

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

September 9, 2024

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Celebrating 102 years of Service

THE MAGIC OF ROTARY 2024-2025

President **REBECCA GERALDI** opened our meeting with an invitation to **KATIE SEEDMAN** to introduce our guests. **JOY OCHE** introduced John Brock-Utne who came to learn about our club, and KATIE introduced KANIKA SABHARWAL, visiting us again.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

LE LEVY turns 90 this month, and some time ago he began anticipating that he would be asked for advice. But despite all the troubles of the world, no one has asked for his guidance, so he is sharing it with us. It boils down to four items.



Le Levy



1. Pay off your credit cards every month.
2. Respect people even when not respecting their opinions.
3. Always have alternatives – never be without options.
4. Learn from everyone – everybody knows something you don't.

His audience received this wisdom with enthusiasm and calls for a song (songs will be for another time).

PRESIDENTS CLUB

ROGER SMITH joined the President's club to share his admiration for a young fellow who rides his bike everywhere and who inspires Roger to hope that at 90 he will be like LE LEVY.



ROTARY ANNIVERSARIES

REBECCA honored this month's anniversaries of Rotary membership, ranging from **RYAN ELLIOT** who celebrated 5 years of membership to **BETSY BECHTEL** who joined our ranks 37 years ago! The total number of years served by the nine who joined in September: **BETSY BECHTEL, STEVE EMSLIE, HERSH DAVIS, LEANNAH HUNT, ROGER SMITH, JIM SUTHERLAND, KAREN KIENZLE, ANDREW PIERCE, RYAN ELLIOT**, is **182 years!**

ROTARIAN BIRTHDAYS

President REBECCA also challenged us to match baby pictures to some of the 15 members with September birthdays. All were cute, and it seems that **GREG HOOD** has changed the least since age 3, given the number of correct guesses for his baby picture.



PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT 10/5 & 10/6

Mark your calendar for October 5 & 6 and sign up with **LINNET KWOK** to help with the Palo Alto Rotary Pickleball Tournament, sponsored by our Rotary Club, with the Palo Alto Pickleball Club. You and your friends can also register to play at www.pickleballbrackets.com. This will be a fun community event bringing lots of visibility to our club and the good work we do. There will be about 140 players!

Volunteering will be fun – there are lots of different jobs in 3-4 hour shifts, and you will get to wear a Rotary in Action t-shirt that you can pick up at the optometry office of **BEN THRELKELD..**

Thank you for helping make a difference! Behind every successful event are amazing volunteers, and we always need more hands. Feel free to invite friends, family, coworkers, or anyone else who may want to join in.

📍 [2024 Rotary Pickleball Tournament Volunteer ...](#)

SERVICE & SOCIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS



Past President **LIZ KNISS** announced that our club received the 2023-2024 Rotary International President's Citation for helping Rotary *Create Hope in the World*. This is a commendation for all the good work we did last year.

REBECCA offered a big **Thank you to:**

MATT DOLAN for hosting the August TGIF, where members benefited from the poolside ambiance of Homewood Suites to relax and socialize.

ERIC JENSEN for representing our club on Labor Day with the rising and lowering of the flags along University Avenue.

MARY ANN GEE for taking over our Social Media and Public Relations.

BRUCE and Jane GEE, GINNY LEAR, and SALLY TOMLINSON for hosting the Paella Auction Dinner in the GEE'S backyard!.



TODAY'S PROGRAM

BETSY BECHTEL introduced our speaker, Gina Dalma, former Executive VP of the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. She is a Mexican transplant and brings a passion for social justice and equity to her work. Among her many honors, she received the Athena Award in 2022, was named one of the Top 50 Women Leaders of San Francisco, Women We Admire, 2023.



Gina began with a very brief history of Hispanics in CA. In 1769 the Spanish came to proselytize, taking the Ohlone people as slaves. With Mexican independence from

Spain, California became a province, and Mexico issued land grants to Mexicans and white people. When the US accepted California as a state, the US pushed out the Mexican people. Mexicans went from land owners to laborers. When Gina and her husband bought a house, the restrictions prevented anyone of "Mongolian,



Mexican, or Black" blood to own a house on her street.

Now, 36% of the labor force in CA is Hispanic; 34% of small businesses in the state are owned by Hispanics; 26% of the electorate is Hispanic; and Hispanics send over \$10billion to Mexico and Latin America each year. The economy of this state stands on the shoulders of immigrants.

Gina had asked two women to join her today, but each works two jobs and could not spare the time to come, so Gina told us about Carla. Carla is 48, studied nursing in Mexico, but she was abused by her husband. Her family would not believe her report of abuse, so she had to flee. She came to the US with her baby. On her first attempt, she was caught and sent back over the border to Tijuana, and on both sides of the border she endured humiliating treatment that Gina chose not to detail. Carla now works as a caretaker for the elderly and is studying to become a paralegal. The baby she brought with her is a graduate of Princeton, a second child is at Foothill College and a third at Paly.

When asked by **RICK BLOCK** about the political composition of the Hispanic community, she noted that Hispanics are not a homogeneous block, but the single most important issue for many of them is abortion because of their Catholic background.

HENRIETTA BURROUGHS asked about the history of Mexico's role in our civil war regarding slavery, and Gina admitted to not knowing the answer. She said that Mexico's history of enslavement of their native peoples is just coming to light. It was not something she learned about in school, and she is interested to learn more.

When asked about the process to get documented, she described her own experience. She and her husband were accepted to Stanford, so they went to the US embassy to get student visas. Many people were waiting in line, and when she got to the front, the first question was for details of their bank account. The people before and after her did not have bank accounts, so they were

denied visas. If you simply want to come and work, it is impossible to come here legally. On the subject of entering without documentation, she recommends a book, "Solito" by Javier Zamora, and a film, "Sin Nombre"

ROGER SMITH asked if she would bring back the Bracero Program that was in place from 1942 to 1964, and without hesitation she said yes.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

REBECCA thanked our speaker with a shower of confetti!



JOY OCHE also rated that confetti shower for enrolling in the Rotary District 5170 Leadership Academy!



With a little extra time remaining, REBECCA gave a social prompt for table talk: ***What is the best thing that happened to you last week?*** This allowed everyone to leave on a happy note, aside from one person who thought it was exceedingly unkind of another to celebrate the defeat of Michigan on the football field over the weekend.



Rebecca Gerald

SEPTEMBER MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Joan Plastiras - 9/3
Elizabeth Santana - 9/8
Ginny Lear - 9/9
Kathy Torgersen - 9/9

Simon Pennington - 9/10
Mike Reynolds - 9/11
Bruce Winterhof - 9/12
Ryan Elliott - 9/17

Michael Wick - 9/19
Linnet Kwok - 9/20
Le Levy - 9/20

Greg Hood - 9/21
Tony Carasco - 9/24
Rebecca Gerald - 9/24
Tim Watson - 9/28



TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS

Greeters: **Kathy Torgersen, Jack Woodson**
Welcome Desk: **Katie Seedman**
A/V: **Ben Threlkeld**
Microphones: **Matt Dolan**
Photographer: **Steve Emslie**
Pinion Writer: **Sally Tomlinson**
Pinion Editor: **Ginny Lear**

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

September 16 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting	Jill Duerig, District Governor, 2024-2025 Our Rotary District 5170
September 23 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting	Sam Liccardo, Evan Low Candidates for US Congress, District 16, Moderator Henrietta Burroughs, Journalist
September 30 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting	3 Long Time Member talks Introduced by Jim Sutherland: Bill Johnson, Cash Alae, Joan Plastiras
October 5 & 6 Mitchell Park	Inaugural Rotary Pickleball Tournament: Open to All Details to follow.
October 7 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting	David Mineta, CEO and Kennya Rodriguez, Mental Health First Aid Project Coordinator, Momentum for Health, speaking on "What to Know and Do About Behavioral Health Issues in Palo Alto"
October 14 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting	Tom Bailey, General Manager, Guild Theater The Guild and Local Entertainment
October 21 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting	Stephanie Crosby, Dean of Disability Resources and Veterans Resources, Foothill College Disability Resources and Veterans Resources at Foothill College