

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

October 3, 2022



Chartered: May 1, 1922

WELCOME

President **KAREN ROHDE** called the meeting together early so we would have time for our City Council candidates. Seeing no visiting Rotarians, she invited members to present their guests. **ANNETTE GLANCKOPF** introduced her guest Amy Yotopolous, **JACKIE WHEELER** introduced Gayle Brugler and Tib Hotson, and **REBECCA GERALDI** hosted guests Halima Liang and John Nguyen.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Karen recognized our newest member, **SIMON PENNINGTON**, who will be inducted next Monday. She then invited **BRIAN STEEN** to lead a round of "Happy Birthday" for all members celebrating October birthdays.



The TGIF last Friday at the Junior Museum and Zoo was a great success, thanks to Social Committee Chairs **MATT DOLAN** and **CAROLE WHITEHILL**, along with **STEVE EMSLIE**.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



LEE LIPPERT told a story about a burning ember that needed other embers in order to burn. Lee used this as a metaphor for the value of Rotary around the world. As a character in his story said, "Thank you for the

fiery reminder of the importance of being part of something bigger than myself."

Coming up next on the social calendar is the Wednesday Happy Hour/Social on October 12, 5:30-7:30 at Homewood Suites, thanks to GM **MATT DOLAN**.

SERVICE CORNER

Food Packaging & Distribution at Nuestra Casa: Wednesday, October 5th, 4:00 – 6:00 Food Distribution. 4 slots available
<https://forms.gle/sVCoq9HLppdhwRWY8>

Olé 5K Benefit Race - Run/Walk at Byxbee Park, Palo Alto Baylands
Saturday, October 8th – 8:00 am start time

2022 Avenues of Service, a Rotary District 5170 project fair showcasing Rotary Club service accomplishments. Join our table and share our service highlights!

October 15, 9:00 am to 2:30 pm at Mission College, 3000 Mission College Blvd., Santa Clara

\$30/person registration (includes lunch), reimbursed by our club

Register at <https://bit.ly/D5170AOS2022>

STANS KLEIJNEN testified that this is a very informative and inspiring event.

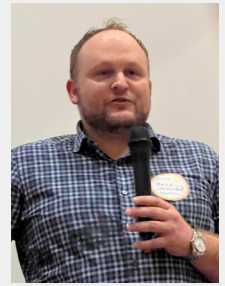
TODAY'S PROGRAM

Before the Program began, Karen gave a brief overview of Rotary and our club, for the benefit of our visitors in the audience and participating in the program.

BETSY BECHTEL introduced **Bonnie Packer**, the moderator of today's Palo Alto City Council Candidates Forum. Ms. Packer is a Past resident of Palo Alto Kiwanis, and a member of the Palo Alto League of Women Voters, though she did not represent the League on this occasion. She explained the format of 1.5

minutes for opening remarks and 30 seconds to respond to each of 5+ questions. With that, things got underway quickly. All candidates impressed us with their ability to respond succinctly to the questions posed.

The candidates, seated in alphabetical order, were: Alex Comsa, Lisa Forssell, Brian Hamachek, Ed Lauing, Julie Lythcott-Haims, Doria Summa, and Vicki Veenker.



Candidates:

Top (l-r) Comsa, Forssell, Hamachek
Second (l-r) Lauing,
Lythcott-Haims, Summa
Third: Veenker



The questions posed were:

1. What would you encourage the city to do to ensure that low paid employees can live here?
2. What do you like and what don't you like about the tax measure K?
3. Prioritize 3 programs for climate change.
4. Do you believe the city should build fiber to the home?
5. Do you support limits on campaign spending and on contributions to campaigns?
6. What should be the council's highest priorities?

All candidates express support for **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**. Hamachek emphasized preserving Palo Alto neighborhoods; Lauing considers it a top priority and sees the residents united on the issue; Lythcott-Haims sees a divided community and stressed workforce housing; Comsa suggested collaborating with Stanford; Forssell mentioned using city land among

other options; Summa suggests requiring 20% of projects be affordable; and Venkeer reminded us of the need to preserve what we have, such as Buena Vista park.

All candidates support MEASURE K, the business tax on the ballot this year, which would tax businesses on a square foot basis, and which includes advisory spending guidelines. Summa and Lythcott-Haims wish it had been a higher tax. Comsa would like to see the assessments differ between small local businesses and larger companies. Lythcott-Haims would have preferred the tax to be based on gross receipts and not square footage. Forssell would prefer that it not have a cap because that makes it regressive. All candidates also support the recommended spending guidelines for the tax revenue.

To address CLIMATE CHANGE, six candidates mentioned transitioning to electricity as their first priority. Forssell first prioritized housing to shorten commutes, and incentives to use transit. Lythcott-Haims also prioritized bringing back the shuttle, and building affordable housing near transit. Summa wants to see a new water plant built to allow water re-use, and emphasizes the need for more bike and pedestrian crossings. Comsa also would push for more water storage. Veenker would like for our smart meters to give credit for charging in off peak hours. Lauing notes that we need to address the grid as we transition to electricity.

FIBER TO THE HOME brought mixed responses. Comsa and Forssell feel there are other priorities for the City's funds, and Lauing and Summa would like the city to look into third party providers. Venkeer is hopeful that the City can provide it, and looks forward to reading the analysis they are conducting. Hamachek and Lythcott-Haims support having the city provide it as a part of our utility package.

All candidates would support some form on limits on CAMPAIGN SPENDING AND

DONATIONS. Several mentioned their own limits of \$1000/person in donations. Comsa believes limits would bring more representative candidates, such as renters and immigrants. Hamachek notes there will always be loopholes.

When asked to list what should be the COUNCIL'S TOP PRIORITIES: Comsa stressed public safety and support for family-owned businesses. Forsell prioritized housing, transportation, and climate, arguing that we should approve and get started on 750-900 homes in the first year. Hamachek stressed housing while protecting neighborhoods, and public safety. Lauing focused on public safety, followed by affordable housing and climate change. Lythcott-Haims emphasized housing, and would expand the police PERT program for mental health calls. Summa listed climate change and housing as a top priority, along with grade separations, bike and pedestrian crossings, and restoring police and fire budgets. Venkeer prioritized housing, climate, and restoring city services of all kinds.

The candidates' opening and closing remarks highlighted their lifetimes in Palo Alto, their public service, and their work experience that would make them worthy of our votes. After the meeting closed, they were surrounded by members who were glad to have the chance to meet candidates in person and learn a bit more about their positions.

CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

President KAREN thanked all for attending, and reminded everyone to check emails for extra reminders of upcoming activities. Next week our Rotary 5170 District Governor will be our special guest.

TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS

Greeters: **Richard Keller**

Welcome Desk/Cashier: **Rebecca Gerald, Katie Seedman**

Room Set-Up: **Bruce Winterhof**

Zoom/Hybrid Host: **Dana Tom**

Pinion writer: **Sally Tomlinson**

Pinion editor: **Ginny Lear**

UPCOMING PROGRAMS/EVENTS

October 10 Club meeting 12:15-1:30 pm	District Governor Savita Vaidhyanathan Imagine Rotary
October 12 8:00-9:30 am	Monthly Club Board meeting via Zoom
October 12 5:30-7:30 pm	Rotary Social MeetUp, Homewood Suites 4329 El Camino Real, PA
October 15 9 am-2:30 pm	2022 Avenues of Service Mission College, 3000 Mission College Blvd., Santa Clara
October 17 Club meeting 12:15-1:30 pm	Overview of Key Propositions on the November 8th Ballot
October 24 Club meeting 12:15-1:30 pm	William Gould IV Diary of a Contraband-The Civil War Passage of a Black Man
October 27 7-8:00 pm Zoom	World Community Service Committee meeting

