

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

March 14, 2022

CELEBRATING OUR CLUB's 100th YEAR

Chartered: May 1, 1922

President **CASH ALAEE** rang the Rotary bell and called the meeting to order, welcoming everyone to the meeting via Zoom or in person at the Elks Lodge.

President-Elect **KAREN RODHE** called on **CHARLIE WEIDANZ** to introduce his guests: Justine Burt and Vicki Veenker. Last October, Vicki founded Sibling Cities USA. Palo Alto and Bloomington, Indiana are the first Sibling Cities. President **CASH** and **DANA TOM** will be on the first visit to Bloomington in May. They will visit Rotary clubs in the area.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

DAVE PRICE presented the Thought of the Day, a summary of the biography of Rotary founder **PAUL HARRIS**, and discussing the early days of Rotary. Paul Harris was a cowboy, actor, fruit picker, and newspaper man at the SF Chronicle before earning his law degree and starting his legal practice in Chicago. He started Rotary not long thereafter.

DAVE shared some of the early rules, including no politics—no politicians allowed, no discussions of politics and no endorsement of candidates; no alcohol was allowed; and meetings were to be conducted to allow ladies to attend without blushing. Whenever a speaker was considered too boring or veering into the confrontational, the membership broke out in song. No one broke into song to protest DAVE'S excellent Thought of the Day.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

As our club meeting is now in-person at the Elk's Lodge, members and guests attending are required to show proof of boosted COVID vaccination. County guidelines will be followed. **CASH** announced we will continue to have the option to attend meetings by Zoom for the next few months. Also, the Club will subsidize lunches for the near future as we continue to work on pricing and location.

Members are encouraged to come in person so that our fellowship and traditions can be resumed.

MIKE REYNOLDS spoke about support for relief efforts in **Ukraine**. In response to requests, three links on where to send donations to assist those affected in the conflict are listed at the end of this Pinion.



DANA TOM reported that Rotarians had recently volunteered at Nuestra Castra, distributing food to food insecure families. Providing food to people who need it also reduces greenhouse gas emissions by conserving food.

GINNY LEAR spoke about **LYLE CONNELL's** memorial service. His Rotary badge, which read "Quality Management" was given to his family, which they appreciated. GINNY said she came away knowing we all knew the same LYLE his family knew, and we were fortunate to enjoy his good grace for his 24 years of membership. The memorial may be watched

on

Zoom:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/12mD_7ROSkg7gaLCTyYvd0x9xVQ2ONOHv?usp=sharing

PRESIDENTS CLUB

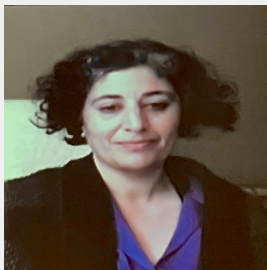


Past President **JACK WOODSON** joined the President's Club in honor of the 50th anniversary of his first President's Club contribution, and in honor of his mother, who recently passed away at 101 years of age.

LIZ KNISS joined on behalf of DAVE PRICE and his excellent article in the Palo Alto Post that morning.

SALLY TOMLINSON joined in honor of her happiness at being back home after spending a wonderful month with her daughter in New York.

NEW MEMBER INDUCTION



Rotarians welcomed new member **NADA DJOMEHRI** to Rotary. Nada was joined by her spouse, Sabra Djomehri. After welcoming Nada, her Sponsor, **CHARLIE WEIDANZ** shared about

Nada's background as a gemologist, and how she met her wife at Stanford after Amherst. **NADA** is passionate about people and connections, hiking, biking and spending time with her family. NADA was then formally admitted to Palo Alto Rotary. Rotarians gave her a warm welcome, and NADA gave a few comments. She is delighted to become a Rotarian and excited about the kinship and connections she looks forward to developing.

OUR CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

April 30, 2022, 5:30-7:30 PM, Mitchell Park.

Rotarians are asked for auction items for the online silent auction. Let Auction Chair **SALLY TOMLINSON** know if you have donations of gift certificates from a favorite restaurant, wine, meals, sharing of talents, etc. Proceeds support our Palo Alto Rotary Annual Charities Fund.

PROGRAM

Ed Shikada, Palo Alto City Manager, joined Rotarians to provide highlights of what the city accomplished in 2021 and objectives for 2022.



Accomplishments in 2021 included breaking ground on the new public service building, which is well under way with \$120 million in funding provided by the hotel tax increase; the opening of the highway 101 pedestrian & bike bridge; and the opening of the newly renovated Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo. Mr. Shikada believes these projects demonstrate there has been progress on Counsel Priorities in 2021—economic recovery, housing for social and economic balance; social justice; climate change, protection and adaptation.

Objectives for 2022 have been shaped by the COVID 19 pandemic and resulting changes in the local economy, such as more people working from home. This has reduced traffic, but also resulted in less economic activity for local businesses; City revenues are down considerably, resulting in a \$40 million budget gap. In addition to supporting local businesses, promoting mental health is a priority, as are fiscal sustainability—fire and emergency, affordable housing, for example.

One ballot measure being considered to bridge the budget gap is a business license tax measure, which would tax local businesses based on square footage per month. If approved, the tax would take effect in about 18 months.

Additional challenges include the Palo Alto Fiber project (getting fiber optics to homes). It will be paid for by people who choose the service. Mr. Shikada said he hopes for a decision this summer or fall.

Climate change protection (sustainability/climate action plan), is an important objective. Therefore, building electrification is top priority, as it will allow homes to switch to electricity based appliances if they choose.

The city is in the process of identifying specific locations for new affordable housing, and discussing how it will be paid for.

The Police Department now has a Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) which provides a psychiatric professional to respond to calls with psychiatric issues. The resource is limited but there is an additional back-up resource as well.

Workforce retention and attraction are issues, since the city is also a victim of the Great Resignation. All bargaining units are being offered a 4% raise, acknowledging the cost of living increase has been significant.

Discussions on radio encryption are also in progress. Tree Ordinance changes are coming, though there will be a time for involvement.

Finally, Many Rotarians will be glad to know the May Fete parade returns on May 7th.

Questions concerned whether the electric grid would support current electrification goals;

whether the City was budgeting for improvements that help people get permits to electrify; and how psychiatric resources are allocated.

CLOSING

As the meeting concluded, **CASH** thanked Mr. Shikada for all that he's done for the city of Palo Alto, especially during the pandemic, providing services that are needed and keeping employees safe. He publicly recognized Mr. Shikada for doing a great job, and stated he is grateful that someone at Mr. Shikada's professional level continues to serve the community in his leadership role.

TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS

Greeters: **BETSY BECHTEL, CAROLE WHITEHILL**

Welcome Desk: **REBECCA GERALDI**

Cashier: **KATIE SEEDMAN**

Thought for the Day: **DAVE PRICE**

Sgt. at Arms: **BRUCE WINTERHOF**

Zoom Co-Hosts: **BEN THRELKELD, DANA TOM**

Pinion writer: **KIM BOMAR**

Pinion editor: **GINNY LEAR**

UPCOMING PROGRAMS/EVENTS

March 21	CHRISTINA CHU, ED LAUING New Member Talks
March 28	Karen Eggleston , Senior Fellow, Freeman Spogli Institute: Cobots in Japan and what they mean for the future of healthcare in the US
April 4	Steven Pifer, Former US Ambassador to Ukraine: on Ukraine
April 11	BILL JOHNSON , Chair, Rotary Grants Committee: 2022 Recipients, Charities Grants

Places to support the people of Ukraine:

Palo Alto Neighbors Abroad website:

<https://www.neighborsabroad.org/>

From Supervisor Joe Simitian:

These are just a few ways **you** can help as the war in Ukraine rages on. These organizations are committed to helping ensure the safety and well being of the victims of the war in Ukraine:

1. International Rescue Committee →
<https://www.rescue.org/topic/ukraine-crisis>
2. Jewish Family and Children's Services →
<https://www.jfcs.org/send-direct-humanitarian-aid-to-the-ukraine-through-jfcs/>
3. Save The Children →
https://support.savethechildren.org/site/Donation2?df_id=5751&mfc_pre=T&5751.donation=form1