

THE JOSEPHINE AND ANDREW SIMONE FAMILY

By Michael Simone

2018 marks the 100 th anniversary of the Simone family taking up residence in Mahopac. Josephine originated from Naples, Italy and Andrew originated from Campania, Italy. My Grandmother was 19 when she landed on Ellis Island and my Grandfather was 18. My Grandmother's older sister introduced them. They first lived in the Bronx, where my Grandmother gave birth to seven children. It was the summer of 1918 when they decided to settle in Mahopac. My Grandmother was pregnant with her eighth child—Andrew Simone, Jr. [my father]. She had eleven children in all; three died in childhood. My Grandfather was a builder. He built homes in the surrounding area, and his reach included Connecticut. He was also a real estate investor and owned the reservoir that supplied water to the bungalows in Mahopac. He funded the opening of Lombardi's. Their life was very basic, simple and real; they were straight to the point; there were no pretenses. They had a stable of horses and they lived from the land. My Grandmother grew everything imaginable—from a variety of vegetables to fruit trees; they slaughtered animals. My uncles were hunters. She did canning and pickling. She made her own pasta, and, of course, the tomato sauce was made from the tomatoes that came from her garden. To ever imagine eating anything from a can was, needless to say, highly criticized. It was something only the Americans did. They were eating organic long before it became fashionable. My Uncle Joey would say, "We rarely went to the grocery store." She also made her own wine and stronger brews. My Grandparents had three sons who served in World War II. My Uncle Charlie was a paratrooper and was in the Battle of the Bulge. My Uncle Joey was a Marine and fought in Japan. My father, Andrew Simone, Jr., was in the Army and was wounded and received 3 purple hearts. He was awarded the Bronze Star and Silver Star in separate actions in the European theater. He saved a captain's life. My father Andrew Jr. was captured twice by Nazi soldiers and escaped twice. After the War my uncles opened a fuel and oil business and my father became a builder as well as a scratch golfer. My Dad Andrew Jr. married my Mom, Eleanor Barrett on Dec. 7th 1941 had 3 children, Terry, Myself, and my sister Luann. Many grandchildren came along to the Simone family. We gathered every Sunday for dinner, or a Bar-B-Que under the tree. My grandparents and so many others of that generation were the navigators, the architects, and the visionaries that created the path to greater opportunity and a better life for future generations. There was joy and hardships that they so gallantly endured. We are eternally grateful to them and they will always be etched in our memory. It is from them that we derive our determination, strength and courage to face life's slings and arrows and to never give up and to always push forward. The family today is still very close even if we don't all live in Mahopac.

I have had the good fortune to have grown up in Mahopac and continue to live here. I graduated from Mahopac High School 1971, raised 3 sons, all graduates of MHS and I am now Grandfather to 18-month-old Sophia. Both of my Parents were graduates of MHS – Mother, Eleanor (Barrett) Simone, and Valedictorian Class of 1938. I attended New England College – Warner, NH where I majored in Business Administration. Professionally, I have been The Town of Carmel Superintendent of Highways since 2000 and continue to manage my company ENOMIS CONSTRUCTION.

Community means a lot to me. I have volunteered in MSA Football & Cheerleading and am a Past Program Director – 11 Years. I have participated in The Prevention Council of Putnam - President 20 Years/Board Member 10 Years. I help out at Community Cares as Treasurer and currently I have been serving on The Mahopac Board of Education as a Trustee. I also maintain my affiliations with Westchester-Putnam Highway Superintendents Assoc. I am the Current President and served as Past Vice President for 8 Years and Secretary for 10 Years. I enjoy being involved and giving back to my Community. It makes me who I am.

I would like to thank The Italian American Club of Mahopac for bestowing the honor of Grand Marshal on me this year. My grandparents would indeed be very happy.