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Neal Rubin

Detroit's Italian heritage filmed

Keith Famie of Novi screened his latest documentary for 550 Italian Americans this week and drew a standing ovation. "Our Italian Story" will air at 7 p.m. Saturday on WXYZ-TV (Channel 7), and even if you don't know Palermo from Perugia, you'll find something in it that feels like home.

Famie shot 70 hours of footage for his study of Detroit's Italian heritage, here and in the old country, and trimming it to 60 minutes felt like slicing off pieces of his arm. Rather than extract another 12 minutes for commercials, he coerced Lipari Foods of Warren into sponsoring the entire show, and it will run uninterrupted.

The special will run again at 1 p.m. Dec. 16 and 9 a.m. Christmas Day. Meantime, Famie is already filming segments for his next two "A Our Story Of" features about Poles and Germans.

"Our Italian Story" gives him a tough act to follow. Lipari Foods president Thom Lipari isn't exactly betting against him, Famie says, but Lipari seems sure of one thing: "I don't think you're going to find such great wine to drink with the German show."

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