We had another wonderful book club meeting.  No brownies but a great meeting anyway.  The next day Pammie made me some so I am doing okay.(She actually made them for the grandkids but I put up such a fuss I got some too.)  Jagi Shashani was the moderator for our book “Freedom at Midnight” by Larry Collins.  The time frame was 1947-8.  It was the time of great change – the ending of the Colonial Empire, new boundaries from WWII, the creation of Israel, and revolution in China to mention a few shocks to the world as it was known then.  What was to be a peaceful handover of territory turned out to be a violent clash of religions and ethnic groups within the area.  Somewhere between 500,000 to 2 million people perished during this “peaceful” revolution.  Much to Britain’s surprise, people simply left their homes rather than live as a minority group governed by a larger religious group.  Moslems in India went to Pakistan and Hindus in Pakistan went to India and everywhere violent retribution was handed out.  This happened in spite of great leaders and leadership.  During this time frame Gandhi was assassinated.  During the discussion we learned what happened to Jagi’s family as they moved from Pakistan to India.  The attendance at the meeting was light but the discussion lively.  Attending were Wendell Stephens, Judy Wilson, Jagi Shashani, Ralph Otte, PP Bill Kerr, PP Steve Andrews, Stuart Rosenberg, and Ann Clever.  I was very impressed with incisive comments from this group and having Jagi’s personal story included as a backdrop was priceless.

On Monday, March 26th we will be reading “Cloud Atlas” by David Mitchell.  PDG Don Allen will be the moderator for this meeting.  The book is a novel that includes history, science, humor, and suspense through six related stories.  It should be a little easier book to read.  Hope you can make the 7 pm meeting at the YMCA.  There is no truth to the rumor that Don, a former banker, plans to charge fees for comments during the meeting.  It will be a safe meeting to attend.

Oh, we also discovered that wine should not be served at the YMCA.  Maybe that is why the attendance was off this past month.  In an unrelated (I think) discussion we are considering holding some meetings in various homes.

Remember, if you ever want to know what the book of the month is or when we meet you can always look it up on the Rotary home page under the Sita page titled “Book Club”.

Wendell Stephens

The Rotary Club of Cupertino