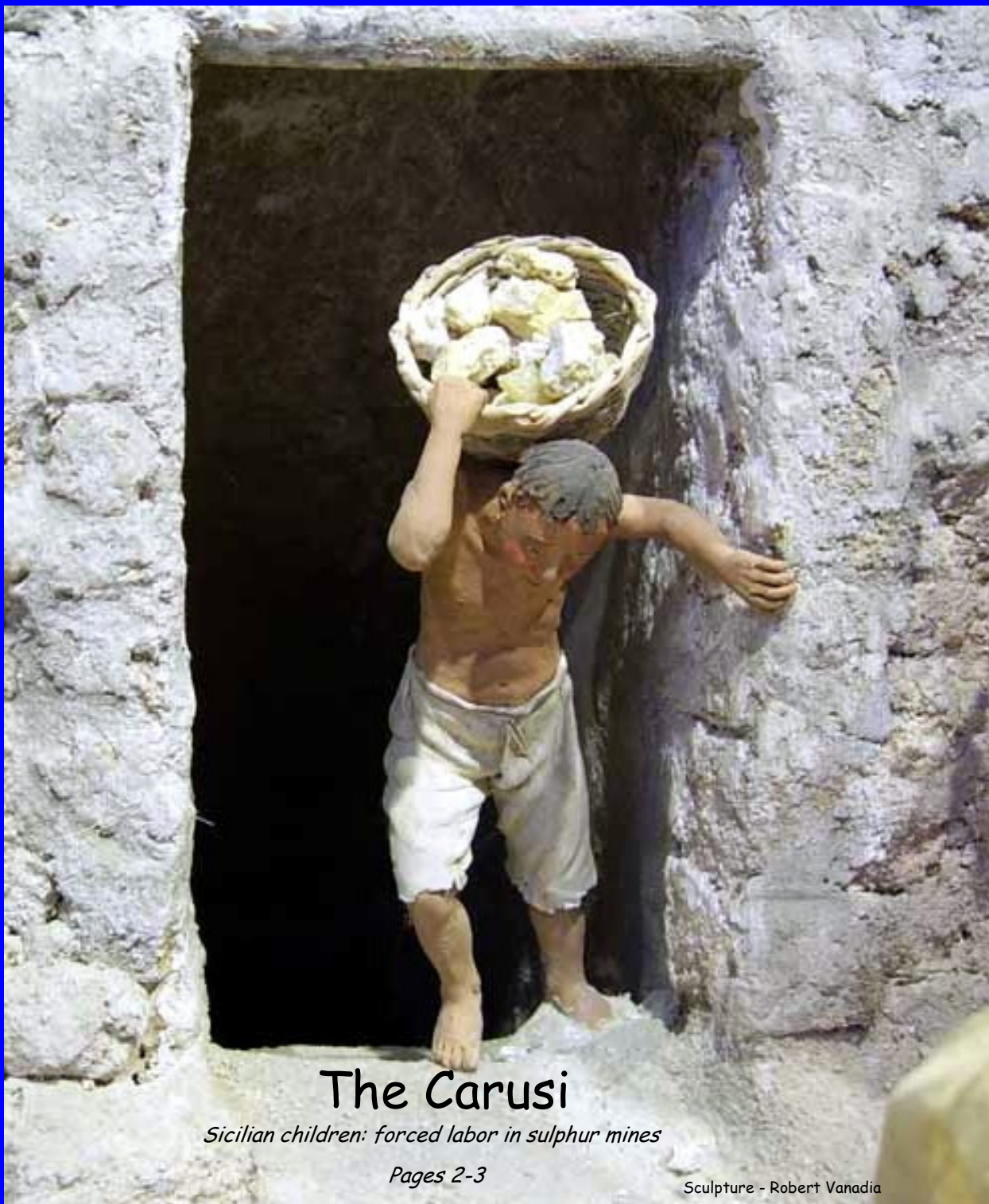


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The Carusi

Sicilian children: forced labor in sulphur mines

Pages 2-3

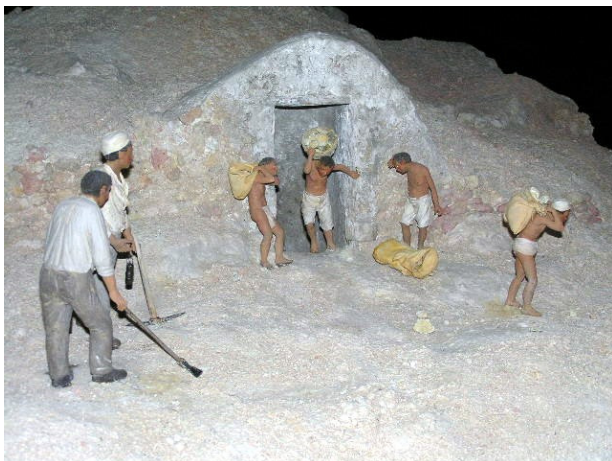
Sculpture - Robert Vanadia

John L Stoddard was born in Brookline Mass. April 24, 1850. He graduated at Williams College, as valedictorian of his class, in 1871, and then studied theology for two years at Yale Divinity School. He began traveling around the world in 1874 turning his experiences into a series of popular lectures delivered throughout North America. These lectures were periodically published in book form as *John L Stoddard's Lectures* and eventually numbered ten volumes and five supplements (1897-1898). The books include numerous illustrations derived from the immense catalog of photographs taken by Stoddard. (see pages 4 & 5)

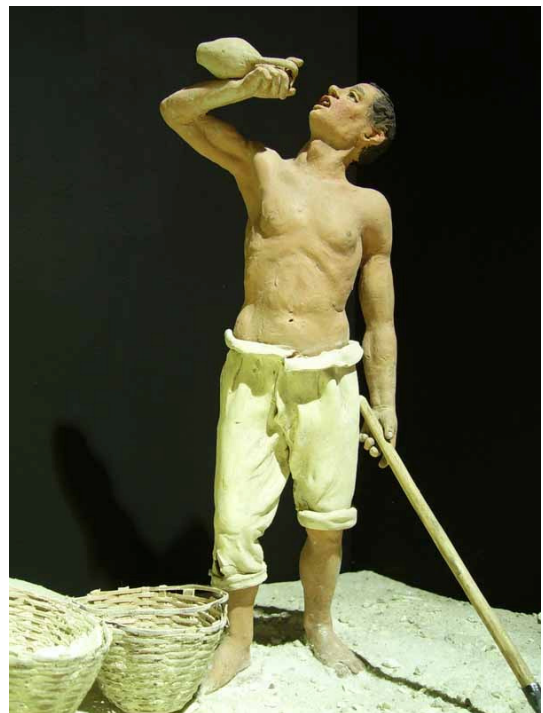
The following excerpt is from his book, *Supplemental Volume 4, Sicily, Genoa, a drive through the Engadine*. It stresses the agonizing life led by Sicilian children (*carusi*), who were forced to work the sulphur mines.

The region lying between Castrogiovanni and Girgenti, Sicily might be called the Yellow Country, for practically the only exportation from this portion of Trinacria (Sicily) is sulphur. One sees innumerable freight cars filled with amber blocks of it, and frequently the station platforms and the rails are covered with its yellow dust.

The importance of this industry to the country will be seen from the fact that out of the five hundred thousand tons of sulphur annually necessary for the world's consumption, no less than four hundred thousand (or four fifths of the whole amount) are now produced in Sicily. One might conclude from this that sulphur mining here would be remunerative. But now that sulphur can be readily extracted, and sulphuric acid can be easily made from iron pyrites, keen competition has reduced the business to a painful struggle for existence. Of course the problem is how to reduce to a minimum the cost of its production. The mines are practically all alike.



Steep, rock-hewn steps descend to depths at which the heat resembles that of a furnace, and nauseating odors make one's breathing difficult. The miners work below in a temperature of over one hundred degrees Fahrenheit, and earn for this exhausting labor about forty cents a day. But since their employer usually pays them only by the month or quarter, they are obliged meanwhile to live on credit at the manager's store. This means, of course, that owing to exorbitant charges and excessive rates of interest, the men have little or nothing finally to show for their unhealthy toil.



But even this expenditure must be materially lessened! Accordingly, the managers of the mines employ a multitude of wretched children, who are virtually slaves, having been sold by their parents to the overseers for fifty or sixty dollars apiece, when eight or nine years old. The agonizing life led by these children, who are called *carusi*, is said by those who have investigated their condition to be something horrible. Their duty is to bring to the surface sacks or baskets of the excavated ore, and up the steep and arduous ascent these youthful martyrs toil with well-nigh naked bodies, panting breath, and trembling limbs, looking like living skeletons,

as, bathed in sweat, they mount the steps which are too high for their small legs. The wage which they receive for this is ten cents for twelve hours' labor! Theoretically, when they have thus worked off the money paid for them, they are free to go; but usually many years of almost insupportable suffering must be endured before that goal is reached, and during that long interval a large proportion of them die, or become physical wrecks. I saw a number of these sulphur mines from a distance, but I confess I did not have the heart to look upon the misery which a descent into those infernos would have certainly revealed. It was bad enough to hear descriptions of it from a man who had repeatedly visited the region, and explored it thoroughly. Yet, to confirm his statements, I quote from a report made on this subject by Signor Adolf Rossi, of the Roman "Tribuna," who with a member of the Italian Parliament made, a few years ago, a visit to one of these mines employing thirteen hundred laborers. He says:

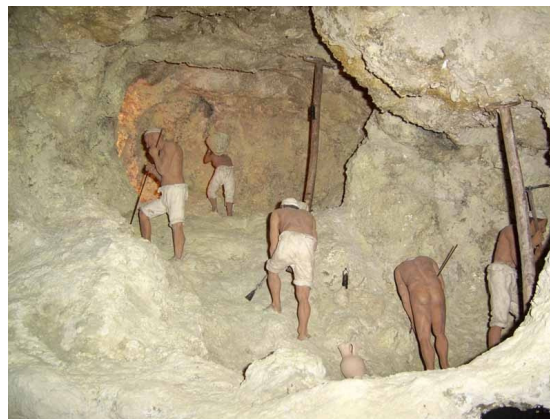
"We began the descent, stooping over and holding with our hands to the vaulted roof. The steps, dug in the soil, are very irregular, sometimes low, sometimes high, now worn away, now dry and dusty, sometimes wet and slippery. We had gone a few yards when we distinguished a faint light. It came from the lamps of a few *carusi* who were coming up, bending under their loads of sulphur. Then we heard their sighs of anguish, growing more distinct as they drew nearer to us,—the sighs of young children scarcely able to go forward, yet obliged to stagger on for fear that the miner should come to beat them with his stick, or burn their legs with his lamp. De Felice and I felt our hearts bursting, as we stepped to one side to let this procession of pariahs pass. As we saw them, bent under their burdens, trembling on their unsteady legs, pity so seized on

us that we ourselves wept like two children. We stopped some of them, and saw for ourselves that they had the skin of their shoulders and spines all the way down the back either red and raw, or callous where it had been



abraded; and there were many scars and bruises. Farther on, in a gallery where the steps were higher and more difficult, we came on another procession of these *carusi*, bending under their terrible loads, which are from sixty to one hundred and fifty pounds; enough, one would think, to kill a child by exhaustion. I heard one say, weeping, to a companion, 'I can go on no more; I must let the sack fall.' At a third turn there was another,

with his burden on the ground. He wept as he crouched beside it. He had fair hair and blue eyes; but the eyes were reddened with weeping, and the tears fell over pale, hollow cheeks. In my career as a journalist I have seen men shot, hanged, lynched, and massacred; I have seen horrors of every kind and deaths in every way; but I have seen nothing which affected me like this."



In the city of Girgenti, but a few miles from these sulphur mines, a young man of refined appearance, gentle manners, and appealing eyes begged me to take him with me, and to let him work for me in even the most menial capacity. For this he asked no wages whatsoever, but said that he would be both

grateful and contented to have sufficient food, some clothing, and a decent 'home. In answer to inquiries, he told me, quite as a matter of course and as a thing too common to be mentioned with surprise, that many people in the neighborhood annually die of hunger. The character and limits of this sketch of Sicily do not permit me to dwell further on this painful subject, or to discuss at length the problem of such awful poverty. But since it positively is not due to drunkenness, or even to idleness, the blame must lie far more with the Government than with the governed.



An old Sicilian



Young Sicily



A vendor of jars



Sicilian Goatherds



Sun-protected street merchants



A characteristic Palermo scene



Sicilian working girls



Bird sellers and fortune tellers: Palermo

A story of a local man's insistence that a painting stored under his sofa was from Renaissance Italy; and how this painting, newly restored, could be worth more than \$300,000,000.

It has been the talk of the town. It has made international news. It has travelled by ship, by cart, by train, and by airplane. It has now made its way from Buffalo to the walls of a noble 16th century mansion in Rome, polished and presented for the world to see.

A painting masterpiece of the Pieta from the Italian Renaissance belongs to Kenmore resident Martin Kober. Both the painting and the efforts of its owner have finally been honored acclaim at an exhibition in Rome organized and sponsored by the Rome Foundation, a philanthropy that supports the development of Health, Scientific Research, Art and Culture in Italy.

In one of the biggest retrospectives dedicated to Renaissance Art in Rome, the Rome Foundation has staged an exhibition entitled "The Renaissance in Rome: The Inspiration of Michelangelo and Raphael" inside the Palazzo Sciarra, a noble mansion from the 16th Century. The Sciarra family is fittingly a branch of the Colonna family, which, by course of its display, thus returns the painting to its derivation. The painting is believed to have once belonged to Vittoria Colonna, an Italian noble woman from the 16th

century and dear friend of Michelangelo. The exhibition displays more than 170 works, one of which is the Pieta owned by Kober. It is given a prominent display accompanied by a documentary video featuring Kober alongside a team of restorers deftly



cleaning years of damage and discoloration on the surface caused by previous shoddy restorations having been performed long before it belonged to the Kober family.

The painting has been in the Kober family for about 120 years, but it was only in the past 5 years that it got such serious attention thanks to Antonio Forcellino, a highly respected Italian historian, writer and Art restorer, who agreed to meet Kober and the wood panel *(painting was executed on a 19 x 25*

inch panel of spruce wood carried out in mixed media, tempera/oil on light thin plaster) in 2008. Prior to that, Art History professors from Columbia University, SUNY Buffalo, and New York University's Institute of Fine Arts had all undermined the importance of the painting and believe it to be a copy of a Michelangelo sketch of the same subject. There is indeed an identical drawing of the painting by Michelangelo that belongs to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston that features Mary with her perished son fallen in her lap, flanked by two muscular angels on each side. Kober made a recent claim that scholarship will soon prove that both the sketch and the painting were carried out by Michelangelo as gifts for Colonna, the latter being a special request from the noble woman because she wanted a version in color.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the National Museum in Washington have also dismissed Kober's claims that the painting is an original Michelangelo. Kober stressed that those who dispute the painting have neglected to see it in person.

Among those who have seen it and believe it are the curators of the exhibition at the Rome Foundation, Maria Grazia Bernardini and Marco Bussaglio. Each of them said that if the painting is not directly by the hand of Michelangelo, it is, undeniably, by someone in his close circle. They could not confirm at this mo-

ment in time its attribution to Michelangelo, but they could confirm whose painting it was not and dispute any former claims attributing the painting to someone else. The curators both stated that the painting is of great interest for it was executed by a painter of great quality, on a very expensive piece of wood, with highly advanced philosophical stylistic elements such as the deepness in the dark background, evoking the gospel account of the passion that the sky became dark and midday. For this reason, the curators in corroboration with the Rome Foundation, the Central Institute of Restoration in Rome, and ENEA technology were committed to restoring the painting back to its original form.

The curators and the Rome foundation were made aware of the unusual greatness of this piece by Forcellino who travelled 5,000 miles from Italy to Buffalo just to have a look in the spring of 2008. Over the years he has become the main crusader alongside Kober in convincing the art history community of its authenticity even writing a book on the topic entitled *La Pietà Perduta*, recently released in English as *The Lost Michelangelos*. Forcellino was convinced this painting was an original Michelangelo partly based on a discovery of his own. He discovered a wax seal on the back of the painting that had long gone unnoticed by the Kober family. This seal indicated a symbol tied to the family of Ragusa's archbishop in the early 1600s. This discovery heavily supported the process of tracing the painting to a number of people and places before being stored under Kober's couch in

his humble Kenmore home.

A trail of documents suggests this generous gift from Michelangelo to his friend, was re-gifted again and again until Kober himself received it as a gift from his parents 470 years later. Since accumulating a library of his own, Kober was able to trace a letter written by Vittoria Colonna to his painting. The letter acknowledges Michelangelo's gift to her of the painting, and she makes specific descriptions on how the figure of Jesus was painted. The painting was then passed from Colonna to an English cardinal, and eventually on to the archbishop of Ragusa, now in Croatia. It got sold to a noble family in Croatia, who married into a noble German family who passed it on from one German baroness to another. In 1883 the painting was willed from the German baroness to her lady-in-waiting, the sister-in-law of Kober's great-great-grandfather, sent to the United States, and the story continues.

Kober travelled to Italy in the fall of 2011 to watch the painting in the restoration lab in the National Gallery of Ancient Art in Palazzo Barberini as it was being prepared for the October exhibition that finishes in February 2012. He witnessed just 3 weeks of the painting's 6 month restoration process undertaken by Lorenza D'Alessandro. According to D'Alessandro the science behind this painting can lead to some important discoveries. She performed x-ray analysis, infrared reflectography, and stratigraphic investigations on the 19 x 25 inch spruce panel and found what she believes are Michelangelo's true brush strokes that include ana-

tomically perfect body proportions and inventive use of color in its under layers. Yet with all the advanced scientific methods applied to clean and restore paintings, there is still no scientific way of attributing paintings. Accreditation will come from an international consensus made of scholars in multi-disciplinary fields who examine everything from dating the wood panels to archival and documentary evidence. The process could take decades.

Kober hopes that forensics can help him, claiming that a 470 year old finger print from when the paint was wet found on his wooden panel matches another finger print found in Paoline Chapel frescoed by Michelangelo between 1538 and 1540. The Paoline Chapel is in the Vatican Palace and the fingerprint is believed to have been found during the chapel's restoration in 2004.

The Pietà's display in Palazzo Sciarra attracts approximately 500 visitors per day. Based on the fact that the Sistine Chapel attracts more than 20,000 visitors per day and is one of the biggest tourist attractions in the world, one can only wonder how many people may soon be knocking on Kober's door. Here's to hoping this masterpiece will also credit the city of Buffalo and its neighbors the recognition they deserve.

Theresa
Potenza
Home:
Rome Italy





Dr. Maria Runfola with infant student

How many people do you know who (1) were raised on Trenton Avenue near Maryland Street deep in the heart of Buffalo's West Side; (2) had her first piano recital at age five; (3) played with the Buffalo Philharmonic at age nine; (4) was the president of the first graduating class of Holy Cross School; (5) attended Villa Maria High Academy where she portrayed Jesus Christ in the Easter Pageant Play and

delivered her lines in Polish! and (6) is a published author, a much in demand speaker, an internationally renowned teacher and authority on how and when children develop music aptitude? I know one, and I believe she is unique - Dr. Maria Runfola, Associate Professor and Music Program Director at the University at Buffalo. Dr. Runfola attended Nazereth College, the Eastman School of Music, and the University at Buffalo where she received her PhD in music education. Her work in developing appropriate music activities for pre-k students is universally lauded. Yet, for all her success, Dr. Runfola remains the smart, self-effacing and hardworking person I met in 1950 when we were fourth-graders together at Holy Cross School.

Maria was one of the favorites of the Felician nuns who taught there. She was respected for her brains and diligence, but even more importantly, for her musical talent, a talent so valued by the Felicians. Maria won a scholarship to Villa Maria Academy and was the first of a number of Holy Cross students who would make the trek to Buffalo's East Side to attend Villa Maria. She has devoted her life to music education, with a particular interest in early childhood arts education and the child singing voice.

Now she is repaying her debt to those sisters with whom she bonded so many years ago by helping to establish a collaborative project between the University at Buffalo and Villa Maria College, which employs the methods and theories advocated by Dr. Runfola. The program reaches out to very young children (as young as three weeks!) to introduce them to music and to lay the groundwork for lifelong participation in mu-

sic.

I had not spoken to Dr. Runfola in nearly 60 years, from the time we graduated from Holy Cross in 1954, until very recently. I was searching for a music program that might be appropriate for my then 17-month old grandson (Salvatore, by the way) and now, I'm looking forward to my new born granddaughter, Juliana, being introduced to music as well. I had purchased my grandson a number of CDs and instructed his parents to play them whenever he was going to sleep: Beethoven, Bach and Mozart. I guess I was hoping that it might somehow foster his love and appreciation of music, even if he developed no particular talent for performing. Recently, I heard his parents singing the ABC song with him, and, to my amazement, he could carry a tune and imitate the sounds he heard. He has become very interested in a toy that plays the ABC song and that excited me.

As I went about my search, I found a music program offered at Villa Maria College in conjunction with UB that catered to very young children. I investigated, and lo and behold, Maria Runfola is an integral part of that program. I recollected that Maria was always extremely musically inclined and decided to Google her to ask her about the program. It was amazing. Even though we have not seen or spoken to one

another for so many years, we laughed as we recalled former classmates and recounted stories of our classroom days. What would people think - 54 students in one classroom? Somehow we learned and learned well, thanks to the efforts of a remarkable Felician Sister Mary Redempta, who was our teacher for five years, from 4th through 8th grade. After our conversation ended, I knew Maria's story must be shared

She is a role model and an inspiration, a great teacher and administrator who is doing so much to help in the total education of our children. We are blessed to have Dr. Maria Runfola living and working in Buffalo, New York.

Editor's Note: You may be interested in Dr. Runfola's newest book: TIPS The Child Voice 2nd Edition published by Rowman and Littlefield. It can be purchased from Rowman and Littlefield Publishing, MENC: The National Association for Music Education and many other vendors.



Maria Runfola, 4 years old, studying piano

A Sicilian Fable

Giuseppe and Rosa were very poor. They were contadini, sharecroppers who were allowed to till the land of a padrone, keeping only a small portion of the fruits of their labors to feed themselves, while giving the lion's share of the crops to their landlord. They lived in a tiny wooden hut near a small town in Sicily. The name of the town, "Fiumefriddu", means "cold river", and the hut was on the banks of that river.

It was the early seventeenth century. One night, Rosa lamented to Giuseppe, "Here we live in this miserable hut, sleeping on straw on this dirt floor, like animals. If we had a decent bed, 'nu littu, I could at least sleep comfortably after the day's labor."

Giuseppe scoffed, "And where would we get a bed? We haven't a pignata pirisciare, nor a stool to sit on."



She retorted "Nu maritu afettuosu (a loving husband) would find a way to get us a bed."

Thereafter, Rosa could not repress her wish for a bed, and every day, she would hound Giuseppe ~ "a bed, a bed!" ~ morning, noon and night.

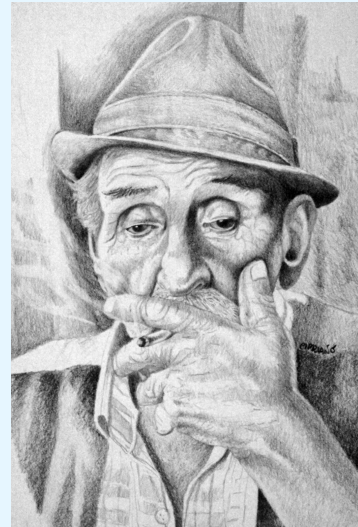
Finally, Giuseppe could take no more. One day when Rosa was working the far side of the fields, he began to strip boards from one side of the hut. He took them out back to a dark grove of trees, where he began sawing and pounding.

That night, Rosa had new complaints. "You're not doing your fair share of the hoeing and planting. I finished twice as many rows as you did today! I'm exhausted, and not only must I sleep on straw, now

there's a pirtusu, a hole on the wall, and the wind from that cold river freezes my coscie!"

It went on that way for a week. The hole got bigger and bigger, and Rosa's complaints grew shriller. She was so angry with Giuseppe that she would work in the fields as far away from him as she could. Giuseppe seemed to be wasting away with concern. Then, one late afternoon while Rosa was trudging back towards the hut, Giuseppe intercepted her and said "Come with me to the grove ~ I have a surprise."

When they entered the grove, Rosa couldn't believe her eyes. There beneath the trees was a magnificent four-poster bed, hung with satins and holding a huge feather mattress. Rosa was overcome with joy, and she embraced Giuseppe as they fell into the soft warmth of the bed, and made passionate love.



Afterwards, Rosa asked "But where did you get these fine bed-linens?"

Giuseppe replied "I have sold my share of our food every night, to pay Donna Chidda for the linens."

Rosa stroked the dark, polished wood of the bed, and began to ask "And the wood . . . ?" But just then she looked out of the grove, toward the river, and cried "Our hut – it's gone! What happened to our hut?"

Giuseppe shrugged and, with a sheepish grin, answered: "La froscia unn si fa, senza rumpere l'ova. You can't make an omelet without breaking the eggs!"

Submitted by Angelo Coniglio

Being a first generation Sicilian American, has always filled me with a special kind of pride. My father Gregorio Alaimo was born in Montedoro, and later moved to Serradifalco. My mother Angela Calieri was born in Campobella di Licata.

Mama came to the America of Buffalo, New York in 1910 with her mother Maria Tascarella Calieri. Grandpa Alphonso Calieri was already here, and this strong, determined woman, came with a two-year old child to reunite with him. They went on to have eight more children, one of which died. Papa, a handsome, dashing bachelor, came in 1921 with a sister Vincenzina and her husband Santo Insalaco. They lived with another older sister Angeline Benfanti, who lived next door to my grandparents and my mother on Trenton Avenue.

Mama was 17 years old and papa was 25. Aunt Angeline was their chaperone when they went out. As love would have it, they married and had three daughters, Cologera (Carrie Jacobi), Maria (Mary Palamara) and me, Santina (Sally Vella). Cologera was named for papa's mother, Maria was named for mama's mother, and Santina was named for papa's father, Santo, whose picture graces my living room wall.

My heritage has always meant so much to me. We learned hospitality very young. My friends, new or old, were always made to feel welcome in our home. Many enjoyed my mother's cooking and baking. They still tell me today, how they remember her cream puffs and cookies. When friends or family visited, out came the coffee pot and any delicacy my mother had made. There was always something. Mama always shared her recipes.

Even though "I love you" was not often heard, it was shown in many ways. My parents were always there when I needed them. I thought they were too strict, but later realized, they just cared too much.

My father worked at American Brass for 44 years. On Saturday morning, he became a shoemaker. He turned on the radio to hear Italian music. He then took out his tools and shoe forms to repair soles, heels, and put cleats on our shoes. It didn't bother me so much when I was younger. But when I got older, and went out on Friday nights, the tapping hammer on Sat-

urday morning, was a bit annoying. He knew it. I still have the box and tools. He was a jack of all trades. My sisters said he would cut their hair, he repaired whatever needed repairing, and who can forget the home remedies? Wine and sugar was our cough medicine, milk and butter was for sore throats, beaten egg whites was for sprains and swelling, to name a few.

Then there's the superstitions. To this day I can't put shoes on the table. If I give someone a purse or wallet, there's always a penny in it. When I give someone a sharp object of any kind, I ask for a penny. And then there's malocchio (evil eye). If I say something nice about someone, I say "God Bless", so as not to insinuate envy and evil.

I do remember the societies. Papa and mama belonged to those from their towns in Sicily. My sisters and I even went to a few meetings with my mother and my aunts. It seemed to be mostly older women trying to recruit new members.

During World War 2, my father wrote letters, sent money and clothing to family still in Sicily. I remember that! He would always employ me or my sisters to address the envelopes for him. Often we rewrote the letters, because he thought his handwriting was not legible. He never forgot his family.

My mother didn't have many memories of Sicily, but my father did. He served in the Italian Cavalry during WW I. He lost a younger brother, Vincenzo, in a wagon accident at age 34. My father left his mother, two brothers, and four sisters to come here. My grandfather, Santo, came to America three times but always returned home to Sicily. He died at about 50 years of age before my father came to America. My grandfather's oldest sister, Salvatrice Sciandra, eventually came to America to join a daughter. She lived to be 96. Uncle Sam, my father's brother visited America. As such I was able to meet him. Sadly, it was after my father died. I remember my uncle being a shorter version of my father. You could see the affection in his eyes, whenever he looked at us, trying not to forget our images. Though language was a problem we hugged and

(Continued on page 11)

kissed a lot.

Grandma Cologera died in 1951. I will never forget my father getting the letter; the envelope was lined in black, as is the custom when death occurs. We couldn't listen to the radio for weeks because we were in mourning.

A few cousins from Sicily traveled to Canada during the 50s. Some stayed there, some came here. There was a wedding in Hamilton, Ontario. Second cousins were getting married. The bride came from Sicily. She wore my sister's wedding dress. Because I had just stood up for a friend's wedding and had a dress, I was chosen to be co-mare. My father was thrilled with the short Sicilian man with whom I stood. He couldn't speak English, but asked if

he could write to me.

Life as a first generation Sicilian American has been very memorable. My father taught me about friends, and he had many: Tony Cordaro, Jack Alessandra, Tom Terranova, Joe Angelo, all his compares, and so many more. My mother taught me how to be a good wife and mother and of course she passed along all her wonderful recipes. My parents taught me pride and love for family.

Hopefully, some traditions will not be lost. I know one that isn't. The following poem was written by my 14 - year old granddaughter, Grace, who, in school was asked to write about a family tradition.

Sunday Sauce

By Grace Gerass

All the way upstairs I can smell it.
Torturing my taste buds
Mmm, I can imagine it now
How much longer do we have to wait?

I count the chattering people
Setting the table is my job
Dishes, forks, glasses, can't forget the napkins
They're all accounted for.

My grandmas arrive, with sweets to admire
Sometimes pies, pastries, ice cream, or strudel
Always having more than enough,
Scarcity is never an issue.

We sit down at the table
Empty bellies waiting to be filled
When it's time to make our dishes
We fill them high, finishing every last bite.

Afterwards, everyone is full
And I help clear the table
Empty plates fill the kitchen,
We relax before we indulge in the dessert.

Always adored by the family
On holidays, special occasions, and more
Once made by my grandmas, now by my mom
Someday soon the tradition will pass to me.



Gregorio Alaimo and Angela Calieri

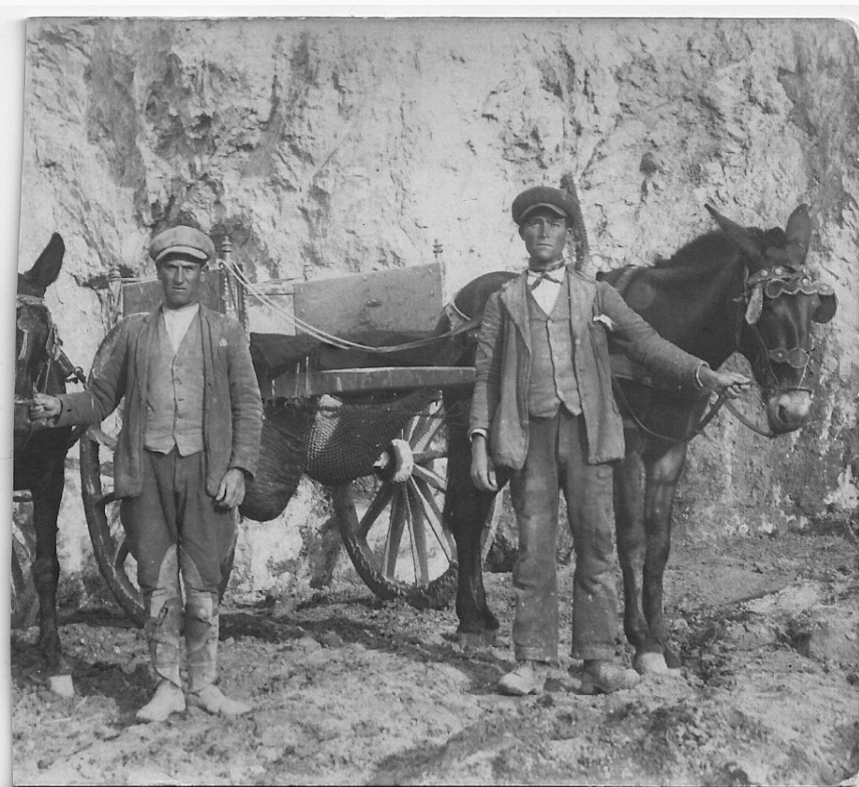


The Calieri family

Alphonso, wife Maria and children Angela, Joseph and Crucifissa



Gregorio Alaimo, Italian Cavalry, WWI



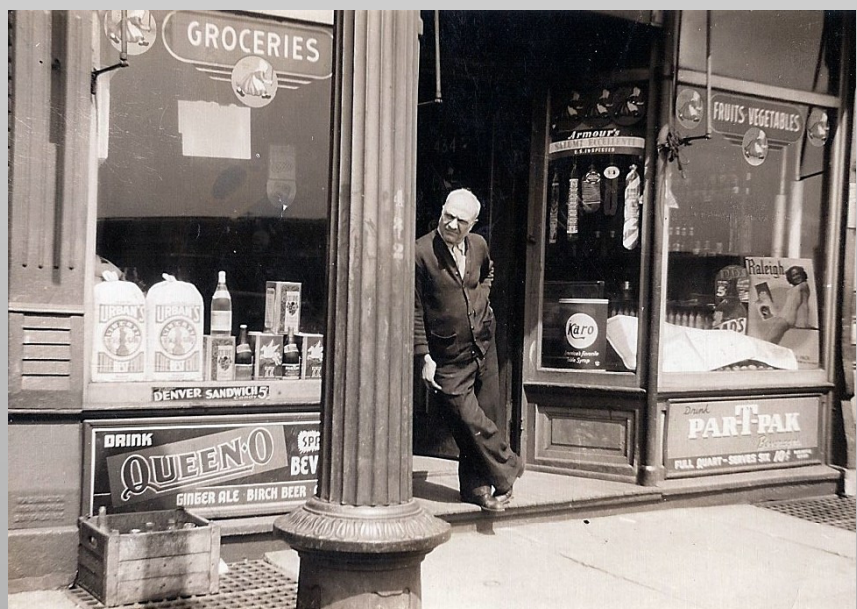
Vincenzino Alaimo on right



Marriage of Frank Perillo Sr. to Carmela Ferraro, April 17, 1948 at St Lucy's Church



Theresa Ferraro and John Losardo wedding at St Lucy's Church



Biagio Perillo in front of his Seneca Street grocery store

Not long ago, I drove down what I call "My West Side," just as I have a thousand times before since I moved away from the old neighborhood in the 60s. I'm not sure exactly what it is that draws me back, especially because things have changed dramatically. Vacant lots have become a staple of the landscape; gone are the many mom and pop grocery stores that seemed to be on every corner, like Bertola's, Bova's, Rotundo's, Mattliano's (and that was one block!); and gone are the wonderful bakeries like Cristiano's, Luigi's, Costanza's, Balistreri's and Amoia's that filled the air of my youth with the aroma of fresh bread baking. It wasn't just any bread, it was NOT what we kids referred to as "American bread." It was bread that we purchased for pennies; fresh, hot out of the oven, crispy and breathing smoke as we cut into it to fill it with freshly picked tomatoes from our grandfathers' gardens, along with a little fresh basil and drizzled with some olive oil and a pinch of salt and pepper, to enjoy the best sandwiches ever, outside under the grape arbors that seemed to be in every West Side backyard.

We kids talked and played cards and told jokes for hours, laughing and exaggerating until the strong voices of our mothers declared that it was time to come inside for dinner. We were all seven to ten years old, so when Mom called, we hustled. It was time for homework and then dinner - or was it dinner and homework? I forget, but it was certainly time for famiglia.

The vacant lots make it obvious just how small these two-story, two-family flats really were, but they never seemed small to us and we never felt particularly cramped or disadvantaged at least not until we watched Ozzie and Harriet. David and Rickey each had their own bedrooms. Few of these houses had garages or even driveways. I recall the great pride these mostly blue-

collar folks derived from getting a new car, not usually a brand-new car, mind you, but a newer car, and how they paraded it around for the whole neighborhood to oooh and ahhh over.

Mostly I remember the meals in our house. We all sat down together at the same time and ate the same meal. It was both simple and delicious and usually predictable as well. Unlike many of our neighbors who had

pasta every single night, we had it only twice a week: on Sundays and Wednesdays. My mother made the best meatballs and she got up early on Sunday morning to make them. I would wake up to that smell - that smell was so special. She always set aside some of the freshly cooked meatballs before putting the rest into the sauce with the beef, pork and sausage. Those meatballs that had been set aside were my Sunday treat. Mom would fry some dough ("pizza frita" as she called it) that had been purchased from the bakery the day before and I delighted in smashing up the meatball onto the fresh dough, fried perfectly. Few things ever tasted that good, then or now. Of course, the memory of my beautiful mother enhances the sweetness of the memories and makes

me yearn for her tender touch.

My West Side home was on the border between Holy Angels parish and Holy Cross parish. It's amusing to say this now, but when I was five or six years old, I thought that the entire world was made up of Sicilians, Italians or Americans. I place Sicilians first because, in my neighborhood, they were dominant in numbers, outnumbering the Italians by 5-1 and the "Americans" by 15 or 20-1. I later discovered that Italy was actually the country and Sicily the province and that Americans were usually half Italian if they lived in our neighborhood. Much later I discovered that there was a whole world out



1944 photo front porch at 497 Seventh St.
Carmine Pignone and Salvatore Martoche

there of different people from different cultures (at that time and that place, that is not how it was). But in those days, the more established families - the ones who had civil service jobs or had risen out of the ranks of laborers, were, for the most part, members of Holy Angels parish and the poorer, later arrivals joined Msgr. Gambino at Holy Cross parish. Still, I thought everybody was Catholic, though I knew some didn't go to church as regularly as they should. There was the occasional Protestant or Evangelical church in the neighborhood and some people I knew would even worship at those churches - but we could not go into a Protestant church for fear of committing a mortal sin.

As soon as we were old enough, we went to the neighborhood "kid sitter," Shea's Niagara Theater. (My big sister took me but luckily she ditched me to be with her friends. My mother would have really let her have it if she knew about it.) Oh my gosh, those Saturday afternoons - two movies, five cartoons, a serial, often involving somebody falling off a cliff to obvious death only to miraculously be saved in the following edition of the serial on the next Saturday. We feasted on popcorn and ice-cream sandwiches, all for 25 cents, and there was often a pie-eating contest where you could win free tickets to go to future performances at the theater.

A really holy family lived right across the street from me. There were two sons who were priests. In those days that was a really big deal. At Holy Cross school, there was always a push to get the boys to consider entering the "Little Sem." Msgr. Gambino liked the idea of leading the diocese in the number of seminarians. Of course, he had to compete with the Polish and

Irish parishes who also had substantial numbers at the seminary.

I recall George Salemi who owned the Escort Shop and Charlie Buffamonti at Superior Mens Shop - they would provide stylish clothing to most of the older boys who often spent all their money from part-time jobs to look cool. I remember wanting a pair of Italian silk tailor-made pants when I got bigger and, sure enough, I got them one day. Those were the best pants I ever owned.

On warm summer evenings we would go for family walks at Front Park or LaSalle Park. We might stop at Ted's under the Peace Bridge for a hot dog or drop off the girls and I might go with my father to the Turf Club or Scotty's, which were across the street from one another on Jersey and Busti Avenue. Oh, did I love those roast beef sandwiches and fava beans. What a treat. I learned to love clams on the half shell at those joints!

The old neighborhood may look different than it used to, but the memories still linger. When I look back 60 or 65 years, I realize it was a poor neighborhood, even then. But all the people who lived there were generally in the same economic boat and they all took great pride in keeping their homes looking

good - it was a special place. I hope and pray that the folks that have moved into my "West Side" will have a chance to realize the fullness and promise of America through their children and grandchildren in the years ahead, just as so many of us have.



**Charles Martoche, at 497 Seventh St.
with children Teresa and Salvatore
1942**



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CONTACT INFORMATION

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ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

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MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

☐ Individual / \$30

☐ Family / \$75

☐ Dual / \$50

☐ Senior / \$25

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$ _____

☐ Yes! I am interested in Italian Lessons.
Please send me more information.

☐ Adult

☐ Intermediate

☐ Children

☐ Advanced

☐ Beginner

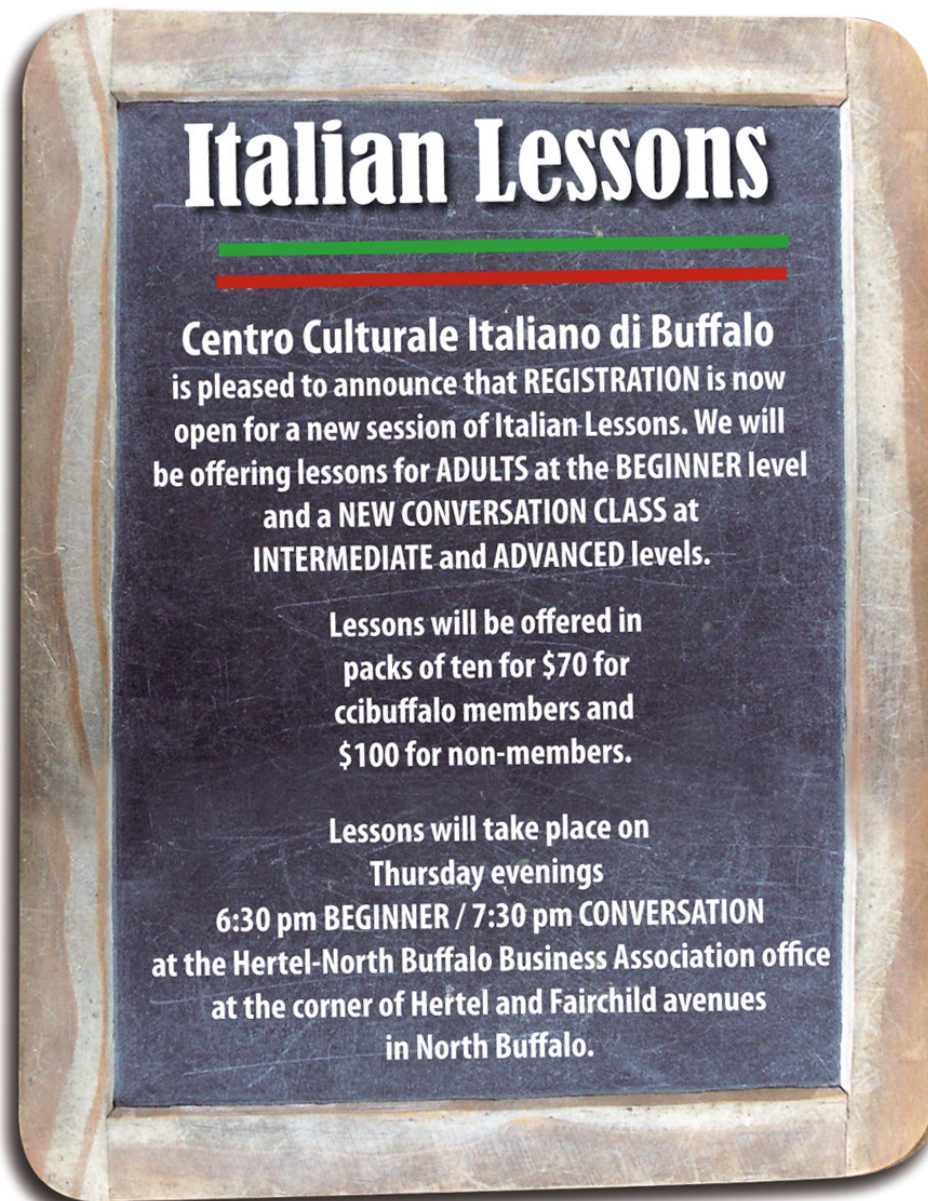
Send completed registration to:

Ms. Maria Aquino
Treasurer, CCIBuffalo
344 Huntington Ave
Buffalo, NY 14214

Membership applications can be downloaded from the Center's website:

<http://www.ccibuffalo.org/>

The Centro Culturale Italiano di Buffalo is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote Italian culture in the Western New York area. The center will be a place where Italians, Italian-Americans, and individuals with an interest in Italian culture may meet and interact. The primary goal of the center is to provide Italian lessons so as to preserve the Italian language in Western New York. The Center will include a library of Italian books, magazines, newspapers, and films as a resource for the community. Live video from RAI International will be available as well as Italian radio. Other planned activities include cooking classes, televised sporting events, guest speakers, and presentations.



For more information check out the Center's website: <http://www.ccibuffalo.org/>

Fifty seven years ago, on September 17, 1954, four young men from Buffalo, New York were inducted into the US Army. Their names were Santo Scime, Angelo Gambino, Joe Valenti and this writer.

Santo and Angelo were married men and on past occasions had been deferred. Joe and I had volunteered for the draft "to get it over with", prior to embarking on legal careers.

Fellow Per Niente member, Peter Gambino, Angelo's younger brother is aware of our deepest regard and gratitude for the kindness of Rita (Buscaglia), Angelo's wife who joined us at Fort Ord, California, where we were sent for basic training. Rita took a little flat in Monterey and each Sunday made pasta brodo and chicken to help fight homesickness.

I can relate a hundred stories about Santo, a tiger of a guy, or Angelo who we lost to Lou Gehrig disease, or Joe, lost, too, from pancreatic cancer. But that's not the purpose of this writing; the foregoing is simply a little background.

Santo and Angelo were discharged early. Joe and I were sent to Europe, Salzburg and Munich, respectively, and remained in close contact. Indeed, we went on several extended trips together, including Sicily where I visited Racalmuto and he visited Montedoro, the adjoining town. We talked often about friends and paisani. Racalmutese favored one another well beyond respect for Montedorese and vice versa. Paisani are important.

Now, let me tell you why. Joe, despite growing up in the shadow of Holy Cross church, and student attendance at Canisius High School and Canisius College, had not yet been confirmed (I don't know why). At Fort Ord, the Catholic chaplain announced that confirmation could be had for those in need. Joe asked me to be his Sponsor; I told him I couldn't afford better than a PX watch; he said a pack of cigarettes and a couple beers



Joe Valenti, Tom Santa Lucia, unknown Irv Shuman

would suffice.

We did it. When we were discharged, I visited Joe at his home on Busti Avenue, and addressed his parents as Mr. and Mrs. Valenti. Mr Valenti interrupted me and said "No. No. No more Mr. Valenti for me and no more Tommy for you; from now on, it's compare and comare, Ok?"

The lesson sank in; Joe was the Best Man at my wedding and when my first son Tom was born, I asked Joe to be Tom's

Godfather. After that, Tom called Joe, Padrino, not "uncle", just Padrino. Always, Padrino.

When Joe's beloved wife, Marlene, predeceased him, I went to Greco's Funeral Home. Joe's mother saw me enter and rushed over. She curled her little self into my arms and weepingly cried "compare, compare, why did God take her, why didn't he take me, what is Joe going to do with me without her?" Joe, now my compare and my son's padrino, gently removed her from my arms.

Sorry for the sad ending but all I'm trying to say is that as Sicilians, we love family first, of course, friends and paisani, too. But the closeness and respect of the old timers for compare (s) and comare(s) can never be equaled. We should be more like our parents and grandparents in many other respects, as well.



Standing: Irv Shuman, Angelo Gambino, unknown, Joe Valenti

Kneeling: Tom Santa Lucia

Francesco Lucca was born in Montemaggiore, Bel-sito, Sicily on January 5th, 1865, the son of Giacomo Lucca and Domenica Catalano. He and his first wife, Maria Piraino, were married in Italy and had five children. They were Domenica "Mary" (Salvatore Pas-safiume); Rose (Anthony Manzella); Jennie (Pasquale Maggiore); Josephine (Michael Rizzo) and John (Lena LaPaglia). Following the deaths of his wife and father, Francesco and his mother brought the five children to America in 1892, landing in New Orleans. From there the gifted marble mason became a stone mason and headed for New York State, where he was responsible for hundreds of projects. He was naturalized in 1900 after settling in the toughest neighbor-hood in the world, the old Canal Street Dis-trict along Buffalo's waterfront. Francesco married Giussupina (Josephine) Runfola on December 17, 1900. She was 20 years old. Her father was Mariano Runfola and her mother was Rosalina Lauricella.



Josephine, Francesco Lucca and family

When the new bride learned there were five sib-lings in an orphanage, she demanded they be brought home immediately to become brother and sisters of their future children: Mariano (Clara Gugino); Salvatore (Concetta La Tona); his twin Angelo; Angeline (Frank Sciabarrasi); Benedetto "Bill" (Grace Arcara); Rosalino "Russell" (Josephine "Molly" Miola); Anthony; Filippi "Effie" (Carl La Porta); Giacomo "Jack" (Doris Segrist); and Anna (Peter Bellanti).

Francesco was an accomplished musician, play-ing trumpet with the German-American band during the 1901 Pan American Exposition in Buffalo, as well as the Kingsford Band of Oswego. He was active in Democ-ratic politics, becoming one of the first committeemen of Italian extraction in the 27th ward. The infamous Only Theater Saloon at Canal and Commercial Streets be-came a safe haven for customers when he took it over in 1900 and where rent was only collected following hard

winters when work was available. Francesco was active in Holy Cross Church, and in 1900 received a letter of thanks from Queen Helena of Italy for money raised for victims of earthquakes at Messina, Sicily, and Calabria, Italy.

He was also instrumental in Columbus Day, a state holiday, decades before his son Mariano made it a national holiday. Francesco died on June 7, 1947. Jose-phine died on March 25, 1945.

Thanks for the genes Francesco, Maria and Jose-phine. The rest is up to us.

Your loving descendants

Postscript:

Early in the 1900s Francesco Lucca and his wife, Josephine moved their family from the Canal Street district to the family homestead: a two story structure with a rear cottage at 257 Trenton Avenue between Maryland and Virginia Streets. This block on Trenton Avenue was also home to Josephine's three brothers, Peter, Mariano, and Angelo Runfola and their families. Future Lucca children started their families in this homestead before moving to other areas on Buffalo's West side that became home to the Lucca families into the 1980s.

Janine Bellanti Nicolaio

Maternal granddaughter of Francesco and Josephine Lucca.

Each year our members pay \$35.00 to receive 4 issues of Per Niente Magazine. That money is used to off-set the cost of producing the magazine. The remaining money is put into our Christmas Fund, which this year, bolstered by generous member donations, totaled \$8,200. This generosity allowed us to support the needs of the less fortunate.

This Christmas Season the Per Niente Club sent **\$2000** to the Amos Hertzler Hospital Fund, Cattaraugus, NY. Amos is a one-year old Amish baby born with Down Syndrome and a rare condition called esophageal atresia, which means his esophagus does not connect to his stomach. He cannot eat, except by feeding tube. A port in his neck drains off secretions and saliva, which he can't swallow. He faces specialized surgery which will occur at Children's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts, one of the few places in the country that performs the procedure. That procedure will cost at least \$250,000 and potentially more, depending on doctor's fees and family travel expenses. Amos has a long way to go. The good news is people with Down Syndrome can live fulfilling lives. We wish Amos and his family the best and hope they receive the support they need.

The lower West Side, a neighborhood once dominated by Italian immigrants, remains just that: a neighborhood of immigrants. The culture has evolved from Italian to Hispanic and African. But the needs are the same. Holy Cross Church, under the direction of Msgr. David M. Gallivan, is the center of the immigrant community. The Per Niente Club donated **\$1000** to assist the renovation of the kitchen of the Holy Cross Youth Center. The kitchen is utilized to provide meals for the youngsters of the community. In addition, we provided **two \$500** scholarships that will be given to Canisius High School freshman: Garang Aguer and senior Achol Young'ndInsane Deng. Achol works in the food program and will begin college in 2012. Both Achol and Garang are from South Sudan, Africa and are active in the Holy Cross Youth Group and the life of the parish. The Per Niente Club also purchased **\$1200** in Gift certificates from Tops Market. The certificates were distributed to families living in the lower West Side. The families are from Puerto Rico and Ethiopia. We worked with the Msgr. Gallivan in obtaining the names of those who were most needy.

Michael Wendel is 46 years old and because he suffers from incurable cancer he is unemployed. Michael lives with his wife, Tammy, and two children in Wilson NY. Michael has been fighting cancer for five years. The cancer has now spread to his back causing him excruciating pain when lying in bed. His family's wish for Christmas is to purchase a special reclining chair that would allow Michael some comfort when attempting to sleep. The family survives solely on a monthly disability check, which barely covers the necessities of life. As such, because of their limited financial resources the Wendels could not purchase the proper chair for Michael and Christmas gifts for their children. Through the auspices of Per Niente's Christmas Fund we presented a **\$1000** check to the Wendels to purchase the chair for Michael and to buy Christmas gifts for their children. We wish the Wendels the best of luck in 2012.

Haven House is a shelter or safe-house for battered women and children. A Christmas tree on the altar of St Margaret's Church was decorated with paper ornaments. Each ornament listed a Haven House child's gift request. The gifts requested were not elaborate nor expensive: a McDonald's gift card, a baseball glove, a radio, etc. Quite different from the Christmas lists submitted by our grandchildren. The Per Niente Club removed the request laden ornaments from the tree, purchased almost **\$1000** worth of gifts and brought them to a safe place from which they would be delivered.

Children attending School # 3 on the West Side, some of whom are impoverished, were treated to Christmas gifts through the efforts of Maria Cala, a bi-lingual teacher at the school. The Per Niente Christmas Fund donated **\$1000** towards the purchase of these gifts.



Josephine and John Patti, Marty and Jackie Tricoli



Bob Mendola, Lou Selva and Tom Mancuso



Joe and Louise Polito, Dollie and Tony Mascellino



Janet and Joe Mineo



Ann Gioia, Joe and Lucy Mattaliano



Dr Bob and Francis Genco



Mangione Family - Anthony, Stefano, Joseph, Giusepina and Mary



Felicetta Family—far right Frank Felicetta who became Police Commissioner, City of Buffalo



The Efner Street family and friends of Augustino Giambra



The DiNatales - Sycamore and Ash Streets



Sam Arena

EGGPLANT ROLATINI

This summer I grew eggplant for the first time in my backyard garden. I don't believe the production I got from six plants. It's early October and I'm still getting more. We have had baked eggplant, eggplant parm, fried eggplant and pickled eggplant, so I decided to try EGGPLANT ROLATINI, and it was a great success. So here is how it goes.

Ingredients

1 large eggplant
8 ounces ricotta cheese
½ bag of fresh spinach
Chopped parsley
Chopped basil
2 eggs
1cup Italian bread crumbs
1 cup of vegetable oil
3 or 4 slices high quality mozzarella



- Peel the eggplant and slice it horizontally about ¼ inch thick.
- Beat the eggs in a shallow dish, adding salt and pepper.
- In another platter spread some bread crumbs.
- Dredge the eggplant in the egg dip, and then press the eggplant slices firmly in the bread crumbs on both sides.
- Put some oil in a sauté pan, when the oil is hot fry the eggplant until the bread crumbs are golden. No longer. When all the slices are fried, let cool.
- Chop the spinach and sauté in a little butter.
- Transfer the chopped spinach to a bowl and drain any liquid add the ricotta basil and parsley.
- Mix until the spinach and fresh herbs marry the ricotta. You should have a spreadable paste.
- Spread this lightly on 2/3 of a slice of eggplant, starting at the wide end. Roll the eggplant gently and place in a baking dish. Continue until you have rolled all your slices. (about 6 or 7 slices for one large eggplant).
- Cut your cheese slices into thirds and place the cheese across the rolled eggplant. Cover the rolls with sauce and bake at 350 degrees until the cheese is melted. Add more sauce when served if desired.
- It is important to use whole milk cheese, not skim milk cheese or cheese product.

Try this recipe. You will love it. Keep it simple

Sam

Hello I found the fall issue on my front lawn. Showed it to all my Italian friends and my Sicilian family. My mom is 93, grew up on Trenton Ave and went to school no 1. She was a VP of Campobello in the late 60s and early 70s and held an office in Racalmuto and VellaLungo Societa. The Per Niente made her day.

Thank you
Charlie Cavaretta

The Heritage Center Foundation, thanks Barbara Gangi, Linda Critelli, Alexandra DiLeo and Toni Marie DiLeo for volunteering their services at the **5th Annual Corks and Forks.**

The proceeds from this fundraiser will benefit the Heritage Center Foundation, which ensures that people with developmental disabilities obtain needed support and services, such as job training, family support and opportunities to live in the community as our neighbors.

Beth Simons
COO

Heritage Center Foundation.

Some how an issue of your very informative publication found it's way into our home. It may have come from anyone since I was born in Buffalo and lived in the area until 1964.

Your issue included an excellent article about Buffalo musicians that was written by Joey Giambra. When I attended Grover Cleveland H.S. (Class of '49) a classmate of mine was named Joey Giambra. Is this the same person? I have a vague recollection that Joey had joined the U.S. Air Force and became a pilot. I am interested in your answer.

Also, on Page 18 there is an article written by Mary Ann Lauricella that features a photo of the Lauricella family. In the photo the young woman standing second from the left is Josephine Zarcone who married my uncle, Paul Sardella. In the mid 1940s my family lived on Hudson Street around the corner from the Zarcone family. I believe her son Charles still lives in the Buffalo area. I would like to get on your mailing list and join your Club, please provide the necessary information.

Frank Mirasola
Florida

Editors Note: The Joey Giambra that you mention is a man of many talents but never an Air Force Pilot. He is an accomplished musician who graduated from Hutchinson Central H.S.

Just a note to say Hi and thank you so much for another great issue of the Per Niente. Once again this issue, Fall, 2011, was packed with so many interesting stories about people, places and many wonderful pictures that span the decades.

I particularly enjoyed the article on North Collins. I also, with my family, spent my summer vacations on the farm. Paul Burgio, my uncle, and his father, "Mr. Frank" Burgio farmed all their lives in North Collins. The strawberries and grapes they grew were juust as sweet as the memories I have of those wonderful days on the farm.

Thanks for the memories
Charles, "Chicky," Di Marco
Seminole FL

I would like to thank all the *Per Niente* members for their kindness on the passing of my brother Ray. Their visits, calls, mass cards and other expressions of condolences were deeply appreciated by Angie and myself, my sister Concetta, and Ray's sons, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

When it comes to support of friends, *Per Niente* is the best!

Ange Coniglio



SAL MAGGIORE

Email: Smaggiore@roadrunner.com

My Thoughts

Yankee Stadium, September 20, 2011

Last night I had the thrill and pleasure of attending a Yankee baseball game at the new Yankee Stadium. The setting was perfect. Tampa Bay was fighting for a play-off berth with the Red Sox, so a win was important. The Yanks just about clinched the pennant. My daughter Rosemary treated me to this beautiful night. It started with my being nervous about the time: 6:40 PM and we were still home. Roe assured me we would be on time. We also had to go to Gate 2 to pick up the tickets. Off we went at 85 mph as if in a Indy 500. A quick stop at the parking lot (\$48), We were on time in our fantastic seats behind the Yankees dugout opposite first base. My daughter and I enjoyed the game and the excitement of being in a crowd of 50,000 people.

But something was missing. Surely the billion dollar stadium was huge and impressive. The players seemed to be lost in the hoopla of entertainment, the big screen ads and the constant viewing of people eating and drinking. The loud music and bright flickering bothered my sensitive eyes and ears. It seemed that there was too much concern on feeding the fans in the many eating areas and restaurants and ushers taking your order for anything from pop corn to dinners. Many people eating full-course meals rarely paid attention to the ballgame. It seem to me that the fans thought it was ok for A-Rod to strike out with the bases loaded or Jeter to go 0 for 5 as long as they were fed.

Maybe I expected to see the ghosts of Joe D, Mantle or Berra.

Did You Know?

Bartolomeo Cristofori di Francesco, 1655-1731, who came from a family of makers of musical instruments, is generally regarded as the inventor of the piano. Ida Lupino (one of my favorite actresses), was born in England to an Italian father.

Do you know who the one of a kind baseball announcer Cristopher Carabina was? He was "Harry Caray" who sang "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" on his broadcasts.

Did you know that Dolores DeFina was the wife of Bob Hope for 65 years?

The hottest politician today (next to our Governor Andrew Cuomo) is Christopher Christie, Governor of New Jersey whom the G.O.P. would love to run for President. His mother is of Sicilian descent.

Carlo Lorenzini, better know as Carlo Collodi, wrote The Adventures of Pinocchio.

Samuel J. Palmisano was until recently Chairman , CEO and president of IBM.

Cyndi Lauper singer, song writer and actress is also of Italian descent as is Patti Russo, female lead singer for "Meat Loaf."

Jimmy Roselli, one of the most popular post World War II Italian American singers, died June 30, 2011 from heart disease at age 85. He was a decorated veteran of the Battle of the Bulge where he earned a Bronze Star. Roselli recorded 35 albums. His biggest hits were "There Must Be A Way" and "Mala Femmena. " Unlike Sinatra who could not speak Italian, Roselli sang and recorded in perfect Neapolitan.

Pizza in America

Pizza crossed the Atlantic in 1897, when a Neapolitan immigrant, Gennaro Lombardi opened a grocery store in New York city's Little Italy at 53 Spring Street. A few years later, he began selling pizza, at five cents a pie, becoming the first licensed pizzeria owner in America.

But pizza really caught on in America in the late 40s, when budget conscious workers began buying pizza by the slice rather than the whole pie. Also when Vets came back from the war, after serving in Italy, they brought with them a love of authentic pizza. Soon after that pizzerias were sprouting up across America. I think back to the early 50s and the pizzerias in Buffalo. Who could forget Santoras, the Casa di Pizza, Vieni Su, Bocci Club and the best, the Golden Key on Connecticut Street .

And what about Gennaro Lombardi's humble beginnings in New York's little Italy? Today it is an upscale restaurant operated by one of his grandsons, only a block from where his original grocery store once was.



Joe Battaglia in front of his Vieni Su

Our Friend, Mark

I went to a U.B. – St. Bonnie basketball game the other night, with a stop at the Buffalo Tap Room for a sandwich. Bob Mangano put together a crew of nine Sicilians and Mark Tiftickjian. This combination of friends has never been unusual for Mark in his life or during the sixty years I have known him.

I thought I could say a few words about a loyal friend of *Per Niente*. Mark has supported the magazine from the time it was only a fledgling newsletter. He's attended all our dinners, golf outings and has done anything we ask of him.

Mark grew up on Potomac Avenue and still lives there. He attended P.S. 45 and Lafayette H.S. with my wife, Susan, and her sister, Rachel. Susan remembers Rachel walking down the aisle with Mark on graduation day from P.S. 45.

We go back to the days at Crystal Beach when we tried to outdo each other with deep tans and baseball games at Massachusetts Playground. Mark loved basketball; a game he still plays at age 72. I don't know if Mark knows a non-Italian.

Frank Lo Tempio, Charley Tasca, Frank D'Arigo or Louie Terragnoli will be the first to tell you that Mark and his family have been selling top quality Oriental rugs for decades and still do on Main Street in Williamsville.

My wife swears by his help with price, quality and history of his rugs. Through the years, my now defunct business, Per Niente Construction has done a considerable amount of work for him and I always gave him the lowest price possible. Even so he always wanted me to come down, especially when two of my best workers, Pete Tasca and Pat Palmeri were helping me. He never did trust them for some reason.

Conversely, Mark loves visiting his son Jay, and his wife and his beautiful grandson in Denver, Colorado.



DANCERS ATTENTION!

CORKY
PRESENTS

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VANITY FAIR BALLROOM

640 MAIN STREET BUFFALO'S BEST
THURSDAY EVENING, JANUARY 4th, 1934


BEAUTIFUL PRIZES FOR OLD COSTUMES
A RIOT OF FUN AND LAUGHTER GET OUT THE OLD CLOTHES

Music—Joe Russell and His Bands of Bands
Buffalo's Greatest Dance and Entertaining Orchestra

Admission 20c (OVER) First 50 Ladies Free

Sam Gerace	Guitar
Vito Giafaglione	Sax
Joe Tirone	Sax
Charlie Sciandra	Sax
Tom Augello	Drums
Joe Bonnadonna	Piano
Angelo Esposito	Trumpet
Russ Giafaglione	Trumpet
Pat Scime	Trombone
Art Silvestri	Bass




GALA XMAS DANCE
AUSPICES
West Side Play Boys
Vanity Fair Ballroom
640 MAIN STREET
Next to Shea's Buffalo Theatre
Buffalo's Smartest Ballroom
You Have Tried The Rest Now Try The Best
Tuesday Evening, Dec. 19
MUSIC
JOE RUSSELL
and
His **Band of Bands**
"Red Hot and Still Heating"
FREE! FREE! FREE!
Christmas Presents for Everybody
ADMISSION
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Social Plan Dancing
New Year's Eve Party
Sunday, Dec. 31 ---Big Surprises
(OVER)

Buffalo's Follies of 1933
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BENEFIT BALL
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ELMWOOD MUSIC HALL
WED. 15 NOV.
FROM 9 P. M. to 2 A. M.
DON'T FAIL TO SEE THIS BIG FEATURE
BEAUTY CONTEST
SPONSORED BY
POSMANTUR'S
Fast Becoming Buffalo's
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STRUM'S
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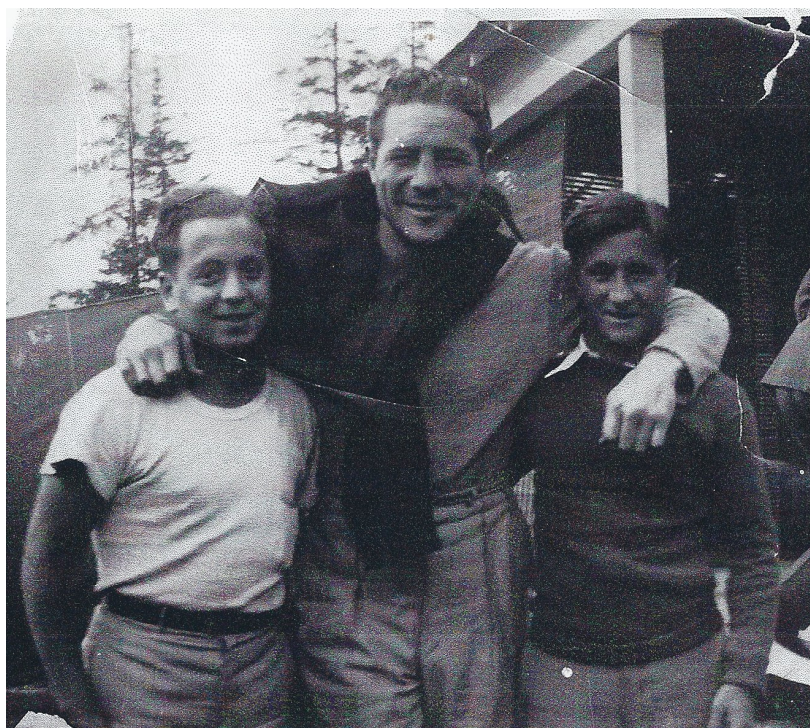




"To my friend Za Za" - Rocky Marciano, mgr. Al Weil



Front: Za Za Parisi, Tony (Shorty) Gerace
Rear: unknown



Left to right:

Unknown, Max Baer,
Heavyweight Champ,
Trainer, Za Za Parisi



Za Za Parisi, Tony Di Maria and Sam Pantano



Du Du Parisi and Eddie O'Grady from Trenton Avenue who taught lower West Side boys sportsmanship.



"Waiting for homemade ravioli "



Front Row: Harry Spero, Billy Alessi, Peter Spero, Richie Callari,

Second Row: John Timpanaro, Ross Scoma, Bob Borzelleri, Roy Manno

Third Row: Wilfredo Velasquez, Paul Reinaicher, Bob Ippolito, Ron DiCarlo, Anthony Marino

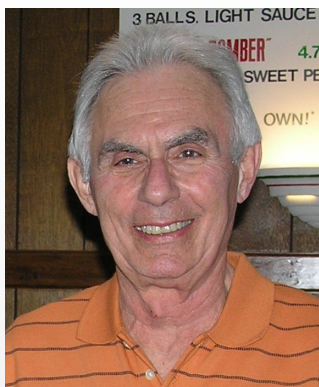
Photo circa 1958 submitted by Roy Manno



Italian children from Swan Street area at School # 6



Mascari Funeral Home, 860 Niagara Street



Joseph Sebastian

How the innocence of making of a movie on the West Side of Buffalo, NY resulted in an unjust termination from my job at the Linde Company in Tonawanda, New York.

This strange tale goes back to the late 1950s while I was employed at Linde. I married Grace Calandra in

1959 and shortly after our honeymoon I returned to work at Linde. At the time, my buddy Jack Lauer and I had just purchased Scotty's Restaurant on Busti Avenue and Jersey Street. About six months later, after that purchase was finalized, Joey Giambra approached me to ask, "would I be interested in having some scenes for a movie called "Draw to an Inside Straight." shot at Scotty's?" I agreed and the movie company went into action converting Scotty's into a tavern called "Mama's." Joe Giambra, Pat Fagan, a popular channel 2 TV personality of the day and other locals were a major part of the movie.

During this period, while playing softball I tore a hamstring in my right leg: a bad collision at 1st base. Though unable to walk I did report to work the following day but due to my injury the Linde medical department sent me home. A few days later filming began outside of Scotty's, my new restaurant. I was there, standing (in pain) and watching the action. Robert Barron, the movie Director insisted I sit in his chair which was labeled "Director."

A person from the Linde Company who was assigned to spy on people "supposedly" off due to injuries walked down Busti to Jersey (the street was closed to vehicular traffic while filming was in progress) He saw me sitting in the director's chair and gleefully reported to Linde that I was having my grand-opening at a place called "Mama's AND that I was "DIRECTING" the affair.

His report stated I was "faking an injury" because of what he assumed was a grand-opening. Needless to say I was terminated. That afternoon, Thorn Grieger, the President of my union, called me to discuss my termination. He said I was fired for faking an injury and directing a grand opening at my restaurant, Mama's. I said "the company was nuts" and he should call a downtown radio station to confirm that a movie called Draw to an Inside Straight was being filmed at Scotty's and it wasn't my grand opening.

When the union gave this information to J. Woods, a decent plant manager who wasn't involved in my demise, Woods immediately called to apologize and rescinded the discharge. I told him I was coming to Linde the next day so he could see first-hand my badly



torn hamstring. He said, "don't bother," but I went anyway determined to let him personally observe my injury. After some discussion I insisted we visit the medical department which at the time was headed by a Doctor Travato who asked why we were there. I explained what happened and he told me to lower my pants. I did. Upon observation the doctor told J. Woods, "look at

the right side of his leg, it's black and blue up to his foot. How do you expect him to work when he can hardly walk?"

Needless to say, this incident was broadcast all over the Linde complex which at the time employed about 5000 hourly and salaried workers. Unfortunately, it caused a lot of WOP-DAGO remarks and magnified the perception at Linde that Italians were not good employees.

The interesting part of this story is that many people (hourly and salaried) kept asking for a long time afterwards, "when is the movie coming out?" They all wanted to see it. So did I. Too bad. Joey Giambra said the film company went broke and the movie was terminated.

LIFE



TOSCANINI & GRANDDAUGHTER

NOVEMBER 27, 1939

10 CENTS



City Hall and Hotel Statler in days gone by



Looking north from Main and Genesee Streets



Niagara Falls, 1938

Below: Broadway looking west towards downtown.





Frank Collura

Symphony Orchestra Conductor

It was Autumn, 1948. A Busti Avenue trumpet-playing freshman at Hutchinson Central High needed an after-school job. One, delivering groceries for fifty-cents an hour was available at The Bingo Fruit Market at Grant and Potomac; unknown territory on the periphery of Black Rock. There was a bo-

nus: a weekend take-home three-wheel bicycle with a large basket in front that stored fine, fresh, deliverable produce.

Since the trumpet player didn't own a bicycle and was enticed by the offer of one, he took the job. At Niagara and Carolina Streets he boarded the first of two IRC busses that would take him to West Delevan Avenue and Grant Street. One block away at The Bingo Fruit Market at Grant and Potomac he met nine-year old Frank Collura the prodigious trumpet playing son of the store's proprietors, Tony and Rose Collura.

Frank and the delivery boy became fast friends. Frank, on his bicycle, followed his fourteen-year old musical counterpart (technically not one iota as good a trumpeter as Frank) on deliveries always asking jazz-related questions. They parted shortly thereafter when the delivery boy left to begin his professional trumpet-playing career for \$1.25 cents an hour at The Gayety, a notoriously tough, bust-out jazz club near the Chippewa-Washington Street Market.

Frank Collura at age seventeen began his professional career as Assistant Principal Trumpet of the Buf-

falo Philharmonic Orchestra, notably the youngest member ever to join that organization. He earned a B.F.A. degree from the University of Buffalo, a M. M. degree from the Manhattan School of Music and went on to become a conductor of Symphonic orchestras. He was one of the few chosen to study in Italy with the renowned Sicilian Maestro Franco Ferrara whose students were the genius symphonic conductors of the world.

Upon completing his studies Frank held an academic position at Buffalo State College, where he was tenured. He was appointed by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra's Music Director, Michael Tilson Thomas to become the BPO's Assistant Conductor. Under his baton, the orchestra gained national prominence with an historic concert at Attica State Prison, soon after the notorious prison riot of 1971.

Frank was soon chosen to be conductor of the BPO Pops Orchestra which led to rave critical reviews. Concurrent with that he directed the Symphony Orchestras of Cheektowaga, and Niagara Falls, N Y. Frank has conducted thirty-five major orchestras throughout the USA, Canada and Mexico. His distinguished collaborators, too numerous to mention include Emanuel Ax, Ella Fitzgerald, Barry Tuckwell, Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Goodman, Lorin Hollander, Mel Tormé, Ruggiero Ricci, Sarah Vaughn, Robert Merrill, Roberta Peters, and Shirley Verrett. His performance with The National Philharmonic of Mexico City was called "a brilliant debut. A conductor of great stature and artistic sensitivity."

He was appointed Associate Conductor of the Kansas City, Missouri Philharmonic and Resident Conductor of the Kansas City Ballet. The extraordinary response from audiences and reviewers led to his receiving the Key to the City.

(Continued on page 39)

(Continued from page 38)

He was later chosen (from among 225 candidates) to be the Music Director of the Santa Barbara Symphony. His performances were broadcast throughout Southern California, resulting in a dramatic increase in box office sales. Attendance at his Young Persons' Concerts tripled. During his six-year tenure he raised the Santa Barbara Symphony to new heights of critical acclaim. Maestro Collura made his recording debut with the London Philharmonic Orchestra in a stellar interpretation of Hugo Friedhofer's film score to the *Best Years of our Lives*, which earned the award of "Film Music Recording of the Year" by High Fidelity/Musical America Magazine. Music critic Roger Hall rated that recording as #3 among his Top Ten Favorite Film Scores from the 1930s-1970s, and #6 in the top 10 of the 100 Essential Film Scores of the 20th century.

In addition to the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Maestro Collura conducted The Radio and Television Orchestra of Sofia, Bulgaria, and the Belgian National Orchestra, where the press acknowledged "the Maestro's dynamic and perfect comprehension of Beethoven."

Ever the academic, Maestro Collura taught at the University of California at Santa Barbara; the Hartt School of Music (University of Hartford); Niagara University, and Mercyhurst College, where, from 1991-2001, he presided over the prestigious, D'Angelo Inter-

national Young Artists Competition. Its prominent judges panel included Dame Joan Sutherland, Marilyn Horne, Lorin Hollander, Elmar Oliveira and Gary Graffman.

In 1997, Maestro Collura inaugurated the "sold-out" New Year's Day concert series, "Vienna in Erie," at the Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center. His thirteen-year tenure with the

Erie Youth Symphony culminated in 2001 with a tour of Italy. The orchestra drew standing ovations in Venice, Siena and Rome. Maestro Collura's commitment to the artistic development of young musicians is widely recognized. Many of his former students now occupy important positions within the music industry.

In 2005, Maestro Collura founded the Young Artists Debut Orchestra, an orchestral training program that serves as an outreach

of the Pennsylvania Chamber Symphony founded by the Maestro and his wife, Jessie K. Collura, its Executive Director. Both organizations reside at Mercyhurst College, Erie, PA.

In 2007-2008, Frank Collura from the depths of Buffalo's Lower West Side on Trenton Avenue reached his musical zenith when as a Culture Connect Envoy of the United States he made his Central-American debut conducting the Orquesta Filarmonica de Honduras to incredible rave reviews.



Trumpeter Frank Collura

By: Joey Giambra (the delivery boy)



Wide World Photo - from the files of LT. John Chace, MD USN, courtesy of Joan Chace Calkin

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