A purpose in life
Archdiocese awards medal to St. Anthony’s John Lodovico

By KRISTEN GLOSS
STAFF WRITER

BRISTOL — “I think everybody in life should have some particular purpose. Mine, in general, is that I always try to do the right thing and what’s good for the community. St. Anthony’s is a big part of the Bristol community,” said John Lodovico, a lifelong member of the parish and recent recipient of the St. Joseph Medal of Honor. The award was given to Lodovico to show appreciation for his work in service of St. Anthony’s parish. Every year a member or a couple from each parish across the Archdiocese of Hartford is nominated by their pastor to show appreciation. See LODOVICO, Page A2

A night of wine and honey

By LISA BACKUS
STAFF WRITER

BRISTOL — Although she tried a chardonnay and a bourbon, it was the spiced honey liqueur that piqued the interest of Kyle Ballou Saturday night at the 2017 Festival of Wine & Spirits to benefit the Bristol Hospital Foundation. See 300, Page A2

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“Your get a full breath of what's out there,” said Ballou, a Hamden resident. “I liked the honey wine hands down.”

Ballou was among nearly 300 guests who were on hand at the Doubletree by Hilton to sample a fine selection of wines, liqueurs and spirits from 52 vendors. In its 19th year, the annual festival is organized by the foundation with the help of Marv Friedman, owner of Maple End Package Store. The money raised during the event will benefit the expansion and the renovation of Bristol Hospital's Emergency Center.

Each year, Friedman gathers his suppliers and distributors, who send representatives to offer guests a great selection of wines and spirits. “People will come right from the winery,” Friedman said. “It just gets bigger and bigger every year.”

During the event guests can sample the offerings and then order them through Maple End Package Store. The foundation gets a percentage of the sales. This year the foundation will donate the proceeds raised during all their events to the Emergency Center renovation project, said foundation board chairman Mike Adams. “This event is extremely important because the emergency room is in need of a big make over,” Adams said. “It costs quite a bit so we’re dedicating all our fundraising to the renovation.”

In the main room, Liza Gallia was pouring samples from the Frank Family Vineyards located in Calistoga, California. The chardonnay and the pinot grigio, she explained, were made in the coolest area of Napa Valley, while the cabernet needs warmer temperatures to ripen. “These are very balanced,” she said. “You’ll get a taste of fruit, oak and very nice acidity which is what you taste at the back of your mouth.”

A few feet away, Marushka Osman was explaining that the handcrafted spiced honey liqueur “KAS Krupnikas” she was offering was made with 35 percent honey, wildflowers, clover and a combination of 10 spices. The liqueur can be served with warm apple cider or cold with cranberry juice and a variety of other ingredients. She and her husband Kas used to make the recipe on their stove until he was laid off and decided to market the old-world family recipe.

Sharon Petersen and her friend Lisa Strom, both of Bristol, also liked the honey liqueur. Both were attending their first Festival of Wine & Spirits and Strom was having her first taste of wine. “There’s so many to choose from,” Petersen said. “She’s liking the Rieslings. We liked the maple liqueur as well. This is a lot of fun.”

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their appreciation for all of the volunteer work that the member does.

“John gives his heart and soul to this parish and gives it gratuitously,” Father Alphonso Fontana said.

His history of involvement with the St. Anthony’s community goes all the way back to when he was born – he was baptized there in 1951. Lodovico has been a member of the development committee and the finance board for over five years, as well as a representative of the parish to the Archdiocese of Hartford. His actions within these roles are the reason Fontana nominated him for the award.

“I look to John for guidance and sage advice when it comes to things spiritual and temporal — that is, the needs of the church, the grounds and finances. He’s a blessing for any pastor who would be here,” Fontana said.

Lodovico attended a ceremony to be presented with the medal at St. Joseph’s Cathedral in Hartford last month with the other recipients. He was in the front row of over 180 people receiving the medal that day.

“Seeing all the names one at a time, or the couples, seeing the humbleness, gratefulness and shaking the archbishop’s hand and saying thank you and him saying thank you in turn... It was an eye opener to faith and what individuals do for their faith and for humanity,” Lodovico said.

While he has been very involved in the community, Lodovico was surprised to receive the award and humbled.

“We were very shocked because John is a very community-minded person. He’s very involved with veterans and all that he does. There are so many more people that are involved in the day to day running of parishes. It’s very humbling,” his wife, Bonnie Lodovico, said.

Lodovico was involved in the development group to add the addition to the church in past years and in the future is planning on helping to do upgrades to the church or interior work to the church hall, putting a garden in with bricks or enhancing the stained glass windows.

“St. Anthony’s Church has been blessed with so many volunteers,” Lodovico said. “There are a bunch of dedicated folks that go to St. Anthony’s that no matter who goes, in some way shape and form, they are all involved in their own way. When you see so many folks giving their heart and soul to a specific organization like St. Anthony’s, you can’t help but want to be involved.”