

# KITE TALES

a monthly newsletter from the  
Redwood Region Ornithological Society

Volume 57 Number 5

January 2022



Red-naped Sapsucker 📷 Scott Carey



**Next RROS Meeting**  
January 12th // 7:00 pm



**What's New on the RROS Website?**  
If you missed last month's Presentation the video recording is available to stream on our website at  
[www.RROS.org/virtualmeeting](http://www.RROS.org/virtualmeeting)

## IN THIS ISSUE

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Save the Date.....        | 2   |
| Upcoming Field Trips..... | 3   |
| Announcements.....        | 3   |
| Santa Rosa CBC Recap..... | 4   |
| Observations.....         | 5-6 |
| Birds of a Feather.....   | 7   |
| About RROS.....           | 8   |

## SAVE THE DATE

### January Membership Meeting: Wednesday, January 12th (Virtual and In Person options) , 7:00 pm

This month's meeting and presentation will be streamed live to all members with internet access and also held in person.

We have located a comfortable venue in lieu of the traditional church hall (which is still off-limits due to covid restrictions).

We will gather at The Arlene Francis Center for Spirit, Art, & Politics ([www.arlenefranciscenter.org](http://www.arlenefranciscenter.org)) located just north of Railroad Square in downtown Santa Rosa at 99 6th St.

### This month's program: A Conversation with Wildlife Photographer and Author Paul Bannick



Image courtesy of paulbannick.com

Paul Bannick is an award-winning author and wildlife photographer specializing in the natural history of North America with a focus on birds and habitat. Coupling his love of the outdoors with his skill as a photographer, he creates images that foster the intimacy between viewer and subject, inspiring education and conservation.

Paul is both the author and photographer of two best-selling bird books, **Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American Owls** (Braided River 2016) and **The Owl and The Woodpecker, Encounters with North America's Most Iconic Birds** (Mountaineers 2008).

### TO "JOIN" THE ZOOM MEETING

1) click on the "Join Zoom Meeting" link provided in the email sent by RROS. To protect the security of the meeting, this link will not be posted on the RROS website. The meeting is open to both RROS members and non-members.

A non-member MUST contact Jeff Valfer ([jhvalfer@gmail.com](mailto:jhvalfer@gmail.com)) to "register" their email contact info for the meeting (will be used ONLY for the purpose of verifying a friendly person).

2) Follow the prompts to download and run ZOOM and/or to ensure that you have the current version of the ZOOM app.

3) Enter the meeting ID NUMBER\*, if prompted. Enter the PASSCODE\*, if prompted.

4) Click to "join the audio conference". Once in the meeting, you may click on the "START VIDEO" or "JOIN VIDEO" button to Zoom yourself into the conference.

5) Once the presentation starts, please select the "mute" button to block audio from your station. At any time during and/or at the conclusion of the presentation, click on the "CHAT" button at the bottom of the screen to type in any comments or questions.

#### **Trouble Shooting:**

If the presenter and slides are blocked by the "windows" of other participants, click on "hide video panel", on the TOP RIGHT of your screen.

If you find that you've reached the "waiting room" and can't get into the meeting, or if you've been dropped from the meeting, PLEASE contact Jeff Valfer, identify yourself and we'll try to make sure you can join.

\*More specific info (including ID NUMBER and PASSCODE) will be sent in an email to all RROS members between now and the meeting time.

## UPCOMING RROS FIELD TRIPS & EVENTS

### RROS Field Trips in the Time of COVID-19

This last year, due to Covid, we required field-trip attendees to make reservations in order to limit the size of the group. We will not be doing that this year, unless a specific trip needs to be limited due to physical restraints. However, you are encouraged to RSVP for all trips. In return, you will receive a reminder of the trip and automatically be shared on the group eBird list.

To RSVP, contact Malcolm Blanchard by email at [mab@mabco.com](mailto:mab@mabco.com) or text at (707) 480-2210.

#### • Saturday -January 8, 2022, Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area with Peter Colasanti, 9:30AM – 1:00PM

Peter Colasanti will lead us on a tour of this fabulous wintering spot on the Pacific Flyway just off Interstate 80 between Davis and Sacramento. Expect large numbers of waterfowl, including Snow Geese (both white and dark morphs) and Ross's Geese. We should see a variety of ducks and other wetland species, including White-faced Ibis. Meet at Parking Lot A (38.5632467, -121.6355989) at 9:30AM. From Davis take I-80 east and exit at Mace Blvd. Turn left at the end of the off-ramp (Chiles Road). Go straight through the next light and travel approximately 4 miles to the end of the road. Drive up onto the levee and enter the Wildlife Area on the left. Vaccinated birders are encouraged to arrange carpools from Sonoma County. Bring lunch. Please note that during wet years this refuge may be closed, due to flooding. You can learn of a closure by accessing <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Closures>. If that happens, we will divert to another refuge. Therefore, it is important that you RSVP for this trip so we can contact you.

To RSVP or more information, contact Malcolm Blanchard at (707) 480-2210.

#### • Saturday -January 22, 2022, San Pablo Bay shore sites with Gene Hunn, 8:00AM – 1:00PM

We'll bird the north shore of San Pablo Bay, south of Highway 37. Gene Hunn will lead us checking out the large concentrations of raptors, shorebirds and other waterfowl. Meet at the Port Sonoma parking lot next to the Petaluma River (38.1166961, -122.5031966) at 8:00AM. We will check the abandoned docks for Ridgway's Rail and the mouth of the Petaluma River for shorebirds and waterfowl before heading east to Reclamation Road, the Tubbs Island trail near the mouth of Tolay Creek, and the wetlands at the Skaggs Island spur off Highway 37. Finish by 1:00PM. Expect a fair bit of walking. Bring your lunch. Carpooling among vaccinated birders is encouraged.

To RSVP or more information, contact Malcolm Blanchard at (707) 480-2210.



## Hats for Sale!

I guess that supply chain thing is for real...we ordered RROS caps in August and just got a message that they should be here to kick off 2022! We'll have the following colors: Olive, Sage, and new for '22, Navy! A few members already have their orders in. If you'd like to order one, shoot an email to [robodonnell1@gmail.com](mailto:robodonnell1@gmail.com).

Don't believe all those rumors about runaway inflation. The price is still \$15.00.

## Charitable Donations for 2022

Every year RROS makes a number of charitable donations to various non-profit organizations near and far. This year we are turning to you to help identify worthwhile causes to support. You can share your ideas at the January membership meeting or send an email to Kite Tales editor Eva Valfer ([evaantonvalfer@gmail.com](mailto:evaantonvalfer@gmail.com)). We will compile a list of causes and share it with the group at a future member meeting.

## Santa Rosa Christmas Bird Count, December 19, 2021

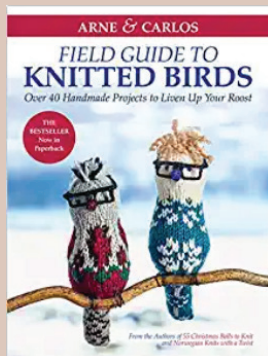
### 62nd annual by the Redwood Region Ornithological Society:

Snow Goose 1 • Greater White-fronted Goose 4 • Canada Goose 770 • Mute Swan 7 • Wood Duck 6 • Cinnamon Teal 2 • Northern Shoveler 151 • Gadwall 10 • *Eurasian Wigeon* 1 • American Wigeon 784 • Mallard 494 • Northern Pintail 157 • Green-winged Teal 66 • Canvasback 5 • Ring-necked Duck 42 • Lesser Scaup 28 • Bufflehead 154 • Common Goldeneye 14 • Hooded Merganser 33 • Common Merganser 102 • Ruddy Duck 37 • California Quail 158 • Wild Turkey 168 • Pied-billed Grebe 38 • Horned Grebe 2 • Eared Grebe 30 • Rock Pigeon 447 • Band-tailed Pigeon 48 • Eurasian Collared-Dove 116 • Mourning Dove 261 • **White-throated Swift** 1 • Anna's Hummingbird 151 • **Selasphorus sp. 1** • Sora 3 • Common Gallinule 3 • American Coot 192 • Black-necked Stilt 17 • Killdeer 84 • Least Sandpiper 100 • Western Sandpiper 10 • Long-billed Dowitcher 1 • Wilson's Snipe 6 • Spotted Sandpiper 4 • Greater Yellowlegs 55 • **Black-legged Kittiwake** 1 • Bonaparte's Gull 2 • Short-billed (Mew) Gull 5 • Ring-billed Gull 109 • Western Gull 5 • California Gull 73 • Herring Gull 1 • Glaucous-winged Gull 4 • gull sp. 172 • Double-crested Cormorant 99 • American White Pelican 22 • Great-blue Heron 18 • Great Egret 51 • Snowy Egret 66 • Cattle Egret 14 • Green Heron 2 • Black-crowned Night-Heron 36 • Turkey Vulture 209 • Osprey 3 • White-tailed Kite 8 • Northern Harrier 7 • Sharp-shinned Hawk 6 • Cooper's Hawk 10 • Bald Eagle 4 • Red-shouldered Hawk 55 • Red-tailed Hawk 94 • Barn Owl 2 • Western Screech Owl 6 • Great Horned Owl 6 • Northern Pygmy Owl 2 • **Strix sp. 1** • **Short-eared Owl** 1 • Northern Saw-whet Owl 1 • Belted Kingfisher 8 • Red-breasted Sapsucker 13 • Acorn Woodpecker 402 • Downy Woodpecker 32 • Nuttall's Woodpecker 71 • Hairy Woodpecker 18 • Pileated Woodpecker 4 • Northern Flicker 100 • American Kestrel 46 • Merlin 6 • Peregrine Falcon 3 • falcon sp. 1 • **Pacific-slope Flycatcher cw** • Black Phoebe 142 • Say's Phoebe 27 • Hutton's Vireo 19 • Steller's Jay 55 • California Scrub-Jay 233 • American Crow 1267 • Common Raven 100 • Chestnut-backed Chickadee 209 • Oak Titmouse 264 • Tree Swallow 70 • Violet-green Swallow 108 • swallow sp. 9 • Bushtit 682 • Wren 7 • Ruby-crowned Kinglet 284 • Golden-crowned Kinglet 5 • White-breasted Nuthatch 102 • Pygmy Nuthatch 3 • Brown Creeper 67 • Pacific Wren 9 • Marsh Wren 2 • Bewick's Wren 52 • European Starling 1206 • Northern Mockingbird 63 • Western Bluebird 519 • Varied Thrush 11 • Hermit Thrush 74 • American Robin 2622 • American Pipit 46 • Cedar Waxwing 190 • House Sparrow 47 • House Finch 651 • Purple Finch 22 • Pine Siskin 54 • Lesser Goldfinch 585 • American Goldfinch 116 • Lark Sparrow 11 • Fox Sparrow 43 • Dark-eyed Junco 946 • White-crowned Sparrow 839 • Golden-crowned Sparrow 908 • White-throated Sparrow 7 • Zonotrichia sp. • Savannah Sparrow 30 • Song Sparrow 132 • Lincoln's Sparrow 10 • California Towhee 301 • Rufous-crowned Sparrow 2 • Spotted Towhee 144 • sparrow sp. 46 • Red-winged Blackbird 994 • Western Meadowlark 108 • Brewer's Blackbird 1133 • blackbird sp. 609 • Great-tailed Grackle 9 • Brown-headed Cowbird 3 • Orange-crowned Warbler 1 • Yellow-rumped Warbler 481 • **Black-throated Gray Warbler** 1 • Townsend's Warbler 29 • **Western Tanager** 1.

**TOTAL SPECIES REPORTED 144 • TOTAL INDIVIDUALS COUNTED 23,410 •**

Number of parties: min 20, max 27 • Party hours: on foot 73.23, by car 56.1 • party miles: on foot 67.1 • by car 375.95 • number of owling parties 2 • hours owling 3 • Number of observers 60.

- Compiled by Gene Hunn



At the very niche intersection of fiber art and field guides you will find this endearing craft book all about hand knit birds. Written by Norwegian textile designers Arne & Carlos, *Field Guide to Knitted Birds* takes you on a colorful Scandinavian birding trip from the comfort of wherever you knit. Featuring real and imaginary birds there is something fun for the fiber art enthusiast in your life. I've knit several of their birds myself and they have added a little extra color and cheer around the house. This [youtube video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zcc5JhkT5Q) on their eclectic designs and make-do-with-what-you-have approach to art will liven up the dreariest of winter days.

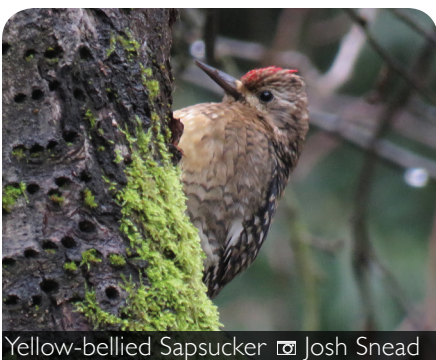
-Eva Valfer, KT Editor

# OBSERVATIONS

November 21, 2020 to December 20, 2021 // COMPILED BY DAVID A. HOFMANN

| Species                  | Date/s         | Location  | Cty | #   | Observers/s  |
|--------------------------|----------------|---|-----|-----|--|
| Tundra Swan              | 12/18/21       | Shollenberger Park and Hudeman Slough                               | SON | 17  | PaD, WeD photos  |
| Eurasian Wigeon          | 12/19/21       | Delta Pond  | SON | 1m  | EuH, BrW   |
| Redhead                  | 11/21/21       | Bodega Bay—Gafney Point   | SON | 1f  | ScC  |
| Long-tailed Duck         | 11/30-12/17/21 | Doran Regional Park   | SON | 1   | EIC, JoS, NaS photo  |
| Barrow's Goldeneye       | 12/02/21       | Napa-Sonoma Marshes   | SON | 1f  | JaH  |
| White-winged Scoter      | 11/24-12/14/21 | Doran Regional Park---off Doran Beach                               | SON | 2   | ZaM, ChD, Je&EvV, EuH, LiH, AnM, AneB, JoS photos  |
| White-winged Scoter      | 12/06/21       | Campbell Cove State Beach   | SON | 1m  | ScC  |
| Black Scoter             | 12/01-15/21    | Bodega Bay---Spud Point   | SON | 2   | JaH, PaW   |
| Stilt Sandpiper          | 11/22/21       | Laguna de Santa Rosa—south of Occidental Rd, east of High School Rd | SON | 1   | DaM  |
| Marbled Murrelet         | 11/24/21       | Bodega Head State Park  | SON | 2   | ChD, JoS, Je&EvV   |
| Rhinoceros Auklet        | 11/21-24/21    | Bodega Head State Park  | SON | 5   | ScC, JoS, Je&EvV   |
| Black-leggged Kittiwake  | 12/19-20/21    | Delta Pond  | SON | 1   | EuH, BrW, DeF, DaL photos  |
| Slaty-backed Gull        | 11/23-25/21    | Bodega Bay---Porto Bodega   | SON | 1ad | LiH, AIW, ZaM, ChD, EuH, MaB, Je&EvV, DaT, RoS, LaK, DeF, DaN, DaL, KEM, RobS, BrF, ScC, DaS, JoS, RoO, MiP photos |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | 12/02-03/21    | Shollenberger Park  | SON | 1ad | NoA, LuC, DaE  |

|                            |                 |                                |     |    |                            |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----|----|----------------------------|
| Short-eared Owl            | 12/19/21        | Santa Rosa Crk Trail           | SON | 1  | BrW heard only             |
| Northern Saw-whet Owl      | 11/25-12/ 18/21 | 9643 Pocket Canyon Hwy         | SON | 1  | JoS taped                  |
| Northern Saw-whet Owl      | 12/19/21        | Los Alamos Road                | SON | 2  | RAR heard only             |
| Prairie Falcon             | 11/21/21        | Tolay Regional Park            | SON | 1  | LaN                        |
| Prairie Falcon             | 12/15-16/21     | Skaggs Island Road             | SON | 1  | Ma&LuS, LiH, ToB, MaB, JeV |
| Prairie Falcon             | 12/18/21        | Hudeman Slough                 | SON | 1  | WeD                        |
| Yellow-bellied Sapsucker   | 12/12-20/21     | Guerneville yard---River House | SON | 1  | ScC photos                 |
| Red-naped Sapsucker        | 11/30/21        | Glen Ellen---Orchard Road      | SON | 1m | ChH                        |
| Rock Wren                  | 12/06-11/21     | S. Goat Rock Beach parking lot | SON | 1  | ScC, JoS                   |
| Lapland Longspur           | 12/14-15/21     | Skaggs Island Road             | SON | 1  | Ma&LuS, LiH, ToB, MaB      |
| Chestnut-collared Longspur | 12/14/21        | Skaggs Island Road             | SON | 1  | Ma&LuS                     |
| Clay-collared Sparrow      | 12/05/21        | Petaluma---Logan Place         | SON | 1  | LeR photos                 |
| Nashville Warbler          | 12/10/21        | Bird Walk Coastal Access       | SON | 1  | MiM, MaN                   |
| Palm Warbler               | 11/29/21        | Bodega Bay---Gafney Point      | SON | 1  | AdP photos                 |
| Scaly-breasted Munia       | 12/07/21        | Sebastopol---1725 Cooper Road  | SON | 3  | JoS photos                 |



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker ☑ Josh Snead

**OBSERVERS FOR THIS PERIOD** .....

Anonymous eBirder • Noah Arthur • Malcolm Blanchard • Tony Briggs • Scott Carey • Lucas Corneliussen • Elizabeth Crouthamel • Wendy Dandridge • Patricia DiLuzio • Chris Dunford • Daniel Edelstein • Bryan Flaig • Dea Freid • Chad Hauck • James Holmes • Lisa Hug • Eugene Hunn • Larry Kent • David Leland • Kate E. Magoon • Mike Mahoney • Anne Menke • Zack Mikalonis • David Moring • Dan Nelson • Maia Nguyen • Larry Nigro • Rob O'Donnell • Adam Panto • Michael Park • Garret Pierce • Levi Rehberg • David Sexton • Nathan Smale • Josh Snead • Mark & Lucas Stephenson • Robert Stevenson • Ron Storey • David Tomb • Jeff Valfer • Jeff & Eva Valfer • Pamela Warren • Brian Webb • Alan Wight

Of special note: Congratulations to Lisa Hug! At the beginning of the year, she had set a goal of 300 species to be seen in Sonoma County. On December 2nd she saw, and photographed the 300th at Jenner Headlands Preserve, the Rough-legged Hawk. Since then she has added a Lapland Longspur #301 on December 15th. Very well done Lisa!

# Birds of a Feather Flock Together

Short Bios of Birders , By Beatrice Blanchard



You never know what little thing might ignite passion in a child. For Dan Nelson, it was climbing into a Bottlebrush shrub at age 7, silently climbing the interior branches so to observe the hummingbirds feeding among the red flowers. Peering through the flowering branches, he observed their lives up close. At 7 years old, he was hooked.

Here's a Fun Fact. 5-year-old Dan Nelson appeared on the TV show Romper Room in 1969. He had accidentally met 'Miss Nancy' and her son Patrick on a Lake Tahoe beach that summer while playing in the sand with toy dump trucks and tractors. Young Dan from Petaluma, the egg basket..., was shown on-set a live white Leghorn and asked "What is this?" Young Dan froze on live-TV, and said "I don't know" much to his family's chagrin. On a trip to Canada, 12-year-old Dan was stunned by the life-like taxidermic mounted Owls at the Museum of Natural History in Victoria, BC. Spellbound, he persuaded his parents to buy him Robbin's Birds of North America Field Guide from the Museum Gift Shop, from which he immediately memorized the vibrant plates and intriguing multi-colored range-maps. Dan was a swimmer in high school, "a pretty good sprinter" and set the Petaluma High School record of 22.6 seconds for the 50-yard free style event. However, swimming laps was taking away time from his birding and music interests, so sports took a backseat.

Work life centered around the outdoors. In 1989, Dan was working at "the best job of all time" for Sierra National Forest and Sequoia National Park. His job? Banding, mapping bird territories, and radio-tracking Spotted Owls. He left this job reluctantly to go on to something better: the Sonoma County birth of son Tyler who was born in 1992.

A later job with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Fish and Game at that time) allowed frequent visits to the Cordell Banks and other shoreline enterprises several times a month to sample fisheries, and all were sensational birding locales. Several years were spent in commercial fishing and crabbing in Alaska. Other environmental projects included the Geysers Pipeline Recharge project, Spotted Owl mapping for CDF and USFS, and other EIRs. Dan even helped atlas birds in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan with Dr. Lawrence "Laurie" Binford, the man who "discovered" the renowned Hawk-watching site at Marin Headlands. Laurie convinced Dan to refine a new circuit of birding hotspots at Bodega Bay which had been

previously neglected (as Rich Stallcup was doing at Pt Reyes since the 1970s). With others like Doug Ellis, Mike Parmeter, Ruth Rudesill, Roger Marlowe, Betty Burrige, Deyea Harper, Nancy Conzett, Rick Lebadour, Jon Winter, Jack Arnold and David Hofmann, Bodega Bay was developed as an exhilarating birding destination. Plus, a delight for local birders, Dan spearheaded the return of pelagic trips in under-studied Sonoma County waters in 1996, starting "Mollymawk Offshore Adventures".

As for exceptional bird experiences, Dan claims many. **Golden Winged Warbler** was enjoyed at a city park in Rockport, Texas in 1981 with Kenn Kaufman, followed by trips to West Virginia to investigate its nesting grounds.

Rarest bird is **Chatham Island Albatross** in July 2001. This sighting was recorded with the A.B.A checklist as the first record in the Northern Hemisphere.

An early and significant bird sighting at age 15 a **Blackburnian Warbler** at Bodega Bay (Cheney Creek) on Nov. 19, 1979. with Betty Burrige and Roger Marlowe, a Sonoma County First.

The **Ross' Gull**, found by Don Pendleton in January 2017 at Half Moon Bay, was not as rare technically but "one of the greatest, most religious, breathtaking, surreal sightings of all time". **Flammulated Owl** and **Northern Goshawk** are two top favorites studying them at their rarely-found nest sites.

August 1980, Dan with Ritch Stallcup were staggered by a low fly-over of one of the **remaining uncaptured California Condors**, at a time when their numbers had diminished to 20 or 30 birds. The mood that day for both Rich and Dan, was "awe-inspiring".

The common **Baltimore Oriole** is memorable for its spectacular, melodious singing ability. "Some even seem to invent interesting parts to the song as if they are cheerful, happy to be alive." Dan's interest in the rich and diverse song of the **Baltimore Oriole** may result from his life-long interest in rhythmic melodies.

And then there's the music. A drummer, Dan was part of a garage band in Junior High called Bad Axe, and later joined The Heat, opening for Teen Heart-throb Ricky Nelson at SonoMarin Fair in Petaluma. Over the decades, he played jazz and dance music for parties and concerts in bands like the 3-Ds, Champagne Groove and The Igniters.

Dan currently runs pelagic trips off the coast of California, and birds widely. He claims the handsome Tyler, an artistic Oregonian, as his proudest accomplishment. Young Tyler, about 28, is learning the noble trade of Blacksmithing at Portland Community College.





## ABOUT RROS

*Redwood Region Ornithological Society was organized in 1962 “to encourage the study and conservation of birds, other wildlife, and their natural habitat.”*

In compliance with local Sonoma County Covid-19 guidelines, meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month October through April. Location TBA. The most current info can be found at [www.RROS.org](http://www.RROS.org).

Sept & May meetings are held outside at 5:30pm.

Annual dues are \$20 per individual, \$25 per family, and \$5 per student. Dues can be sent to RROS Treasurer Rob O'Donnell, 421 St. Mary Place, Santa Rosa, CA 95409

## RROS STAFF

### OFFICERS

President: Eugene Hunn .....enhunn323@comcast.net // 707-981-7301  
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 Treasurer: Rob O'Donnell.....robodonnell1@outlook.com // 707-694-9776

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 Kite Tales: Eva Valfer.....evaantonvalfer@gmail.com //415-524-3222  
 YAMS Coordinator: Lisa Hug.....lisahug@sonic.net // 707-535-9370  
 Membership: Rob O'Donnell.....robodonnell1@outlook.com // 707-694-9776  
 Website: TBD.....

Kite Tales deadline is the 20th of each month. Observations may be sent to David A. Hofmann.  
 All other content may be sent to Eva Valfer.