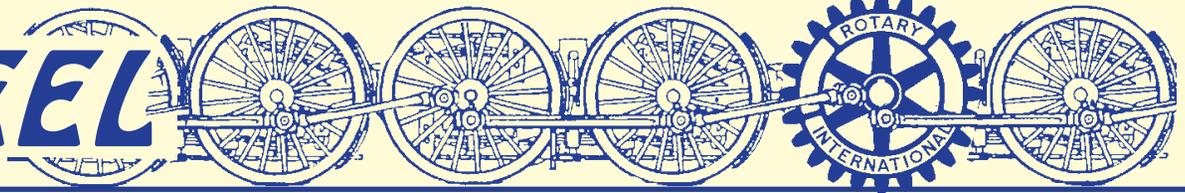


The BIG WHEEL



Rotary Club of Novato

Chartered April 26, 1954

The Golden Nugget of the North Bay

In The Valley of Gentle Seasons

December 5, 2025
Vol. 77, No. 21
Editor:
The Winner



Call To Order

President **Lynn Dawson**, promptly at 12:15 pm, rang the bell and called the rowdies to order. **Melinda Durfee** led us in the Pledge of Allegiance; **Jim Bates** presented his “favorite guy” **Leonardo da Vinci**: “Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.” An Example, the Mona Lisa’s smile!

Visitors and Guests

Visitors attended to help us celebrate the season and being together. **Barbara Bochner** was **Larry Harrison**’s guest; **Kathy Ketron** accompanied husband **Russ**; **Beth Rowett** hosted our speaker, **Meghan Kehoe** and **Marla Heglund**, Development & Community Relations Officer for the Center for Domestic Peace; former member **Sandi Bowman** was introduced by **Ross Millerick**; and **Lori Frugoli** brought along two members of her staff at the Marin County District Attorney’s Office, **Mindy Franco** and **Anna Macias**.

President **Lynn** welcomed back member **Pat Eklund** whom we haven’t seen in forever! **Pat** reported that her 98-year-old mother is now in hospice, but she had been her mother’s full-time caregiver for several years.

Announcements

President **Lynn** reported from **Sasha D’Amico** that **Mike Howard**, former member of our club who moved to Las Vegas a couple of years ago, has had a serious stroke and is currently hospitalized. Members who wish

can drop off cards at the police station and they will send them on to **Mike** and **Linda**.

Member **Jean Brown**, who recently lost her husband and our member **Phil**, would also appreciate cards and texts, no visits right now.

Blue Star Moms

Larry Harrison, who for the past month has been collecting Target gift cards for returning veterans, presented \$3990 worth of cards to **Barbara Bochner** of Marin/Sonoma Blue Star Moms.

Car Wash

Jim Spilman announced that the car wash, held in mid-November, netted \$3840 for our fund set aside to honor teachers.

Collecting Specs and £ € ¥

Russ Ketron let us know that he is still collecting used eyeglasses to be distributed to those in need in Mexico. He is also collecting any foreign currency you might have lying around your house following your world-wide travels. The money will be sorted and given to the appropriate country reps for polio! **Phil Dougherty** shared a “strange” \$2 bill for the cause!

Simple Gesture

Mark Bosch thanked all those who participated in the Simple Gesture Food Drive and reminded us all that one can continue to give through ASG.HELPS.

Featured Rotarians

Andy Czajkowski

New member **Andy Czajkowski** was originally from Arizona, but has been involved with Rotary for 23 years, first through Interact and RYLA in high school. He also went to France in his junior year of high school with the Rotary Youth Exchange Program, where he found out that he really did not want to pursue his former goal

of owning a French restaurant! He joined Rotaract at the University of Arizona, and then the Rotary Club of Sausalito when he moved north. He took a break from Rotary during Covid, and reached out to **Lynn** recently, and the rest is history!

Chris DeGabriele

Long-time member **Chris Degabriele** knows at least half of Marin County and is related to multiple members of our club. He started life on the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, in a small town of about 4000, near Iron Mountain. It is remote, cold and has short summers, but the pluses were being able to go right out the back door to fish and hunt and the cultural diversity. And, of course, the Green Bay Packers!

He considers himself quite lucky! As he turned 18 and finished high school, despite a very low draft number, he got to go to Michigan Tech, because the draft ended at that same time. After college he went to work for Bechtel and met **Joanie** in Detroit. He served a stint in South Carolina and then settled in NorCal, where he met former Novato Rotarian **Jim Fritz** who at the time was the general manager of the North Marin Water District. **Chris** succeeded **Jim** as general manager where he had a policy that his managers had to get out in the community and belong to a service organization. **Chris** has served twice a club treasurer, was virtual club president during the Covid year 2020-21. He thanked all for the support over the years – reminding us of Labor Day by the Lake – for both him and **Joanie**.

Speaker

New member **Beth Rowett** introduced our speaker **Meghan Kehoe** who is the Director of the children, Youth and Community Prevention Division at the Center for Domestic Peace. She has been working in the field of domestic violence and sexual assault for 16 years

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 26, 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

December

Dec. 12	Annual Meeting & The International Trip That Changed My Life - Melissa Prandi
Dec. 19	Unwrapping AI: The Gift That Keeps on Learning
Dec. 21	Holiday Brunch - Marin Country Club
Dec. 26	No Meeting

January

Jan. 2	No Meeting
Jan. 9	Novato Rotary Endowment Presentation
Jan. 16	Club Assembly
Jan. 22	Novato Speaker Series - Christian Thwaites
Jan. 23	Club Social - Music at the Harness' home.
Jan. 30	Mental Health & Rotary

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 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. 31, 2026



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

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Ross Millerick
Youth Service

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Membership

Sonia Seeman
Jonas Center Liaison

Peter Oser
President, Nova-Ro Corp.

Brad Williams
Chair, Novato Rotary Endowment

Tom Rickey
Past President

and has a master's degree in Nonprofit Management.

Meghan thanked **Sasha D'Amico** and the Novato Police Department, as well as **Lori Frugoli** at the Marin County district Attorney's Office for their wonderful working relationships. **Meghan** grew up in Yosemite and her father was instrumental in starting the Rotary Club of Yosemite which is now the Rotary Club of Mariposa. She started in the field of domestic violence right after college and the first grant she ever wrote was a request to Rotary to fund a play structure at the facility she was working at.

She shared the disturbing fact that in the U.S. 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men will experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime.

It is the #1 violent crime in Marin County. 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men in Marin will experience sexual violence. It is also the leading cause of homelessness for women and children.

The Center for Domestic Peace is for survivors, prevention, and treatment. In 2023-24, the Bilingual Hotline team, working 24/7, handled almost 8K calls for help. In addition to the Hotline, the center provides confidential shelter, legal help, advocacy, criminal domestic violence, and restraining order support.

They also provide individual and family therapy, support groups, workshops, and outreach. They have started a transitional housing program with 21 apartments, support for permanent housing and an economic empowerment program.

They are continually growing and changing to meet the current needs. They have added a 0 to 10 years program for parents and children, an Elder Abuse Training and ICJR, Improve Criminal Justice Response, for those who have immigration barriers.

She summed up her presentation by saying that domestic violence is a learned behavior and they operate with the thought that it can be unlearned!

Raffle

The 25er and **Moses'** side-bet dollars all went to visitor **Kathy Ketron**. Don't spend it all in one place!

Rotary Club of Novato



A Winter Wonderland
BRUNCH & ENTERTAINMENT

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21
11:00 A.M. SOCIAL • 11:30 A.M. BRUNCH

MARIN COUNTRY CLUB
500 Country Club Drive, Novato

\$60 PER PERSON
KIDS under 12 EAT FREE

BUFFET BRUNCH - NO HOST BAR

RSVP to: Marsha Molloy
mjmolloy@pacbell.net or 415-328-7745

Mail check payable to: Rotary Club of Novato
Mail checks to: Marsha Molloy, 308 Becky Court, Novato, CA 94949

RSVPS and checks due by December 16th

Or Scan QR code to
purchase tickets online





Russ Ketron (l) and Michael Morrissey (r) talking donations of used eye glasses and foreign currency for Polio.



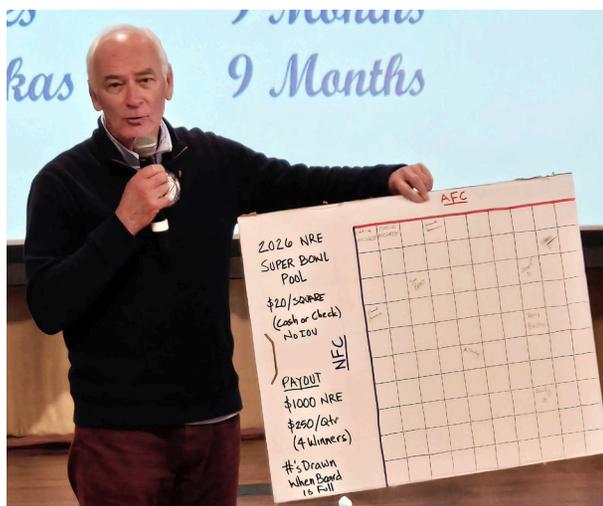
Our Featured Rotarians. Andy Czajkowski (l) and Chris DeGabriele (r).



Larry Harrison (l) presents Barbara Bochner of Blue Star Moms (r) with \$3,990 in holiday gift cards for veteran families.



Melinda Durfee (l) led us in the pledge after Pres. Lynn Dawson (r) opened the meeting.



Chris DeGabriele announcing the Super Bowl board for the February 7, 2026 fundraiser, "A Dinner You Can't Refuse".



Beth Rowett introduces our Speaker.



Jim Spilman announces the Car Wash raised \$3,840.



Our Speaker Megan Kehoe from the Center for Domestic Peace.