

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

September 17, 2018

Reporter: DON MORGAN

Editor: LYLE CONNELL

At President GINNY LEAR's request, LEE LIPPERT led the Pledge (after he instructed us how to do that). GINNY noted the absence of visiting Rotarians and guests and thanked IRIS KOROL for hosting the pop-up social at Gamble Gardens the preceding Thursday evening, ably assisted by MATT DOLAN, who then joined the President's Club.

JUDY KLEINBERG joined the President's Club in honor of the same event. She also announced that the Chamber of Commerce will present its annual Athena Award for Professional Womens leadership to our former President SHERRI SAGER at a ceremony on October 30. She asked that we all buy tickets and attend .



GEOFF ZIMAN joined the President's Club with a question to long-time members: when did our club post a plaque in the Gamble Gardens room where food was served stating that our club sponsored the room? (No response.) GEOFF also said a few weeks ago he "married off" a granddaughter, whom a slide showed receiving the groom's proposal, on bended knee.



RALPH ADAMS joined the President's Club to mark his wife's and his completion of a double marathon.



GINNY LEAR announced that a hundred or so Club-insignia wine glasses had surfaced in former President LE LEVY's garage and were now for sale at \$5 each.



For the Rotary Foundation, former President BETSY BECHTEL showed a video illustrating Foundation expenditures on matters such a water supply, electrical power, and the fight against Polio. Noting our \$30,000 contribution last year and TIM WATSON's review last week of its recipients, she said letters were in the mail soliciting renewed contributions, with a goal of 100% participation, regardless of amounts.

PAM KRUDOP spoke appreciatively of the several women who had inspired her over the years. GINNY thanked those who staffed the meeting.

The Program: Deborah Rhode, Stanford Law School Professor:

"Cheating: Ethics and Law in Everyday Life" PAM KRUDOP reviewed our speaker's educational and professional background, including Phi Beta Kappa and summa cum laude at Yale College, honors at law school, a clerkship with Thurgood Marshall on the United States Supreme Court, work on the Clinton impeachment proceedings, and long tenure at the Stanford Law School.



Professor Rhode held up her book "Cheating" as a real bargain on Amazon. She estimated the costs of cheating, broadly construed, in the United States at a trillion dollars annually. Her examples included incorrect tax returns, insurance fraud, marital infidelity, domestic violence, and corruption. She pointed out that many of President Trump's steadfast supporters do not trust him. She added downloading of copyrighted music from the internet. Leaving aside "white

lies" where truth would be harmful, she said studies showed that 10% of people (including us of course) always tell the truth, 5% hardly ever do so and 85% are guilty of occasional untruths. "Ethical numbing" is widespread, for example "everyone else pilfers office supplies, why shouldn't I?" The internet makes it easy to present other peoples' work products as one's own. We need more support for whistleblowing and auditing of tax returns. Although IRS audits are very cost effective, enforcement budgets have been steadily reduced over the years. Who among us or the Congress wants to help the IRS? Michael Milken was convicted of enormous violations of federal securities laws and sentenced to ten years imprisonment. He was free after only two years and even taught a course at a business school, which perhaps apocryphally began with a student asking "Is it alright to cheat in this course?" A lengthy and lively Q&A followed. DICK BUSH, standing tall and trying to inject some humor, told Professor Rhode that the table in front of him was occupied by Palo Alto officials and it was good to see them being lectured on honesty. Laughter drowned out LIZ KNISS' efforts to be recognized to respond. HAL MICKELSON asked for the professor's views on our contingent-fee system, unique among nations, for legal representation. She agreed that conflicts of interest inhere in that system, as well as in other forms of billing such as billable hours, but added that contingent-fee billing does make legal representation available to many who lack the financial resources otherwise to pay lawyers. LIZ KNISS asked about youths being afraid to disclose fellow students' plagiarism because doing so would make them unpopular. For more, buy her book: "Cheating".

PROGRAMS and EVENTS

*September 24 Palo Alto City Council Candidates:
Pat Boone, Tom DuBois, Eric Filseth, Alison
McCormack, Cory Wolbach*

