

'Jersey Boy' actor to lead Morris Columbus Day parade

Dominic Scaglione Jr., who portrays Frankie Valli in the musical "Jersey Boys," will be the grand marshal at this year's Morris County Columbus Day Parade.

"Last year we had the cake boss, this year we got one of the Jersey Boys," parade Chairman Joe De Fillippes said, referring to "Cake Boss" TV star Buddy Valastro, who was grand marshal last year. "That's Italian, and that's how we try to do it."

The seventh annual parade, which is sponsored by the East Hanover Italian American Club, will be start at 2 p.m. Oct. 9 on Ridgedale Avenue in East Hanover. Lisa Marie Latino of Long Shot Productions will serve as the parade master of ceremonies, according to a news release about the event.

"Every year we get a little bit bigger," DeFillippes said. "We've been trying to get high school bands to participate, and this year we're getting Hanover Park, Whippany Park and Parsippany. That's going to be a plus for us. From what I understand Whippany Park's got 150 kids in their marching band."

Scaglione is best known for portraying Valli,

but he also has appeared on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" and was chosen to sing Valli's songs at the New Jersey Hall of Fame induction ceremonies.

Also being honored at the parade are:

Paul Santucci, who has been named Italian American Man of the Year. Born in Madison, Santucci graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson University, started his business career as a financial adviser and now serves as chief operating officer for the Wealth Management Group, a division of UBS Financial Services.

Maria Lupo was selected as Italian American Woman of the Year. Lupo is an artist who began her studies in Italy. She is a recipient of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts Fellowship Award and her work is in many private and public collections.

Joe Di Rocco was chosen as Italian American Athlete of the Year. DiRocco started playing baseball in his hometown of East Hanover's Tee-Ball League. He now

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plays for the Everett Aquasox, a Class A affiliate of the Seattle Mariners. During his four years at Hanover Park High School, DiRocco received many state and local awards. He received a scholarship to play baseball at Seton Hall University.

Bobby Wells was named the Humanitarian of the Year. Wells, who is leader of the show band The Infernos, led an effort to raise awareness for the citizens of L'Aquila, Italy, who were the victims of a devastating earthquake.

“This is an outstanding group of honorees who serve as great role models for young people and demonstrate how hard work and family values are the backbone of what Italian Americans are all about,” said parade spokesman, William Agnellino.

There also will be a carnival at Lurker Park in East Hanover on the day of the parade beginning at noon with food, rides, and music.

There also will be a dinner/dance on Oct. 7 at the Hanover Manor.

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