

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

Date: April 22, 2013

Reporter: DON MORGAN

Editor: LYLE CONNELL

PRESIDENT HAL began the meeting at 12:30, with MIKE COUCH leading the Pledge. Looking ahead to a “creative exercise” later in the meeting, he assured that there was a facilitator at each table.

He resumed the meeting at 12:44 by welcoming Visiting Rotarian Lori McIntosh, a professional photographer from Morgan Hill. Members introduce their guests:

Elaine Dai, guest of EJ HONG;

David Kleiman, guest of JON STOUMEN;

Nancy Bjork, guest of JULIE JEROME;

Leika Kejriwal, guest of JULIE JEROME;

Neil Rauschhuber, guest of WALTER HAYS;

Laura Barletta, guest of BEN THRELKELD.

MARCIE COX welcomed back from “injured reserve” CYRILLE BETANT, who said he was glad to rejoin the land of the living.

ROB LYMAN’s Thought for the Day told the story of Boston hockey fans that took things into their own hands by collectively singing the national anthem a capella at the Bruins game two days after the Boston Marathon bombing. He pointed out that their emotional statement in part repudiated the act of the bombing – and noted that Rotary members are called to do their own “singing.” He challenged us to find one area in which we are uniquely able to contribute and take one bold step in that area this week – singing loudly ourselves!.



DON MORGAN reported on the completion over the previous three days of the Hands-On Project to repaint the kitchen that serves the La Comida Rotary Dining Room, which serves low-cost or free lunches five days a week at the Avenidas Senior Center in downtown Palo Alto. The painting crew consisted of ART STAUFFER, BILL BUSSE, CHET DOUGLAS, DICK FREEMAN, DON MORGAN, JUDITH STEINER, MIKE MCMAHON, and STEVE MADSEN. DON also thanked ED DANGLER, JIM SUTHERLAND, and YORIKO KISHIMOTO for being prepared to help if their services had been needed at the times they were available.



JOHN BARTON explained a “Hands-On” opportunity for the Club to participate in the Fourth of July Chili Cookoff in Mitchell Park. He has a distinctive recipe and needs helpers for cooking and for decorating the Club’s tent. He urged Members to consider participating and will follow up at subsequent meetings.



BEN THRELKELD for the Membership Committee asked each Member to nominate two prospective members during a facilitator-led creative exercise at each table. He added that others would try to recruit the

Nominees, unless the nominator would do so. He hopes to increase the diversity and decrease the average age of the membership, goals PRESIDENT HAL heartily endorsed.

BRIAN STEEN introduced as our featured speaker, Russell Hancock, PhD, the President and CEO of Joint Venture Silicon Valley, who also teaches in Stanford’s Public Policy Program. BRIAN noted that as a musician himself, he was particularly pleased to welcome a concert pianist to talk about the health of Silicon Valley.



Dr. Hancock first talked about what’s happening: the Silicon Valley economy is booming, far outperforming state and national ones in job growth (92,000 in 2012) and high-tech innovation (13,000 patents and 17 IPOs in the year).

It boasts the world’s most dynamic and robust economy, dating as far back as 75 years. In a big change, San Francisco has recently seen remarkable high-tech growth. Yet challenges abound. VCs, long the heart of growth, have endured 10 unprofitable years. Angel funding, however, has substantially increased. While very high earners are doing well, median incomes have fallen the past five years, and the number of those earning only poverty level incomes has grown. The middle that had been the strength of the economy has been hollowed out by outsourcing. Another former strength, education, has suffered disinvestment. The public sector is even worse off; the tax system does not track what is actually going on. The public sector also suffers from widespread unwillingness to tolerate failures, hampering innovation.

In a brief Q&A session, Dr. Hancock faulted shortcomings of regional planning for transportation and housing growth, observing that almost everyone objects to the same two things, density and sprawl. He does not see dangers for Silicon Valley in other established high-tech regions including China; they rather are opportunities for global businesses. There is, nonetheless, one region that does concern him-- New York. His company publishes statistical reports on the economy in the Silicon Valley Index. On the web they may be found at siliconvalleyindex.org. Following a hearty round of applause, President HAL thanked Dr. Hancock in whose honor the Club will present a dictionary to a primary school student for whose family English is a second language. Starting in May, HAL advised that the price of Club lunches will rise to \$18, an unwelcome effect of a booming economy. The meeting adjourned on time.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

- April 29 **Emma Seppala**, Associate Director, Stanford Center For Compassion, Altruism and Education, Compassion and Service
- May 6 **Jocelyn Villaruz**, Mend A Broken Heart Project
- May 13 **George Koo**, What is Happening in China Today
- May 20 **New Member Talks**, TBA
- May 27 **DARK**
- June 3 **Catherine Crystal Foster**, College Education: Trends and Challenges Facing California Youth
- June 10 **DARK** Debunking

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