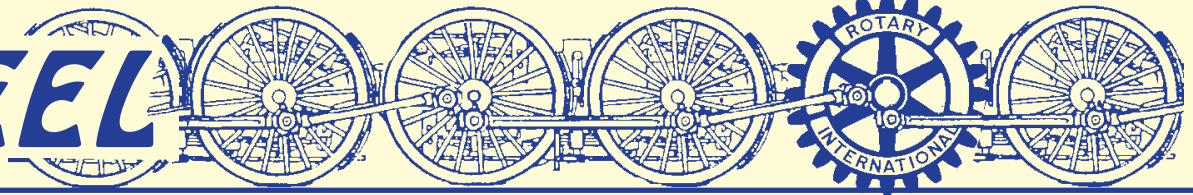


# The BIG WHEEL



Rotary Club of Novato

Chartered April 26, 1954

The Golden Nugget of the North Bay

In The Valley of Gentle Seasons

**August 21, 2026**  
**Vol. 78, No. 6**  
**Editor:**  
**A Winner**



## The Call, Pledge & Thought

Past President **Lynn Dawson** missed the moving podium so much, she agreed to fill in for **President Peter** today. She introduced **Randy Baker** who lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance and gave us this memorable Thought for the Day from 1960 Poet Laureate **Robert Ross**: “Suddenly, quietly you realize that – from this moment forth – you will no longer walk through this life alone. Like a new sun, this awareness arises within you, freeing you from fear, opening your life. It is the beginning of love, and the end of all that came before.”

## Visitors & Guests

There were no visiting Rotarians gracing our presence today, so we moved on to guest of Rotarians: **Skip Meehan**, guest of wife **Laura Joss**; speaker **Mark Martindill**, guest of **Mark Bosch**, and **Dr. Olivia Burger**, guest of **Craig McCurdy**. **Dr. Burger** has taken over **Craig's** former optometry practice; and **Kathy Ketron** guest of husband **Russ**.

## Updates

While **PE Rene Prado**, stealthily moved through the room, passing out a new edition of our membership roster, **PP Lynn** said that she had

lunch with **Gloria Dunn-Violin**, who is feeling better and ready to start a new round of radiation. No phone calls, but cards would be appreciated.

## Announcements

### Marin Oaks Garden

**Randy Baker** thanked too many people for your editor to catch for all their help on the Marin Oaks garden irrigation project. The staff and students have been watering the garden by hand, and this should be an improvement for them. This was a project of the Climate Action Team.

### Cushion for your Tush

**Sonia** let us know that the Club has purchased five new plush-cushioned chairs for members whose tushes need a bit of extra care. These will also be available for the Novato Speakers Series.

### BBQ, Brews & Comedy

**Sonia** also asked for a volunteer to attend the RC of Ignacio's fundraiser –BBQ, Brews and Comedy– on September 12, 5:30 pm, Jonas Center– as our club's responsible representative. **Evan Blacksea**, gamely volunteered.

### Social Media Skills Needed

**Phil Dougherty** asked anyone who has a facility with Instagram or Facebook, to please volunteer to help out the Public Relations Committee. See **Joy Fillman** or **Phil**.

### NSS Upcomming Season

**Phil** also once again, reminded us all that tickets for the next season of the Novato Speakers Series are on sale for \$100, a savings of \$20 for the season!

## Acoustics Study Results

**John Reuscher** let us all know that the club has had an acoustic study done and there really is a best place to stand, if you are using the microphones to make announcements. Because of the noise from the AC/heating vents on the stage, your announcement will be clearer, and more easily heard if you move toward the audience and off to the side a bit.

## Bruno's Bocce Ticket Exchange

**Marty Wickenheiser** announced that she will be unable to use her ticket to the Bruno's Bocce party which will be held on September 12 and she is happy to give it to someone who could use it. This set off a cascade of others who also could not attend and a series of people volunteering to snap up tickets, too quickly for your editor to follow, but I trust all are pleased.

## Ice Breaker

Returning us to yesteryear, **PP Lynn** had us do another Ice Breaker – name five things that the people at your table have in common. Lots of fun answers and we found out several new things about our fellow Rotarians! Your editor's table got a bit mixed up on the directions, but we could report that **Joy** and **Reggie** are visual learners, **Rene** and **Joy** have an interest in psychology, **Edgar** and **Rene** both speak Spanish, **Joy** and **Reggie** both drive Priuses, and **Edgar** and **Joy** each have two children, a boy and a girl.

*Continued on page 3*

## Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor

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Cost \$600 per year (\$15 per issue, prev. 3yr avg.)

Contact Bill Vespa: zip@sonic.net

## Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor



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# TGIF

**Friday August 28th • 5:30 - 7:00 pm**  
**(Music Starts at 7:00 if you want to stay)**



**Golden Gate Bistro**  
**7380 Redwood Blvd, Novato**

*You buy a drink and  
Rotary will provide some appetizers*

# SEPTEMBER

## SPECIAL DATES

- |      |                               |
|------|-------------------------------|
| 9-1  | Chris & Larry Harrison        |
| 9-1  | Al Shirley                    |
| 9-2  | Karen Palmer                  |
| 9-5  | Raye-Lee Estes                |
| 9-5  | Lucia & Christopher Mychajluk |
| 9-7  | Suzanne & Tom Bales           |
| 9-8  | Alane Chen                    |
| 9-9  | Kathy & Jim Botko             |
| 9-10 | Delyn & Nick Kies             |
| 9-13 | John Reuscher                 |
| 9-16 | Craig McCurdy                 |
| 9-16 | Cindy Milano                  |
| 9-19 | Kathy Botko                   |
| 9-19 | Gary Lam                      |
| 9-24 | Marcus Combs                  |
| 9-25 | Jo & Dean Heffelfinger        |
| 9-26 | Tara & Tommy Lee              |
| 9-28 | Art Crofts                    |
| 9-30 | Hannah Simon                  |

## Upcoming Programs & Events

### August

Aug 28 **Offsite Social** - Golden Gate Bistro

### September

Sept 4 **NPD**  
Sept 11 **Meeting at Jonas**  
Sept 18 **Meeting at Jonas**  
Sept 25 **Offsite Social**

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

### OFFICERS

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*Assistant  
District Governor*

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**Joy Fillman**  
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**Marcus Combs**  
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**Randy Baker**  
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**Jeff Slavitz & Holly Axtell**  
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**Jorg Puhr-Westerheide**  
**Andy Czajkowski**  
*The Rotary Foundation (TRF)*

**Ross Millerick**  
*Youth Service*

**Rene Prado**  
*Membership*

**Sonia Seeman**  
*Jonas Center Liaison*

**Jim Carriere**  
*President, Nova-Ro Corp.*

**Jeff Slavitz**  
*Chair, Novato Rotary Endowment*

**Lynn Dawson**  
*Past President*

Other tables all like country music (Well, **Maggie** won't turn it off!), like **Clint Eastwood**, like to hike and have hiked Yosemite, have visited Utah and like chocolate chip cookies. The table next to us, are college grads, were not born in Novato, all have siblings, all have traveled outside the U.S., all have been officers of a club. Moving one to another table, all lived in Novato, all liked chocolate, all have been to Europe, all have been to college. And another table, all have lived outside Novato, all like to hike in Novato, none are colorblind, and all enjoy gardening. As things were winding down, this table found three things in common, they had nothing in common, all have dabbled in a 2nd language, and all have been outside of CA. The next table were all gamblers and live in Novato, they were all born in North America, and all speak English, none have hats on and none have tried LSD. And the last table had all been born out of state, all had been to grad school and all wore black glasses! A very fun and enlightening Ice Breaker!

**Mark Bosch** then took the microphone and announce that **Skip Meehan**, member **Laura Joss'** husband is the only person present who has jumped out of a plane.

## Program

**Mark** then went on to invite to the podium our speaker, **Mark Martindill**, from the organization "A Simple Gesture". **Mark** reminded us that over 23K people in Marin worry about food challenges, 41% of those are below the SNAP threshold.

A Simple Gesture started in Ashland, OR in 2010, as a way to make it easy for people to help out their neighbors. Today every third household takes part in Ashland. An impact is something you can measure and know you are making a difference.

**Mark**, who is from Santa Rosa, is not paid, initially interviewed 40 executive directors of A Simple Gesture organizations to get a clear idea of best practices. He started organizing in May 2025 in Sonoma County and their first event, which typically takes two hours, started in October 2025. Their goal is to reach 8-10% of hungry people.

Nutrition is critical, they are interested in picking up good food, not just "food". Last year the State of California passed a bill making it illegal to throw away food, but the bill was more about diminishing methane gas than making sure food was getting to those who needed it. Thus, 70% of the food that food banks receive are high sugar bakery items and fruit.

Making it simple was not so easy, but they have developed an app which works smoothly for drivers and donors. 1) Fill any bag with shelf-stable pantry foods (nonbreakable); 2) Put the bag on your door step on the next event date and, 3) it is picked up, by a driver who leaves a bright green reusable bag for next time. The bag has a Thank You and a Needs list for your local pantry. Such food could include peanut butter, rice, or canned tuna. If the food is donated then the pantry does not have to buy it. Our club's Operating Partner is **Mark Bosch** and the local pantry that we take our food pickups to is the pantry at St. Francis Episcopal Church on Fifth Street in Novato.

**PP Lynn** thanked **Mark** for his presentation and presented him with hand-drawn cards by our own **Alan Dunham**.

## Upcoming Calendar

**Lynn** then announced that next week we will be at Golden Gate Bistro, 7380 Redwood Blvd., Novato (the old Perry's Deli for you old timers) for a social at 5:30 pm.

In two weeks, our program will be the canine unit from the Novato Police Department.

## 25'er

The 25er was won by **Keith Axtell**, don't spend it all in one place!

**Rotary**  
MISSION SAN RAFAEL

*Invites you to*

# SUNSET CRUISE

**- SF BAY -**

*Ahoy! Come Join Us!*

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 28 | 6:30 - 8:30 PM**

A FUN & FRIENDSHIP SOCIAL HOSTED BY MISSION SAN RAFAEL ROTARY

Enjoy breathtaking views from the water, including Tiburon, Belvedere, Sausalito, San Francisco, the Golden Gate Bridge, Angel Island, and surrounding areas.

Pack a picnic dinner and dine on the Bay with fellow Rotarians, family, and friends. This private ferry is chartered exclusively for our group.

*Bay evenings can be chilly—bring a jacket!*

DEPARTING FROM TIBURON FERRY TERMINAL

|                     |                      |                   |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| BOARDING<br>6:45 PM | DEPARTURE<br>7:00 PM | RETURN<br>8:30 PM |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|

|                                        |                                                                                                 |                                                      |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ADULTS</b><br>\$50.00<br>PER PERSON | <b>UNIVERSITY STUDENTS</b><br>\$30.00<br>PER PERSON<br><small>Valid student ID required</small> | <b>CHILDREN 12 AND UNDER</b><br>\$25.00<br>PER CHILD |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|

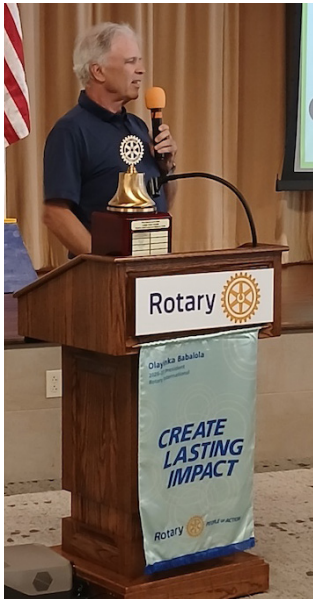
RESERVE YOUR TICKETS TODAY!

SCAN THE QR CODE OR CLICK THE LINK TO PURCHASE.

★ Note: A donation to Zeffy is optional.

**Questions:** Melissa Prandi  
prandiprop@gmail.com

TOGETHER, WE CONNECT. | WE SERVE. | WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



## A Simple Gesture

It is as easy as 1-2-3

- 1 Fill any bag/box with shelf-stable pantry foods (non-breakable)
- 2 Put the bag on your doorstep on the next event date
- 3 We pick it up, leaving you a bright green reusable bag for next time. The bag has a Thank You and Needs List for your local food pantry

Speaker Mark Martindill spoke about the “A Simple Gesture” food program, which provides food to those who are challenged to provide enough food for themselves.



PE Rene Prado and PP Lynn Dawson at the District's BBQ for Presidents, President-Elects, and Assistant District Governors.



The Rotary Clubs of Novato, Ignacio, Novato Sunrise and Novato Evening sponsored the Rise food packing event which took place on August 22, 2026 at the Druids Hall in Novato.

**Rise**  
AGAINST HUNGER