



The Appleknocker

Sebastopol Rotary Club's Weekly Bulletin

Dr. Wen Chen – Human Rights in China



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President 2019/2020: Keller McDonald



"All the News that Fits We Print"



BEFORE THE BELL



Your humble scribe signed on to Zoom around noon. As usual for the last ten weeks, many Rotarians had already signed on and were *catching* up with each other. Communal conversation for the fifteen minutes prior to the meeting was lively. Our speaker, Dr. Wen Chen was also chatting with those who gathered early. **Guenter Meiburg** noted that his daughter lives in Hong Kong. Dr. Dan Bornstein told the group that his dental offices were open now. If you are eagerly awaiting that root canal, give him a call!



AT THE BELL



President Keller McDonald rang the real roto-bell at 12:15 sharp! **President Keller** gave a thank you to all for following health guidelines to help keep us all safe. Service above self.

Guenter Meiberg gave us a pandemic tension reliever thought for the day.

"When you go out among others-wear your mask! This relieves tension within yourself, and more importantly, it relieves tension among those around you."



Sonoma County YWCA Domestic Violence Hotline 707-546-1234

Future Programs

**Stephen Schneider & Alex
Campbell
Houses for the Homeless
June 12**

**Jorgen Holst
Slow TV
June 19**

Events

**DeBunking
June 27**

Miscellany

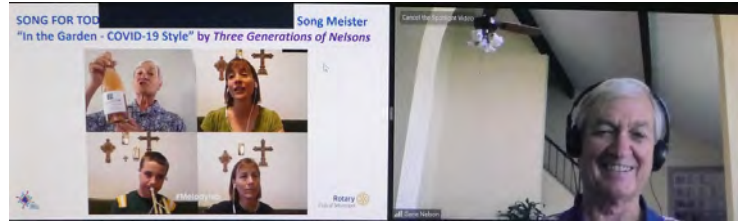
MAKEUP NOTIFICATIONS–JackEDunlap@gmail.com

**On-line Make-Ups:
www.RotaryEClubOne.org**

**Domestic Violence Hotline:
707-546-1234**

sebastopolrotary.com

The **Gene Nelson** family singers were in top gear today! Three generations of Nelsons sang “In the Garden-COVID-19 style.” This included Grandson **Ben** rockin’ the Green Bay gear. CD’s are available now. Operators are standing by!



VISITING ROTARIANS AND GUESTS

Bud Daveiro introduced **Dr. Dan Bornstein** from the Santa Rosa club and **Maria Robinson** from the Santa Rosa East club. She lives in Sebastopol.



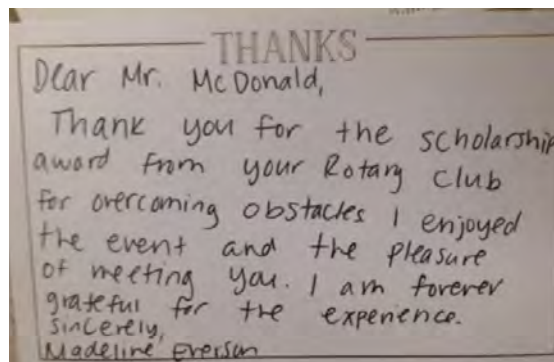
ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Keller pointed out that June is **Rotary Fellowships Month**. Rotary Fellowships are international groups that share a common passion. There are over 70 of them! Bird watching seemed to be on Keller’s mind. There is also beer, wine, whisky, and rum groups along with motorcycling, photography, and flying groups.



President Keller then introduced a theme that went through the rest of the meeting, hummingbirds in the Western Hemisphere. Hummingbirds and Rotarians have more in common than one might think...

It started with hummingbirds and Rotarians have more in common, followed by video of hummingbirds hitting the man in the video in the face. Does that pass the Four-Way Test? Hummingbirds have an average heart rate of 1200 bpm. Rotarians are known for having heart.



The Sebastopol Rotary Overcoming Obstacles Scholarships winners from Analy High School, Josh Collins and Maddie Everson, were recently highlighted at the Senior Awards virtual event. Josh also won the Oscar Lewis Scholarship. Our former Rotary Youth Exchange student, Natasha Miranda-Isakova won six scholarships, including the Graff Award for Grit & Grace. Maddie recently sent a thank you note to **Keller**. We wish all of you a lifetime of success.

Hummingbirds and Rotarians have more in common than one might think. Keller showed us a picture of black chinned hummingbird. He pointed out that some male Rotarians used to have black chins, but now have white chins.



Yes, Rotary is having a seven-day convention in June, and it's free to the public. No excuse not to attend some of the sessions. Registration is now open at <https://www.riconvention.org/>

The virtual convention includes a Walking Challenge. A friendly step goal competition among peers. Prizes will be offered for the winners. Fun bonus activities to increase your chances of winning. The challenge starts Saturday, June 20 at 6am Sebastopol time, and ends Friday June 26 at 10:59 pm Sebastopol time.

Additionally, the convention will include a Virtual House of Friendship, which allows attendees to connect with Rotary Fellowships, Rotary Action Groups, partners, projects, and other Rotary International resources.

Hummingbirds and Rotarians have more in common than one might think. Hummingbirds go into hibernation when it is extremely hot or very cold. Rotarians' hibernation-like mode is called "nap time", which arrives around 3:30pm.

Remember, Debunking is coming up on Saturday, June 27th. Watch your email for all of the details. There is no meeting on Friday, June 26th.

Hummingbirds and Rotarians have more in common than one might think. Hummingbirds can recognize flowers they have already visited. Rotarians recognize service projects they already completed, so do the Rufus hummingbirds.

Keller gave a big shout out to all of the kids in our three interact clubs. He gave his thanks to **Pauline**, the Interact committee members, and the wonderful advisors.

Hummingbirds and Rotarians have more in common than one might think. Hummingbirds are the world's smallest warm-blooded animals. Rotarians are warm-blooded.

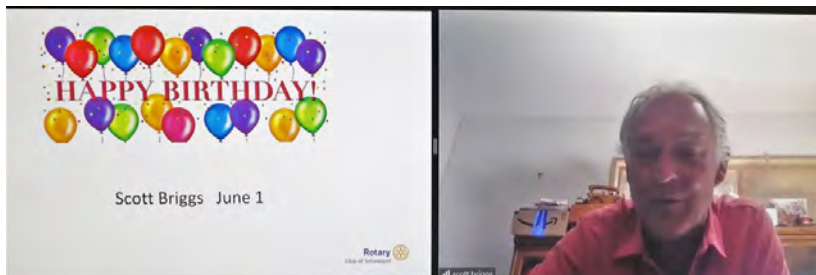
Keller gave a shout out to last week's SRJC Scholarship winners. Anna Onofre Leon, Melinda Sterne, Edward Gathercole, and Hayley Louzao offered their thanks. Hayley sent us a wonderful letter, in which she signed the letter, "Future Nurse". Congratulations to all of the winners!

Hummingbirds and Rotarians have more in common than one might think. Hummingbirds eat more than their daily intake after the torpor state. Some Rotarians eat more than their daily intake during shelter-in-place. Your scribe and editor thinks this meeting is starting to go to the birds!

Hummingbirds and Rotarians have more in common than one might think. There are over 340 species of hummingbirds in the world (all in the Western Hemisphere). There are over 1.2 million Rotarians in 35,000 clubs all around the globe.

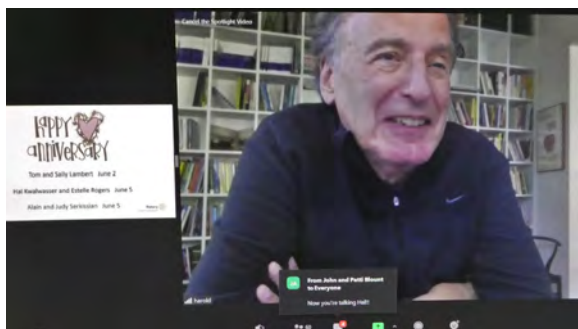
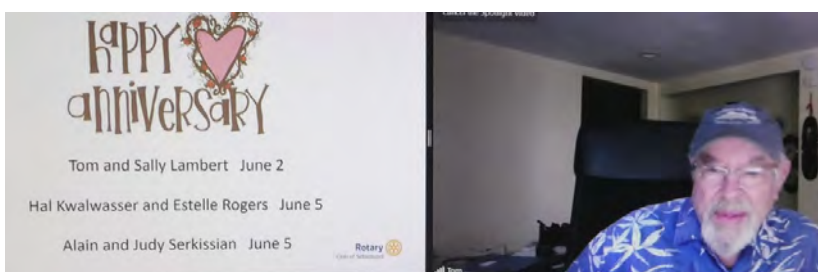


RECOGNITIONS



Scott Briggs celebrated his birthday on June 1st. He hit the big "7-0", and celebrated by spending time with his family and grandkids. He donated \$100 to the Education Foundation in honor of this birthday.

Tom and Sally Lambert had their anniversary on June 2nd. They went to the Spud Point crab shack. Since seating was unavailable, they drove down the road to a pull out and ate.



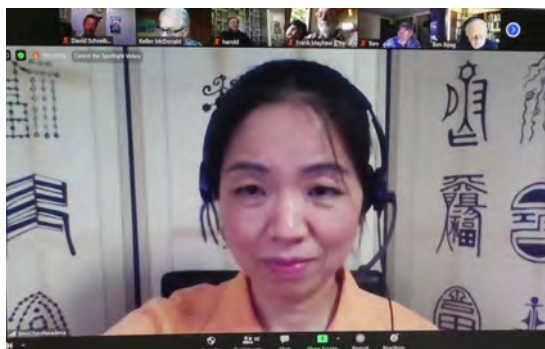
Hal Kwalwasser and **Estelle Rogers** celebrated their anniversary (June 5th) by going to Napa to dine. **Hal** said he was bringing a bottle of Sonoma wine. **Alain** and **Judy Serkissian** celebrated their anniversary on June 5th. Our best to everyone!

Like these Amish villagers, the Rotary Club of Sebastopol uses the power of working together, each contributing to the whole, to get amazing things done!

Like the Amish villagers, the Rotary Club of Sebastopol uses the power of working together, each contributing to the whole, to get amazing things done! Where are the birds?

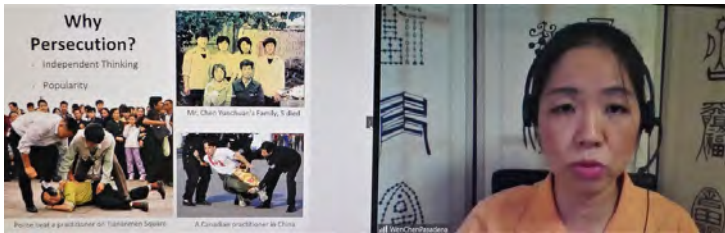


THE PROGRAM



Jorgen Holst introduced the speaker, Dr. Wen Chen, who spoke about the state of human rights, in China. Dr. Chen, is a professor at CalTech in Pasadena. She was born in China, and immigrated to the United States in the early 1990's. She was awoken to the realities of human rights in the late 1990's, by understanding the realities of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre. In the late 1990's, Dr. Chen became aware of Chinese persecution of the Falun Gong. Falun Gong is a traditional Chinese body and mind meditation practice, rooted in truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance, and taught for free. It's become one of the most popular

meditation practices in the world, with over 100 million practitioners, including 17 million in China. The growth of the Falun Gong began to outgrow the rate of membership in the Chinese Communist party. The party began to see the Falun Gong as a threat, because they assumed it taught independent thought, even though it was only a meditation practice. In 1999, the party began to persecute practitioners of the Falun Gong. Millions of practitioners were imprisoned, forced into slavery and hard labor, and required to give up Falun Gong.



Dr. Chen started to discuss the ongoing issues regarding forced organ harvesting in China. In the mid-2000's, reports started to surface that the organs from prisoners, especially members of the Falun Gong, were being harvested and sold. Human Rights groups discovered that wait times for organs in China were suspiciously short. Chinese tradition is rooted in reincarnation, which discourages organ donation, raised red flags with human rights groups. Dr.

Chen spoke of two Canadian investigators, posing as organ buyers, discovered that several hospitals, located near prison camps, were offering organs from Falun Gong practitioners. Additionally, academic medical researchers discovered that the survival rate of transplant patients who went to China for transplants was much lower, when compared to other countries. Because of this, many countries have outlawed its citizens from traveling to China for organ transplants.

Dr. Chen then discussed the increased Chinese influence on world politics, media, and academia. Dr. Chen noted that the Chinese government influenced the outcome on legislation at the Federal and state levels outlawing travel to China for organ transplants. She also discussed the increased influence the Chinese government now has on some major media outlets, with the insert of a state sponsored circular called "China Watch." She noted that groups tied to the Chinese government are purchasing motion picture studios, and cinema chains, so they can control what movies are produced and distributed. Dr. Chen then spoke about the Confucius Institute, an academic institution operated by the Chinese government, that teaches the government view of Chinese history and culture. There are over 600 branches of the Confucius Institute at Colleges and High Schools in the United States as of 2018, including Stanford, UC Davis, and UCLA. Dr. Chen noted that these institutions are encouraged to block speakers critical of human rights and the Chinese government. Additionally, teachers are required to not practice Falun Gong, and discuss Tibet, Taiwan, and the Tiananmen Square Massacre.

Dr. Chen then discussed how cheap and slave labor has attracted many foreign companies to produce goods and offer services, which helped to build the strength of the Communist party. She noted how Cisco assisted the Chinese government construct the great internet firewall, and how Yahoo turned email information over to the government. She then discussed how the United States is cracking down on Chinese influence. In 2018, the Department of Justice ordered two state run media organizations to register as foreign agents. Additionally, in 2018, the National Defense Authorization act outlawed use of Huawei and ZTE technology, and threatened to defund universities which partnered with Confucius Institute, forcing over half of the institutes to close.

Finally, Dr. Chen discussed how the Communist party is facing issues within China. First, the mass imprisonment of Falun Gong practitioners started to shed light on human rights issues, both nationally and internationally. Second, the increased use among the Chinese of VPN software to access websites originally blocked by the great internet firewall. Third, the increase in human rights lawyers across China. Fourth, the increased use of petitions against the Chinese government for human rights violations. Finally, loss of membership in the Communist party and its affiliated organizations within China. Dr. Chen mentioned a US-based website where party members can officially quit, and receive official documentation, recognized by US Immigration officials.



With another interesting meeting in the books, **Keller** struck the Roto-Bell at 1:18pm.

🍎 COMING ATTRACTIONS 🍎

You never know what you will find on the backroads. You might even find a President of a local Rotary Club who's crazy about ducks. Find out on Saturday, June 27th.

