

# SENIOR LIFESTYLES

## Brockport resident celebrates 100th birthday

By Mike Latona  
Staff Writer

BROCKPORT — With great glee, Ray D'Andrea talks about the gravestone cutter who began designing D'Andrea's headstone by marking that he was born in 1900. However, the man refused to start sculpting a projected year of death.

"He didn't put no 19. He said, 'You're going to live to be 100,'" D'Andrea recalled. "That was 40 or 50 years ago."

The cutter proved to be a prophet: D'Andrea has, indeed, lived into the 21st century, and on April 11 he celebrated his 100th birthday.

The milestone was acknowledged by many parishioners at Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. They signed a gigantic 100th-birthday card for him on April 9. Although D'Andrea was unable to attend Mass that day, Father Peter Enyan-Boadu, pastor, planned to present the card to him two days later at his 100th-birthday party at Brockport Veterans Club.

Also expected to attend the big birthday bash were D'Andrea's only child, Lucretia, who lives in Carlsbad, Calif., and many of his five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Yet the most special guest for his 100th-birthday festivities would be his wife, Jessie, who recently had a big birthday of her own. She turned 95 in March.

Ray and Jessie were married in 1959 and have lived in Brockport since that time. It was Ray's second marriage (he was a widower) and Jessie's first.

Although Jessie did not wed until she was in her 50s, she had always considered marriage "if the right guy came along," she said, chuckling.

D'Andrea was born in Italy and moved to the United States when he was 25.

Since that time he has lived in different parts of western Monroe and eastern Orleans counties.

### Alzheimer's group seeks nominations for award

The Rochester Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association is accepting applications for its annual Quality of Life Awards. The awards recognize individuals and organizations whose lifetime or long-term achievements have made major improvements in the lives of people with Alzheimer's disease and their families.

Among past recipients of the Quality of Life Awards are Dr. Paul Coleman, director of the Alzheimer's Disease Center at the University of Rochester Medical School; Kirkhaven Hart Tayler Special Care Center; and the Alzheimer's and Dementia Outreach Program at ViaHealth.

Nomination forms can be obtained by contacting Teresa Stewart at the Alzheimer's Association, 716-760-5400. Deadline for submission is Friday, April 21.



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Raymond D'Andrea, of Brockport celebrated his 100th birthday April 11. His wife, Jessie, is 95.

"I was planning to go back to Italy, but I make money and change my mind," he said in slightly broken English. "I couldn't do the work in Italy that I could do here."

D'Andrea worked for Eastman Kodak Co., and also worked in the Brockport area as a stonemason and forklift operator. He met Jessie at a plant in Brockport where they were both employed.

The two dated each other for only a few months before being married at Church of the Nativity. They have been dedicated parishioners there over the years; in fact, Father Enyan-Boadu noted that while Ray's 100th-birthday card was being signed at a Sunday coffee hour, "People were reminiscing that he was very active in church."

Although they don't get out as much as they used to — Ray suffered a stroke about 15 years ago — Jessie said she continues supporting the parish by crocheting items to be raffled at Nativity's annual festival.

D'Andrea noted that the changing times have brought considerable growth to the area he has inhabited for so many years. He remembers Route 19 — the main drag in Brockport — when it was just a dirt road.

"The traffic is getting so you can't even move," he said. "I used to drive from here to Rochester and see only one or two cars. If someone was going slow, you could pass them any time you wanted."

Despite the swelling population in the Brockport area, Jessie said she and her husband have been content to remain in their home on Fair Street in the village.

"Everybody helps us out, going to get groceries and getting us to the doctors. I have two sisters here. When you go around you might get in trouble, so we stayed here. And we didn't get in trouble," Jessie said with a laugh.

"If I didn't enjoy it, I would move," her husband added.

Although he said he's pleased about turning 100, D'Andrea, for the most part, is taking the birthday in stride.

"It's just like anything else," he remarked. "Once in a while you think about what you've done before, that's all I can tell you. After 100, there's not much more you can do."

### Thoughts to Consider



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