

Kiwanis Community



Kiwanis® CLUB OF MARTINEZ

March 2026 Newsletter

Kiwanis is a global organization of men and women dedicated to improving the world one child and one *community* at a time

Club Moves, Remodel Begins

The Kiwanis Club of Martinez is about to embark on a major remodel of its longtime home as part of its one hundredth anniversary celebrations. In order to make way for the clubhouse work, the club will meet at 1124 Arnold Drive, President **Steve Francis'** office building, in vacant first floor space, while construction is underway. The first meeting at the new location will be March 5 and will remain there during that month.

Meanwhile back at the Kiwanis Youth Center, the first remodeling work starts March 2 with tearing out the old closets and framing the new closets by JV Construction. Next comes the removing of old flooring in the main hall and kitchen and adding new flooring by Gill's Carpets. Then painting by Roy Jeans will be started, laying new floor and baseboard, hanging closet doors and building a new partition by the front door. If all goes well, the club will return for the first April meeting.

The work is being funded by the Martinez Kiwanis Foundation as part of its centennial grant program. The improvements will not only benefit the club but also any community or city groups who use the Kiwanis Youth Center.

A crew of members moved furniture to the temporary space following the February 26 meeting. Pictured at right is the vacant space above, and the tables and chairs moved in and the crew below.



The empty space from the entrance, the head table will be at left in front of mirrors.



Phil, Denis, Igor, Les, Patty, Donald, Bob (and Tom behind the camera) after the tables and chairs are in place.

Club Welcomes Three New Members



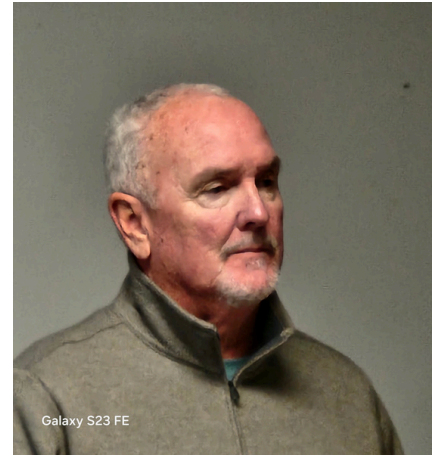
Belma Mirvic

Belma, who lives in Martinez, is a financial advisor with Edward Jones in Pleasant Hill. A native of Croatia, she holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Sarajevo. She is married to Asghar, an industrial designer, and has 2 children in Martinez schools.



Michelle Harrington

Michelle, a Martinez resident shares five adult children with her husband Phil. Born in San Francisco, she is retired from a career in public administration. Her hobbies include gardening and mystery novels.



Phil Harrington

Phil, an engineer, is married to Michelle. He is a graduate of Alhambra High School (1975) and UC Berkeley. He retired from a career in public works, including Contra Costa County and director in Antioch and Berkeley. , and was named leader of the year by the American Public Works Association. His hobbies include fishing and Cal sports.

All three new members were sponsored by president **Steve Francis**. They were inducted at the February 12 meeting by Lt Governor **Cecilia Stone** of the Pittsburg club. When asked why they wanted to join our club, each expressed a desire to be more involved in the Martinez community.



Here the three new members hold their boxes of Kiwanis gear (L) while Lt Gov Cecilia Stone formally inducts them (R)



Semiquin-, Sesqui- and Centennial Celebrations

Mark your calendar now for upcoming celebrations: on **April 1** the City of Martinez celebrates its 150th anniversary of incorporation at the City Council meeting that night; on **April 15** the mayor reads a proclamation of our Club's 100th anniversary at the City Council meeting--a large turnout of Kiwanians is expected; on **April 26** our club's **2** centennial gala will be held at the Martinez Event Center; and on **July 4**, the United States celebrates its semiquincentennial.

Before the Move Comes the Preparation

While the club will be moving out of its longtime home in March (see page 1), the move doesn't just happen. Ten Kiwanians (pictured below, with one behind the camera) gave up part of their President's Day holiday to empty out cupboards and strip the walls. Under the direction of **Donald Pallotta**, the cupboards are bare and contents either stored in the storage room or discarded.

In one sense, remodeling began with an act of vandalism: a person or persons unknown threw a rock through a patio window, spraying shards of glass all over the interior. Apparently, no entry was made, but the police took a report and the city boarded up the broken window (see picture of damaged window and offending rock below).

Several items of interest were found in the cupboards: an old but workable laptop computer that appears to have been used by then-treasurer **Thora Harshman** in the years 2011-2016, and a copy of the original blueprints for the club's design, bearing the name of architect and Kiwanian **Harry Nakahara** and dated 1954. The plans did not include the kitchen or storage room, which must have been added later.

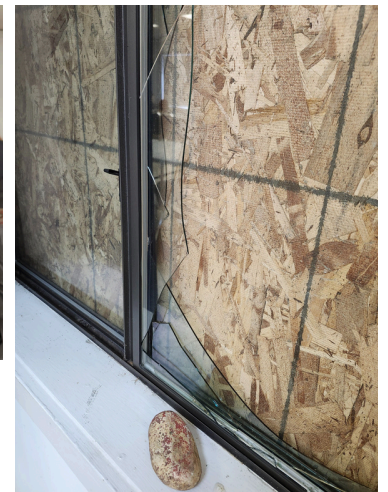
The upcoming remodel is not the first time the building has been improved. Oldtimers will recall when the old kitchen and its deep sink were replaced by the current sink and cabinets. A later remodel upgraded the bathrooms to be handicap-accessible and the entry ramp was added; this work required the club to move out to temporary use of the First Congregational Church basement.



Phil, Bob, Roy, Donald, Steve, Connie, Bill, Maureen, Tom, and Denis behind camera



Bill and Bob take down the presidents' "mugshots"



Broken window and rock



Connie and Maureen admiring the shelves they emptied



Emptied and soon to be gone

February Programs



Gloria O'Dell, retired medical social worker with many years' experience with hospice care, told us that hospice care is covered by Medicare, is available for patients with a terminal diagnosis of 6 months or less, and puts the patient in charge.



Leslie Dawson CPA briefed us on income tax issues especially for seniors, including IRA, RMD, QCD, and covered them PDQ.



Cheryl Trott of Vitalent, a national nonprofit blood donation and research organization, gave us a dynamic and interactive program on the need for donated blood and how to go about it.

Ralphie Martinez and Paula Webb (with program chairs **Connie** and **Migs**) told us about what motivated them to start the nonprofit Checkin project to raise awareness and prevention of suicide.



Kiwanis Club of Martinez

750 Allen St., P.O. Box 1886, Martinez CA 94553, www.martinezkiwanis.org

[You can find this newsletter on the website](#)

Officers 2025-2026

President **Steve Francis**
President-Elect **Connie Chapman**
Treasurer **Patty Winsor**
Secretary **Bob Braun**
Immediate Past President **Igor Skaredoff**

Directors-Trustees 2024-2026

Migs Carter
Dawn Manley
Maureen Cowger
Marylee Taylor

Directors-Trustees 2025-2027

John Noon
Donald Pallotta
Perry Picchi
Bill Patt

Committee Chairs

Bocce Capo **Les Johnson**
City Liasion **Donald Pallotta**
Chamber of Commerce Liasion **Denis Smith**
Community Grants **Donald Pallotta**
Centennial Grants **David Gerson, Steve Francis**
Dolly Parton Book Program **Susan France**
Safeway Food Bank Drive **David Gerson**
Loaves & Fishes **Maureen Cowger**
Meals on Wheels **Bill Patt**
Membership **Denis Smith**
See's Candies fundraiser **Patty Winsor, Maureen Cowger, Connie Chapman**
Service Leadership Programs (SLPs):
Alhambra High Key Club **Kristin Connelly**
College Park High Key Club **Denis Smith**
Scholarships **Carol Walsh**
Social Media/Promotion **Dawn Manley/Connie Chapman**
Newsletter Editor **Tom Watrous**
Staff Photographer **Denis Smith**

Kiwanis Kalendar

Program Chairs

March 5 Noon meeting; invocation **Dawn Manley**. Program Centennial Gala planning
March 11 Wednesday: Board meeting 5:30-7:30pm at President Steve's conference room, 1124 Arnold Dr.
March 12 Noon meeting; invocation **John Noon**, Program Wendy Christiansen of Martinez Jr. High band
March 18 6pm Division Council Meeting (DCM) at Steve's office, 1124 Arnold Drive
March 19 Noon meeting; invocation **Donald Pallotta**, Program **Dawn Manley** on the Food Bank
March 26 Noon meeting; invocation **Bill Patt**, Program **TBA**

Meals on Wheels Drivers



March 3 **Carol Walsh**
March 10 **Laurie Pittman**
March 17 **Perry Picchi**
March 24 **Mark Ross**
March 31 **Bill Patt**

Kiwanians Celebrating...

Birthdays

March 5 **Maureen Cowger**
March 8 **Don Sanders**
March 12 **Migs Carter**
March 31 **Noralea Gipner**
Kiwanis Anniversaries
March 3, 1988 **Mark Ross** 38 years
March 10, 1992 **John Surges** 34 years
March 15, 2012 **Don Sanders** 16 years
March 22, 2018 **Laurie Pittman**
Wedding Anniversaries
none