



# ROTARY SPOKES

## Rotary Club of Ventura

Est. May 1, 1919

“The Friendliest Club in Rotary”

January 22, 2023

### MEETING JANUARY 18, 2023

**Attendance**—Every time I counted, I got a different number, but at least 45 members and guests attended, plus one via Zoom. Almost every seat was taken!

**Lunch**—Pork roast, roasted potatoes, carrots, green salad, and cookies for dessert.

**Flag salute, inspirational message, and introductions**—**Connie Young**. She shared a quote from 18th century cleric John Wesley: “Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the ways you can, In all the places you can, At all the times you can, To all the people you can, As long as ever you can.” And a quote from Jane Goodall: “You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.” These quotes embody why the Julius Gius Memorial Rotary Foundation was founded.

**Songleaders**—**Bev Ward** and **Clyde Reynolds**—  
“America the Beautiful”

**Award**—Hutch Hutchinson presented **Clyde Reynolds** with his Paul Harris plus 3 pin. We saw a brief video about how the Rotary Foundation is transforming the world.



#### Announcements:

**Rob van Nieuwburg:** Longtime Rotary member **Jere Robings** died January 2. The memorial service is February 11. If you plan to stay for lunch at the church, please RSVP. See attached Obituary.

**Meaghan Smith:** The “**Four-Way Test**” essay contest for middle school and high school students, essays are due February 19. See our website for flier, announcement, and cover letter.

**Lynda Girtsman:** (1) **Member survey:** if you haven’t already done so, please respond by January 31.

(2) Thanks to those who toured the **Ronald McDonald House Charities Family Room** at VCMC. And please participate in the **Walk for Kids** on Sunday, March 19. Registration is \$25 per person; \$100 if you'd like a t-shirt.

**Neal Lassila: (1) Club polo shirts:** please provide, by the end of the month, your size (XS to 3XL), men or women's, and color (navy blue, powder blue, or lavender). One shirt per member free; additional shirts are \$45 each.

(2) We will be rotating the location of **Board Meetings** to the venues of different benefactors, starting with the January 26 board meeting, which will be at the YMCA. Locations of later meetings will be in the Spokes newsletter and on our website.

### Happy Dollars.

**Fining—Ken Leandro and Betsy Chess** conducted an informative session about the **Staci Johnson Ingram Perspectives on Peace Scholarships**. This year's deadline is April 17, with judging the last two weeks of April. Submissions are in art, photography, video or music. Applicants must be graduating seniors at Ventura, Buena, Foothill Tech, Pacific or El Camino High Schools, who will be attending a vocational/technical school. More judges are needed—contact George, Ken, or Betsy. For rules and more information, go to [perspectivesonpeace.org](http://perspectivesonpeace.org).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

(For up-to-date and more complete information, check the ClubRunner app on your phone, or our web site, [VenturaRotary.org](http://VenturaRotary.org))



**January 25 lunch meeting—Chrissy Stamegna** will discuss the **Brain Injury Center**. She will be accompanied by **Lisa Morris**, who suffered a traumatic brain injury and has benefitted from the services of the Center.

**January 26—Board Meeting**, 12:00-1:30 p.m. **Note that it will be at the YMCA.**

**February 1 lunch meeting—Carl Morehouse**, former Ventura Mayor and councilmember, will discuss Ventura's **sister city program** with Loreto, Mexico.

**February 8 lunch meeting—Annual fundraiser for Ventura High School Interact.**

**February 9—Book Club**, 5:30 p.m., at Bajaj's home, will discuss *Luz* by Debra Thomas.

**February 15 lunch meeting—Debra Thomas**, award-winning author.

**February 19—"Four-Way Test"** essays due.

## PRESENTATION—CONNIE YOUNG—JGMRF

At the Rotary Club of Ventura meeting January 18, 2023, club past president (and current Foundation president) Connie Young gave a very informative and interesting presentation about the Julius Gius Memorial Rotary Foundation (JGMRF).

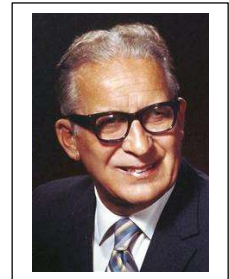
The Foundation was created in 1998 as the club's 501(c)(3) charitable arm. It was named in honor of Julius Gius, who was a longtime club member and the editor of the Star-Free Press. He was involved in many community organizations including Salvation Army, United Way, Boy Scouts, and YMCA, and served as a trustee of Community Memorial Hospital. JGMRF is run by a board that consists of future, present, and past club presidents (currently Connie (President), Rob van Nieuwburg, Saurabh Bajaj, Margi Wray, Neal Lassila, and Doug Halter).

The Foundation is funded through the club's fireworks event, corporate and individual donors, legacy benefactors, and through donations automatically included in our quarterly dues. During the pandemic, the club's "pay lunch forward" program used the portion of our dues that would have gone to lunches, matched by Harald Wulff, to assist the Salvation Army and Project Understanding.

JGMRF funds are used to support club projects such as assisting the homeless and the vision clinic. It also provides grants to non-profit community organizations with a strong focus on Ventura. Grants are given to make a lasting impact to support the most vulnerable and needy members of our community. Each year, grants totaling \$20,000 to \$35,000 are awarded. To date, JGMRF has given some 350 grants totaling \$811,262, 44. (I tried to ask who got the 44 cents, but Mary shushed me up.) Applications for this year's grants are due February 28, 2023. For more information and the application form, go to the new Julius Gius Foundation button at the top of the club's homepage. (Thanks to Ken Leandro for setting that up!)

Within the JGMRF is the Joe Taylor Endowment. When Joe died in 2015, he made a significant bequest that is used exclusively to fund scholarships (over \$65,000 to date). The recipients are vetted by the Ventura College Foundation. The newly-created Everett Millais Scholarship Fund gives a scholarship to at least one Ventura College student each year.

In addition to the contribution automatically included with your dues, you may make additional contributions to the JGMRF, name it in your estate plan, or list it as a beneficiary of a 401(k). More information about this will be given at an upcoming class, "JGMRF 102."



*To Julius, Joe, Everett and Staci: Your generosity and spirit live on, bettering the lives of others and inspiring us to follow your example.*

## OBITUARY: HERBERT JERE ROBINGS



**Herbert Jere Robings**, known by people as "Jere," passed away on January 2, 2023, at home with his family by his side. Jere was born in Hollywood January 15, 1932.

Jere survived his first wife, Marie, his mother Jean, his father Bert, and his brother Edward and sister Wynn.

When he was a student at Fairfax High School he worked weekends at the Sunset Hills Towers as a bellhop, serving many celebrities and even gangsters. After graduation he became a meter reader for Edison, and then a Field Service Man.

In 1950 he was drafted into the army, training in San Luis Obispo, where he got assigned to the Signal Corps as a field radio repair specialist. With this special training, he was sent to Paris to work at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers of Europe (SHAPE) in Paris, France, as a Field Radio Repair man.

After returning from his service, he again served Edison in the corporate sales area, and went on to have a 38 year career, including area manager of Simi Valley, Moorpark, and Fillmore.

After retiring from Edison he worked locally for Congressman Gallegly, and then was made Executive Director of the Ventura County Taxpayers Association (VCTA) and eventually the Director of Ventura County Alliance of Taxpayers (VCAT).

Jere's volunteer work included helping secure the bond measure for the Conejo Valley Unified School District (USCD) and being on the oversight committee. He was also on the board of the American Heart Association, the YMCA, and more.

One of his most involving associations was Rotary, being a member of Simi Valley Club while he was with Edison, with the Ventura Club when he assisted taxpayers, and then the Thousand Oaks Club when he fully retired. In Rotary he was President while in the Simi Valley Club, and Executive Secretary while at the Thousand Oaks Club. He attended over a dozen international Rotary conventions, both around the world and across our country. He was also deeply involved in following the procedures and developments of the worldwide Rotary organization, and very active in following the process of Rotary's eradication of polio.

Jere was survived by his wife K.T. Connor, whom he knew from Rotary; his son James Robings and his daughter Jackie Smith (Jim); his grandchildren Charlaine Horning, James J. Robings, Sienna Robings, Chase Robings, Katey Smith; and 6 great grandchildren.

A memorial celebration will be held for Jere at The Church of the Epiphany, in Oak Park, on February 11th at 11:00 AM. If you'd like to join us for lunch at the church afterwards, let us know. We'd love to have you and want to make sure we supply enough. Just contact [ktconnor@sprynet.com](mailto:ktconnor@sprynet.com).

And if you feel the need to send flowers, send instead your contribution to either the Rotary Club of Thousand Oaks or the Church of the Epiphany. Jere loved the good work they both do. And was part of both of them.