



# Plan Ahead

*Soroptimist International of Palm Desert*  
*monthly newsletter*



June 14



June 15



June 20



Soroptimist is a global organization of women who volunteer their time their talent and their resources to improve the lives of women and girls through programs that lead to economic and social empowerment.

## President Message

Dear Members,

It has been a privilege to serve as your president during the past year, and I am so proud of all that we have accomplished together.

Our club has continued to thrive and support our charitable initiatives and support for one another, We truly embody the spirit of of sisterhood and community.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I am excited for the opportunities that lie ahead for our incredible members. I am confident that under the leadership of our new President, Natalie, we will continue to grow and evolve, finding new ways to connect, support and uplift one another. I encourage each of you to stay engaged and involved, as you are what makes our club so special.



It has been an honor to lead this group, and I look forward to seeing all that we will achieve in the future.

With warmest regards

Your President,  
Diane



Congratulations!!  
to all of the students  
who are in the Graduating Class of 2025

## Did You Know?

On June 23, 1972 Title IX of the Education Act was signed by President Nixon and it was one of the most important legislative initiatives that was passed for women and girls since women won the vote in 1920.

This legislation guarantees both equal access as well as equal opportunity for female and male students in almost every aspect of our educational system as it prohibits sex-based discrimination in any educational program or activity that receives federal financial assistance.



JUNE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Vanessa Wilk ~ June 5



Winners  
Biggest Hat  
Rose Mary  
Most Colorful Hat  
Diane our Speaker  
Most Beautifulous  
President Diane



During our Business Meeting on May 21st, Susan Rosenberg reminded us of the dedication to our club by member, Becky Goebel. Becky will once again serve as our club Treasurer. After a few kind words to Becky about service and about gratitude, Susan presented her with an Angel pin.



## Getting to Know Us

*(we are featuring a different SIPD member in each issue of our newsletter)*

### Introducing Vanessa Wilk



Vanessa Wilk has been positively impacting people since 1990.

She has served on various boards and organizations including Arts Commissioner for the City of Santa Clarita; Santa Clarita Committee on Aging, the Circle of Hope Advisory Board; SCV Child & Family Center Board; Soroptimist International of Greater Santa Clarita Valley

(SIGSCV).

In 2013/14, Vanessa served as president of SIGSCV. Vanessa had a vision for her year as president – reach out and find a “hands-on” project. She discovered the “Girls Only” program at the Val Verde Community Center and SIGSCV adopted the Val Verde girls. Soroptimist members spent several hours a month mentoring these young people (8-18) – discussing issues like bullying and dating violence, as well as exposing these young girls’ minds and hearts to arts and cultural awareness. The program was so successful it received a \$5,000 “Celebrating Success Award” grant by Soroptimist International.

In 2016, Vanessa co-chaired the SCV Senior Center Celebrity Waiter event. The dinner raised over \$130,000 doubling the previous year’s total.

Vanessa has received numerous accolades which include: the Boy Scouts of America “Leaders of Character” Award; and The Signal’s “51 Most Influential” Emerging Leaders Award. She was the very first recipient of “The Cheri Fleming Heart of the Community Award” and she was named top community leader by SCV Elite Magazine’s Ultimate Women in Business.

Born and raised in Boston, Vanessa graduated with a degree in Communications from Endicott College in Massachusetts. In 1980, Vanessa moved to California where she opened a dress shop on Palm Desert’s world famous El Paseo Drive before moving to Los Angeles to work in the fashion industry.

Vanessa and her husband, Scott, have two adult children, Alison Grace (Matt) and Scott, Jr. (Brooke), Three incredible grandchildren, Ezekiel, Finn, and Peyton and 2 very spoiled dogs.



## 2025-2026 SIPD Installation

This year, our 2025-26 Installation of Officers was held at the home of Vanessa and Scott Wilk, Doris Churry was our Installing Officer and it was a “mooving” experience which we all “udderly” enjoyed.





## Soroptimist International of Palm Desert

Perfect Attendance Awards Presentation at Sea View Elementary School with members of Soroptimist International of Palm Desert, Armando Avalos (representing Senator Alex Padilla and Jose Esparza (representing Assemblyman Jeff Gonzalez).



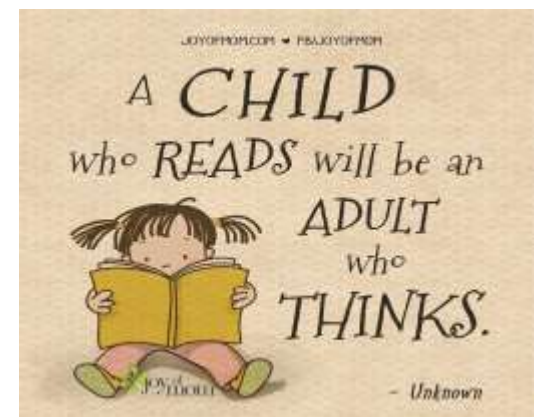


## The Library at Sea View Elementary School



THE MORE THAT YOU READ,  
THE MORE THINGS YOU WILL  
KNOW. THE MORE THAT YOU  
LEARN, THE MORE PLACES  
YOU'LL GO.

—Dr. Seuss







## COLORING ACROSS THE GLOBE

These beautiful pieces of art were created by youngsters in Malmo.

We transferred them onto note cards, matched them with envelopes and packaged in random groups of four.

The funds raised from the sale of these beautiful note cards will be donated to Soroptimist House of Hope.





## Women in History

Nellie Coffman

### The Desert Inn and Tourism in Palm Springs

Nellie Coffman arrived for a visit in the tiny village of Palm Springs with her son, Earl, in 1908.

The daughter of a Dallas hotel owner, she saw Palm Springs potential to grow with tourism. The town had not flourished because of the loss of agriculture due to a 10-year drought. McCallum, who owned large amounts of land, had to sell parcels of land to stay afloat.

The next year, Coffman and her husband, Dr. Coffman, and their two sons, returned to Palm Springs and purchased the Lavinia Crocker's Sanitorium. They continued maintaining the property as a sanitorium, but in time Nellie realized that this property would do better as a hotel. Her husband did not agree, and they parted.

Nellie, along with her sons, George and Earl, then transformed the property into the Desert Inn. In a short time, Coffman replaced the shabby wooden frame of the sanitorium and canvas tents with bungalows and the first swimming pool.

One of her first acts, when the refurbishing was done, was to invite two reporters from the LA Times. They raved about the food and the hospitality.

Throughout the 1920's, the Desert Inn was the destination of choice for celebrities of the era. Too many to list. She created the vogue for desert vacationing.

Coffman died in 1950, and the hotel steadily declined, it was sold and demolished in 1956 and replaced by the Desert Fashion Plaza which opened in 1967 and in turn was demolished in 2014.

Now it is the site of shops on North Palm Canyon Drive, the Kimpton Rowan Hotel and a giant statue of Marilyn Monroe.



## About Us

### Our Mission

We are a global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment.

### Our Vision

Women and girls have the resources and opportunities to reach their full potential and live their dreams.



We have an active and engaged membership with over 1,100 clubs across North America, Latin America and the Pacific Rim.

### Our Core Values

Soroptimist International of the Americas, Inc.® is committed to:

#### Gender Equality

Women and girls live free from discrimination.

#### Empowerment

Women and girls are free to act in their own best interests.

#### Education

Women and girls deserve to lead full and productive lives through access to education.

#### Diversity & Fellowship

Women from varied backgrounds and perspectives work together to improve the lives of women and girls.



## Connect with us

Soroptimist International of Palm Desert  
P.O. Box 13997,  
Palm Desert CA 92255  
760-534-8782

### MEETINGS

Speaker's Meeting  
1st Wednesday of the month

Business Meeting  
3rd Wednesday of the month

### 2024-25 OFFICERS

Diane Backovich, President  
Rose Mary Jameson, Past President  
Betsy Kreger, Secretary  
Becky Goebel, Treasurer

### EMAIL

[info@soroptimistinternationalofpalmdesert.org](mailto:info@soroptimistinternationalofpalmdesert.org)

### FACEBOOK

[soroptimistinternationalpalmdesert](https://www.facebook.com/soroptimistinternationalpalmdesert)

### WEBSITE

[SoroptimistInternationalofPalmDesert.org](https://SoroptimistInternationalofPalmDesert.org)

### NEWSLETTER

Natalie Angrisani, Editor  
[itsnatalie@gmx.com](mailto:itsnatalie@gmx.com)



2025  
Leadership Round Table  
(LRT)

June 24, 2025 6-9 p.m. (EDT)  
Virtual and fully interpreted.

The LRT provides members the chance to develop your leadership skills in a supportive, collaborative environment.

Be a part of the ever-changing and growing Soroptimist organization. This is your opportunity to learn and become a better overall leader.

Explore interest in becoming a future Soroptimist leader!



**Its never too early to start planning:**

Spring Conference 2025 - June 5 - 7

In Fort McDowell, AZ at WeKoPa Casino Resort  
(20 min from Sky Harbor Airport in Phoenix)

Please share with all members of your club.  
Encourage all new members to register.

Start Inner-club fundraising now to help members attend.

For more information and registration, Click on the [LINK to the CALL](#)