

# The Rotarygram



## Rotary Club of Van Nuys

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Club 1470 — District 5260

September 8, 2004

### Meeting Highlights

Sherri Cunial, wife of member Gary Cunial, presented an informed, interesting report on her personal experience with stem cell research. This controversial topic has many complexities that Sherri explained in easily understood terms, using visuals that helped the audience follow her talk.

The story of her harrowing, life-and-death struggle ended happily only through the miracle of a stem cell transfusion. Her ever-expanding study of stem cell research, sparked by her own involvement, has given her a passionate commitment to tell others what wonders are possible today...and what further research on stem cells may hold in the future.

Stem cells hold the ability to be transformed into whatever a body may need — new cells, tissues or organs. Of the three sources: adults, children and embryonic, the embryonic source seems to be most controversial — and also may be those holding greatest promise for future stem cell health miracles.

Californians will have the opportunity in November to vote on Prop 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative. This proposition, if passed, will provide sorely needed funding for further research and development in stem cell technology. While Sherri has an obvious and understandable bias in favor of passing the initiative, she encourages others to get informed about the issues and, above all, get out and vote on Prop 71 on November 2nd.

Our thanks to Sherri Cunial and Gary for an outstanding program!

**Resources:** [www.stemcellresearchfoundation.org/WhatsNew/EmbryonicStemCells.htm](http://www.stemcellresearchfoundation.org/WhatsNew/EmbryonicStemCells.htm); [stemcells.nih.gov/basics/](http://stemcells.nih.gov/basics/); [www.YESon71.com](http://www.YESon71.com).



### Visitors

**Visiting Rotarians:** Rich Lawrence, Rotary Club of Simi Sunrise. Introduced by Leo O'Biecunas.

**Guests:** Jim Sullivan introduced Sean Sawyer, guest of the club. Gary Cunial introduced two of his staff, Raquel and Jennifer. Barbara Baerg proudly introduced her granddaughter, Ashley Anderson.

**With 100 degree-plus weather, do you suppose that's why a number of VN Rotarians came dressed in shorts?...and can you identify the owners of those shapely legs?**

**Entertainment Books—2005...see Paul Davis!**

## Student Recognition



This week, we honored outstanding students from Van Nuys High School. From the left, Mary Alderman, student advisor, Kailen Whang, Nilufar Izadpanah, President Carlos Rivera and Youth Service Director Joe Chu. In addition to their commendations, each student honoree receives a \$50 US Savings Bond.

## Announcements

- See HOT DATES on page 4 for upcoming club and community events.
- President Carlos Rivera announces that next week, 9/15, the club will recognize Mexican Independence Day (9/16) with a special Mexican buffet featuring a variety to satisfy everyone's taste.
- Barbara Baerg reminded all that the Rotary Centennial Convention will be in Chicago, June 18—22, 2005. (I missed hearing another addition to her list of 100 reasons to attend.)
- Barb also reported that we have a long list of Rotarians and guests attending the Dinner/Theater party on October 22 — "Late Night Catechism 2 — the Sequel."

## The Spotlight's On...

### BARBARA BAERG



In the 1970s, Barbara Baerg was welcoming visiting executives to MCA/Universal and giving them the grand tour of the studios and an opportunity to meet some of its stars. The Los Angeles native had joined MCA as a secretary to the company's president, Sidney

Scheinberg, and was frequently called upon to escort visitors to events — including, she says, a memorable book reading by Al Pacino. During her 10 years with the company, she had the honor, she recalls, of working briefly for Hollywood movie mogul Lew Wasserman, who was then MCA/Universal's chairman of the board.

She spent two years at MCA/Universal, then moved to the east coast, working for MCA on Park Avenue in New York and raising three daughters in New Jersey — “a great place to raise a family,” she says. Five years later, she returned to MCA/Universal. “I wanted to be close to Universal,” she remembers.

It was an executive at MCA back in California who planted the seed for her next career move. “He thought I would be great in real estate,” she says. She took his suggestion, earned a real estate license and began the hard work of building her business in the San Fernando Valley. “I earned \$2,600 my first year and \$50,000 the next year,” she remembers. In those first years, she learned how to successfully meet her client's real estate needs and to get their valuable referrals. “You

have to get yourself out of the way,” she says, “and focus intently on what your clients are telling you. I treat my clients like my extended family,” she adds. “That's how I do business.”

Barbara's passion for serving her clients extends to serving her industry. An associate with Remax on the Boulevard, she recalls standing up at her first real estate area marketing meeting to talk about herself and she “almost passed out.” Determined to do better at the next meeting, she made her pitch into a poem. Soon, she was leading the local area meetings and then became chair of marketing for the Southland Regional Association of Realtors. She was instrumental in the creation of the organization's first Homebuyers

**“I treat my clients like my extended family. That's how I do business.”**

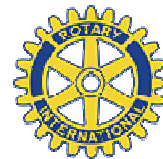
Fair, served on the board of directors for two years and was honored by her peers as REALTOR® Associate of the Year in the region in 1994. She was also a state director for the California Association of REALTOR® for seven of her 19 years in real estate.

Rotary came into Barbara's life about eight years ago when a Van Nuys Rotarian invited her to a meeting. She was hooked almost immediately, she says, and began with enthusiasm to devote her spare time and energy into club and community service. Slated to become the Van Nuys Club's president in July 2005, Barbara believes she really has a well-rounded life in Rotary. “I do business with friends, I help the community and I meet people all over the world,” she says. She has traveled to district and international conferences (in Japan, Singapore and Argentina) “I love Rotary,” she says. “For almost 100 years, we have been doing good in the community. We are a culture unto ourselves,” she adds. “Aside from politics and religion, our credo is to do good.”

*Contributed by Andrea Reinken.*

**“Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish.”**

**-John Quincy Adams**



# "Service Above Self"

## Rotary Club of Van Nuys

### Upcoming Programs

- Sept. 15      Craft Talks (always one of our most interesting programs) will be given by two of our newer members: Victoria Castillo and Fred Rabban. Program chair — Diane Eaton.
- Sept. 22      Former member, Gordon Mace, will give us his insider's view of what's happening in Commercial Real Estate. Chairperson — Archie Kidwell.
- Sept. 29      Conejo Valley Little League Champs — Vince Bonsignore, sports writer for the Daily News, has reported on this team and will tell all about the competition and more. Bring a youngster...you'll be glad you did! Program chair — Joe DiFatta.

#### BIRTHDAYS

- Sept. 17      Barbara Baerg
- Sept. 19      Barry Leonard
- Sept. 21      Flip Smith
- Sept. 22      Ken Benson
- Sept. 24      Archie Kidwell
- Sept. 25      Jim Tenner
- October 5    May Mangia

#### HOT DATES

- Sept. 11      District Leadership Meeting, 8 a.m., Sam's Café.
- Sept. 24-26   Sierra (Bishop) Safari. Reserve NOW.
- October 7    Mid-Valley Comm. Police Council — Annual Citizen's Recognition Luncheon 11:45 a.m. — Airtel Plaza
- October 22   Dinner/Theater: "Late Night Catechism II — The Sequel" El Portal Theater, North Hollywood.

We're on the web! [vannuysrotary.org](http://vannuysrotary.org)

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