

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

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Editor: LYLE CONNELL

The sociable club meeting proceeded as usual. Steadfast DICK MANSFIELD took care of the visitors. Smiling KRISTIN WU took the lunch money. Sergeant-at-Arms (newly appointed) STEVE MADSEN took care of the setup.

Substitute President MIKE McMAHON opened the meeting with a salute to the flag and then introduced the visitors. There were two Visiting Rotarians from the San Jose North Club – Stacy Castle (Non Profit Executive) and Don Aguilar (Human Resource Manager). The speaker was accompanied by two guests introduced by ANDY COE – Jeremy Dennis and Ehren Elder. ART STAUFFER's guest was again Zafar Igbal. RALPH ADAM's guest was Wayne Richardson from Operation Blessing, an NGO with world-wide projects. ROB LYMAN's guest was his foster son, Eric Gardina.

Satirical JUDITH STEINER gave us entertaining opening remarks and threw in thoughtful pieces of wisdom relating to the differences between women and men in several domains. Most memorable were the following: *"A man will pay \$2 for a \$1 item he needs - A woman will pay \$1 for a \$2 item that she doesn't need....but it is on sale."* *"A woman has the last word in any argument – Anything a man says after that is the beginning of a new argument."* *"Men wake up as good looking as they went to bed – Women somehow deteriorate during the night."* *"A woman knows all about her children. She knows about dentist appointments and romances, best friends, favorite foods, secret fears and hopes and dreams – A man is vaguely aware of some short people living in the house."*



Super Salesperson LEANNAH HUNT joined the President's Club to commemorate her "trip of a lifetime" visit to South Africa. For alluding to his PPSD (Post Presidential Stress Disorder) Condition,



MIKE McMAHON's state was, possibly, made worse by also being coerced into President's Club.

Sagacious ANDY COE introduced our speaker, 21st District Representative Rich



Gordon, former San Mateo County Supervisor. Rich proceeded to give us his impressions of the first seven months of his life in the Assembly in Sacramento. He described the frenetic pace of things in the Capitol; being double and treble booked; having to deal with 1400 bills in a very short time; freshmen being thrust into positions of high responsibilities; challenges of transparency; staff and lobbyists having too much power; lack of institutional knowledge;



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and difficulties in being able to think long-term. He attributed many of these problems to the effects of term limits. Of particular concern was the extreme partisanship of the two-party system. Rich described some of the (apparently successful) efforts that he had made to break down the existing barriers and to produce greater measures of common ground. Despite the problems, Rich commented on the fact that he had found in Sacramento really good people of incredible diversity having a wide range of skills and talents. They are caring and compassionate and wanting to do something good. He concluded by saying that he considers it to be an incredible gift, honor and privilege to have been elected to serve as our Representative.

A number of questions followed:

From ISRAEL ZEHAVID: How did he feel about the influence of lobbyists? The best aspects were that they can provide ideas and information.

From BETSY BECHTEL: How could the situation described and term limits be changed? Rich stated that future modifications (not elimination) of term limits might result in the reduction of the number of bills and being able to concentrate on quality versus quantity.

From DARYL SAVAGE: How can the enormity of the tasks be tackled? They can be tackled by finding ways to make it work and setting a different tone.

From MARCIE COX: What happens to High Speed Rail if the numbers do not work? Sacramento could make it go away by legislation to stop issuing bonds for funding. He and Senator Joe Simitian have their fingers on the purse strings. The business plan due in the fall will have huge impact. The jury is still out.

From DAVID NEGRIN: Why was so much previously defeated legislation being reintroduced? Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed legislation that had passed the House. Now with Governor Brown in place, they had a brand new deal so they wanted to reintroduce the legislation.

From LE LEVY: Since incumbents have very definite reelection advantages, wouldn't eliminating term limits be detrimental? Rich pointed out how term limits discourage challenges. He felt that the new electoral districting would bring some very interesting changes, and so would open primaries where the top two vote getters (irrespective of party) would have a run-off.

Before closing the meeting, the president made a request for more people to step forward as Pinion Writers. Those interested should contact LYLE CONNELL. Your reporter for this week heartily endorses this request, and would point out that by writing the Pinion you can enjoy putting your own spin on the weekly events. (As may be evident here!) Do think about it as it is a significant way to contribute to the well being of our Palo Alto Rotary Club. Final note: You are reminded of the joint potluck barbecue with the University Club being held on Saturday, August 20 at 11:00 AM at Foothills Park. Bring salad, dessert or dip/chips.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

August 1 Arley Marley, District 5170 Governor
August 8 Peter Dailey, Deputy Director, SF Port, San Francisco and the America's Cup
August 15 Ron Lynn, Stanford Football