

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

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Reporter: ANDREW PIERCE

Editor: LYLE CONNELL

President KATIE SEEDMAN called the meeting to order at 12:30 and BEN THRELKELD led the Pledge of Allegiance.

VISITING ROTARIANS

Richard Carlson, a former member of this club, was visiting from Tucson. Carolyn Grewal is a brand new member of the Santa Clara Rotary Chapter. She is a scientist with Evans Analytical.

GUESTS

BEN THRELKELD introduced his guest Rotraut Clum. CHARLIE WEIDANTZ introduced his guest, David Kabakov, President of Abilities United.

WE CARE COMMITTEE REPORT

Those who can visit with ISRAEL ZEHAVI are asked to work through his wife Kathryn or DICK FREEMAN. Kathryn's email is kziz2004@yahoo.com. Please send Dick cc of any correspondence with Kathryn. Israel is in a convalescent home in Sunnyvale and he is in a wheelchair. He really needs people to come visit and, if possible, to read the New York Times to him. There is nothing wrong with his mind.

VIC ROSASCO has recovered from hip surgery and was at the meeting.

OPENING REMARKS

Opening remarks were given by BILL BUSSE who said his topic was the advantages of aging. These apparently include the right not to discuss the topic at hand if one so chooses. BILL told us about the New Horizons' mission to Pluto. He has a connection with Clyde Tombaugh, the discoverer of Pluto -- his wife was invited to the Lowell Observatory when she was eight years old and Clyde Tombaugh was BILL's physics professor at Northern Arizona. Pluto was named after a worldwide naming contest. It was located after two years of searching by Tombaugh. New Horizons left nine years ago travelled 3 billion miles. It flew by Pluto at a distance of 7,800 miles with some of Tombaugh's ashes in a vial. A large heart-shaped region that was spotted on the surface of Pluto will be named Tombaugh Regio. BILL BUSSE returned briefly to his scheduled topic noting that one knows they are old when the rocking chair won't rock and your walker has an airbag.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

There is a new directory available on paper and also electronically.

The Rotary Means Business meeting will be on August 19, 2015 at 7:00 a.m. at Channing House. Three clubs will be participating and there will be a talk on crowd funding.

GLORIA HOM asked the crowd, with mixed success, when the next Rotary social will be. It will be on Friday, July 31 at 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at her house on Middlefield across from Samyana Yoga. Members whose names begin with A-M shall bring wine. Those beginning with M-Z should bring an appetizer. It was left unclear whether the people whose names begin with M are to bring both or to choose one or the other.



CHARLIE WEIDANTZ introduced new member ELIZABETH SANTANA, who was sponsored by BEN THRELKELD. She is Director of Development at the Palo Alto Players after leaving a corporate job to work in the non-profit arts sector.

PROGRAM

HENRIETTA BURROUHS introduced our guest speaker, Carlos Martinez. Mr. Martinez was born in Managua, Nicaragua and is a naturalized American citizen. He attended school in Mexico City and practiced as a licensed architect. He completed his graduate degrees at UC Berkeley where he obtained two Masters; one in architecture and another in city planning. For a time, he was a private entrepreneur running a successful small business in the Mission District. Later he worked for Dames & Moore, a large multinational providing consulting and economics services, and for the Mission Economic Development Association, a small non-profit organization. He worked in the public sector for the cities of Hayward and for the East Palo Alto Redevelopment Agency for more than a decade. He was appointed as East Palo Alto Interim City Manager in October 2014 and as East Palo Alto City Manager in March 2015. Carlos provided an overview of East Palo Alto. It is one of the youngest cities in San Mateo County with a population of 30,000 people. Sixty percent are Hispanic, 20% African American, 10% Pacific Islander, and 10% other. It is a low income community. It had to go the Supreme Court to obtain permission for incorporation. In the beginning, the mobilizing issue was rent increases from property owners from outside of the town who often left their apartments in poor condition. Undesirable uses were commonly placed in East Palo Alto when it was unincorporated, such as the County dump, which has now been transformed into a nature preserve and a recycling and toxic recycling centers.



Early on, the City adopted rent control and a general plan to control uses. Many thought it would not be viable. The largest revenue generator was a McDonald's, which does not create enough revenue to run a city. The City created a redevelopment agency which oversaw the University Circle development, including the Four Seasons Hotel in the former Whiskey Gulch. Whiskey Gulch provided very little in revenue, but required quite a bit of police services and was a troubled area. Later, the City developed retail across the freeway at the Gateway/101 redevelopment area. This includes the Home Depot and the Ikea which help create additional revenue for the City. At this point, there is no doubt East Palo Alto will survive as a City. The City still does lack services compared to some of its neighbors.

The City did lose a bit of its identity with the loss of the Whiskey Gulch area. The current plan is to develop a town center along Ravenswood and Bay Road.

UPCOMING MEETING SPEAKERS

July 27 Keith Humphreys, Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Stanford School of Medicine: "Marijuana Legalization - Implications for California"

August 3, Paola Estanislao, Human Trafficking Prosecutor, Santa Clara County: "Human Trafficking and How it Intersects our Lives"