For Immediate Release
Contact Sorrento’s at (217) 735-1442

Sam Sorrento’s Pizzeria is celebrating 50 years in business in Lincoln, Illinois this weekend, June 7-9 with a ribbon cutting scheduled at 4pm on Friday June 7th at the restaurant’s new location at 614 Broadway Street in Historic Downtown Lincoln. Owners Jim and Lisa Drew and Lisa’s son Tony Curcuru invite the public to the ribbon cutting event, including any and all current and former employees and generations of devoted customers.

Sorrento’s opened in 1969 in Lincoln. Giovanni and Anna (aka Mamma Sorrento) Curcuru opened Sorrento’s Pizza in 1969. They came from the small town of Cinisi, Italy in Sicily. After Giovanni and Anna ran the shop for a while, it was passed to their son, Serafino (aka “Sammy”). He was the face of the shop for many years and was known for always remembering your pizza order and having sweet muscle cars. The restaurant featured family recipes as it does to this day, and provides “a taste of old-world Italian style” to downtown Lincoln.

When “Sammy” passed away in 1998, Sorrento’s was left to be run by his wife, Lisa and their four kids: John, Annalisa, Jetty, and Tony. It was not an easy transition, but it very much became a family effort. Everyone played a part in keeping Sorrento’s going as best they could.

Today, owners Jim & Lisa Drew, along with son Tony, manage the restaurant as a “family effort.” Tony manages the kitchen and the social media, although it has been Lisa who has been providing incredible historic photos and stories on the Sorrento’s Facebook page located at www.facebook.com/SorrentosPizzaLincoln.

The family restaurant moved three doors down from their previous location in August of last year. With the new location, Sorrento’s can accommodate several small groups, and large groups as well, including wedding rehearsal parties and family gatherings for the holidays (call ahead for bookings). The restaurant holds 70 people – twice the size of the previous location. The change in location has also increased carry-out traffic. Tony attributes this to the outdoor patio and the quaint inviting atmosphere on the inside.

“It is a testimony to the business over the years that our family-run business has touched a lot of lives,” said Tony Curcuru. “We have seen a great response on our Facebook page as we approach this milestone anniversary.” Tony has also started a Cannoli business on the side.

Owner Jim Drew says “we all pitch in as a family member. I’m not home at night (he laughs).” His wife Lisa agrees. “It is a sacrifice to run your own business, but you have to love it. We enjoy the people as we remember the past and from our restaurant we hope to make their lives better.”

Though the location has changed, the same delicious menu remains. The pizzas are made fresh to order with fresh ingredients, whole and natural, and contain no artificial ingredients. The dough is made fresh daily. Specialty pizza favorites include Sam’s Light Pizza, Taco Pizza, BBQ Chicken Pizza. Calzone and Salads are also served. Holiday menu items are also rolled out during Valentine’s Day and St. Patrick’s Day.
Sorrento’s has a large following of regulars from central Illinois, including Peoria, Morton, Bloomington and Decatur. With the return of Route 66 signage to the downtown, they have seen an increase in international travelers from countries such as Belgium, France, Germany and the U.K.

“We finally have the first alignment of Route 66 signed in Lincoln that traverses to the historic downtown business district, which is something that has not happened since 1929,” said Geoff Ladd of the Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway. “We are already seeing more visitors as a result which benefits downtown businesses, and this will only increase as we approach the 100th anniversary of Route 66 in 2026.”

Sorrento’s will reveal a Route 66 Special on Saturday June 8th, and also will announce a special secret contest that will run for a week beginning on Saturday as well. For more information, contact Sorrento’s at (217) 735-1442.

New Location: 614 Broadway in Lincoln, IL
The Sorrento’s Team L-R: Tony Curcuru, Lisa Drew, Jim Drew

Historic photos below:
Giovanni and Anna (aka Mamma Sorrento) Curcuru

The family-run business in Lincoln