



CCI Newsletter No. 10 & 11, Vol. 3

In Memoriam

CCI wishes to express its heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Joey Giambra and John Tarantino, Sr., both of which were strong supporters of CCI and the Italian-American community. Sadly, both lost their battle to COVID-19 this past spring.

In Loving Memory of Joey Giambra

Born: October 31, 1933 **Died:** May 14, 2020

Founding editor of the *Per Niente Magazine*, a local publication of memorable stories of the Italian-American heritage and community, director of the film *La Terra Promessa*, and author of the play *Bread and Onions*, Joey Giambra was truly the creative genius behind our Italian-American community. He will be deeply missed.

Below is a picture of CCI Board Member Michael Gialombardo (left), Joey Giambra (center) and Joe DiLeo (right) at the Shea's Performing Arts Center and premiere of the film *La Terra Promessa*.



“Joe wrote the script and directed *La Terra Promessa* from his heart. It is our story, every one of us; he just put it into words for us, and for that we are grateful.” -Joe DiLeo, *Per Niente: Special Issue* dedicated entirely to Joey Giambra.

For more information on the *Per Niente Magazine*, go to <http://www.perniente.org/subscribe.htm>

In Loving Memory of John P. Tarantino, Sr.

Born: February 8, 1921 **Died:** April 8, 2020

Mr. John P. Tarantino Sr. was a food distributor and founder of Tarantino Foods, Inc (founded in 1947). Mr. Tarantino was 99 years young when he left us.

“He was a devoted Christian who served God well through his work.

Hours before he passed away, he gave orders about what had to be done at the distribution office. I personally remember him dearly with a smile on his face always greeting me with a joyful “*Buon giorno!*” He will always have a special place in my heart.” -Dr. Francesco Giacobbe, CCI President

CALENDAR

Unfortunately, this past spring, several of our scheduled CCI events had to be cancelled due to the outbreak of COVID-19. CCI's Programming Committee is working hard to explore new ways of bringing its members a program of events for the fall in a format that will ensure everyone's safety. More information about these events will be disseminated via email, on our website, and through Facebook.

Notes On CCI Lecture “My Experience Growing Up in Italy” by Mr. Angelo Polisano

Back in February, before the Corona virus shut down, I had the pleasure of attending Mr. Polisano’s talk. Below is a recap of the event and only a *few* details of his extremely fascinating life:

- ◆ Lining the tables with Italian pastries, handmade linens and other artefacts, Angelo welcomed his 50+ guests. And, while he ensured the warmth of your typical Italian-American family, he embarked on tales of a *not* so typical Italian-American upbringing!
- ◆ Angelo’s mother was born in the U.S.; however, because her family journeyed back to Sicily, Angelo was born with dual citizenship in Caltanissetta, and raised in Ravanusa (small city near Agrigento), Sicily.
- ◆ Angelo had the good fortune to thrive as a young boy due to his family’s successful olive oil business.
- ◆ Angelo feels tremendous pride for his grandparents particularly his grandfather who had the ability to open his own boarding house in the U.S. and then, later on, a successful olive oil factory in Sicily -*the only one* in the six surrounding towns!
- ◆ When he spoke of his childhood, Angelo filled the room with laughter as he highlighted some of his adventures as a mischievous, young boy with curly, long blond hair.
- ◆ At the age of 13, Angelo ran away from the seminary school he was attending (near Lecce) where they had the audacity to shave his beautiful locks! Angry, bald and fueled with determination to never return, Angelo boarded a train back to Sicily. As luck would have it, one of Angelo’s father’s friends happened to be on that same train! Long story short—he made it home safely and did not become the next pope!
- ◆ Interestingly, before making their way back to the U.S., Angelo’s family lived for about 4 years in France. During that time, Angelo worked for a gunsmith and proudly made his own shotgun at the age of 15. It would not be until Angelo turned 17 that he and his family would return to the U.S.
- ◆ Angelo worked at various jobs including roasting chickens and painting rooms, and working his way up to becoming a metallurgical supervisor at Bethlehem Steel.
- ◆ Currently, a resident of Elma for over 30 years, Angelo is also a real estate investor, and spends his summers in his garden and on his sailboat. “I stay busy,” Angelo says with a chuckle.

Grazie infinite Angelo!

Paola (Giacobbe) Kersch
CCI Board Member and Programming Chair

Lifetime Donors

As many of you know CCI offers a lifetime membership with a gift of \$1,000.00. We wanted to take a moment to not only express our gratitude to all of our lifetime donors but also stress how impactful such a commitment is as it strengthens our organization and its continued efforts in preserving the Italian heritage and culture in Buffalo. It has been a CCI tradition to recognize the year’s new lifetime members at our annual Gnocchi night. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 and much to our disappointment, we were unable to do so this year. Our plan is to honor these members when the time is right to celebrate and the safety of everyone can be ensured.

The CCI is also delighted to inform everyone that all donations of \$1,000 or more toward the New Building fund will guarantee lifetime membership.

Announcements:

- Please follow CCI on Instagram at @CCIBuffalo and like us on Facebook.
- Check our website at www.ccibuffalo.org as we continue to post new information.
- We are pleased to announce that adult classes at all the levels will resume virtually in September. For more information, call (716) 832-2653 or send an email to ccibuffalo@gmail.com
- Our good friends at WEBR radio have decided to adopt CCI as one of their charitable projects and to feature CCI on a monthly basis with program updates and a host of promotional features that are still under discussion. More information to come!

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Paola M. (Giacobbe) Kersch, PhD

Send your feedback to: kerschp@dyc.edu or
(716) 517-5168.

CCI New Building Renovations

We are pleased to report that work at the site of the New Building is well underway! So far we have completed the removal of lead, asbestos and other contaminants, and have installed new electricity and gas lines. We look forward to our remodeling projects!



CCI New Building Capital Campaign Honor Roll

The New Building Capital Campaign continues its momentum in full stride as it moves closer to closing in on the ultimate goal of \$2,000,000. CCI wishes to thank its current list of donors who have gifted or pledged. As always, you can make donations at www.ccibuffalo.org, but to learn more about the project, our Campaign Counsel Mr. John Vecchio welcomes the opportunity to speak with you personally. John can be contacted at (716) 345-8690. GRAZIE INFINITE A TUTTI!!!

Amici Society

(\$1- \$999)

Diane Baker
Robert Baker
Anthony Belia
Salvatore Cardullo
Joseph Cordaro
Francesco Destito
James Difiglia
Rocco Diina
Toni Marie Di Leo
Maestra JoAnn Falletta
Hon. Leslie G. Foschio
Joseph Frandina
Luciana Galante
Hon. Joseph Gerace
Mark Goldman
Michael Guerra
Ann Hearty
Fredrick & Maria Lo Bue
Peter LoJacano
Roberta Landberg
Thomas Lochner
Msgr. Dino Lorenzetti
Carol Maulucci
Vera Mancino
Joseph Marotta
Carol Marzec
Mary & Don McCrorey
Ernesta & Tom McElvein
Pietro Mendola
Frances Menno
Ida Moscato Doherty
Johanna Mucciarelli
Hon. Henry Nowak
Caroline Parrinello
Elia & Kosta Pozanditis -On behalf
of Kosta's on Hertel
Clara Radoani
Jonathan & Barbara Reichert
Dorothy Rodo
Sandra Russo
Shellie Rutstein
Bonnie Scalfani
Dennis Schrader
Donna Simon
Katherine Sinicropi
Mildred Swados
Dr. Rocco Venuto
Jonathan Weir

Paolo Busti Society

(\$1,000- \$9,999)

Thomas Augello, Esq.
Wayne Bacon
Robert Bencini, Esq.
Dr. Joseph Calabrese
Dr. Michael Calabrese
Lucia Caracci Ederer, Honorary Italian
Vice-Consulate
Hon. Frank Caruso
Anthony Cipolla
David D'Arata
Joe Dash- On behalf of Dash's Markets
Dr. Matthew & Krystene Di Paola
Hon. Sheila Di Tullio
Michael Giallombardo
Paul G. Joyce, Esq.
Juliet E. (Gentile) Kline
Robert J. Liguori
Joseph Lombardo
John Lunghino
Joseph Matteliano, Esq.
Joseph Mineo- On behalf of
Blatner & Mineo CPA PC
Marc Panepinto, Esq.
George Pinto- On behalf of Pinto
Construction
Dr. Michael Pizzuto
Myriam Renzi
Daniel Ricigliano, CPA
Hon. Mark Saltarelli
Paul and Colleen Seminara
Family Fund
Leona F. Tenney
Mr. Frank Vacanti on behalf of
Weatherpanel, Inc.
John Vecchio
Hon. Lawrence J. Vilardo

Luigi Chiesa Society

(\$10,000- \$49,999)

Anthony Adinolfe -On behalf of Buffalo
Gypsum
Mario Avarello Family
Robert Castiglione
Marguerite Collesano
Hon. Joseph Fiorella
Maria Foss & Craig Foss
The Giacobbe Family
Dr. Steven Lana Family
Joan & Dennis Lo Curto

Peter LoJacano- On behalf of the
Federation of Italian-American
Societies of WNY

Ronald Lojacono
Hon. Frederic Marrano
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Marrano
Hon. Salvatore Martoche,
Honorary Campaign Chair
Mr. Donald Marzullo- On behalf of
JBM Mechanical Services
Hon. Anthony Masiello, Campaign
Chair
Robert Mercurio- On behalf of James
Desiderio Inc.
Angelo Natale – On behalf of
Natale Builders
Anthony J. Picone- On behalf of
Picone Construction
John Pieroni
Dr. John Pollina
Romulus Club (Frank Sparacino)
Dr. John Repicci
Dr. Frank and Mary Pat Schreck
John Philip Tarantino
Don Angelo and William Yuhnke-
On behalf of WEBR Radio
1440 am

Societa` di Renata

(\$50,000+)

Anonymous
Mayor Byron W. Brown- On
behalf of the City of
Buffalo
John Ciminelli- On behalf of the
Ciminelli Family
Donato Curcio
Anthony N. Diina, Campaign Vice
Chair
Sen. Christopher Jacobs
National Grid
Anthony P. Lo Russo-On behalf of
APL Property Group
Carl and Carol Montante
Mark C. Poloncarz- On behalf of the
County of Erie
Russell J. Salvatore- On behalf of
Russell's Grand Hotel
Nicholas Sinatra- On behalf of Sinatra
Development