

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

July 20, 2026

Writer: Hal Mickelson

**CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT**

Celebrating 104 years of Service

CREATE LASTING IMPACT 2026-2027

Savvy observers declared that **CHARLIE WEIDANZ** has hit his stride as President of the Rotary Club of Palo Alto. His easy confidence was on display as he called our club's meeting to order on July 20, 2026.... Charlie began by greeting members who participated by Zoom.... He observed that on This Day in History, July 20, 1979, Neil



Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were the first human beings to set foot on the Moon....

Visiting Rotarians and Guests were introduced by **President-Elect ERIC JENSEN**:

Pete Dailey was a visitor from Los Altos Rotary. After joining the Presidents Club, Pete noted that he's a candidate for the governing board of the Santa Clara Valley Water District, District 7; Benjamin Trinh joined us from San Jose, where he's a new member; Adam Weinert and his wife neighbored



with us from the Modesto Sunrise club, where he's focused on Vocational Service.... Manoj Kumar was the guest of CHARLIE WEIDANZ; Dwight Nishimura was the guest of **DANA TOM**; Fred Gibbons was with us as the day's main speaker.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

JUDY KLEINBERG had a jim-dandy Thought for the Day, the "Three Bones for Thriving":

To have enduring impact, a legacy that matters, each of us needs to rely on three bones, the Wishbone, the Backbone and the Funny Bone. The Wishbone supports our capacity to "dream big," to keep looking for the world that can be.

The Backbone enables us to stand up for what's right. It's courage, stamina and unwavering resolve.

The Funny Bone reminds us to laugh loud and long, and especially to laugh at ourselves. If you can't laugh at your own mistakes, you'll fall prey to discouragement and burnout.

A Funny Bone provides perspective and lets you bring warmth and joy to those around you. People will forget what you said to them but will remember how you made them feel. To thrive, you need all three: your Wishbone, Backbone and Funny Bone. Remember they're there, and care for them.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

REBECCA GERALDI announced that District 5170 will present a Rotary Collaborative Impact Summit on Saturday, September 19, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at the San Jose McEnery Convention Center. The event will explore and celebrate the ways Rotary can Create Lasting Impact in partnership with community organizations as well as through Rotary's own Avenues of Service. Registration will cost \$70 and will include lunch....

As made known to us by **GINNY LEAR**, Michael McFaul, former U.S. Ambassador to Russia, Senior Fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institution and the Freeman Spogli Institute, will speak to members of our club and Los Altos Rotary at the Mitchell Park Community Center from 12:00 noon to 1:30 on Thursday, **September 3**. Registration opens August 10. A limited number of seats (100 for us) will be available with only one guest per member as available.

PRESIDENTS CLUB

JACKIE WHEELER joined the President's Club to honor her late husband's crucial role in the Apollo program: Ralph Wheeler headed up the simulation group for the lunar landing module, enabling the astronauts to practice stepping out onto the moon....

RALPH ADAMS has provided our club with five copies of a splendid book called "First Principles" by Pulitzer Prize winner Thomas E. Ricks, published by Harper Perennial. It's a magisterial account of what our country's Founders learned from the Greeks and Romans. RALPH hopes that we'll circulate the five copies and take turns reading them.

PROGRAM

Our principal speaker, **Fred Gibbons**, was introduced by **DANA TOM**, for a talk on "AI and the Future of Learning." DANA recalled that Fred had been CEO (and founder) of Software Publishing when DANA had his first job there. Fred earned his BS and MS at the University of Michigan and his MBA from the Harvard Business School. In his spare time,

he enjoys SCUBA diving, sailing, painting and flying....

Fred began with cautionary tales: Asked for a critique of a new product, a student submitted a paper produced by AI, but couldn't explain a word of it.

Students in a class at Brown University scored 96 on a take-home quiz when the use of AI was permitted, but only 42 when asked about the same subject on an in-class exam....

There may be a new way to learn with AI that's better than traditional education: Allowing students to explore information as opposed to extracting it. The

teacher should instill curiosity, then let the student "run down any rabbit hole you choose...." The student might ask AI to read everything that X ever said about Y, then, relying on AI results, the student can be asked to reason through what X may have answered to questions about Y.... Q&A: How do we teach soft skills when entry-level jobs are going away? Harvard Business School is developing simulators that will behave like participants in an interview.... How do I get started? "Claude" is the best, at a cost of something like \$20 per month. Claude has been designed to be trustworthy in business. Chat GBT is more consumer-oriented.



CLOSING

CHARLIE thanked our speaker, offering him a Rotary coffee mug with our theme of the year on it. And, he thanked our many volunteers who made today's meeting possible. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.

MEETING VOLUNTEERS

Greeter: Eric Jensen, Tim Misner
Welcome Desk: Rebecca Gerald
Hybrid Host: Dana Tom
Pinion Writer: Hal Mickelson
Pinion Editor: Ginny Lear

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

July 27 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Susan Roberts, heart transplant recipient Topic: Life is all about how you handle Plan B
August 3 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Larry Diamond, Senior Fellow Global Democracy at Freeman Spogli Institute, Sr. Fellow Hoover Institute
August 10 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	District Governor Geeta Kadambi Topic: District 5170 in 2026-2027
August 17 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	5th District Supervisor Margaret Abe-Koga Topic: Outreach and Engagement
August 24 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Georgia Farooq, ED, Thrive Alliance for Nonprofits Topic: The Pulse of Nonprofits in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties
August 31 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Eric Jensen, Hands on Service Project
September 3 Thursday Special Rotary Event 12-1:30 pm Mitchell Park	Former U.S. Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul Insights on International Topics A shared event with Los Altos Rotary Club
September 7 Club Dark for Labor Day	No Meeting, Labor Day Post Flags on University Avenue



A delightful picture of Hal, today's Pinionista in his natural habitat.