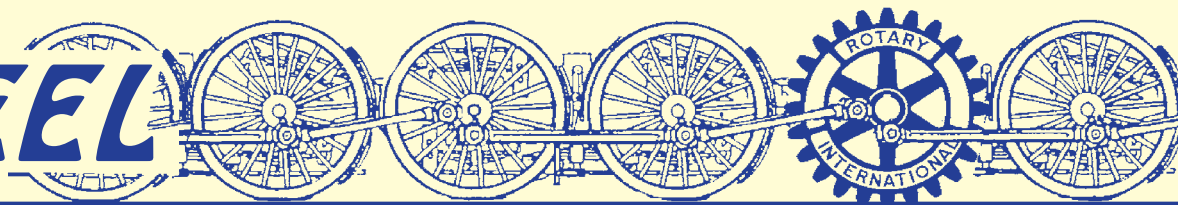


# The BIG WHEEL

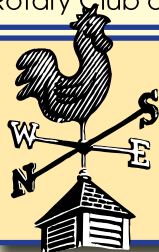


Rotary Club of Novato

Chartered April 26, 1954

The Golden Nugget of the North Bay

In The Valley of Gentle Seasons



**August 23, 2024**

**Vol. 76, No. 7**

**Editor:**

**Bill Vespa**

## Call to Order

**President Tom** called the meeting to order and welcomed us to the Rotary Club of Novato. **President Tom** declared, "This club personifies service above self. This club doesn't wait, we do. We don't ask why? We ask why not?"

## The Pledge & Thought

After **Jim Carrier** led us in the Pledge, he gave us thoughts for the day. The first one was inspired by the recent Russian prisoner release, "There's no shame in failure, only in quitting." The second one, **Jim** said related to him directly, "Laziness is nothing more than the habit of resting before you get tired."

## Visitors and Guests

**President Tom** asked for visiting Rotarians to stand. **Daniel Mikkola**, visited from the Rotary Club of Ignacio. **Daniel** works for NUSD and wants to share some exciting school programs with us.

Next up were the guests of Rotarians. **Gloria Dunn-Violin** had former members **Sandy Bowman** and **Ross Millerick**. **Ross** will be running for the Marin Community College Board. **Suzanne Bales** brought **Kathleen Gallivan**, whose husband **Jack** was a long-time member of our Club. **Past-President Phil D.** introduced our speaker and the President of the College of Marin, **Jonathan Eldridge, Ed.D.** **Phil** also introduced the new Vice President of the school, **Dr. Dana Emerson**. **Lynn Dawson's** guest, **Chris Siefkas**, made his second visit to our club. **Robert Marshall** introduced his neighbor **Barry** who teaches psychology and other subjects. When he is not teaching, he loves working on BMW motorcycles. **Barry** is possibly interested in joining

our Club. **Keith Axtell** brought **Pat Chiota**, who has been living in Singapore, and visiting us for the second time.

## Recognitions

**Larry Harrison** is celebrating his birthday, Sunday with family. **Peian Harness**, is celebrating her birthday on the 29th in Europe. **Mary Lou** and **Larry Mazzotta** are celebrating their 37th anniversary on the 24th. **John Cutrufelli** celebrated his 19th year as a Rotarian on the 19th. **Jim Carrier**, is celebrating his 20th year as a Rotarian on the 31st.

## Community Care

**President Tom** welcomed back **Moses Jacob**, who is recovering from knee surgery. **Tom** also reported some very sad news. **Christine Stroeh's** sister passed away this month.

## Announcements

**Larry Harrison** announced a Rise Against Hunger food packing on Saturday, September 14th, 8 a.m., at Druids Hall, alongside the three other clubs in Novato. Our Club needs at least 15 people. The plan is to pack 10,150 meals on Saturday, starting at 8 a.m. and finishing about 10 a.m. The packing can be done sitting down, so anyone can do it. It will be well ventilated with doors and windows open, fans will be on. **Larry** will also need a few volunteers to come early to help set up, arriving at Druids Hall at 6:30 a.m. and also needs people to help sweep up afterward.

**Jim Spilman** announced another community service project, on Saturday the 14th, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., removing a mini-dock from the Bahia Lagoon.

**Eliza Roesler** is helping to start a VFW Auxiliary. Anybody who has family that's eligible or in the Veterans of Foreign Wars can sign up for the Auxiliary. The VFW post has graciously offered to cover the first year of membership, so it's free. Auxiliary members work on projects that help support the VFW. Meetings are going to be the second Wednesday of the month at 4.15 p.m. The next meeting is on September 11th. It's like a "happy hour" meeting. If you're interested, reach out to **Eliza** or **Tiffany Fischer**.

**Tiffany** followed with her own announcement reminding

everybody that on Tuesday, the 27th, at 7 p.m., Oakmont Cedar Living, she is starting a support group for the community. It will be on the fourth Tuesday of every month, and it's to help folks with aging parents, mainly dementia, get insight how to help others age in place at home or placement.

**Jorg** reminded us to look out for his EREY letter where donations to the 5150 Foundation will get you raffle tickets. The 5150 Foundation event is on the U.S.S. Hornet on October 12th. This is where the raffle will take place. Please make you make a donation/purchase raffle tickets prior to October 12th.

**Jeff Slavitz** said that, October 5th is the National Association of Mental Illness Walk. It will be at McInnis Park. If you would like to be a member of the walk or contribute, look for a recent email, there's a little link in there. If that doesn't work, contact **Jeff**.

As promised, **Dan Mikkola** from NUSD announced an exciting partnership with College of Marin. There will be a field trip to COM for all of our 8th grade students on October 11th. The students will get exposed to what high school means, and how grades matter. They will also learn about San Marin and Novato High programs, so they can decide which school fits them. There will be college learning programs, as well as industry members present. It's really a great experience for 8th graders to think about what they want to do and make better choices.

**President Tom** followed with a couple of other quick reminders. Interact's workshop is tomorrow morning at the S.F. War Memorial; Next Friday, August 30th, is our first social of the year. It's our annual picnic at Miwok Park. **John Cutrufelli** will be doing the barbecuing, as usual. Arrive between 11:30 a.m. and noon. Please bring a salad or an appetizer or a dessert; T-shirts are here! Come up after the meeting to claim yours.

## Who's Dat Rotarian?

Get a clue, get it right, get a prize. If you get it wrong, you owe a joke at the next meeting or a monetary contribution.

*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?"

## 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
- 9-7 Rafelina & Anthony Maglio
- 9-9 Kathy & Jim Botko
- 9-10 Camille Marshall
- 9-13 John Reuscher
- 9-16 Craig McCurdy
- 9-16 Cindy Milano
- 9-19 Kathy Botko
- 9-20 Craig Anderson
- 9-24 Marcus Combs
- 9-24 Marilyn & Lowell Smith
- 9-25 Jo & Dean Heffelfinger
- 9-26 Tara & Tommy Lee
- 9-28 Art Crofts



## Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor



**Empathy**  
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## Upcoming Programs & Events

### August

Aug. 30 **No Meeting**

### September

- Sept. 6 **Andy Pansini:** Fathers of Invention - A Marin Story of Innovation
- Sept. 11 **Board Meeting**
- Sept. 13 **Jeff Saperstein and Dick Spotswood:** Israel
- Sept. 20 **Social Event TBA**
- Sept. 27 **Julie Cohne:** Sustaining Arts - Rain Forest

### October

- Oct. 4 **Danica Remy:** President Asteroid Institute
- Oct. 9 **Board Meeting**
- Oct. 11 **No Meeting**
- Oct. 18 **US Marines Colonel Kearny:** On Ukraine
- Oct. 25 **No Meeting**

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

### OFFICERS

**Tom Rickey**  
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**Lynn Dawson**  
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**Peian Harness**  
*Secretary*

**Al Shirley**  
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**Steve Wright**  
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**Stacie Vance**  
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**Peter Rubens**  
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**Peter Pelavin**  
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**Roy Pfeifer & Gloria Dunn-Violin**  
*Environmental Sustainability (NR-CAT)*

**Holly Axtell**  
*International Service*

**Jorg Puhw-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*

**Peter Oser** was first up. “This Rotarian, in high school, ran the 100-yard dash in under 10 seconds.” The guess of **Jeff Slavitz** has **Peter** going to the Internet to find a joke. Next was, **Suzanne Bales**. “This Rotarian and some friends (in his college days), ran out of gas while crossing the Rockies. He ran a few miles in the snow over “the Great Divide” with shirt and sandals on. It was not **T.J. Neff**, so **Suzanne** is looking for a joke. The final clue was for **Keith Axtell**. “This Rotarian was brave enough to hitchhike all the way across Canada on his way to California. He got into a very big truck with a gentleman and offered to drive that big truck. While driving at night, he almost hit a moose. **Keith’s** guess of “Who’s that Rotarian?” has him looking for his joke book. After several penalty free guesses by various members, we got one final clue. “It’s pretty amazing that this guy ran under 10 seconds when he could barely walk a couple weeks ago.” The correct answer was **Moses Jacob**.

## Getting to know you

**Pres. Tom** encouraged members to share personal stories to help everyone get to know each other better. **Jeff Slavitz** recounted how he met **Nancy** on St. Patrick’s Day in 1988 at Harrington’s Bar in San Francisco and got here business card. **Jeff** had read that he had 48 hours to call for a date or he would be forgotten. He called the next day, which **Nancy** took as extreme interest. That first date led to a successful 34-year marriage and two children. **Phil D.** then, shared his story of meeting his wife, **Lori**. They had known each other as children, reconnected after 20 years, married 34 years ago and have two daughters. **Phil** noted the contrast of **Jeff** having 48hrs to call and **Phil** waiting 20 years.

## People of Action

**President Tom** had **Rene** show a couple of short Rotary videos. The messages were: “Leaders volunteer their skills, expertise, and resources to solve issues and address community needs. We are people of action.” “Join us, and together we can make an even greater impact. Find out how you can get involved at [rotary.org/action](http://rotary.org/action).”

## The Program

**President Tom** introduced our Speaker. College of Marin **President Jonathan Eldridge, Ed.D.** He’s been with the college for 11 years as vice president, and he works with his faculty and staff, as well as community partners, to create a truly coherent and integrated educational program for students. **President Tom** read an extensive resume, and with “Without further ado”, introduced **Dr. Jonathan Eldridge**.

**Dr. Eldridge** thanked us for having him talk to our Club. He acknowledged his successor in the vice president role, **Dr. Dana Emerson**, who just joined the college 20 days ago.

**Dr. Eldridge** noted the significant impact the College of Marin has had on the community. **Dr. Eldridge** shared a story of a former student who, after taking ESL classes in 1987, went on to become a realtor and now has children attending the college. This story exemplifies the long-lasting, generational influence the college has on the community.

**Dr. Eldridge** emphasized COM’s role as the primary public higher education institution in Marin County. The college’s success is largely due to its partnerships with local organizations and agencies. He mentioned an upcoming meeting at the Jonas Center in October with over 100 partners to discuss ways to improve student outcomes in areas such as basic needs, health, and educational opportunities. **Dr. Eldridge** also highlighted the importance of the partnership with the Rotary Club of Novato, which helped establish the Jonas Center, a very popular event space in Marin County.

The College of Marin boasts the highest UC transfer rate among Northern California community colleges. **Dr. Eldridge** underscored the affordability of community college and the opportunities it provides for students to save money before transferring to four-year school. He also discussed the college’s commitment to workforce development, particularly through programs like ESL, construction training, and the Certified Nursing Assistant program.

**Dr. Eldridge** addressed barriers faced by low-income, first-generation students of color in Marin County, noting that only about 40% of these students complete the A to G requirements necessary for entry into four-year institutions. The College of Marin, which is more diverse than the county itself, plays a crucial role in providing access to higher education for these students. The college’s Compass Program, for example, begins working with these students as early as ninth grade to support their academic success and college enrollment. About 70% of Compass students complete the A to G requirements. Additionally, learning communities and the Summer Bridge Program play vital roles in ensuring that students are well-prepared and supported, giving them equitable opportunities to achieve their goals.

**Dr. Eldridge** highlighted COM’s athletic programs. He pointed out the new Miwok Aquatic and Fitness Center which hosts water polo, swimming, and diving. There are various other sports offered including baseball and soccer. The college’s athletic teams offer students the chance to compete, develop important life skills, and enjoy the experience, but students must have a full academic

load. He noted that oldest person with a connection to COM is 100 year old **Art Shallock**, who is living in Sonoma. Art played baseball at College of Marin where he got his associate’s degree and pitched for the Yankees in the 1953 World Series.

Efforts to increase student and community involvement on the IVC campus have been bolstered by new facilities such as the Jonas Center, Miwok Aquatic Center, the organic farm, and the Nugget Markets demonstration kitchen. The college is also negotiating with the Marin Fire Service to build housing for the Fire Foundry Program, aiming to diversify the fire service and provide more opportunities for students. This initiative will include housing for seasonal fire workers and facilities for education, equipment maintenance and training, further enhancing the campus education environment.

The college is strengthening its partnerships with NUSD and exploring a middle college model, where high school students spend their entire day on the college campus, taking both high school and college courses. This would provide students with a more direct path to entering the workforce or transferring to a four-year institution. **Dr. Eldridge** also talked about the college’s third campus in Bolinas, which is being rebuilt as a field station for teaching and research, in partnership with UC Berkeley and other institutions. This facility will be crucial in addressing climate change and other pressing issues.

As the college approaches its 100th year, **Dr. Eldridge** spoke of the importance of honoring its past and defining its future. The college community, including faculty, staff, students, and alumni, is encouraged to share their stories and contributions. He feels the responsibility of being stewards of the college, focusing on how to make the college the best place to study, work, and drive positive change in the community. The Center for Student Success, set to open during the centennial, is highlighted as a capstone project that will further enhance the college’s educational infrastructure.

After **Dr. Eldridge** answered questions from the audience, President Tom thanked our speaker. Then he reminded us of the upcoming calendar, asked us to help clean up the tables and to get our t-shirts.

## The 25<sup>er</sup>

**John Ringgenberg** was the winner.



*Past President Phil describes meeting his bride.*



*Jorg describes 'Every Rotarian Every Year'.*



*Jeff describes meeting his bride.*



*Eliza Roesler describes program for helping the elderly.*



*COM Vice President Dana Emerson.*



*COM President Jonathan Eldridge describes expanding opportunities.*