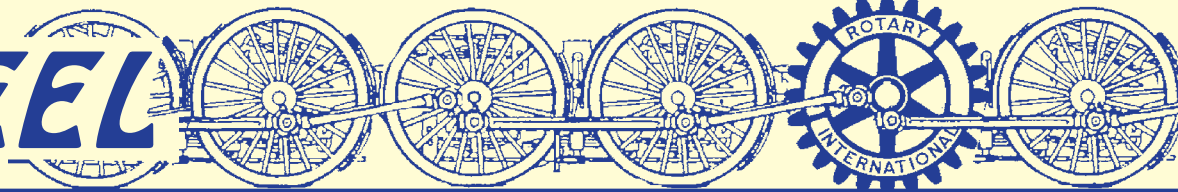


# The BIG WHEEL

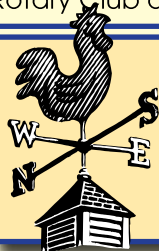


Rotary Club of Novato

Chartered April 26, 1954

The Golden Nugget of the North Bay

In The Valley of Gentle Seasons



**August 9, 2024**  
**Vol. 76, No. 5**  
**Editor:**  
**Bill Vespa**

## Call to order

**President Tom** called us to order at 12:15 pm, welcoming all to the Rotary Club of Novato. A Club that personifies “Service Above Self”. We don’t wait; we do. We don’t ask why? We ask why not?

## Pledge and Thought

**Pres. Tom** called on **Tiff Fischer** to lead us in the Pledge. After leading us in the pledge, **Tiff** shared a thought from **USMC Lt. Gen. John Lejeune**, “Leadership is the sum of those qualities of intellect, human understanding and moral character that enables a person to inspire and control a group of people successfully”.

## Visitors and Guests

Rotarians visiting us today were our speaker **5150 District Governor Steve Wright** and **ADG Stacy Vance**; **Gary Bramon** introduced **John Christman**, **Gary’s** Chiropractor and past president from the Rotary Club of Mill Valley. **John** may be looking to join our Club; We had several guests. **Peter Rubens** brought his daughter **Kim** visiting from Baltimore, MD; **Keith Axtell** hosted fellow Rotarian **Rick Chiota’s** wife **Pat** as his guest. **Tiff Fischer** brought her sister and co-worker from Aging Solutions, **Nicole**; **John Reuscher** introduced **Rebecca**, a former Rotarian; **Tommy Lee** had caregiver **Jessica** as his guest; **Lori Frugoli** brought her friend and neighbor **Jennifer**. **Lynn Dawson** introduced her guest and potential member **Chris South**; **Marisa Remak** brought her daughter **Sadie**. **Gary Bramon** brought **Mark Dale** from the Novato Speaker Series as his guest.

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

**Peter Rubens** was celebrating a birthday today. In the next few days, **Phil** and **Laurie Dougherty** are celebrating their anniversary; **Jim White** and **Nohemi Beissmann–Mason** have birthdays.

## Community Care

**Penny Hansen** said **Peter Pelavin** is recovering from a back procedure. **President Tom** reported that **Moses Jacob** is up and walking after knee replacement surgery.

## Announcements

**Don Violin** announced the upcoming Bocce Ball tournament to support Rotaplast on Saturday, August 17.

**Tiff Fischer** announced a volunteer support group at Oakmont Senior Community Center on Tuesday August 27. The group will provide insight and knowledge about the symptoms of memory loss and dementia. Topics will include aging in place at home, dealing with difficult behaviors and preventing elder abuse. We are all invited to attend.

**President Tom** had short list of announcements: T-Shirts are still on the way. PRLS master class is coming up Saturday Aug 17. **Lynn Dawson**, a PRLS graduate, gave an overview of this leadership program and encouraged anyone to attend that has not. The Interact Kick-Off will be held on August 24 at the SF War Memorial Auditorium 9:30-2. Contact **Eliza Roesler** with questions. Rise Against Hunger will be on 9-14, the four Novato Rotary Clubs will participate. We need 15 members from our Club to help, contact **President Tom** or **Larry Harrison**.

## SASYS

Continuing **Past President Phil’s** “Service Above Self” award presentations, **President Tom** called on **Mike Morrissey**, the first SASYS recipient this Rotary year. **Mike** has been very active behind the scenes. He has helped on multiple service projects, produced all the **Marty’s** Moments segments, has served on the Club Board and funded Scholarships, just to name a few things. **President Tom** asked about **Mike’s** pre-retirement life. **Mike**

described his work life as “his evolving”. The short version of **Mike’s** resume is that he started as a Cal Poly graduate, working as a Landscape Architect. Then travel and work blended. He was a bus driver in Istanbul and Katmandu, spent 20 years in Asia, worked at the Environmental Institute in Tokyo, later started his own company in Bangkok, which he sold to a multi-national company and that is when **Mike** retired. **Mike** had always used photography in his work, but this became a hobby that he combined with his world travels. He began documenting homeless encampments in San Jose, CA and realized that he needed video to properly tell those stories. After he married **Jaqueline**, a specialist in Non-Profits, he used video to document Marin County non-profits and he also has documented local artists. He has about 240,000 photographic images which he is using to publish books. Congratulations **Mike!**

## Back by Popular Demand

*Continued on page 3*

## BIG WHEEL EDITORS NEEDED

Contact **Bill Vespa** at  
[zip@sonic.net](mailto:zip@sonic.net)

*Support the most interesting  
Rotary Club ever!*

*Help share the meeting with family,  
friends and members unable to attend.*

# 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?"



## 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.

## Rotary Big Wheel Sponsor



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## Upcoming Programs & Events

### August

- 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

### October

- Oct. 4 **Meeting TBA**  
Oct. 11 **No Meeting**  
Oct. 18 **Meeting TBA**  
Oct. 25 **No Meeting**

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

### OFFICERS

**Tom Rickey**  
*President*  
**Lynn Dawson**  
*Vice President*  
**Peian Harness**  
*Secretary*  
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*Treasurer*

**Stephanie A. Urchick**  
*R.I. President*  
**Steve Wright**  
*District Governor*  
**Stacie Vance**  
*Assistant District Governor*

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*Logistics & Facilities*  
**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*

Due to the many inquiries about the recent showing of the slide show from his trip to the RI Convention in Singapore, **President Tom** treated us to a second showing.

## Getting to know you...

In the spirit of getting to know each other better, **President Tom** called on **Larry Harrison** to talk about some of his life experience. **Larry** lived in St. Louis and graduated from high school in 1970. While still in high school a people from Israel came to request help harvesting crops in Israel. At this time, most of the Israeli population was still in active service as a result of the military conflicts. Being Jewish and seeing an opportunity to give back, **Larry** and a schoolmate volunteered. They went to Israel and lived on a Kibbutz for several months. Starting at 3am they harvested fish, pulled weeds and picked fruit. He met many people from all over the world, which caused him to see his homeland in a different light and opened his mind to new ideas. The harvesting was aggravating his athletic injuries and then in one day he received a letter from his girlfriend, saying she was marrying a Marine and one each from his mother and father saying they were divorcing. So **Larry** headed back to St. Louis and a couple of weeks later, the enlightened **Larry** needed to get out of St. Louis and moved to the Bay Area near his brother. This led him to meet his wife **Chris**. **Larry** noted how his life choices put him on the path to where he is today. He reminded us to do the same for ourselves and make adjustments if needed to get where we want to go.

## Our Speaker

**President Tom** introduced our Rotary 5150 Assistant District Governor, **Stacy Vance**. **Stacy** started in Rotary as a Rotaractor in 2010. **Stacy** is a member of the new San Rafael Marin Evening Club and has been a Rotarian for 15 years. **Stacy** has been involved in Rotary at many levels of leadership from Club to District and is a Master PRLSs graduate. She is also involved in non-profits outside Rotary. **Stacy** introduced **DG Steve Wright**. **Steve** has been a member of the Pacifica Rotary Club since 1987 and is a two time president and held most every other position in the Club. At the District Level he has also held many leadership positions. **Steve** was selected as District 5150 Rotarian of the year in 2018. **Steve** and his wife **Colleen** (a Rotarian since 1994) have hosted three Rotary Youth Exchange students and both have extensively support Rotary financially and

have received the 5150 Grand Slam Honor. **Steve** retired in 2019 from the Collections Industry and served on numerous local Boards. **Steve** is an U.S. Army Veteran and awarded the Commendation Medal.

**DG Steve** presented **President Tom** with a one-time award because our Club has provided so many (10) members to serve in District level positions this year. **Steve** moved into his presentation by stating that he was going to keep District Events to a minimum, to let Clubs focus on Club events, where the most important things happen. **Steve** noted the three reasons for District events: they are fun, provide networking and raise funds for the District Designated Funds. Global Rotary membership is a concern. Numbers are down except in Ukraine, India and Asia. There will be a Membership Summit event on September 7, 2024, which was originally proposed by **PDG Laine Hendricks**. The District Foundation event this year will be on the USS Hornet on October 12, 2024 from 11am to 5pm. **Steve** noted that with the proximity to the Fleet Week events across the bay, a Blue Angels sighting was possible. **Steve** noted that RCN has 100% participation in Every Rotarian Every Year, and we should be proud of that!

**DG Steve** talked about the Rotary themes for the year. The International slogan “The Magic of Rotary” resulted from a Dominican Republic water project demonstration where a child came to incoming **RI President Stephanie Hertek** and asked her to “Show me more of that magic”. The District theme “Hope in Action” was borrowed by **Steve** from the 1953-54 International theme. The district logo with three hands represents “collaboration” of people, other Rotary Clubs and other organizations; the gloves are for “Hands on Projects” which is the heart and soul of Rotary (**Steve** even gifted Club Presidents a pair of leather gloves this year); The hands touching represents friendship. **Steve** talked about the importance of friends and interactions at the club level. Meetings and service projects are where your friends are and where words, hugs and support are given. **Steve** said thought he discovered this, but it is not a new idea, the first object of Rotary from 110 years ago is “Development of Acquaintances as an Opportunity for Service”.

**DG Steve** said that Rotarians are the helpers when there is trouble in the world. He recalled attending an RI Convention where numerous World Leaders spoke and referred to the 18,000 Rotarians in attendance as fellow World Leaders. **Steve** then realized that Rotarians are also World Leaders! 49 of the 51 founding members of the U.N. in 1945 were Rotarians and

to this day Rotary is the largest NGO at the UN. No other organization could set out to eliminate Polio worldwide (currently 23 there are new cases). Rotarians are helpers locally, leaders internationally. It all starts with one person’s idea and the drive, passion, love and money of Rotarians as a group. The world needs Rotary now more than ever. **DG Steve** related a few stories of how seeming small projects can have a major impact. Things as simple as reading to a child, providing plastic surgery through Rotoplast or saving lives by providing clean water systems.

In closing, **DG Steve** left us with a challenge to “fill in your dash” (picture the dash between your birth and death dates on a headstone). Look at the existing projects are they the best they can be? What about new projects? Put your “Hopes in Action” and share the “Magic of Rotary” with the rest of the world. **Steve** then thanked us for the incredible honor to be our **DG**, for being his friends and fellow Rotarians. **DG Steve**, Thank for your inspiration!

**President Tom** thanked us all for coming. Upcoming event reminders: Aug 30 Picnic at Miwok Park led by **John Cutrufelli**. In the spirit of “The Magic of Rotary” we will have Magician **Jay Alexander** as our program next week. This is a great opportunity to bring potential members.

## 25'er

The pot was won by **Marty Wickenheiser**.





District Governor Steve Wright gives a helpful resource guide of upcoming events and shows a Magic water filtration project.



Assistant Governor Stacie Vance of San Rafael Evening describes PRLS Master Program.



President Tom holding the award for Member District participation.



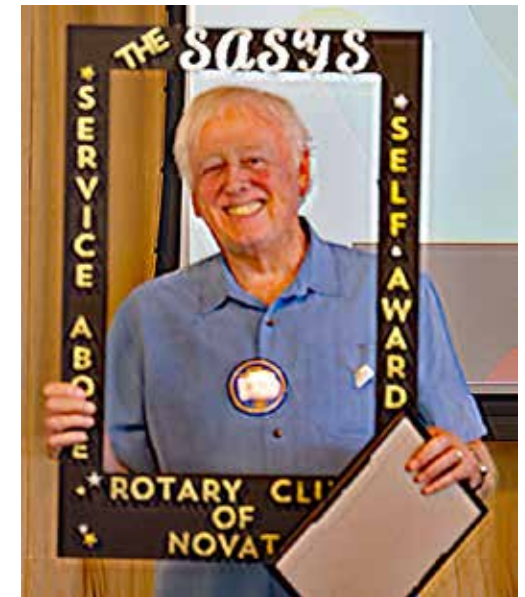
President Tom presents Mike Morrissey with a SASY Service Above Self recognition for production of Marty's Moments videos that show the foundation of our Novato Rotary Club with legendary moments.



USS Hornet Foundation Event on October 12, including lunch, tours, music and Blue Angels flyover.



Village Carmelita, Peten Guatemala was sharing water with cattle before arrival of filtration system.



Thank You, Mike.