

Yungers Lodge | Nutley Yesterday · Today - 1961

NUTLEY YUNGERS LODGE

JOSEPH CITRINO

A GROUP of Nutley High School alumni shared in the realization of a dream on December, 1955; a dream that had its misty beginning in the minds of a few people in the Fall of that year. On that day 40 charter members were present at the first meeting of the Nutley Yungers Lodge and elected Joseph Citrino, a student at Seton Hall, president.

Two months prior to that time, Mrs. Mary Cetta, wife of Dr. Peter Cetta and then president of the Opti-Mrs. Club, Miss Rose Marie Viola (now Mrs. Robert Desiderio), of Rutherford, Miss Rosemarie Orechio (now Mrs. Bruce Ciccone), Miss Maria Cosentino and Citrino met informally with the idea of resolving a problem, which had always plagued graduates of Nutley High School who were either going to college or working and were living at home, namely, "what can a girl or boy do for social life, exclusive of dating, in the Town of Nutley'?"

The people faced with this problem were too young to join many of the civic and service organizations in town and many felt that they were too old to continue active membership in their various church organizations which were usually composed of members of their own faith only.

The answer to this problem, as believed by the four aforementioned people, would be the formation of an organization composed of these young adults which would be their very own. The idea was placed into operation at that initial meeting in 1955.

Then, the Nutley Yungers Lodge, a civic, social and educational organization for young men and women between the ages of 17 and 27, who are high school graduates, was formed.

Their object is to promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church and community, to raise the standards of home life, and to require adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.

The club motto is "Too Young to be Old ... Too Old to be Young."

On February 7, 1956, the first installation of officers dinner was held with Mayor Harry W. Chenoweth the installing officer.

Installed along with Citrino were Allen Testa, John Tischio and Rose Marie Viola, vice presidents; Maria Cosentino, recording secretary; Rosemarie Orechio, corresponding secretary; Anthony Liquori, treasurer; and Robert Nakashian, sergeant-at-arms.

The principal address was delivered by Reverend Anthony Benti, of Holy Family Church. The other speaker was Frank A. Orechio, who was then president of Nutley Chamber of Commerce and is now publisher of The Nutley Sun.

This method of having a minister, rabbi or priest from one of the Nutley churches or synagogue giving the invocation and speaking and having a different commissioner of the town installing the officers has been the policy followed at all installation dinners.

From the very beginning, the members realized, that not only had they formed their own organization with a constructive purpose, but for the first time they were meeting and getting to know people they knew of, but did not know personally or had known only briefly while in high school.

The initial year saw this organization award a \$100 scholarship to a student of high academic standing who was in need of financial aid in the graduating class of Nutley High School.

April of that year, the First Annual Dinner Dance was a great success and an Easter Egg Hunt was held for the Sons of Italy Orphanage on its grounds on Washington Avenue.

During the month of May, in Library Park, a small oak tree was planted with a plaque by the members. On Memorial Day the Yungers assisted the Nutley Optimists with the Junior Olympics at Park Oval. The following months saw weekly swimming parties held every Wednesday night at the Terrace Swim Club. In the fall, the Yungers again assisted the Nutley Optimists in its touch football program.

A successful raffle was conducted in October to raise money for the Nutley High School Scholarship Fund and The Nutley Sun Camp Fund.

At the regular meeting in December, 1956, Citrino was reelected president. The Nutley Yungers Lodge was incorporated on January 2, 1957 and the membership increased to 50 members with the activities of the initial year being repeated. The Nutley High School Scholarship was doubled to \$200 and The Nutley Sun Camp Fund contribution was also increased.

On December 1, 1957, William Eisele, a student at Newark College of Engineering, was elected president. All past activities were carried on and the Nutley High School Scholarship was increased to \$300.

An interesting aspect of the club's social life was highlighted earlier this year by the announcement of the engagement of Miss Susan Ranken to Theodore Berger. This is the first engagement between members of the club, although many past members are now married and have children of their own.

The Yungers Lodge is guided in all its activities by its Board of Trustees. Citrino, past president for two years and now a graduate of Seton Hall

University and a student at its Law School, is chairman of the board of trustees.

Other trustees are Tischio and Miss Cosentino, past charter officers, and Eisele, past president. Each year the outgoing president is elected to become a new trustee.

Regularly scheduled meetings are held the first Sunday night of every month at 351 Passaic Avenue. Educational films are shown and guest speakers are present at all meetings.

All past activities are still being carried on with the total amount of money given in Nutley High scholarships amounting nearly to \$1,000.

This past Winter, the club also sponsored an entry in the Nutley PeeWee Basketball League.

It is the intention that a Yungers Lodge will be formed in one of the surrounding communities within the next couple of years, and with the coming of each new year after that, other Yungers Lodges will be formed with the idea of a state-wide and possibly in future years, a National Yungers Lodge.