

# Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

November 22, 2021

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President KHASHAYAR "CASH" ALAEE called the meeting to order broadcasting "Live and In Person" from the Elks Club with co-hosts BEN THRELKELD and DANA TOM, while others attended at home on Zoom. He and the tech team are taking thorough steps towards hybrid meetings when some will attend in person and some will attend virtually. Getting all the audio input from various sources is complicated! With audio uncertain, MATT DOLAN suggested that CASH do his presentation as an interpretive dance!

Past President BEN THRELKELD then invited introduction of VISITING ROTARIANS and GUESTS OF ROTARIANS. We had two visiting Rotarians: Carole Whitehill, who is a Rotarian relocating to this area, attended as a guest of STEVE PLAYER; and Ashok Saraf is a visiting Rotarian from Mumbai and who has connected with MIKE REYNOLDS.

MATT DOLAN brought us our Thought for the Day, which was actually his thought for last Monday when his technology did not cooperate. But we are easily pleased with week-old thoughts! Especially since he spoke in honor of Veterans, noting that patriotism is based on love and principles similar to those of Rotary. To love our country is to love the world.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS, REPORTS AND REMINDERS:

CASH again impressed us with how busy our members are, doing committee work and volunteering, with more opportunities. and LE LEVY brought together by SOHEILA MOZAYAN in service to Magical Bridge

LARRY KLEIN and GEOFF BALL have been busy attending meetings and doing outreach as they work to determine how our club will play a role in addressing the climate crisis.

The Holiday party will be Dec 8, 5:30-7:30 at the PA Art Center Auditorium, chosen partly for its high ceilings and good air circulation. There will be catering by Harry's Hofbrau, piano by Paul Engel, and songs by Masako Yokota with Rotarians singing along. Please contact MATT DOLAN to help decorate or to tend bar. And invite friends to the holiday party as part of our membership outreach.

The Centennial Committee will meet Nov 23, 4-5 pm via Zoom.

Watch this video of KEN SANCHEZ explaining why he is a part of Rotary! You will be proud that KEN is a member of our club, proud to be part of Rotary yourself, and inspired to share yourself with Rotary and share Rotary with your friends!

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bwR2AllwLW-Nu\\_4wJVduQ7KP0nYK0SH/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bwR2AllwLW-Nu_4wJVduQ7KP0nYK0SH/view?usp=sharing)

The Grants Committee will meet on Dec 7. Let BILL JOHNSON know if you want to join the committee. This year 56 organizations submitted applications requesting a total of \$433,000. Our budget is \$55,000, which comes from charitable contributions and from proceeds from the endowment.

The Endowment Goal this year is to raise \$100,000 that will be matched by the pledges of 5 Rotarians: DUANE KALAR has pledged \$50,000; PATTY MCGUIGAN, and BRUCE SWENSON and ROGER SMITH have pledged a combined \$35,000; and DANA TOM has pledged \$15,000. ROGER SMITH announced his pledge, noting that it is a gift that keeps on giving. The endowment currently puts out about \$50,000 every year for our charities. The more we give now, the more the club can continue to give in the future. So donate generously! If you wish to make your gift from your IRA RMD or donor advised fund, please direct it to the Palo Alto Rotary Annual Charities with a note designating it for the endowment.

THANKS TO HELPERS: Pinion Editor LYLE CONNELL and writer yours truly.

PROGRAM: Long Term Member Talks. JIM SUTHERLAND introduced the lineup of stellar speakers: BILL FOGARTY, a member of our club for 38 years; RALPH ADAMS, with us for 31 years; and MIKE COUCH, a member of 25 years.



BILL FOGARTY is a San Francisco native with family lines going back to Prussia, Scotland and England. He grew up in a house that his parents paid \$12,000 for, and attended San Francisco schools, making childhood friends that he still keeps in touch with. Both of his parents worked in their

music store, which also provided the first "employment" for Bill, starting at age 7 – "wages", even through college, were generally in the form of records. Bill attended the University of San Francisco where he majored in accounting and was in ROTC. He also met Janet and her plans to become a nun were cast aside for love. In one very special year, Bill was commissioned in the military in May, graduated in June, married in June, and discovered he would be a father in July! After his military service, he went into accounting. He joined our club in 1983. His wife is a Millbrae Rotarian, past mayor, and she continues to work as an attorney, while Bill is retired. They love to travel and have visited over 40 countries.

**RALPH ADAMS** graduated from West Point just when the Vietnam



war building up and there was concern that communism would take over the world. Ralph wanted to help the cause, and he joined the Air Commando because their mission was not to kill people but to help them with services and aid. He never went to Vietnam, but filled his tour of duty. When he left the military, he knew he

wanted ultimately to start his own business. He took a job with a construction and development company because he liked the culture and saw opportunities for personal growth. He got a contract in Crossville, Tennessee and helped set up a Rotary club that is still going. A friend invited him to join a construction firm in the Bay Area, and he joined the PA Rotary in 1974. Ralph has been club President and he raised money for the club by taking pledges for his climb of Mt. Kilimanjaro. He has formed several companies in construction management and commercial real estate. Over the past 15-20 years he has handled school project management and inspection. (If ever there is an earthquake, schools are the safest place to be!) Having started many businesses during his life, even Ralph does not know what will be next.

**MIKE COUCH** is a San Francisco native, having been born in the



same hospital as now 6 generations of his family. A freckled young Michael Douglass Couch charmed us all as he looked out from the photo taken at the fancy hotel that he loved visiting with his grandparents. Mike's father learned how to build houses by books and built over 100 houses over the years. Mike went to Palo Alto schools, and his employment during childhood and college was for his dad, doing construction.

After college, Mike worked for his father's company, and then took a job at Coldwell Banker in commercial real estate. He has been involved in developing homes, commercial centers and apartments. Now he is part of Couch Investments with 3 generations of ownership – Mike, his children, and grandchildren. He and his wife Jean have traveled to 6 continents and 50 countries, the most unusual of which was Papua New Guinea. He joined Rotary in 1996, has been club President, done international projects, participated in Rotaract at Stanford, and in many other aspects of the club's service arms. MIKE also is heavily involved in a variety of community projects.