

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

November 24, 2025
Writer: Steve Emslie

UNITE
FOR
GOOD

Celebrating 103 years of Service

UNITE FOR GOOD 2025-2026A

President **BRUCE GEE** called the meeting to order at 12:30 and welcomed attendees and zoomers. BRUCE encouraged in person attendance next Monday for those who can to hear our Gunn High School Choir.



Being Thanksgiving week, President

BRUCE asked for turkey carving **HACKS: ERIC JENSEN** shared his technique which removes the breast from the carcass before slicing the meat.

President BRUCE reminded us that the Club **Holiday Party** will be on **December 11**, at **PATTY MCGUIGAN'S** festive house. The party starts at 5 pm and the carolers will begin to sing at 6:15. Heavy appetizers are on the menu prepared by Chef Julien.



President-elect **CHARLIE WEIDANZ** came forward to ask for introductions of any visiting Rotarians or guests. **DANA TOM** introduced his two guests, Kate and Keith Melwick.

CHARLIE then introduced his own guests, Nanci Klein and Ruth Carias.

THOUGHT FOR THANKSGIVING DAY

IRIS KOROL reminded the club to take time this Thanksgiving week to reflect our wonderful environment which includes great beauty, community spirit, exemplary culture and the opportunity to give back. She concluded by reciting the following anonymous poem for



Thanksgiving:

May your stuffing be tasty,
May your turkey plump,
May your potatoes and gravy have nary
a lump,
May your yams be delicious,
And your pies take the prize,
And may your Thanksgiving dinner stay
off of your thighs.

PRESIDENTS CLUB



ERIC JENSEN joined the President's Club in recognition of the food and clothing drive held last Monday, at our meeting and three other places, and the tremendous support given by our club.

DAVE SMULLIN also joined the President's Club in honor of **ERIC JENSEN** and his dedication to the club.

BLUE BADGE PRESENTATION

SUZANNE JAIN, sponsored by **DANA TOM**, was introduced by Membership Committee Chair **LINNET KWOK** as our club's newest Blue Badge Member. **LINNET** also reminded the club of the Blue Badge requirements including attending a District event, Board meeting and doing their New Member Talk.



THE ROTARY FOUNDATION DRIVE



Past President **REBECCA GERALDI** wrapped up the "in meeting" portion of The Rotary Foundation fund drive and showed the results so far. We have exceeded the Polio Plus goal and are closing in on the Foundation goal which is nearly 60% of our

stated goal. The fund drive isn't over and there is still time, through June 30, 2026, to reach our Foundation goal of \$25,000. **REBECCA** also acknowledged the members who have already donated and encouraged those who haven't yet to do so. She wrapped up with a short video highlighting the many ways the Foundation helps improve the lives of the most needy in our world. She reminded the members that Foundation donations come back to the club in the form of Global Grants.

PROGRAM

ANNE CRIBBS introduced today's speaker, **Colin Schmidt** of America Scores Bay Area. Colin leads an organization that provides after school programs integrating soccer and poetry in middle and high schools in over 180 Bay Area locations. Anne provided Colin's brief biography and history of the after school program which grew out of the World Cup soccer games hosted in the US in 1994.



Colin began his presentation by posing three questions: 1. Why soccer and poetry? 2. What is the economic case for enhanced after school programs? And 2. What do Arnold Schwarzenegger and Gavin Newsom have in common?

After school programs provide multiple benefits to all school age children especially those at risk. These programs provide alternatives to elicit behaviors and it teaches young people skills that can transfer into productive adulthood. After school programs are free for those who can't afford day care which provides a much needed service to working families.

Colin discussed the positive economic return these programs have on our society. For every dollar spent on after school the State receives \$16 in economic benefits. Proposition 49 (the Education Safety Act) enacted by the voters several years ago provided the funding to enhance after school programs statewide. The Act was supported by then Governor Schwarzenegger and then San Francisco Mayor, Gavin Newsom. California leads the

nation in its support of investment in extended learning.

These programs are especially important today since children are still suffering the impacts of the pandemic shut down and increased societal isolation. Team sports are a great way to engage students and encourage community interaction.

Colin gave more history on the development of the program. Soccer and poetry evolved out of the 1994 US World Cup. Sponsors and revenues from the World Cup helped initiate the program. The World Cup organization stresses that each venue hosting the event needs to leave a lasting legacy and the soccer and poetry program is just this legacy.

Club soccer is very expensive and can be a barrier for many families to participate. America Scores provides an accessible alternative to the cost prohibitively high soccer club leagues. Many inner city schools are able to provide free or reduced cost programs through this organization.

Poetry was added when weather conditions prevented outdoor soccer play. Kids were enthusiastic to continue working together on literary projects over the winter season. In addition to poetry, the program also involves community service such as anti graffiti campaigns and food drives.

Colin also acknowledged that our club's **ANNE CRIBBS** was recognized in 1994 with the Legacy Award for her support of the America Scores formation. ANNE ensured that the proceeds from sponsors and merchandise was able to fund America Scores.

Colin finished by reciting a poem by one of the program participants, "The Beautiful Game" which celebrates the joyful game of soccer.

Question and answers:

IRIS KOROL asked Colin to elaborate on the programs. Colin said the programs are staffed with volunteers and offers programs 5 days a week alternating between soccer and writing classes. A competitive game is held on Saturdays.

LIZ KNISS

asked about the community building resulting from the programs. Colin agreed that the programs reach beyond the schools and encourages parents to build lasting friendships.

HENRIETTA BURROUGHS

asked about how the programs deal with head injuries as a result of head impacts. Colin stressed that head hit in the program were not allowed.

DUANE KALAR asked about the status of AYSO. Colin said AYSO was still very strong and typically centered in suburban areas and did not compete with America Scores programs.

DANA TOM commented that soccer helps character development and resilient skills which is more important than competitive soccer since less than 1% of kids will play competitive soccer in college.



MEETING ADJOURNED

President BRUCE closed the meeting at 1:30 with appreciation for our speaker.

MEETING VOLUNTEERS

Greeters: Iris Korol, Dave Smullin
Welcome Desk: Rebecca Gerald
Hybrid Host: Ben Threlkeld
Pinion Writer: Steve Emslie
Pinion Editor: Ginny Lear

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

December 1 12:15-1:30pm Club Meeting	Gunn HS Choir Program Our Annual Treat!
December 8 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Long-Term Members Talk Jon Stoumen, Jim Sutherland, Mike Baird
December 11 5:00-7:30 pm Holiday Party Come!	Holiday Party! Festive Home of Patty McGuigan 1530 Waverley St. Palo Alto, Hosted by the Rotary Club
December 15 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Palo Alto Public Safety Professionals Keeping the public safe during the Holidays
December 22 No Club Meeting	
December 29 No Club Meeting	