



Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

Date December 8, 2008

Reporter: BRIAN STEEN

Editor: NICK NICHOLS

MIKE COUCH started the meeting at 12:15 PM.

VISITORS & GUESTS

GEORGE FITZGERALD welcomed our guests: ANDY COE introduced Theodore Ambrosio, a Rotarian visiting from Italy. Rotarians with Guests: WALT HAYS introduced Jim Southerland, LEONARD ELY introduced Owen Johnson, SCOTT GLISSMEYER introduced Dave Thornton, ROB LANCEFIELD introduced his wife Rita, DICK MANSFIELD introduced his wife Ellie, PETER GUENTERMANN introduced Ricardo Torlieu, also from Italy.

OPENING REMARKS

LEN ELY provided this historic FDR quote: *"This country needs, and unless I mistake its temper, the country demands bold persistent experimentation. It is common sense to take a method and try it. If it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something."* As a 58 year Palo Alto native, Len shared his perspective on recent and pending City decisions regarding funding the police station and libraries. He encouraged all listeners to question whether the City has taken the right course in these matters.

MIKE thanked our greeter ROB LANCEFIELD, cashier PETER GUENTERMANN and BRIAN STEEN as e-Pinion reporter.

MIKE made congratulatory Blue badge presentations to E.J. HONG and JOAN PLASTIRAS. Well deserved!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MIKE reminded everyone that there will be no Rotary lunch meetings on Dec. 22 and 29.

CASH ALAEE also reminded us of the Dec. 16 Holiday Party, hosted by LIZ KNISS and husband Rick. A-M, bring an appetizer, N-Z, bring *white* wine. We also need setup and cleanup folks.

PETER GUENTERMANN provided an update on Stanford Rotaract fundraising, and their plans for a water well project in Guatemala

JACK WOODSON announced the January 10 Habitat for Humanity project in Redwood City in cooperation with Stanford Rotaract and the University Rotary Club.

DICK FREEMAN has Entertainment Books for sale through the Dec. 15 meeting.

TODD LEWIS encouraged attendance at the upcoming Rotary Endowment meeting at the Hamilton, 555 Byron, Tuesday, Dec. 16 from 9-10 AM.

RUTH SCHNEIDER announced that our Club had just elected MARTHA KANTER as our President, Elect-Elect. Yeah, Martha!

MIKE concluded the announcements by reminding us of the board meeting coming up Dec. 11 at his house starting at 4:30 PM.

SPECIAL HOLIDAY ANNOUNCEMENT

PREZ MIKE reminds us in the spirit of Holiday Giving, we will be honoring Ming's staff for excellent and gracious service throughout the year at our next meeting, December 15th.

PROGRAM

DENNIS SHEEHAN introduced Gary Richards, the SJ Mercury's "Roadshow" columnist. Gary (an Iowa State grad!) has been the transportation reporter for the San Jose Mercury News since 1991, and before that was a sports editor and assistant city editor. The "Roadshow" column now generates several hundred questions a week, and is a popular six-day a week column, thanks to the internet and email.

Gary provided many humorous traffic stories and insights, concluding by summarizing that motorists contact him with South Bay transportation complaints and ideas, because they don't know where else to go for help.

Q: What about the gas tax? A: Agreed it should be raised. Hasn't been raised since 1990. Needed for infrastructure repairs.

Q: Who's going to repair Page Mill Road at Hwy 101? A: Santa Clara County repaired part, Cal Trans to repair the rest. STEVE EMSLIE (PA City Planner) confirmed this.

Q: Why is Hwy 880 congestion so badly? A: Lots of truck traffic from the Port of Oakland. Some East Bay businesses not affected as much by the recession, so 880 traffic continues.

Q: How is driving and cell phone compliance? A: Not good after the first couple of months. Ticket is only \$20. Will likely go up.

MIKE thanked Gary for a great presentation with a dictionary to be presented to Green Oaks Academy in Gary's name.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

[Palo Alto Rotary - Speakers Schedule](#)

December 15 – Juliette McDonald – Holiday Celebration with singing and lots of holiday cheer

December 22 and 29 – No meeting. Enjoy the holidays and have a Happy New Year!

NEARBY MEETING PLACES:

[Palo Alto Rotary - Meeting Information](#)