

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

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OPENING



Members were welcomed to our Columbus Day meeting by **President Elect HAL MICKELSON**, who had to introduce himself, as he forgot to wear his name badge. A \$20 fine followed, a portent of fines to come. **DAVE SMULLIN** led us in The Pledge of Allegiance, in honor of those serving in our armed forces.

VISITORS AND GUESTS

ROB LANCEFIELD introduced visiting Rotarians and guests: Former PA members, Dick Carlson of Tucson, AZ, and Klaus Heinemann, of Gualala, CA. Also attending were Mary Qian of San Mateo Rotary; Thomas Dittler of the Munich East Club, in Germany; and Stu Ganz of SJ Rotary, with 31 years of perfect attendance, visiting us in hopes of enjoying Ming's famous Chicken Salad. Stu was not disappointed.

Guests: Beth Roemer, Stanford Law School (**ANNETTE GLANCKOPF**); Chris Cobey, former Mayor of Atherton (**DAVE SMULLIN**); and **RICK RAYBIN** brought his wife, Ramona Ambrozic.

OPENING REMARKS



by **SALLY TOMLINSON**, who is taking a Stanford Continuing Ed course on Improvisation at Work, said she sees a correlation with Rotary's interest in "Building Good Will and Better Friendships." Sally encouraged us to say "yes" for a week and see what results it brings.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cashier Chair **DANA TOM** followed Sally by asking us to take up her challenge to say "yes" as we are in need of cashiers. Sign up sheets were on the tables. Hope we passed the test, Dana.

Rather than traditional fining, P-E Hal asked for all who took a child of any relation to college this fall to pay \$20 and tell about it, made \$120 for Rotary Charities. Thanks to all, including **BILL BUSSE** who is positive his great grandson will enter Stanford in 14 years.

Welcome Desk: **DICK MANSFIELD**

Greeter: Past President **MIKE McMAHON**

Cashier: **JOYCE CUSICK**

Sgt. at Arms: **STEVE MADSEN**



TODAYS PROGRAM

With thanks to all who put our meeting together, P-E Hal handed the microphone to **DIANA DIAMOND** to introduce our speaker, Charles Munger, Jr., of Palo Alto, who spoke on "Redistricting Reform, the Open Primary, and the Elections of

2012." Mr. Munger is an experimental physicist, receiving his Ph.D at Cal in 1987. His interests presently lie with atomic physics tests of fundamental symmetry principles. He has chaired the reviews under the State Board of Education for instructional materials in mathematics and in science for the California public schools in 2006 and 2007.

Charles became involved in politics and was the largest individual donor (\$1.3M) supporting the passage of California's Prop. 11 in 2008, which established the citizens redistricting commission. He was also the proponent and chief backer (\$13M) supporting the passage of Prop. 20 in 2010, which extended the authority of the commission to draw the boundaries for congressional districts. They passed with margins up to 23%.

Lines are redrawn every ten years following the census to foster the "one person, one vote doctrine" requiring that electoral districts within a state have equal populations. With the legislature in charge of the process, incumbents typically gerrymander districts, guaranteeing their political party majority, to protect themselves. Under the new process of Prop. 11, a 14-member citizens commission was seated, with the charge to redraw the electoral map. It has already had the effect of opening the process to candidates who would previously not have bothered to challenge an incumbent. The big question, from **JOHN KIDD**, is why, in a democracy, does it take one person willing to spend more than \$13 million to make this change happen. Charles' answer was "pure independence." And, that enough people couldn't be persuaded to donate the amount needed for this important campaign.

California will also have an open primary in 2012. Anyone can run from any party. The top two vote getters will face each other in the general election. More people will vote and there will be a minor invigoration of minor parties. Along with California, only Louisiana and Washington have open primaries. Mr. Munger said he opposes rank order voting, which some cities have, such as San Francisco and Oakland. This was an excellent, informative presentation.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

October 17 **Panelists: Emily Renzel and Peter**

Drekmeier, Moderator: Diana Diamond, Pros and Cons on Measure E

October 24 Speaker TBD, Rotary Foundation

October 31 New Member/Longtime Member Talks, TBA

[Palo Alto Rotary - Meeting Information](http://www.rotarypaloalto.org)
www.rotarypaloalto.org