

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

August 14, 2023



Chartered: May 1, 1922

WELCOME

President **LIZ KNISS** welcomed everyone, and, there being no visitors, moved immediately to the Quote for the Day.

QUOTE FOR THE DAY

TRISH BUBENIK, via Zoom, brought us these inspiring words from Maya Angelou:

"Love recognizes no barriers.
It jumps hurdles, leaps fences,
penetrates walls
to arrive at its destination
full of hope."

ANNOUNCEMENTS



GET SOCIAL THIS WEDNESDAY: The Mid-Summer Backyard Pizza Party is this Wednesday, August 16, 5:00 - 7:00 PM at **STEVE EMSLIE'S** house. Bring your appetite for his homemade pizza, a bottle of wine, and a friend or significant other.

HOST A TGIF: Social Chair, **MATT DOLAN**, circulated a sign-up sheet for anyone interested in hosting a **TGIF**, and, starting in January. Homewood Suites, managed by **MATT**, will host the monthly Wednesday socials.

Through the magic of today's ask, TGIFs are now covered through August 2024! Thank you to everyone.



HELP DEVELOP A **HEALTH APP, GET PAID:** **SALLY TOMLINSON** invited people to join a 45-minute Zoom session in the name of health science on Friday, August 18 at 2 PM, hosted by the Snyder Lab at Stanford.

Together with fellow Rotarians, you can learn about an app under development and fill out a survey to give input. Your reward, in addition to having contributed your 2 cents worth to science, will be a Starbucks or Visa gift card for \$20-25, and future opportunities to use the app and participate in other studies. Contact Sally Tomlinson for more info and to get the link for the Zoom call.

WHAT IS HOPE?



President **LIZ** invited us to spend ten minutes at our tables discussing this question and then each table reported their one-sentence definition. Some responses were philosophic: Hope is an aspiration or a deeply innate expectation that things will get better. The table of engineers noted

that an architect is an engineer with hope. One table reported hoping for better table mates next week. ChatGPT says: "Hope is the optimistic anticipation and belief in the possibility of positive outcomes, even in the face of challenges and uncertainty."

When asked to rewrite the response as if written by a 60-80-year-old Rotarian, ChatGPT said, "Hope is the unwavering light that guides us through life's twists and turns, reminding us that tomorrow holds the promise

of better days.” Yikes! Are we really that flowery in our language?

TODAY'S PROGRAM

GINNY LEAR

introduced our speaker,

Ben Stefoni, a Professor of Psychology at Foothill College. He spoke on the topic of **Open AI and ChatGPT** with the title:



“AI & Education: The Good, the Bad, and the Unknown.”

ChatGPT came online last November. You can tell it to write a 900-word essay on “x” in the style of “y” with references and writes that essay for you.

He started by asking us if we thought ChatGPT might have advantages for education (about 80% raised hands yes) and if it might pose risks for education (about the same percentage said yes). He then invited us to identify some advantages and some ways it would be detrimental to education. Members offered many examples.

Outside of the education arena, the ramifications of AI are broad. Will it create different jobs, or replace jobs? It looks to be useful in highly sophisticated climate modeling. A chatbot version of personalized mental health services raises questions about the benefits and risks of that kind of “service.” Many other applications are coming online.

Educators know that you need to DO in order to LEARN. But we now have machines that can do much of the “doing.” When Professor Stefoni first learned about ChatGPT, his immediate reaction was “Oh shit.” Foothill was an early adopter of online learning, and his department is 80% online. Is this going to make it easier for students to skate through without learning? Eight months later, he is

more neutral about it, seeing it as a mixed bag for not only education but for society at large.

The Good of AI in education includes AI tools specifically designed for education, such as Quill, for writing skills. The Bad of AI includes those very same AI tools for education which may overload schools and educators with too much granular data. AI also threatens academic integrity, making it difficult to determine what is student learning and what is computer generated.

We ran out of time for him to go into the unknowns, but we can be certain that the Unknowns of AI are vast.

TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS

Greeter: **Chris Jensen**

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

Zoom/Hybrid Host: **Ben Threlkeld**

Pinion writer: **Sally Tomlinson**

Pinion editor: **Ginny Lear**

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

August 16
5:00-7:00 pm

Summer Pizza Social
Home of Pat and Steve Emslie, Palo Alto

August 21
12:15-1:30pm
Club Meeting

Mary Hughes, Founder, Close the Gap California
10 Years of Close the Gap: Accomplishments: What we learned. Why it Matters

August 23
5:30-6:30 pm

Membership Meeting
Contact Linnet Kwok
Zoom

August 24
7:00-8:00 pm

World Community Service Meeting
Contact Mike Reynolds
Zoom