



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2026
YAKIMA CONVENTION & EVENT CENTER

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CHRISTINA PRKIC
THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE,
HOW IT’S STRUCTURED & THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL
OPEN MARKET COMMITTEE



Christina Prkic is vice president and regional executive of the Seattle Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. In this role, Christina engages with members of the business and banking sectors, as well as with community and government leaders in Washington and Alaska as part of the Bank’s commitment to understanding and reflecting the communities it serves. She is a senior leader who represents the San Francisco Fed in the region and oversees the Seattle Board of Directors and Advisory Councils, including their contribution to monetary policy decisions.

Christina was raised in Miami, Florida and practiced law there for more than ten years in both the public and private sectors. Before joining the San Francisco Fed in 2013, she worked in the aerospace industry supporting global business operations and largescale corporate integrations. She serves on the board of the Washington Council for Economic and Financial Education and is a member of the International Women’s Forum.

Christina received a juris doctor from the University of Miami School of Law and a Bachelor of Arts in political science with a concentration in international affairs from the University of Florida.

When not at work, Christina, her husband, and their elementary-aged daughter enjoy traveling and spending time outdoors.

FOR THURSDAY’S MEETING

Greeters – Linda DiLembo, Jolene Seda
Inspiration – Dan Sullivan
Sergeant-at-Arms – Brad Hansen
Program – Sharon Miracle
Attendance – Matt Crow

FUTURE PROGRAMS

September 10th – Michael Novakovich, Igniting Innova-
tion: Unleashing Curiosity, Challenging Assumptions &
Discovering New Possibilities

September 17th – Rotary Picnic

September 24th – Diane Patterson and Hannah Wilson,
Yakima Free Clinic



If you have not already signed up, please contact
the Rotary office today.

ROTARY ROASTERS IS BACK!

Whether you’re a morning person or need that first coffee jolt to get you going, Rotary Roasters has you covered. Join us for a cozy morning meetup at Catalyst Coffee located inside Single Hill Brewing on Tuesday, September 8th at 7:00am.

Coffee and pastries are self-pay, so bring yourself and your best morning vibes.

ROTARY BACKPACK DELIVERY TO ADAMS ELEMENTARY - AUGUST 27, 2026



REVIEW

In October, Yakima is hosting FIRA USA, the premier trade show and conference that will bring growers, technology builders, robot manufacturers, researchers, investors, and media together to experience and accelerate agricultural technology solutions. Our program features a panel discussion with Jon Smith sharing how Yakima was chosen and introducing our speakers Dr. Ines Hanrahan, Executive Director of the WA Tree Fruit Research Commission; Paul Cathcart, area manager for Chiawana Orchards; Sam Godwin, owner of Godwin Family Orchards; Dr. Brian Pearson, Director of Oregon State University's Mid-Columbia Agricultural Research & Extension Center; and Elizabeth Hargrave, senior enterprise account executive for Orchard Robotics. Each one shared what Ag Technology means to them, an example of current technology being used, and challenges.

Sam Godwin is an independent small tree fruit farmer located in Tonasket growing apples, cherries and pears. A small town without a lot of people, he has had to think outside the box. He started farming organically about 1999 before it was a thing. Knowing he was never going to be a large-scale operation fit right in with technology. Sam has partnered with WSU Smart Farm in Prosser with a test orchard at one of his orchards testing how to use AI technology associated with water and irrigation. Using canopy sensors, they are working to determine how much water is too much water, how much water is needed, and how to cool and when to cool to protect fruit when it gets too hot. Infrastructure sensors in his test orchard have been collecting data all summer long. WSU is using that data to train their AI to help provide information as to when to overhead cool, so fruit is not sunburned. The technology included the purchase of a valve to automatically turn the system, based upon date, off and on. Next spring when frost season arrives, the thermometer and valve can be used the other way to turn on when it's too cold. As a small farmer, he wears all the hats. When looking at new innovations, it has to be simple, survive on the farm, be out in the weather, work every day, be reliable, and trustworthy. Economics is a huge concern; they need to see a clear path in how it's going to help improve and be something that offset the costs put into it.

As an orchard area manager, managing a group of farms in Yakima Paul Cathcart is interested in technology to explore using sprayers to do precision applications based upon imagery. Current camera technology systems are in place that can go through an orchard and use AI technology to detect fruit, size them, count them, predict crop yield and count flowers. It would be exciting and cool to translate data into an actual spray application that would make it value added with spray controllers that can use high resolution GPS technology to locate where a tractor is in the field, correspond to technology offered, and either spray or not spray or spray different rates in different parts of the field. The challenge is that GPS fidelity is not as good as it could be. They need to be accurate. A discrepancy measured in inches in a row of trees compounds and can get way off and spray incorrectly. Fruit growers are not excited about being R&D partners; they are looking for technologies ready for action with a 2-year pay-back period on investment.

Elizabeth is part of a start-up company moving technology out to the orchard; to become that layer between the software and hardware component that takes information out in the orchard leading to reduction in costs. In today's agriculture environment there is not a picker that can scale up to the level needed to reduce labor

costs. With the help of sensors, they are seeing information from an orchard that is driving down costs. Based upon data that provides how much fruit is on the tree, they can determine whether they will or will not go out for a second pick or will or will not do a second round of thinning. Those little cost reductions across the board are critical for growers. Why did her company come to Yakima versus other areas? At the end of the day, they want to be where the growers are. Growers don't want technology 4 years from now – they want to give feedback now. The biggest part of ag tech success is adoption. As a company they have to be willing to put in hours in the field with growers and listen to what they are saying.

Brian's work with OSU specializes in tree fruit. It is immensely labor intensive; they are always trying to find new ways to work more efficiently and effectively, get more data and information, and help growers make smart decisions. He has seen a lot of technology. A lot originates from the Midwest where they grow corn. We grow fruit. What works for corn on flat ground doesn't translate to the slopes of fruit trees. OSU's research farm helps with innovation. The most common technology in our area is sensor-based with moisture sensors, plant sensors or weather stations. They test and work with growers and companies to develop and refine products. They are a third party that gives opportunity to try new things in a real environment. The collaboration between growers, companies and education in the Pacific Northwest is the best he has seen anywhere in the U.S. As a FIRA USA participant, he is excited to see new technology, how growers interface with it, and learn from conversations.

The dates for FIRA are October 20-22. It is free to growers, farm workers, and students. This is an opportunity for Yakima to shine - say hello, show them Yakima's hospitality, and don't forget to eat fruit.

What else happened? Elisabeth Tutsch served as our greeter – thank you! Joe Biondi shared a musical tribute to Dolly Parton that weaved in ZZ Top, Elvis Presley, and ended with a clip of "I Will Always Love You." Connie Falon introduced our newest member, Emily Jameson who transferred from Southwest Rotary. Emily was raised in Yakima, graduated from West Valley High School and built a career in non-profit leadership. She holds a bachelor's degree in Intercultural Religious International Studies and a master's in urban studies. She's lived internationally and frequents to Guatemala where her sister and brother-in-law founded a micro-enterprise nonprofit. She's worked in higher education, inclusive finance, legislative advocacy, fund development and green building material. Today she is the regional director of business development and community development for Self Help Federal Credit Union. She is a certified coach with a trauma aware certification. She loves to explore the PNW with her son and serves as part of the Mountain View PTA and as a board member of the Yakima Arts Academy. We are so excited to have her as part of OUR Rotary Club!

Jedean Corpron promoted the Rotary picnic set for September 17th at the Yakima Tennis Club. Everyone who has already signed up to attend will have their name put in a bucket to win a nice bottle of wine next week. Kelly Gasseling raised money for Rotary Charities as our sergeant-at-arms with questions that would determine if you were really a true farmer.



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