

Barry Chiorello's

SECOND STORY PRODUCTIONS, LLC

Promotion Name: **My Story Growing Up Italian - Portraits**
for the Mercer County Italian American Festival
West Windsor, NJ, www.ItalianAmericanFestival.com

Category: **Best New Promotion #43**

Background

To increase publicity for the 11th Annual Mercer County Italian American Festival, an Italian cultural festival, we created the “**My Story Growing Up Italian - Portraits**” promotion. Through newspaper advertisements, website placement, and TV spots we encouraged readers and viewers to submit their stories with corresponding photos of growing up Italian or with Italian friends while promoting the Mercer County Italian American Festival. This promotion was based on the promotion created in 2009 called “My Stories Growing Up Italian” and made more powerful with the addition of a TV component and the inclusion of corresponding photographs.

The power in this promotion is the fact that it gives participants a reason and a place to share their unique and personal stories while seamlessly branding the Mercer County Italian American Festival as a truly cultural and personal experience.

The promotion consisted of the following:

Print Advertisements (5)

Five quarter page newspaper advertisements, one per week for five weeks preceding the festival, were run in our media partner, The Times of Trenton newspaper.

Each ad featured the following

- The beginning portion of the writer’s story along with a corresponding photo and directed readers to the festival website to read the complete story.
- A tie in to the Mercer County Italian American Festival

Television Spots (6)

One interview to kick-off the promotion

Five interviews based on the stories featured in the print advertisements

Website

Stories with corresponding photos were submitted and viewed on the official festival website

Special Newspaper Section

Stories with their corresponding photos were published in the Special Festival Pull-out section in the Times of Trenton newspaper the Thursday preceding the festival.

Purpose/Objective

- To generate increased publicity for the Mercer County Italian American Festival
- To reinforce the mission and identity of the festival as a *cultural* festival.
- To create additional value for our Media Partners – The Times of Trenton Newspaper and WZBN TV 25

Target Audience

Italian Americans and General Population

- Italian Americans: core audience of the festival
- General Population: growing segment of festival attendees
To include the general population we requested stories about “Growing up Italian or *with Italian friends.*”

Duration of Program

Print advertisements and TV spots ran for five weeks leading up to the festival. Stories and photos may be submitted and read on the festival website year-round.

Overall Effectiveness

- Increased Value to Media Partner, The Times of Trenton
The Times newspaper was given exclusivity to publish the stories pre-festival. Only featured stories were published on the festival website until after the festival.
The Times publication date was promoted in advertisements and on the festival website.
- Generated credibility for the festival as a cultural festival
- Reinforced the mission of the festival to all audiences
- Drove readers and interested parties to the festival website
- Increased festival exposure on TV through 6 news stories including one interview to kick off the promotion and five interviews with the writers whose stories were featured in the print ads.
- Increased Value to Media Partner, WZBN TV 25 by inclusion in the print advertising for the promotion

Cav. Gilda Rorro Baldassari, after seeing her story published - "I can't tell you how much it means to see my family's picture in there. I feel as though my parents and grandparents are smiling through the photo. I don't know what to say. As they say in Italian, 'non ce parole' - there are no words!"

Overall Revenue and Expense Budget

The promotion itself did not generate revenue. Expense for the promotion included only graphic design of the advertisements - \$300.

Attendance/Number of Participants

- Number of Stories Submitted: 38
- Festival Attendance: 100,000

Measurable Results

- Number of Print Advertisements Placed for the Promotion: 5 (in-kind)
- Advertisement Size: 3 columns x 10 inches (Quarter Page)
- Total Value of "My Story Growing Up Italian - Portraits" Print Advertisements: \$10,718
- Number of TV interviews/stories: 6 (in-kind)
- Length of spots: 2 to 7 minutes
- Total Value of "My Story Growing Up Italian - Portraits" TV Spots: \$7,974
- Number of Stories Submitted: 38
- Festival attendance: 100,000



BARRY CHIORELLO'S SECOND STORY PRODUCTIONS, LLC

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barry@barrychiorello.com • www.barrychiorello.com

MY STORY

Growing up Italian

portraits



Battaglia and Sorrentino families and friends

Author: **Cav. Gilda Rorro Baldassari, Ed.D**
Hometown: **Hamilton, NJ**
Occupation: **Consular Correspondent and Chair NJ Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission**

Could your happiest days be spent being forced to live in a segregated part of town, in a modest wooden house without running water, gas, heat or electricity, with a wood/coal stove that only warmed a few of the rooms downstairs, and an “out house” supplied with a Sears and Roebuck catalog in lieu of Charmin? [...] Strange as it may sound, my mother, Dr. Mary Sorrentino Battaglia, often spoke of the “good ole’ days,” with nostalgia.

continued at www.ItalianAmericanFestival.com

17th Annual Mercer County Italian American Festival

September 24th, 25th and 26th, 2010

SEND US YOUR STORY & PHOTO

Submit your story and related photo of Growing Up Italian (or with Italian friends) and view others at www.ItalianAmericanFestival.com. You may also submit your story by mail at “My Story Growing Up Italian - Portraits” c/o MCIAFA, PO Box 2862, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690, (250 words max.). (Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope if you would like your photo returned.) Selected stories and photos will be published in **The Times** on September 23rd in the special Mercer County Italian American Festival pull-out section.



www.ItalianAmericanFestival.com

For more information about the festival, please call: (609) 631-7544

MY STORY

Growing up Italian

portraits



Damiano Family with Giuseppe "Joe" kneeling in white shirt and father "Mastro Antonio" with hat

Author: **Giuseppe "Joe" Damiano**
Hometown: **Trenton, NJ**
Occupation: **Master Cabinet Maker**

"Mastro Antonio" is what they called him in the Burg - a master of inlaid wood and cabinetry. Apprenticed as a boy to a cabinetmaker in Naples, Italy, my father produced furniture, bars and other wooden items that were veritable works of art. [...]

During World War 1, my father left Philadelphia to fight for Italy. He was captured and imprisoned by the Austrians...

continued at
www.ItalianAmericanFestival.com

11th Annual Mercer County Italian American Festival

September 24th, 25th and 26th, 2010

SEND US YOUR STORY & PHOTO

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MY STORY

Growing up Italian

portraits



Lou Zanoni, age 5, at a family wedding, peeking out at the camera.

Author: **Louis Zanoni**
Hometown: **Ewing, NJ**
Occupation: **Co-inventor of the LCD,
Chairman - WZBN TV**

I was born in 1933 in the bedroom of the house my family lived in on Princeton Avenue in Trenton. My father was 55 years old. My mother was his second wife. After his first wife died, he returned to Pescantina, Italy, to find another wife.

Like other northern Italians, we lived in north Trenton and my mother never cooked with tomato sauce. We ate polenta and rice...

*continued at
www.ItalianAmericanFestival.com*

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MY STORY

Growing up Italian

portraits



Feast of the Madonna di Cassandrino in Chambersburg, circa 1937

Author: **Peter Inverso**
Hometown: **Hamilton, NJ**
Occupation: **President & CEO,**
Roma Bank

My recollections of Chambersburg are of growing up in a closely knit, uniquely Italian neighborhood, where large families were measured by eight or more; where the roles of a father and mother were well defined, as were the roles of their children; where lack of respect or courtesy was punishable; where family ties were stronger than the Gordian knot; [...] and where the weekend meant obligatory visits to relatives...

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MY STORY

Growing up Italian

portraits



Vincenzo Paxia (right) in the tailor shop at Maury Robinson's, Trenton, NJ, 1963

I was born in a village in Sicily in 1933. Life was simple. Most of the boys played in the streets. To keep us out of trouble, we were given the chance to go to a trade school, where I learned how to be a tailor. I started this training around the age of 10. And for the next 6 years, I learned all aspects of being a tailor. I later attended Bologna School of Design where I received my diploma...

Author: **Vincenzo Paxia**
Hometown: **Trenton, NJ**
Occupation: **Tailor**

continued at
www.ItalianAmericanFestival.com

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September 24th, 25th and 26th, 2010

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Welcome **benvenuto**

12th Annual

Mercer County Italian American Festival

at Mercer County Park

Old Trenton Road, West Windsor, New Jersey

September 23, 24, 25 2011

12:00 Noon - 10:00 PM

Selected as one of the Mid-Atlantic region's top events by [aaaworld.com](#)

52:05:50:04

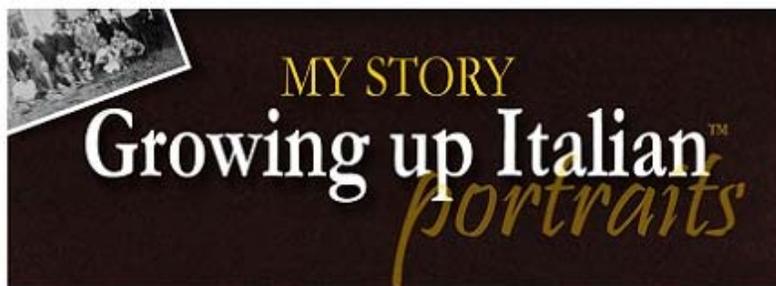
DAYS HOURS MIN SEC



Click Here for Today's Top News Stories

Festival News

Vincent Amico is looking for photos of life in the "burg" in the 60s & 70s for a documentary he is producing. For more details contact Vince at vincentvsa@hotmail.com.



The Mercer County Italian American Festival and The Times have partnered to record your story of growing up Italian (or with Italian friends). And this year we invite you to include a photo. Tell us your story in 250 words or less and include a photo related to the story. Selected stories and photos will be published in The Times newspaper on September 23 in the Mercer County Italian American Festival pull-out section.

Click [here](#) to submit your story.

Click [here](#) to read stories!

Rain or Shine

Join us as we celebrate our Italian and Italian American Heritage and Culture at the 12th Annual Mercer County Italian American Festival, September 23, 24 and 25th 2011

Food Piazza

Italian restaurants, wine and beer, Enjoy Italian specialties from many of the area's best Italian restaurants and vendors.

New Videos - How to Make Capicola Part 1, How to Make Capicola Part 2

2010 Super 50/50 winner was Linda Thomas on ticket #24696, her share was \$21,552.00

Add your story to My Story Growing Up Italian - Portraits and include a related photo. New Stories added 6-23-11

Video - John Scarpati in his own words - 2009!

Festival Association announces our new Attorney



Entertainment Food Culture Bocce Directions Pictures Get Involved

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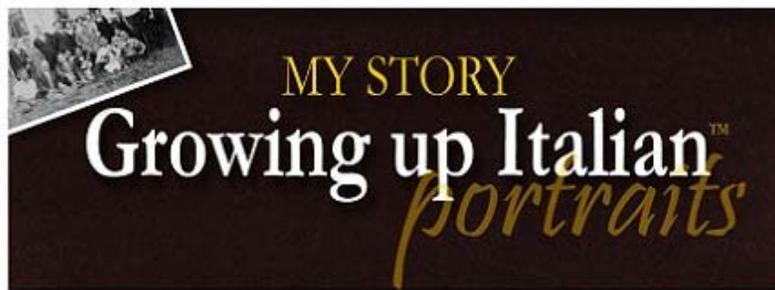
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Add Your Story Growing Up Italian

The Mercer County Italian American Festival and The Times have partnered to record your story of growing up Italian (or with Italian friends). And this year we invite you to include a photo. Tell us your story in 250 words or less and include a photo related to the story. Selected stories and photos will be published in The Times newspaper on September 23 in the Mercer County Italian American Festival pull-out section and on the Mercer County Italian American Festival website.

What's your Name?

What's your email address?

What's your occupation?

What's your hometown?

What's the title of your story?

Type your story in the box provided below! Your story can be up to 250 words!

Words remaining: 250

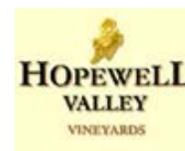
Please visit our sponsors who make this festival possible.



Do you want to upload an image with your story? If so select the 'Browse..' button below to upload your image.

Note: Photos should be **jpg files** at 300dpi to be considered for inclusion in The Times special festival section.

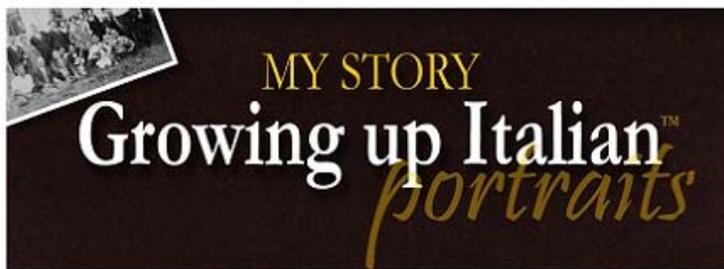
Caption





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Entertainment Food Culture Bocce Directions Pictures Get Involved



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The Mercer County Italian American Festival and The Times have partnered to record your story of growing up Italian (or with Italian friends). And this year we've included photos. Tell us your story in 250 words or less and include a photo related to the story. Selected stories and photos will be published in The Times newspaper on September 23 in the Mercer County Italian American Festival pull-out section.

Click [here](#) to submit your story.

An Italian Tailor

Author: Vincenzo Paxia
Occupation: Tailor
Hometown: Trenton, NJ



Vincenzo Paxia (right) in the tailor shop at Maury Robinson's, Trenton, NJ, 1963

I was born in a village in Sicily in 1933. Life was simple. Most of the boys played in the streets. To keep us out of trouble, we were given the chance to go to a trade school, where I learned how to be a tailor. I started this training around the age of 10. And for the next 6 years, I learned all aspects of being a tailor. I later attended Bologna School of Design where I received my diploma. I worked at various tailor jobs in Modena after graduation.



One day, my godfather suggested that I apply for a tailor union job in America. My uncle who lived in Belmar, NJ would sponsor me to come there. So, I came to America in 1958. I remember that the first thing that I saw was the Statue of Liberty.



While working at Brooks Brothers clothing factory, my uncle who was in the tailor union in Trenton got me a job making leather coats in a factory on the corner of Carol and Perry Streets. One night, while at a bar, I met a man who made slipcovers who offered me a job. His shop was in Princeton.



While waiting for a bus in front of Landrock's, an expensive men's clothing store in Princeton, I met the head tailor. Noticing that I was sharply dressed, he asked me what I did for work and I told him that I was a tailor. He offered me a job at the shop. I eventually ended up at Maury Robinson's in Trenton. I enjoyed working for Maury for 18 years. When I became a citizen in 1964, Maury wrote a nice story about me for the newspapers. When Maury died, I opened my own shop. My shop is located on College Street in Trenton.



Recollections of Chambersburg

Author: Peter Inverso

Occupation: President & CEO, Roma Bank

Hometown: Hamilton, NJ



*Feast of the Madonna di
Cassandrino in Chambersburg,
circa 1937*

My recollections of Chambersburg are of growing up in a closely knit, uniquely Italian neighborhood, where large families were measured by eight or more; where the roles of a father and mother were well defined, as were the roles of their children; where lack of respect or courtesy was punishable; where family ties were stronger than the Gordian knot; where relatives may have fought with each other, but outsiders dare not; where the church, clergy, nuns were revered and a family blessed if one of their own was called by God to serve Him; where there was no casual dress

for Sunday Mass; where wrongs, real or perceived, caused feuds and grudges that could last for decades; where discourse principally took place on front porches, stoops, or the corner bar or club; and where the weekend meant obligatory visits to relatives.

It was said that in Chambersburg everyone knew your business, and they probably did! Chambersburg was as much a life style and attitude as it was a geographic delineation. Predicated on a deep pride of ethnic identity, the Burg was the Burg, in great measure, because of the institutions woven into its fabric—its churches, schools, bakeries, restaurants, specialty food stores, neighborhood bars, tomato pies, and The Feast of the Madonna di Cassandrino. Plentiful societies and clubs provided a focal point for the men to meet, argue over who was better-DiMaggio or Williams, play pool and cards, and vent their "machoism".

In the forties and the fifties, society was not as mobile, and while demographic change was beginning, life in Chambersburg principally revolved around day to day contact in the neighborhood with families and friends, who served as a safety net and support structure for each other. I was the beneficiary of that support and consider myself fortunate to have had Chambersburg as the setting for my early life experience.

Guidance of a Brother

Author: Lou Zanoni

Occupation: Co-inventor of the LCD, Chairman WZBN TV

Hometown: Ewing, NJ



*Lou Zanoni, age 5, at family
wedding with brothers and
cousins, peeking out at the
camera*

I was born in 1933 in the bedroom of the house my family lived in on Princeton Avenue in Trenton. My father was 55 years old. My mother was his second wife. After his first wife died, he returned to Pescantina, Italy, to find another wife. Like other northern Italians, we lived in north Trenton and my mother never cooked with tomato sauce. We ate polenta and rice. My father liked to hunt rabbits and pheasants and taught me to use only one shot, so there wouldn't be too many pellets in our dinner.

My mother never really acclimated to her life in Trenton and I grew up speaking mostly Italian until I started school. I have a sister who is five years older. I also had my father's first family – three grown stepbrothers and a stepsister.



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This picture was taken at a family wedding. Two of my brothers and several cousins are all dressed up for the occasion. I was there, too, about five years old, peeking out at the camera from behind the skirts of a nun.

One of my brothers, Andy, fourth from the left, took a special interest in me. He was a HAM radio operator and then a radioman flying international routes for TWA. He taught me about electronics and pointed me in the right career direction...to the radio shack in the U.S. Navy, then to electronics school, and after graduation to the RCA research laboratories.

If You Plant Potatoes, You Get Potatoes

Author: Giuseppe "Joe" Damiano

Occupation: Master Cabinet Maker

Hometown: Trenton, NJ



Damiano Family with Giuseppe "Joe" kneeling in white shirt and father "Mastro Antonio" with hat

"Mastro Antonio" is what they called him in the Burg—a master of inlaid wood and cabinetry. Apprenticed as a boy to a cabinetmaker in Naples, Italy, my father produced furniture, bars and other wooden items that were veritable works of art. Roman chariots and fine steeds were intricately designed into the bedroom set he proudly made for our mother.

During World War 1, my father left Philadelphia to fight for Italy. He was captured and imprisoned by the Austrians. In their jail, he and other prisoners received no food and were forced to survive on rodents. The Italian government declared him a "Cavaliere, Ordine Militare d'Italia" (Knight, Military Order of Italy), for his wartime service.

A strong man and father of 13 children, "Mastro Antonio" taught by example. Since I was four-years-old, I was straightening nails for him with a small hammer. As we grew, my 7 brothers and I would help him in his shop after school and on weekends. He would show us how to do something just once. If we ever made a mistake, there was no scolding, just a disapproving look that made you realize it was to be redone. He always emphasized, "Make the back look as good as the front; don't cut corners." Thus we became skilled carpenters by the time we entered middle school.

A friend once said to him, "If I had your sons, I'd become rich." My father answered, "If you plant potatoes, you get potatoes."

They Knew the Secret for the Happiest Days

Author: Cav. Gilda Rorro Baldassari, Ed.D.

Occupation: Consular Correspondent & Chair NJ Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission

Hometown: Hamilton, NJ

Could your happiest days be spent being forced to live in a segregated part of town, in a modest wooden house without running water, gas, heat or electricity, with a wood/coal stove that only warmed a few of the rooms downstairs, and an "out house" supplied with a Sears and Roebuck catalog in lieu of Charmin? Add to that a 12-hour work day from 6 am-6 pm, and from 7 am-12 pm on Saturday.

Strange as it may sound, my mother, Dr. Mary Sorrentino Battaglia, often spoke of the "good ole' days," with nostalgia. Growing up, my sisters and I were told countless stories of the Italian immigrants, who, upon arriving in Mays Landing, were made to live in a part of town called "The Grade," where they were constantly called "Wops, Guineas or Dagos."



Battaglia and Sorrentino families and friends

When my grandfather opened his bar and grill in town, the Klu Klux Klan paid an unwelcome visit shouting, "You dirty Dagos; go back to ITLY' where you belong!" To add to the frustration, when my mother became a typist in the Atlantic County Clerk's Office, she would often have to write a restrictive covenant stating, "This property cannot be sold to a Negro, a Jew, a Catholic, or an Italian."

Despite the difficulties, Italian immigrants continued to fetch up to that village because of the Cotton Mill of the Mays Landing Water Power Company. During the summer, my mother joined her siblings to work in the mill, amidst screaming machines, where the cotton would swirl around them like snow in January.

So why "the happiest days," one might ask? Her answer was simple. On Sunday, after mass, at Saint Vincent De Paul's Church, the extended family and friends gravitated at my grandparents' home. They would all make a contribution to the feast, the wine, music and dancing. All the generations joined in entertaining themselves. No one was left alone or isolated on Sunday or any other day. All were shown love and value. They knew the secret for the happiest days.

Grandma and Grandpa's House

Author: Janet D'Onofrio Brooks

Occupation: Self-employed

Hometown: Brooklyn, NY (Bensonhurst)

Like many other Italian-Americans most of my memories of growing up revolve around food. We lived just a couple of miles from my mother's parents so we would often have Sunday dinner there as well as Christmas and Easter dinners. All of the cooking and eating always took place, you guessed it, in the basement! In the spring, Grandma would take care of her garden where she grew figs and other vegetables. She and my grandfather would sometimes come to the Poconos with us for a weekend. She would often walk out to the road to pick dandelion leaves for a salad that evening. The bitter, fresh taste of these "weeds" was fantastic. My grandfather made wine every year and always had a small bottle of it on the dinner table every night. His wine equipment was in the cellar, which smelled of grapes and wine all year long. Only the men and boys were allowed to touch or go near the wine equipment when the wine was being made. The only exception he made to this inviolate rule was for me. He actually allowed me to turn the handle of the presser one year! Grandpa's favorite breakfast food was a raw egg. He would take a knife and poke a tiny hole at each end and then suck the egg out from one end. Sometimes after dinner, if it was the right season, he would slice some peaches and soak them in his wine. They tasted like heaven!

Re-connect

Author: Phyllis Bruno

Occupation: Sales

Hometown: West Windsor

My father was sent here from Italy at 14 to work in the factories. He fought in WWII for the USA. Eventually he went back to Italy married my mother and wanted to stay in Italy but the opportunities for work were in the US; mom was not happy! All of my aunts and cousins remained in Italy. We went to Italy on occasion so I always missed the family there. I married a Hungarian-Polish man (now divorced) and although my daughter being around my mother knows she is Italian but really did not understand how much! So two years ago I took my 8 year old daughter on a cruise that stopped many places in Italy then went to southern Italy for 10 days. She met everyone as I did the 1st time I went at 7; I will never forget that trip. I have always felt my soul is in Italy. All of my cousins