



FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Mary Vella Gomes (415-517-5533)

Vice President Pauline Scerri Henderson (650-245-1774)

Secretary: Maryann Milla (415-218-6329)

Assistant Secretary: Mary Borg Smith (650-692-0413)

Treasurer: Joseph Vella: (650-619-4565)

Assistant Treasurer: Ninfa Pace (650-697-1079)

Parliamentarian: Terrie Smith Aquino (650-438-5579)

Message from the President

Our Third Installation Ceremony of the Board of Directors and the General Meeting was held on January 28th. Thank you to Mona Nicholas, Tony Spiteri and Louis Vella for their roles in the Ceremony. Thank you to those of you

who came and who also stayed for the reception following the General Meeting.

At the Installation Ceremony, we were able to use for the first time the beautiful podium that Charlie Chetcuti built and donated. We are extremely grateful for his generosity.

The Grievance Committee members for 2024 were approved by the members present at the January General Meeting. The committee includes Mary Anne Fassler (chair), Charlie Catania, Barbara Fenech, Paula Ebejer Moffitt and Peter Abela. Thank you for volunteering to serve on the committee again this year.

The Entertainment Committee has been formed and Rita Borg and Karen Borg are the co-chairs. The hard-working committee includes Ninfa Pace, Carmen Micallef, Brian Ciappara, Pauline Henderson, Emma Magarrell, Sina Borg, Maryann Milla, Lina Agius, Rose Agius, Bev Dennehy and Grace Lacey. The committee has planned many functions for this year and the Social Events Calendar is attached. Our St Patrick's Day Dinner will be held on March 16th and that flyer is also attached. Please take a look and plan ahead to save the dates and attend. Please consider volunteering.

Brian Ciappara will continue to update us with any Safety information that is important for us to be aware of. Manuel Micallef, as always, will provide us with information regarding repairs or other issues in the building that need to be addressed. Ninfa Pace will continue to keep us informed of the Women's Committee activities and Mary Smith, for Welcome and Well Being, will continue to make sure that acknowledgements are sent to those who have suffered a loss or are ill.

We have made some changes to the Hall Rental Contract regarding cost and also a more detailed explanation of do's and don'ts. If you have any plans to rent the hall, please be sure to contact me in advance so we can lock down the date for you.

Please be sure to take a few minutes to read the Newsletter every month. It is disheartening for us to learn that some members admit that they don't read it. Questions you may have about times/dates could likely be found there and may save you a phone call. Along with this month's Newsletter is the House Rules. Please review carefully.

In 2023, we approved 34 new members and at our January Board Meeting, we approved the first new members of the year: Lana Johnson, Aaron Johnson, Jose Martinez, Darren Xerri and Michelle Galea Espinoza. We hope all of our members will be active by attending our meetings and supporting our events.

I will be visiting family in Chile from February 12th through March 7th but I

will be available via email. Our Vice President, Pauline Henderson, will be covering for me while I am gone.

Thank you and ... **Go Niners!**

The next General Meeting is on Sunday, February 25th at 10:30 a.m.

Message from the Honorable Consul General of Malta

Greetings dear friends of the Maltese American Social Club and the Maltese Community in California. Welcome to the first club's newsletter of the New Year which is already over 6 weeks old. With the new year comes new hope. We continue to hope and pray 2024 will bring lasting peace first and foremost in our hearts and in our families especially our Maltese-American family as well as peace and cooperation outside our homes, our State, our nation and throughout the world.

By the time you receive this communication it will be around the feast of St. Paul Shipwreck which is celebrated in all churches all over Malta but particularly in Valletta. It will also be Carnival time in Malta.

Carnival in Malta 2024: I am writing this article from Malta, and as I walk the streets of Valletta, I see huge preparations for this annual fun event which continues to gain in popularity among residents in Malta and Gozo, as well as tens of thousands of visitors. If you have a chance and the time to look at some videos or online images of Carnival in Malta, I have no doubt you will be impressed with the artisan skills and the intricacies and details of the Carnival parade floats, costumes, music, singing,

dancing troupes, lights, colors, and anything anyone can imagine to celebrate the crazy carnival days in Malta. The weather so far has been extremely cooperative with beautiful Spring like temperature and no rains.

First Membership Meeting of 2024: On the last Sunday of January, our club organized the now annual installation ceremony of the new Board of Directors, Auditors and Sergeant at Arms for the new year. The meeting was once again well attended and it was an impressive and enthusiastic beginning of a new and exciting year at the Maltese Club. Our members are increasingly realizing and appreciating the work of those who dedicate personal time, talents, and resources to run the business of not only the Maltese-American Social Club but all other Maltese-American organizations operating in California. Well done indeed. Every year we try to improve the celebration of the Installation Ceremony and we are open to new ideas and suggestions. Please feel free to approach the committee members in-charge or send your ideas to the club and they will be passed on through the proper channels. Speaking of organizing committee, kudos to, Mona Vella Nicholas, Tony Spiteri, Peter Abela, Bart Borg, Joe Cutajar, Mary Vella Gomes, Gracie Lacey, Jeff Milla, Charlie Chetcuti, and Jose' & Mary Martinez for their part, big or small, towards the success of another BoD Installation ceremony. Thank you also to Rita Borg and members of the entertainment committee who prepared a very nice reception for everyone in attendance following the meeting. It was an outstanding and all-around pleasant morning, fitting for a new beginning.

Artistic Maltese *Presepju* – Nativity: In January, the Friends of the Maltese *Presepju* disassembled this delicate work of art and carefully had it stored for the next Christmas season. This past Christmas we all enjoyed yet another successful display of this magnificent museum piece and amazing work of art. Fr. Charles from St. Elizabeth's Church was gracious enough to come and bless the nativity. This year, by popular demand, the Nativity was left on display till the women's club meeting in January to give everyone the chance to admire and enjoy it. A special thank you to the members of the "Friends of the Maltese *Presepju*." Peter Xuereb, Joe Vella, Emmanuel Micallef, Johnny Falzon and Teddy Borg for their expertise, appreciation, and talents. Next year we have plans to continue to enhance the exhibition of this unique work of art. We are therefore asking anyone who would like to donate towards the Maltese *Presepju* to make their donations payable to Maltese Community Network and mail to Maltese Community Network, PO Box 698, San Carlos CA 94070. All donations are welcome and acknowledged. Thank You very much, *Grazzi Hafna*.

Another special thank you goes to Ms. Sharon Caruana Fekete who gave a very interesting and engaging talk at the women's club gathering about the Artistic Maltese *Presepju* focusing specifically on the figurine of the lady wearing the well-known Maltese *Ghonella* or *Faldetta*. The talk was extremely well received and we hope to do more of these. Ms. Caruana Fekete is now part of the "Friends of the Maltese *Presepju*"

Embassy Official Visit: Plans have been underway for quite some time to facilitate a visit from an official from the Malta Embassy in Washington DC to the Maltese Consulate office in Millbrae. No date has been determined yet but there is a good chance that the visit will take place around April. Those who will be included on the list of invitees will need to have all their documents in order in advance.

Visa for Malta and Europe: Many at the club and by phone have asked about the new law that requires US Citizens to obtain a visa before they can travel to Europe including Malta. Many expressed some anxiety or concern about this new requirement. Please know there is nothing to worry about. The visa is referred to as ETIAS or European Travel Information Authorization System. It works very similar to the ESTA visa that people from other countries including Europe and of course Malta need to complete before they can travel to the US. It is usually completed on-line and it costs somewhere around \$10. The requirement for ETIAS visa is not set to begin for another year. We have plenty of time to discuss however if anyone would like more information, please feel free to contact my office via email at malteseconsulate@yahoo.com

Festa Season during the month of February in Malta & Gozo: After the festivities of Christmas and New Year the Festa calendar in Malta in February is somewhat calm except for Carnival of course. The feast of the Shipwreck of St. Paul (*San Pawl Nawfragu*) in Valletta and St. Paul's Bay. *Conversion of St. Paul* in Mdina. IL-Festa it-tajba:

We continue to encourage everyone to keep your families, friends and loved

ones constantly in your thoughts and prayers and to watch out for each other. One never knows the last time we are able to do so. We continue to hope and pray for lasting peace and better times ahead.

Always remember, it is not what we take but what we give that makes us truly rich...So give without remembering and receive without forgetting.

Message from the Secretary Maryann Milla



Correspondence

Except for payments for functions and dues, please remember that all correspondence, and any important information that may need to be put in the newsletter, should be addressed to: secretary@maltese-americanscsf.org

Just a reminder that, if you **have not paid your membership dues**, they were due on January 31st. If you have not paid, you can no longer be considered a member in good standing.

Please remember to **notify me of any changes to phone numbers, email and address changes**, so that we can keep our records current. You can reach me at 415-218-6329 or via email. Information Forms are available at the Club.

Membership

Welcome to our newest members:
Lana Johnson, Aaron Johnson,
Jose Martinez, Darren Xerri and
Michelle Galea Espinoza

Website

Visit us online for a look at the memorable moments through pictures, information about the Club and more. Dennis Simmons strives hard to keep it updated as much as possible for us. <http://malteseamericanscsf.org/memberservices.aspx>

Club Hours

Sunday: 9:00 -5:00p.m.

Friday: 5:00 p.m. -1:00 a.m.

CLOSED

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday -**EXCEPT**: The 2nd Tuesday of the month for the Women's Club Meeting from 6:30-10:00 p.m.

Library Hours

The last **Sunday** of each month from **11a.m. to 1p.m** or contact Mona Vella - Nicholas, Librarian and Historian, at 650-589-4578 for an appointment.



Those we love don't go away, they walk beside us every day, unseen, unheard, but always near, Still loved, still missed, and very dear.

*Condolences to the family of
Joe Spiteri*

Grievance Committee

The 2024 volunteer members are Mary Ann Fassler (Chairperson), Charlie Catania, Barbara Fenech, Paula Moffitt and Peter Abela.

Maltese History Month

*By: Mona Vella-Nicholas
Librarian and Historian*

January 10, 1910 --- The United States chooses the first consul to Malta, under President William Taft.

January, 1942 --- The Victory Kitchens are established in Malta. Anyone is eligible to subscribe, but they must do so for a minimum of one week. Each subscriber is entitled to one meal per day. The cost is a sixpence or a part of their rations. For threepence, one can have a kind of minestra. Because ingredients are scarce, the food is usually more water than meat or vegetables and the portions are small. As a result, the Victory Kitchens are generally hated, but the people have little choice, since kerosene for cooking is practically unavailable and most of what is available is severely rationed.

The Maltese Historical Society is writing a book and it's all about you! For more information, please contact Mona Vella Nicholas at LeProfess@aol.com or 650-589-4578 or Charles Vella at charlesvella@comcast.net Make sure your family doesn't get left out of this story about Maltese immigration to the Bay Area.

Origin of Maltese Last Names

Is your last name **Ciantar**? If so, you may be interested in knowing where your name comes from. **Ciantar** is of Sicilian origin. It is a form of the Sicilian word "ciantari", which means "joker." If this is your last name, you may have had an ancestor who was a professional joker or someone who just had a really good sense of humor!

Entertainment Committee

The Entertainment Committee consists of the following members: Rita Borg (Chairperson), Karen Borg (Co-Chairperson) Sina Borg, Brian Ciappara, Mary Vella Gomes, Emma Magarrell, Ninfa Pace, Beverly Dennehy, Rose Agius, Maryann Milla, Gracie Lacey, Lina Agius, Carmen Micallef, and Pauline Henderson. Volunteers for our functions are always needed and welcomed! If you are interested in volunteering for the upcoming events in 2024 please contact Rita Borg at: luftymom2000@gmail.com.



~ March 16th ~

St Patrick's Day Dinner Dance

~ April 13th ~

Family Bingo and Pasta Dinner

~ April 20th – 21st ~

Rummage Sale

Women's Social Committee

Meetings are held at 6:30pm on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. Functions *may be held* on different days (members will be contacted if there are changes to the date and/or time for the meeting). Please plan to join us on February 13th. Please bring “finger foods” to share and enjoy during the meeting. Plans for 2024 will be discussed.

Support Our Advertisers!

Please take the time while reading the newsletter to check out our advertisers who are supporting our Club. Remember to mention the Club when patronizing these businesses.

Payments (No CASH)

Payment for dues and all functions should be made by CHECK payable to: Maltese American Social Club of San Francisco (MASC) and send it to the attention of Ninfa Pace. Please be sure to provide **separate checks for each event**. Payment for functions must be made by the deadline date. IF PAYMENT IS NOT RECEIVED BY THE DEADLINE DATE, ATTEMPTING TO PAY AT THE DOOR ON THE DAY OF THE EVENT WILL BE DENIED.

Hall Rental

EMMANUEL MICALLEF HALL

The hall is available for rent to members only. Please contact Mary Vella Gomes (415-468-3747 or 415-517-5533) for information and to pick up a form and guidelines from the Club.

Non-Responsibility Declaration

All activities arranged for or sponsored by the Maltese American Social Club of San Francisco, Inc. are for the convenience and pleasure of the members and their guests who desire to participate. The Maltese American Social Club does not assume any responsibility for the well-being or safety of the participants or their property in any matters pertaining to said activities.

This Newsletter is created by Secretary, Maryann Milla, with the approval of the Board of Director

