



DANTE'S INFERNO



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Bob Guidera

Great spring and summer events in the works

I'd like to highlight a few club events we've planned for spring and summer.

Especially exciting is a trip to Italy that club member Michael Micciche is organizing. Mike operates Italian Journeys of Sacramento, which specializes in travel planning and booking services for Italy. He typically travels there annually.

You may have noticed the beautiful pictures and articles about Italy in the *Inferno*, which were done by Mike. He's an old hand at organizing these tours and has done many.

A trip date hasn't been set yet, but Mike will provide more details at our May 21 meeting.

Reservations are open, and the trip is open to members, friends and family members.

Closer to home: May will start out with our Mother's Day brunch

See PRESIDENT'S CORNER, Page 3

EGGSTRA SPECIAL EASTER



Easter egg hunters, above, invade the Dante Club grounds during the club's annual egg hunt March 31. At left, board member John Caselli, holding bunny, and his family pose for the Easter Bunny. Although event chairman Dan Calcagno refused to don the club bunny outfit, the event proved fun for kids and adults alike. Along with an age-tiered egg hunt, the event featured a petting zoo and complimentary hot dogs for all.

Viva l'Italia! Let's go!

By Michael Micciche

Why do people the world over love to travel to Italy?

Browse through previous editions of *Dante's Inferno*, and I think my articles about Italy can help us all remember why visiting Italy is so special, especially for those of us with Italian roots.



Michael Micciche, center, and some friends examine a map during a trip to Italy's Piedmont region.

See ITALY, Page 6



NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

Ladies Auxiliary

The Ladies Auxiliary welcomes new members and new ideas.

The auxiliary meets for dinner and social events on the second Monday of the month, except for July and August.

Women interested in joining can find applications on the Dante Club website or may call Karol Buccola at 916-455-4232 or email Karol at karolrb55@gmail.com.

New members

Michele Quaranta was to be inducted in April but personal issues have delayed his addition to the Dante Club.

We will interview Marco Ambroselli and Geoff Wharton in May. Marq Truscott is on the waiting list for membership.

We have lots of openings for new members, and we encourage current members to invite qualified men to apply. Applicants can obtain forms on the club website or from club manager Allison Nord or Frank Calcagno at 916-515-1117.

Club apparel

Available for purchase is a variety of specialty Dante Club-branded clothing. Members can choose among aprons and four styles of sweatshirts and polo shirts. Clothing comes in sizes for men, women and children.

To order items, speak to Ron Cristoni at a meeting or reach him at 916-457-4516 or roncristoni@aol.com.

Save pull tabs

Over the years, the Dante Club has supported and given back to our community in many ways.

During World War II, members wrapped surgical bandages, purchased

war bonds, helped the United Service Organizations (USO), sponsored blood drives, supported the opera, donated to the Sacramento Philharmonic, assisted in the Christmas Seals program, purchased beds at Mercy Hospital and purchased a Bramson membrane oxygenator, or heart-lung machine, for the Sutter Hospital Medical Research Foundation.

We can continue supporting the Sacramento community today.

Pull tabs on aluminum soda and beer cans, for instance, are worth more than the cans. We can collect the tabs to support a community need.

Families that stay at the Ronald McDonald House on the University of California Davis Medical Center campus, for example, pay \$55 per night to stay there while visiting hospitalized family members.

We can offset their lodging expenses through pull-tab donations, allowing the families to pay only \$5 per night.

So please save your pull tabs and bring them to Dante Club events. We will collect them and donate them from the Dante Club to the Ronald McDonald House.

Chocolate gifts

If you need a perfect gift, we have just the thing for you: our new Dante Club imported chocolates.

They're delicious and custom-made with our logo. Each box costs \$20 and can be purchased in person from any club server or administrative staff member.



Upcoming Events

To reserve and pay online, go to:
<http://www.danteclub.com/calendar.php>

June 5

Tuesday Night Dinner

Time: 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner

Menu: three pasta stations with shrimp, chicken and pork; caesar salad, rolls, mini-desserts, house wine, coffee, iced tea

Cost: \$25 adults, \$12.50 children ages 5 to 10

Reservations pending

June 10

Viva Vino and Beer Event

Time: 1 to 4 p.m.

Menu: specialty wines and olive oils, beers from local breweries; Italian sausage on sourdough rolls with peppers and onions

Cost: \$25; designated drivers pay \$5 (cash) at the event

Other highlights: outdoor seating under trees, music, art

SAVE THE DATE

June 21

Italian Heritage Night at the River Cats Game; Sacramento vs El Paso

Time: 7:05 p.m. game starts

Cost: \$19; \$2 Miller Lites

Reservations by June 15; pick up tickets at the club or at the game at Will Call

August 4

Vic Martinelli Memorial Golf Tournament

Time: 7 a.m. check-in, 8 a.m. shotgun start, 2 p.m. bar opens, 2:30 p.m. lunch

Location: Bartley Cavanaugh Golf Course

Cost: \$85 green fees and lunch; \$20 lunch only; \$100 sponsors
Sign up online and pay by cash or check. Questions? Contact Frank Buccola at 916-606-4026 or frankiebuccola@gmail.com.

**President's Corner**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

on May 12, the Saturday before Mother's Day, at the club. Then our annual Viva Vino wine and beer tasting event will be held in June this year. Having it in June (June 10, to be exact) almost assures perfect weather.

June 21 will be Italian Heritage Night at a River Cats game, and on Aug. 4 we'll have our annual Vic Martinelli golf tournament and dinner. This is a fun event and a good fundraiser for the club.

Among my favorite summer events are our no-meeting barbecue nights at the club. In place of July and August meetings, we get together for steak and beer. It's grill-your-own-steak outside, with all the fixings inside in the Venetian Room. Great steaks and a good time!

I hope you've all noticed what our manager, Allison, has done with our past-president photos. She's captured the photos and presented them in a digital format on a new flat screen. It has made a nice moving presentation honoring them. Check it out.

Under Allison's leadership, the club is advancing nicely. She has booked some profitable functions, and financially we're improving our bottom line.

As always, our club is on the lookout for new members, so if you know someone you think would be good for our club, please invite them to join.

At 90, this icon of the Sacramento auto industry keeps on selling cars

Vince Maita, an icon of the Sacramento area automobile industry, has always been a supporter of the Dante Club, enjoying Tuesday night dinners there with his friends and even celebrating his 85th birthday at the club.

Now, at 90, Vince remains dedicated to his community and to the thriving automobile dealership business he created in the 1970s.

Vince Maita's parents were Louis and Edith Ravera Maita. Louis Maita's father emigrated from Cefala Diana, in Palermo Province, through Ellis Island to San Francisco. Edith's parents came to San Francisco from Calizzano in Italy's Liguria region.

Edith and Louis met and married in San Francisco and moved to Sacramento in 1929 with their young son, Vincent. Vince's brother, Albert, was born in Sacramento that same year.



ITALIAN AMERICAN BUSINESS PROFILE

Vince Maita

The family lived on a ranch off 14th Avenue, long before it was a paved, heavily trafficked thoroughfare.

Growing up during the Depression, Vince learned the value of hard work and creating long-lasting relationships. He enlisted and served in the U.S. Navy. After an honorable discharge, he attended Heald Business College.

See MAITA, Page 4

2018 DANTE CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

- Robert Guidera, president: robertguidera@att.net
- Bill Giovanetti, first vice president, building and grounds: wgiovanetti@comcast.net
- Ron Cristoni, second vice president, club clothing: roncristoni@aol.com
- Ron Fiorica, recording secretary, scholarships: rbfiorica@frontiernet.net
- Tom Mezzanares, treasurer: tjmezzan@gmail.com

BOARD MEMBERS

- Ronald Bacher, admission ticket chairman: ronald.bacher@gmail.com
- Richard Battistessa, advisory, social activities: drbattistessa@comcast.net
- Victor Brida, tour director: vbrida@gmail.com
- Dan Calcagno, Easter Bunny: dmcalcagno@aol.com
- Frank Calcagno, membership: fscal@comcast.net
- John Caselli, publicity: jac6652@aol.com

- Jim Dimino, advisory committee: jkdimino@sbcglobal.com
- John Fiorica, sergeant at arms: jfpacificrr@frontiernet.net
- Matt Longo, building and grounds: longomb@sbcglobal.net
- Michael Micciche, corporate travel: Michael.micciche@gmail.com
- Tom Novi, social activities: tomnovi@aol.com
- Patrick Orelli, finance: porelli@gallina.com

**IN THE KITCHEN***Allison Nord
General Manager**Dante Club's pastry chef sets the pace with endless energy*

At 3 a.m., most of the world is in bed, fast asleep, but Silvia Gomez is just starting her day.

In the wee hours, Silvia delivers to corporate accounts in Sacramento and beyond. After 20,000 steps or more, she's usually done around 1 p.m. If she's lucky, she gets a quick nap before working another six to eight hours for the Dante Club as our lead supervisor and pastry chef.

Physical exhaustion doesn't even begin to cover it, but she's always there, setting the pace for others.

I'm proud to honor Silvia, one of our outstanding team members and our March employee of the month.

Silvia is the youngest of six. Growing up, she and her siblings helped out in her mother's gardening business.

"My first day at the job, I was 6 years old," she said. "I began by staying on the truck bed watching the equipment, according to my mom, so no one would steal them. I was promoted to picking up fallen fruit from fruit trees, but I wanted to do more."

A lawn mower was the

See IN THE KITCHEN, Page 5

Maita

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

In his first real work opportunity in the 1950s, Vince took a clerical job at a Sacramento dealership, J.J. Jacobs Cadillac Buick. He then learned everything about the parts department before moving on to the service department.

When the company had to eliminate his position, Vince asked the owners if he could learn something different as a way to stay on with the company. He was told he could try his hand at sales.

So he did—and discovered he was successful at it. He even earned the title of Vanguard Salesperson for Oldsmobile in the San Francisco zone in 1953.

Vince Maita had found his niche. The rest, as they say, is history.

Vince then went to Sutton Motors, where he worked in all departments and soon became a manager. Mr. Sutton eventually asked Vince if he wanted to buy Sutton's Oldsmobile store. So in 1975, Vince became the sole owner of what would become Maita Oldsmobile. The business, at

2211 Fulton Ave. for many years, prospered into a leading Oldsmobile franchise. Vince also opened a body shop on Tower Avenue, later relocating it to a larger facility on Auburn Boulevard.

Vince believed in giving customers the best service possible.

"I always wanted to make sure that each and every customer felt as though they were my most important customer," he said.

Vince and his wife, Ellen, who died in 2015, were married for 26 years and raised four children. Daughter Tina became a nurse and sons Paul, Steve and Leslie joined their dad in the family business.

In 1986, Vince and Steve bought a Hyundai dealership franchise. Toyota, Subaru, Chevrolet, Mazda, Nissan and Honda franchises followed. Father and son also created Elite Acceptance Corp. to broaden the scope of buyers to include those who didn't fit traditional lender profiles, providing financial services to help them purchase vehicles.

Over time, the Maita name became

See MAITA, Page 5

Premium winery, brewery and olive oil partners**Wine**

- Balletto Vineyards, Santa Rosa
- Bella Grace Vineyards, Sutter Creek
- Carvalho Family Winery, Clarksburg
- Galvan Family Cellars, Fairfield
- Karmere Vineyards, Plymouth
- Merlo Vineyards, Redding
- Morse Wines, Fiddletown

- Pedroncelli, Geyserville
- Perry Creek Winery, Fair Play
- Sean Minor, Napa
- Secret Ravine, Loomis
- Taylor Family Vineyards, Napa
- Yorba Wines, Sutter Creek
- Young's Vineyard, Plymouth

Beer

- Blue Note Brewing Co., Woodland

- Hoppy Brewing Co., Sacramento
- Lost Coast Brewery, Humboldt
- Mussetter Distributing, Auburn
- Out of Bounds Brewing Co., Rocklin
- Wildcard Brewing Co., Redding

Olive Oil

- Olive Mix, Sacramento
- Maltese Olive Oil, Sacramento

**In the Kitchen**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

first equipment she operated. She mowed lawns for a few months, but then she got bored.

By age 12, she knew how to use every machine her mother owned, except the chainsaw.

**Silvia Gomez**

"She never let us touch that," Silvia said.

The children's schedule consisted of school in the morning, helping their mother after school and doing their homework in the evening.

"I have always looked up to my mother, but she always told us, 'You don't want to be like me. I work in the hot sun all day, and when it rains, there isn't any work. Go to college.'"

Silvia had always wanted to be a teacher, but knowing she

could be her own boss and sell her own creations motivated her to attend culinary school.

"Have you ever handed a dessert to someone and noticed their face?" she said. "I wanted to be the reason for that. What's the main attraction at a party? The cakes and desserts. And that's what I wanted."

Silvia completed an associate degree in baking and pastries at the Art Institute of California. When she isn't baking or working, she likes hiking, traveling and finding new places to eat.

New-employee training, setup, breakdown and serving are among Silvia's many talents and responsibilities at the Dante Club.

Her outstanding work ethic, endless energy and keen sense of responsibility have helped to take the Dante Club to a new level in the past few months.

Maita

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

synonymous with integrity and excellence in several realms of customer service.

In the early 1990s, Auburn Boulevard needed attention. Vince decided it wasn't enough to be a businessman in the community, so he also became a leader, participating in the Fulton Avenue Association and joining the Auburn Boulevard Redevelopment Board.

The board received a grant to underwrite the cost of hiring two deputy sheriffs to patrol and provide extra security in the Auburn Boulevard area. This led to another project, the enhancement of Auburn Boulevard, which was completed in 2012.

Vince Maita still sells cars. He still enjoys going to work and interacting with employees and customers. He still stresses to his employees that if they take pride in what they do, success will naturally follow. His desire and passion have created an organization that today employs more than 700 people.

Vince remains active in the Sacramento community. As a member of Del Paso Country Club, he plays golf weekly. He is a Carmichael Elks Club lifetime member and contributes to various charities, including The First Tee, Sacramento Salvation Army and Shriners Hospital.

Over the years, Vince has been honored with many awards and accolades, which he always receives humbly.

Vince says any Dante Club members who are interested in Toyota, Chevrolet, Honda, Subaru or Mazda vehicles and would like his help with a purchase can call him at his office at 916-481-0855, Ext. 500.

"If you're a member of the Dante Club," he said, "I'll be happy to personally assist you."

DANTE'S REMINDERS**Member volunteers**

To volunteer, contact club president Bob Guidera or social chairman Tom Novi to offer your services. Reach Bob at robertguidera@att.net or 916-451-1467 and Tom at tomnovi@aol.com or 916-961-6197. For new social events, contact Vic Brida at vbrida51@gmail.com or 916-588-6276.

Donations

Donate to our scholarship or building funds in memory of a loved one or a friend to keep their legacy going. And buy raffle tickets! Donations can be made easily online at <http://www.danteclub.com/donation.html>.

Dante Club apparel

If you'd like to buy club shirts or other specialty clothing, contact Ron Cristoni at 916-457-4516 or roncristoni@aol.com or speak to him at a meeting. Place an order with cash or check.

Newsletter photos and news

Submit photos and news items for *Dante's Inferno* to John Caselli at jac6652@aol.com. Items must be received by the 20th of each month to be considered for the following month's newsletter. Publication depends on available space and is not guaranteed. To post news and photos on Facebook, log in to your Facebook account and search for "Dante Club."

Contact information

Have you recently changed your address or phone number? Please alert our club treasurer, Tom Mezzanares, at 916-467-7483 or tjmezzan@gmail.com.



Board discovers new premium vodka for club bar

In an ongoing search for the perfect selection of distilled spirits for the Dante Club bar, several members of the board of directors recently toured the J.J. Pfister Distilling Co. in Sacramento.

In their continuing quest for an ideal vodka to accompany rigatoni and saltimbocca, the board members unanimously decided on the Pfister Potato Vodka during a tasting.

According to the distillery, its potato vodka is “certified organic, handcrafted and sustainably distilled. Using organic, naturally gluten-free potatoes sourced from the beautiful Klamath Basin, it is made in-house right here in Sacramento.”

“It had all the qualities we were looking for in a premium vodka,” said board member Tom Novi. “The fact that it’s gluten-free was the real tie-breaker.”



Dante Club board members Ron Cristoni, Michael Micciche, Richard Battistessa and Tom Novi learn about gluten-free potato vodka as they join others on a recent tasting and tour of J.J. Pfister Distilling Co. in Sacramento.

Italy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Italy is all about the food, the wine, the art, the scenery, the culture, the sea, the mountains, the islands, the history and the modern. There’s so much to see and do.

Later this year, Dante Club members can experience the many wonders of Italy on a special club-sponsored trip that I’m organizing through my travel business.

We haven’t set a trip date yet, but members who attend the club meeting May 21 can learn about our itinerary options. I will try to answer questions, show more pictures of Italy and talk about the many ways to see and enjoy the country more affordably than anyone might think.

Here are a few photos from my trips to Italy. I hope they will rekindle the urge to visit. They’re just a taste of what awaits.

The centuries-old Ponte Vecchio, top right, in Florence was rebuilt in 1345 after a flood. The Roman Colosseum, far right, is thought to be the largest amphitheater ever built and is among the most famous sights in Rome. Juliet’s Balcony, right, adorns a Gothic-style museum in Verona.

