



Township of Belleville *New Jersey*

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Belleville Welcomes “Nicolette Way” to Honor Longtime Township Family

BELLEVILLE – November 24, 2021 – Belleville has placed a “ceremonial topper” on Mitchell Street in honor of the Nicolette family, who have been part of the community’s fabric since 1910. The street is now also known as “Nicolette Way.”

The Nicolette family – which has run a local towing and auto body business for 78 years – is also known for its involvement in NASCAR. Nick Nicolette became a stock car racer in the early 1940s, painting his cars the blue and yellow colors of Belleville.

He went on to become a three-time New Jersey champion, a two-time New York champion and placed fourth out of 1,600 drivers in the NASCAR nationals. Nick relied on family members to be his pit crew.

“This street naming is long overdue and very well deserved to the Nicolette family,” said Councilman Tom Graziano. “As a lifelong resident of Belleville with my family roots spanning over 100 years through four generations, this street naming is very near and dear to my heart. When members of our community have deep roots and years of a successful business, it is important that we recognize them and their contribution to our amazing township.”

The Nicolette family came to America from the Provence of Potenza – the town of Melfi – in Italy in the early 1900s. Nicola arrived in 1910; his wife, Lucia, came three years later.

The couple purchased a house at 50 Mitchell St. from Mr. Mitchell, for whom the street was originally named. Nicolino (Nick) Nicolette was the youngest of seven children. When he earned enough money from racing cars, he purchased a lot of land at 42 Mitchell St., a few doors from his childhood home.

Nick and his brother, Pete, built a two-family home for Nick to raise his family. To this day, Nicolette family members still live at 42 Mitchell St.

Nick and Pete also went to enlist in the military during World War II. Pete was accepted but Nick was denied because of hearing challenges in both ears. Nick, still eager to serve, worked in a military warehouse.

In 1943, with his earnings from racing, Nick also started his business, Nicolette Auto Body & Towing. With his brother Sal, they started a small shop in a garage on Hilton Street and then moved to Passaic Avenue, very close to Mitchell Street.

“And, once again, to honor his hometown of Belleville, a town he loved and was proud to be a part of, Nick painted his towing equipment in those great Belleville colors of blue and yellow,” Graziano said. “They continue to this day. Having his home and business in the same town, Nick walked to work every day.”

Nicolette Auto Body and Towing has provided service to the Township of Belleville since its inception. Nick Jr., a retired Belleville firefighter, began working for his father as a teen and now owns the business, continuing in his father’s footsteps, 78 years after its founding.

“The Nicolette family is Belleville through and through,” said Mayor Michael Melham. “They’ve occupied houses in the area around Mitchell Street and their business for decades and still have family and relatives here. The family has always been civic minded and always put Belleville first. They truly bleed Belleville blue and gold.”

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