

Jon Rauser

President and Owner, The Rauser Agency, Inc.
50-Year Member (Since 1973)

To say the U.S. healthcare system is complicated is an understatement. But if you have half a minute, Jon Rauser can break it down for you.

In “30-Second Insurance Tips – Free Tips for Fiscal Fitness,” Jon unravels healthcare insurance issues in interesting, comprehensible, witty summaries (subscribe at TheRauserAgency.com).

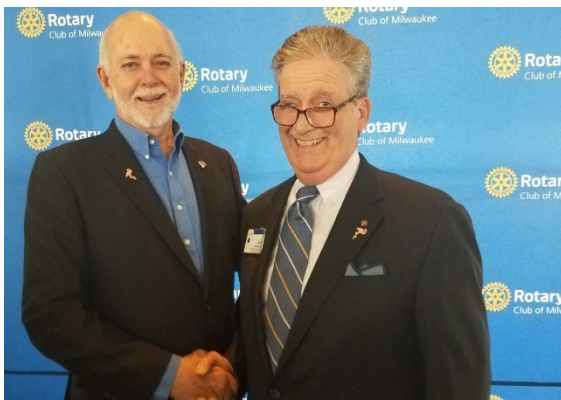
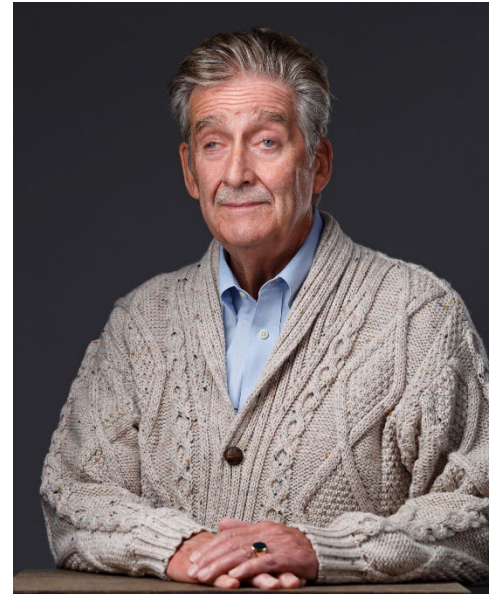
While he clearly enjoys writing and sharing the weekly emails, the idea was prompted by a concern about the viability of his business. When the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act was passed in 2010, Jon worried the new legislation might put him out of a job, so he created his Tips as a way to stay connected to clients.

“I thought I might have to find a different career, but I was damned if I was going to let my clients forget about me. I’m currently on Tip 584 and over the course of 11 years, I’ve rarely missed a week. It’s a way for me to still make my mark in the industry and shed some light on the issues. I may retire when the health care industry is fixed—so I may never retire,” said Jon, who inherited that drollness from his grandfather, Erwin F. Rauser.

“My grandfather, who started the Shorewood Mills underwear business, was a giant of a self-made man. But what I remember most about him was his fantastic sense of humor. He was a wonderful man, who always tried to make me laugh and whose smile lit up a room.”

As a boy, Jon traveled on his own to Reno, Nevada, from Milwaukee on the California Zephyr or by airplane to spend summers with his grandfather.

“He was a great man. My dad [Erwin “Erv” F. Rauser Jr.] was too, but like most men of that generation, he was busy working to support our family. Then, he died at age 49, so I didn’t have the chance to get to know him very well.”



Jon with Rotary President Barry Rassin

At the time of his father’s death, Jon was a 22-year-old senior at the UW–Madison majoring in history and weighing future options like law school. At his father’s executors urging, he dropped out of college to take over Shorewood Mills, which manufactured private-label undergarments for stores like Macy’s, Bloomingdales and Saks Fifth Avenue.

After about seven years, the decision was made to liquidate the company. Jon enrolled at UW–Milwaukee for a semester to finish his degree. One of his professors was none other than David Buck.



Jon with Vice President Mike Pence

Along with following in his grandfather's and father's footsteps in the family business, Jon is a third-generation Rotary Club of Milwaukee member—and the connections there have been life-altering. For example, in 1957, Rotarian Bob Nourse founded The Executive Committee (TEC), bringing together seven other men, including Jon's father—all with businesses that weren't large enough for their own boards of directors. TEC, which served as a de facto board of directors for these companies, had a formula so successful that the organization grew and was eventually sold and became a thriving international company with 45,000 members in 35 countries. One original TEC board member, the late Charlie Mellows, of Charter Manufacturing in Saukville, became Jon's close mentor.

"Charlie loved my dad and because of that he spent countless hours with me as we tried to keep Shorewood Mills competitive when the entire textile industry was moving overseas. A quiet thoughtful man, Charlie was wiser and better than any business school professor."

When Jon joined Rotary in 1973, he was one of several young new members.

"There was a big group of young businessmen—like an incoming freshman class—and we had a pretty good run together. Many of those guys are still around and we remain good friends. I've served on the board and on various committees, but nothing is more important than sitting around a table with really cool people. I like the structure, the tradition and all the friends and memories I've acquired over the years. Rotary has been a constant throughout my life and it's nice to have that anchor."

Professionally, Jon has been an active member of the National Association of Health Underwriters, serving in various chairmanships and as the organization's State President. He was awarded the industry's 2013 Robert C. Gilray Distinguished Service Award, and although being politically active is "not really his thing," he has frequently worked on health care with policymakers in Wisconsin and Washington, D.C.

Besides his passion for his 42-year profession, Jon has been an avid bicyclist, golfer, skier, gardener and runner. He accomplished the prestigious goal of running a sub-three-hour marathon at the Milwaukee Lakefront Marathon, but one of his most memorable races was the Moscow Marathon as a member of a special delegation from the Milwaukee Athletic Club, guests of the Russian Sports Federation.

"Running has been a wonderful part of my life. I love its meditative state."



Running friends in Moscow