

**SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
OF SOUTH LAKE TAHOE FOUNDATION**

Post Office Box 2179, Stateline, NV 89449

Website: <http://www.sislt.org>

ORIENTATION GUIDE

MEETING INFORMATION

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON MEETINGS: We meet for lunch approximately 49 weeks a year each Wednesday from 12:00-1:00 p.m. (12:00-1:30 for business meetings) at Harrah's Tahoe. The meeting location is subject to change. Watch for e-mail notification of changes. We do not meet ("dark") the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, during Christmas and New Year's weeks nor the Wednesday the week of Celebrity Golf Tournament. The business meeting is held on the first Wednesday of the month. All other meetings feature programs.

BOARD MEETINGS: Board meetings are usually held on the Monday preceding the first Wednesday of the month. Location varies. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. Members may not vote at a board meeting, but they can participate in discussions. All club petitions, surveys and sign-up sheets must be presented to and approved by the board before they are circulated at a regular meeting. Check with committee chairs or the president concerning questions about board procedures.

BUSINESS MEETINGS: Business meetings are usually held the first Wednesday of the month. All members are expected to attend this important meeting. This is where the business of the club is conducted and the decisions are made affecting all members. These meetings usually last from 12:00 to 1:30p.m.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS: Members of committees set their meeting times according to their convenience and the responsibilities and assignment deadlines of the respective committee. Committees typically meet once a month, although some meet more often or less often, as their particular responsibilities dictate.

NEIGHBORING CLUBS: Information on neighboring clubs is available on the Sierra Nevada Region's website (<http://www.soroptimistsnr.org>). The other local club is Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra (SITS), which meets at 7:30 a.m. each Thursday at the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center. Our members frequently attend those meetings.

SOROPTIMIST PIN AND NAME TAG

You are encouraged to wear your Soroptimist pin and name tag at all meetings. We wear the pin on the left, over the heart (not on the collar). Many members also wear their pins regularly as a part of their business dress. (You'd be surprised how many Soroptimists you meet when traveling!) The name tag is worn on the right, opposite the pin. You will receive your pin and name tag at your induction. Your new member fee will cover the cost.

SOROPTIMIST INTRODUCTION

When asked to introduce yourself in the Soroptimist manner, you are encouraged to use the standard form for identifying members and their businesses: State your name and your position or the name of your business. (Example: President Diane, this is Susie Jones, the personnel manager with XYZ Company, or this is Susie Jones representing my company, XYZ Enterprises.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements are limited to information about upcoming committee meetings and other club-related activities. Solicitation of funds during a Soroptimist meeting is not permitted without board review and club approval. Business promotion during meetings is also discouraged. For opportunities to promote businesses, see NETWORKING TABLE and BUSINESS PROMOTION below. SUPPORT PLUS announcements give members the opportunity to share information about other members who are ill, in the hospital, have lost a loved one, or have experienced some other sad or stressful event. The club sends cards and/or flowers. If you are not sure when you may make an announcement or where an item belongs in the proceedings of the club, ask the President or President-Elect.

SHARING PERSONAL AND NON-SISLT INFORMATION WITH CLUB MEMBERS

FINES: Members pay fines for the opportunity to share something special (e.g., birthdays, anniversaries, child's school achievements, new car, picture in the paper, vacations, etc.), or to make announcements about non-SISLT activities (e.g., "I am selling tickets for XYZ event. If you are interested, please see me at the Networking Table outside after the meeting.") Members are encouraged to keep fine announcements and stories brief. Information about fund-raisers should be limited to the purpose, date, time, location, price and where tickets may be purchased. A typical fine amount is \$1.00, although you are welcome to pay more, if you wish.

NETWORKING TABLE: The table, located outside the meeting door, is for business advertisements, information about political events, pledge sheets, and for ticket sales and

other information related to non-Soroptimist fund-raising events or to other non-Soroptimist business information. Sponsor sheets or follow-up information may also be placed on the networking table.

NEWSLETTER: Members may also submit articles to the newsletter advertising the fundraising events of a non-Soroptimist organization.

SHARING MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION WITH NON-SISLT INDIVIDUALS AND SOLICITORS

If a non-Soroptimist asks you for personal information about a SISLT member listed in the roster, newsletter, or other club informational materials, please contact the member for permission to release the information, or better yet, have the member herself contact the requester. We do not accommodate individuals who request entire rosters, phone lists, or e-mail and fax numbers for the purpose of general solicitation. Such requests should be denied outright.

SOROPTIMIST PLEDGE

The pledge, found on the back of the Mission Statement card, should be committed to memory, as we close most meetings with it. The pledge is also printed on page 12 of this guide.

GUESTS

Members are encouraged to bring guests to any meeting. Prospective members may also attend business meetings. When bringing a guest(s), members should always notify the Program Chair by e-vite Monday morning before the meeting.

LUNCH PROTOCOL

If you want a veggie lunch, you must specify on your RSVP. We cannot ask for takeout boxes. We pay \$10 for our meeting and lunches are included. Please do not ask staff for *any* special requests.

SOROPTIMIST INFORMATION

REGION: You can access information about the Sierra Nevada Region, to which SISLT belongs, on a website at <http://www.soroptimistsnr.org>. We encourage you to visit this site often to learn about regional projects and opportunities to visit with Soroptimists at district meetings and regional conferences.

FEDERATION: *The Soroptimist of the Americas* is a quarterly magazine published by our federation in July, October, January, and April each year. Your dues cover the cost of a subscription to the magazine. You may also learn about Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA) activities by perusing the federation's website at <http://www.soroptimist.org>.

INTERNATIONAL: *The International Soroptimist* is published quarterly (March, June, September, and December) by Soroptimist International headquarters in Cambridge, England. A subscription order form, address, and other information about Soroptimist International is available online at <http://www.soroptimistinternational.org>.

ATTENDANCE

Members are expected to attend weekly luncheon meetings regularly. They are **required** to attend the meetings of their assigned committee and to actively participate on that committee throughout the Soroptimist fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). Committee chairs keep attendance records for their respective committees and submit them to the board twice a year. New members are assigned to a committee their first year. Members often alternate from year to year between technical and program committees to gain more experience in the club. It is your responsibility to notify the committee coordinator if you cannot attend a meeting. Often, a member who agrees to be a co-chair does so with the commitment to become the chair of that committee the following year - i.e., a chair in training. Everyone is required to participate in our major fund-raising events — the November Wine and Food Tasting, the July Celebrity Golf Tournament and the Holiday Auction. Each member is encouraged to participate in the presentation of Fighting Chance in our local schools. Each member must commit time to help make these events a success.

COMMITTEES

Committees are of vital importance to the club. It is through committees that the activities of our organization are accomplished. Committees promote the official Soroptimist programs, and they undertake the various technical aspects of efficient club operations. Each committee is appointed to perform certain functions. All club members should be active members of technical as well as service committees, so that the expertise of members is divided between the needs of the organization and the needs of the community. Our federation (SIA) committee structure suggests, but does not prescribe, our local committees.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In general, the responsibility of technical committees is to administer the operations of the club.

- **ATTENDANCE:** Responsible for taking attendance at the weekly club meetings, collecting quarterly meeting fees for each member, and acting as hostesses for all visitors. This committee also processes make-up forms for appropriate Soroptimist activities for those wishing to establish perfect attendance, and for all Soroptimists visiting from other clubs.
- **COMMUNICATIONS:** Responsible for planning and implementing the club's communications, public relations, and information programs. The committee is comprised of the following activities:
 - **Publicity and Public Relations:** Responsible for promoting and developing public relations for the club in the community and for obtaining publicity for all club activities and events.
 - **Website:** Designs the website and manages the information posted to the site.

- **ROSTER:**

Prepares the club roster and updates as needed.

- **FINANCE:** Responsible for preparing the annual club budget recommendations.
- **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION:** Reviews prospective member applications for eligibility and formulates recommendations to the Board; sponsors activities to recruit new members and promote retention of current members; responsible for educating members about the heritage, purpose, objectives, policies and programs of Soroptimist and for preparing club members for leadership within Soroptimist and on their own committees. The SUPPORT PLUS responsibility also belongs to this committee.
- **LAWS AND RESOLUTIONS:** Responsible for reviewing club procedures and by-laws, proposing amendments and resolutions regarding the procedures and presenting them to the Board and the membership. May also become involved, as appropriate, in activities concerning Regional or Federation procedures and by-laws.

- **PARLIAMENTARIAN:** Appointed by the president to advise on parliamentary law.
- **PROGRAMS/FACILITIES:** Coordinates the weekly programs and arranges for appropriate facilities and other support for each program.

SERVICE COMMITTEES

These committees, sometimes called program committees, accomplish the organization's service to the community in specific program areas.

- **CULTURAL ARTS:** Expands and encourages the arts and cultural enjoyment for our members (both morning and noon clubs) and family/friends; hosts club meetings annually that focus on local cultural themes, such as music and artists; arranges cultural tours; and coordinates cultural event trips (plays, museums).
- **EDUCATION AND YOUTH:** This committee's primary responsibilities are to coordinate the **SISLT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM** and **YOUTH AWARDS**. Academic and vocational scholarships are awarded to graduating seniors from South Tahoe and Whittell High Schools; to LTCC graduates transferring to a four-year college; and to students re-entering college and the workplace. In addition to academic scholarships, the committee presents or publicizes the following recognition awards to students at local schools:
 - **YOUNG WOMEN OF DISTINCTION** - Students from South Tahoe and Whittell High Schools are nominated by their teachers and counselors for this outstanding academic and extra-curricular achievement award. Recipients and their families are honored at lunch meetings. The frequency of the awards is determined each year by the chairs of this committee in accordance with the availability of club members to coordinate these special programs. Currently, the awards are being made once to twice each year.
- **ENVIRONMENT:** Fosters increased awareness within the club and in the community about environmental issues. Typical projects include community beautification, and maintenance and clean-up of local trails and natural waterway.
- **INTERNATIONAL GOODWILL AND UNDERSTANDING (IGU):** Keeps abreast of activities at federation and international levels (e.g., educational and vocational assistance to developing countries, disaster relief, land mine removal programs); maintains contacts with "friendship link" Soroptimist clubs in foreign countries; promotes within SISLT the Soroptimist International president's annual December

10th appeal for contributions to a special international issue of her choosing; identifies and develops other programs to promote IGU.

- **AWARDS COMMITTEE**
- **WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITY AWARDS:** The Women's Opportunity Awards program was established in 1972 to assist women with primary financial responsibility for their families, to obtain the skills-training and education necessary to improve their employment status and the standard of living for themselves and their family. The women receiving these financial awards may use them for any costs associated with their education.
- **THE RUBY AWARD: FOR WOMEN HELPING WOMEN**
Recognizes women who have distinguished themselves in their chosen field. A \$100 honorarium is given to the recipient's chosen charity or non-profit organization.
- **THE VIOLET RICHARDSON AWARD:** This award is named for the first president of Soroptimist, Violet Richardson, who had a personal motto, "*It's what you do that counts!*" She laid the foundation for the heart of the Soroptimist philosophy, which is volunteerism. Each year the two Soroptimist clubs honor two South Lake Tahoe girls between the ages of 14-17 who epitomize the values in which Violet Richardson believed. The recipients receive cash awards and are entered in a regional contest for additional cash recognition. The regional winner goes on to compete at the federation level. Members of the Education and Youth Committee often serve on the Joint-Club Committee.

LOCAL COMMITTEES

- **A FIGHTING CHANCE:** A special, anti-abduction project created by the club to empower children in grades 3-6 with the knowledge and tools to help themselves in dangerous situations.
- **WINE-TASTING:** Coordinates the annual wine-tasting fund-raiser, which enjoys a reputation as a BEST OF TAHOE event. Every member is required to assist the committee with time and effort in some way.
- **EDGEWOOD CELEBRITY GOLF TOURNAMENT:** Coordinates the SISLT service to the golf tournament. Our club sells drinks, sandwiches, and hot dogs to visitors and tournament staff. The net proceeds from this tournament are split by Edgewood and SISLT. Sign-up sheets will be circulated. Everyone is required to participate in this event, and is encouraged to HAVE FUN!

- **HOLIDAY AUCTION:** Last meeting in December. Great opportunity for Holiday gifts. Bring your friends!
- **MAJOR PROJECT:** We have been setting aside funds toward a major project for a contribution to our community.
- **ALLOCATIONS COMMITTEE:** This committee is charged with the task of overseeing the disbursement of monies made available to the community from our fundraising. Advertising that grants are available, collecting grant applications, reviewing the applications and with the help of the membership, deciding on the winners of the grants and awarding the grants at a luncheon, usually held in spring.

SISLT FOUNDATION

The club furthers its philanthropic goals through the structure of a foundation. The Internal Revenue Service has designated the club a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation to facilitate our ability to accept tax-deductible gifts and bequests. Funds are disbursed once a year through the allocation process described above. The grants advance the quality of life for women and youth. The club has also funded a long-term interactive learning project for the art program at Lake Tahoe Community College.

WHAT IS IT GOING TO COST ME?

Anything worth having comes with a price tag. Being a Soroptimist is no different, and the biggest part of that price tag is your time. Repeatedly you will hear, "The price of membership is attendance." Attendance at weekly luncheon or breakfast meetings, attendance at club committee, social and fund raising activities, and maybe even attendance at community meetings where you will be representing your club. How much time you devote is really up to you, but if you are going to reap the benefits that you read about, then you should be ready to become very involved in your club's activities. In addition to attendance at meetings, you will be serving on one or more committees. Service on these committees may include additional luncheon or evening meetings. Do not start getting worried; these extra meetings do not occur that often. But so there are no surprises, it is important for you to have all the information necessary to make the right decision about joining our club. Other meetings from which many Soroptimists derive rewarding benefits and friendships are the district, regional and federation meetings. Without attending some of these meetings, you will not meet all those other women with whom you are going to exchange ideas and with whom you are going to form life-long friendships. Again, the degree of your involvement is up to you.

Now we come to the bottom line: money. Some annual regional and federation dues are mandatory. The club year runs from July 1 through June 30. All dues must be received no later than June 30. SISLT bills members for annual dues of \$132.00 per year. This amount includes local, regional and federation dues. A one-time new member fee of \$30.00 covers the cost of the membership pin and other orientation materials supplied by the club. The cost of our meetings is \$90 per quarter, due at the beginning of each quarter, and covers the entire quarter up to 13 meetings, excluding special-event meetings. This amount covers our club's weekly meeting costs and is charged whether or not you are present, eat your lunch, or not. Members are not allowed to skip lunch to avoid meeting fees. In addition, you are expected to financially support the wine-tasting fund-raiser.

TIPS TO HELP YOU FEEL PART OF THE CLUB!

1. **ATTEND REGULARLY!**
2. At the meetings, arrive early. By arriving a few minutes early, you will have the opportunity to visit with new friends. Remember, sometimes longer-term members are just a tad shy so do not hesitate to introduce yourself first. Make it a point to meet someone new each week.
3. Volunteer at the first opportunity. It is a great way to meet members and get to know them. It will also insure that long-term members remember your name. After all, you are not really a Soroptimist unless you are in there doing something!
4. Wear your name tag and pin.
5. Stand and give your name anytime you speak to the group. It is of no value to hear a name if there is no face to attach to it.
6. Be dependable. Do not sign-up, volunteer, or otherwise commit yourself without following through. This means: Arrive on time; be prepared for what you are supposed to do; if an emergency arises, give the person in charge as much notice as possible, so that she will have enough time to replace you. Better yet, find your own replacement, if something unforeseen prevents your participation. Remember, you unnecessarily inconvenience other people when you fail to follow through.
7. Take a deep breath, open your wallet, and pay a fine occasionally. The club loves to share those special moments with you.

ENJOY YOURSELF

SOROPTIMIST PLEDGE

I pledge allegiance to Soroptimism
And to the ideals for which it stands;
The sincerity of friendship,
The joy of achievement,
The dignity of service,
The integrity of profession,
The love of country.
I will put forth my greatest effort
To promote, uphold and defend these ideals
For a larger fellowship in home, in society, in business,
For country and for God.

OBJECTIVES OF SOROPTIMIST

- To maintain high ethical standards in business,
In professions and in other aspects of life.
- To strive for human rights for all people and, in
particular, to advance the status of women.
- To develop a spirit of friendship and unity among
Soroptimists of all countries.
- To quicken the spirit of service and human understanding.
- To contribute to international understanding
and universal friendship.