



DANTE'S INFERNO



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Rich Battistessa

Outlook bright for Dante Club in 2018

Happy New Year! As 2018 begins, the Dante Club is off and running with new ideas, new menus and renewed energy.

Our new manager, Allison Nord, kicked off December in great fashion.

Allison was well-received when we introduced her to the general membership at the December meeting.

We're all waiting with great expectation to see the direction she has planned for the club.

We start the new year with many positive thoughts.

Our club treasurer, Tom Mezzanares, reports that, financially, we are progressing well.

Little Magpies Preschool is providing a steady income to help with financial commitments, and the 2017 increase in dues has enabled us to take care of some of the past year's emergencies.

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MEET THE MANAGER

Sacramento native brings 'go-to girl' savvy to the Dante Club

Allison Nord, the Dante Club's new general manager, always thought she'd become a lawyer.

"I studied pre-law and planned to go to law school," she said. "Then I realized that lawyers deal with a lot of human misery."

Human enjoyment, she decided, was much more her style. For the past 25 years, Allison has been all around the world and back in her career as a special-events and food and beverage expert for a wide array of businesses.

A Sacramento native, Allison is one of the five children of Julie and Odell Nord. She attended Mira Loma High School and Utah State University.

In college, she founded a special-



Allison Nord

events company, Wild Hare Promotions, with clients that included the Sacramento Dixieland Jazz Jubilee and the Spokane Hoopfest.

In her first management job after college, working for Marriott, she helped open the Delta Center in Salt Lake City for the NBA Utah Jazz.

The 20,000-seat stadium and arena hosted every major special event in the Salt Lake City area, including concerts,

rodeos and basketball and hockey games.

"Then Nordstrom came knocking at my door to help them revamp all their cafes in the Salt Lake City area," she said. "So I redesigned their menus, catered special events and grew the Nordstrom cafes to deliver fast, fun and tasty food for hungry shoppers."

Never afraid of taking on a challenge, Allison soon became known as a "go-to girl" who could fix problem accounts.

She has helped revamp food and beverage accounts for Fed Reserve Bank, Litton Industries, US West and AT&T, as well as restaurants and catering companies throughout the Salt Lake City area.

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NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

Ladies Auxiliary

The Ladies Auxiliary held its annual installation dinner on Jan. 8.

These new board officers were sworn in during the meeting: Karen Buccola, president; Kathy Ring, vice president; Dawn Cooper, treasurer; and Barbara Caselli, secretary.

Woman interested in participating in the auxiliary may call Karol Rehm Buccola at 916-455-4232 or 916-217-6124 or email her at karolrb55@gmail.com.

New members

On Dec. 18, the Dante Club honored revered member Richard "Dick" and "Coach" Cristofani for his 34 years of service by bestowing him with lifetime membership.

Richard served as club president in 1995 and has been a driving force in getting members to attend Dante Club events. Congrats and grazie to Richard!

Also at the meeting, the club approved previous member Tom Lippi and entertainer and real estate agent Michael St. John for membership. Frank Calcagno sponsored them.

Michael will be inducted along with Dave Gregory, sponsored by John Caselli, in January. Tom Lippi will be inducted in February. Frank Lomascola is waiting in the wings.

We have openings for new members, so please encourage qualified people to apply.

Show Tom the money

Membership dues for 2018 are due this month. They can be paid online at <http://www.danteclub.com/members.php> or by sending a \$100 check to:

Dante Club, Attn: Tom Mezzanares
2330 Fair Oaks Blvd.

Sacramento, CA 95825

Checks should be made payable to the Dante Club.

Club apparel

Available for purchase are aprons and four styles of sweatshirts and polo shirts for men, women and children.

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

Social activities

Over the years the Dante Club has given back to our community in various ways.

Members have wrapped surgical bandages during World War II, purchased war bonds, helped the U.S.O., participated in blood drives, supported the opera, donated to the Sacramento Philharmonic, assisted with Christmas Seals, purchased beds at Mercy Hospital and purchased a Bramson membrane oxygenator for Sutter Hospital Medical Research Foundation.

A new way to give back to the community is collecting pull tabs from aluminum soda and beer cans, which are worth more than the cans.

Families staying at the Ronald McDonald House at UC Davis Medical Center pay \$55 per night, but with pull tabs the families pay only \$5 per night.

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

Let's keep giving back by supporting our community.

Lend a fellow paesano a hand

The Dante Club has long supported local Italian-American businesses whenever possible.

In turn, members of the local Italian business community have long supported the Dante Club.

The Dante board recently decided to feature Italian businesses in *Dante's Inferno* as a way to show our support.

We will try this for the next few months to see if it should be a permanent feature in our newsletter.

Initially, selected businesses would have no cost to participate.

The feature should be a great opportunity for the Italian community to support Italian businesses, as *Dante's Inferno* now has a circulation of nearly 1,000 copies a month.

Any Italian businesses in the area that would like to participate should contact Tom Novi at tomnovi@aol.com for further details.



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

January 15**Meeting Night Dinner**

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

Menu: pork marsala, mixed greens, garlic mashed potatoes, rigatoni with meat sauce, winter squash, cannoli

Cost: \$13 with reservation, \$15 at the door

Reservation deadline: 10 a.m. Friday, Jan. 12

January 20**Crab Feed**

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

Menu: antipasto, mixed greens, all-you-can-eat crab, rigatoni with meat sauce, seasonal vegetables, rolls, wine, spumoni, coffee, iced tea

Cost: \$45 adults, \$25 children age 12 and younger

Reservation deadline: 10 a.m. Friday, Jan. 12

February 6**Tuesday Night Dinner**

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

Menu: antipasto, chicken and polenta, seasonal vegetables, rigatoni, rolls, spumoni, wine, coffee, iced tea

Reservations are pending.

March 17**Cioppino Dinner**

Time: 5:30 p.m. cocktails, 6:30 p.m. dinner

Menu: antipasti, salad, risotto, cioppino, dessert, wine and \$2 green beer for the Irish

Cost: \$48 per person

Live music from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Reservation deadline: 10 a.m. Monday, March 12



President's Corner

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We still have projects that need attention, but those can be met with our existing budget flow.

Board members feel confident that, with new marketing strategies and new activities, we will see more prosperous months ahead.

Our new board has been elected, and officers will be announced at the January general meeting.

Rest assured that the board is committed to handling business in a way that benefits all members.

Membership is growing steadily. Our signature events have contributed nicely to the scholarship and building funds, allowing us to progress in meeting our obligations.

We were excited to see an increase in attendance at our November Tuesday night dinner and hope that future monthly dinners will be equally popular.

Our Christmas dinner was well-attended by many new members, as well as some older folks we haven't seen in a while.

The board will continue working hard to improve all our functions.

We encourage new members to volunteer, which helps make our events better and more rewarding for everyone.

The cioppino dinner is right around the corner, for instance, and we need more volunteers to step up and help.

In the spring, Viva Vino is a great Dante Club event in which to get involved.

In the fall, the annual Vic Martinelli golf tournament is a special club event that supports our scholarship fund.

Pulling off successful events is a big task, and we hope new and old members alike will participate. Please join in and support our club.

Thanks to all for a great 2017, and here's to more progress in 2018.

Come fly with us!

By Michael Micciche

The Dante Club would like to determine if any members are interested in visiting Italy for about two weeks in the fall.

The club can sponsor, plan, organize and book customized small-group trips. We prefer to avoid large bus tours, tourist-oriented restaurants and big crowds.

Groups of two to 10 people are the ideal, so we can arrange ground transportation using

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The famous Uffizi Art Gallery and Museum in Florence houses a wealth of priceless Italian Renaissance art.

Manager

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Allison also has launched catering companies and owned restaurants and pubs in such remote areas as Lake Powell, a vacation spot along the Utah and Arizona border.

“That’s where

I honed my MacGyver-like planning skills, because the nearest store was three hours away,” she said.

When Salt Lake City hosted the 2002 Winter Olympic Games, Allison led the food and beverage department for the E-Center, where Olympic hockey games were played.

She oversaw as many as 350 employees and 30 food and beverage outlets.

Hotels were Allison’s next challenge. She handled special events for as many as 1,000

attendees for two hotels in Park City, Utah.

After that, for a season, she worked for film festivals all over the world, including the Sundance, Cannes, Tribeca and South by Southwest festivals.

In 2007, Allison returned to California to serve as general manager of a 200-room resort in Monterey.

For the past five years, she has

brought special events and food and beverage services to premier senior communities in the Bay Area.

And now Allison is back in her hometown of Sacramento, excited to help revive the Dante Club to its former glory.

“It’s fantastic to be home,” she said. “It’s right where I belong.”

“It’s fantastic to be home. It’s right where I belong.”



Italy

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cars or vans.

Our only required activity is to visit Florence to see everything related to our club namesake, Dante



Dante Alighieri

Alighieri, via a walking tour. After that, you can break off in groups and proceed to other destinations, as desired.

I hope to arrange an official welcome for the Dante

Club in Florence from government or museum officials. I think it would be great if we could get media coverage about the club connecting with its namesake.

Most of the trip will allow time to do what you want and go where you want. The trip also is open to friends and family. Of course, you can extend your travels beyond the two weeks at your own expense.

Before we talk about details, we need some preliminary information from members interested in the trip. How many family members or friends will participate? (Do not include club members; they must sign up on their own.) What regions or cities are of interest? We can't cover the whole country, and, because of the required visit to Florence, we'd need to focus on areas north of Rome.

I will try to honor participants' suggestions in the itinerary. All ideas are welcome. If there is interest in a full-size tour, such as for as many as 25 people, please let me know.

You can email me at italianjourneys70@gmail.com.

If you don't use email, talk to me at a club meeting or call me.



The Duomo, Florence's 13th century cathedral, dominates the central piazza.

Don't worry about the finer details of our proposed Florence adventure for the time being.

We first need to determine the level of interest in the trip among our club members. Buon viaggio!

Italians on the road: Funeral records open a window to the past

By Steve Lavezzo

On Nov. 27, I took a 7-kilometer walking tour with the Sacramento Walking Sticks through several cemeteries in Colma, a small town in San Mateo County.

I picked up a copy of the Colma Historical Association News and Notes for October, November and December.

An article in it, "Records of the Valente, Marini, Peralta and Co. Funeral Home" by Richard Rocchetta, said this long-established business was closing and asked if

the Colma Museum would like to house its funeral records dating back to its origins in 1888.

The Valente Mortuary was established on Stockton Street in San Francisco's North Beach district. As the 1906 earthquake fire approached, Frank Marini buried the funeral records in Washington Square Park.

While waiting to rebuild the mortuary, he ran the funeral home out of the basement of the home of banker A.P. Giannini.

The records, 63 volumes up to 1993, will be available to people doing genealogical research on their families. Records after 1993 are on the company's computer and will be available in the future.

The website of the San Mateo County Genealogical Society will have an index of funerals performed by the mortuary, offering a resource for families researching ancestors who lived in San Francisco.

For more information, email at colmahist@sbcglobal.net.



DANTE'S REMINDERS



Member volunteers

To volunteer, contact club president Rich Battistessa or social chairman Tom Novi to offer your services. You can reach Rich at drbattistessa@comcast.net or 916-961-4854 and Tom at tomnovi@aol.com or 916-961-6197. To explore 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 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 25th 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 Tom Mezzanares at 916-467-7483 or tjmezzan@gmail.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
- 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