# The BIG WHEEL

Rotary Club of Novato | Chartered April 26, 1954 | The Golden Nugget of the North Bay | In The Valley of Gentle Seasons

**November 20, 2026**
**Vol. 78, No. 17**
**Editor:**
**Bill Vespa**

## Call To Order

**President Peter** rang the bell with authority, and we were off.

## The Pledge & Thought

**Reggie Winner** led us in the pledge of allegiance, then proceeded with the Thought for the Day. Appropriately for the time of year, the theme of **Reggie's** thought was gratitude. The actual thought however, was left at home in **Reggie's** printer. So, **Reggie** wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving! **President Peter** added his own thought, "We are never as young as we are today, so seize the moment!"

## Visiting Rotarians

A former member of 24 years, **Patti Hurst**, was visiting us from her Rotary Club in Athens, Georgia. President **Billy Campbell** was visiting from Novato Evening.

## Guests of Rotarians

**Larry Harrison** had soon to be member **Julie Jacobson** as his guest. **Alan Dunham** brought his wife, **Roberta**.

## Community Care

**Reggie Winner** shared that former member **Bob Smith's** wife **Bonnie Smith** passed away last weekend. Past President **Lynn Dawson** joined our meeting via zoom, because her dog is not feeling well.

## Special Presentation

Foundation Chair **Jorg Westerheide** made special **Paul Harris** pin presentations. **Beth Rowett** and **Roy Pfeifer** both received Blue Sapphire pins, **Jeff Slavitz** & **Peter Pelavin** got their two Sapphire pins, **Lynn Dawson,** attending via zoom, will get her four Sapphire pin later and **David Gabriel** got a ruby pin.

## Announcements

**Evan Blacksea** asked for ideas for Rotary projects that involve COM and the IVC campus.

**Maggie Shao** announced that she turns 65 in December. She is closing her acupuncture business, trimming down to a suitcase and backpack to go on a "Slow Travel" adventure. She is starting by visiting Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for a month; the rest of the trip is unplanned and the next stop will reveal itself to **Maggie** at the end of her stay in Malaysia. **Maggie** said, "The world is a big oyster".

**Mark Bosch** thanked us for our support of "A Simple Gesture". "A Simple Gesture" has two food pickups scheduled in December; they are collecting on the 5th and the 19th. They would like for you to participate on both dates, but it is not required. If you are a registered donor, make sure to go to the website and indicate which days you will have food, so they do not make an unnecessary pickup trip to your home.




**President Peter** reminded us of the Winter Wonderland Brunch at Marin Country Club on December 13th. Get your checks to **Marsha Molloy** by December 8th.

## Marty's Moment

We were treated to another Marty's Moment. This time **Marty** interviewed **Nohemi Beissmann-Mason**, a member since 1999 and responsible for RCN's involvement in the Copper Canyon Project. You can view the interview at Marty's Moment - Nohemi.

*Continued on page 3*

## Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor

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## NEW MEMBER NOTICE

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

- **Julie Jacobson: School Board Trustee**
- **Arden Pennell: Biotech**

If there are no objections by:

**Thursday, December 3**
he/she/they will be inducted on or about:
**Friday, December 4**

*Marisa Remak*
Secretary


# 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?"

NOVATO SPEAKER SERIES

## Patrick Martin

### History of Mystery

**Thurs., January 28, 2027**
**7 pm to 8:30 pm**

Majoring in Psychology and Theater Arts, illusionist and comedian Patrick Martin worked his way through University studies by teaching sleight of hand to corporate executives. After graduation, he competed at an International Symposium of Magic and made magical history by winning two "Grand Prix Awards" for excellence in both stage and close-up magic. Known for the universal quality of his magic and humor, Mr. Martin has been featured at theater and music festivals throughout Europe, Indonesia and Japan. Patrick has performed on television specials in Europe, Japan, China, and in the United States, and currently can be seen on the popular series, "Masters of Illusion". He has entertained for numerous Heads of State, as well as at private parties for Jack Nicholson, 1st Lady Michelle Obama, Steve Wynn, and singer Katy Perry.

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


## Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor

**Nova-Ro**

**Independent Senior Living**

**www.novaro.org**


## Upcoming Programs & Events

| | |
|---|---|
| **November** | |
| Nov 27 | **No Meeting** |
| **December** | |
| Dec 4 | **Michael Jenkins - Body Kinetics Owner** Maintaining Fitness As We Age |
| Dec 11 | **John Trauth** - Maintaining Optimism While Aging - Annual Club Meeting/Elections |
| Dec 18 | **J.M. Reyes** - Buck Center Advances and Current Funding Status |
| Dec 25 | **No Meeting** |
| **January** | |
| Jan 1 | **No Meeting** |
| Jan. 8 | **Marlon McWilliams, PsyD** - The Aging Brain |

## ROTARY CLUB OF NOVATO
### 2025/2026 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

**OFFICERS**

**Peter Pelavin**
*President*

**Rene Prado**
*Vice President*

**Marisa Remak**
*Secretary*

**Chris DeGabriele**
*Treasurer*

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**Olayinka H. Babalola**
*R.I. President*

**YuHui Chen**
*District Governor*

**Judy Johnson**
*Assistant District Governor*

**DIRECTORS**

**John Reuscher**
*Logistics & Facilities*

**Joy Fillman**
*Public Image & Awareness*

**Marcus Combs**
*Community Service*

**Randy Baker**
*Environmental Sustainability (NR-CAT)*

**Jeff Slavitz & Holly Axtell**
*International Service*

**Jorg Puhr-Westerheide**
**Andy Czajkowski**
*The Rotary Foundation (TRF)*

**Ross Millerick**
*Youth Service*

**Rene Prado**
*Membership*

**Sonia Seeman**
*Jonas Center Liaison*

**Jim Carriere**
*President, Nova-Ro Corp.*

**Jeff Slavitz**
*Chair, Novato Rotary Endowment*

**Lynn Dawson**
*Past President*

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## Program

**ADG Judy Johnson** came up to the microphone. After watching **Nohemi's** interview about the Copper Canyon project, **Judy** was reminded that she had donated Beanie Babies to the Copper Canyon Project.

**Judy** is from Novato Sunrise Rotary and our Assistant District Governor. She introduced our District Governor **YuHui Chen**. **YuHui** is from the Rotary Club of Menlo Park and owns a gym. Three of six fun facts shared: She speaks four languages, holds a record for doing 55 push-ups in 60 seconds and, being a global traveler, moved 19 times between 1995 and 2010. **YuHui** is the "Energizer Bunny" of District 5150.

**DG YuHui Chen** started her presentation by having us do seated stretching and breathing to relax. **YuHui** also thanked the Club for its community support. She shared her experience traveling to Uganda with a service project, emphasizing the impact of Rotary's work in providing clean water and hygiene packages to communities in need. This was her "Rotary Moment".

**YuHui** asked others to share their "Rotary Moment". Several members, including **Jeff Slavitz**, **Beth Rowett**, and **Jim Carriere**, shared their personal "Rotary moments" - trans-formative experiences that led them to join or continue with Rotary, ranging from Rotary's mental health initiatives to, international service in Afghanistan, and disaster relief work with Shelter Box. Your Rotary moment is powerful, share it!

**YuHui** emphasized the power of Rotary's fundraising efforts in transforming lives and the importance of measuring impact through the "Seasons of Love" theme. Summer – Maternal and Child Health, Fall – Education and Literacy, Winter – Food Drives and Warmth Drives, and Spring – Environment. Education and literacy, especially for girls, are close to **DG Chen's** heart. **YuHui** related a personal story of a woman, **Miss Young**. **Miss Young** was in her 40's and asked **YuHui** to show **Miss Young** how to write her own name. Even though in her 40's, **Miss Young** could not read or write. **Miss Young** grew up poor and was from an adoptive family. Her adoptive family never sent her to school because she was a girl. It turns out that **Miss Young** was **YuHui's** mother. Education is powerful; it changes lives and restores dignity. There are still many young females, and males, that would not have access to education, if not for Rotary.

**YuHui** emphasized that Rotary's impact comes from member contributions, noting that over $356 million is contributed annually across the US (about $225 per member), with local District 5150 members donating over $1 million to the Rotary Foundation the previous year (about $460 per member). Then **YuHui** showed a pretty cool custom video about our Club with photos, custom music and lyrics highlighting our Club's achievements.

**DG Chen** closed by highlighting the focus for the year: Grow Rotary; Serve Together – Seasons of Love; Expand our Reach; Build the Future of Rotary. And she also announced two upcoming events. The "Purple Pinkie" event to support the eradication of Polio, which takes place from November 20th, 2026 to January 9th, 2027 visit the website Purple Pinkie. The second event is the Summer of Love District Conference on June 12, 2027.

**YuHui's** final thought:"As a teen I dreamed of World Travel - Rotary has provided the opportunity to travel and provide service".

**President Peter** presented **YuHui** with a set of **Alan Dunham** note cards.

## Raffle

**John Christman** took home the twenty five bucks!

## The End

And with that, we were adjourned! Happy Thanksgiving!


Marin Independent Journal

**VOTE FOR US!**

Rotary Club of Novato as the "Best Service Club"

Bill and Adele Jonas Center as the "Best Meeting Convention and Event Space"

IJ READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2027

Dee's Organic Catering as the "Best Caterer"!

**Voting Ballot at**

**marinijreaderschoice2027.com**

**Voting Protocols:**

- Only one ballot from one URL is allowed (this generally means one ballot per device)
- 10 categories must be voted on for the ballot to count
- It's best to complete your ballot at one time; refreshing, or leaving it, may result in timing out, and you may need to start over
- You will be asked for your email upon completing your ballot, we will not share your information

**Voting Nov. 1 - 30, 2026**


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*Marisa Remak*
Secretary




*Foundation Chair Jorg Westerheide presents Paul Harris pins to President Peter Pelavin, Beth Rowett, Roy Pfiefer, David Gabriele and Jeff Slavitz.*







*Sharing Rotary Moments: For Jeff Slavitz it was Rotary's Mental Health initiatives, for Jim Carriere it was seeing a person in need receive a Shelter Box and for Beth Rowett it was heading up a service project in Afghanistan as a new member of Rotary.*







*The Marty's Moment was with Nohemi Beissmann-Mason. Nohemi brought the Copper Canyon Project to the RCN. The project was headed by Nohemi and supported the Tarahumara, an indigenous people living in Copper Canyon, Mexico.*



*Maggie Shao is retiring and plans for a "slow travel" trip starting in Malaysia for a month.*



*ADG Judy Johnson hands a District Theme pin to Evan. Each Club member received one.*



*We enjoyed a Thanksgiving themed turkey lunch complete with pie for dessert.*



*Our speaker, 5150 DG YuHui Chen.*




*DG YuHui Chen's theme is "Seasons of Love".*




*YuHui's Rotary Moment came on a service project in Uganda to provide clean water.*




*The District Conference is on June 12, 2027.*