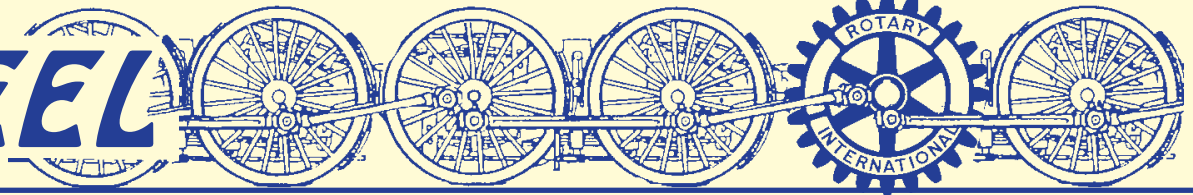


The BIG WHEEL



Rotary Club of Novato

Chartered April 26, 1954

The Golden Nugget of the North Bay

In The Valley of Gentle Seasons



January 30, 2026
Vol. 77, No. 28
Editor:
Editor: Al Locate (Dean H)

Call to Order

Prez Lynn rang da bell.

Pledge

Past Prez **Tom Rickey** led us in the pledge (which he knew by heart).

Thought for the Day

Marisa Remak gave us these thoughts: “When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary.” - **Fred Rogers** (won’t you be my neighbor?) “When you try to hide part of yourself from the world (for fear of ridicule or shame) the world can become a very lonely, dark place. You deserve to be loved for your authentic self. You deserve sunshine.”- **Rachel Reid** Note: **Mr. Rogers’** statement has become a game changer.

Visiting Rotarians

We had one visiting Rotarians today: Our speaker, **Jenny Bates** is a member of the Ignacio Club.

Guests of Rotarians

Past Prez **Bill McDill** introduced his current spouse, the lovely **Vicki**. While **Beth Rowett** introduced her big sister, **Margaret Burns**, who’s from Bakersfield. **Deborah Belaga** was Prez Lynn’s guest. **Sonia Seeman** intro’d **Laurie Vogowill**. The lovely **Jacqueline Morrissey**

(**Mike’s** wife) was the guest of her son **Evan**. **Stephanie Simonian** and **Susannah Dameron** were guests of the Club who are interested in joining Rotary. **Susannah** is with Citerion Travel which is donating a UNESCO Luxury Cruise to our Live Auction!

CRACK! Ice Breaker

Prez Lynn’s Ice Breaker was that she asked 14 questions regarding **Frank Sinatra** and the **Andrews Sisters**. Questions such as **Frank Sinatra’s** nickname, which is “Old Blue Eyes” and the **Andrews Sisters** entertaining the Troops overseas in World War II.

Announcements

Give Her a Call

Past Prez **Marty Wickenheiser** advised us that **Gloria Dunn-Violin** has been very sad and depressed since Don’s passing. She would enjoy phone calls, or a card.

ADYCR Tickets

Prez Elect **Peter Pelavin** says get your ticket for the Italian Dinner for Saturday, February 7. They’re running out! Also, contact him if you have an auction item.

Beanies for Babies

Past Prez **Robert Marshall** is looking for donations for “Beanies for Babies”. To learn more contact **Rob**.

Yum Yum Eat 'em Up!

Past Prez **Brad Williams** is soliciting those hungry Lobster eaters for the Lobster Feed at his house. The dinner will be auctioned at the Dinner You Can’t Refuse on February 7.

Eradication of Polio

Past Prez **Jorg** gave us an update on Rotary’s effort to eradicate Polio. Rotary has been working on getting rid

of Polio worldwide for thirty-five years and we’re still at it. We will keep at it until Polio is gone!

Rotarians of the Day

Today we learned a lot about **Keith** and **Holly Axtell**. We were shown a “Marty’s Moments” interview covering both of them. **Holly** was our Rotary District Governor and **Keith** was a major supporter. **Keith** started the District’s Global Grants Project serving as its Chair. It’s going stronger than ever!

Speakers

The program today is mental health. The entire meeting was about mental health starting with **Marisa’s** “Thought for the Day”.

Jenny Bates from the Rotary Club of Ignacio spoke to us. She basically told us that no where near enough attention is given family mental health. **Jenny** is involved with Rotary camp RYLA and other programs that are involved in family mental health.

Did you know that suicide is the second leading cause of death in America? Also, one in five Americans suffer from mental health problems.

Our Rotary District has a NAMI group and **Jeff Slavitz** is our Club’s chair.

Also, **Jacqueline Morrissey** is very involved in the mental health programs. **Jacqueline** should join our Club.

There is no help for families and there definitely should be!

Raffle

Rene Prado took home twenty-five pictures of **George Washington**.

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

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

Captain Gil Rud

From the Prairie to the Pacific: A Blue Angels Journey

Thurs., April 23, 2026
7 pm to 8:30 pm

Captain Gil Rud will share his journey from rural North Dakota to the cockpits of U.S. Navy jet fighters, and ultimately captain of a flagship aircraft carrier, USS Constellation, responsible for the welfare of 5,000+ sailors.

His success as a naval aviator led to the ultimate reward- "Boss" of the world-famous Blue Angels, overseeing their successful transition to the F/A-18 Hornet.

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



Upcoming Programs & Events

February

Feb. 6	Rotary's Return on Investment - 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
Mar. 13	Meeting - TBD
Mar. 20	Meeting - TBD
Mar. 27	Club Social - TBD

ROTARY CLUB OF NOVATO 2025/2026 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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International Service

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Patty Dougherty & Sonia Seeman
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Jonas Center Liaison

Peter Oser
President, Nova-Ro Corp.

Brad Williams
Chair, Novato Rotary Endowment

Tom Rickey
Past President

The Silent Auction bidding has already started online!
Plus you can preview the Live Auction and Dessert Auction
at: <https://ItalianSupperClub.auctria.events>

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 Reception

SOLD OUT!

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.

NEW MEMBER NOTICE

The application for membership of the following was (were) approved by the Board of Directors and the Membership Committee:

- **Charlie Strickfaden: U.S. Park Manager, Retired**

If there are no objections by:

Thursday, February 12

he/she/they will be inducted on or about:

Friday, February 13

Marisa Remak

Secretary

Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor



845 Vallejo Avenue, Downtown Novato
www.handjtire.com
hjtire@vbbn.com

Burt Hoffmann
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- Tires
- Brakes
- Alignment
- Shocks
- Oil Changes
- Tuneup

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!

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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



Marisa Remak gave us thoughts for the day.



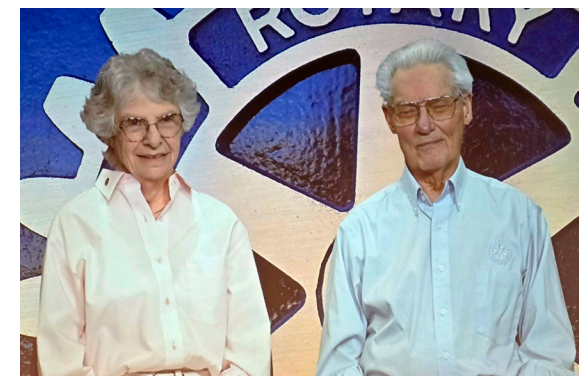
Prez Lynn worked in the mental health field.



Asking for crafty members to make crocheted hats for new borns for warmth.



Jorg gave figures of Rotary's eradication of Polio worldwide.



Holly & Keith Axtell were Featured Rotarians in a "Marty's Moments" interview.



Jenny Bates spoke about Mental Health Suicide awareness since 1984. Jeff Slavitz Chairman of Marin NAMI (not present)



One of our 2 mental health NAMI speakers is President of the NAMI Marin Board. Debra Belaga.



Brad Williams is offering a Lobster Dinner for 10 lucky auction winners.



One of Holly Axtell's great Rotary achievements are the Micro-Credit projects.



Susannah Dameron donated a Cruise circumnavigating Greece's Peloponnese Peninsula with UNESCO World Heritage Sites. She is standing with Marty W.



Jorg presented Peter Pelavin with a PHF pin.



Keith Axtell's greatest achievement was a project bringing urban children to outdoor multi-day camps.