

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

November 28, 2022



Chartered: May 1, 1922

WELCOME



Our President for 2020-2021, **BEN THRELKELD** led today's Rotary meeting, filling in for President **KAREN ROHDE** who attended via Zoom from out of town. **BEN** called the meeting to order

at 12:30 pm. There were no visiting Rotarians or guests. **BEN** encouraged Rotarians to invite friends to meetings as an excellent way to introduce others to the good work being done by Palo Alto Rotary.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

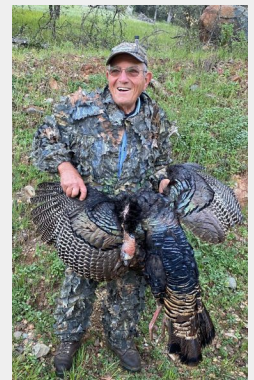
LEANNAH HUNT presented the Thought for the Day. She reflected on the fact that the month of December, while wonderful for many, is a difficult time for many others, such as those who are alone and those with family conflicts. She encouraged Rotarians to reach out to individuals who are without companionship this holiday season and to try to spend time reconnecting with and extending a kind and



friendly hand to those who might really appreciate it.

PRESIDENTS CLUB

DUANE KALAR joined in honor of the organic turkey he successfully hunted for Thanksgiving dinner this year.



GINNY LEAR joined in honor of former president **BEN THRELKELD** leading his first in-person meeting.

BEN THRELKELD joined in honor of **KAREN ROHDE's** effort to build community at Rotary meetings.

CLUB HOLIDAY PARTY



On December 14, 5:30-7:30 pm, we will gather at Gamble Gardens to celebrate the Holiday Season! We will enjoy bites, drinks, music and more. To help plan, please register that you will attend. Thanks to **MATT DOLAN** and **CAROLE HALL WHITEHILL** for managing the event, and to

IRIS KOROL for arranging this historic, festive venue. Please register. No cost.

<https://forms.gle/Amx6hKwXoMhLJJHcA>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Ukraine fundraiser scheduled by Santa Clara Rotary for December 16th had to be postponed until the end of January. We will stay in touch for details as soon as available.

BRUCE GEE

announced he is co-chairing the Grants Committee with **BILL JOHNSON**. If anyone is interested in joining the committee to help review applications, interview finalist organizations, and select grant recipients, please let BRUCE know now.



Help with food distribution for Nuestra Casa, Wednesday, December 7th, at Rise City Church in Redwood City, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm and 4:00 to 6:00 pm. Please contact **CHARLIE WEIDANZ** for more info.

After announcements, Rotarians broke into groups for "table talk," an opportunity to share the most memorable holiday gift they have ever given. Fun stories were revealed!

TODAY'S PROGRAM

MIKE REYNOLDS

introduced today's speaker, **Robert Freeman**, the Executive Director of The Global Uplift Project (TGUP), as one of the most passionate, tenacious



humanitarians he has ever met. Robert is a historian who focuses on the future, putting his skills to work on the front lines to change the world. After experiencing homelessness in high school, Mr. Freeman spent 6 years with the Merchant Marines, obtained an undergraduate degree from Santa Clara University, and then

received an MBA from Stanford. This was followed by a successful career in the computer field, from which he retired in his 40s. He then became a high school teacher in Los Altos. In 2007, Mr. Freeman founded One Dollar For Life, a non-profit that morphed into TGUP.

In 2012, with ODFL, he received the SF 49ers' "Bay Area Teacher of the Year" award. The title of today's presentation was: "**A simple plan to change the world.**"



As a high school teacher, Mr. Freeman challenged his students to do something small and see if it would change the world. He issued a challenge to them that if everyone gave one dollar, he would build a classroom somewhere in Africa. For two weeks in the summer of 2007, they held a drive called "One Dollar for Life" The drive grew to include a few other area high schools, and successfully raised \$9,000 dollars; enough to build the promised classroom. The program has now funded 22 projects in some of the poorest countries in the world. Projects include classrooms, water wells, medical clinics, libraries, science labs, playgrounds, latrines, and more.

Essential to the program is that the community that will receive the project must contribute to the project. When a village in Malawi asked for help with a classroom, the program purchased primary materials and the members of the community made the 160,000 bricks needed to build 5 classrooms.

The project also provided rooftop solar panels to power the computers. In Nepal, ladies from the community formed a human chain to move 20,000 bricks from the ground to the roof of the school so that a second story could be built.

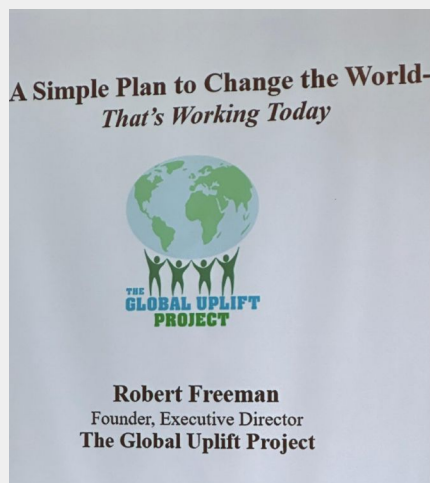
The program is tackling other problems that are rooted in poverty.

Adolescent girls who cannot manage their hygiene during their period cannot attend school. TGUP provides adolescent girls with washable, reusable sanitary pads that last 3 years. These essential supplies keep girls in school for a mere \$2 each. A well dug in one community allowed for the planting of two crops per year instead of one, increasing food and reducing hunger. The provision of cows for an orphanage provided milk for protein to small children who had none.

Rotarians have been very supportive of the TGUP. Rotary helped remodel a classroom in the Masai Mara region of Kenya and supplied the books required by the state's curriculum. The Los Altos Rotary club helped rebuild a school that was damaged by the terrible earthquake in Aceh, Indonesia. Rotary Clubs of Palo Alto, Belmont, San Ramon have contributed \$13,000 to the Save a Girl Sewing Center, which enables thousands of local girls to stay in school.

TGUP has built 270 low cost, small scale, high impact infrastructure projects in some of the poorest countries in the world, which are expected to improve the lives of over 2 million people.

Because TGUP's operations are covered by grants, every dollar (\$1.09, actually) that is donated goes toward projects. According to



Mr. Freeman, with 1,200,000 Rotarians in the world, for \$10/year each we can build 1,000 classrooms a year. These small projects really do have the power to change the trajectory of many people's lives. TGUP has adopted as its motto a Bantu saying that Mr. Freeman learned from a Kenyan elder: "Even the greatest waterfall starts with a drop of water."

Questions:

During the question and answer period, Mr. Freeman explained how projects are formed, by (1) raising the funds and (2) finding the projects. The program always goes with people who are known and recommended.

BRUCE GEE was so inspired by TGUP's work that he offered to make a generous donation to the program on behalf of all Palo Alto Rotarians. Many other Rotarians also expressed their desire to donate. Those who would like more information on the projects and how to donate directly should go to the TGUP website at <https://tgup.org>

CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Past President Ben thanked He also thanked members for attending, both roomers and zoomers. Please donate to The Rotary Foundation and sign up for the Holiday Party on December 14th.

TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS

Greeters: **Cash Alae**

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

Meeting Set-Up: **Matt Dolan**

Zoom/Hybrid Host: **Dana Tom**

Microphones: **Matt Dolan, Cash Alae**

Pinion writer: **Kim Bomar**

Pinion editor: **Ginny Lear**

UPCOMING PROGRAMS/EVENTS

December 5 Club meeting 12:15-1:30 pm	Christian Martine Steps to Improve Your Digital Security, from Novice to Savvy
December 6 9-10 a.m. Contact Betsy Bechtel for info	Endowment Board quarterly meeting
December 6 11:30-12:30 Contact Rebecca Geraldi for info	Membership Committee monthly meeting
December 7 2-6 pm Contact Charlie Weidanz for info	Distribute food at Nuestra Casa Signup on website link
December 12 Club meeting 12:15-1:30 pm	West Bay Opera Singers Musical Selections GUESTS WELCOME!
December 14 5:30-7:30 pm Please Register	Member Holiday Party Gamble Gardens 1431 Waverley St. PA
December 19th and 26th January 2, 2023 No Meetings	Happy Holidays! HAPPY NEW YEAR!
January 9, 2023 Club meeting 12:15-1:30 pm	New Member Talks Lee Pfab, Carole Hall Whitehill