

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

Date: February 18, 2013

Reporter: GINNY LEAR

Editor: LYLE CONNELL

PRESIDENT HAL called us to order asking that we stand for the Pledge of Allegiance, led by **ANNETTE GLANCKOPF**, and to please remain standing.

It was with great sadness that **PRESIDENT HAL** announced the passing of our dear friend, Rotarian **SAM WEBSTER**. **SAM** became a member of PARC in 1974,



BOB BULMORE was Club President. We all stood for a moment of silence. **HAL** asked that we remember **SAM**, keeping in mind words of the prophet Micah, 6:8, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" **SAM** will be again remembered at next week's

meeting. A **SAM WEBSTER** Memorial Service will be held on Sunday at 5 pm at the First United Methodist Church, 625 Hamilton Avenue at Webster Street, Palo Alto.

INTRODUCTIONS: Visiting Rotarian: Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar, Holger Klinge of the Rotary Club of Uelsen/Coevorden, Germany. Guests introduced: Ann Kalar, wife of nearly 52 years, of **DUANE KALAR**; George Haley, partner in Pillsbury, San Francisco; and our speaker today, Tom Phillips, former Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court, now a Partner in Baker Botts, Austin, Texas, guests of **HAL**. All three men were Harvard Law School classmates.

The thought for today was offered by **CHESLEY DOUGLAS**. The topic was **BUILDING MEMBERSHIP** in



Rotary. How do we turn a new member into a committed Rotarian? Every member must get involved in service. We are here to make a difference. **CHESLEY** asked us to Reach Within to Embrace Rotary. This is quite a timely thought in this week of celebration of the 108th anniversary of the founding of Rotary in Chicago - February 23, 1905.

DON MORGAN announced two Hands On Projects needing our Club members' participation. One is on Saturday morning, March 16, to plant trees on El Camino Real, under the direction of Canopy, as we did at the school in East Palo Alto last year. Training is given. The other project is over three days, April 19-21, to refurbish the kitchen at La Comida in Palo Alto, which serves lunch five days a week for seniors, 60 and over. Let **DON** know if you can participate.

CLAM BAKE, Saturday, MARCH 2nd, 6-10 p.m. **KATIE SEEDMAN** gave an update on this year's gala event at the University Club off Foothill Expressway in Palo Alto. (Should you not be a clam chowder person, other entrees are available.) Live and silent auction donations are due by this Friday, February 22nd. If you have not yet signed up, email or tell **KATIE** by next Monday, Feb. 25th, that you are coming. You can pay her later, \$75 per person. A great time is planned! **Don't miss it!**

YORIKO KISHIMOTO introduced **HOLGER KLINGE**, 24, a Rotarian from Germany and a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar studying at Cal State East Bay this year, hosted by a Rotarian family. Holger reminded us that in the 2010/2011 year, \$9.6 million US funded one-year individual grants of \$25,000 or more to Ambassadorial students around the world, to further their education. Holger said he is a walking Rotary project, telling his college classmates about the work of Rotary. This was an excellent update on an important Rotary program. Thank you.



Our speaker was **THOMAS R. PHILLIPS**, partner in Baker Botts, of Austin, TX. His legal work centers on



Appellate Practice, Complex Business Litigation, and International Arbitration. He was Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court from 1988-2004, requiring him to be elected in contested, partisan, statewide elections in 1988, 1990, 1996, and 2002. Prior to his service on the Supreme Court, Justice Phillips was a trial judge in Harris County. He is a graduate of Baylor

University and Harvard Law School. He is a former member of the Texas Historical Commission. His wife, Lyn, served on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Justice Phillips began by saying he was planning to talk about the colorful history of the Texas Supreme Court, to compare and contrast with the California Supreme Court. As he looked into California's court, he decided ours was worth his total focus. Texas and California became states within four years of one another. About that time, there was a change from justices being appointed to being elected. California's first Chief Justice was Serranus Clinton Hastings, who later founded Hastings College of the Law in SF. His \$100,000 donation assured that his name was included. (A Google search of this person shows a very interesting background.)

Our speaker's aim was to go through all of California's Chief Justices, and they were a wild bunch in the early days. Talk of gun duels in Lathrop, and friends in high places setting the accused free was just a part of the story. How justices were appointed or elected went through several iterations. California's current system of retention-based election of appellate judges was created by then Alameda County District Attorney, Earl Warren, a future three-term Governor of California, who was appointed Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court by President Eisenhower.

Strong feelings remain over Gov. Jerry Brown's first term appointment of his Secretary of Agriculture Rose Bird to be Chief Justice. Justice Bird served for 10 years, as the first female Chief Justice to be appointed by a Governor, in 1976; and after winning a retention election in 1978, she became the only Chief Justice to be removed from office by the voters in 1986.

How judges are selected is important because it is central to our democracy. We need to protect it and assure that the judiciary remains independent and vigorous. Asked to compare Texas and California's Governors, our speaker's answer was that Governor Perry has done a good job on judicial appointments. **BILL BUSSE** asked for comment on the US Supreme Court: Justice Phillips thinks it has long been partisan, that its votes are mostly predictable. His hope is that the court's members are scholarly, temperate, and work well together. And, that he doesn't know of a better system. Many thanks for an excellent talk.

Thanks also to Team Rotary for today: **BEN THRELKELD** at the Welcome Desk; **EJ HONG** at the iPad; **ANTONIO SCHETTINO**, cashier; **JOYCE CUSICK**, Photographer; and **STEVE MADSEN**, room set-up.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- February 25 **Laurie Smith**, Sheriff, Santa Clara County, Topic: TBA
- March 4 **Joe McNamara**, Former Police Chief, San Jose, Crime in Silicon Valley
- March 11 **Susan Lutter** (Club Member), Rotary in Cameroon
- March 18 **Los Altos Main Street Singers**
- March 25 **Gerald Uelmen**, Santa Clara University Law Professor California's Dysfunctional Death Penalty Law