



DANTE'S INFERNO



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Bob Guidera

Excellent dinners in store for March

March is a good month for events here at the club. We will start off with our very popular cioppino dinner event on March 2.

Club members Rich Battestissa and Mike Talini team up to put this delicious meal together. Some say it's the best cioppino in town.

If you're unfamiliar with cioppino, it's a very tasty fish dish with a tomato-based sauce and various types of seafood.

Also in March, we have a Tuesday night dinner featuring our famous chicken and polenta, which is always a crowd pleaser and one of my personal favorites.

If you haven't noticed, our Tuesday dinner prices have been lowered to \$25. This is a very popular dinner so please reserve early.

Later in March we will bring back another favorite, the Fizz Brunch. We'll have many types of

See PRESIDENT'S CORNER, Page 3

Club board approves changes proposed in responses to survey

At its February meeting, the Dante Club board formally approved several changes designed to better meet members' needs and expectations. The board's decision followed a review of the changes at the January members dinner.

The changes are based on responses to a social activity survey that members completed in November. Here's a summary of the approved changes:

1. A three-member committee will monitor and direct the quality and Italian authenticity of food served at Tuesday Night and members dinners. Committee members Richard Battistessa, Michael Micchiche and Michael Talani will work with the club manager and cook to set menus and recipes. They also will listen to member comments and provide feedback to the manager, cook and advisory committee. Members are encouraged to share opinions and suggestions about meals.

See SURVEY, Page 3

Veneto towns packed with history

By Michael Micchiche

The Veneto region of Northern Italy offers a wealth of sights, including one of the most historically evocative cities: Asolo, known as "the Pearl" and "the City of a Hundred Horizons" because of its beautiful mountain setting.

The town includes the remains of an amphitheater and an aqueduct; Rocca, a castle dating from the late 12th to early 13th centuries; Caterina Cornaro, a castle that's now home to



Italian travel writer and Dante Club member Michael Micchiche, above, takes a stroll along a typical street in Asolo, an architecturally interesting town in a mountain setting in Northern Italy.

See VENETO, Page 5



NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

Ladies Auxiliary

The Ladies Auxiliary donated \$1,000 to the Dante Club's Scholarship Fund and \$100 to the same fund in memory of Shirley Bennett, a longtime auxiliary member.

For most of this year, the auxiliary will meet for dinner and social events on the second Tuesday of each month. The regular Monday schedule will resume in September.

Women interested in joining the group may call or text Carole Stefani-Chivaro at 916-698-2036.



New Ladies Auxiliary officers are, front row from left, Heidi Pesce Veneman, co-vice president; Debbie Duccini Hansen, co-treasurer; Tina Luchini Bowers, co-treasurer; Judy Farina, secretary; Carole Stefani Chivaro, co-president; and back row from left, Helen Manfredi Pierson, co-vice president; and Debra Cattuzzo, co-president.

Club apparel

Members can buy Dante Club-branded clothing, including aprons and four styles of sweatshirts and polo shirts. Clothing comes in sizes for men, women and children. Order from Ron Cristoni at 916-457-4516 or roncristoni@aol.com.

New members

The Dante Club would like to honor all past presidents going back to Pannatoni in 1926.

Still active past presidents include Rich Battistessa, Michael Talani, Jim Casali, Jim Dimino, Ron Pane, Ron Fiorica, Tom Mezzanares, George Carollo, Mark Franzioia and Frank Perri.

We have all profited from their many contributions.

In January, we inducted Tom Mathews, sponsored by Jim Dimino. Welcome! In February, we interviewed Frankie Churchill, sponsored by Ernie Tomaselli. We're scheduled to interview applicants John Morelli and Chuck Santoni, sponsored by Frank Calcagno, this month.

We have four remaining on our waiting list.

In memoriam

We are sad to report the passing of George Cerniglia on Jan. 27. George was a Dante Club lifetime member who joined in March 1991.

The Cerniglia family includes Joe, who still attends, escorted by grandson Anthony Reay. That family also includes the Tobia family.

Please keep George's wife, Ann, and their family in your thoughts and prayers.

Pull tabs

Word is out that the Dante Club is collecting pull tabs from aluminum cans, and they are now pouring in.

We recently received a second shipment from Howard and Cheryl Seaton from Gold Beach, Oregon.

"No beer cans were damaged in the collection of these pull tabs," said Howard Seaton. "Just a few soda cans and a lot of cat food cans."

Please join the Seatons and other club members in this drive to benefit the Sacramento Ronald McDonald House Adopt-A-Family program.

Annual dues

Dante Club dues for 2019 are past due. Members who have not paid their

See NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE, Page 4



UPCOMING EVENTS
Reserve and pay online at:
<http://www.danteclub.com/calendar.php>

March 17**Fizz Brunch**

Time: 11 a.m. fizzes, noon brunch

Menu: Fruit salad, pastries, potatoes, bacon, biscuits and gravy, scrambled eggs with cheese and scallions, orange and cranberry juices, coffee, iced tea

Cost: \$25 adults, \$13 children ages 5 to 10; no-host bar included
Reserve by 10 a.m. Wednesday, March 13.

March 18**Membership Dinner Meeting**

Time: 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner, 8 p.m. meeting

Menu: House salad, Italian sausages, Milanese-style tripe, sauteed spinach, rolls and butter, cherry pie

Cost: \$13 with reservations, \$18 at the door
Reserve by 10 a.m. Friday, March 15.

April 2**Tuesday Night Dinner**

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

Menu: Ribollita, manicotti, roasted beef with carrots, Italian bread pudding

Cost: \$25 adults, \$13 children ages 5 to 10
Reserve by 10 a.m. Friday, March 29.

April 7**River Cats Day Game**

Time: 1:05 p.m.

Location: Raley Field in West Sacramento

Cost: \$19
Reserve by April 2. Email tomnovi@aol.com for info.

**President's Corner**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

fizzes followed by a very nice Sunday brunch.

I'm delighted to report that we had a very profitable December. Tom Mezzanares, our treasurer, says he hasn't seen a month that good for a long, long time. This is great news for us, because, as you know, we're experiencing some tight times.

Our staff has come through for us, which has helped our financial situation. Interestingly, we had fewer December events than we had in the previous year, but we made more money.

Fortunately, we were able to cut our expenses and will continue to do so.

Speaking of money, if you haven't paid your annual dues, they were due Jan. 31. Please see Tom and take care of this as soon as possible.

As a club, we are not full and would welcome new members. If you know someone who might want to become a participating member, please invite them to join. We will welcome them with open arms.

With the club off to good start for the new year, please remember that this is your club, and you must support it by attending our events and bringing your friends.

Our chef Jessi Moreno has come up with many very good food ideas that I'm sure will delight you and your friends.

Ask her about her chocolate cake: It's a little bit of heaven.

Andiamo avanti!

Survey

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

2. A floor manager will oversee dinners to help ensure that our members have an exceptional experience.

3. The price for members dinners will be \$13 with a reservation and \$18 without. This is designed to encourage reservations, so the club manager can better estimate food purchases. Complimentary beer and wine with dinner will continue, as will half-price drinks for members. Typical pricing for comparable private-event dinners ranges from \$35 to \$40.

4. The Tuesday dinner price will decrease from \$28 to \$25.

5. The board will monitor the sound system, but speakers should speak into the microphone. Anyone in the back of the room who can't hear should stand up and say so.

6. An Italian flag will be displayed at member events.

7. Water will be on tables at all events.

8. Members will be asked about starting members dinners earlier, at 6:30 p.m.

9. Spumoni will be available for dessert.

10. Free hot dogs, beer and soft drinks will be served during the annual Easter egg hunt.

11. The annual Mother's Day brunch will continue to be held on Mother's Day.

12. The Viva Vino event will be held on a Saturday in late September or early October in an effort to improve attendance.

13. Member events will feature more Italian music.

14. Dante Club at the River Cats will be a day game this year on Sunday, April 17, so more families and children can attend.

15. At the July and August steak barbecues, cooks will fire up the grills earlier and include mushrooms and onions as accompaniments.

16. The golf committee will decide on the annual golf tournament location.

17. Attendance at the Sausage Stag Feed will be limited to members and guests age 21 and older.

18. Bocce will be available before members dinners.

19. The Christmas dinner price will be kept as low as possible, and large families will not be split up.

20. Bar service will be improved to ensure faster, better service.

21. The board will consider increasing member benefits. Members can now get reduced-cost dinners, half-price drinks and room rentals for events, free beer at members dinners and other free or reduced-cost social events.

22. Leftover food will be put in take-home containers and sold to members for a moderate price.

23. The new Dante Club manager will be responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive marketing program to better publicize the Dante Club as a banquet facility and to improve the club's business performance.

24. The board will examine the costs and benefits of establishing a modestly priced Dante Club private label wine.

The Dante Club board of directors thanks all who took part in the social survey and offered suggestions. Social chairman Tom Novi and his committee hope the changes will help improve members' experience and better serve all members.



2019 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
- Ron Pane, tour director: repane@icloud.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.net
- 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: pat@apcpagroup.com

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
- Taylor's Market, Sacramento

- 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

News, Notes and Otherwise

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

dues should mail a check to the club or to club treasurer Tom Mezzanares as soon as possible.

Multiple trips planned

Ladies Auxiliary member Gloria Tomei has organized a trip to the Jackson Rancheria on March 5.

Participants will leave from Holy Spirit at 9 a.m. and continue to the Dante Club to pick up passengers. Cost of the trip is \$35 per person.

Tomei plans additional trips for April, May, June, July, August, September and October.

Call her at 916-447-5559 or email her at gtomei@comcast.net for more information.

Bocce leagues forming

We would like to welcome young and old, novice and expert, to sign up for our bocce experience. We're forming league play that will start at 10:30 a.m. March 9 on the Dante Club's two bocce courts. We'll offer refreshments for all attendees.

Members who have never played before will discover that it's easy to learn. It's also an opportunity to be part of an Italian tradition, make new friends and enjoy the camaraderie our club provides.

Members who'd like to play on a team with specific people should let organizer Rich Battistessa know via email at drbattistessa@comcast.net. Those who sign up as singles will be placed on a team.

We now have 30 members ready to go, and more are welcome to join the group. We promise a fun and memorable experience.

For questions, call Rich Battistessa at 916-961-4854.



Another town in the Veneto area is Bassano del Grappa, home to the popular Italian after-dinner drink grappa, as well as many art venues and historical buildings.

Veneto

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the Eleanor Duse Theatre; the Palazzo della Ragione, which houses the city museum; and a cathedral built in 1747 that houses the Assunta altar piece.

Asolo is known for its architecture and for its distinctive aristocratic atmosphere that can be felt in its many squares and cafés.

Another captivating town in the Veneto region is Bassano del Grappa, where Italians' favorite digestivo, grappa, was invented.



Visitors cross over the Brenta River in Bassano del Grappa via the Ponte degli Alpini, a historic wooden covered bridge. Architect Andrea Palladio designed it in 1569. A tavern on the bridge has remained unchanged since 1779.

Visitors can sample and purchase the popular brandylike beverage in various tasting rooms and retail shops.

Bassano del Grappa is easy to walk around, as most of the town is free of cars. The beautiful Brenta River flows under the

town's historic wooden covered bridge, Ponte degli Alpini, which offers good photo opportunities.

Architect Andrea Palladio designed the bridge in 1569 to replace one dating from at least 1209.

Palladio's bridge was destroyed in 1748 and rebuilt three years later.

The Nardini tavern on the bridge has remained unchanged since 1779.

In the heart of town, opposite the bridge in the old Palazzo delle Teste, is the Poli Grappa Museum,

See VENETO, Page 6



The Poli Grappa Distillery and Museum in Basano del Grappa, far right, celebrates the popular digestivo, grappa. Visitors, right, enjoy a leisurely stroll through town.



Veneto

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

In the heart of town, opposite the bridge in the old Palazzo delle Teste, is the Poli Grappa Museum, created by the Poli family in appreciation of grappa. Five self-guided instructional rooms help visitors appreciate grappa and include opportunities for tasting.

Other points of interest include a cathedral built around 1000 and renovated in 1417. It contains artworks by Leandro da Bassano, Ottavio Marianali and others. The town museum features ancient archaeological remains, works by Antonio Canova and the Tiepolos, and drawings by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Spagnoletto, Albrecht Dürer and Rembrandt. The Palazzo del Municipio, or Town Hall, erected from 1404, has a noteworthy loggia and a fresco attributed to Jacopo da Bassano.



DANTE'S REMINDERS



Member volunteers

To volunteer, contact club president Bob Guidera or social chairman Tom Novi to offer your services. You can reach Bob at robertguidera@att.net or 916-451-1467 and Tom at tomnovi@aol.com or 916-961-6197.

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 purchase club shirts or other specialty clothing items, contact Ron Cristoni at 916-457-4516 or roncristoni@aol.com or speak to him at a members meeting. You must present cash or a check to place an order.

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.