



Soroptimist International Of Bellflower

*A service organization made up of women who strive to make a difference
for women and girls in local communities and throughout the world*

*Celebrating 60 years of Making a Difference through
Volunteer Service*

Presidents Message:

This year we, the Bellflower Soroptimists, celebrate 60 years of existence. 60 years of making a difference to local organizations in our city and surrounding areas. 60 years of making a difference in women's and girls lives. 60 years of helping make dreams come true. 60 years of enriching lives. 60 years of touching hearts and lifting spirits. We must pay tribute to those Soroptimists that came before us in our club. Our charter President was Ruth Caruthers and our Charter club was the Downey Club (meaning that club helped us to form). Those founding club members are no longer with us but they paved the way for us.

Women join Soroptimist because they want to make a difference. By being a member of this international service organization we are able to make a difference not just in our local community but around the world. By all the Soroptimists joining together we make that impact globally. We have helped build water wells in Senegal; schools in the tsunami torn country of Thailand; we are helping the girls orphaned in the Japanese earthquake and tsunami to be able to have a place to live and continue their education and much much more.

Our club has provided scholarships for girls going onto college. Not just one scholarship, not two but over the lifetime of our club it is probably close to 200 scholarships that have been given. We have given tens of thousands of dollars to Women re-entering the job force through our Women's Opportunity Awards (see article inside this newsletter for more details). We have supported local domestic violence shelters and drug and alcohol rehab houses. We helped to build a housing community for low-income seniors who might otherwise be out on the street. We support local organizations within the City and the list goes on.

We have members who have come and gone and we have members that have stayed. Each woman who has joined our club has made a difference - whether they stayed 1 year or stayed 50 years - each one helps us to improve the lives of women and girls in need. Many women who join our club stay members for years and years. Lucinda is one such member, having joined in 1969 and she is still a contributing member today. Others have been members for 27 years, and 15 years and 10 years, and 2 years and 1 year and 6 months and so on. Women join to make a difference. To all the women who are members and have been members, I salute you! You are an inspiration to the women and girls we help. You make an impact; you touch lives in a positive way; you reach out that helping hand to others in need. *You* make the difference! Take a moment and be proud of all you do and the difference you make.

President Sue

Board of Directors

President:

Susan Held

Vice-President:

Vicky Daniels

Recording Secretary:

Marcie Raphael

Corresponding Secretary:

Doreen Robbins

Treasurer:

Robin Ordequi

Directors/Delegates:

Deana Porter

Terri Williams

***Soroptimist International of
Bellflower was chartered on
May 2, 1953***

*For more information about the
Bellflower Soroptimist Club, be
sure to check out our website:*

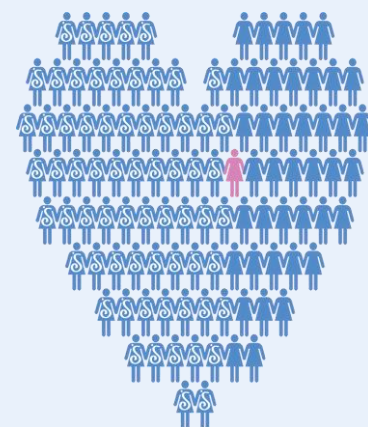
<http://www.soroptimistbellflower.org>

*and go to our Facebook page and
"Like" us!*

***Bellflower Soroptimists
PO BOX 301
Bellflower, CA 70706***

Our theme this year is:

***"Making a Difference, One
Woman At A Time"***



Why Do Soroptimists Focus on Women and Girls?

Soroptimist was formed because in 1921 women who were interested in volunteering in their communities were not permitted to join male service organizations. Since that time, the organization has worked to help women improve their standing in the world. Despite tremendous strides, women still do not enjoy equal economic or social status with their male counterparts. As an organization of and for women, Soroptimist feels uniquely qualified to tackle the challenges facing today's women and girls.

It's true that both men and women live in poverty, face financial discrimination and must overcome obstacles. But throughout history – in every country in the world – women and girls face additional obstacles and discrimination solely because of their gender.

Soroptimist Information – Or “Did You Know??”

- Soroptimist International has about 95,000 members
- Soroptimist International of the Americas has about 40,000 members
- Soroptimist International members reside in about 120 countries and territories throughout the world
- The name Soroptimist International of the *Americas* might be misleading to some because clubs that belong in the *Americas* are actually located in 20 different countries and territories! Those countries are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Columbia, Ecuador, Guam, Guatemala, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Panama, Paragua, Peru, Phillipines, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, United States and Venezuela.
- Soroptimist International has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which oversees U.N. activities and policies promoting human rights. Soroptimist representatives are volunteers and work in one of the four U.N. centers in New York City, Paris, Vienna or Geneva. It is in this forum that Soroptimist representatives can advocate for the Soroptimist mission of improving the lives of women and girls.

Soroptimist Village Birthday Party

Bellflower Soroptimists were the lucky club to be able to host the May Soroptimist Village Birthday party. **Soroptimist Village**, a low-rent senior citizen housing complex is located in Norwalk. The Village was built by Soroptimists in 1963 and is to this day supported and managed by ten Soroptimist clubs who work with the City of Norwalk Housing Authority to provide housing for 60 low-income seniors. Every month a Soroptimist club hosts a birthday party for the residents of the Village. May was our month to do this. 4 Soroptimist members were on hand that night to serve cupcakes, punch, and coffee. Then led by our fearless leader, Doreen Robbins, Bingo was played and prizes awarded to the winners. Let me say that these Villagers sure can get competitive about Bingo! Happy birthday was sung to the 3 May birthday people and each were given birthday presents from all the Soroptimist clubs who support the Village. It really was a fun night. We will do it again next year and can always use more volunteers that night as we do need to walk around the room and help them fill in the numbers that have been called as the caller Dorren, moves everything right along and some of the people are not that quick in finding the number!



Birthday Bingo at Soroptimist Village in May, 2013



Soroptimist Members were Bingo callers at the Village Birthday Bash



Soroptimist member helps the Villagers find their numbers

Bellflower Soroptimists Awards Luncheon and Tea was held on May 14 and was a huge success!

Members of Bellflower Unified school District; local organizations as well as State Official Representatives were on hand to help share the afternoon as the Soroptimists gave away thousands of dollars that had been raised for just that purpose. Many thanks to **Erin Stibal**, Field Deputy from Supervisor Knabe's Office; **Gerri Guzman**, Field Representative from Assemblmember Cristina Garcia's office as well as Bellflower Unified School District Superintendent **Brian Jacobs, Ed.D** and Board President **Laura Sanchez-Ramirez** for their attendance and participation in this event! The Bellflower Soroptimists were fortunate this year to have raised enough money to present 2 - \$1,000 Women's Opportunity Awards to two very deserving women. The Women's Opportunity Awards program assists women who provide the primary source of financial support for their families by giving them the resources they need to improve their education, skills and employment prospects.

Maria Alvarez is the mother of a 2 year old son and is currently attending Cerritos Community College to obtain an Associate Degree in the nursing program. After she obtains her degree from Cerritos college, she plans to transfer to a 4-year University and earn her Bachelors and then Masters, while working as a Registered Nurse. Maria is studying full time, enrolled in 18 units and the money we presented her will go a long way in helping her to achieve her goal of becoming a nurse.

Our second Awardee was **Anna Leonard**, a single mother of a 9 year old son, who is also attending Cerritos College to earn a nursing degree. Over the years Anna took one or two classes each semester until she was able to earn her degree as a Physical Therapist Assistant. Anna works 18 hours a week, using her current degree, attends school four days a week, attends clinical sites after her classes, studies 3 -4 hours every night and still finds time to help others in schools, church and community. Anna was not able to attend our award event as she was busy working at her clinical. We will be sure she receives her money and awards certificates. Anna hopes to be able to visit our club in the future to personally thank us for this award that will help her to achieve her dream.

Victoria Ortega received this year's Violet Richardson Award. This award honors girls who are making a difference through volunteer service. Victoria volunteers with Saint Dominic Savio Youth Ministry and helps make food baskets from August to February and is also involved in neighborhood clean-ups. She attends Summer Day Camp as a counselor where she has learned to be a leader and has learned the tough life lesson that some kids go home to face tough issues. Victoria has said that she has learned a lot through her work and is ready to learn more and share it with the world. We were happy to be able to present her with a check for \$300 as well as certificates from State Legislators and Supervisor Knabe's office.

With us at the event to receive certificates as well as monetary awards were **Su Casa**, an organization that is celebrating 30 years of protecting families against domestic violence; **Community Family Guidance Center**, who each year provides high quality, low cost counselling services to over 9,000 of the highest need families in our community. Additionally **Little House** was recognized for their service to our community – for their work as a drug and alcohol treatment center for women for over 60 years. Of course we also recognized and have contributed financially to **Soroptimist Village**, a low-rent senior citizen housing complex in Norwalk. The Village was built by Soroptimists in 1963 and is to this day supported and managed by ten Soroptimists clubs who work with the City of Norwalk Housing Authority to provide housing for 60 low-income seniors. We were happy to be able to recognize and award the **Bellflower Volunteer Center** for the wonderful job they do within the city of Bellflower, providing opportunities for youth and adults to volunteer in their community. In 2012, 1600 people volunteered a total of 1290 hours with the Volunteer Center. **Caring Connections**, a Healthy Start community collaborative has been serving children and families in the Bellflower Unified School District since 1992. Our club supports their work and was able to present them with a check to help them continue their work.



Our Violet Richardson Awardee, Victoria Ortega and our Women's Opportunity Awardee, Maria Alvarez. Not pictured is our 2nd Women's Opportunity Awardee, Anna Leonard



The picture above is President Sue (center) with the club's Violet Richardson Awardee; the Women's Opportunity Awardee and the local organizations that received recognition as well as monetary awards.

Soroptimist Spring Conference held in Ventura, CA in April

Spring Conference. A term that only a Sorpotimsit can relate to. It's a time in our Soroptimist lives when we have the opportunity to join with other Soroptimists in our Region (area), in one location, for 2 ½ days, to conduct business, give away money, honor deserving women and girls and bestow recognition to clubs that have worked hard over the past year. Members can attend as many days as they are able. It is a lot of fun as we get to meet with Soroptimists from our Region and learn about what they are doing, and how they do things. We share, we eat, we drink, we laugh and we get re-motivated for all that we do.

This year our Spring Conference was held in Ventura, right on the beach. The weather was wonderful, though a bit cold when the wind kicked up. Oh, but what a view! To go back and relax would be a great thing!



At Spring Conference we conduct business and vote on issues. Each club has 3 voting members that are given voting cards and when its time to vote, this is what the room looks like. A sea of pink voting cards going up in the air – to vote either for – or against the motion.



At this year's Spring Conference 2 of our own members received recognition. Deana Porter for achieving 5 years as a member. YAHOO Deana!! And Cecily Seburn was recognized by the Region as a tireless Registration Chair for oh so many years. This is the last year that she will be doing this. She is relieved and we as members are a bit scared to see how things are handled next year as for all intents and purposes, Registration was always a smooth oiled machine (at least to everyone's untrained eye!) Thank you Cecily for all that you have done. Recognition well deserved.



Calendar of Events

June 4 – Business Meeting

June 11 - Program Meeting

We are “dark” during July and August – meaning no monthly meetings though we will be holding meetings to plan the upcoming year and start planning for our fashion show!

July 27 - Installation and induction of new member(s)

August Date to be determined – Comedy and Tupperware Night

*October 10 – Joint Service Club Lunch – Simms Park – 12 noon.
We are the host club for this event!!*

Save the Date!!



*Bellflower Soroptimists Fashion Show
& Boutique*

is...

Saturday, November 16

@ 11:30

@

Sycamore Plaza in Lakewood

See you there!

