



**Make Dante Club
a priority in 2026**

DANTE'S INFERNO



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dan Calcagno

Changes and improvements in the works

The honeymoon has ended. Well wishes from many members and my personal adrenaline rush as the new president have been replaced with meetings, writings, opinions and suggestions. I'm not saying these are bad things, just that the volume is taking some getting used to.

We have much to get excited about over the coming months. Several efforts are in the planning stages for the Dante Club's 100th anniversary celebrations. Regional dinners, a fall weekend of activities and a festa are on the horizon. We'll provide some details in the *Inferno* and more in subsequent communications.

The Dante Event Center continues to present more

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DINNER WITH MEMORIES



A cardboard cutout of the late Frank Calcagno, longtime Dante Club member who died in 2022, gets a seat of honor at the far end of the table next to his brother, current club president Dan Calcagno, during February's Sunday Dinner. Both wear orange in honor of Frank's love for the San Francisco Giants. Joining the brothers at the table are Frank's son Kevin, and Kevin's wife, Dawn, front center, along with Frank's wife, Sandy, and other Calcagno family members and friends.

Membership drive seeks to beef up club roster

Over the past decade, Dante Club membership has slowly declined — from 380, the maximum allowed in the bylaws, to a bit over 200. This has resulted in a significant loss of revenue and fewer members available to help with various projects.

In response, current club president Dan Calcagno asked past presidents Rich Battistessa and Tom Novi to draft a membership-recruitment plan designed to significantly increase club membership. Rich and Tom

developed the plan, which Dan and the board of directors approved in February. It was then presented to all members at the February dinner and was warmly received.

Here are the key elements of the recruitment plan:

- Amend the bylaws to expand the definition of associate member to include non-Italians who have a strong interest in all matters Italian and in the Dante Club, as friends of Dante. Increase the maximum

See MEMBERSHIP, Page 6



NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

General manager's report

In February, the Dante Event Center catered several annual crab feeds by local groups, including the Construction Industry Education Foundation, with 577 guests, and the Meeting Professionals International Sacramento/Sierra Nevada, with 130 guests.

We look forward to the spring with our Macchia Wine Dinner and Tasting event on March 24, annual Easter egg hunt on April 4, "A Night in Vegas" event on April 17 and Spring Craft Fair on April 26.

Because of increasing costs in labor, food, liquor and overhead fees, the Sunday Family Dinner price increased in January to \$25 for adults and \$15 for children 12 and younger. We appreciate Dante Club members' continuing support of the dinner and hope to see many attendees throughout the year.

Members can rent a banquet room at the event center at a 50% discount for personal events. To learn more about the process, contact club president Dan Calcagno, send an email to info@danteclub.com or call 916-925-8230.

Bocce

The Dante Club will kick off its spring bocce season with a Saturday of open play on March 21. This promises to be a fun session with all teams participating in short game play.

The bocce committee would like to invite new players to participate in this social event. Play will begin at 10 a.m., and refreshments will be served during the lunch hour. For those who have never rolled a bocce ball, the event could be a great time to try it out.

The Saturday league has eight teams, and we are looking to add people. We can create new teams for bocce newcomers. Four players is the minimum number for a team.

We also have a Tuesday group for those unavailable on Saturdays. Tuesday bocce will start March 31.

The Saturday and Tuesday teams are both invited to the open-play session.

Bocce is a great game and great fun. We encourage everyone to come experience a little of our Italian heritage during this 100th anniversary year of the Dante Club.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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

March 9

Dante Women's Club Dinner

Time: 4:30 p.m. cocktails, 6 p.m. dinner

Menu: Irish clementine cucumber salad, braised corned beef, cabbage with roasted carrots, boiled Yukon potatoes, rolls with butter, mint chocolate gelato

Cost: \$25 members, \$30 guests

Reservations are now closed.

March 16

Dante Club Members Dinner and Meeting

Times: 6 p.m. cocktails, 7 p.m. dinner, 8 p.m. meeting

Menu: Irish clementine cucumber salad, braised corned beef, cabbage with roasted carrots, boiled Yukon potatoes, rolls with butter, mint chocolate gelato

Cost: \$25 per member

Reserve by midnight Friday, March 6.

March 24

Macchia Wine Dinner and Tasting

Times: 5:30 p.m. cocktails, 6 p.m. dinner

Menu: Green salad, stuffed meatball, ciambatta, lamb chops and orzo, chocolate molten cake, vanilla gelato; different wines to accompany each course

Cost: \$90 per person

Reserve by midnight Monday, March 16.

April 4

Dante Club Easter Egg Hunt

Times: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Menu: Hot dogs, chips, sodas, juices, popsicles, ice cream sandwiches, complimentary beer for adults

Cost: Free for members and children; no-host bar

Reserve by midnight Saturday, March 28.

April 12

Sunday Family Dinner

Times: 4 p.m. cocktails, 5 p.m. seating, 5:15 p.m. first course

Menu: Insalata mista, rigatoni with marinara, pork loin, zucchini and squash, spumoni with biscotti

Cost: \$25 adults, \$15 children 12 and younger

Reserve by midnight Thursday, April 2.

**News, Notes and Otherwise**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Buildings and grounds

Several small maintenance tasks were needed in February. Special thanks go to Ron Pane, Matt Longo and Frank Perri for their help in addressing them.

The buildings and grounds committee is researching options for a new refrigerator for the kitchen area. The Dante Club has a three-door, reach-in unit that was purchased in 1988. It has given us more than 36 years of daily service but now has given up and needs replacing. The new unit should be in place by the end of February.

With spring just around the corner, it will soon be time to erect the outdoor tent. The committee will send an email in early April to schedule dates for volunteers. All those who helped in the past will receive the email. Anyone who wants their name added to the list of volunteers should email gprocida@gplandscape.com.

Our first official event under the tent will be April 18, so the week before that is most likely when we'll set up the tent.

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 monthly.

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.

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 Dante Women's Club also participates.

Our two clubs have donated 1,757.7 pounds of pull tabs to the Ronald McDonald House, which has raised more than \$1,800.

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.

Scholarships

Graduating high school seniors seeking a Dante Club scholarship next year have until the end of this month, March 31, to submit their applications.

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 a description of activities they've participated in during their high school years.

Applications and additional documents must be submitted to danteclubscholarship@gmail.com.

For questions, students should email Richard Battistessa at drbattistessa@comcast.net.

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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

Don Agostinelli, Steve Lavezzo, Colin Orelli, Bill Maffei

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

Tom Mezzanares

SCHOLARSHIP

Rich Battistessa, Tom Novi, Mark Pedroncelli

SOCIAL

Joe Porata, Steve DeCristofaro, Pat Orelli, Joe Bonanno,
Tom Mathews

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

BOCCE

Rich Battistessa, Frank Bartucco, John Rizzardo, Jim Dimino,
Nick Canepa

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Rich Battistessa

ENHANCING OUR ITALIAN CULTURE

Ralph DiLibero

WOMEN'S CLUB LIAISON

Dan Calcagno, Bill Maffei, Joe Bonanno

100th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Dan Calcagno, Rich Battistessa, Joe Porata and a crew
of hundreds

More assignments and changes to be announced.

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



Fun icebreaker builds bonds in club community

Under a glittering red Valentine's Day tabletop, we enjoyed a lovely February dinner meeting filled with good food, conversation and exciting updates. I presented a short video highlighting the Dante Club website, and Francesca Carleson introduced a fun new icebreaker for our club: the Ciao Chat Challenge.

The Ciao Chat Challenge will officially begin at our March meeting. Members who choose to participate will receive a game card featuring six questions. Players must introduce themselves to members they don't yet know, ask one of the questions on the card, and write that person's name under the corresponding question. Each question must be answered by a different member never met before.

Players then place their completed cards in a box on the



DANTE WOMEN'S CLUB NEWS

Debra Cattuzzo

raffle table. At each meeting, one completed card will be drawn, and that lucky member will win a free dinner.

This is a wonderful way to meet new people, learn names and strengthen our club community.

Also in February, a sign-up sheet was passed around for members interested in shadowing the check-in process. Each month, two members will be selected to learn the process so they can occasionally volunteer to take charge.

This will allow more members to enjoy the social hour while also helping everyone become more familiar with fellow members' names. We were thrilled to have 15 members sign up to volunteer.



Women's Club members, from left, Susan Braun, Paula Fendick, Patty Galvez and Gloria Gomez enjoy happy hour with a surprise visit from Patty's husband, Steven Galvez.

We warmly introduced new members Mary Ann Beltrami and Sherrie Swass (Italian name Locatelli). We were also delighted to welcome back Jeanette Matteucci and her daughter,

See ICEBREAKER, Page 7

2026 DANTE WOMEN'S CLUB BOARD

- Debra Cattuzzo, president: cattuzzod@gmail.com
- Anna Tenderella, hospitality: annatenderella03@gmail.com
- Kathy Holberton, trustee/caller: crystalgal@yahoo.com
- Alyse DeFazio, vice president: alysedefaz@aol.com
- Carole Stefani-Meyers, past president: cchivaro2@aol.com
- Roseann Jamison, trustee/caller: rosieado@yahoo.com
- Tina Luchini Bowers, treasurer: tebowers55@gmail.com
- Karol Buccola, past president: karolrb55@gmail.com
- Donna O'Neil, trustee/caller: rtg4005@gmail.com
- Susan Kasimatis, secretary: sjk955@gmail.com
- Adrienne DeFazio, trustee/caller: adefazio73@gmail.com
- Marie Waldron-Booth, historian: bmbooth@aol.com
- Nancy Doyle, trustee/caller: ncdoyle59@gmail.com



Membership

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

number of associate members from 15% to 33% of the membership. These proposed changes are moving through the bylaws change process and will be voted on in the near future.

- Ask the Dante Women’s Club to encourage husbands of their members to join the Dante Club.
- As a welcome, offer new members a complimentary first meal.

- To better expose Dante to potential members, encourage current members to invite their friends to the monthly members dinners and Sunday night dinners.

- Emphasize the membership drive each month in the *Inferno* newsletter and at member events.

Members’ help is needed to make this plan work. We ask everyone to invite their good friends to the dinners and other Dante events. Our message to members: “You are Dante, and Dante is you!”

President’s Corner

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

opportunities for us to gather and celebrate our Italian culture and heritage. Last year wine dinners and murder mystery events received rave reviews, so we’ll bring them back starting this month. A new venture is a casino night with a Las Vegas vibe.

With the increasing number of events, members may not be able to attend them all. I encourage them to pick and choose events that will put a smile on their faces.

We have begun taking a more streamlined approach to our members meetings.

We now will send out facts and finance information for review before we get together so the business portion of our meetings goes quicker. Members will be able to prepare their questions and comments ahead of time rather than rely on seat-of-the-pants discussions during meetings. In addition, I remind everyone that they may attend

our board meetings at 6 p.m. on the second Monday of each month. Members must let me or another board member know and must RSVP for dinner. The meetings run until about 8:30 p.m.

Our club membership continues to ebb and flow. We have had a more than 95% membership renewal rate for 2026. Each year there are always several people who don’t renew, for their own reasons, and we will miss them.

Half a dozen men have joined our club in the past few months. One of our newest inductees has even taken applications to two of his friends for their consideration.

We hope that this, coupled with a membership drive championed by two past presidents (read about that beginning on Page 1), will help us regain some of the numbers we used to see on our roster.

All our social activities come with the financial side of the organization, which is drawing a great deal of my and many

others’ time. Members can expect to see information soon about price increases, with supporting data and rationales for why the changes are needed.

I hope all members see it as their responsibility to speak up if they disagree with the proposed changes. It is everyone’s responsibility to examine whether the club can continue as it is or if tweaks are justified for the betterment of the club.

As always, I invite members to tell me their ideas, and so far many have. Some ideas are a bit out there, but I will listen to all. Not every idea will be implemented, but I promise that those that ignite a spark will receive an honest listen.

Many small tasks around our club need members’ thoughts and hands. If I don’t request help directly, members can still approach me or any board member and tell us what they can do, even if they just want to share their opinions about events or projects.



Icebreaker

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Nate Castagnolia. Jeanette had been away from the club for the past five years, and we are so happy to have her back.

As some might already know, member Linda Franzoia-Fiel owns Stingers Sports Pub at La Riviera and College Town drives. She also recently purchased Club 2-Me bar at 47th and J streets.

Several members of our previous board — myself included — spent a lot of time at Club 2-Me during our college years. We even played volleyball for the bar and proudly won a first-place trophy.

Speaking of winners, here is the lineup of prize winners in our February raffle: Linda Buchioni,



All smiles at the February dinner are, from left, Cathy Bertolani, Marissa Barbero, Ashlee Andreotti and Franzi Lopez.

\$50 cash door prize; Linda Reardon, free dinner; Elaine Shaedler, baguette and dip tray with baguette and tapenade; Sue Olson, \$25 See's gift card; Sophia Grisaffi, Instant Pot with tea towel; Teresa Olivieri, \$25 Cinemark gift card; Debra Pannatoni, silver champagne bucket with prosecco and chocolates; Cathie Agostinelli, pot of red tulips with accent pillow; Linda Reardon, flavored olive oils and vinegars; Marissa Barbero, Scrub Boys Car Wash gift card; Roseann Jamison, valentine chocolate cake with tea towels; and Natalie Cvitanov, \$25 Boudin Bakery gift card.

Thanks go to Alyse DeFazio and others who brought in pull tabs in February.

Our Dante Club centennial anniversary celebration committee chairwomen, Rena Zellars and Melissa DeNigris, and I have decided we want to organize a daytime Italian Festa at the Dante Event Center on Sunday, June 28.

We need members' help! We are looking for memories and

ideas for Italian-themed booths, games, food and entertainment. We would love to replicate Italian festas of the past, welcoming families from Dante as well as the general public.

I encourage women's club members to send me their ideas and let me know if they can help us put together an incredible celebration.

I'll have more information coming soon.



New and existing club members enjoying their evening are, from left, Sarah Mistler, Angela Pane Klier, Amy Behr, Libby Bertacchi and Sandy Bertacchi.

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News, Notes and Otherwise

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

Social

The Dante Club will celebrate its 100th anniversary throughout this year.

The Men's Social Dinner, a new event, will feature four meeting nights with regional dinners exploring the heritage of our membership. The events will be for members and their guests. A short presentation will describe the regions and menu being highlighted, and a brief business meeting will follow dinner.

Our first social dinner on Monday, April 20, will be a great way to introduce potential members to the club for our next 100 years.

The club encourages would-be chefs to enter their best sauces, gravies or sугos in a first-ever Dante Club Pasta Sauce Cook-Off in April. It will be held during the Men's Social Dinner.

Other attendees will taste and judge the chefs' offerings during cocktail hour from 6 to 7 p.m. in the Tuscan Room, with dinner afterward.

The winner will have bragging rights for the year, and maybe the

kitchen will use the winning recipe at a dinner, who knows?

Chefs must make 4 quarts of sauce for tasting. We hope eight or more members sign up. Email Joe Porata at jporata@sbcglobal.net for more details.

Membership

In February the membership committee began a new applicant-approval process.

We interviewed Tony Van Curen and Johnny Magagnini. Tony was a research scientist at the University of California, Davis. His wife is Marian. Johnny and his wife, Trizia, relocated from the Bay Area to Roseville.

What was new is that they were both approved by the general membership and inducted into the club on the same night. Please help Tony and Johnny feel welcome at upcoming events and meetings.

Also inducted in February were Anthony Giannotti and Carl Britton. They had been approved some months ago, but conflicts prevented them from returning. They attended in February, so now they're full-fledged members. Make them feel a part of us.

We now have no one on the waiting list. One candidate is working on his application but has not mailed it in yet. We have 212 regular members and an additional 19 lifetime members on our rolls. On Page 1, read about an effort to increase these totals.

To date, 195 have renewed their Dante Club memberships for 2026 — including three lifetime members, even though they aren't



New Dante Club member Johnny Magagnini, left, gets a hearty welcome from his sponsor, Colin Orelli.

obligated to do so. Fifteen members have received renewal reminders, and four have said they won't be returning.

In the past two months, two of our members, Frank Cemo and Robert Lanza, have passed away. We will miss them.

In February, John Finegan won our member-attendance raffle. He was not present, so the March prize will be \$35. Winners must be present.

The committee encourages members to invite people they know to consider joining our club — family members, friends, guys on the street looking for an Italian organization and spouses of Dante Women's Club members. Applications are available online, from committee members and at the Dante Event Center office.



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 Mezzanara 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.

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