



Events

No Events found

Birthdays

- Parmod Kumar
September 28th
- William P. McQueen Jr
September 28th
- Leticia Almaro Nicolini
September 29th
- Barry J Gordon
September 30th
- Nelson Meeks
October 6th
- Nickolas Peterson
October 9th
- Gerald D. Hoobler
October 10th
- Howard Jenkins
October 17th

9-13-24 Concord Rotary Newsletter

By Tina S. Akins

Our Sept 13 meeting was held at John Muir Medical Center, Concord.



President **Jim Kohl** called the meeting to order, and for a moment, the meeting format seemed familiar. **Beth Willer** led us in the pledge, and **Elisabeth Anderson** led us in the Four-Way Test.

Our surroundings were wonderful. Lunch was delicious. The best part was seeing so many familiar faces in the room! There were guests, spouses, members we haven't seen for a while. It was a pleasure to be there.

We were off and running, happy to be back to what used to be our annual off-

site meeting at John Muir Medical Center. **Dr Gene Voelkel** acted as the MC. He reminded us that we've been meeting here since 1990, when two club members - **Dr Lee Knoll**, Medical Staff President, and **Harry Bowers**, long-time member of the Mt Diablo Hospital Board - inaugurated the meeting. **Dr Voelkel** had the pleasure of introducing our host and speaker for our meeting, yet another member of our club, **Mike Thomas**. Mike has been with John Muir Health for 16 years, and two years ago, was named CEO of the organization. Congrats!



John Muir Health is big. There are more than 1,000 doctors affiliated with JMH, and 6,500 medical staff. And, we found out there is a lot more to JMH than the two hospitals we know so well. It's a not-for-profit, growing, community-based, locally-governed, independently operated health care organization with much on its long list of facilities and services. It was a pleasure to listen to Mike describe the organization and learn more about its many strengths, and its challenges.

Mike described how JMH is consistently award-winning, with highly acclaimed facilities and services. We heard about that. But

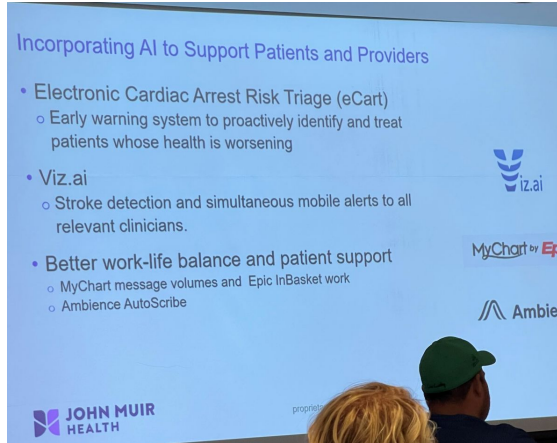




we are not near or that. But I didn't know that the Cardiovascular Institute is nationally known and is truly something to brag about. In fact, it has been named amongst the top 50 cardiovascular centers in

the nation, 5 years in a row. And it's growing. There are now 12 robots used for surgery, and the description sounded other-worldly.

The John Muir Health system includes Urgent Care centers in 5 different cities. There are Outpatient Care centers in those same cities. We know of the hospitals in Concord and Walnut Creek, but there is also a psychiatric hospital in Concord, providing acute psychiatric and outpatient behavioral health services. There are hardly any facilities in the state that provide in-and out-patient services, and JMH does it well.



The Behring Pavilion is a recently-opened cancer center at the Walnut Creek Hospital, and again, is highly acclaimed. It is partnered with UCSF Health. The only other centers of this level in Northern California are UCSF and Stanford. I.e., our local Ken Hofman Cancer Center is a big deal!

Mr Thomas is obviously proud of the health system, and it seems he has every right to be. He was clear to

outline the challenges, though. He described an aging facility that needs seismic retrofitting. He mentioned our ever-aging demographic. In 2015, one in 4 of our population was 65 or over. By 2035, the estimate is 1 retiree for every 2 younger than that. In this discussion, "younger" can be re-labeled the work force. That is, the folks with medical insurance paid for by an employer. When MediCal or Medicare pays JMH, the rates are lower - substantially lower. With less and less private insurance payments as our demographic ages, and with more payments made through government programs, JMH's bottom line suffers. Mike explained that the challenge needs careful planning so as to meet the needs of our community in the future.

We left the meeting a little wiser, and a little more proud of what we have right in our backyard. And **Mike Thomas**, CEO of John Muir Health and mostly-absent member of our Rotary Club of Concord, left with our best wishes, our heartfelt gratitude, and with a new Rotary hat to remind him we appreciate him and are glad he's a member of our club.



A big thanks to **Gene Voelkel** and to **Rick Ernst** for their work to coordinate this great off-site meeting.

Upcoming Speakers

Club Leaders



[Jim Kohl](#)
President



[Sandra J Newman](#)
Secretary



[William P. McQueen Jr](#)
Treasurer



[Gregory M. Grassi](#)
Treasurer
Endowment (T)



[Celia Veronica Valencia](#)
Fundraising



[Anthony A. Akins](#)
Rotary Foundation



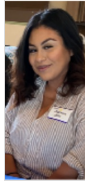
[Sean Duffey](#)
Membership Chair



[Rick Ernst](#)
Membership
Service



[Bryan E. Keding](#)
Community
Service



[Josephine Leiva](#)
Club Service Chair



[Elizabeth E Willer](#)
International
Service Chair



[Dave Litty](#)
Vocational
Service



[Memory A. Woodard](#)
Youth Services
Chair



[Wanda D Waltman](#)
iPast President