

Philanthropy, community service define Link Piazza's life

The Wolf Pack will forever be indebted to Link Piazza, a long-time supporter who has committed more than \$1 million to help the University of Nevada Athletics Department in a number of its much-needed capital projects.

Piazza's involvement with the Wolf Pack goes back more than 60 years to the late 1940s and early 1950s when he served as the first radio voice of Nevada's games.

His numerous gifts have led to naming rights for the Legacy Hall Ticket Office and Hall of Fame Room as well as the Peccole Park baseball press box. The gifts were facilitated through Steve Ricker, assistant to Piazza.

"I am very honored to be a part of Wolf Pack Athletics and to assist in the mission of the University and athletics department to put the student-athlete first," Piazza says. "My life has been blessed, and it gives me great enjoyment and pleasure to share my resources with the northern Nevada community."

Through his generosity over the years, Piazza has supported hundreds of nonprofit organizations throughout the world, most notably the University of Nevada, Reno, the Nevada Humane Society and the Reno High School Alumni Center. He also recently built a dog park in Hidden Valley which opened in October.

"We are very excited to reconnect with a person like Mr. Piazza who was integral in the history of Nevada Athletics as the first 'Voice of the Wolf Pack,'" Nevada Director of Athletics Cary Groth says. "He has been amazingly generous to organizations in northern Nevada. We want to thank Mr. Piazza for his generous support of Wolf Pack Athletics and look forward to continuing to develop this partnership."

Piazza is the son of proud Italian immigrants who came to Reno in the early 1900s. Link was born in Reno on Dec. 11, 1918. His father was committed to realizing the good



Photo courtesy Nevada Athletics

President Milton Glick and Athletics Director Cary Groth honor Link Piazza who has donated over \$1 million to the University.

life in America and passed this motivation on to his children. Link inherited his father's great commitment to honesty, vision, helping friends and the belief that there is no country like the United States of America.

Link attended Mary S. Dotten Elementary School, Northside Junior High School and Reno High School. During World War II, he served as a pilot in the U.S. Army Air Corp and flew B-25 bombers on 67 missions. He is an honored war veteran and recipient of 17 medals, including the Distinguished Flying Cross for significant war efforts and achievements.

In 1944, he married Helen and they had three children: Lynn (deceased), Suzanne (deceased) and Craig, a successful Reno businessman.

Community involvement has also been a major part of Piazza's life. He has spent a significant amount of time giving to others and contributing to his community. He has donated his energy and resources to a number of civic and fraternal organizations. Piazza volunteered his services as official scorer and timer for high school zone and state basketball

tournaments for 33 years. He was the voice of Wolf Pack sports for the University of Nevada, Reno games in the later 1940s and early 1950s and was coorganizer of the first Reno Little League. He is cofounder of the Reno Junior Ski program that still continues to benefit local junior skiers.

Piazza has played a significant role in his community's development. In 1938, he cofounded the Sportsman Sporting Goods Store with his brother, Chet. He was also codeveloper of the Hidden Valley Properties and Golf Course and three shopping centers. He and his brother produced and hosted a TV show called Sportsman Trails for 28 years. He has supported the Reno Rotary Club and construction projects for the Reno High School Alumni Center and the Nevada Humane Society's Regional Animal Center.

—Rhonda Lundin,
director of Media Services, Athletics