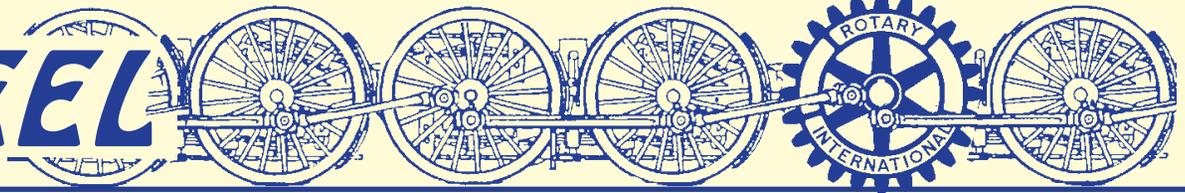


The BIG WHEEL



Rotary Club of Novato

Chartered April 26, 1954

The Golden Nugget of the North Bay

In The Valley of Gentle Seasons



January 16, 2026
Vol. 77, No. 26
Editor:
Bud Jett (Dean H.)

Call to Order

Prez Lynn gaveled us to order.

The Pledge

Marcus Combs led us in the pledge.

Thought For the Day

Past Prez **Phil Dougherty** provide us with a thought: “Lynn’s focus this month is kindness, care and mental health. These are some quotes thought the ages that touch on these themes:”

“Educating the mind without educating the heart, is no education at all.” – *Aristotle*

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in service to others.” – *Mahatma Ghandi*

If you can’t fly then run, if you can’t run then walk, if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do you’ll have to keep moving forward.” – *Dr. Martin Luther King*

“Happiness is the new rich.”

“Inner peace is the new success”

“Health is the new wealth”

“Kindness is the new cool”

– *P.P. Phil Dougherty*

Guests of Rotarians

Niharika Marcharla was the guest of **Ross Millerick**; **Rana Eger** was **Penny Hansen**’s guest; **Charlie**

Stackfaden was the guest of **Laura Joss**; **Sonia Seeman** intro’d her guest **Laurie Vogeuser**; and last but not least Prez **Lynn Dawson** had **John Walter** as her guest.

Ice Breaker

Prez Lynn directed us to think of an act of kindness that you experienced or witnessed. At our table **Beth Rowett** told us of her daughter & experience of losing all of the photos she and her husband had taken in Africa. Two years after she lost them, they were returned to her. The person who found them finally looked at them and found **Beth**’s daughters address on the very last photo.

Announcements

A Dinner You Can't Refuse

Past Prez **Frank Bruno** talked about the Live Auction and groups should get together to bid on the more pricey multi-person events.

Past Prez **Reggie Winner** is looking for more desserts... More pies, cakes and cupcakes.

Prez Elect **Peter Pelavin** is looking for more Silent Auction items, like restaurant gift certificates, etc.

Past Prez **Bill McDill** told us of the history of the annual fundraising dinner. It started thirty plus years ago as a polenta feed put together by the late Past Prez **Dave Milano**. The event was very successful. We had both a silent auction and live auction, and a dessert auction. We had polenta and Beef or chicken stew.

Program

Today the Chair people of many committees talked... Presenting the Novato Rotary Club Strategic Plan 2025-2026.

John Reuscher told us the wireless microphone stand moves the receivers up for better reception which translates to better hearing for the audience. Each person using a microphone should stand and hold it up so they can be heard better.

Marcus Combs has put together programs for “Respecting the Elders”; we need food for the food bank, we are working on drainage at Loma Verde School; we’re working on environmental sustainability (no fires!); **Randy Baker** is working on the Hamilton School project.

PDG **Holly Axtell** has World Community Service. They have projects on just about every continent. They have projects in Guatemala, Singapore, Afghanistan, Egypt, all over the world.

Ross Millerick is Chair of Youth Services. They have many projects and are looking for additional funds

Patty Dougherty is Chair of Membership. We currently are 105 members strong. They’re working on turning Red Badgers to Blue, plus getting younger members. **Patty** told us we’re going to have biannual picture day so we can get newer member photos.

Patty’s dad Past Prez **Phil** is head of Public Image (Publicity?)

Marisa Remak handles a whole bunch of different stuff.

Finally, **Mark Bosch** is the Chair of Club Socials. He told us he’s working on a “Beer Blitz” and asked us to remember this coming Friday there is a social at Past Prezs **Peian & Ron Harness**’ house. It starts at 5:30 p.m.

Raffle

Jim Carriere left \$25 richer.

Continued on page 3

The BIG WHEEL

P.O. Box 657
Novato, CA 94948

The Four-Way Test

"Of the things we think, say or do:

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?"

Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor

Limited Sponsor Opportunity!

Show your support of the RCN and target people that share your commitment to supporting Rotary.

Limit of two sponsors!

Size: 1/4 column

Frequency of publication: 3x or 4x per month

Distribution: Over 130 like minded recipients

Open Rate: 68%

Cost \$600 per year, \$15 per issue (Prev. 3yr avg.)

Contact Bill Vespa: zip@sonic.net

Christian Thwaites Driving Ukraine

Thurs., January 22, 2026
7 pm to 8:30 pm

Christian has volunteered to deliver front line vehicles to Ukrainian military and aid organizations the last two years.

In his talk, Christian will share his volunteer mission insights, life in Ukraine, personal stories about the Ukrainians and volunteers he met, Ukraine's resilience amid war scenarios, and thoughts about Russia/Ukraine economy and their journey towards peace.

Tickets: Adults \$30 • Students \$15
www.novatospeakerseries.com



Upcoming Programs & Events

January

- Jan. 22 **Novato Speaker Series** - Christian Thwaites
- Jan. 23 **Club Social** - Music at the Harness' home.
- Jan. 30 **Mental Health & Rotary**

February

- Feb. 6 **Brad Howard**
- Feb. 7 **A Dinner You Can't Refuse**
- Feb. 13 **No Meeting**
- Feb. 20 **First Responder Therapy Dogs**
Michelle Detrick
- Feb. 27 **Prof. Andrew Reddie**

March

- Mar. 6 **Meeting at City Hall** - City Leaders Panel

Rotary



Club of Novato

YES, BIG WHEEL EDITORS ARE STILL **NEEDED**

*Support the most interesting
Rotary Club ever!*

*Help share our meetings
with family, friends
and members unable to attend.*

*All you need to do is supply typed
notes of the meeting. NO Formatting!*

Contact Bill Vespa at
zip@sonic.net

ROTARY CLUB OF NOVATO 2025/2026 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Lynn Dawson
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Public Image & Awareness

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Gloria Dunn-Violin & Randy Baker
*Environmental Sustainability
(NR-CAT)*

Holly Axtell
International Service

Jorg Puhr-Westerheide
The Rotary Foundation (TRF)

Ross Millerick
Youth Service

Patty Dougherty & Sonia Seeman
Membership

Sonia Seeman
Jonas Center Liaison

Peter Oser
President, Nova-Ro Corp.

Brad Williams
Chair, Novato Rotary Endowment

Tom Rickey
Past President

TGIF

with Live Music

Friday January 23rd • 5:30pm 'til...



At the home of Peian and Ron Harness
449 Fieldstone Dr., Novato



*Drinks provided by the Club
Food is Pot-Luck, please bring a dish to share.*



*Live background Piano music provided
by Peian and two other pianists!*

**A Great time to mingle
and mix with Rotarians!**

**Parking is easy on street but there will be several
steps up to the party house
(If you can make it up, it will all be worth it)**

Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor



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- Tires
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ITALIAN SUPPER & MUSIC

**THE ROTARY CLUB OF NOVATO PRESENTS
A DINNER YOU CAN'T REFUSE**

Bill & Adele Jonas Center • 1800 Ignacio Blvd., Novato

Saturday, February 7, 2026

5:30-6:30 Purchase Signature Cocktails
6:30 Dinner
Auctions through the Evening
Cocktail Attire Encouraged!

Silent Auction

Live Auctions

**Live Entertainment,
Music & Dancing
Featuring
"Frank Sinatra"!**

**NO Tickets
at the Door!**

Event tickets are \$100
subject to availability,
purchase before Jan. 30, 2026

Rotary Club of Novato

**THE NOVATO ROTARY ENDOWMENT IS A 501(C)(3)
ALL PROCEEDS SUPPORT COMMUNITY,
YOUTH, ENVIRONMENTAL, VOCATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS.**



President Lynn gave us the status of the RCN Strategic Plan for 2025-26.



Chair of Logistics & Facilities, John Reucher, talked wireless mic reception and the new wireless receiver stand.



Frank Bruno describes the Speakeasy entrance to the "A Dinner You Can't Refuse" fundraiser.



Patty is our Membership Co-Chair.



Holly is our World Comm. Service Chair.



Randy is our Environ. Sustainability Chair.



Reggie wants desserts for the "ADYCR" fundraiser.



Peter wants auction items for the "ADYCR" fundraiser.



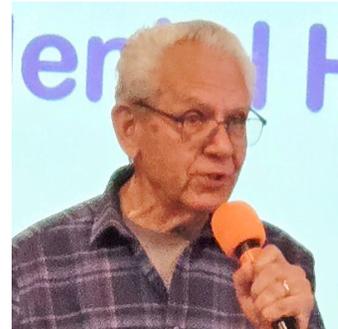
Mark is our Social Chair.



Ross is our Youth Service Chair.



Marcus is our Comm. Service Chair.



Jim asks us to enter CC info ahead of the "ADYCR" fundraiser.



Larry talks ShelterBox.