

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

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VISITING ROTARIANS AND GUESTS OF ROTARIANS

Rotarian visited us from Gualala. Guests included Avo Izmirlian, guest of STEVE EMSLIE; Peter Shambora, guest of DENNIS MCGINN; and Steve Zientek, guest of MIKE McMAHON. Sharon Tennison attended for the final time as guest of WALT HAYS, to be followed by her induction later in the meeting. OLIVER COOLIDGE is tired of introducing his daughter, Chrissy Coolidge, as a guest; and he begged us to persuade her to complete her membership application.

OPENING REMARKS

JIM SUTHERLAND revealed that today is the anniversary of the 1930 launch of the Mickey Mouse cartoon, inspiring JIM to share with us examples of Disney's fortitude in the face of challenge, and his remarkable accomplishments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, REPORTS AND REMINDERS

TOM GRACON announced that the Rotary speech contest is next week, Thursday 23rd 7 - 9 PM. They need contestants!! Please let people know – they can contact ANNETTE GLANCKOPF or TOM for details or to compete.

NEW MEMBER

SHARON TENNISON was inducted, sponsored by WALT HAYS.



SHARON founded the Center for Citizen Initiatives during the cold war to foster relations with Russia. The group has brought over 6000 Russian entrepreneurs to the US, and many of them trained with Rotarians. SHARON has contributed to the formation of 27 Rotary clubs in Russia. She lives in San Mateo and visited many clubs in our area before choosing ours.

ENDOWMENT UPDATE

BILL FOGARTY and TODD LEWIS announced that in the last week the



Endowment Fund received the largest single gift in its history, from SAM WEBSTER (\$50,000 as directed in his will). TODD read the letter from the family. Total Endowment contributions this year amount to over \$69,000. We are still striving for 100% participation with checks being accepted

through June 30; so there is still time to give.

OK TO BE CRABBY ON APRIL 4

BRUCE GEE, DICK BUSH and GINNY LEAR announced the plans for our annual fundraiser, Friday, April 4, 6:30 PM at University Club, with silent and live auctions and a return to the popular Crab Feed. The goal is to raise \$50,000 total, with \$15,000-25,000 in sponsorships. Ticket sales will cover the cost of the event, and profit for charity will come from sponsorships and auctions. The PA Weekly has offered to help publicize and offer incentives in the form of ads.



PRESIDENT'S CLUB CONTRIBUTIONS

JON and O'Malley STOUAN are grandparents of a baby boy born on Jan 5. And JON, (making time to dote on the grandchild?) retired from his organ courier career having completed 40 international and 30 domestic deliveries of donated organs.

PROGRAM

DIANA DIAMOND introduced our speaker, Karyn Sinunu-Towery, who just retired from the District Attorney's Office of Santa Clara County, after a 30-year career in which she earned a reputation for integrity and



thoroughness. High-profile cases include her recent prosecution of former County Supervisor George Shirakawa, and her work leading to the exoneration of Rick Walker, who served 12 years after being falsely convicted of murder.

Illustrating a pendulum of criminal justice, Sinunu-Towery notes that our state's highest crime rate (per 100,000) was in the 1990's, but today we are back to the rate of the 1960's. She took us through 30 years of Criminal Justice in review.

1977: CA switched from indeterminate to determinate sentencing. With indeterminate sentencing, a burglary sentence would be 2-10 years, but the time actually served depended on the behavior in prison. With determinate sentencing, once the judge chooses the sentence, behavior in prison has no influence; so there is no incentive to behave well in prison.

1982: Prop 8 - Victims Bill of Rights, added an additional penalty for prior bad conduct. 1988: Californians became concerned about violent gang-related crimes, and passed the California Criminal Street Terrorism and Prevention Act. If a crime is committed by someone affiliated with a gang, the judge can add 5, 10 years or even life to the sentence.

1994 – Two and Three Strikes (Prop 184 and AB 971): If you have a “serious or violent felony” on your record and you commit a new offense, the sentence will be doubled, and if this is your 3rd offense your sentence will be 25 years-life. This is the harshest 2- and 3-Strikes law in the US.

2000 – Prop 21: Allows prosecutors (at their discretion, without judge approval) to file juvenile cases in adult court. The result is people in prison serving life sentences for crimes committed while they were juveniles.

In the early 2000's, there were several high-profile sexual predator cases that resulted in new legislation. 2006 – Amber Alert established an emergency alert system in the case of abductions. 2004 – Megan's Law created an online directory of sexual predators. 2006 – Sexually Violent Predator Law allows prosecutor to bring a civil case against a sexual offender up for release, which results in their having to stay in prison.

2011 – Proposition 109 – Realignment: Takes people with nonviolent offenses and deals with them locally; so only the most violent offenders go to state prison. The 1960 CA prison population was less than 20,000. If we applied that rate to today's population, we would have only 50,000 prisoners, but instead we have over 100,000.

2012 – Proposition 36: Softened 2- and 3-Strikes law, resulting in resentencing people who were given 25 years-life for a nonviolent 3rd offense. This brings CA more in line with other states.

Death penalty – each time it comes to a vote, more people vote to abolish it, increasingly for cost reasons. It takes about 25 years for appeals to be done. If Sinunu-Towery wanted to pad her retirement, she could work on death penalty appeals and have a very nice income. Many are doing just that.

“I give the information, you draw the conclusions.”

UPCOMING DATES:

January 20 Dennis Boyle of IDEO, Design Thinking for the Underserved

January 27 Stephanie Martinson, Racing Hearts Project

Info: www.rotarypaloalto.org