



**Make Dante Club
a priority in 2026**



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dan Calcagno

New president takes the helm as 2026 kicks off

Welcome to the Dante Club's biannual changing of the guard.

It is with anxiety that we embark on a milestone in our history. The Sacramento area is rich in tradition, and belonging to an organization reaching its century mark places us as a member in good standing among all those other institutions.

As noted on this page, UNESCO has recognized Italian cuisine with its Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity designation. What better place to celebrate Italian social values, gastronomic traditions and familial camaraderie than at the Dante Club.

As new club president, my goal is to not mess up what those before me have

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DANTE'S INFERNO



BUON NATALE ITALIAN STYLE

Members of the St. Francis High School Italian Club regale the Dante Women's Club with Christmas carols sung in Italian. The group performed for the women's club during its Dec. 8 dinner meeting. The students' teacher, Rose Marie Bertini, has arranged the students' annual holiday performances for the Dante women over the past several years. See Page 6 for more photos from the dinner meeting.



It's official: Italian cuisine is an international cultural treasure

Risotto alla Milanese. Carbonara. Osso buco. Brasato al Barolo. Gnocchi alla Romana. Limoncello. Tiramisu. Gelato. The list of authentic Italian gastronomic delights goes on and on and on.

Italians, of course, don't have to be told how fantastic their food is. For generations, they have taken great pride in developing a much beloved national cuisine, guided by history, traditions, regional diversity, quality seasonal ingredients,

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NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

General manager's report

December was a great month at the Dante Event Center, with over 30 club, public and private events scheduled. The Sentivo wine dinner drew 54 guests, and 219 guests attended the club's Christmas dinner.

We look forward to our annual crab feed on Jan. 17 and encourage members to join us Jan. 25 for food and drinks while watching the American Football Conference and National Football Conference championship games.

Starting this month, Sunday Family Dinner prices will change due to increasing costs in labor, food, liquor and overhead needs. New prices are \$25 for adults and \$15 for children 12 and younger. We appreciate members' continued support of the dinner and hope to see everyone back at the table in the new year.

We're booking events into 2027. See Page 10 for information on booking personal events.

Buildings and grounds

December seemed to be door month at the Dante Event Center. The main doors leading from the bar into the Venetian Room had been sagging and needed repair.



Ron Pane, left, and Matt Longo inspect a sagging door into the Venetian Room. Volunteers took apart the door jamb and rebuilt it. They adjusted several other doors in the building as well.

A few members disassembled the door jamb and rebuilt it. Several other doors were adjusted and repaired as well.

Special thanks go to Matt Longo and Ron Pane for organizing the work.

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January 4

Sunday Family Dinner

Times: 4 p.m. cocktails, 5 p.m. seating, 5:15 p.m. first course
Menu: Dante winter salad, chicken marsala with herb-roasted red potatoes, seasonal vegetables, roasted garlic focaccia breadsticks, red velvet cupcakes with cream cheese frosting

Cost: \$25 adults, \$15 children age 12 and younger
Reservations are now closed.

January 12

Dante Women's Club Dinner

Time: 4:30 p.m. cocktails, 6 p.m. dinner
Menu: Italian lentil soup, chicken scallopini, penne pasta with creamy Parmesan sauce, roasted baby carrots, rolls and butter, Italian chocolate mousse
Cost: \$25 members, \$30 guests
Reservations are now closed.

January 17

Dante Club Crab Feed

Times: 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner
Menu: All-you-can-eat crab buffet with cocktail sauce, clarified butter and lemons; Caesar salad; rigatoni with marinara sauce; seasonal vegetables; rolls and butter; chef's dessert bar; half chicken option available for non-seafood eaters
Cost: \$80 per person
Reserve by midnight Saturday, Jan. 10.

January 19

Dante Club Members Dinner and Meeting

Times: 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner, 8 p.m. meeting
Menu: Italian lentil soup, chicken scallopini, penne pasta with creamy Parmesan sauce, roasted baby carrots, rolls and butter, Italian chocolate mousse
Cost: \$25 per member
Reserve by midnight Friday, Jan. 9.

January 25

Ultimate Football Watch Party

Times: 11:30 a.m. check-in, noon AFC championship game, 3:30 p.m. NFC championship game
Menu: Food and drink available to order
Cost: \$15 per person, includes beer or mocktail
Raffles and reserved front tables for members. Open to the public. Walk-ins welcome.

SAVE THE DATE: Cioppino feed, March 14



News, Notes and Otherwise

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Bylaws revision proposed

Revising dues and initiation fee information in the Article III Membership section of the Dante Club bylaws has been proposed.

This is the current wording relating to dues for classes 1 and 2 (regular and associate) members:

1. The dues for classes No. 1 and 2 will be \$100 per year.

Here are three proposals for revising this section:

1. **The dues for classes No. 1 and 2 will be \$1,000 per year.**
2. **The dues for classes No. 1 and 2 will be \$500 per year.**
3. **The dues for classes No. 1 and 2 will be \$250 per year.**

The second reading and voting on these proposed bylaws changes will take place Jan. 19 during the membership meeting.

Legacy fund donations

The Dante Club Legacy Fund was created during the pandemic as a way for members to help the club through a difficult period.

The Dante board of directors has decided to reinvigorate the fund as one of five strategies to pay off the club's remodeling mortgage. Donations to the fund will help retire the mortgage early.

The Legacy Fund has three donation levels: platinum, \$1,000 or more; gold, \$500; and silver, \$250. Donors will be recognized annually in the newsletter and at a members dinner.

They'll also be honored on a plaque in the Dante Event Center.

Donations will be applied to the mortgage principal each month.

Donors should mail or deliver a check to the Dante Club (attn: treasurer) and explain how the donor or a person honored by the donor should be recognized—what name should be on the plaque and in the newsletter. Donors may remain anonymous if they prefer.

Annual dinner payments

Members can pay monthly or annually for meeting-night dinners. When paying in advance, members cannot receive a refund or a credit for any dinner they don't attend, but they don't need to tell the event center if they can't attend, as they have already paid.

The annual payment option is a convenience for those who don't want to pay monthly.

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

Newsletter advertising

Dante's Inferno coordinator Tom Mezzanares and the Dante Club board thank our advertisers, whose support helps defray the costs of publishing the newsletter. Anyone interested in advertising in the *Inferno* in 2026 can email Tom at tjmezzan@gmail.com.

Club apparel

The Dante Club works with Premier Graph-x to brand clothing with the club logo, including hats, T-shirts, jackets and aprons. Order at danteclub.shopgraphx.com or

contact Mark Pedroncelli at peddc@surewest.net or 916-812-6729.

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

Pull-tab program

The Ronald McDonald House charges \$20 per night for parents to stay there while their children receive treatment at UC Davis Medical Center. The pull-tab program helps those who can't afford the cost by accepting donations of aluminum-can pull tabs, which it then sells for cash.

The Dante Club has donated to the program since March 2018. The Women's Club also participates. Our clubs have donated a total of 1,757.7 pounds of pull tabs to the Ronald McDonald House.

Scholarships

Graduating high school seniors seeking a Dante Club scholarship next year must submit applications by March 31. Applications are available online and at the Dante Event Center office.

Students must provide their grade-point average, two letters of recommendation, a personal essay and activities they've participated in during their high school years.

Applicants may apply online at <https://danteclub.com/scholarship.info/>. For questions or more information, they may email Richard Battistessa at drbattistessa@comcast.net.

Membership

We ended 2025 on a strong membership note. We added these men to our ranks: Andrew Varanelli,

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2026 Committees and Assignments

COMMITTEES

ADVISORY AND FINANCE

Matt Longo, Dan Calcagno, Bruce King, George Procida, Joseph Pasquinelli

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Ron Pane, George Procida, Frank Perri

BYLAWS

Ron Fiorica, Pat Orelli

MEMBERSHIP AND INVESTIGATIONS

Joe Bonanno, Don Agostinelli, Tom Mathews, Dennis Noble, Brian Noble

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

Tom Mezzanares

SCHOLARSHIP

Rich Battistessa, Tom Novi

SOCIAL

Joe Porata, Steve DeCristofaro, Mark Pedroncelli, Pat Orelli

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

BOCCE

Frank Bartucco, John Rizzardo

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Rich Battistessa

ENHANCING OUR ITALIAN CULTURE

Ralph DiLibero

WOMEN'S CLUB LIAISON

Dan Calcagno, Matt Longo, Pat Orelli

WELCOME DESK

Bill Maffei

CLUB APPAREL

Mark Pedroncelli

100th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Rich Battistessa

2026-2027 DANTE CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

- Dan Calcagno, president: dmcalcagno@aol.com, 916-677-7146
- Matt Longo, first vice president: longomb@sbcglobal.net, 916-397-5869
- Joe Porata, second vice president: jporata@sbcglobal.net, 530-368-7479
- Steve DeCristofaro, secretary: stefanodad@gmail.com, 916-752-3247
- Joseph Pasquinelli, treasurer: jmpasquinelli@gmail.com, (708) 805-5242

DIRECTORS

- Joe Bonanno: jbonanno@sbcglobal.net, 916-524-3952
- Ron Fiorica: rbfiorica@frontiernet.net, 916-687-6406
- Bruce King: bking23@hotmail.com, 916-709-1530
- Bill Maffei: mrmaffei@sbcglobal.net, 916-207-6837
- Pat Orelli: pat@apcpagroup.com, 916-369-2327
- Ron Pane: repane@icloud.com, 916-798-0111
- Mark Pedroncelli: peddc@surewest.net, 916-812-6729
- Frank Perri: perri1740@att.net, 916-337-5284
- George Procida: gprocida@gplandscape.com, 916-869-6591



December a time of generosity, gratitude and music

At our December meeting, we were once again delighted by members of the St. Francis High School Italian Club as they sang Christmas carols in Italian. They were wonderful, and they loved performing for us. Many thanks to their teacher, Rose Marie Bertini, for making it happen.

Thanks also go to the Dante Women's Club members who brought in goods for donation to the Bishop Gallegos Maternity Home. The home's executive director, Paulette Wylie, spoke at our meeting and then introduced Mindy, a former resident who is now an employee of the home. Mindy told her life story, including how she became homeless and eventually found a haven at Bishop Gallegos.

Mindy described how being at the home has saved her life and



DANTE WOMEN'S CLUB NEWS

Debra Cattuzzo

said she now has a purpose. She also brought her beautiful little girl, Marlowe, to the meeting.

We learned about the impact this wonderful organization has on pregnant women who are struggling with drug addiction, homelessness or domestic violence or those who just need a safe place to have their child. The home provides them with support—emotionally, physically, medically and psychologically.

The Bishop Gallegos home employees were so appreciative when I arrived in my Highlander filled with the sheets, towels, pajamas, household goods and personal care items for the mothers and babies that our members had



Paulette Wylie, right, executive director of Bishop Gallegos Maternity Home, speaks during the Dante Women's Club dinner meeting in December. At left is Mindy, a former resident and now employee of the home, who also spoke.

donated. We also donated \$1,395 in cash to the organization.

Thanks again to our members for being so generous.

And, of course, we have to acknowledge and thank the members who brought in pull tabs at both our November and December meetings. These seven women delivered huge bags of tabs: Gabrielle Rasi, Anna Tenderella, Linda Raridan, Sue Pricco, Anna Turner, Linda Banks

See DECEMBER, Page 7

2026 DANTE WOMEN'S CLUB BOARD

- **Debra Cattuzzo, president:** cattuzzod@gmail.com
- **Alyse DeFazio, vice president:** alysedefaz@aol.com
- **Tina Luchini Bowers, treasurer:** tebowers55@gmail.com
- **Susan Kasimatis, secretary:** sjk955@gmail.com

- **Anna Tenderella, hospitality:** annatenderella03@gmail.com
- **Carole Stefani-Meyers, past president:** cchivaro2@aol.com
- **Karol Buccola, past president:** karolrb55@gmail.com
- **Adrienne DeFazio, trustee/caller:** adefazio73@gmail.com
- **Nancy Doyle, trustee/caller:** ncdoyle59@gmail.com
- **Kathy Holberton, trustee/caller:** crystalgal@yahoo.com
- **Roseann Jamison, trustee/caller:** rosieado@yahoo.com
- **Donna O'Neil, trustee/caller:** rtg4005@gmail.com
- **Marie Waldron-Booth, historian:** bmbooth@aol.com



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



Dante Women's Club members come out in full festive force for their Dec. 8 dinner meeting, enjoying delicious food, Italian carol singing and camaraderie among their friends.



Dante Women's Club members, from left, Michelle Troja, Angelina Troja-Grant, Stacey Reardon, Suzie Franzoia Rozewski and Alex Hughes bask in a moment of warm friendship and happy holiday spirits.



Delighting in each other's company at the Dante Women's Club's Dec. 8 dinner are, from left, member Virginia Griffin, Olivia DeGennaro, Ava Dunham and member Andrea Matarazzo. Griffin, DeGennaro and Dunham are all members of Sacramento's Italian cultural dance troupe Balliamo.

And even more December fun ...

DAY OF WINE AND POSES



Dante Women's Club member Helen Mandredi Pierson, center, and her twin daughters, Cindy McBride, left, and Sandra Whaley, show off some of the offerings featured during the Sentivo Vineyards and Winery wine-tasting dinner at the Dante Club on Dec. 18. Pierson and her daughters are owners of the award-winning vineyard operation with multiple locations, including wine-tasting rooms in Suisun Valley in Fairfield and Fair Play in El Dorado County.



December

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

members to the club (their Italian family names are in parentheses): Ashlee Andreotti (Sciuchetti), Kelsey Cox (Romero), Ivana Arostegui (Saia) and Jane Muzzi. Welcome to our club!

We also had a fabulous Christmas raffle. Here are the winners: Carole Orelli, Biba basket of Italian items; Cathie La Pietra, free dinner; Danielle Cvitanov, Christmas cactus; Carol Perri, Coach purse; Natanlie Cvitanov, box of chocolates and two poinsettias; Melissa DeNigris, Christmas pillow, stocking hangers,

mugs and cookie jar; Patty Peter, Christmas bag, pillows, blanket, Biba cookbook and wine; Florinda Fantasia, Disney tote bag with three stuffed Disney mouse characters; Patty Galvez, \$80 gift certificate to Relles Florist; Michelle Affinito, \$25 See's gift card; Peggy Alexander, \$100 Mattone's gift card; Joanne Massoni, \$50 California Pizza Kitchen gift card; and Sue Stevens, Christmas basket of items for keeping warm. It was quite a generous raffle!

At our Jan. 12 meeting we will install officers and board members. Here's to 2026!

News, Notes and Otherwise

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sponsored by Roy Jones; Frank Valente, sponsored by Nick Canepa; Joe Lapenna; Nick Warren; William Sevdy; and Sean O'Donoghue, sponsored by Andy Pennisi. These four were voted in during the year and have been waiting until January for their formal induction: Jay Boundy;

Anthony Giannotti; Pete Reali; and Paul Rossotti, sponsored by Andy Cavagnaro. Among the newcomers are firefighters, a barber, a broker, a teacher and a software engineer.

Our membership stands at 233 — 214 active and 19 lifetime. In January, we will induct Jon Olivieri, a retired building

contractor. On tap for interviews are Johnny Magagnini—moving from the Bay Area where he was active in several Italian clubs—and Carl Britton, a smog technician and bouncer.

The membership committee may have changes. Anyone who wants to help us better our numbers should reach out.

President's Corner

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done. We have challenges, but we have a vibrant membership, with many committed to our success. We can always use more help, so I encourage members to consider what more they might contribute.

Please tell me or any board member what you like or dislike about our club's future. I will work on all good suggestions but will also be honest if I disagree. None of us will be here to celebrate our club's 200th year, so let's try to make the centennial the best it can be.

We've had some changes on the board, but I first want to recognize and thank those who have opted to not continue in their roles. I will start by naming

Dennis and Brian Noble, the package deal of father and son. We hope to keep them both on our membership committee.

All of us will feel the loss of not one but four past presidents from the board. Richard Battistessa, Jim Domino, Tom Mezzanares and Tom Novi did not run for re-election. We will miss the spirited debates at the Monday meetings and the legacy knowledge they possess, but their continued commitment to many of our activities is great. Their efforts will still guide Dante Club scholarships, publications, golf tournament, bocce and cioppino, to name a few activities. It will be hard without them, but we will adjust. Please let them know if you feel the same way as I do.

New to the board for 2026-27 are Joe Bonanno, Bruce King and Frank Perri. We got one past president back and still have Ron Pane, Ron Fiorica and Pat Orelli.

Twelve of the 15 board positions are filled. I encourage members to consider joining us or encourage someone they know to step forward. Direct any questions to me. Filling a spot on one of our committees can be held by any regular or associate member.

Elected positions on the board are Matt Longo, first vice president; Joe Porata, second vice president; Steve DeCristofaro, secretary; and Joe Pasquinelli, treasurer. Committee assignments have begun but will be in flux for a few months as we address our needs.

**Cuisine**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

communal culinary practices and cherished family rituals centered around cooking.

But now Italians can claim added cachet: The United Nations' cultural agency, the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, or UNESCO, has officially recognized the international impact and importance of Italian cuisine in all its vast variety.

On Dec. 10, during the 20th annual session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage held in New Delhi, India, UNESCO honored Italian cuisine with the agency's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity designation, marking the first time a nation's entire cuisine has earned the distinction.

"It is with great emotion and pride that Italy welcomes the decision of UNESCO," Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said in a public video post on Facebook after the honor was announced. "It is a historic recognition ... because for us Italians, cuisine is not just food or a collection of recipes. It is culture, tradition, work and well-being. Cooking means taking care of family, friends and guests. It means combining our history and our future, passing down ancient knowledge and constantly turning it into something new, protecting



the environment and defending biodiversity."

In her video post, Meloni made a point of singling out Italians who live abroad.

"It is also thanks to them that Italian cuisine and everything it represents is so highly appreciated around the world," she said.

"Today we celebrate an achievement that belongs to Italy but that enriches humanity as a whole. Thank you all, and long live Italian cuisine."

As Italians living abroad, we at the Dante Club shout "Hear, hear!" to Meloni's sentiment.

We are proud of the part we have played over the years in celebrating our ancestral country of origin, including the flavorful foods we hold dear. Many of us have happy memories of family tables laden with delectable dishes made by our nonnas.

In the Dante Club kitchen our chefs have always strived to serve

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Cuisine

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us meals featuring favorite Italian dishes. In November we celebrated the late local chef legend Biba Caggiano, whose restaurant for many years helped Sacramentans broaden their tastes for authentically crafted Italian cuisine.

And in true Italian communal spirit, we've even been known to share recipes: In 2024 and 2025, for example, Dante

Women's Club member

Adrienne DeFazio wrote a food column for our monthly newsletter, sharing her detailed takes on pasta alla puttanesca, lasagne in padella, torta fregolotta, caffè alla salentina and many more good foods.

So, yes, we love all things Italian—especially our food. And now, thanks to the UNESCO designation, all the world OFFICIALLY loves it, too. Long live Italian cuisine!



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Want to book a personal event? Don't delay

The Dante Event Center is booking special events for the 2026-2027 event seasons. Any men's and women's club members interested in hosting a personal event at the center should inquire about booking as early as possible.

To host an event, a member must first schedule a meeting with general manager Jennifer Peretti or event coordinator Ashley Perham.

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

A member's desired room and date will be placed on hold for two weeks to allow the member time to decide if the center is the best place for the

event, without the date getting booked in the meantime.

At the end of the two weeks, if confirmation and a security deposit have not been received, the date will be released to the public.

To confirm an event, a deposit must be paid and a contract must be signed and dated.

Members can rent a banquet room at a 50% discount for a personal event for themselves, for family members—limited to spouses, parents and children—or for a personally owned business.

Members with questions about the discount may contact club president Dan Calcagno.

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

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 530-368-7479 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 Tom Mezzanares at tjmezzan@gmail.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. All submissions are subject to editing for clarity, accuracy, style and length. 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 Dan Calcagno at 916-481-8638 or dmcalcagno@aol.com.