

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

January 13, 2020

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Editor: LYLE CONNELL

President DANA TOM called the meeting to order, and President-elect BEN THRELKELD introduced Visiting Rotarians and Guests.

VISITING ROTARIANS and GUESTS OF ROTARIANS: Frank Verlot, visiting from Los Altos Rotary, is Assistant Governor of Area 9 which includes our club. Jo RoyC visited us from the PA University Club, and Rhonda Bekkedahl also from PA University Club is ED of Channing House. Speaker Ann Ravel is a San Jose Rotarian. BRIAN STEEN introduced Dave Cortright, who is a fellow singer. SOHEILA MOZAYAN introduced her good friend and source of inspiration, Elizabeth Wolf. DANA introduce Mike Reynolds who has just submitted his application for membership

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: Julian Demalleville shared a quote encouraging us in the year to come to make mistakes! If you are making mistakes it is because you are trying new things, so make new mistakes, make glorious amazing mistakes!



NEW MEMBER INDUCTION: SOHEILA MOZAYAN joined as our newest member. Her sponsor CHARLIE WEIDANZ knows her from some of her 20 years spent with Abilities United. She is compassionate in her work with the developmental disability community, she lives by acceptance and inclusion and respect, and she will make a great Rotarian. SOHEILA feels Rotary will help her fulfill her personal goal to make the world a better place.



DANA awarded GEORGE WHEATON a Paul Harris pin with 5 blue sapphires in recognition of his generosity to the Rotary Foundation and Polio Plus over the years.

Several openings remain for Project WeHOPE Jan 14, 6:30-8:15 pm. 1858 Bay Road in East Palo Alto.



CASH ALAEE invited all to attend the Youth Speech Contest on January 25, 10-11:30 am at Avenidas, 450 Bryant Street. The registration deadline has been pushed back to Jan 20, so you can still encourage young people to apply.

GINNY LEAR reminded us of our Chinese New Year Banquet at Chef Chu's Restaurant on January 28, 6:00 pm. \$75 per person for a delicious feast. Only 6 seats of 100 remain as we go to press!



BRIAN STEEN invited everyone to go upstairs after the meeting to play pool on their professional tables!



Five people joined the PRESIDENT'S CLUB. CYRILLE BETANT offered a quintupled contribution to the President's Club to atone for his rare attendance. He hopes to spend less time travelling as soon as he finds someone to run his company. This is only his second week home since Thanksgiving!

GLORIA HOM has been away for 3 weeks. She announced a Chinese dinner on January 30 at the Palo Alto Woman's Club, to benefit the Palo Alto History Museum and Avenidas. \$125 per person



LIZ KNISS invited BRUCE SWENSON to the podium. He was VP and Professor at Foothill College, and co-chairing the campaign to pass a bond measure to support



FHDA community colleges. He had a great kick-off fundraiser recently at her house.



CHRISTIAN MARTINE commented on the irony, given the topic of today's speaker, that money provides opportunities to speak even in Rotary. In his case, he asked his family to chip in to allow him to donate to The Rotary Foundation today in honor of his birthday. We sang to wish him a happy birthday.



And finally, **JUDY KLEINBERG** shared the good/sad news that her son, who has worked in Singapore for 18 years, has just become CEO of a new company funded by Nest Labs. Unfortunately this means that he is not coming back here any time soon.



DANA showed another inspiring video that reminds us why we are Rotarians and proud to be so.

THANKS TO HELPERS: Pinion editor **LYLE CONNELL**; greeters **JON COWAN** and **CHARLIE WEIDANZ**; welcome desk and cashier **KATIE SEEDMAN** and **REBECCA GERALDI**; setup and A/V **DICK MANSFIELD** and **RICHARD KELLER**; microphone managers **TOM GRACON** and **LAURIE LISTON**; Pinion writer **SALLY TOMLINSON**.

PROGRAM – Ann Ravel “What is the prospect for Fair Campaign Finance Regulation in the 2020 Election?”

DIANA DIAMOND introduced Ann Ravel, member of the Federal Elections Commission under President Obama from 2013-2017, and current candidate for State Senate to represent District 15.



Ravel pointed out that the Federal Election Commission (FEC) was established after Watergate when thousands of dollars in cash was paid to Watergate burglars, bringing attention to the sources and quantities of money in political

campaigns. The FEC has six members, no more than 3 of any one party. The FEC was dysfunctional when she was there because of animosity among members and difficulty enforcing their decisions. Now it is non-functional because there are only 3 members remaining but 4 votes are needed to do anything. The FEC regulates how money is raised, not how it is spent.



Ravel touched on several areas of concern in election finance: foreign investment, dark money, and social media used for false statements. In general, enforcement of all violations is weak. Accepting foreign money has always been illegal and the CIA is very concerned about foreign investment in our elections. Dark money is difficult to trace, and our government lacks the will to investigate. The use of

Facebook and other media for false statements and political advertising is complex and needs to be regulated. In response to questions, Ravel explained that the \$2800 limit on contributions applies.

WE MEET NEXT WEEK

Monday, February 20, - Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday

Our program will be our annual Hands on service project
ALL HANDS ARE NEEDED!