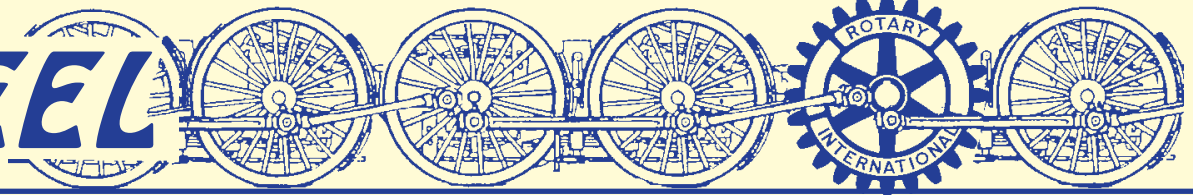


# The BIG WHEEL



Rotary Club of Novato

Chartered April 26, 1954

The Golden Nugget of the North Bay

In The Valley of Gentle Seasons



**June 13, 2025**  
**Vol. 76, No. 36**  
**Editor:**  
**By The Winner**

## In the Beginning

For his penultimate meeting, **President Tom Rickey** welcomed members and their guests and asked **Nohemi Beisseman-Mason** to give the pledge and Thought for the Day. **Nohemi** quoted from **David Peters**: "Wealth as the world defines it can be an extremely elusive thing. It seems as if as soon as we achieve some measure of it, our desires escalate to the next higher plane – and wealth is just out of our reach again."

"I believe true wealth can be achieved in only one way, Gratitude! True appreciation and thankfulness for all the good things, however simple, that already exist in our lives."

"The ability to appreciate provides more joy than the ability to accumulate. The man of the simplest means becomes wealthy the moment he receives the gift of gratitude."

## Visitors and Guests

There were a plethora of guests joining us today: **Vicki McDill**, **Edna Scheller**, **Sharon Scheller**, and for the last time **Shelayna Levo**, all guests of **PP Bill McDill**; also for the last time **Andy Czajkowski** as well as investigating guest **Gary Lam** as guests of **President-Elect Lynn Dawson**; as **Tiffany Fischer**'s guest, **Reed Felder**; **Eliza Roesler** was accompanied by her Mom, **Debra**; **Jackie Lee** squired her spouse **Andrew**; and **Christina Stroeh** once again brought along **Zoila Garcia**.

## Birthday and Anniversaries

**President Tom** recognized **Jorg Westerheide** for his 82nd birthday and a 65th anniversary for **Al & Roberta Dunham**. He also acknowledged incoming president **Lynn**'s 15th year anniversary as a Rotarian.

## Announcements

### Sad News

**President Tom** sadly announced the passing of our member and **Kyle Frazier's Dad, Tom Frazier**.

### Membership Dues

**Chris DeGabriele** announced a BOLO – Be On the LookOut – for an email containing your invoice for your 2025-26 Rotary membership dues. It will come from our honorary member and bookkeeper, **Lynda Morgan** at [Sonomacountybookkeeping@yahoo.com](mailto:Sonomacountybookkeeping@yahoo.com).

### Relay for Life 2025

**Dean Heffelfinger**, a cancer survivor himself asked those in attendance who are cancer survivors to raise their hands, then asked all who had friends or relatives who were cancer survivors to raise their hands, it was nearly unanimous! He then proceeded to remind all of the 2025 Relay for Life, which will be held July 19, 2025, at Olive School, starting at noon on Saturday and running overnight until 10 am Sunday morning. He encouraged all to donate what they could to this important fundraiser. Make your checks out to the American Cancer Society and give them to **Dean**. He will get them to where they belong!

### Art, Wine & Music

**President Tom** thanked members who helped or stopped by during the Art & Wine Festival this past weekend.

## Upcoming Events

**President Tom** reminded all of the special treat at next week's meeting, a musical program by renowned performers **Christina Stroeh** and **Joni DeGabriele**. He also wished Bon voyage to all going to the Rotary International Convention in Calgary, Canada next week, including **Incoming President Lynn** and **Ron and Peian Harness**.

## New Member Inductions

**President Tom** then invited **PP Bill McDill** up to the podium to induct our two new members: **Shelayna Levo**, granddaughter of our beloved, departed member, **Paul Scheller** and **Andy Czajkowski** (pronounced Chai-cow-ski)! **McDill** encouraged them to increase the benefit to themselves and the club by actively participating in as many club activities as interests them. He then asked all to stand and welcome our most important, new members!

## Five-Minute Talk

**Red-Badger Chris Siefkas** was invited up to the podium to give his Five-Minute talk but warned us that he could only say what his parole officer would allow! He and his wife **Susan**, live close by in the Country Club and have two grown children – a daughter who is an attorney in San Jose and a son who is a consultant in Encinitas. He worked for a private oil company – Renkent Oil, LLC - before retiring, but for years had worked for Vision Fund International in micro-financing. His work took him all over the globe, visiting 73 countries, but he was primarily in East Africa. He has been impressed by what he has seen our Club do in International Service and hopes to be able to make a contribution to that area.

*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?"

## Keena Turner

### The Secret Behind the 49er Super Bowl Championship Run

**Thurs., July 24, 2025 • 7 pm to 8:30 pm**

In 1980, Keena was drafted in the second round by the San Francisco 49ers and played outside linebacker with the "Team of the Decade" until his retirement in 1990. His eleven-year contribution to the team resulted in four Super Bowl wins and a trip to the Pro Bowl. He championed the 49ers to victory as Captain of the 1984 team and was subsequently chosen by his teammates as the "Len Eshmont Award" recipient for his courageous and inspirational play.

Keena Turner, legendary #58 and 4-Time SUPER BOWL CHAMPION for the San Francisco 49ers, will join us to discuss sportsmanship, teamwork, the championship mindset and what it took to win and sustain dominance during his 11-year professional football career. Now, Vice President and Senior Advisor to the General Manager, Keena will field questions about his "Team of the Decade" and the future of today's Niners squad.

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

## Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor



**Empathy**  
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## Upcoming Programs & Events

### June

- June 20 **Christina Stroeh & Joni DeGabriele**  
The Rotary Grammys
- June 27 **Debunking**

### July

- July 4 **No Meeting**
- July 11 **RCN Board** - 2025-26 Strategic Plan
- July 18 **Scholarships**
- July 24 **Novato Speakers Series:** Keena Turner The Secret Behind the 49er Super Bowl Championship Run

## ROTARY CLUB OF NOVATO 2024/2025 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

### OFFICERS

**Tom Rickey**  
*President*

**Lynn Dawson**  
*Vice President*

**Peian Harness**  
*Secretary*

**Al Shirley**  
*Treasurer*

**Stephanie A. Urchick**  
*R.I. President*

**Steve Wright**  
*District Governor*

**Stacie Vance**  
*Assistant District Governor*

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**John Reuscher**  
*Logistics & Facilities*

**Jeff Slavitz**  
*Public Image & Awareness*

**Peter Pelavin**  
*Community Service*

**Gloria Dunn-Violin**  
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**Holly Axtell**  
*International Service*

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

**Eliza Roesler**  
*Youth Service*

**Patty Dougherty**  
*Membership*

**Sonia Seeman**  
*Jonas Center Liaison*

**Dean Heffelfinger**  
*President, Nova-Ro Corp.*

**Peter Oser**  
*Chair, Novato Rotary Endowment*

**Phil Dougherty**  
*Past President*

## Trivia Time

One last game of Table Trivia was started by **President Tom** on the subject of Father's Day. One table, who may or may not have been using Google, got six answers correct and won gift certificates to B & R and Starbucks. The initial celebration of Father's Day was started in 1910, the most common gift is ties (even today??); it was made an official holiday in the U.S. by **Nixon** in 1972; in card-giving, it ranks fourth; there are 50 countries throughout the world that celebrate Father's Day; it originated as a way to celebrate a single father of six girls; Parent's Day was split into celebrations for fathers and mothers in order to provide for more gift-giving.

## Program

**Sasha D'Amico** then introduced our speaker, the Director of the Community Development Dept. for the City of Novato **Clare Hartman**. Her talk was comprehensive and very well-received.

She indicated that she had three goals since being elevated from acting to permanent director. They are 1) to continue to implement the Community Development Customer Service Improvement Program; 2) to investigate Cannabis Retail possibilities in Novato (there is currently only delivered sales, not retail); 3) to increase housing and business development.

She has asked her staff to focus on a Customer Service approach, indicating to them that there is only one place for people to go for these services so they should make it the best experience. In 2024, during the first six months of her tenure, she had to increase staffing and begin to implement new software. Beginning in September 2024, the department updated the application process and completed the checklist for the Express permits. They have also instigated twice a month – the 1st & 3rd Thursdays, from 9-11 am – an all-agency permit advice center where applicants can come and get answers to their questions from all the agencies that might be involved

in granting permits. This service is targeted at individual residents and small businesses. The department has also started a feedback loop by initiating a Customer Satisfaction Survey which they encourage all to complete. They have implemented several suggestions from the surveys.

For those in the trades, licensed contractors, they have new permit tracking software which should launch in October 2025. The counter is open Mondays through Thursdays 9-11 am. There is also a new digital site at [Novato.org](http://Novato.org) through which permits can be tracked.

The department is investigating storefront retail for cannabis. It is in the draft/market analysis stage. New sites in various stages of development for housing and retail which can be accessed at [Novato.org/planning](http://Novato.org/planning) projects are Fireman's Fund site in San Marin, an additional Habitat for Humanity, the Birkenstock site in North Novato, the old Pini property on Grant Avenue and a development at Landing Court.

**Hartman** then fielded questions and accepted kudos for a terrific presentation

## The Final Meeting

**President Tom** reminded all of the treat they are in store for at his last meeting.

## The Raffle Winner

**Sharon Scheller**, who was at the meeting to see her daughter inducted into our club, won the \$25'er! Last I saw she was trying to give it to her mom, **Edna Scheller**, because **Edna** had paid for her lunch!

### NEW MEMBER NOTICE

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

- **Tom Christman: Chiropractor**

If there are no objections by:

**Thursday, July 3**

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

**Friday, July 11**

*Peian Harness*

Secretary



Rotary  CALGARY 2025

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21-25 JUNE 2025 • CALGARY, CANADA

Register today at [convention.rotary.org](http://convention.rotary.org)



**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](mailto:zip@sonic.net)**





*President Tom Rickey's final Board meeting at Tom's home. (l to r) Peter Pelavin, Phil Dougherty, Patty Dougherty, Gloria Dunn-Violin, Eliza Roesler, Lynn Dawson, Jorg Westerheide, Moses Jacob, Peian Harness, Dean Heffelfinger, Peter Oser, Sonia Seeman, President Tom, John Reuscher.*



*Dean Heffelfinger announces the upcoming Relay for Life event.*



*Speaker, Clare Hartman City of Novato Director of Community Development.*



*Nohemi Beissmann-Mason led the Pledge and gave the Thought For The Day.*



*President Tom welcomes new member, Shelayna Levo.*



*Chris Siefkas gave his 5-Minute talk.*