

**SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL  
of  
GREATER SACRAMENTO  
(SIGS)**



**SOROPTIMIST**  
**Best for Women**

*Our Mission Statement...*

*To improve the lives of women and girls through programs that lead to social and economic empowerment.*

**REFERENCE GUIDE FOR MEMBERS**

**The following is designed to help you understand club rules, guidelines and expectations. Some of these guidelines may change throughout the year. Active membership is the best way for staying up-to-date on current policies and procedures.**

***WELCOME TO SIGS!***

**Revised 2014-11**

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## MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

### Dues

Annual membership dues are \$165.00. The dues are allocated as follows:

To support regional, national, and international operations:

Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA)-our Federation	\$ 52.00
Signature Project – Live Your Dream	1.00
Soroptimist International Per Capita	5.00
Liability Insurance	3.00
Region Membership Fund	1.00
SIA Founders Pennies (Community Service Donation)	5.64
Sierra Nevada Region (SNR) Dues	16.00
SNR Fellowships (Community Service Donation)	1.00
SNR “S” Club Fund	<u>.50</u>
Subtotal	\$ 85.14

To support club operations:

Annual Retreat	\$ 30.00
Operating Costs (General Fund)	<u>49.86</u>
Total	<u>\$165.00</u>

The club also pays the Sierra Nevada Region (SNR) for a roster, handbook, one regional conference fee, one district meeting fee, one director’s retreat fee and the club’s share of the regional delegate’s expense.

### New Member Fee

In addition to the annual dues, there is a one-time new member fee of \$45.00 which covers the Federation fee, membership pin, name badge, induction ceremony, and roster costs.

### Fines, Fees and the Superstar Program

Charging fines is done so at the discretion of the Board. Fines are a means for raising money for the club’s operations. Fines, if applicable, are collected at each meeting. There is a name badge fee of \$3.00 that is enforced when a member does not wear their name badge at a meeting.

The Superstar Program is designed to acknowledge an achievement, accomplishment or personal celebration through a financial donation. The fee for declaring oneself a Superstar is \$50.00. Becoming a Superstar does not necessarily preclude a member from being subject to fines or the name badge fee.

### Fundraising

Each member must help raise monies for the Service Fund. Each year the extent of this obligation is developed and approved by the Board and implemented by the Ways & Means Committee. Members are allowed to donate their own money to fulfill this obligation. These funds are intended to accomplish the Soroptimist mission statement.

Members are also required to donate annually towards the Service Fund, otherwise referred to as the Service Commitment. The Service Commitment is in addition to any fundraising activities implemented by the Club.

### **How to Get Involved**

One of the biggest challenges that new members face is developing a connection with their fellow club members. By attending meetings, joining committees and participating in service projects you will become better acquainted with this great group of women! Start with your sponsor if you have questions or need clarification about anything, but do not hesitate to reach out to any member for guidance. We are all eager to help you become an involved and active member of SIGS.

*“A woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform.” - **Diane Mariechild***

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **About Soroptimist International**

When a new member joins our local club, she also becomes a part of Soroptimist International (SI) which is "a global voice for women through awareness, advocacy and action with over 100,000 members in 127 countries." It all started with the founding of the first club in 1921 in Oakland, California. We were there when the Charter of the United Nations came into existence!

The idea that executive, business, and professional women could join together to provide service spread quickly around the world. In 1924, the first clubs in Europe were chartered while new clubs in North America formed rapidly. By 1928, there were enough clubs to form two Federations: America and Europe. By 1978, 55 countries had clubs throughout the world. Soroptimist International now consists of four Federations; Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA), Soroptimist International of Europe (SIE), Soroptimist International - Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI), and Soroptimist International South West Pacific (SISWP). Plans are underway to install a fifth federation, Africa. After 80 years, Soroptimist International is the largest women's service organization in the world.

Our club is part of Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA). This Federation is organized similarly to a pyramid. Our Federation is divided into regions, which is further divided into districts, which are then divided into clubs. Our club is Soroptimist International of Greater Sacramento, which is located in District V of the Sierra Nevada Region and rooted within the Federation, Soroptimist International of the Americas.

Soroptimist clubs, districts, regions, and Federations sponsor a wide range of projects and programs that support communities both locally and abroad. More information on these programs is available on SIA's web site at [www.soroptimist.org](http://www.soroptimist.org). Local clubs have the flexibility to choose district, regional, national and/or international projects to participate in. Our club chooses programs that best fit our unique interests and service goals.

### **Meetings, Lunch Reservations and RSVP's**

This club meets from September through June, with a summer mixer in August. Regular luncheon meetings are held on the first and third Tuesdays. Luncheon meetings include a speaker or program and time for mingling. Business meetings are scheduled periodically as directed by the President.

Reservations should be received no later than the Friday prior to the meeting. Instructions for making reservations and lunch costs are published each month in the newsletter which is e-mailed to all members. If you make a reservation and are unable to cancel prior to the Monday before the meeting, you will still be expected to pay. Please be courteous and RSVP whether you are coming to the meetings and wanting lunch, too.

You will also be asked to RSVP for any special events by the person planning it so that a final count for food can be obtained. It is very important that you be considerate of the planners and RSVP by the date given. Costs vary from one special event to another. You may also be asked to bring a food or beverage to share.

### **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors consists of nine elected officers: President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President of Membership, Vice President of Service, Vice President of Ways and Means, Vice President of Programs, and Vice President of Communications. Additionally there are three directors. Two of the directors hold office for two years with one elected one year and the other elected the alternate year. The third director is the Past President and serves for one year. The President-Elect is automatically next year's President.

Elections are held at the Annual Retreat in April. The Installation Dinner is held in June. Incoming officers and directors officially assume their duties on July 1. The Board of Directors meets at least once a month. The schedule is determined by the President.

### **Nominations and Elections**

The Nominating Committee consists of the president-elect and at least three members selected by the president-elect. In March, the president-elect shall announce to the club that nominations are open and the Nominating Committee will accept recommendations from members. The Nominating Committee will determine the slate to be presented to the membership for a vote at the annual retreat. The Nominating Committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each office and for the required number of directors.

The president-elect is elected to serve the term as president the following year upon election to the president-elect position. The Nominating Committee shall secure the consent of each nominee before announcing their candidacy.

The report of the Nominating Committee shall be read at the first meeting in April. Additional nominations may be made from the floor, provided consent of the nominee(s) was previously obtained. The proposed slate shall be e-mailed to all the members. The election shall be held at the Annual Meeting in April. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be read again at the Annual Meeting and additional nominations may be made from the floor, provided consent of the nominee(s) was previously obtained. Election shall be by ballot for any office for which there is more than one nominee.

### **Newsletter**

A monthly newsletter is e-mailed to all members. It contains information about the club, upcoming business meetings and guest speakers, member updates, and reports about our service projects and committees. The deadline for articles is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the newsletter's publication.

## **Membership Roster**

When you join, you are asked to provide a photograph (head shot) for the roster, which is updated as needed. The Membership Roster is available to current members only. Roster information is gathered from your membership application, which includes professional affiliations, hobbies, interests as well as contact information. The membership roster is intended for club activities only and should not be distributed for public use.

## **Budgets, Financial Reports and Taxes**

Each year, the Board approves a budget for both operating and service costs. The General Fund is used for operating costs. Revenues include, but are not limited to, dues, lunches, and fines. The Service Fund is intended to account for service projects. Revenues include fundraising activities earmarked for service and Service Commitment fee. Financial reports are available at board and business meetings throughout the year. Sales and income tax returns are prepared and filed as well as the corresponding tax paid if a filing requirement exists during the fiscal year.

## **Spelling**

“Soroptimist” is difficult to spell.....remember that it has two “o’s” and two “i’s.”

## **Sponsors**

All new members have a sponsor; usually the woman who nominated you for membership. She is there to encourage you to become proactive in club activities and events. She is your resource on how to “Have fun! Get it done!” (*Our club motto.*) We encourage you to contact your sponsor, or any club member, if you have questions or need clarification about anything.

## **Membership Recruitment**

You are always encouraged to invite friends, family or acquaintances who might be interested in joining our club to our lunch meetings and mixers. Recruiting materials are available through the Membership Chair or our club’s website. If preferred, the club will pay for your prospective member to attend one meeting or event. Remember to include your guest when you RSVP.

Prospective members are women who presently or previously operated a business or work in a professional occupation. There are three classifications of membership: regular, retired/unemployed, and embarking. A fourth category, life membership, is still held by some members, but is no longer available.

## **Websites**

Our club’s website is [www.sacramentosoroptimists.org](http://www.sacramentosoroptimists.org) and includes copies of newsletters, a calendar of upcoming events and other important information. We encourage you to check it often.

Soroptimist International of the America's website is [www.soroptimist.org](http://www.soroptimist.org). They have a wide range of information regarding Soroptimist in general including international projects that your dues help support. Soroptimist International's website is [www.soroptimistinternational.org](http://www.soroptimistinternational.org) which is another resource for international awareness issues as well as a listing of Soroptimist organizations worldwide. Soroptimist International Sierra Nevada Region, which represents the region that SIGS is a part of, has its own website, [www.soroptimistsnr.org](http://www.soroptimistsnr.org). Their web site has a listing of other local clubs in case you need to make up a meeting.

Last, but certainly not least, SIGS is on Facebook! Like us at [www.facebook.com/Soroptimist](http://www.facebook.com/Soroptimist).

# COMMITTEES

Committees do the work of the club and meet outside of lunch meetings. Some meet just once, while others meet periodically throughout the year. They are an excellent way to get to know other members and to become involved in club activities. Involvement is required in at least one committee and you are encouraged to participate in more.

## How to Sign-Up

Sign-up sheets for committees are distributed at the Annual Retreat. New members may be assigned a committee when they join. Most committees welcome as many helping hands as possible, so feel free to jump on board! Below are some highlights of the duties, responsibilities and expectations for each committee.

## Service

- Research, recommend and coordinate community and international hands-on projects to promote member participation.
- Make recommendations regarding club cash donations to qualified charities.
- Ensure that thank you letters are given to all donors by coordinating with the Treasurer.

## Ways and Means

- Strategize activities to meet the annual budget obligation.
- Monitor collections for all Ways and Means projects.
- Recommend and coordinate approved fundraising activities that provide resources needed for successful service projects.
- Coordinate and promote the Superstar Program.

## Programs

- Identify subjects, matters and issues appropriate for presentations.
- Secure and promote luncheon program speakers.
- Oversee special events through Activities & Events (*Program subcommittee*).
  - **Activities & Events subcommittee**
    - Summer Mixer: is an evening gathering on the third Tuesday in August. This event is intended to reacquaint ourselves with one another and kick off the new fiscal year. It is a casual, potluck style party usually hosted by a member in their home.
    - Holiday Mixer: is an evening gathering in December or January and is held either at a member's home or a restaurant. A creative gift exchange may take place.
    - Annual Retreat: is an evening meeting held in April at a restaurant. Most costs are covered by annual membership dues. Only members in good standing are able to attend. A survey may be sent to the membership prior to the Retreat for member input. Survey results and any other agenda items will be presented and discussed at the meeting. Next year's Board of Directors is elected and Committee chairs are announced.
    - Installation Dinner: is held in June either at a member's home or a restaurant. This is the last meeting of the fiscal year. The new Board of Directors is installed while the outgoing Board of Directors and the committee chairs are honored.

## Membership

- Promote new club membership through recruitment materials approved by the Board.
- Recommend and implement Board approved campaigns for increasing membership.
- Preside over member induction ceremony and presentation of name badge.
- Recommend and implement Board approved plans for membership retention and survey non-renewing members and membership termination.
- Coordinate with Luncheon/Hospitality and Personal Connections (*Membership subcommittees*).
  - ***Luncheon/Hospitality subcommittee***
    - Maintain the lunch reservation roster, collect lunch fees, and forward collected funds to the Treasurer.
    - Greet and sign-in members and guests at each meeting.
  - ***Personal Connections subcommittee***
    - Provide support to members as needed by observing birthdays and other special events.
    - Keep in touch with members who may be ill or experiencing difficult times.
    - Serve as point of contact for any support programs maintained by the membership for food, transportation, etc. for another member in need.
    - In the event of the passing of a member, contact that member's family to offer support as well as gather materials needed for the SNR Celebration of Life Ceremony.

## Communications

- Coordinate communications between our club and other clubs which may include appointing a Club Liaison (*Communications subcommittee, as needed*).
  - ***Club Liaison subcommittee***
    - Gather information from other clubs, local, regional, international, etc. regarding service projects, membership ideas, etc.
    - Relay findings to the Communications Chair and, if requested by the Chair, to the Board as well.
- Enhance public awareness about our club within reasonable means, which may include appointing a club photographer, historian, public relations chair, etc.
- Coordinate communications as needed between club members for all club related activities.
- Oversee the Newsletter, Website, Facebook and Member Roster (*Communications subcommittees*).
  - ***Newsletter subcommittee***
    - Develop, format, and distribute a timely monthly newsletter that includes current and upcoming activities, luncheon information and articles from the President, committees and the general membership.
    - Maintain a current e-mail distribution list.
    - Notify the membership of distribution list changes as needed.
  - ***Member Roster subcommittee***
    - Maintain member information in the form of a roster.
    - Provide a copy of the member roster to all current members.
    - Distribute any roster updates to the membership in a timely manner.

- ***Website subcommittee***
  - Maintain all web pages on the club's website including links to other websites.
  - Maintain a calendar of meetings and events, a current list of the Board of Directors and Committee Chairs.
  - Illustrate our mission statement and Soroptimist pledge.
  - Maintain information available in the member's only section which includes, but is not limited to:
    - ✓ Board meeting minutes
    - ✓ List of founding members and past presidents
    - ✓ Bylaws
    - ✓ Member Roster
    - ✓ Standing Rules
    - ✓ Finance policy
- ***Facebook subcommittee***
  - Maintain and update club and community information as needed.
  - Manage comments and posts.
  - Authority to accept or reject friend requests.
  - Provide links to other websites as appropriate.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

A sample of the agencies and projects that we support are:

- Goal4.org
- Planned Parenthood Mar Monte
- Women's Wisdom Art
- World Venture
- The SHARE Institute
- My Sister's House
- Sacramento Crisis Nursery
- Wellspring Women's Center
- Women's Empowerment
- Family Promise
- The Discovery Museum Science & Space Center
- American River Natural History Association
- St. Matthews Episcopal Church
- Courage Worldwide
- Women's Empowerment
- St. John's Shelter
- Salvation Army
- Lilliput Children's Services
- College Possible
- Soil Born Farms
- WEAVE

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

Each year we offer a number of grants and awards to worthy causes both domestic and internationally. The Service Committee coordinates this grant process. Club members sponsor grant applicants who are qualified 501(c)(3) organizations. Past recipients include, but are not limited to: Faces, Women's Empowerment, My Sister's House, St. John's Shelter, WEAVE, Healing Hands - Healing Heart, the Jewish Family Service Literacy Program, Wonder, Inc., and the Sacramento Crisis Nurseries.

Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA) also offers the Women's Opportunity Award (WOA) that begins at the club level. We proudly support women in our community who choose to enhance their skills and employment prospects through education and training. Additionally, we recommend our WOA recipient for the regional and international award.

**As members of SIGS, we strive to put the F-U-N into our FUNdraisers.**

**So let's have fun and get it done!**