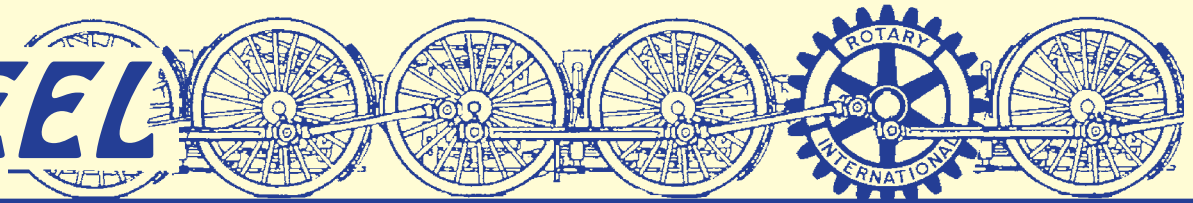


The BIG WHEEL



Rotary Club of Novato

Chartered April 26, 1954

The Golden Nugget of the North Bay

In The Valley of Gentle Seasons



July 19, 2024
Vol. 76, No. 2
Editor:
Stem Chris D

In the Beginning

Al Shirley and **Peian Harness** greeted us and distributed RED Raffle tickets

Dee's Catering fed us a delectable variety of main dishes, salads, fresh fruit, desserts and NA libations.

Acting President **Robert Marshall** rang the bell and welcomed us to Rotary Club of Novato.

Jim Carriere led us in the Pledge of Allegiance and new member **Eliza Roesler**, in honor of National Daiquiri Day, provided an apropos toast to "Have yourself a Daiquiri!"

Our lone visiting Rotarian **Jean Caramatti**, formerly of San Francisco Airport, is still searching for a new Club. And **Sasha D'Amico** brought our speakers and guest, Novato City Manager **Amy Cunningham** and Assistant City Manager **Jessica Deakne**.



E-MAIL or SNAIL MAIL?

If you would prefer to receive only the emailed version of the Big Wheel, please email Bill Vespa at zip@sonic.net. By going to delivery by email only, you will also lower our Club expenses.

Announcements

Sunshine

Paul Scheller's birthday party and Celebration of Life will be held at 1pm this Sunday, July 21, at the Druids Hall.

President Tom Rickey underwent a successful ablation procedure yesterday and is recovering.

Relay for Life

Craig Anderson called upon us once again to encourage participation in this year's Relay for Life at Olive School beginning at noon on July 20th culminating the morning of July 21. Donations can be made via check to American Cancer Society delivered to **Craig** or online at Relay for Life Novato and click the DONATE button where credit can be directed to Rotary Club of Novato (RCN).

Proclamation Presentation

Gloria Dunn-Violin asked for all hands on deck at this Tuesday's City Council meeting, July 23rd at 6pm, wherein the Novato Tree Team and Rotary Club of Novato will receive a proclamation for good works to plant trees on Wilson Avenue.

Get your Tie-Dyed Shirt!

Peian Harness announced that free "tie-dyed" T-shirts are being ordered to kick off **President Tom's** year. Contact **Peian** for details and to order.

Project H2Open Door Update

Acting President **Robert Marshall** presented an H2Open Doors update describing this past years' effort in Guatemala where two Wall Spring water treatment units and a new submersible well pump were installed along with two RACHEL systems (Remote Area Community Hotspot for Education and Learning) with World Possible, 1,000 reading glasses (including 200 sun

glasses) with Restoring Vision, and 400 hygiene kits with Days For Girls. A fine example of collaboration with Rotary clubs from other parts of the U.S. and internationally and with other like-minded charitable organizations. **Robert**, who is now President of H2Open Doors reflected that each system with the add ins noted above cost ~\$35K-\$45K.

The Middle

Sasha D'Amico introduced Novato City Manager **Amy Cunningham** and Assistant City Manager **Jessica Deakne** who provided a "City Update." **Amy** focused on the City's fiscal challenges and noted that the FY2024/25 budget projects a \$4.3M deficit to be backfilled by reserves, and that the existing reserve funds are projected to be fully depleted by FY26/27 without some revenue increase or service cuts. **Amy** reflected that the majority of City costs are for personnel and in FY2002/03 the number of City staff was at its' Zenith (234), fell to its' Nadir in FY2021/22 (190.5) and currently stands at 198 (FY2024/25). The City Council will consider proposing a ballot measure this November enabling Novato voters to approve increasing the Novato Sales Tax from the current 8.5% to 9.25% which is expected to bridge the deficit.

For more information visit: <https://www.novato.org/government/finance/local-funding>.

The End

Sasha D'Amico held the winning red ticket and won the \$25er!

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?"

August

SPECIAL DATES

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|--|
| 8-6 | Tommy Lee | |
| 8-7 | Lowell Smith | |
| 8-9 | George Estes | |
| 8-9 | Kyle Frazier | |
| 8-9 | Peter Rubens | |
| 8-12 | Laurie & Phil Dougherty | |
| 8-13 | Nohemi Beissmann-Mason | |
| 8-13 | Jim White | |
| 8-16 | Chuck Hildebrand | |
| 8-18 | Nancy Sumner & Jeff Slavitz | |
| 8-19 | Patty Dougherty | |
| 8-24 | Marilu & Larry Mazzotta | |
| 8-24 | Gregory Molloy | |
| 8-25 | Larry Harrison | |
| 8-29 | Peian Harness | |

Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor



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Upcoming Programs & Events

July

July 26 **NPD Chief Naugle**

August

Aug. 2 **President Rickey:**
Novato Rotary Yearly Outlook

Aug. 9 **Rotary DG Steve Wright**

Aug. 16 **Jay Alexander:** Magic Show

Aug. 23 **John Eldridge:** President COM

Aug. 30 **No Meeting**

September

Sept. 6 **Andy Pansini:** Fathers of Invention - A Marin Story of Innovation

Sept. 13 **Jeff Saperstein and Dick Spotswood:** Israel

Sept. 20 **Social Event TBA**

Sept. 27 **Julie Cohne:** Sustaining Arts - Rain Forest

ROTARY CLUB OF NOVATO 2024/2025 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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Tom Rickey
President

Lynn Dawson
Vice President

Peian Harness
Secretary

Al Shirley
Treasurer

Stephanie A. Urchick
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Steve Wright
District Governor

Stacie Vance
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Peter Rubens
Public Image & Awareness

Peter Pelavin
Community Service

Roy Pfeifer & Gloria Dunn-Violin
Environmental Sustainability (NR-CAT)

Holly Axtell
International Service

Jorg Puhrr-Westerheide
The Rotary Foundation (TRF)

Eliza Roesler
Youth Service

Jeff Slavitz & Patty Dougherty
Membership

Sonia Seeman
Jonas Center Liaison

Craig Anderson
President, Nova-Ro Corp.

Peter Oser
Chair, Novato Rotary Endowment

Phil Dougherty
Past President

An Erosion of Truth: A Call for Responsibility in Journalism and Politics

by Ray Sanford, Rotary Club of San Juan Capistrano

In recent years, we've seen a troubling trend emerge in both journalism and politics: the manipulation of reality to fit predetermined narratives. This practice not only undermines the foundation of democracy but also corrodes the very institutions designed to protect it.

Journalists, once hailed as the fourth estate, have a crucial role in maintaining the balance of power. Their primary function is to hold the other three branches of government accountable. However, many have strayed from this essential duty, instead opting to frame events in ways that align with their own political leanings or those of their employers. As my old Journalism teacher, Marjorie Noble, would say "Your job is to report, not editorialize."

This shift has led to a distortion of facts, where news outlets often present issues as existential threats to democracy itself. In reality, these situations are more accurately described as challenges to specific political parties or ideologies. By conflating party interests with the fate of democracy, media organizations contribute to an atmosphere of constant crisis, which can desensitize the public and erode trust in institutions.

Politicians, too, bear responsibility for this corrosion within the system. Many have abandoned the principles of good governance in favor of partisan point-scoring and fear-mongering. They frequently present policy disagreements as all-or-nothing scenarios, ignoring the nuanced reality of most political issues. All in a desperate quest for more power.

This approach not only heightens tensions but also overlooks a fundamental aspect of American democracy: the delicate balance between majority rule and minority rights. The Constitution was designed specifically to constrain the power of the majority, protecting the rights of all citizens. When politicians and journalists fail to acknowledge this balance, they do a disservice to the very system they claim to protect.

To address these issues, both journalists and politicians could benefit from applying the Rotary Four-Way Test to their work:

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?

By consistently asking these questions, reporters, media outlets and political figures could significantly improve the quality of our public discourse and decision-making.

The stakes in politics are rarely as absolute as they are often portrayed. Most issues exist on a spectrum, with room for compromise and nuanced solutions. By acknowledging this reality, journalists and politicians can foster a more constructive environment for problem-solving.

The rust and corrosion within our system can be addressed, but it requires a collective effort to prioritize truth, fairness, and the common good over partisan interests. Only then can we hope to rebuild trust in our institutions and ensure the longevity of our democratic system.



Rob Marshall gives an update on Project H2Open Doors recent water filter installation in Guatemala.



Water filter where water goes from brown to clear, like magic.



Desk-top learning connecting to RACHEL self-contained programs.



Learning about menstruation.

Project H²Open Doors Update



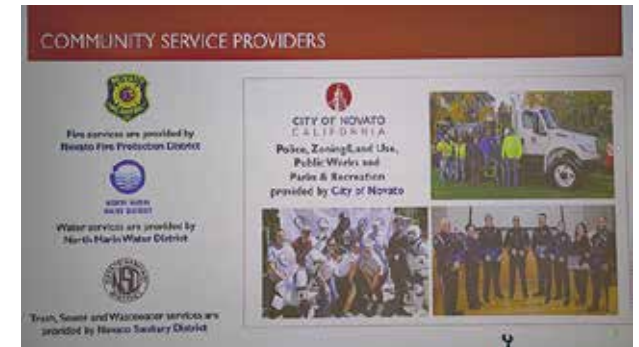
Eliza Roesler helps with Rob Marshall meeting agenda.



Novato City Manager Amy Cunningham.



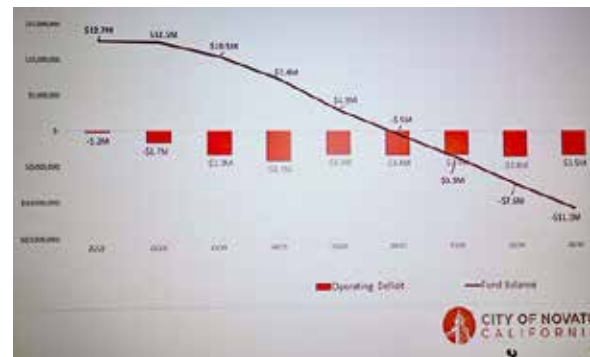
Novato Police Captain Sasha D'Amico introduces Amy Cunningham, City Manager.



Where the money goes and resident satisfaction graph shows the diminishing stats and need for more tax.



Inviting dish.



Graph shows decline in financial reserves and deficits caused by increase demand for City Services and better pay to keep employees.