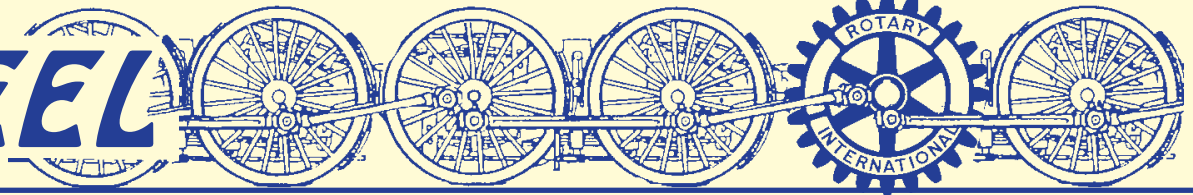


# The BIG WHEEL



Rotary Club of Novato

Chartered April 26, 1954

The Golden Nugget of the North Bay

In The Valley of Gentle Seasons



**May 8, 2026**  
**Vol. 77, No. 39**  
**Editor:**  
**Al Katrazz (Dean H)**

## Call to Order

Prez Lynn rang da bell.

## Pledge

Marisa Remak led us in the pledge, of allegiance, that is.

## Thought for the Day

The thought was presented by **Randy Baker**; “Day in, day out, teachers sacrifice their emotional selves to search for that spark in each and every child. That spark of hope and dreams of each child.”

So the teachers who are our guests today, please take to heart the somewhat obscure quote from **Dr. Forest E. Witcraft**, a college professor and an executive in scouting in the 1950’s. He was writing about his own philosophy of teaching but it applies equally to you today:

“A hundred years from now, it will not matter what kind of car I drove, what kind of house I lived in, how much money I had in the bank. But the world may be a better place because I made a difference in the life of a child.”

## Visiting Rotarians

We had one visiting Rotarian today. It was **Mike Buddely** from a club he did not write legible name for.

## Guests of Rotarians

My friend, **Darlene Purcel**, came as guest of my dear friend, Past President **Al Angulo**. The lovely **Kathy Ketron** was the guest of Past District Governor, **Russ Ketron**. **Christine Magtibay** came as the guest of **Jay**. **Mark Bosch** intro’d **Madison Morgan**. Past Prez **Gary Bramon** intro’d **Chris Niessen**. The lovely **Rafelina Maglio** was introduced by **Edgar Mendoza**.

## Program

Past Prez **Frank Bruno** first told us about the history of the Teacher Awards. Then introduced **John Lenz** Deputy Superintendent of the Marin County Office of Education; who then introduced our Master of Ceremonies, **Tracy Smith**, Superintendent of Novato Unified School District.

The Award Winners:

**Joe “Mike” Bronson** - Hamilton School, 3rd Grade - With three classroom years, **Mr. Bronson** has already become a remarkable educator and leader. His colleagues describe him as dedicated, dynamic and someone who is quietly changing what it means to be a “Third Grade Mathematician”.

**Danielle Miravalle** - Lu Sutton Elementary School, 1st Grade - **Danielle** is a ten year educator with extraordinary heart and intention. Her defining quality is her commitment to growth. With **Danielle’s** significant involvement in school activities, she is remodeling a home and planning her wedding.

**Alex Kinnee** - Novato High School, AVID/History - **Alex** teaches with precision, passion and profound compassion. Outside of school **Alex** is

a **Taylor Swift** fan and she loves hiking and the great outdoors.

**Michelle Lafevere-Bernt** - San Marin High School, Data Specialist - **Michelle** with her nineteen years of service, chases outcomes for her students. As **Michelle** prepares to retire this year, her school and students can say without hesitation, that it is a better place because of her.

**Jeff Packman** - Marin Oaks High School, Leadership & Credit Recovery - **Jeff** is the teacher that shows up for the students that the system is likely to lose. He is a proud family man and loves the Giants and 49ers.

**Catherine “Katie” Dumont** – Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Kindergarten - **Katie** is a teacher whose care and creativity and steadiness have made her an anchor of her school Community. **Katie** leads the school’s Summer Camp, which is very successful. She is known as the “Earing Lady”, she has a pair for every occasion.

**Diane Johnson** – Sinaloa Middle School, 8th Grade Math - **Diane** has spent seven years making Mathematics feel meaningful. **Diane** stays after school for a 7th period Career Exploration Program. She loves to go camping.

**Cassandra “Cassie” Baddeley** – Our Lady of Loretto, 6th Grade - **Cassie** teaches with dedication, warmth; and unwavering belief in every student. This summer **Cassie** is getting married!

**Emily Cook** – Lynwood Elementary School, 2nd Grade - **Emily** teaches with enthusiasm and infectious joy. **Emily** loves to hike as well as kayak.

**Caren Gutierrez** – Rancho Elementary School,

*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?"



## Tony Lindsay A Soulful Evening with Tony Lindsay

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

Back by popular demand!

Tony and his band wowed us in season one! Join us for an extraordinary evening as we embark on a remarkable musical journey with Tony Lindsay, the legendary lead vocalist of Santana.

Don't miss this exclusive opportunity to witness a true icon in action, captivating audiences with his undeniable talent and unforgettable stage presence.

**Tickets: Adults \$30 • Students \$15**  
[www.novatospeakerseries.com](http://www.novatospeakerseries.com)

## Upcoming Programs & Events

### May

May 15 Meeting at Jonas  
May 22 Social at Nova-Ro  
May 29 No Meeting

### June

June 5 International Services - Holly Axtel  
June 12 Meeting at Jonas  
June 19 No Meeting - Campus Holiday  
June 26 Meeting at Jonas - Farewell to 2025-26 & Induction 2026-27  
June 27 Debunking

## NEW MEMBER NOTICE

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

- Pam Jukas: Property Management
- P.J. Nave: Social Media Consultant

If there are no objections by:

**Thursday, May 15**

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

**Friday, May 16**

*Marisa Remak*  
Secretary

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

### OFFICERS

**Lynn Dawson**  
*President*

**Peter Pelavin**  
*Vice President*

**Marisa Remak**  
*Secretary*

**Chris DeGabriele**  
*Treasurer*

**Francesco Arezzo**  
*R.I. President*

**Mitone Griffiths**  
*District Governor*

**Judy Johnson**  
*Assistant District Governor*

### DIRECTORS

**John Reuscher**  
*Logistics & Facilities*

**Phil Dougherty**  
*Public Image & Awareness*

**Marcus Combs**  
*Community Service*

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

**Holly Axtel**  
*International Service*

**Jorg Pühr-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*

## Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor



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John Da Silva

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

5th Grade - **Caren** is a resource specialist, serving students in transitional kindergarten. Besides being a loving dedicated teacher, **Caren** absolutely loves black licorice.

**Emily Cavallero** – Loma Verde Elementary School, Special Ed. 2nd-5th Grades - **Emily** treats every day in her twenty years of teaching as an opportunity to get better. Every student is unique and she creates personal lessons for each of them. **Emily** fills her personal life with art and fun.

**Emily Steffy** – Olive Elementary School, Transitional Kindergarten - **Emily** has taught transitional kindergarten for nineteen years and still comes to school every day with a smile and a willingness to help. **Emily** gets all of the teachers to work as a team which tells you a great deal about the creativity and generosity she brings to everything she does.

**Jen Shelly** – Pleasant Valley Elementary School,

K to 5th Grade - **Jen** is a resource specialist and brings an exceptionally thoughtful appreciation to her teaching. **Jen** loves 90's Hip-Hop and has an exceptional sense of humor.

**Bekall Orellana** – Marin Christian Academy, 4th Grade - **Bekall's** love of teaching and learning is contagious. She transforms the school into a "Gold Rush" experience. In addition, **Beckall** loves flowers and rainbows and smiley faces. Wherever she is, there's a happy atmosphere.

**Andrea Rattenbury** – San Ramon Elementary School, 2nd Grade - **Andrea** has spent twenty-five years at San Ramon where she is known as **Mary Poppins!** She is a calm, endearing and deeply capable educator. **Andrea** feels that once a student is hers, they always are. She attends former students sporting events and graduations.

**Meghan Ahern** – San Jose Middle School, 7th Grade English & History - **Meghan** actively refines

her teaching to best reflect her students. **Meghan** loves to cook and feed people. Her friends say her cooking brings her genuine joy. This is exactly the spirit she brings to every lesson.

**Katie Euserio** – Marin Christian Academy High School - **Katie** has taught 9th through 12th Grade Spanish with remarkable depth and care for twelve years. When asked for a fun fact, **Katie** couldn't think of any, but everyone who works with her wholeheartedly says she's funny.

After all of the awards, Past Prez **Frank Bruno** had all the winners swear to only spend the money on themselves.

### Yes on G

**Ross Millerick** told us a little about Prop. G and why we should vote for it

## Raffle

**Danielle Miravalle** took home the extra \$25 bucks!

**At the 2026 District 5150 District Celebration, the Rotary Club of Novato received the Best Club Award and the Governor's Bell award. The Governor's Bell Awards recognize clubs that are truly leaning into what it means to Unite for Good. They represent clubs that have asked themselves not just what can we do, but how can we create lasting impact?**



*President Lynn Receives the Governor's Bell Award for the RCN.*



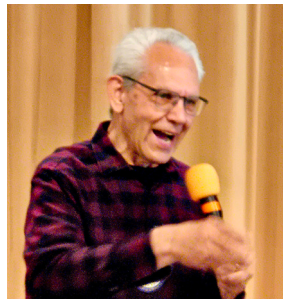
*President Lynn points out that the RCN received the Best Club Award.*



*RCN members attending the 2026 District Celebration included Beth Rowett, Rene Prado, Joy Fillman and Peian Harness.*



*Randy Baker gave the Thought for the Day.*



*Past President Jim Spilman*



*Maggie Shao*



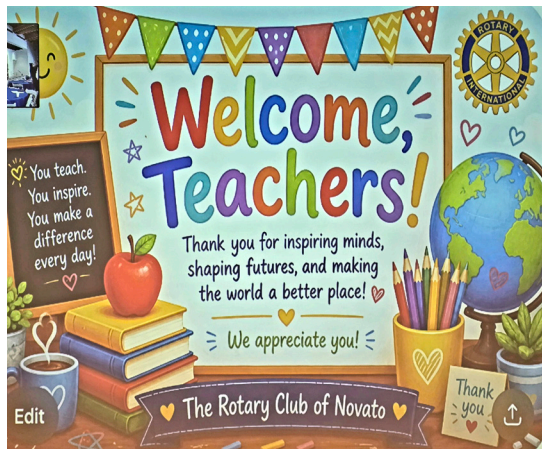
*Marin County Dept. Superintendent John Lenz..*



*President Lynn Dawson, NUSD Superintendent, Dr. Tracy Smith and Teacher Recognition Chair Christopher Mychajluk.*



*Past President Frank Bruno was the M.C.*



*Teachers received awards and took an oath from Frank Bruno to spend their award money only on themselves.*

