

History
of
Soroptimist International
of Stuart

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HISTORY of SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF STUART

Soroptimist International of Stuart was chartered in the fall of 1954. It is an association of executive business and professional women. Planning for the club began when Helen Noble Burgess and Jane Chaney, representing Soroptimist International of Ft Pierce, called on Rosaleen Murray, manager of Stuart Chamber of Commerce, asking for names of qualified business and professional women. From a list of thirty prospects, Beatrice Pittman and Anita Morrison took over leadership and gathered a group to meet at the Chamber of Commerce Building in September, 1954.

In November 1954, the club with 20 members, was chartered at a dinner at the Stuart Hotel on US 1 just south of the Roosevelt Bridge, site of Mullet Square. (Mullet Square is no longer in existence due to construction of the new Roosevelt Bridge-11/1/1997). Buena Meade and Margery Silvers of the sponsoring Ft Pierce club officiated. **Lillian Armstrong Dassori, who was then County Supervisor of Schools, was the charter president and Anita Morrison, vice president.** Luncheon meetings were held twice monthly in the Stuart Hotel dining room where the cost of a complete meal was \$1.00.

Charter members were Lillian Armstrong Dassori, Ellen M Nelson, Zola Swarouth, Frances R Keith, Lula Boyle, Sally Schwarz, Anita Parks Morrison, Rosemary Hinkle, Garland Kreider, Dorothy Pierce, Charlene Berry, Ruth Hall, Lillian Hansen, Beatrice Pittman, Mary W Roxby, Lettie C Dugan, Helen Matousel, Edna Coutant, Dorothy Routa, and Florence Voss.

The first project was saving the Gilbert's Bar House of Refuge on Hutchinson Island and its establishment as a museum. This was the last remaining of 10 Florida shelters for shipwrecked sailors. **A Martin County Historical Society was formed in 1955 through instigation of the Soroptimist Club;** and Martin County assumed ownership of the museum. Val Clear, brother of Soroptimist Zola Swarouth, was the first museum director and literally "beat the bushes" to collect historical items to depict the past of this Indian River area so important to Florida history.

Filling a community recreation need was the next major project undertaken. **In 1958, with cooperation from many other groups, a fund for a public swimming pool was established** and the fund grew for several years. This became somewhat of a "bottomless pool" as it became evident that because of maintenance expense, no public body would assume ownership of the facility even when construction funds were sufficient.

In 1960, Harmon P Elliott, a winter resident of Stuart, decided to build a museum in memory of his father, the inventor Sterling Elliott. Depicting the development of automotive engineering, the building and its exhibits were given to Martin County. Soroptimists were proud their interest in culture and history had created the first museum and believed it must have played a part in Mr. Elliott's decision to build the second one.

During the year 1960, Soroptimists joined with other civic groups to place their permanent insignia signs, with meeting information, on joint club signs at the north and south entrances to the city on US 1. Other cooperative projects have included work in clean-up campaigns, beautification councils, Sailfish Regatta, holiday and anniversary parades, blood banks, x-ray drives, and fair booths.

As the town of Stuart grew, its appearance became increasingly more important. A very talented man from Canada, Bill Ambler, became Stuart's first director of parks. Funds were contributed for several years to assist with area beautification under Bill's guidance.

In 1964, when the Pioneer Occupational Center wanted to purchase Coral Gardens Bowling Lanes for permanent quarters (to be remained Tri-County Rehabilitation and Technology School); the club contributed money and equipment. Members also saved newspapers upon request, and worked bingo and bake sales for the center. This center no longer exists. It later was renamed and is presently identified as HPS (Helping People Succeed).

In 1964, Louise Miller served as president of Stuart Soroptimists.

In 1965, a living Christmas Tree was planted with appropriate seasonal ceremony at a major intersection. Another time, anchors from the USS Rankin, sunk offshore as a reef, were installed at the north and south entrances to Stuart. This was a reminder of Soroptimists' connection with the historical House of Refuge.

In 1966, the old lifesaving station once again needed saving itself. The club learned of its desperate need for a new roof. The County Commission, to save costs, had voted to install a roof that did not conform to the House's original appearance. Soroptimists dug deep into collective socks, solicited funds, and contributed \$1500.00 toward the replacement of the wood shingle roof.

In 1968, nearly 10 years after its inception, the demand for swimming instruction from a growing population heightened, and funds were offered to the Martin County Board of Public Instruction. The Board had room on land adjacent to the new high school (Martin County High School). The Kiwanis Club accepted the project in 1972 and raised additional funds. Soroptimists assisted in this endeavor and raised more funds. Martin County Commissioners agreed to match the funds raised and the pool is now a reality with the school owning and operating the facility for the public.

Club members were at the first planning meeting for the Martin County Fair, and in 1968 were asked to sponsor the opening night program. This program selected the annual Fair Queen, known as the "Martin County Fair Lady." This developed from a small ceremony outdoors near the entrance garden to a beautiful pageant in the big tent.

When Martin Memorial Hospital was expanding for the 2nd time in 1969, a two year project by the club furnished a room at the hospital. Throughout the 26 years, many Soroptimist Club activities have been with children and youth.

Soroptimist International of America sponsored an annual Youth Citizenship Award for each club to select a local high school senior to compete with other students. Young

women were recognized for excellence in business training classes. Funds were given for various trips to Washington DC, 4-H, and other student seminars.

For 10 years, a girls' service club (S Club) was sponsored at the Martin County High School and a similar group, Sigma Society, was sponsored at St Joseph College (no longer in existence) in Jensen Beach. Currently, IndianRiverside Park, a public park, is located at the river site and Summerville Assisted Living is located on the west side of the property. A "brick" from St Joseph's was given to the Stuart Youth Center for their expansion.

Projects for younger children have included layettes given through Red Cross, money for welfare agencies for dental care, tonsilleotomies, foster homes, migrant schools, Sunland Training Center, child care centers, mentally disabled children, and toys and books for a children's corner at the Indian River Mental Health Center Branch and Open Door (an early learning facility for disabled youngsters-presently the Challenger School).

Personal items were provided for women in jail and assistance was given to a young woman injured in a diving accident. Birthday parties have been given at nursing homes.

One of the new Federation projects was called "Training Awards Program," (TAP is now called Women's Opportunity Award) which retrains women for re-entry into the labor market.

Contributions have been given to Hospice, the Paradise Boys Ranch, and Martin County Public Library (now consisting of Blake/Main, with branches in Hoke/Jensen Beach, Timer Powers/Indiantown, Morgade/Port Salerno, Cummings/Palm City, and Hobe Sound).

In 1972, Martha Norton served as president for a two year term. Contributions to our local projects continued with even more enthusiasm and greater amounts of money collected. The Martin County Fair Lady pageant continued as our project.

Wanting to identify with one continuing charity in 1975, Soroptimists began contributing annually to "Meals on Wheels." This involved delivery of meals to the homebound and is a project independent of government funds. **Martha Norton was selected as 1975 Woman of the Year for her contributions.**

Nancy Tucker became president in 1976. The club continued to contribute to the Meals on Wheels program. They also decided to continue the Martin County Fair Lady pageant at the Martin County Fair.

The Southern Region Conference was held in West Palm Beach and one of the main events was a fashion show by club members modeling the clothes they made with McCalls' patterns.

In 1977, Louise Miller was named Woman of the Year.

In 1978, Carolyn Coy served as president. Because of her experience chairing fashion shows in the Junior Woman's Club, she proposed doing fashion shows to bring in funds.

The first show was held at the Woman's Club building on East Ocean Blvd. Clothes were modeled from various shops. The next year, the club held the show at Monarch Country Club, and later at Ocean Village on Hutchinson Island with clothes provided by the exclusive Harold Grant for Women shop in Harbour Bay Plaza.

By 1994, the show was staged at Indian River Plantation (later Marriott) with the first show given by the Gardens Mall, followed by Jacobson's Department Store (no longer in existence) from North Palm Beach.

Parties were the "in" thing for raising money for club expenses. Christmas parties were held at Louise Miller's home many times, and later, combined Christmas cocktail parties at Joan Till's home followed by dinner at Carolyn Coy's home were a success as well.

The club also had a Gilligan's Island party at Joy Funston's home and "Bunko" parties at Joan Smith's clubhouse. Everyone brought a covered dish and cash donation per person.

Evelyn Deggeller followed her sister, Carolyn, with her presidency in 1980-1982. After her installation, Evelyn represented the club at the **SIA convention in Los Angeles, California.** Her two "roomies" were Marion Bigger and Vinese Gardner. The featured speaker at the convention was Maureen Reagan (President Ronald Reagan's daughter).

The club held its first carnival at the fairgrounds and used one of the buildings for an art contest with school students drawing pictures in assigned categories. The winners received plaques and cash in each category. Raffles were held to win golf clubs and bag the first year, and a Honda motorcycle the second year.

Evelyn started the 50/50 game which is still played today for extra monies for the club; and served on the Southern Region Finance Committee with Vinese Gardner.

The club's largest contribution came in 1980 when \$6,000.00 was raised for the new YMCA complex on Monterey Road (airport bypass road). A memorial tree was given to Stuart and planted in 1980.

Soroptimists held Casino nights to raise funds for a new Barn Theatre building. The club worked with the Barn Theatre people as well as the Optimist Club. One of the largest Casino fund raisers was held at Zarrella Farms' warehouse in Palm City (Alt #76 west of turnpike).

Evelyn was selected Woman of the Year for 1982.

Our Martin County Fair Lady pageant gave way to a request from the Junior Women's Club to take over the **Christmas Parade** as their club was closing and would not be able to sponsor it any longer. **The first co-chairs were Barbara Navitsky and Carolyn Coy.** Parades were held on Saturday morning in Stuart on East Ocean Blvd encircling Confusion Corner. Participation included schools and local organizations and livestock.

In 1984, the Stuart Soroptimists found new member – Mary-Jo Horton, a past governor of Southern region and former president of a Miami club.

In 1990, Donna Naglreiter served as president for a two year term. With lobbying from Carolyn Coy and permission of the Stuart City Commission, the parades were moved to the first Friday evening (night) in the month of December.

Following Donna's term as president, she embarked on chartering a new club in the Ft Pierce area (our club was originally chartered by a Ft Pierce club in 1954). Donna was successful and the St Lucie Club was chartered, with Donna joining their club for a number of years. Donna was selected Woman of the Year for 1991.

In 1992, Joy Funston was named Woman of Distinction at the first WOD awards ceremony sponsored by the Palm Glades Girl Scouts.

In 1993, past governor Mary-Jo Horton was selected as Woman of the Year.

In 1994, Joy Funston served as president for a one year term. Under Joy's presidency terms were reduced to one year as membership numbers increased.

The club held its first annual Women's Golf Tournament in 1994. It was held at Indian River Plantation (now Marriott) followed by the next year's tournament at Martin Downs Country Club. Funds were distributed to the club's two major charities, SafeSpace and the Boys and Girls Club of Martin County. The club also donated time to the annual Council on Aging Air Show, and the United Way Day of Caring.

The club adopted a family from United Way and distributed toys and food for Christmas. Tee shirts were given to the Hope Rural School in Indiantown. **Mary-Jo Horton was named Woman of Distinction in 1994.**

Dinner parties became cocktail parties. Cocktail parties became wine and cheese parties. **Joy Funston was named Woman of the Year for 1995.**

Carolyn Miller served as president in 1995. Under her presidency, we donated funds to SafeSpace, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Martin County Fire Fighters (for a new flag), House of Refuge, City of Stuart's Youth Intervention Program, and the **first two year donation to Molly's House**, a temporary residence for parents of hospitalized children.

Club member Joyce Holmes was named Woman of Distinction in 1995.

Carol Hodnett served as president in 1996. Again, we held our golf tournament, the air show, Christmas Parade and Fashion Show. Funds went to Molly's House for the second year donation and **funds were set aside for two new projects: STEPS-Soroptimist Training & Education Programs for Scholarships (program to assist students with forms for scholarships), and SOS-Save Ourselves, a breast cancer awareness activity program initiated by past president Joy.** SOS/SOS was renamed Save Ourselves/Save our Sisters.

Our TAP (now WOA) winner won at the Region conference in Boca Raton. **Carol Hodnett was selected as Woman of the Year for 1996.**

Betty Kroesen-Miner served as president in 1997. Our sponsoring club helped Soroptimist International of St Lucie County celebrate its second year birthday. Donna's membership in that club provided their needed leadership.

President Betty presided over the Southern Region conference held at Indian River Plantation in the spring of 1998. Mary-Jo Horton and Joy Funston co-chaired this event. SR governor Ann Decatrel from The Palm Beaches club was present. The theme of the conference was "Discover our Treasures."

Barbara Sorbello served as president in 1998. Discussion was held regarding the Palm Glades Women of Distinction luncheon as they were no longer able to chair the event. **We decided to sponsor WOD as a yearly event to highlight women** with commendable service to the community. This event would also provide funds for the service projects. **Nidia Bernstiel and Betty Kroesen-Miner were selected Women of the Year for 1998.**

Stuart Soroptimist's Board consisted of: president, president-elect, vice-president, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, treasurer, ass't treasurer, and four Directors with two year staggered terms, a delegate, and the parliamentarian.

In 1999, Susan Klein served as president and Diane Grassick was selected as Woman of the Year.

Susan attended the first Southern Region Leadership retreat held in Lake City, Florida with seven of our members. The Women of Distinction luncheon raised \$18,000.00 ...the most ever raised by any fund-raiser. **The SOS/SOS project won the Service Award at Southern Region. The Press Book and Newsletter won 1st place awards.** It was a good year.

Grace Haven was elected District I director (2 year term) and Lucy Lueg was appointed to the Southern Region finance committee.

Mary-Jo Horton became a member of the prestigious Laurel Society, the first member from the Stuart club. Luncheon club meetings were held at Maneros Restaurant for \$11.00 each member. Dues were \$100. per year for regular members.

We donated two \$1000 checks to YCA (Youth Citizenship Award) winners, and another \$1000 to WOA. The WOA winner also won at Southern Region Conference, receiving \$3000.00 from the region.

The club, after much debate, presented the Martin County Commission \$20,000.00 to construct two pavilions at the new Mary J Brogan Park located near the Challenger School on Willoughby Blvd.

At Women of Distinction ceremonies in April 2000, president-elect Cathy Gaudet was named as this year's recipient in the Civic/Professional category.

Cathy Gaudet served as president in 2000. Elected were Nidia Bernstiel as president-elect, vice-president Joanne Zarro, Joan Staley as treasurer, Lucy Lueg as ass't Treasurer,

recording secretary was Karen Vaina, corresponding secretary was Amy Chappel, Carolyn Coy and Karen Dobbins were 2nd year directors, and Rosalind Hall and Joanne Towner were 1st year directors. Mary-Jo Horton served as parliamentarian and Susan Klein as past president.

SIA initiated a new awards program called the Violet Richardson Award (VRA). The program recognizes young women, ages 14 – 17 for their volunteer work in the community. The club voted to award the winner \$500.00 and \$1000.00 to the charity of the winner's choice, the organization to which the winner donated her time.

The Grand Opening of the Mary J Brogan Park was held on November 13, 2000. The STEPS program continued with 14 students attending the workshops. **Nidia Bernstiel created and announced the start-up of the first SIS website.**

Grace Haven, District I director reported Stuart led the region in donating \$1050.00 to the President's Appeal for the "Trafficking of Women" and another \$1055.00 to the "Legacy of Learning."

Barbara Sorbello was named Woman of the Year for 2000. Susan Klein was chosen as Woman of the Year in 2001.

Nidia Bernstiel served as president 2001-2002 with elected officers Joanne Zarro as president-elect, Amy Chappel as vice-president, Jody Bond as treasurer, ass't treasurer was Susan Wolf-Schwartz, recording secretary was Sharon Lippisch, corresponding secretary was Joan Staley, 2nd year directors were Rosalind Hall and Karen Vaina, and 1st year directors were Jane Cebelak and Marilyn Monk. Cathy Gaudet served as past president and Mary-Jo Horton as parliamentarian.

In 2001, Suzanne Bell again (fourth time) chaired the Christmas Parade. The parade name was changed to "Holiday Parade" to be "politically correct" per the changing times. **The club hired for the first time an "outside" bookkeeper to provide written monthly financial reports.** Forms were created by treasurer Jody Bond for members to report funds to and from accounts. Membership costs increased to \$125.00 per year with a \$25.00 charge for 1st time induction. Luncheons were increased to \$15.00 each member.

SOS/SOS reported 107 mammograms for the year, an increase over the previous years. New SIA projects included "Supporting Peace in Africa." We matched member donations up to \$250.00. We supported "Limbs for Life" which related to land mines from previous wars. **The club, via Joyce Holmes, applied and won an SIA \$8000 grant for SOS/SOS mammograms.** We provided 167 mammograms for the next year.

Past president Cathy initiated the sale of "blue sashes" trimmed in yellow for club members to display the various pins collected from other clubs, conferences, and conventions. The sashes were sold to members and other clubs' members as well. The SOS/SOS committee asked members to participate in "Making Strides for Cancer" Walk. \$600.00 was raised for this event.

Southern Region Conference was held in West Palm Beach. Members were treated to a dinner cruise. Once again, our WOA winner won the region award and the \$3000.00 award monies. **Susan Klein was elected region secretary and Lucy Lueg was elected region treasurer.**

Joy Funston, Carolyn Coy, and Donna Nagreiter were nominated to Laurel Society. The club would donate \$1000. in the member(s) name.

Mary-Jo Horton led the "Take Stock in Children" program and provided \$1000.00 scholarships to 3 high school students. The students were chosen from the Pathfinder interviews.

Joanne Zarro was elected president 2002-2003. Karen Vaina served as president-elect, Sharon Lippisch as vice-president, Jody Bond as treasurer, Diane Dadko as ass't treasurer, Bonnie Tadross as recording secretary, Pat Langhorne as corresponding secretary, Jane Cebelak and Marilyn Monk as 2nd year directors, and Jeanette Mueller and Donna Linton as 1st year directors. Betty Kroesen-Miner served as parliamentarian and Nidia Bernstiel as past president.

During the summer, president Joanne, past presidents Nidia, Susan, Cathy, Donna, Joy, and Pat Langhorne and Jody Bond attended the **SIA convention in San Diego, California.**

Former Southern Region governor Ann Decatrel from The Palm Beaches club served as SIA secretary during the convention. Our club was recognized in several different seminars for activities that were successful for our club...such as SOS/SOS, our Holiday Parade, and our Woman of Distinction ceremony and a membership increase of 31% (18 new members).

At convention, we decided to involve our club and its members in a more "international" approach to help women and children in countries other than our own. Fay Anderson, a Soroptimist from a Nevada SI club was invited by president Joanne to be a guest speaker at our 48th birthday party. Fay provided the information needed to assist us as we looked to organize an International Relations committee. Mary-Jo Horton and Jan Lemasters co-chaired this new committee.

Luncheon meetings moved to Chantals restaurant and later Twisted Grille to allow for a more centrally located site, improving our attendance at meetings. The District 1 meeting was held in Ft Lauderdale sponsored by the Pompano Beach club.

Our club decided to provide a telephone line (220-0115) for prospective members, SOS/SOS clients, and others attempting to contact our club. The SOS/SOS committee was very active by participating in the "Tell A Friend" phone calls.

Carolyn Coy was elected in 2003 to Laurel Society for her long term service to the club. She was president for two years and Soroptimist Woman of the Year in 1980. Carolyn had been troubled by recurring cancer and a serious accident kept her from attending meetings for about 6 months after years of perfect attendance awards.

Cathy Gaudet was selected Woman of the Year in 2002.

Southern Region Conference was held in Columbus Georgia and attended by president Joanne, past presidents Cathy, Nidia, Susan, Karen Vaina and others. **President Joanne was also chair-elect of the Stuart/Martin County Chamber of Commerce.**

In 2003, Women of Distinction Awards initiated a new category for our younger women – Rising Professional/Volunteer (now renamed Rising Star). This award was to recognize younger women demonstrating traits found in our Women of Distinction winners. Co-chairs Marilyn Monk and Jeanette Mueller realized a net of \$35,000.00.

President for 2003-2004 was Karen Vaina and Woman of the Year for 2003 was Jeanette Mueller. Other officers were Sharon Lippisch-president-elect, vice-president Jody Bond, treasurer-Diane Dadko, ass't treasurer-Pat Langhorne, recording secretary-Marilyn Monk, corresponding secretary-Jane Cebelak, 2nd year directors-Donna Linton and Jeanette Mueller, and 1st Year directors were Phyllis Heisler and Maria Pearson. Mary- Jo Horton was parliamentarian and Joanne Zarro served as past president.

President Karen, past president Nidia, Jody Bond, Donna Linton, Mary-Jo Horton, Pat Langhorne and others attended the District I meeting in Davie, Florida. Connie Desko was elected new Director.

Beverly Bevis and Lucy Lueg co-chaired the Holiday Parade in 2003 with a theme of “Winter Wonderland.” It was an appropriate title as it poured down rain for the first time in many years but thankfully the rain held off nearer the end of the parade.

2003-2004 was the year SIS was able to function for the first time as a 501(c) 3 non-profit under the auspices of SIA.

SOS/SOS and STEPS were active all year with an increase in mammograms and student assistance and scholarships. **SOS/SOS provided a mobile unit** for mammography in areas of the county not easily accessible.

International Relations Committee (IRC) developed a program for assistance to a medical clinic for the poor in Honduras. Blue sashes were made this year and sold to members for \$20. each with proceeds going to the IRC fund. It was decided to sell sashes at the southern region conference in Tampa, Florida. Jane Cebelak located a seamstress for the sash project. Again all proceeds go to IRC.

The 78th Southern Region Conference in Tampa was held April 22-25, 2004. Those attending were president Karen, past president Nidia, Susan, Cathy, past governor Mary-Jo, Jody Bond, Donna Linton, Jan Lemasters, Jeanine Webster, Diane Dadko, and Marilyn Monk. Governor Voncile Rayner from the Atlanta club presided at the conference.

Ways & Means Committee chaired by Susan Klein gave each member a white piggy bank for depositing all loose change at the end of each day. The story of the pig's most recent whereabouts was told at each meeting. A party at Jeanette Mueller's home culminated in emptying the piggy banks (a piggy roast) and the funds were given to the club for operating expenses.

Priscilla Sawicki visited Japan to visit our Friendship Link and took sashes with pins for SIA members in their club.

Women of Distinction Awards Luncheon, chaired by Jeanette Mueller and Donna Linton, was held again at IRP (now the Marriott) in April. One of our members, Bonnie Tadross, was selected winner in the Volunteer category.

In 2004, Donna Nagreiter and Joy Funston were nominated and inducted into the Laurel Society for long and outstanding service to our club.

Sharon Lippisch was installed as president in 2004-2005 at Stuart Yacht & Country Club with **Karen Vaina winning Woman of the Year for 2004 and Tanya Shipman named Outstanding New Member 2004.** Other officers were Jody Bond-president-elect, Jane Cebelak-vice-president, treasurer-Pat Langhorne, ass't treasurer-Jeanine Webster, Donna Linton-recording secretary, Barbara Sorbello-corresponding secretary, 2nd year directors-Diane Dadko and Jan Lemasters, and 1st year directors were Tanya Shipman and Bonnie Tadross. Mary-Jo Horton was parliamentarian and Karen Vaina served as past president.

Martha Norton was nominated for Laurel Society membership in the coming year.

Little did President Sharon know what she had in store for her presidency...visits from Frances, Jeanne, and Ivan!

President Sharon, president-elect Jody, past governor Mary-Jo, past president Nidia, past president Joanne (slightly pregnant), Jan Lemasters, Donna Linton, Priscilla Sawicki, and Tanya Shipman all traveled to **Calgary, Canada for the SIA convention held in August, 2004. The convention presented for the first time the new "S" logo for SIA...modern and streamlined.**

Our club received recognition for its contributions to SIA and our members handed out literally hundreds of our club pin, and sold out of the sashes "quietly" carried with them. Donna became the head seller and you could see her beautiful blonde hair heads above the members from Taiwan, Japan, Korea, etc.

The IRC had created a large SASH of a size to hold pins from all over the world with the names of various regions of the Americas printed on the sash. The sash was a tremendous hit at the convention and our members came home with many new friends and many more pins to recognize our worldwide friendships.

Hurricanes of late 2004 pounded our town, our county, and the two counties north of us. Many members experienced damage and/or destruction to their homes and businesses. Sharon canceled only two meetings – one each in September and October. Our effort to provide a District I meeting place was put on hold for a year. Holiday Inn on Hutchinson Island was almost destroyed.

On another sad note, past president Carolyn Coy died November 3, 2004. Her presence will long be felt in our club. Upon Carolyn's death, her sister, Evelyn Deggeller, initiated our club's **Carolyn Coy Cancer Memorial Fund.**

Somehow with help from above, co-chairs Melissa Barnes and Terri Tudico gave us a Holiday parade to be proud of...even with all the hurricane damage. The parade was planned, organized, and delivered with such aplomb you would not have believed hurricane devastation had taken place only 6 weeks earlier.

Committees worked overtime. The Davie club was generous enough to serve as host club for the District I meeting (our meeting!) in January, 2005. President Sharon, president-elect Jody, past governor Mary-Jo, past presidents Karen and Nidia, and Pat Langhorne attended. **Our club received the Governor's Award for our IRC's Light of the World Charities (LOWC) project.**

Community Service chairs Karen Vaina and Marilyn Monk were able to provide funds to individuals in need because of the hurricane's wrath.

Lucy Lueg had been reelected for a second 2 year term as Region treasurer but due to severe damage to her home, she reluctantly resigned her position. **Past president Nidia was asked to serve as region secretary for the remainder of term 2004-2006,** and she accepted.

Our Friendship Link club in Kiryu, Japan provided funds to assist a homeowner in Indiantown and also to plant two trees at the Stuart Cultural Center (gazebo)...to formally recognize our friendship. Coverage in the media was extensive and well appreciated.

SOS/SOS and STEPS continued to be strong committees. **SOS as of this year has provided dollars for more than 1000 mammograms in Martin and St Lucie County.** STEPS has produced winners at Pathfinders and student numbers increase every year.

Nashville, Tennessee was home for the Southern Region conference held in April 2005. Past president Barbara provided medical "scrubs" for our contingency to wear during our Governor's Award LOWC presentation. The scrubs were flowered tops with rose colored baggy pants. President Sharon, president-elect Jody, past governor Mary-Jo, region secretary Nidia, and Tanya Shipman represented us and brought home a 2nd place win for the LOWC in the southern region.

Our newsletter First Edition, editor Bonnie Tadross, won first place and our pressbook won second place. We recognized Carolyn Coy's death with a beautiful ceremony Sunday of the conference.

Ways & Means held a "White Elephant" sale/dinner/party at Donna Linton's home and netted more than \$2000.00 for operating expenses. We "lost" a wonderful past president-Cathy Gaudet, as she moved north to be closer to family.

WOD was again held at the Marriott in April 2005 and received coverage far beyond the norm because of a small fire erupting during the ceremonies. The program was moved

outdoors and with the able assistance of **co-chair Jeanette Mueller's** personal "bullhorn," the winners were announced and the capacity group was entertained. **President-elect Jody was named WOD in the Business/Professional category.** Unable to attend, Jody's daughter Kelly Pelletier capably accepted for her. **Co-chair Donna Linton** reported net profit for the event was approximately \$30,000.00.

In May 2005, past governor Mary-Jo, president-elect Terri Tudico and past SIA secretary Ann Decatrel attended the chartering of club Largo/Mid-Pinellas. Our club presented a monetary gift and Mary-Jo personally presented an engraved gavel to president Mary Fisher of Largo. Marilyn Monk prepared 2004-2005 project reports for SIA and SI.

An "Invitation to Join" reception was held in early June at Chantals restaurant with 26 invitees attending. More than 25 SIS members were there to welcome the invitees. President Sharon made a short presentation to the invitees.

2005-2006 installation was held at Monarch Country Club on June 17, 2005 with governor Voncile presiding. Terri Tudico, incoming president-elect chaired the installation and chose "Gemstones" as the theme. **Jody Potts Bond was installed as president.** Other officers were Jane Cebelak-vice-president, Jan Lemasters-recording secretary, Melissa Barnes-communications secretary, Pat Langhorne-treasurer, Glenna DeMichael-ass't treasurer, Bonnie Tadross and Tanya Shipman-2nd Year directors, Leigh Giunta and Margaret Richebourg-1st year directors, and Betty Kroesen-Miner-parliamentarian. Sharon Lippisch served as past president. The office of corresponding secretary was changed to communications secretary with responsibilities of: email, website, newsletter, directory, and public relations. **The "Passing of the Gavel" was instituted for the first time-president to president.**

Martha Norton and Roberta Onufrey were recognized as Life members (an honor no longer available through SIA). **Evelyn Deggeller was selected as a nominee for the Laurel Society 2005-2006.** **Donna Linton was honored as Woman of the Year for 2005.**

The President's Retreat (SOLT) was held at Monarch the following day. Governor Voncile and past SIA secretary Ann Decatrel were in attendance. 2005-2006 membership lists 2 life members and a total of 60 members.

During the summer months president Jody was notified by governor Voncile that our club had received the highest recognition possible...from Soroptimist International. We won 1st place in the Health category for our project LOWC and the 2 birthing units we had constructed at St Benedict Joseph Medical Center in Honduras. We were the only club in SIA to be recognized for this honor.

Additionally, we were runner-up in the same category for a \$5000.00 donation to the Addis Abba Ethiopia Fistular Hospital, which was also recognized by SIA in an issue of *Best For Women*.

Past president Joan Till passed away during the summer months.

Luncheon meetings were moved to Bonefish Grille but in March returned to Twisted Grille, and in April to Chantals. Luncheon costs are \$15 to the member. 50/50 raffle continues at lunch. Announcements (other than club news) cost \$1.00 to the announcer. If your cell phone was left on, the cost to the offender is \$5.00. Budget for the fiscal year is approximately \$56,000.00 with funds in excess of \$42,000 provided to service projects.

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Board dinner meetings are held Tuesday evenings at Chantals before the monthly Thursday business meetings. **President Jody initiated agendas and all board/committee reports via email for the board and past presidents. Agendas for business and program meetings were also emailed to the general membership.**

At the September meeting, with the recommendation of president Jody and the board, **Joanne Zarro's name was selected** as the second member for this year to be inducted into **Laurel Society for 2005-2006.**

A new segment added to the 2005-2006 meetings was the "5 Minute Member Cameo." This allowed members to learn about each other, our backgrounds, our interests, but was not used as an advertisement for our businesses for services.

Our club hosted the District I meeting in October, 2005 at the Holiday Inn on US1. Holiday Inn/Hutchinson Island was destroyed. Attendance at the meeting was at a high with all clubs represented except San Juan Puerto Rico....approximately 80 Soroptimists. Margaret May Damen, local author and financial advisor was the featured speaker.

In November, hurricane Wilma came across Florida via the west coast and again Stuart was hit hard. We were saved from Katrina and the 26 other hurricanes that came to life in 2005.

Tanya Shipman, a former resident of Louisiana led a "one woman" movement to provide funds, clothing, good, and furniture items to a small town in Baker, Louisiana. Our club under her leadership (and with assistance of Ann Shafer from the Power Lunch Bunch) raised in excess of \$15,000.00 for the victims of Katrina.

President-elect Terri and Melissa Barnes again co-chaired the Christmas parade (we went back to the original name) and attendance was the largest ever seen. The parade route proceeds on East Ocean Blvd from Stuart Middle School to Monterey Road. The floats from the various schools produced volcanoes, waterfalls, light shows, and theatrics never before seen in our parade.

We accepted sponsors for the first time in the parade other than the newspaper. Stuart News was the primary sponsor with Renar Homes, Just Gold Jewelers, and Atlantic Bank. The parade netted funds in excess of \$5000.00. Barry Grant from the radio station again emceed for us. This year we prejudged the floats prior to parade so winning floats could be honored during the parade. Floats, bands, and marches exceeded 65 entries. President Jody and president-elect Terri headed the parade with their grandchildren....riding in a boat!

Membership continued to grow to 70 with new members coming in monthly. **SOLT, under the leadership of chair Mary-Jo provided an extraordinary meeting at our**

December program meeting. It was called a SOLT Fair and required all members to “visit” each booth (program) and learn something about the program. It was the most successful SOLT meeting ever.

During December 2005, an anonymous donor contacted Jeanette Mueller, chair of Ways/Means with a \$10,000.00 gift to insure happy Christmas holidays for several families in Martin County. Marilyn Monk and Janice Norman, co-chairs of Community Service worked with Jeanette to provide the gifts to several families in Martin County.

Laws and resolutions committee, Donna Naglreiter-chair, amended the bylaws to allow the office of president to serve an additional term if requested by the nomination committee. It also allowed the office of treasurer to serve a 2nd and a 3rd year term if requested by the committee.

President Jody submitted Club Reports for 2005-2006 and FOCUS reports for “Santa Claus \$10,000” and “NOLA” (hurricane Katrina).

In February 2006, our club won the “Making a Difference for Women” Award for Southern Region. This is a new SIA award of \$500.00 and our entry was Schonna Green, executive director of M.I.S.S.. housing and assistance for women and their children. Her entry was submitted by past president Nidia. Ms Green traveled with us to southern region conference for recognition by the clubs in our region.

In March 2006, Elizabeth Divine-Clark won the distinction of WOA winner for our club and received a check for \$1500. She also won the southern region award for \$5000. and received a check at the southern region conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico May, 2006.

Noel Trachtenberg, WOA chair, prepared reporting for this award, and encouraged our winner, Ms Elizabeth Divine-Clark, to attend our southern region conference and be recognized. Ms Clark attended the conference with her lovely daughter, Heather.

The finance committee, chaired by Donna Linton, prepared the budget for **2006-2007 with a new line item in the Service Project Revenue/Expense area. Our club set aside specific funds in a new savings account titled “Long Term Investment.”** These funds will be used for long term commitment projects approved by the membership.

The WOD Awards Ceremony was a success with the marketing talent of chairs Margaret Richebourg and Glenna DeMichael. The event was held April 4th at Sailfish Point. Luncheon was \$75.00 per person and attendance reached an all time high of 492. Fifty SIS members attended; the highest number since the earliest WOD. There were 78 nominees in the four categories. Laurel Sauer, a local TV news personality, emceed the event. Karlin Daniel, a nationally recognized auctioneer, presided over 7 live auction items for a total of \$38,000.00 in funds. A raffle and 80 silent auction baskets were also profitable. Signature project sponsors and category sponsors provided \$25,000.00 funding to create videos and presentations of three signature programs.

Videos of projects and the winning nominees were presented on large plasma televisions. **Gross income was \$135,000.00 with expenses of \$71,000.00 and net income of approximately \$64,000.00 for next year's service projects.**

SIS member Debbie Hollister was named 2006 WOD in the Volunteer Category.

Southern Region Conference was held in San Juan, Puerto Rico May 5-7, 2006 at Condado Plaza with governor Voncile presiding. President Jody, president-elect Terri, incoming president-elect Donna Linton, southern region secretary Nidia, past governor Mary-Jo, past presidents Susan Klein and Donna Naglreiter attended the conference.

Nidia was elected governor-elect for 2006-2008 serving with incoming governor Connie Desko.

Our newsletter won 2nd place, the pressbook won 1st place, and **incoming president Terri was selected as southern region recipient of the Emerging Leaders Seminar** held at the Philadelphia convention in July 2006. President Jody was asked to speak for the "Response to the Welcome" at the conference, and presented a blue crystal memento with the Stuart insignia "the sailfish" to the San Juan club as a remembrance of the conference.

Awards program meeting in May, 2006 provided 5 scholarships to students amounting to \$4000.00. Violet Richardson Award winner, Jessica Baral, was awarded a \$500.00 scholarship and a \$1000.00 award to the charity of her choice, Martin County Red Cross.

Past president (and Life member) Louise Miller passed away May 12, 2006. She was 93 years, 4 months old. Her humor and dedication to our club will be long remembered.

SI requested president Jody submit a 500 word document with photos for the SI winning Health project for IRC—Light of the World Charities-St Joseph Benedict Medical Clinic in Honduras. SI will spotlight us in the September 2006 SI magazine.

SIS vice-president Donna Linton was elected Chair of the Stuart/Martin County Chamber of Commerce for 2006.

June 2, 2006 at Monarch Country Club was the 2006-2007 installation date with attendance at 71 and incoming governor Connie Desko presiding over the events. Past president Cathy Gaudet "surprised" **incoming president Terri** and co-installed Terri with Connie.

Evelyn Deggeller and Joanne Zarro Jones were formally inducted into the Laurel Society for 2005-2006, and Betty Kroesen-Miner and Mary-Jo Horton were nominated for induction in 2006-2007. Mary-Jo, already a Laurel Society member, was recognized and her status will be elevated to the **Diplomat level.**

President Jody honored Karen Vaina, Terri Tudico, and Patricia Langhorne with the President's Award. Terri Tudico was named Woman of the Year for 2006.

Officers installed were Donna Linton-president-elect, Pam Hough-vice-president, recording secretary-Sandy Kesslering, communications officer- Janice Norman, treasurer-Marge Isadore, ass't treasurer-Cathy Sherry, 2nd year directors-Glenna DeMichael and Leigh Giunta, and Jeanine Webster and Jeanne' Hudock as 1st year directors. Mary-Jo will serve as parliamentarian and Jody as past president.

The 39th Biennial SIA Convention “Free to Dream” was held in Philadelphia July 19 -22, 2006. The SIA headquarters on 1709 Spruce St was open to membership. President Terri, president-elect Donna, governor-elect Nidia, past governor Mary-Jo, and past presidents Joanne and Jody attended.

President Terri attended the “Emerging Leaders” forum with 19 SIA members from other countries. Nidia served as volunteer registrant, Donna as timekeeper, and Jody as microphone monitor. Mary-Jo and Joanne represented us at the Laurel Society reception. Nidia, Mary-Jo and SIA president Tess provided on-stage entertainment.

SIA contacted Jody to present the LOTWC project in the Renaissance Lounge with 6 other SIA clubs. Jody accepted, Nidia transported the materials and Mary-Jo, Donna, Joanne and Jody assembled the display. Joanne presided at our scheduled time of 3:30 on Friday and fielded questions from SIA convention members (approximately 1500).

The display was a success and materials were handed out to interested SIA members. The WOD video was viewed on Friday as well. Additional region and club pins were added to the Large Sash. **(The SIA convention chair reminded all members to attach their pins as it was possible our sash would one day be on display at the SIA headquarters.)**

President Terri held her retreat in August with good attendance. She brought information from the SIA convention to include “healthy heart” in our SOS-SOS project this year.

Meetings were held at Renato's in Harbour Bay Plaza at \$20.00. 5 minute cameos would continue during the year. SOLT was held in October with a Halloween theme, chaired by Mary-Jo and Jeanine.

Cathy Sherry resigned from the board as ass't treasurer. Jeanine took the position, and Pamela Hoke joined the board as a director. Later, Marge Isadore resigned as treasurer; Jeanine stepped in as treasurer and Marilyn Monk became ass't treasurer for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Christmas Parade December 1st, 2006 was chaired by Joanne, Sharon, and Sherry, and titled Fairyland. The parade had increased sponsorships and funding; with attendance at an all time high. Attendance has continued to increase with floats and with the viewing public. Barry Grant once again emceed from the grand stands. Mary Christine, Richard Kjellstrom, Jeanine Webster and Mel Noble acted as hosts for the sponsors and dignitaries in the stands.

The Woman of Distinction Awards officially became the “WOD Evening Awards Celebration” as it became an evening event for the first time and received wide

acceptance by the club and the attending public. The WOD was co-chaired by Leigh Giunta and Maggie Overdorf, who with their committee, successfully reworked several aspects of the event to produce its highest profit ever-over \$61,000. The “Celebration” was held Thursday, March 22, 2007 at Martin Downs Country Club in the main clubhouse and in a large tent. **Margaret Richebourg was named Woman of Distinction in the Volunteer Category.** A nominee and sponsor cocktail party was held several weeks earlier at Tesoro Country Club to recognize all nominees and the major sponsors.

Southern Region Conference was held in Key Largo, hosted by the Homestead Club on May 3 – 6, 2007. President Terri, past presidents Susan, Jody, governor-elect Nidia, past governor Mary-Jo, incoming president Donna, Pamela Hough, Pamela Hoke, and Barbara Bullis attended. Our club chaired the “1st Timers” reception with attendance of 35 new members. Our newsletter won 1st place; the SOLT program was recognized for “Celebrating Success;” and **president Terri was elected to a 2 year term as District 1 representative to Ruby Lee Minor.**

Laws and resolution committee, chair Jody, undertook a total revision of policy codes and bylaws to address 501(c) 3 issues. All was adopted by the membership. SOS-SOS provided record mammograms this year under the leadership of chair Jeanne’. The mobile mammogram unit provided service to 15 women in one day.

The “Making a Difference for Women” award was presented to Bertha McManus at our May program meeting. STEP scholarship winners were also awarded at this meeting. One of the students who received a STEP scholarship was mentored by president Terri.

Incoming president Donna chaired a membership reception during the fall at Renato’s restaurant with approximately 60 women in attendance. Membership continues to thrive with a total of 61 members. New members are Janice Meadows, Abbey Morrison, Pat Williams, Valerie Graham, and Jo Ellen Dyer.

Incoming president Donna’s SOLT retreat was held at Manero’s on May 24 with 15 members attending. Donna’s theme was Respect, Responsibility, and Recommit.

Past president Jody was awarded the Outstanding Soroptimist Award (formerly named Woman of the Year) for 2006-2007 at the last business meeting on June 7th. Martha Norton, president Terri, Mary-Jo Horton, and Janice Norman received awards for “Perfect Attendance.”

Installation was held for the 3rd time at Monarch Country Club on Friday, June 8th 2007 with governor-elect Nidia presiding. The theme was “A New Year” complete with champagne and bells! **Susan Klein and Jeanne’ Hudock received the President’s Award from out-going president Terri.**

Officers installed 2007-2008 were: Donna Linton-president, Pamela Hough-president-elect, Glenna DeMichaelParris-vice-president, Jeanine Webster-treasurer, Sherry Guffin-ass’t treasurer, Kelly DeGregorio-secretary, Rosemary Phillips-communications officer, Pamela Hoke and Jeanne’Hudock-2nd year directors, and Gigi Suntum and Jackie

Jackson-1st year directors. Mary-Jo Horton will serve as parliamentarian and Terri Tudico Pettengill as past-president.

The “Passing of the Gavel” was presented again this year with those former presidents in attendance taking part. Additionally, **Susan Klein and Nidia Bernstiel were nominated for inclusion in Laurel Society with induction during the 2007-2008 year.**

During the summer, Vee Chambers, a member of our club since 1962, passed away. “Aunt”Vee, who was in her 90’s, was a colorful and well-respected member of our community.

The Soroptimist International Convention XVIII in Glasgow, Scotland was attended by governor-elect Nidia July 29 - Aug 3, 2007. The convention theme was “Working for Peace.”

Noon luncheon meetings were held at Iannelli’s and later moved to Chantal’s at the airport in Stuart. Member cameos and introductions continued at the program meetings.

The finance committee, chaired by Leigh Giunta, reworked the budget in a more simplified format, hired a new book-keeper, and started the year with \$10,000.00 CD deposits and generous funding for all service projects.

We provided \$5000 in funds for new signage at the House of Refuge. The sign refers to our club’s project in 1955 to save the House as it was in ruins. A ceremony was held at the House dedicating the sign with Commissioner Doug Smith presiding. The SOLT committee invited prospective members and gave an overview of SIS and its projects. President Donna, past president Terri, Noel Trachtenberg and Martha Norton represented us at the unveiling.

The international relations committee initiated a new project with former Congresswoman Linda Smith. The program, Shared Hope (a safe haven in Jamaica for young girls caught up in sexual trafficking), was a SIA suggested theme and endorsed by president Donna. A reception of about 100 people was held at a private home in October, and raised more than \$40,000.00 during the reception. **Margaret Richebourg and Pat Williams chaired the committee for this fundraising event.**

SOS-SOS has removed the minimum age requirement for free mammograms and has included obesity and heart concerns within the program.

The district meeting, hosted by the St Lucie club, was held October 12-13, 2007 at the Saints Country Club. President Donna, governor-elect Nidia, past governor Mary-Jo, past presidents Terri, Jody, Donna L, president-elect Pam, Jeanine Webster, Rosemary Phillips, Barbara Bullis, and Jeanne Hudock attended.

Mary-Jo, Jody and Barbara presented the “Shared Hope” project and received district 1st place for the Governor’s Service Award. **President Donna accepted recognition for our club’s participation in WOA, VRA, Founding Pennies, increased membership for year 2006-2007.**

The **Christmas Parade was held Friday, December 7, 2007** with attendance increasing from year to year. **Sherry Guffin and Janice Norman chaired** the club's yearly public service project to Martin County. Barry Grant again emceed the event with floats that boggled the imagination. Sponsors continued to provide funds thereby making the parade a "small" fundraiser. **The theme was Caribbean Carnival.**

Woman of Distinction was chaired by Tanya Shipman Spain and Kelly DeGregorio. The Evening of Honors was held March 18, 2008 at Monarch Country Club with 13 nominees in Business/Professional, 13 nominees in Volunteer, 15 nominees in Civic/Professional, and 16 nominees in Rising Star. All nominees were recognized with trophies and photos.

The Evening Awards was held at Harbour Ridge Country Club April 8 at 6:30 pm with Ms Ann Young as our emcee. About 250 people were in attendance. **New member Tara Biek won recognition in the Business/Professional category.** Cocktail time was followed with dinner and a wonderful evening of recognition. One main sponsor, Toyota of Stuart, provided \$20,000.00 for this event. In addition to a limited live auction, bidding was used to provide funds for SOS/SOS. Former member Rosalind Hall enthused the audience and the bidding progressed. Net proceeds from the event were approximately \$50,000.00.

The 82nd Southern Region Conference was held in Clearwater, Florida April 17-20, 2008 with a theme of "Plunder the Possibilities." President-elect Pam, past governor Mary-Jo, governor-elect Nidia, past president Terri, and Barbara Bullis, Janice Norman, Glenna Parris, Sherry Guffin, Margaret Richebourg and Pat Williams attended. **Governor-elect Nidia took office and represented the Stuart club with its first governor of Southern Region. Well done, Nidia!**

New members for 2007-2008 are Tara Biek, Gretchen Frazier, Samantha Kayser, Terri Zainc, Susan Perez, and Lisa Fricke. We continue to maintain a very strong roster of active past presidents; a welcome energy boost to the club.

Laws and resolution committee chair Joanne Zarro brought minor changes for approval to the membership. **The only noteworthy item was the elimination of requiring attendance for general members at meetings.** Attendance is encouraged but no longer required by SIA. Board members are required to attend meetings as previously cited.

LaVaughn Tilton received our club's "Making a Difference Award" for 2007-2008. Ms Tilton is a long time philanthropist and the founder of Martin County's Hibiscus Children's Center.

Memorial Day 2008 brought sadness to our club with the accidental death of Susan Klein's husband Bobby. Swimming out to assist his sons in ocean waters, Bobby drowned trying to save his two sons. Susan was quoted at Bobby's memorial service saying, "Thank you for not taking my three boys." The club came to Susan's assist and provided materials, food, drinks, etc for more than 700 people who attended the service. **Past president Karen Vaina and Jeanette Mueller "chaired" the massive drive to pull this feat together...all in the space of two days!** As past president Karen said, "Never have I been more proud of our club members and what they can do when asked."

President Donna, past presidents Jody and Terri were in the Baltic Sea on vacation and had to send their love and condolences via Blackberry and Iphone to Susan.

Installation was held at Willoughby Country Club on Friday, June 20, 2008 with cocktails and dinner for approximately 80 people. **President Donna presented her President's Award to Mary-Jo Horton and Jeanine Webster** for their assistance to the presidency during her term. **Karen Vaina and Margaret Richebourg were honored with membership in the Laurel Society of SIA. The Outstanding Soroptimist Award for 2008 was presented** by last year's honoree Jody Potts Bond **to past president Joanne Zarro** for years of exceptional service to the club, women and girls.

Governor-elect Nidia's installation was a theme of rainbow colors. **Officers installed 2008-2009 were: president Pam Hough**, president-elect Glenna Parris, vice-president Janice Norman, treasurer Sherry Guffin, ass't treasurer Kelly DeGregorio, recording secretary Gretchen Frazier, communications officer Rosemary Phillips, 2nd year directors Jeanine Webster and Jackie Jackson, 1st year directors Liz Bonan and Debbie Hollister. Donna Linton serves as immediate past president, and Mary-Jo Horton as parliamentarian.

The highlight of the installation was an "off-broadway" production by Jeanette Mueller of "Menopause." The talented thespians in the production were Mary-Jo Horton, Terri Pettengill, Sherry Guffin, and Janice Meadows. (Rumor has it, telephone calls from NY agents are asking for a limited return engagement. No response as of now from Producer Jeanette.)

Governor Nidia and past governor Mary-Jo attended the biennial SIA Convention "Sharing Good Fortune" in Taipei, Taiwan China July 16-19, 2008.

During the summer, The Soroptimist International Best Practices Award 2007-2008 was given to our club in the category "Soroptimists will ensure that women and girls live in safe and healthy environments." Project "An Evening of Shared Hope" also won 3rd place finalist at the SIA Convention for "Celebrating Success Award" in the area of human rights and status of women. Additionally, **the club received the Soroptimist Club Award for participation in all areas of the Renaissance Programs-fundraising/membership/program/public awareness. Our club was the ONLY club in the southern region to receive this honor. Congratulations past president Donna** on the club's accomplishments during your term.

President Pam held her 2008-2009 retreat "Stay Connected-Get Involved" on Saturday, Aug 2nd at ArcAngels from 9:30 – 2:00. Chairs introduced their committees and speakers were utilized both morning and early afternoon. SIS business and program meetings will continue to be held on 1st and 3rd Thursdays, September through May.

Jeanine Webster was asked to serve as Southern Region treasurer and resigned her 2nd year director position on our 2008-2009 board. Jackie Jackson resigned her position as did Gretchen Frazier. Janice Meadows volunteered to serve as recording secretary. Past presidents Karen Vaina and Sharon Kinane volunteered to serve as 2nd year directors for the remainder of 2008-2009. Tara Biek resigned her membership in the club.

Christmas Parade was held Friday, December 4, 2008 with a “Storybook” theme. Terri Zainc, Sherry Guffin and Janice Norman co-chaired the event which proved to once again be the best public service event for Martin County.

SIS held a Human Trafficking Summit on January 22, 2009 to educate the Treasure Coast community about “Human and Sexual Trafficking of Women.” The result of the summit provided a far-reaching effect: a coalition headed by our Martin County Sheriff Department was formed to eliminate trafficking on the Treasure Coast. Past president Terri Pettengill serves as our representative with the coalition.

The Woman of Distinction committee was chaired by Gigi Suntum and Lisa Marshall. The 41 nominees were recognized at Giuseppe’s Restaurant on March 3, 2009 and the Award ceremony was held at Marriott on April 7th with approximately 185 in attendance. Former SIS member Gayle Harrell emceed the event. A 10 item silent auction and signature “cause” cards provided additional revenue to the club.

Net funds for the WOD event were approximately \$14,000.00. The overall economy of the world was in a major economic freefall and profits for most 501c 3’s were minimal.

The Southern Region Conference was held April 23-26, 2009 in Huntsville Alabama with Governor Nidia presiding. Gov Nidia, past governor Mary-Jo, president-elect Glenna, southern region treasurer Jeanine, and past president Terri attended.

Past Governor Mary-Jo did the honors June 26, 2009 at Monarch Country Club with 40 in attendance where president-elect Glenna’s theme was “Jewels of the Sea. **The slate of officers for 2009-2010 installed were Glenna Parris-president, Kelly DeGregorio-president-elect, Liz Bonan-vice-president, Sherry Guffin-treasurer, Gigi Suntum-asst treasurer, Janice Meadows-recording secretary, Rosemary Phillips-communications director, 2nd year directors Janice Norman and Debbie Hollister, and 1st year directors Lisa Fricke and Terri Zainc.**

President Pam honored Janice Norman and Sherry Guffin with the President’s Award. Sharon Kinane was honored with her nomination to Laurel Society for 2009 and Amy Duffet Chappel was honored as Outstanding Soroptimist for 2009. The “Passing of the Gavel” was presented with all past presidents in attendance.

President Glenna held her 2009-2010 evening retreat on August 25th at past president Sharon’s home. Attendance and enthusiasm was present and ideas were raised to infuse new life into the club. Membership totals 47 for 2009-2010 with new members Lisa Grassam and Sarah Symons and our two life time members. **Luncheon meetings were moved to the Harborage Restaurant on the St Lucie River, with the cost at \$20.00.**

Past president Jody Bond was elected Chair of the Stuart/Martin County Chamber of Commerce 2009-2010 .

Southern Region District 1 meeting was held October 23/24, 2009, hosted by SI/Coral Gables at Courtyard Marriott. Governor Nidia, past governor Mary-Jo, past presidents Pam Hough, Donna and Terri P, and Terri Zainc attended. *Think Globally, Act Locally* was the theme with a presentation by Sharon D’Eusanio (Dade County Victim Services)

on Human Trafficking. Shared Hope International Inc (SIS) also provided a presentation. **SIS won the District 1 Governor's Service Award for its annual Christmas parade.**

Christmas Parade, Friday, December 4, 2009 was held in downtown Stuart with repeating chairs Janice Norman, Sherry Guffin and Terri Zainc. The theme was "Christmas under the Sea." It "rained on our parade" for much of the parade, but the enthusiasm and smiles on the faces of all those who watched the parade was as large as ever. **The overall responsibility of producing and managing the parade continues to be a concern for our club.** Martin County's population is nearing 150,000 citizens; and control for the safety of all those at the parade is becoming an issue. We maintained our sponsors of Jeanine Webster, Just Gold Jewelers, and the Scripps newspaper.

Luncheon meetings held at the Harborage proved to be a major success with attendance at meetings on the rise. President Glenna proved herself to be a light-hearted leader with a fearless approach and a great sense of humor. The SIS directory was late getting published so past president Terri took on the project and got it completed/printed/distributed by the December meeting. Kudos to Terry!

Past president Karen provided a never-ending stream of communication for our members...creating and issuing humorous and novel ways to reach everyone. She also continued to provide written brochures, notes, programs, etc when needed for the club.

The program committee, headed by vice-president Liz Bonan, decided to hold a "Vegas" card party at Evelyn's home in lieu of a program meeting on Thursday, March 18, 2010 at 6:30 pm. Evelyn, Barbara, Janice, Jody, Karen, Donna, Tanya, Mary-Jo, Liz, Diane attended and all proclaimed to have kept all their "winnings."

Several times this year the club also held a "Soropty" hour...a social at one of the local restaurants. This proved successful as a "non-work meeting" for our members.

The WOD breakfast was held at Harborage Marina March 16 for all nominees. President Glenna related our club history and **chairs Tanya (Shipman) Spain and Gigi Suntutum provided information to the nominees. Past president Donna and president-elect Kelly DeGregorio served as co-chairs.** The committee consists of Barbara, Diane, Jeanne', Karen, Jody, Mary-Jo, Janice, Pam and Lisa Grassam. There are 38 nominees with 11-Business; 7-Civic; 8-Volunteer; and 12- Rising Star.

Monday, 11:30 am April 26, 2010, the Women of Distinction Awards Luncheon was held at Marriott Hutchinson Island Resort (IRP) at a cost of \$75.00 per luncheon. President Glenna welcomed all and member Lisa Grassam DC was keynote speaker addressing women's mental and physical health. Attendance was a successful 246. Kelly Bond Pelletier (Jody's daughter) was recognized in the Business/Professional Category...first mother/daughter "team" to achieve this honor. Past president Terri presented signature program sponsor cards; and auctioneer Drew Pittman brought in funds from 2 major donations-a Vegas travel/trip donated by Jeanine; and a Tennessee cabin retreat donated by past president Susan. Gross proceeds are approximately \$45,000.00 with net proceeds of approximately \$35,000.00, an excellent ratio of cost/ net. **Tanya Spain (WOD co-chair) provided all graphic and layout materials (pro bono) for the WOD invitations and lengthy programs. Kudos to Tanya!**

Southern Region Conference was held April 30 – May 2, 2010 at Embassy Suites in Deerfield Beach/Boca Raton. **The theme was Leg-A-Sea with Governor Nidia presiding.** Members attending were: Gov Nidia, past gov Mary-Jo, So Region treasurer Jeanine, past presidents Evelyn, Karen, Jody, Terri, Donna and Pam Hough. Barbara Bullis and president-elect Kelly DeGregorio also attended. A presentation by the “Battleaxe” proved to be an inspiration to the officers there. Suggestion was made to SIA that they consider “corporate” memberships for clubs. First time ever...we went home with no recognitions from the region. Priscilla Tatarsky from Nashville, Tennessee was elected governor, Pat McCay from Huntsville, Alabama governor-elect, **Jeanine Webster was reelected treasurer and Pam Hough was elected as secretary. Terri Pettengill will serve as parliamentarian.**

The Finance committee, chaired by Amy Chappel, presented a 2010-2011 budget of \$62,700.00. The committee decided to “bank” all service dollars into one category named “project expenses.” This allowed the president and general membership to determine at retreat what programs should/could remain in the new year; and provide opportunity for new programs to be developed or old programs to be channeled to other entities or dissolved. **SIA and SI “named” programs remain in the 2010-2011 budget.** This concept was approved by membership at May 6, 2010 business meeting. Existing dollars remain in CD deposits, the Coy Grant, and the Frances Langford Grant.

President-elect Kelly conducted her retreat at Martin Memorial offices May 22nd with 25 members attending. Pat Austin served as moderator and Mary-Jo provided a “historical” club profile of its 58 year history. **The members determined the new year a transitional year with focus on fewer major/minor projects/programs overall.** The 2010-2011 approved budget cited no club specific funded projects, so members and the incoming president will determine projects to consider.

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Handing over responsibility for the annual Christmas Parade in the 2010-2011 year to the City of Stuart and Stuart Main Street was a difficult determination and decision. Women of Distinction Awards (with SIA program honorees) will continue.

SOS/SOS, STEPS, Community Service and International Relations are eliminated for 2010-2011 but their concerns may be introduced in a “whole” concept for one project to be determined by president Kelly’s transitions teams.

A “Shoes” Installation was held at FINS restaurant Thursday, June 17, 2010 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. Kelly DeGregorio was installed at president for 2010-2011 with past president Jody Bond doing the honors with assistance from past presidents Karen Vaina and Donna Linton. Exotic and beautiful “spiked” shoes were aplenty with a pair or wooly boots and running shoes thrown in for good measure. Karen put her hand to Jody’s installation script and created a memorable installation unseen before.

Prior to installation, **Amy Chappel (2009)) presented the Outstanding Soroptimist Award and honor to Janice Norman for 2010. Past president Donna presented the Laurel Society nomination for 2010 to past president Jody Bond. Outgoing president Glenna honored Karen Vaina and Sherry Guffin with her President’s Award.**

Kelly's executive board members consist of: Liz Bonan-president-elect; Janice Norman-vice-present; secretary-Janice Meadows; communications officer-Debbie Hollister; Sharon Kinane-treasurer; assistant treasurer-Rosemary Phillips; 2nd year directors Lisa Fricke and Sherry Douds; and 1st year directors Lisa Grassam and Cindy Pingolt. Past president Glenna and parliamentarian Mary-Jo complete the slate.

Perfect attendance awards were presented to Barbara Bullis, Martha Norton, Evelyn Deggeller, and Jody Bond. **Mary-Jo Horton received recognition for her 50 years as a Soroptimist and now joins Martha Norton who received that honor several years ago.**

President Kelly named past president Susan Klein chair of the SIS 2010-2011 transition committee. This committee would determine direction of SIS with final approval by the general membership. **Committee (task force) members present at the 1st meeting July 29th** were Mary-Jo, Sharon, Karen, Jody, Terri P, Donna, Gigi, Valerie, Jill and president Kelly. Mary-Jo served as secretary.

“Women in Crisis/Crises” would serve as the general direction with **emphasis on health, economy and physical abuse** issues. Suggestions for a major project in crisis/crises areas brought about agreement on a possible “transitional house” for women. Suggestions for minor (one day projects) were requested of committee and general membership. The Transition Committee with membership approval decided to suspend/terminate programs such as SOS/SOS, STEPS, Community Service and International Relations as of this calendar year. Mammograms will be offered via the Carolyn Coy Fund.

At the September meeting, the membership approved a major project committee (evolved from the task force) chaired by Susan Klein and Rosemary Phillips. This committee (Susan, Rosemary, Karen, Sharon, Sherry, Mary-Jo, Joanne, Valerie, Jill, Margaret, Terri, Janice and Janice, and Karen Dobbins) met at the Safespace offices and developed a workable concept, its logo and name to be offered to our club and the community. A public community presentation was offered at the Woman's Club, January 18th, 2011. The issue of teen violence and its effects was addressed by Brandi Carlson, a recognized authority and speaker on this subject from Tallahassee.

Community and agency members (Children's Services Council, Children's Home Society, Hibiscus Children's Center, representatives from the Martin County School Board, Martin Memorial Health Systems, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Club, etc) attending provided strong input into the issues and the need for assistance. All agencies represented expressed a strong desire and support for our suggested program.

At the February 2011 SIS meeting, an initial plan for the major project was presented and approved by the membership. This SIS main project revolves around teen violence, its prevention and treatment, with **a program called TRUST (Teen Relations Using Safe Tactics).** This program has been instituted in various formats throughout the country (Safe School Ambassadors Program). We provided a presentation to the School Board with initial funding of \$5000.00 to initiate the program at the David Anderson Middle School.

Services previously provided through **SOS-SOS** were available as needed in 2010-2011 through the **Carolyn Coy Foundation** chaired by Evelyn Deggeller.

On March 10, 2011, SIS showed support for Safespace Inc (a domestic abuse agency), exec director Jill Borowicz, a fellow Soroptimist by attending the annual Safespace luncheon benefit. President Kelly, Janice N, Donna, Debbie, Lisa, Mary-Jo, Pam Hough and Jody attended.

In March, the club made available \$2000.00 to the former **International Relations** committee, chaired by Donna, for continued support of the 2009-2010 Shared Hope project. The committee (Donna, Mary-Jo, Amy, Terri, Jody and Joanne) held a yard sale at Evelyn's home May 21 and 22, 2011 adding \$939.00 additional funds to Shared Hope. President Kelly then personally "anteed up" with \$61.00 to make it an even \$1000.00 for a grand total of \$3000.00. We learned that the yard sale proved to be a valuable tool in reaching and educating residents who weren't aware of our projects or mission.

The 85th Southern Region SIA Conference held in Montgomery, Alabama April 7 -10, 2011 was attended by past presidents Terri and Evelyn, past governors Nidia and Mary-Jo, and Jeanine and Barbara. Mary-Jo, Barbara and Evelyn also served as our club's delegates. **Our Press Book, chaired again by Barbara, won 1st place.** An SIS presentation, Teen Violence Prevention, was presented by our club at the conference.

The breakfast for our forty-four Woman of Distinction nominees was held by the WOD committee on Wednesday, March 23, 2011 at the Woman's Club of Stuart from 8 am to 10 am. Tom Winter provided the nominee photos and chair Lisa's Mom, Betty Bowen, provided the mini quiches, etc for all.

The Woman of Distinction Awards Luncheon was held on Thursday, May 5, 2011 at Marriott Hutchinson Island Resort. Dr Lisa Grassam served as the chair with committee members Karen, Donna, Joanne, Debbie, Terri, Valerie, Tanya, Gigi, Janice N, Mary-Jo, Diane, Rosemary, Jody, and president Kelly. Attendance was at a high of 272 guests, a number not seen in recent years. Forty-four nominees were entered this year with one of our own—**Jeanine Webster—being honored as Woman of Distinction in the Volunteer category.** A raffle and a live and silent auction were held as was a "cause" presentation by president Kelly which resulted in additional funds. **Overall, the net proceeds for WOD 2010-2011 are approximately \$28,000.00.**

Long time SIS member, Karen Ripper, a senior vice-president of Martin Memorial Health Systems retired this year after 35 years as a valuable part of the hospital and its' programs. Karen, congratulations on a job well done. We're all proud of you!

At the May 19, 2011 program meeting, our club honored **Jeanne Emiddio as the Woman's Opportunity Award recipient (Tanya Spain, chair).** Mrs Emiddio is a single parent of four children including twin boys about 4 years old. She is working full-time and attending college to provide a better life for her family.

The Violet Richardson Award (Rosemary Phillips, chair) recipient for 2011 was Gabrielle Silvas (one of 23 applicants) for her work in the Treasure Coast Human

Trafficking Coalition. Rosemary spoke of Gabrielle's involvement at her high school and within the coalition producing a video and passing out flyers regarding the coalition's work.

The SIS installation was held at Finz Restaurant on June 16, 2011 at 5:30 with a theme of "relax and enjoy" by our **incoming president Elizabeth "Liz" Bonan**. Mary-Jo Horton, member and past Southern Region Governor presided at the installation. Sunglasses and all items needed for a great vacation were used as "props" for the installation.

President Kelly thanked her board and the membership for their hard work in our transition year. President Kelly honored **Lisa Grassam with the President's Award** for stepping up to the plate and chairing the Women of Distinction committee and awards ceremony.

Glenna Parris was honored as our Outstanding Soroptimist for 2010-2011. Janice Norman, last year's honoree, presented a long history and biography on Glenna dating back more than twenty years...including a Woman of Distinction awards ceremony Glenna was involved with...while at the same time...almost delivering her baby!

Past Governor Mary-Jo installed President Liz' board which consists of Janice Norman, president-elect: Lisa Grassam, vice-president; Sharon Kinane, treasurer; Janice Meadows, assistant treasurer; Lucy Lueg, recording secretary; Debbie Hollister, communications officer; Amy Chappel and Tanya Spain, 2nd year directors; and Evelyn Deggeller and Lynne Spraker as 1st year directors. Kelly DeGregorio serves as immediate past president and Mary-Jo Horton as parliamentarian.

Janice Norman and Jody Bond, received their Laurel Society membership pins from SIA for 2011 and 2010. This honor is submitted by the club to SIA for recognizing long and honorable service to the club and Soroptimist International.