

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

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Reporter: JOHN KIDD

Editor: BRIAN STEEN

President **KATIE SEEDMAN** called the meeting to order at 12:30.



PETER SHAMBORA introduced us to his daughter and guest, Jessica;



DICK BUSH introduced his friend and fellow entrepreneur, John Kenney. Our lone Visiting Rotarian was Debra Cen from the PA University Club.

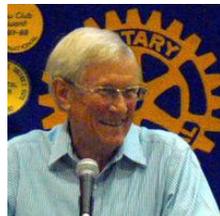


BILL BUSSE reported on the well intended but unsuccessful visit to our bed-bound Rotarian, **ISRAEL ZEHAVI**. Bill will try again next week, when he has found out for sure he is at the nursing home, to read a bit of the NY Times to Israel. Others are encouraged to do the same.



GLORIA HOM re-announced the 'drop everything and come as you are' no-sign-up monthly Wine & Chat Party, this month at her home. This Friday, 31 July, 660 Towle Way off Middlefield in Midtown, 5:00-7:00 pm. Bring wine or finger food and friends or significant others.

DON MORGAN turned Opening Remarks into touching dedication to his 12th grade English teacher, Mr. Pennypacker, who inspired him to aspire to go to a far off unknown place called Harvard. First in his family to go to university, his aspirations led him to be able to not only study, but to understand and enjoy the Bard.



DANA TOM took to the podium to introduce our speaker, Dr. Keith Humphreys. As a Stanford professor and Director for Mental Health Policy in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Dr. Humphreys has been asked to serve on several US government commissions and committees, including one year as President Obama's Senior Policy Advisor on National Drug Control Policy. He just completed duty as a member of the State of California's Blue Ribbon Commission on Marijuana Policy.

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When talking about the State's upcoming decision about whether to legalize marijuana, Dr. Humphreys was delightfully adept at communicating a comprehensive knowledge of the issues.

Making it clear that he was not going to advocate one way or another, Dr. Humphreys stated that the primary purpose of the Blue Ribbon Commission's report was to educate those who will be drafting potential legislation. Evidently it is now apparent that the majority of Californians want to legalize marijuana. It is also evident that the State's elected officials are not going to tackle the problem. Rather, they have decided to punt the issue over to our hectic initiative process, making the job of educating the drafters of the inevitable various and sundry initiatives all the more difficult and all the more important. If California decides



to legalize marijuana, there are a whole bunch of ways they can screw up the legislation to do so. Chief among the potential mistakes would be bad tax policies that would wind up encouraging increased use by youth who are the most vulnerable to the possible addiction to the drug. Chief among the characteristics important to include in any potential legislation is flexibility. (There is not yet enough known about the appropriate price point: too cheap and the price-sensitive kids will be too encouraged to buy; too expensive and the illicit market comes back into play.) It will be important to not make the mistake of trying to solve the State's budget problems with the taxation policy. Most important is the need to avoid the public health catastrophe of the tobacco industry.

Other interesting points: 'Marijane' is thirsty, consuming as much water as almonds; today, marijuana contains from 10 – 16% of the active chemical, THC, whereas the marijuana of the 70's was only 4 - 5%; players in the marijuana industry are vulnerable to indictment for a federal felony – no small wonder then that the abundant cash in the industry is often hidden in hollowed out trees rather than in banks; edible marijuana takes much longer to have an effect, often leading to an overdose of the novice consumer; most of the current consumers of 'medical marijuana' are recreational users, not patients; Oregon and Colorado have done a poor job in legislating the legalization of marijuana, Washington somewhat better. For more information about the results of the Blue Ribbon Commission study, go to safeandsmartpolicy.org.



Upcoming Programs

- August 3 **Paola Estanislaio, Human Trafficking Prosecutor, Santa Clara County: "Human Trafficking and How it Intersects our Lives"**
- August 10 **New Member Talks: Charlie Weidanz, Tim Watson, Pamela Krudo**
- August 17 **Lunch Meeting @ Elks Lodge, Susan Valenta District Governor**

