



**Reserve early for  
Dante dinners  
in November!**

# DANTE'S INFERNO



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Tom Novi

### *Trials and triumphs mark immigrants' U.S. experience*

October was Italian Heritage Month, and we celebrated it Oct. 2 with a wonderful Sunday night Italian dinner of pasta and meatballs and entertainment by the Bambini Dancers.

We continued celebrating our Italian heritage on Oct. 14 with a gourmet Italian dinner and music and entertainment by Cheryl Tiburzi and her band. Tiburzi sang traditional Italian songs and a medley of tunes made popular by Italian crooners, all performed in a very nice cabaret-style show. Nearly 200 members and guests enjoyed the evening, with dancing and drink late into the night. (Well, not that late, but it was fun, and most were dancing!)

We also provided some information on the Italian American experience of

See PRESIDENT'S CORNER, Page 6



Italian Heritage night attendees, left, dance off their dinners. Sparkling lights, right, brighten an October wedding reception.



## Center hosts 36 events, caters 35 — a club record

October 2022 was by far the busiest month that the Dante Event Center has seen since coming back from the pandemic, general manager Jennifer Peretti reports.

"We hosted 36 events, with the Dante center catering 35 events, which is a record here at the club," Peretti said.

Special events included multiple weddings, reunions, anniversaries and birthdays, as well as the Italian Heritage Month evening on Oct. 14 with a performance by singer Cheryl Tiburzi.

"The event season has returned in full force, and we are loving every minute of it," Peretti said. "For November, we're seeing an



Roses adorn the cake of honor at one of many wedding receptions held at the Dante Event Center in October.

assortment of events scheduled before the day of being thankful, but we do still have openings if you're considering hosting

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## NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

### Advisory and finance

Thanks to the Dante Club Event Center, which is showing a record year-to-date profit, we have been able to make many necessary improvements and equipment replacement purchases, including a monitored fire alarm system, a new air conditioning unit, a new ice maker and several other items.

As many of you know, profit and loss vs. available cash are two different things. Although the event center is at a record year-to-date profit, our cash is low because of the many needed repairs and updates. We also have additional needs coming up, including repair of an old walk-in refrigerator and replacement and repair of interior doors and entry doors to the building.

Any donations that members can make to help us complete our goals will be greatly appreciated. Please send donations to club treasurer Tom Mezzanares at the Dante Club, 2330 Fair Oaks Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95630. Make checks payable to Dante Club of Sacramento. Donations also can be made online at <https://danteclub.com/product/donation/>.

### Club apparel

The Dante Club works with Julie Brown at Premier Graph-x to brand clothing with our club logo, including hats, T-shirts, jackets and aprons in a wide array of colors.

Members can order items online at [danteclub.shopgraphx.com](https://danteclub.shopgraphx.com) or contact Mark Pedroncelli at 916-812-6729 or [peddc@surewest.net](mailto:peddc@surewest.net).

For special orders, contact Julie Brown at 916-787-0603 or [julie@premieregraphx.net](mailto:julie@premieregraphx.net).

Order Dante Club-branded apparel now for the holidays.

### Buildings and grounds

Behind the scenes and out of sight of everyone but the Dante kitchen staff is a large walk-in refrigerator that's been in place since the club was built and has provided great service over the years.

Now it needs help. The refrigeration unit is old and needs replacement. The ceiling inside the cooler is sagging and also needs replacement.

Once these upgrades are completed and a fresh coat of paint is applied, the refrigerator can continue to provide us with years of trouble-free service.

We don't usually give doors much thought until they don't work. Rather than waiting until they break, we've decided to upgrade our doors. All exterior doors and some interior ones will receive new weatherstripping as well as adjustments to their hinges and locking mechanisms. This work will help ensure that our doors open and close properly, lock as designed and keep the weather out.

See NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE, Page 7



### UPCOMING EVENTS

Call 916-925-8230 or reserve  
and pay online at:  
[danteclub.com/members-event-calendar/](https://danteclub.com/members-event-calendar/)

#### November 6

##### Sunday Family Dinner

**Times:** 4 p.m. cocktails and meal pickup, 5 p.m. dinner

**Menu:** Butternut squash soup, herb-roasted chicken with lemon butter sauce, rice pilaf, seasonal vegetables, rolls with butter, chef's choice dessert

**Cost:** \$15 adults, \$8 children ages 12 and younger

*Reserve by Saturday, Oct. 29.*

#### November 14

##### Ladies Auxiliary Dinner

**Times:** 5 p.m. cocktails, 6 p.m. dinner with meeting afterward

**Menu:** House salad, chicken cacciatore, creamy cheddar polenta, seasonal vegetables, rolls with butter, chef's choice dessert

**Cost:** \$22 per person

*Reserve by Sunday, Nov. 6.*

#### November 21

##### Members Dinner and Meeting

**Times:** 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner

**Menu:** Cranberry mixed green salad, roasted turkey with stuffing, garlic mashed potatoes with gravy, roasted Brussels sprouts, rolls with butter, chef's choice dessert

**Cost:** \$22 per person

*Reserve by Saturday, Nov. 12.*

#### December 4

##### Sunday Family Dinner

**Times:** 4 p.m. cocktails and meal pickup, 5 p.m. dinner

**Menu:** White truffle and cauliflower soup, roasted green beans with carrots, roasted pork loin with cranberry sauce and stuffing, garlic mashed potatoes and gravy, rolls with butter, chef's choice dessert

**Cost:** \$15 adults, \$8 children ages 12 and younger

*Reserve by Saturday, Nov. 26.*

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:** Auxiliary dinner, Dec. 12; Dante Club Christmas party, Dec. 18; Members dinner, Dec. 19. **Reserve early!**



# Italian influence strong throughout California

*Editor's note: This article is reprinted with permission from the Italian Cultural Society, Sacramento.*

The story of Italians in Northern California is a story of individual and collective accomplishment. They came early, lured by the discovery of gold. Attracted by the climate and resemblance to their native homeland, they stayed.

The descendants of these people still live in the foothill towns of the Mother Lode.

A visit to the village of Sutter Creek in Amador County, where their names are emblazoned on historic buildings, or a walk through the Catholic cemetery at Jackson in Calaveras County, attests to the sojourn of these Italian pioneers.

They arrived in great numbers during the mass migration at the turn of the century.

The early immigrants came primarily from the northern regions of Italy. It's estimated that 60 percent of California's Italian population is of northern Italian extraction.

The largest settlement arose by the San Francisco Bay, where the early Italians settled in San Francisco's North Beach district.

As the stream of Italian immigration continued, the district became an Italian colony. There,

they built a successful cultural and economic community and spread throughout the Bay Area.

Many Italian families in California can trace their American roots to the North Beach colony.

By 1859, the first Italian-language newspaper in California, *L'ecco Della Patria*, was published semiweekly in San Francisco.

By 1931, Italian newspapers operated in Sacramento, Stockton, Martinez and Weed. Today, the statewide weekly Italian newspaper, *L'Italo-Americano*, is still published in California.

The arrival of the Italians in California coincided with its early settlement by Americans. As a result, the Italians played a vital role in shaping the destiny of California and its economy.

It wasn't long before Italian fisherman had established themselves in fishing villages from Eureka to Benicia, Martinez, Pittsburg, San Francisco, Monterey and Santa Cruz.

By the 1880s, California waters were dominated by Italian fishermen and their graceful sailing feluccas.

By 1900, the fishing industry of California had become the second leading fishery in the nation, and by 1910, 80 percent of the state's fishing business was

managed by Italians.

During World War II, Italian fishermen were prevented from using their fishing boats by wartime restrictions on Italian immigrants living along the coast.

Across the state, Italians also settled in farmland and played a prominent role in developing today's fruit, vegetable and dairy industries in places like Marin and Sonoma counties and the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys.

By the 1880s, Italians dominated the fruit and vegetable industry.

Italian immigrant Marco Fontana arrived in the United States in 1859, and, along with another Ligurian, Antonio Cerruti, founded the California Packing Company in 1889.

Under the popular Del Monte label, their canneries soon became the largest food processing corporation in the world. Most of their workers were Italian.

One of the enterprising Italians who left his mark on California was Domenico Ghirardelli, who traveled through the gold mines selling chocolate and hard candies.

Ghirardelli settled in San Francisco after the Gold Rush and founded the Ghirardelli Chocolate empire, with Italian immigrant labor, at the site of the present

See LEGACY, Page 9



## 2022 Committees and Assignments

### COMMITTEES

#### ADVISORY AND FINANCE

Pat Orelli, chairman; Joe Porata, vice chairman

Members: Tom Mezzanares, Richard Battistessa, George Procida, Tom Novi

#### BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

George Procida, chairman; Don Agostinelli, vice chairman

Members: Matt Longo, Tom Mezzanares, Joe Porata, Ronnie Pane

#### BYLAWS

Ron Fiorica, chairman; Don Agostinelli, vice chairman

Member: Dan Calcagno

#### MEMBERSHIP AND INVESTIGATIONS

Dan Calcagno, chairman

Members: George Procida, Don Agostinelli, Dick Zarzana

► Member involvement subcommittee: Tom Mezzanares, Ron Fiorica

#### PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

John Caselli, chairman; Tom Mezzanares, vice chairman

#### SCHOLARSHIP

Rich Battistessa, chairman; Jim Dimino, vice chairman

Members: Mark Pedroncelli, Mike Battistessa, Kyle Calcagno and auxiliary members Phyllis Keilholz and Nancy Doyle

#### SOCIAL

Joe Porata, chairman; Rich Battistessa, vice chairman

Members: John Caselli, Matt Longo, Pat Orelli, Mark Pedroncelli, Dick Zarzana

### SPECIAL COMMITTEES

#### BOCCE

Rich Battistessa, chairman; Jim Dimino, vice chairman

Members: Dick Zarzana, Bill Zellers, Don Agostinelli, John Rizzardo, Frank Bartucco

#### GOLF TOURNAMENT

Members: Joe Porata, Frank Buccola, Rich Battistessa, Tom Mathews

#### DINNER PROGRAM

Rich Battistessa, chairman; Jim Dimino, vice chairman

Members: Don Agostinelli, Dick Zarzana

#### ENHANCING OUR ITALIAN CULTURE

Members: Ralph DiLibero, Rich Battistessa

#### SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS

- Ladies Auxiliary liaison: Rich Battistessa
- Check-in desk for club events and raffle: Joe Porata, chairman; Pat Orelli, vice chairman; members John Caselli, Matt Longo and new members
- Club apparel: Mark Pedroncelli
- Sergeant-at-arms: open position

## 2022-2023 DANTE CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### OFFICERS

- Tom Novi, president: [tomnovi@aol.com](mailto:tomnovi@aol.com), 916-961-6197
- Patrick Orelli, first vice president: [pat@apcpagroup.com](mailto:pat@apcpagroup.com), 916-369-2327
- Joe Porata, second vice president: [jporata@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jporata@sbcglobal.net), 530-887-1583
- Ron Fiorica, secretary: [rbfiorica@frontiernet.net](mailto:rbfiorica@frontiernet.net), 916-687-6406
- Tom Mezzanares, treasurer: [tmezzan@gmail.com](mailto:tmezzan@gmail.com), 916-467-7483

### DIRECTORS

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- Dan Calcagno: [dcalextra@aol.com](mailto:dcalextra@aol.com), 916-481-8368
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- Mark Pedroncelli: [peddc@surewest.net](mailto:peddc@surewest.net), 916-812-6729
- George Procida: [gprocida@gplandscape.com](mailto:gprocida@gplandscape.com), 916-455-4738
- Dick Zarzana: [razarzana@comcast.net](mailto:razarzana@comcast.net), 916-683-4812





# *Mercato a success with 12 vendors, array of goods*

Our annual mercato was an incredible success with 12 vendors, including three who are auxiliary members: Tina Cates, Kathy Holberton and Denise Garbero. Vendors sold biscotti, olive oil, toys, jewelry and handmade items.

Each vendor donated a raffle prize worth \$30 or more. Winners were: Dorine Wiese, olive oil and balsamic vinegar; Susan Formanek, biscotti/pizzelles made by Laura Scarrone; Alyse DeFazio, Touchstone crystal earrings; Jennifer Grady, Tupperware bowls; Peggy Alexander, Christmas tree decoration with earrings; Nancy Mazzier, serving tray; Margaret Lynch, Villa Biscotti cookies; Sandy Calcagno, Pampered Chef items; guest Janice, Murano glass paperweight; Susan Formanek, Christmas towels; Pam Ditomasso, pottery vase; Linda Rairdan, painted Halloween pumpkin made by member Jan Matthews; Cattuzzo's guest Gretchen, Discovery Toy; and

## **LADIES AUXILIARY NEWS**

*Debra Cattuzzo*

Cattuzzo's guest "Rooster," coffee mug and Home Goods gift card. A new member who joined that evening, Florinda Fantasia, won the free November dinner.

Thank you to members who donated pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald House: Phyllis Kielholz, Anne Zacharias, Jennifer Eckert and Susie Franzoia-Rozewski.

Welcome to new members Lisa Parrinella, Tiffany Quinn and Florinda Fantasia. We now have a membership of 203.

Bebe Leverino Wright suggested that a group might want to see Italian tenor Pasquale Esposito perform Dec. 9 at the Sofia arts center in midtown Sacramento. Interested members should let me know, and I can put them

in touch with the group planning the outing.

Last month, we lost a prior auxiliary member, Lena Gaddi Perrot, who became a member in 1995. We send our sympathy to Lena's family.

Since Gloria Tomei retired as bingo caller and trip coordinator, a couple of sisters have volunteered to be the dynamic duo for bingo calling. Thank you, Linda Franzoia-Feil and Susie Franzoia-Rozewski for stepping up. We expect some good jokes like those Gloria used to entertain us with.

As I explained last month, we need people to volunteer to serve as board members for next year. Specifically, we need a new vice-president and a new secretary.

We will vote on the 2023 board at our November meeting. We also will vote to approve the updated auxiliary bylaws.

See you all soon!

## **2022 LADIES AUXILIARY BOARD**

- |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • Debra Cattuzzo, president:<br><a href="mailto:cattuzzod@gmail.com">cattuzzod@gmail.com</a>                           | • Judy Farina, secretary:<br><a href="mailto:jfarina56@yahoo.com">jfarina56@yahoo.com</a>                         | • Roseann Jamison, trustee/caller:<br><a href="mailto:rosieado@yahoo.com">rosieado@yahoo.com</a>             |
| • Heidi Pesce Veneman, co-vice president:<br><a href="mailto:hpveneman@yahoo.com">hpveneman@yahoo.com</a>              | • Anna Tenderella, hospitality:<br><a href="mailto:annatenderella@sbcglobal.net">annatenderella@sbcglobal.net</a> | • Susan Kasimatis, trustee/caller:<br><a href="mailto:sjk955@gmail.com">sjk955@gmail.com</a>                 |
| • Helen Manfredi Pierson, co-vice president:<br><a href="mailto:helen@medicambulance.net">helen@medicambulance.net</a> | • Karol Buccola, past president:<br><a href="mailto:karolrb55@gmail.com">karolrb55@gmail.com</a>                  | • Phyllis Keilholz, trustee/caller:<br><a href="mailto:swedgewood@aol.com">swedgewood@aol.com</a>            |
| • Tina Luchini Bowers, co-treasurer:<br><a href="mailto:rkb0719@sbcglobal.net">rkb0719@sbcglobal.net</a>               | • Sandy Calcagno, trustee/caller:<br><a href="mailto:fscal@comcast.net">fscal@comcast.net</a>                     | • Margaret Lynch, trustee/caller:<br><a href="mailto:gmlynch@sbcglobal.net">gmlynch@sbcglobal.net</a>        |
| • Debra Duccini Hansen, co-treasurer:<br><a href="mailto:dducc56@gmail.com">dducc56@gmail.com</a>                      | • Adrienne DeFazio, trustee/caller:<br><a href="mailto:adefazio73@gmail.com">adefazio73@gmail.com</a>             | • Barbara Reali, trustee/caller:<br><a href="mailto:barbara.reali46@gmail.com">barbara.reali46@gmail.com</a> |
|                                                                                                                        | • Nancy Doyle, trustee/caller:<br><a href="mailto:ncdoyle59@gmail.com">ncdoyle59@gmail.com</a>                    | • Ann Zacharias, trustee/caller:<br><a href="mailto:anncecelia02@yahoo.com">anncecelia02@yahoo.com</a>       |



## President's Corner

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coming to the United States and Northern California, including immigrants' challenges and successes.

Before we leave Italian Heritage Month, it's important to remember the difficulties those early immigrants faced, along with their accomplishments in overcoming them, as this is what contributes to our unique heritage.

Here is an encore of the welcoming message I provided to the attendees:

"On behalf of the Dante Club, welcome to our celebration of Italian Heritage Month, a recognition of the challenges faced by Italian immigrants in achieving the American dream.

"The Dante Club was established in the mid-1920s to provide social, cultural and economic support to Sacramento's largely immigrant Italian community. In 1962, the foresight of the Dante Club leadership made a major commitment to the club's future when the Dante Event Center was built in what was then the hinterlands of Sacramento.

"Then, during the COVID pandemic, club president Ron Pane — along with landscaper and member George Procida and the help of numerous members and friends of Dante — provided the leadership to completely renovate the event center and grounds to like-new condition.

While the Dante Club is well-positioned for the coming decades, it is important that we understand the past and the experiences of Italian immigrants in America.

"The Italian American experience began in the late 15th century when the great Italian explorers discovered the continental mass that came to be America. Cristoforo Colombo was followed by Amerigo Vespucci and others discovering and mapping areas from the East Coast to the Louisiana area, and even Alejandro Malaspina, who mapped our Pacific Coast.

"Two Revolutionary War generals of Italian heritage, William Paca and Caesar Rodney, were signatories to the Declaration of Independence, and Philip Mazzei provided to Thomas Jefferson the thought that 'all men are created equal.'

"In spite of their contributions to the discovery of America and fighting for its independence, Italian immigrants endured discrimination and personal attack, including public lynchings and other abuse. In 1891, *The New York Times* declared after one such incident that the 'lynched men' were simply 'sneaking and cowardly Sicilians, the descendants of bandits and assassins.'

"Italians were often subjected to virtual servitude by 'padrons,' who would package groups of Italian immigrants who signed onerous contracts to serve as laborers, from the 1860s to 1885,

when legislation finally outlawed such practices.

"But probably the most offensive and demeaning action taken against Italian Americans was during World War II when the Roosevelt Administration labeled 695,000 Italian Americans to be 'alien Americans,' placing thousands in concentration camps.

"Finally, in 2000, President Clinton signed the Wartime Violation of Italian American Civil Liberties Act, which sought to make amends for Italian immigrants' loss of many civil liberties.

"In spite of these barriers to economic and social justice, as well as personal affronts, prideful Italian Americans have contributed, prospered and succeeded in virtually all areas of American life, wrapping their arms around the promise of a better life that our immigrant parents and grandparents sacrificed so much for.

"Yet, to remember the past challenges and barriers that have been overcome is not to condemn the American dream. Rather, it is a celebration of the American promise when we see the results of so many Italian immigrants' hard work, perseverance and resulting success.

"So, enjoy tonight's entertainment and fine dining as we celebrate our Italian heritage and all that is good in America. Grazie."



## News, Notes and Otherwise

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### Membership committee

During the October members meeting, we inducted Mark Fierro, a financial planner sponsored by Frank Lienert, and Jim Brennan, a semi-retired real estate broker sponsored by Tom Mezzanares.

Both men already participate in the Dante Club bocce league and want to get more involved in other club activities.

In the past month we have accepted three applicants for membership. Joseph Williams, sponsored by Ralph DiLibero, is a retired engineer. Chris Costamagna, sponsored by John Waldron, was recently sworn in as chief of the Sacramento Fire Department. Andy Cavagnaro, sponsored by Don Agostinelli, is a consulting psychologist. Also, Richard Merri, a member since 1972, has asked to be considered for lifetime membership.

We hope to address all of these requests in November.

A reminder to current members: Club dues are due annually by Jan. 1. They can be paid online at <https://danteclub.com/2023-membership-dues/> or by check payable to Dante Club of Sacramento and mailed to: Dante Club, attn. Tom Mezzanares, 2330 Fair Oaks Blvd., Sacramento CA 95825.

The application form for prospective new members also is available online.

Questions? Contact any membership committee member: Don Agostinelli, George Procida, Dick Zarzana or Dan Calcagno.

### Save pull tabs

Since member Ron Cristoni challenged club and auxiliary members to collect aluminum can pull tabs to benefit the Ronald McDonald House, we have collected close to 1,500 pounds of pull tabs.

Proceeds help parents with lodging costs while their children are hospitalized at the University of California, Davis, Medical Center in Sacramento. The \$1,500 raised from our pull-tab donations has paid for more than 60 nights of lodging.

Club and auxiliary members can bring their pull-tab donations to their respective meetings.

Learn more about the Ronald McDonald House pull-tab program online at [www.rmhcnc.org](http://www.rmhcnc.org).

### Newsletter advertising

Gina Zarzana-Stiriti of Lyon Reality, who is a member of the Ladies Auxiliary, is the latest advertiser in *Dante's Inferno*. New advertisers are always welcome. Email John Caselli at [jac6652@aol.com](mailto:jac6652@aol.com).

## Thanksgiving a la Italiana

### Feast blends two cultures with gusto and gratitude

By Susan Pricco

No one does family dinner like the Italians — especially on a holiday. For children who grew up in an Italian household, this is just how things are done, and we tend to be a bit cavalier about it.

But Thanksgiving, a purely American holiday, at the Italian table is the embodiment of blending Italian and American culture and gratitude for the same.

The autumn season is the time of harvest and bounty, which is reflected at the feast.

Virtually all special Italian dinners begin with antipasti featuring salume, a variety of cured meats, pickled vegetables and cheeses. It can be modest slices of salami or a delicate prosciutto, possibly even a paper-thin slice of lardo (melt-in-your-mouth seasoned pork fat) with fresh bread or grissini.

You might also see fresh tomato slices with anchovy, salsa vert or a splash of balsamico. In some areas, preserved antipasto is made with pickled spring vegetables from the Mason jar for the occasion, usually from a family's regional recipe.

Next, pasta, the Primo Piatti. Whatever region a family hails from is reflected in this course — perhaps penne from Campania, tagliarini from Piemonte, Genovese gnocchi with pesto, spaghetti puttanesca from Naples or Pugliese hand-rolled cavatelli.

By now, the table conversation has become lively and celebratory — the hallmark of a successful feast.

Then, Secondi. In the American tradition, the turkey is usually the centerpiece, but among Italians there could be porchetta, a slow-roasted pork belly rolled with seasoned stuffing, or a whole roast chicken.

See THANKSGIVING, Page 8





## Thanksgiving

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In our household, the elder generations used to argue over who got the “piece that went over the fence last” — the crispy, fatty, juicy turkey tail — until one year when my aunt delivered a platter of seven perfectly roasted turkey tails to the table.

Potatoes and harvest vegetables manifest as yams, green bean casserole and maybe a gelatin salad recipe left over from the 1960s.

Starting to see the blending of Italian and American?

Salad jumps around. A green salad could show up in the antipasti course, alongside the entrée.

Or it could be a course of its own before or after the Primo or Secondi.

Fancy Italian dinners frequently present a cheese course or fresh



Thanksgiving in an Italian American household may feature slow-roasted pork belly with seasoned stuffing as the centerpiece, along with regionally inspired side dishes.

fruit, served whole in ice water, before the big dolce: Nonna’s best torta, bonét (panna cotta in a restaurant), semifreddo, amaretti, torrone — whatever is special to

your family and friends. It is the crowning glory to a leisurely paced meal that has been shared on a special holiday with those you love.

## October

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

an event.”

Peretti said December is almost fully booked but that space is still available for an handful of events.

“So get your inquiries in quickly,” she said. “We hope to see you all during our monthly events, and let’s all welcome fall with open arms.”

Peretti said the center is booking events for the 2022-2024 seasons, so Dante Club members interested in hosting a personal event at the center this year should inquire soon.

To host an event, a member must schedule an in-person meeting with Peretti or event coordinator Annah Rose.

Available dates and rooms, type of event, estimated guest count, event timing, any catering needs and other pertinent details will be discussed.

“We will then place the room and the date on hold for two weeks to allow time for the member to decide if the center is the best place for the event, without the date getting booked in the meantime,” Peretti said.

“At the end of the two weeks, if the security deposit has not been

received, the date will be released. To confirm an event, a deposit must be paid, and a contract signed and dated.”

**Club members can rent a banquet room at a 50% discount for a special personal event for themselves, immediate family members—including spouses, parents and children—or a personally owned business.**

Members with questions about the rental discount can contact club president Tom Novi at 916-961-6197.

For booking inquiries, email [info@danteclub.com](mailto:info@danteclub.com) or call 916-925-8230.



**Legacy**

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Ghirardelli Square.

The California wine industry also owes much to the Italian founders of the industry.

In 1881, the Italian Swiss Colony was founded at Asti in Sonoma County by Andrea Sbarbaro as a cooperative of Italian immigrants from the wine-growing regions of Italy. The colony soon became one of the largest producers of wine and dominated the U.S. wine market during its heyday.

The founding of the Italian Swiss Colony promoted the widespread participation of Italians

in the grape and wine industry and their success in the vineyards of the Napa, Sonoma and Central valleys.

Perhaps the most inspiring of California's Italians was Amadeo Pietro Giannini, known as the "Giant of the West."

Born in San Jose in 1870 of immigrant Italian parents, Giannini organized the Bank of Italy in North Beach, San Francisco, in 1904 to aid his fellow Italians.

Breaking new ground, he established the first statewide system of branch banks in the nation by opening branches in the

Italian neighborhoods across the state.

Italians provided most of his work force.

In 1930, Giannini changed the name to Bank of America, which soon became the largest bank in the world.

Italians played a prominent role in the creation of California. Their story is our story, their experience ours.

Their contributions are often overlooked, but the enterprise and success of these Italian pioneers is a unique legacy, one shared by all of us.

## DANTE'S REMINDERS

**Member volunteers**

To volunteer, contact George Procida for anything related to buildings and grounds and Joe Porata for anything related to social events. Reach Procida at 916-455-4738 or [gprocida@gplandscape.com](mailto:gprocida@gplandscape.com) and Porata at 530-887-1583 or [jporata@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jporata@sbcglobal.net).

**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 online at <https://danteclub.com/donations/>.

**Dante Club apparel**

To purchase club shirts and other clothing items, contact Mark Pedroncelli at 916-812-6729 or [peddc@surewest.net](mailto:peddc@surewest.net) or speak to him at a members meeting. Cash or checks are needed to place orders. Members also can order through the Dante Club website at [danteclub.shopgraphx.com](http://danteclub.shopgraphx.com).

**Newsletter photos and news**

Submit photos and news items for *Dante's Inferno* to John Caselli at [jac6652@aol.com](mailto: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. Members also can post news and photos on the Dante Club's Facebook page.

**Contact information**

Recently changed an address or phone number? Please alert Tom Mezzanares at 916-467-7483 or [tjmezzan@gmail.com](mailto:tjmezzan@gmail.com).



## Prized wild mushrooms make delectable fall soup

**F**all is in the air, and Italians are heading to the foothills and their favorite mountain spots to find the most prized fungi: wild mushrooms.

There are many stories of nonnas and nonnos with their sacks and special rakes, foraging through the forest looking for little bumps in the ground where precious mushrooms are concealed. When it was the right time of year, families were off to their secret spots to fill their sacks — and God forbid if they ever shared their destinations.

October and November found many front rooms filled with the musty odor of dirty socks, as the

### JUST LIKE MOM USED TO MAKE

*Richard Battistessa*

portable heaters dried the precious morsels.

Fungi, of course, are an important part of Italian cooking. Seekers of these prized delectables were very careful about the type of mushrooms they picked.

One story of how you could tell if you found edibles: You put the mushrooms in a pot with a brass compound. If the brass turned green, you threw the mushrooms out.

A better bet is to purchase safely edible mushrooms from a

reliable market. I would highly recommend purchasing edible mushrooms at the Ferry Building in San Francisco.

Here's an Italian soup you can make with a wide variety of mushrooms.

### WILD MUSHROOM SOUP

#### Ingredients:

- 8 pieces dried porcini mushrooms
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 slices pancetta, finely chopped

See MUSHROOMS, Page 10

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**Mushrooms**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 2 medium carrots, whole
- 1 large shallot, chopped
- 2 1/2 quarts chicken stock
- 1/2 teaspoon salt or to taste

**Directions:**

In 1 1/2 cups of warm water, presoak the dried porcini about 20 minutes, until softened. Drain, reserving all but the last 2 teaspoons of steeping liquid. Remove and rinse the softened porcini. (I sometimes will use marsala or a white wine to soak.)

In a 5-quart pot, heat 5 tablespoons of olive oil, add the

pancetta and onion, and saute until translucent.

Add the carrots and shallot, and cook 2 minutes over medium heat, stirring constantly.

Add the stock and salt, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and keep on low boil for about 10 minutes, until the vegetables are tender.

Be creative and enjoy!

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