

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS

April 20 - Jeffry Walker, Executive Director, Community School of Music and Arts - Title TBA

April 27 - Red Cross/Trish Bubenik - "Be Red Cross Ready" AN INSIDER'S VIEW!

May 4 - Harold Luft, Director of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation Research Institute - "Thinking Differently about Health Care Reform"

Our Knight Fellow speaker, Babak Dehghanpisheh, gave us an insider's view of "THE CHALLENGES OF REPORTING FROM THE MIDDLE EAST." He might have added "...AND THE PERSONAL RISKS INVOLVED!"

Babak was introduced by TOM GRACON who has developed a working relationship with the Knight Fellowship staff at Stanford. Tom's efforts, as a member of our outstanding Program Committee, have brought to the Club some outstanding international programs. And this was definitely one of the best. Read more later in this Pinion.

IT WILL BE A SEAMLESS TRANSITION...President Elect RALPH ADAMS again performed presidential duties in the absence of our "*once upon a time*" President MIKE COUCH. Well done, Ralph!

OUR OFFICIAL "GUEST INTRODUCER" WAS DENNY BOYLE

Our visiting Rotarian was Jim Lang, a Nuclear Engineer from North Mecklenburg City, North Carolina.

Guests of Rotarians were: Bruce Gee, an associate of SAM WEBSTER and TODD LEWIS...and Ginny Lear, BRUCE SWENSON'S guest. Ginny is a Los Altos Rotarian considering a move to our Club.

E.J. HONG began by asking the esteemed members of her Program Committee to take a bow. She noted that "*There are still places in the chorus line for other would be Programmers.*"

With that our ProgChair launched into OPENING REMARKS. Today's lesson included three stories on how to choose an attorney. Jumping quickly to the last story...seems a reveler came home late with two bottles of whiskey in his back pockets. Being overly cautious so as not to disturb his wife, he fell down the stairs...the bottles broke and he was left with a bleeding posterior. Carefully he bent over, looked in the mirror and applied bandaids over the cuts. He was shocked the next morning when his wife said, "*I see you came home drunk again last night!*" Flabbergasted our hero said, "*How did you know?*" "*I saw all of the band aids plastered on the mirror!*" The moral of the story..."Choose an attorney who will help you cover your butt!" Sage advice E.J.!

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WALT HAYS introduced the 18 members of the Oaxaca Neighbors Abroad delegation. He then shared information on our Rotary "hands-on" project, which took place in Oaxaca this past February. Activities included refinishing chairs in the library, funding a play structure at an orphanage and providing 16 much needed toilet seats...also for the orphanage.

VISITING MEMBERS OF THE NEIGHBORS ABROAD COMMITTEE noted that this is the 45th Anniversary of the Palo Alto/Oaxaca Association. They thanked Walt, the Committee and our Club for contributing to its ongoing success. The delegates expressed their thanks and invited one and all to visit Oaxaca. It was obvious that our Rotary Team "had deported themselves in a most exemplary manner." Who said that?

Acting President and President Elect RALPH noted that recently deceased Club Member JOHN BRACKEN had been instrumental in establishing the Palo Alto/Oaxaca Sister City Program.

BACK TO THE INSIDER'S VIEW...

BABAK described his experiences as a Newsweek Bureau Chief in Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran. The challenges included knowing how to report on Afghan warlords treatment of Taliban prisoners....taking a "hostile environment" training course...being an imbedded reporter with Marines in Falluja...traveling Iraqi roads in an armored car...and knowing how to report on treatment of detainees.

In Iran the reporting challenges came from the extreme clash of views...old and new...religious and secular...the nuclear issue...the admonition to not report on human rights abuses. The good news is that as a result of President Obama's open hand the Iranians will participate in the up coming Six Party Talks.

It was suggested by one of our members that we start a Sister City Program with Iraq. Barak noted that it would be premature, but that person-to-person contact has a positive longterm impact. *Perhaps it's time to consider re-establishing Rotary in the Middle East!*

NEARBY MEETING PLACES

[Palo Alto Rotary - Meeting Information](#)