

Minutes Rotary 9/1/20

President Rich Proctor called the September 1, 2020, Zoom meeting of the Rotary Club of Honolulu to order at 12:01 PM. He welcomed all attendees and visitors. **Alice Tucker** followed with an inspiration that described life at Kahala Nui from one's welcome to the current Covid-19 environment. **Gwen Yamamoto Lau** led the Pledge of Allegiance and **Kent Reinker** the singing of "God Bless America". **President Rich** noted the visitors, Melissa Fisher, Laura Sen and Creighton Goldsmith. He reported no birthdays for the upcoming week, but did recognize the club anniversaries of **Tim Johns** (26 years), **Diana Sakurai** (5 years) and **Paul Saito** (9 years).

Co-chairs **Carolann Biederman** and **Don Anderson** reported the status of the Rotary Annual Campaign. **Carolann** said the campaign which began June 23rd with the key words "Inspiring & Impact", has received donations and pledges totaling \$85,000 toward the \$100,000 goal. Seventy-seven percent is in the bank! She gave mahalos to all the donors and to the Trustees who are personally calling members who have not had the opportunity to respond. **Don Anderson** waxed about how inspired he is by our club and its members' responses. Because one anonymous member indicated he would donate the last \$12,000 to meet the goal, only \$3000 in additional pledges is needed. The funds raised by our inspiring club can do work to inspire others in our community. **Carolann** announced when the goal is met the new and accumulated fellows will be announced at a meeting.

Reese Liggett announced the work dates for the RAT Pack to work on the Centennial Park. (Friday, September 18, and Saturdays, September 19 and 26.) He showed a work schedule and asked that volunteers contact him to sign up to help.

President Rich gave the small group time to **Rick Towill** to give some history of Palmyra Island before introducing Chad Wiggins, Director of the Palmyra Program for The Nature Conservancy in Hawaii, the day's speaker. From **Rick** we learned Palmyra is an atoll 560 miles south of Honolulu and is part of the Northern Line Islands. A Judge Cooper of Hawaii purchased the island for \$750, then sold it to the Fullard-Leos for \$15,000. The Japanese wanted to lease the atoll in the mid 1930's, which would have impacted WWII. The U.S. Navy did lease the atoll beginning in 1939 and left equipment and trash following the war. After the war Mrs. Fullard-Leo was being charged property and garbage tax. The latter was discontinued after she visited the powers-that-be in her dotage and rebelled. **Rick** suggested seeing the four hour movie entitled "The Sea Hotel" which involves Palmyra.

Rick introduced Chad Wiggins who spoke of *The Promise of Palmyra*. Since the purchase of the atoll by The Nature Conservancy, it has been the responsibility of The Hawaii Nature Conservancy to maintain the atoll, to study the habitat and natural inhabitants and to train ocean/island caretakers. The Nature Conservancy operates in all U.S. states and many other countries. With pictures he showed the beauty of Palmyra and spoke of the connectivity of the all the islands and the resilient ecosystem. With slides he discussed the ten species of island birds and nine species of crab. (Coconut crabs can grow as big as a garbage can cover!) Thirteen new species of insects have been discovered, including a new yet-to-be-named cockroach.

Chad showed the resiliency and restoration of the coral since the major bleaching due to high temperatures in 2015 as an example of the resiliency of a healthy ecosystem. Thirty thousand rats have been removed from the island. Coconut trees, an invasive species for Palmyra, are being extracted so the normal cycles between vegetation, bird life and marine life can be restored. Healthy ecosystems can respond and restore. He spoke around three different themes or foci, climate, adaptation and resilience. The conservancy goals include doing a better job of protecting Palmyra, learning the lessons to help conserve deep off-shore waters (pelagic), and to see if conservation lessons can be applied to Hawaii. He said Palmyra is a place of wellness and healing which needs our support. Contact info for further information: nature.org/Palmyra, nature.org/Hawaii and cwiggins@tnc.org His talk was followed by a Q&A session.

President Rich announced no meeting next week. The speaker for the September 15 meeting will be A. Kam Napier, Editor of PBN. After the singing of "Hawaii Aloha", the meeting was adjourned at 1:03 PM.

Nancy White
Scribe