



Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

Date AUGUST 30, 2010

Reporter: DONALD MORGAN

Editor: NICK NICHOLS

CALL TO ORDER

PRESIDENT MIKE began the meeting at 12:20 pm by leading the Pledge. He resumed the meeting at 12:40, calling for introduction of the following visiting Rotarians and guests, all of whom received applause.

Visiting Rotarians: Dean Merritt, of the Shanghai Club; Rick Nelson, of the Elizabeth City, NC, Club; and Art Adams, of the Los Gatos Morning Club.

Guests: Kay Wilson, guest of SHERRI SAGER; John Etchemendy, the meeting's featured speaker; Jean McCown, guest of SHERRI SAGER; Craig Nordland, guest of HAL MICKELSON; and Lois Blank, guest of SUE HARTENBAUM.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

President MIKE called on KAREN SINGER to present opening remarks. She told a touching story of a water carrier who made good use of a cracked pot to nourish a row of flowers between the source of the water and the master's house. She elicited appreciative and loud laughter by a concluding warm reference to all of her cracked-pot fellow Rotarian friends.

REPORT OF WE CARE COMMITTEE

DICK FREEMAN surprised the audience by noting that the month had five Sundays, Mondays, and Tuesdays, a feat that would not be repeated for hundreds of years. He expressed sadness and sympathy respecting the recent deaths of BRIAN STEEN's mother and JUDITH STEINER's mother. In a happier vein, he announced that the previous day had been DAVE NEGRIN's 86th birthday. DAVE retorted that feat would also *never* be repeated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President MIKE announced that there would be a meeting for Red Badge Members hosted by GINNY LEAR immediately following the luncheon meeting.

He reminded those present that dues were due, and would increase if not paid by September 1. He warned that continued default thereafter would result in a visit from an enforcer. [Editor's note: they are actually due by the 15th. You still have a chance to avoid the enforcer!]

He thanked Social Committee Chair GLORIA HOM and members DICK FREEMAN, HAL MICKELSON, ANNETTE GLANCKOPF, STEVE MADSEN, and RUTH SCHNEIDER for assistance at the prior day's social at his house.

He noted that there would be a Hands-On Project Saturday morning September 11, along with the Palo Alto Kiwanis and

the City of Palo Alto to repair vandalized playground equipment at Hoover Park. Members should have received an email notice with details and a request for volunteers.

President MIKE thanked JOCELYN VILLARUZ for serving as today's Cashier, STEVE MADSEN for setting up the meeting, DICK MANSFIELD and RALPH ADAMS for serving as Greeters, and DON MORGAN for drafting the Pinion.

President MIKE reminded everyone that there would be no meeting next Monday, Labor Day.

THE PROGRAM

President MIKE called upon DIANA DIAMOND to introduce the guest speaker. She said that John Etchemendy had served the past ten years as Provost at Stanford. She reviewed his functions in that capacity, his graduation from the University of Nevada, his teaching at Princeton, a Doctorate from Stanford in 1982, and a variety of academic positions there since 1983.

Provost Etchemendy spoke on "Why U. S. Universities are the Envy of the World (and Can We Maintain Our Advantage?)." He noted that U.S. universities had a 100 to 1 favorable balance of trade as measured by degree candidates, far better than any other sector, and overwhelmingly led the list of top universities worldwide that had been issued by a Chinese University. He reviewed factors that account for that pre-eminence, including the cultural factor of lack of deference, competition among U.S. universities, federal funding of basic research at universities since WWII, the lack of central government control of education, and the flexibility of the somewhat chaotic American system to recognize the emergence of late bloomers and educate them whenever they were ready to learn. He said foreign universities were eager to emulate America's success, noting that Stanford entertained over a hundred delegations per year from abroad, trying to learn how to excel. Competition is increasing around the globe, and that is good for everyone involved. He said that U.S. universities as a whole would react well to increased competition, and would find alternate sources of funds as government financial support continues to diminish.

A lively Q and A session included his observation that in general this country benefits from its foreign students, regardless whether they stay and stimulate our economy or return home, where they spread respect and friendship for the country that educated them so well. They could have pursued advanced education cost-free at home but chose the education that U.S. universities make available, even though much more expensive. He also answered why costs of higher education

were increasing, pointing to competition for excellent students by various means, including expenditures to make their on-campus lives enjoyable and comfortable, while still intellectually challenging.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

[Palo Alto Rotary - Speakers Schedule](#)

September 13 – **Rich Casey**, Los Altos Rotary, “Child AIDS Prevention in Africa”

September 20 – New Member Talks

September 27 – **Linda Thor**, Chancellor of the Foothill-DeAnza College District, “A Newcomer’s Perspective of on California Higher Education: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly”

NEARBY MEETING PLACES:

[Palo Alto Rotary - Meeting Information](#)