

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

September 14, 2026
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CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT

Celebrating 104 years of Service

CREATE LASTING IMPACT 2026-2027



President **CHARLIE WEIDANZ** opened the meeting and welcomed "Zoomers" and "Roomers".

President Elect **ERIC JENSEN** welcomed the visiting Rotarians and guests. Pete Dailey from the Los Altos Rotary Club returned as a visiting

Rotarian and shared that Palo Alto Rotary is his favorite club to visit.

Past member **Steve Madsen**, visiting from Richmond, Virginia, was also welcomed. Steve said he misses Palo Alto, its weather, and the club, while noting that Virginia offers humid summers and colder, snowy winters.

STEVE PLAYER introduced Mark Gates as his guest.



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

ERIC JENSEN introduced Past President **GINNY LEAR**, who reflected on the 25th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks. She



acknowledged that many people had spent the preceding days watching coverage, remembering where they were, and considering how the events affected their families and communities.

GINNY focused particularly on the first responders, service members, volunteers, and ordinary people who entered dangerous situations without knowing what they would face. Many saved lives, and some gave their own lives while doing that. She encouraged members to continue reflecting in their own way and recommended visiting the September 11 Memorial in New York City, describing it as a powerful and respectful tribute.

NEW MEMBER INDUCTION

NANCY COUPAL was formally welcomed as the club's second new member of the year. **KRISTINA LUGO'S** remarks highlighted her



leadership in the community, her business experience, and her repeated support for local nonprofit organizations. She also praised NANCY'S responsiveness and willingness to help, noting that she quickly handled an urgent request made that morning.

NANCY said she was happy to join the Rotary family and appreciated the club's global work. She joked that Rotary membership might allow her to use Rotary lounges while traveling internationally. KRISTINA welcomed her warmly and thanked her sponsor, President CHARLIE for helping bring her into the club.

NANCY promoted a September 24 fundraiser organized jointly by Avenidas and La Comida for the older-adult community. The event will be held at Mitchell Park Community Center from 4-6 pm and feature food donated by approximately 14 restaurants. It is intended to showcase the complementary work of both organizations. PS. Palo Alto Rotary Club sponsored the founding of La Comida many years ago when it originally shared space with Avenidas.

PRESIDENTS CLUB RECOGNITION

JAKE YOO honored the service of America's men and women in uniform. The remarks emphasized that individuals serve for many different reasons, including freedom, faith, family, land, and shared values. He also stressed the importance of learning from the history of World War II and remaining both morally good and strong enough to defend a free society.

Past President **BRUCE GEE** joined to recognize the club's audiovisual and technology volunteers. **DANA TOM, BEN THRELKELD,** and **SOPHIE TSANG** were thanked for the behind-the-scenes work required to make each hybrid meeting function smoothly. He specifically acknowledged SOPHIE'S attention to the technology during the meeting and emphasized that the Zoom capability is an important service to members who cannot attend in person.

DUANE KALAR made two contributions, one honoring **MIKE MCMAHON** and another honoring **ANNE CRIBBS**. He recalled attending the 1960 Olympics in Rome and finding an old photograph of the event from 66 years ago. Both MIKE and ANNE were

members of the US Olympics Teams. None of them knew each other then. Quite a wonderful coincidence!

SPECIAL EVENT: SEPT. 28. LAST CALL!

Special off-site meeting on Monday, September 28, noon-1:30 pm (no lunch):

In order to accommodate a larger audience for Former Ambassador Michael McFaul, and to allow him more time to speak.

The meeting will be at the Mitchell Park community center. The format will be a speech with written questions following.

This meeting is being held in conjunction with the Los Alto Rotary Club, for members and guests. *It is an in person only meeting.*

Registration is required, there is no charge. Because we paid to reserve the room, we are asking our members for a \$5 donation to cover the room fee, if you wish to help.

Register by following this link:

<https://square.link/u/h3AL61F2>.

VOLUNTEER & SERVICE UPDATES

FLAG SERVICE: Members were thanked for participating in the recent flag placement and removal activity.

PALO ALTO PLAYERS: BETSY BECHTEL and **GINNY LEAR** were recognized for ushering and assisting patrons at Palo Alto Players Isat Sunday. Members were reminded that the current production is still running and encouraged to purchase tickets.

DISTRICT SUMMIT: The Rotary district will hold its first large District Summit this Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the McEnery Convention Center in San Jose. The event will bring together approximately 60 Rotary clubs, nonprofit organizations, and community partners.

Palo Alto Rotary will have a table at the event. The summit is intended to help clubs and nonprofits exchange information, build relationships, attract prospective Rotarians, and showcase their community work.

Volunteers will not need to staff the table all day and will have opportunities to visit displays and hear speakers.

A few additional volunteers were requested. The club will cover the \$70 registration fee for members who volunteered and asked interested people to contact Eric promptly through email.

MEMORIAL GROVE @BIG BASIN

CASH ALAEE and **DUANE KALAR** recently visited Big Basin with a state ranger using GPS coordinates. The Rotary grove was heavily affected by the CZU Lightning Complex fire, which devastated much of the park. The original sign may have been destroyed, and the area is now overgrown and difficult to access. The state and Sempervirens Fund are working through a long-term process to replace memorial signs throughout the park with fire-resistant designs. Rotarians will form a working group to follow up. Thank you to CASH and DUANE.

PROGRAM

JAKE YOO introduced **Sophia Pablo Hoshino**, Donor and Community Engagement Manager at Hidden Villa in Los Altos Hills, who presented an overview of the organization's history, mission, programs, and volunteer opportunities. She began by asking members to share their connections to Hidden Villa or to an outdoor place that was personally meaningful. Members described attending camps, visiting the property, participating in retreats, supporting capital campaigns, bringing children and grandchildren, and appreciating the site's combination of nature, farming, education, and social justice.



Hidden Villa traces its roots to Frank and

Josephine Duveneck, who purchased the property in 1924. The nonprofit programming developed later, particularly in the 1940s and 1960s. The Duvenecks helped establish a Sierra Club chapter, founded Peninsula School, welcomed Japanese American families returning from World War II incarceration, and sought to keep the land open for education, community, and connection with nature.

Hidden Villa's current vision is "a sustainable, healthy, and just future for all." Its mission is to foster educational experiences that build connections and inspire deeper appreciation and respect for nature, food, and one another.

Hidden Villa serves approximately 10,000 Bay Area young people each year through environmental education programs. Students may visit the farm, meet animals, explore the education garden, hike, and learn about food systems and the natural environment.

The organization's summer camp began in 1945 and served approximately 640 young people during the most recent summer. Programs include day camps and residential camps lasting five or twelve nights. Participants care for animals, harvest food for meals, take part in archery and art, swim, play in the creek when conditions permit, and build friendships across cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Hidden Villa operates an eight-acre organic farm growing fruits and vegetables and maintains an integrated animal program. The organization sells produce at the Los Altos Farmers' Market and through a community-supported agriculture program. It also donates approximately 25 percent of its harvest to the Community Services Agency of Mountain View, with the partnership approaching its 20th anniversary.

Sophia invited members to the annual tomato-tasting festival and highlighted ongoing work on fire mitigation and land stewardship across the property's approximately 1,600 acres. Hidden Villa is evaluating how best to protect its open space in light of climate change and wildfire risk.

The presentation reinforced the long-standing relationship between Hidden Villa and Palo Alto Rotary, including Rotary support for environmental education.

CLOSING

President **CHARLIE** thanked our speaker, our members and volunteers.

MEETING VOLUNTEERS

Greeters: Duane Kalar, Stans Kleinjen

Welcome Desk: Rebecca Gerald

Hybrid Host: Sophie Tsang

Microphones: Kristina Lugo

Pinion Writer: Kanika Sabharwal

Pinion Editor: Ginny Lear

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

September 21 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Annamarie Lusardi, Prof of Finance , Stanford University Topic: Financial Literacy for the Student Athletes, Struggling Families and more
September 28 Monday Special Rotary Event 12-1:30 pm Mitchell Park <u>3700 Middlefield Rd. Palo Alto</u>	Former U.S. Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul Insights on International Topics A shared event with Los Altos Rotary Club Registration required https://square.link/u/h3AL61F2
October 5 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	To Be Announced
October 12 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Candidates Forum: Palo Alto City Council Moderator, Gennady Sheyner, Palo Alto Weekly
October 19 12:15 - 1:30 PM Club Meeting	Ray Purpur, Deputy Director of Athletics - Capital Projects The Game is Changing: What's Happening in College Athletics - and Why Stanford Matters