



**Celebrate Italian
American Heritage
and Culture Month!**

DANTE'S INFERNO



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Tom Novi

This month honors Italian Americans

October is special for Americans of Italian origin, as it has been designated Italian American Heritage and Culture Month by proclamation of the President and Congress.

The designation honors the many achievements and contributions that Italian immigrants have made to the United States, with a particular focus on their influence in science, the arts and culture.

During the month, many people of Italian descent will enjoy celebrations in various communities nationwide. In San Francisco, for example, the annual Italian Heritage Festival and Parade will be held Oct. 9, and I'm sure many of our members will attend.

Closer to home, our Dante Club has scheduled dinners on Oct. 2 and Oct. 14 to celebrate with food, music and drink the unique history and

See PRESIDENT'S CORNER, Page 6



Tom Mezzanares and his closest friends enjoy the food and conviviality of the Dante Club family dinner on Sept. 4.

Center hopping with activity in September

September was a month filled with the return of monthly groups at the Dante Event Center, including the Dante Club Ladies Auxiliary,

Sacramento Police Veterans Association, American Public Works Association and Daedalians.

"We're excited to see everyone back after the summer breaks," said general manager Jennifer Peretti.

The event center also hosted

several weddings and anniversary celebrations, as well as reunions for the Rio Americano High School Class of 1972, the El Camino High School Class of 1962 and the La Sierra High School 60th reunion.

Several all-day conferences, birthday parties and celebrations of life also were held at the center.

"The event season has returned

See SEPTEMBER, Page 8



NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

Advisory and finance

At the board of directors meeting on Sept. 12, we were advised that the walk-in cold-storage box in the kitchen is failing. If the box fails, the Dante Event Center could not continue to provide meals to our customers.

So the board approved funds to replace the walk-in box and repair the ceiling above it, which was damaged by evaporating water from the box.

We recently installed a new air conditioning unit and smoke alarms that are monitored by AT&T. Funds for these projects were made available because of the recent remodel of the Dante Event Center and the fantastic job general manager Jennifer Peretti and her staff are doing.

George Procida and Ron Pane are in the process of creating a long-term replacement plan to help us budget for major projects such as paving and roof replacement. Currently, the inside and outside doors are not working properly, so we need to repair or replace the doors as needed to keep them operating correctly and to keep the building secure.

There is a continuing need for maintenance and repairs, so the Building Capital Improvement Fund would greatly benefit from donations from our members and friends

Club apparel

The Dante Club is working with Julie Brown at Premier Graph-x to brand many items with our club logo, including hats, T-shirts, jackets and aprons in a wide array of colors. Members can go online to order items at danteclub.shopgraphx.com or contact Mark Pedroncelli at 916-812-6729 or peddc@surewest.net. For special orders, contact Julie Brown at 916-787-0603 or julie@premieregraphx.net.

Look for Dante apparel at the next members meeting. An item with the club logo will be awarded as a raffle prize. Members can start shopping now for October's Italian Heritage Month and the holidays.

Buildings and grounds

Our new fire alarm system is finally fully installed. The fire department inspected it and gave it a passing grade.

Training on the use and operation of the system has been scheduled with ADT for Dante Event Center staff, club members and the buildings and grounds committee.

Nov. 1 is just around the corner. That date marks the end of events scheduled for our outdoor tent. The tent must be taken down, cleaned, dried and folded for storage until next spring.

We will seek volunteers to help with this task. It will be scheduled for either the first or second weekend of November. Members interested in helping should send an email to gprocida@gplandscape.com. We will put people on a list to receive additional details.

See NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE, Page 7



UPCOMING EVENTS

Call 916-925-8230 or reserve
and pay online at:

danteclub.com/members-event-calendar/

October 10

Ladies Auxiliary Dinner

Times: 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner with meeting afterward

Menu: Heirloom tomato and arugula salad, roasted Brussels sprouts, pork chops Italiano, creamy pesto gnocchi, rolls with butter, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$22

Reservations closed.

October 14

Italian Heritage Night

Times: 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner and show

Menu: Apertivo platters, insalata Italiano, mezza rigatoni with marinara and Parmesan, porchetta with mushroom risotto and rapini, rolls with butter, vanilla panna cotta with blackberry composta

Cost: \$45 per person

Reserve by Thursday, Oct. 6.

October 17

Members Dinner and Meeting

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

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

Cost: \$22 per member

Reserve by Saturday, Oct. 8.

October 24

Dante Jazz Society, Dave Bass Trio

Times: 6 p.m. doors open, 7 p.m. show

Menu: Bites and sips, including charcuterie, cheese, fruit, dessert and house wines

Cost: \$35 for show, \$8 to \$20 for bites and sips

UPCOMING: Family, auxiliary and club member dinners in November. Reserve early online!



Controversial Columbus still gets his day

By Susan Pricco

Editor's note: Ladies Auxiliary member Susan Pricco is the former president of Piemontesi Nel Mondo of Northern California.

Why Columbus Day? Cristoforo Colombo, aka Christopher Columbus, was born in Genoa, Italy, in 1451, but as an adult, he lived in Portugal and finally settled in Spain.

Columbus lives in infamy as the “discoverer” of the New World, now known as the Americas.

While many argue that because native Americans already lived there, the land was not actually discovered. Still others argue that Leif Erikson discovered the New World.

Native Americans were, indeed, in residence, but they were originally misidentified as “Indians” because the navigation techniques of the day were inaccurate, and the Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria ships had the wrong idea of where they had landed.

Leif Erikson, the daring Nordic explorer, may have landed somewhere in the Americas several centuries earlier. So why do we not celebrate his discovery with a day eating lutefisk and singing Viking songs?

Columbus first went to sea as a teen, almost losing his life on an Atlantic voyage when French privateers attacked and burned his ship. He aspired to find a better avenue to the spice trade in Asia.

Columbus designed a three-ship voyage westward and presented it to Portugal, Genoa and Venice. He was rejected each time. Finally, he lobbied the monarchy of Spain, which put him on retainer to keep him around. Some years later, when Spain regained control of Granada, the monarchy approved the plan.

Columbus first landed in what is now known as the Bahamas, and he found the natives friendly and open to trade. He and his crew then continued to Cuba and thought it was China. Next he arrived in Hispaniola, now Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and posited that it could be Japan.

When returning to Spain,

See COLUMBUS, Page 11

New member profile: Joseph Bonacci

Joseph Bonacci, who recently joined the Dante Club, has been immersed in Italian culture all his life. He is very happy to share his stories and experiences with fellow club members.

Bonacci comes from Scranton, which is the cultural center of northeastern Pennsylvania. The region's anthracite coal mining industry attracted a large influx of Italian immigrants, particularly from Gubbio, to work long hours underground, digging up hard, black coal, as they sought the American dream.

Anthracite, the highest ranking of all coals, possesses the highest carbon and fewest impurities of all coal types. Northeastern Pennsylvania's coal region has the largest known deposits of anthracite coal in the world.

As the region's population grew, Italians who made the voyage to an unfamiliar land brought their culture with them.

Introduced to nearby Jessup, Pennsylvania, in 1909, la Festa dei Ceri celebrates the life and legacy of Sant'Ubaldo, patron saint of Gubbio, Italy. The Eugubini built wooden pillars similar to those used during the festival in Gubbio and began running through the town's streets just as they had done for generations.

Today, thousands of spectators from around the world watch teams representing Sant'Ubaldo, San Giorgio and Sant'Antonio race through the streets of Jessup every Memorial Day weekend.

The most fulfilling aspect of our shared history is the realization that, despite our many commonalities, Italian culture in America is as diverse as our descendants.

To learn more about la Festa dei Ceri, go online at <https://www.saintubaldosociety.org/home> or chat with Bonacci during a Dante Club event.



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

Members: Bob Guidera, 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: Pat Orelli, Mark Pedroncelli, Dick Zarzana, John Caselli, Matt Longo, Bob Guidera, Michael St. John

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

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- Mark Pedroncelli: peddc@surewest.net, 916-812-6729
- George Procida: gprocida@gplandscape.com, 916-455-4738
- Dick Zarzana: razarzana@comcast.net, 916-683-4812



Mercato and board nominations coming up soon

Happy October! Fall is finally here, and I'm so excited. It's my favorite time of the year.

Our next dinner meeting is our annual mercato on Columbus Day. We always have such a great time and look forward to seeing some new vendors at this year's event.

At our September meeting, we had one of our largest groups yet—131 people enjoying yummy chicken and eggplant Parmesan.

After two years as a Ladies Auxiliary caller, Margaret Lynch has retired. The auxiliary thanked her and gifted her with a beautiful glass calling bird that our vice president, Heidi Venemen, had found in a cute little gift shop in Montana.

We know Margaret's women will miss her contacting them each month, but she'll be at the dinner meetings, so stop by her table to say hello. Thank you to Alyse

LADIES AUXILIARY NEWS

Debra Cattuzzo

DeFazio for stepping up to fill Margaret's caller position.

Next year we will have two positions available on the auxiliary board, with vacancies in the vice president and secretary positions. If any members have an interest in being nominated for either position, we will hold elections at the November board meeting.

Treasurer Tina Lucchini Bowers and I, as president, plan to stay on for the next year, but that doesn't mean our positions aren't available for election. Anyone who chooses to be nominated for any of the board positions should feel welcome to request a nomination. Let the auxiliary vote on the members they chose to have as our board.

We also need to send a shout out to these members who brought in aluminum can pull tabs for donation to the Ronald McDonald House program: Cathy Bertolani, Ann Zacharias, Vera Marogna and Marisa Barone. Our auxiliary members have really stepped up in collecting these tabs, which we add to the men's collection. It's a very worthy cause.

In September, we welcomed eight new members to the auxiliary. This month we welcome another eight, which brings us to a whopping total of 205 members. New members this month are Christina Affinito, Michelle Affinito, Juliette Affinito, Trina Affinito Clarke, Wendy O'Neal, Caity McCoy, Dense Garbero and Ellie McAuliffe Zellmer. Welcome to you all!

And I'll see everyone at the mercato on Columbus Day!

2022 LADIES AUXILIARY BOARD

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| • Debra Cattuzzo, president:
cattuzzod@gmail.com | • Judy Farina, secretary:
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President's Corner

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

contributions of Italians in America and California. This is to remind us of our history and the challenges that our Italian parents and grandparents had to overcome to provide us, our children and our grandchildren the opportunities that we often take for granted.

To recognize and involve other Italian social and cultural groups in the area, I have personally spoken to the presidents of the Italian Cultural Society, Piedmonte Reale, Romulus and Sons of Italy and invited them and their members to our celebrations. I'm sure many of our members also will attend and enjoy these wonderful events.

At the Sept. 19 members dinner, we were treated to a wonderful presentation, "The Evil Eye," by Ralph DiLibero, M.D., a Dante Club and former board member who hails from the East Coast. Ralph spoke on the long history of the evil eye superstition in Italian culture and how it has shaped many Italian customs.

The dinner was a wonderful presentation of chops, peppers with onions, and baked Brussels sprouts, along with spumoni for dessert. Any members who missed this event did themselves a disservice.

The board has made a number of changes in our meeting format to elevate the social elements — good food, drink and camaraderie among members, along with noted speakers.

Please plan to attend the next meeting in October. I guarantee that you will enjoy it!

As always, take care and stay well. Grazie.

Rolling to victory



Bocce co-chairman Jim Dimino, left above, honors trophy winners Dennis Noble and George Zarzana. Ladies Auxiliary members, far left, Dorine Wiese, Darlene Ryan and Sharon Pelton, in back, enjoy a friendly bocce game. Auxiliary bocce coordinator Debra Duccini-Hansen, left, tests out the courts.

The Dante Club Bocce League resumed play on Sept. 24 and will continue through Thanksgiving. Play is from 9 a.m. to noon every Saturday. Members new to bocce are welcome. Contact Jim Dimino or Rich Battistessa for more information.

**News, Notes and Otherwise**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Italian Heritage Month

Oct. 14 at the Dante Event Center should be on the calendar of every Dante Club member.

The night of food, drink and song will mark Italian Heritage Month, a national recognition.

The evening will begin at 6 p.m. with a cocktail hour that will feature apertivo platters. Dinner will follow soon after.

Manager Jennifer Peretti and chef Jonathan Diaz have planned a special yet traditional Italian meal that includes an insalata, mezza rigatoni with marinara and shaved Parmesan, and porchetta with mushroom risotto and rapini.

A vanilla panna cotta with blackberry composta dessert will complete the meal.

Singer Cheryl Tiburzi and her group will provide music and entertainment during dinner and a cabaret-style show afterward. Dancing and socializing will follow the show.

Tiburzi is a skilled entertainer who has performed throughout the region, headlining shows for a number of Italian social groups.

In the cabaret show, she will perform a medley of traditional Italian songs and an array of songs made popular by Italian crooners such as Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Tony Bennett — everyone's favorites.

Cost for the evening is \$45. Seating will be limited to 250 attendees and the public may attend, so we hope members have already made their reservations by the deadline of Oct. 1.

The special evening is expected to sell out.

Membership committee

When our members meetings restarted on Sept. 12 after a summer hiatus, the membership committee interviewed two prospective new members.

Mark Fierro, sponsored by Frank Lienert, and Jim Brennan, sponsored by Tom Mezzanares, were both excited to join the Dante Club and seemed good choices to join our ranks.

They were introduced to members present, and both were accepted. They will be inducted at a future meeting.

We now have only one applicant on the waiting list. We also handed out two application forms for perspective members.

We ask that members keep up their efforts to bring family and friends into the Dante Club.

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've 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 has paid for more than 60 nights of lodging.

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

Learn more about the pull-tab program at www.rmhcnc.org.

Newsletter advertising

Dante's Inferno coordinator John Caselli has added another advertiser to the ranks of satisfied customers: Gina Zarzana-Stiriti of Lyon Reality, who is a member of the Ladies Auxiliary.

New advertisers for the newsletter are always welcome. Anyone interested may email Caselli at jac6652@aol.com.

**September**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in full force, and we are ready for it," Peretti said.

An assortment of Italian Heritage Month events are planned throughout October.

An Italian Heritage Sunday family dinner was held Oct. 2, and an Italian Heritage dinner on Oct. 14 will feature a music performance by Cheryl Tiburzi and Friends.

"We hope to see you all during our monthly events," Peretti said. "We are also filling up for the holiday season, so if you're planning a holiday party or know someone who is, then send them our way."

Peretti said the calendar is filling up quickly as the center books events for the 2022-2024 seasons.

With that in mind, 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



Displays of cannoli and crostini tempt attendees at the Christian Brothers Extravaganza, held at the Dante Event Center on Sept. 9.

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 or call 916-925-8230.

What's so special about being Italian?

You gotta love the Italians.

During this month's national celebration of the contributions that Italian Americans have made to our American way of life, we need to be aware of small and large events that have occurred over the years. For example:

- In 1805, Thomas Jefferson recruited a group of musicians from Sicily to form a military

band, which ultimately became the renowned U.S. Marine Corps Band.

- In 1851, Giovanni Nobili founded what became one of the finest private universities in the nation, Santa Clara University.
- In 2000, in recognition of the significant persecution Italian Americans suffered

during World War II, President Clinton signed the Wartime Violation of Italian American Civil Liberties Act.

The legislation sought to apologize and make amends for the harm Italian Americans faced during the war with the loss of many of their civil liberties.



Minestrone: perfect comfort food when fall's on the way

Fall is in the air, and that calls for some Italian-style comfort food.

Why not try a hearty bowl of delicious soup?

This recipe for Italian minestrone is not new, but it's also not old. It's a great recipe to test out and share with friends and family in the coming months.

MINESTRONE, MA BENE

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup red kidney beans
- 2 pounds beef shanks
- 4 cups water

JUST LIKE MOM USED TO MAKE

Richard Battistessa

- 1 35-ounce can peeled tomatoes
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 1 cup celery, sliced
- 1 cup green beans, fresh or frozen
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon basil
- 1 cup sliced zucchini
- 2 cups coarsely shredded cabbage

- 1/3 cup small elbow macaroni

Wash beans. Cover with water and soak overnight. Drain beans and place in kettle with next 10 ingredients. Cover and simmer slowly until meat is easily removed from the bone. Discard bone and fat. Chop meat into bite-size pieces, and return to soup. Add zucchini, cabbage and macaroni. Cover and cook about 20 minutes. Makes about 12 cups of soup. This will cure whatever ails you. Mangia bene.

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Provide future support for club and create a lasting legacy

Members, please consider making the Dante Club part of your estate plan. You can create a legacy for yourselves by giving a heritage gift to the club.

Please remember us when you're writing or updating your will. You can help provide future financial support to the Dante Club and your Italian heritage by making a remembrance gift in your will or estate. Your gift will help us maintain the Dante Event

Center as a premier venue for club events and activities booked by the public.

Including the Dante Club in your estate plan is a simple, meaningful way to have a lasting impact on your Italian heritage beyond your lifetime.

If you would like to make such a gift—or let us know if you already have—please contact our club treasurer, Tom Mezzanares, at tjmezzan@gmail.com.

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Columbus

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Columbus regaled the royalty with exaggerated stories of his discoveries. He led several more trips between Spain and the Americas, but this is where things get less attractive and more controversial.

So why do we celebrate such a flawed nautical adventurer?

What Columbus did was to open the Americas to European colonization and trade.

And for better or for worse, his achievement is arguably one of the major events in history.

So annually, in the United States and many other countries, we still honor the brave voyage of this seagoing Genovese, Christopher Columbus.



BABY'S GOT WHEELS

Eleina Peretti, honorary "assistant manager" at the Dante Event Center, is all smiles as she celebrates her first birthday. Eleina is the daughter of Jennifer Peretti, general manager of the event center.

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 and Porata at 530-887-1583 or 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 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.

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. 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.