

VALLUZZO FAMILY

Potenza, Italy, south of Naples, is the capital city of the region of Basilicata and is the highest Italian province capital on the mainland, 2,180 feet above sea level. Potenza has suffered greatly through wars and earthquakes, the last of which occurred in 1980.

From this city, Carlo Valluzzo as a young man and who was a shoemaker, left to make his journey to America in the early 1900's. He settled in the town of Danbury, Connecticut. He must have worked very hard in a very short period of time to afford the trip back to Italy to marry his sweetheart Celeste Barbarita. He returned to Danbury to raise his family and to provide them a better future. He had four children, three girls and a son named Rocco. His son had received all the help he could from his father in order to attend college prior to his father's death in 1949. Rocco had to work in a hat factory to save money for his education and after attending the University of Michigan he graduated from dental school. He practiced dentistry in Battle Creek for 25 years and married Ida Mae Schilling. They had four children, CHARLES VALLUZZO, Jacquie, Robert and Rocco, Jr. After Rocco retired from dental practice, he bought a franchise in 1963 in McDonald's Restaurant.

He moved his family to Baton Rouge, a location he selected among others offered by McDonald Corporation and opened the first McDonald's Restaurant on Plank Road, with the ambitious desire of spreading the aroma of hamburgers all over the city. He succeeded.

Today, son Charles and grandson John own and operate 25 McDonald's in the Baton Rouge area. Rocco's other children, after working with him for a few years, decided they wanted to move to other areas of the United States. Robert owns and operates a McDonald's Restaurant in Seattle, Washington and Rocco, Jr. owns and operates four McDonald's in the Mobile, Alabama area. Daughter Jacquie sells real estate in New York city.

Charles is married to Nancy Mellody. They have five children, John, Becky, Tim, Chris, and Patrick. All his children attended college and Patrick attends St. Thomas More School in Baton Rouge. Charles and Nancy also have seven grandchildren.

