

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

Date: August 19, 2013

Reporter: DICK MANSFIELD

Editor: LYLE CONNELL

At 12:30 p.m. full-service President STEVE EMSLIE opened our meeting by conducting the pledge of allegiance and then introduced visiting Rotarians Crystal Mead from Corpus Christi, Texas, former member Lisa Akselrad from the Sunnyvale club, and Theo Schub from Mossman, Australia. President STEVE then exchanged banners with visiting Rotarian Arvind Thosar, of the Shaniwarwada, India, club who was accompanied by his wife, Neela. Guests of Rotarians were Palo Alto CPA David Holland (WALT HAYS) and Palo Alto Chief Communications Officer Claudia Keith (CASH ALAEE).



KAREN KIENZLE's excellent opening remarks focused on "the art of slowing down." The pace of life is fast and unrelenting; the cure is to slow down, unplug, and tap into "a little slow." The notion is catching on: KAREN told us that there are even a Slow Art Day and a World Institute of Slowing.

Club lyricist and past president LE LEVY took a turn as auctioneer, selling for the benefit of club charities, two sets of tickets to San Francisco Giants games this week. Winning bidders were President STEVE and GINNY LEAR.

HERSH DAVIS reviewed the club's participation in the recent Tour de Menlo cycling event: HERSH and his son Josh, the versatile LE LEVY and his wife Judy, and JACK WOODSON participated; and all enjoyed a wonderful lunch afterward.

Several members joined the President's Club:

- JOYCE CUSICK honored LYLE CONNELL for his long and faithful service as reporter, editor, and publisher of the Pinion.
- BEN THRELKELD, who with TODD LEWIS had purchased a Korean dinner chez President STEVE at the spring fundraiser, praised the dinner cooked by president-elect E. J. HONG, as well as President STEVE's hospitality.
- BRUCE GEE expressed gratitude to his business colleague TODD and to BEN for inviting him to enjoy the Korean dinner with them; he particularly enjoyed songs by E. J.'s daughter.
- E. J. HONG herself acknowledged that the Korean dinner "was a great time," with camaraderie enhanced by excellent food and drink.

STEVE MADSEN received thanks from President STEVE for rehabilitating the Rotary Bell by which our meetings are called to order. Word in the street is that welding was involved.

Today's program was the Palo Alto Rotary 2013 Club Assembly, which President STEVE subtitled *A Financial Overview and Review of Member Engagement*. He worked from a detailed PowerPoint presentation and has asked JOYCE CUSICK to make the presentation available to all members on the club website. High points:

President STEVE identified four Club Financial Centers – club operations, Palo Alto Charities, Palo Alto Rotary Endowment, and Rotary Foundation – and, with graphics by ART STAUFFER, provided recent financial details and an explanation of how the four centers interact. His conclusions: Club operations have come very close to breaking even, but a \$50 dues increase appears necessary this year after many years of holding the line. On the other hand, despite the good efforts of the Palo Alto Rotary Endowment to provide support for the club's charitable activities, club fundraising has declined slightly and action appears necessary to maintain the club's historically high level of charitable involvement.



He then raised "key questions" in four areas:

- (1) FUNDRAISER: Should the club consider a new and different major fundraising event to replace the "gala" format used in recent years?
- (2) GIVING MODELS: Should the club include a charitable-giving element into each member's annual dues, perhaps as a way to render an annual fundraising event unnecessary?
- (3) LUNCH PRICING: Should the club establish a lunch billing system which would allow members who attend regularly to prepay for lunches at a discounted rate?
- (4) PALO ALTO MISSION: Should the club continue its community and international giving at its current levels?

President STEVE proposed that these and cognate questions be considered by a subcommittee of the Board and volunteers from the membership at large. The subcommittee would be expected to present options for a club vote not later than January 2014. In the interim, President STEVE would proceed with planning for a 2014 fundraising event, and would issue a dues letter including suggested charitable giving levels.

Discussion followed, recorded by JOYCE CUSICK and KATIE SEEDMAN, with valuable contributions from ROB LANCEFIELD, NANCY PETERS, HENRIETTA BURROUGHS, JOHN O'KEEFE, E. J. HONG, LEANNAH HUNT, NINA MOORE, former member Lisa Akselrad, TODD LEWIS, JOAN PLASTIRAS, and TOM GRACON. Others wished to speak, but time ran out: All will have full opportunity to participate over the next several months.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

August 26--Bernard Muir, Director of Athletics, Stanford University
Sept. 2--Dark, Celebrating Labor Day
Sept. 9--Stuart Crabb, Dr. for Learning and Development, Facebook, OMG!
They R Here! Engaging Generations X, Y and Z

Info: www.rotarypaloalto.org

