



**Summer barbecue
set for July 20**

DANTE'S INFERNO



**PRESIDENT'S
CORNER**

Dan Calcagno

*Price increases
carefully studied*

The entire board and I have received a lot of questions and comments lately about the Dante Event Center price increases. Thanks to all those who let us know their opinions. It's far better for us to know what's on members' minds than to face silence, forcing us to guess.

So I want to help everyone understand what's happening behind the scenes.

The price changes have not come without a lot of discussion and review of event center practices.

At least three efforts examining event planning, menu preparation and staffing have been worked on for the past few months, and recommendations are in various stages of implementation. Costs generally have increased

See PRESIDENT'S CORNER, Page 6



Showing off their certificates of achievement are, from left, Dante Club scholarship winners Maria Rizzardo, Gianna Rizzardo, Ava Dunham, Mathew Ielati, Ben Monson, Cade Rucker, Stella DeRoss and Audrey LaDuke. A ninth winner, Benjamin Lopez, is not pictured. The students were honored during the club's June 18 dinner.

BRIGHT STARS

Students' academic excellence earns Dante Club scholarships

The Dante Club awarded \$1,500 scholarships to nine deserving students at the club's annual scholarship awards ceremony, held during the June 18 members dinner.

Honored were recent high school graduates Matthew Ielati, Ava Dunham, Ben Monson, Stella DeRoss, Cade Rucker, Maria Rizzardo, Audrey LaDuke, Gianna Rizzardo and Benjamin Lopez.

During the evening, the students were introduced to club members and each was presented with a certificate of achievement. The students shared details of their

college plans, highlighting their academic goals and aspirations.

In awarding scholarships every year, the Dante Club continues its longtime commitment to fostering educational opportunities and recognizing outstanding student achievements.

The scholarships are intended to help support students as they pursue higher education and contribute to their communities.

The nine 2026 graduating seniors represent a high standard for academic excellence and strong commitment to community service.

See SCHOLARSHIPS, Page 7



NEWS, NOTES AND OTHERWISE

General manager's report

June was filled with exciting, memorable events for Dante Club members and the larger community.

The murder mystery dinner on June 5 was once again a favorite, earning enthusiastic feedback from guests, who enjoyed an evening of entertainment, dining and fun. We will host another murder mystery dinner on Nov. 13.

Throughout June, we hosted graduation celebrations, including multiple events for the University of California at Davis. It's always rewarding to be part of such meaningful milestones and to welcome families as they celebrate these important achievements.

Our Tricolore Pasta and Sausage Festa was another wonderful event, bringing people together on June 20 to celebrate 100 years of Dante Club members personally hosting and serving the community. The event showcased the spirit, tradition and volunteerism that continue to make our organization so special.

In July, we enter what is traditionally and expectedly our quietest month of the year. Despite the seasonal slowdown, however, we still have an exciting event lineup planned, including our annual members and friends summer barbecue, another private graduation celebration, a summer wedding and a 300-person reunion.

We look forward to continuing to provide memorable experiences for our members and guests. See Page 6 for information on how members can book the event center for personal celebrations at a discounted rate.

Bocce

Super Seniors, a bocce team from the Dante Club, secured second place and \$120 each in the East Portal California Cup Tournament.

The team of Romano Luchini, Jim Luttig, Dennis Smith and Frank Bartucco took the No. 2 spot in the Silver Cup division, edging out 24 teams from out of town. Congratulations, Super Seniors.

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

Prices listed are for credit card payments online. Call club for cash and check prices.

July 12

Sunday Family Dinner

Time: 4 p.m. cocktails and to-go orders, 5 p.m. seating, 5:15 p.m. first course

Menu: House salad, pork saltimbocca alla Romana, seasonal vegetables, focaccia breadsticks, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$29 adults, \$16.50 children 12 and younger
Reserve by midnight Friday, July 3.

July 20

Members and Friends Summer Barbecue

Time: 5 p.m. cocktails, 6 p.m. buffet and steaks

Menu: Pasta salad; rolls and butter; corn on the cob; baked potato bar; uncooked New York steaks for do-it-yourself grilling; garlic and oil, sautéed mushrooms, caramelized onions and steak seasoning; build-your-own ice cream sundae bar with chocolate and vanilla ice cream and assorted toppings

Cost: \$41 per person
Reserve by midnight Friday, July 10. Event outdoors under the tent.

August 2

Sunday Family Dinner

Time: 4 p.m. cocktails and to-go meals, 5 p.m. seating, 5:15 p.m. first course

Menu: Insalata mista, housemade garlic bread, spaghetti and meatballs, seasonal vegetables, chef's choice dessert

Cost: \$29 adults, \$16.50 children age 12 and younger
Reserve by midnight Friday, July 24.

August 11

Dinner and Wine Tasting, featuring Oak Farm Vineyards

Time: 5:30 p.m. cocktails, 6 p.m. dinner and wine service

Menu: Grilled peach, arugula, honey and burrata salad; sweet corn risotto with Parmesan and chive oil; mushroom ravioli with brown butter, crispy sage and shaved pecorino; coffee-rubbed sirloin with potato puree, charred broccolini and red wine demi glace; dark chocolate bread pudding with fig compote, cherry and port reduction; and vanilla gelato

Cost: \$100 per person
Reserve by midnight Sunday, Aug. 2. Limited capacity.

**News, Notes and Otherwise**

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Buildings and grounds

June was relatively quiet for the buildings and grounds committee. On the task list were a clogged drain, a loose handle and an exit sign needing adjustments — overall, nothing major. Thanks to all who helped make these minor repairs.

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 reinvigorated the fund as one of five strategies to help pay off the club's remodeling mortgage.

Donations to the fund will help retire the mortgage early.

The Legacy Fund has three levels for donations: platinum, \$1,000 or more; gold, \$500; and silver, \$250. Donors are honored annually in the newsletter, at a members dinner and on a plaque in the Dante Event Center.

Donations are 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. As of March, our two clubs have donated 1,823.4 pounds of pull tabs. At the current \$1.09 exchange rate, we have raised \$1,987.50 or 99 nights for the Ronald McDonald House.

Annual dinner payments

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

Membership

The membership committee is proud to introduce our newest addition to the Dante Club: Art Vallergera. Sponsored by Tom Novi, Art was interviewed and inducted during the June meeting. We encourage members to welcome

Art when they next see him.

With the recent change to our bylaws, all men (Friends of Dante) will now be allowed to submit an application to join the club when sponsored by an existing member in good standing. The application form is available online.

Our membership waiting list is now empty, but we expect that to change soon.

Dante membership drive

Earlier this year, past presidents Rich Battistessa and Tom Novi reported on current president Dan Calcagno's decision to initiate a Dante Club membership drive, a recognition that a robust membership contributes greatly to a robust Dante Club.

Elements of the membership drive included asking the Dante Women's Club to encourage their husbands to participate, offering new members a complimentary dinner along with members inviting their friends to Sunday night and members dinners.

The plan also included a proposal to expand the definition of associate member in the bylaws to allow a limited number of non-Italians to join if they have a strong interest in all matters Italian and the Dante Club.

At the June members dinner, attendees voted to approve the proposal. As a result, friends who love the Dante Club experience can now be considered for membership. Members may nominate both their

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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: patrickjo@gmail.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



Limoncello takes the cake at memorable meal

With its sunny decorations and fabulous food, the Dante Women's Club's June dinner meeting was a wonderful kickoff to summer.

Many members raved about the delicious lasagna, but the true showstopper of the evening was the limoncello cake for dessert.

The cake was such a hit that treasurer Tina Luchini Bowers invited chef Adam Rodriguez and general manager Ashley Ponder to take a well-deserved bow for preparing such a memorable meal.

Vice president Alyse DeFazio graciously conducted the meeting in my absence. She welcomed one of our newest additions, Cathy Horn, and presented her with a membership flag pin.

We are delighted that Cathy has joined our club and look



DANTE WOMEN'S CLUB NEWS

Debra Cattuzzo

forward to getting to know her better.

Raffle prize winners of the evening were Kathy Holberton, \$50 cash door prize; Bianca Ferri, free dinner; Julia Noto, Leatherby's gift basket; Kathryn Beltrami, \$25 Corti Bros. gift card; Cathy Maffei, taco sectioned serving tray with napkins; Debbie O'Donoghue, \$20 Peet's gift card; and Janine Orsi, \$25 Amazon gift card and hydrangea gift basket. Congratulations to all the winners.

Alyse ran the meeting so efficiently that there was time to play four lively games of bingo.

Congratulations to these bingo winners, who each brought home \$10 in cash: Carolyn Bray, Cindy



Ready to enjoy a lasagna dinner in June are, from left, Dante Women's Club members Dawn Calcagno, Sandy Calcagno, Cathie Agostinelli, Eleanor Ford, Cathy O'Donoghue and Sally Wilson.

Collins, Debra Jefcoat and Carol Orelli.

Although our regular dinner meetings will take a summer break, we hope to see many members at the various events at the Dante Event Center throughout the season.

Our dinner meetings will resume Monday, Sept. 14. We look forward to gathering again on that date.

Have a great summer!

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: rtdg4005@gmail.com
- Marie Waldron-Booth, historian: bmbooth@aol.com



News, Notes and Otherwise

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Italian and non-Italian friends who would be strong club members. So take a moment to talk to a friend who would be a good addition to Dante. The membership application is on the club website. Questions about the process? Call membership committee chairman Don Agostinelli at 916-451-1155.

Club apparel

The Dante Club works with 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 our apparel coordinator Mark Pedroncelli at peddc@surewest.net or 916-812-6729. For special orders, call Julie Brown at 916-787-0603 or email her at julie@premieregraphx.net.

Book a personal event at Dante Event Center

The Dante Event Center is booking special events for the 2026-2028 event seasons. Any 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 Ashley Ponder. 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 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 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 the Dante Event Center at 916-925-8230.

President's Corner

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and our efforts to minimize the impact have helped, but they haven't been enough to prevent a bump in prices.

All of this is occurring at the same time as seasonal attendance goes down, which is normal in the summer months. Fewer members have attended Sunday and members dinners

and other special events, likely because of summer vacation schedules and personal financial decisions. The event center is experiencing the same downturn with private bookings.

So what can Dante Club members do about this? They can continue to support the club, attend events they enjoy and remember what they like about being around the building with

their fellow members. They can become ambassadors for the event center and encourage friends and business associates to consider booking it for their next celebration.

I encourage everyone to continue sharing their thoughts with the board and me. This is our club, and we are the ones to make it the best it can be.

Support our paesanos

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Owner
Zellars Concrete, LLC
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Sacramento, CA 95860
www.zellarsconcrete.com
bill@zellarsconcrete.com





Scholarship recipient Gianna Rizzardo, second from left, joins her supporters for dinner. With her at the table are, from left, Haiden Hertel, uncle Ed Bubienco, aunt Lisa Bubienco, grandfather John Rizzardo, father John Rizzardo and mother Teresa Rizzardo.

Scholarships

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The students were selected from among a competitive pool of applicants, each showcasing an impressive blend of academic excellence and personal character.

The Dante Club is proud to support these future leaders and look forward to seeing the great things they will accomplish.



Scholarship recipient Maria Rizzardo, second from left, sits with, from left, grandfather John Rizzardo, Owen Mallia, father David Rizzardo, mother Jule Rizzardo and uncle Gene Rizzardo.



Seated at the scholarship dinner, are, clockwise from far right, Ray Ingle, Curtis Laduke, Brendin Mitchell, scholarship recipient Audrey Laduke, Jamie Laduke, Sue Ingle, Christine Ingle and Tom Matranga. Standing at center is Geno Bartucco.



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@glandscape.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 dmcacagno@aol.com.

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