



# ***The Desertarian***

**Newsletter of the  
Rotary Club of Palm Springs, California**

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*April 4, 2012*

Midway between April Fool's Day and Easter/Passover weekend, the Rotary Club of Palm Springs members convened for their Wednesday meeting, and enjoyed a bountiful buffet featuring some excellent Chinese cuisine. It was uncertain whether everyone was hungry an hour later.

**Meeting Convened:** President **Mike Sellin** opened the meeting at 12:13 p.m. **Ted Calouri** led the Pledge of Allegiance. **Frank Peabody** led members in the 4-Way Test of the things Rotarians think, say or do. The Rev. **Jim Griffes** offered a Judeo-Christian invocation. President **Sellin** acknowledged several guest, as well as six visiting Rotarians from such locales as Tennessee, Oregon, Washington and Indio and Palm Desert.

**Announcements:** There were a number of announcements. **Judy Bronstein** reported that the March 31<sup>st</sup> RAGS (Rotary Annual Garage Sale) event generated sales of \$3,254. She thanked all who participated in making the event a big success. Several other announcements included reminders of an upcoming new/small format Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser at Mizell Senior Center...A May 26<sup>th</sup> Potluck/Bingo Party...April 28<sup>th</sup> "Rotarians at Work" Day...and the long-anticipated annual "Demotion Dinner" on Saturday, June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Blue Badge:** **Jamey Canfield** presented **Dave Allen** with his blue badge, mercifully retiring the worn out red one.

**Program:** **Ted Calouri** introduced guest speaker **Paul Zellerbach**, Riverside County District Attorney. A long time and highly acclaimed former criminal prosecutor in Riverside County, he was elected as a Riverside Superior Court Judge in 2000, serving nearly 10 years. He was elected Riverside County District Attorney in 2010, assuming that office in early 2011.

District Attorney **Zellerbach** spoke on the new realignment of the state's criminal justice system, which will involve some of the "biggest changes" that he can recall during his professional career.

Basically, as advocated by Governor **Jerry Brown**, it shifts much of the burden and responsibility for housing prisoners from the state to the counties. The Governor's upcoming tax proposal to be submitted to the voters will also include major emphasis on this "realignment." Whether adequate funding will be provided by the state is unclear, according to Mr. **Zellerbach**.

Realignment creates a "3 nons" class of felonies. (non-violent, non-sexual, and non-serious). Governor **Brown** classifies these offenders as "low level." But D.A. **Zellerbach** questions the term "non," and feels that all felonious offenders are guilty of serious crimes.

He cited examples of how realignment will move numerous prisoners from state prison to county jails, many of which were built to house short-term and "transitional" prisoners—not incarceration of multi-year. He also pointed out that Riverside County jails are already at capacity, although under realignment, hundreds of prisoners will be released. Many others will end up serving only fractions of the terms to which they've been sentenced.

**Zellerbach** did suggest that realignment has some good aspects, particularly in that former parole supervision is being shifted to county probation personnel, which he feels will allow better control over parolees. Assuming the state will provide necessary and adequate funding for this expanded workload and responsibility.

The District Attorney answered a number of interesting and insightful questions...

**Recognition:** **Jamey Canfield** assessed fines relating to such things as the FBI's "10 Most Wanted" list. Among those who paid up for their lack of knowledge of criminal activities were: **Jim Dunn, Bob Elsner, Bob Barrett, Norm Brown, Dave Allen** and **Thomas Smith**—none of whom ever (to our knowledge) appeared on the "Most Wanted" list.

**Happy Dollars:** Only a handful of happy dollar volunteers today: **Frank Peabody, Bill Lentz,** and **Judy Bronstein**.

**Opportunity Drawing:** Nancy Palmer missed her chance by failing to pluck out the black marble. But she was \$29 richer by having the right ticket number.

Guest Editor: **Bob Elsner** (filling in for Mike Brill, who's cruising the world again)

