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Contacts: Shaye A. Roscoe
203-924-7462

Lisa Savoid
203-924-7462

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Boys & Girls Club Celebrating Success of Past Member Jack Ribas

Shelton, CT, June 6, 2016 – As part of our year-long 60th anniversary celebration, the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley will be recognizing the life of someone who has been positively affected by our Boys & Girls Club on a regular basis throughout the year.

This month we recognize John “Jack” Ribas. Jack is not only the Club’s former Executive Director—leading our organization for more than 30 years—he is also a former Club kid. Jack joined the newly formed Boys Club, which was just a games room in the back of the Community Center, in 1956. As the Club grew so did his involvement. He was named Boy of the Year in 1962 and began his Club career with a series of part-time jobs, including locker room attendant, games room supervisor, table tennis coach, gym instructor, and referee.

In 1971 he was hired as the first Program Director in the Club’s history and held that position until 1975 when he was hired by the Boys & Girls Club of Bridgeport as the Director of the North End Unit. Two years later he was promoted to Director of Operations for all four Bridgeport units.

In 1978 he came back to the Valley when he was hired as the Executive Director of the Community Center Boys & Girls Club of Shelton-Derby. One of his first official acts was to admit girls as full-time members and change the name of the Club to the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley. The Shelton Club became one of the first official Boys & Girls Clubs in the country.

Jack helped lead the Club through the terrible fire that destroyed the Clubhouse on Howe Avenue in 1991. Jack never lost faith that the Club would rise from the ashes, and in fact, only lost one day of operations.

He helped with the design and construction of the new clubhouse in Shelton in 1991 and the new clubhouse in Ansonia in 1999. Under his leadership in 2007 the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley was named one of the top 20 clubs in the country.

Jack has also worked with many other nonprofits in the Valley. He served as president of the Parent Child Resource Center, the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank, St. Margaret Mary’s Parish, and Highland Golf Club. He has received numerous awards over the years, including the Gold Seal Award from the Valley Chamber of Commerce, the

Charles H. Flynn Humanitarian Award from the Valley United Way, the Golden Deeds Award from the Huntington Exchange Club, the Liberty Bell Award from the Valley Bar Association, and was elected into the Boys & Girls Club Hall of Fame in 2007.

Jack is now retired and splits his time between Shelton, CT, and Bonita Springs, FL.

We are looking for stories about anyone whose life was positively affected by our Boys & Girls Club. Stories are welcome all year long, from Club members, past members, friends, and family. If you have an experience you'd like to share with us, please email Press@BGC-LNV.org, or call Ann Wheeler at 203-924-7462. All are invited to our 60th Anniversary Gala on November 10, 2016. See our website for details at www.BGC-LNV.org.

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