

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

May 4, 2026

Writer: Randa Hoffman

UNITE
FOR
GOOD

Celebrating 104 years of Service

UNITE FOR GOOD 2025-2026

President **BRUCE GEE** called the meeting to order, noting he'll be away next week, a granddaughter is planned to arrive on Tuesday, to join **first grandson**, Jordi, reason enough to yield the gavel.

Previous visitor, Sunny Dykwel, was welcomed back.



confidence. If children live with acceptance and friendship, they learn to find love in the world. BRUCE reflected that as grandparents and mentors, we model what matters most.

PRESIDENTS CLUB

REBECCA GERALDI, honored the recent olive oil tasting event hosted by **DANA TOM** and his wife Nancy, with **SALLY TOMLINSON** and husband Tim, rounding her \$80 bottle of winnings up to \$100 in their honor for a lovely evening of hospitality.

DUANE KALAR joined, in honor of Doris Fisher, co-founder of The Gap, who passed away recently. DUANE recalled meeting the Fishers back in 1969 at a tennis tournament in Lake Tahoe, long before The Gap became a household name, and wished he'd invested.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

HENRIETTA BURROUGHS, caught slightly off-guard when called upon, but clearly ready, shared the beloved poem *Children Learn What They Live*, written by Dorothy Law Nolte and published in 1954. Nolte, a parent educator and family counselor, believed that the environment shapes character: If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn. If children live with encouragement, they learn



In a touching tribute, **LIZ KNISS** spoke without naming names, describing a dedicated Rotarian (**KATHY TORGENSEN**) who stumbled into service one walkway at a time, quietly raising thousands for Ukraine relief along the way. So, "she who shall not be named" will be celebrated at the Avenidas party on May 17th, tickets are available.

GLORIA HOM joined the Presidents Club in honor of today's speaker, and added she'd just returned from China, still thriving, and exhausting in the best way.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A few items to keep on your radar. The board survey is still out, please respond if you haven't [[LINK](#)].

On the fundraiser front, a few outstanding invoices are still outstanding.

ERIC JENSEN gave a quick recap of the annual May Fete Children's Parade, in which many Rotarians turned out and represented the club beautifully. Rotary pride, on full display.

SALLY TOMLINSON reminded us that this Saturday there is a walk exploring Palo Alto's privately owned public open spaces, a fascinating look at what the city charter requires developers to provide. It runs 11 a.m. to roughly 1 p.m., about a mile, and lunch is included. There's still room; see Rebecca to sign up. This is a silent auction item offered by **LISA VANDUSEN**.

EPIC DAY OF SERVICE MAY 16th

REBECCA GERALDI announced the Epic Day of Service on Saturday, May 16, a district-wide Rotary event with all 64 clubs participating. All clubs will be packaging meals with Rise Against Hunger at West Valley College, with shifts starting as early as 7:30 a.m. through 1:30 p.m. Here is the [\[LINK\]](#) to the registration page. If you'd like to coordinate a group shift with fellow Palo Alto Rotarians, let Bruce or Rebecca know!

PALO ALTO ROTARY ENDOWMENT FUND

DANA TOM presented on the Palo Alto Rotary Endowment, reminding us that Q4 of the Rotary year is the one time we focus on the endowment, now at \$1.5 million in diversified assets, professionally managed by Sand Hill Global Advisors. This year, it contributed \$62,000 to our annual charities budget, that's 31% of the total, doing good in the world.



A \$25,000 challenge grant will match donations dollar-for-dollar through June 30th, organized by **PATTY MCGUIGAN, BRUCE SWENSON, DUANE KALAR** and **DANA TOM**. You can give today in cash, appreciated stock, via QCD, or plan a future gift through a bequest or IRA. **TIM WATSON** will be available after the next several meetings to answer personal planned giving questions, and will also speak on the topic May 18th.

PROGRAM

IRIS KOROL introduced today's speaker, her friend and colleague **MARGUERITE GONG HANCOCK**, the inaugural CEO and President of the soon-to-open Palo Alto Museum.

Marguerite is a Palo Alto native, four generations deep, whose parents met at Stanford, married in Memorial Church, and never moved. A museum executive, community builder, political consultant, economist, and educator for 25-plus years, she holds degrees from BYU and Harvard (where she met her husband in the library; it pays to study). She's written three books and raised three children in Palo Alto. Oh, and every day at 3 p.m., she believes it's a good time for chocolate.



Marguerite opened with a tale of three women, Abby Rockefeller among them, who over lunch in 1928 agreed to start a museum. Nine days after the stock market crash of 1929, with no money and only 8 paintings and 1 print, they opened the Museum of Modern Art anyway. She also reminded us that the Smithsonian was born from a stranger's bequest, James Smithson, who'd never even visited America. It took the U.S. government more than ten years to agree on what should

be done. Her point: big institutions start with big, stubborn ideas.

The Palo Alto Museum has been more than 20 years in the making, and its journey has not been without its rainstorms, literally. The building was set to open in February when multiple storms revealed water intrusion far more complicated than anticipated. Marguerite is characteristically undaunted. After a productive meeting with the city last Thursday, the museum now has a scope, timeline, and budget for the necessary repairs. An opening will be announced this year.

Examples of what visitors can expect to see: a film and entertainment gallery celebrating Palo Alto's outsized role in Hollywood from the Golden Age of Stanford Theater through Pixar, and Dreamworks. A "People and Places" wall where each tile flips to reveal the Palo Alto connection behind a film or a face (did you know the executive producer of Pirates of the Caribbean is a Gunn grad?). An interactive "I Am Palo Alto" AI exhibit pairing historic research with live conversation.

The Q&A covered everything from how the city approves naming frameworks to whether there will be a conference room in the basement. Naming rights for rooms and spaces are tied to financial support. Bruce thanked Marguerite and presented her with Rotary's Four-Way Test banner, values she's clearly been living all along.

CLOSING

BRUCE thanked the volunteers and our attendees. The meeting closed at 1:30.

MEETING VOLUNTEERS

Greeters: Kathy Torgersen, Julie Jerome
Welcome Desk: Rebecca Gerald
Hybrid Host: Dana Tom
Microphones: Kanika Sabharwal
Pinion Writer: Randa Hoffman
Pinion Editor: Ginny Lear

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

May 11 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Tim Chou, Stanford Lecturer, Computer Science Topic: Pediatric Moonshot
May 18 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	ANDREW LUCK, GM Stanford Cardinal Football Topic: Stanford Football 2026
May 25 NO CLUB MEETING	Memorial Day observed No Club Meeting
May 25 U.S. FLAGS ON UNIVERSITY AVE. PROJECT	Memorial Day of Service Flags up at 8 a.m. Flags down at 5 p.m. Details to follow soon