

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

Date: September 23, 2013

Reporter: DICK MANSFIELD

Editor: LYLE CONNELL

President STEVE EMSLIE got us off to an early start, greeting a small but choice group of Rotarians and guests at 12:12 p.m. and then returning at 12:32 p.m. to lead the pledge of allegiance and begin the formal meeting. Between the greeting and the pledge we enjoyed an excellent Elks Club lunch.

President STEVE introduced visiting Rotarians Nash Narasimhav from the Cennai Club in India, Joan Rosselle, a fundraising consultant from the Los Altos Club, and Marcel Wassink, an information technology executive from the Wien-Donau Club in Vienna. Nash and Marcel were second-time visitors; and we hope we'll see all three again. BEN THRELKELD introduced his guest, Michael Wick, (the President and CEO of a cancer therapeutics firm); DAVE THORNTON's guest was his wife, Mary Alice ("the President and CEO of our home"); and DARYL SAVAGE introduced the speaker's guest, Mark Garcia.

We're confident ZAFAR IQBAL was correct when he said his opening remarks would be "preaching to the choir": his thesis was the importance of good character. He skillfully synthesized language attributed to Aristotle, John Wesley, and Brian Tracy in support of his conclusions that good character earns respect, trust, responsibility, success, and, ultimately, happiness: "Be good and you will be happy."



Membership Chair BEN THRELKELD and sponsor WALT HAYS joined President STEVE to induct new member, DAVID HOLLAND, a Palo Alto certified public accountant. Welcome aboard, DAVID!



President STEVE led off the announcements by telling us we had all been invited to Mountain View Rotary Club's "Sports Theme" social at 5 p.m. Tuesday, September 24, at Scott's, 420 Castro Street. Sounds like our kind of Rotary event, so we hope some members will attend notwithstanding the short notice.

And ANNETTE GLANCKOPF thanked three Rotarian volunteers who joined her in assisting at "Palo Alto Quakeville," an emergency preparedness program sponsored by Emergency Services Volunteers at Cubberly on September 21 and 22. In addition to ANNETTE, JOAN PLASTIRAS, WALT HAYS and visiting Rotarian Marcel Wassink participated; and we thank you all.



JOAN PLASTIRAS then joined the President's Club to thank ANNETTE for the opportunity to be involved in "Quakeville" – "it was a blast!" – and to express appreciation to President STEVE for giving her son, several years ago, a Big Ball Factory toy, which JOAN avers, started her son on the road to a future career as an engineer.

DAVE THORNTON also joined the President's Club, to honor 40 years of marriage to Mary Alice.



President STEVE graciously acknowledged today's volunteers: Cashier CHESLEY DOUGLAS, Guest Desker and Pinion Writer DICK MANSFIELD, Greeter HAL MICKELSON, Setup Maestro GINNY LEAR and Audio-Visual Guru STEVE MADSEN.

Today's speaker was NBC Bay Area lead investigative reporter Tony Kovaleski, who was introduced by LIZ KNISS. Mr. Kovaleski has worked for many television outlets across the country and has won a number of awards for investigative journalism; he joined NBC Bay Area at the beginning of 2012.



Mr. Kovaleski expressed pride in his work, which "helps our society be a better society." As illustrations he showed and commented on two video clips.

One involved allegations of sexual assaults and harassment, racism, retaliation for reporting the conduct and failure to investigate it, within a military unit. Six months of investigation resulted in a very persuasive video segment which, in turn, led to personnel turnovers and improved practices within the unit.

The second clip was the product of a three-month investigation into allegations that a highly-placed California bureaucrat had taken many expensive and time-consuming trips of dubious relevance to his regulatory duties. The trips were paid for by private groups affiliated with enterprises subject to the agency's regulation and thus, while arguably legal, were at best ethically suspect. Again the video segment was polished and persuasive, and although the bureaucrat remains on the job, the issues have been effectively submitted to what Mr. Kovaleski called "the court of public opinion."

Mr. Kovaleski left time for a question session in which WALT HAYS, DANA TOM, HENRIETTA BURROUGHS, LE LEVY, DAVID SMULLIN, JOHN O'KEEFE, JOAN PLASTIRAS, and ROB LANCEFIELD participated. He closed by telling us, "I need all of you. You are my eyes and ears."

PRESIDENT STEVE adjourned the meeting close to 1:30 p.m.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

Sept. 30--Walt Hays, Rotary World Community Service

Oct. 7--Becky Beacom, Manager, Health Education, PAMF, "The Picture of Health"

Oct. 14--Rotary Partners in Service

Oct. 21--Tim Tosta, Palliative Care

Info: www.rotarypaloalto.org