



Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

Weekly Newsletter

Date September 7, 2008

Reporter: BRIAN STEEN

Editor: NICK NICHOLS

OPENERS:

MIKE COUCH started the meeting at 12:15.

VISITORS & GUESTS:

SHERRI SAGER welcomed our guests:

Visiting Rotarians: Sumiltra Jonnabigadda, 1000 Oaks Club;
Ginnie Leer, Los Altos Rotary

Rotarians with Guests: ANNETTE GLANCKOPF introduced Diane Raley; EJ HONG introduced Alison Cormack and Taher Fatehi; ART STAUFFER introduced Ed Dangler; ROB LANCEFIELD introduced Chuck Piercey.

OPENING REMARKS:

JACK WOODSON reminded us of how fortunate we are to live where top notch medical services are available (Jack just went through back surgery). To help others not so fortunate, Jack suggested contributions be made to the Rotary Foundation and Rotary International.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MIKE announced the October 2 Rotaract-Rotary Social 5:00PM at the Borel Private Bank, 245 Lytton Ave. MIKE also mentioned a possible Rotary tail-gate party at the upcoming Stanford USC game and the Sept. 10 Feed the Homeless dinner. We still need a coordinator for this Rotary outreach program.

CASH ALAEE provided a sincere thank you to MIKE and JEANNE COUCH for hosting a fabulous end-of-summer social gathering at their Los Altos Hills home.

PRESIDENT'S CLUB:

TRISH BUBENIK made a generous contribution to honor local Red Cross volunteers who helped those affected by Hurricane Gustav.

PROGRAM:

ANDY COE introduced Irvin Yalom, M.D. Professor Emeritus of Behavioral Psychology at Stanford. Dr. Yalom provided insights from his most recent book, "Staring at the Sun: Overcoming the Fear of Death".

He felt that if you meditate on your existence, you come upon four ultimate concerns: mortality, purpose, isolation and the fear of death. He shared the wisdom of Greek philosopher Epicurus who said the purpose of philosophy is to help others attain a tranquil life, with pleasure and pain as measures of what is good and bad, that death is the end of the body and the soul and should therefore not be feared.

Q/A following Dr. Yalom's presentation:

Q: I'm afraid of losing my memories, please elaborate.

A: Each person has their own precious world. It's sad and poignant to lose this in death.

Q: Is fear of death a Western phenomenon or the same in other cultures?

A: Yes, it takes place in many different forms. Most notable are the pharaohs of Egypt.

Q: What about the individual who welcomes death to avoid responsibility?

A: This is often sought by suicidal people, but we don't know if death really extinguishes consciousness.

Q: Any guidance for friends facing terminal illness?

A: Be with them in the here and how. Ask them what they would like now.

Q: Is death really a fear of religion?

A: There's a strong argument for that.

Q: What should I be doing in my last 1000 days?

A: Look forward and do things you won't regret. Live your life as though you want to repeat it over and over.

MIKE thanked Dr. Yalom for an inspiring presentation and announced a dictionary will be presented in his honor to Green Oaks Academy.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

[Palo Alto Rotary - Speakers Schedule](#)

September 15 - Toni Heineman - The Status of Foster Children Today

September 22 - Dick Henning - Backstage at the Celebrity Forum

NEARBY MEETING PLACES:

[Palo Alto Rotary - Meeting Information](#)