

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

May 22, 2023



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WELCOME and INTRODUCTIONS

President **KAREN ROHDE** gave a hearty WELCOME: As we did for two long years, all of us attended on Zoom today, though this time it was for a different reason: the Bayside Golf Links Café is installing new kitchen equipment.

President-Elect **LIZ KNISS** introduced Eric Jensen who visited us again. A couple of other guests, Lisa Van Dusen and Suzanne Attenborough from the Palo Alto Community Fund, joined too late to be introduced, apparently with a specific interest in our speaker.



legacy gifts and annual gifts. The annual goal is for everyone to give, regardless of the amount.

ROGER SMITH has offered to match dollar for dollar up to \$5000 any first

time contributors to the Endowment fund. Also important are legacy gifts, gifts from trusts, and retirement account distributions. Contact TIM for information about giving through any of these mechanisms, and contact TIM if you have provided for Rotary in your will, trust, or IRA distribution so the club can track it.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

CASH ALAEE

showed us how he used AI to write his thought of the day talk. He asked ChatGPT to write a 30-second speech about Rotary International's work, which Cash read to us. Lots of laudatory



language! Cash recommends using ChatGPT as a vehicle for writing about Rotary. (Note that the Aug 14 speaker will talk about ChatGPT and education.)

REMAINING AUCTION ITEMS TO GO!

Thank you to **MARCO MAINA, SALLY TOMLINSON,** and **NADA DJOMEHRI** for the Gamble Garden Guided Tour and Luncheon that took place last week.

The Photo Excursion to the Palo Alto Baylands with **DAN QUINN** will be on Saturday, June 10, 10 am – noon. Two spaces are available, \$100/person. Dan will give pointers on taking photos with your phone, or any device of your choosing! Contact DAN QUINN.

PALO ALTO ROTARY ENDOWMENT FUND

TIM WATSON explained that the endowment gives 5%/year of its total funds to Palo Alto Rotary Charities. Currently at about \$1.2 million, the endowment has grown from

The Guided Chinatown Tour and Dim Sum Lunch with **GLORIA HOM** will take place on Tuesday, June 13, approximately 10 am – 4 pm. Six spaces are available, \$100/person. Contact GLORIA HOM. Ask her about dating Bruce Lee!

ROTARIANS IN ACTION

Thank you to **KAREN ROHDE, DANA TOM, and JERRY UNDERDAL** for preparing and serving food early on Saturday morning in Mountain View. Hope's Corner distributes about 350 breakfast and bag lunches each Saturday to food insecure families. Thank you to **JON STOUMEN** and **BRUCE SWENSON** who asked to sign up but the slots were already filled.

Coming on Monday, May 29 (no Rotary meeting that day): Flags on University Avenue. Two shifts: 8-8:30 am with coffee after, and 5-5:30 pm with drinks after. This is a joint project with the Palo Alto University Rotary. 8 AM, meet at the corner of University and Cowper. 5 PM meet at corner of University and High. No need to sign up, just show up!

Coming on Friday, June 2, 4-8:30 pm (in shifts): Palo Alto Community Child Care at the Ventura Community Center, help with PACCC Community Celebration event. Contact **CHARLIE WEIDANZ** or **LEE PFAB**.

Coming on Wednesday, June 7, 2-4 pm and 4-6 pm: Nuestra Casa food distribution at Rise City Church parking lot in Redwood City. Contact CHARLIE WEIDANZ or follow the link in **KAREN's** e-mail.

Please complete the survey regarding Hands On/Sleeves Up projects:
<https://forms.gle/WVweFbhE7bmWHRCH8>

SOCIALIZING WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY!

The May TGIF will be on Friday, May 26, 5:30-7:30 at the Homewood Suites, hosted by **MATT DOLAN**. Bring yourself, bring a guest, bring a bottle of your favorite beverage to share.

SAVE THE DATE: President KAREN will soon be former-President Karen, and in order to make that transition, she will submit herself to the traditional silliness at her Debunking on Monday June 26, 5:30-7:30 at Michael's at

Shoreline. More details to come. No regular meeting that day.

TODAY'S PROGRAM

DANA TOM introduced our speaker today. **Dr. Lara Aknin** is a Distinguished Professor of Psychology at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, British Columbia. She chairs Lancet's COVID-19 Mental Health Task Force, and co-edits the World Happiness Report. She is Director of the Helping and Happiness Lab, and spoke today on **Giving's Positive Impact on the Giver**.

Describing an early childhood trick she played on her brother to get his money to spend on herself, Dr. Aknin asked why, in the face of the promise of self-gratification, do people often engage in unselfish behavior?



In a survey, she looked at individuals' general levels of personal spending (on expenses and gifts for themselves), their pro-social spending (on gifts for others and charity), and their general self-rated happiness. While personal spending did not correlate with happiness, pro-social spending correlated positively with happiness, regardless of income level.

While this was just a correlation, her hypothesis was that unselfish, pro-social behavior makes us happier. She has put her hypothesis to the test in various ways.

When North American students were given money and assigned to spend it that day on themselves or someone else, those assigned to spend it on someone else were happier at the end of the day. To see if this effect required a basic level of wealth, a different study looked at students in a relatively rich

area of America and students in South Africa where many reported difficulty meeting their family's food needs. Even in the economically needier population, happiness correlated with purchasing and giving away a bag of goodies rather than keeping it for oneself.

In a further effort to look across cultures, her group used Gallup data and found that in 88% of countries surveyed, people who had donated money in the past month reported higher levels of happiness.

Very young children engage in prosocial behavior. In a study of toddlers aged 22-24 months, the toddlers showed more signs of happiness when giving treats to a monkey puppet than when receiving treats, and even more happiness when the treats they gave to the monkey came from their own personal supply rather than from the experimenter's supply.

Dr. Aknin's group finds a similar effect in ex-offenders, though to a smaller extent. Dr. Aknin cited the work of last week's speaker, Juliana Schroeder, who showed that social connections make us happier. This, she argues, is the reason that pro-social and generous behavior makes people happier – it promotes social connections.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President **KAREN** thanked the volunteers who made today's meeting possible and reminded everyone that there is no meeting next Monday in honor of Memorial Day.

See you all on June 5.



TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS

Zoom/Hybrid Host: **Dana Tom**

Pinion writer: **Sally Tomlinson**

Pinion editor: **Ginny Lear**

UPCOMING MEETINGS and EVENTS

May 29 No CLUB meeting	Memorial Day Post and retire American flags on University Avenue 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.
June 2 4:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Assist PACCC with a Community Celebration Event at the Ventura Community Center, helping with setup, cleanup, check-ins, raffle sales and other activities; ask Karen or Charlie
June 5 Club meeting 12:15-1:30 pm	Dr. Brady Page, Infectious Disease and Critical Care Medicine, Stanford "Fighting Infectious Disease: The Story of Polio"
June 7 2-4 and 4-6 pm	Package and deliver food at Nuestra Casa in Redwood City
June 26	NO Club Meeting
June 26 5:30-7:30 pm SAVE the DATE!	President KAREN's debunking Michael's at Shoreline