



Commit to active participation in our Dante Club

DANTE'S INFERNO



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Pat Orelli

Thanks to all who helped with event

Once again, the month of March featured the Dante Club's renowned annual cioppino dinner.

Over two days, 20 club members, ably assisted by a few volunteers from the Women's Auxiliary, chopped, sliced and stirred as they prepared for the March 16 dinner. Under the superb guidance of our perennial chairman, Rich Battistessa, and chef Michael Talani, a marvelous dinner was prepared and served.

A raffle was organized and crafted with much assistance from the auxiliary. Huge thanks to all who contributed their time and donated baskets and other prizes for the raffle.

After high attendance in prior years, it was somewhat disappointing that we had only 132 reservations for this wonderful dinner. I did note

See PRESIDENT'S CORNER, Page 7

Fishy feast dubbed a success



Board member Mark Pedroncelli, left above, enlists his gondola rowing skills as he stirs the risotto for the cioppino dinner. He got support from kitchen crew members, at right, Guiseppe Verdi, Michael Talani, Fred Belluomini and Angelo Pennisi.



Raffle and dancing added to the fun

The boats came into the wharf and the fishermen were pleased with their catch. So much so that they shared their catch with our Dante Club guests for the annual cioppino dinner on March 16. The clams, crabs, mussels, cod and shrimp used in the fish stew were exceptionally fresh.

Michael Talani and his kitchen crew prepared the meal. The risotto was better than any we remember from previous years. Dessert and dancing contributed to a great evening.

Big thanks go to all the volunteers from the Women's Auxiliary and the men's club. They

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NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

Advisory and finance

The advisory and finance committee's primary charge is to provide guidance from the board of directors to our Dante Club manager, Jennifer Peretti, and report to the board her concerns. At times this may seem a bit mundane as she not only reports to the board at its meetings but also to the club at members meetings. The committee works out the details.

Lately, the corkage fee continues to be an issue, but after considerable research by Rich Battistessa, it should be resolved at our next meeting.

Our treasurer reported that four members resigned, and another 13 were sent letters that they would be dropped from the rolls if dues and penalties were not paid by March 31.

On a more positive note, 11 new members have been inducted since the start of the year, with three more waiting to be interviewed.

Buildings and grounds

March was a busy month for building maintenance, with several small items and a couple of large ones.

The small things included a quarterly service for the heating and air conditioning system and all refrigeration units and the purchase and installation of eyewash stations so we can remain compliant with Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations. We installed an automated external defibrillator for any potential medical emergencies, and staff members were trained in its safe use and operation. New mirrors were installed in the women's bathroom near the kitchen. Faucets in the kitchen sinks were repaired, and a slow draining sewer line was snaked.

Now the big things: The kitchen had a bad drain cleanout cover that required concrete to be jackhammered out to allow a repair to be made. New concrete was poured, and the area is now good as new.

All commercial kitchens have a fire-suppression system over the grills in case of a fire. Unfortunately for us, the building safety code was updated, and our system is not compliant. Needed upgrades are extensive and will require a few different contractors. The work should be completed in early April.

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

April 7

Sunday Family Dinner

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

Menu: House salad, rigatoni with marinara, chicken or eggplant (vegetarian) Parmesan, seasonal vegetables, rolls with butter, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$18 adults, \$8 children ages 12 and younger

Reservations are now closed.

April 8

Women's Auxiliary Dinner and Meeting

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

Menu: Raspberry mixed green salad, chicken rigatoni, seasonal vegetables, focaccia breadsticks, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$22 per person

Reservations are now closed.

April 15

Dante Club Members Dinner and Meeting

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

Menu: Raspberry mixed green salad, chicken rigatoni, seasonal vegetables, focaccia breadsticks, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$22 per person

Reserve by midnight Friday, April 5.

May 5

Sunday Family Dinner

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

Menu: Summer pasta salad, creamy polenta, pan-seared Tuscan chicken, seasonal vegetables, rolls with butter, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$18 adults, \$8 children ages 12 and younger

Reserve by midnight Friday, April 26. Guest limit 220.

May 13

Women's Auxiliary Dinner and Meeting

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

Menu: Italian salad with citrus vinaigrette, spaghetti with meatballs, seasonal vegetables, housemade garlic bread, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$22 per person

Reserve by midnight Thursday, May 2.

SAVE THE DATE:

Dante members meeting and dinner, May 20

**News, Notes and Otherwise**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2



New members are Vince Mastracco, Ken Lewis, Gary Savelli and Paul Ciccarelli.

Membership committee

March was a busy month for the membership committee. We added four new members, interviewed two and have two applicants waiting in the wings.

Inductions were the main order of business as we introduced Ken Lewis, a teacher, sponsored by Bill Maffei; Gary Savelli, a salesman and musician, sponsored by John Rizzardo; Paul Ciccarelli, an attorney, sponsored by Al Manfredi; and Vince Mastracco, a real estate agent and longtime radio golf-show host, sponsored by John Caselli.

John Angella, sponsored by Randy Canova, came in for an interview, stayed for dinner and was accepted into the club by all members present. We hope to induct John in April.

As for those on the waiting list, we're scheduling Anthony Guisti, sponsored by Don DelPorto, for a chat in April. We'll hold off until May for Dave Rizzardo, sponsored by John Rizzardo. He's busy until then on Monday nights because he's taking Italian language classes.

Thanks to new members and

applicants and to the sponsors for bringing new faces to the organization. Applications are available online from the Dante Club office or from the committee.

Save pull tabs

The Dante Club provides many opportunities for members to enhance their Italian identity and build camaraderie with friends.

Other opportunities benefit the wider community, shining a positive light on the club—for example, the Ronald McDonald House Pull-Tab Program.

For the past five years, club member Ron Cristoni has coordinated our participation in the program, which helps offset the cost of overnight accommodations for parents with a child hospitalized at UC Davis Medical Center.

The Dante Club has raised nearly \$2,000 for the program.

Dante Club and Women's Auxiliary members are asked to continue collecting pull tabs from their pet food, soda and beer cans and bring them to their meetings.

For more information about the Ronald McDonald House Center of Northern California, go online at www.rmhcnc.org. Select "Getting Involved" and scroll to box 5, "Pull Tab Program."

Newsletter advertising

Newsletter coordinator John Caselli and the Dante Club board wish to thank our advertisers. Their support helps defray the costs of publishing the club's monthly *Dante's Inferno*. Prospective advertisers should email Caselli at jac6652@aol.com.

General manager's report

Returning events at the Dante Event Center in March included Sons in Retirement branches 23 and 69, Allied Arts, the American Public Works Association and our largest onsite event, the Valley Industrial Claims Association crab feed, with 490 guests attending. The 2024 Easter Egg Hunt had the biggest preregistration post-COVID, with more than 150 guests reserved.

Because of an increase in labor and food costs, the Sunday Family Dinner price has increased this year to \$18 for adults. Children's meals remain the same, at \$8 per child.

Member reservations for Women's Auxiliary, Sunday and members dinners are now due by midnight on Fridays rather than Saturdays to ensure that the food and products can be ordered without delay or issue.

Annual dinner payments

Members can pay monthly or annually for our 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.

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2024 Committees and Assignments

COMMITTEES

ADVISORY AND FINANCE

Pat Orelli, chairman; Dan Calcagno, 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; Tom Novi, vice chairman

Member: Steve DeCristofaro

MEMBERSHIP AND INVESTIGATIONS

Dan Calcagno, chairman

Members: George Procida, Don Agostinelli, Dennis Noble, Tom Mathews

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

John Caselli, chairman; Tom Mezzanares, vice chairman

SCHOLARSHIP

Rich Battistessa, chairman; Jim Dimino, vice chairman

Member: Mark Pedroncelli

SOCIAL

Steve DeCristofaro, chairman; Rich Battistessa, vice chairman

Members: John Caselli, Matt Longo, Joe Porata, Ron Pane, Mark Pedroncelli

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

BOCCE

Rich Battistessa, chairman; Jim Dimino, vice chairman

Members: Dick Zarzana, John Rizzardo

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Frank Buccola, chairman

Members: Bill Maffei, Rich Battistessa, Frank Bartucco

DINNER PROGRAM

Rich Battistessa, chairman; Jim Dimino, vice chairman

Member: Don Agostinelli

ENHANCING OUR ITALIAN CULTURE

Ralph DiLibero, chairman

Member: Rich Battistessa

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS

- Women's Auxiliary liaison: Tom Novi
- Check-in desk for club events and raffle: John Caselli, chairman; Matt Longo, vice chairman; and new members
- Club apparel: Mark Pedroncelli
- Sergeant-at-arms: Colin Orelli

2024-2025 DANTE CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

- Patrick Orelli, president: pat@apcpagroup.com, 916-369-2327
- Dan Calcagno, first vice president: dcalextra@aol.com, 916-481-8368
- Ron Pane, second vice president: repane@icloud.com, 916-798-0111
- Joseph Pasquinelli, secretary: jmpasquinelli@gmail.com or (708) 805-5242
- Tom Mezzanares, treasurer: tjmezzan@gmail.com, 916-467-7483

DIRECTORS

- Richard Battistessa: drbattistessa@comcast.net, 916-961-4854
- John Caselli: jac6652@aol.com, 916-456-1253
- Steve DeCristofaro: stefanodad@gmail.com, 916-752-3247
- Jim Dimino: jkdimino@sbcglobal.net, 916-956-6691
- Ron Fiorica: rbfiorica@frontiernet.net, 916-687-6406
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- Bill Maffei: mrmaffei@sbcglobal.net, 916-207-6837
- Brian Noble: ibnoble@gmail.com, 916-217-8836
- Dennis Noble: d.noble35@comcast.net, 916-889-6677
- Tom Novi: tomnovi@aol.com, 916-961-6197
- Mark Pedroncelli: peddc@surewest.net, 916-812-6729
- George Procida: gprocida@gplandscape.com, 916-455-4738



Lively St. Patrick's Day raffle produces nine winners

Women's Auxiliary members came dressed in green to celebrate St. Patrick's Day at our March dinner. The tables were beautifully decorated by Anna Tenderella's crew, and the corned beef and cabbage dinner was wonderful.

With our usual leprechaun, Laura Scarrone, out with ankle surgery, Natalie Cvitanov and Maggie Ward volunteered to make treats. We also had a stand-in leprechaun in Francesca Carleson, who merrily passed out the treats. Thanks to all for stepping up. Laura hopes to be back in her bunny suit at our April meeting.

Six members brought in their pull-tab collections for the Ronald McDonald House project. Thank you to Alyse DeFazio, Francesca Carleson, Adele Solander, Ann Zacharias, Suzie Rozewski and Cathy Bertolani. I love that these women have risen to the challenge by taking time to pull tabs off cans and bring them in.



WOMEN'S AUXILIARY NEWS

Debra Cattuzzo

We are now adding quite a lot to the men's pull-tab collection, which is donated each year to help parents pay for accommodations at the Ronald McDonald House while their child is hospitalized at UC Davis Medical Center.

Cathy Eister conducted a lively raffle last month. Winners and their prizes were Elaine Schaedler, egg poacher and farm-fresh eggs from Debra Cattuzzo's neighbor; Cathy LaPietra, limoncello cake and lemon bowl with lemons; Debra Cattuzzo, \$20 Peet's gift card; Elaine Schaedler, polenta bowl with ingredients and recipe; Sharon Taylor, \$25 See's Candy gift card; Peggy Alexander, Vera Bradley purse set; Nina Ciani, \$24 Boudin gift card; Kelly Pane, free auxiliary dinner; and Beckee

Lienert, appetizer tray with bowls and tower of olives.

We introduced another five new members to the auxiliary: Morgan Fendick, Francesca Lewis, Karen Scoville, Jeanne Ireland and Marilyn Cottini. Always glad to have new members.

Sadly, we lost another auxiliary member in March. Kathy Galli had been a member for the last five years. She died after a short battle with cancer.

Kathy never had children of her own but was like a second mother to her sister Roberta's five children. She was very active in their lives, as well as in their children's lives. Kathy taught third grade for almost forty years.

Services will be held at St. Ignatius Church. The rosary will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, June 27, and the Mass will begin at 11 a.m. Friday, June 28. Kathy will be missed by her auxiliary friends.

See WOMEN'S AUXILIARY, Page 6

2024 WOMEN'S AUXILIARY BOARD

- Debra Cattuzzo, president: cattuzzod@gmail.com
- Anna Tenderella, hospitality: annatenderella@sbcglobal.net
- Kathy Holberton, trustee/caller: crystalgal@yahoo.com
- Alyse DeFazio, vice president: alysedefaz@aol.com
- Karol Buccola, past president: karolrb55@gmail.com
- Roseann Jamison, trustee/caller: rosieado@yahoo.com
- Tina Luchini Bowers, treasurer: tebowers55@gmail.com
- Adrienne DeFazio, trustee/caller: adefazio73@gmail.com
- Donna O'Neil, trustee/caller: rtdg4005@gmail.com
- Susan Kasimatis, secretary: sjk955@gmail.com
- Nancy Doyle, trustee/caller: ncdoyle59@gmail.com



Colorfully decorated gift baskets adorn tables at the Women's Auxiliary's March dinner. Members also built similarly attractive baskets for the recent Dante Club cioppino dinner.

Auxiliary

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

On March 16, the Dante Club held its annual fundraiser, a cioppino feed. Preparing for this event takes months. Our members donate items from January to March to help prepare beautiful baskets for a raffle at the event. It takes a lot of work for our board to shop for basket fillers, as well as compile them for raffle presentation.

I have a lot of members to thank for their help. First, let me thank all of you who donated items, wine, Italian foodstuffs, spa items and even baskets. Next, I need to thank Sue Pricco, Susan Kasimatis, Anna Tenderella and Donna O'Neil for shopping for

items that could be used in the raffle. I'd like to send a special shout-out to Heidi Veneman, who helped me spend hours shopping for those little filler items to make the baskets present so well.

Thanks also go to the members who spent hours putting the raffle baskets together. They were Donna O'Neil, Susan Kasimatis, Francesca Carleson, Dorine Weise, Norma Petta and Vickie White, along with three new members—Diane Sapienza-Boundy, Francesca Lewis and Olivia Shirley. They put together 35 beautiful raffle baskets. In fact, we had so many baskets that we ended up holding some back for the raffle at this summer's golf tournament.

I also thank these members who cut up all the vegetables for the cioppino meal: Carmella Cioli, Silvana Cioli, Jan Mathews, Anna Turner, Adrienne DeFazio, Carole Pesetti and Roseann Jamsion. While these women were in the kitchen, other people were in the main room, setting up the raffle. Thank you Rich and Diane Battistessa, Cathy Eister, Nancy Doyle and John Caselli.

Finally, thanks to all members who helped the night of the event. Tina Bowers, Roseann Jamison, Emily Dees, Cathy Eister and Susan Kasimatis—we couldn't have made it through the night without you!

From the Women's Auxiliary archives:

DANTE AUXILIARY IS PLANNING BENEFIT

The past presidents group of the Dante Club Auxiliary will hold its annual charity card party Friday evening, April 21st, in the Dante Club.

The committee includes Mesdames Frank Corsiglia, chairman, and Angelo Matteoli,

Edwin Frichette, Joseph Renucci, Fred Belluomini, John DeStasio, Lou Warren, Fay Granados, Julius Giammattei, Vincent Caselli, Carl Panattoni, Nell Barbaria, Frank Gabrielli, Thomas Mezzanares, Arthur Tisdell, Louis Nardi and Miss Leah Micheli.

Mesdames Manuel Caselli and Victor Panattoni are the co-chairmen of the sewing group making articles to be displayed at the party.

—Reprinted from The Sacramento Bee, April 3, 1944



Group asks Italian Americans to oppose erasure of Columbus Day

The Conference of Presidents of Major Italian American Organizations is asking for the Dante Club's support to preserve Columbus Day at the federal level.

The conference consists of 63 cultural, educational, fraternal and anti-defamation groups that seek to preserve and promote Italian American history and traditions. The Dante Club recently joined the organization.

The conference asks the Dante Club and other member groups to voice their opposition to U.S. Senate bill 2970, which

would erase Columbus Day and instead designate the second Monday in October as Indigenous People's Day.

“Columbus Day must be preserved to honor not only our ancestors but also the 18 million Americans of Italian descent living today.”

“Columbus Day was intended to encourage greater acceptance of immigrants,” conference leaders said. “The holiday must be preserved to honor not only our ancestors but also the 18 million

Americans of Italian descent living today. Uphold our history, before it's too late.”

Over the past two years, the conference reported, prominent Italian American leaders have worked with White House officials to develop Columbus

See COLUMBUS DAY, Page 12

FAMOUS ITALIANS

Yogi Berra stands tall in baseball history

By Tom Novi

The surest sign of the transition from winter to spring is the beginning of baseball season. And there has never been a more beloved ballplayer than the late Lorenzo Pietro “Larry” Berra, aka Yogi, a Hall of Fame catcher for the New York Yankees from 1946 to 1963.

At 5 feet, 7 inches tall, Berra was not your prototypical major league catcher, but he led the Yankees to 10 World Series. The son of Italian immigrants, he was raised on “the Hill,” the Italian section of St. Louis. He often described his youth as nearly idyllic, playing ball all day with his friends, including lifelong buddy Joe Garagiola.

Berra always wanted to be taken seriously as a ballplayer, but his knack for the oddly turned phrase often overshadowed his baseball accomplishments. After serving as a Navy gunner in World War II, he signed

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President's Corner

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with pleasure that eight of the 14 tables were attributable to members and their guests. Although crab feeds had no trouble filling the room at \$75 each, was this too much for a cioppino dinner, which requires far more fish and labor, or was our timing just off this year? Only wondering ...

Our Sunday Night Family Dinner was well attended on

March 3. It was nice to see that many children attended. I hope this will grow to a true family affair.

Many thanks go to Randy Canova and Colin Orelli for their efforts in reinstating the drawing. Over the past two Sunday dinners, they have raised more than \$1,000 for the building fund.

In a recent discussion with two past presidents about fundraising, it was suggested that

we bring back Viva Vino, our wine-tasting event. This was a good fundraiser in the past but does require significant advance planning.

Would any wine connoisseur members who make regular trips to area wineries consider chairing this project? We're looking at May 2025.

If so, please contact me or our social chairman, Steve DeCristofaro.



Rice and peas dish honors Venice's patron saint

This flavorful rice dish is served on April 25 for the Feast of San Marco, the patron saint of Venice. "Risi e bisi" (riso e piselli) means "rice and peas" in the Venetian dialect. It is a delicious cross between a risotto and a soup that is traditionally made with fresh spring peas. Using frozen peas, however, can make it possible year-round. For this version, the chefs at Christopher Kimball's Milk Street adapted a recipe from Michela Tasca, owner of Ca' de Memi, a bed-and-breakfast inn at Piombino Dese near Venice. In Tasca's version, some of the peas are puréed, giving the finished dish a brilliant emerald green color.

JUST LIKE MOM USED TO MAKE

Adrienne DeFazio

RISI E BISI

Ingredients:

- 1 medium carrot, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 large white onion, half thinly sliced, half finely chopped
- 1 medium celery stalk, thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons fennel seeds
- 1 quart (4 cups) low-sodium chicken broth (use homemade broth if possible because you can control the level of salt or use a good-quality commercial product like Better Than Bouillon chicken base with 50% less sodium)

- 2 cups frozen peas, divided (1 cup still frozen, 1 cup thawed to room temperature)
- 2 cups lightly packed fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 3 to 4 ounces pancetta, finely chopped
- 4 tablespoons salted butter, cut into 1-tablespoon pieces, divided
- 1 cup Vialone Nano or Arborio rice (Vialone Nano was preferred in the original recipe, but it's hard to find. We used Arborio rice with great results.)
- Ground black pepper
- 2 ounces Parmesan cheese, finely grated (1 cup), plus more for serving
- Optional: Piece of Parmesan rind to add to vegetable or

See JUST LIKE MOM, Page 11

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ENHANCING OUR CULTURE

They came for a better life

By Susan Pricco

I remember stories told by my grandparents about their early years as immigrants, including some of the hardships they faced.

In the early 1900s, my maternal grandmother, Matilda Verna, was a toddler when her family moved from Cirie—outside Torino—in Piemonte, Italy, to New York enroute to Michigan seeking a “better life.” I think many of us have heard that phrase but might not know many details.

As with many immigrant families, my grandmother’s father, Lorenzo, came first, to meet his brother-in-law and get settled. Her mother, Giussepina, joined him

about a year later with their five children, all younger than age 8.

I can only admire her courage and strength on that long journey across the ocean in the ship’s cheap-ticket steerage section—with their few possessions, her fearful children leaving the only home they knew, and with hope in her heart despite any trepidation.

Life was hard for these new immigrants, and there was great prejudice against them. Italians were so hated, my grandmother told me she never attended school past fourth grade because children threw rocks at her. She was one of eight children by then, her father

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Yogi

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with the New York Yankees. He led the Yankees in hitting for seven straight seasons and almost never struck out.

A 14-time all-star and Hall-of-Famer, Berra was probably the most beloved ballplayer of his time. Managers loved him, players loved him, and fans and the general public loved him. He truly loved the game, and the game loved him back.

Perhaps Berra’s most endearing quality was his humility. As sports journalist Leonard Koppett wrote: “In the brightest of publicity spotlights for more than four decades, Yogi remained completely himself, a rarer and more difficult accomplishment than making the Hall of Fame.”

Yogi Berra was truly a great Italian and remains a national treasure.

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News, Notes and Otherwise

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Bocce tourney

Frank Bartucco and Jim Luttig won the first two-man bocce tournament on Feb. 5. They were the masters of the court, going undefeated.

Second place went to Joe Porata and Pete Pesetti.

Fourteen two-man teams competed, and all played very well on the groomed courts.

A big thank you goes to Frank and his scheduling partner, Nick Canepa.

With the success of the tournament, the bocce committee has decided that additional competition will be forthcoming.

A mixed-team tourney with our Women's Auxiliary bocce group is planned.

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.

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, call Julie Brown at 916-787-0603 or email julie@premieregraphx.net.



Wines donated by board member Mark Pedroncelli were among raffle gift items that helped raise money for the Dante Club's building fund.

Fishy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

were in rare form, helping with ticket sales for a raffle that featured over \$3,000 in prizes. They also chopped vegetables and cleaned the fish.

A special thanks to all who contributed to the raffle by donating fabulous baskets and money for gift cards. The Grab Crab, a new addition to the raffle, was a great success.

As always, thanks go to general manager Jennifer Peretti and her staff for their support.

Want to book a personal event? Don't delay

The Dante Event Center is booking for the 2024 through 2026 event seasons. Any club members interested in hosting a personal event at the center should inquire as early as possible.

To host an event, a member must first schedule a meeting with general manager Jennifer Peretti or Dante event

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

The member's desired room and date will be placed on hold for two weeks to allow time to decide if the center is the place for the event, without the

date getting booked in the meantime.

At the end of the two weeks, if a 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.

Members can rent a banquet room at a 50% discount for a personal event for themselves,

family members, which include spouses, parents and children, or a personally owned business.

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

For event inquiries, send an email to info@danteclub.com or call 916-925-8230.



Lorenzo Verna family members pose for this photo dating from around 1910. The family includes writer Susan Pricco's grandmother, Matilda Verna, second from left.



Life

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

working as a janitor and her mother remaining at home. Despite her lack of a more formal education, my grandmother learned to speak, read and write English fluently.

I recently saw the movie “Cabrini” by Angel Studios, which chronicles the life of Mother Francesca Cabrini, the first American saint, a medically frail Italian nun who

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Rice

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chicken broth while simmering. Remove when ready to use the broth.

Directions:

In a large pot, combine carrot, sliced onion, celery, fennel seeds, chicken broth, 2 cups water and optional Parmesan cheese rind, if using. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then cover. Reduce to medium-low and simmer until vegetables have softened, 10 to 12 minutes. Remove pot from heat. Using a slotted spoon, transfer solids to blender, draining off as much liquid as possible. Add 1 cup vegetable or chicken broth to blender along

with 1 cup of still-frozen peas and parsley. Leave remaining broth in pot so it remains warm. Blend until mixture is smooth, 1½ to 2 minutes. Makes about 3 cups puree. Set aside in blender jar. In large saucepan over medium heat, combine chopped onion, pancetta and 2 tablespoons butter. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onion and pancetta are lightly browned and some pancetta fat is rendered, 6 to 8 minutes. Add rice and stir until grains are coated with fat, then stir in 1 cup of broth. Cook, stirring until liquid is mostly absorbed, about 5 minutes. Ladle in additional broth to barely cover rice and simmer, stirring often, until broth is mostly

absorbed. Repeat addition of broth and simmering until mostly absorbed, 4 or 5 times, until rice is al dente and most of broth has been used. This process should take 25 to 30 minutes. Remove pan from heat and let stand uncovered for 5 minutes. Add thawed peas and puree, then stir until heated through, about a minute. (Adding purée after rice has finished cooking keeps a vibrant green color.) Add remaining 2 tablespoons butter and stir until melted. Stir in Parmesan, then taste and season with salt and pepper. Serve sprinkled with extra Parmesan. Makes four to six servings.

Life

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emigrated from Italy on her mission to save orphans.

I now have a more relatable picture of life during that time and the prejudice and dangers the immigrants faced.

Moving forward to America, with skills they learned in Italy and a work ethic ingrained in them, these hard-working immigrants built new lives despite hardships amid a strenuous and sometimes threatening and meager existence. Not all survived.

I now have a much deeper appreciation and admiration for those who persevered despite all odds. *Un milione grazie alla mia famiglia ancestrale.* I honor you all.

—Article author Susan Pricco is a member of the Dante Women's Auxiliary.

Columbus Day

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Day proclamations that explore the history behind the holiday.

In 1892, President Benjamin Harrison organized the first national Columbus Day parade in New York City to ease a diplomatic crisis between the United States and Italy that surfaced the prior year when a lynch mob murdered 11 Italian immigrants in New Orleans.

With the success of the parade, attended by more than a million people, Italian Americans used Columbus as a vehicle through the 1900s to fuel their assimilation and fight anti-Italian persecution.

Today, the holiday pays tribute to Italian American pride and heritage.

The conference asks members of Italian American organizations to call their senators and request that Columbus Day be preserved.

For more information, go to www.copomiao.org.

DANTE'S REMINDERS

**Member volunteers**

To volunteer, contact George Procida for anything related to buildings and grounds and Steve DeCristofaro for anything related to social events. Reach Procida at 916-455-4738 or gprocida@gplandscape.com and DeCristofaro at 916-752-3247 or stefanodad@gmail.com.

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.