

LITTLE ITALY NEWS SEPTEMBER 2009 EDITION

www.littleitalytroy.org

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Troy Little Italy Quadricentennial Celebration

*September 24, 2009
Noon to 8 PM*

Among the several offerings at our Quadricentennial Celebration on Thursday, September 24th will be the opportunity to enjoy literally a taste of other cultures at our food court which will remain open from 12 noon to 8 pm. Representatives from the Ladies of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, St. Ann's Church and St. Nicholas Ukrainian Church will join with members of the Italian Community Center, Troy's German-American community, Questar III Culinary Arts teacher James Rhoades and his students, Rabbi Avraham Laber, and Paul Marano to provide a menu which includes pierogi, pasta fagioli, corned beef and cabbage sandwiches, hot dogs and sauerkraut, German potato salad, venison and rabbit stew, flat bread, fried dough, Irish soda bread, challah bread, Irish coffee, churros, baklava, honey cakes, and several more items that may be added to the menu. The Epicurean Restaurant will provide French cuisine.

From the stage, you will be entertained by demonstrations of Ukrainian and Irish dancing, traditional Quebecois music, the music of SHELVING ROCK with Stephen Iachetta and T. Breze Verdant, and SIMPLE Theory with Maurizio Russomanno, as well as a DJ playing recorded music from 1909 in addition to traditional ethnic music. The music begins at 12 noon, dancing demonstrations begin at 6 pm.

In addition there will be demonstrations of rug weaving and making challah bread; Questar III students will be assembling a canoe; and DEFY students will have painted colorful murals of historic scenes. Several craftspeople will be displaying and selling arts and crafts. At our historic exhibits area, there will be day long viewing of our neighborhood history DVD as well as exhibits of posters relating to neighborhood history.

Enjoy the week long City Events starting 9/20 and ending on 9/27.



The DeFazio's with Senator Ted Kennedy. Josephine and Anthony DeFazio have had the pleasure of meeting many prominent public officials during their countless years of dedicated service to our community. Both were long time members of the American Committee on Italian Migration of the Diocese of Albany. Anthony was a diocesan chairman for several years. The committee, founded in 1952, was instrumental in the passage of measures to increase the numbers of Italians to enter America following 1924 restrictions placed on immigration from southern and eastern Europe. Congress replaced the national origins system with a preference system designed to reunite immigrant families and attract skilled immigrants to the United States. The Kennedy family, including President John F. Kennedy and Senator Ted Kennedy were staunch supporters of the legislation signed into law in 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson. At the time of the meeting, Senator Kennedy, noticing Mr. DeFazio's Knights of Columbus lapel pin, greeted him as "brother Knight". We all mourn the passing of Senator Kennedy. (Photo courtesy of the DeFazio family)

CO-Operate with your neighbors Troy Food Co-op Needs You!

Support the Troy Community Food Co-op in the Pioneer Market and help reach our goal of 1,000 member-owners by the end of 2009. We're nearly 700 families & businesses strong and nearing the end of a \$2.5 million capitalization effort. Already a member ... then be part of the Member2Member campaign and recruit one more. Not a member yet? Please join and own the place where you shop. Joining is just a mouse click away at www.troyfoodcoop.com

Meet the Candidates Night Wednesday, October 21, 2009, 7- 9 PM at the CYO on 237 4th Street in Troy.

SEPTEMBER MEETINGS

9/16 Neighborhood Watch 6 PM
Troy Little Italy 7 PM @ 233
Fourth St. (corner of Washington)

9/30 TNAC Meeting, 5:30 to 7 PM
Location to be determined. Send items for agenda to:
Hilary@trionline.org

For Rent - - - 245 Second Street
3rd floor in Victorian rowhouse. 1 Br, great light, good closet space. Walking Distance of library, Sage campus, downtown amenities, Little Italy market. Smoke—Free house. No dogs. \$625 Includes heat. Call Bernice—273-1692.

More Recognition for Weed & Seed
<http://www.ncpc.org/programs/catalyst-newsletter/catalyst-newsletter-2009/volume-30-number-8/weed-and-seed-sites-use-cpted-to-improve-their-communities>

Another Success!!!

The following article was submitted by Andrea Daley. She and her family are Troy Little Italy's biggest cheerleaders. Whenever Andrea is in charge of an event, she and her family work tirelessly to ensure a great outcome. Little Italy is very lucky to have them living in our community. Thank You Andrea & family

The community comes together again! The weather was turned up a bit, but it did not stop us from having our annual City-Wide Garage Sale; another success! Great buys for so many. One person commented "I could not refuse the items being offered, I came back three times!" Next year it will be planned in the fall when it is a little cooler.

I would like to acknowledge the Red Front for providing the community with their superb Bar-b-que! It was enjoyed by many! Many words of thanks to those who helped with the signage (a huge job), directing traffic in the early hours and assisting throughout the day! What a privilege to be part of Troy Little Italy!



South Central & Little Italy in the news

The Record

August 5, 2009, p4. A night out with the neighbors by Tom Caprood with photo by J. S. Carras. National Night Out events held in Troy are publicized including the Little Italy and Osgood neighborhood celebration at the Hill Street MarketPlace.

August 13, 2009, p7. Kids get own shirt, glove by Tom Caprood with photo by J. S. Carras. The South Central "Baseball and More" Day Camp is featured. The four week camp was sponsored by the city of Troy, Little Italy, Tri-City Valley-Cats and the Troy Police Athletic League and supported by several partnerships of local organizations and businesses, centered at the Sage College Recreation Center.

August 14, 2009, p9. ICC hosting We Care Day on Sunday to benefit the Manor by Tom Caprood. Now into its 55th year, the project provides assistance for residents of the Van Rensselaer Manor by members of the Italian Community Center.

Times Union

August 29, 2009 Stickball stirs memories by Phil Neuffer. Rocco DeFazio describes our "field of dreams", the old marketplace, and stickball. Don't miss the photos! For a photo gallery by Luann Harris from the Troy stickball league, visit <http://timesunion.com>

Quadricentennial Plans

On Thursday, August 27th a dozen representatives from Irish, Italian, German, French, Lebanese, and Ukrainian ethnic groups gathered to make plans for the September 24th Quadricentennial event to be hosted by Troy Little Italy in the MarketPlace on Hill Street. Among the several attractions being planned for the event which begins at 12 noon and ends at 8 pm is a food court featuring a number of ethnic foods, an area for arts and crafts, a kid's activities center, entertainment including ethnic music and dancers, and historic exhibits on film and DVD. We need volunteers to assist in several areas of planning and implementation. The next planning meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 8th at the Friehofer Run for Women Headquarters, corner of Fourth and Washington, at 7 pm.

Library director to speak in Little Italy.

Paul Hicok, Troy Public Library Director, will give a presentation at the September 16, 2009 Little Italy meeting at 7 pm regarding the bill creating a public library district in the City of Troy. The bill, amending chapter 422 of the laws of 2008, was sponsored in the Legislature by Assemblyman Ron Canestrari and Senator Roy McDonald, and has been signed by Governor Paterson. The Board of Trustees of the Troy Public Library will now be able to hold a city wide special election on Tuesday, September 29th between the hours of 7 am and 8 pm at the Main Library, 100 Second Street, and at the Lansingburgh Branch on 114th Street. The ballot will be in two parts, the first asks the voters to create the library district with an annual budget of \$890,000 and the second part invites voters to elect seven trustees to the new library board. Special District Public Libraries are much like school districts or fire districts. Residents of the city select the Board of Trustees and vote directly on the library's annual budget. This removes the library from the politics of the city and places control and responsibility for library service directly in the hands of Troy residents. Currently, the Troy Public Library depends primarily on annual appropriations from the City of Troy and Rensselaer County to cover operational costs. Under the special district model the voters would be the ones who decide the library's budget – instead of the decision being made by neither the library nor the voters. The public will get a chance to vote on a proposed tax levy. The library estimates that the average household in the City of Troy would be assessed \$46.67 per year for library service. Currently that is just a little more than the purchase price of a single book. "If you were to read just 6 books a year and maybe watch 6 DVD's you would save over \$320 if you borrowed them from the library", said Paul Hicok, Library Director. He added, "libraries return far more value to the community than they cost in taxpayer support. With books and magazines and music and DVD's and access to the Internet, the public library is an important part of the fabric of any community. A successful vote to establish a library district in the City of Troy will allow us to re-open both the Lansingburgh Branch and the Sycaway Branch as well as add some

hours of service to each and to purchase more library materials for the community."

Voters in zip code 12180 are asked to vote at the Main Library at 100 Second Street in downtown Troy and voters with the zip code 12182 are asked to vote at the Lansingburgh Branch on 4th Avenue and 114th Street in Lansingburgh. Residents who cannot attend the meeting may contact Paul Hicok, Director, Troy Public Library, 100 Second Street, Troy, NY at (518) 274-7071 for additional information

Troy's Little Italy book available.

A limited supply of the book depicting the pictorial history of Troy's Little Italy by Michael Esposito is still available for sale at the Hill Street Farmers' Market on Wednesday's and at DeFazio's Import store. Market Block Books, M.O.S.S Bookstore, Clement's Frame and Art Shop, the Rensselaer Union, Samaritan Hospital Gift Store, Borders at Crossgates, and Friar Tuck Book Store in Delmar are among the local places to obtain copies. The book is also sold on the internet. All royalties are being donated to the Troy Public Library.

Book signings by the author will be held at the Shrine Festa Italiana, Italian Community Center, 1450 Fifth Avenue, Troy on Friday and Saturday, September 11th and 12th from 5 – 8 pm (books are being sold by Market Block Books) and on Wednesday, September 23rd following a 12:15 pm "book talk" in the 7th floor Librarians Room at the New York State Library, Empire State Plaza, Albany. Remember, we are always interested in adding photos depicting life in Little Italy to our collection of images. Items will be scanned and returned to the owners ASAP.

New Troy Blog on Times Union Site

The new blog was started by two Troy residents, Joely Johnson and Erika Groff. Please visit the site, bookmark it and feel free to add your own story or make comments on what is already in place. Kudos to both of them.

<http://blog.timesunion.com/troy/>

Tea Party Express coming to Albany

The rally will be held September 10th at 5:30pm at the State Capitol (facing City Hall). For more info go to:

<http://www.teapartyexpress.org/indexhtml/>

Alley Action Project 2009

The Alley Action Project 2009 is a grass roots movement focusing on helping neighborhood residents to develop and enact community-building projects. These projects can be designed to work in a very specific area or be a more broadly based idea. The main focus is on the concept that a community can begin to solve problems with creativity and neighborhood involvement.

An instructional workshop will be held on September 15 at the Arts Center of the Capital Region, 265 River Street, Troy, NY from 6:30 – 8:30. Please arrive early to enjoy a light supper and refreshments.

This event will bring together diverse communities and neighborhoods from Troy and the Capital Region. The program will begin with a short power point presentation based on recent successful Alley Action Projects. This will be followed by small group discussions to elicit specific neighborhood problems. The final part of the program involves the entire group, to develop simple and direct strategies to bring attention to the discovered problem.

Our goal is to advise and guide the groups through organizing an action project, funding it, putting together the team and accomplishing the event. The demonstration project recently completed in the Osgood Neighborhood of South Troy brought together kids, seniors, families, neighbors and other interested people to design and apply a large mural to the Alley face of a building that had been regularly tagged by graffiti. It has been shown over time that property owners who maintain their buildings through art, care, and maintenance are not often attacked by graffiti.

In order to accommodate all interested participants please reserve your space in the workshop as soon as possible. There is no fee to participate. Sid Fleisher, 518-272-1944

Alley.action@yahoo.com

**FARMERS MARKET
WEDNESDAY 3 - 7 PM**

Italian Community Center Charitable- Foundation of Troy

1450 5th Avenue

Troy, New York 12180

(518 274-0508, ext 5

21st ANNUAL SHRINE FESTA ITALIANA

**Friday, Saturday & Sunday
September 11th—13th, 2009**

Friday 5:00pm - 11:00 pm

Saturday 5:00pm - 11:00pm

Sunday - Mass - 10:00am in the main hall

Food booths to open 12 noon until 6:00pm.

Great Italian Food - Kids Fun - Games of Chance

Live Music for your entertainment

Also

“Little Italy” books for Sale - Fri. & Sat. only, 5 to 8

“Empty Bowls” Information Booth

Flavour Café - Flavored Coffee & Italian Pastries

Vespa of Schenectady

Italian Souvenirs & Cookbooks - ICC

Entertainment

Friday 9/11 - T S Ensemble 6:00 - 10:00pm

Saturday 9/12 - Good Times Band - 6:00 - 10pm

Sunday 9/13 - Al Bruno, Entertainer - 2:00 - 6:00pm

Live Broadcast Magic 100.9

Bocce Tournament - Saturday 9/12

Home Wine Tasting and Wine Making

Lessons - Sunday 9/13

No Gambling on Sunday

Games of Chance (Must be 18 or older to play)

AT LIBERTY

The Saga of an Italo-American Family in South Troy

by

Frank LaPosta Visco

Chapter 11: A Wedding & A Birth

It was almost the witching hour on a moonless April night in 1935 when the *ostetrica* (midwife) Viorica DiPaolo, was summoned to the home of Francesco and Rose Campobasso to receive her instructions. The last time she had attended their daughter Rose, at the birth of Joseph Anthony Case, complications required a trip to the hospital. The Campobassos wanted to emphasize that that option was to be avoided.

The old woman made her assurances, gathered her bundles and proceeded the few blocks to the Liberty Street flat of Joe and Rose Case.

The next morning, it was announced that the newest Case had arrived -- a healthy 9-pound boy, and that he would be christened Joseph Anthony, the same two names of his older brother, but reversed. Esther, now released from her confinement, and pale from not being allowed in the sun since the previous summer, was eager to help her older sister with the care of the infant.

House calls were common then, and Dr. Positano, the physician who had attended Rose after the complications of her first difficult delivery, called frequently at the Case household to check up on Rose and the infant. The fact that Esther was there every time he visited was far from a coincidence, for the good doctor had been enamored of Esther for as long as he could remember. A shy man, he barely managed to speak to Esther, experiencing that all-too-common male fear of rejection when faced with the object of his affection.

One day, though, he spoke more than the usual banal pleasantries, and berated himself for it afterwards

After examining Rose and the baby, the doctor was offered the usual hospitality of sharing coffee and *biscotti* at the kitchen table, and he accepted.

Esther, aware of his interest in her, tried to keep the conversation limited to the most banal of topics, the weather, but she sensed an undercurrent of seriousness about the physician, as he nervously stirred his espresso. What she couldn't know was that he was trying to tell her something he had rehearsed over and

over, phrasing and rephrasing it, never quite satisfied that he had the right words, and worried that he would be betraying a confidence and his Hippocratic oath if he revealed the reason for his speech.

Being lost in these thoughts caused an embarrassing silence that he suddenly became aware of, when he was asked the same question twice.

"What's that? Oh, yes, I'll be back again on Tuesday," he stammered out as he stood up from the table and prepared to leave.

"Esther, could I speak with you, please?" The doctor gestured toward the door, hoping Esther would escort him to it for a private word. She went with him, a concerned look clouding her face.

When they reached the front door, the doctor said, "Esther, I've known you and your family for a long time. I wouldn't do anything to hurt you in any way. I -- I just want you to know that if there's anything I can do to, um, help in the, you know, situation, I'd be honored."

Despite her smile, Esther's eyes turned cold. "Thank you, doctor. I think we'll be all right," was all she said.

As the doctor had feared, getting out of the Campobasso house and into the Case compound was an opportunity for Esther to reestablish her relationship with Eddie, despite the strong objections of the parents. Obviously, when Esther was with Rose and the baby, everyone concerned made sure that the two were never alone.

In spite of the obstacles that the families put in their way, courtship resumed, and two months later the strong-willed Esther had her way; another Case male would wed another Campobasso female, although as far as the couple was concerned, it was their second wedding to each other.

These days, when the modern-day descendants of the Campobasso and Caserta/Case families look at the June 1935 wedding pictures of Esther and Eddie, they see something unique. Actually, it's who they don't see that makes it so -- Francesco Campobasso isn't there.

It's not that he was deceased in 1935; he would live another ten years, passing on just as the second world war ended. No, he's not there because Esther refused to allow him any part in it.

Esther blamed her father for her imprisonment. True, he was the enforcer of the strict rule, but it was the women of the family, led by Esther's mother Rose, who

decreed the punishment, in order to clear the family name of any taint that could result from the elopement of Esther and Eddie the previous July.

Francesco had made no exceptions -- Esther had had no contact with the outside world since her return from the civil ceremony in Vermont -- a non-wedding in the eyes of Troy's Italo-American community.

And although he didn't say it to Esther, Dr. Positano understood what that would mean if everyone knew what he knew.

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Next: In Chapter Twelve, Double Trouble.

Can You CanCan? SAVE the DATE

No, we aren't suggesting you whip up your skirts or toss your drawers. Troy Co-op owners and friends will "Eat Local" this winter by canning local produce for our fall and winter tables. Using the power of cooperative purchase and by sharing equipment and work, we can extend the harvest season in our cupboards. The trick, of course, is to learn the canning process.

On October 3rd, 10:00 A.M., Co-op owners and friends will gather to learn canning at Cooperative Extension, 61 State St. Troy, NY. Participants will share the expense of the produce, (It will likely be tomatoes), and canning jars. Cooperative Extension will share their stoves, canning equipment, and expertise with us. Cost of cans and produce will be \$8.00 per person.

Harriet Warnock-Graham might call to convince you to reserve your spot and to remind you to get it on your calendar. If she doesn't call and you're self motivated, you can call Eric Paul, General Manager of the *Troy Community Food Cooperative*, 424-1131, to hold your space since space will be limited.

Organizers for Canning Day are the Troy Food Co-op, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rensselaer County, and Agricultural Stewardship Association



old-time

N.Y. stickball

TOURNAMENT September 26-27, 2009

Call Rocco DeFazio for more information at 271-1111

*Now accepting
6 player teams!*



All proceeds benefit:

Youth programs in Little Italy
and the South Troy Area



**Willie Mays was often seen
playing stickball with kids
in Harlem.**



**We'd play in between the cars.
If you hit it over the roof you were out,
because you'd lose the ball!**

-Willie Mays



Call Rocco DeFazio for more information at 271-1111

Little Italy Stickball League Photo Gallery

South Troy Hooligans



Paul Normand Steve Skowron

Anthony Mosca Bob Mosca Andrew Mahz Thomas Hohe

Albia Legends



Max Keado Anthony Valenti Joe Fazioli Tim White

Casey Job Mike Krogh

The Special Eds



Left to right:
Ben Casale, Stan Cooper, Mark Millington, Mike Liesenfelder,
Dave Jabour, Andrew Christie

The Wet Six



Mike Bouchard Anthony Gadani, Tom Fuller Buck Carey
Nick Slaboda Nick Kimmey Kyle Cronk

Wynantskill Stables



Donny Reilly, Nick Testo, Dominic Testo, Steve Gross, Anthony Testo,

Nate Novak

Electric Dream Machine



Wes "Russ" Speanburg John DeFazio Ed Gavin

Ray Perricone Mike DeFazio Matt DeFazio



The Over-the-Hill Gang



Left to right:

Chuck Tangredi, Scott Provost, Billy Bevevino, Joe Mariano,
Nick Scattareggia, TJ Case

Bobby Case

Tre Mariano

Troy's Stickball League

The sons and grandsons of longtime Italian families are becoming hooked on stickball. For the past year or so, occasional, impromptu pick-up games have been played once again in the old market place and attendance at the organized stickball tournaments (which raised \$8,000 for children's youth groups and area food pantries) is improving. Slowly, word got out and now there are several teams known as the Troy Stickball League— the South Troy Hooligans, the Electric Dream Team, the Over the Hill Gang, the Albia Legends, the Special Eds, the Wet Six, the Wynantskill Stables – who play Sunday and Monday nights at the Hill Street market adjacent to the bocce courts (which are also being kept busy). Rocco DeFazio, who has been the point man for the resurgence of stickball, overheard a typical comment at a recent game - "what would my grandfather think, knowing that I'm playing stickball in the market?" And now, teens and their dads are joining together for the fun and the competition that the old urban game affords. Many of the surnames of the players – Casale, Testo, Bevevino, Mariano, Valenti, Potenza, Scattareggia, Fazioli, Mosca, DeFazio – represent the offspring of long standing Little Italy immigrant families. They are being joined by friends – Casey Job, Steve Skowron, Nick Slaboda, Mike Krogh, Russ Speanburg, Buck Carey, Dave Jabour, Mack Millington, and many other guys, from all parts of the area. Once again, the old market comes alive with yet another activity. The season will end with a tournament on September 26 and 27, 2009 with the proceeds going to local youth groups.

Call Rocco DeFazio at 271-1111 for additional information.