

# Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

March 30, 2026

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UNITE  
FOR  
GOOD

Celebrating 104 years of Service

## UNITE FOR GOOD 2025-2026

President **BRUCE GEE** opened the meeting to bustling virtual and physical meeting rooms with greetings both ways and introduced President Elect **CHARLIE WEIDANZ** who introduced the visiting Rotarian, Charles Cheng, and guests: Darcy Huston with **ANNETE GLANKOPF**, Lisa VanDusen with **STEVE EMSLIE**, and Assistant Chief James Reifschneider (Breaking news: now Chief) with **ERIC JENSEN**.



## NEW MEMBER INDUCTION

**LINNET KWOK** inducted **ANDRES CALZADA**



## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

It was **RANDA** (like "panda") **HOFFMAN's** birthday so she led us in a Happy Birthday chorus, expressing joy and love. Later she will celebrate with teeth cleaning and then cake in that order!



as a new Red Badge member. **KANIKA SABHARWAL**, ANDRES' sponsor, praised his community support to include attending [Leadership Palo Alto](#). ANDRES is a data privacy and regulatory lawyer working out of Palo Alto and San Francisco and he was not shy with the microphone. President BRUCE extended a cheerful "Welcome ANDRES!"

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**JULIE JEROME** announced **DIANA DIAMOND** had a medical procedure done and will be recovering locally. A card was passed around to send notes of good cheer from each of us, and we expect to see DIANA back, asking those great questions, in the coming months.

## ROTARY IN SUPPORT OF OUR YOUTH

Today some of us learned Palo Alto Girl Scouts was the first Girl Scout troop in the United States.

**Darcy Huston**, introduced by **ANNETTE GLANKOPF**, has been a leader with Girl Scouts since



### **DOUBLE EJs!**

**Purchase tickets here:**

<https://2026crabfeed.square.site/>

The money raised supports the club grants to  
**Local Charities**  
**Vocational Scholarships**  
**World Community Service**  
**Youth Services**

Sponsors were recognized with gratitude: platinum sponsors **Altamesa Memorial Park** and **EJ HONG**, gold sponsors **Heritage Bank**, **DUANE KALAR**, **TIM WATSON**, **Mike Reynolds**, silver sponsors **ROGER SMITH**, **RICK BLOCK**, **Chop Keenan**, **TODD LEWIS**, **CASH ALAEE**, **RALPH ADAMS**, and many member Donors including **BRIAN STEEN**, **REBECCA GERALDI**, **GINNY LEAR**, and Honorary member **PAM BRANDIN** of Omaha, NE. Room remains for more sponsors and donors—contact Bruce. Again, you can buy tickets online at:

<https://2026crabfeed.square.site/>

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

President BRUCE closed this portion by reminding the club we are community leaders and we get to partner with these youth programs through our giving. Imagine what Palo Alto would be without these groups – please give.



2006. Herself and her daughters all Girl Scouts, she showed us the Girl Scout House (near the Junior Museum), told us the Girl Scouts sold 29,000 boxes of cookies this year including through their effective digital store, and closed with

highlights of the fun activities and community

service the scouts are doing. On behalf of our club, ANNETTE presented our \$2,000 grant check to Girl Scouts as part of the club's Youth Services. Darcy said the

grant will be used for troop support and scholarships, so no girl is left behind. Another great program supported by Palo Alto Rotary through the annual fund raising dinner.



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

**EJ HONG** and **ERIC JENSEN** pitched Crab-Solutely, the annual club fundraiser.

**Silent auction is open:**

[32auctions.com/CRABSolutely](https://32auctions.com/CRABSolutely)

## PROGRAM



**JACKIE WHEELER** introduced Palo Alto **Mayor Vicki Veenker** — the city's 14th female mayor, recognized as one of California's top 20 lawyers under 40 in 2002, and co-founder of the Women's Professional Soccer League, now known as the National

Women's Soccer League.

**Mayor Vicki** (whose last name rhymes with "tinker") shared her background as a community leader and practicing attorney before outlining her priorities for Palo Alto in 2026. She opened by expressing gratitude for the Rotary Club's "service above self" ethos and the work our members do.



The Mayor described how the city has re-aligned its 2026 priorities to provide clearer direction to city staff. While acknowledging the essential, ongoing work of any city — safe streets and neighborhoods, housing, and economic development — she emphasized that this year's four priorities represent a shorter, more concrete set of objectives built on long-standing values. Those priorities are:

- **Housing Milestones**
- **Cubberley Community Center**
- **Government Efficiency**
- **Business Vibrancy**

**Housing Palo Alto** is advancing several housing initiatives in 2026. Project Home Key will provide transitional housing for unhoused residents, featuring on-site wraparound services and job skills training. Charities Housing is preparing to break ground on a new 130-unit affordable apartment complex

on El Camino Real. The city is also pursuing a pro-housing designation from the state, which would unlock additional grant funding to support broader housing goals.

**Cubberley Community Center** The former Cubberley site is being reimagined as a modern community center following a land deal with the school board to acquire additional acreage. Planned amenities include a community gym and updated theater. A conceptual master plan and associated CEQA documents will be presented at the April 20 City Council meeting, with public input actively sought as the project moves forward.

**Business Vibrancy** The city has retooled its Economic Development Committee and launched a business retention, expansion, and attraction strategy focused on identifying key industries, forging strategic partnerships, and strengthening the tax base. Near-term actions include outdoor activation guidelines for California Avenue and Ramona Street — covering parklets and public space standards — moving through the Architectural Review Board in April and the Economic Development Committee in May before reaching Council in June. Temporary entertainment zones permitting outdoor alcohol consumption for special events are also being considered.

**Government Efficiency** The city is modernizing operations and community engagement through several initiatives. Outdated gateway signage is being replaced, and unattractive street barriers on Cal Ave and Ramona have been replaced. The 311 platform is being upgraded for issue reporting.

Mayor Vicki updated us on a couple of other initiatives:

**Oversized Vehicles** The city is actively addressing the issue of persons dwelling in oversized vehicles through a multi-pronged approach. Current efforts include deep cleaning affected streets, towing vehicles where applicable, and connecting street dwellers to available services and housing resources. Recognizing that this is a regional challenge rather than a purely local one, the mayor is coordinating with the County Supervisor to convene a broader regional

conversation on safe parking best practices. The goal is to develop a unified, collaborative regional approach to the issue.

**Churchill Rail Crossing** A rail safety ad hoc committee has been formed to specifically address safety concerns surrounding the temporary Churchill Avenue grade crossing closure. The committee is actively preparing materials and policy recommendations for Council consideration. These findings are scheduled to be presented at the April 15 City Council meeting, where next steps on the crossing's future will be deliberated and decided.

## CLOSING REMARKS



President Bruce thanked Mayor Veenker and presented her with a banner of the Rotary Four-Way Test. He also thanked the volunteers, rang the bell, and sent us on our way.

## MEETING VOLUNTEERS

- Greeters:** Mike Gullard, Richard Keller
- Welcome Desk:** Rebecca Gerald
- Hybrid Host:** Dana Tom
- Pinion Writer:** Eric Jensen
- Pinion Editor:** Ginny Lear

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

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