

**10 YEAR  
ANNIVERSARY  
ISSUE!**

**Around About**

**Peterstown**  
ELIZABETH NJ

**PRICELESS**

**ISSUE NO. 60**

**OCT/NOV 08**

published by Joe Renna for the Sons of Peterstown Sports Club



## FOUR CRUMBLING HOUSES OF FROG HOLLOW

Frog Hollow is a neighborhood that sits just south of the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, NJ. At the turn of the 20th century it was predominantly settled by Polish immigrants. Robert Fernandez, Sr. has written a recollection of his experiences growing up there in his compelling first book titled *Four Crumbling Houses*.

Bob Fernandez's father was from Spain and his mother was from Poland. They moved to Elizabeth when jobs were hard to find after the great depression, to find work in the factories of "the big city." Bob's life was not very different from the general population around him. He was one of six children, the son of immigrants who spoke little English, who worked hard to eke out a living and strived to achieve the American dream, if not for themselves then for their children.

*Four Crumbling Houses* is about growing up poor in the 1930's through the 50's. It is about surviving and persevering in the face of extreme challenges, a combination of several societal calamities like poverty, racial prejudice, and two wars. Like thousands of his contemporaries Bob became resourceful, getting the most of whatever resources there were.

Everyone who lived through those times all agree that the greatest resource was family and friends. And so it was for Bob Fernandez. He presents thirty one chapters in his book, each a vignette into the daily lives of himself and his friends on their path to adulthood, including going off to war and coming back home. The chapters, which can stand alone, are tied together by a common theme, friendship.

The unique perspective that Bob brings to his story is his relationship with life-long friend Phillip "Dennis" Saxton. Sack, as Bob called him, lived in one of the four crumbling houses. They were occupied by the only four black families in Frog Hollow.

Bob does an edifying job of describing his realm of poverty but then he delves into the despair of those families living in the crumbling houses, poorest amongst the poor with even fewer options available to them that society offered to the general population. The homes were barely habitable, their occupants marginalized. It is out of this setting that Bob and Sacks become best friends, breaking barriers decades old. There are many real moments in the book that tug at heart strings but they are trumped by the uplifting outcomes to dire situations. Many times Sack would need to tap his repertoire of Polish phrases that Bob taught him to get out of a jam.

Anyone with any ties to Elizabeth would find Bob's accounting very familiar. His recollection of details is uncanny. His crew's romps through Frog Hollow, Peterstown, and The Port along with the people they encounter are classic. A parade of characters appear in the book that other Elizabethans of a certain age will remember, but to outsiders would come across as fictional.

There are many heroes in the book as well. A great respect is paid to the men and women who went off to fight in World War II. Bob's account of that time from the perspective of a grade schooler offers an uncommon viewpoint. There were personal heroes too, like Boxing trainer Peter Nozza. The men who were off fighting in World war II were revered and when it was time for Bob and his crew to go fight in Korea he understood why.

The *Four Crumbling Houses* can very easily be categorized as a sports book. Bob's passion is in boxing. He is a lifelong member of the New Jersey Boxing Hall of Fame and is a boxing historian who has written extensively on the subject for magazines. Sacks became a professional boxer and this book chronicles his career from the first set of gloves that he and Bob purchased to his final fight.

Younger readers can only imagine the hardship that the previous generation endured and this book would help them do that. The book would put older readers on an emotional roller coaster as they relate the stories to their own trials and tribulations. For Elizabeth folks the *Four*

*Crumbling Houses* would serve as a documentary of their own lives. Scenes from Kirk Center in Peterstown, Shooter's Island off the Arther Kill, swimming in the Elizabeth River and the train barreling through Frog Hollow.

Most of what is referenced is long gone. The NJ Turnpike cut right through Frog Hollow, the train is gone and Kirk Center is now condos. Change is inevitable which is why books like this are invaluable. Almost like a textbook it teaches life lessons learned through experiences. Bob gives an opportunity for generations to learn the true value in friendship, loyalty, and being honorable, if not first hand then at least through him. 📖



(above) Bob Fernandez wrote a book about his upbringing in the Frog Hollow section of Elizabeth. It is available for sale at [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com).



(left, r-l) Walter McKenna, Ray Fernandez and Bob Fernandez would trek to South Beach on Staten Island to swim with Phil Saxton, who was not allowed in the public pools.

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Although great care has been taken to ensure the information contained within is accurate, Around About Peterstown assumes no liability for errors or omissions.

Around About Peterstown welcomes the comments and concerns of its readers put into writing and sent to:

**AROUND ABOUT PETERSTOWN**  
 202 Walnut Avenue  
 Cranford, NJ 07016  
 (908) 709-0530  
 Fax: (908) 709-9209  
 E-mail: joerenna@joerenna.com

**JOE RENNA**  
 Publisher / Editor

**TINA RENNA**  
 Editor/Advertising Sales



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**President's Message**



The advantage of having my butcher shop located in Peterstown is that I still have a daily connection to the community. It's a blessing for me to be able to see and talk to the stream

of people that come through my door each day. From early morning there is at least a half dozen who sit and stay for a while. Jokingly some may say this is more of a curse. But all kidding aside, it is a pleasure. When I read the stories that people send in to the newspaper it reinforces this feeling.

As hectic as the day could get it is the people that keeps me grounded and puts everything in perspective. Most stories are of bygone days when friends and family played an intricate part in each other's lives. For my visitors those days are not gone, from my parents friends to their grand kids.

I encourage everyone to write down their memories so they won't be lost. At Sacco's we are still relying on oral history, orchestrated on the most part by Jimmy Malta.

I'd like to pray for him to make a speedy recover. He is whole heartedly missed.  
 Thank you and God bless.

John Sacco, President

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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.

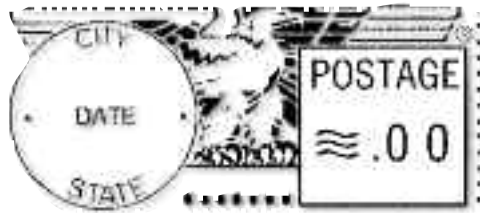
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**Letters to the Editor**



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Around About Peterstown welcomes Letters to the Editor at our postal, fax or e-mail addresses. Letters must include sender's name, address and phone number (only name and town will be printed). Letters should be typed. Letters appear as space permits. We reserve the right not to print a letter without notifying sender.

Hi Joe,

I've always enjoyed reading your Peterstown paper. There is so much great history that you have been able to bring back to your old readers (like me). Your August-September issue had some very special items that jogged my old memory. The St. Rocco Feast was always a great week to eat well and see old friends and of course reminisce (tell stories) of the old days.

Your section on Al Vardalis was especially interesting to me... He and I used to compete against one another, in the Union County Police Pistol League. Al was a very good shot in his day. He mentioned Judge Postizi and Sal Serago. Sal was one of my best friends on the Elizabeth Police Department. Sal and the Judge came from a section in North Elizabeth that could have been termed "The little Peterstown." Fanny Street, Jackson Avenue and Van Buren Avenue were the home of the Telemonde's, Campanelle's, Russo's, Huiskie's, Marone's, Postizzi's, Appuzio's, Serago's and others.

On Saturday evening there were often prize fights, hosted by the Telemondes' after the earlier pony rides, were you could have your kids photographed on one of the ponies. By the way, there was no crime or disorderly kids in that neighborhood. North end and Blessed Sacrament Parish, like the "Burg" was a great place to grow up. Sadly, things don't always change for the best.

I wonder how many of our modern families could handle "the depression" or children knowing how to stoke a "coal fire" in the kitchen.

One little correction in Al's article. The viaduct that he referred to was next to Sacred Heart Church, not Holy Rosary.

Thanks for the memories Joe.  
 Ralph  
 Ralph Froehlich, Union County Sheriff  
 Elizabeth, NJ

Hi Joe,

I grew up in Roselle Park but have many friends and relatives from Elizabeth. I've read your newspaper and thought it was great.

My partner, Tom Shaver, lived on Grove St., not too far in from Grand St. We saw that you had friends of ours in your paper, Oscar Petraglia and Biagio Acito.

My cousins both had fathers who were raised in Elizabeth. My one uncle, Daniel DiFabio, lived down by the old movie theater on Elizabeth Avenue with his parents and sister, Betty. My other cousin's dad, Joseph Girgus, lived on Grand Street. His brother Mike and his sister, Helen, are in their 80's are alive and well in Clark.

Mike's sister-in-law, Frances and her husband, Arthur, lived over by Cherry St. Frances owned Fran's Antiques on Elizabeth Avenue by the Route 1 bridge.

Mike and his sister, Helen, know a lot about old-time Elizabeth that may be fun to read. It wouldn't be from the Peterstown perspective but it would be from the Grand Street perspective of about 80 years ago.

Good times!! As we say down here in FL.  
 I enjoy the paper very much. Take care!  
 Helena Roberts  
 Leesburg, FL.

Hi Joe,

I was raised at 708 Third Avenue, just a couple of doors down from Spirito's. I now live in Florida, across the street from my parents Anthony and Leonora (Malta) Degatano. My parents receive the neighborhood paper and I always look forward to receiving it from them.

You know, Florida is great. I've had many opportunities here to grow and flourish in the real estate business. For that I am grateful. But the comraderie of being with people from the same background, that share the same values and similar experiences growing up, is missing in my life.

In the past, I have heard from one or another that there are others from the Burg that might have relocated to the Tampa Bay Area. I would relish the opportunity to develop a network with them. I was from the St. Anthony's class of '68 and Mother Seton's class of '72. Here is my contact information to pass along.

Thanks,  
 Margaret (Degatano)Fischer  
 Office # 727-495-2424 (If I'm out, have me paged!)  
 email: margaretfischer1@yahoo.com  
 Web site: www.MargaretFischer.com

**On the one year anniversary of your death.**



Cpl. Luigi "Louie" Marciante Jr.  
 11/10/81 - 9/20/07

It broke our hearts to lose you,  
 you did not go alone.  
 For part of us went with you,  
 the day God called you home.

You are forever in our hearts.  
 All Our Love,  
 Marciante Family

Joe Renna,

I'm trying to track down a man for my Mother's friend, Peter Weinrauch. His name is Joseph Cistrelli, and his last known address was Elizabeth, New Jersey. He and my Mom's friend were together in World War II, in the Navy. They are both 86 years old. I have no idea why your website came up when I tried to google Mr. Cistrelli, but I'm trying all options.

Anybody ever heard of him or have an address for him? Any assistance you can give me will be much appreciated.  
 Paula Morelli Piersall  
 Detroit, MI

Dear Paula,

I am sorry to say that Joe passed away. I spoke to his nephew Nick and forwarded your email to his son.

Thank Mr. Weinrauch for his service. - Joe

Joe,

I'm Lissa Rotolo Cali and I am taking this opportunity of your correspondence with my brothers, Victor and Jim to thank you on behalf of myself and the many, many people whose lives, hearts and memories you've touched over the years with your newspaper. Your idea for this paper was a stroke of pure genius. I am so impressed. It is such a gift, of a rare kind. Your publication gives us a reason to slow down in our hectic lives and to take some time to remember good and precious childhoods and other memories from Peterstown. We have been blessed with times shared, memories made, bonds formed that most others really have not. We find that out as we go off into our adult lives and meet others. We realize how cool it all was and how our pasts have formed who we are now.

Thank you for going with your heart years ago and doing the hard work starting a newspaper and publishing it still for the enjoyment of all of us. Thank you so very much.

Lissa Cali  
 Manasquan, NJ

Dear Joe,

Just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the articles about Frank Merlo and Tennessee Williams. That was a bit of very interesting history occurring in Peterstown.

We just returned from attending a wedding in NJ, and enjoyed taking some friends to Peterstown to show them the area and to talk about the Merlo/Williams connection. Interestingly enough, my 87 year old aunt, Josephine Tornambe Rinaldo, added a bit more info regarding the Merlos. She told me that originally the Merlos had their store in what is now Barone's and later moved across the street. She knew this because her family owned a hardware store on the corner of John Street and 3rd Avenue and the Merlos relocated next to them after leaving the Barone's site.

Thanks again for the articles. I look forward to your next publications.

Maria Gautreau  
 Pomona, Ca.

Hi;

Are you still publishing the paper? I usually see the paper in Wachovia bank in Cranford early in the month.

The paper is great and even though I am not from Elizabeth, I usually read the paper cover to cover. I've read some of the older editions on-line, and appreciate the patriotic tone that your paper has.

Thank You & be safe,  
 John Hathaway  
 Cranford, NJ

Dear John,

This issue was printed and delivered yesterday. - Joe

# Editor's Opinion

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

This issue of Around About Peterstown marks its 10-year Anniversary. Sixty issues, who would have think it?

I grew up on Fourth Avenue and Niles Street. My daughters were the fourth generation of my family to live in the two family that was retrofitted to accommodate eleven people. I was one of seven children. My parents, Millie and Pete, and maternal grandparents, Maria Libera and Giuseppi Nigro occupied the home as one unit, just five small bedrooms total, one shower, no dining rooms or fancy amenities like closet space.

The house was always full. The coffee was always on for company and my yard was a catchall for fiends. It seemed any time, day or night, there were two dozen people in my house and yard. It wasn't different for my wife Tina and myself.

Leaving the homestead was bitter/sweet, especially because I was the last to go. I considered myself blessed having grown up in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, New Jersey. The neighborhood may have been materially poor but it was rich in the things that mattered most.

Not to sound too schmaltzy, but there was an over abundance of love, respect, loyalty, care, generosity and spirituality that is not common. There was a value system that defined the culture that can not be explained, it must be experienced to be truly understood.

In his book Four Crumbling Houses, Bob Fernandez shares lessons in life that he has learned growing up in Elizabeth. I learned similar lessons through different experiences. There were some tests of character that he took that was not in my text book, for example, standing up for his best friend in the face of institutional prejudice.

My two daughters do not have the challenges in their lives that I had in mine, and, by the same token, I did

not have to face nearly as many obstacles my parents or grandparents had.

But challenges are all relative to the environment you are in. You would not have a feeling of being without if everybody had nothing. Deficiencies are most easily seen from an outside perspective.

I didn't care that I shared a bedroom with my three brothers, my daughters would find it unbearable if they were roomies. They are just not used to it.

As for possessions, the fewer we had the more we valued them. We used to keep a wiffle ball in a certain place and play with it until it disintegrated. The amazing thing about all of this is that I was without wants.

It was the goal of my parents for us to grow up unwanting, as it is for me with my children. The key is in establishing the value of what is desired. Superficial goals will never be satisfied, but that list of schmaltzy stuff I had growing up is in abundance. There is a big amount of the things I value most still in supply in my family and friends from Peterstown.

The opportunities to experience true tests of character come from some kind of societal strife. My kids seem so deprived. 🐾



## Not for Nothing But...

I said good bye to my house but not my home.



Aspiring actor/writer Joey Merlo

## JOEY MERLO WALKING IN FRANK'S FOOTPRINTS

Sixty years ago Frank Merlo headed to Greenwich Village in New York City to pursue a career as a playwright. He achieved a level of success as the inspiration and muse of Tennessee Williams. Presently Joey Merlo is in the same place pursuing, the same dream and probably walking in Frank's footsteps.

Frank's mother Rosalie Merlo is Joey's great grandfather. Joey is a Junior attending the Tisch School of the Arts at NYU. He is a drama major with a desire to be a writer. His resume lists a host of productions in which he performed, acting, dancing and singing, in a tenor voice.

Stories of Frank Merlo, especially those which appeared in the June 08 and August 08 issues of the Petersown paper, piqued Joey's interest in the story behind Frank and Tennessee. He studied Williams in class and performed in his play The Glass Menagerie. Joey's goal is to write a script for the stage or screen about the relationship.

Joey Merlo is currently on stage in a sold out show but has promised to send announcements of any upcoming shows he will be in to the Peterstown paper so some folks from back home can attend.

His resume lists Noble Talent Management as a contact if there are any producers interested. 🐾

## COMMUNITY SUFFERS WITH UNTIMELY LOSS



Joe Paternostro

A seemingly endless line of mourners wrapped their way down Third Avenue in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth to pay their last respects to the family of Giuseppe "Joe" Paternostro at the Corsentino Home for Funerals. Joe passed away on Friday, October 10, 2008 without an inkling that the pains he was feeling were fatal. He was just 48 years old and the shock of his death stunned the community.

It is considered tragic when anyone passes away at such a young age but it is even more devastating when that person was so beloved by so many. Joe was involved in many people's lives in many circles. Since his arrival from Vallata Italy in 1972 he became involved with the social and cultural happenings in the neighborhood. He was a member of the Valletese Club as well as the Ribera Club. He attended Elizabeth public schools, where he played soccer, a passion of his.

Joe was known for his contagious sense of humor and

his love of life. An extremely close bond with his identical twin brother Tony added to the high jinks that surrounded him. They left a lasting impression to everyone who was in their company.

Joe owned Tommy's Pizzeria with his brother on Fairmont Avenue in the North End section of Elizabeth. Visitors came from near and far to attend his wake and funeral, which was held at St. Anthony's Church in Peterstown. It was attended by friends, family, customers, government officials and members of various clubs. A school bus load of students came from Springfield where Joe moved his family in 2004, to tearfully console their classmate on the loss of their father.

Giuseppe is survived by his loving wife, Carmel (nee Caravano); children, Anna Maria, Gerardo and Giuseppe; his parents, Anna (nee LaVecchia) and Gerardo; a sister, Mrs. Marina Moriello and her husband, Albert; his brother, Tony; and his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Emmanuel and Tessie Caravano.

It will take a long time for many people to accept that the is gone, if ever. 🐾



(right, l-r) Joe, Joe Jr., Gerry, Anna Maria and Carmel.

(left, l-r) Tony and Joe Paternostro.



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# ELIZABETH COMMUNITY STEPS UP IN A BIG WAY FOR ACHILLES FREEDOM TEAM OF WOUNDED VETERANS

Submitted by Enza (Marciante) Jacobowitz

Growing up in Elizabeth, I always felt a sense of pride in my community and when I married and moved away I still called Elizabeth home. It wasn't until I took on the personal mission to support the Achilles Freedom Team of Wounded Veterans that I truly realized what the support of a community really meant.

My journey to support the Achilles Freedom Team of Wounded Veterans is a personal mission as my husband Rich, know by many as 'Jake', is a Marine. It is because of his relationship with the military that we proudly support veteran causes as much as we can. When we learned about the Achilles Freedom Team and the "Endow a Chair" program, we decided to begin our heartfelt commitment to making a direct difference in the lives of veterans. At that time I never thought that the community of Elizabeth would support me in this mission as much as they have.

My husband was not the only reason I decided to support our veterans. In 2007, my brother Luigi Marciante Jr. was deployed to Iraq and I knew that one of the best ways to show my support and appreciation to my brother was to directly support his fellow brothers and sisters. I began to channel my energy into developing a team for the Achilles Hope & Possibility 5M with the proceeds going to the Freedom Team. We named our team Pay It Forward because I believed that if I helped wounded soldiers today someday someone would do the same for my brother if he were ever in need.

Sadly, on September 20, 2007 my brother's life was cut short by an improvised explosive device. I cannot recall when exactly but shortly after his death I knew that the best way to honor Louie's memory was to

dedicate my life to supporting wounded veteran causes. That was when "Team S.O.S. – Support Our Soldiers" in honor of fallen and wounded veterans was born.

On June 22, 2008 Team S.O.S. was seventy people strong ranging from family, friends and twenty of the Elizabeth Police Department's finest. With the support of the Elizabeth PBA, Sgt. Jim Sacca, Dee and Courtney Villani and countless friends and family, we made this year's Hope & Possibility our most successful race raising over \$15,000.00! With this money, we endowed five hand crank wheelchairs in Louie's name and in return Achilles has given these chairs to five young men who have recently returned from Iraq.

Louie was one of the greatest people I have ever known. He had a zest for life and energy like no other. I am proud of my brother. Proud of the man he became. Proud that he wanted a better life and chose to join the Army to achieve that goal. Proud that he was loved by so many people and touched so many lives. But most of all I am proud that he served our country with honor and gave his life by serving for you.

It has been a year since my brother's passing and with each day I become more encouraged to make a difference in my life in honor of Louie. It is with the support of a community such as Elizabeth that I become more and more thankful for the positive people and moments that enter my life. I, along with my family, will always hold the people of Elizabeth in our hearts as you have held us in yours.

If you would like info on how you can support the Freedom Team of Wounded Veterans or the "Endow a Chair" Program please call at 212-354-0300. 📞

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(above, l-r) Stephanie and Lorenzo Marciante



(above, l-r) Felix Zeppieri and Suzie Lebrini



(above, l-r) Giulio Lebrini, Frank Zeppieri and Dean Lebrini



(above, l-r) Accursio, Christian and Maria Marciante



(left, l-r) Dick Traum, President, Achilles Track Club Enza and Richard Jacobowitz



(above) Team S.O.S.



(below) Sgt. Jim Sacca, right, and team of Elizabeth's Finest!



(left) Presenting one of the handcrank wheelchairs purchased by our fundraising efforts to a member of the Freedom Team of Wounded Veterans.

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Wednesday, November 5th	1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Farley Towers 33 Cherry St.
Thursday, November 6th	12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Sampson Center 800 Anna St.
Friday, November 7th	11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Peterstown Center 409 Palmer St.
Saturday, November 8th	11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Sampson Center 800 Anna St.
Wednesday, November 12th	1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Liberty Square 240 Elizabeth Ave.
Wednesday, November 12th	5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	City Hall 50 Winfield Scott Plaza

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Created by Michael Anello, email: anellodesign@gmail.com

**HOW TO PLAY CODE PLACER:**

1. Each row horizontal and vertical must contain one set of all letter.
2. Each 3x3 space square must also contain one set of all letters and spaces.
3. Lettters in shaded aquares must be arranged to spell out phrase.

Hint: One row is completed.


Solution will be in the December 08 issue of Around About Peterstown.

A	S	H	Y	N	O	T	C	L
Y	C	L	T	S	H	A	N	O
T	N	O	A	C	L	Y	S	H
H	A	S	O	Y	N	L	T	C
L	Y	C	H	T	S	O	A	N
O	T	N	L	A	C	H	Y	S
S	H	A	N	O	Y	C	L	T
C	L	Y	S	H	T	N	O	A
N	O	T	C	L	A	S	H	Y

**SOLUTION TO OCT 08 PUZZLE**

The unscrambled letters appearing in the shaded squares spell out: "St Anthony School"

A				N	O			L
	C		T		H			
	N			C		Y		
	A	S						
L				T				N
O	T					H	Y	
						C		
		Y	S		T			
N	O	T	C	L	A	S	H	Y



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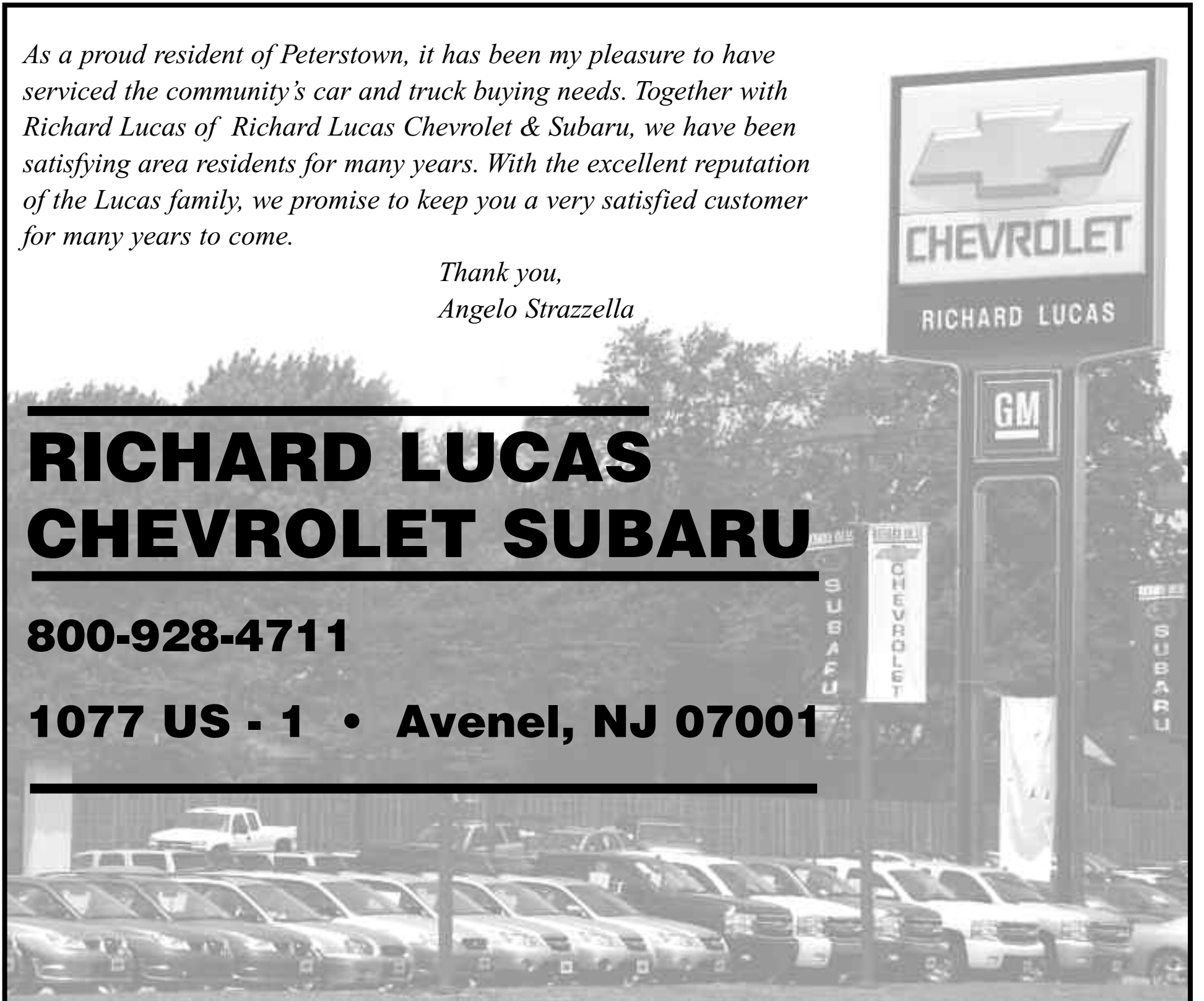
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# FROM THE 6 DEGREES OF SEPARATION FILE

When Jim Sacca moved to Upper Freehold, NJ from Elizabeth 1 year ago he rode around to get a handle on his surroundings. He was surprised to find an authentic Italian deli, just like the ones back home. It was in a secluded stretch of Route 526 in neighboring Allentown. The name of the place was Phil's Take Out. His surprise escalated after he introduced himself. The conversation went something like this:

Jim: Hi I am new to the area and wanted to pick up a menu and see what you sell here.

Ross: Really? Your from Elizabeth? I'm from Elizabeth. What is your name?

Jim: Jim Sacca.

Ross: (Takes a second to study Jim's face.) Your fathers the mason. You lived next to the butcher shop. I knew you when you were small. I know your whole family. You are cousins to Jimmy Sacca. Me too.

Ross called over his three co-workers, his brother Sal and his Uncle Felice (Phil) and cousin Bruno to confirm. Jim was shocked. The eldest, Phil, who's last name is Acuri, went on and on about his affiliations

with Jim's family in Peterstown. Jim Sacca who owned Sacco's Butcher Shop on Third Avenue lived just three doors down from Phil in the town of Calabria in Italy. Jim Sacca actually sponsored Phil when he applied to immigrate to America in 1968. After a few years of living in Elizabeth Acuri moved to Washington Township and opened a Deli.

Jim Sacca's wife, Rose Spano, was the sister of Jim Sacca's paternal grandmother Concetta, they were also Calabrese. Jim Sacca also sponsored Concetta's son John Sacca, Jim's father, on his excursion to America.

Phil's was a good find for Jim who was worried about finding authentic Italian food. Sal actually makes the reverse commute from Elizabeth to Allentown. While the rest of New Jersey's masses are traveling to the northwest end of the state during rush hour, Sal leaves his home at 9:10 am to lace his apron up at 10:10 am.

When Sacca is asked how good the food was at Phil's he doesn't say anything, he just forms a point with the tips of his fingers and kisses them as he throws them open. That's Italian for magnificent. 🍴



(above, l-r) Phil Acuri, Bruno and Sal stand ready to serve Jim Sacca.

(left) The sign for Phil's Take Out is easy to miss while driving down Route 526. The building is partially hidden by a bountiful grape vine planted by the Acuri's.

(left) Travelers must spot Phil's rather nondescript sign.



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(above) Alessandro and grandpop Sal Mirabile.

## PETERSTOWN PHOTOS AVAILABLE ON-LINE!

Albums from the last ten years of Around About Peterstown are being uploaded daily to [picasaweb.com/Peterstown.NJ](http://picasaweb.com/Peterstown.NJ). Photos can be downloaded and prints can be ordered on-line. Older photos will be scanned and uploaded as well. With Video Data Services assistance old 8mm films and VHS tapes will also transferred to a digital format and uploaded for viewing.

(below) Peterstown.NJ home page on Picasa.com



# PICASAWEB.COM/PETERSTOWN.NJ



(above, l-r) Frank Guarraci, Paul Farina, Gianfranco Gurraci, Giuseppe Cortere, councilman from ribera Italy cutting the ribbon, Elizbeth Mayor Chris Bollwage, Ribera Club President Peter Agliata, Treasurer Jimmy Foderá, Elizbeth Councilman Frank Mazza, Father Vincent Miceli from Brooklyn, and Liborio Firetto, at the 2008 Ribera Club Picnic and ribbon cutting ceremony of new clubhouse on September 23 on Palmer Street off Fourth Avenue.



(above) Paolo and Filippina (nee Guddemi) Daino (center) were visiting from Ribera Italy to celebrate thier 50th wedding anniversary at the Ribera Picnic with (l-r) Nellina and Benny Tamborello, Ninetta and Joe Ferrera, Carmelina and Charles Tavormina, and Jackie Guarraci.

(right) Club members in front of the new clubhouse.



Color photos can be seen, downloaded and prints can be purchased at [www.picasaweb.com/Peterstown.NJ](http://www.picasaweb.com/Peterstown.NJ)

## FROM BOB FERNANDEZ'S PHOTO ALBUM

Author of *Four Crumbling Houses*

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Shooter's Island 1948.



Sack in his prime.



Pete Nozza drills Saxton.



Ray, Sack & Bob in NYC.



Sack with his 1932 Chevy.



Pinkey Meets Gurkey.



Crabbing in the Kill.



Team's only uniform.



Bob dives into Elizabeth River.



Railroad Bridge over Crick next to Gas House.

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# WHERE ARE THE CONFORTI COUSINS?

Twenty-five year old Nicola (Nicholas) Conforti, left a wife and three sons in Sala Consilina, Italy, and boarded the SS Brasile from Naples, Italy on February 10th, 1899. He arrived thirteen days later at Ellis Island with \$15.00 in his pocket and spoke no English. He then made his home in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, NJ.

Six years later, in March 1907, Angiola Mele Conforti, with \$10.00 in her purse, and also with no knowledge of the English language, joined her husband in Elizabeth. She arrived with their three sons in tow, Anthony (aged 12), Dominic (7) and Michael (6). The family lived at 809 Third Ave. and soon became actively involved in the community where they would have and raise three more sons, Peter, Joseph, and John.

Nicholas found employment with the Elizabethtown Gas Company and later as a caretaker on the Kean Estate. Angiola was busy maintaining a home and tending to their sons. She also was known for nursing the sick, be they family or friends. She, herself, while tending to those who had fallen ill with Scarlet Fever, contracted that disease and died in 1915. Nicola died in 1927.

Anthony, the eldest of the 6 sons, born in 1895, married Lena Turtur, who kindly and graciously took on a husband, and also the raising of 5 "brothers-in-law." Anthony established his own painting company. Dominic worked his entire career for the Singer Company in Elizabeth. Michael owned and operated Mike's Hat and Shoeshine Shop on Elizabeth Ave. Peter became a Union Supervisor for bricklayers. Joe worked as a house painter for his brother Tony. John became a U.S. Parcel Postman.

In time the family grew, moving out of Peterstown to other sections of Elizabeth, but they always remained true to their roots and maintained a connection with St. Anthony's Church, Peterstown and the open-air market.

Tony and Mike employed many young men from "The Burg" who were attending college and later went on to medical and law schools. Tony painted St. Anthony's Church on several occasions.

Dominic, who was lovingly called "Chippy" and "The Mayor of Peterstown" at a testimonial dinner in his honor, raised thousands of dollars by selling fundraising chances for St. Anthony's, the Salesians, Alexian Brothers and St. Elizabeth's (Trinitas) Hospitals. He regularly visited the patients at all the city hospitals that would otherwise be without any company.

Four of the brothers married into well-known Peterstown families. The Turtur (Lena), Migliore (Rose), and Wade (Minnie and Anna) families were very instrumental in establishing St. Anthony's Church and Peterstown as a haven for Italian immigrants from the early 1900's. Organizations within St. Anthony's Church like the Holy Name Society and Parade, St. Ann's Rosary Society, the Altar Guild, the Church's Minstrel and Fashion Shows were an integral part of the Conforti family life.

Nicola and Angeola Conforti had six sons who produced 10 first, 22 second and 49 third generations of cousins living throughout the U.S. For a total of 81.

The first two generations of the Conforti family in America have all passed on. They left a fine legacy and a continuing set of values having been instilled in their children. The Conforti cousins live by the values of faith, family, and service. They are very grateful for the sacrifices their families made and are very proud of their parent's accomplishments. In turn, the cousins live lives in a way that would make their parents proud.

Today, they proudly count among them active and retired doctors, lawyers, a New Jersey State Supreme Court Judge, accountants, educators, secretaries, corporate and financial executives, and two Marine Colonels.



(above, l-r) Victor, Elissa and Jim Rotola at Jim's 50th Birthday celebration in.

## CATCHING UP

Jim Rotolo and Nick Renna got together to celebrate his 50th birthday. Jim and Nick went through twelve years of school together, eight at St. Anthony's Grammar School and four at Roselle Catholic H.S., class of '78. They spent their time together finding out how everyone in each other's families were doing. Nick planted the idea that others would like to know what they were up to also and suggested sharing the information through the Peterstown Newspaper.

Thier mom was Vincentina Conforti. She married Victor Rotolo, the youngest of 11 children. But that's a different story.

### CONFORTI FAMILY TREE Nicola and Angiola (6 children)

#### Anthony and Lena (4):

- Angela Jakucs(3):
  - Robert –retired Marine Colonel, California (2)
  - Mary Lynn – retired teacher, Tampa, Florida (2)
  - Richard - retired Marine Colonel, Wall, NJ (2)
- Nicholas, a retired Doctor, Spring Lake, NJ and (6):
  - Mary Beth – guidance dir. at Michigan State U (6).
  - Christopher – financial executive, Boston (2)
  - Kathleen – financial executive, Manhattan, NY
  - John – real estate executive, Interlaken, NJ
  - Paul –financial planner, Wall, NJ (3)
  - Michael – stock broker, Avon (1)
- Vincentina Rotolo(3):
  - Victor – attorney, Clinton (4)
  - Elissa – a teacher, Manasquan (3)
  - James – a physician, Sea Girt, NJ (4)
- MaryAnn Cassidy (4):
  - Mona –teacher's assistant, Wall, NJ (2)
  - Anthony –HVAC engineer, Avon, NJ
  - Michael – insurance accountant, Portland, Maine (2)
  - Gina- teacher's assistant, Westerly, Rhode Island

#### Michael and Minnie (2):

- Nicholas –a retired Oral Surgeon, West Palm Beach, Fla and Nantucket, Mass, (5):
  - Michael – maintenance supervisor, Jupiter, Fla
  - Carolyn – teacher, Blair Academy, Blairstown, NJ (2)
  - Sarah –secretary/bookkeeper, Nantucket, Mass (3)
  - Philip –, Nantucket, Mass.
  - Nicholas – inspector, US MVD, Nantucket, Mass
- Maria – retired Preschool Principal, Rahway

#### Peter and Anna (1):

- N. Peter – Superior Court Judge, Sparta (3):
  - Christine – Accounts Director, Caldwell, NJ (2)
  - Carolann – Clinical Social Worker, Wayne, PA (3)
  - Damian – attorney, West Caldwell, NJ (2)

#### Joseph and Rose (2):

- Joseph – financial analyst, Scotch Plains (2):
  - Joseph, Jr. – golf pro, Naples, Fla (1)
  - Susan – teacher, Westfield, NJ (2)
- Robert – attorney, Toms' River (2):
  - Thomas - finance/credit analyst,
  - Carolyn – speech pathologist, Wyckoff, NJ (1)

#### John and Dorothy (1):

- John
- Dominic – no children



(above, l-r) Conforti cousins Dr. Nicholas J., Dr. James Rotolo, Judge N. Peter, Dr. Nicholas A.



(above, l-r) Conforti cousins Robert., Judge N. Peter,\* Maria and Joseph. \*The Judge's "N" stands for Nicholas.



(above, l-r) Angelo Andretta, Maria Giudice Andretta, Salvatore Andretta. While visiting Sala Consilina in May, 2007, Jim and Allison Rotolo met a distant cousin Maria Giudice, whose mother was a Conforti. She lives in Jim's grandfather's old home.



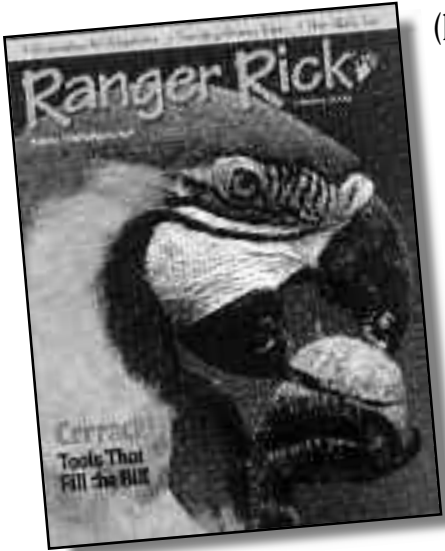
(above) Jim's photo of a welcome sign from his visit to Sala Consilina, which claims Paterson, NJ as its "Twin Town".



(above) Manifest from the S.S. Brasile from 1907 shows Angiola Mele traveling with her sons Dominco, Antonio and Michael on lines 20 to 23.



(above) Ed Skarbek, a native of the Frog Hollow section of Elizabeth, NJ, has dedicated 45 years to teaching. He was instrumental in building a wildlife habitat where he teaches in Rockland, MA.



(left) A write-up about the school's nature trail appears in the October 08 issue of Ranger Rick Magazine.

# FROG HOLLOW, MASSACHUSETTS

R. Esten Elementary School of Rockland Massachusetts transformed the School's inside courtyard into a wildlife habitat, the latest addition to a nature trail that had been crafted over the past eleven years. Ed Skarbek, a fourth grade teacher and workcrew member, suggested a name for the project and to everyone's delight the courtyard was named "Frog Hollow Pond".

The name of the habitat is very fitting. It is whimsical and evokes an image of a pleasant nature setting. It is rather ironic that the inspiration for the name is an industrial track of land in a big city in New Jersey where Ed grew up. It was not always like that, though. The area in Elizabeth was tagged Frog Hollow a century ago because of the abundance of frogs found there and the plentiful fishing along the Elizabeth River.

Frog Hollow was one of the distinct neighborhoods, which were carved into Elizabeth, NJ. Each neighborhood had defining characteristics, which made them unique, and almost independent. The culture of each community is a source of pride. It was this sense of pride and maybe a bit of nostalgia that made Skarbek think of naming the pond Frog Hollow.

Searching for a little historic significance to the name put Malinda Learning in contact with Joe Renna, publisher of Around About Peterstown. Learning was the project leader and came across a map of Elizabeth in the December 06 issue of the newspaper that referenced the neighborhood. Frog Hollow, a predominately Polish

American community, abuts Peterstown, an Italian American community.

The project was funded by a conservation fund from Seaworld Busch Gardens. The school received an Environmental Excellence Award from Seaworld for the work that it has done on the trail.

Scott Hammond designed the pond. Ed, Malinda, Scott and Matt, Scott's assistant made up the initial crew that did all the construction. Machinery had no access to the area and all excavating and landscaping was done by hand including transporting 3.5 tons of fieldstone, 10.5 tons of three-quarter-inch stone, and 10 yards of mulch by wheelbarrow.

The students pitched in when it came time for planting. The project took six weeks during summer break to complete, working Monday to Thursday from 6:00 am to 4:00 pm. On the first day of school, students, teachers and parents marveled at the sight of the courtyard. Students now study, first hand, the ecosystem surrounding the pond, alive with plants, birds, dragon flies, fish, butterflies, toads and frogs.

The school is now working on a book that will tell the story of how Frog Hollow Pond came to be. Its title is The Story of Frog Hollow as Told by Mr. Toad. A brief biography about the author will note that Mr. Toad was born and raised in the Frog Hollow section of Elizabeth, NJ before moving to Rockland, MA.

(right) The dramatic transformation of the courtyard, on the 40th anniversary of the school, can be seen through these before and after photos.



## Not for Nothing But...

Are there any gardenes growing around the pond?



(above and left) Students of R. Esten Elementary School dress their courtyard with seasonal decorations. They help maintain the nature trail and have the opportunity to study the life cycles of the inhabitants in and around the pond.



(above, l-r) Christine (Bianco) Smith, Ed Skarbek and Malina Learning standing behind the sign that exhibits the name of the wildlife habitate they helped create as "Frog Hollow".

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# FROG HOLLOW, NEW YORK CITY

Elizabeth, NJ was well represented in the 71st annual Pulaski Day Parade in New York City on October 5, 2008. The parade that marches down 5th Avenue in Manhattan is in honor of the Polish Brigadier General Casmimir Pulaski, who at the age of 31 died in 1779 fighting for American freedom in Savannah Georgia. The theme for this year's parade celebrated the 400th anniversary of Polish pioneers arriving at the Jamestown Colony in Virginia.

The Elizabeth contingent, under the auspices of the Elizabeth Federation of Polish Organizations, was organized by the General Pulaski Memorial Parade Committee of Elizabeth, NJ which is facilitated by St. Adalbert's church.

St. Adalbert's is located in the Frog Hollow section of Elizabeth and traditionally serviced the Polish community which dominated the area. The contingent's Marshal was Joseph Dziedzic a devotee at the church who maintains the church and its properties.

Kasia (Catherine) Klimek of Cranford, NJ was named 2008 Miss Polonia for the Elizabeth contingent. She is a junior at Cranford high school, and stood atop the group's float assisted by Barbara Kanopko and Mia Renna, also from Cranford. Catherine, her two brothers Thomas and Michael and parents Stanley and Grace Klimek are parishioners of St. Adalbert's Church. Stanley originally lived in Elizabeth after emigrating from Poland.

Four bus loads of marchers left from St. Adalbert's following a mass delivered in Polish. Parishioners from St. Hedwig's Church, located in the Bayway section of Elizabeth were also present.

The hard working committee was chaired by Jessica Topolosky, who is also a member of the overall parade committee. She was also the chairlady for the Banquet Committee that held an event for approximately 600 guests at the Marriott Marquis Hotel on 42nd Street. Jessica is the Supervisor of the Bureau of Community Development for the City of Elizabeth.



(above, l-r) The Elizabeth Contingent banner lead the way followed by Union County Sherriff Officers.



(above) St Adalbert's Church, Elizabeth, NJ.



(left) Catholic hierarchy and members of the Polish clergy view the parade from the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

(below) Elizabeth's float held Marshal Joseph Dziedzic, far left, and was topped off by Miss Polonia Kasia Klimek with aides Barbara Kanopko, to her right, and Mia Renna, on her left.



(above, l-r) Mia Renna, Kasia Klimek, and Barbara Kanopko in front of the alter of St. Adalbert's Church.



(right) Jessica Topolosky.



Color photos can be seen, downloaded and prints can be purchased at [www.picasaweb.com/Peterstown.NJ](http://www.picasaweb.com/Peterstown.NJ)

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(above, back, l-r) Carmine, Marta, Julianna, (front, l-r) Marcella & Sofia Cianfano



(right, l-r) Teresa and Salvatore at the opening of Cianfano's in 1985.

# CARMINE BRINGS CIANFANO'S BACK

*In the words of Carmine Cianfano*

My parents Salvatore and Teresa Cianfano established Cianfano's Restaurant in 1985. When my family and I emigrated to the U.S. from Italy forty years ago, we brought with us not only our traditions and customs, but equally as important generations of family recipes. During my father's trips to Italy, he would collaborate with great chefs and upon his return he would incorporate many of these ideas at the restaurant. He always stressed the importance of utilizing the freshest and finest ingredients in his cuisine, such as pure olive oil. My parents built their restaurant business based on hard work, perseverance and integrity. Our guests could always depend on enjoying delicious, home-made dishes, created with a personal touch.

Years later after having my own family I realized that

the "Old World Italian Cuisine", was rare to find. The methods and principles used by my parents in their cuisine style were no longer existent. People approached me over the years and would tell me how much they missed our food, especially our home-made ravioli. I often wondered if their children and generations to come would ever be fortunate enough to experience this type of cuisine. As fate would have it, I would be given the opportunity to return to the "old neighborhood" and pick up where my parents had left off ten years ago.

Although the world has changed since those early years, the love for delicious, simple cuisine with a personal touch will always remain. I aspire to share the gift my parents gave to me with my own family and future generations. 🍴👨🍳

## Recipes

Submitted by Carmine Cianfano  
Cianfano's Restaurant, Elizabeth, NJ.

### Veal Saltimbocca Veal Pizzaiola

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 thin slices flattened veal
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 oz. Cognac
- 1½ oz. butter
- 1 slice prosciutto

#### PREPARATION:

- 1) Roll prosciutto into veal slices and skewer with toothpicks.
- 2) Sauté veal in olive oil until brown.
- 3) Add butter to pan, once melted add cognac. (flammable-use caution).

Makes 1 serving

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 4 slices veal
- 28 oz. plum tomatoes, crushed
- ¼ cup of olive oil
- 5 oz. red wine
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 oz. oregano

#### PREPARATION:

- 1) Put veal, crushed tomatoes, chopped onion, garlic, oregano and red wine into baking pan.
- 2) Bake at 350° for 1 hour.

Makes 4 servings.





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# NOT ANOTHER CUCUZZA STORY

The folks from Petersown are very proud of their gardens and for some reason its the cucuzza that is most bragged about. Usually photos and stories of the Italian squash make reference to the size of the vegetable but this article is a testament to the plant's adaptability and tenacious determination to thrive.

Joe Amato thought it fascinating that a seed, somehow, made its way into a crack between his home and a walkway. With no nurturing, the seed took root and started to grow along the walk and up the side of his house. The cucuzza plant is a vine and gripped it's way up the brick wall, producing its bat shaped squash along the



(above) Joe Amato points to the spot where his cucuzza plant took root.

(right) The plant towers over Joe's head on its way to the second floor of their home.

way. Amato said he had never seen anything like it in his 80 years.

Joe could not resist showing off the six foot cucuzza growing in his nephew Giuseppe Ferrera's garden. A four block trek from his house on Third Avenue to Spencer Street. To keep the cucuzza from spoiling on the ground the caretakers actually tie it up along the vine's lattice. The cucuzza which is allowed to grow as long as possible will supply the seeds for next year's planting.

(right, l-r) Antonio Milano, Giuseppe Ferrera and Joe Amato showing off their six foot cucuzza.



(above, l-r) Antonio, Giuseppe and Joe tie the cucuzza so it can grow horizontally off the ground.

.....  
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Mother Nature really doesn't need help gardening but she does show her appreciation when she gets it.

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(right) Minnie (Idarola) Leikauskas, still spry at 94 years old.

(below) Minnie in the fashion of the day.



(above, l-r) Minnie and husband Adolph Leikauskas.

(below, l-r) All three Idarola brothers enlisted in the armed services after the death of their brother Charles who was killed in WWII in February 1942. Gaetano applied and was rejected three times before being accepted in the Navy; the youngest, William, enlisted in the Navy Sea Bees; Joseph who was previously in the Army, enlisted in the Marines.



## ARTICLE SPARKS MEMORIES OF CROSS STREET

Minnie Idarola Leikauskas of Kenilworth, NJ felt lucky when her friend from Cranford gave her the August 08 issue of Around About Peterstown. He said her 94 year old body got such a charge reading it end to end. Especially the article about Al Vardalis and his experience on Cross Street in Elizabeth.

Al was originally from Kenilworth and moved to Cross Street as a youngster. Minnie was raised along Cross Street before moving to Kenilworth. She attended Cleveland Jr. High and Battin High School where she graduated in 1932.

Minnie has fond memories of School 3 Playground and the St. Rocco's Feast, which was featured in the August issue. The Feast brought back many memories for Minnie especially the little fluted paper cups of lemon ice.

Her cousin Mary Gargano lived across the street from the playground on South 7th Street. Gargano is remembered as the long time secretary for Judge LaCorte. Her grandparents, Caterina and Miguel Labriola lived in Peterstown on Fourth Avenue near John Street. Miguel worked in construction and built the first wooden church of St. Anthony's where classes were taught on the first floor and masses were held on the second. This building was on Centre Street prior to

(right, l-r) Minnie's sister Rose was a registered nurse and enlisted in the Navy Nurse Corps.



the present brick building.

Minnie, the oldest of six children, was born on May 27, 1914 in the brick corner house on Pearl Street close to South Broad Street near St. Elizabeth Hospital by midwife delivery.

All six children in her family were baptized, made First Holy Communion and Confirmed in St. Anthony's Church. All four brothers were altar boys under the supervision of Brother Francis and the pastor at the time was Father Ruvolo. Minnie was married in the "new" church, on the corner of Third Avenue in 1935.

Minnie's memories are clear and precise. Though times may have been tough there was much joy to be had in dealing with them as part of a supportive community. Her experiences were similar to those of other residents. In her eyes everyone was very poor. Her father worked part-time everyday after his full time job with the Rail Road refusing outside relief.

In 1927 the family moved to a brick house at 848 E. Jersey Street (behind 847 Cross St.) next door to the Orsini family. Minnie can speak volumes about the times she spent there with her wonderful family and friends.

As the oldest child, every Saturday Minnie went with her mother to carry produce bundles from the farmer's market. They usually went in late afternoon because prices were cheaper. They also bought live chickens from the poultry man and brought them home in a bag with its head sticking out. With no car, the family had to walk everywhere.

She remembers, many times, going to Janucci's Butcher for "skin beef for soup", carrying her mother's message to "Tell him to give you extra bone." Weinstein's grocery store smelled like "Little Italy" from the garlic and spices. Minnie has fond memories of helping her dad with his annual task of making wine.

Minnie's siblings all served in the service with one, Charles, making the ultimate sacrifice. Thier service is what she is most proud of.

In the middle of the Depression, her brother Charles, who was unemployed, joined the Navy in 1940. Pearl Harbor was struck with a sneak attack on December 7, 1941 while Charles was on duty with the ship Jacob Jones on the east coast. In February 1942 it was bombed by Germans and sunk off Cape May, N.J. 14 miles from shore, only 13 survived. Charles was recognized as the first casualty from Elizabeth so early in the WWII.

Mastapeter's Funeral Home on Amity Street in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth conducted a military service at no cost at St. Anthony's Church where Charles served as an altar boy.

Minnie was married at that time with two children. One by one, her three brothers and sister enlisted in various services between the Marines, Navy and Nurse Corps, leaving their Gold Star mom alone. A government yellow flag hung in her mom's window with a Gold Star in the center, and four blue stars around it, representing her five children who served. 🇺🇸

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# ELIZABETH RIDERS JOIN FORCES WITH KENILWORTH PBA

Hundreds of officers and friends from across the state turned out for the fifth annual Kenilworth P.B.A. #135 Motorcycle Run held on Saturday, September 20th. The proceeds benefited the Valerie Fund in memoriam of 2 year old August "Guzzy" Villanti of Kenilworth who became an un-official member of the Kenilworth Police.

The annual fundraiser raises money for police causes and Kenilworth families. They benefited the "Children's Miracle Network", The McElroy Family, the family of "Big Joe" Beviano, the Concerns of Police Survivors and the New Jersey PBA who raised money for a 77-year-old widow of a Rahway police officer to repay a civil judgement to the man she believed killed her husband.

The Kenilworth officers decided on the beneficiary of this year's run when they heard of "Guzzy" from his grandmother Elizabeth "Liz" McCormick who worked in the Kenilworth Diner. Liz and her husband Richard had been raising their grandson almost since birth. Guzzy was in and out of chemotherapy outpatient treatment and had endured numerous surgeries.

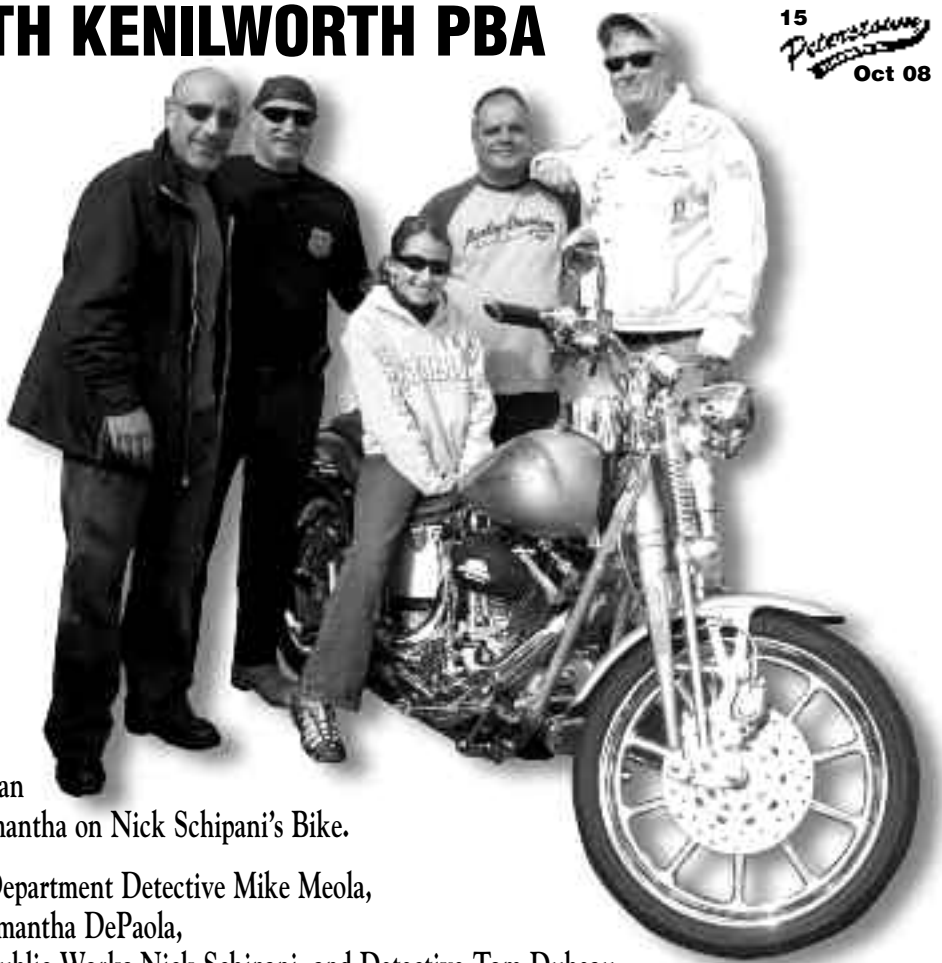
"We all kind of adopted him" said patrolman Michael Devlin. When he passed away Captain Scott Philips made phone calls countywide to make sure he had a full police send off including motorcycles and a police procession which led from his funeral mass to his final resting place in the Hollywood Memorial Park.

Guzzy was diagnosed at birth with Neuroblastoma which is a form of brain cancer that occurs in infants and young children. He succumbed to the disease in July at the age of 2 years and 2 months. His grandmother asked that the proceeds from the Motorcycle Run benefit the Valerie Fund in his name.

The Valerie Fund's mission is to provide support for the comprehensive health care of children with cancer and blood disorders. To learn more about the Valerie Fund please visit [www.thevaleriefund.org](http://www.thevaleriefund.org).



(above) Elizabeth PD Patrolman Frank DePaola's daughter Samantha on Nick Schipani's Bike.



(above, l-r) Elizabeth Police Department Detective Mike Meola, Patrolman Frank DePaola, Samantha DePaola, Superintendent of Elizabeth Public Works Nick Schipani, and Detective Tom Dubeau.



(left, l-r) Police from all over participated. The motorcycle police duties were to maintain a safe ride which lasts about 1.5 hours. Sgt. Allan Attansio, Mountainside PD; Sgt. Bill Hughes, Patrolman Rous Shortway, Morris County Park Police; Sgt. Jason Rodgers, Westfield PD; Investigator Angel Padila, Linden PD, Vincent Nardone, Essex County Prosecutors Office and Ptrl. Michael Devlin, Kenilworth PD.

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# JACOBSON'S NEARING 60 YEARS IN BUSINESS



(above) Allen and Pat display one of those new fangled microwave ovens first introduced by Amana in 1967.



(above, l-r) Pat, Linda, Tarek, Linda's son, Allen.

Nathan and Mae Jacobson opened Jacobson's Distribution Company in December 1949. Originally the business was called Jacobson's Tire and Battery Company because in addition to selling TV's and appliances it also sold auto parts. The business stopped selling auto parts years ago and has concentrated on home appliances and TV's while adding bedding to the mix. Jacobson's is still at the same location, still family owned and operated and still the most successful distributor in the area.

Upon their retirement in 1975, Nathan and Mae passed the business on to their son Allen.

There is no secret to Jacobson's success. All one has to do is walk in to the show room and notice the vintage interior decorating. Shoppers are greeted with original tin ceiling tiles, dated wood paneling and scuffed floor tiles. It has never been Jacobson's style to try to impress its customers with superficial amenities but with the lowest warehouse to customer prices around.

By keeping his overhead low Jacobson's can offer

discounted prices and concentrate more on service. For instance they can offer free delivery on appliances or free assembly of gas grills. When competing with the big mega-stores Jacobson's service can not be matched.

For those shopping strictly for the lowest price Jacobson's guarantees to be the lowest of any authorized dealer. If he doesn't have the lowest price already Allen will gladly beat any offer on any item he carries.

What makes Jacobson's operation unique is the size of his warehouse that is on premises at 725 Rahway Avenue and his staff. Allen is able to buy in bulk and keep a large inventory. A savings that is passed on to the consumer. He maintains his own delivery and warehouse staff where others must pay third party services.

Jacobson's also carries a wider variety of brands than most appliance stores. Customers have hands on access to a large selection of appliances that fill a variety of needs in price and size, from apartment dwellers to homeowners. Jacobson's is also the favorite for many home remodeling and building professionals.

The seasoned decor of the store is accompanied by a sales staff that matches in longevity. Pat Muscaritolo has been a sales person for Jacobson's an astounding 31 years. Ken Gartner clocks in at 26 years and newcomer Tarek Metwally has 14 years under his belt. The combined experience of the staff and Allen adds to the customer's feeling of security of knowing that they are getting expert advice and that they can count on continued support even after the sale is made.

The consistency of good service at low prices over the years is the reason for the loyalty that customers have shown Jacobson's. Allen has literally sold appliances to families spanning four generations. Return and referral business is a testimony to the value he offers. No one lasts for sixty years in business without an impeccable reputation of customer satisfaction. 🍷



(above, l-r) Pat, Linda, Tarek, Linda's son, Allen Jacobson and Allen from a 1993 newspaper clipping.

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(above, left, right) Jacobson's store front from 1959 and 2009. Being located in a designated Urban Enterprise Zone allows Jacobson's to charge only 3 1/2% sales tax, an additional savings for the customer.



(right) Allen Jacobson stands in his no-frills showroom which is filled with the newest models of home appliances and the latest in flat-screen TVs.

(above, l-r) Tarek Metwally, Pat Muscaritolo and Ken Gartner combine for 71 years of employment at Jacobson's.



(right) No place in New Jersey is too far for Jacobson's crackerjack delivery team, Will Cruces and Alex Class.

(right) Nicole Greiff is part of Jacobson's office staff that focuses on customer satisfaction.



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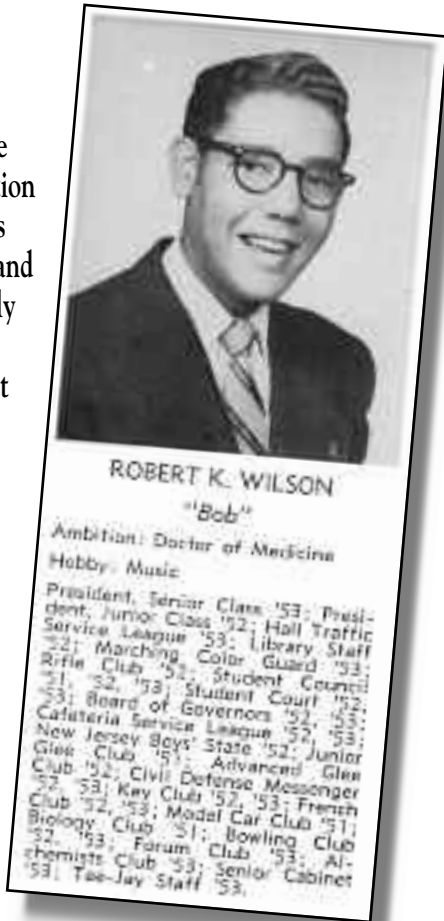
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# THOMAS JEFFERSON H.S. CLASS OF 1953 55th CLASS REUNION

(right) Dr. Bob Wilson from the Peterstown section of Elizabeth was class president and voted most likely to succeed. Bob became a dentist and is now deceased.



Every five years the Thomas Jefferson H.S. Class of 1953 holds a class reunion. Their latest was held on September 11, 2008 at the Atlantic Highlands' Beacon Hill Country Club. Of the 247 graduates 43 attended the reunion. There are 53 known deceased members.

Five came from out of state, Zoltan Olah travelled the furthest from Houston Texas. Gerry Grabcheski and Dick Kochanski are from Florida, Jack McCarthy is from Missouri and Perry DePinho hopped up from Delaware.

The event even included one of the classes past teachers in attendance. Bob Coulter taught math and was also the school' soccer coach. In 1953, the senior

year for this class, Coulter lead The Minutemen to a state championship.

Back in the day Jeff was an all boys school and the class' quinquennial reunion is a stag party. But there are opportunities where the classmates get together with their wives and partners. In June of 2009 Herm Kassel will generously host a party for his classmates and guests at his home in Toms River.

Interested parties can contact the following for more information:

Jack Padavano 732-929-1666 - john668@netzero.com  
 or Don Schiessl 908-353-0867 - dasretired@aol.com.

(right) The basketball squad of Miss Ruth Glasier's homeroom were intermural champs two years in a row. (standing, l-r) Don Schiessl, Melvin Eggers and Bob Morton. (kneeling, l-r) Howard McCarthy, Michael Jachim and Carl "Doc" Corsentino.



(far right) The team reenacted their 1953 winning pose, sans Morton, at their 1973 reunion.



(above, kneeling, l-r) Jack Padavano, Ron Posyton, Jack McCarthy, Joe Pecario, Mel Eggers, Ed Obuch, Tony Chiodo, Ed Prokopik, Pat Topetro, Jack Lynch, Frank Hauck. (standing, l-r) - Don Schiessl, Perry DePinho, Warren Hecht, Marty Korab, Menotti Lombardi, Al Fischer, Gerry Grabcheski, Bill Silverman, John Occipinti, Rich Cooper, Richie Timler, Henry Verdini, Zoltan Olah, Bob Coulter (Teacher), Dick Oswald, Bill Romanow, Frank Tropicchio, Bob Morton, Paul Jones, Howard Shershinger, Bob Barlow. Herm Kassel, Bob Berry, Dick Kochanski, Charley Coniglio, Joe Kazowski, Nick Netta, Butch Lospinoso, Carl Corsentino, Jack Lynch, Sandy Osofsky, Larry Pargot, Ken Brown.

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# CLASS REUNIONS AROUND

## ST. ANTHONY'S CLASS OF '62

Jerry Oriscello, Frank Malta and Mike Minitelli are spearheading a 45 year grammar school class reunion and are looking for classmates. If you are one, please call Mike at 908-687-5213 or Frank at 908-355-1176.

## ST. ANTHONY'S CLASS OF '65.

Still in the planning stages. Members of the class can call Debbie Steele at 908-245-6801 or email her at debhar@comcast.net and leaving contact information.

## ELIZABETH H.S. CLASS OF '78

Reunion Date: Saturday, November 29, 2008  
Please send us current names & addresses of classmates.  
E-Mail: EHSClassof78@aol.com or call 908-820-3808.

## ROSELLE CATHOLIC AND GIRLS CATHOLIC CLASSES OF '78

Saturday, November 29, 2008 at the Kenilworth Inn. For info email: RCGC78reunion@yahoo.com

Leave contact info and if you have interest in playing Golf the day before. Rooms are reserved for attendees if you would like to book one.

## ST. ANTHONY'S CLASS OF '79.

Contacts Gina (Triola) Zagar at 732-310-7411, or email her at gmtriola@comcast.net, or you can contact Michele (Migliaccio) Miller at 908-463-1683, or email her at jmillertravel@yahoo.com.

Please leave all contact information and spread the word to other classmates.

# SPIRITO'S IS THE PLACE TO REUNITE

When Lisa (Lopes) Hewson was visiting from California, her lifelong friends got together at Spirito's for dinner. They ate, laughed and reminisced about growing up in the neighborhood.

The group has stayed in close contact with each other

even though they are separated by a few thousand miles.

The party expanded to include other friends like Sally Ferry, who works in Spirito's and Peter and Rose Casano who happened to be having dinner there at the same time. The three took advantage of the photo op.

It is possible to have an impromptu reunion just showing up at Spirito's.



(above, l-r) Cheryl Feller, Lisa Hewson, Angel Nase, Karen Cicalese and Helen Cortese.



(above, l-r) Sally Ferry, Rose Casano, Linda Colletti and Peter Casano.

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 <b>ROSELLE \$229,000</b> <b>Fenced-yard Values</b> Sun-dappled street enhances this well-kept 3BR Cape Cod. This attractive home boasts carpeting with HW flooring. Family rooms, thermal glass, many built-ins. Pantry, eating bar. Garage. Call for more details 908-245-9301	 <b>ROSELLE \$259,900</b> <b>Attractive Ranch</b> Enjoy a warm welcome in this 3BR/2 BA residence near public transportation. This promising home features FDR. Fin bmst. High ceilings, storm windows, Patio, well maintained. Call for more details 908-245-9301	 <b>HILLSIDE \$299,999</b> <b>A Smart buy, Great Life!</b> Large split level home renovated on 2006, 4 Bedrm, 3 Baths, Living Rm & Dining Rm combo. Finished Bsm. Garage. Call for more details 908-245-9301	 <b>FRANKLIN \$310,000</b> <b>Relaxed Townhouse Life</b> You must not miss this friendly 3 BR/2 BA charmer in ideal condition. Fine residence offering ceramic tile BA, extra large closets and track lighting. Gas fplc. Garage. Light & airy plan. Call for more details 908-245-9301	 <b>UNION \$349,900</b> <b>Multi-Family</b> GREAT RENTAL PROPERTY! 4 Bedrm, 2 Bath. Totally Remodeled Kit & Bath (both flrs) All H/W Flrs - New Furnace & HW Htr! Walk to public trans, 2 blks to Rt. 24 & 78. LOW TAXES! Call for more details 908-245-9301	 <b>HILLSIDE \$390,000</b> <b>Multi-Family Investment</b> 7BR/4 baths. Private drive. Separate apt. airy open floorplan, large rooms, back staircase, Exercise room, high ceilings, newer windows. Hardwood & tile flooring, track lighting, Jacuzzi, garage, Call for more details 908-245-9301

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**CHECK YOUR ROOF BEFORE WINTER ARRIVES**

These are all signs of an aged or improperly installed roof, which causes drainage, higher energy bills, and will also lessen the market value of your home.

- Shingles are rotted, accumulating algae or moss
- Soiled & stained roofs may breed pollutants, vegetation fungus & algae
- Missing, cracked & curling roofs may cause structural damage & leaks
- Roofing decay may be caused by poor attic ventilation
- Blistering & peeling paint may be caused by moisture & humidity
- Ceiling has cracked paint, discoloration, rotting, leaks, or peeling in the wallpaper.
- Excess amount of debris or loose roofing granules causing drainage to be blocked
- High home energy costs may be caused by poor roof insulation

If a roof needs to be replaced it should be done before the winter arrives. Winter weather can cause damage to the rest of the house if ice and snow is allowed to pass through.

If it is inevitable that a roof would need replacing it is better to do it sooner than later. This decision would avoid additional damage and be more cost effective since material costs will be rising.

If you are not sure if you need your roof replaced call a roofing contractor for an evaluation. Some contractors charge for estimates but you can find others that offer free estimates.

There are many options when choosing a roof. It would be impossible for the average homeowner to know all the technical aspects that go into replacing a roof. At the very least, though, the homeowner should be presented with the pros and cons of each option.

Some contractors offer only a small selection of shingles and may suggest a certain brand, not because it is the best for your home or budget, but because it is most convenient and profitable for them. The home owner should know the many different qualities of shingles before making a selection.

Home owners should have the type of roofing material chosen written on the contract. The shingle packaging should be available and easily checked against the brand that is on the contract.

The following should also be part of every quality roof replacement.

- A leak Barrier
- Roof Decking Protection
- Quality Shingles
- Efficient Attic Ventilation
- Ridge Cap Shingles

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