

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

Date October 20, 2008

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Editor: LYLE CONNELL

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

October 27 – Joe Simtian – The latest in Laws. Who thinks this stuff up?

November 3 - Dr. Judy Miner, President of Foothill College ~ Topic TBA

November 10 - Lee Hockstader - The Great Unmentionable: Immigration and the Next President - Lee will talk about how the issue of illegal immigration fell off the political map in the general election and why it is likely to come back to challenge the next president.

MARK HEYER welcomed our guests:

Visiting Rotarians: **John Matsushima** from Fort Collins, Colorado, **John Hammerschmidt** from Los Altos, **Tom Hansen** from San Jose, and **Mark** himself, visiting from Boquete, Panama

Rotarians with Guests: **BARB MITCHEL** introduced Camille Townsend and Barbara Klausner; **CASH ALAEE** introduced **Riccardo Torleo**.

OPENING REMARKS were provided by **SCOTT GLISSMEYER**, who shared highlights from Dr. Eboo Patel's book, "Acts of Faith", that was written to motivate youth worldwide to learn tolerance of other faiths and religions. Dr. Patel's book is a hopeful and moving testament to the power and passion of young people, and to the notion that we find the fulfillment of our identities in the work we do in the world.

MIKE thanked our greeters **ADRIAN MIKOLAJCZAK** and **JOAN PLASTIRAS**, cashier **PATRICIA O'BRIEN**, and E-Pinion reporter **BRIAN STEEN**.

MIKE presented a bottle of wine to **BRIAN STEEN**, thanking him and everyone who worked to make our Gateway landscaping event with Palo Alto Parks a success. A special thanks to **JOYCE CUSICK** for quickly posting the event photos to our Rotary website.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

DENNIS BOYLE invited everyone to an open house at IDEO, Inc. Nov. 6th from 6 – 4 p.m. at 100 Forest Ave, Palo Alto [Palo Alto Rotary - Calendar of Events](#)

ROB LANCEFIELD gave several good reasons to contribute to Rotary International *now*:

- The need is huge, only increasing.
- Contributed funds are well spent.
- For each \$20 donation, the donor receives a raffle ticket. The first place prize is a trip for two to the Rotary International Convention in **Birmingham, England**, and second place prize is a trip for two to **Belize**.
- As an additional incentive and in keeping with Rotary's goal of **Every Rotarian Every Year**, **AXEL MERK** will contribute \$100 (up to \$1,000 total) for each first-time contributor's donation of a dollar or more to Rotary International.

MIKE asked **LE LEVY** for an update on the recent Wells Fargo/Wachovia merger. **LE** indicated Wells will be the largest US bank after the merger and that good things are happening. **Le** provided an optimistic contribution to the **President's Club**.

SAM WEBSTER also contributed to the President's Club by recognizing autistic children participating in sports.

CASH ALAEE confirmed there will be a Rotary tailgate party at the upcoming USC football game, November 15th beginning at 2 pm; the game starts at 4 pm. **STEVE PLAYER** enthusiastically auctioned two sideline passes to the game to **LE LEVY** for a generous contribution of \$150. [Palo Alto Rotary - Calendar of Events](#)

PROGRAM

BARB MITCHELL introduced Palo Alto Unified School District Superintendent Kevin Skelly. His background includes work with budgeting, benefits, compensation, policy, curriculum and instruction, standards and assessment, special education, and staff development. Dr. Skelly received his BA in Economics from Harvard and his Ph.D. in Education Management and Policy from UC, Berkeley.

Kevin summarized the District's recently completed strategic with these key educational objectives:

1. Education should be personalized for students.
2. The District will focus on staff development and teacher retention.
3. More resources are needed for infrastructure
4. Improvements. PALY facilities are inferior to most schools.
5. Good communications and governance are essential for educational success

Q/A following Kevin Skelly's presentation:

Q Should schools focus on spoken English immersion as well as other languages?

A That's not a priority in PAUSD; need to do more with written English

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Q Do you believe teachers should be rewarded for skills and capabilities?

A Yes, but the question is how? Difficult to fairly implement.

Q How do you know you're getting the best teachers?

A "Gamebreakers" teachers are recognizable and should be a hiring priority and not middle of the road candidates.

Q How about requiring Algebra for all 8th graders?

A A dumb idea. Higher math is not appropriate for all students. Everything isn't fair.

Q Any Lehman Brothers investment losses like the \$150 Million loss to San Mateo County schools?

A No, PAUSD bonds are down only 5-6%.

Q Should educators intervene in social and economic issues?

A Generally, no. Shouldn't promise too much.

NEARBY MEETING PLACES:

[Palo Alto Rotary - Meeting Information](#)