

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS

March 23 – Dr. Robert Negrin – “Cellular Therapy, a New Direction for Treating Tough Diseases”

March 30 – Kim Keene, Palo Alto City Manager.

PRESIDENT MIKE COUCH conducted the meeting.

GEORGE WHEATON led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

TONY CARRASCO introduced the visiting members and guests. There was one visiting Rotarian, **CHARLES CHENG** returning from Shanghai. Guests included Rod Diridon (**BRIAN STEEN**), Vivek Carrasco (son of **TONY CARRASCO**), Jay Thornaldson (**DARYL SAVAGE**), Sumbul Ali-Karamali (**E.J. HONG/JUDITH STEINER**), Buke Barug (**DENNIS BOYLE**), Bruce Gee (**TODD LEWIS**).

OPENING REMARKS:

As fate would have it, **BILL BUSSE** just arrived home just in time for belated opening remarks. He wanted to share some thoughts about the effect that **fate** plays out in living to an old age. Having been a Navy pilot, **BILL** went on to describe how a number of his close buddies from pre-flight school had not survived to old age, having been killed in action or had succumbed to tragic accidents. The incidents appeared to be in the odd chances or as something overlooked, such as a cable. “Call it what you may, but I call it fate.”

2009 GIVING

MIKE COUCH announced that this Rotary Club is giving away \$50,000 this year, in part because of a surprise gift from the Koret Foundation.

THE GALA EVENT

HAL MICKELSON, **KEVIN CURRY** and **STEVE PLAYER** again reminded us of the upcoming fund raising event at the Sharon Heights Country Club on March 21st. So far the attendance looks to be as good as two years ago. There will be good entertainment and great items to bid on. **Ellie Mansfield** was recognized as having done a tremendous job in helping prepare for this event. Those who have not signed up are encouraged to do so. Also, consider asking your friends and neighbors to enjoy the evening with you.

PRESIDENT’S CLUB:

GEOFF ZIMAN wanted us to listen carefully that he was joining the Presidents Club in honor of his daughter’s sixth grandchild. That’s right, his daughter’s sixth!

ROTARACT MENTORING PROGRAM

In conjunction with the University Club, a mentoring program is being setup whereby Rotaract members can have contact with experienced members in their various fields of endeavor. You can sign up to participate in this program.

PROGRAM:

BRIAN STEEN introduced today’s speaker, Rod Diridon, who has had extensive experience in the world of rail systems. He presented a broad perspective of the proposed high-speed rail system between San Francisco and Southern California. A trip between these two areas would take approximately 2.5 hours to make the journey. This is a \$40 Billion Project. The cost for a trip on the system is estimated to be one-fifth of that by auto and one-third the cost by plane.

He began by showing that many other countries have or are developing high-speed rail systems. The US does not have one as yet. After 10 years in California, a route has been selected and all but two stations identified. One that is not identified is Palo Alto/Redwood City. Ninety-eight Engineering firms are currently working on the project. This project could generate 450 thousand jobs and require huge amounts of steel, electricity and other materials.

At present the process involves gathering data and developing various alternatives to be completed by spring /summer next year. This would be followed by a lengthy process of selection from the various alternatives with community involvement. Rod cautioned about jumping to conclusions because no alternatives, such as a wall in Palo Alto, have been decided upon as yet. There is misinformation out there.

NEARBY MEETING PLACES

[Palo Alto Rotary - Meeting Information](#)