# Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

November 25, 2024

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Celebrating 102 years of Service

#### THE MAGIC OF ROTARY 2024-2025



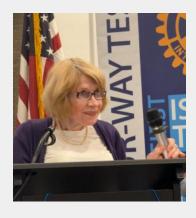
President **REBECCA GERALDI** began our
November 25 meeting by
asking "Zoomers" and
"Roomers" at the
Baylands Café to invest a
minute or two in greeting
each other....

BRUCE GEE recognized
Alex Kent, a visiting
Rotarian from
Burlingame; ERIC
JENSEN presented his
guest Liz Cowie; AMY
YANG introduced Judy
Severson: ULLRICH
SCHWERTSCHLAG
hosted Theresa Ronan,
who will be the keyboard
accompanist for our
December 16 program.



Abigail Adams wrote to her husband John in 1776, "I long to hear that you have declared an independency. And, by the way, in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors." However, that "generous and favorable" treatment did not follow quickly. The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution in 1870 provided that voting rights cannot be denied on the basis of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude," but said nothing about denial of the right to vote based on gender. Fifty years later, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment decreed that voting rights cannot be denied on the basis of sex, but said nothing about other laws and practices that deny equality for women. An Equal Rights Amendment approved by Congress in 1972 is not part of the Constitution today because an insufficient number of states had accepted it by 1982, the deadline set for ratification. A cigarette ad in 1968 told women, "You've come a long way, baby," but we can still ask whether we've come far enough.

## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



#### **DIANA DIAMOND**

noted that
Thanksgiving is
frequently observed
with thoughts about
American history,
and she offered a
few reflections about
what she called
"herstory" instead.

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS + HOLIDAY PARTY**

President REBECCA announced that our club's annual Holiday Party will take place on Wednesday, December 11, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., at the home of **PATTY MCGUIGAN.** You should expect good music, good food, and good cheer, and the event will provide a great opportunity to bring along a guest or two who may wish to know more about Rotary. Volunteers are needed to help out in shifts with setup, bartending and cleanup; please contact PATTY or Social Chair, **GREG HOOD.** 

Our speaker on December 2 will be Elena Kadvany, Food Reporter for the Chronicle, who has promised to share inside information about the restaurant scene. On December 9, we'll have our annual club and Endowment Board elections, and we'll hear from Kenneth Lee of Stanford about Hindu Religious and Cultural Celebrations. On December 16, we'll enjoy a Holiday Sing-Along, accompanied by Theresa Ronon. To keep the decks clear for festive activities, there will be no TGIF's in November or December and no Monday luncheons on December 23 and 30. Monday meetings will resume on January 6. Our Endowment Board will meet December 3, at 9:00 a.m.; for information, please contact BETSY BECHTEL. Our club's Board will meet January 8, at 8:00 a.m.; contact REBECCA. Our Program Committee meets January 9 at 12:00 noon; contact **SALLY TOMLINSON.**.

**TODAY'S PROGRAM** 

#### **MIKE REYNOLDS**

introduced the day's speaker, **Desiree Lyon, CEO of Namaste Direct,** who joined us via Zoom to share information about her organization as a World Community Service project. She saluted our club as "valuable"



thought partners" as well as partners in raising funds. She explained that Namaste Direct is a "small, scrappy NGO" duly registered in Guatemala whose mission is to empower women to pursue their dreams. It's not only women who benefit; it has been proven that bringing women inro a society's economic life means a much improved chance of breaking generational patterns of poverty.

The work of Namaste Direct began with a microloan program, but loans are now just one element of the services and activities that it makes available. Strategic alliances with other organizations address reproductive health, education and legal support

As an example of the progress that can be achieved, **Desiree** told us about a woman named Olga, who had received only a fourth-grade level education. She came to Namaste Direct with no assets in



her own name. She used a Namaste loan to buy a grinding machine that she uses in preparing and selling coffee, chocolate and spices. She is one of 5,000 women who have benefited from Namaste's help.... Participants in Namaste's programs are matched with business advisers, encouraged to develop formal business plans, and provided with coaching and workshops on needed skills and techniques.... A more recent program, an alternative to microloans, is called "Cuchubal," a savings club. Each month, a different woman receives a share of the group's savings, matched by Namaste.

Before adjourning the meeting, **REBECCA** thanked the Rotarians who made it possible

## **TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS**

Greeters: **Eric Jensen, Jenn Tori** Welcome Desk: **Katie Seedman** 

A/V: Dana Tom

Microphone: **Mike Reynolds**Pinion Writer: **Hal Mickelson**Pinion Editor: **Ginny Lear** 

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS	
December 2 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting	Elena Kadvany, SF Chronicle Food Reporter The Palo Alto Restaurant Scene and Life as a Food Reporter
December 9 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting Election of both Club and Endowment Board members	Kenneth N. Lee, Chaplin Associate, Office for Religious & Spiritual Life Stanford University Hindu Religion and Cultural Celebrations
<b>December 11</b> 5:30-7:30 pm	Holiday Party! Festive Home of Patty McGuigan! Halls will be Decked!
December 16 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting	A Holiday Sing-A-Long with Your Vocally-talented Fellow Rotarians Pianist Theresa Ronan
<b>December 23</b> DARK	No Club Meeting
	HOLIDAY BREAK
<b>December 30</b> DARK	No Club Meeting
	HAPPY NEW YEAR!
January 6 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting	Erwin Chemerinsky, Dean and Jesse H. Choper Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of California, Berkeley School of Law No Democracy Lasts Forever

