



Newsletter ~ Fall 2023

Dante Alighieri Society of Pueblo

P.O. Box 1561, Pueblo, Colorado 81002

- President:** Michael G Salardino • **1st Vice President:** Chris Picicci • **2nd Vice President:** Frank Sagona
• **Treasurer:** Joey Gavato • **Corresponding Secretary:** Donna Gutierrez • **Recording Secretary:** Dorothy DeNiro
Committee Chairs: **Education:** Chris Picicci • **Membership:** Frank and Vivian Sagona • **Historian:** Patty Retzlaff
• **Events:** Warren Diodosio • **Reservations:** Carol Arias, Betty Giltner, and Janet Sciortino
• **Scholarship:** Donna Stutzman
• **Past Presidents:** Donna Stutzman, Barbara Ferrero, Rocco DeNiro
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Mission Statement

The mission of the Dante Alighieri Society of Pueblo, Colorado is to promote and preserve the Italian language, culture and customs in Pueblo and Southern Colorado regions.

To achieve this mission, the following goals are set forth:

To award scholarships to Pueblo area senior high school students to continue the study of the Italian language at the university level and to sponsor cultural and social activities to enhance the Italian American community.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

REGIONAL DINNER (featuring food of Sicily)

The Pueblo Country Club

November 18th @ 5:30 PM

CHRISTMAS PARTY

At the Home of Rocco & Dorothy DeNiro

3101 High Street, Pueblo, CO

December 10th @ 5:30 PM

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Ciao Amici,

It has been awhile since our last newsletter. In the meantime we hosted another excellent Scholarship Lunch (thank you Donna Stutzman) and a fun Festa. Thank you to Warren and Warren Diodosio for bailing us out when, somehow, the ever important dolce “got through the cracks.” Scrambling by the Diodosios produced Dairy Queen Dilly Bars which were the hit of the festa! From now on, we will refer to them as Dili Bars to give them an Italian look. Or “gelato on a stick”. Viva Dairy Queen! (Viva Regina dei Latticini)!

Although we all know many examples of contributions made by Italian immigrants coming to America, I was recently enlightened to find yet another. We all know that the food in New Orleans (Creole etc), is famous and delicious. Well, I am just finishing a book called “Creole Italian, Sicilian immigrants and the shaping of New Orleans food culture”. Many Sicilians, including my own family, arrived in America via New Orleans. Now we know that without our ancestors, the food in New Orleans would not be what it is today!

Speaking of Sicilian food, it will be featured at our Regional dinner this coming November 18th, at the Pueblo Country Club. We have added new members, but we welcome more. Unlike other ethnic organizations, you only have to love Italian, not be Italian to be a part of Dante Alighieri!

Michael G. Salardino, President

Dante Alighieri Society of Pueblo

BERGAMO EXPERIENCE

From February to June, I had the most wonderful time studying abroad in Bergamo, Italy. It was my first time traveling alone, being in Italy alone, and living on my own, therefore I was quite nervous in the beginning. I spent my first two weeks getting to know my way around Bergamo. I was in awe of how beautiful the city was. As someone who likes both modern and medieval atmospheres, the city was a perfect mix for me. It was a bit difficult in the beginning as I lived in the lower city, Citta Basa, and I had classes in the upper city, Citta Alta. I didn't understand public transportation yet nor the best ways to get from the lower city to the upper, but I had a lot of help from my roommates who I had quickly bonded with. They helped me learn the bus system which then made traveling around Bergamo less complicated and intimidating.

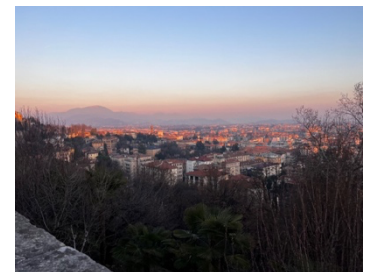
While in Italy, I spent my weekdays studying in the Dipartimento di Lingue, Letterature e Culture Straniere. I took classes in art history, tourism, photography, and Italian. I found the lectures different from what I was used to in the States as the lectures rarely included assignments and gave students more time freedom. I enjoyed attending the lectures as I was learning topics I had not studied before, and I was able to make friends in class. Also, after classes, I would attend gatherings and parties for Erasmus students. They



were organized by two international student organizations, ESN and AEGEE. The parties helped me make friends with other students from all over the world. Furthermore, on the weekends I traveled around Italy with some of my friends. Some of the places I went to were Milan, Lovere, Siremone, Lago di Como, Brescia, Lecco, and many others. I took trains and metros for the first time in my life which was exciting for me. One of my favorite trips I took was to Florence. My friends and I stayed there for four days and created our itinerary.

Moreover, not only did studying abroad allow me to travel around Italy, but it also allowed me to travel around Europe. I traveled to two other countries, Austria, and Slovakia. It was shocking how easy and inexpensive it was to travel to and from countries. I was happy to explore both Austria and Slovakia with a friend of mine. I was able to experience cultures, foods, and languages I hadn't before.

In the end, my favorite part of my study abroad experience was meeting others. I made many friends who I know will be around for a lifetime. Many friendships felt like we had been friends long before we met. The friendships I made, helped make my time in Bergamo fun, comfortable, and worth it.



Additionally, I would like to thank the Dante Alighieri Society for helping me with my study abroad experience. Without their contribution and interest in my studies, study abroad would have been much more difficult. Again, thank you to the Dante Alighieri Society!

A Book on the Life and Legacy of Vincent Massari

Recently, Alessio De Stefano published *Vincent Massari: Cronache di un abruzzese d'America* (Radici Edizioni) on the life and legacy of the Italian immigrant from Abruzzo. Mr. Massari (1898-1976) left Italy when he was only 17 years old entering the US through Ellis Island. He made his way to Las Animas County and eventually to Pueblo, Colorado. He quickly realized that working in the mines was not for him. He eventually became a writer and politician, and served in the Colorado House of Representatives for 10 years as a representative of Pueblo County. He was also elected to the Colorado Senate three consecutive times, beginning in 1964. Mr. Massari was a strong advocate for workers' rights and unions. He was founder of *Marsica Nuova* and wrote for *l'Unione* newspapers. Mr. Massari was a fierce advocate for making sure that Southern Colorado State College became the University of Southern Colorado, a four-year college serving the needs of our community and region. With a passion for education, and with his monetary support, Senator Massari's legacy lives on in Pueblo. Every day, hundreds of athletes, faculty and staff use the Massari Arena on the CSU-Pueblo campus. If you would like to obtain a copy of the book, you can find it on Amazon.

Benvenuta, Valentina!

The Dante Alighieri Society of Pueblo would like to welcome the student athlete, Valentina Brienza to Pueblo. Valentina is a CSU-Pueblo tennis player from Basilicata, Italy, and a transfer student from the University of the District of Columbia. Valentina is currently a junior, studying Agricultural Business. She is excited to begin working in the CSU-Pueblo John L. Garcia Language Center as an Italian tutor. Valentina is looking forward to sharing more about her country, language and culture with the campus and the greater Pueblo community. She is happy to speak about the beauty and traditions of southern Italy with Dante Alighieri members. The landscape of Southern Colorado reminds her of Basilicata and she is happy to be living and studying here.

Join Us for Italian Conversation

Dante Alighieri members are invited to join CSU-Pueblo students and italophiles for Italian conversation and fun at Thunderzone Pizzeria (2270 Rawlings Blvd) on Tuesday evenings from 7-8 PM during the semester. The meetings are an opportunity to build community in an informal setting while being able to practice speaking Italian. All Dante members are welcome to join in these discussions, and all proficiency levels are welcome from beginners to native speakers. The weekly meetings will start on September 12th and end on December 5th. There will be no meeting on November 21st during CSU-Pueblo's fall break.

CSU-Pueblo in Torino

A group of 15 CSU-Pueblo students traveled to Torino, Italy for an organized short-term study abroad program. Professors David Volk and Chris Picicci organized the June 2023 inaugural Torino experience. Students enrolled in Italian and music classes while in Italy for university credit. The participants attended class in the mornings and visited several different museums in the afternoons, including the National Museum of Cinema in the Mole Antonelliana (the symbol of Torino), the National Automobile Museum, and the Egyptian Museum, to name a few. Students participated in organized excursions to Lago d'Orta and the island of San Giulio, Milan, the Italian Riviera, Asti, Bra (the city where the Slow Food Movement began) and L'Università delle Scienze Gastronomiche in Pollenzo. Students gained first-hand knowledge of the cuisine and wine of the Piedmont region, and learned about the essential role that Torino and the Royal House of Savoy had on the Risorgimento, also known as the unification of the Italian peninsula. Students enjoyed their time in Italy and appreciated the beauty of Italy's urban and rural landscapes, savored the country's delicious foods and interacted with its delightful people. When asked what piece of advice she would give students about

traveling to Torino, Shaylan Hutchinson wrote in the exit survey: “Take the trip. I would do this trip again in a heartbeat if given the chance. This is the perfect way to experience the world and gain more knowledge while studying. The trip gave me so many new friendships and memories that I will forever be grateful for. So take the opportunity and go to Italy. You will not regret it.”

Italian at CSU-Pueblo

Across the United States several foreign languages have seen a decline in enrollment. Because of this, CSU-Pueblo’s Italian minor program is at risk of being cancelled. If you are concerned about maintaining all levels of Italian at the university, please voice your thoughts and support by contacting our fellow Dante member and the chair of the Department of English and World Languages, Dr. Alegría Ribadeneira at alegria.ribadeneira@csupueblo.edu, Tel.(719) 549-2887 or write to her at CSU-Pueblo / 2200 Bonforte Blvd. / Center for IHHI, Suite #206 / Pueblo, CO 81001.



JOIN US ON TUESDAY EVENINGS
THIS SEMESTER

CIRCOLO
ITALIANO @
Thunderzone
Pizzeria from
7-8 pm

2270 Rawlings Blvd, Pueblo, CO

[HTTPS://WWW.THUNDERZONETAPHO
USE.COM/CSU-PUEBLO/
FOR MORE INFO., CONTACT
CHRIS.PICICCI@CSUPUEBLO.EDU](https://www.thunderzonetaphouse.com/cs-pueblo/)



Congratulations Scholarship Winners!

The Dante Alighieri Society of Pueblo held the annual Scholarship Awards Celebration on Sunday, May 7, 2023, at the Pueblo Country Club. We were pleased to award \$1500 scholarships to several deserving students from area high schools. Luke Johnson from Central High School received the DA Scholarship in Memory of Dominick, Mary, and Lucille Ann Masterantonio. Marianna Martinez Jaramillo from Central High School received the DA Scholarship in Memory of Angela Biondi. Pedro Arrieta from Centennial High School received the DA Scholarship in Memory of Lucille Diodosio. Jada Montoya from South High School received the DA Scholarship in Honor of Dr. Silvio Covi.

In addition to the high school scholarship winners, Emiley Hayes, from Colorado State University Pueblo, received a scholarship for study abroad in Italy at the University of Bergamo.

We wish to thank Antoinette Masterantonio for donating a scholarship and our corporate sponsors for supporting the scholarship event. A special thank you to Pueblo District 60 high school Italian teachers Joanne Griego and Michelle Van Hee for inspiring their students and encouraging them to continue studying Italian.

Scholarship Winners: Pedro Arrieta, Luke Johnson, Marianna Martinez Jaramillo, Jada Montoya



DANTE GOES DIGITAL!

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Membership dues renew online!



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