



**Reserve now
for Heritage
Month event!**

DANTE'S INFERNO



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Tom Novi

October marks our unique heritage

It seems as though each season has a special personality, and fall is no exception. There's one last burst of heat in September before the leaves begin falling in October and November.

For Italians, October is very special, as it is recognized as Italian Heritage Month, a celebration of our rich history and heritage. Rich Battistessa and Joe Porata are working on special events for October that members should find enjoyable. As the details are finalized, we will get the information to each of you. Stay tuned.

Questions, questions, I get questions. I was recently asked about food and drink: Do we make sure there is plenty of food at member dinners? Do we have imported

See PRESIDENT'S CORNER, Page 6



An ornate display graces the Dante Event Center in preparation for a nikkah ceremony, a traditional Islamic wedding custom in which the bride is joined by all the women in her family before her nuptials begin. In the Muslim faith, the men are separated from the women during the event.

Weddings, celebrations and a barbecue fill up August calendar

August was a great month for the Dante Club, with an assortment of events booked. Among them were Ray Stone's 5-Star Review Party, the American River Home Care company picnic and the Dante Club members and guests barbecue, as well as a handful of beautiful weddings, birthday parties and anniversary celebrations.

The event center also attracted a new branch of Sons in Retirement. Branch 23 gave the center a test run and loved it. The group plans to use the venue for its events over the long term.



The Tuscan Room is set up for 200 attendees at a traditional Muslim wedding in August.

"We are excited for what the rest of 2022 brings and are looking forward to 2023," said general manager Jennifer Peretti. "We are preparing for the holiday season, so any holiday parties, please send

See AUGUST, Page 8



NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

Advisory and finance

The advisory and finance committee is considering suggestions for funding maintenance and equipment replacement costs projected by the buildings and grounds committee. We are working closely with the social committee, board of directors and general membership to determine ways to increase the building capital improvement fund to cover these costs.

Under consideration is directing to the fund any profits from certain annual functions, as well as the idea of creating new annual functions.

For instance, because our golf tournament profits go to the scholarship fund, discussions are underway to direct annual cioppino dinner profits to the building fund. Also, the social committee plans an annual Italian Heritage Night dinner in October, with profits earmarked for the fund.

Financially, business is good. The Dante Event Center remodel, along with the expertise of its manager and staff, has helped increase profits, compared to those of previous years. If that trend continues, the event center will have an outstanding year.

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

The buildings and grounds committee reports no major work projects for August. Several small maintenance items, however, were addressed, including switches, plugs and lights.

The committee continues work on its long-term Capital Asset Reserve Study, which should be completed by the end of the year.

The installation phase of the new fire-alarm system is nearing completion. The system should be up and running soon.

In memoriam

Dante Club member Wayne William Rankin passed peacefully in his sleep on Aug. 14. Born June 3, 1947, Wayne was the beloved husband of Linda for 51 years, father of daughters Joy Rankin and Jill Price (David) and grandfather of Samantha and Dominic.

Wayne was preceded in death by his parents, Gordon and Eileen Rankin, and brother Gary. He is survived by his sister Penny Knapton (Steve) and

See NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE, Page 6



UPCOMING EVENTS
Call 916-925-8230 or reserve
and pay online at:
danteclub.com/members-event-calendar/

September 4

Sunday Family Dinner

Times: 4 p.m. cocktails, 5 p.m. dinner; meal pickup available at 4 p.m. only

Menu: House salad, meatloaf, garlic mashed potatoes with gravy, herb-roasted zucchini and squash, rolls with butter, vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce

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

Reserve by Saturday, Aug. 27.

September 12

Ladies Auxiliary Dinner

Times: 4 p.m. cocktails, 5 p.m. dinner; pickup available at 4 p.m. only

Menu: Caesar salad, garlic mashed potatoes, chicken or eggplant Parmesan, seasonal vegetables, rolls with butter, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$22

Reserve by Saturday, Sept. 3.

September 19

Dante Members Dinner

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

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

Cost: \$22 per person

Reserve by Saturday, Sept. 10.

October 2 (Italian Heritage Month)

Sunday Family Dinner

Times: 4 p.m. cocktails, 5 p.m. dinner; meal pickup available at 4 p.m. only

Menu: House salad, bucatini with marinara and meatballs, seasonal vegetables, rolls with butter, tiramisu

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

Reserve by Saturday, Sept. 24.

COMING UP: Italian Heritage Night, Oct. 14 (more details on Page 7)



SPOTLIGHT ON GRAPPA

Pungent elixir calls for fortitude and an open mind

By Susan Pricco

Editor's note: Ladies Auxiliary member Susan Pricco is the former president of Piemontesi Nel Mondo of Northern California. She brings a wealth of community and family stories.

Even as a young *ragazza* in California, I knew about wine. My grandfather made red wine behind the shed, and sometimes created the strongest vinegar I had ever tasted. That vinegar may have been the reason why some members of my family went prematurely gray.

But then there was grappa.

Nonno had friends who drank it, and there was a bottle kept on hand—I'm sure for medicinal purposes only.

Grappa is made, literally, from the leftovers of winemaking. The dregs or pomace, mostly fermented grape skins and seeds, are distilled and reprocessed into the bracing elixir.

As I got older and developed the internal fortitude to drink it, I discovered not-so-subtle differences among grappas.

Some were meant for drinking after aging, like a fine brandy. Others were meant to drink when they were young, with a touch of fruitiness but also a rather rough edge. Still others can be described as reminiscent of jet fuel.



Grappa, a high-octane, strongly flavored drink favored by Italians, is often clear in color. It is made from winemaking leftovers, the grape skins and seeds.

On my first trip to Italy, when I was 21, I was invited to a friend's family *cantina* behind their deli. They delightedly offered flavored homemade grappa from a small cask, blueberry.

They also had some commercially produced grappas in flavors such as orange and lemon. These grappas bore a luminous quality. I wondered if they would glow in the dark.

I had always known grappa as clear in color, with a pungent aroma. The homemade stuff was a little syrupy, softer and sweeter than what I had previously drunk, and I was surprised at its mellowness.

On a subsequent trip to Italy on a warm night in Venice, a group of us had been on an evening gondola ride and decided to stop for a nightcap.

By now I'm cocky about ordering a *digestivo* from the hotel bar and said in my limited Italian, "*Una grappa, per favore.*"

As the two bartenders exchanged glances and repeated my request, they politely poured a straight shot for me. I joined my party and chatted while sipping my drink.

We were still having fun a good hour later, so I went to the bar and ordered a second grappa.

Suddenly, the bartenders could speak English.

"You like our grappa? Where are you from?"

Needless to say, I became the popular Italian American tourist for the evening.

See GRAPPA, Page 6



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: tjmezzan@gmail.com, 916-467-7483

DIRECTORS

- Don Agostinelli: donjos451@aol.com, 916-451-1155
- Richard Battistessa: drbattistessa@comcast.net, 916-961-4854
- Dan Calcagno: dcalextra@aol.com, 916-481-8368
- John Caselli: jac6652@aol.com, 916-456-1253
- Jim Dimino: jkdimino@sbcglobal.net, 916-956-6691
- Bob Guidera: robertguidera@att.net, 916-451-1467
- Matt Longo: longomb@sbcglobal.net, 916-397-5869
- Mark Pedroncelli: peddc@surewest.net, 916-812-6729
- George Procida: gprocida@gplandscape.com, 916-455-4738
- Dick Zarzana: razarzana@comcast.net, 916-683-4812



Members prepare to resume meetings in September

Is everyone looking forward to returning to our Ladies Auxiliary meetings?

At our last meeting in July, we had seven new members apply to our auxiliary that very night—and one person whose husband is in the men's club.

The applicants have now all been accepted and look forward to being auxiliary members.

The new members are Debbie Edwards Bertoni, Joanne (Quartuccio) Wilcox, Donna (Dighero) O'Neil, Barbara Relles, Jennifer (Affinito) Grady, Grace Marie Romanello, Kathy (Filpi) Holberton and Elvira (Malatesta) O'Day. Some of you may know Elvira as the Biscotti Lady.

Welcome aboard, ladies!

We look forward to many fun meetings ahead throughout the rest of the year.

LADIES AUXILIARY NEWS

Debra Cattuzzo

Because we missed bingo at our last meeting, September will feature dinner and bingo.

October will bring our annual mercado, which happens on Columbus Day again this year, so it will be a double celebration.

Our mercado is like an Italian marketplace where vendors can showcase their wares.

Browsers at the marketplace will find all sorts of wonderful items to buy, including olive oil, biscotti, Tupperware, toys, many handmade items, and jewelry, jewelry, jewelry!

In November, of course, we have our annual board meeting.

During this important meeting, we will not only talk about the state of the auxiliary and the progress we have made in expanding our membership (we're now up to 193 members), but we also will finally vote to install new bylaws, and we will accept nominations for auxiliary board officers for the coming year.

Any members who have an interest in serving on the board can nominate themselves. They also can nominate their friends for any position.

We will take a vote during the meeting to choose new officers. We encourage all members to attend and participate.

In the meantime, enjoy your Labor Day weekend, and we will see you soon!

2022 LADIES AUXILIARY BOARD

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| • Debra Cattuzzo, president:
cattuzzod@gmail.com | • Judy Farina, secretary:
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anncecelia02@yahoo.com |

**Grappa**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Now, I realize, grappa may not be everyone's cup of tea. But for the brave-hearted, give it a try. Helpful hint: On a first attempt, do not smell it! Just trust me here.

Whether served straight, chilled, in an espresso or drizzled over assorted fresh fruit, known as macedonia, grappa will bring the warmth of Italy into your soul.

President's Corner

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

wines at the bar?

I've paid attention to the meals at members dinners, and it seems there is plenty to eat. If you experience something different, please let me know, but this does not seem to be an issue.

Also, our general manager, Jennifer Peretti, tells me that we have two very nice imported Italian wines, along with Italian beer and other liquors, for the members. The wines, Poggiotondo Chianti Sangiovese and Villa Antinori Toscana Rosso, are modestly priced for imported Italian wine, so please enjoy.

Spring and summer bocce sessions have been completed, with the fall session starting soon. Contact Jim Dimino at 916-956-6691 if you are not a current player and would like to participate.

Finally, the Dante Event Center continues to prosper, with more events booked weekly. See the article on Page 1 for more detailed information. We should all be proud of the staff's efforts.

Grazie, and stay well.



Winners in the summer bocce season are, from left, Brian Noble, Denis Noble, Jim Herzog and Peter Pesetti, joined by dog Spot. Joe Porata, also a winner, is not pictured.

News, Notes and Otherwise

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

brother Paul. He was loved by his many nieces, nephews, family and friends.

Wayne had been a member of the Dante Club for 13 years.

We ask members to please keep the Rankin family in their thoughts and prayers.

Bocce update

Bocce at the Dante Club rolls on, with our fall session scheduled to start in early September.

We would love to add players and teams, so we have created a bocce pool for those who are interested in playing but have

See NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE, Page 7

Want to learn more about bocce ... ?

Bocce is a unique cultural tradition passed down from one generation to another. Italians love the game, which ranks next to soccer as a great Italian national pastime. From the times of Caesar Augustus to George Washington, bocce has had a long and colorful history. The name bocce was coined by the Romans. Italian immigrants are credited with bringing the sport to the United States and popularizing it. Bocce is a popular sport in Northern California, with many major bocce complexes and leagues in various cities, including the 60 teams at Sacramento's East Portal Bocce Club in east Sacramento. The film "Breaking Balls" is a heartwarming documentary about the game of bocce and the annual Cleveland Challenge Cup Tournament, one of the largest bocce events in North America, held at the Italian American Club in Wickliffe, Ohio. Wickliffe has a large Italian American community with many bocce players. The film follows three colorful figures involved in the game and the Challenge Cup. The community of bocce players are the soul of this sport and the heart of this movie.

— Italian Cultural Society, reprinted with approval

**News, Notes and Otherwise**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

limited time. As our team captains need rollers, we will draw from the pool.

We encourage new members to get involved. Bocce is such a great way to get to know Dante Club paesani. Watch for the September start-up.

A major bocce project underway is to install lights for the courts. This will allow expanded play time and a way to beat the heat during the warmer months. Currently, we have more than 70 players, including Ladies Auxiliary and men's club members.

We are looking for a contractor to do the lighting installation. Members who know of someone who could help may contact one of these bocce committee members: Jim Dimino, John Rizzardo or Frank Bartucco. These three are instrumental in league and court organization.

Mark your calendar, and come out to join the group.

Italian Heritage Month

Oct. 14 at the Dante Event Center will mark the Dante Club's celebration of October as Italian Heritage Month.

An evening of drink, food and song will begin at 6 p.m. with a cocktail hour that includes apertivo platters, followed by dinner.

The traditional Italian menu will include insalata, mezza rigatoni with marinara sauce and shaved Parmesan, and porchetta with mushroom risotto and rapini. Completing the meal will be a dessert of vanilla panna cotta with blackberry composta.

Sacramento-area singer Cheryl Tiburzi and her band will provide music and entertainment during dinner and a cabaret-style show afterward. Dancing and socializing will follow.

Tiburzi has performed throughout the region, including headlining shows for a number of Italian social groups.

In the cabaret show, she plans to perform a medley of traditional Italian songs and an array of songs made popular by Italian crooners, including Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Tony Bennett.

Cost of the dinner and show is \$45. Seating will be limited to 250 attendees.

The public also may attend, so it's important for members to make reservations early as the event is expected to sell out.

Membership committee

Dante Club summers mean barbecues in July and August and no members meetings, which means the membership committee doesn't conduct applicant interviews or induct new applicants until September.

So this month the committee is back to work. Of course, committee members are always open to receiving inquiries and applications for prospective newcomers, so current members shouldn't hesitate to refer their friends and family for consideration.

In the past six months, seven new members have been approved: Jim Dubendorf, Frank Crandall, Mike Manassero, Chris Mascarini, Frank Lienert, Bill Hendricks and Leroy Dal Porto. Others are on the waiting list, and we look forward to their acceptance.

Please direct questions to anyone on the membership committee: Don Agostinelli, George Procida, Dick Zarzana and 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'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.

A member of the Ladies Auxiliary, Gina says she will always take referrals, and that's no Ly ... on.

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



Guests, left, dance in celebration during an Aug. 18 wedding reception at the Dante Event Center. The festivities also featured the bride and groom, above, playing a newlywed game.

Bookings

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

them our way.”

Peretti said the calendar is filling up quickly as the event center books events for the 2022-2023 season.

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 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 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.



Sip a zesty Italian-style cocktail to celebrate Heritage Month

With Italian Heritage month coming in October, here are a couple of cocktail recipes to help you celebrate in Italian style.

ITALIAN MARGARITA

Ingredients:

- lime slices or a wedge to garnish
- coarse Sea Salt on the rim
- 2 ounces of tequila
- 1 ounce of Amaretto

JUST LIKE MOM USED TO MAKE

Richard Battistessa

- 1 ounce orange juice
- 1 ounce of lime juice
- 1/2 ounce simple syrup

Shake in a cocktail strainer with ice 10 to 15 times. Pour.

And here's another favorite cocktail recipe:

AMALFI MARTINI

Ingredients:

- 4 ounces of good gin
- 3 ounces of limoncello
- 1 ounce fresh lemon juice
- 6 mint leaves

Combine gin, limoncello, lemon juice and mint leaves with two thirds ice in a cocktail straine. Shake for 30 seconds and pour. Garnish with a lemon wedge.

Enjoy. Salute!

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Learn Piemontese language in upcoming Zoom classes

Our friends at the Piemontesi Nel Mondo of Northern California invite interested Dante Club members to learn the Piemontese language in a series of online classes.

Even though “real Italian” is generally spoken in Italy and is the norm, dialects are still spoken by many people among their family and friends.

Technically, in a region that had or has an army of its own, the spoken

regional tongue is considered a language, not a dialect. There are more than two million Piemontese language speakers thriving worldwide.

Classes are held via Zoom twice monthly at 1:30 p.m. Thursdays. There is no charge.

Email a request for further details and Zoom access to Joseph Tonda at jadnot@yahoo.com or call Vince Fausone at (415) 647-1241.



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What's so special about being Italian?

You gotta love the Italians.

The Washington Post and other media outlets reported in August that the last of 29 Domino's pizza parlors, opened in Italy since 2015 by an Italy-based Domino's franchise company, have closed.

The business move ends the multinational pizza chain's efforts to introduce American-style pizzas (think pineapple-topped pies with cheese-filled crusts) to native Italians, with the added enticement of home delivery.

According to news reports, Michigan-based Domino's struggled against an increase in competing delivery services during the pandemic.

Also, Domino's pizzas just proved a hard sell in Italy.

The chain reportedly discovered (surprise, surprise) that Italians prefer their local mom-and-pop restaurants' pizza to the Americanized version.

Thirty-five million Italian Americans would likely agree, with thundering applause!

“Domino's pizzas just proved a hard sell ... Italians prefer their local mom-and-pop restaurants' pizza to the Americanized version.”

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.