

# EARLY BIRD WEEKLY

NewbergRotaryEarlybirds.org

Rotary  
Newberg Early Birds



June 8, 2023

Last week was a call for volunteers to take on a one-year stint to coordinate fellow members for weekly breakfast, setup/take-down, and to liaise with Northwest Christian Church for meeting space. Never-Say-No-Rachel Powell stepped up and will chat with Casey to make sure she's good to commit.

Our program last week was delivered by two of our Inbound Youth Exchange students.



**Pilar "Pili" Durante** was first up.

Pili comes to us from San Carlos de Bolivar, Argentina.

In the first part of her year with us she played basketball at Newberg High School. She even managed to pull off getting #11 on her jersey, the same as back home in Argentina.

She also played tennis. She didn't really want to but her host parents encouraged her. Turns out she was glad they did because she very much enjoyed it and was glad for the nudge. Hey, if you're going to expand your cultural experience, why not expand that to your sports experience, right?

She was introduced to the Halloween experience with host family, Dan and Raquel. She was not a fan of pumpkin guts. Just sayin'!



And if you want to see what happens when a Brazilian/American introduces an Argentinian to Christmas, let this next image sink in for a minute.



Pilar is involved with the local Interact club and helped with last year's fundraising wrapping gifts at Fred Meyer.

This year she attended a Trail Blazers game and a Winterhawks game where she got to ride in a Zamboni across the ice.

She shared the prom experience with Wayne (next up), Sharwika (coming in a couple weeks) and Trisha Sito.

During Spring Break she got to see Cirque de Soleil.

Her concerts included Echosmith and Duran Duran.

She got to visit Seattle's Space Needle and Pike Place Market with her Exchange friends.

Pili sees her future being more tourism and building international relationships.

Her highlights in The States were pumpkins (ew), painting, dancing and shows.

When asked whether she thought she'd changed during her time in Exchange she said she'd opened up to want to see more of the world and its people.

She has also grown much more confident with public speaking.

**Yi Tang "Wayne" Cheng** comes to us from Taipei, Taiwan.



Wayne wasn't quite as comfortable in front of a group as Pili, yet.



Among his memorable moments were the kids' visit to Universal Studios during the West Coast Road Trip.

He, too, has taken up tennis in his high school experience, a new sport for him, with Aaron Rauch as his coach.

He got to go snow skiing, a fun new experience since snow isn't really a Taipei thing.

Wayne got to attend a Blazers game. This was a good time for him, being a big time NBA fan. Even though his favorite team is the Golden State Warriors.

Christmas was also a new experience, being not such a big deal in Taiwan.

Wayne remembers his arrival at Portland International when his first host mom, Carolyn Davidson, came to pick him up.

Between the long flight and strange surroundings he was physically and emotionally exhausted ... and slept on his way home from the airport.

Recalling his decision to join the Rotary Youth Exchange, he had passed on his first opportunity because he didn't want to leave his girlfriend behind.

He came to realize that he really wanted this new experience for himself and said yes to the Exchange Program.

Since he chose Exchange, she chose to become his Ex.

When asked what he thinks the future holds for him, he says he would like a future in architecture with continuing education here in the United States.

Editorial Comment: If you were wondering about the benefits of Youth Exchange being nothing more than travel opportunities, there is so much personal growth by our kids, ourselves, and their host families!

A total win for everyone involved.