

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

March 23, 2026

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UNITE
FOR
GOOD

Celebrating 104 years of Service

UNITE FOR GOOD 2025-2026



PRESIDENT **BRUCE GEE** rang the bell and called the meeting to order. After, Roomers and Zoomers exchanged greetings.

PRESIDENT-ELECT **CHARLIE WEIDANZ** introduced several visiting Rotarians from Zimbabwe, Spain, and Iceland. Guests were Nancy Kawakita, **DANA TOM**'s wife, Hannah

Lu, co-president of the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto, guest of SUSAN LUTTER, Theodore Timpson, guest of RANDA HUFFMAN. President Bruce introduced his guests, Lisa Van Dusen and **JENNIE SAVAGE**, who was about to be inducted.

steals the sweetness from your soul. "You have your own rhythm, your own heart, your own beautiful way of moving through this world. The world does not need another perfect person — it just needs someone genuine, kind, and content in their own skin."

NEW MEMBER INDUCTION

JENNIE SAVAGE was formally inducted as the newest member of the Palo Alto Rotary Club. President Bruce shared how he first



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



The District 5170 LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, **Sangita Seshadri** from Saratoga Rotary, offered a reflection inspired by Winnie the Pooh, reminding us that comparison

crossed paths with Jennie: on a rainy March day, he brought his shovel to help fill sandbags during flooding — and there was Jennie, already doing the same thing, entirely on her own. "You could tell that service is deep in her soul." Jennie came to the club through potential member Lisa Van Dusen, though as Bruce noted with a smile, Jennie "sort of skirted around and jumped the line in front of Lisa."

Jennie accepted her induction warmly: "I have shoes to fill. I know several of you in the room and you have been community servants for decades. You have made Palo Alto and the

Bay Area the incredibly special place that it is. I am humbled and gratified to join you in Rotary." Her husband John Dawson was on hand to witness the occasion

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISTRICT LEARNING ASSEMBLY — APRIL 11. The Lieutenant Governor reminded members about the upcoming District Learning Assembly (DLA) on April 11 in Fremont (8 AM–3 PM). New members and incoming board members are especially encouraged to attend. This year's featured speaker is Gene Irvin Hadfield, a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar known for her work with hearing-impaired youth and her great sense of humor. The day includes three interactive breakout sessions and concludes with the Richard D. King Speech Contest, featuring four finalists from across the district. As President Bruce put it: "You could think you know it all — no, you don't. You learn things."

"CRABSOLUTELY!" April 18, 5:30-8:30 PM

Stepping in for **ERIC JENSEN**, President **BRUCE** reminded everyone about the Crabsolutely! Annual Fundraiser on Saturday, April 18, from 5:30–8:30 PM at Mitchell Park Community Center. Tickets are \$125, and tables of eight can be reserved. The live auction goes online this Friday — watch for emails. Vegetarian options are available.

Sponsors were recognized with gratitude: platinum sponsors Altamesa and **EJ HONG**, gold sponsors Heritage Bank, **DUANE KALAR**, **TIM WATSON**, additional sponsors **ROGER SMITH**, **RICH BLOCK**, **Chop Keenan**, **TODD LEWIS**, and many members including Honorary member **PAM BRANDIN** of Omaha, NE. Room remains for more sponsors—contact Bruce. You can buy tickets online at: <https://2026crabfeed.square.site/>

LIVE AUCTION: CRUISE INFORMATION A live auction item there will be a [UNESCO Treasures of Ancient Greece, circumnavigating the Peloponnese](#).

WORLD COMMUNITY SERVICE UPDATE

MIKE REYNOLDS and **STANS KLEIJNEN** of the WCS committee provided a snapshot of the club's international service work across four regions.

The club is currently deliberating between two global grant opportunities — with a decision to be made at an upcoming in-person WCS



meeting. In Guatemala, the club continues its long-standing legacy, now collaborating weekly with the Women's Best Initiative. The club has a deep relationship with India, with members visiting as recently as February. And in Thailand, the club funds multiple smaller grants — and just this week received district approval for a global grant. Members were encouraged to give generously at Crabsolutely! to support local and world grants.

PROGRAM

DANA TOM introduced **JON OSAKI**, award-winning filmmaker and Executive Director of the Japanese Community Youth Council (JCYC) in San Francisco.



Jon noted that he came to filmmaking not through formal training, but through urgency — sparked by the 2016 election, when public conversations began justifying the WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans as having been necessary. "I realized how short memories we have in this country. I had to do something about it."

Jon's parents — his father Wayne, at the Tule Lake



Segregation Center, and his mother Sally, at the Gila River Concentration Camp — were both incarcerated. He was present the day they each received their reparations checks in the 1990s, remembering his father's first instinct to give the money away, and his mother's firm side-eye in response.

In 2018, Jon released "**Alternative Facts: The Lives of Executive Order 9066**", now streaming on PBS.(link at the end)

He shared clips tracing the roots of the incarceration: the economic motives of white farming interests who lobbied for the removal of Japanese Americans they viewed as competition; Earl Warren's fear-driven gubernatorial campaign built on unsubstantiated claims of Japanese American disloyalty; and the military's assertion — entirely fabricated — that Japanese Americans were signaling enemy submarines off the West Coast. Most striking was the cover-up at the Supreme Court level. Both the FBI and the FCC had independently found no evidence of espionage or sabotage by Japanese Americans.

Justice Department attorney Edward Ennis tried to include a cautionary footnote in the government's Korematsu brief acknowledging this — but John J. McCloy ordered the printing presses stopped and the footnote deleted. The original reports were burned. One copy survived, and attorney Don Tamaki used it decades later to reopen Fred Korematsu's case — revealing that the incarceration

had rested on a foundation of intentional falsehoods.

Jon closed by drawing parallels to today: the politics of fear, the generalizing of groups, and the reluctance of courts to challenge executive branch national security claims are not relics of the past. "The same tactics Earl Warren used in 1942 are very much alive and well today."

The link to the documentary, "Alternative Facts: The Lies of Executive Order 9066" that our speaker, Jon Osaki, released in 2022 is below. You do not need to be a PBS donor to view it.

<https://www.pbs.org/video/alternative-facts-the-lies-of-executive-order-9066-s9lqmk/>

FINAL REMARKS

President **BRUCE** thanked Jon with particular personal meaning: "My mother was in the internment camps. My mother is now 100 years old."

Following Q&A, on behalf of President Bruce, DANA TOM presented Jon with the Rotary 4-Way Test banner.

A member highly recommended Rachel Maddow's podcast: "Burn Order" — a seven-part series on this same subject — as a companion resource.



In closing, **BRUCE** again noted that while AI is here to stay, AI can never replace the camaraderie and friendship among Rotarians meeting together.

MEETING VOLUNTEERS

Greeters: Betsy Bechtel, Dave Smullin

Welcome Desk: Rebecca Gerald

Hybrid Host: Dana Tom

Pinion Writer: Betsy Bechtel

Pinion Editor: Ginny Lear

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

March 30 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Vicki Veenker, Mayor of Palo Alto Topic: Goals and Challenges for 2026
April 6 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Rotary Community Grants Recipients
April 13 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Mark Jacobson, Stanford Prof of Civil & Environmental Engineering Still No Miracles Needed: How Today's Technology Can Save Our Climate and Clean Our Air
April 18 5:30-8:30 pm Mitchell Park	Annual Crabfest and Pasta Fundraiser Proceeds benefit Local Charities and Community College Scholarships
April 20 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	3 New Member Talks
April 27 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	David Steinberg, New York Times Crossword Puzzle Editor