

Pioneer Award

SUSIE PERRELLA DIGIACOMO

1993



**BORN NOVEMBER 2, 1899 IN BAGNOLI, ITALY
DIED MARCH 26, 1995 IN LOUISVILLE, COLORADO**

Susie DiGiacomo was a woman who had a definite impact on the Louisville community as well as far beyond. She immigrated from Italy to Louisville with her family when she was six years old. Susie worked as a cook at the Blue Parrot Restaurant for 24 years. Although her formal education went only through the eighth grade, she was a self-educated woman who became active in national politics and whose opinions, ideas, and political support were often sought by others.

A 1984 article in the Louisville Times about Susie's reputation as a "local political legend" noted that when she registered to vote at the age of 21, she chose to register as a Democrat because, she said, it is "the champion of the poor." In 1938, she was asked to serve as committee woman for the Democratic Party in Louisville. She ended up serving in that capacity until 1989 and was known for her efforts to canvas on behalf of Democratic candidates and to get people registered to vote. She was Vice-Chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee in Boulder County, a member of the State Democratic Central Committee, a member of the Board of Directors for the Mental Health and Retardation Center of Boulder, and a member of the Community Hospital Board. She never missed a State Democratic convention from the time she joined the party until her retirement. Throughout the years, she became acquainted with many Democratic Party candidates, including Ted Kennedy, Adlai Stevenson, Lyndon Johnson, and Hubert Humphrey.

Susie was also very active in the St. Louis Church, and was in charge of one of the biggest fundraisers, a famous annual chicken dinner, to raise money to build the new church on Grant Avenue. Susie was a larger-than-life person who had an impact on not only Louisville and Boulder County, but also on her country.