



SOROPTIMIST
Best for Women

January 2006 Soroscope

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF

DIABLO VISTA



Karen Jameson, President
282 Mistral Way
Vallejo, CA 94591
707-642-0512

Jo Harlow, Editor
1392 Lichen Ct.
Concord, CA 94521
925-827-9676

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S.I. Diablo Vista meets the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Wednesdays at 12:00 noon at the Outback Steakhouse, 150 Longbrook Way, Pleasant Hill, CA

Mission and Core Purpose

To improve the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world

President's Message

Dear Members,

Happy New Year.....Christmas is over and we can return our attention to work on Soroptimist projects- before we have to worry about tax time! Here is a quick rundown of upcoming events:

February 22- Women Making a Difference for Women Luncheon at Contra Costa Country Club.

March 4- Saturday of Service, a one day program. Our plan is to provide a benefit to the clients of Monument Crisis Center.

March 16- Youth Recognition Night

April 22- Murder Mystery Event

On another note, I saw an article of interest in the SIA Best for Women magazine, October 2005 issue. This article is on membership, which is an ongoing problem. For the organization as a whole, in 2004-2005, SIA recruited 5,000 new members- but lost 6,000. This article talks about ways to recruit members, there are several suggestions, but one is very simple- just ask. If you haven't read this article, please do and consider how our club can develop a plan to increase membership.

Our work with Monument Crisis Center falls into a qualifying category for the "Celebrating Success" program. We will be submitting this work to Federation for recognition!



Thanks to all for your continued dedication to our Soroptimist mission!

Karen

Upcoming Events

- January 4 - Board Meeting - Old Republic Title
- January 11 - Business Meeting
Making a Diff. for Women
Committee meeting after.

January 18 - Mayor Susan Bonilla
Meeting will start at 12:00 - please be on time
Susan is teaching a class and needs to leave by 12:30

- January 25 - Community Action Network
**See article on page 3*
- February 1 - Board Meeting - Old Republic Title
- February 8 - Business Meeting, Gloria Soderbery
Valentine's Party
Don't forget your secret pal
- February 15 - TBA - Women's Health Center
John Muir/ Mt. Diablo
- February 22 - Women of Distinction Luncheon
Contra Costa Country Club
12:00 Noon
- March 1 - Board Meeting - Old Republic Title
- March 4 - Saturday of Service
- March 8 - Business Meeting
- March 15 - TBA
- March 16 - Youth Recognition Night

Saturday of Service

What?

Saturday of Service is the opportunity for Soroptimists to join together on one day to carry out service projects that improve the lives of women and girls. It is a unique opportunity to raise awareness about Soroptimist as an international organization of women helping women.

Clubs undertake service projects year round, but having clubs participating in one event all over the world on the same day can help to raise public awareness about Soroptimist. This annual event was conceived of and executed by nine SIA clubs in the Phoenix area of Arizona, USA, in 2002. In 2003, more than 100 clubs participated worldwide. In 2004 and 2005 the numbers increased dramatically as the idea was shared around the globe.

When?

At its board meeting in July 2004, the Soroptimist International board of directors voted to recognize the Soroptimist Saturday of Service on the Saturday prior to International Women's Day (which is always March 8th).

Observed around the world, International Women's Day is rooted in the centuries-old struggle of women to participate in society, and the political process of equal footing with men. Since the very beginning of this century, women around the world have employed International Women's Day as a rallying point for coordinated efforts to demand women's rights. It is a day to reflect on progress made, to call for change, and to celebrate acts of courage and determination in pursuit of women's rights.

Where?

Soroptimist clubs all over the world are invited to participate in this event and to raise awareness about Soroptimist's mission to improve the lives of women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world.

How?

Clubs should select a hands-on service project that focuses on women and girls and can be carried out on the Saturday prior to March 8th.

Projects should reflect the goals and objectives of the SIA Strategic Plan. Some examples of successful

projects include painting and doing other repairs in a domestic violence shelter, setting up a one-day health care clinic for low income women; or holding an educational workshop on non-traditional careers for girls.

Why?

Saturday of Service is a special event that primarily serves to show the world the power of Soroptimist to improve the lives of women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world.

In addition to helping women and girls, participation in this event provides clubs with the potential for positive public awareness and media coverage. Refer to the sample publicity materials and tips found in the Library of the SIA website under Public Awareness.

**2006
Women of Distinction
Award Luncheon**

Contra Costa Country Club
801 Golf Club Road
Pleasant Hill, CA

12:00 Noon

Cost: \$30.00 per person

Menu:

Baby Spinach Salad

Entree choice of:

Hazelnut Chicken Breast

Grilled Salmon

Grille Vegetable Ravioli

Beverage choice

Dessert

Community Action Network

We are having a format change for our meeting on January 25, 2006. It is still the Outback at 12 noon, but the restaurant will be the site for a meeting of the Community Action Network. This is being hosted by the PH Chamber of Commerce and representatives from the City of Pleasant Hill and various media. Several Non-Profit groups have been invited to attend.

The focus of this meeting is provide information to the PH area non-profit groups so we can better spread the word of our events and eliminate scheduling conflicts with each other. Training on how to use the online calendar for the City of Pleasant Hill will be available as well as the best way to get our events out to the radio/tv/newspapers.

Each non-profit group represented will have the opportunity to describe their organization and mission. We are hoping to have Norene Lowry and a member of the Founder Region board speak for Soroptimist.

The cost for this lunch is only \$5! It will be a buffet with sliced steak and chicken, salad, bread and beverage. Tana Goff needs to know how many people will attend, so please let Tana or me know if you'll be there, as well as any other questions you have.

Happy January Birthdays

Flower: Snowdrop Birthstone: Garnet

January	5	Verna Beard
January	9	Judy England
January	12	Diane Graham
January	21	Sue Manning
January	26	Gloria Utley

Club Committee Consolidation

S.I. Eugene, Oregon, USA was given recognition in The International Soroptimist Magazine for consolidating their committees. Their club was facing a common situation among Soroptimist Clubs, too many committees and not enough members to handle the work load. "Our committee structure had 17 club committees, not including special event/project committees. Each member was required to serve on several committees. We had some committees that were unable to coordinate a time to meet and thus accomplished nothing. Members were overwhelmed with responsibility and new members were sometimes assigned to inactive committees making their integration into the club slower."

Project Goals:

- Reduce the number of committees
- Reduce the number and scheduling conflicts of committee meetings
- Increase member involvement and satisfaction (leading to greater retention)
- Increase committee efficiency
- Increase communication between committees
- Create annual month by month committee calendar
- Clarify committee responsibilities
- Engage new members in active committees
- Educate all members of committee work required at club level
- Create a notebook for each committee to facilitate transfer of information from year to year
- Expand mentoring program to committee level

The plan cut the committees down to four:

*Community Service

- Finance
- Membership
- Awards

Committee Coordinators were chosen and trained. A new committee responsibility outline was developed and each coordinator was supplied with a month by month calendar to work from. It was the coordinators' role to oversee the calendar and delegate leadership responsibilities to committee members.

Committee Consolidation (continued)

Each club member was assigned to one committee and expected to chair at least one of the assigned tasks. Each committee met monthly at a newly scheduled club meeting that increased our meetings to three each month.

Each committee kept an updated notebook of activities and plans and reported to the club monthly and handled public relations for their assigned projects with the help of the club PR liaison.

Project Outcomes:

Members reported great satisfaction with this new arrangement. We averaged similar attendance at committee meetings as at business meetings. Most members found it convenient to meet at a regularly scheduled daytime meeting dedicated to committee work.

All our previously designated committees were consolidated to these four year-long committees and each issue was integrated into the larger picture.

Because each committee met at the same location at the same time, communication between committees was enhanced. We simply walked across the room to check schedules or get current information. We found planning to be much easier when there was a cross-over interest between committees. We managed to cut down on phone calls and e-mails by getting immediate responses at meetings. We also used these meetings to receive committee reports or to distribute pertinent project information.

One of the definite benefits of this structure was for the new members. They were assigned to the same committees as their mentor and became immediately involved with committee activities. Our mentoring included the entire committee and new members were able to work with and get to know several people.

This plan proved very useful for integrating and retaining our new members and for their education about the organization. Because of informal nature of committee meetings we found it an excellent place to disseminate information about how our club and the organization as a whole function.

The written information that outlined the responsibilities and timelines for each committee proved extremely educational for all members. It was immediately clear to whom each task was assigned and the

expected start and finish times for it. Monthly responsibilities were assigned and tracked. Program Focus Reports were provided and newsletter articles were generated.

The efficiency with which we operated was definitely improved. The simplicity of this committee structure increased member involvement and member satisfaction.

** Reprinted from The International Soroptimist June 2005*

New Year's Resolutions From Governor Kathy

1. **Take time to get to know the members of your club.** If you are not President, find someone that you don't know very well, and sit with her at your next meeting.
2. **Wear your pin at least once a week other than during the meetings.** And when someone asks you what the pin represents, be prepared with your thirty second elevator speech: Soroptimist is a worldwide service organization that is working to improve the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world.
3. **Invite a friend or co-worker to come to a meeting.** Find out what they are interested in: service, networking, friendship, and show them how joining a Soroptimist Club can fulfill their requirements.
4. **Be an informed member.** If you don't understand the terminology or the Strategic Goals of Soroptimist International of the Americas, visit the Region web site, the Federation web site, read your magazine, and plan to attend Conference in May and Federation Convention in July. When you are an educated member, you become an enthusiastic member and you retain your membership.
5. **Raise your hand and say yes to being a leader.** Whether it is volunteering to chair a committee within your club, a Region committee, holding an office within your club or Region, nothing gives you more satisfaction and personal growth than assuming a leadership role.