





SEE PAGES 3-5

On August 4, our speaker was fellow Rotarian Christy Vogel of the Rotary Club of Tampa, founder and executive director of Sounding Joy, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that provides professionally fitted hearing aids to children in the extended Tampa Bay/Sarasota area whose families cannot afford them. We learned a lot about being born with a hearing deficiency and how difficult it can make your life. A MUST VIEW...

Enjoy the Presentation:
(Run time 37 minutes)



At

Upcoming		
Sept 1	100 Central	Broadway theatre manager and author shares behind-the-scenes stories <i>From the Back of the House</i> .
Sept 14	FIELD TRIP	Asolo Repertory production facility, called the Koski Center, located at 1009 Tallevast Road in Sarasota,
Sept 15	100 Central	Dan Minor- Harvest House – housing and hunger-relief provider.





SEE PAGE 2



Jim Cerny
Technology Educator

Jim Cerny, a tech educator and STUG volunteer, helps provide refurbished computers and tech education to Sarasota County

Tuesday Noon
August 18, 2026
Zoom Meeting ID: 860 6855 4560
Passcode: 908057
Club of Sarasota Bay

Bridging the Digital Divide: STUG's Refurbishing Group Provides Free Computers to Those in Need

SEE PAGE 6



The Friendliest Club in the World

BEHIND THE CURTAIN AT ASOLO REP

WHEN
Monday,
September 14,
2026 •
10:00 AM

WHERE
Robert & Beverly
Koski Center •
1009 Tallevast Road,
Sarasota

ACTION
**REPLY TO RESERVE
YOUR SPOT!**
• Space is limited
• Guests welcome
• There is no fee
for this tour

Rotary Club of Sarasota Bay • District 6960 • rotarysarasotabay@gmail.com • 941-445-3465
"The Friendliest Club in the World"





Tuesday, August 18, 2026 • Noon

Give Your Old Tech New Life

JIM CERNY & THE SARASOTA TECHNOLOGY USERS GROUP (STUG) JOIN US AUGUST 18

Jim Cerny, president of the Sarasota Technology Users Group (STUG), will join our meeting on Tuesday, August 18, along with three of his board members. Founded in 1982, STUG is an all-volunteer group that has spent more than four decades helping Sarasota residents get comfortable with technology — teaching beginner Windows classes on Zoom and producing instructional videos on tech tips and troubleshooting.

Bring your old computers, phones, tablets, and other electronic equipment to the meeting. STUG will repurpose the devices and donate them to people in our community who can't afford new equipment — turning your unused tech into someone else's fresh start.

STUG has been teaching Sarasota residents technology skills since 1982.

DATE & TIME: Tuesday, August 18, 2026 • Noon

LOCATION: 100 Central Ave, Community Room, 5th Floor, Downtown Sarasota

— just bring your items to the meeting —

Questions? Contact the club before the meeting.

“The Friendliest Club in the World”

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From Silence to Sounding Joy

Christy Vogel brought her mission — and her story — to Sarasota Bay

SPEAKER

Christy Vogel

Founder & Executive Director
Sounding Joy
Tuesday, August 4, 2026 · Noon

WHY IT MATTERS

Untreated childhood hearing loss is linked to twice the risk of addiction and more than five times the risk of suicide attempts in young adults — a connection Christy has made her life's work to change.

KEY POINTS

- Founded Sounding Joy in March 2021
- 100+ children fitted with hearing aids
- 2023 TEDx speaker
- 2024 Tampa Bay Lightning Community Hero — \$50,000 donation
- \$100,000+ raised for the cause IRS-approved 501(c)(3)



Christy Vogel, Founder &
Executive Director, Sounding Joy

Hearing the World With Her Eyes

Our guest speaker on Tuesday August 4th was Christy Vogel, Founder and Executive Director of Sounding Joy — and she gave us a story that began in silence and ended in joy.

At age 11, Christy learned two things about herself: she was hard of hearing, likely since birth, and she had unknowingly taught herself to read lips just to keep up in school. Her family couldn't afford the hearing aids she needed, and insurance didn't cover them. Because she had to piece together sound and facial expression to understand what people were saying, she often answered slowly — and classmates and teachers alike assumed she was “slow,” even “stupid.” By her teens, still without hearing aids, she told us she had started to believe them.

It wasn't until her late twenties — by then already succeeding in a competitive marketing career — that Christy could finally afford her first pair of hearing aids. She described that moment as one that changed her world instantly. Birds. Phone tones. Dozens of everyday sounds she never knew existed. Fully able to hear for the first time, her career took off; over the next two and a half decades she built a marketing track record that includes work with brands like Amazon and Walt Disney Pictures, and eventually her own agency, Marketing Direction.

A WAKE-UP CALL

But it was a darker set of facts that turned Christy's personal story into a public mission. She told the club that children with untreated hearing loss are twice as likely to become addicted to drugs or alcohol, and more than five times as likely to attempt suicide as young adults. Two of her own cousins, who shared her hereditary hearing loss, had passed away from complications of alcohol addiction — a loss Christy connects directly to the isolation, misunderstanding, and ridicule so often faced by children whose hearing is never corrected.

Continued



Christy, age 11 — the year she learned she was hard of hearing.



Christy (back left) with her family — Two cousins who shared her hereditary hearing loss died from complications of alcohol addiction.

***“Hearing aids don't just help children hear better.
They can save lives.”***

— Christy Vogel, Founder, Sounding Joy

SOUNDING JOY TAKES SHAPE

That realization led Christy, in March 2021, to found Sounding Joy, a St. Petersburg-based nonprofit that provides professionally fitted and programmed hearing aids to children whose families can't afford them. Working with partners including Tampa Children's ENT, USF Audiology, and Johns Hopkins All Children's, Sounding Joy has already helped more than 100 children across Pinellas and Hillsborough counties.

Christy shared that an estimated 1,845 to 2,767 children in the Tampa Bay area live with hearing loss, and more than a quarter come from ALICE families — households that earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but not enough to absorb the \$2,000 to \$6,000 cost of a single pair of hearing aids, which need replacing roughly every three years as children grow. It's a gap Sounding Joy exists to close.

RECOGNITION BEYOND TAMPA BAY

Christy's advocacy has carried wellpast Tampa Bay. In 2023 she took the TEDx stage at TEDxSouthHowardAvenue, where her talk was described as leaving a “seismic impact” on the audience. In February 2024, the Tampa Bay Lightning named her a Community Hero, presenting Sounding Joy with a \$50,000 donation — a portion of which Christy directed to the Rotary Club of Tampa. Altogether, she has helped raise more than \$100,000 for the cause, much of it through events like The Art of Hearing Gala, and Sounding Joy is now working toward a goal of donating two sets of hearing aids every single week.

Fellow speakers and clients describe the effect she has on a room. “You can feel the pain behind her voice, and that pain turns into resolve,” said Kristen Thompson of Thompson Marketing Partners. Gary Mills of Mills Mehr & Associates put it simply: “She captures and engages her audience by speaking from her heart.”

Continued

HOW OUR CLUB CAN HELP

SoundingJoy is a fully IRS-approved 501(c)(3) (EIN 87-2361933), so every donation is tax-deductible. Christy left our members with a few concrete ways to get involved:

- Donate directly at soundingjoy.org
- Connect Sounding Joy with local audiologists, school districts, or corporate sponsors who might partner on a child's fitting
- Spread the word — awareness alone helps close the gap for the thousands of hearing-impaired children in our region who fall outside Medicaid eligibility
- Save the date for Sounding Joy's own 5th Annual HEAROS Golf Tournament, Friday, November 6, 2026, at West Chase Golf Club



STAY IN TOUCH

Sounding Joy — St. Petersburg, Florida — info@soundingjoy.org — 813-526-1870 — soundingjoy.org

Thank you, Christy, for reminding Sarasota Bay what one person's determination — and one club's willingness to listen — can do.

ABOUT SOUNDING JOY

Sounding Joy is a St. Petersburg-based 501(c)(3) (EIN 87-2361933) founded by Christy Vogel in March 2021. It provides professionally fitted hearing aids to children whose families can't afford them, in partnership with Tampa Children's ENT, USF Audiology, and Johns Hopkins All Children's.





Monday, September 14, 2026 • 10:00 AM

Behind the Curtain at Asolo Rep

A PRIVATE TOUR OF THE ROBERT & BEVERLY KOSKI CENTER

Tom Walker has arranged a special outing for our club — a private tour, on Monday, September 14 at 10:00 AM, of the Asolo Repertory Theatre's production facility, the Robert and Beverly Koski Center, located at 1009 Tallevast Road in Sarasota, near Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport.

This is not the main theater — it's Asolo Rep's auxiliary home for set design, rehearsal, and costume work. Highlights include the Joan Armour Mendell Scenic Studio, the Ted Weiller Rehearsal Hall, costume shops, and storage spaces. Tom has taken this tour before and says it's well worth seeing how a professional regional theater builds its productions from the ground up.

DATE & TIME: Monday, September 14, 2026 • 10:00 AM

LOCATION: Robert & Beverly Koski Center • 1009 Tallevast Road, Sarasota

Space is limited — reply to reserve your spot — Guests welcome

There is no fee for this tour

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