jr. and his wife, Lisa, Joseph

and his wife, Pamela, and Mary Abitante and her husband, Peter; dearest brother of Joseph Nigro, Nancy Gersick, and the late Mary DeLorenzo and Millie Renna, and dearest grandfather of Soraya, Matthew, David, Ryan, Megan, Michael, Brian, Daniel, Maggie, Sydney, and Jack. 🕊️



(above) Mike Nigro and his siblings, Millie Renna, Mary Delorenzo, Nancy Gersick and Joe.

## MARIA COLLETTI (NEE MIRABILE), 79

Maria Colletti (nee Mirabile), 79, of Elizabeth, N.J., passed away on Monday, December 12, 2011. She was born in Ribera, Italy, and came to the United States in 1961 settling in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, NJ.

She was a homemaker who loved cooking for and spending time with her family. She treasured her grandchildren just as much as they treasured her. A devoted and loving wife, mother, grandmother and sister, she is survived by her husband, Gaetano Colletti;

sons, Antonino "Chris" and his wife, Gisela Colletti, and Michael Colletti; daughter-in-law, Linda Colletti; her grandchildren, Justin and his wife, Cristina Colletti, Michael Colletti and Michael Colletti Jr.; a sister, Francesca D'Anna, and brothers, Calogero and his wife, Louisa Mirabile, and Salvatore and his wife, Enza Mirabile. Maria was predeceased by her son, Giuseppe Colletti; her sister, Paola D'Anna, and brother, Guiseppe Mirabile. 🕊️



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