



**Details on Italian
Heritage Month
coming soon**

DANTE'S INFERNO



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Tom Novi

October to honor Italian American heritage, culture

As we move into the fall months, several interesting activities are in store.

Club member Ralph DiLibero will speak at the members dinner in September. His topic will be the Italian necktie. Ralph has a wealth of knowledge on all things Italian and is always an entertaining speaker, well worth the price of admission.

In October, state Sen. Roger Niello will be our guest speaker. For all of you who complain about the deplorable condition of our roads or our homeless situation, you will want to hear Sen. Niello and ask him questions. It is a great honor to have him as our guest.

Also coming up in October is Italian American Heritage and Culture Month, which will include Italian music, food and entertainment.

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GOODBYE TO SUMMER



Among the many Dante Club members who enjoyed the club's August steak barbecue are, above center, George Procida and Eric Luchini, and, right, Don Agostinelli and Tom Mezzanares. Outside swamp coolers and tents provided comfort for members and their guests who dined on ribeye steaks that they grilled themselves. General manager Jennifer Peretti and the Dante Event Center staff set up the grills and seasonings and also prepared and served tasty side dishes and dessert.



ENHANCING OUR ITALIAN CULTURE

Seeking "the Cure" a distinctly Italian way of life

By Susan Pricco

For centuries, Italian tradition has been to spend a week or two each year at a geothermal spa, where natural hot springs are harnessed for their professed benefits, sometimes called "taking the waters" or "the Cure."

Dating back at least to the Roman Empire, the reputed "healing waters" attract Italians from all walks of life for respite and recuperation.

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NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

General manager's report

August brought the Dante Event Center some great events, including a 314-guest Sysco Regional Sales Manager meeting that was a hit, according to general manager Jennifer Peretti.

The center also hosted a 50th anniversary party for the Sacramento chapter of Western Service Workers of America, as well as weddings, birthdays and other celebrations.

Dante Club members and guests on Aug. 21 enjoyed a barbecue that attracted 166 guests, this time with a little cloud cover.

"We are excited for the summer months to come to a close and the approaching colder weather," Peretti said. "With that comes fall flavors. And on Oct. 27, we will celebrate Italian Heritage Month. The menu will be released soon, so keep an eye out."

Peretti said the event center continues to receive bookings, filling in the gaps for the 2023 calendar and booking into 2024 and 2025 as well.

Buildings and grounds

Thankfully, August saw very few needed repairs to our facility. We had a couple of small issues with swamp coolers, which supply air to the kitchen, and one issue with the air conditioning unit for the Tuscan Room. All repairs have been addressed or are being completed.

Italian Heritage Month

Mark Oct. 27 on the calendar. That's when the Dante Club will celebrate Italian Heritage Month with Italian music, bocce and pasta-sauce tastings.

Cocktails, dancing, music and bocce also will be part of the experience.

An entry form for sauce makers will be available to members soon. Bragging rights are at stake, and a few other twists are planned.

Reservations can be made soon. Watch for emails and a promotional flier in the next couple of weeks.

Advisory and finance committee

The advisory and finance committee considered several suggestions at its August meeting. One was a

See NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE, Page 3



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

September 11

Ladies Auxiliary Dinner and Meeting

Times: 5 p.m. cocktails, 6 p.m. dinner, followed by meeting
Menu: Arugula and strawberry salad, chicken cacciatore, creamy polenta, seasonal vegetables, bread, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$22 per person

Reserve by midnight Wednesday, Aug. 30.

September 18

Dante Club Members Dinner and Meeting

Times: 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner, followed by meeting

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

Cost: \$22 per person

Reserve by midnight Saturday, Sept. 9.

October 1

Sunday Family Dinner

Times: 4 p.m. cocktails, 5 p.m. dinner

Menu: House salad, beef and cheese ravioli with Bolognese sauce, seasonal vegetables, garlic bread, chef's choice dessert

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

Reserve by midnight Saturday, Sept. 23.

October 9

Ladies Auxiliary Dinner and Meeting

Times: 5 p.m. cocktails, 6 p.m. dinner, followed by meeting

Menu: Italian lentil soup, rigatoni with Bolognese, herb-roasted pork loin with sun-dried tomato and artichoke Tuscan cream sauce, seasonal vegetables, rolls with butter, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$22 per person

Reserve by midnight Wednesday, Sept. 27.

October 16

Dante Club Members Dinner and Meeting

Times: 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner, followed by meeting

Menu: Caesar salad, rigatoni with Bolognese, herb-roasted pork loin with sun-dried tomato and artichoke Tuscan cream sauce, rolls with butter, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$22 per person

Reserve by midnight Saturday, Oct. 7.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: No Sunday Family Dinner in September. Celebrate Italian Heritage Month on Oct. 27.

**News, Notes and Otherwise**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Reminder that if they have a problem with staff or management of the Dante Event Center, they must bring it to the attention of a board member, preferably the club president or first vice president, to resolve. Members should not try to settle issues themselves.

In addition, management and staff are expected to treat club and auxiliary members with courtesy and to bring any member issues to the attention of the president or first vice president. Also, any member present at the club when a private event is in progress must respect that a room may have been rented and must request permission before entering the room.

The committee also considered many comments about the food offered at the Sunday night dinners. The dinners were intended to be affordable family affairs patterned after Italian family Sunday dinners. Because of Monday holidays, only 10 Sunday dinners are generally offered each year. It was decided that eight of these should feature Italian fare and two could be non-Italian. Members meetings should also follow this format—with St. Patrick's Day and Thanksgiving as the two exceptions—with high-quality Italian food as the goal.

Also discussed was whether the Dante Event Center should provide to-go boxes at functions. Because most restaurants provide to-go boxes when requested, it was recommended that this service also be provided upon request at Dante functions where meals are served,

except for buffet meals. Ample food is to be available at member meetings, but requesting seconds and then a to-go box is unacceptable. It was suggested that excess food be boxed and offered for purchase for \$5 to \$10.

Save pull tabs

The Dante Club has always prided itself on providing ways for members to give back to our community. For the past five years, Ron Cristoni has worked with the Ronald McDonald House pull-tab program, which helps offset the cost of overnight stays for parents with a hospitalized child.

Cristoni reports that our total donations to date are 1,625 pounds, valued at more than \$1,625.

Members are asked to collect pull tabs from their canned pet foods, sodas and, of course, beer. Dante Club and Ladies Auxiliary members can bring their donations to their meetings.

For more information, contact Ron Cristoni. Members also can review the Ronald McDonald House Center of Northern California at www.rmhcnc.org. Go to "Getting Involved" and scroll to box 5, "Pull Tab Program."

Membership committee

The membership committee is back in business after the summer hiatus. Tom Strobel, sponsored by Paul Jacobs and spouse of Susan Kasimatis of the Ladies Auxiliary, will be inducted at this month's members dinner.

Four people on the waiting list will be scheduled for interviews: Dan Michelotti, sponsored by Jim DiPinto; Richard Marconi,

sponsored by Joe Bonanno; Paul Turner, whose application was submitted by Debra Cattuzo; and Vincent Nocito.

Members reaching their 25th or more club anniversary are Joseph Guzzo, 45 years in July; and, as of this month, Don Del Porto, 54 years; Howard Seaton, 31 years; Peter Grassi, 31 years; Tom Relles, 28 years; Ross Reller, 28 years; Ciro Immordino, 27 years; Tim Merri, 27 years; and Joseph Prassa, 26 years.

Thanks to all for their participation in the Dante Club.

Members are encouraged to submit applications for potential members and, more importantly, to bring anyone interested in joining to a special event so they can experience what the Dante Club is about.

Application forms are available on the Dante Event Center website or from the membership committee.

Dante crafts fair

The Dante Event Center will host the inaugural Dante Craft Fair and Festival from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 22. The event will feature crafts vendors, children's games, food trucks, music and raffles, with proceeds going to the Lupus Foundation. Look in upcoming issues of the *Inferno* for more information.

Newsletter advertising

Newsletter coordinator John Caselli, along with the entire Dante Club board, wishes to thank our advertisers. Their support helps defray the costs of publishing the

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2023 Committees and Assignments

COMMITTEES

ADVISORY AND FINANCE

Pat Orelli, chairman; Joe Porata, vice chairman

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

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

George Procida, chairman; Don Agostinelli, vice chairman

Members: Matt Longo, Tom Mezzanares, Joe Porata, Ron Pane, Bill Maffei

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

Member: Mark Pedroncelli

SOCIAL

Joe Porata, chairman; Rich Battistessa, vice chairman

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

BOCCE

Rich Battistessa, chairman; Jim Dimino, vice chairman

Members: Dick Zarzana, John Rizzardo

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Frank Buccola, chairman; Rich Battistessa, vice chairman;

Member: Bill Maffei

DINNER PROGRAM

Rich Battistessa, chairman; Jim Dimino, vice chairman

Members: Don Agostinelli, Dick Zarzana

ENHANCING OUR ITALIAN CULTURE

Ralph DiLibero, chairman

Member: 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: John Rizzardo

2022-2023 DANTE CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- 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

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- John Caselli: jac6652@aol.com, 916-456-1253
- Jim Dimino: jkdimino@sbcglobal.net, 916-956-6691
- Matt Longo: longomb@sbcglobal.net, 916-397-5869
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- George Procida: gprocida@gplandscape.com, 916-455-4738
- John Rizzardo: sjrizzardo@gmail.com, 916-331-6391
- Dick Zarzana: razarzana@comcast.net, 916-683-4812



Summer brings new members

We acquired nine new auxiliary members during the summer months.

In June, we welcomed Natalie Cvitanov, Marisa Ciani, Bridget Kafouros and Anna (Guidi) Turner. In July we welcomed Elda (Velo) Borges, Carmella (Nini) Cioli and Silvana Cioli.

And in August, as of Aug. 20, we welcomed Dorothy (Cioli) Conway and Vicki (Marvelli) White.

We look forward to getting to know all these new members.

On Saturday, Oct. 22, we'll present the first annual Dante Craft and Food Festival.

The event promises to be amazing, with adult and child craftspeople, wedding vendors and many food trucks. Make sure you don't miss it!

I again invite members to the SELFe event at 11 a.m. Sept. 16 at St. Francis High School in Sacramento.

LADIES AUXILIARY NEWS

Debra Cattuzzo

The event will be an afternoon marketplace with many local vendors selling their wares, as well as food vendors and guest speakers. The event is all about empowering and encouraging women and girls to be their best selves.

This year's keynote speaker is Adrienne Bankert, a television news anchor in New York who started her career as a Sacramento news anchor.

She has recently written a book about how kindness has helped her career.

The SELFe event promises to be an exciting afternoon. Tickets are now on sale.

I will email everyone with the information.

Our next meeting will be Sept. 9. I look forward to seeing you all.

REMEMBERING A FRIEND:

BOB GUIDERA

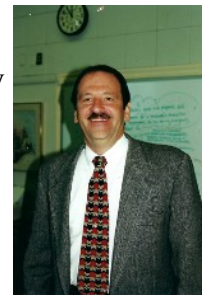
A celebration of life will be held from 3 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 14, at the Dante Event Center for past Dante Club president Bob Guidera.

Bob died July 30 at age 75.

Born and raised in east Sacramento, Bob attended local schools and graduated from Humboldt State College.

He went on to complete a teaching credential at Sacramento State College, as well as a master of arts degree in education and administrative services.

In 1971, Bob began his lifelong profession of teaching for Elk Grove Unified School District. He taught at James



Bob Guidera

See BOB GUIDERA, Page 10

2023 LADIES AUXILIARY BOARD

- Debra Cattuzzo, president:
cattuzzod@gmail.com
- Alyse DeFazio, vice president:
alysedefaz@aol.com
- Tina Lucchini Bowers, treasurer:
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- Susan Kasimatis, secretary:
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**News, Notes and Otherwise**

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club's monthly *Dante's Inferno*. Prospective advertisers should email Caselli at jac6652@aol.com.

Annual dinner payments

Members can now pay monthly or annually for monthly meeting night dinners.

When paying in advance, members cannot receive a refund or a credit for any individual dinner they don't attend, but they don't need to tell the event center if they will or won't attend, as they have already paid.

For reservation substitutions, members must call 916-925-8230 by noon the day of the event and give the substitute's name. Substitutions not confirmed by noon can't be honored.

Golf tournament

The Dante Club's annual Vic Martinelli/Frank Calcagno Memorial Golf Tournament raised \$25,495 for the club's scholarship fund, with 140 golfers participating.

This was the third consecutive year the event featured a full field of golfers and strong membership support.

A big mille grazie goes to the golf committee for its exceptional work. Roy Jones and Frank Buccola were an outstanding sales force contributing to this year's raffle.

The Ladies Auxiliary helped with registration and ticket sales

— thank you, Debra Cattuzzo. Thanks also to Joe Porata for organizing the ticket sales and working on the golf ball drop.

The Dante Event Center management staff made a delightful luncheon with outstanding service.

Team Dante solicited eight corporate sponsors, each contributing \$1,000 to the event. They were Pacific Coast Building Products Inc., Brickhouse Restaurant, Meals on Wheels, LYRA Corp., Emigh Hardware, Associated Bank of Milwaukee, Drewiski's Catering and Food Trucks, and Niello BMW.

In addition, more than 25 donations came from families and friends who sponsored holes. We appreciated the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District and Haggin Oaks Golf Course for their involvement in making the tournament successful.

The next tournament is planned for September 2024.

Club apparel

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

Members can order clothing items at danteclub.shopgraphx.com or they can contact coordinator Mark Pedroncelli at peddc@surewest.net or 916-812-6729.

For special orders, contact Julie Brown at 916-787-0603 or julie@premieregraphx.net.

Bocce league

The final Dante Club summer league standings for 2023 are now in the history books.

The Sons d'Beocce rolled to their fourth championship with an impressive 10 wins and 4 losses.

In a season that had more splits than ever recorded, there was an equal amount of camaraderie, competitiveness and sportsmanship.

Congratulations to all players.

The fall league is scheduled to begin Saturday, Sept. 9.

Adding a ninth team, a social and a mix-and-match fun tournament is under discussion. Details will follow.

Here's the final tally of wins and losses for the summer:

1. Sons d Boecce, 10-4
2. Maestri d Bocce, 8-6
3. Italian Stallions, 8-6
4. Riolo Rollers, 8-6
5. Infierno, 8-6
6. Avanti, 6-8
7. Dante Rollers, 4-10
8. Fratelli d'Bocce, 4-10

Elections on the horizon

As we enter the fall and winter months, the days will grow shorter, the temperatures will get cooler, and the club will have its elections for 2024 and 2025. We are looking for a few good men to serve on the Dante Club board of directors for those two years.

Any member interested in participating on the board should reach out to Ron Pane via email at repane@icloud.com or via text at 916-798-0111.



The Cure

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Although spas are located in numerous places throughout Italy, some of them are particularly notable, such as Montecatini Terme, Val d'Orcia in Tuscany, Caracalla in Rome and Cavascura on Ischia Island, which is reputed to be the oldest of the ancient spas still in use.



Italians dip into the benefits of "taking the waters," a centuries-old tradition throughout Italy that spa-goers say helps them maintain their good health.

These days, many people might refer to these getaways as an outdoor retreat or a spa vacation, but the Cure is much more.

The Italian concept is to use the spas for rejuvenation of mind, body and spirit, separate from a vacation as we know it. Drink the water, bathe in it, revel in it.

Historically, the spas offer steaming pools or natural springs, beautiful scenery, restful music,

massage and healthful food. Many even have medical consultants on staff. But it's the water that is the attraction. Thermal spas are naturally occurring, with varying temperatures and mineral content.

What's so special about the water? Theories abound, but there is some medical evidence of value for certain health conditions.

I remember my grandparents and friends talking about going to

take the waters. In Italy, many employers and businesses offer time for the Cure to help their employees maintain their good health.

That's a wise benefit for workers and employers alike, in my humble opinion.

And for Italians, the tradition remains essential for well-being and a good quality of life.

President's Corner

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

This promises to be a night to remember. More details will be forthcoming.

Fall play for the bocce league has begun, with nearly 50 Dante Club members rolling balls each Saturday.

Members who would like to participate, too, should contact Jim Dimino or Rich Battistessa. The members who play now are

enjoying themselves, with lots of good fellowship and fun.

For many of us, it's probably hard to believe that it's been nearly two years since our last board election, but it has.

A nominations committee consisting of Dan Calcagno, Matt Longo and past club president Ron Pane, who is the committee chairman, has been established to assemble a roster of candidates for Dante Club members' consideration. Anyone with an

interest in serving on the board should let Ron or the other committee members know.

It saddens me to report the passing of past club president Bob Guidera in July. Bob was well-regarded as a 16-year member, having served a number of years on the board and two terms as president. I ask members to remember Bob in their prayers.

Finally, I wish everyone good health and a nice wrap to the summer months. Please stay well.



CLAIMING OUR HERITAGE

Italian American singer Connie Francis left her imprint on 1960s music memories

By John Caselli

I have so many memories from my youth. August, for example, was traditionally our last hurrah before we returned to the classrooms of St. Mary's School, where the Pallottine nuns from New Jersey sculpted our mush-melon brains for the educational challenges that lay ahead.

August also meant yellow cling peaches from the tree in my parents' backyard and, most importantly, our traditional two-week excursion to Santa Cruz.

My memories could fill a mountain of scrapbooks, but one in particular is the music of those formative years that can automatically take me back to the beach or the boardwalk.

The Beach Boys, of course, are a natural go-to with their voluminous library of songs about surfing and girls on the beach. But if you look beyond the obvious, you'll find a song by Connie Francis called, appropriately enough, "V-A-C-A-T-I-O-N" that was released 61 years ago in June. It's one of those songs that when I hear it, it's 1962 again.

Concetta Rosa Marie Franconero, or Connie Francis, was born to an Italian American family in Newark, N.J., in 1937 and spent her early years in New York City's Brooklyn area. From age 4, she was playing and singing music, eventually winning a slot on "Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts" television show. Thinking there might be too many vowels in her given name, Godfrey suggested she use the stage name Connie Francis.

From 1958 to 1967, Connie Francis made the charts over 40 times with such hits as "Who's Sorry Now?," "Stupid Cupid," "Everybody's Somebody's Fool," "Where the Boys Are" and, of course, "V-A-C-A-T-I-O-N." It's estimated that she has sold more than 100 million records worldwide.

Francis will celebrate her 86th birthday in December at her home in Florida.

Italian immigrants play vital role in creating California

Ligurian immigrants were among the earliest groups to settle in the United States during the mid-19th century. People from the Italian region of Liguria settled in major U.S. cities—New Orleans, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston and New York.

Genovesi settlers from Liguria, primarily from the area around Genoa and the province of Chiavari, became one of the largest groups to settle in San Francisco and other areas of Northern California.

The early Italian settlement of the Mother Lode mining counties during the Gold Rush of the 1850s was part of the larger settlement of California by people from Liguria. These pioneers used the traditional skills of their Italian heritage to develop the region.

Lured by the promise of gold and land, these Italian pioneers came to stay.

The immigrants soon established themselves in the mining, cattle ranching, lumber, construction, stone masonry, quarrying, fruit and vegetable market gardens, orchard, grocery, olive oil, railroading, mercantile, banking, restaurant, hotel and boardinghouse, and vineyard

and wine industries of the California Gold Country.

The heaviest settlement was in the southern Mother Lode. By 1870, 25 percent of the state's Italian population lived in the three foothill counties of Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne.

Most of these immigrants came from the same region of Italy and represented the distinctive chain migration of the Italians from around Genoa.

To this day, the Mother Lode is populated by the descendants of these Italian pioneers, who carry on the traditions brought to early California.

The arrival of Genovesi in California coincided with the early development of the state. As a result, Italians played an important role in the creation of California. They settled in farmlands and played a prominent role in developing today's fruit, vegetable and dairy industries.

By the 1860s, a large number of Genovesi had established themselves as truck farmers in Northern California and soon controlled much of the production of fruits and

See IMMIGRANTS, Page 11



Try this flatbread chock-full of Mediterranean flavor

Flatbreads are all the rage right now. They can be a dinner or an appetizer. Stop by your local market, and pick up pizza dough instead of making it yourself, which will save time.

This flatbread is full of Mediterranean flavor.

PESTO PROSCIUTTO FLATBREAD

Ingredients:

- Cornmeal pizza dough
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto, cut into strips
- 3 tablespoons dried tomato pesto

JUST LIKE MOM USED TO MAKE

Richard Battistessa

- 4 ounces provolone cheese, shredded (about 1 cup)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 cup bay arugula

Directions:

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Lightly grease a baking sheet and sprinkle with cornmeal. Stretch the dough into a 12x8-inch rectangle or oval. Lightly brush with olive oil and cover with plastic wrap.

In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium

heat. Add prosciutto. Cook, stirring occasionally, until browned and crisp. Remove to paper towels to drain.

Spread pesto over the dough. Sprinkle with prosciutto and cheese.

Bake for approximately 16 minutes or until crust is golden brown.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and lemon juice. Add arugula and toss to coat. Top pizza with arugula mixture.

Enjoy!

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**Bob Guidera**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Rutter Junior High School and then moved on in 1977 to Valley High School, where he taught industrial arts, metal shop and driver education.

He later moved to Rio Cazadero High School, where he focused on the work experience program.

Bob retired from his long career in secondary education in 2009.

When not in the classroom, Bob could be found under the hood of his cherished 1961 Chevy pickup.

His interest in classic cars served as a catalyst



Bob Guidera stands alongside his prized 1961 Chevy, which sparked his interest in classic cars in general. He frequently spent his free time as a volunteer for the Woodland Tractor Museum and the California Automobile Museum in Sacramento.

for him to volunteer at the Woodland Tractor Museum and the California Automobile Museum in Sacramento.

Bob was an active member of the Dante Club for many years, serving as a board member and as president of the board.

We ask all Dante Club members to keep the Guidera family in their thoughts and prayers.

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**Immigrants**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

vegetables. By the 1880s, Italians dominated the fruit and vegetable industry in the Central Valley.

Across the state, 1,200 Italian gardens employed 10,000 people, mostly from Genoa area.

Skilled in cultivating fruits, flowers and vegetables in their home regions, immigrants from Liguria and Lucca in Tuscany established truck farms around San Francisco to feed the booming city. The farmers introduced specialty crops from the Italian kitchen—broccoli, eggplant, cardoon, artichokes, sweet basil, the pear-shaped tomato and fennel.

Italian immigrants also left their mark on the food-processing industry. One such Genovesi

pioneer was Marco Fontana. With another Ligurian, Antonio Cerruti, he established a chain of canneries under the Del Monte label, which soon became the nation's largest food-processing corporation.

The Genovesi also dominated the fishing industry of the 1850s. They established themselves in Eureka, Benicia, Martinez, Pittsburg, San Francisco, Santa Cruz, San Diego, San Pedro and Monterey. By 1910, Italians controlled 80 percent of the fishing industry in California.

Another enterprising Ligurian was Domenico Ghirardelli, who traveled through the gold mines in the 1850s selling chocolates and hard candies. He settled in San Francisco after the Gold Rush and formed the Ghirardelli Chocolate empire at the site of present-day Ghirardelli Square.

The California wine industry owes much to its Italian founders, who have been planting vineyards and making wine in America since the early colonial days when Filippo Mazzei planted vineyards with Thomas Jefferson.

The founding of the Italian Swiss Colony at Asti in 1881 by Ligurian Andrea Scarboro as a cooperative of Italian immigrants promoted the widespread success of Italians in the wine industry and the vineyards of Napa and Sonoma.

One of the state's most inspiring Italians was Amadeo Pietro Giannini, who set up the nation's first banking system to serve immigrants. His Bank of America soon became the world's largest bank.

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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.