



## BEST COUNTY IN BEST STATE FOR HS SPORTS

When PA announcer Nick Renna signs off after a game, he thanks the fans of the “best county, in the best state for high school sports.” The statement has a flavor of hometown boasting but a strong argument can be made that it is true.

This past basketball season is a perfect example of what Nick is talking about. When USA Today listed its top 10 high school basketball teams in the country three were from New Jersey, St. Patrick's of Elizabeth (#2), St. Benedict's from Newark (#5) and St. Anthony's of Jersey City (#7). St. Anthony's (28-1) and St. Benedict's (24-1) only losses came from St. Pat's (30-2). St. Pat's suffered one of their losses in the finals of the Union County Championship to county rival Linden, knocking St. Pat's. from the list's #1 berth. What is equally amazing is that these perennial national contenders are located within a few miles of each other, fodder for North vs. South Jersey fanfare.

Claiming to be the best is a part of sports. Parents, fans and classmates show their support for their schools, their towns and for the athletes. It is a wonderful thing to see, they support them equally whether they win or lose. In perspective, sports are a healthy diversion from the serious part of life. For some of the more talented athletes, sports is the serious part of life. There is no problem with that as long as it's kept in perspective. For a students destined to turn professional, the playing field is their classroom.

There is really no national championship tournament for high school sports so national rankings are based on opinion. There are relatively few occasions for national powerhouses to go head to head. So there may be several areas of the country that claim to be the best and they can all be right when it comes to certain sports, but when looking at an overview of all sports Nick may be right about New Jersey. Being the most densely populated state in the nation may explain the reason for so much talent in such a small area.

The beauty of our teams is that the students tend to be home grown. Though non-public schools attract students regionally, public school students must live in the district in which they attend school. With 611 school districts the talent is more dissipated than other states making the national ranking even more impressive.

The number of New Jersey state titles, in all sports, that teams have brought back to Union County in the past few years has been impressive. A comparison to the twenty other counties would show if there is any validity to Nick's claim.

One undisputed national champion from Union County was not part of any school team. Al Camicia lived on Centre Street in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth and would train on his own then take a train to wherever a track meet was being held. Al was competing against world-class runners, men who trained full time and had the best equipment and coaching from their clubs and Universities. Al had little time or money to dedicate to the sport. He worked full time as an Ironworker for Interstate Ironworks in Hillside, NJ. He would ask local businesses to sponsor him. Companies like Burry Biscuits in Elizabeth would buy him his train ticket, for example. Then off Al would go and usually come back with a trophy.

In 1941, Camicia, whose friends called him Speedy, traveled to Cincinnati, Ohio for the U.S.A. National A.A.U. Championships. The field was stacked with the elite runners of the day including John Woodruff, Gold medal winner in the 1936 Olympics and part of the world record holding relay team. Woodruff held A.A.U. titles for three consecutive years. Camicia was anxious to race him. One editorial cartoon hinted that Woodruff was ducking Camicia. Without any entourage or fancy uniform, Al quietly went out and won the one-mile race, beating Woodruff by a stride after, what a newspaper account describes as, being “boxed in.” Camicia also set a new record for the mile in that race, 4 minutes and 13 seconds.

Al took his trophy back to Peterstown and rested up for work. Carlton's Pharmacy displayed the trophy in their store. Camicia took things in stride after that. He got married that year and joined the Merchant Marines when World War II started, and stayed in the service for eight years. Camicia was very modest. His children's friends in the neighborhood never knew why he was called Speedy.

(left) Illustrations by artist Ray Manskey of Peterstown's Al Camicia commemorating his winning the U.S.A National A.A.U. One-Mile Championship in 1941 in which he set the new record of 4 minutes and 13 seconds.



(above) Roselle Catholic alumni, Joey Evans ('06), John Lyp ('00), Rich Biddulph ('77) and Nick Renna ('76), share duties of PA announcer at The Lion's Den. Nick Renna “the voice of New Jersey high school sports”, has been announcing high school and college sporting events for 10 years.

# Around About Peterstown

ELIZABETH NJ

April 07

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## President's Message



Last year the club made a modest investment in resurrecting a Columbus Day celebration. Its been many years since Columbus Day had gotten its proper recognition. The Peterstown community has always held the day in high regard. Years ago an annual parade snaked through the streets of Elizabeth. The Sons of Peterstown Club believes it is time to bring back that excitement. At risk is a new generation losing touch of an important part of American history.

Last year's dinner was successful in reaching out to other organizations in Union County that have the same desire to celebrate the holiday. Most clubs are too small to host a big event on their own, so we hope to bring them together.

The response last year was positive and we are starting to reach out to other clubs now. Interested clubs should contact Joe Renna at 908-447-1295 or myself at 908-355-5469.

Thank you and God bless.

John Sacco, President

## PRESS RELEASES

Press Releases that benefit the community of Peterstown are offered free of charge. Every effort will be made to accommodate appropriate articles when time and space allows. Send any info in early.

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## Letters to the Editor



Hi Joe,

I Just wanted to tell you how nice it was to see the article in your paper about the old time boxers and my dad, Lenny LaBrutto. My daughter found your web site (joerenna.com) by chance when she Googled her grandfather's name.

Thank you,  
Lisa (LaBrutto) Reilly  
Beachwood, NJ

Dear Mr. Renna,

I wish to thank you for the wonderful paper, *Around About Peterstown*, Elizabeth, NJ. My cousin, Catherine Lamendola, gave me a gift subscription and I cannot thank her enough.

I was born in our apartment on Third Avenue near John Street. I was given the name Gioacchino. My full name is Giovacchino Charles Coniglio, but mostly everyone knows me as Jake, or Jack. My maternal grandfather Carmelo Firetto and grandmother Caterina Priolo Firetto owned and operated the bakery on John Street that was in back of the big saloon on the corner (N.E.) of Third Avenue and John Street. After World War I we moved to 20 Christine Street in 1919 and we stayed there. My maternal grandparents, my parents, and my Uncle Frank Firetto, all died there.

While growing up, I attended Public School #3 on the corner of 2nd Avenue and South Seventh Street across from the playground. I played with a good softball team, with "Puggy" Carus (Caruso) and Pete DeFranco, but not with the "Disgusted Millionaires".

After graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School in June 1934, I went to the University of Iowa, and earned a degree in Cultural Sociology until the beginning of World War II. I enlisted in the Army and was sent to Yale University for one year of special training before going to the South Pacific. After discharge at the Army at the end of the war, I entered graduate school at the University of Denver, received a Masters Degree in Social Work in June, 1952, and went to work as a Licensed Specialist Social Worker at a psychiatric hospital.

I met my wife, Faith, when we were both graduate students at the University of Denver. We were married September 1, 1951 at St. James Episcopal Church in Wichita. We have two daughters: Gina, who resides in Connecticut and works in New York City as Director of Information on Architecture and Content Strategy with Oglivie & Mather Advertising; and Giuli, who received her Masters Degree in English from North Texas State and is married to a Professor of English and Director of the English Department at Northwest Missouri State and they have a son, Nino, age two years.

Well, I am happy to receive the newspaper you publish and may you continue to do so with great success.

Sincerely,  
Jake Coniglio  
Wichita, KS

(right) Faith, Jake  
with their  
grandson, Nino.  
They celebrated  
their 55th wedding  
anniversary and  
Jake's 90th  
birthday in  
September 2006.



Dear Mr. Renna,

My sons gave me a surprise birthday party on "The River Lady" in Toms River for my 65th birthday. Forty-three close relatives and friends attended.

I lived in Peterstown on 222 Amity Street with my parents Frank and Jennie Nocera and my brother Nat (Red), who died several years ago, my sister Nettie and my brother Pat. I attended school #15, Cleveland and Battin. I graduated in 1959 and I worked in the Main Library on Broad Street and then the National State Bank. I attended St. Anthony's Church and was active in the CYO. I was married there in 1960. We lived on First Avenue and then moved to Linden. In 1970 we moved to Forked River and in 2000 I moved to Toms River. We had 4 sons: John, Jim Pat & Greg and I now have 5 grandchildren. I went to college and became an registered nurse. I worked in a rehab hospital in Toms River for 20 years. I retired in December 2006 but still work 2 days a week.

I have very fond memories of Peterstown when life was so simple I remember going to my grandparent's house on Christine Street every day (Carmella & Pasquale Catalano).

My grandmother always had something cooking. The house smelled great and oh how she fed us! We watched fireworks on their porch. I remember bike riding all over Elizabeth.

I would love to hear from people who remember me. Please feel free to publish my phone number. I look forward to every issue of the Peterstown Paper.

Thank you.  
Carmella (Necera) Saxton  
32 Caldwell Drive  
Toms River, NJ 08757  
732-349-0580



(left, r-l) Carmella  
(Nocera) Saxton  
and her Godmother  
Kay Cusamano.



(above, l-r) Carmella's  
brother Pat  
and his wife Kim.



(above, l-r)  
Carmella's best  
friends, Joan and  
Bruce Copio.



(above, l-r) Carmella  
and her sister Nettie.



Cast rehearsing Dalton Jones (Jesus) Veronica Verdier, Christina Abitanto, Roxanne Tourkaw, Guillermo Padron, and Mike Faccione. Not pictured: Malyssa Searcy, Alyssa Louis, Maria Gryzbowski. Director: Gill Grant, Executive Producer: Fr. Greg Fisher.

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

High school sports have turned into serious business and they should be. Top athletes are learning the nuances of the business in high school, preparing for what they can expect in college and the pros.

In many ways, high school sports are a microcosm of the real world and young athletes learn real life lessons. Competition tests every emotion. In the end the players learn how to deal with success and loss, with adversity and fortune. Another lesson that they can learn is how to plan for retirement working in a field of their dreams. 🏀🏈🏊🏆



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## AL CAMICIA DIES AT 89

... Camicia held the record for running the mile in 1941 in a time of 4 minutes and 13 seconds.. 🏃🏻‍♀️



(right, l-r) Stella and Al Camicia celebrated 65 years of marriage

Grace was predeceased by her husband of 70 years, George Occhipinti and is survived by her daughter, Adeline Crincoli and her husband, Michael; a son, Vincent and his wife, Frances Occhipinti; five grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. 🌻🌻

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ADVERTISER	PAGE
Alliance Plumbing & Heating .....	16
American Plumbing .....	16
Amici's Restaurant.....	13
Antone's Restaurant and Bar.....	13
Bar Nine.....	15
Bella Gina's Italian Deli & Restaurant .....	15
Best Dental Group.....	6
Blue Streak Auto Sales.....	8
Burgdorff Realty .....	18
Cafe Z Restaurante .....	15
Campus Inn Sports Bar & Grill .....	15
Candelino Kitchens.....	16
Cervantes of Spain Restaurant.....	13
Chevey's Tex Mex.....	11
City Tavern Restaurant.....	13
Cleveland Auto & Tire .....	8
Colton's Pharmacy.....	8
Corsentino Home for Funerals.....	3
Custom Hair Design .....	7
David Fabbo Construction .....	20
DiBella Financial Group.....	18
DiCosmo's Italian Deli & Catering (Clark) .....	15
DiCosmo's Italian Ices .....	10
Dimensions A Total Salon .....	7
Dr. Nicholas Cicchetti, D.M.D. ....	6
Dr. Jorge Matos, Orthodontics .....	6
Dr. James J. Mauti, M.D. & Sports Medicine Physician. 7	
Dr. Nicholas Palmieri, Chiropractic Sports Medicine... 7	
Dr. Frank Paternostro, D.M.D. ....	6
Dr. Joseph M. Schulman, Family Practice .....	7
Doris B. Bence Realty .....	18
Dovetails Antiques and Auctioneers .....	17
Drew Memorial Company .....	3
East Coast Computer Care .....	4
Echoqua Italian Bistro .....	13
Elizabeth Auto Wrecking & Auto Glass .....	8
Elizabeth Yellow Cab .....	10
ERA Village Green Realtors.....	18
ERA Village Green Realtors.....	18
Exit Realty Lucky.....	18
Exit Realty First Choice Realty .....	18
Front Street Smokehouse and Saloon.....	12
Gilligan's Roofing .....	16
Gourmet Deli .....	15
Gran Centurions.....	14
Guilded Lillie Antiques and Auctioneers .....	17
Jacobson's Distribution Co. ....	17
Jersey Window Factory .....	16
Joanne's Luncheonette .....	10
Larry's Generator .....	8
Law Offices of Antony Carvello, Esq., CPA.....	17
Leonard Funeral Home.....	3
M & M Construction .....	16
Magic Fountain.....	10
Mario's Trattoria.....	13
Michelino's Midtown Station Cafe .....	10
Michelino's Pizzeria.....	12
Millennium Home Mortgage.....	18
Miracle Plaza Car Wash & Laundry/Dry Cleaning .....	9
NJ P.C. Pros. Professional Consultants .....	8
O'Donnell Insurance Agency .....	17
Pavel Construction .....	16
Pete's Limosine Service .....	4
Petrucelli Funeral Home.....	3
Pinho's Bakery.....	10
Prudential New Jersey Properties .....	18
RE/MAX Prestige.....	19
RE/MAX Properties Unlimited .....	18
Rocco Auto Service.....	8
Roofing Outlet.....	16
Sacco's Meat Market.....	12
Santillo's Brick Oven Pizza .....	12
Short Cuts.....	7
Spirito's Restaurant.....	12
Tapas of Spain .....	15
Tequila's Grill.....	13
Third Generation Mortgages.....	18
Thunder Auto Body Repair.....	8
Tomasso Brothers.....	7
Tommy's Pizza .....	12
Trinitas Cancer Center.....	4
Trinitas Hospital Sleep Disorders Center.....	5
Video Data Services.....	6
Villani Bus Company.....	10
You & I for Men .....	7

# THE PETERSTOWN CHAPTER OF TAYLOR'S TALE

Taylor's tale is not a pleasant one. There are a few chapters, though, that illustrate the goodness in the world and that the virtues of faith, hope and love can overcome heartache. Taylor King is an eight-year-old girl with a rare neurodegenerative disorder called Batten Disease. Her family is committed to save Taylor and other children like her.

Batten Disease is inherited and primarily strikes infants, toddlers and school children. Presently there is no treatment and it is always fatal. Only about three in every 100,000 are affected. Taylor has Infantile NCL, which strikes the earliest and progresses the most quickly. It is caused by the lack of an enzyme responsible for removing waste deposits from the body's tissues. Average age of onset is between six months and two years, and average life expectancy is between five and ten years. Classic symptoms include seizures, blindness and rapid mental and physical decline. It is the rarest form of Batten Disease, and the children affected by it are in a true race against time.

Batten Disease is devastating, and its diagnosis leaves little room for hope. However, Taylor is very special in that she has some enzyme production, while most children with Infantile NCL have none. This unique factor explains Taylor's late age of onset and the fact

that aside from her visual impairment, she is, in many ways, still a very normal little girl.

The mission of Taylor's family is to save Taylor and other children like her by raising awareness of Batten Disease and raising funds to find a cure. Taylorstale.com is a website that is the heart of the King's family efforts. It contains a timeline of Taylor's life filled with photos and stories. The site also chronicles the events and developments in their battle against Batten Disease. The site, designed by Taylor's sister Laura, includes a link to information about research development.

The beauty in this story is the strength and happiness that Taylor expresses. It is apparent through the website that the love shared between her and her family is pure. At the very least Taylor's tale should be an inspiration to everyone who must overcome a challenge. Each day in Taylor's life is so precious that the family lives it to its fullest. Not in self-gratification but by helping others.

Taylor lists a few of her dreams on her website. She wants to get a 100 on her spelling test every week. She wants to build a sand castle at the beach this summer. She wants to be a Tar Heel like her Sissy. She wants to marry her handsome prince, just like Sleeping Beauty. 📞

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# A FORTUITOUS RIDE

Every three months, Sharon King travels with her daughter, Taylor, from Charlotte, NC to the Jervis Clinic in Staten Island, NY to treat her Batten Disease. It is the closest clinic to Charlotte she could find. Though there are some federal funds dedicated to research of the rare disease it can only be spread so thin.

When Sharon flew into Newark Airport for the first time she needed to find transportation from the airport to the clinic. She had not arranged for car service and was not familiar with the area at all. A concierge she approached directed her to Pete Canu who owns a car service and happened to be available at the time.

Pete sensed that the ride to the clinic was for the young girl. Taylor's eyesight had been deteriorating and her mom was assisting her. Sharon was appreciative of the patience and service that Pete was giving them. He was touched by how Sharon took care of Taylor and how Taylor took things in stride. He thought of the great lengths that they were going through to meet a doctor.

As a chauffeur, Pete was being extra accommodating; he wanted to do everything he could for this little girl he had been watching the past few hours. As they headed back to the airport, he asked if there was anything else that he could do. At that Sharon shared Taylor's tale. It was an opportunity Sharon never passes up; raising awareness was one of her goals in the mission to help children inflicted with Batten Disease like her daughter.

Pete gave Sharon his business card so she can arrange for his service when she plans her next trip. Sharon gave Pete the website address, Taylorstale.com, that was set up to help in the battle against Batten Disease.

That evening Pete visited Taylor's site and did more research about the disease. He found information about the Batten Disease Support and Research Association and information on how people can help, including making financial donations.

A few days later was Superbowl Sunday and the Sons of Peterstown hosted one of the biggest parties of the year. The party was in the cafeteria of St. Anthony's School and as guests rolled in they were greeted by Pete at the front table armed with printouts from Taylor's website including photos and details of her story. Pete personally spoke to everyone walking in, raising awareness and collecting money that was donated to the association.

Sometimes situations seem overwhelming and there's not a whole lot that anyone can do. But in the face of what Taylor's going through, a small gesture can really expand. From the King family to Pete Canu to the Peterstown community, there is no saying where this story will lead. Hopefully it will be to finding a cure. 🐾

To make a donation in support of Batten Disease research, please make your check payable to BDSRA (Batten Disease Research and Support Association) and send it to :

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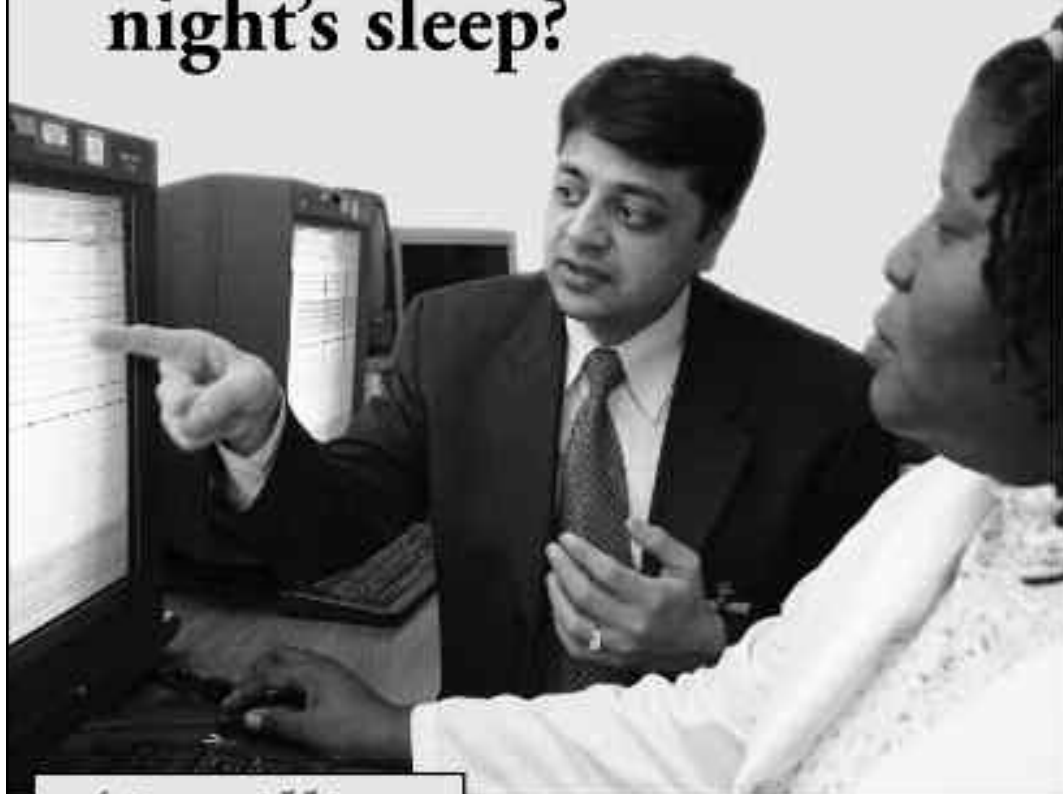
(far right)  
Pete Canue

(right, l-r) The King family: Taylor's sister Laura, brother Stephen, mom, Taylor and dad.

Taylor King



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(right) Marisa Petraro is the keeper of Case #18 on the popular game show "Deal or No Deal"



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an overnight success.

.....

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# STAR IS RISING FOR ELIZABETH'S MARISA PETRORO

Hard work and perseverance are paying off for Marisa Petraro. In the past year, her career as an actress has soared to new heights. The road to an acting career is notoriously tough. Marisa not only had the fortitude to pursue her dream but she did it overcoming an early bout with cancer.

Marisa's modest upbringing in Elizabeth, NJ was far different than her lifestyle in tinsel town. She embraces the fond memories of her childhood and it keeps her grounded. She grew up at 41 Jefferson Avenue in Elizabeth, NJ, in the shadow of City Hall. Her parents were born in Italy, in the province of Abruzzi, and met in Argentina. She spoke Italian in her home, but she also speaks Spanish.

Marisa's father, Angelo, retired from General Motors after 25 years. He owned a rental property on Second Avenue in the Peterstown Section of Elizabeth. Both he and his wife, Lina believed Marissa and her older brother Robert would have the best opportunity for success and happiness through education. Marisa went to Bender Memorial Academy in Elizabeth and was part of the 1989 graduating class at Roselle Catholic High School. Robert also went to RC, graduating in 1980.

It has been 18 years since she graduated and still reminisces about being back home, adding Spirito's, in Peterstown, was her favorite place to eat. Trips back to Jersey include visiting her mom in Westfield and her brother in Randolph.

As early as she could remember, Marisa had a fascination with being on stage. When she was five years old she got a taste of it by competing and winning in the Miss Pee Wee New Jersey pageant. With the support from her parents Marisa participated in countless pageants, such as Miss Junior New Jersey. Developing her poise, appearance and performance skills. In 1996 she won the Miss Italia USA title and was the top five finalists for Miss Italia Del Mundo (Miss World Italy).

The drama club at Roselle Catholic reinforced Marisa's desire to pursue acting, in her senior year she played in Arcinic and Old Lace. She also was a cheerleader and a member of the track team. All the while Marisa was taking trips to New York to study acting at the highly acclaimed HB Studio.

Marisa graduated from Kean University with a degree in marketing. She worked in advertising a while and did some modeling in New York, but her dream of being an actress was always lingering. She finally made up her

mind to do something about it.

With not much more than her Honda Civic and a strong desire, Marisa drove from Elizabeth to Hollywood, CA. She imposed a five year limit on her pursuit and promised not to get discouraged before then. At times it was very frustrating. Hopefuls go on countless auditions where the chances of being considered for a role are one in a thousand. Needless to say there is a lot of rejection.

There was a flicker of light at the end of the tunnel for Marisa in 1997. She was picked to be in a commercial directed by David Lynch and for the next nine years she has made appearances in a few dozen television series. Still there was no big project on the horizon. The pressure to quit was always growing.


In December 2005, Marisa got an unpredictable break. She was selected to be one of 26 models to assist on a game show called Deal or No Deal. The show, hosted by Howie Mandel, became a sensation. It put Marisa on the radar and she was being noticed. People Magazine included her as one of the "100 Most Beautiful People of 2006".

Marisa has now landed film roles with the prospects of doing more. She is currently in theaters in "Reno 911! Miami" and the soon to be released "Everybody Wants to Be Italian". Two more are in production.

The moral of the story is that success is a journey not a destination. Marisa has arrived to where she wants to be by doing what she loved. She could never have imagined that the road to her success would run through a game show but she created the opportunity by staying the course.



(above) Visit [marisapetraro.com](http://marisapetraro.com) to learn more about Marisa and her current projects. The site includes her resume and filmography, photo portfolios, a demo reel and other interesting links and news clippings.



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FINDING STRENGTH IN ADVERSITY

After graduating from Roselle Catholic High School, Marisa Petrero attended Rutgers University. It was a short lived experience for in her freshman year she was diagnosed with a rare childhood cancer called Rhabdomyosarcoma that affects the muscles. Needless to say it was devastating news. She left school to undergo chemotherapy and radiation treatment.

Her ordeal was painful and debilitating. She experienced hair loss and still wears the scar from where a tumor was removed from her arm. Through her treatment and recovery Marisa never gave up on her dreams and gained a richer appreciation for life. She enrolled in Kean University, which was close to home and built herself up physically and mentally.

Her cancer has been in remission since, but Marisa is still conscious of the effect it has on others. And so she dedicates her time to helping those afflicted.

Marisa volunteers her time helping individuals going through therapy, she calls friends and fans who have contacted her after finding out about her struggle with cancer through Deal or No Deal. Marisa also works at raising awareness of the cause, she is producing a documentary and motivated a contestant on Deal or No Deal to donate 10% of his winnings to the Tomorrow's Children Fund, the organization that has programs to help her cause.

Marisa is very appreciative of everyone that has helped her grow, over come and excel. Starting with her family and friends and continuing with her teachers in Roselle Catholic, professors at Rutgers and Kean, and her doctors.

Eventually, she will be thanking the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences when she wins her Oscar. 🎬



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(left) Marisa Petrero's high school year book photo from 1989 when high hair was all the rage.



(above) Marisa Petrero will be starring in the upcoming film "Everybody Wants to Be Italian"

(left) The Petrero family, Robert, Angelo, Marisa and Lina Marisa.

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# PETERSTOWN SCHOOL NO. 3 WILL NOW BEAR THE NAME OF NICHOLAS LaCORTE - FINALLY

### letters to the editor

#### They wasted our time

On Oct. 22, 1983, a letter was sent to the Elizabeth Board of Education to inform them that a committee had been organized in our American-Italian area regarding the new school on Second Avenue. We advised the board that the people of the area were dissatisfied with the name which the Board had decided on (Peterstown School 3), and we stated our preference for the name Nicholas S. LaCorte School 3.

At a committee meeting of the board of education held Feb. 2, the board reconsidered the naming of the new elementary school located on Second Avenue and reaffirmed its decision of Sept. 2.

### On naming a school

Angelo Nigro has put his finger on an issue in Elizabeth that affects and concerns all American-Italians and for that matter all of the people in the city.

Should public buildings be named for living prominent people or should they be named to memorialize people who have achieved fame or made a significant contribution to the community, it is an issue of the moment. I believe we should name buildings after the deceased regardless of the contribution of the living figure. With all due respect to Peter Gold, Sam Abell, Mayor Thomas G. Dunn, Mayor John T. Gregorio and former Gov. Brendan Byrne, let their names be cast in bronze where they have gone to the great beyond and not before.

I am railing along with having a school in a predominantly American-Italian community be named after an Italian. Naming a school after an Italian seems like such a waste, when we could use it to memorialize the late great World War II hero, Sgt. John Santillo. What is wrong with naming it after Dr. Corbo, Barnum or the late Elizabeth mayor Nicholas LaCorte. The community would definitely have input and I would like to thank those members of the Board of Education that sided with this view.

Mention was made of an elected board of education, which I highly recommend. It is about time that the people of Elizabeth had input into the people who sit on the board. The board runs the largest public business in the city of Elizabeth and certainly should be represented by the people who serve at the will of the people and must stand for election. I believe we should have one member for each ward and three elected at large for a maximum of three years. The men and women who serve and do a good job have nothing to fear from having to face the voters.

The first step in this process would be obtaining the necessary signatures to change from an appointed to an elected board of education. From here it goes to the ballot for the decision of the voters, who will have the final say.

Frank J. Candelino  
Elizabeth

The very next day I received a phone call from the secretary of the board informing me that the board voted to reconsider the naming of the new School 3. I was told there would be a private meeting of the board on Feb. 3 at which time they might vote on whether or not to rename the name Peterstown School 3. The secretary also indicated that I would be advised of the results. By Feb. 9, I had heard nothing so I called the secretary of the board to find out what had happened at the meeting. I was advised that there would be another private meeting on Feb. 10, just before the regular meeting. That night our committee went to the Mitchell Building and, when the regular meeting was scheduled to start, the secretary of the board came into the hallway and to our city.

In closing, I personally would like to say that this city needs a board of education elected by the people. This way they would have to be responsive to the needs of all the people, not only a certain few. If this cannot be done, then next year, which is the election year for mayor and three council-at-large members, we will have to vote in a different direction. This way new board members will be appointed. We surely have nothing to lose. From what I see and read, there are many others being hurt by this board of education, not only American-Italians. Together all of us can accomplish something at the election polls next year.

Let's hope and pray we do.

Angelo Nigro  
Chairman of Committee to Rename School 3

The Elizabeth Board of Education announced that it plans to recognize the accomplishments of former Elizabeth mayor, the Honorable Nicholas S. LaCorte by renaming Peterstown School No. 3. The school will now be designated as Nicholas S. LaCorte-Peterstown School No. 3. The public elementary school, located at 700 Second Avenue in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, was constructed in 1983 and houses nearly 700 students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

No one is happier to hear this news than Angelo Nigro who lives on Palmer Street. In 1983, when the school was rebuilt, Angelo was the chairman of the Committee to Rename School 3. The group petitioned then Mayor Dunn, city council and the board of education to have the school named in honor of someone who has had a significant relationship with the Peterstown Community. At that time the Board of Education was appointed by the Mayor, it is now elected.



(right) Nicholas LaCorte

(left) Letters from issues of *The Daily Journal* from 1983 from Frank Candelino and Angelo Nigro about naming the newly build School #3 in honor of Nicholas LaCorte.

To the frustration of the committee and the residents they represented the school went unnamed. The community would be reminded of the issue whenever another public building would be dedicated in someone's honor. It has been a long 24 years, but Angelo will see his wish for the school in the Italian-American neighborhood of Peterstown to be named after one of their own. It happens that one of the names presented by the committee for consideration in 1983 was Nicholas LaCorte.

Born in Elizabeth, NJ in 1912, the late Nicholas S. LaCorte was widely known as an impassioned and active member of the community, serving as mayor from 1952-1956. However, this was only one aspect of his busy life. LaCorte served as senior partner with the Elizabeth law firm LaCorte, LaCorte and Walters, Union County Freeholder, New Jersey State Senator, judge for the New Jersey State Court of Tax Appeals and member of the board of trustees for the Alexian Brothers Hospital in Elizabeth.

Through his dedication to community causes, he also served as a member of the Elizabeth Elks Lodge, advocate for the Dean Martin Gessner Knights of Columbus 3310, member of the Union County Cultural Society and even as a youth, served a co-chairman of the last co-ed class of the former Battin High School in Elizabeth. His son, Mr. James S. LaCorte currently serves as the Union County Surrogate.

A ceremony celebrating the renaming of Peterstown School No. 3 is currently in planning stages and will be announced pending the finalization of details. For more information, contact Donald Goncalves at (908) 436-5135.

## SCHOOL #12 THESPIANS TREATED TO NY SHOW

Back in June, the School #12 Theater Arts Institute performed Annie Jr. Many people from the school and the community donated time, materials and funding to make the show such a success. One of those people was Ray Vella, who back in June left School #12 singing the show tunes performed by the students.

In the spirit of the season, Mr. Vella and his Civic Association (RVCA) wanted to do something special for the children of Elmora School #12 who performed in the play, so his organization donated 55 Annie tickets and the bus to transport the students to a professional showing of Annie Jr. at Madison Square Garden. The children were thrilled to go to NYC during the holiday season and to see this awesome performance. They were mesmerized by the performers and the sets. As the children were waiting for the performance to begin they were given soft drinks and popcorn to enjoy - all thanks to the giving spirit of the RVCA.

It was a fun-filled experience that the children will never forget! A great time was had by one and all!



(above, l-r) Cast members of School #12's production of Annie, Brandon Custodio, Kim Miller, Oscar Mateo, Nicholas Cuesta, Sebastian Vega, Ray Vella, Stacy Feliciano, Briana Araujo, Bruna Bertozzi, Ammy Ortiz, Carolina DaCosta.

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(above) Coach Phil Colicchio gives his team a pep talk at half time..



(left) The proud papa with members of his booster club, Alyssa, Gia and Tommy.

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St. Pat's which, who was ranked #1 in the country by USA Today earlier in the season, ended the year with a 30-2 record. The Celtics also set a tournament record with 85 points. Villanova bound senior Cory Fisher accounted for 32 of those, another T of C record. Jeff Robinson, also a senior will be going to Memphis.

Boyle is in his 19th year coaching and celebrated his 400th win this past season. His teams have been ranked in the USA Today National Poll almost every year he coached.

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Photos by Laura Skrec

(above, l-r) Tom Lewis and Marge Egan

## 30 YEARS FOR EGAN AS TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR

Tom Lewis the Executive Director of Union County Interscholastic Athletic Conference, a post previously held by recently deceased Frank Cicarell, presented a plaque to Marge Egan prior to tip-off of the Union County Tournament girls basketball final between Westfield and Scotch Plains at Roselle Catholic High School on Feb. 23, 2007. Egan's efforts and contributions as director of the girls basketbal Union County Tournament for 30 years were recognized in a brief pre-game ceremony in The Lions' Den.

Egan, who coached basketball at Mother Seton and Brearley and served as athletic director at the Clark parochial school, presented both teams and all players with awards in a post-game ceremony following Scotch Plains' triumph.



(above) St. Patrick's basketball team won back-to-back New Jersey State Championships in 2006 and 2007.



(right) St. patrick's coach Kevin Boyle.

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# CRANFORD GIRLS WIN SCHOOL'S FIRST EVER UNION COUNTY JV BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP



(l-r) Coach Jackie Huber, Kelly Hardman, Angela Renna, Jamie Webb, Taylor D'Antico, Danielle Gross, Hannah McHugh, Lauren Grandall, Mary Kate Minitelli and Meghan Monahan.

The Cranford High School JV Girls basketball team won the 2007 Union County Championship beating Governor Livingston of Berkeley Heights, 57-35. The game was held Friday evening, February 23 at Roselle Catholic High School. This was the first time in the school's history that JV girls won the title. The team also posted a 21-2 record, which was also a school record. Under the guidance of second year coach, Jackie Huber, every one of the nine players contributed to the win with sophomore Hannah McHugh leading all scorers with 17 points, sophomore Angela Renna had 13 and freshman Jamie Webb had 8. The defensive effort was lead by freshman Taylor D'Antico and sophomore Mary Kate Minitelli dominated the boards with most rebounds and had six points. Freshman Kelly Hardman contributed 6 points while sophomore Meghan Monahan scored three. Sophomore Lauren Grandall and freshman Danielle Gross scored 2 each.

Huber played for Union Catholic and won the UCT Championship in 1998. She has a 40-4 record in her first two years coaching the JV Cougars.

Peterstown was represented by D'Antico, Minitelli and Renna, whose families hailed from the Elizabeth neighborhood. 📸



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COLLETTI ENDS 19 YEARS COACHING ST. MARY’S

Anthony Colletti has finished an impressive career as basketball coach for St. Mary’s High School in Elizabeth, NJ. His nine year record as varsity coach is 151 wins to 61 loses. His final year team finished 19-5 and won the Mountain Division of the Mountain Valley Conference. Prior to coaching varsity, Anthony spent ten years coaching JV and assisting the varsity coach, and current athletic director, Robert Halleck.

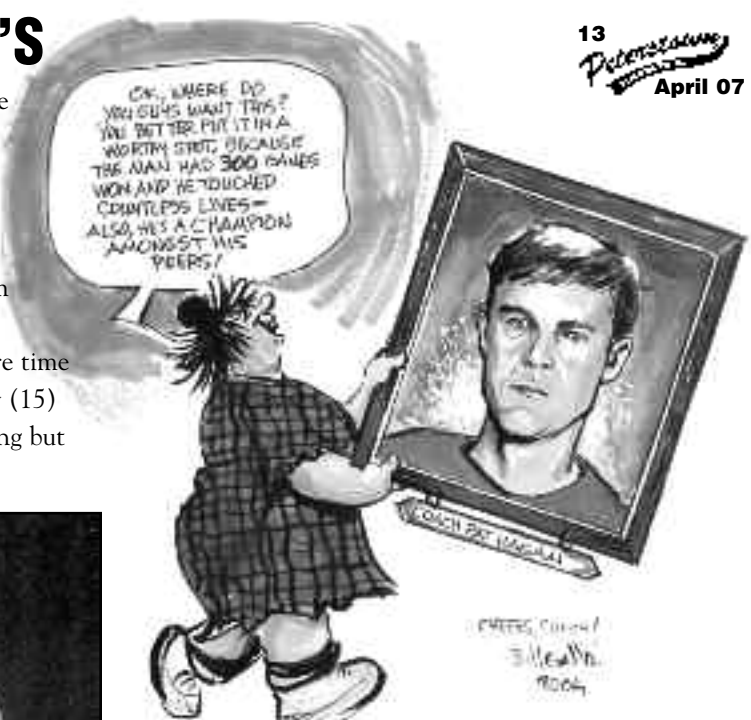
St. Mary’s doesn’t have the resources or size of a powerhouse school, so a lot of credit was given to Colletti for enabling his players to play to the best of their abilities.

The Hilltoppers always had an up hill battle each season, playing in the best county, in the best state, for high school basketball.™ They lost to Elizabeth High School in the Union County Tournament and to State Champions, St Patrick’s in the State Tournament, also from Elizabeth.

Anthony cleared his schedule to spend more time with his family, his wife Lisa, Daughter Ashley (15) and son Anthony (11). He will still be coaching but now it will one-on-one with Jr. 🏀



(above) St. Mary’s 2007 Varsity Basketball Team: (back row, l-r) Head Coach Anthony Colletti, Kory Robierson, Chris Richards, Malcolm Pearson, Ansumana Bailey, Chris Alcaide, Asst. Coach Martin Ferreiro. (middle row, l-r) Chris Dumont, Gage Daye, Latif Rivers, Michael Mayes, Sean Randall. (front row, l-r) Carl Brown, Gabriel Garcia, Eric Doss, Gaby Phanor, Franklin Kennedy.



(above) In 2004, Pat Hagan’s 300th win was immortalized in a cartoon by the legendary New York Daily News artist, Bill Gallo.

(right) The game ball is on display in RC’s Trophy case.



ANOTHER LEGENDARY UC COACH RETIRES

After 27 years of coaching Roselle Catholic Basketball Pat Hagan is hanging up his whistle. It is the longest any coach in the county has spent with one high school. He lead his team to six Mountain Valley Conference championships and was named Coach of the Year twice, in ‘87 by the UC Basketball Association and in ‘99 by the Star-Ledger. 🏀

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(above) John Zamarra shows what happens to a thousand pounds of grapes after a week of fermentation and final pressing.

(right) John's father, Emilio, used this heavy screw to crush grapes in his homemade press.



(below) Photo of John's hydraulic press.



# HOME WINEMAKING - OLD VERSUS NEW

Submitted by John Zamarra

This article originated as I was explaining to my son Christian the differences in the way I make wine and the way his grandfather used to make it. It all began in Elizabeth, New Jersey at 24 Spencer Street, in the 1950s when I was a teenager and helped my father, Emilio, make wine every fall. He had immigrated to the U.S. from Vallata, Italy and made wine every year in the basement.

He washed everything with lots of water before starting. I also wash everything using hot washing soda and lots of rinse. Pop didn't measure anything - it was all done by the formula he kept in his head. No chemicals were added. He relied on the natural yeast on the grapes for the fermentation to take place. He knew enough to punch down the must twice a day, but he took no measurements.

After the crushed grapes had fermented for a week, it was time to barrel the free flowing wine and to press what was left in the fermenting barrels. He crushed everything including the stems and he pressed the grapes using a home made press that utilized a large three inch diameter acme screw which was 42 inches long and quite heavy.

In contrast, I use a crusher-destemmer, and designed and built a press that uses his original basket. However, I use a hydraulic bottle jack instead of the screw for pressing. It's so much easier - and anyone can help- no big muscles required.

I've read a few books on modern day winemaking and have found three major areas which are significantly different from the methods used by my father fifty years ago.

The first major difference involves the use of a hydrometer to measure the specific gravity of the grape juice throughout the fermentation process. I also measure the temperature of the must each time I punch it down and keep a record of the results. When the fermentation gets vigorous during the third and fourth days, I will punch down the must as many as five times a day. If the temperature exceeds ninety degrees Fahrenheit, I cool down the must using frozen water jugs. My father never tried to control the temperature - he just let it run its course.

In the way of equipment, he used 55 gallon wooden barrels, whereas I use stainless steel containers for the primary fermentation. Also, I add carbon dioxide to the top of the fermenters when the fermentation is nearly completed and the natural carbon dioxide is not being generated. To test for the presence of carbon dioxide, light a match and hold it over the must - if carbon dioxide is present and no oxygen, the match will go out.

The second major difference between my father's methods and my own involves the use of sodium metabisulfite to kill the natural yeast on the grapes. It is the only chemical I use -at the rate of 50 parts per

million (and I never add it again.) Then I inoculate the must with my own choice of winemaker's yeast. I feel that by doing this I am controlling the process more stringently and consistently. I know how hot the must can get, and I know the upper limits of the alcohol that the yeast will allow. Although my father relied on the natural yeast, I don't believe he ever lost his entire production (100 to 150 gallons) because of a lack of fermentation. However, my father occasionally had a portion of an entire barrel turn to vinegar.

The third variable that is significantly different is the control of oxygen and minimizing its affects on the wine. My father did not bottle his wine. He kept the wine in 55 gallon barrels stored on their sides. He got the wine by either using a spigot at the base of the barrel, or by inserting a rubber hose in a hole at the top of the barrel and siphoning it out. Each time he or I siphoned off a gallon of wine, we removed the bung and created an opportunity for air to enter the partially filled barrel. Naturally, the possibility of greater amounts of air and other airborne contaminants entering the barrel increased as we consumed more of the wine. Consequently, a partial barrel of wine would turn to vinegar every four or five years.

In contrast, I do not use wooden barrels and conduct the secondary fermentation in glass carboys with oak chips added. I keep the small space above the wine filled with carbon dioxide to insure that no oxygen or air is in contact with the wine. When I am satisfied that the fermentation is completed and am satisfied with the taste of the wine, I begin bottling. All bottling is completed within 1 year of the initial crushing of the prior year.

I and others thought my father's wine was very good, always fully dry with a light touch of fruitiness. My sister Alba is one of the few people who has drunk both my wine and my father's - and she says mine is better

Finally, when Pop made wine, the entire house reeked of grapes for almost two weeks. Uneducated as I was in the world of winemaking, I thought it was a natural part of the process. Consequently, I didn't start making wine at home until I retired and had studied the subject. I thought that my house would be plagued with grape aromas for two weeks- and I didn't want to subject my wife and three children to that kind of aromatic experience. I began in the garage and kept the door to the living room shut tight. But I did keep the floor in the garage clean of crushed grapes. The result-viola -no smell. It was the grapes under foot that caused all the aromas back in the 1950s. Had I known, I would have started making wine a lot sooner!

HAPPY WINEMAKING, and remember "Never bite the feet that stomps your grapes". 🍇🍷

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# Recipes

Submitted by Gerarda and Gerardina Chirichiello

## Lobster Tail Royal

### INGREDIENTS

4 cold-water lobster tails in their shells 6 - 7 ounces each  
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
2 sticks (24 oz) unsalted butter  
2 teaspoons finely minced garlic  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

### PREPARATION:

- 1) Heat the broiler, with kitchen scissors cut the upper shell of each lobster tail down the center of the back, leave the tail fan intact. Lift the uncooked tail meat through the slit so it rests on the shell.
- 2) In medium saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat, add the garlic, lemon juice and parsley, salt and pepper. Cook, without allowing the butter to brown, until the garlic is fragrant. Remove from the heat and keep warm.
- 3) Place the lobster tails on a broiler pan. Pour 2 tablespoons of the butter mixture in a small bowl and use it to brush on the lobster tails. Broil the tails, at least 6 inches from the heat for 8 minutes or until the meat is opaque and firm to the touch.
- 4) Leave the rest of warm garlic-parsley butter for lobster dipping.

## Monk Fish “Marinero”

### INGREDIENTS

1 King Monk Fish  
8 Prawns  
8 Clams  
1 teaspoon flower  
2 garlic cloves  
1/2 teaspoon parsley  
1/2 glass of white wine  
1/2 glass of fish broth  
50 ml olive oil  
Salt to taste

### PREPARATION:

- 1) Cut the Monk Fish into a steak cut.
- 2) Slice garlic and place in a casserole dish with oil and cook for 1 minute.
- 3) Put fish, wine and fish broth, in dish and cook for five minutes.
- 4) Add flour and salt, then clams, prawns, parsley and transfer to the oven and cook on 350-400 degrees for five minutes.



15  
*Peterstown*  
April 07

(left) Bar 9, located in Elizabeth, on the corner of Third Ave and Niles St.

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Two and a half years ago, Stefano Calella and Louis Catanho opened Bar 9. They completely renovated the old bar known as The Peterstown Tavern and Reds prior to that. They will cutting the ribbon on a new kitchen they added to the place.

They will start serving lunch and diner in the casual setting. The menu offers something for everyone from snacks to full meals. There are a few selections of sandwiches, burgers, steaks, pasta, chicken, soups and salads. The menu is rounded out with appetizers, and desserts. Espresso and Cappuccino is also served.

The bar is lively with a young clientele watching sports and dancing the nights away on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Stef and Lou made a much appreciated improvement to the neighborhood. 🍷🍷



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(above) Abram, seeing eye dog in training, and his official puppy raiser Victoria LaBrutto.

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The program called "The Seeing Eye Puppy Project" works in conjunction with the 4-H Youth Development Program and finds participants, usually between the ages of 9 and 19 to prepare the dogs. The breeds used are German Shepherd, Labrador Retriever, or Golden Retriever.

The first months in a dog's life are the most important to his future behavior. The puppy raiser must teach him the required basic obedience commands. There is much more to learn and the handler must attend Puppy Raiser meetings twice a month.

This is a huge commitment, especially for a young person, which is why Victoria LaBrutto should be given a lot of credit for volunteering to raise Abram, a Black Lab. She is 15 years old and a freshman at Cranford High School. It is a full-time responsibility and she must balance her training schedule with school and other activities. The dog must be brushed every day and must

be with a person as much as possible. Abram sleeps in Victoria's room.

Once the puppy is between 14 and 18 months old, it goes into training at the Seeing Eye for four months. This training includes mastering traffic situations to prepare the puppy for its work as a guide dog. The criteria to pass is tough and not all dogs qualify, for example if they have the prey instinct-and like chasing cats.

Victoria would get to see Abram graduate from a distance when he is ready but then would have no other contact afterwards. It has proven to be the toughest part of the assignment. As a consolation, she could be proud that she helped the mission of the Seeing Eye, Inc. to enhance the independence, dignity, and self-confidence of the blind person who will receive Abram. 🐾🐾

• • • • •

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their home games in Williams Field on Summer Street in Elizabeth. They played their first game home, under the lights on April 1st with a victory. Information about the league and the season's schedule can be found on the organization's web-site gssl.com. 🏈



(above, top) Matt Thompson, Jonathan Henriques, Rich Catena, Jason Tavaras, Capt. Joe Firetto, Hugo Lourenco, Rui DaSilva, Manager Avelino Pires. (bottom) Anthony Firetto, Gianfranco Triscari, Tony Desousa, Mike Colona, TJ Quinn, Danny DaSilva. (missing) Coach Pete Vitabile, Chris Lopez, Adam Mires, Raje El-Tamawi.

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(above, l-r) Jerry Nigro and his father Mario helped erect flags outside the Vallatese Clubhouse on the corner of Fourth Avenue and High Street. The street sign reflects the official renaming of Fourth Avenue to Vallata Avenue commemorating the club's 100th anniversary.

# HERE COMES THE SONS

A new generation is swelling the ranks of the Vallatese Club in Peterstown. The Vallatese Association is celebrating its one hundredth anniversary this year and the youth movement represents the next fifty years. Some of these young members' great grandfathers were charter members back in 1901.

The next generation formed an unofficial sub-group within the club and on Easter Sunday they gathered at the Fourth Avenue Clubhouse before attending the 12:00 mass in St. Anthony's Church that is celebrated in Italian. From the dedication that the group has shown, the future of the club looks secure and prosperous.



(above, seated, l-r) Giovanni Cerullo, Felice Tanga, Gerardo Tanga, Daniele Crincoli, Massimo Chirichiello, Joe Padrenostro, Mike LoBrace, Tony Padrenostro, Vito Giannetta, Armando Muscaritolo, Franco Quaglia. (2nd row, l-r) Pasquale Ciccarella, Tommy Ciccarella, Carmine Giannetta, Angelo Giannetta, Federico Gallo, Raymond Vella, Pasquale Vella, Vittorio Vella, Simone Chirichiello, Marco Crincoli, Marco Nigro, Vito Mazza, Marcello Crincoli, Paolo Crincoli, Jerry Nigro, Anthony Mazza, Anthony Mazza, Anthony LoBrace, Ferdinando Rinaldi, Gennaro Nigro, 6th Ward Councilman Frank Mazza. (top row, l-r), Giuseppe Bruscianelli, Roberto Gallo, Carmine Chirichiello, Joe Rinaldi, Rocco Mazza, Silvio Rosa, Leonardo Rinaldi, Gerardo Giannetta, Mike Rosa, Mario Cornacchia, Rocco Crincoli, Carmine Crincoli, Girolamo Bruscianelli,

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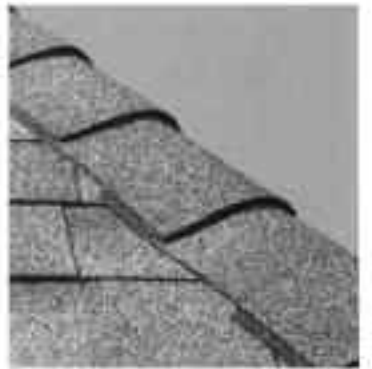
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