

Home of the Phillies Lasting Legends The Local Immigration Issue

SOUTH JERSEYTM

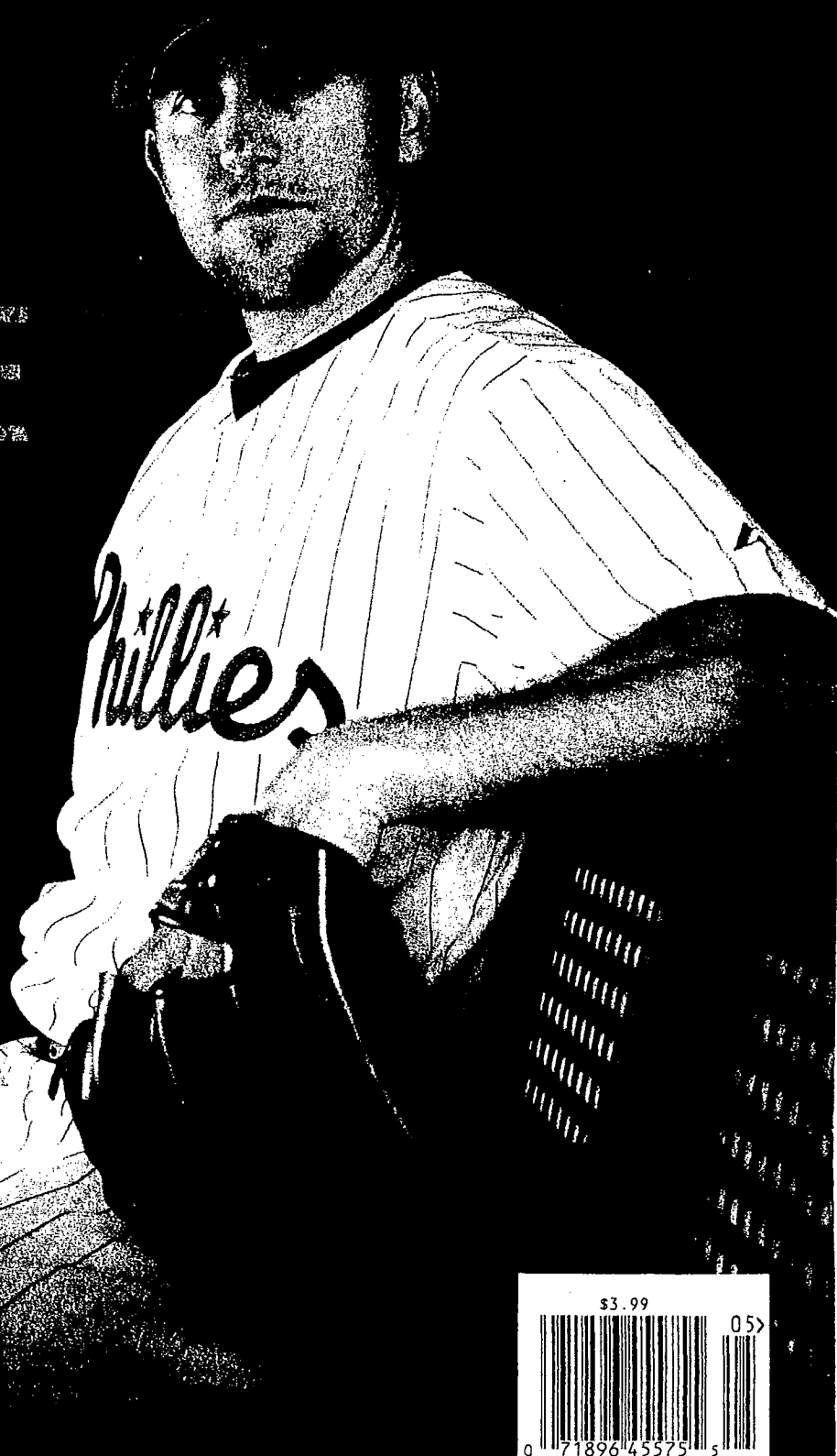
VOLUME 7 ISSUE 1

MAGAZINE

EXCLUSIVE

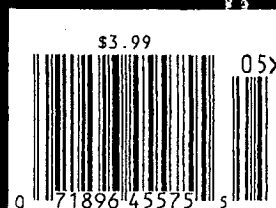
BRAD
LIDGE

THE PHILLIES CLOSER
ON GETTING BACK TO THE
WORLD SERIES AND WHAT
HE LOVES MOST ABOUT
SOUTH JERSEY



Presorted Standard
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BELL MAWR, NJ
PERMIT NO. 67

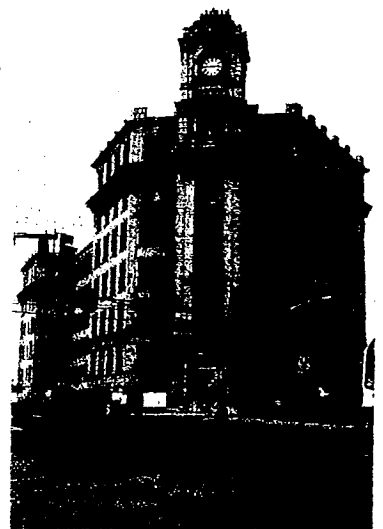
SOUTH
JERSEY
.com



Immigration is more than a policy debate to the Brazilian population of Riverside, a once-vibrant community decimated by the economy and a now-repealed ordinance against undocumented residents and workers.

{AMERICAN}

The Dream?





TOP: A WORKER AT PLANET CAFÉ IN RIVERSIDE SPEAKS PORTUGUESE ON THE PHONE TO A CUSTOMER. THE BRAZILIAN-OWNED CAFÉ IS ONE OF MANY BUSINESSES ROCKED HARD BY THE DEPARTURE OF SO MUCH OF THE TOWN'S IMMIGRANT POPULATION. OPPOSITE PAGE, FROM TOP: MARIA MARINIENO, OWNER OF PAVILION BBQ, STANDS INSIDE HER RESTAURANT; ALL IS QUIET ALONG THE MAIN DRAG IN TOWN; LISETTE RODRIGUES FOLDS BABYWARE INSIDE THE NEW IMAGE CLOTHING STORE IN TOWN.

by
Jonathan Vit
Photography by Jeff Anderson

The shelves of Victor's Supermarket are overflowing with imported goods—Linguas de Gato cookies from Portugal, cans of orange-flavored Sumol brand soda and Chocapic cereal, a picture of Pico the dog on the box. Above a deli counter stuffed with pink and red meats hangs a Portuguese football scarf. Outside, giant photographs of meats and produce adorn the vibrant yellow stucco building, beckoning customers to step inside.

But on a Friday afternoon, Victor's Supermarket is empty. So is the Brazilian-owned Planet Café down the street. Ditto, the nearby Touch of Brazil salon, Pavilion BBQ and New Image clothing store. Standing outside Victor's, beneath the market's simple sign of a cute piglet, owner Maria Victor looks up and down Riverside's once bustling business district and remembers a time before the town took a hard stance on undocumented immigrants. Before it was illegal to rent to or employ illegal immigrants in Riverside. Before the town's once large Brazilian community packed up and moved to Northeast Philadelphia—or back to Brazil.

"There used to always be people walking," Victor laments with a sigh. "It was different then, very different."

Riverside, along with dozens of other New Jersey towns, is at the center of a national debate on immigration reform. According

to the most recent Census numbers, foreign-born residents account for some 12.5 percent of the U.S. population. Recent numbers from the Migration Policy Institute list one in every five New Jersey residents as foreign-born, half of whom had gained citizenship by 2009. Burlington County, where Riverside's located, is home to an estimated 39,732 foreign-born residents, accounting for 8.9 percent of the county's population.

Foreign-born residents have a huge impact on the state's economy. All together, immigrants are responsible for almost one-quarter of earnings statewide. And as small business owners, immigrant entrepreneurs bring in one-fifth of the state's entire business income. "The impact that has on New Jersey—and on South Jersey, where I grew up—is very simple... economic growth," says Cherry Hill native Charles "Shai" Goldstein, executive director of the New Jersey Immigration Policy Network. "Our country's history is [that] every wave of immigration brings economic growth."

With approximately 12 million undocumented immigrants residing in the U.S. and an average of \$5.9 billion spent annually on immigration enforcement, immigration is a hot issue. Though President Barack Obama listed immigration reform as a top priority for his first term, he has spent the better part of the past year embattled in the tussle over health care reform and has yet to set a comprehensive immigration agenda. Still, the debate on immigration reform rages on in the Congress, where a bill that would make it easier for undocumented immigrants to earn U.S. citizenship [HR 4321] was recently introduced.

In New Jersey, grassroots organizations like Goldstein's Immigration Policy Network have been holding open meetings in immi-

grant-heavy towns to try and drum up support for immigration reform, but the movement is not without its detractors. Take the members of the New Jersey-based group called the United Patriots of America, whose founder and president, Ron Bass, adamantly believes illegal immigration is a scourge to the nation.

"More communities should take a stance against people who are breaking the law just by being here illegally," says Bass. "People who come into the country illegally, they cost a lot of money; you have to provide them with services, you have to provide them with education, you have to provide them with hospitals. Why do you think there are so many illegal immigrants in New Jersey? New Jersey is one of the biggest economies in the country right now.... If they want to come to the country let them do it the other way legal immigrants did."

It's a point of view the people of Riverside have heard all too often.

an Immigrant Town

Located across the Delaware River from Northeast Philadelphia, the small township of Riverside is no stranger to immigration—or immigration controversy.

Maria Marinieno moved to Riverside from Portugal in 1980 to join her family, who had already made the 1.6-square-mile town nestled along the Rancocas Creek their home. "When I came to



TOP: MARIA VICTOR SHOWS OFF SOME OF THE PORTUGUESE SPECIALTIES INSIDE VICTOR'S SUPERMARKET, THE GROCERY STORE SHE CO-OWNS WITH HER HUSBAND. OPPOSITE PAGE: A WALL OF DIFFERENT CURRENCIES HANGS INSIDE PLANET CAFÉ. THE MONEY WAS GIVEN TO OWNER MARIANA FERNANDES AND HER HUSBAND AS GOOD LUCK CHARMS WHEN THEY OPENED THE BUSINESS IN 2009.

the United States, to Riverside, there was a lot of industry here," says Marinieno. "There was so much industry here that you could work and not need to go anywhere else to live your life."

As industry left, the town suffered, recalls Marinieno, only to rebound again around the turn of the millennium as a new wave of Brazilian immigrants moved in, setting up shops and taking advantage of a thriving construction market. There was enough demand that in 2005, Marinieno opened Pavilion BBQ on Pavilion Street to serve Riverside's large Portuguese and Brazilian populations.

FREE HOME WHITENING
(VALUE OF \$350.00)
with your first visit including initial exam, x-rays, cleaning and polishing
Redeemable for new patients only. Restrictions apply. Please ask for details.

9 Top Dentists
SOUTH JERSEY

Dr. Zahra Afsharzand, D.M.D.
Dr. Mario Valentine Lima, D.M.D., M.S.D.
Dr. Ijuba Lemke, D.M.D., Ph.D., ND
Dr. Boris Babiner, D.M.D. (Periodontist)

RESTORATIVE AND COSMETIC DENTISTRY
VENEERS, CROWNS, BRIDGES, IMPLANTS AND DENTURES

Dr. Zahra Afsharzand, D.M.D.
Dr. Mario Valentine Lima, D.M.D., M.S.D.
Dr. Ijuba Lemke, D.M.D., Ph.D., ND
Dr. Boris Babiner, D.M.D. (Periodontist)

www.fashionrocksboutique.com

Fashion Rocks
856-751-7533

www.fashionrocksboutique.com
1906 rt. 70 E at Springdale Road
Cherry Hill, New Jersey 08003

But in 2006, Riverside's town fathers passed an ordinance that made it illegal to employ or rent to undocumented immigrants. Following an example set by Hazleton, Penn., Riverside threatened business owners and landlords with thousands of dollars in fines and the possible loss of their business license if they employed or housed undocumented immigrants. Despite support from anti-immigration groups like Bass' United Patriots of America, which in 2006 demonstrated in Riverside in support of the ordinance, the town soon realized it was in too deep. Facing numerous civil-rights lawsuits and disheartened by the federal court's ruling against Hazleton's similar law, Riverside repealed the measure one year later, but not before a reported 1,000 immigrants fled the town.

Businesses closed as their customer base left, and four years later downtown Riverside is still struggling with the near-fatal one-two punch of shuttered storefronts and the poor economy.



"Some Brazilians want to come here and move back to Brazil. That is not us; we like America. I came here when I was a kid. I don't remember anything from Brazil. This is my country here."

—Mariana Fernandes

PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS:

Andreotti's Viennese Café
Casona of Collingswood
gg's Restaurant at the Doubletree
Jason and Josh Warren
The Pop Shop
Joe Palombo's Mirabella Café
Norma's Eastern Mediterranean Restaurant
Cous Cous Moroccan Cuisine
Seasons 52
Classic Cake Company
More to come!

SOUTH JERSEY MAGAZINE presents



CELEBRITY SERVERS

Bill Vargas - Sports Anchor Fox 29
Christina Pirelli - WHYY's Christina Cooks
Gervase Peterson - Fox's Survivor
Mrs. New Jersey United States contestants
Bob Kelley - CBS 3 Traffic Anchor
Jeremiah Trotter - Philadelphia Eagles
Rick Williams - GABC News Anchor
Marc Miller - Solo 104

In-Kind Sponsors

COURIER-POST
South Jersey's Newspaper | courierpostonline.com



**Philadelphia
magazine**

Donald B Kravitz - DBK Photo
Joe Griffith - Just-4-Fun Music

TICKETS ARE \$75 IN ADVANCE • \$85 AT THE DOOR

The 7th Annual Dishes for Wishes will feature a competition among 20 celebrated South Jersey restaurants, fantastic silent auction items, celebrity servers, raffle to win "A Year of Dining Out" and more!

Call 800-252-9474 TODAY to purchase tickets

For more information visit www.nj.wish.org



SHUTTERED BUSINESSES LIKE THIS ONE ARE AN ALL-TOO-FAMILIAR SIGHT IN DOWNTOWN RIVERSIDE.

"The majority [of residents] went back to Brazil because of economy, not immigration," says Marinieno. "They didn't have a job. I believe if the economy suddenly got better they would come back. Right now I don't blame them for leaving."

On a typically crisp March night, Pavilion BBQ is empty save a couple of employees sweeping the tile floor and watching a Portuguese soccer game on television. According to Marinieno, business started to slow a year ago and has yet to pick back up. She believes the economy is killing her business, as more and more of her neighbors who have stayed see dining out as a costly luxury.

Less than half a mile away, Maria Victor remembers when the Portuguese supermarket she owns with her husband, José, was one of many Portuguese and Brazilian stores along the Bridgeboro/Scott Street business district.

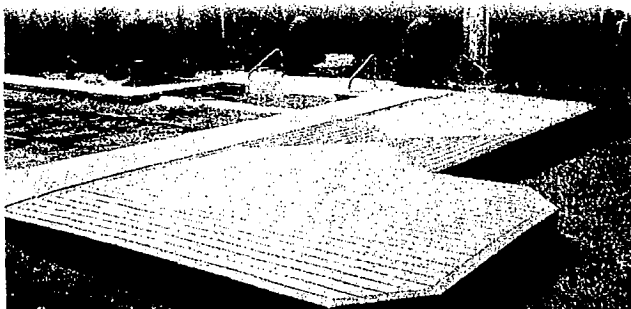
"It's been very bad," says Victor. "First, immigration sent a lot of people back to their home countries."

"It is just American history; immigrants are always the driving force behind entrepreneurship. It was no different with the Italians, the Irish, the Jewish Eastern Europeans, and it is no different for immigrants who came here from Mexico, South America and the Middle East."

—Charles "Shai" Goldstein, Cherry Hill native and executive director of the New Jersey Immigration Policy Network




856-672-9293
www.ckconstruction.com



NEW REMODELS

Over 12 Years Of Expert Deck Design and Construction



A premier educational facility in a premier community.

BEACON Academy

Learning to Play
Playing to Learn

Infants-12 Years • Full & Part Time Programs
Pre-School Programs • Bridge Enrichment Program
Full Day Kindergarten • Half Day Kindergarten
Before/After School Program

Now registering for fall classes
Serving Kennedy Hospital, Washington Twp.
and Virtua Health & Wellness Center

570 D Egg Harbor Road • Harbor Pavilions
Washington Twp • Sewell, NJ 08080

856-582-6199

Hours: 6:30am to 6:00pm




MARIA MARINIENO, OWNER OF PAVILION BBQ, REFLECTS ON THE VOID LEFT BY THE DEPARTURE OF IMMIGRANTS IN TOWN, MANY OF WHOM MADE UP HER CUSTOMER BASE.

one wall of the café have already moved out of town. "I would say out of 100 percent, 30 to 40 percent went home," Fernandes estimates.

Brazilians come to America with hopes of earning enough money in three years—the length of a typical legal immigrant visa for Brazilians entering the U.S.—to live on comfortably when they return to Brazil, explains Fernandes, who emigrated to the States when she was 14 years old. Unfortunately, the realities of living in a country as expensive as the United States are often hard-learned. Three years can quickly become eight as immigrants struggle to make enough money to survive while sending some home to support those they left behind. In no time a legal immigrant becomes an illegal immigrant on an overstayed visa, stuck trying to fulfill a dream despite a reality that is much more difficult than they ever imagined.

"They come here to stay three years, that is what the American dream is for Brazilians," says Fernandes. "They think they are going to get a lot of money, but it isn't like that. You [do] make more money [than you would in Brazil], but you work harder and everything costs so much."

And for immigrants living in the United States without a proper visa, especially those with strong family ties, the fear of deportation is a daily reality. Fernandes is a legal immigrant; she moved here as a teenager and doesn't remember much of her life in Brazil. Her husband, on the other hand, was picked up sleeping in his car after the couple argued. He didn't have the proper immigration paperwork. Daniel Assis—who, like his wife, was born in a town near



Thomas G. Oakes Associates
A Technologically Advanced Court Reporting Firm

Conferencing Center

Video Conferencing Suites
Deposition Suites
Meeting Rooms

Video conferencing center available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

We can arrange your video conference anywhere in the world, at any time.

State of the art facilities.

SOLUTIONS
TO KEEP YOU A STEP AHEAD

MENTION THIS AD AND RECEIVE 20% OFF OUR STANDARD VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM RATES.

A full service Court Reporting, Litigation Support and Trial Presentation firm
Call for a brochure

www.TGOakes.com • 535 Route 38 East • Suite 330 • Cherry Hill, NJ • 856.869.3433

Service, Technology and Support... Every Step of the Way!!!

Ideal Fashions
NJ's Largest Prom Store

One Of The Nation's Top 10 Prom Stores



Jewelry to match your dress

Shoes to match your dress

Clutches to match your dress

Tuxedos to match your dress

Prices to match your wallet

Swing on down... to Ideal



483 N. White Horse Pike, Rt. 30
Hammononton, NJ 08037
1.800.753.4544
609.561.2712

It cost Assis \$10,000 to sneak across the border with the help of Mexican smugglers, often called coyotes, 12 years ago. It will now cost him another \$8,000 in legal fees to be able to remain in the United States with his wife and 4-year-old son, Esder.

redressing Past Mistakes

And as it grows, so does the need for immigration reform to clear up the muddy route to legal citizenship. Cries for widespread

"I think that many who [favor stricter regulation] may not have the full understanding of the incredible contributions that undocumented immigrants make to the fabric of New Jersey and our country as a whole," says Brenner. "The realistic expectation that there would be some form of mass deportation does not recognize the magnitude or the impact on a community that that approach would have."

Goldstein contends that any opposition to immigration reform that would make it easier for undocumented immigrants to become citizens is counterproductive.

"In a state like New Jersey, one-fifth of the population is foreign-born, and we need enforcement systems, there is no doubt about that. But it has to be balanced with why we have a strong market. We have it because of immigrants, and if you choke that system you are choking America." ■

We're proud to recognize the 2009 winners of the SGR Student Art Show in NJ

If I Were President I Would...

Lower Taxes

Give the government more money

Give the people more money

Give everyone else a dollar

I want to
end world war,
make peace,
I say
end animal
pull a stop
the cover
weapons and
listen to the
cry of my fellow
Americans

PAPER

BASKET

COVERLY

A black and white illustration featuring a peace sign and a stick figure. The peace sign is positioned in the upper center, with a large, faint circular line above it. To the right of the peace sign is a stick figure with its arms raised in a 'V' shape. Below these symbols is a stylized map of the world, with the words 'WORLD' and 'PEACE' written across it in a bold, sans-serif font. The entire illustration is rendered in a high-contrast, grainy style.

Practicing the Art of Law



SouthJersey.com

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 1

SOUTH JERSEY MAGAZINE