



Giacomo ("Jimmy") Rapacioli was born on August 14, 1939 in Morfasso. He was one of nine children born to Giuditta (Binelli) and Guido Rapacioli. The family didn't have much, but Jimmy has happy memories of his childhood in the mountains outside Piacenza. To make money, he would sell eggs and produce in the village. Giuditta was a devout Catholic who hoped Jimmy would become a priest. But Jimmy had other plans and escaped on his horse on the day he was supposed to begin the seminary.

On January 19, 1959, Jimmy, along with his parents and two brothers Celeste and Franco, left Genova on a ship bound for New York. Silvio Schiavi, a good family friend, sponsored their immigration, and helped them to find jobs in New York. They rented a small apartment on 104<sup>th</sup> Street in Harlem. The rest of his siblings — Quinto, Renzo, Silvana and Rina — stayed in Casa Delle Donne with their eldest sister Anna. They arrived the following year once the three older boys and Guido had earned enough to fund their voyage.

The morning after his arrival, Jimmy went to work as a dishwasher at Laurent Restaurant in Manhattan. He stayed until the restaurant closed its doors in 1991. During his more than 40 years at Laurent, Jimmy moved up to waiter, captain, and banquet manager. In 1972, he partnered with his old friend Natalino Arrigoni to become owners. Jimmy's brother Renzo, who served as sommelier, helped to develop a world-class wine cellar that won Wine Spectator Grand Awards from 1985 to 1990.

Jimmy met his wife Eliane (Flory) at Laurent, where she worked as a cashier after she emigrated from Nice, France. They married on January 28, 1967. In 1970, their daughter Nadine was born. The family lived in the Bronx, where on Sundays, Jimmy could be found in his yard, tending to his garden or hosting large summer barbecues.

In 2001, Jimmy, Renzo, and their brother-in-law Pino Cavanna purchased a small restaurant in the Bronx to reduce their commutes but still work in the business they loved. Pino churned out Italian specialties in the kitchen, and Jimmy and Renzo focused on the wine and customers. Jimmy's declining health finally convinced him to retire in 2005. He and Eliane moved to Pennsylvania where they became part of a tight-knit community and spent time with their beloved dog, Sam. Nowadays, back in New York, Jimmy likes visits from family and friends, especially his only grandson, Vincent, of whom he is very proud.

Jimmy never forgot and was always grateful for the Piacentini who helped him when he came to the United States. In turn, he helped other recent immigrants when they arrived in New York. When he joined the Societa Val Tebbia e Val Nure, he began raising money for the scholarship fund, which he continued to do for almost 50 years. He loves sharing and celebrating his Piacentini heritage, and the Societa has played a central role. When he was healthy, he never missed a Scholarship Dinner-Dance. He could also be found on the bocce court each year at the Father's Day picnic.

Jimmy is thrilled to receive this honor, and thanks all of you for this special recognition.