

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to those who published the 50th Anniversary book as recognized here.

“Credit for help received goes to Violet Richardson Ward, charter president of the first Soroptimist Club of Alameda County, to Eloise B. Cushing, founder member of Soroptimist Club of Alameda County, and to all the past regional directors and governors, who did so much for the organization in the past 50 years.

To Governor Charlotte Chichester for her encouragement, to Past Governor Mary Giannotti for extra research and leg work and Past Governor Matie Barker for time spent assisting in documenting historical facts and editing.

To Fiftieth Anniversary Steering Committee - Dorothy Cox, MaryEllen George, Mary Gianotti and Bayonne Glenn, all of whom have given much time and support.

To other Southwestern Soroptimists: Alice Brandt, Marjorie Brown, Mauda Crockett, Kay Davis, Dora Finne-
more, Marie Graves, Ilse Greer, Geneva Kipp, Margaret Knott, Aimee Lubin-Buehl, Alverna Osborn, Mildred Palmer,
Bernadine Quinlin, Dorothy Sarnes, Pamela Schlaepfer, Barbara Stevenson, Violet Unland, Isabelle Portale, Cotie
Locke, Dorothy Wright, Ortha Wulfing, all club Fiftieth Anniversary and history committees and all others who may
have contributed in any way; and

To Venturists: Past Governors Marcia Batrez and Celesta Delaney.

My special thanks to Violet Richardson Ward. Without her inspiration, enthusiasm and inexhaustible fund of information, this history of Southwestern Region’s first 50 years could not have been written.”

Bess Combs, Chair
Fiftieth Anniversary Committee
Soroptimist Club of Antioch
October 3, 1971

It was updated by the 75th Anniversary Committee in 1996

Patti Cross
Catherine (Kate) Burns
Margaret Bockman
Julia “Bess” Combs
Mary Gianotti
Dorothy Avilla, Governor

It was updated for the 100th Anniversary of Soroptimist in 2021 by Kris Chorbi, Governor 2020-2022, with the assistance of Past Governor Catherine (Kate) Burns and edited by Governor-elect Vicki Ham. Printed booklets were provided to members who attended the 2021 Virtual Founder Region Conference. Some of the terminology was updated to current standards and grammatical corrections were made from previous versions.



Charter.

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

WHEREAS, the persons whose names appear at the foot hereof, (each of them being a white woman, over the age of 18, engaged as proprietor, partner, corporate officer or manager of a legitimate business in the County of Alameda, State of California) having enrolled themselves as Charter Members of the Soroptimist Club (Oakland) and having agreed to conform to the By-Laws of said Club as adopted on the 26th day of September organized by electing the following officers, to wit, President, Violet Richardson,

Vice-President, Sue Ballard,
Treasurer, Nellie M. Drake,

Directors, Edna B. Kinard, Doris C. Tilton,
Gladys R. Leggett, Blanche Rollar, Adelaide Goddard.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the premises, the SOROPTIMIST CLUB, a corporation organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of California, DOETH HEREBY GRANT to the aforementioned officers and to their duly elected successors, sole and exclusive right to conduct a SOROPTIMIST CLUB in the City of Oakland, County of Alameda, State of California, together with all rights and privileges appertaining thereunto, subject to the condition that the active membership of said Club shall at no time fall below twenty-five, and to the further condition that should a State or National Association of Soroptimist Clubs be hereafter organized, the said Soroptimist Club (Oakland) shall be represented therein and shall comply with such by-laws as may be regularly adopted by said State or National Association.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF this Charter has been issued and executed by the Soroptimist Club, Incorporated, and the seal of said corporation affixed thereto, this 26th day of September 1921

SOROPTIMIST CLUB, INC.

per *Sue Ballard* Managing Director.

Charter Members of the Soroptimist Club (Oakland)

*Georgia C. Ormsby
Ella H. Taylor
Lydia H. Payne
Lillian Blake
Cassie C. Moreland, D.D.
Grace M. Wetterhall-Crowder
Adelaide Goddard
Sarah G. Hammond
Sarah I. Shuey M.D.
Blanche Rollar
Regina Grassel
Gladys H. Barnbollar
Doris C. Tilton
Gladys R. Leggett
Mae Green Lineker
Mary Hughes Patterson
Ruth L. Boyd
Nellie M. Drake
Hattie Lehnhardt
Sarah Ann Barrett*

*Sue L. Ballard
Sylvia G. Sternberg
Etta Herriem
Lillian Brownridge
Merbe Blewett
Louise M. Glasier
Pauline S. Musbauer, M.D.
Meta J. Erickson
Minnette A. Perkins
Anna Irlig
Hannah C. Coates
Maud M. McDonald
Lavinia Harris
Clara Ferguson
Mira C. Merriman
Anne F. Glover
Floise B. Cushing
Jane Sweet
Esther Hoerst
Fannie Brake*

*Florence I. Tilton
Myrtle B. Parker
Anna M. Gilchrist
Jane J. Flippen
Violet Richardson
Ethel Nourse
Melvina Rushmore
Florence M. Cohan
Alice Glaze
Adele R. Mayberry
Cathes C. Vivian
Undine Murdock
Gussie Meyer
Irina Randolph
Helen M. Gamble
Mabel Parker
Edna B. Kinard
Margaret Paige
Iva B. Young
Florence C. Burrell*

*Alma B. Thorne
Pauline G. Drennan, M.D.
Hilda Gascoigne-Coulter, D.S.C.
Ruth Simpson
Myrtle H. Lent
Helen B. Glenn
Carroll F. Greenleaf
Ida M. Theurer
Virginia Dieltl
Edna Brown
Ettie E. McCall
Emily D. Wilkie
Louise M. Gans
Waly M. Beltink
Isabel C. Jenkins
Madeleine Gibbons
Edna Sugden
Mabel F. Allen
Pearl Rogers
Rose A. Starr.*

This is a copy of the official charter of our very first Soroptimist club. It was known officially as the Soroptimist Club of Alameda County. You will note that the date mentioned in this charter of September 21 is different from the date we acknowledge as our official founding date. October 3, 1921, the date we acknowledge, was the date of the club's official charter party.

When reading the charter, please be advised that the word "white" in the first line of the first paragraph was struck in 1954. Corrections have not been made in this reprinting in order that you might have a legal, "original" copy of our Founding charter.

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The Birth of An Idea

by Stuart Morrow



I have been invited to relate in the Year Book of the San Francisco Soroptimist Club how the first of these clubs came to be started, and it may be of interest to Soroptimists to learn that it was an observation made to me by a woman that gave me the first suggestion.

In the summer of 1921, being at that time a resident of Oakland, California, I was asked to assist in the formation of an Optimist Club in the city. While thus engaged, I made a call upon one of the business colleges for the purpose of interesting its manager (whom I assumed to be a man) in becoming a member of the Optimist Club. The manager, however, turned out to be a woman. Upon my explaining to her the object of my call, she expressed her regret that it was not a club for business and professional women that was being organized, in view of the fact that business and professional men already had several organizations patterned after the Rotary Club, while the women did not have any at all.

The seed thus sown in my mind took root and germinated to such good purpose that it was only a short time afterwards that the Mother Soroptimist Club became an accomplished fact. Some years previous to this, and upon my own initiative, I had carried the Rotary Club idea across the Atlantic, and had successively and successfully organized Rotary Clubs of Dublin and Belfast in Ireland, of Glasgow and Edinburg in Scotland, and of Liverpool, Birmingham and London in England. The experience thus gained I found most helpful in starting Soroptimist Clubs, and I decided to aim always at quality rather than numbers, but at the same time never to leave a club until it had been placed upon an absolutely permanent basis, irrespective of how long a time it occupied or how inadequate the financial returns. I also resolved to cover first the leading cities of the world rather than limit my activities to any one state or group of states. The prestige that has thus accrued to the Soroptimist Club places it in the forefront of all women's organizations.

It is my earnest desire that the slogan, "Quality, Harmony, Service," may ever be the guiding principle of every organizer of a Soroptimist Club. Quality - as regards the high grade of its membership; Harmony - as between its members; and Service - not only to its members, but to the city, to the nation, and to that great cause of friendship between nations, upon which the future progress of civilization will undoubtedly depend.

- Reprinted from San Francisco club's 1925-26 Yearbook.



Hotel Oakland - the Rose Room was the location of the first (the 'preliminary') meeting of Soroptimist. May 31, 1921



Photo - The officers were installed and the charter presented at an inaugural banquet in the West Room of Hotel Oakland on Monday evening, October 3, 1921.



Charter Member Adelaide E. Goddard, one of the 'original eight' attendees of the "First Meeting of Members - Committee Luncheon" (Venus Cafe, June 21, 1921)

BEGINNING OF SOROPTIMISTS

The First Club

Stuart Morrow, a professional organizer with a number of other talents to his credit, organized the Soroptimist Club of Alameda County in 1921.

During a sojourn in the East Bay while attempting to form an Optimist club in Oakland, he called upon the "Parker-Goddard Secretarial School" in search of a candidate for membership. He explained his purpose for calling, talking several minutes. Presuming that the school was run by two men, he was surprised to learn that, instead, it was operated by women. He sought to excuse himself.

It was then that Adelaide E. Goddard commented, "When the men admit women as members of their service clubs, I would be interested."

This remark sparked an idea for Mr. Morrow. He called together several of the outstanding business women in Oakland to pursue the idea of forming a service club for women. The preliminary meeting was Tuesday, May 31, at 4 p.m. in the Rose Room of Hotel Oakland.

The chosen name -SOROPTIMIST - was coined from two Latin words: SOROR and OPTIMUS. **Soror-Sister:** the companion word to brother, symbol of the bond of comrades. **Optimus-The Best, the Highest Good:** from this word comes Optimism, the philosophy that all works out to promote the highest good. Hence it became interpreted to mean "**the Best, or the Highest Good for Women,**" and more popularly in recent years as "The Best for Women".

The Articles of Incorporation of the Soroptimist Club were filed by Stuart Morrow in Sacramento, California on July 1, 1921. Signed by himself, Sarah Jane Fearn, Oakland, and Cecilia Waldron Heaton, Berkeley, they specified the patriotic, civic, moral, social, personal purposes, and advantages for members; designated that clubs would be founded and operated throughout the United States, with the principal business transacted in Oakland, the terms for the corporation to exist being 25 years; and named himself as originator, founder and general manager of the corporation, therefore having 90 percent of the voting power, property rights, and interest of the corporation.

According to the fundamental principles of the movement, membership was to be open to but one woman in each classification of business and profession.

Meantime, formulation plans were going on. A "preliminary" meeting, held May 31 at 4 p.m. in the Rose Room of Hotel Oakland, brought little results, as evidenced by the fact that of the seven women present, none except Mrs. Gladys H. Barndollar, were on the charter member list; nor did they attend any of the other pre-charter meetings.

A second gathering, noted as the "First Meeting of Members - Committee Luncheon" - held in a "private room upstairs in the Venus Cafe on Tuesday, June 21, 1921 at 12:15 p.m.", proved successful, as eight of the nine women in attendance became the "leaders" that were needed.

Those eight and their classifications were:

- Mrs. Gladys H. Barndollar, Multigraph(ing) Letter Co., principal
- Mrs. Doris C. Tilton, Marinello Skin and Scalp Specialist, principal
- Mrs. Adelaide E. Goddard, Parker-Goddard Secretarial School, principal partner
- Miss. Grace M. Wetterhall, Real Estate, principal
- Mrs. Lillian Blake, Art Dealer, proprietor
- Mrs. Mary Hughes Patterson, Piano Teacher, principal
- Dr. Mae Green Lineker, Optometrist, principal
- Mrs. L. Blanche Roller, Corsets and Blouses, proprietor



*Although not the first to pay her dues, Mrs. Barndollar obviously was the "ringleader" among all of these members. Her name was on every attendance list, including the "preliminary" meeting. She was chair of the first reception committee, a member of the inaugural banquet committee and a "group" captain (groups formed to inspire attendance during beginning months of the club) for various periods of time. Later records show her as club president, 1931-32 and regional (district) secretary, 1932-34.

Photos, etchings from Soroptimist International of the Americas archives.

With the help of Mr. Morrow, these women outlined the plans for organizing the club. With assistance from Chambers of Commerce, Rotary clubs, school superintendents and others, Mr. Morrow gathered names of prominent business and professional women as potential members. A number of them were invited to luncheon meetings that were being held weekly at the Hotel Oakland; some were invited as speakers.

From this group and other women, whose names had been submitted by the original "eight", came the charter members of the club, including Violet Richardson (Ward), who we cherish today as our "Founder President". (She has told numerous times how she was invited as a speaker and later elected by breaking the tie-vote by voting for herself). She was the guest speaker on July 25; her name was added as a paid member on August 4 and as present on August 8 for the sixth regular luncheon meeting. The minutes of the election meeting don't show her "breaking the tie" but do say, "Upon a ballot being taken, Miss Violet Richardson was elected president of the club and Mrs. Sue L. Ballard, vice-president."

When 80 women, representing as many classifications of businesses and professions, had signed the charter, it was closed. Election of club officers took place on Monday, September 26, 1921 at the "first annual meeting", as mentioned the above, naming to serve with the president and vice president: Nellie M. Drake, treasurer, and directors, Miss Edna B. Kinard, Mrs. Doris Tilton, Mrs. Gladys R. Leggett (Penland), Mrs. Blanche Rollar and Mrs. Adelaide Goddard. (A newspaper clipping dated Aug. 24, but not giving the year, shows a photo of Mrs. Goddard, who had originally sparked the idea, as "corresponding secretary of the Soroptimist club, a woman's group organized on lines similar to the Rotary club.")

Dues were set at this annual meeting as \$1.50 per month. "Stuart Morrow, managing director, presided and was assisted in conducting the ballot by Mrs. Ormsby (who was admitted as a charter honorary member, making the charter list actually number 81), Mrs. Barndollar, Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Rollar, Mrs. Flippen and Mrs. Boyd. The secretary was to be appointed by the board of directors, which took place at its first meeting and named Mrs. Helena M. Gamble "at a salary of \$25 (twenty-five dollars) per month."

The officers were installed and the charter presented at an inaugural banquet in the West Room of Hotel Oakland on Monday evening, October 3, 1921. The new board held its first meeting immediately following the banquet. Thus, the first Soroptimist Club in the World was organized, with Miss Violet Richardson of Berkeley as its charter president.

The foregoing quotes are directly from a 7x8 1/4" Standard Diary, which was among two boxes of materials from the personal files of Helena Gamble, who later became federation historian, "for the remainder of her life." In Stuart Morrow's own handwriting, this small black book records all of the regular luncheons, including the annual meeting, that were held prior to the inaugural dinner, the record of payment of dues by the members, verifying the 81-member charter list, including three associates and the one honorary; minutes of the election and charter meetings and the board meeting following.

Along with this book are letters to and from the organizer and his assistant and copies of much of the correspondence that went toward setting up both the 1926 meeting in Oakland and the 1927 sessions in San Francisco. They explain his absence from both of these meetings.

Early historians of most of the first 230 clubs in the federation (some very brief and others in good detail) are among these documents, which also reveal many of the problems, disputes, pleasures and accomplishments of the early Soroptimists.

These artifacts were given by Helena Gamble to Harriet P. Tyler, charter member and past president of the Soroptimist Club of San Francisco and past federation secretary and president (1942-44). She passed them to Southwestern's past regional director, Alta Hengy of Oroville, who in turn gave them to Past Governor Matie Barker in 1970, after learning how enthused she was over the then forthcoming Golden Jubilee and the history of Southwestern Region. "I've tried to give them to others," Past Director Alta told the then governor, "but no one seemed to place the value on them that I feel you will." ...You may well believe she was right, as they have proved to be some of the most valuable information available in writing this early history of the Soroptimist organization.

On October 10, at noon, just a week following the installation ceremony, the first official meeting was held. President Violet commented in her president's report, "We began and closed on time and have continued the practice throughout our charter year."

During that first year 22 new members were admitted and 14 charter members were removed from the rolls, (one by death). The fundamental principle of classification was maintained: membership was open to only one woman in each classification of business or profession. Attendance rules were enforced. Bulletin notices kept members informed and reminded of programs for each meeting. Publicity was good. The club's constitution and bylaws, as drafted by Eloise B. Cushing, Emily D. Wilkie and Dr. Pauline Nusbaumer, were accepted on November 21, 1921.

When first organized, the Soroptimists met as a luncheon or friendship club, according to the first president's report, but not for long. President Violet was presiding at an inter-service council meeting, when Monroe Deutsch, vice-president of the University of California, Berkeley, suggested that these clubs (Rotary, Kiwanis, Soroptimist and Optimist) should exist for service, rather than merely for friendship.

From that day on, SERVICE was the KEY word for SOROPTIMISTS. The stated purposes of the club then were "to foster the ideal of service as the basis of all worthy enterprise and to increase the efficiency of its members in pursuit of their occupations by broadening their interests in the social, business and civic affairs of the community through an association of women representing diverse vocations."

The first president's report further reflects that the projects during the first year included a "Save the Redwoods" campaign, a heating plant for the Rescue Home, establishment of a vocational guidance bureau in cooperation with the YWCA, which later was made a branch of the California Employment Service, and care of three destitute families at Christmas.

Since women from cities other than Oakland were invited to membership (8 or 10 from Berkeley, one from Alameda, all others from Oakland), the club was called the Soroptimist Club of Alameda County. In 1928, when the Berkeley club was chartered, most of the Berkeley women who had been members of the Alameda County club had been transferred to Berkeley, including Charter President Violet Richardson (Ward). The Alameda County Club then became the Soroptimist Club of Oakland, also known at the "Mother" club.

The idea of Soroptimism (a term no longer recognized) grew rapidly. Mr. Morrow traveled extensively to organize other clubs. The "Founder Club" was a good pattern for him to follow, both in organization and bylaws.

The San Francisco club was chartered by him, March 6, 1922, followed in the same year by clubs in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. Having "personally carried Rotary across the ocean to other lands several years previously," at the very beginning of organizing the Alameda County club, Mr. Morrow had visions of an international Soroptimist organization.

It was impossible for him to do all the organizing alone. So, on July 21, 1922, a memorandum of agreement was signed appointing Violet Richardson, Dr. Fannie Williams and Oda Faulconer, presidents of the Soroptimist Clubs of Alameda County, San Francisco and Los Angeles respectively, as directors of the Soroptimists Club, Inc., for the purpose of organizing Soroptimist clubs within California. It also fixed initiation fees for new club charter members at \$15, with one-half going to him, one-third to the club, the remaining \$2.50 going to establish an extension fund.

Because of pressure of family and employment, these women were unable to travel to any great extent, so they hired Helena Gamble, a charter member of the Alameda County club who also was a professional organizer and campaign manager, to do the organizing of clubs within the state, which she did until 1927.

This freed Mr. Morrow to organize more clubs on the East Coast and to travel to Europe, where he organized the Greater London, England, and Paris, France clubs in 1924. When the club was organized in London, it became the social rage for the season; the charter meeting was attended by 250, including members of the Royal family.

A May 19, 1926 agreement between Mr. Morrow, as managing director, and Mrs. Gamble denoted her as field organizer to develop clubs outside of California (at least two each year, herself), train appointees to do the work in each state and report not less than once a month, in full detail, to the managing director. It set a \$20 charter member initiation fee, of which \$10 would go to the field organizer for her expenses; \$2.50 to the managing director, \$2.50 to a sub-organizer and \$5 to the individual club's organization expenses.

In a letter to the first federation president, Helena stated that when she "arranged with the three Soroptimist presidents to organize clubs in 1923, they felt Mr. Morrow had gotten too much money", so she organized within California for \$7.50, one-third going each to Mr. Morrow, the local club's treasury and to her for all expenses, including traveling and hotels ... a small sum, considering "that I was one year organizing the San Jose Club and made a trip there every week, you can readily see that it cost Helena several hundred dollars."

The First Leaders

Edna Brown:

Classification: Life Insurance

Join/Date of first dues payment: September 1, 1921

Violet Richardson (Ward):

Classification: Physical Education

Join/Date of first dues payment: August 1, 1921

Eloise Cushing:

Classification: Attorney-at-law

Join/Date of first dues payment: July 1, 1921

Emily Wilke:

Classification: Copy Editor University Press

Join/Date of first dues payment: September 1, 1921

Gladys Leggett Penland:

Classification: Insurance Broker

Join/Date of first dues payment: June 1, 1921

Sarah Hammond:

Classification: Cafeteria

Join/Date of first dues payment: June 1, 1921

Helena Gamble:

Classification: Campaign Manager

Join/Date of first dues payment: August 1, 1921

Cassie Moreland, D.O.:

Classification: Osteopathic Physician

Join/Date of first dues payment: June 1, 1921

Isabel Jenkins:

Classification: Jewelry

Join/Date of first dues payment: September 1, 1921



1922—Violet Richardson is the driver, Nellie Drake (whose catering business the car is in front of) is in the passenger seat, and an unidentified person is referred to as “the princess” with the elaborate headdress.



The First Regions

As more clubs were organized on the West Coast, there grew a need to meet jointly and develop programs that pertained to all clubs. Up to this time, each had operated independently. Keen interest also was developing in Mr. Morrow's early "visions". The time was nearing for considering federating into a State, National and International congress of Soroptimist clubs. For the best interests of the members and of the individual groups, he was petitioned by several of the clubs to call a convention for that purpose. Through a circular letter and questionnaire, combined with a pre-holiday "Season's Greetings", the keenest interest was found to be among the west coast clubs.

Therefore, with the consent of Mr. Morrow, the first called west coast meeting of Soroptimist clubs was held at Hotel Oakland, California, on August 25, 1926. It opened with Dr. Luella Swauger, president of the "Mother" club, in the chair. Mr. Morrow was not present, although he had been expected to attend. He asked that Violet Richardson Ward represent him in the meeting.

Another interesting sidelight, a direct quote from the letter dated June 24, 1926, from field organizer Helena Gamble to Stuart Morrow, in Detroit, Michigan, in which was enclosed a letter for his approval, which he gave, calling the conference in Oakland on August 25, 1926 at 11 o'clock:

"Violet was married last Wednesday, June 16th, and has gone to the High Sierras for her honeymoon. Her sister, the widow, was married the same night ... Does it not seem funny, the first president of the "Mother" club, the first president of the Los Angeles club and the first president of the San Jose club have all married this year?"

Clubs on the Pacific Coast, in order of their chartering, were: Alameda County, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Long Beach, San Jose, all in California; Seattle, Washington; Portland, Oregon; Spokane, Washington and Vancouver, British Columbia. Minutes show 20 delegates representing 700 members in these 10 clubs.

Discussion at this first meeting centered on:

1. The need for a federation
2. The international nature of the organization
3. The desire to own the name 'Soroptimist'
4. Miscellaneous club problems, such as classifications and types of memberships, payment of dues, need for a parliamentarian, proposed support of a National Girls' Week.

Five major committees were appointed: Mae Carvell, Los Angeles, was named chair of a committee to obtain from Mr. Morrow a proposition designating the amount of money he would accept to give up all rights to Soroptimist clubs. Violet Richardson Ward, as his representative, was asked to communicate with him to secure a definite proposition and to report it to the committee.

Eloise B. Cushing, Alameda County, was to chair the committee to contact all clubs and obtain an expression of their sentiments over purchase of the name "Soroptimist". Mrs. G.M. Starr, Portland, Oregon, was to head a committee on constitution and bylaws. Mrs. Ruby Barnham, Long Beach, was to chair a committee to determine costs (ways and means) and check back with the clubs.

Northern, Central and Southern area representatives Iris Lutz, Portland, Mrs. Earle, Sacramento, and Gertrude Maynard, Los Angeles, were selected to arrange for and carry out the second conference (actually a continuation of this meeting) early in 1927 and to select the time and place. Mary Dry Boldemann and Florence Curry, of San Francisco and San Jose respectively, were unanimously authorized to continue in their present capacities of chair and secretary and to open the 1927 conference.

At this second conference, held in San Francisco June 28-30, 1927, Mae Carvell, charter member of the Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles, moved that "For the purpose of the election of a regional director at this convention, the geographical divisions be specified in the tentative constitution and code, i.e.,: Northwestern, Southwestern, North Central, South Central, Southern, North Atlantic, South Atlantic, and New England."

Thus, with unanimous approval, Southwestern Region was formed, along with the seven others that were specific by name and by the states that would comprise them.

Minutes of this 1927 meeting further report that Jennie Todd, Alameda County charter member, was elected the first Southwestern regional director.

These and other actions were unanimously approved by the International Federation of Soroptimist Clubs, as it became known, due to one club being in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

The basic principles of regional structure and the comprehensive laws written at that first meeting are the foundation of what Soroptimist is today, the largest international classified service organization for women in the world.

Purchase of Name "Soroptimist"

As a result of the work of all the committees appointed, and plans that were laid at the first meeting of the west coast clubs, success was attained, but not easily.

Aimed at forming an international Soroptimist organization during the planned June 1927 conference, inquiries were sent to Mr. Morrow seeking his demands for selling his property rights and vested interests in the Soroptimist Club, Inc.

In a letter from Houston, Texas, dated May 30, to Mrs. Mary Dry Boldemann, conference presiding officer, in a disturbed tone over his circumstances, Mr. Morrow wrote: "In considering this question, I have had to bear in mind that I have given up my time exclusively for the last six years to founding the Soroptimist clubs and to the organization and development of its various branches in the United States, Canada, England, and France and that this work has up to this time provided merely my actual living and traveling expenses, beyond which I have not even one dollar to show for my six years work ... Apparently, either from a per capita tax or from the purchase of my interests for cash must come any profit accruing to me in the entire matter ... therefore, it appears fitting that I should submit two offers, one in per capita tax, the other for cash, which are as follows:

"(1) For the surrender of all my rights, title and interest in the Soroptimist club, I will accept a per capita tax of one dollar per annum to continue during my life (I am now seventy-one years of age) obligating myself to establish, maintain and conduct in the city of Los Angeles an office as headquarters of the international association. Or, I will accept a per capita tax of fifty cents per annum for the same period, but without any obligation.

"(2) For the surrender of all my rights, title, and interest in the Soroptimist club, I will accept the sum of six thousand dollars in cash."

After the discussion at the June 1927 conference in San Francisco, a compromise settlement was approved in the amount of \$5,500, to be met before August 1 (only 30 days hence). Eight western U.S.A. clubs underwrote the purchase fund: Alameda County, San Francisco, San Jose, Seattle, Portland, Spokane, Sacramento, and Los Angeles.

From a history of the San Francisco club, written October 30, 1931, comes, "San Francisco had the honor and privilege of being one of those eight clubs. Our pro rata was \$619.75, which we had to raise during July, our vacation month. This was done by borrowing from two of our members. These loans were repaid with interest, the last payments being made in January 1928. Every Soroptimist club on this continent indicated its intention to share in the purchase price; the European clubs sent a group check as proof of their good faith."

From San Jose's history, written this year, comes, "Our proportionate expense amounted to \$389.50, against which we recorded several small refunds the following year, from monies given by the other clubs participating in addition to the original eight."

Morrow lived 10 years past the date of settlement with the Soroptimists.

American Federation Formed

At a meeting held June 4-5, 1928, in Washington, D.C., the American Federation of Soroptimist Clubs was formed, with two-year terms and a convention each biennium. There were 31 delegates from 14 clubs within the United States and one in Canada, who took part in this action. They were from five districts with a total of 15 clubs, of which seven were from Southwestern district (region).

It is in order to state here, that, since Soroptimism began in Alameda County, since Southwestern Region was the home of four of the first ten clubs - Alameda County, San Francisco, San Jose, and Sacramento - and since the first vice president, Jennie Todd, was a charter member of the "Mother" club, the region's history is inseparable from that of the Soroptimist Federation of the America's, Inc. Therefore, it is important that the story of Southwestern Region include the early history of Soroptimism.

At this first Federation convention in Washington, D.C., the "Soroptimist Emblem" was adopted. Its story, too, is sacred to Southwestern Region.

The Soroptimist Emblem



Mrs. Anita Houts Thompson, founder member, whose Soroptimist classification was "designing and engraving", submitted an emblem design, in competition with others, which was adopted as the official Soroptimist emblem. This was our official emblem, used on all Soroptimist pins and Soroptimist stationery, until SIA created the new federation logo.

In searching through the archives while preparing for the 50th Anniversary activities and history, it was learned quite by accident that Anita Houts Thompson's grandson resides in Reno, Nevada. Doris O'Connor, past Reno club president, was on her way to her club's installation when a young man (seeing her pin) approached her with great enthusiasm about Soroptimism. "My grandmother designed the Soroptimist emblem," he said. Doris couldn't believe her ears. But later, when he presented her with a faded envelope of old clippings and letters, she knew that she had found gold.

Among the letters was one written to Helena Gamble by Anita Thompson, which reads in part: "Jennie Todd, then our Alameda County president, appointed a committee of three to design something reflecting our aims and ideals. As the writer's classification was that of designing and engraving, the other committee members left the matter to me".

"Needless to say that in the work of love, I put forth my best efforts to produce a worthy design. After much thought, and with the assistance of an artist to make concrete my ideas, the design was ready for submission. It met with unanimous approval of our local club and was sent to Washington D.C., to take its place with other competitive designs. There again, it met with unanimous approval and was adopted officially".

"The design, as you know, represents womanhood with her arms uplifted in a gesture of freedom and acceptance of the responsibilities of the best and highest good. The leaves and the acorns represent the strength of our organization and the leaves of the laurel typify victory and achievement."

From Juneau, Alaska, Martha Edwards, Soroptimist club president, wrote, "We are proud possessors of the original mold of the Soroptimist emblem. The original mold of the plaque was sculptured by the late Victor Alonza Lewis of Juneau, nationally known artist. His daughter, Mrs. Chairman Gross, a former resident of Juneau, found the mold in her father's effects and presented it to the Soroptimist Club of Juneau in May, 1950".

According to other documents among historic files, this emblem was selected from among 18 entries.

The story of the emblem, as interpreted by Patricia Calhoun, has been reproduced and printed at all levels in Soroptimist literature. Many clubs and members have in their possession parchment copies of the narrative on the emblem, which had been signed and presented to them by Helena Gamble, founder member who had attained the distinction of being named Federation historian for life.

The Soroptimist Pledge

The search for a Soroptimist 'creed' began six months prior to the 1930 convention. The delegates chose to defer making a decision for another six months so that each club could receive copies of the proposed creeds to make an informed decision. Ethel Knight Pollard, director of Midwestern/South Atlantic regions, noted "we want a creed that we can use and work by and live by, not one that will simply be printed and stuck away to get dusty and have no use to us."

Six months later the federation chose as its creed a pledge that simply stated the ideals of the organization. The pledge was written in 1927 by Candis Nelson, a charter member of the Seattle, Washington club. The pledge was set to music in 1947 by Dorothy Miller Dunlap, a member of Huntington Beach, California club. The setting was adopted as the official musical arrangement of the pledge at the 1950 convention in Seattle, Washington - the city where the Soroptimist Pledge was adopted.

Soroptimist Pledge

I pledge allegiance to Soroptimist
and to the ideals for which it stands.

The Sincerity of Friendship,
The Joy of Achievement,
The Dignity of Service,
The Integrity of Profession,
The Love of Country.

I will put forth my greatest effort
to Promote, Uphold, and Defend these
Ideals, for a Larger Fellowship in Home,
in Society, In Business, for Country and for God.

The Soroptimist Grace

For the bread upon the board,
make us truly thankful Lord.
For each person here,
whom our hearts hold close and dear.
For this day oh Lord above,
now accept our grateful love.

Soroptimist Symphony

Words and music by Dorothy Vale Kissinger

(Soroptimist Club of Mesa, Arizona)

If I can serve another's need;
If I can be a friend in deed;
If I can lessen someone's pain;
Always be glad to share my gain;
Then I will know joy's meaning true;
Found in achieving work to do;
And I will know the reason why,
Soroptimist am I.

If I can answer freedom's call;
Striving to be a friend to all;
If I have love for my own land;
Yet to far shores hold out my hand;
Then fellowship I'll truly share;
When for the whole wide world I care;
And I will know it's fine and free,
Soroptimist to be.

If all the best I will defend;
Yet to the needy courage lend;
If I will bless my home with love,
And grateful be to God above;
Then life's true meaning I will know;
In understanding I will grow;
And in humility I'll pray,
Soroptimist to stay.

Words and Music by
DOROTHY VALE KISSINGER
 (Soroptimist Club of Mesa, Arizona)

Moderato

Musical notation for the piano introduction, consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef) in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

Vocal line and piano accompaniment for the first system. The vocal line includes three verses of lyrics.

1. If — I can serve an -
 2. If — I can an - swer
 3. If — all the best I

Vocal line and piano accompaniment for the second system. The vocal line includes lyrics for the first two verses.

oth - er's need; If — I can be a friend in
 free - dom's call, Striv - ing to be a friend to
 will de - fend; Yet — to the need - y cour - age

Vocal line and piano accompaniment for the third system. The vocal line includes lyrics for the third verse.

deed; If — I can less - en some - one's pain,
 all; If — I have love for my own land,
 lend; If — I will bless my home with love,

Al - ways be glad to share my gain; Then I will
 Yet to far shores hold out my hand; Then fel - low -
 And grate - ful be to God a - bove; Then life's true

know joy's mean - ing true; Found in a - chiev - ing
 ship I'll tru - ly share; When for the whole wide
 mean - ing I will know; In un - der - stand - ing

work to do; And I will know the rea - son why Sor -
 world I care; And I will know it's fine and free Sor -
 I will grow; And in hu - mil - i - ty I'll pray Sor -

op - ti - mist am I.
 op - ti - mist to be.
 op - ti - mist to stay.

Spectacular Growth

From the beginning, Southwestern Region accepted challenges that extend Soroptimism and promote its ideals and has usually "led the action".

At the formation convention in Washington, D.C., in 1928, Federation President Ruby Lee Minar offered an award to the director whose district organized the greatest number of clubs. During that first biennium, 1928-1930, eleven new clubs were organized, eight of which were in Southwestern District. Mae Hutchins, Southwestern District Director, won the award of \$100 in gold coins.

Blanche Edgar, Sacramento club charter member, served as Southwestern Regional (district) Director in 1930-1932. She also cherishes another honor - the record of having helped organize 103 clubs, some outside of Southwestern Region (including Tokyo, Japan). Hence, for years, Blanche has been known as "Mrs. Extension" and identified by her slogan, which she loves to yell, "TimbeR-R-R !!!"

Largely due to "Mrs. Extension's" efforts, by 1951, Southwestern Region had grown to 118 clubs and to 131 by the end of that biennium (June 30, 1952). Division was inevitable and so decided by convention action, July 1952, with 67 clubs to the south making up Pacific region and the remaining 64 in Northern California, northern Nevada and Hawaii retaining the name "Southwestern".

Steady growth has continued, with only slight recessions in membership from time to time. Business or growth developments caused a loss of four clubs during the years, but two were gained by a boundary change that added all of Nevada to the region, and three new clubs were added, therefore on October 3, 1971, Southwestern Region proudly listed 134 clubs, making it the largest region both in clubs and membership in the federation.

Beginning of Soroptimist International Association

In 1927, Soroptimist clubs from the United States and Canada met in San Francisco and formed an International Federation. Through the constitution and bylaws, they had attempted to cover all Soroptimist clubs and set up a National Council for each country, thus allowing for growth.

Hopes were that this was a step toward fulfilling Mr. Morrow's original vision of a world-wide Soroptimist organization. The first meeting of the International Federation was set for June 1928 in Washington, D.C.

However, shortly before the 1928 convention, word was received from Miss Amy Kerr Sander that the overseas clubs did not feel bound by the 1927 constitution and that they had formed a European Federation, of which she was president. She and other overseas representatives attended the 1928 convention as observers.

It was decided in Washington, D.C., to discard the 1927 constitution and bylaws, identify that meeting as "Preliminary International Meeting of Soroptimist Clubs" and to organize an International Association and a separate American Federation, including clubs of the United States and Canada.

The new International Constitution adopted in 1928 said that membership would consist of all Soroptimist federations (two in existence). For each federation there would be a representative body composed of the presidents and two vice-presidents and contact would be made through that body. International conventions were to be held quadrennially, beginning in 1930.

That year-1930-became the most eventful year of Soroptimism to that date: the first biennial convention of the American Federation in Philadelphia, June 2-5, was followed by the International convention in London, June 14-18, attended by representatives from the United States, Canada, England, Scotland, Holland, Belgium, France, Germany, Austria, and Italy.

In 1934, a third federation, the Federation of Great Britain and Ireland, came into being.

Another important change came at the 1938 convention in Atlantic City, N.J. with an amendment to elect a liaison secretary as a tie between the federation presidents and international committee chairs. Elizabeth Hawes, London, England, was elected and served until 1948, when she retired. Dr. M.M. Garot of Denmark took her place at the Harrogate, England Convention and served until 1952.

Growth of Soroptimism, SIA's activity in new international organizations, (such as the United Nations), and a desire to realize social projects, made evident the need for a permanent international board with a president and constitution. A permanent board was elected and a constitution adopted at the Copenhagen Convention in 1952.

Thus Soroptimist International Association, as it is today, came into its rightful place in the Soroptimist organization and Mrs. Gertrude Huitt, an attorney living in East St. Louis, Illinois, a past president of the Soroptimist Club of St. Louis and a past American Federation president, became SIA's first president.

Redwood Memorial Grove

Before the Southwestern Region subdivided into 3 regions, including Founder Region; under the direction of Southwestern Region Governor Ruth Thomas Heitfeld of Sacramento, the Redwood Grove in Prairie Creek State Park was purchased by the Soroptimist clubs of Southwestern Region. The grove, consisting of 40 acres of old growth redwood, fir, and other species of trees, was purchased through the Save the Redwoods League for \$10,000. The clubs donated \$5,000 with the State of California matching that amount.

Club members in the region made voluntary contributions toward the purchase of the grove, and at the Southwestern Region Conference, presided over by Governor Ruth, there remained a balance of \$600 yet to be paid. Soroptimist International of Eureka sent a rhododendron plant to the conference to be raffled. At the Sunday morning breakfast, chances were sold, and the balance was raised with a surplus given to the Southwestern Region Fellowship Fund.

The grove was officially dedicated on August 14, 1949 by Past Governor Ruth and Governor Emily Zeigler. Many Soroptimists from throughout the region attended the service.

In 1951 death claimed a member of Soroptimist International of Eureka. The idea was conceived to plant a rhododendron in her memory. For a number of years one native rhododendron was planted by the California State Division of Beaches and Parks. The practice was later discontinued for the rhododendrons were not growing in the deep shade of the grove.

In 1958 Soroptimist International of Eureka purchased and had installed the bronze box and door, adorned with the Soroptimist insignia and an etched rhododendron spray. In October 1958 the first Redwood Memorial Grove Service was held at the grove. The names of 154 deceased members were placed in the niche on plasticized scrolls.

It was soon after this first service that the second Sunday in June was established as the official date for the Annual Redwood Memorial Grove Service.

In 1969 Willfred Keene donated \$50 in memory of his wife to Soroptimist International of Alameda. The Save the Redwoods League and the California State Parks officials had a rustic bench carved from a redwood log placed in memory of Eleanor Keene.

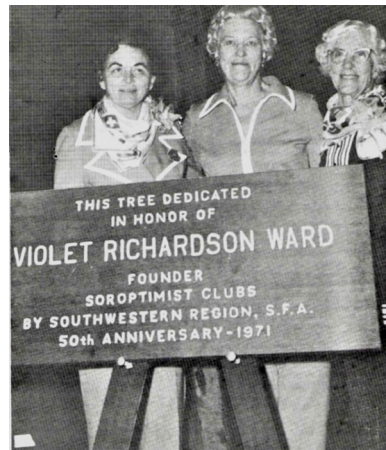
On June 13, 1971, at a special dedication, a tall stately redwood tree within the grove was named to honor the first president of Soroptimist, Violet Richardson Ward. Many Soroptimists were in attendance at this Fiftieth Anniversary event as well as representatives from Save the Redwoods League and the State Parks.

At the time of the division of Southwestern Region into three regions in 1976, the Redwood Memorial Grove was allotted to Founder Region. The accumulated funds were transferred to be maintained as a capital repair fund for the maintenance of the Grove and the granite marker.

In 2004, following significant malicious damage to the monument, it was found necessary to close the niche permanently and maintain the list of names of deceased members since 1958 in a perpetual Memorial Book. There are nearly 2000 names inscribed there.

As stated in Founder Region Procedures, the Chair of the Redwood Memorial Grove has always been a member of Soroptimist International of Eureka.

Catherine (Kate) Burns, Past Governor of Founder Region (1978-1980) has had the Redwood Memorial Book in her possession and has kept it up to date since 1976. In addition she has served as Chair intermittently since 1980 and has been Chair since 1995. The photos which appear on this page were shared by Kate and are kept in the Memorial Book. In June 2017, a beautiful bench was placed in the Grove, with a plaque honoring Kate for her years of service supporting the Founder Region Redwood Memorial Grove and the Memorial Service.



Violet Richardson Ward, Founder President of Soroptimist's first club in Alameda County, at the podium during the ceremony dedicating a tree in her name at the Redwood Memorial Grove in 1971. Seated to the right is Catherine (Jordan) Burns, President, Soroptimist International of Eureka 1970-1971. No one is seated on the platform with Catherine because all who were to be seated there wanted to be out in the audience where they could see Violet as she spoke!

Kate Burns reading from the Memorial Book.



Founder President Violet Richardson Ward enjoying a private moment with "her" tree in 1971, the 50th Anniversary of Soroptimist.



The 1920's

The Soroptimist clubs' membership represented a vital cross-section of community thinking and planning. Service projects, through the years, cannot be recorded without relating the clubs' activities to the influential events of their communities, the nation, and the world.

Clubs that came into being during the "Roaring 20's" experienced the Stock Market Crash and the resultant financial disaster. Service was rendered to club members who experienced financial loss so they could re-establish their businesses as well as meet their immediate family needs. It is true that Soroptimists suffered disaster, however, many clubs initiated service projects that have paved the way for greater things.

Our first club reported supporting a "Save the Redwood League" project and the establishment of a vocational guidance bureau in cooperation with Oakland YWCA. Today this bureau is a part of the California Employment Service. Sacramento planted a "mile of trees" along the Sacramento-Stockton highway and furnished flowers for hospital rooms. San Jose established scholarships for college students and provided camperships for children. These projects were still in existence during the 1970s.

Different was the project of the Watsonville club in the 1920s - with its young, "either in body or spirit," membership singing and putting on skits when visiting other Soroptimist groups.

The 1930's

The '30s ushered in the "depression" years which were hard on Soroptimists as well as the public at large. Soroptimists turned their efforts to providing clothing, medical supplies, dental and shoe funds, milk lines for children and food for the needy at home and abroad.

It was during this time that Hitler was named chancellor and was busy creating a formidable machine, which was ultimately to affect people all over the world. Even with war clouds hanging overhead, and despite the depression, Soroptimists were rendering service to their communities to make them better places in which to live. Throughout the region, scholarships, camperships and student loan funds were initiated. The Napa club gave "packages for patients" in the Napa County Infirmary; it was so successful that it has continued into the '70s. San Jose had a project "Say It With Roses", and planted a plot in the City Rose Garden with a rose from every State in the Union. It grows today.

Other history-making projects were:

Berkeley sponsored a "Women's Driving School" and was a force in having a center-line painted on highways; Eureka assisted the W.P.A. in locating employment for women; Richmond assisted the physically and mentally handicapped; Marysville-Yuba City provided a Christmas pageant with music, carols and scenes of camels and wisemen on an island in the city lake; Fresno provided funds for needy college girls; Modesto furnished lunches for school children; Visalia supplied clothes for high school seniors; and Monterey spent time restoring dolls and distributing them to needy children.

The 1940's

In the '40s service efforts were turned toward immediate war work, as shocked America reeled under the devastating bombing of Pearl Harbor. Red Cross, Service Chest, High Sea Gifts, USO, and YMCA work was undertaken with redoubled efforts. Soroptimists, uncomplaining, took up unaccustomed jobs to keep the ships, tanks, planes and supplies rolling, while in their hearts were silent hopes and a fervent prayer for the return of their loved ones. Ambulances and station wagons bearing the Soroptimist name were transporting military men from bases to hospitals. Soroptimists manned USO Community Canteens and Lookout Stations.

The Honolulu Club headed the evacuation immediately after the Pearl Harbor disaster. Hospital equipment of all kind was donated. There were "Packages for England", "Bundles for Holland", Chinese Relief, (AFA fund for Mule Back Nurses of China) hundreds of wheelchairs donated to returning veterans, and projects too many to name.

At long last the tide of events began to turn in 1944, as America took heart with the Normandy Invasion and the Battle for Leyte. Southwestern Soroptimists gave freely of their "Founder Pennies" to a fund (first known as the Madame Noel Fund) for the purpose of re-establishment of clubs in war-torn Europe. Events moved fast in 1945 - the Yalta conference and the Charter adoption in San Francisco in June; the surrender of Japan in August 1945.

The happier years from 1946-1950 saw the club activities turn quickly to peace. Scholarship programs increased in number. The Regional Fellowship Program began in 1948 for women graduate students at universities. It was in 1948, too, that Southwestern Region purchased a Redwood Grove of forty acres in Prairie Creek area, on Highway 101, north of Eureka.

Club service went forward with the '40s. Santa Rosa instituted the Sonoma County Fair nursery for children from three to six years of age (care of children when parents attended the fair). It operated, which operated for many years with Soroptimist volunteer supervision. Vallejo collected and shipped English language classics to Russia. Sacramento furnished musical instruments for a Lincoln School band. Modesto and Napa sponsored youth centers. Berkeley and Visalia sponsored Girl Scouts. Fresno sponsored a midsummer formal ball for servicemen, and Eureka became known for its dental fund.

The 1950's

During the early '50s Armistice talks bogged down in Korea and Southwestern Region was "bogging down" under torrential rains. Severe losses were felt in Marysville-Yuba City, Santa Cruz, Humboldt and Sonoma Counties. Soroptimists were on the spot with housing, food, clothing and medical supplies for flood victims. Again, Soroptimists helped Soroptimists. After the floods, the mountain areas were devastated by forest fires. Soroptimists again were prepared to give service.

A new Southwestern Region project was established - the Eye Bank. Hundreds of Soroptimists have willed their eyes so "others may see".

The Space Age began in 1957 as the Russians launched their Sputniks - with and without dogs. Soroptimists were busy keeping their feet on the ground and were busy accomplishing their earthly missions. Forty-six clubs were chartered. "Soroptimist Only" service projects were given emphasis.

Clubs making headlines in their communities were: Santa Rosa for sponsoring the Sonoma County Heart and Sonoma County Nurses associations; Vallejo, Napa, Albany, Turlock, Chico, Manteca, Fresno, Marysville, Yuba City, Placerville, Redding, South Lake Tahoe, and Santa Rosa gave hundreds of dollars to hospitals for equipment; San Jose, West of Twin Peaks and Richmond supported Sheltered Workshops; Reno and San Francisco gave resuscitators for the Fire departments; St. Helena built a swimming pool; East Oakland sponsored a school for mentally disabled children; and clubs throughout the region sponsored Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, Brownies and Blue Birds. During this decade Fresno was given the Woman's Home Companion Award for their "Girl of the Month" project.

The 1960's

In the 60's, the nation witnessed John F. Kennedy's successful bid for the Presidency and his tragic assassination. During this time our nation committed itself to reach the moon by 1970, and Soroptimists pledged themselves to work with and for youth. The "S" Club movement took hold; the Soroptimist Foundation Youth Citizenship, (now the "Identifying Project") was begun; and the "Girl of the Month" project increased in numbers. The year 1966 brought involvement in the war in Vietnam, and the nation was conscious of the increase in the use of narcotics. Prevention of "Drug Use and Abuse" became the target for Soroptimist Service.

In 1969 we witnessed student wrangling, walks and riots - women's styles reached a new "high" for hemlines, and men's hair reached a new complexity. The young were enchanted with the 'Hippie' movement and style. The Drug Abuse problem became a household worry. It was during this decade that our government census told us that our "life span" was longer, and that earlier retirement was presenting the nation with the necessity of providing activities for our Senior Citizens. With all of this going on in the world, Soroptimists were "Leading the Action" in their communities through various service activities.

Throughout the region Senior Citizens clubs, Drop-in centers and recreation programs became common-place. Antioch, Healdsburg, Albany, Sacramento, Taft, Davis, San Jose, Pittsburg, Napa, Fallon, Monterey, Modesto, Lodi, and others sponsored Senior groups and Drop-in centers. The Redding club made history when it pledged \$70,000 for the Senior Citizens Center of Shasta County. The project was completed with the Soroptimists furnishing 70 percent of the labor and materials, and the balance of the funds was supplied by the SFA Foundation, the first and only club to be granted Foundation money under the club assistance program.

Other outstanding service projects during this time have been: Visalia furnished park playground equipment and the City of Visalia named the park "Soroptimist Park"; Fresno built a "Chapel in Storyland", located in Fresno's Redding Park; Concord built a "Spray Painting Center" at Diablo Therapy Center; El Pinablo established a youth teen center known as "The Steeple" where Soroptimists listened and young people talked, a project to provide communication between youth, their parents, and adults; San Francisco West of Twin Peaks purchased an artificial kidney machine; Sacramento sponsored and furnished the "Concillio Library" in the Mexican-American area; Auburn had a "Pennies for Pines" project and planted 6,800 trees after the "big turn"; St. Helena established and supervised a teen center; clubs assisted Alaska earthquake and Crescent City tidal wave victims; many clubs contributed park and playground equipment; hospital equipment and furnishings of all kinds were purchased and donated; visual and hearing equipment for pre-school children were popular service endeavors; beauty contests were sponsored throughout the region; Placerville supported a music camp; and Woodland was awarded the "Lady Bird Johnson Certificate" for helping to make their city the cleanest in the U.S.; Yerington and Hawthorne-Babbit sponsored "Dog Clinics" and assisted in vaccinating dogs.

The 1970's

As the Ecology movement shifted into high gear in the '70s, Soroptimists added emphasis to planning for their Golden Anniversary in 1971 by serving mankind. Hundreds of dollars were sent to Peru to assist earthquake victims. Concord established a "Meals on Wheels" project and won community and regional recognition.

In 1970 as the war in Vietnam de-escalated, Southwestern Soroptimists were busy escalating club projects to become "Golden Jubilee Clubs" to celebrate the 50th Anniversary. Time and money were contributed toward building a SFA float, "Seeing Eye to Eye" for the Tournament of Roses Parade, and on January 1, 1971, in Pasadena, California, the name "Soroptimist" was televised around the world to usher in our Golden Jubilee year.

At the 1971 Spring Regional Conference in San Francisco, Southwestern Region, with love and affection, unveiled a Bronze Portrait of charter President Violet Richardson Ward. Present in the audience were Violet, "Friend Husband" Stanley, son John, and SFA President Katherine Stinson. Mr. Ono de Ruyter, the artist, captured in the portrait the wonderful face and character of our Founder President Violet. On June 13, 1971, a special Fiftieth Anniversary Memorial Service for departed members was held in the Redwood Memorial Grove. Added to this day's activities, a special Redwood Tree was dedicated and named for Charter President Violet.

During our 50 years, service projects continued and special new ones have been added for our Golden Jubilee Year. These have been: Santa Cruz had a begonia named "Lady Soroptimist"; North San Mateo had an orchid named "Lovely Mists" for the lovely Soroptimists; Oakland purchased a bookmobile in honor of Founder Member Eloise B. Cushing; Waikiki sponsored a Campfire Group of mentally disabled children with severe emotional problems; Colfax converted a "caboose" into a railroad museum; Oakland and Berkeley sponsored "satellite homes" for the elderly; Sonoma Valley and Placerville furnished rooms in hospitals; Marysville-Yuba City sponsored the "Yuba General Volunteer Bureau"; Reno has a childcare center; Woodland helped purchase the "Woodland Opera House", one of only two in California; Chowchilla, Madera and The Sierras have joined together to sponsor a County Mental Health Clinic and program; Delano participated in the "Beautification of City Traffic Islands"; San Leandro sponsored sending the high school "jazz band" to Switzerland; Manteca built a swimming pool; El Pinablo, El Cerrito and Richmond started an Inter-Community vision and screening program for pre-school children and Antioch provided funds for a "Therapy Pool" for the Mt. Diablo Therapy Clinic.

In the area of Drug Abuse, we find clubs sponsoring programs and rehabilitation centers. Taft has "DUE", Drug Understanding Education, El Pinablo operated "Unity House", Hayward, "Project Eden"; Visalia, "Turning Point", and there were others. Livermore purchased a "Drug Abuse" film for the Police Department, and Watsonville has spearheaded a drive for a "Van" for use in Drug Prevention.

Other projects in 1971: Burlingame, San Mateo and North San Mateo sponsored "Skylark Residencies, Inc" for youth; San Francisco sponsored a Pediatric Reading and Language clinic; Crescent City spearheaded a community awareness program on "Pollution"; Greenville built and equipped a city park; East Oakland began a "New Careers" program, and there are others too numerous to list.

A high point in Soroptimist Service through the years, has been the awarding of scholarships in all classifications to assist youth in continuing their education. In 1971 alone, clubs distributed approximately \$53,000 in scholarships. Other monies disbursed in service projects have amounted to over \$100,000 in the year 1971.

Soroptimist Service is **Big Business, because Soroptimists Think Big!**



The 1980's

The 1980's marked big changes for Founder Region. The expansion from three to five districts and the office of Lieutenant Governor were implemented in the 1980-1982 biennium. With the continued growth of Founder Region, it was a necessary step and very needed to impose less travel on the directors and provide communication between region and clubs more advantageously. During this biennium there was phenomenal growth in the region. In the first year of the biennium, every club exceeded the 20% goal of growth as they did again in the second year.

The internationality of our organization was emphasized through participation in the projects adopted at this time: Chiapas Clean Water - SIA, Barbados Child Care Centers and Tonga Nursing Center, SI/Senegal Water Project, SI International President's Appeal Day on December 10 initiated by SI President Catherine Salt in Los Angeles in the summer of 1982.

At the conference in Eureka, there was a great ceremonial "burning of the boundaries" in the fireplace at Eureka Inn. For the first time all of the artificial boundaries between clubs, and the source of differences through the years, were eliminated for this region. Now eligible women could join any club that was convenient or acceptable to her. Surprisingly, it has been a much simpler process for establishment of new clubs and providing the opportunity for membership to more women.

In March of 1986, Founder Region Fellowship was incorporated. It became a separate entity with each club a member. A goal of \$15,000 per year was set for awards.

International President, Sadun Katapoglu, attended the 1987 conference and presented a charter to a new club, Soroptimist International of Napa Sunrise. The "Visiting Soroptimist Program" was established which led to wonderful visitors from other federations. The Founder Region Fellowship Endowment Fund was finalized and the bylaws were approved by conference action. The Endowment Fund reached \$80,000 strong.

The official Founder Region emblem, described as "A bird in flight" was adopted in 1988. When first presented, the description was a seagull... which was the symbol used for Founder Region's growth awards. During discussions, a delegate from Hawaii pointed out that there are no seagulls in Hawaii so Lt. Governor Susan Lompa amended the proposal to be a "bird" in flight and the proposal was adopted.

A Founder Region newsletter began in 1988 with the name "Founder Spirit" and a committee was created to produce the publication. An ad-hoc committee was appointed to study possible redistricting for the region in 1989. The redistricting, adding a sixth district, was adopted at the conference in 1989 with an effective date of July 1, 1990.



The 1990's

With an unexpected change in leadership, Governor Lorraine Komor began her term in January of 1990 and had the honor of presiding over three region conferences. A new district was formed from the southern portions of Districts I and II making a total of six districts in the region. Several clubs were disbanded due to low membership in accordance with Federation Procedures.

The first weekend in May was established as the permanent date of the region conference. Founder Region voted to become a sponsor of the annual Legislative workshop in Sacramento. "Galaxy of Stars" awards were distributed at the 1991 and 1992 conferences by the district directors. Founder Region Fellowship awards were increased "to an amount not to exceed \$20,000." District VI clubs showed exceptional growth during this period.

During the 1994-1996 biennium, there were many changes that made our history unique. The Member Services Committee was created, which brought together the Recruitment and Retention, Soroptimist Orientation and Leadership Training, and Public Relations Committees into a single powerful source of information for clubs of our region. The origination of the common call brought to the membership information for all District and Leadership Meetings within the region under one cover. The Pink Ribbon Campaign was formed in which the membership joined forces and brought to their communities information on Breast Cancer Awareness through educational literature, speakers and financial aid for free mammogram programs through hospitals and women's shelters.

During the 1996-1998 biennium, two new "S" Clubs were chartered, both in District VI. Waipahu High School "S" Club was sponsored by Soroptimist International of Oahu, and Kennedy High School "S" Club was sponsored by Soroptimist International of The Marianas. Public Relations was becoming a huge focus and who could ever forget the Safeway bags sponsored by Soroptimist International of Eureka, which went on to be recognized by the Federation.

The 15th Convention of Soroptimist International was held in San Francisco in 1995 and region members contributed time and talent to its success. Founder Region was honored to see Patsy Daniels from Soroptimist International of Santa Rosa installed as International President. Several clubs took up the focus on domestic violence with awareness, advocacy, and action programs that have truly made a difference in our communities. This focus on domestic violence became a permanent identifying focus of our Federation in 1994.

Founder Region joined with Sierra Pacific Region and Sierra Nevada Region in our "Diamond Jubilee" celebration, the 75th anniversary of Soroptimist service to the world.

At the 1997 region conference, the decision was made to restructure our six districts. Changes were made to Districts I, III, IV, and V to make a more even club distribution. The first "Officers and Members Training Retreat" was held in lieu of individual district leadership meetings. The new concept gave the attendees the opportunity to learn as well as interact with officers and members from other clubs in the region.

Soroptimist International of Livermore Sunrise was chartered getting the 1998-2000 biennium off to a great start. All the clubs in the Region focused on recruitment and retention feeling energized after our 75th anniversary celebrations. The Region hosted six Japanese girls and two adults from Chuo Region for a week. Members of the Region board spent the week acting as tour guides throughout our Region. Lasting friendships were created which still exist today.



The 2000's

The 2000-2002 biennium started with a Leadership retreat at Sonoma State College. Walker Ranch was chosen for the next Leadership retreat, a very rustic and pastoral place. The Public Relations committee was re-established and "Founderlink", the online newsletter, was instituted. The honoring of the Women of Distinction was changed from Sunday to a Friday afternoon luncheon and we started Conference Friday mornings. At our 2002 Federation Convention in San Diego, Japan Chuo Region and Founder Region signed papers to become Friendship Links.

During this biennium, we were invited to attend the Youth Forum in Minami Region, Japan. The Board decided on who to send to Japan. There was an essay contest among our "S" Club members and three were chosen. Off we went to Japan. Six "S" Clubs were chartered and one was re-formed.

There were many special events during the 2002-2004 biennium. The chartering of a new club, American Canyon was very exciting; over 100 members from the Region were in attendance. A bus trip to the Redwood Memorial Grove was arranged; subsequently, over 100 members experienced the Redwood Memorial Grove Service, which was a record.

The Recruitment/Retention/Extension/Soroptimist Orientation and Leadership Training Fund was established. Founder Region Fellowship gave a reception for members who are Fellows, to meet the awardees one on one. The 2004 Conference was held in Tamuning, Guam. Forty seven clubs were represented at Conference and heard presentations from the Honorable Felix P. Camacho, Governor of Guam, Senator Tina Rose Muna Barnes, a Congressional Record from the 108th House of Representatives, Official visitor, Takiko Hayaish, President Soroptimist International of the Americas, and a workshop conducted by Leigh Wintz, Executive Director SIA. Linda Manor, Director of the Fund Development Council shared information on funding Soroptimist programs.

Governor Cathy Mitchell was the first, and so far only, Governor to be installed in Guam to start off the 2004-2006 biennium. Soroptimist International of the Americas introduced the "Renaissance Campaign". Clubs were asked to focus on Program, Public Awareness, Membership and Fundraising.

SIA funded the Women's Opportunity Awards based on the number of clubs in each region. As a result, SIA awarded \$20,000 to the six district winners of our Women's Opportunity Awards. Founder Region accepted the challenge of the Renaissance Campaign and 100% of the clubs participated in the Women's Opportunity Awards in both years of the biennium.

Governor Sue Finch kicked off the Soroptimist Stop Trafficking Campaign during the 2006-2008 biennium creating awareness of the insidious business of human trafficking. Founder Region members raised more money for Fellowship than ever, allowing us to award \$60,000 to eight women with the passion to pursue their dream. Many clubs participated in the region-wide "Saturday of Service" activities to assist senior women. Our "Live Your Dream" Faire raised almost \$10,000 for "Project Independence: Women Survivors of War" and this project was selected as SIA's Best Practices award for promoting this Quadrennial project.

During the 2008-2010 biennium, many achievements were made. One hundred percent of clubs participated in the Women's Opportunity Awards, honoring at least 114 women. One hundred percent of members donated to Founder Pennies. Ninety-five percent of clubs participated in the Violet Richardson Award. Fifty percent of clubs submitted Ruby Award applications.

More than \$120,000 was raised to benefit the SIA Program Development Fund through the Club Campaign & Laurel Society contributions. Founder Region Fellowship recognized fifteen women with grants totaling \$140,000. Awareness, advocacy and action regarding our international programs against Human Trafficking and exploitation resulted in hundreds of volunteer hours performed and tens of thousands of dollars raised to benefit local communities.



S O R O P T I M I S T [®]

Investing in Dreams

In 2019 the Soroptimist of the Americas Logo was updated to include the new tagline, "Investing in Dreams"

The 2010's

The 2010-2012 biennium started off with Soroptimist International of the Americas having their convention in San Francisco, which meant that most of our members could attend. All were reminded of how International we are in this organization! Our October district meetings were well attended and we stressed writing club grants and teaching us how to make reports to Federation and Soroptimist International about our projects so the UN would know what we are doing. The board members re-designed the region website and brought it up to date! Founder Region gained 156 new members. The region adopted the region VRA winner's project and made over 2,500 blankets for Foster children. The region also supported the Ruby Award winner's project of building a secondary school in Kenya and raised \$18,400 in just 8 months. Leadership Training was incorporated into the Conference schedule so more could attend and learn about the organization. Governor Linda Sue created the "Whoo Award" to honor outstanding members in each club.

During Governor Dona Gaddis Wolf's 2012-2014 biennium, Founder Region was named FIRST PLACE in 2013 as "Outstanding Region" of the Federation and honorable mention in 2014. This was the year of big change at the federation level. SIA launched "Shaping the Future" of Soroptimist at the convention, and the second year it was "Riding the Wave of Change". "Increased Collective Impact" was the buzzword of the biennium. The LiveYourDream.org program was launched and has had a big impact adding thousands of people to our network. Club Giving was at an all time high, and the goal was for clubs to donate 10% of their funds raised to SIA while keeping 90% for local projects. In 2014, SIA launched the membership campaign - "All Aboard the MemberSHIP". SI/Northern Mariana Islands won 5th place at the federation level for the most increase in membership. Membership recruitment and retention was a major focus this biennium. The Cloverdale, East Contra Costa, and Livermore clubs disbanded. Clubs were encouraged to become "No Guilt Clubs" and assess their club health. Unless clubs are healthy, and focusing on the Soroptimist mission as well as having fun, they will not continue to be relevant. An effort to charter a new club on the island of Palau began, although did not get completed before the biennium was over.

The Dream It, Be It Program: Career Support for Girls was launched at the 2015 SIA Convention in Vancouver, BC, Canada. The Dream It, Be It Program is intended to reach girls in secondary school who face obstacles to their future success by mentoring them on setting and achieving their goals, moving forward after setbacks or failures, and discovering career opportunities. Many Founder Region clubs engaged in the new Dream It, Be It girls' project during the 2014-2016 biennium. One hundred percent of the Founder Region clubs participated in the Live Your Dream Award. The region continued the Ruby Award and the Violet Richardson Award. Club Giving continued to be at an all time high.

There were three major accomplishments for Founder Region during the 2018-2020 biennium. **First**, three NEW clubs were chartered in this biennium, opening the door to new members in Vacaville, The Republic of Palau and American Canyon and broadened our geography giving us more opportunity to increase our collective impact, both locally and globally (glocally). **Second**, Founder Region had 100% participation in clubs contributing to SIA Club Giving in our 2017-2018 club year! This is a first for Founder Region. The **third** accomplishment is the success we have seen with our clubs having Human Trafficking Awareness Proclamations read at their community City Council meetings, and then taking those Proclamations and awareness information into their community. Founder Region Soroptimists will continue our effort to STOP trafficking.

The 2018-2020 biennium theme, "Empowering Change", aptly expresses the uniqueness of this term and the work accomplished. The region reduced the number of districts and realigned district boundaries for better balance. Two new clubs were chartered - SI/West Sonoma County and SI/Oakmont Wine Country. At our 2019 Founder Region Conference, Soroptimist International President Mariet Verhoef-Cohen attended and presented updates on "Women, Water & Leadership". When the Coronavirus pandemic struck in 2020, our world changed drastically and we had to empower change to comply with social distancing and canceled our in-person conference. Founder Region Fellowship gave \$100,000.00 in Fellowship grants to 10 deserving women in 2019 and 7 women in \$70,000.00 in Fellowship grants in 2020.

The 2020's

The first year of the 2020-2022 biennium was overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Clubs had to meet via Zoom and most in-person events and fundraisers were cancelled due to the "Stay at Home" orders and "Social Distancing" restrictions. SIA released the "Virtual Toolkit" to help clubs navigate the "new normal" of doing business and provide online resources. Virtual meetings helped the region board engage with members across the region and created many opportunities to support each other online. Clubs were resourceful in creating online fundraising and award recipients were honored much in the same way, virtually. The region presented several online "Tutorials" to help members learn Zoom and other online applications. Program support and leadership training topics were also delivered virtually throughout the year. SIA restricted "in-person" activity in the federation at the end of 2020, so the 2021 conference went virtual once more. The conference service project was a collaboration with the "Dress a Girl Around the World" organization and members began sewing dresses to send to under-developed countries. The Founder Region History Book was updated for the 100 Year Anniversary of Soroptimist and was provided to conference early bird registrants. Conference spanned over 5 days with 8 different events in which members could participate. Plans to celebrate our Centennial in October of 2021 were all put on hold and will likely be done virtually as well. As this booklet goes to print, we are hopeful that the vaccine, being widely distributed, will allow us get back to normal, so the second year of the biennium can end with in-person activities and hands-on service to our communities.

Directors & Governors from 1921 to 2021

1920's

1927-1928- Jeannie G. Todd, Alameda County, Director
1928-1930- Mae Wright Hutchins, San Jose, Director

1930's

1930-1932- Blanche O Edgar, Sacramento, Director
1932-1934- Amelia F. Johnson, Los Angeles, Director
1934-1936- Helena M. Gamble, Oakland, Director
1936-1938- Mayme V. Matthay, Los Angeles, Director
1938-1940- Alta D. Hengy, Oroville, Director

1940's

1940-1942- Lessie M. Hancock, San Jose, Director
1942-1944- Lois Stanley, Long Beach, Director
1944-1946- Edith B. Kelley, Sacramento, Director
1946-1948- Dr. Ruth S. Thomas (Heitfield), Chico, Director
1948-1950- Emily N. Ziegler, San Diego, Director

1950's

1950-1952- Ruth G. White, M.D., Whitter, Director
1952-1954- Josephine Deterding, Sacramento, Governor
1954-1956- May Overhouse, Salinas, Governor
1956-1958- Robina Sleeper, Sacramento, Governor
1958-1960- Grace Patton, Stockton, Governor

1960's

1960-1962- Mary Lorentzen-Moser, Lafayette/Orinda, Governor
1962-1964- Evelyn Holland, Woodland, Governor
1964-1966- Mary Ellen George, San Jose, Governor
1966-1968- Mary Gianotti, El Cerrito, Governor
1968-1970- Matie Barker, Sparks, Governor

1970's

1970-1972- Charlotte Chichester, Delano, Governor
1972-1974- Julia 'Bess' Combs, Antioch, Governor
1974-1976- Margaret "Maggie" Knott, Vallejo, Governor
1976-1978- Violet Unland, Oakland, Governor
1978-1980- Catherine (Jordan) Burns, Eureka, Governor

1980's

1980-1982- Marge Conley, Santa Rosa, Governor
1982-1984- Patricia Daniels, Santa Rosa, Governor
1984-1986- Del Nickerson, Concord, Governor
1986-1988- Carol Steele, Fort Bragg, Governor
1988-1990- Susan (Lompa) Joyce, Richmond, Governor

1990's

1990-1992- Lorraine Komor, Santa Rosa, Governor
1992-1994- Dorothy Avilla, Livermore, Governor
1994-1996- Patti Cross, Martinez, Governor
1996-1998- Nancy Walker, Concord, Governor
1998-2000- Linda McDoniels, St. Helena Sunrise, Governor

2000's

2000-2002- Carol Rose, El Pinablo, Governor
2002-2004- Mary Ann Redden, Antioch, Governor
2004-2006- Cathy Mitchell, Cloverdale, Governor
2006-2008- Sue Finch, Eel River Valley, Governor
2008-2010- Amelia Benko, Livermore, Governor

2010's

2010-2012- Linda Sue Hansen, Vallejo Gateway, Governor
2012-2014- Dona Gaddis Wolf, Pittsburg, Governor
2014-2016- Bobbi Enderlin, Benicia, Governor
2016-2018- Pam Parker, St. Helena Sunrise, Governor
2018-2020- Sylvia Crafton, The Marianas , Governor

2020's

2020-2022 - Kris Chorbi, Eureka, Governor

Celebrating **100** *of Leadership!*
YEARS

1927-1928 Regional Director, Jennie G. Todd,

Soroptimist of Alameda County, CA

Jennie Todd served as director for one year until she was elected first vice president of the Soroptimist Federation of the Americas. Records for this year are unobtainable for research purposes.



1928-1930 Director: Mae Wright Hutchins

Soroptimist Club of San Jose

Secretary: Florence Gardiner, San Francisco

Treasurer: Ina Stanley, Long Beach

Mae Hutchins presided at the Southwestern Regional Conference, as it was then called, on October 21, 1928, in San Jose. The minutes show 16 representatives from seven of the eight clubs in the district, two regional officers, one federation officer, First Vice President Jennie Todd, Alameda County club, and four members.

Upon convention action, charters will be granted on a basis of 25 members. It was agreed that the charter fee would be \$15.

The second regional conference was held in Los Angeles, March 4, 1929, with eight of the nine clubs represented. In typical Southwestern style, Southwestern Region subscribed \$50 for the first *SFA project, the Wakefield Memorial Fund, to restore the home of George Washington for the 200th anniversary of his birth.

The minutes show that Director Mae received the Federation President's Award for the region gaining the most clubs (eight in Southwestern, only three were chartered in all other regions) in the biennium.

1930-1932 Director: Blanche O. Edgar

Soroptimist Club of Sacramento

Secretary: Lillian Kelson, Stockton

Treasurer: Inez Smith, Bakersfield

Extension was Blanche Edgar's strong point, even in the early days of Soroptimist work. She had compiled the first Extension pamphlets and had one club (Marysville) to her credit before becoming the regional director. The 15 clubs in the region as of July, 1930, were increased to 20 during the biennium. Four of these were in California and one in Salt Lake City, Utah.

While extension on the local level was the responsibility of club representatives, the regional directors did most of the contact work and organization of new clubs, mostly at her own expense. Her total clerical allowance for the two years was \$20.

In addition to her duties as director, Blanche found time to organize the Salt Lake City club at the request of Federation President Bertha K. Landis.

Reported cost of operating the federation, and a deficit in the federation treasury, brought a motion to endorse a plan that the regions pay to the federation \$5 from each new member fee.

Each president gave a verbal report of the growth and service of her club. Now that the growing pains were easing, reports showed greater stress on service. Clubs on a local level supported the federation project of planting trees to commemorate the George Washington Bi-centennial.

Director Blanche was elected secretary of the federation for the 1932-34 biennium at the American Federation Convention in Sacramento.



1932-1934 Director, Amelia F. Johnson

Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles

Secretary: Gladys H. Barndollar, Oakland

Treasurer: Ruth Parkhurst, Ventura

Gleaning from the minutes: "In spite of wide spread business readjustment with loss of membership, the four district council meetings were attended by an average of two representatives from 99 percent of the clubs." President's reports showed many programs devoted to woman's position in the economic field. These played their part in the federation's adoption of the objective economic advancement for women.

Recommendations from this region for the federation objectives included (1) Soroptimist Foundation for Applied Business Research, and (2) Junior Soroptimist Clubs for the Advancement of Young Women.

Two clubs were chartered during this biennium. Federation law had reduced the minimum number required for chartering to 15.

Director Amelia was elected president of the American Federation at the Baltimore Convention for 1934-36.



1934-1936 Director, Helena M. Gamble

Soroptimist Club of Oakland

Helena Gamble, founder member and assistant organizer, had played a key part in extension throughout the SFA during the early years.

Helena's director's report read as follows: "During my term of service as regional director, there has been a very definite effort made to organize new clubs. Three were organized. One in Phoenix, Arizona brought club contact with more than one state. Five more clubs are in the works. The total membership in our 23 clubs is approximately 950. Interclub meets in several sections of the region have served to cement the friendship for which we strive".

"It was with a great sense of honor that I accepted the appointment as SFA historian in Washington, D.C., in 1928. Each succeeding federation president has given me great encouragement and assistance. I received the history of most clubs organized for the first nine years and in the American Soroptimist issues of April and May, 1931, these were published."

Helena Gamble was made permanent historian through the carrying of a motion by Harriett P. Tyler, San Francisco, Federation secretary: "In recognition of the fact that she has made a valuable contribution to the federation from its inception, and that she compiled an accurate and complete record of the clubs, and from their beginnings and has been the federation historian since formation of the federation, I move that Helena M. Gamble's name be submitted to the convention body as historian by the American Federation for the duration of her life."

Helena M. Gamble, known as "The Fairy Godmother of Soroptimism," continued her work on the federation's history, striving to get it published until her death. She was paid special tribute at the federation's Silver Anniversary convention in Estes Park, Colorado in 1946, for her faithful service and devotion to Soroptimism.



1936-1938 Director, Mayme V. Matthay

Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles

Secretary: Dr. Mable Hammons, Alhambra

Treasurer: Ada Cummings, Santa Paula

The report of the regional director shows that a questionnaire was submitted to the clubs in the region regarding the causes of the loss of membership. From the returns, "expense of maintaining membership", was given as the chief cause.

Various interests shown by the clubs were: economic advancement of women; Venture clubs; legislation; revolving funds; club councils, and obtaining employment for women.

Recommendations considered were, "that all clubs select as regional delegates persons who are qualified to do organization work," and "that all regions in their meetings discuss the many matters which are of interest to all the membership."

Six clubs were organized during this biennium.

Director Mayme was elected to serve as the first vice president of the American Federation from 1938 to 1940.



1938-1940 Director, Alta D. Hengy

Soroptimist Club of Oroville

Secretary: Blanche Parson, Chico

Treasurer: Ada Cummings, Santa Paula

The story begins to change with many more "visitors" present at regional meetings. Then, as now, the term means members other than delegates. The minutes of the meeting of October 15-16, 1938, show 29 clubs present and represented by 81 delegates and 128 visitors.

"Geographically Southwestern Region was comprised of California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. At the beginning of the biennium, there were 31 clubs with 1,095 members. During the biennium 14 clubs were chartered, including Ogden, Utah, which was sponsored by the Salt Lake City club. This chartering made it possible to organize a region (three clubs being required) and the Rocky Mountain Region was established. The number of clubs in Southwestern Region was reduced to 42 with a membership of 1,295 at the close of the biennium. During this biennium two board members were added to the regional board, and a regional roster was compiled.

"Meanwhile, world wide affairs were affecting Soroptimism. Great Britain had declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939, and the international aspect of the organization was emphasized by the exchange of letters during war time. This is a short quote from one: 'London has more or less returned to normal. Except for the blackouts, all theaters are in full swing. We would rather be bombed at home than bored in the country.'"



1940-1942 Director: Lessie M. Hancock

Soroptimist Club of San Jose

Board of Directors: Hilda O'Neill, Bakersfield Emily Ziegler, San Diego
Secretary: Abbie Farnsworth, Oakland
Treasurer: Eda Robinson, Marysville

Clubs Chartered: Even in war-time clubs were chartered and in the April 1942 report, Lessie Hancock will go down in history as the director that called conference sessions to order on time - to the split second.



The minutes of this biennium mention for the first time such things as : requests that local chair send publicity to the regional chair; Soroptimists education in the form of a question and suggestion box on Classifications; report of the regional Venture clubs; the first attendance award for the number of members at a regional conference; requests for orders from clubs for a history of Soroptimism; a resolution that proper steps be taken to get the Soroptimist emblem in Webster's Dictionary and the World Almanac; a report of the president's round table (later called president's council); and the Peace Committee, reporting as a National Defense Committee, showed fantastic amounts of work done, from baking, to selling bonds, from staffing listening posts, to donating blood, yet taking time to make a report!"

It ends with this quote by Dr. Elizabeth Ayers of the Oakland club: "When we have won this fight, we must also win the peace."



1942-1944 Director: Lola Stanley

Soroptimist Club of Long Beach

1944 - 1946 Second Vice President of the American Federation

Board Members: Mollie Johnson, Sacramento Rose Vanderburg, San Francisco
Secretary: Helen Daly, Ventura
Treasurer: Esta Imler, Phoenix

Clubs Chartered: The biennium closed with four new clubs, plus four Venture clubs.



Even with war restrictions, 42 of the 48 clubs were represented by 106 delegates at the first conference of the biennium. Regional delegates voted to purchase the first of the two ambulances, which were a part of the war effort supported by the region. One was given to the San Pedro Post of Embarkation; the second, which was voted the next year, was given to Oak Knoll Naval Hospital. Venture clubs assisted with this project.

Classifications were frozen by federation action in Cleveland, and Life membership could be granted to an active member of a club for 15 years of continuous service.

The club year was changed, the calendar year to conform to the SFA fiscal year, and presidents elected in December 1942, held office for 18 months.

Harriett Tyler, San Francisco, SFA president, reported acceptance of Director Lola Stanley's suggestion that Founder Day pennies be used to establish a fund to rehabilitate European clubs after the war. This fund was to be known as the Noel Fund in honor of the gallant French Soroptimist and surgeon who established most of the clubs in Europe.

1944-1946 Director: Edith B. Kelley

Soroptimist Club of Sacramento

Board of Directors: Catherine Patrick, Watsonville Margaret Pratt, Los Angeles
Secretary: Ruth S. Thomas, Chico
Treasurer: Josephine Pendleton, Berkeley

Clubs Chartered: Ten new clubs were organized and one club lost its charter this biennium.

By written ballot, the clubs approved the recommendation of the board that "in lieu of the 1944 full conference, area meetings of clubs be held with an agenda designed to aid the region in carrying on its business efficiently and to promote further vital participation on the part of clubs and individual Soroptimists in the war effort."

While to some, extending the business of the region was slowed, the smaller groups did allow for more member participation and attendance was good. The meetings were for one day only as hotel accommodations were extremely limited.

The regional project was the giving of collapsible wheel chairs, usually through the Red Cross. The treasurer's report shows \$3,474 contributed by the clubs.

Although the war was over, the British and Europeans were still affected by rationing due to shipping restrictions. The Sister club report showed that thousands of packages of dried milk, eggs, fruit, tea, coffee, needles, thread, medical supplies, vitamins, and warm used clothing were sent to Great Britain and Europe.

Lola Stanley, second vice president of the federation, reported that of the \$25,000 given to the Noel Fund, more than \$14,000 had been contributed by this region.

There were a total of 14 Venture clubs reported.



1946-1948 Director: Dr. Ruth S. Thomas (Heitfield)

Soroptimist Club of Chico

Theme: *"Clubs Which Work Together Will Grow Together"*

Board of Directors: Frances Haverle, Huntington Park Ruth Spowls, Phoenix
Secretary: Ruth Thomas, Fresno
Treasurer: May Overhouse, Salinas

The war was over and with the theme "Clubs Which Work Together Will Grow Together" much was accomplished this term.

Firsts for the region were: attendance awards established; a printed regional roster; presidents established in all areas; and club bylaws were sent to the regional chair for approval.

History making activities of this biennium were: club contacts were made in Mexico and Director Ruth translated Soroptimist pamphlets into Spanish; Fellowships and Grants in Aid were established by voluntary contributions of \$1.00 per member each year; and the Redwood Memorial Grove became a real project and completed -- it was tribute to the Founders on our 25th anniversary.

During this biennium the matter of dividing the region because of area growth, was recommended to the regional constitution and bylaws committee, and was referred to the clubs for ratification.



1948-1950 Director: Emily N. Ziegler

Soroptimist Club of San Diego

1950-1952 Federation Secretary
1952-1954 Second Vice President
1954-1956 First Vice President
1956-1958 President of the Federation

Board of Directors: Jimmie Beronio, El Centro; Alida Dysen, Los Angeles
Secretary: Marie Graves, Oakland
Treasurer: Jo Deterding, Sacramento



Clubs Chartered: There had been tremendous growth in the region during the past ten years. This again was made possible through extension under the direction of Blanche Edgar, who organized 22 clubs during the biennium, making a total of 116 clubs as of June 30, 1950.

War restrictions in 1944-46 necessitated smaller (area) meetings with less travel. These became the fall district meetings. These meetings were under the direction of the secretary, treasurer, and two board members, each in her own area.

At the April 1949 conference, 90 of the 95 clubs were represented by 241 delegates, Presidents' reports were not given orally at the conference, but a copy was prepared and given to each club.

For the first time it was possible to obtain federation supplies through the regional secretary and a display of material at the conference received much attention.



1950-1952 Director: Ruth G. White, M.D.

Soroptimist Club of Whittier

Board of Directors: Jo Deterding, Sacramento Mary Ellen Pangle, Riverside
Secretary: Marguerite Blanchard, San Marion-South Pasadena Treasurer: Sally Nelson, Albany

Directors - District 1: May Overhouse, Salinas District 2: Marjorie Frye, Modesto
District 3: Elsie Edminson, Los Angeles District 4: Katherine Finchy, Palm Springs

District Secretaries - District 1: Sylvia Spencer, Vallejo District 2: Gladys Seymour, Fresno
District 3: Gladys Dunlavy, Pomona District 4: Lillian Dolde, Albuquerque



During this biennium the Regional "Eye Bank" was established. The president of the Phoenix club, who had willed her eyes, passed on. The necessary operation was successfully performed and another person saw after 28 years of blindness.

The first club in Mexico was chartered. Dr. Ruth Thomas, a past regional director, speaking in Spanish, presented the charter to the new Soroptimist Club of Tijuana. Three clubs were chartered this biennium.

Other accomplishments this biennium were: each of the four district directors had visited clubs in her district at least once; 96 club bulletins were published; 108 clubs had corresponded with overseas clubs; all clubs joined the United Nations; and clubs contributed \$7,485.55 to the Women's Medical College, a federation project.

Southwestern region became a smaller region in April 1952 - the Northern part of the region retaining the name Southwestern and the southern part became Pacific region. At this conference two slates of officers had to be elected.

1952-1954 Southwestern Region Governor, Josephine Deterding

Soroptimist International of Sacramento

Theme: *"Team Work"*

Region Board: Secretary: Gladys Seymour, Fresno Treasurer: Sally Nelson, Albany
Directors - District 1: May Overhouse, Salinas District 2: Hazel Scarlet, Woodland

District Secretaries - District 1: Sylvia Spencer, Vallejo District 2: Garnet Hart, Reno

Clubs Chartered: During this biennium 17 clubs were formed.

Southwestern Region became a smaller region (in area) by federation action in July 1952, at which time the Pacific region was created in the southern part of the original Southwestern Region. The region consisted of 64 clubs in Northern California, northern Nevada, and Hawaii. At the time the title of Director was changed to Governor.

The region was divided into two districts, each headed by a director and a secretary. There were four district meetings presided over by the directors and two regional conferences presided over by the Governor.

This term the Governor initiated a newsletter. It served to familiarize clubs with the requirements of the organization; second to remind presidents of important dates for meeting various obligations; and third, to stimulate pride in making reports and to generally promote assimilation of Soroptimist.



1954-1956 Southwestern Region Governor, May Overhouse

Soroptimist International of Salinas

Theme: *"The Joy of Achievement - Challenges Met, Projects Completed"*

Region Board: Secretary: Gladys Seymour, Fresno Treasurer: Dorothy Osborns, Placerville
Directors - District 1: Bess Combs, Antioch District 2: Robina Sleeper, Sacramento

District Secretaries - District 1: Mildred Myers, Concord District 2: Esther DePaoli, Jackson

Clubs Chartered: Eight clubs were chartered this biennium.

Emphasis this biennium was especially given to "Soroptimist Only" projects; to meet community needs; to sponsoring "Second Horizon" groups; to Eye Bank contributions; and to "Soroptimist Assimilation" (education).

District meetings developed into workshops, directed by "teams of consultants" giving members the opportunity to listen to experts, to discuss club problems, and to share Soroptimist experiences.

It was in this biennium, December 1955, that torrential rains fell on California and brought disaster to many areas of the region. In each of these areas where there was a club, money poured in from clubs throughout the federation to help relieve the Soroptimist communities, which suffered severe damage.

The first memorial service was held in the Soroptimist Redwood Grove.



1956-1958 Southwestern Region Governor, Robina Sleeper

Soroptimist International of Sacramento

Theme: *"Facing the Challenge"*

Region Board: Secretary: Harriett Kelly, Martinez Treasurer: Kathleen Sievers, Palo Alto
Directors - District 1: Cheever Mitchell, Oakland District 2: Grace Patton, Stockton

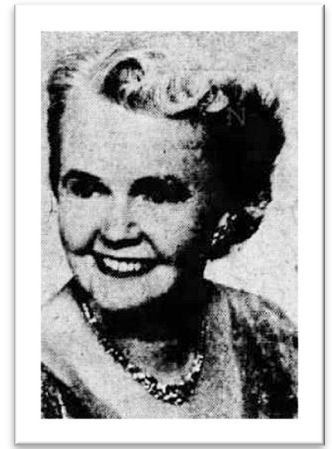
District Secretaries - District 1: June Zegar, San Luis Obispo District 2: Dr. Evelyn Ross, Fresno

Clubs Chartered: In all there were 12 clubs chartered this term.

It was during this biennium that Corcoran, the region's 100th club, was chartered.

Presidents' Councils became area meetings (43 meetings were held during these two years); the first transportation pool was tried; redistricting of the region from two to four districts became law and the regional board of directors expanded from five to seven members; a plan for operating the Soroptimist Redwood Grove as a memorial was devised; a monthly bulletin from the governor to each board member, club, and chair became a first; the region sold the most UNESCO cards in the SFA; and the first "Woman of Achievement" regional award was given.

Treasurer Kathleen Sievers was elected SFA Secretary and served from 1962 to 1964. She later served as SFA Treasurer from 1964 to 1968.



1958-1960 Southwestern Region Governor, Grace Patton

Soroptimist International of Stockton

Theme: *"Together We Built"*

Region Board: Secretary: Dr. Evelyn Ross, Fresno Treasurer: Edna Colville, Reno
Directors - District 1: Mary Lorentzen, Lafayette-Orinda District 2: Lilly Budde, San Francisco
District 3: Joan Crawford District 4: Miriam Petihome, Calaveras County

District Secretaries - District 1: Mildred Patterson, Oakland District 2: Gene Kern, Burlingame-San Mateo
District 3: Catherine Bunting, Red Bluff District 4: Elsie Hilton, Modesto

Clubs Chartered: Nine clubs were chartered this biennium.

It was during this biennium, following the federation convention, that many time consuming re-organizations were carried out. Four districts replaced two; the regional roster was reduced to pocket size; club boundaries were established, clarified and filed; district and club budget guidelines were established; a governor's monthly plan book (later known as a calendar) was started.

Firsts during this term were: Northwestern and Southwestern regions joined to charter Mt. Shasta; the first "S" Club was chartered at the Alameda High School on May 1, 1960; the Harriett Tyler "LAW AWARD" for \$1,500 was awarded to Agnes Duggan of San Francisco, (\$300) and to Emily Thompson of Stanford University (\$1,200); for the first time installation of regional officers was held at a regional conference.

Grace Patton was the first Governor to serve on the SFA Executive Committee.



1960-1962 Southwestern Region Governor, Mary Lorentzen-Moser

Soroptimist International of Lafayette-Orinda

Theme: *"The Song of Soroptimist - Beat the Drums, Loud and Clear"*

Region Board: Secretary: Mildred Myers, Concord, Treasurer: Edna Colville, Reno

Directors - District 1: Clowe Collins, Napa District 2: Lois Lyons, San Jose & Mary Ellen George, San Jose District 3: Evelyn Holland, Woodland District 4: Selma Hansen, Sonora

District Secretaries District 1: Mary Ann Brown, Concord District 2: Patricia Randolph, Burlingame-San Mateo District 3: Ariel Gardner, Lovelock District 4: Charlotte Chichester, Delano

This was our "Ruby" biennium with the theme "The Song of Soroptimist - Beat the Drums, Loud and Clear." It was a term with the full realization that every Soroptimist "has something of importance to offer and that every offering is needed if we are to fulfill our goals and meet the challenge of an ever-changing world."



1962-1964 Southwestern Region Governor, Evelyn Holland

Soroptimist International of Woodland

Theme: *"Building Today's Youth into Tomorrow's Leaders"*

Region Board: Secretary: Elsie Hilton, Modesto, Treasurer: Mary Gianotti, El Cerrito

Directors - District 1: Mildred Meyers, Concord District 2: Mary Ellen George, San Jose District 3: Aimee Luginbuehl, Reno District 4: Francis Bender, Oakdale

District Secretaries - District 1: Jean Sauder, Crescent City District 2: Nita Gurbarg, S.F. West of Twin Peaks District 3: Arthusa Moore, Davis District 4: Lois Firestone, Hanford

This biennium we found a "new quest" through expansion of IGU programs. We saw "new action" in undertaking the development of youth leadership and studying the needs and problems of youth. Enthusiasm and support was given to the Soroptimist Foundation Endowment Fund and Southwestern continued to lead in contributions to the fund.

Conference planning took on a new approach through group discussion and evaluation, especially emphasizing that **"PUBLIC AFFAIRS ARE OUR AFFAIRS"**.

Plans were made for the introduction of an Education Handbook. This biennium the Extension and Education Committees worked very well jointly in workshops - a natural step toward their being combined, by federation decision, as an Education - Extension Committee.

The region contributed \$5,000 to the SFA Foundation. (Minnette Kerr-Higgins, San Francisco member, served as trustee for the Soroptimist Foundation for a period of six years during the early developments of the Foundation and Endowment fund).

Five Soroptimist clubs, four Venture and six "S" clubs were chartered during this term.



1964-1966 Southwestern Region Governor, Mary Ellen George

Soroptimist International of San Jose

Theme: "Accent on Youth"

Region Board: Secretary: Clowe Collins, Napa Treasurer: Bayonne Glenn, Sacramento

Directors - District 1: Mary Gianotti, El Cerrito District 2: Doris McDonald, Burlingame-San Mateo
District 3: Arethusa Moore, Davis District 4: Charlotte Chichester, Delano

District Secretaries - District 1: Helen Howard, Ukiah District 2: Rea Roderick, Hayward
District 3: Matie Barker, Placerville District 4: Lolly Hanson, Tracy



This biennium, program planning was done for more outstanding accomplishments for youth. The first "S" Club region meeting was held at the April regional conference. It was at this meeting that the Soroptimist Club of Alameda presented the Mary Ellen George "S" Club awards. In 1964, the total regional board attended a Venture conference, and the Venture Governor was the Region's guest at all seven of the winter area meetings.

Other firsts were: an Extension-Educational Handbook was published (thanks to the immediate past Governor, Evelyn Holland as chair of the combined Extension-Education Committee); the "Ear Bank" became a regional project; a Roster and Literature Committee came into being; a regional newsletter was sent quarterly to all members; a regional choir made its appearance; and the United Nations materials were made available at all district and regional meetings.

Directly due to Soroptimists' efforts in the area of public affairs, a California Governor's Commission on the Status of Women was formed and a Soroptimist was appointed to the commission. Thus, California, Hawaii and Nevada each had a commission with Soroptimists serving on it. Four Soroptimist, one Venture, and eight "S" Clubs were chartered this biennium.



1966-1968 Southwestern Region Governor, Mary Gianotti

Soroptimist International of El Cerrito

Theme: "Moving in the Direction of Change"

Region Board: Secretary: Lucile Mauzy, Walnut Creek Treasurer: Marjorie Brown, Crescent City

Directors - District 1: Violet Unland, Oakland District 2: Betty Howard, Redwood City
District 3: Matie Barker, Placerville District 4: Lolly Hansen, Tracy

District Secretaries - District 1: Lois Sundborg, Antioch District 2: Ilse Greer, S.F. West of Twin Peaks
District 3: Gladys Kimball, Paradise District 4: Mauda Crockett, Delano



Many firsts occurred this biennium. A 50th Anniversary committee was appointed, and work planning for the Golden Jubilee year began; A Violet Richardson Ward "Youth Achievement" award was presented; and the region contributed \$500 to the Violet Richardson Ward scholarship fund at the University of California. The "S" Club annual conference was held at Asilomar, the program planned by the girls under the supervision of the regional chair; the Mary Ellen George endowment fund for "S" Club awards became a regional project; A Redwood Memorial Grove History was written by Marjorie Brown; a Redwood Memorial Grove Fund was established and all responsibilities for the grove were transferred to the region - a chair was appointed and all expenses incurred shall be withdrawn from this fund. Area meeting "Early Bird" sessions were started for an organized question and answer period; by conference action, mid-morning and afternoon "rest breaks" were introduced; two three-fold education pamphlets were published and distributed.

Southwestern Region was privileged to be a large contributor to the Foundation Endowment Fund, with 51 clubs contributing 200 percent; over \$800 was contributed to a school in Patzacurro, Mexico, and \$800 was sent to the American 4-H program in Korea; a collection at regional conference netted \$500 for an SFA Refuge fund. A grant of \$12,000 from the SFA Foundation fund was made to the Redding club for building a community Senior Citizens Center.

Five clubs were chartered, the greatest number in any region of the SFA for this biennium. One Venture club and 10 "S" Clubs received charters.

1968-1970 Southwestern Region Governor, Matie Barker

Soroptimist International of Sparks

Theme: *"On the Beam Today for Tomorrow"*

Region Board: Secretary: Flora Critchlow, Livermore Treasurer: Lois Sundborg Gustafson, Antioch

Directors - District 1: Margaret Knott, Vallejo District 2: Ilse Greer, S.F. West of Twin Peaks
District 3: Margaret Galli, Roseville District 4: Esther DePaoli, Amador

District Secretaries: District 1: Betty Soekland, Calistoga District 2: Audrey Jacobs, Santa Cruz
District 3: Grace Donehower, Reno District 4: Lillyan Robeson, Fresno



Slogan: "SOROPTIMISTS THINK BIG". Southwestern came to the front in Youth Projects, the new area (program) of Soroptimist activity, with the addition of 14 "S" Clubs and two Sigma Societies. Muriel Morse, SFA president, invited four "S" Clubs and one Sigma Society girl to participate in the SFA convention in St. Louis in July, 1970.

A Human Rights Committee came into being, at the suggestion of the SFA; IGU added support for Native Americans; the education committee published a compact-size handbook with an extension supplement; and the 50th Anniversary committee opened the last conference with a **"Roaring '20s Fun Night"** to inspire enthusiasm for the Golden Jubilee at club level.

The program and activities for the Golden Jubilee year began to take shape. A multiflora begonia was named "Lady Soroptimist" for the Santa Cruz club. A golden orchid was named "Lovely Mists" for the lovely Soroptimists of North San Mateo county. Each of these flowers was presented to federation officers at the St. Louis convention. Preliminary work was done on a Bronze Portrait of Violet Richardson Ward, Soroptimist's first president. The region led with substantial contributions for the SFA float for the 1971 Tournament of Roses parade, in Pasadena, California.

In addition, members and clubs rose immediately to the last "SOS" for aid to earthquake victims in Peru, both with dollars for the SFA chosen school rebuilding project and many other emergency items that were needed.

In addition to the "S" Clubs and Sigma Societies, four Venture and four Soroptimist clubs (including one of each in Hawaii) were chartered and Southwestern Region acquired all of the state of Nevada through a regional boundary change.

Conference registration fees were increased, by conference approval of the budget, which had been revised to set up Hawaii as a separate area of District II.



1970-1972 Southwestern Region Governor, Charlotte Chichester

Soroptimist International of Delano

Theme: "Turn Your Face to the Wind"

Region Board:

Secretary: Marian Larkin, Walnut Creek Treasurer: Betty Howard, Monterey Peninsula

Directors - District 1: Jeanette Romonoff, Alameda District 2: Dorothy Dodson, San Leandro
District 3: Marjorie Brown, Carson City District 4: Vada Fink, Patterson

District Secretaries: District 1: Dorothy Sarnes, Berkeley District 2: Carol Incerpi, Foothill Cities
District 3: Barbara Luther, Placerville District 4: Virginia Congdon, Hanford



This is the biennium of the Soroptimist Golden Anniversary. The Golden Jubilee conference was held in San Francisco in April, 1971. The bronze portrait of Violet Richardson Ward was unveiled in appropriate ceremonies.

This "Portrait in Bronze" of Founder Violet Richardson Ward marks the Golden Jubilee. It was sculpted in her likeness by Mr. Ono deRuyter. It was unveiled during the Jubilee year regional conference in San Francisco as the highlight of Violet's 50 years as a Soroptimist. In this ceremony, all Soroptimist clubs in Southwestern and others from around the world placed capsule predictions of the future of Soroptimism. They will not be opened until the 100th year, 2021.

The "Lady Soroptimist" begonia and "Lovely Mists" orchid were on display; 60 clubs were commended for "Leading the Action" and becoming Golden Jubilee clubs and many more for writing their club histories and for planning special Golden Jubilee Anniversary projects; and a number of members attended the Golden Jubilee SIA convention in Rome, Italy in June 1971.

On June 13, 1971, at the annual memorial services in the Soroptimist Redwood Memorial Grove, Soroptimists and friends witnessed an added feature - the dedication of a stately redwood tree as a living memorial to honor Violet Richardson Ward, charter president of the first Soroptimist club in the world.

In June 1971, the regional board and the Extension and Education Chair flew to Hawaii to charter the Kona club. While in Hawaii, the first area meeting was held for the Island clubs.

October 3, 1971, Soroptimists are celebrating their 50th anniversary with a pilgrimage to the city of the birthplace of Soroptimist - Oakland, California.

Soroptimists from around the world made the pilgrimage. Ethel Lord, SI president, the keynote speaker, Katherine Stinson, SFA, and a number of other Soroptimist dignitaries were on hand for the gala occasion.

Three new Soroptimist clubs were chartered and the region's 50th "S" Club was chartered in Vallejo on May 18, 1971, the 50th year of Soroptimist.

Approval was given by the regional board to support the "Heifer Project". Funds were collected to purchase 28 pregnant goats and one pregnant heifer, which were transported to Korea.



1972-1974 Southwestern Region Governor, Julia "Bess" Combs

Soroptimist International of Antioch

Theme: "Let it Begin With Me"

Region Board: Secretary: Dorothy Sarnes Treasurer: Dottie Locke

Directors - District 1: Ortha Wulfig District 2: Carel Incerpi District 3: Marjorie Lauerman
District 4: Martha Miller District 5: Agnes Conrad 6: Lenore Jordan

District Secretaries - District 1: Julia Vargo District 2: Audrey Signalness District 3: Gail Stober
District 4: Margaret Ann Lowry District 5: Zona Morrison 6: Del Laine

Clubs Chartered: SI/Santa Cruz Mountains; SI/North Fresno; SI/Ceres; SI/Novato; SI/Modesto North;
SI/Hickham, HI; SI/Rocklin-Loomis; SI/Portola; SI/Weaverville; SI/Lake Almanor; SI/Las Vegas (2 clubs)

Conferences: 1973 - Sacramento - Woodlake Inn
1974 - San Jose Clubs in region: 150

The Sacramento conference was memorable for the ammunition train explosion near Roseville. Not knowing what else would happen, the Woodlake Inn management evacuated the conference body to the swimming pool area for the day. Also, during the evening Regional Board meeting, the fire department was called to put out a fire in the kitchen which was directly below where the board was meeting.

The San Jose conference in 1974 provided the Soroptimists experience of being in an armed camp - dog corps sniffing for bombs in the shrubbery, sentries with guns ready for action in each hotel hallway. Keys had to be shown for entry to the halls. There were cameras on the roof, manned by military guards and riots on the streets. WHY? President Gerald Ford was to arrive for a 9:00 AM meeting at the hotel. Little, if any, delay was experienced in opening the Southwestern Regional conference. —Bess Combs



1974-1976 Southwestern Region Governor, Margaret "Maggie" Knott

Soroptimist International of Vallejo

Theme: "Onward and Upward"

Region Board: Secretary: Shirley Godfrey Treasurer: Marjorie Lauerman

Directors - District 1: Nina Arrabit District 2: Adeline Mills District 3: Dr. Dorothy Patterson
District 4: Lillyan Robeson District 5: Glenda Rother 6: Del Laine

District Secretaries - District 1: Marlene Leverett District 2: Kathryn Peterbaugh
District 3: Edith Dilley District 4: Doris Scott Peach District 5: Dora Kurasaki District 6: Marie Knobel

Clubs Chartered: SI/West Maui; SI/Fort Bragg

Conferences: 1975 - Honolulu - Hilton
1976 - Santa Rosa - El Rancho Tropicana

At the Santa Rosa conference Southwestern Region was divided into three regions along district lines -District I and V, Founder Region; District II and IV, Sierra Pacific Region; and, District III and VI, Sierra Nevada Region. Later some boundary adjustments were made. Long discussions had been held over several years to determine the feasibility and wisdom of the division. The size of the region had become unmanageable by volunteers. This was particularly true for the size of the conference, with attendance of well over a thousand, it precluded many sites being available.

Founder Region was established for the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano, Napa, Marin, Sonoma, Mendocino, Lake, Humboldt, Del Norte and the state of Hawaii. —Maggie Knott



1976-1978 Founder Region Governor, Violet Unland

Soroptimist International of Oakland

Theme: *"Beat of the Drum Calls Us To Service"*

Region Board: Secretary: Ruth Duer Treasurer: Marjorie Conley

Directors - District 1: Marian Larkin District 2: Catherine (Jordan) Burns District 3: Jean Paty

Clubs Chartered: SI/Benicia; SI/Guam; SI/West Santa Rosa

Conferences: 1977 - Oakland - Hilton at the Airport Clubs in region: 55
1978 - Concord - Sheraton Inn Clubs in region: 57 Registration 352



Soroptimist International of Guam was chartered under the auspices of the federation board, and assigned to Founder Region as the most able to integrate it. There was never a vote by the regional board nor conference body to accept this responsibility, however, Guam (Agana) is now considered to be a part of the district including Hawaii. This new region moved forward to establish its own identity - to become a unit. New leadership was developed as the closeness of the clubs provided mutual effort and a new regional strength. —Violet Unland



1978-1980 Founder Region Governor, Catherine (Jordan) Burns

Soroptimist International of Eureka

Theme: *"Let Us Grow"*

1980-1982 SI/A Vice-President

Region Board: Secretary: Susan (Lompa) Joyce Treasurer: Marjorie Conley

Directors - District 1: Jinx Mann/Dorothy Sarnes District 2: Patricia Daniels

District 3: Frances Sueco/Mabel Peterson

Clubs Chartered: SI/Mendocino - Sonoma Coast; SI/The Redwoods; SI/The Tri Cities

Conferences: 1979 - Eureka - Eureka Inn Clubs in region: 56 Registration: 293
1980 - Santa Rosa - El Rancho Tropicana Clubs in region: 58 Registration 390



During the summer of 1979 Violet Richardson Ward passed away. A large group of regional representatives attended the Memorial Service in Berkeley to pay respect to this leader in the development of Soroptimist.

Conference action of this biennium included the division of the districts from three to five and the addition of a Lieutenant Governor. Following the new Federation Bylaws adoption in Calgary, July 1978, long hours of conferencing were needed by the region and the clubs to adopt procedures implementing the options provided for them in the Bylaws. We grew in our understanding of Soroptimist service and ideals, our friendships and working relations, and particularly, in membership numbers.

During the International Convention in Honolulu in the summer of 1979, several members of the regional board and others served the International Board as "Conrad's Crew", doing secretarial work, page service and general errand running. It was an exciting way to learn of the procedures and policies at the International level and meet Soroptimists from around the world. The incorporation of individual clubs was encouraged. Several clubs completed the process, providing protection against liability for club action for individual members. —Kate Burns

Note: Kate celebrated her 100th Birthday on January 14, 2021. She received cards from Soroptimists all over the world. She is still active in her club and keeps up on region activities.

1980-1982 Founder Region Governor, Marjorie Conley

Soroptimist International of Santa Rosa

Theme: "Windows"

1982-1984 SI/A Foundation Director

1984-1988 SI/A Treasurer

1988-1992 SI/A Foundation Secretary - Treasurer

Region Board: Lieutenant Governor: Patricia Daniels Secretary: Dorothy Carver
Treasurer: Carole Steele

Directors - District 1: Susan (Lompa) Joyce District 2: Del Nickerson District 3: Jacque Brown
District 4: Colleen Smith District 5: Mabel Peterson

Clubs Chartered: SI/Rohnert Park - Cotati; SI/Kihei - Wailea; SI/Cloverdale; SI/Eel River Valley; SI/Saipan; SI/Yountville

Conferences: 1981 - Berkeley - Claremont Hotel Clubs in region: 63 Registration: 379
1982 - Kelseyville - Konocti Harbor Inn Clubs in region: 64 Registration: 426

Expansion from three to five districts and the office of Lieutenant Governor were implemented in this biennium. With the continued growth of Founder Region it was a necessary step and very needed to impose less travel on the directors and provide communication between region and clubs more advantageously. "It was a privilege to serve as governor of such a great region as it provided me personally with the background in Soroptimism so necessary to aspire to higher office in Federation and Foundation."

—Gov. Marjorie



1982-1984 Founder Region Governor, Patricia Daniels

Soroptimist International of Santa Rosa

Theme: "Gifts of Soroptimism"

1984-1986 SI/A Vice-President

1986-1988 SI/A President-elect

1988-1990 SI/A President

1995-1997 SI President

Region Board: Lieutenant Governor: Del Nickerson Secretary: Lorraine (Hanna) Komor Treasurer: Carole Steele

Directors - District 1: Mary Wilson District 2: Joan Aldrich District 3: Viola Gottschalk District 4: Norma Rhoads Mecum

Clubs Chartered: SI/Big Foot Country; SI/Dublin; SI/Castro Valley; SI/Moraga; SI/San Ramon; SI/The Delta

Conferences: 1983 - Oakland - Oakland Hyatt Clubs in region: 65 Registration: 459
1984 - Maui - Intercontinental Clubs in region: 69 Registration: 453

During this biennium there was phenomenal growth in the region. In the first year of the biennium every club exceeded the 20% goal of growth as they did again in the second year. At our second conference, in Hawaii, Madeline Bordallo, First Lady of Guam, was the keynote speaker. In recognition of her contribution to the women of the Pacific Rim, she was awarded the regional Woman of Distinction Award. Another highlight was the moving, beautiful Memorial Service on the beach. From there an outrigger canoe took leis, dedicated to each woman who had died in the last year, out to place them on the ocean surface to float until the tide took them on out to sea later in the day.

The installation banquet outside on the lawn near the ocean on Saturday evening was beautiful with each officer given a lei, representing an island in the Hawaiian chain and the duties of her office. The internationality of our organization was emphasized through participation in the projects adopted at this time: Chiapas Clean Water, SIA; Barbados Child Care Centers and Tonga Nursing Center; SI/Senegal Water Project; SI International President's Appeal Day on December 10th, initiated by SI President Catherine Salt in Los Angeles during the summer of 1982. —Patricia Daniels



1984-1986 Founder Region Governor, Del Nickerson

Soroptimist International of Concord

Theme: "*Images of Soroptimism*"

1990-1994 SIA Foundation Board Member (1992-1994 President)
1994-1996 SIA Federation Director, 1995-1996 SIA President-elect, 1996-1997 SIA President

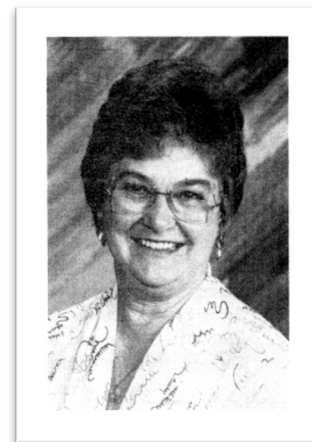
Region Board: Lieutenant Governor: Carol Steele Secretary: Lorraine (Hanna) Komor
Treasurer: Carole Hoskins
Directors - District 1: Loretta Mayer District 2: Joan Aldrich District 3: Barbara Nobles
District 4: Barbara D'Arezzo District 5: Louise Smith

Clubs Chartered: SI/Mendocino; SI/Windward; SI/Oahu; SI/Marianas; SI/Orinda;
SI/Humboldt Bay; SI/Diablo Valley; SI/Hilo; SI/Tri Valley; SI/Kauai

Conferences: 1985 - Eureka - Eureka Inn Clubs in region: 69 Registration: 516
1986 - Concord - Hilton Clubs in region: 73 Registration: 613

At the conference in Eureka, there was a great ceremonial "burning of the boundaries" in the fireplace of the Eureka Inn. For the first time all of the artificial boundaries between clubs, and the source of differences through the years, were eliminated for this region. Now eligible women could join any club that was convenient or acceptable to her. Surprising, to some, it has been a much simpler process for establishment of new clubs and the providing of the opportunity for membership to more women.

During this time, Founder Region Fellowship was incorporated in March 1986. It became a separate entity with each club a member. A goal of \$15,000 per year was set for awards. —Del Nickerson



1986-1988 Founder Region Governor, Carol Steele

Soroptimist International of Fort Bragg

Theme: "*Dreams of Soroptimism*"

Region Board: Lieutenant Governor: Susan (Lompa) Joyce Secretary: Shirley Grover
Treasurer: Lainie Lewis
Directors - District 1: Sally Sheridan/Dorothy Avilla District 2: Carol Hoskins
District 3: Barbara Nobles District 4: Patricia Mayer District 5: Eli Buinac/Louise Smith

Clubs Chartered: SI/Central Oahu; SI/Napa Sunrise; SI/Tamalpais Sunrise; SI/Vallejo Gateway

Conferences: 1987 - Oakland - Oakland Hyatt Regency Clubs in region: 80 Registration: 561
1988 - Santa Rosa - El Rancho Tropicana Clubs in region: 81 Registration: 632

Things I remember most about my biennium are the following:

Having the International President, Sadun Katapoglu, at my first conference and presenting a charter to a new club, Soroptimist International of Napa Sunrise.; the establishment of the "Visiting Soroptimist Program" and the wonderful visitors from other federations; the finalization of the Founder Region Fellowship Endowment Fund, the bylaws were approved by conference action, and we reached \$80,000 in the endowment fund.

The adoption of an official Founder Region emblem, described as "A bird in flight". When first presented the description was a seagull... which was the symbol used for Founder Region's growth awards. During discussions, a delegate from Hawaii pointed out that there are no seagulls in Hawaii, so Lt. Governor Susan Lompa amended the proposal to be a "bird" in flight and the proposal was adopted. It was a biennium of change both in conference structure and members of the Region Board. I remember the fun, meeting new friends, but most important, watching the region grow. The second conference was one to remember, the largest attendance ever, the presence of many of the Federation Board members, raising \$8,000 for each Foundation and Fellowship. —Carole Steele



July 1988 - January 1990 Founder Region Governor, Susan (Lompa) Joyce

Soroptimist International of Richmond

Theme: "We Are One in Service Spirit"

1984-1986 SI/A Growth and Development Committee Member

1986-1988 SI/A Growth and Development Committee Chair

Region Board: Governor-elect: Lorraine Komor Secretary: Shirley Grover Treasurer: Lainie Lewis

Directors - District 1: Dorothy Avilla District 2: Patti Barendreght District 3: Doris Jones

District 4: Patricia Mayer/Diane Lehman District 5: Bette Stilwell

Clubs Chartered: SI/Kahului

Conferences: 1989 - Honolulu - Sheraton Waikiki Clubs in region: 80 Registration: 406

Highlights of the 1989 Founder Region Conference held on Oahu, Hawaii consisted of a business session considering 22 indexes under very tight time restraints. Some issues adopted were: realignment of Districts I and II to form a new district for 1990-1992; permanent deadline date of December 15th for submission of amendments for conference; a list of conference sites with the idea that any club could then host a conference; support of the Peace Garden Project, and a focus on Alzheimer's Disease. A personal highlight was our Saturday banquet at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel Monarch Room, where I focused on Soroptimist clubs and members as family, and had my own "one night stand" singing "Love Will Be Our Home". At the close of conference it was my honor and pleasure to personally gift the Region traveling pins for region officers (except governor) and directors.

At Fall District meetings in 1989, I told a tale of geese flying in formation and why they honk - to encourage their leader to keep up the pace and lead them on. When the leader tired, it went to the back of the flock, honking encouragement to a new leader. This had great meaning for our Soroptimist leaders and the future, but also gave my board members the opportunity to "Honk" at me each time I told the story.

A newsletter began with the name "Founder Spirit" and a committee was created to produce the publication. An ad-hoc committee was appointed to study possible redistricting for the region. The redistricting, adding a sixth district, was adopted at the conference in 1989 with an effective date of July 1, 1990.

In addition to honoring all past governors within our region boundaries who served as governors when we were Southwestern Region and Founder Region, we also honored visiting past governors from other regions, i.e., our workshop leaders Lynn Wurth, Golden West Region; Loretta Mayer, Desert Coast Region; and our official Federation Visitor, Roberta Porter, Northwestern Region.

In January, 1990, I resigned as your governor and as a Soroptimist after 18 years of membership. This left a great void in my life. At the time I was in personal crisis, a divorce action, my son's wedding plans, purchase of a new home and moving in, and the earthquake disorientation. I fell apart feeling that I could not do the best job that the region deserved. In retrospect I regret this very much, sorry for leaving so many people "holding the bag". My sincere apologies go out to everyone. I rejoined Soroptimist in April, 1991, and this was due to one member of my club continually staying in touch with me and encouraging me to return... please do not ever forget... one person can truly make a difference. —Susan Joyce



January 1990 - June 1992 Founder Region Governor, Lorraine Komor

Soroptimist International of Santa Rosa

Theme: "Celebration of Soroptimism"

Regional Board: Governor-elect: Dorothy Avilla Secretary: Lorraine Humphrey Treasurer: Yvonne Anglin/Carol Steele/Nancy Walker

Directors - District 1: Carolyn Poage District 2: Patti Cross District 3: Dale Vauhgn-Bowen
District 4: Judi Van Gorder District 5: Diane Lehman District 6: Ruth McKay

Clubs Chartered: SI/Noyo Sunrise

Conferences: 1990 - San Ramon - Marriott	Clubs in region: 80	Registration: 537
1991 - San Ramon - Marriott	Clubs in region: 78	Registration: 526
1992 - San Ramon - Marriott	Clubs in region: 75	Registration: 521

My governorship was unique in that I served from January 1990 through June 1992 and therefore presided at three region conferences. Some highlights of these years are as follows: A new district was formed from the southern portions of Districts I and II making a total of six districts in the region. When I succeeded to the governorship, Carol Steele served as Governor-elect pro tem until June 30, 1990. When the treasurer resigned in the fall of 1990, Carol Steele served as Treasurer until Nancy Walker was elected at the 1991 conference. Several clubs were disbanded due to low membership in accordance with Federation Procedures. The first weekend in May was established as the permanent date of the regional conference. Founder Region voted to become a sponsor of the annual Legislative workshop in Sacramento. "Galaxy of Stars" awards were distributed at the 1991 and 1992 conferences by the district directors. Founder Region Fellowship awards were increased "to an amount not to exceed \$20,000." District VI clubs showed exceptional growth during this period. —Lorraine Komor



1992-1994 Founder Region Governor, Dorothy Avilla

Soroptimist International of Livermore

Theme: "Leading the Way"

Regional Board Governor-elect: Patti Cross Secretary: Diane Lehman Treasurer: Nancy Walker

Directors - District 1: Linda Zaffiro District 2: Sandi Hardy District 3: Amelia Benko
District 4: Linda McDoniels District 5: Dawn Moreland District 6: Ruth McKay

Clubs Chartered: SI/Yokayo Sunrise; SI/Sonoma Sunrise

Conferences : 1993 - San Ramon - Marriott	Clubs in region: 73	Registration: 465
1994 - Maui, Hawaii - Marriott	Clubs in region: 73	Registration: 353

During this biennium there were many changes that made our history unique.

The creation of the Member Services Committee, which brought together the Recruitment and Retention, Soroptimist Orientation and Leadership Training, and Public Relations Committees into a single powerful source of information for clubs of our region. The origination of the common Call began, which brought to the membership information for all District and Leadership Meetings under one cover.

Membership joined forces and brought to their communities information on The Pink Ribbon Campaign, Breast Cancer Awareness, through educational literature, speakers and financial aid for free mammogram programs through hospitals and women's shelters.

At the Federation Convention, I was proud to accept the President's Award for 59 of our 73 clubs, participate in Foundation's celebration for the completion of the 5 in 5 Program, receive certificates for 43 of the clubs in appreciation of their support, and have Founder Region's Pink Ribbon Campaign recognized and honored.

At the beginning of my biennium I invited all Soroptimists to join me on a journey down a yellow brick road. I never could have guessed it would be such a rewarding journey. Thank You, —Dorothy Avilla



1994-1996 Founder Region Governor, Patti Cross

Soroptimist International of Martinez

Theme: "Reaching for Soroptimist Rainbows"

Region Board: Governor-elect: Nancy Walker Secretary: Linda McDoniels Treasurer: Robin Rudisill
Directors - District 1: Carol Rose District 2: Mary Ann Redden District 3: Patty L. Groth
District 4: Bev Homan District 5: Donna Ayres District 6: Mary L. Huebner

Clubs Chartered: SI/St. Helena Sunrise

Conferences: 1995 - Oakland Clubs in region: 72 Registration: 417
1996 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 72 Registration: 466



Two new "S" Clubs were chartered, both in District VI. Waipahu High School "S" Club was sponsored by Soroptimist International of Oahu, and Kennedy High School "S" Club was sponsored by Soroptimist International of the Marianas

The initiative and personal contributions of the Founder Region Public Relations Committee gave us two issues of Founder Region News, a newsletter that was distributed to all members. In addition, they created awards to honor clubs with outstanding public relations. Who could ever forget the Safeway bags sponsored by Soroptimist International of Eureka which went on to be recognized by the Federation?

The 15th Convention of Soroptimist International was held in San Francisco in 1995 and region members contributed time and talent to its success. We were also lucky enough to celebrate the installation of Patsy Daniels as International President. So many clubs took up the focus on domestic violence with awareness, advocacy, and action programs that have truly made a difference in our communities. This focus on domestic violence became a permanent identifying focus of our Federation in 1994. —Patti Cross



1996-1998 Founder Region Governor, Nancy Walker

Soroptimist International of Concord

Theme: "Inward Journey - Outward Paths "

1999-2000 SI/A Federation Director
2000-2001 SI/A Federation Secretary/Treasurer
2001-2002 SI/A Federation President-elect
2002-2003 SI/A Federation President

Region Board : Governor-elect: Linda McDoniels Secretary: Mary L. Huebner
Treasurer: Patty L. Groth
Directors - District 1: Carol Rose District 2: Dion Weaver District 3: Gloria Scoggin
District 4: Carrie E.C. Domogalla District 5: Donna Ayres District 6: Angela Bugarin

Clubs Chartered: SI/The North Bay; SI/McKinleyville

Conferences: 1997 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 72 Registration: 435
1998 - Berkeley Marina Marriott Clubs in region: 72 Registration: 509



We joined with Sierra Pacific Region and Sierra Nevada Region in our "Diamond Jubilee" celebration, the 75th anniversary of Soroptimist service to the world. At the 1997 region conference, the decision was made to restructure our six districts. Changes were made to District I, III, IV and V to make a more even club distribution. Phyllis Sweet, an inspiration to us all, was selected as the 1997 Federation recipient of the \$10,000 "Training Awards Program" award.

The first "Officers and Members Training Retreat" was held in lieu of individual district leadership meetings. The new concept gives the attendees the opportunity to learn as well as interact with officers and members from other clubs in the region.

Many will remember the lengthy business meeting at the 1998 Conference when the conversion from "Procedures and Policies" to "Bylaws and Procedures" was voted on, a real learning process.

1998-2000 Founder Region Governor, Linda Mc Doniels

Soroptimist International of St. Helena Sunrise

Theme: "Making a Difference Together"

2004-2006 SI/A Fund Development Council Member

2007-2008 SI/A Fund Development Council Chair

Region Board Governor-elect: Carol Rose Secretary: Mary Ann Redden
Treasurer: Lynn Forrest Knight

Directors - District 1: Amelia Benko District 2: Dion Weaver District 3: Joan Crawford
District 4: Cathy Mitchell District 5: Lynne Jackson District 6: Judy Lee

Region Conferences: 1999 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 69
2000 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 69

Soroptimist International of Livermore Sunrise was chartered, getting the biennium off to a great start. All the clubs in the Region focused on recruitment and retention, feeling energized after our 75th anniversary celebrations. The Region hosted six Japanese girls and two adults from Chuo Region for a week. The girls and their chaperones "lived" with different members throughout the Region giving both the Japanese girls and American families a unique opportunity to interact. Members of the Region board spent the week acting as tour guides throughout our Region. Lasting friendships were created which still exist today.

At the Region conference in 2000 the board surprised six members with Laurel Society memberships. The members were invited to join the Board at the head table during lunch on Saturday without a clue as to why. When the memberships were announced, the District Director from each district presented them with their Laurel Society pin. It was a highlight of the conference. From 1998-2000 we made a difference together and I want to thank all the members of the Region for giving me the opportunity to serve you. It was a ball. —Linda McDoniels



2000-2002 Founder Region Governor, Carol Rose

Soroptimist International of El Pinablo

Theme: "Soroptimists Soar into the New Century"

2003-2005 SI/A Federation Director

Region Board: Governor-elect: Mary Ann Redden Secretary: Amelia Benko
Treasurer: Cathy Mitchell

Directors - District 1: Chrisann Nicholson District 2: Doris Webster District 3: Lee Ray
McDoniels District 4: Kay Barrett Ritter District 5: Sue Finch District 6: Julie Kamanawa-Kala

Clubs Chartered: SI/Fremont; SI/Central Solano County

Region Conferences:

2001 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 66 Registration: 417
2002 - Kona, HI - Keauhou Beach Resort Clubs in region: 66 Registration: 332

The biennium started with a Leadership retreat at Sonoma State College. It was the first time we used evaluations to let us know how we did and it gave us new direction for the next year. Walker Ranch was chosen for the next Leadership retreat, a very rustic and pastoral place. The Public Relations committee was re-established and Founderlink, the online newsletter was instituted. The honoring of the Women of Distinction was changed from Sunday to a Friday afternoon luncheon and we started Conference on Friday mornings. At our 2002 Federation convention in San Diego, Japan Chuo Region and Founder Region signed papers to become Friendship Links.

During this biennium, we were invited to attend the Youth Forum in Minami Region, Japan. The Board decided on who to send to Japan. There was an essay contest among our "S" Club members and three were chosen: two girls from Sacred Hearts Academy in Honolulu and one from Liberty High School in Antioch. Off we went to Japan. Six "S" Clubs were chartered and one was re-formed. I can't express how wonderful it was to be your Governor. I visited every club and was always met with warmth, friendliness and love from every member. It is an experience that will never be taken from me. —Carol Rose



2002-2004 Founder Region Governor, Mary Ann Redden

Soroptimist International of Antioch

Theme: "Achieve Growth By Sharing"

Region Board: Governor-elect: Cathy Mitchell Secretary: Sue Finch Treasurer: Joyce Strand
Directors - District 1: Chrisann Nicholson District 2: Terry Comiskey District 3: Carol Stein/Terry Baldwin District 4: Linda Simon District 5: Elaine Reed District 6: Julie Kamanawa-Kala

Clubs Chartered: SI/American Canyon

Region Conferences: 2003 - Concord - Concord Hilton Clubs in region: 67 Registration: 470
2004 - Hilton Guam Resort & Spa Clubs in region: 67 Registration: 216



There were many special events during the biennium. The chartering of a new club, American Canyon, was very exciting; over 100 members from the Region were in attendance. A bus trip to the Redwood Memorial Grove was arranged. There were some difficulties such as the bus driver did not know how to get to the Redwood Memorial Grove; the bus did not go over what felt like 40 miles per hour. However, it was a worthwhile trip in that over 100 members experienced the Redwood Memorial Grove Service.

At the 2003 Conference guest speaker Michael Pritchard kept the membership in stitches with his humorous presentation about his experiences as a teacher and working with handicapped people. His lively wit included phrases such as, "If life was logical, men would ride side saddle" and some people have NCAA, "No Clue At All".

The Recruitment/Retention/Extension/Soroptimist Orientation and Leadership Training Fund was established. Founder Region Fellowship gave a reception for members who are Fellows to meet the awardees one on one. The 2004 Conference was very exciting; it was held in Tamuning, Guam. Forty seven clubs were represented at Conference and heard presentations from the Honorable Felix P. Camacho, Governor of Guam; Senator Tina Rose Muna Barnes, a Congressional Record from the 108th House of Representatives; Official visitor, Takiko Hayaish, President Soroptimist International of the Americas; and a workshop conducted by Leigh Wintz, Executive Director SIA. Linda Manor, Director of the Fund Development Council shared information on funding Soroptimist programs. There is so much more that happened during the biennium, but not enough space to put it all down. Being Governor of Founder Region was, and is, a life changing experience. I cherish the friendships and memories made. Thank you for the opportunity to serve. —Mary Ann Redden



2004-2006 Founder Region Governor, Cathy Mitchell

Soroptimist International of Cloverdale

Theme: "Together We Can"

2007-2009 SI/A Federation Director

Region Board : Governor-elect: Sue Finch Secretary: Linda Sue Hansen
Directors - District 1: April Rovero District 2: Norene Lowry District 3: Terry Baldwin
District 4: Penny Solem District 5: Debbie Thompson District 6: Jane Murakami

Clubs Chartered : SI/Windsor; SI/24-680

Region Conferences: 2005 - San Ramon - Marriott
2006 - Concord - Concord Hilton Clubs in region: 65 Registration: 185



First Governor, and so far, only Governor to be installed in Guam. It is a memory that I will cherish forever. The warmth, friendship, and love that we received from the members of the two clubs will never be forgotten. Soroptimist International of the Americans introduced the Renaissance Campaign. Clubs were asked to focus on Program, Public Awareness, Membership and Fundraising. SIA funded the Women's Opportunity Awards based on the number of clubs in each region. As a result, SIA awarded \$20,000 to the six district winners of our Women's Opportunity Awards. Founder Region accepted the challenge of the Renaissance Campaign and 100% of the clubs participated in the Women's Opportunity Awards in both years of the biennium. Kathryn Xian, the Non-Executive Director of "Safe Zone Foundation" and "Girl Fest Bay Area", was the region winner of the "Making A Difference for Women Award" and went on to win the Federation award. Two clubs were chartered: Soroptimist International of 24-680 and Soroptimist International of Windsor.

Thank you for the honor that you bestowed on me by electing me your Governor for the 2004-2006 biennium. I will cherish the memories and the friendships that I have made for the rest of my life. I will continue to fight for the women and children who have no voices and I know that "Together We Can" improve the lives of women and girls in our local communities and throughout the world. —Cathy Mitchell

2006-2008 Founder Region Governor, Sue Finch

Soroptimist International of Eel River Valley

Theme: "Creating Magic Through Soroptimist Service"

Region Board:

Governor-elect: Amelia Benko Secretary: Linda Sue Hansen Treasurer: Debbie Thompson
Directors - District 1: Barbara L. Lanier District 2: Dona Gaddis Wolf District 3: Bobbi Enderlin
District 4: Helen A. Sager District 5: Bonnie Vukonich District 6: Judy Lee

Region Conferences:

2007 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 65 Registration: 455
2008 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 65



Your extraordinary efforts during the 2006-2008 biennium were: kicked off the Soroptimist Stop Trafficking Campaign creating awareness of the insidious business of human trafficking; raised more money for Fellowship than ever-allowing us to award \$60,000 to eight women with the passion to pursue their dream; continued to support the Women's Opportunity Award with 100% participation; increased club participation in the Violet Richardson Award to 92%, honoring 62 girls for their community service; raised record sums of money in your club fundraisers and gave record sums away through your community projects; expanded attendance at the "Hit the Road", "She's All That" and "Get Real Academy" events; augmented awareness of Soroptimist through your press releases and media campaigns; participated in region-wide "Saturday of Service" activities to assist senior women. Our "Live Your Dream" Faire raised almost \$10,000 for Project Independence: Women Survivors of War and this project was selected as SIA's Best Practices award for promoting this Quadrennial project.

You did all that and more and I will always remember the magic you created through your Soroptimist service!

—Sue Finch



2008-2010 Founder Region Governor, Amelia Benko

Soroptimist International of Livermore

Theme: "Making A Difference Matters"

Region Board:

Governor-elect: Linda Sue Hansen Secretary: Dona Gaddis Wolf Treasurer: Debbie Thompson
Directors - District 1: Charlene Stamps District 2: Gloria Soderbery District 3: Bobbi Enderlin
District 4: Sandra Frazer District 5: Ada Kornmeyer District 6: Sylvia Crafton

Region Conferences:

2009 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in Region: 57 Attendance: 500
2010 - Ihilani Resort & Spa – Ko Olina, Honolulu, HI Clubs in Region: 57 Attendance: 282

I have thanked you for the privilege of serving as Governor of this Region, but it must be said again that the value you placed on your own membership was my inspiration. I asked for 110%, your response was immeasurable. The successes of my biennium were a true reflection of the commitment and dedication of the membership of this Region.

You can all be proud of **two years** of:

100% of clubs participating in the Women's Opportunity Award, honoring at least 114 women, we know it was many more.
100% of members donating to Founder Pennies
95% of clubs participating in the Violet Richardson Award
50% of clubs submitting Ruby Award applications
More than \$120,000 raised to benefit the SIA Program Development Fund through the Club Campaign & Laurel Society
Founder Region Fellowship, recognizing fifteen women with grants totaling \$140,000.

Awareness, advocacy and action regarding our international programs against sexual trafficking and exploitation, the hundreds of volunteer hours performed and the tens of thousands of dollars raised benefitted our local communities.

—Amelia Benko



2010-2012 Founder Region Governor, Linda Sue (Nickerson) Hansen

Soroptimist International of Vallejo Gateway

Theme: "Just Imagine"

Region Board

Governor-elect: Dona Gaddis Wolf Secretary: Bobbi Enderlin Treasurer: Pam Parker
Directors - District 1: Charlene Stamps District 2: Gloria Soderbery District 3: Linda Glantz
District 4: Jeannie Griffiths District 5: Patti Clinton District 6: Sylvia Crafton

Region Conferences

2011 - Rohnert Park - DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Sonoma Wine Country
Clubs in region: 56 Registration: 417
2012 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 56 Registration: 477

This biennium started off with Soroptimist International of the Americas having their convention in San Francisco, which meant that most of our members could attend. All were reminded of how International we are in this organization! Our October district meetings were well attended and we stressed writing club grants and taught you how to make reports to Federation and Soroptimist International about your projects so the UN would know what we are doing. As a board and region, we re-did your website and brought it up to date!

We gained 156 new members. We took on our region Violet Richardson Award winner's project of making over 2,500 blankets for Foster kids. We took on our region Ruby winner's project of building a secondary school in Kenya and raised \$18,400 in just 8 months.

We moved Leadership into our Conference schedule so more members could attend and learn about the organization. Just imagine all that you did for these two years that moved women and girls ahead in the world. I thank you for everything.
—Linda Sue Hansen



2012-2014 Founder Region Governor, Dona Gaddis Wolf

Soroptimist International of Pittsburg

Theme: "Share the Light of Soroptimist Service"

2018-2019 SIA Fundraising Council Member
2015-2017 SIA Federation Director

Region Board

Governor-elect: Bobbi Enderlin Secretary: Charlene Stamps Treasurer: Pam Parker
Directors - District 1: Gloria Bragg District 2: Bev Gomer District 3: Shannon Richards
District 4: Maddy Leader District 5: Kris Chorbi District 6: Lorene Hopkins

Region Conferences

2013 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 55 Registration: 412
2014 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 56 Registration: 416

Club Members as of 6/30/14: 1630

Clubs Chartered: SI/Northern Mariana Islands

During Dona's biennium, Founder Region was named first place in 2013 as "Outstanding Region" of the Federation and honorable mention in 2014. This was the year of big change at the federation level. SIA launched Shaping the Future of Soroptimist at the convention, and the second year it was Riding the Wave of Change. Increased Collective Impact was the "buzzword" of the biennium. The LiveYourDream.org program was launched and has had a big impact adding thousands of people to our network. Club Giving was at all time high, and the goal was for clubs to donate 10% of their funds raised to SIA while keeping 90% for local projects. —Dona Gaddis Wolf



2014-2016 Founder Region Governor Bobbi Enderlin

Soroptimist International of Benicia

Theme: "Share the JOY of Soroptimist"

Region Board: Governor-elect: Pam Parker Secretary: Charlene Stamps Treasurer: Vicki Ham
Directors - District 1: Gloria Bragg District 2: Bev Gomer District 3: Helaine Bowles
District 4: Maddy Leader District 5: Kris Chorbi District 6: Lyn Lurbe

Region Conferences

2015 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 53 Registration: 404
2016 - Honolulu, Hawaii - Waikiki Beach Marriott Clubs in region: 53 Registration: 288

Club Members as of 6/30/16: 1489

SIA launched the membership campaign - "All Aboard the MemberSHIP" - SI/Northern Mariana Islands won 5th place at the federation level for the most increase in membership. Membership recruitment and retention was a major focus this biennium. The Cloverdale, East Contra Costa, and Livermore clubs disbanded. Clubs were encouraged to become "No Guilt Clubs" and assess their club health. Unless clubs are healthy, and focusing on the Soroptimist mission as well as having fun, they will not continue to be relevant. An effort to charter a new club on the island of Palau began, although did not get completed before the biennium was over.

SIA Conventions were held in Vancouver, BC, Canada and Orlando, Florida. The Soroptimist International Convention was held in Istanbul, Turkey in 2015.

100% of the clubs participated in the Live Your Dream Award. The region continued the Ruby Award and the Violet Richardson Award. Club Giving continued to be at an all time high, and the goal was for clubs to donate 10% of their funds raised to SIA while keeping 90% for local projects. Many Founder Region clubs engaged in the new "Dream It, Be It" girl's project. —Bobbi Enderlin



2016-2018 Founder Region Governor Pam Parker

Soroptimist International of St. Helena Sunrise

Theme: "Soroptimists Are Shining Stars "

Region Board : Governor-elect: Sylvia Crafton Secretary: Kris Chorbi Treasurer: Vicki Ham
Directors - District 1: Elise Balgley District 2: Pat Eileen Fisher District 3: Joy Swank
District 4: Barbara Young District 5: Dyann O'Brien District 6: Angie Haramoto

Region Conferences

2017 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 52 Registration: 360
2018 - San Ramon - Marriott Clubs in region: 53 Registration: 360

Club Members as of 6/30/18: 1503

There were three major accomplishments for Founder Region during this biennium. **First**, three NEW clubs were chartered in this biennium. What a great accomplishment! Opening the door to new members in Vacaville, The Republic of Palau and American Canyon only broadens our geography and gives us more opportunity to increase our collective impact, both locally and globally (glocally). **Second**, Founder Region had 100% participation in clubs contributing to SIA Club Giving in our 2017-2018 club year! This is a first for Founder Region. The **third** accomplishment is the success we have seen with our clubs having Human Trafficking Awareness Proclamations read at their community City Council meetings, and then taking those Proclamations and awareness information out INTO their community. Founder Region Soroptimists will continue our effort to STOP trafficking.

—Pam Parker



2018-2020 Founder Region Governor, Sylvia Crafton

Soroptimist International of the Marianas

Theme: "*Empowering Change*"

Region Board : Governor-elect: Kris Chorbi Secretary: Pat Eileen Fisher Treasurer: Vicki Ham
Directors - District 1: Elise Balgley District 2: Bev Gomer District 3: Joy Swank
District 4: Barbara Young District 5: Dyann O'Brien District 6: Kristal Koga

Region Conferences

2019 - San Ramon - San Ramon Marriott Clubs in region: 53 Registration: 351

2020 - Virtual via Zoom Clubs in region: 54



Our biennium theme, "Empowering Change", aptly expresses the uniqueness of this term and the work accomplished. We empowered change by reducing our number of districts and realigned district boundaries for better balance. We chartered two new clubs—SI/West Sonoma County and SI/Oakmont Wine Country. At our 2019 Founder Region Conference we were honored to have our Soroptimist International President Mariet Verhoef-Cohen and SIA Federation President Elizabeth Di Geronimo, as visitors and presenters. When the Coronavirus pandemic struck in 2020, our world changed drastically and we had to empower change to comply with social distancing and canceled our in-person conference. We converted our plans for the 2020 conference and accomplished all of our business and awards via a Virtual Conference including Zoom video conference call presentations for Legislative Advocacy, Founder Region Fellowship, and the Saturday Night announcements of the ballot and election results with a virtual installation for our 2020-2022 Founder Region and Fellowship Boards. There were several narrated presentations posted on the website to cover the content and all aspects of a typical Founder Region Conference. We also accomplished our Leadership Training in June with narrated presentations and a live Zoom event including breakout sessions. Founder Region Fellowship looked at new ways of raising funds and educated us on the importance of financial strategies to ensure the longevity of this life-changing program. We gave \$100,000.00 in Fellowship grants to 10 deserving women in 2019 and \$70,000.00 in Fellowship grants in 2020. —Sylvia Crafton



2020-2022 Founder Region Governor, Kris Chorbi

Soroptimist International of Eureka

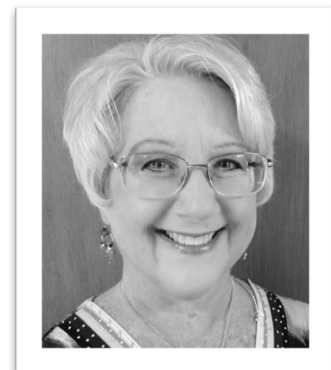
Theme: "*Dream BIG for the future!*"

Region Board: Governor-elect: Vicki Ham Secretary: Joy Swank Treasurer: Tess Albin-Smith
Directors - District 1: Lenore Colarusso District 2: Jackie Arnold District 3: Colleen Ganaye
District 4: Vicki Baldwin District 5: Kristal Koga

Region Conferences

2021 - Virtual via Zoom Clubs in region: 53

2022 - Oahu - Waikiki Beach Marriott



This biennium faced many challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, but we forged ahead as our theme states: "Dream BIG for the future!" Clubs had to meet via Zoom and most in-person events and fundraisers were cancelled due to the "Stay at Home" orders and "Social Distancing" restrictions. It did give way for a new form of engaging members and created many opportunities to attend club meetings all over the region. The region created several online "Tutorials" to help members with Zoom, Website Design, Facebook, Dream It, Be It Programs, and Club Treasurer Training. Leadership Training took on a whole new expanded offering throughout the year and we were able to engage with members more often. Expenses for the region were reduced so the board created a "Membership Incentive" campaign to award clubs \$500 if they inducted 5 new members between Jan 1st - May 31st. SIA restricted in-person activity for the federation, so the 2021 conference went virtual once more. Without travel considerations, speakers were obtained from all geographic locations, including SI President Sharon Fisher, and all members could now attend. The conference service project was a collaboration with the "Dress a Girl Around the World" organization and members began sewing dresses to send to under-developed countries. The Founder Region History Book was updated for the 100 Year Anniversary of Soroptimist and provided to conference early bird registrants. Conference spanned over 5 days with 8 different events in which members could participate. Registration was done through Eventbrite and several new conference pages were created on the region website as a virtual program. Hopefully, the second year of my biennium will allow us to get back to business as usual. —Kris Chorbi

2022-2024 Founder Region Governor, Vicki Ham

Soroptimist International of Willits

Theme: "BEE the Dream"

Region Board : Governor-elect: Elise Balgley Secretary: Kristal Koga Treasurer: Tess Albin-Smith
Directors - District 1: Lenore Colarusso District 2: Jackie DeVries District 3: Colleen Ganaye District
4: Elaine Reed District 5: Teri Lynn Sato



Region Conferences:

2023 - Oakland Marriott City Center Attendance: 260

Clubs in Region: 50

2024 - San Ramon Marriott Attendance: 243

Clubs in Region: 47 Club Members as of 6/30/2024: 1258

After two years of COVID virtual meetings, I wanted as many in-person meetings as we could manage. I encouraged the board to hold their PRTs in-person, although some went hybrid and some continued on Zoom. We gathered together again for District Meetings and I only had to cover one Zoom Leadership Training. We traveled to Guam, which was a wonderful experience and the District V clubs were so gracious in making sure we had a wonderful time. It was important to me to have our members return to the fun and fellowship that can only be had by being together.

Our clubs returned to regular meetings, community fundraisers, and in-person awards programs. I could only attend a few of these gatherings, but when I did, it was clear that our members had missed being together. And I always appreciated your invitations to your events.

I am very proud of the work the Founder Region clubs have accomplished in these past two years. The message got through that we needed to give more Live Year Dream awards than we had in the past, and we did increase those awards during the biennium. Dream It, Be It events continued, we had an increase in the number of "S" Clubs, and reporting on Big Goal Accelerator projects increased.

The success in Founder Region takes effort from all. You are all awesome Founder Region!!