

Columbus Celebration 2017

“Columbus Day, a Great American Holiday”

The legacy of Columbus and Columbus Day as a holiday is constantly under attack by the media, other ethnic groups, recently by the National Education Association (NEA) and in some cases local school boards. We feel this should be our opportunity to insure the proper observation of the holiday and carry on in Columbus’s name. If your chapter is not participating in Columbus celebrations or Italian Heritage Month, consider initiating an event such as an Italian flag raising, a wreath laying, an essay contest, or a street banner, to name a few. The Columbus Day Committee has been working to support and in collaboration with the Preserve Columbus Day Coalition (PCDC), and we plan on continuing to work with them in the future.

At the recent UNICO National Convention, the Columbus Day Committee was instrumental in joining with UNICO National to present a resolution, which was unanimously approved by the delegates, to preserve, protect and defend Columbus Day.

The Columbus Day Committee encourages chapters to reaffirm, preserve, protect and defend Columbus Day as tribute to him and to the spirit of discovery, especially in light of current events. Bring awareness to communities that “October is Italian Heritage and Culture Month” and “Re-Discover Your Italian Heritage Month” by incorporating these themes into related events.

The Columbus Day Committee strongly encourages individuals to download a very unique app, EMOJITALIA, that allows users to show support for Columbus Day and encourages friends, family and elected officials to do the same! Once installed, users can sign EMOJITALIA’s petition requesting the preservation of Columbus Day. Email local and national elected officials to further request the preservation of Columbus Day (app developed by the Columbus Citizens Foundation).

UNICO members, and their families and friends are invited to participate in this year's 73rd Annual New York City Columbus Day Parade on **Monday, October 9, 2017**. It’s now become a must do! It’s a bucket list item! This is UNICO’s national flagship parade and the world’s largest celebration of Italian-American culture. Join us in experiencing this very memorable day. Those participating will be sent specific information in early October about the exact time and area for assembly (preliminarily) at 12:00 PM on 47th Street, west of 5th Avenue. See Parade Chairman Ralph Contini and you will be inserted in the line of march. UNICO’s float theme will be: **“Columbus Day, a Great American Holiday” to reaffirm, preserve, protect and defend Columbus Day** and continue to bring awareness about October as “Italian Heritage and Culture Month” and the UNICO National charities.

The Columbus Day Parade in New York City is the world's largest celebration of Italian-American culture. The parade will march up Fifth Avenue from 47th St. to 72nd Street. The parade is a televised global event with millions of viewers and nearly one million spectators. It will be broadcast on ABC Channel 7 in the NY area, ABC online and RAI Int'l, from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

The following is information on several other upcoming Columbus Day parades:

Sunday, October 8, 2017: A number of parades will take place. We urge all to participate in any Columbus Day activities available to them. There will be parades in East Hanover, NJ, Nutley-Belleville, NJ, Hartford, CT, and Stamford, CT.

The **Nutley-Belleville** Columbus Day Parade will start at 1:00 PM. Marchers are to gather at 12:30 PM at Belleville High School and will march towards Nutley High School.

The **Ocean County Columbus Day Parade** will be on Oct. 8, 2017 and will start in Seaside Park, NJ at 1:00 PM. Members and guests are to assemble at 12:00 PM, usually on The Boulevard at J Street and march towards Seaside Heights. Please check with parade officials for exact location.

The Philadelphia Columbus Day Parade - Will be held along its historic South Broad Street location. It will kick off from Broad & Moore at 12:00 PM.

St. Louis Columbus Day Parade - Starts at 12:00 PM at Columbia and Macklind with a Festival at Berra Park.

The Chicago Columbus Day Parade - Will take place on Monday, October 9th. The parade starts on State St. at Wacker Drive and continues south to Van Buren and starts at 12:30 PM. It will be broadcast on ABC Channel 7 and ABC online.

The UNICO National Columbus Day Committee is asking for contributions from Chapters and individuals. Your support will enable UNICO National to continue to be a visible presence during these important Columbus Day and Heritage events. **Please send your donations to the National office earmarked "Columbus Day".**

Please join us in celebrating “**Columbus Day, a Great American Holiday**” and October as “Italian Heritage and Culture Month!”

Sincerely yours in UNICO,

Ralph A. Contini

Ralph A. Contini, National Columbus Day Chair