

# Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

August 15, 2022



Chartered: May 1, 1922

## WELCOME

President **KAREN ROHDE** called the Zoom only meeting to order at 12:30 PM. President-elect **LIZ KNISS** called for guest introductions.: Zooming in from Portland, OR, **HAL MICKELSON** introduced his guest, also on Zoom, Sam Boot.

## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



**RICK BLOCK** offered today's thought: Human beings need community as an antidote to loneliness, and we also have a responsibility to be co-creators and sustainers of

community for others. Rotary allows us to do both, both within and beyond our club.

## NEW MEMBER INDUCTION

Our Membership Chair **REBECCA GERALDI** presented the newest Rotarian in the world as of right now, **JENN TORAI**. Her sponsor is **ANNETTE GLANCKOPF**. JENN handles Stanford Health Care's government affairs initiatives. Prior to this role, she worked with various Bay Area community-based organizations. She was a Leadership Palo Alto Fellow.



Our new member, **JENN TORAI**, has been an adjunct professor for San Jose State University's School of Social Work, is a former Co-Chair of the Asian/Pacific Islander Social Work Council of Northern California, and a former Co-President of the Urban Planning Coalition at San Jose State University. Jenn is a co-founder and active member of Asian Women Empowered - a non-profit group that fosters civic engagement and leadership in Silicon Valley. Jenn holds a BS degree in Psychology from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and holds a Master's in both Urban and Regional Planning and Social Work from San Jose State University. She is civic-minded and is interested in uplifting and enriching the community.

## MEMBER PULSE SURVEY

**Tell us what you think...** **KAREN** announced a 4-question only, member survey that will come in our email today. All who return it by Friday are eligible for a change to win a bottle of fine wine.

## TODAY'S PROGRAM

**DIANA DIAMOND** introduced our speaker, Professor **Larry Diamond**, Senior Fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, and Professor by courtesy of Political Science and Sociology, Stanford University, speaking on **American Democracy Imperiled: Threats and Remedies**. He started by observing that society today is largely

polarized; there is a major policy span between the two parties. He asserts that the major drivers of the political

polarization are the rise of social media dumbing down politics with sound bites and the massive, rising economic inequality. Professor Diamond then criticized the current electoral system of "first past the post" preceded by a partisan primary and gerrymandered districts. The party primary usually has low turnouts of the most extreme voters who select an extreme winner. He suggests a blanket primary followed by Ranked Choice Voting. He describes this in this article:

[Saving Democracy—Realistically : Democracy Journal](#)

To read more about the effect of social media on democracy, he suggested:

[Why the Past 10 Years of American Life Have Been Uniquely Stupid - The Atlantic](#)

As an example of democracy on life-support he pointed out a recent example of a swing state going extreme:

[Jane Mayer on Ohio's Lurch to the Right | The New Yorker](#)



## CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

With thanks to Larry Diamond for his insights, and a reminder about the coming Member Pulse Survey, and thanks to everyone for attending today's special Zoom only meeting, **KAREN** rang the closing bell.

Next Monday, our meeting will return to the ELKS Event Center.

## Socials and Events not to be missed:

- **Chili and Chill:** Saturday, August 20, 5:00 PM **LIZ KNISS'** backyard, come for **Rick's** famous chili, **BETSY BECHTEL'S** cornbread, coleslaw, and dessert. Entertainment by PA Players Director and Rotarian **ELIZABETH SANTANA**. \$75 donation to our Annual Charities, space available. Contact: **LIZ** or **Betsy** to sign up.

- **San Francisco Art Insider Tour** --Thursday, August 25, 9 am-5 pm. \$100 donation to Annual Charities led by **Megan and TODD LEWIS**. Contact **TODD** to sign up.

- **TGIF** - August 26, **MATT DOLAN's** place, 5:30

- **POP-UP Event:** Monday, September 5 --Tour Palo Alto High School, 1:30-3:00, led by retired math teacher Arne Lim. Organized by **GLORIA HOM**. RSVP online.

- **The Rotary Cranks** cycle group meets Saturday and/or Sunday, 9 am. For details, Contact: **LE LEVY** or **PATTY MCGUIGAN**

## TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS

Zoom Host: **Ben Threlkeld**

Pinion writer: **Mike McMahon**

Pinion editor: **Ginny Lear**

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS/EVENTS

August 22	<b>Hands-on Backpack Project at the Elks Event Center</b> for the Grateful Garment Project
August 25	<b>World Community Service meeting: Zoom, 7-9 PM</b> contact Mike Reynolds
August 26	<b>TGIF: Matt Dolan's home. 5:30-7:30 PM</b>
August 27-28: One hour shifts: 11:00-4:00 Each day	<b>Palo Alto Festival of the Arts</b> Sign up to represent Palo Alto Rotary at the Chamber of Commerce Info Booth. Contact Charlie Weidanz at the Chamber of Commerce
August 29	<b>Dr. Gloria Hom, Educator, Community Volunteer,</b> The Bayside Cannery: The Story of Thomas Foon Chew. Personal and local history.
September 1	<b>Program Committee Meeting</b> Contact Sally Tomlinson
September 5	<b>Labor Day. DARK.No meeting</b>
September 5	<b>Place flags on University Avenue. 8 AM &amp; 5 PM</b>

