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 6, 2026
Vol. 78, No. 15
Editor:
Bill Vespa

Call to Order

President **Peter Pelavin** called us to order.

Pledge & Thought for the Day

Roy Pfiefer led us in the pledge of allegiance.

Roy also provided the Thought for the Day about Elections and the Four-Way Test.

"Now that another election is behind us, I think it is a good time to consider how our political process measures up to Rotary's Four-Way Test.

First: Is it the TRUTH?

During elections, we hear promises, accusations, and claims. How often do we stop to ask whether what we are hearing is actually true?

Second: Is it FAIR to all concerned?

Do candidates and their supporters treat those with opposing views fairly, or do they sometimes seem more interested in winning than fairness?

Third: Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?

Elections often divide families, friends, and communities. Shouldn't democracy encourage respectful disagreement rather than hostility?

Fourth: Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

The ultimate purpose of an election should not simply be victory for one party or candidate, but better government for everyone.

Perhaps the greatest lesson of the Four-Way Test is that we can disagree without being disagreeable, compete without being enemies, and lose an election without losing respect for one another.

And wouldn't it be refreshing if our elected officials followed the Four-Way Test as faithfully as Rotarians try to do?" Thank you, **Roy**!

In Memoriam

Former RCN Member
Warren Glass

October 26, 1945 – November 1, 2026

Visiting Rotarians

Zero today.

Guests of Rotarians

Past Prez **Bill McDill** intro'd his favorite wife, **Vicki**. PDG **Russ Ketron** intro'd **Marc Lewis**. **Ross Millerick** introduced NUSD Board Trustee **Abbey Picus**, **Gary Lam** had fraternity brother **Paul Pastorino** as his guest, **Jim Spilman** brought the "Love of his Life", wife **Diane**, PP **Larry Harrison** introduced **Barbara Travis** and **Barbara Bochner** of Blue Star Moms, **Chris DeGabriele** brought his wife **Joni**, PP **Lynn Dawson** had three guests, NUSD Superintendent **Dr. Tracy Smith**, NUSD Trustee **Julie Jacobson** and **Arden Pennell. Julie** and **Arden** are on track to become members of RCN.

Community Care

PP **Reggie Winner** announced that former member **Warren Glass** passed away. Details of a service for **Warren** have yet to be worked out. Cards can be sent to **Warren's** wife **Peggy Glass**, 10 Meadow Ln., Novato, CA 94947.

Special Presentation

PP **Larry Harrison** called up **Barbara Bochner** and **Barbara Travis** from Blue Star Moms. **Larry** presented a check in the amount of $2,000 which was gifted by **Paul** and **Edna Scheller**. **Larry** asked for Target Gift Card donations for the holidays. Some of these cards will be held past the holidays for needs that come up before the 2027 holiday season. This years' campaign has been jump started by a $1,000 gift from an anonymous Rotarian and $500 from **Chris** and **Larry Harrison**.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Member Birthdays included **Tom Rickey**, **Susan Siefkas**, **Bill Vespa**, **Grace Wong**, **Lynn Dawson**, **Bill McDill**, **Marie Rios**, **Holley Axtell**, **Rene Prado** & **Al Angulo**. The sole Wedding Anniversary is **Holly** & **Keith Axtell** celebrating 46 years. Member Anniversaries were celebrated by **Cindy Milano** (25yrs), **Christina Stroeh** (11yrs), **Randy Baker** (2yrs) and **Edgar Mendoza** (1yr).

Announcements

Novato Public Library

Evan Blacksea announced that the Novato Public Library is open again after refurbishing. They are looking for book donations in small quantities to fill shelves.

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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?"

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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

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Upcoming Programs & Events

November

Nov 13	**Dr. Scott Smith & Cristina Aquino**- Polio Update
Nov 20	**Marlon McWilliams, PsyD** - The Aging Brain
Nov 27	**No Meeting**

December

Dec 4	**TBD**
Dec 11	**John Trauth** - Maintaining Optimism While Aging - Annual Club Meeting/Elections
Dec 18	Speaker from the **Buck Center**
Dec 25	**No Meeting**

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Lynn Dawson
Past President

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Relay for Life

Marie Rios announced that Relay for Life is happening July 17, 2027 at Olive School – Save the Date!

Blue Badge

Having completed all the requirements, Evan Blacksea swaped his Red Badge for a Blue Badge.

Zua Foundation Presentation

PP Peian showed a few short videos about the Zua Foundation music program in Bogota, Colombia. It is an after school program to keep kids off the streets. Performing is a requirement, which helps with building self-confidence.

Program

PP Lynn introduced **Julie Jacobson**, NUSD Board Trustee. **Julie** is an accountant professionally, volunteers for educational boards, plays Tennis, enjoys the outdoors, is married and has two children. **Julie** called up fellow Trustee **Abby Picus** and Superintendent **Dr. Tracy Smith**.

Julie thanked our Rotary Club for our support. **Julie** talked about the importance of academic rigor, athletics and providing food and emotional support for students – caring for and education of the "Whole Child" in schools.

Novato is challenged to provide these services. Our tax base is the lowest in the county and schools are getting the same funding as was set in 2009. NUSD has been cutting to stay ahead of the funding. Until now the cuts have been structured to shield students from losing services. The next round of cuts will impact students directly. **Julie** closed by reminding us that good schools are a community asset and that poor quality of schools negatively affects property values.

Abbey Picus took over the presentation and spoke on how important even the smallest programs are to students. **Abbey** cited her own daughter's difficulties with anxiety and the inability to attend school without the support of specialized staff at the school campus that gave her the emotional support she needed.

The path forward for preserving the level of education we currently have in Novato is a parcel tax. This parcel tax is currently hypothetical and still in the formative stages. The NUSD Board will decide on December 1st what the tax amount should be and whether to move forward with requesting a parcel tax.

The last attempted parcel tax was Measure G, which missed passage by only 157 votes. To insure the next tax passes, clear consistent messaging on multiple platforms like mailing, email, signage, etc. is needed. Community outreach is also vital. Neighbor to neighbor communication as well as neighborhood canvassing will be used to get the message to the voting public. Volunteers are needed!

There was a short Q&A fielded by all three speakers. Statewide enrollments are declining, but the Board looks at local population trends which are influenced by housing developments like the old Fireman's Fund property. All parcel taxes allow senior citizens to be exempted by making a request in writing. If the parcel tax is not passed expect major cuts to the schools in the NUSD and property values to drop.

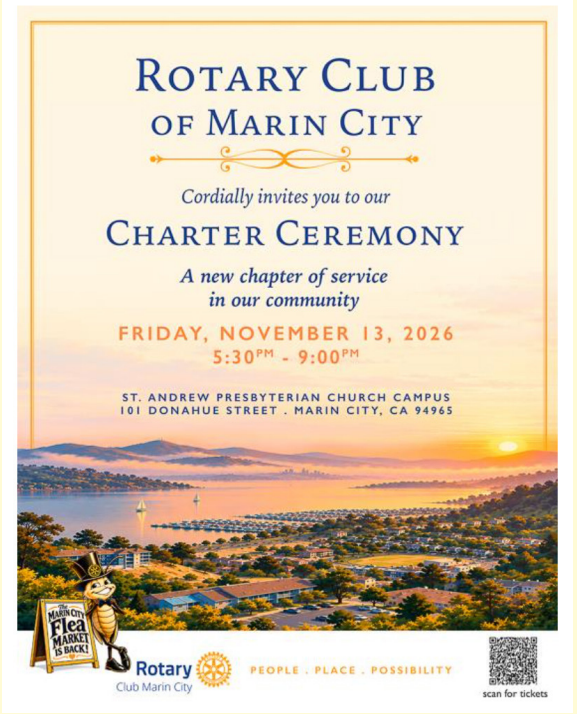
Our speakers received a set of **Alan Dunham** note cards.

Raffle

Our speaker drew the winning ticket and **President Peter** is twenty five bucks richer!

Parting Words

President Peter closed with the quote, "Please go away and do something good for yourself or the world.", then he gavelled the bell..







Past President Phil welcomed us to the Bill & Adele Jonas Center.



Past President Larry Harrison presents a $2,000 check from Paul & Edna Scheller to Barbara Bochner and Barbara Travis of Blue Star Moms.



Evan Blacksea makes his last announcement as a Red Badger.



Past President Peian Harness showed videos from the Zua Foundation.



Past President Lynn Dawson introduced our speaker NUSD Board Trustee Julie Jacobson.



Our speaker NUSD Board Trustee Julie Jacobson.



NUSD Superintendent Dr. Tracy Smith and Board Trustee Abbey Picus.



Julie Jacobson draws the winning raffle ticket..