

OPINION

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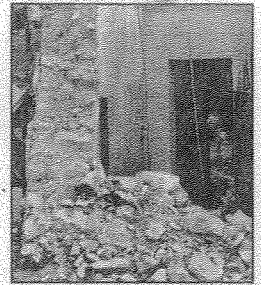
OUR VIEWS

Abruzzo's pain

The world once again turns into a small place. As Lower Hudson Valley residents have done so many times before, groups and individuals are mobilizing to help the Abruzzo region of Italy heal from a 6.3 magnitude earthquake that killed upward of 270 people and left historically significant buildings crumbling. Again, it is the human drama, coupled with a personal connection, that inspire charity for those in desperate need.

Steve Acunto of Mount Vernon has myriad ties to the region. He is director of the Italian Academy Foundation, a nonprofit organization that promotes culture, business and better communications between the the United States and Italy. The group has opened its 11-room residential facility in L'Aquila to earthquake victims. Acunto's great-grandfather donated generously to help rebuild his hometown of Bisegna after a 1915 quake.

The Blauvelt Sons of Italy lodge, the largest in Rockland, is planning fundraisers with local restaurant owners and other efforts to build the Rockland Lodge Earthquake Relief Fund. The American Red Cross in the Lower Hudson Valley is accepting donations for victims, and there's also talk of plans for supporting reconstruction in the region. The suffering and need are great. Help ease the burden if you can.



Sandro Perozzi/AP Photo
An earthquake-damaged house in Onna, Italy.