



Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

Date MAY 2, 2011

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Editor: NICK NICHOLS

VISITING ROTARIANS AND GUESTS

In attendance was Visiting Rotarian Klaus Heineman of the Gualala, CA Club.

BILL JOHNSON introduced his guest Marilyn Anderson, STEVE EMSLIE introduced his guest Tommy Fehrenbach, GINNY LEAR introduced her guest David Pejcha, and RALPH ADAMS introduced his guest Joe Mulholland.

OPENING REMARKS

VICKY CHING began with a story about two horses, one blind and the other wearing a bell that enabled the blind horse to follow along through the day and back to the barn. Her moral was that God does not dismiss anyone because of imperfections, that everyone needs help at times, and at other times can and should lovingly wear a bell to help others in need.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For the We Care Committee, DICK FREEMAN reported that Leonard Ely, Sr. died last week, and asked that he be remembered in prayers. DICK also said that by next week a number of volunteers would receive information about when and where to pick up ISRAEL ZEHAVER to drive him to and from Rotary meetings in his wheelchair-friendly car.

GINNY LEAR awarded a Blue Badge to SAM GORDON, and announced that he was the official Club Photographer. SAM remarked that one had to be careful suggesting things they liked, as his causal comment that he enjoyed photography accounted for his new role. GINNY also awarded a Blue Badge to CHRISTINA CHU, who thanked GINNY for introducing her to Rotary and sponsoring her membership.

ANNETTE GLANCKOPF gave the second half of her contribution to join the President's Club, following up on her first-half contribution the week before, in thanks to several Members she named as having participated in the Palo Alto Safety Faire at the Stanford Shopping Center on May 1.

On behalf of the Community Grants Committee, BILL JOHNSON presented a check for \$4,000 to Marilyn Anderson of the Beechwood Elementary School, serving East Palo Alto and East Menlo Park. The grant, the sixth and last the Committee will make for the year, will go to acquisition of communication equipment for the fourth grade. Ms. Anderson gave thanks for the grant, and spoke about the need for a good elementary school and the success that Beechwood is enjoying.

SALLY TOMLINSON joined the President's Club to mark the nearing completion of renovation of the former Sea Scout

building in the Palo Alto Baylands.

NICK NICHOLS reported that the United States has a telemark ski team; and he joined the President's Club in honor of his 15-year-old granddaughter's advancement to the A Team, which competes in World Cup events. He also said he is moving to San Francisco, and will be leaving our Club. [Reporter's comment: Many thanks to NICK for editing Pinions in recent years!]

THE PROGRAM: WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

TOM GRACON introduced today's speaker, Beth Duff-Brown, currently a Knight Fellow at Stanford, and previously a well-traveled journalist and Peace Corps Volunteer. Born in Palo Alto, she decided after two years with the Peace Corps in the Congo to pursue a career in journalism, rather than follow her father into law. She had learned of the plight of young girls and women in the Congo: under-educated, forced into farm labor at early ages, and all too frequently suffering with what locals still call "The Four Letter Word," following unprotected sex with domineering males.

In a different vein, she related that upon a return to her Congo village at age 30, the women lamented her lack of a child she wanted. They offered prayers for her that were, in fact, followed within a year by the birth in Malaysia of her daughter, who is now a student at Jordan Middle School here in Palo Alto.

Working with the Associated Press around the world for the past 20 years, Ms. Duff-Brown wrote a personal story about a Congolese girl, demonstrating that personal journalism could get an audience. That led to her interest in persuading AP to open a website devoted to women's issues. She pointed out that more women go to college than men today, that women outnumber men in the workforce, that women write most of the checks, and make a very high percentage of purchasing decisions. She hopes to convince AP that women have purchasing power that should attract substantial advertising to the website she envisages. It would be one site that, among other things, would tell more stories like hers about the Congolese girl. It was in order to learn how to develop such a site that she applied for the Knight Fellowship.

In response to questions, Ms. Duff-Brown said that parts of AP were very excited about her proposed site, but that the editorial powers were undecided about financial matters. Other answers dealt in good-natured humor with where her daughter called home, whether she had a birth certificate, and whether her daughter was eligible to become President having been born in Malaysia. Another answer addressed how there

could be such a thing as creative non-fiction, one of the subjects she now studies.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

[Palo Alto Rotary - Speakers Schedule](#)

May 9 Esther Wojcicki – *Solving the Educational Crisis in CA: Perspectives from One Classroom*

May 16 Axel Merk – *Challenges for the Dollar and the Economy*

May 23 New/Longtime Member Talks

May 30 **Dark**, Memorial Day Observed