

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

January 3, 2022

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Thought for the Day: SOHEILA MOZAYAN reflected on the challenging year and said calling it a “difficult Year” is an understatement. While we tried to bring

light and hope to each other She cheered the excellent speakers and events, shared virtually, planning for the Centennial and serving our community. The poem she shared she said reflects the Rotary spirit. “I hope you live louder. I hope you laugh more. I hope you become the type of person that brings good energy wherever you go, and the type of person people want to be around. I hope you speak your mind, that you raise your voice for injustice, that you tell others that you love them, instead of waiting until it’s too late. I hope you live louder, shine brighter. From this moment on.” (Marisa Donnelly)

He then launched a call for President’s Club. TRISH



BUBENIK joined to share words of wisdom from former member Martha Kanter who had served as Chancellor of the Foothill-DeAnza

Community College District before leading College Promise where she is currently the CEO. During the Obama administration she was named Undersecretary of Education. On January 1, Martha wrote on Facebook that “2022 will be replete with joy, challenge, heartbreak, remembrances, optimism, and, above all, perseverance for a better nation and world propelled by inspiration, integrity, integrity, confidence, ingenuity, motivation, collaboration, love, hope and peace!”

CASH then announced a successful toy drive last month



spearheaded by BRUCE GEE for Project We Hope. LEANNAH HUNT’s son also delivered a car full of toys to MATT

DOLAN who collected the toys at Homewood Suites.

Moving into the future, CASH made three announcements:

*Two committee meetings for January 4: Membership at 11:30 and Centennial at 4:00, both on Zoom; January 12 Happy Hour cancelled due to Omicron; Board of Directors, on January 12 at 8 am, will discuss meeting in person with hybrid options maybe in February.

DANA TOM requested volunteer ushers for Palo Alto Players, Sunday, January 16, 1-4:30, for “Men on Boats.” Contact DANA.* NOTE DATE CHANGED to February 6.

CASH announced NO meeting on Monday, January 17 but MLK Day of Service, building winter backpack kits for LifeMoves at Homewood Suites, 12:30.*

CASH invited others to attend dinner with Jennifer Jones, Rotary International President 2022-2023, Sunday, February 27, 7:00-9:00 pm Blackhawk Museum, 3700 Plaza Circle. Danville, CA 94506. Tickets \$150 per person.*

*Please consider participating ONLY if you have been vaccinated or tested COVID-free within 48 hours of the event.

CASH then introduced IRIS KORAL to speak about former member AJ “Nick” Nichols who passed on December 30. He attended Stanford as an undergrad and graduate student and found his real home in Palo Alto and invited all to read his amazing obituary.

CASH referred to the email about the United Nations climate change conference, known as COP26, attended by Rotary International President Shekhar Mehta who joined the Rotary delegation in Glasgow, Scotland.

He then celebrated the Endowment Fund’s addition of \$71,000 donation to the \$100,000 pledged by five generous Rotarians. Chair BETSY BECHTEL urged all to help support the remaining \$29,000 needed to invest in our charitable work. CASH also noted that the Centennial Committee will soon set the fundraising goals leading up to our major Centennial event in April.

STEVE PLAYER led the Trivia Contest after applauding REBECCA GERALDI’s creative skill in creating such

difficult questions. It turns out Rotary International published world-wide memberships at 1.4 million in 46,000 clubs. Takamatsu, Japan is not a Palo Alto sister city but five are: Albi, France; Enschede, Netherlands; Linköping, Sweden; Oaxaca, Mexico; and Palo, Philippines. CHESLEY DOUGLAS was motivated to work with the City of Palo Alto to display sister cities in front of City Hall and architect BILL BUSSE designed and built the sign post display. By our Centennial celebration in April, ROB LYMAN will have been organizing and hosting New Member Talks for 13 years.



DANA TOM introduced our speaker Dr. Terri Givens, Political Science Professor, McGill University in Montreal. Her topic was “Radical Empathy: Finding a Path to Bridging Racial Divides,” also the title of her latest book. Dr. Givens is also the CEO and founder of Brighter Higher Ed, which focuses on reinventing higher education leadership with changing demographics, financial challenges and advances in educational technology. She also served as Vice Provost at Texas University and Provost of Menlo College (first African American and woman), professorships at UT and Washington U. At Menlo she led faculty and staff in developing programs for first generation students, updating curriculum and infrastructure for evidence-based assessment. She works to develop leaders with an understanding of the importance of diversity and encourages personal growth through empathy.

She shared three of six steps to accomplish that—vulnerability to challenge misunderstandings and stereotypes, such as unequal health needs. The second step is be grounded in who you are. Menlo Park has few people of color and has a history of not selling homes to non-Whites—a community behind in diversity. The third step is to be open to the expectations of others and to take action to create change. She shared the example of working with the school district and the city of Menlo Park to help the police force build trust.

Dr. Givens emphasized the need to work on trying to feel what others feel. She emphasized leaders must learn to understand others, put themselves in others’ shoes. She strongly recommended telling personal stories to trigger

empathy--telling how things impact you and pointed to



empathy with COVID and mental health and wellness.

CASH thanked TRISH BUBENIK, Pinion reporter. LYLE CONNELL, Pinion editor, and DANA TOM, Zoom co-host.

Next week’s speaker is Ahmad Thomas, CEO of Silicon Valley Leadership Group.

President Cash rang the bell at 1:30, having made a resolution to end meetings on time in 2022.

Twenty members remained to interact with Dr. Givens who left the group with a variation of the Golden Rule—Do unto others as they would like to be treated.

DANA closed the meeting at 1:37 so Dr. Givens could prepare for a class.

Dr. Givens had announced that she would present “six steps.” Since she covered only three, maybe she can return in the future to share the other three steps. More information at terrighivens.com.