A recent press release from the U.S. Census Bureau noted that the oldest of the Baby Boomers have tuned 60 years old. Tom Brokaw has already claimed that the WWII generation was the “Greatest Ever.” So where would the boomers stand?

Baby Boomers refer to the generation born between 1946 and 1964, named because of the spike in births, which occurred after World War II. The oldest in the group has just turned 60 and are just three years away from early retirement. Economists, historians and marketing professionals, have tracked their lives. With their lives lived under a microscope, it will be interesting to see how this generation will be remembered.

Our two most recent presidents, George W. Bush and Bill Clinton are among those who have turned 60. Other well-known celebrities reaching this milestone include Cher, Donald Trump, Sylvester Stallone and Dolly Parton. These are the names offered by the Census Bureau. Besides the list of celebrities and newsmakers future generations will look at the events that defined the era. In this light, Baby Boomers can make an argument that they are, if not the Greatest Ever, then pretty darn close.

The first of the Baby Boomers turned 18 years of age in 1964. Events from that time and over the next eighteen years will be the criteria for which they will be judged. Significant contributions to culture, science and humanity will be weighed against the devastation and suffering caused by their human action. The first and most defining event was the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. This was followed by the assassination of his brother Robert and of Martin Luther King, Jr. The Vietnam War was the most defining issue of the day. It was the catalyst for how the youth would change society - forever.

Depending on who is doing the analysis, the culture that the Baby Boomers created in the 60’s and early 70’s was either liberating or destructive. Rebellion was the call to action, but so was peace. Society was split between traditionalists and a rising population of disgruntled youth. Across the country there were mighty clashes between established pillars of society and an emboldened anti-establishment movement. Protests were conducted over causes like civil rights, racial equality and equal rights for women. Eventually the protest would focus on the war. It was a confusing time that pitted Americans against each other. Half the population was fighting the government, not to overthrow it, but to improve it, while the other half were working in accordance with the government trying to improve it within. There was traditionalist in positions of power battling both fronts. It seemed that in either case, young Americans were suffering the brunt of the war and government policies. The results of the tumultuous times were a raised level of freedom in America.

This new freedom lifted every segment of society, for the good and bad. Sex, Drugs and Rock and Roll was leading the way but right behind them were advances in science and technology that were revolutionary. Advances in health, education, ecology and human services exploded. The Baby Boomers were living and working without the restrictions of the oppressive social standards of past generations.

True, it was the Greatest Generation that laid the groundwork so that “their children could have it better than them.” They started the housing boom and increased production of goods and services like never before and they gave birth to 80 million children. America was in an era of unbridled prosperity.

Boomers noticed that things may have gotten a little too reckless and got their parents attention the only way they know how - they threw a tantrum. It worked.
Tino Rosa: Everyone’s Friend

December 5, 1952 - September 25, 2006

December 5th is very special to me. It is not just my only daughter Alexandra’s birthday, but it is also the birthday of my best friend, Tino Rosa. On Monday, September 25, 2006, Tino was taken away from us.

It was a very big family of sisters and brothers, cousins, nieces and nephews along with his son Justin, who was extremely proud of, an adoring daughter Natalie who was always trying to protect him, and his wonderful mother, who should have had to bury her son.

Anyone and everyone who knew Tino knew of his generous nature. If someone needed anything, he was always there. That’s what made his loss a little tough. After being in business for over 60 years with his brothers, Manny, Arthur, and sister, Lida, you can only imagine how many people he knew. It didn’t matter where we would go he knew everyone. If we were out to breakfast, lunch or dinner, he was always the first in his pocket and would refuse everyone else. As generous as he was, he was also just as free with his advice; he was constantly giving me advice and then accusing me of not taking it. I’m sure everyone ever really seen Tino without a cigar? I think he started with cigarettes around 12 years when he was playing cards. If you put the last two things together you will find our only two voces.

Tino introduced me into a new world. Imagine that, cigars, cards, who would have ever thought of that.

Whenever we would be going to play cards, I had to make sure I had a stash of cigars. No matter where we were he was always the guy who got away from there, once the house gave away his then he started giving away mine. We always saved the last two for us. That man that was only is someone I can only pray to someday become. Kind andConsiderate, thoughtful and full of wisdom are only a few of his characteristics. He was always there ready to tell a joke or a story or listen to a joke or story. All of this does not scratch the surface of the man.

Tino Rosa, loving father and husband, respected businessman, loyal and loving sibling and son everyone’s friend. To me, my best friend, may you rest in peace and know you will be missed by all.

Dear Mr. Renna,

I enjoy your paper so much. Happy to read about the old times from the Burg, as we call it. I was born on 20 Christine Street. My mom, Jennie Sisia, was born on Second Avenue and my father was born on John Street. They called him Charley. Frank Ferro was born in the year 1900 and his parents had a bakery on John Street in the early 1900’s.

My Grandfathers were John Sisia and Carmine Ferro and my grandmothers were Catherine Priola and Guadalupe Sosa. My grandfather, John Sisia, came over from Italy in 1886 and lived in Brooklyn then came to Elizabeth, NJ to work for Elizabethshawn Gas Co. in 1940 and married in 1920.

My uncle, Joe Ferro, joined the Rainbow Division during World War I and served in the infantry. He died in 1918 while serving in France.

I went to School #3 and Sal Renna (who I believe your related to) used to chase me all over the schoolyard with 5 or 4 others trying to catch me. I was small and quick, so they had a tough go of it. Then I went to Cleveland Jr. High. It was there that I met John (Rabbit) DiPola who became my best friend and eventually my best man when I got married in 1959. He is the one who subscribed me to Around About Peterstown. I’ve really enjoyed the ones I’ve received and to see names and faces I remember, although the faces are a bit older.

When I attended Jefferson High I had one of the hottest cars, a 1954 Ford. It had two of the best sound glass pack mufflers in all of Elizabeth and surrounding cities, and I had the tickets to prove it. They almost cost me my license. I always had the only car in Elizabeth with a speaker in my outside grill. That was the girl in Batten High which could keep warm by dancing down the street. Well! Enough of the silly stuff.

I now live in Charleston, S.C. It is truly a beautiful place. Both my daughters, Laurie and Stephanie also live in this area. I also have 2 beautiful grandchildren, Esmen and Leigh. My wife of 47 years, Jeannine, is in a nursing home with Alzheimer’s. But we are thankful because we can see her and spend time with her every day.

I’ve been very active in the churches I’ve attended through the years, and praise the Lord that my whole family is serving the Lord in their communities. God has been good to us, even through the many trials we’ve been through. If you know that beautiful poem “Footprints”, you’ll know the experiences of our lives.

I don’t know if you put telephone numbers or addresses in your paper, but if you do I would love to here from some of my friends or family. My address is: 8415 E. Saddle Brook Drive, N. Charleston, SC 29420 and my phone number is 1-843-760-9628.

If you ever come to Charleston to visit, look me up. Hey Rabbit, when you read this give me a call.

Sons of Peterstown Sports Club

2/2 South 7th Street
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John Sisia, President
Editor’s Opinion

everybody has one - this is mine - by Joe Renna

Using new technology and knowledge almost every aspect of our lives is better off than they had been in the past. I say “almost” because there are cultural and societal changes that are not better and we are now forced to address them.

Advances in civilization have proven to increase the quality of life for people. Slavery was omnipresent in the ancient world and existed relatively recently in this country; it is unimaginable today. This is a measure of being civilized. That Aztecs engaged in human sacrifice, when we take action we are accused of being heavy handed.

When we take action to prevent destruction? Do we sacrifice our freedom's to prevent destruction? America freedom and equality are being put to a test.

There is a culture war being waged and traditions in American culture are hanging in the balance. Some basic rights that we as Americans have taken for granted and are now being challenged, like our freedom of speech and privacy. On a much broader scale America is being challenged as a country; it is unimaginable today. This is a measure of being civilized. America may have to take a step back in order to move forward in this conflict. Some have criticized us for doing it already. The truth is that we have been acting with great restraint and even so our war on terror seems extreme.

Our goal of eliminating the world of terrorists was initiated by them. We must not sway from it no matter how difficult it seems. The impression that we are sinking low to obtain our objective must be weighed against the consequences of assuming that terrorists will deal with us in a civil manner.

The terrorists are in this battle for the long haul. We need to realize this and act appropriately, that is without restraint.

I nursed a snake back to health and then it bit me.

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE RENNA FAMILY

Joe, Tina, Angela and Mia

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Editor's Opinion: Every aspect of our lives is better off than they had been in the past. However, cultural and societal changes are not necessarily better, and we are now forced to address them. Advances in civilization have increased the quality of life for people, but challenges such as human sacrifice in ancient cultures persist. The culture war in America is a test of our freedom and equality, and our actions must be evaluated against their consequences. The goal of eliminating terrorists must be weighed against the method used, and the impression of sinking low to achieve our objective must be avoided.

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Merry Christmas from the RENNA Family

Joe, Tina, Angela and Mia
Ismael Garcia of Miracle Plaza has been named the 2006 "Entrepreneur of the Year" by the Union County Economic Development Company (UCEDC).

Miracle Plaza, 1068-72 Elizabeth Avenue, was nominated by the Elizabeth Avenue Partnership (EAP), the downtown management corporation responsible for administering the Elizabeth Avenue Special Improvement District. Miracle Plaza, which is located at the "Gateway" to the Elizabeth Avenue shopping district, combines a full service car wash and oil change facility with a new state-of-the-art 24-hour Laundromat.

The UCEDC Entrepreneur of the Year Award is an annual award presented to an individual who runs a business located within the UCEDC's service area and has demonstrated strong entrepreneurial spirit showing potential for long-term business success and economic growth. In addition, he or she must show a commitment to the community through volunteer activities.

"We really were quite impressed with the EAP's application nominating Miracle Plaza," said UCEDC President Maureen Tinen. "We felt it really embodied the true spirit of entrepreneurship on his part. "He had some stiff competition but we really felt that he was a pure entrepreneur in a tough market and was very deserving of this award."

Ismael is an enterprising young businessman who says he gets his ambition from his father, Dego, a grocery store owner who brought the family here from Cuba in 1970. Like his dad, Ismael always lobbied to have his own business. This desire combined with his love of cars led him to open his first 10 minute oil change center in West New York, New Jersey, which he operated for five years. Then, with increased knowledge and experience, Ismael opened Miracle Plaza on Elizabeth Avenue in 1992, and since it has added a 4,000 square foot car wash into a 17,000 sq. ft. three-business, one-stop custom care service center for your car or clothes. The sprawling 135 foot storefront was expanded nearly 100 feet and serves as a clean, vibrant, well-lit gateway to the area.

"I am honored to receive this award and see how much all of my family's hard work has paid off," said Garcia. "I feel that this award validates the hard work my father has put in as a businessman and being that he has never been recognized for any of it, I feel this award is as much for him as it is for me."

"Miracle Plaza was one of the first businesses on Elizabeth Avenue to undergo extensive storefront and expansion initiatives," said EAP executive director, David Strochak. "After Ismael's beautification efforts, other businesses began to follow suite, thus creating a surge in storefront revitalization in the district."

"Ismael's vision served as a great impact to the area where he not only turned one business into three, but cleaned up a 33,000 square foot property, demolishing three dilapidated buildings creating nearly 50 parking spaces, while creating 30 jobs for area residents," said Strochak.

UCEDC a non-profit economic development corporation, is dedicated to stimulating economic growth and creating an environment for progress. UCEDC has been serving the business community for over 25 years, providing an objective and authoritative voice on business and economic development issues.

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**UCEDC NAMES ISMAEL GARCIA OF MIRACLE PLAZA “ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR”**

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The Arthritis Foundation has announced that Maggie Mueller will be the 2007 National Arthritis Walk Honoree. Locally, Maggie Mueller will be working as a volunteer chair of the 2007 Hudson and Union County Arthritis Walk. Mueller will provide leadership for the Arthritis Foundation’s annual Arthritis Walk taking place in Jersey City at Liberty State Park on May 6, 2007.

Diagnosed at just age 18 months, Maggie doesn’t remember a day without pain and without medications. Each day she takes 12 pills and each week she injects herself three times. You’d think this would make the teen depressed and irritable, but not Maggie. She has said that given the choice, she would not give up having arthritis because it makes her a stronger and more compassionate person.

It is because of that strength, compassion and her commitment to helping others that Maggie Mueller has been selected as the Arthritis Foundation’s 2007 National Arthritis Walk Honoree. In 2005, she served as Youth Chair for the Somerset, N.J. Arthritis Walk, spoke with local reporters and formed her own walk team of more than 30 family and friends. In 2006, she continued to serve on the Arthritis Walk committee, was a mentor to the new Youth Chair and has visited local congressional leaders in support of legislation that will benefit people with arthritis.

As the 2007 National Arthritis Walk Honoree, Maggie will represent the nearly 300,000 children with arthritis or chronic joint symptoms in her awareness and fundraising efforts. A long-time volunteer for the Arthritis Foundation, Mueller was asked to work on the Union and Hudson County Arthritis Foundation Arthritis Walk because of her leadership skills and passion for helping people with arthritis.

"By teaming up and participating in the Arthritis Walk, corporations and individuals can make a difference in the lives of 46 million Americans who suffer from doctor-diagnosed arthritis," said Maggie Mueller.

Teams are forming now for the Arthritis Foundation Arthritis Walk on May 6, 2007 at Liberty State Park in Jersey City. To register a team or volunteer, contact Andrea Mueller at the Arthritis Foundation at 732-283-4300 ext 329 or register online at www.arthritis.org.

About the Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation is the leading health organization addressing the needs of some 46 million Americans living with doctor-diagnosed arthritis, the nation’s number-one cause of disability. Founded in 1948, with headquarters in Atlanta, the Arthritis Foundation has 46 chapters and 150 community service points located throughout the country.

The Arthritis Foundation is the largest private, not-for-profit contributor to arthritis research in the world, funding more than $380 million in research grants since 1948. Through the support of more than 600,000 volunteers, the foundation helps individuals take control of arthritis by providing public health education; pursuing public policy and legislation; and conducting evidence-based programs to improve the quality of life for those living with arthritis. Information is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-800-568-4045 or www.arthritis.org.

Not for Nothing But... We should count our blessings each day like Maggie has to count the pills she must take.
MICHELINO’S HOSTS TOYS FOR TOTS

(left, l-r) Marines Caero, Jones, Rodriguez, Centeno and Squires, (below) Janice de Avila of Elizabeth’s Midtown SID was a big help to Santa.

Michelino’s Pizzeria & Restaurant held a party on Wednesday December 6th to kick off this season’s toy drive. The bar/restaurant, located on the corner of Washington Avenue and South Street is facilitating the Toys for Tots Program for a local Marine Recruiting Station located at 65 Jefferson Avenue in Elizabeth.

The station is located in Midtown Elizabeth, an area designated as a Special Improvement District (SID). Mike LoBrace, owner of Michelino’s is also the Treasurer of the organization which runs the SID.

The mission of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program is to collect new, unwrapped toys during October, November and December each year, and they distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to needy children in the community in which the campaign is conducted.

Staff Sergeant David Caero, Gunnery Sergeant Tommy Jones, and Officer Alex Rodriguez from the Jefferson Avenue station were joined by Sergeant Major Centeno and Sergeant Major Squire from the State recruiting office to greet guests. Staff from the SID and Michelino’s generously gave their time to assist in handling the hundreds of toys that were collected that evening.

Toys will be collected up until Christmas at the Recruiting Station, Michelino’s or the numerous other Local Toy Drop-Off Locations.

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(above, l-r) Patty Marconi, Connie DeCesare and husband, Dan; Bob Vaccaro with wife, Liz, and Jim, Patty’s husband.

(above, l-r) Rosemary Campo, Michele Luisi, Josa Castagna, Donna Dippolito, Joyce Mierzejwski, and Donna Cutugno share a table. Apparently they still think Sr. Superior would not want them fraternizing with the guys.

(above, l-r) Barbara and Joe Capece, Paul Troncale, Russell Nascondiglio, Gary DiGirolamo, Linda and brother Vince Kornmeyer, take a break in between bites.

(above, l-r) One of the jollier tables: Mary Caravano, Wad’s wife, Sal Signorelli, Lorraine Cascio, Bill DePaolo, the Caravano twins Jim and Joe, and Jim “Wad” Caravano.

(above, l-r) Oscar Petraglia, Jim Imbriaco, Mary Anne Nufrio, Mary Ann Mele, and husband, Steve, reminisce about school days with Brother Charles Mayer.

(above, l-r) Rosemary Coppola, who with Lorraine Grazio and Biagio Acito helped put together the reunion, is flanked by the Caravano twins.

(above, l-r) Lorraine Grazio, Joanne Manetta, Joelyn Bonjovi and Ann D’Aries have maintained friendships since their St. Anthony’s days.

Mary Anne Nufrio, who traveled the longest distance, from Connecticut, to get to the reunion, was given the honor of cutting the cake. She received a little help from Dino Annucci.

ST. A’S 8th GRADE CLASS OF ‘66 REUNITES

Forty years after they graduated from eighth grade, St. Anthony’s Grammar School class of 1966 reunited back at one of their old haunts. About four dozen classmate gathered in the cafeteria of their old school, located on Centre Street in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, NJ. The evening included a tour through the school, good eats and of course many laughs.

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Tequila’s Grill celebrated its grand opening on October 25, 2006. Owner Victor Vinanzaca is a veteran employee of other popular local restaurants. He worked for ten years at Monola’s in Elizabeth and then at Amici’s in Linden. Tequila’s is located at 824 Pearl Street, the former home of Vila Nova Restaurant. Tequila’s has a full menu of fish and seafood dishes offered as lunch or dinner portions. There are an equal amount of appetizers and soups offered along with the entrees. As if the menu items were not special enough, Victor prides his kitchen on his daily specials.

Tequila’s Grill is in walking distance of the Union County Courthouse and Trinitas Hospital and attracts customers from them along with employees of the City of Elizabeth. Victor is currently offering a special discount off the lunch bill for city employees who show their IDs. Tequila’s Grill is also a comfortable setting to sit and have cocktails with friends. There atmosphere is quiet and friendly with a mix of singles and couples sitting on bar stools or at tables.

Recipes
Submitted by Tequila’s Grill, Elizabeth, NJ

**Steak Tequila**

**Camaones de Portar al Mar**

Shrimp wakened by the sea

**INGREDIENTS**

1) Saute Celery, Pepper and Onion in Olive Oil until cooked.
2) Sauté mushroom, scallions, garlic in olive oil and flambe with a splash of Tequila.
3) Place steak on serving plate and pour the sauteed mix over the steak.

**INGREDIENTS**

7) Jumbo Shrimp
1) Garlic Clove
1) Lemon Wedge
1) Celery Stalk (chopped)
1) Bell Pepper (chopped)

Choose to serve with Mashed Potatoes or Mexican Rice

**PREPARATION:**

1) Steam Shrimp.
2) Grill steak
3) Sauté mushrooms, scallions, garlic in olive oil and flambe with a splash of Tequila.
4) Stir heavy cream into saute pan and cook until it bubbles.
5) Spoon contents of saute pan over shrimp and on top of the sauteed mix over the steak.

**TEQUILA’S GRILL - SPECIALS ARE THEIR SPECIALTY**

Tequila’s Grill is in walking distance of the Union County Courthouse and nearby restaurants and attracts customers from them along with employees of the City of Elizabeth. Victor is currently offering a special discount off the lunch bill for city employees who show their IDs.

**INGREDIENTS**

Serloin Steak
Fresh Lemon
Achote (pepper)
Mushrooms
Garlic
Olive Oil

**PREPARATION:**

1) Marinade steak with fresh lemon and achore for a minimum of 2 hours.
2) Grill steak
3) Sauté mushroom, scallions, garlic in olive oil and flambe with a splash of Tequila.
4) Stir heavy cream into saute pan and cook until it bubbles.
5) Spoon contents of saute pan over shrimp and on top of the potatoes or rice.

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- Mario’s Trattoria
- Anytime Burger Bar
- Casa Nova Tavola
- Tequila’s Grill
- Spirito’s
- Antone’s Restaurant and Bar
- Casa Nova Restaurant-Bar
- Casa Nova Restaurant-Bar

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- Casa Nova Restaurant-Bar
**TAPAS OF SPAIN OPENS A SECOND LOCATION**

Daniel Palacio celebrated the opening of his second restaurant, Tapas of Spain, with a ribbon cutting ceremony on October 23, 2006. He also owns a restaurant by the same name on New York Avenue in Elizabeth. The new location is on Routes 1&9 in Linden and was home to the Navigator Restaurant for 22 years. Though the name on the sign has changed the landmark lighthouse still sits on top and the familiar boat still adorns the parking lot. There has been changes made to the interior but still present are the authentic Italian chandeliers from the 1700’s.

The two restaurants are quite different in appearance. The new location is a spacious building with separate dining rooms and a huge bar. It also has a room for private parties that seats up to 100 people. Tapas of Spain on New York Avenue, once home to Smoothies, is a bar/restaurant much more casual. The food in both places is equally delicious.

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JOSEPH FARRARA - JO JO TO HIS FRIENDS

Jo Jo Ferrara was 68 when he passed away on November 11, 2006. He was at an age that bridged a gap between the Baby Boomers and their parents. It may have been because he grew up with much older brothers, Paul and Frank, but he had a maturity that allowed him to work and socialize with groups older than he was. Jo Jo was experienced beyond his years and to the guys in the neighborhood that were a dozen or so years younger he was an elder statesman.

Ferrara took a great deal of pride in his neighborhood and was always willing to help someone in need. He especially took the younger guys under his wing. He was more like a big brother than a father figure. He was able to solve problems and be a guide to the younger guys to set them on the right course. He helped the Sons of Peterstown Club get on its feet and clear hurdles as it grew. He supported every community event and encouraged others to get involved.

His love for the community was taught to him by his parents. His mother, Anna, nee Macina, was a midwife and assisted in the births of countless babies in the neighborhood. Anna was a certified midwife when she arrived from Italy when she was 19 years old. Many times she would be paid in trade because money was scarce. His Father Joseph was a carpenter. When it came time to build the steps on the top of St. Anthony's Church it was he who had skills to do so. Jo Jo went to Elizabeth public schools and graduated Thomas Jefferson High School in 1956. He played football and baseball in high school and later went back to coach football. He went to Upsala on a scholarship and finished his degree at Seton Hall. After college he played catcher for local fast-pitch softball teams. He also coached Pop-Warner Football in Roselle Park.

In 1971 he married Connie Pavese, who moved from Vallata Italy to Elizabeth. They have two children, a son Joseph, who's an electrical engineer with a wife named Amy, and a daughter Anna Gil, who is principal of Christopher Columbus School #15 in Peterstown. She and her husband, Daniel, have two daughters, Gabriela, 20 months and Sofia, 5 months old.

Jo Jo Ferrara will be missed dearly by young and old alike. His passion for the community will be hard to replace.

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NEIGHBORHOODS OF ELIZABETH

Map of Elizabeth Neighborhoods researched by Charles Aquilina for the Elizabeth Public Schools Bicentennial Committee in 1976.

1) THE PORT 7th Street to Sound, North of Elizabeth Avenue at first Irish and German, then Eastern European Jews. Developed by Edward Kellogg, 1835 as an industrial area. Terminus for “York” road started in 1700's from Philadelphia.

1a) BUCKEYE OR NEW MEXICO Hungarian, Irish and Mexican Seventh to Fifth Streets from tracks to Livingston Street (Part of Port).

1b) DIAMONDVILLE Local citizens would pick coal from R.R. cars or from area adjoining cars to burn for fuel in winter. Irish, German (Part of Port).

2) KERRY HEAD “THE HEAD” James Keirghry of the Kerry Keighry, Captain John S. Canning Engine No. 2. Famous local leader, Irish and German. Developed by Edward Kellogg in 1850's to 1860's.

2a) THE BUSH Outskirts of Kerry Head toward the meadows.

3) PETERSTOWN “THE BURG” George and John Peters owned land which was sold into house lots in 1865. First Irish and German then Italian.

4) FROGHOLLOW East of Atlantic Street south of Elizabeth Avenue west of First Street. Irish, Slavic and Polish. So called because marshes contained many frogs and fishing was excellent for area residents.

5) HELLSTOWN First Street to Elizabeth Avenue. Turning left at foot of First Street a block away N.J. Drydock, Nixon’s shipyards, (Holland Submarine). “Rope Walk” employed up to 1,000 workers till it burned in 1890’s.

6) BRITTAN VILLE Developed in mid 1800’s. Area featured “English Gardens”. Area approximately from Bridge Street to Central Baptist Church.

7) UPTOWN When First Street area was in its business boom, many stores had branches in both sections.

8) QUALITY HILL Hilltop homes Grier Avenue South Broad Street, South Street Grove Street, Williamson Street Mansions the most expensive in the City. Developed 1860-1890.

9) GREATER ELIZABETH South Elmora Avenue near South Broad Street negotiations with Linden to incorporate eastern part.

10) BAYWAY Bayway Avenue from Spring Street, Polish and Italian. Jerry Bentley, “Unofficial Mayor” in early period.


12) WEST END South side of C.R.R. tracks, West of Elmora Avenue.

13) NORTH END Wilder Street and North Broad Street. Almost part of Hillside.

14) ROUTLEDGE Stanton Avenue, Kilsyth Road Cross Avenue, Wilber G. Quincy and Walter D. Perkins, developers.

15) WESTMINSTER Developed by Edward J. Grassman in 1920’s. Became prestigious area.
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Justice Scalia described his hand gesture to the press as being “Sicilian”.

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A ONCE IN A LIFETIME JOURNEY TO SICILY
Submitted by Debbie Harris

I have always been curious about the Sicilian town of San Giovanni Gemini, the birthplace of my maternal grandparents, Concetta Romano Di Dolce and Giuseppe Di Dolce. With the help of the internet, I began years ago to research my family history and San Giovanni Gemini. Last year when my older sister Diana asked me whether I would be interested in traveling with her to Sicily, I jumped at the opportunity. My husband, Rusty, encouraged me to make the trip with my sister despite his inability to travel with us.

Not too long after I made my decision to travel to Sicily, I was speaking with my childhood friend, Joanne Signorelli Arena, and I mentioned the trip I was planning. Just a few minutes after our telephone conversation ended, Joanne called back and asked whether she and her sister, Mary Signorelli Tomasso, could join us. Their father, Ozzie Signorelli and his family were also from Sicily and Joanne, like me, was thrilled by the idea of seeing the land of her ancestors. Joanne later came to find that her grandmother’s family was also from San Giovanni Gemini and her grandfather’s family was from the town of Cammarata next to San Giovanni Gemini.

Before I knew it, the traveling group had grown to include a few more of my friends, Rosemarie DeRose Molliozzi, Patrizia Altobelli and Irene LaBrutto Russo. Shortly after we finalized our travel arrangements, Irene learned she was going to be a grandmother. Both of her sons, Jerry and Christopher, and their wives were expecting babies in October and November. Naturally, Irene could not imagine being out of the country when the new additions to the Russo clan were born, and decided to cancel. As of this writing, Jerry and Mary Russo have welcomed their daughter, Lileana, into the family. They expected babies in October and November. Irene could not imagine being out of the country when the new additions to the Russo clan were born, and decided to cancel. As of this writing, Jerry and Mary Russo have welcomed their daughter, Lileana, into the family.

Our guide led us to a scene very familiar to all of us as “Burg” girls – the San Giovanni Men’s Club. The club, which had about twenty tables, was hosting groups of men in various stages of card playing. Again, we were met with curious stares until the man explained who we were and why we were there. One of the men motioned to us to follow him. We followed him through the cobblestone streets, having no idea where he was taking us. We were all overcome with emotion as we walked the streets of the town. While walking, I had an epiphany – I realized that we were the first members of our family to venture back to Sicily since our grandparents had emigrated over seventy years ago.

The group departed to Italy on October 16, 2006 and before we knew it we were enjoying the sights of Palermo, Agrigento, Giardini Naxos, Taormina, Savoca, Siracusa, Forza D’Agro, Cefalù, Selinunte, Castlemola, Calatabiano, Cammarata and San Giovanni Gemini. From the moment we arrived in Sicily, we were overwhelmed by the beauty of the landscape, the richness of the history, and the wonderful food and wines of Sicily. Most of all, we enjoyed partaking in the rich Sicilian culture. As we roamed the streets of the medieval towns and observed the local people going on with their daily routines, it became apparent why Peterstown (“the Burg”) was the way it was and why its people did some of the things they did. There was no doubt that the Sicilians living in Peterstown brought part of their lives with them when they immigrated to America.

We visited the towns of Savoca and Forza D’Agro, where, contrary to what I thought, Martin Scorsese filmed many of the scenes from The Godfather and Godfather II. We were even lucky enough to meet a few residents who were extras for the film. I cannot tell you what a rush it was for me to sit in Savoca and sip espresso in the very spot that Michael Corleone visited the father of his future bride, Apollonia. In the film, Apollonia’s father owned the bar/café. In reality an old woman (not the friendliest Sicilian citizen) owns it. Nevertheless, it was a fantastic day for all of us.

As wonderful as our visit to Savoca and Forza D’Agro was, the highlight of the trip and for that matter, of our life, was our visit to San Giovanni Gemini and Cammarata, locally referred to as the “twin towns.” I made the trip with my sister, Diana, Joanne Arena and Patrizia Altobelli. Our tour guide, Rosella Bezzo, graciously helped us to find a local driver, Francesco. Making the trip even more interesting was the fact that our driver, Francesco, spoke no English and we spoke very little Sicilian. We did manage to explain to Francesco that we were searching for relatives we may have in the twin towns.

The twin towns are perched on the side of a mountain and given this location, we found it amazing that these towns existed at all. Francesco drove us to the top of the mountain via local highways and a winding, narrow road. At the top of the mountain, we came upon San Giovanni Gemini. Our driver, Francesco escorted us to San Giovanni Gemini’s town square where we met with curious stares from all of the men who were gathered there. Francesco explained who we were and why we were there. One of the men motioned to us to follow him. We followed him through the cobblestone streets, having no idea where he was taking us. We were all overcome with emotion as we walked the streets of the town. While walking, I had an epiphany – I realized that we were the first members of our family to venture back to Sicily since our grandparents had emigrated over seventy years ago.

As a side note, while we were visiting the ruins of Castlemola and driving back and forth on our shopping jaunts to Taormina. He also recommended one of the best trattorias we ate at during our entire stay in Sicily. For some reason, we hit it off. I think he looked at me as a sort of an American aunt. On the night before we were to return to the U.S., Paolo invited us to his home in Calabestia, where we met his lovely wife, Salvia, and their children. Salvia graciously opened up her home to six strange American women and served us drinks and coffee, all while we tried our best to communicate with one another.

I am sure that all the girls who made the trip with me will agree that this was a trip of a lifetime. We laughed together, cried together, sat in awe of the sites together, sipped limoncello and wine together and our group will always now be remembered among ourselves as the “Sicilian Pussy Cats”, I will leave the rest of you to wonder where that came from.}

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HAPPY 70TH ANNIVERSARY TO THE CRESTLIN CLUB
History of the Crestlin Boy’s Club taken from its 50th Anniversary program in 1986.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was president for two years, Ford Motor Co. was producing the first V-8 engines, the Lindy, Charleston, and marathon dancing was in vogue during the year 1934. Meanwhile, back on Fourth Avenue in the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, a club known as the Original Disgraced Millionaires was on the brink of being dissolved due to the hard times prevalent as a result of the greatest depression this country ever had to endure. There were ten remaining members who could not continue to exist as a club, resulting in the termination of this famous Peterstown landmark.

At this point, the late Harry Fennemilla and his late brother Mike decided to take over the old clubhouse. They concluded the young men of the neighborhood needed a place to congregate. This club had no official name and lasted until 1935.

Following this failure, another young enterprising man by the name of Nick “Doc” D’Antico (now deceased) was determined that he would utilize these new quarters as a club. This particular effort flourished until the summer of 1936. Within a span of two years, three different organizations striving to become a stable meeting spot for the young men of Peterstown went the way of the Model T Ford - out of existence.

After these unsuccessful club formations, a group of 26 young men decided to meet in an attempt to organize a worthwhile and enduring club. And so it happened on July 17, 1936 the Crestlin Boys Club was born.

How did it acquire its name is the next question. A young lad named Anthony LaQuaglija (now deceased) suggested the name of the new club be called Crest denoting this meaning for peak, crown, pride, courage, etc. Then another young man of the original 26 organizers mentioned the addition of the letters “L” in which the majority approved and the name became official. On July 22, 1936, legal incorporation papers were drawn up and filed resulting in a legalized corporation with the name never to be duplicated in the state of New Jersey.

The dues at this time were the huge sum of $.25 cents a month, with an initiation fee of $2.00 plus a two-month advance payment of $.50 cents.

The motto adopted for the club was “Through peace there is joy.” Beautiful indeed. All wondered if this fraternal assemblage would survive and thus avoid the pitfalls of its predecessors. A favorable sign became evident when the membership doubled within two weeks. The new club was truly prospering and its future looked bright. It would be wise to mention that the birthplace of the Crestlin Club was originally at 648 Fourth Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

As the first meeting, Anthony Ferrara was elected president, his vice president was Michael Fennemilla, the secretary was Charley Buco and the treasurers were Anthony LaQuaglija and Santo Toso. Now the association began to move forward. In fact, the club became a beehive of activity as the membership engaged in numerous athletic contests including softball, football, basketball and at a later date, ping pong. As a result, numerous awards were won including the 1941 City “AA” Softball Championship. The number of trophies is on display at the present clubhouse.

In the early 1950’s it should be noted that a house bowling league was formed through the efforts of brother member Frank Iazzetta (now deceased). The league continued for 35 more years. Many members became proficient in pool billiards, in addition to golfing of which tournaments were once promoted twice yearly.

In the 1930’s, also known as the “pot belly stove era”, one of which the club owned and used to heat the entire club, adding to this, new members began to see membership in large numbers. This increase of members reflected a trend where more than one family member became Crestlin Boys. Names such as the Bisce’s, Melchione’s, Fennemilla’s, Squillace’s, Malgieri’s, D’Maggio’s, Castrelli’s, Nettta’s, Paternoster’s, Iazzetta’s, Cherchello’s, Cassio’s, and Lentme’s swelled the ranks.

During this decade, the “big band craze” became very popular with the club being swept among its followers. Every year the club sponsored two dances one in Spring and one in Autumn. As a result many members became outstanding “hoofers”, meaning they were good, and attended dances in the surrounding towns. What could be more appropriate at this time than selecting the logo of the Crestlin Boys Club as a dancing couple? In fact, the dances sponsored by our club were the most important social functions of the year. All were well attended and happy occasions for everyone.

As events moved at a rapid pace, this led the club to decide to locate to larger and more spacious quarters. During the year 1937, the club moved to 574 Fourth Avenue about three blocks down the street (Skinny Albano’s place).

The club now is presently across the street from that location. The club continued to undertake many

The Crestlin Boy’s Club 70th Anniversary party is set for Sunday January 21, 2007 from 1pm to 5pm at Costa’s Restaurant, Chestnut Street, Roselle Park. The event will feature Italian buffet along with beer and wine along with a DJ for entertainment.

The donation fee is set at $ 45.00 per person paid in advance by December 20, 2006. Any one interested could send a check along with their name, address and phone number to: Crestlin Club, 574 Fourth Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07202.

If there are any questions please feel free to call the club at 908-355-4652.

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Saturday, February 3, 2007

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840 North Broad Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07208
908.352.0670 Fax 908.352.9424
Special thanks to Frank Osnoto and Paul Insalaco for supplying the photos and text for the history of the Crestlin Club article.

activities including the famous yearly Christmas Party for neighborhood children. This became a popular event but ultimately had to be discontinued in later years.

Unemployment at this time was still one of the major ills of our economy affecting most club members. Meanwhile, in Europe, and Asia war clouds began to rise and many countries were becoming involved, especially Germany, Italy and Japan seeking world conquest. Ultimately, our own country was engulfed in this world war on December 7, 1941 as Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. Very soon thereafter, as many as 75% of the club members were called into the armed forces. Then tragedy struck home as one of our members, Ralph Veltri, was killed in action in the Pacific Theater, a painful and sad loss for all of the members. A couple of our members became prisoners of war while still others were wounded in action. During this horrible conflict, much credit is to be extended to Charles Montana (now deceased). He was most instrumental in maintaining our club during those bleak days of World War II. Many of our members were now scattered all over the world.

What a fine contribution and sacrifice that they have made to insure our freedom. In 1945, the war finally ended and the boys began their trek for home. Things slowly began to return to normal including the lifting of rationing and many new members joining our organization. How prophetic the club’s motto of 67 years ago “Through peace there is joy”.

The next monumental event in the club’s growth was the discussion and planning to build its own clubhouse. Property was purchased directly across the street, 574 Fourth Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ, the club present location.

In 1949 a house was removed from that property. With the assistance of most of the members toward the erection of the new building, much progress was in evidence and in 1950, a new clubhouse became a reality. Meanwhile, a serious problem arose; namely, the lack of money to meet the club’s various building obligations. It was decided that monetary pledges be floated interest free to the members and again, the majority of members responded admirably by loaning the club this needed money. Without this display of loyalty and confidence, the club was decried for financial ruin and in fact it would have been dissolved. The Crestlin Boys spirit reflected itself in triumph. Twenty-eight years elapsed before attention was directed toward the redemption of the pledges. It should be noted that the pledges were issued on a voluntary basis on three different occasions and this brought about the successful building of the present club.

When the year 1977 arrived, our president, Dominick (Mickey) Sorrentino (now deceased), who incidentally led our organization on a sound financial footing, believed that the time had arrived to reimburse the members who held outstanding pledges. This beautiful dream materialized when each member who had pledged their money to the club were paid back in full including members who held outstanding pledges. This beautiful dream materialized when each member who had pledged their money to the club were paid back in full including the family members of those that had passed away. The only remaining “Original Charter Member” is Walter Scutro.

At every monthly meeting, the deceased brother members of our club are remembered with a moment of silence. Every November around All Souls Day a memorial mass is held at St. Anthony’s Church followed by a communion breakfast. This memorial ceremony has been occurring annually for many years.

(right) Mickey Sorrentino was president of the Crestlin Club for 41 years, from 1961 until 2002.

(below) Photo from club’s 30th Anniversary Dinner-Dance from 1967.
“The Niners” E. Hoesterey, F. Iazetta, E. Klein, M. LaFerrara—missing V. Dadessa

“The Devils” R. Lobraee, C. Cialese, L. Malgieri, E. Caprino, A. Triola

“The Hot Shots” D. LaPlaca, T. Gallagher, P. Schultz, T. Fiorino, R. Bisco

“The Thunderbirds” J. Mariano, C. Gambino, E. Lombardi, V. Dippel, F. Sorvillo


“The Champions” V. Oliveri, F. Ziegler, F. DiCosmo, R. Pizzelli, J. Telymonde

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The Comets* M. Wargachi, A. Netta, T. Laferrara, I. Dercole- missing P. Cocuzza

The Angels* A. DiMaggio, A. Paternoster, P. Klein, A. Nardone, D. Sorrentino

The Horners* F. Silvio, R. Paternoster, H. Favor, J. Veltri, J. Pepe

The Bums* J. Sorrentino, N. Funt, C. Bongiovanni, D. Lentine -missing F. LoBrace

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Charles met his wife, Tess Tenore, as teens while playing in the School 3 playground. They married in 1949 and were married 41 years. Tess taught for many years in Elizabeth at Washington, Cleveland, Jefferson and finally Elizabeth High School.

Bongiovanni was a long time member of the Crestlin Boys Social Club of Elizabeth, and a member of their bowling league. He volunteered for the Benedictine Sisters at their Sunday and Monday night bingos for many years. He also volunteered with Junior Achievement. He loved to grow his vegetables and would brag with Gus Osnato about their “cuccuzza”.

Charles and his Tess, who also deceased, had one daughter, Marie, who is married to Thomas Schabbe. He is also survived by two sisters, Mrs. Lucy Leo and Rosalie Marisco; a brother, Nicholas Bongiovanni, and two grandchildren, his pride and joy, Mrs. Kris Schneider and Thomas Schabbe.

Marie’s memories of her parents focus on the way she says they taught her how to love, share and just be there for her family. For Marie, growing up as an “only child” was not as people thought. She remembers that there were always a few cousins in tow when she went on vacation or a day trip. To her many cousins her dad was “Uncle Charlie”.

Marie believes her father’s greatest attributes were his sense of family and his faith. If someone was in the hospital, it was him who was went to visit, to give a shave or just sit by the bedside. He visited his infirmed friends weekly and wouldn’t miss a visit no matter the weather or his health.

Marie said “During the last 6 years he was ill, one of the highlights he looked forward to was reading the Peterstown Newspaper. He just loved to reminisce about his neighborhood and friends.”

In lieu of flowers, the family asked mourners to make contributions to the Center for Hope Hospice, Father Hudson House, 111 DeHart Pl., Elizabeth, NJ 07202.

JAZZ GREAT FRANK VICARI REMEMBERED BACK HOME

Frank Vicari, 75 of New York City died on October 20, 2006 in New York University Medical Center.

Originally from the Peterstown section of Elizabeth, NJ, Vicari lived in New York City for the past 27 years. He began his career as a musician playing in jazz clubs in Newark while he was still a teenager.

He served in the US Air Force where he played saxophone in various service bands. In the early 1960’s Vicari was the lead tenor saxophone player in Maynard Ferguson’s Band. He moved on to play with Buddy Rich and was a member of Woody Herman’s Thundering Herd. Frank lived for several years in St. Thomas where he played seven nights a week in local jazz ensembles.

When he returned to New York City he toured and recorded with Whate Elephant, the Saturday Night Live Band, and many prominent performers including Tom Waits, George Benson, Dave Matthews, James Brown, John Lennon, J. Greis, Tony Bennett and Bette Miller. Right up until his death he was a regular performer at “The Garage” on Seventh Avenue in NYC. He was a member of the Musician Local 802 Union.

His parents Anthony and Lillian Vicari and his brother Salvatore “Vax” Vicari predeceased Frank. Surviving are his wife Grossdenka, daughter, Marie, two sons Ken and Andre, his sister Marian Falco, 3 grandchildren, and his Aunt Connie.

A memorial service was held at St. Anthony’s Church in Elizabeth, NJ on November 6, 2006.

UNCLE CHARLIE LIVED HIS 88 YEARS IN PETERSTOWN

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Anthony and Louise Barile of Elizabeth recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with an intimate family dinner at Pantaggis Restaurant with their son and daughter and family.

Anthony Barile and the former Louise LaFerrara were married at St. Anthony's Church in Elizabeth on October 20, 1946.

Anthony Barile was a detective with the Elizabeth Police Department for 29 years before retiring in 1981. He also served in the Army during World War II.

Both are members of the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary #73 of Elizabeth and have served as Department State Commanders in 1972-73.

Mr. Barile is a member of the Union Elks, Knights of Columbus and the Retired Police and Fireman's Organization. Louise Barile was an executive secretary at Exxon and City Federal Savings Bank before retiring.

They have a son Frank of Elizabeth, a daughter Ann Louise and her husband John Barra of Roselle Park who have two daughters and two sons. John Barra, Jr. of Pennsylvania, Gina and her husband Vincenzo Fernicola of West Paterson, Anthony and Christina Barra of Cape May and Julie and Steve Ceranamo of Union. They have two great-grandchildren, Francesca and Angela Fernicola.

(above) Louise and Anthony celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in 1996.

(right) Louise and Anthony in 1946.
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UNION - 3BR Cape in great location w/private MBR w/office/nursery. Recently renovated to include new windows, roof, electric, hot water heater! CAC, huge backyard, perfect for entertaining! Trans #048010655 $349,000

Welcome Home!
UNION - Well maintained, 2 Bedroom Cape, easy conversion to 4 Bedroom. Eat-in Kitchen, formal Dining Room, Living room with fireplace, full finished basement, summer kitchen, hwd floors, central vacuum. Trans #048010597 $345,000

For additional information on these great homes, please call:
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