



# The Voice of the Vineyards

The Weekly Electronic Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Healdsburg

"The mission of a bulletin is inform the membership,  
comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable"

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## OPENING



**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Led by **Richard Cochran**

## GUESTS OF ROTARIANS AND THE CLUB



✓ Michael Fichtner, son of **Tricia Fichtner**

✓ Jack Strange – Incoming District Governor



✓ Christian Jerusalem – Rotarian from Germany



✓ Rob Maxima – *A Simple Gesture*

✓ Betsy Hafner (Speaker) – State Department

✓ Deena Cochran, wife and guest of **Dick Cochran**



## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



Presenter: **Ali Tuttle**

**Ali** shared a quote attributed to Mark Twain:

“If you eat a live frog first thing in the morning, nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day.”

Ali explained that her family adapted this idea into the phrase “**Eat the frog,**” using it as motivation to tackle the hardest or least pleasant task first.

## MYSTERY ROTARIAN

*Hints Provided:*

- Civil Engineer
- Has 5 children (10 total including spouse’s children)
- 55 years in Rotary, including clubs in **Novato, Ukiah, and Healdsburg**
- 45 years of perfect attendance



*Guess:* **Robert Pedroncelli** guessed by **Jerry Ogden**



## FELLOWSHIP & CLUB ACTIVITIES

*Femme Gathering*

- ✚ Hosted at **Barbara’s house** (hosted by **Nita Parker**)
- ✚ Wine and food provided
- ✚ Positive feedback on fellowship and atmosphere
- ✚ About 6 Rotarians attended

*Riddell Preserve Hike & Picnic*

- ✚ Result of a Crab Feast auction item

- ✚ Participants toured the preserve
- ✚ **Barbara** prepared lunch at the cabin
- ✚ Appreciation expressed to:
  - **Barbara**
  - **Norm**
  - **Trisha**
  -

#### *Riddell Burn Project*

- ✚ Funded by a District Grant for wildfire resilience
- ✚ Preserve size: approximately 400 acres
- ✚ Location concerns near **West Dry Creek / Brack Road**
- ✚ **Jim** described completed work:
  - Burning old burn piles
  - Consolidating wood debris
  - Fire mitigation efforts
- ✚ Group humorously remarked: “*We’re good at burning things.*”

#### *Arundo Removal – Russian River*

- ✚ Participants: **Don Anderson, Don M, Matt Anderson, Gary, and Norm Fujita**
- ✚ Worked ~**3 hours** removing invasive Arundo
- ✚ Location: *Badger Park*, along the Russian River
- ✚ Joined by:
  - Other Rotary clubs
  - High School Interact Club

### **Environmental & Community Events**

#### *ASG Appearance at Farmers Market*

- **Simple Gesture** participated at the Saturday Market

#### *Upcoming Recology Facility Tour*

- *Date:* May 26
- *Time:* 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM
- *Location:* Recology of Sonoma-Marin’s Materials Recovery Facility
- Purpose: Learn about recycling processes and machinery
- Reminder to dress appropriately
- Contact **Norm Fujita** if interested

### **SOCIAL EVENTS**

- **Dinners for 8**
  - Hosts have been notified
  - Watch emails for details

- **Potluck Social**
  - **Date:** May 19
  - **Host:** Pat Williams
  - **Coordination:** Trisha Fichtner managing sign-ups and food
  
- **Debunking at Brandt's Beach**
  - **Date:** June 26
  - Sign-up encouraged
  - **Jim** promised a “*delicious*” menu
  - Much jovial anticipation

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

### AAUW Garden Party

- Hosted at **John and Nancy Andrews'** property
- Garden described as “*absolutely amazing*”
- Nancy Andrews: AAUW President
- Julie Hanamura: Event Chair
  
- **Scholarships**
- Supports women pursuing college or returning to education
- Includes **Tech Trek** programs
- Covers: Healdsburg, Geyserville, Cloverdale, Windsor
- Approximately **\$70,000** awarded annually
- Club encouraged to attend and support
  
- **Far West Rotary Conference**
- Bowling and singing reported
- Great photos shared

## HAPPY DOLLARS



- **Paul Frechette**
  - Turned 77 on May 7
  - Willie's Seafood celebration
  - **\$77** to the Community Fund



- **Mark Decker**
  - Purchased a new **2026 Nissan truck**
  - Gave old vehicle to his son
  - **\$50** to Paul Harris



- **Dick Bertapelle**

- Traveled via Amtrak from Emeryville to Chicago en route to Michigan
- Sleeping car removed → **55-hour seated trip**
- Highlight: visiting Amish country
- Adventure appreciated despite mishaps
- **Gift:** Goat milk soap presented to President **Cathy**
  - **\$100** to the Community Fund



- **Mike Potmesil**

- 2½ weeks in Morocco
- Spent approximately 2.5 weeks in Morocco
- Traveled with tour group:
- Intrepid
- Group size: 10 travelers
- **\$140** to PolioPlus

- **George Heath**

- Car totaled after being T-boned (not at fault)
- Now driving a Honda CR-V purchased from his son
- 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday next month
- **\$80** for Green Hair Day



- **Dick Cochran**

- Hosted Mother's Day with three mothers, grandchildren, and sons-in-law
- Called the day "*glorious*"
- Playfully praised his spouse
- **\$100** to PolioPlus

- **Cathy King**

- Enjoyed a wonderful walk on a lovely day
- **\$25** to PolioPlus



## TODAY'S PROGRAM



### May 11 – Betsy Hafner, U.S. Trade Representative / State Department

Betsy Hafner of the U.S. Trade Representative's office delivered a deeply contextual talk focused on the economic and trade dimensions of Russia's war in Ukraine, emphasizing that the conflict is as much an exercise in economic warfare as it is a territorial or military struggle. Drawing on historical background from the

Euromaidan protests of 2013–2014 and her own firsthand visit to Kyiv shortly thereafter, Hafner explained how Ukraine's pivot toward European integration—marked by the signing of its EU Association Agreement—was viewed by Russia as an existential threat to its influence, setting the stage for the annexation of Crimea and, years later, the full-scale invasion. She argued that President Putin's objectives extend beyond land acquisition to the systematic weakening of Ukraine's economic independence, particularly through attacks on key sectors such as agriculture and metallurgy. Ukraine's role as a global breadbasket made Russian assaults on ports like Odesa especially damaging, disrupting grain exports to Africa and the Middle East, stranding crops in silos, reducing farmers' ability to plant, and contaminating millions of acres of arable land with mines and debris—developments that sent shockwaves through global food markets and raised fears of famine. While EU efforts to reroute Ukrainian exports through Europe provided limited relief, they also created political strain within the bloc, and exports remain below prewar levels. Hafner also highlighted the devastation of Ukraine's historically strong steel and metallurgical industries, underscoring the long-term industrial damage caused by sustained attacks. Despite these challenges, she noted Ukraine's resilience and adaptability, particularly in technology and innovation, from digitized government services that reduce corruption to rapid advances in drone technology. She additionally reflected on the war's human cost, suggesting that Russia's unusually high death-to-injury casualty ratio may carry domestic political consequences as losses increasingly affect Russian families. The talk concluded on a note of cautious hope, recognizing individuals like Gary Bartz whose international support efforts symbolize the broader importance of civilian engagement, and reinforcing her central message that trade policy, economic resilience, and global cooperation are critical to understanding both the impact and trajectory of the war.

## RAFFLE

Ticket Winner 948 – **Don Mitchell**

Marble Outcome Black. received a bottle of Foppiano Sauv Blanc wine



## **CLOSING**

**President Cathy** rang the bell to close the meeting.

## **UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

- **May 18:** Tucker Huhn – *Roots for Peace*
- **May 25:** DARK