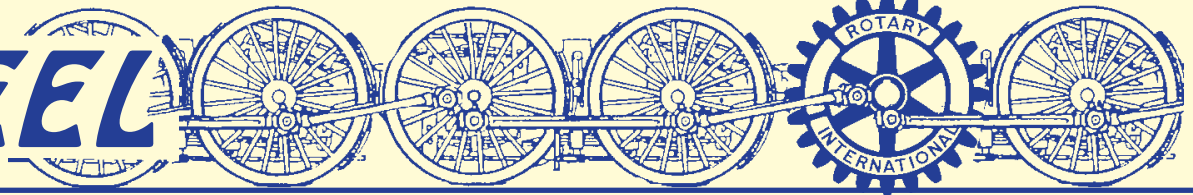


The BIG WHEEL



Rotary Club of Novato

Chartered April 26, 1954

The Golden Nugget of the North Bay

In The Valley of Gentle Seasons

June 26, 2026
Vol. 77, No. 45
Editor:
A Winner



President Lynn rang the bell for the last time in this official capacity, calling us to order promptly at 12:15 pm. in her usual warm fashion welcome us all and recognized Visiting Rotarian from Terra Linda Tresa Ocegueda. She then asked members to introduce their guests and it was the usual suspects: Kathy Ketron with husband Russ; Toni Bramon with spouse Gary and Bill McDill with his favorite wife Vicki.

Leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance was Mr. Sound John Reuscher. The Thought for the Day was offered by Past District Governor and Past Club President Russ Ketron as we wrapped up the 2025-2026 year. "As Rotarians we have all recited the Four-Way Test and you may have heard me add the fifth is "Have Fun! Yet how many of us know the Rotary Vision Statement?"

"Together we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change across the globe, in our communities and in ourselves."

As Rotarians we know "Service Above Self" isn't just a motto, it is a way of life. As my personal motto states, "Together We Make a Difference"

Announcements

Marty W. reminded all of the memorial service for Past President Anne Wade on Saturday, July 18 at 2 pm at the Best Western Novato Oaks Hotel, 215 Alameda del Prado, Novato. She had also recently spoken to Gloria Dunn-Violin who is feeling better.

Jim Spilman thanked Randy Baker, Marty W., and Charlie Strickfaden for starting the project at Past President Tom Winner's bench in O'Hair Park. They replaced the foot rest and have more work to do. Larry

Mazzotta was scheduled to join them, but arrived just as they were all leaving!

President Lynn thanked Jim Spilman, and Sylvia Barry for their two years of work on the murals at the Hamilton Transit Center that commemorate the 180,000+ Southeast Asians who passed through in the early 1980's on their way to a new life in the U.S. She especially noted Charlie Strickfaden's diligence in cleaning the murals before the grand unveiling! Must be the good training he got in the Park Service.

She also reminded us to join with the Novato Clubs and two San Rafael Rotary clubs to walk with the Rotary float in the Fourth of July parade taking place on July 4 in downtown Novato - along Grant Avenue at 10 am.

The Rotary Year Review

President Lynn, in an effort to confine the Debunking Party to only fun and frolic, then proceeded to review her Rotary year, starting with the Strategic Plan and goals that the Board had established. She then went through the goals of the President which had an impressive list and really only included one goal, still in progress which was not completed - a video history of the club. Many others, including a new Endowment fundraiser, were a roaring success. In addition to being recognized as one of the Best Clubs in District 5150, under President Lynn's leadership the club was awarded the singular and coveted Governor's Golden Bell award for the Rotary 2025-2026 year.

Also the club received Shelter Box Gold recognition for our contributions; we had four major social events with the other Novato clubs; we successfully implemented the Youth Leadership Novato program; we had the first dog inclusive social event (cats next year?); and the wrap-up of the Hamilton Transit Center project. We supported our members throughout the year with training - Leadership Training workshops, Global Grant training, and kept inn touch with members with weekly Wednesday emails re: club goings-on; as well

as weekly photography and regular Big Wheel edition with meeting descriptions and activities reminders. We also did a bang-up job in Membership - many thanks to Patty Dougherty and Sonia Seeman on the Membership Committee. New members include John Christian, Gary Lam, Matt Chiang, Evan Blacksea, Marie Rios, Laura Joss, Hannah Simon, Edgar Mendoza, Charlie Strickfaden, Randall Lee, Laurie Vogensen, Jay Magtibay, Susan Siefkas and Pam Juckas.

President Lynn gave the Treasurer's Report for Chris DeGabriel who was out of town. Chris reported that as of June 21, 2026, the club had income of \$119,00 and expenditure of \$77,000. There will be some expenses as the year wraps up, but any excess budgeted funds will simply roll over to next year. The Novato Speakers Series, which is held in a separate account, is in the black.

John Reuscher, Acoustics Master and chief of Logistics and Facilities, gave the report for the Club Administration Committee. Their main focus was improving the audio delivery at the Jonas Center. Jim Spilman, Rene Prado and John all worked on the portable audio/visual station and it has helped a lot. Mark Bosch headed the Bar Committee and provided libations for our events - when appropriate - including the ADYCR, as well as schlepping said libations to and from storage. The committee also handles all the meeting set-up and take down.

Jim Spilman, covering for Marcus Combs who was also out of town, indicated that we had heard enough lately about what the committee had done, but reassured us that they had great fun doing it all.

Randy Baker who took over as chair of the Environmental Committee - Climate Action Team (CAT) from Gloria Dunn-Violin, briefly recounted the activities of the committee - they helped develop an environmental curriculum for Novato K-8 students, they did a fire safety presentation, they supported a sustainable forest in Ecuador, cleaned up the median along Novato

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

Upcoming Programs & Events

July

July 3	No Meeting - July 4th Holiday
July 10	Meeting at Jonas
July 17	Scholarships
July 23	Novato Speaker Series - Tony Lindsay
July 31	Meeting at Jonas

August

Aug 7	Meeting at Jonas
Aug 14	Meeting at Jonas
Aug 21	Meeting at Jonas
Aug 28	Meeting at Jonas
Aug 31	Off-Site Social

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 Axtell
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



845 Vallejo Avenue, Downtown Novato
www.handjtire.com
hjtire@vbn.com

Burt Hoffmann
John Da Silva

(415) 897-1185

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

Blvd. in front of the North Marin Community Services building. Their project of the Hamilton Natural play area is a work in progress.

Chair of the World Community Service committee Holly Axtell also demurred on specifics of her committee's activities having recently given the club a detailed overview, but she did remind us that the committee has participated in projects in ten countries worldwide — Afghanistan, India, the Philippines, Chile, Egypt, Guatemala, Mexico, Colombia, Nepal and Haiti.

Ross Millerick, chair of the Youth Services Committee, cited the club's participation in RYLA and an active Interact club at San Marin HS, as well as the start of an Interact Club next year at Marin Oaks as some of their on-going projects. The crowning achievement of the committee was the inaugural Novato Youth Leadership program which was a great success, especially for the young people who participated, getting to know and understand the role of our community's civic and political leaders.

Membership co-chairs Patty Dougherty and Sonia Seeman, accomplished a lot in one year, especially considering that one of them also fitted in a wedding and honeymoon! Hint: it wasn't Sonia! The committee facilitated the induction of 16 new club members, bring our total membership to 110 members, plus three honorary members. They helped eight Red Badgers upgrade to full Blue Badge status with help from Red Badge Rendezvous. The committee sent out "Miss You" cards at the beginning of the year to members we hadn't seen in a while at the beginning of the year. They distributed Novato Rotary polo shirts to all members and worked with Bill Vespa twice this year to get out updated club directories with pictures. There will be a new one out in July.

Mr. Club Communication, and chair of the Public Image committee, Phil Dougherty, highlighted the contributions of Penny Hansen, our Club photographer extraordinaire! The other activities of this committee include the weekly email bulletin, and the source of great outreach to the community - the Novato Speakers Series. The committee has also made an effort to promote Club Runner as a source for members to facilitating staying in touch.

President Lynn waxed rhapsodic about how our Club has been a model in the District for Collaboration - both for service projects and social fun!

On a somber note, Lynn asked us for a moment of silence in memory of the members who passed this year: Phil Brown, Lowell Smith, Don Violin and Anne Wade.

She then thanked all the Board members for their time spent and time shared. She handed out a gift of a clock to each one — no time like the present and no present like time! — with the batteries included! She also had clocks for special recognition to several members for going above and beyond in their contributions to the club, making every minute count:

- Chair of the Novato Rotary Endowment Board: Brad Williams
- Chair of the Nova-Ro Board: Peter Oser
- Program Chair: Sasha D'Amico
- Social Committee Chair: Mark Bosch
- Jack of Multiple Trades and Big Wheel producer: Bill Vespa
- Queen of Photography: Penny Hansen

She thanked the club for the friendship, support and welcoming this year, as well as the laughter, trust and joy!

Since she said so many nice things about us, Phil Dougherty felt compelled to get up and make a presentation! Lynn graciously received the traditional Past President's plaque recognizing her year's service and the diamond-studded Past President's pin - the best pin in Rotary! In addition, there was a gift certificate and a gift of Marisa Remak's embroidered napkins with Rotary emblems on one side and poodles on the other! Covering all the bases!

The Rotary Year Ahead

Past President Jorg assumed the duty of inducting the 2026-2027 Novato Rotary Board of Directors, calling each person up to the front.

- Logistics & Facilities: continuing in the role, John Reuscher
- Public Image: taking over from Phil Dougherty, Joy Fillman

- Community Service: continuing in the role, Marcus Combs
- World Community Service: continuing in the role, Holly Axtel
- Vocational Service: David Gabriel
- Rotary Foundation: taking over from Jorg Westerheide, Andy Czajkowski
- Youth Services: continuing in the role, Ross Millerick
- Membership: taking over from Patty Dougherty, René Prado
- Jonas Center Liaison: continuing in the role Sonia Seema
- Nova Ro-Board Chair: taking over from Peter Oser, Jim Carriere
- President: Peter Pelavin
- Vice-President and President-Elect: René Prado
- Secretary: continuing in the role, Marisa Remak
- Treasurer: continuing in the role, Chris DeGabriele

He then asked those present to raise their right hand and swear to do the best job they could!

Peter Pelavin then took to the podium for brief remarks! He thanked all for being here and Lynn for doing such a good job — he said it was kind of like pinch hitting for Willie Mays — he had no idea how she did all she did! He feels it intimidating to follow in Lynn's footsteps and is eternally grateful that she does not wear heels!

He then outlined his plan to be monarch for life, including fealty oaths, fines and dues which would be taxes paid directly to him. As your editor and other past presidents can attest, that wish for a life-time presidency will fade mighty fast!

He thanked the club for the honor and trust indicating that this club is wonderful and the people/members are what make this Club so special!

The 25er

For her last official duty, Lynn had President Peter pick the winning raffle ticket and very fittingly, the 25er and Moses Jacob's side pool was won by long-time member and Past President Bill McDill.



President Lynn recognized several members who went above and beyond, "making every minute count", with a clock.

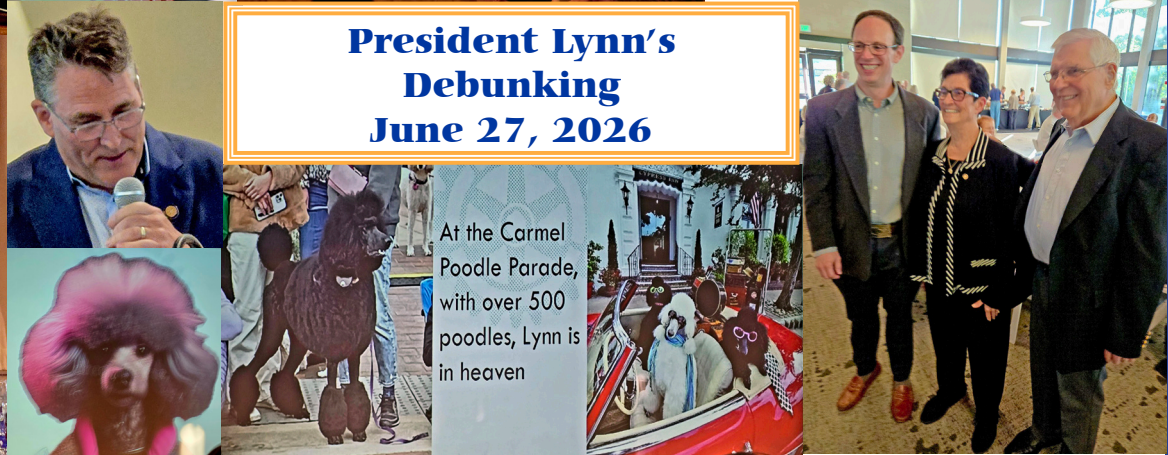


Past President Phil presented outgoing President Lynn with parting gifts, including the Past Presidents Pin and Gavel.

Past President Jorg swore in President Peter Pelavin and his Board for the 2026-2027 Rotary year.



**President Lynn's
Debunking
June 27, 2026**



At the Carmel Poodle Parade, with over 500 poodles, Lynn is in heaven