

Soroptimist International of Woodland

May 2012

www.soroptimistofwoodland.org

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Upcoming events:

May 23 - Cinco de Yolo hosted by SI Greater Davis

May 30 - Human trafficking presentation by Mary Molinaro, president of Strive2Free

June 9 - Story Time with Soroptimist at the Woodland Public Library

June 13 - Scholarship and Awards Recognition Event

June 20 - Installation of Incoming Officers

June 29-July 1 - Planning Retreat for 2012-2013

President's Message

Happy Spring everyone! It's a beautiful season full of flowers, blue skies, and warm sunshine, all very welcome, especially after the winter rain. I hope you all are enjoying this special time before we gear up for a hot summer.

Time has been flying by, and my presidency will soon end. I'm proud to say that the club has completed many projects throughout this year: Evening on the Green Concert, Bunco Nights, Tamale Drives, Second Horizon's Bingo, and Community Outreach Projects.

We also recently participated in Career Day at Progress House and the Live Your Dream Hike, which were both very successful.

I mentioned that my term as president is winding down, but it does not mean the women in Soroptimist of Woodland will slow down at all! We are now planning to have a recognition event for our signature Scholarships & Awards and to host an informational talk regarding human trafficking in the Sacramento Valley.

I sometimes wonder how we did, and will, get all these things done. Then I realize that I am surrounded by fabulous women, who make everything come true with their passion, commitment, and determination. To be a part of such a wonderful group gives me a nice, warm, and revitalized feeling, just like spring does. The only difference is the former one lasts all year long!

Thank you to my club for making my presidency a wonderful experience!

Michiko Pate
President 2011-2012



Introducing our New Members

Lisa Bruni

I am delighted to be a new member of SI Woodland! I am a California native (spending most of my youth in Sonoma). I arrived in Woodland in 1998 with my husband Matthew Franck, after previously attending UC Davis for a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Policy, followed by graduate work in Environmental Horticulture. I have worked as an Environmental Scientist for an environmental consulting firm, as a Chemist in an analytical laboratory, and as a Teaching and Research Assistant while doing graduate work at UC Davis. I am the mother of a very busy 11-year-old daughter named Erin. Describing myself as a "Professional Volunteer" (although I am currently looking for work -- hint!), I have spent the last several years coaching youth basketball and softball in the Woodland community, and serving countless hours as the PTA President at Whitehead Elementary. I have enjoyed engaging with our local youth, and am excited about the opportunities that SI Woodland will further provide in working with women and children in our community. I also am excited about the new friendships I am now forging with the wonderful women of SI Woodland!

BriAnne Dewberry

I mostly grew up in Davis, but for a brief and impressionable moment of my childhood, I lived in Colorado. After graduating from Davis Senior High School, I went to college for only a year before a sports injury got the best of me. From there, I decided to take my part time job more seriously, and for the last 13 years I've built a career at First Northern Bank. I started as a clerk in the Davis Real Estate Department and worked my way up to Operations Manager for the Woodland Branch. One of the reasons I take pride in working for the bank is its commitment to giving back in our local communities. As a manager of the bank, I am encouraged to take part on a grander scale, and I do so eagerly. I chose to be involved with SI of Woodland for two reasons: its reputation for getting things done, and its focus on helping women and children. It's one thing to sit around and talk about taking action, but it takes a special kind of energy to execute. I am grateful to be part of such an energetic group. A few more things about me: my husband and I have 2 cats and a dog (which our family and friends refer to as "our children"). I'm happy when I'm crafty, and I enjoy singing, dancing, playing sports, and camping.

Donyel Niehues

A Woodland resident since 1990, I am Vice President of Yolo Machinery Erectors, Inc. My business partner, Jim, and I will be celebrating our 30th wedding anniversary this July, and we have three adult children: Jim (26) who is a video game developer; John (23) who launches satellites; and Lara (20) who is pre-med at the University of Nevada. A former high school French teacher, I have been active volunteering at Holy Rosary, Plainfield, Lee and Woodland High as well as with Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. Now with all three kids grown and out of the house, I'm looking forward to having extra time to serve the Woodland community through Soroptimist! Thank you all for the warm welcome and the special new friendships!

Alienus Non Diutius – Alone No Longer – Pixar University

Soroptimist International of Woodland – May 2012

Live Your Dream Hike 2012

Twenty young ladies joined Soroptimist members and guests for the 4th Annual Live Your Dream (LYD) Hike, from Muir Woods to Stinson Beach on Saturday, April 21, 2012.

We started off the day by giving each of the girls a backpack filled with goodies and a LYD Hike T-shirt. Participants enjoyed a healthy breakfast of bagels, fruit and milk on the bus ride.

SI Woodland member Donyel led a fun game, similar to telephone, during the ride. It served as a great ice breaker, as well as showing how easily things can be misunderstood.

Upon arrival at Muir Woods the girls were divided into groups of four teens and two or three adults. SI Woodland member BriAnne created a photo scavenger hunt. Each group was provided with a pack of photos and was encouraged to locate the items along the trail and photograph them as proof.

The scavenger hunt was a great addition to the LYD Hike, and got the girls to talk to each other while searching for banana slugs or California poppies.

At the mid-way point we stopped for a snack break and to catch our breath. It was a beautiful day and the girls enjoyed the view. The Dipsi Trail is fairly challenging, and we all needed to recharge before setting out on the last leg of the trail.

Before heading out again, SI Woodland member Tania led the girls in a Goal-Setting activity. The theme was "Live Your Dream", and the girls were asked to write down their dreams. They were then challenged to determine obstacles that they may face and identify people who might help them achieve their dreams. Many girls shared their dreams and asked for suggestions on reaching their goals.

In past years, we've had a problem with some girls rushing through the hike and getting ahead of the adults. This year, SI Woodland member Pam assigned a lead group, and all other groups were 5 to 10 minutes behind each other. This kept everyone at a good pace and allowed us to keep the girls in their assigned groups.

SI Woodland member Vicki drove up to Stinson Beach and set up a wonderful lunch. Thank you to all SI Woodland members who assisted in preparing the lunch. Special thanks to SI Woodland member Monique for doing the shopping.

The weary, and very hungry, hikers arrived at the beach between 1:00 and 1:30. SI Woodland member Tammy encouraged the last stragglers along, and they were all so excited to finally see the ocean!

After wolfing down the sandwiches, chips, fruit, and juices, most of the girls headed out to cool off in the waves. The Frisbees donated by First Northern Bank served double duty...first as lunch plates, and then as toys to chase in the ocean.

Seven of this year's hikers were returnees, and all have said they'd encourage others to attend in the future. Many thanks to all the hard work put in by the LYD Hike committee members: Pam (co-chair), Tania (co-chair), Linda, Monique, Roxanne, Donyel and BriAnne.



Progress House Career Day

Progress House is a twelve bed residential facility specializing in The Female Offender Treatment Employment Program.

On Career Day, Beth started the whole group with introductions and an explanation of Soroptimist: what we do and why we were there. The women were then divided into three groups of three 40 minute stations.

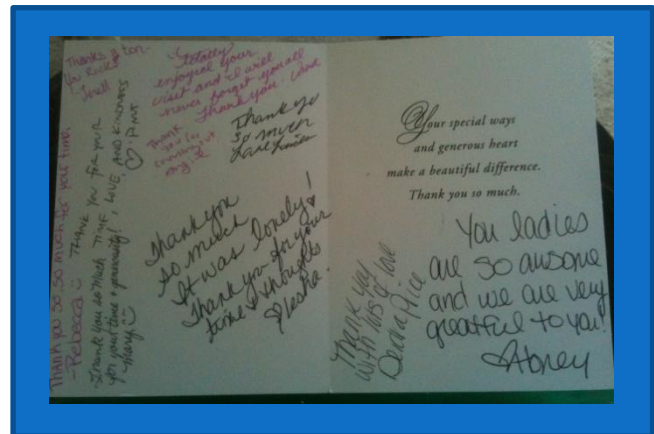
Station One: our human resources guru, Beth, led interviewing skills, which included what to do and not do before and during a job interview. Her actors were fellow SI members Linda and Michi. Linda played the part of what to do correctly, while Michiko dressed in a crazy outfit playing the part of what NOT to do.

Station Two: Betsy led applications, forms, resumes, and what to bring when applying for jobs. Betsy supplied sample applications and the participants practiced completing them correctly. There also was a Q&A regarding resumes and job seeking websites. The information supplied was amazing.

Station Three: Laura and Janice were in charge of career fashion and makeup. The ladies enjoyed this station immensely! We had gathered a substantial amount of clothing, shoes, and purses during and after a Bunco event. With our MaryKay samples, the ladies loved getting an idea of how to correctly apply daytime work makeup.

All participants seemed excited and glad to have us there. They come from varying backgrounds and skill levels. We believe that each one took something away from the training. At the closing, the girls were given goody bags. Beth supplied MaryKay cosmetic bags filled with makeup compacts, lipstick and mascara. Betsy supplied Silpada jewelry earrings and also small lotions, shampoos, and conditioners. Janice supplied trouser socks for each goody bag.

We finished with a fully-donated catered lunch from TOGO's, and all was well-received. They can't wait to have us return!



Scholarships and Awards

The **Women's Opportunity Award** was established to assist women with primary financial responsibility for their families to obtain the skills-training and education necessary to improve their employment status and standard of living for themselves and their families. This year's \$1,000 award winner is Jillian Allen, a 26-year-old single mother of a two-year-old son. She has overcome several challenges during her life, including a father who abandoned her family, rape at age 13, the murder of her best friend, an abusive relationship, and most recently, a diagnosis of benign essential tremors. This means that her hands, feet and head shake. She is pursuing an education in nursing despite her own medical struggles. She wants to ensure that she gives her son an example that giving up on your dream is never the answer. "There is always a way to get through things. You really have to believe in what you are doing and be strong."

The **Violet Richardson Award** is a recognition program for young women ages 14-17 engaged in volunteer actions within their communities or schools. The award is given to young women whose activities make the community and world a better place. Our award winner is Miriam Campos from Pioneer High School. She volunteers at Yolo Family Resource Center. She writes for the youth newspaper, which informs Woodland's youth about what goes on around them. She and her newspaper crew help prepare food for the homeless at the Wayfarer Center. Miriam will receive \$500, and Yolo Family Resource Center will also receive a \$500 donation from Soroptimist of Woodland.

The Soroptimist **Ruby Award** honors women who have worked to improve the lives of women and girls through their professional and/or volunteer work. We are pleased to honor Susan Keever from the Progress House for her dedication to the women and children living at Progress House. The mission of Progress House is to provide quality, comprehensive services for women whose lives have been affected by substance use disorders. Susan acts as lead counselor, providing guidance and education to the residents. One resident explains, "Susan truly cares and understands the struggles we have been through and helps us not only with the problem, but the solution as well, so we don't have to continue down the path of self-destruction anymore." Progress House will receive a \$1,000 donation from Soroptimist of Woodland to support Susan's work there.

The **Evelyn Holland Scholarship** honors young women pursuing their education in agriculture, who exemplify her dedication to civic affairs and the advancement of women in society. Nicole Reiff is this year's \$1,000 recipient. She plans to attend Cal Poly San Luis Obispo to earn a degree in Agricultural Business. She hopes to either own or operate a business that supports the farming community. Nicole volunteers at her church and at The Woodland Opera House.

The **Sheila Edwards Memorial Scholarship** honors young women pursuing a career in education, who exemplify her passion for education and improving literacy in our community. Our award winner is Gabriela Garcia from Woodland High School. She hopes to teach at an elementary school in the future. She volunteers at a local elementary school helping students with reading and math. Gabriela will receive a \$1,000 scholarship to attend college.



SOROPTIMIST

Best for Women

ABC Project: A Book for Every Child - Supporting Literacy in Our Community

For the past three years, Soroptimist International (SI) of Woodland has given books to every kindergartner in the Woodland Joint Unified School District, resulting in the distribution of over 2,400 books. During distribution, SI Woodland members read a story to the class before allowing children to choose a book to take home. Committee members and non-committee members alike enjoy the warm reception that these books garner from our young students. Teachers appreciate the timeliness of this gift; we distribute our books near the end of the school year to promote summer reading.

Kristy commented on her experience, “The teachers asked me to report that the book selection we give away is perfect, very age appropriate, and the subject matter is just great for what they are teaching. They really appreciate us doing this program!” She further reported, “I want to add a Happy Dollar for today. One young boy said he needed a book because his dad didn’t have any for him. The teacher told me that his parents had recently separated. He was so excited to have a book to take over to his father’s house!!”

Beth reported a similar experience: “Each of the teachers was very excited to have a Soroptimist in their classrooms and while each teacher thanked us profusely, one teacher touched my heart when she said, ‘This is the only book some of these children will have in their home.’”

SI of Woodland couldn’t be happier to provide these students with reading materials and to provide our club with a great community experience. Thank you to our ABC Committee members: Kristy, Monique, Tami, and Tania. Thanks to all of our members who assist with book distribution and make this program a great success!

To further promote literacy in our community, SI Woodland hosts “Story Time with Soroptimist” at the Woodland Public Library. A Soroptimist member will conduct story time for children preschool to age 7 on the second Saturday of each month at the Children’s section of the library. Children can participate in a related activity at the end of story time as well! We have one more story time this year on June 9th from 1:00 to 1:30. Bring the kids down for some story time fun! This event is free.

Go confidently in the direction of your dreams!
Live the life you have imagined. – Henry David Thoreau

Soroptimist - Improving the lives of women and children in our community and throughout the world.

Officers 2011-2012:

President

Michiko Pate

President-Elect

Tania Garcia-Cadena

Secretary

Beth Coehlo

Treasurer

Pam Weaver

Immediate Past President

Laura Liddicoet

Human Trafficking
Informational Talk

Please join Soroptimist International of Woodland when we welcome Mary Molinaro to answer the following questions: What is human trafficking? Why does it exist? And what can you do about it?

Ms. Molinaro is the president of Strive2Free, a non-profit organization which was formed to bring awareness to the Sacramento Valley, to provide assistance to victims, and to support local efforts to stop human trafficking.

This is an opportunity to educate ourselves about a form of modern-day slavery that is taking place right here in our backyard.

Mary Molinaro on Human Trafficking in the Sacramento Valley
County Fair Mall Community Room
1125 East Street
Woodland, CA 95776
May 30, 2012
Doors Open 5:30pm
Presentation 6 – 7pm
Please RSVP at siwoodland@soroptimist.net as space is limited

Thank you to all the SI Woodland members who contributed to this newsletter.