

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

July 27, 2026

Writer: Randa Hoffman

CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT

Celebrating 104 years of Service

CREATE LASTING IMPACT 2026-2027

CHARLIE WEIDANZ called our club's meeting to order on Monday, July 27, welcoming both our in-person crowd and our faithful Zoomers to another Rotary Monday.



Visiting Rotarians and Guests were introduced by President-Elect **ERIC JENSEN**: Sveinn Magnússon joined us from Reykjavík,

Iceland, a member of the oldest Rotary club in his country. A physician by training, Sveinn spent much of his career at the helm of Iceland's Ministry of Health, where organ transplantation policy regularly crossed his desk, making him an especially engaged audience member for today's program.

Wendy Lee visited from District 5300 in sunny Pasadena, where she and her husband Robert own and operate a print shop in Monterey Park. Wendy is a longtime Rotarian (since 2018) who has served as club secretary more times than she cares to count, and she's in town visiting grandchildren while



exploring a possible move and a new club closer to home.

KATHY TORGENSEN introduced her guest, Lester Vincent, an attorney and partner at Womble Bond Dickinson who handles software and intellectual property matters and, fittingly for a Rotary crowd, became Kathy's neighbor, then her fence-mate, then her friend.

KANIKA SABHARWAL introduced Luke Farley.

And Annette King, guest of **KRISTINA LUGO**, is the founder of Splicer Films, which produces documentaries for mission-driven organizations; her most recent release tells the story of the Magical Bridge.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

REBECCA GERALDI brought us a delightful bit of trivia for July 27: Finland's "Sleepyhead Day," on which the last person in a household to rise is playfully declared the sleepyhead, sometimes with a glass of cold water to the face for good measure. In the seaside town of Naantali, home to two Rotary clubs, the tradition gets a twist: a secretly chosen honoree is gently tossed off the pier into the sea at dawn, not for being the last one up, but as a mark of respect for a meaningful contribution to the community.



Rebecca tied it neatly to this year's theme: lasting impact rarely comes from one grand gesture. It's built one thoughtful act, one welcomed new member, one brightened day at a time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GINNY LEAR shares here that the new date for Ambassador Michael McFaul's talk. It is now **Monday, September 28**. We will convene at Mitchell Park, and in this case, **every attending member** will need a reservation. Seating is limited.

We are partnering with the Rotary Club of Los Altos to bring this special event to everyone. Details for September registration to follow.

Amb. McFaul notified us of the needed change because he had just learned he will receive the Hubert Humphrey Public Service Award on September 3, in Boston, from the American Political Science Association. It is, he said, *"like a lifetime achievement award from my main professional organization."* It means a lot to him. Congratulations from all of us!

PRESIDENTS CLUB

Two members topped up the Presidents Club this week. **LEANNAH HUNT** celebrated a fabulous three-week cruise aboard Oceania's new ship Allura, taking in Venice, the Croatian coast, and Istanbul with two friends and conquering the Acropolis along the way.

RANDA HOFFMAN shared highlights from a work trip to Alaska, capped off by a tour of the Matanuska Glacier, one of the small fraction of the world's glaciers still considered healthy, and came home smitten enough to hint at more glacier trips in the future.

TREASURER'S UPDATE

ANNE CRIBBS gave the club an encouraging look at where things stand financially, building on the numbers she



shared two weeks ago, reminding everyone that keeping the budget balanced is very much a team effort. All attending appreciated her work very much.

PROGRAM

BETSY BECHTEL introduced our speaker, **Susan Roberts**, her former boss and, by her own account, her best one, from a 40-year career together at Citibank.



In 2012, Susan's life changed suddenly when an undiagnosed heart condition led to heart failure and, within about a month, a heart transplant at Stanford. Her talk, "Life Is All About How You Handle Plan B," walked the club through that fast-moving journey and the fourteen years since: the ongoing balance of medication and monitoring, a few serious health detours along the way, and a deep well of gratitude that has shaped how she spends her time now.



Susan has devoted much of her post transplant life to service connected to organ donation as a longtime member (and former chair) of Stanford's Patient and Family Advisory Council, a volunteer ambassador for Donor Network West, a Stanford peer-to-peer mentor, and a volunteer with Peninsula Food Runners. She was joined by a colleague from Donor Network West, who fielded questions about how organ allocation actually works. Blood type and geography play the biggest roles, he explained, and age is far less of a



barrier than people assume; Donor Network West's oldest donor to date was 100 years old.

Susan closed by reflecting on all she's been able to witness because of

her transplant: her son's wedding, her 50th anniversary, all made possible by someone else's decision to be a donor.

CLOSING

CHARLIE thanked **Susan** for her candor and her story, and sent her home with a Rotary mug bearing this year's theme. He also thanked the week's volunteers for making it all happen.

MEETING VOLUNTEERS

Greeter: Kanika Sabharwal

Welcome Desk: Rebecca Gerald

Hybrid Host: Ben Threlkels and Sophie Tsang (in training) **GO SOPHIE!**

Pinion Writer: Randa Hoffman

Pinion Editor: Ginny Lear

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

August 3 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Larry Diamond, Senior Fellow Global Democracy at Freeman Spogli Institute, Sr. Fellow Hoover Institute Topic; America is Facing a Crisis in Democracy: What can we do?
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 7 Club Dark for Labor Day	No Meeting, Labor Day Post Flags on University Avenue
September 28 Monday 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 Registration required

