



Speakers

November 07, 2018

[Grier Graff, Kurt Hauch, Tina Etcheverry](#)

November 14, 2018

[George Lakoff, UCB Prof.](#)
TBD

November 15, 2018

[TBD](#)
Amazing Microbes and
Extreme Enzymes

November 28, 2018

[Severin Borenstein, Haas School of Business: Faculty Director, Haas Energy Inst](#)

Thought for Our Days

Thought for Our Days

Members heard a moving anecdote from Terry Regan last week, as he shared the story of his great-grandparents' entry into the United States after the Irish Potato Famine for the Thought for the Day. His great-grandmother had to lie about her age. She was 12 years old and the shipping manifest listed her as 14 because America would not take immigrant children under the working age of 14. Terry compared those times to our own, and went on to say, "Shame on America for forgetting the words on the Statue of Liberty: *Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest tossed to me; I lift my lamp beside the golden door!*"

Some of Us Celebrated Halloween!



Events

November 7th
[Membership Committee](#)

November 7th
[Grants Committee](#)

November 7th
[Supportive Housing Committee](#)

November 14th
[Social Committee](#)

November 14th
[Peace Committee](#)

November 14th
[Boards of Directors](#)

November 28th
[Communications Committee](#)

November 28th
[Opportunities for Fun \(Fund Raising\) Committee](#)

November 30th
[BARSHEEP TGIF - Hosted by TBD](#)

December 5th
[Membership Committee](#)

December 5th
[Supportive Housing Committee](#)

December 12th
[Social Committee](#)

Pain: Treatment and Addiction

By Joan H. Collignon

Last Wednesday's speaker Dr. Peter Ralston (pictured here with Jack McPhail, who presided over the meeting in the absence of President

December 12th
[Peace Committee](#)

December 13th
[Holiday Party](#)

Birthdays

[Pate D. Thomson](#)
November 5th

[John M. Ferguson](#)
November 11th

[Dennis V. Hacker](#)
November 14th

[Luc Ibata](#)
November 18th

[Maurice Gene Marcus](#)
November 19th

[Carol Neil](#)
November 20th

[John J. O'Dea](#)
November 27th

[Judith Anderson Glass](#)
November 29th

[Thomas S. Reed](#)
November 29th

[John Pardee](#)
December 2nd

[Arlene Carol Marcus](#)
December 3rd

[Sheila Sabine](#)
December 3rd

Beth) shared the current research on pain, and some startling information about the opioid epidemic in the United States. He addressed three major questions:

- How do drugs work on the brain to mask pain or induce pleasure?
- What could be done to save more lives if only the law and societal views allowed?
- What could an organization as powerful as Rotary do to help alleviate our current situation?



Dr. Ralston covered the physiology of pain and the ways drugs can block that pain. He reminded us that pain is a fundamental sensation, and there's no way we can really know what another person is feeling. Even culture determines pain perception. A person who says he or she is in pain should be believed.

Opioids, whether natural or synthetic, activate opioid receptors in the brain and spinal cord, which diminish pain and elevate mood. We're familiar with endorphins, a natural "high" which blocks pain and makes us feel good. Morphine—derived from the opium poppy—activates these same receptors, as does cannabis. Acupuncture blocks pain, as do placebos. Interestingly, placebos work because people generate their own endorphins which block the pain. So yes, it's all in our head, but it's real! Prescription synthetic opioids such as oxycodone or fentanyl are particularly dangerous since they are more potent than natural opioids and are more easily overdosed.

In the case of an overdose the drug Naloxone administered immediately blocks the action of the opioid and saves lives. Dr. Ralston was passionate when he told us that this is a drug that should be widely available not just to first responders but to those who care for or work with drug users who might overdose, as it is a benign drug that is harmless if administered in error. Yet many states or jurisdictions refuse to mandate its use because of the moral opprobrium heaped on drug users: If they overdose, it's their own fault.

Drug addiction is a disease, and Dr. Ralston argued strongly that it should be treated as such. Rather than leaving us depressed with the current situation, he offered a formula for saving lives, and suggested that Rotary as an organization might help promote some of these ideas:

- Over 80% of Americans with opioid addiction are not receiving medical care; they could be helped by training primary care physicians in practical intervention, such as methadone and Buprenorphine therapy. This requires changes in federal laws.
- Naloxone should be made available as an over-the-counter nonprescription drug.
- We should get the money out of drugs by making addicting drugs freely available at treatment centers. This would require changing societal views, as well as laws.

This is a VERY brief summary of this timely presentation, which was well documented with statistics and diagrams which gave a fuller picture of the situation. You may contact our speaker for the full set of slides of his PowerPoint presentation at henry.ralston@ucsf.edu.
