

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

August 24, 2020

Reporter: GEOFF ZIMAN

Editor: LYLE CONNELL

Our president ringing the opening bell at 12:30 pm stifled the informal chat and started the meeting. The first item covered was a touching message to the club from our esteemed Honorary member DICK FREEMAN, conveyed by his wife Corkie and daughter Sue. It read: "Dick Freeman would like to send his sincere thanks to all the people who sent him cards and greetings for his 94th Birthday. Every card brightened his day and made him thankful for the many years of friendship in Rotary. Participating in Rotary, truly, has been a highlight of his life. Thanks again."

CASH ALAEE acknowledged three visitors. The first being Kim Bomar guest of DANA TOM. The others were BEN THRELKELD's parents - Robert Threlkeld (Sonoma County) and Toby Stanley (Maine).

ART STAUFFER provided the thought for the day by reminiscing on a particular visit to Guatemala. He spoke of the inspiring people he met and the encouraging work of the Esperanza Juvenil organization that we help to support.



DANA TOM again explained the innovative "Coffee with Rotarian" program.

Provided you do not opt out, every month, members will be paired with another member. The email notification will expect each pair to connect and converse to promote fellowship.



PETER SHAMBORA reminded the club that the Uncle Nearest Whisky Tasting is the subject of the next TGIF on Friday 8/28 at 5:30 - 7:00 pm. The event will be virtual but, if you ordered and pickup your samples, you can really imbibe.



HERSH DAVIS gave an update on the Tour de Menlo fundraising event of the Rotary Club of Menlo Park. He invited cycling devotees to join LE LEVY and himself to make an organized ride together on Sunday, September 13. For full details of the fun ride and how to donate to the good cause, contact either of them. Yuhui Chen of the Menlo Club joined our meeting for support.



SALLY TOMLINSON asked for recommendations on quality speakers and made the point that, with virtual meetings, we could look for candidates outside our immediate region.



Promoted and proposed by HAL MICKELSON, seconded by LAURIE LISTON, the Club's updated club bylaws were passed by an affirmative voice vote. Thanks to Hal's efforts there was a clear majority of our members present. The newly approved bylaws will be posted to the Club's website and can be found in the Club Documents section under the Members tab.

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Our favorite hands-on project of placing flags on University Avenue on Labor Day, September 7 has had to be modified due to the pandemic. The number of participants will be limited to two in the morning and two in the evening. If you are interested to take part, email President Ben. There will be a Zoom meeting on Tuesday, September 1 at 6 - 7 pm of those interested in organizing our 2021 Annual Fundraiser. The goal will be to recruit volunteers, identify leaders and develop an action plan.

Before the speaker was introduced, the Pinion volunteers GEOFF ZIMAN and LYLE CONNELL were thanked for their contribution to the meeting.

OANA MARCU introduced our speaker Vicent Partal, a journalist in Catalonia, Spain. His topic was the coronavirus pandemic as a symptom of a global systemic crisis. He is a director of VilaWeb, the most important online newspaper in Barcelona, established in 1995. Among his qualifications is being the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the European Journalism Center in the Netherlands. As a reporter and correspondent, Vicent has for decades covered many major events throughout the world and won a number of prestigious journalist awards. In addition, he has published several books about Europe and Catalonia's striving for independence.



In his talk, Vicent was able to provide perspective on what strange affects the coronavirus is having on the world and the major challenges to be faced. He pointed out that the pandemic has become a worldwide situation as a

direct result of travel and how it is aggravated by China being the factory of the world. Some other affects he noted were the opportunities for big pharma to make millions from vaccines. At the same time governments were using the event to suppress freedoms - Hong Kong being an obvious example. On the other hand, the pandemic has produced amazing examples of people working together and encouraging radical thinking. He mentioned the innovative idea from France of encouraging night travel by train as an alternative to climate damage from flying. He advocated using the pandemic as a means to fix problems.

OANA MARCU asked the speaker how the rest of the world viewed the United States. In an extended answer, Vicent indicated that some of the problems seen were worldwide and that he decried politics becoming a profession. ROB LANCEFIELD asked about joining groups around the world to which the speaker pointed out how positive it was to see scientists all working together. JUDY KLEINBERG asked about media ownership and political influence on the news. The speaker emphasized how important it was to have media sustained by communities and readers rather than special interests.

Next meeting's speaker will be Mitchell Stevens from the Stanford Graduate School of Education. His topic will be Higher Education in the Time of Coronavirus.

September 7 we will be DARK (Labor Day).