



A publication of Soroptimist International of the Philippines Region (A Foundation) Inc.

Vol. 1 No. 1 July 2009

Strengthening TEAMS to Achieve Our Dreams

While winds were howling and heavy downpours flooded Metro Manila, SI Iloilo revved its gears to welcome 422 delegates and guests who trooped to the bustling hub of the Western Visayas Region for the 22nd Mid-Biennial Conference of Soroptimist International of the Philippines Region (A Foundation) Inc. (SIPR). *Strengthening Teams to Achieve Our Dreams* was the theme of the Conference held at the Sarabia Manor Hotel in Iloilo City from May 7 to 9, 2009.

The processional of officers and the entry of colors led by young cadets were followed by a lavish choreographed version of the *ati-atihan* depicting the natural gaiety of the Ilonggos. Joining SI Iloilo President and Conference Chairperson Jane Frances C. Jarantilla in warmly welcoming attendees were no less than the Mayor of the City of Iloilo Jerry P. Treñas and Iloilo Province Governor Niel B. Tupas. Soroptimists recited their Pledge, SIPR Governor Carmen A. Flor declared the Conference "Open", banged the gavel and the rest of the program unfolded. **To page 9....**



PAST GOVERNORS who lent their invaluable support were honored: L-R: PG Gladys S. J. Tiongco, Linabelle R. Villarica, Dulce I. Gozon, Diwata A. Baluyot, Gov. Carmen A. Flor, Leticia A. Yap, Luz Un Ocampo, Dolores M. Flores, Esperanza F. Arkoncel



GOVERNOR'S AWARDS went to exemplary District Directors L-R: Lourdes M. Javier, West Central Luzon; Ma. Leonor G. Berroya, MM Southeast District; Florida O. Marcelo, MM Northwest District.



GOVERNOR'S CITATIONS were presented to Soroptimists with outstanding contributions during the year: L-R front: Leticia U. Uy, Leticia C. Yap, Evelyn San R. Buenaventura, Celestina C. Ng, Benita O. Santos, Fe Amor Ilagan, Ma. Rosario T. Tumaneng, Conchita M. Dela Cruz, Governor Carmen A. Flor; Rosalinda A. Grande, Ma. Paloma B. Papa; Lorna C. Silverio, Ma. Soledad M. Tugade

Conference Sidelights



LOPEZ ANCESTRAL HOME

NAIA Terminals 1 and 2 had a festive mood. Soroptimists from Metro Manila and Luzon filed in long lines and choked the check-in counters. Many wore their blue vests and yellow tee shirts. Laughter and chatter filled the air. Heavy bags probably filled with costumes must have earned for the airlines additional revenues from excess weights.

Arriving in Iloilo, host club SI Iloilo members warmly welcomed the delegates. There were rides waiting to ferry the delegates to their hotels. Members did a quick check-in of their luggage and immediately proceeded to lunch and a tour of this historic and beautiful city.

To page 14....

Why We Need Women Leaders

Keynote Speech of Catherine Standiford, SIA President-Elect at SIPR's 21st Mid-Biennial Conference



When we think of women leaders, some well-known names come to mind: Former US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Polish scientist Marie Curie, Mexican Artist Frida Kahlo, Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, Burmese Political Activist Aung San Suu Kyi and former Soroptimist Member and first female US Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O' Connor. All of these women are true pioneers who continue to shape our world and how we experience it. We think of these women as leaders because they are not afraid to speak out in the face of injustice or to use their intelligence, influence and talents to promote positive change. Great leaders help others do more and become more than they ever thought possible. They motivate, inspire and transform lives.

Today, we are going to talk about women and leadership, what it takes to be a good leader and why we should all feel proud to belong to an organization that prizes leadership as its core value.

The women leaders I mentioned are all well known and revered. But many women demonstrate incredible leadership and accomplish remarkable feats becoming household names.

To page 8....

Governor's Message

By: SIPR Governor Carmen A. Flor



Another year has passed. Another conference successfully conducted. Now is the time to review, assess and reflect on the performance of our organization during the past year.

At the outset, let me congratulate our SIPR Board - the District Directors and the Officers - for their outstanding performance and unconditional support.

We have just come back from a hugely successful and most enjoyable mid-biennial conference in Iloilo. The hosts left nothing to chance in their preparations for this event. From the storied and elegant Nelly Garden, to the fabulous Punta Villa Resort, to the enchanting music of the Kabayao Family Ensemble, to the inspiring speakers, to the legendary hospitality of our hosts and the gracious presence of our SIA guests, what more can we ask for? Thank you, SI Iloilo, we shall always remember the 22nd Mid-Biennial Conference.

SIPR has done great in many aspects of the Renaissance Campaign. Our Fundraising Chair Thelma Ortiz and Dream Raffle Chair, Chit dela Cruz, both beat the odds, during this year of economic downturn. Our Website Chair, Bing Grande and Cherry Tumaneng, Public Awareness Chair, have created an interactive, dynamic and informative website that keeps us well connected. Our newest program, the Unsung Women Heroes Awards has been hailed as an awe inspiring program, expanding the public awareness of our mission. Kudos to our chair, Lorna Silverio.

We have established a partnership with the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency in our effort to "Stop Trafficking" of women and girls, we have achieved 100% participation in WOA and 80% in both VRA and MADWA, because of the persistence and dedication of Program Council Chair, the amiable and ageless Letty Yap. Despite difficult times, we have recruited 274 new members and chartered SI Angat. Congratulations to the sponsoring club, SI San Rafael.

Our "expedition" team to Romblon, headed by Evelyn San Buenaventura, merits our admiration. Amid turbulent weather conditions, uncharted waters, and spartan accommodations, they chose to proceed to Sibuyan, Romblon.

Our Soroptimist Leadership Training Professorial Team, all selfless Soroptimists, headed by our GE Paloma Papa deserve our gratitude for giving of their time, their expertise, their boundless generosity in imparting Soroptimist knowledge to our officers without much fanfare. Our Publication Team should likewise be congratulated for coming out with this newsletter.

I would be remiss if I do not mention SIPR's appreciation for the persons who have made it their mission to provide our organization it's new home at Globe Telecom Plaza. We want to give our special thanks to PFD Luz Un Ocampo who gave us our first home at Brgy. Olympia, Makati City. FD Dulce Gozon renovated the apartment after 10 years and put it up for sale. DD Lenn Berroya and SIPR Treasurer Marisol Tugade both mounted two Golf Tournaments to enable SIPR to purchase a suitable unit at Globe Telecom Plaza in Mandaluyong City. IPG Linabelle Ruth Villarica, utilizing her personal resources completely furnished the condo unit with all the amenities of a modern office headquarters, Soroptimist can all be proud of. To all of them, SIPR is most grateful.

Last, but not the least, congratulations to our outstanding clubs for keeping Soroptimist volunteer service alive nationwide in the communities that we serve. Let us all continue with our mission to improve the lives of women and girls in our communities and work with enduring "teamwork" in the spirit of friendship. Let our performance speak.



Chartering Ceremony of SI Angat, April 4, 2009, was held at Kalinangan Integrated School, Angat, Bulacan. SI San Rafael Charter President Lorna C. Silverio and President Marivic Vergel de Dios made possible the chartering of the 80th club of SIPR.



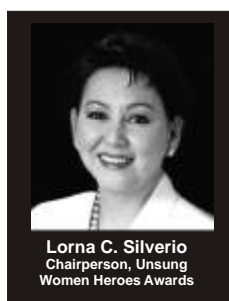
SIPR Pre-Conference Board Meeting at Hotel del Rio, May 7, 2009



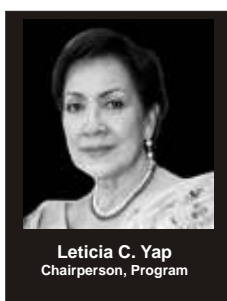
SI Iloilo, Conference Hosts for the 22nd Mid-Biennial Conference, led by President Jane Frances C. Jarantilla



Thanks to this "Fantastic Five", DD Cora Pedro (representing IPG Linabelle Villarica) Treasurer Marisol Tugade, DD Lenn Berroya, FD Dulce Gozon, PFD Luz Un Ocampo, who worked hardest to provide us with our new SIPR headquarters. With them in photo are GE Paloma extreme left, and Gov. Carmen extreme right.



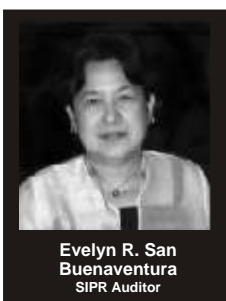
Lorna C. Silverio
Chairperson, Unsung
Women Heroes Awards



Leticia C. Yap
Chairperson, Program



Ma. Paloma B. Papa
Governor Elect
Chairperson, Soroptimist
Leadership Training



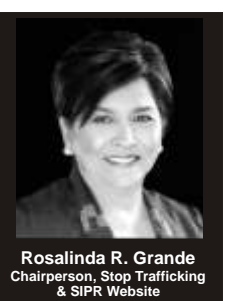
Evelyn R. San
Buenaventura
SIPR Auditor



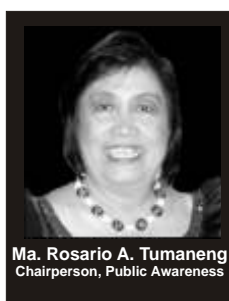
Thelma T. Ortiz
Chairperson, Fundraising



Conchita M. dela Cruz
Chairperson, Dream Raffle



Rosalinda R. Grande
Chairperson, Stop Trafficking
& SIPR Website



Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng
Chairperson, Public Awareness

Improving the Lives of Women and Girls

TRIBUTE TO

Unsung Women Heroes

It was their shining moment. On April 16, 2009, 12 ordinary women leaders who did extraordinary work to improve the lives of women and girls in their communities, beamed happily on the stage of the Abelardo Hall, College of Music, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City as Soroptimists paid tribute to them in simple but meaningful awards ceremonies. They were neither celebrities nor high-profile personalities in society but the bigness of their achievements seemed to fill the Abelardo Hall as the crowd applauded them when they were recognized as the Unsung Women Heroes of Soroptimist International of the Philippines Region for 2009.



Registration of guests

The awardees included three educators, three volunteer social and community workers, two non-government workers, a farmer and environmentalist, a cooperatives leader and a dancesport champion. Each has an inspiring story to tell that warms the heart and uplifts the human spirit.



Guests from the Diplomatic Corps

The Guiding Lights

Women seem to be the best teachers when it comes to educating, molding and guiding the youth along the right paths in life. *Herminia C. Mañez* of Binangonan, Rizal who was a teacher for 48 years helped shape the minds and characters of many students who are now successful in their respective fields. Despite her age, she continues to empower disadvantaged women and small-time women entrepreneurs in her community by providing them livelihood skills and capital to improve their economic situation. *Jo Ann G. De Larrabal*, on the other hand, focuses her work on teaching single pregnant women, childbirth education and childcare. With her Tuesday Volunteers group, she teaches these girls value formation, arts and crafts, livelihood projects and skills training. She established the Birthing Room in Nazareth Home where 64 babies have already been delivered. In the case of *Filipinas A. Buenarte*, now owner and president of the Megbyte College of Science and Technology in San Fernando, Pampanga, her inspiring triumph over poverty and adversity strengthened her resold to "pay forward" and help provide education to poor students through scholarships.



The Audience

From Tragedies to Opportunities

Despite their sad and painful experiences as victims of sexual exploitation and domestic violence, three courageous Unsung Women Heroes, namely Alma G. Bulawan, Mary Joy E. Barcelona and Lucila A. Lopez proved to the world that there is always hope and opportunities awaiting them if they have a deep faith in God and a strong determination to change their lives. All three are now working with NGO groups. Alma is a staunch advocate of anti-prostitution and a founding member of the *Buklod ng Kababaihan ng Olongapo*, a drop-in center for women in prostitution. She helps these women change their lives through education and alternative means of livelihood. Mary Joy, a former "Japayuki" and now a supporter of women's rights, has joined an NGO called DAWN (Development Action for Women Network) where she is currently coordinator of its Alternative Livelihood Program. Lucila, a victim of domestic violence, is now a proud advocate of women's rights and gender sensitivity. She supervises the Tala Day Care Center ASAKAPABATA Program which focuses on *Aralin, Sanayan at Kakayahang Pambata*

Shelters for Street and Abandoned Children

Ma. Veronica G. San Juan, a former banker, and Cecilia G. Seckler of Bacolod City have shown their deep love and concern for children by literally sheltering them under their maternal care. Veronica is active as a volunteer worker of the *Tulay Sa Don Bosco Street Children Village* by spending time, energy and resources for 30 street children of Manila. Cecilia, with the full support of her husband Philip, established *Haven's Home* in Bacolod City, a refuge for 27 young people from ages 11 months to 21 years old. They take care of the children's education and maximize their potentials in various fields, especially in music.

Special Advocacies

Four awardees were recognized for their special advocacies and services. *Editha C. Santiago*, a community worker and environmentalist, formed KILUS or *Kababaihan Iisa and Layunin Umunlad ang Sambayanan* mobilizing 500 barangay women by teaching them the importance of recycling as a source of additional income. She made use of "juice packs" by transforming them into blinds, belts, shoes and bags which are now exported to other countries. *Desiree B. Duran*, a former fishball vendor, turned into a successful farmer after she attended a seminar on off-season high-value crops conducted by the Department of Agriculture. Her initial success in grafted tomatoes which earned her Php 70,000 motivated her to become a full-time farmer. She has generated employment for 5,000 farmers and their wives by employing them as vegetable pickers, thus raising their income and employment levels in San Idelfonso, Bulacan. Promoting cooperatives in Eastern Mindanao is *Norma D. Pereyra's* advocacy. Through her training programs, she has instilled awareness on the importance of cooperatives among the people of Davao del Norte and, at the same time, improved the lives of women members through her gender advocacy. She was instrumental in enhancing relationships of more than 25,000 women members of the



The 2009 Unsung Heroes Awardees

Tagum cooperatives with their male counterparts at home and in the workplace. Teaching children to dance in her poor neighborhood in Antipolo City is a special advocacy of *Belinda G. Adora*, national dancesports champion and gold medalist of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games. By sharing her dancing skills with the children, Belinda hopes that like her, they could also dance their way out of poverty and improve their lives.

Search for more Unsung Women Heroes

The successful awarding event is just the beginning of searches of future Unsung Women Heroes awardees in the country. SIPR Governor Carmen A. Flor, Overall Chairperson of the Awards Working Committee, said "SIPR will expand our search nationwide to reach the farthest communities in the country, to recognize the efforts of little women, heroines in their own localities, even where no Soroptimist Club exists".

Underscoring the importance of the Awards, Governor Carmen further added that these "awards of recognition intend to bring into focus the heroism of ordinary women, who even without the trappings of wealth, nor power nor resources, have risen above their circumstance to help, to share and to care for others".

Chairperson Lorna C. Silverio, commenting on the "First Edition" of the Unsung Women Heroes Award, said that the "award ceremonies has become more meaningful and timely with this year's Women's Month theme *Babae, Yaman ka ng Bayan*". She added that the awardees literally represent the "wealth of our nation for, by their sterling example alone, they motivate other women and children to rise beyond poverty, pushing the country beyond the present global financial crisis".

The Working Committee for the Unsung Women heroes Award comprised the following: Governor Carmen A. Flor (*Overall Chairperson*); Lorna C. Silverio (*Chairperson*); Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng (*Co-chairperson*); Leticia C. Yap, Zosima L. Pizarro and Alma S. Twaño (*Ways and Means*); Priscilla Y. Enciso, Yolanda C. Hernandez, Clarita T. Ordonez and Virginia Benosa-Llorin (*Media*); Leonor G. Berroya, Enriqueta V. Doble and Ma. Soledad M. Tugade, (*Invitations*); Carmen A. Flor, Lorna C. Silverio and Leticia C. Yap, (*Selection Panel*); Lorna C. Silverio and Leticia C. Yap (*Awards/Prizes*); Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng and Rosalinda R. Grande (*Souvenir Program*); Gladys SJ. Tiongco, Rida S. Aznar and Anna V. Lagma (*Accommodations and Hospitality*); Dulce I. Gozon, Gladys SJ. Tiongco and Ma. Paloma B. Papa (*Advisers*); and Nerissa P. Escoto and Lerma C. Sajor (*Secretariat*).

The Recognition Awards Ceremonies were managed by Carmencita P. Marinez, Alma S. Twaño, Mary T. Jazul, Cristina A. Lee and Mari C. Moya (*Registration and Reception*); Leonor G. Berroya and Ma. Soledad M. Tugade (*Officers of the Day*); Fe Amor A. Ilagan and Florida O. Marcelo (*Physical Arrangements & Refreshments*); Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng and Rosalinda R. Grande (*Executive Producers*). Bart Guingona provided technical direction and was the master of ceremonies. Cocktails were provided by *Brazil! Brazil! Restaurant*.

The 12 awardees were ably presented by pretty Soroptimist who added grace and elegance to the occasion. They were: Rida S. Aznar, Trisha B. David, Rebecca N. Domongan, Anne Marie C. Gordon, Yolanda S. Ignacio, Anna V. Lagman, Ma. Cecilia B. Oñate, Jeannie N. Sandoval, Kaye C. Tinga, Marivic V. Vergel de Dios, Romina G. Vicerál, and Ma. Remedios C. Vitorio.

By: Yolanda Canseco Hernandez, Assistant Region PRO

Adding their elegant presence and articulate introductions of the awardees are twelve young pretty and outstanding Soroptimists.



1st VP Trisha B. David, SI Sampaloc



Pres. Rida Aznar, SI Valenzuela



Pres. Mariecel Onate, SI Ortigas & Environs



Pres. Kaye C. Tinga, SI Taguig
Pres. Marilee C. Vitorio, SI Alabang
Pres. Anna V. Lagman, SI EDSA Villagers



Past Pres. Rebecca N. Domogan, SI Hope Baguio
Pres. Anne Marie C. Gordon, SI Olongapo
Pres. Marivic Vergel de Dios, SI San Rafael



Pres. Jeannie Sandoval, SI Malabon
Romina Vicerál, SI Caloocan
IPP Yolanda S. Ignacio, SI San Jose City



Awardees with Soroptimist Organizers

BETTER ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER EMPOWERS WOMEN

Soroptimists Celebrating Success!
2009 Finalist - Program Category

By: Rosalinda R. Grande Charter President
SI Eastwood City

Nestled atop the mountains of Kalang in Pampanga is a small community of indigenous people - the Aetas. The trek to this site is hot and bumpy in the summer and wet and even more jarring during rainy days. But Soroptimists from SI Eastwood City have found a tranquil group of 151 families with less than the basic necessities of life worth the arduous trip.

Water is an emotional subject. Soroptimists were, however, able to stir the community to help themselves to have better access to clean water in response to MDG Goal #7 - to decrease by half the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. SIEC sought to empower the women in Sitio Target through better access to clean water and to encourage good sanitation and health habits, like simple hand washing, among elementary school children.

Out of 8 wells in Sitio Target, only two hand-pumped wells were operational, the others have been in a state of disrepair for many years. These two wells served 700 people, 450 of whom are women and girls. The burden of fetching water for cooking, cleaning, laundry and sanitation fall to these women who spend many unproductive hours waiting for their turn at the wells. Hand-pumping of water is a backbreaking work, especially for women. There is an elementary school in the sitio built through donations from other NGOs but there was no water supply for drinking nor sanitation. When children needed to go to the bathroom (which is especially embarrassing for the girls), they went home and often did not return to class. When there is no water, women and girls are always the first to feel the burden.



Happy faces greet visitors to Sitio Target Elementary School despite lack of basic necessities like water.

Soroptimists were apprised of this urgent need of the community. SIEC discussed the project plan at the club level and then met with barangay officials and local leaders. They agreed to install an electric pump and a pressurized tank in one of the wells. A water supply line was laid from the community well to the elementary school. SIEC paid for the materials and supplies whilst the local community procured the materials, provided the labor and supervised the work. Soroptimists monitored the progress of the project, liaised closely with the designated persons and inspected the project which was completed in January 2009.

Working with indigenous people is a challenge because of cultural differences and the remoteness of their communities, though the project itself is quite innovative in its simplicity. Having an electric pump cuts short the unproductive time spent by women waiting at the well so they can spend more time in other productive work. Pupils at the Sitio Target Elementary School now have water supply for drinking, washing and sanitation. The project inspired a group of nuns to take interest in rehabilitating the other hand-pumped well so that another section of the community can have better access to clean water.

While visiting the project site, SIEC took the opportunity to render additional service to the elementary school such as conducting a nutrition program and slippers distribution, sponsoring girls to attend a Girls Scouts camp, among others. A teacher is now undergoing teacher training for an alternative learning program which will be conducted for out-of-school girls in the community. For these efforts, the Department of Education and the local community awarded SI Eastwood City Certificates of Appreciation.

Projects like this are quite strenuous and taxing for members but it widens the scope and impact of Soroptimist. The time spent by members travelling together fosters friendship and camaraderie with many shared experiences. SI Eastwood suggests that every club go out of their comfort zone to do one such project to help our indigenous peoples.

Fetching trickles of water by hand pumping is a back-breaking job that falls to women. Better access to clean water empowers women by cutting short unproductive time spent in the wells for other more productive activities and eases their burden.



Soroptimist Impact Projects 2008-2009

Mentoring Little Women

An Impact Project of SI EDSA Villagers' Club

The Soroptimist vision of improving the lives of women and girls in local communities is focused enough to be unmistakable in its intention but open enough to allow for as much approaches as there are ingenious minds in the organization. Because of this, many women and girls have been beneficiaries of skills training, health programs, eco soc and other projects of our clubs worldwide. Our club, SI EDSA Villagers Club, has seen numerous action in the different fronts.

Two years ago, our club's Human Rights and Status of Women Committee chair, Flora Corpuz Eufemio, a retired Cabinet Undersecretary (of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, DSWD), and who, for 6 years, sat as Vice Chairperson of the United Nations' Geneva based Committee on the Rights of the Child, opted for a pro-active and grass roots approach to trying to improve the lives of women and girls. Having seen action in numerous campaigns and conferences all over the world, and having authored instructive manuals and reviewed international interventions on social engineering, she impressed upon the club the importance of intervention during the formative years of young girls so that they grow to be women aware of their rights, their worth and of the possibilities of making their futures better. Working with older women in challenged circumstances will alleviate immediate problems but nurturing Protective Behavior in young women points to an empowered future.

Thus the SI EDSA Villagers Club started on the "Mentoring Little Women" Program with about 40 young girls, aged 9 to 15 at Barangay Bagumbayan, Quezon City. The program included info-share sessions for both the mothers and the fathers in order to make the home environment more attuned to the benefits of the program. The program is continuing one with follow up sessions and counseling. The girls and women who are part of the "Mentoring" exhibit perceptible confidence and positive outlook during activities.

By some uncanny convergence, Dr. Madrid, a speaker during the recent Mid-biennial Conference in Iloilo spoke of human trafficking and the importance of creating a culture or environment that will prevent susceptibility to being victimized by human traffickers. On the similar vein, the March - May, 2009 edition of SIA publication Best for Women, also speaks of 'empowering girls to end the cycle of abuse' in connection with teen dating violence. What better way to empower than to enrich women's self esteem and concept about proper values and acceptable norms?

Thanks to a club grant of \$6,500 from the SIA, SI EDSA Villagers Club will be able to pursue, in a more comprehensive manner, this program which is designed precisely for early empowerment of women.

This project aims to empower girls, 9 to 15 years of age; and to improve their social status and quality of life by providing them with

- 1.) Information on their rights and on the opportunities to pursue their education, to imbibe positive values and outlook in life in order to develop healthier self esteem while reducing tendencies to drop out of school; and
- 2.) Strategies that help them to feel safe all the time, through Protective Behaviors thereby preventing their becoming prey to illegal recruitment and trafficking, sexual harassment and other forms of abuses.
- 3.) Programs by which parents improve, and share with their peers, their knowledge on parental skills for the support of these girls.

Under the program, the targeted batch of 60 young girls will be prepared for a more productive role in society thru intensive mentoring and regularly provided guidance and counseling, as well as help in their schoolwork by the club members who themselves, first attend training on Protective Behavior. The college training in Guidance and Counseling of Club President (and Project Officer) Anna Lagman, the extensive training and experience of Past President Dr. Dorrie Vergara, M.D. along the many years of experience in social action in the field of health of Assistant Treasurer Lydia Sy Dyragos with neuro-surgeon husband are being put to exhaustive action. Group activities are provided to girls experiencing emotional and psychological problems as majority had expressed having been verbally and physically maltreated by their parents if not being victims of attempted sexual abuses. Although experts have been consulted on the program, members of the SI EDSA Villagers' club are all acquiring the mentor's knowledge and skills on child rights and Protective Behavior in order to increase the level of dissemination among the girls in the community. The youth and energy of Mari Moya and Evelyn Cristi and the positive let-us-value-the-moment attitude of Cora Serrano are useful for sparking up enthusiasm during club activities. The scope of work necessitates the club's seeking the assistance of DSWD, the local government, the local police, the local schools, the church. Community volunteers are also mobilized, among others, as a network for reporting abuse. The work itself is never inert. The methods are developed and improved as work proceeds and mentors learn as they teach. Peripheral support activities are also involved, such as skills training for economic empowerment and even feeding for the really marginalized girls.

This approach was chosen by SI EDSA Villager's Club because empowering young girls now, will develop future teenagers and women, who will not be easily victimized because they know enough to stay out and get out of dangerous and harmful situations. Addressing the cause of the manifest problem is hoped, in the long run, is to reduce the incidence of harm and trauma to women and girls.



Pres. Anna Lagman with the graduates



Flora Eufemio hands graduation certificate

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH FOR MUSLIM WOMEN PROJECT

SI Makati - Winner, Governor's Thrust in Family Spacing

Coming for the war-torn areas of Mindanao, many Muslim Families resettle in Barangay Maharlika, Taguig City - long deprived of medical and healthcare services by the local government. SI Makati embarked on this on this project to empower women through improved health care and knowledge about family spacing, including natural family planning. Seven half-day sessions of lecturettes on reproductive health were conducted by SI Makati covering topics on the various aspects of women's reproductive system, including women's diseases, child-bearing, family spacing, and methods of family planning.

There were 300 women participants who came from the nine puroks of the barangay. They were provided free medical consultations, medicines, and a pap smear test. After each session, an open forum was held to allow participants to clarify issues or to ask questions relating to women's health care. Handouts were distributed and snacks were served. SI Makati took the occasion to promote the organization and explained the Soroptimist's major programs like Women's Opportunity Awards, Violet Richardson Award and the Making Difference Awards. They also distributed STOP Trafficking fliers to participants.

The project was jointly implemented with the collaboration of Barangay Maharlika officials and Friendly Care, a local HMO. The project cost of US\$7,000.00 came from SIA which extended a club grant to SI Makati in 2008. SI Makati recommends that the project be replicated for women in other marginalized communities such as the Aetas and other indigenous peoples in Northern Luzon, and to integrate livelihood skills training for these women, as well as such programs that benefit their children.



Medical personnel of Friendly Care provided free check up and consultations



Lectures on reproductive health care were conducted by SI Makati



ANTI-TRAFFICKING AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Soroptimists 2009 celebrating Success!
SIA Finalist - Public Awareness Category

SI Makati mounted an aggressive and continuing Anti-Trafficking Awareness Campaign since the start of the Biennium 2008-2010. The tri-media campaign consists of:

- On-going press publicity releases in nationwide newspapers.
- November 26, 2008: One-hour radio interview over DZAR (on-line media) with a 5 million reach nationwide and 7 to 8 million households reached worldwide.
- December 2, 2008: One-hour TV guesting "Talk to Harry" over Channel 3, Destiny. 3,000 fliers on Anti-Trafficking/rape/violence distributed by SI members in malls, bus terminals, public wet markets, church plazas, schools and in other public places.
- Seminar conducted by SI Makati members and volunteers from the Department of Social Welfare and Development for women in marginalized areas whereby data on trafficking modus operandi of trafficking syndicates were explained, steps on how to prevent children from being victimized were enumerated and where to run for help for emergencies pertinent to trafficking.
- Anti-trafficking sessions with young girls in depressed areas (aged 10-17) whereby participants were informed of children's human rights, life protection skills, who to call for help, etc.
- Members spent a total of 50 member-hours



SI Makati MOA signing with Sr. Sol Perpiñan of the Third World Movement Against Exploitation of Women

DAY CARE CENTER of SI BACOLOD An Impact Project of SI Bacolod City First Place, Governor's Thrust in Basic Literacy

This biennium the governor has focused on three programs, namely: Education, Family Spacing and Breaking the Poverty Cycle. SI Bacolod was awarded first place under the category of Education.

Basic Literacy for children from economically challenged families began ten years ago, upon the initiative of a dedicated educator, Cely Mirano, now President of SI Bacolod. The day care center, aptly called Day Care Center of SI Bacolod was established in Barangay Taculing, Bacolod City, for Kinder and Nursery pupils inside the government compound of the Bacolod City National High School. Tuition, textbooks and uniforms are totally free for these children from impoverished families courtesy of SI Bacolod Foundation.



Recognition Day at the Day Care Center - where many dreams are born

Through the efforts of Soroptimists, led by former SI Bacolod President Prima Inday Pefianco, who sustain the Day Care Center it has become a landmark of pre-school excellence, and was granted 5-Star status by the Department of Social Welfare and Development. The City Government of Bacolod City provides the salary of the teacher. In view of her dedication, qualifications and loyalty, SI Bacolod has appealed to Mayor Evelio Leonardia to convert the teacher's status from casual to permanent. It is an enduring partnership between the city government and the Soroptimist International of Bacolod Foundation, Inc. Many of its preschoolers are now enrolled in different public and private schools in the city, some of whom have landed in the Honor Roll. Certainly, it has established the Soroptimist brand and is a lasting testament to the Soroptimist mission of improving the lives of beneficiaries in the community it serves. This has become a little school where many dreams are born.

Soroptimist Impact Projects 2008-2009

WATERLILY LIVELIHOOD PROJECT A Impact Project of SI Taguig City

The waterlily (water hyacinth) is abundant in the lakeside of city of Taguig, running a stretch of 7.5 km. This seemingly worthless plant clogging the river and waterways is now a thing of value.

SI Taguig City launched an extensive research effort in cooperation with Taguig-based agencies of the Department of Science and Technology, Technology and Skills Development Authority, Department of Trade and Industries and PDDP and the city government in areas of high technology quality control, raw materials treatment and manpower training. Over and above the Club's goal to supply local and foreign markets with waterlily by products, it is focused on high-end clientele. Hence, local designers were tapped to help in product design.



SI Taguig members and participants attend a meeting

Outright exposure and use of public awareness tools such as Swak na Swak TV Show; One Town One Product (OTOP) exhibit at SM Mega Trade Hall are but a few aggressive strategies to capture product niche in the export market.

To date, 616 women and girls are kept busy gathering, weaving bags, home decors, and arts and crafts products to cater to high-end clientele. This is SI Taguig's centerpiece project to challenge the "Breaking the Poverty Cycle Program" of SIPR.



CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION FOR WOMEN IN MINDANAO (CIW) An Impact Project of SI Davao City

Prior to 2007, women offenders in Davao and the rest of Mindanao with prison terms exceeding three years were brought to the National Penitentiary in Muntinlupa to serve out their sentences because of the lack of space and facilities in the local jails. The women inmates suffered the anguish of long separation from their children and family; in many cases, they lost contact altogether.

Because of its desire to alleviate the plight of the female prisoners SI Davao City, led by PFD Partria G. Montemayor, Elizabeth Z. Duterte, Adoracion P. Cruz -Avisado and Sr. Mary Josephne B. Bacaltos, and in partnership with the Women Network Group, approached and convinced the Provincial and Local Governments to rehabilitate an old building in Juan Acenas Sub-Colony, St. Tomas, Davao del Norte for penal purposes. After numerous representations and lengthy follow-ups, their request was granted and the renovation of the building resulted in a comfortable and livable space for female inmates. In September 2007, the Correctional Institution for Women in Mindanao (CIW) was inaugurated, touted to be the only one of its kind outside Metro Manila. It now accepts convicted female prisoners from all over Mindanao.



The renovated building of the Correctional Institution of Mindanao where a holistic program for female prisoners is in place.

From its inception, SI Davao City has played a pivotal role in this landmark project and continues to do so until today. The club has been donating funds for the various needs of the 137 CIW inmates and regularly visits the jail. The inmates have a holistic program, including an adult literacy program recognized by the Department of Education; inter-faith services; and recreation activities. Lectures on prison rules, citizenship and personal hygiene are conducted. Female relatives and children are allowed to sleep over during special occasions. SI Davao also sponsors income generating projects mainly through the provision of raw materials and skills training. With the skills they have learned, some inmates are now employed in the Tagun Agricultural Development Corporation (TADECO).

SI Davao's continuing project upholds the dignity and self-worth of convicted female felons. It would not have been possible without the advocacy and leadership of Soroptimists and its partnership with the local government, the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology and other NGOs in Mindanao who all worked together to provide an atmosphere conducive to the transformation of female prisoners towards their personal rehabilitation and eventual release from prison.

"IBEST AKLAT PAGBASA" A MOTHER AND CHILD EARLY LITERACY PROJECT

An Impact Project of SI Mandaluyong
Second Place, Governor's Thrust in Basic Literacy

SI Mandaluyong's study shows that there is a serious neglect in addressing literacy problems especially among children in public elementary schools because of several reasons, including the lack of resources and facilities and the mother's own preference to prioritize other activities such as gambling and other vices. Thus, the club launched Mental Empowerment of Women and Girls through "iBEST Aklat Pagbasa" - a two-pronged literacy campaign to re-educate disadvantaged mothers and to help their young children develop reading readiness skills. Through this project, SI Mandaluyong sought to demonstrate that it is possible to eliminate, if not totally eradicate, illiteracy not only in depressed areas in Metro Manila but also in remote areas of the country.

Club members ensured that all preparatory arrangements were in place prior to the start of the actual literacy training of mothers and children. These included consultations with local officials; interviews of mothers; selection of venues; procurement of supplies; preparation of lesson plans and visual aids; and the schedule of activities. Two venues were selected, a private school in San Juan and the Dona Basilisa Elementary School in Mandaluyong City. There were 108 mothers and 120 children who participated in the program.



The Mother & Child Early Literacy Program can be replicated by other Soroptimist clubs in their communities.



Pres. Ma Baldus with Kids - Learning how to read and write in a non-stressful environment

Mental Empowerment of Women and Girls through "iBEST Aklat Pagbasa" Mother and Child Early Literacy Project is proactive and gives long term solutions to end poverty and improve the lives of women and girls. The project uses the Body-Brain-Energy Synchronization Technique or the BEST learning approach. This method uses classical music to synchronize both hemispheres of the brain working in harmony with the physical body and the energy within. It aims to teach children to learn "how to learn" reading and writing while enjoying a non-stressful experience

As the project got on the way, the mothers slowly realized the importance of their role as their children's first role model and the most important teacher. The mothers were equipped with knowledge about proper child care and they were made aware of the literacy development of their children. This knowledge developed their self-esteem and self-confidence. The children, 2 1/2 to 5 years old, who participated in the program discovered that learning were more confident and seemed to have a good self-image. Their reading readiness skills were developed providing them with rich learning experiences.

Club members spent six months and Php30,000 run one course of this early literacy program which can be replicated by other Soroptimist clubs in their communities. SI Mandaluyong President Ma. Baldus believes that "by continuously educating the mothers and starting their children early in reading, this gigantic dream of changing the nation and helping women improve their lives can be realized if done collectively. Along we are just one drop but together we are an ocean."

FEDERATION FUNDED PROGRAMS

The Women's Opportunity Awards, Violet Richardson Award and Making a Difference for Women Awards are programs funded by the Soroptimist International of the Americas. The search for awardees begins at the club level. The Making a Difference for Women Awards will be renamed the Ruby Awards commencing July 1, 2009. Awardees and / or their organizations receive cash grants

The Women's Opportunity Awards program is Soroptimist's major project. Through the programs, clubs in 19 countries and territories assist women who provide the primary source of income for their families by giving them the resources they need to improve their education, skills and employment prospects. Started in 1972, the program best exemplifies the aims of the organization. Each year, more than \$1 million is given at various levels of the organization through cash awards. Recipients, many of whom have overcome enormous obstacles including poverty, domestic violence and drug and alcohol abuse, may use the awards to offset any costs associated with their efforts to attain higher education such as books, childcare and transportation. Last year, one of the three SIA finalists was Mispah Evangelio, from an aeta tribe in Aklan Province, who struggled with poverty and discrimination. SIPR's 2009 Women's Opportunity Awardee is *Minda Pascual*, a survivor of rape, trafficking and prostitution. She has three *Amerasian* children. While enrolled in a vocational course at Miriam College Adult Education, she came to know of women's groups that paved the way to her present involvement with victims of trafficking and prostitution. Minda decided to finish high school and she is now enrolled in a course in Social Work. She dreams of finishing her studies so that she can help marginalized women experience healing and recovery.



Minda Pascual, 2009 Region Women's Opportunity Awardee. In the photo are: Leigh Wintz, SIA Executive Director; SIA Federation Director Dulce I. Gozon (partly hidden); Governor Carmen A. Flor; SIA PE Cathy Standiford; Minda Pascual; SI Malabon President Carmen Moreno; Program Chairperson Leticia C. Yap and WOA Chairperson Gloria Bernardo.

The Violet Richardson Award is a recognition program for young women ages 14 to 17 engaged in volunteer action within their communities or schools. The award is given to young women whose activities make the community and the world a better place. They are girls who have identified a problem in their communities and have worked hard to address the problem. Search for awardees may be conducted in schools, local non-profit organizations or other places where girls might volunteer. The Violet Richardson Award is not a scholarship program. It is intended to motivate young girls to become committed volunteers. SIPR's 2009 Violet Richardson Awardee is *Klarra Mae A. Ramos*. Bringing gifts for the aetas who were displaced by the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo was her first experience in helping others. Through the Interact Club of Rotary International, Klarra disseminates information among young people about good health habits, such as eating vegetables for better nutrition and the children can cope better with class work. Klarra also talks on proper hygiene to street children and those who are abused or under difficult circumstances. Klarra's club has partnered with other organizations in socio-civic projects. They have organized lectures on caring for the environment to help prevent flooding and pollution.



2009 Region Violet Richardson Awardee Klarra Mae A. Ramos receives award from PE Cathy Standiford witnessed by SIA Federation Director Dulce I. Gozon and SI Olongapo President Anne Marie Gordon.

The 2009 Region Making a Difference for Women Awardee is Sr. *Teresita C. Feliciano* of the Religious of the Good Shepherd Congregation. Sr. Tess has had a lifelong commitment of helping displaced people - teaching English language skills to Vietnamese refugees prior to their travel to the United States, teaching sustainable livelihood skills to residents in resettlement areas, fighting for the emancipation of farmers. As Director of the Migrant Desk in the Archdiocese of Pampanga, she is now focusing on providing counseling, scholarships and legal aid to the wives and children of migrant workers.



Sr. Teresita C. Feliciano, 2009 Region Making a Difference for Women Awardee, receives her award from Governor Carmen A. Flor. Also in the photo are L-R: SIA Federation Dulce I. Gozon, SIA PE Cathy Standiford, SI Magalang President Flordeliz Feliciano and MADWA Chairperson Lorna C. Silverio

The Making a Difference for Women Awards honor women who work to improve the lives of women and girls through her professional or personal activities. The work of these women helps to promote the issues that are important to Soroptimist. Honorees are ordinary women who worked in extraordinary ways to benefit women and girls. Soroptimist is particularly interested in honoring women who have identified and focused on a need in their communities, especially within the past two years.

SOROPTIMIST LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

By: Ma. Paloma B. Papa, Governor-elect

A new format of officers training was designed for Biennium 2008-2010 in answer to the clamor to reinforce and strengthen Club and District leadership. To effectively respond to the needs of target participants composed of District Directors, District Director Elect, Club Presidents, President Elect, Vice Presidents, Treasurers and Recording & Corresponding Secretaries, a Professional Team was formed to facilitate the training and workshop sessions held at the SIPR office for Metro Manila clubs; out-of-town clubs held training sessions in selected venues. Those who were unable to attend were given the opportunity during the OTS held in Iloilo. For a more fruitful and lively interaction, sessions were conducted per District.

The syllabus allowed not only current but also future officers to gain a better perspective and insight of club operations and to learn skills on problem solving and how to replicate and implement best practices. Intelligent discussions evolved during the workshops as participants took active roles, thus gaining more knowledge and leadership skills on how to manage their respective Club/District with vigor and confidence.

The training sessions stressed a positive approach in pursuing areas that need improvement at the club and district level. In particular, it covered significant areas of the entire SI organization and its linkages such as:

- Organizational Structure and the Evolution of Soroptimist Clubs
- Soroptimist Vision & Mission
- Membership Attributes
- Overview of SIA initiatives
- SIPR identifying projects
- SIA's Thrust on Stop Trafficking and the Renaissance Campaign
- Governor's Thrusts - Reproductive Health (Family Spacing), Basic Literacy and Breaking the Poverty Cycle
- Leadership Patterns - Styles and Impact on Productivity
- Effective Club Management
- Creating Fiscal Management
- Handling and Servicing our Public



The Professional Team comprises GE Ma. Paloma B. Papa (Chairperson); PDD Benita O. Santos (Co Chairperson); PFD Leticia C. Yap (Program Council Chairperson); PDD Ma. Soledad M. Tugade (Region Treasurer); PDD Rosalinda R. Grande (Chairperson, Website & STOP Trafficking); Past Region Secretary Celestina C. Ng (Chairperson, SOLT); PP Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng, (Chairperson, Public Awareness); PDD Fe Amor A. Ilagan (Region Secretary)

SOROPTIMIST AWARDS

SIA CELEBRATING SUCCESS FINALISTS

SI EASTWOOD CITY
SI MAKATI

GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL AWARDS

OUTSTANDING CHAIRPERSONS

Leticia C. Yap, Program
Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng, Public Awareness
Conchita dela Cruz, Dream Raffle
Lorna Silverio, Unsung Women Heroes
Ma. Paloma Papa, Leadership Training Program
Rosalinda R. Grande, Website
Fe Amor Ilagan, Fellowship
Benita O. Santos, Co-Chair, Leadership Training Program
Celestina C. Ng, Chairperson, Soroptimist Orientation and Leadership Training

OUTSTANDING DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Florida O. Marcelo, MM Northwest District
Leonor G. Berroya, MM Southeast District
Lourdes M. Javier, West Central Luzon District

OUTSTANDING MEMBER

Leticia Uy, SI Metro Cabanatuan

OUTSTANDING REGION OFFICER

Ma. Soledad Tugade, Treasurer
Evelyn R. San Buenaventura, Auditor

GOVERNOR'S THRUSTS AWARDEES

Family Spacing - SI Makati
Basic Literacy - SI Bacolod
SI Mandaluyong

TEN (10) OUTSTANDING CLUBS

SI Guagua
SI Bocaue
SI Sta. Maria
SI Pampanga
SI Meycauayan
SI Manila Tourist Belt
SI San Jose del Monte 2
SI Cabanatuan
SI Mandaluyong
SI Malabon

TEN (10) HONORABLE MENTION

SI Antipolo
SI Hope Baguio
SI EDSA Villagers
SI Valenzuela
SI Olongapo
SI San Jose del Monte 1
SI San Rafael
SI Eastwood City
SI Rizal
SI Marilao



**Most Outstanding President
FY 2008-2009
Mary T. Jazul**



Most Outstanding Club FY 2008-2009 - SI Founder Manila



**Most Outstanding Member
Leticia Uy, SI Metro Cabanatuan**



Outstanding DDs with the Council of Advisers L-R: PFD Pery Arkoncel, PFD Letty Yap, PFD Luz Un Ocampo, PFD Dolly Flores, PNP Di Baluyut, PFD Gladys Tiongco, FD Dulce Gozon, Gov. Mimi Flor, DD Lenn Berroya, DD Lou Javier, DD Cora Pedro, DD Flery Marcelo & DD Menchie Martinez

SIPR Identifying Projects



Adopt-a-PNP Women & Children's Desk Awardees



SI San Jose del Monte I Pres. Mercelita Sta. Maria w/ DD Cora Pedro receives trophy for Best in Adopt-a-Barangay

Renaissance Campaign



SI San Rafael Pres. Marivic Vergel de Dios w/ CP Lorna Silverio & DD Menchie Martinez receives the award for Best in Membership



SI Founder Manila Pres. Mary Jazul poses w/ DD Flery Marcelo in receiving the award for Best in Fundraising



DD Girlie Piccio, SI Davao and President Lourdes Mateo, SI Sta. Maria receive for their clubs "Best in Programs" awards



SI Ortigas & Environs Pres. Mariecel Oñate w/ DD Lenn Berroya receives the award for Best in Public Awareness



SI Hope Baguio Pres. Edith Datuin w/ CP Rebecca Domogan receives the award for Best in Public Awareness



President Estrelita S. Hizon of SI Manila Tourist Belt receives the top award for Stop Trafficking of Women & Children Program

from page 1.....why we need women leaders

Women like Violet Richardson Award, whose energy and spirit were admired by all who knew her. At a time when women were barred from membership in service organizations, Violet - an extremely successful professional woman - helped form the very first Soroptimist club and served as its first president. She fought for equal pay for women at a time when equal pay work was rare. And, Violet envisioned an international organization that would make the world a better place for women and girls. Her credo was "it's what you do that counts"

At the time, few shelters existed in Japan, even though abused women desperately needed safe havens. Kotomi helped open a shelter - the first of its kind - on the island of Hokka-a-ido. In 2001, her remarkable work led to the creation of the first law to protect women in Japan from Domestic Violence.

Like many Women's Opportunity Award recipients, Guadalupe Vidales is a domestic violence survivor. Today she holds a Ph.D and ably supports herself and her two children. Guadalupe has never forgotten her past and is now leader herself as she helps many women get out of abusive situations. Why? Because Soroptimist, just like you and me, demonstrate leadership by seeing Guadalupe's potential and helping her achieve it. As you can see from examples set by women like Violet, Cindy, Kotomi and Guadalupe, good leaders share many qualities. These include:

- * Self Awareness * Confidence * Integrity * Clarity of Purpose * The desire to be lifelong learners * The ability to learn from mistakes * An openness to change
- * A willingness to take risks * The power to inspire * The skills to create a vision - and, yes, the skills to communicate that vision to others.

Two essential qualities should be added to this list: humility and courage.

Irena Sendler was a social worker in Poland during World War II. Her job included going in and out of the Warsaw Ghetto, which housed Poland's Jews - Jews who were being systematically shipped out to the Treblinka gas chamber. In 1942, working with the Polish resistance, Irena led an effort to smuggle Jewish children out of the Warsaw Ghetto, placing them with Christian families. She carefully documented each child's information so they might one day be reunited with their families. She placed those documents in a jar and buried it in neighbor's yard.

Irena helped save an astonishing 2,500 Jewish children. Eventually she was caught, imprisoned and brutally tortured. But she never gave up the names of the children she had saved. Nominated for Peace Prize in 2007, Irena said, "I only did what was normal. I could have done more." Courage and Humility

Courage tested in such a horrific way. The point is being leader does take courage because leaders are often required to make unpopular or potentially dangerous decisions.

Women are naturally compassionate. We believe in the power of communication - and we're good at it! We form strong bonds with people. We encourage other women. We give support - and receive support freely. Relationship, the key component of any leadership strategy, are especially important to women. They matter to us. And we have an amazing ability to exert leadership through quiet and informal authority, using the relationships we so carefully nurture.

A recent Pew Research Center study looked at the public's perception of who excels at the top 8 character traits valued in leaders. According to the study, women were rated higher than men in honesty, intelligence, compassion, being outgoing and creativity. Women were rated equal to men in being hardworking and ambitious. Men were only rated higher than women for the trait of being decisive. This shows that women's leadership qualities are becoming more recognized and that's a good thing, particularly in light of the economic and other changes our world is currently experiencing.

We know these truths: Women are strong, women are persistent, and women are courageous.

Philippines Region clubs submitted 27 entries in the 4 areas. And two clubs in your Region have been identified to receive recognition as Region Finalist when I call your club's name, please come up to receive a certificate of appreciation.

In the program area, congratulations to SI Eastwood City for their "Better Access to Clean Water Empowers Women" project. And in Public Awareness to SI Makati for their "Anti-Trafficking Awareness Campaign". To all clubs who submitted an entry to Soroptimists Celebrating Success, thank you for sharing your outstanding projects. Recipients of the region awards will compete for federation awards. One in each area will be given to that club project truly exemplifying a best practice. Federation winners will be announced on July 4 in Chicago, and will be featured in next year's Best for Women magazine. In addition to being able to create projects and programs consistent with their vision, good leaders understand the importance of having sound financial practices and resources. For Soroptimist, this is critical to achieving our mission of improving the lives of women and girls. Members and clubs demonstrate leadership by supporting Soroptimist programs through your generous contributions to the Annual Club Campaign.

Fifty-three clubs in Philippines Region have donated funds from their local fundraising efforts to SIA recognizing that we are an international organization - and when we help one woman, whether she is in our own backyard or across the globe - we help all women.

The following clubs have achieved bronze club status with a contribution of at least \$500 to the Annual Club Campaign. SI Bocaue, SI Caloocan, SI Metro Cabanatuan, SI Manila Tourist Belt. One club in Philippines Region has achieved Silver club status by contributing at least \$750. Congratulations to SI Founder Manila. Finally, there is 1 Gold Club. This club has contributed at least \$1000 to the Annual Club campaign. SI Makati. Let's hear it for all of these clubs - and to all of the clubs who have contributed, even if they haven't reached a recognition level yet! Remember, it's not too late to donate to the 2009 Annual Club campaign. Just be sure your check reaches HQ before May 31.

Just as your region has shown leadership, Soroptimist International, our umbrella organization, has displayed leadership by adopting a new strategic plan. For the first time in Soroptimist's history, the plan narrows our focus to transforming the lives of women and girls - which dovetails beautifully with SIA's own direction.

You know what else women leaders do? They listen to the needs and desires of others. More than 5 years ago our federation listened to the results of some very comprehensive membership/marketing research to identify things that we needed to do to become stronger and more viable as an organization. Because the women leading SIA at the time listened, the Renaissance Campaign, with its focused mission to improve the lives of women and girls was born. Along with many tools and resources to help members and clubs use the four areas of program, membership, fundraising and public awareness to advance our mission at home and abroad.

Today, it is time for SIA to listen again. So we have initiated a new membership/marketing study to get your feedback on how we have been doing since Renaissance Campaign began almost 5 years ago. We will be using the results of this study to determine where Soroptimist should go from here. So, we listening to club presidents and first time attendees through focus groups being facilitated in every Region. In addition to listening to clubs presidents and first time attendees, we are listening to prospective members to understand why they choose to join us in our mission of improving the lives of women and girls or why they chose not to.

We want to listen to each of you through a membership satisfaction survey now available on-line. Please take time to answer the survey. What you tell us will help shape the next phase of the Renaissance Campaign and ensure that Soroptimist retains its vitality, relevance and leadership among volunteer organization. White papers on "Teen Dating Violence," "Women's Heart Health," and "Balancing Work and Family Life" give a voice to these issues from a woman's viewpoint and demonstrate that Soroptimist is an organization that pays attention to and responds to the issues that women and girls face.

Women leaders are also generous. And to tap into that generosity which exist even in difficult economic times we are gearing up our fundraising efforts to include exciting new online donation strategies. We also continue to aggressively reach out to corporate leaders, asking for their financial support. If you have any leads for potential corporate sponsors, please share them with our corporate director, Debra Beach. Our Soroptimist programs distinguish us as a leader in the non-profit world. The WOA, VRA and the MADWA award all celebrate the inherent leadership abilities of women. For many of these women, the honor is both practical and profound. Quite, simply, our awards make the difference between a life well lived and dreams never fully realized.

We are truly fortunate to belong to an organization that values leadership. Why? Well, I firmly believe that I am recognized as a leader in my profession and my community today because of Soroptimist. Now, not everyone wants to be a leader. But everyone can develop leadership skills that contribute to personal and professional success. In our organization you will find women leaders at every age, in every culture and in every neighborhood. We value members like you who are willing to lead, willing to speak up and will to take action on behalf of the women and girls who need our help. Today, they need our help more than ever.

Imagine for a moment what our world would be like if more women were in charge. Would there be more equity and fairness and less discrimination and injustice? Yes. Would we be closer to ending extreme poverty and human suffering in our time? Yes. Would there be more peace in our world? Yes. As Soroptimists, we have the power and the leadership qualities to make our world a better place. What it requires is that we work together and use our individual and collective leadership talents to make it happen. What it requires is a belief that we can do it.

Mary Kay Ash, the founder of Mary Kay Cosmetics, says "if you think you can, you can. And if you think you can't, you're right. I believe with our continued leadership and commitment, Soroptimists CAN make the world a better place, not just for women and girls, but for EVERYONE."



Soroptimists at the opening of the conference with SIA President Elect Cathy Standiford



Early Birds at the Press Conference

from page 1... **Strengthening teams**

SIA President-elect *Catherine Standiford* gave a well-applauded keynote speech on *Why We Need Women Leaders*. She also conducted two focus group discussions for club presidents and first-time attendees to assess current member satisfaction and to elicit comments on how the organization may be further improved. PE Cathy named two clubs as Region Finalists under the new procedures adopted by SIA for the 2009 Soroptimists Celebrating Success! - *SI Eastwood City* for their project *Better Access to Clean Water Empowers Women* and *SI Makati* for their *Anti-Trafficking Awareness Campaign*. For the Annual Club Campaign, PE Cathy recognized the following clubs: Gold - *SI Makati*; Silver - *SI Founder Manila*; and Bronze - *SI Metro Cabanatuan*, *SI Calocan*, *SI Bocaue* and *SI Manila Tourist Belt*.

In her report to the Conference body, Governor Carmen dwelt on the gains of SIPR during her first year in office, particularly, the *Unsung Women Heroes Award*; the partnership forged with the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration to intensify awareness and *stop the trafficking of women and girls*; the enhanced Soroptimist Leadership Training; and the improved financial condition of SIPR due mainly to better fiscal management and the success of the 2008 Dream Raffle. Governor Carmen recounted the havoc that Typhoon Frank brought to islands of Kalibo, Iloilo and Romblon and how Soroptimists responded with the SIA Disaster Assistance grants. She commended the informative and dynamic website and recounted initiatives to foster camaraderie and add vibrancy to the organization through fun activities like talent competitions. Governor Carmen attributed the success of her first year to the cooperation extended by members and the tenacity of her team in pursuing Soroptimist objectives.

The District Directors of SIPR reported on how clubs in their districts attained the Soroptimist mission of improving the lives of women and girls in their respective communities. Projects highlighted the varying needs in local communities and the diverse approaches employed by clubs to respond to those needs.

Five resolutions, including one expressing appreciation for the Conference Hosts, presented to the body were approved. The Region Awardees for Women's Opportunity Awards, Violet Richardson Award and the Making a Difference for Women Awards were honored. There were three workshops for participants: The Joys of Volunteering, Conflict Resolution; and Teams that Shine, facilitated by SIA Executive Director Leigh Wintz, GE ma. Paloma B. Papa, and Charter President of SI Eastwood City Rosalinda R. Grande, respectively. The last in the series of Soroptimist Leadership Training was conducted for the Western Visayas and Mindanao clubs. Members of the Laurel Society and the Sampaguita Society were honored as contributions were sought from new members.

Successful teams reward and motivate exemplary contributions. Capping the Governor's Awards, SI Founder Manila was cited as Most Outstanding Club and Mary T. Jazul as Most Outstanding Club President. Aside from the ten outstanding clubs, another ten clubs made it to the Honorable Mention list. Governor Carmen individually recognized members of her team who have made special contributions as well as clubs who participated and past governors who have lent their support to SIPR endeavors.

The guest speakers were both inspiring and informative. Congresswoman and Charter President of SI San Rafael Lorna C. Silverio presented the SIPR Making a Difference for Women Awardee and appraised the body on the status of the Congressional bill on the Magna Carta for Women. Senator Mar A. Roxas praised Soroptimists for their volunteer service whilst being both mothers and homemakers. Dr. Josette Biyo, the first Asian to receive the Intel Excellence in Teaching Award in 2002, shared her secrets to success in life - hard work, patience, learning new things, sharing one's blessings, living within one's means and trust in God. Dr. Bernadette J. Madrid, Director of the Child Protection Unit of the UP Manila - Phil. General Hospital spoke on abuses committed against children and suggested measures for Soroptimists to adopt. Pampanga Gov. Eddie T. Panlilio expounded on the government's bureaucratic ills. The special numbers performed by SI Boucaue, SI Jolo, SI Ortigas & Environs and Bulacan North District provided participants a break. The fashion show of SI Iloilo members and the performance of the Kabayo Family portrayed the flair and the rich cultural heritage of our hosts.

Indeed, the program packed with highlights and sidelights demonstrated the vivacity and strength of Soroptimist teams in the Philippines. When the glamour and pomp of the event wears out, the esprit de corps of Soroptimists who ensured the success of the Conference will surely be long remembered.

Guest Speakers



Senator Mar A. Roxas



Pampanga Governor Eddie I. Panlilio



Bernadette Madrid



Dr. Josette Biyo

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN FOR AN ANTI-PROSTITUTION LAW

By: Rosalinda R. Grande, Charter President, SI Eastwood

Following the Stop Trafficking Workshop held at MMNED in January 2008, SI Eastwood City joined forces with the Coalition on Anti-Trafficking Against Women - Asia Pacific in an advocacy campaign for the passage of an Anti-Prostitution Bill. We believe that prostitution is not a choice; it is an attempt by prostituted women to survive. Despite society's low regard and harsh treatment of prostitutes, our national policy and constitutional guarantees and the International Human Rights Instruments must apply equally to women in prostitution. Consequently, there can be no valid consent given by the victim exploited in prostitution. Our laws (ref Ra9308 Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003) do not adequately offer protection of the human rights of prostituted women.

SIEC wrote letters to members of the Philippine Senate to advocate for the passage of an Anti-Prostitution Law. They invited other clubs such as SI Alabang, SI Angeles, SI Bataan, SI Congressional, SI Las Piñas, SI Pangasinan, SI Parañaque, SI Nova Centra, SI Marikina Metro and SI Silangan to also write letters. For the past two years, SIEC has also been lobbying at the Senate together with CATW (AP), Bagong Kamalayan, NCRFW and other like-minded organizations. After long follow-ups, Senate Bill 1886 sponsored by Senator Manuel Villar.

On May 19, 2009 the interpellation for Senate Bill 1886 Anti-Prostitution Bill (sponsored by Senator Manuel Villar) was closed. The following day, May 20, 2009, the House version of the Anti-Prostitution Bill was also finalized by the Committee on Revision of Laws. Among others, the bills provide that the consent of the victim exploited in prostitution to the commission of any of the acts shall not in any way exempt the offender from, or mitigate his/her criminal liability. Hence, the express consent of the victim is inconsequential and does not negate the liability of the perpetrator for it is the mere commission of the penalized acts that gives rise to criminal liability.

Joining SIEC on May 19th at the Senate Session Hall were SI Founder Manila and SI Sampaloc. Until we see the bill signed into law, we will continue the campaign on behalf of these voiceless exploited women. We invite other clubs to join us in this endeavor.



At the Senate Session Hall, (L-R) SIFM Pres. Mary J. Jazul, SIS Pres. Carmen Moreno, SIEC PRO Rowena S. Rivera, Sen. Pia Cayetano, STOP Trafficking Chairperson Rosalinda R. Grande, PDD Maripaz Herrera and other Soroptimists.

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF STA. MARIA 170129

BASIC LITERACY MOVEMENT FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS
First Place Renaissance Program

Soroptimist Int'l. Sta. Maria adheres to the principles that an educated populace is an empowered one. To achieve this goal, Si-Sta. Maria undertook enabling and empowering educational programs for the people of Sta. Maria in line with the objective of providing an improved educational capability of the people, particularly woman and girls.

To promote basic literacy among women and girls is an advocated dream of Soroptimist International of Sta. Maria. This is move to empower women populace in the municipality. A well-informed and skilled population of Sta. Maria will help develop its socio-economic life. SI Sta. Maria undertook several educational programs for the people of Sta. Maria, particularly Barangay Poblacion. There is high hope that new horizons for success will be achieved to lift the community from economic crisis and SI Sta. Maria in hope to find a solution for the crisis take the leap to help women and girls in the community.

Seminars, skills training and accreditation Program of Department of Education (DepEd) were offered to inculcate in their minds the principles of self-discipline and self-reliance to improve their lives when we speak of education. Both sexes were given a chance to upgrade their level of education, but SI Sta. Maria had a more focus on girls and even women (solo parents, teenage mothers and girls).

Concerted efforts of SI Sta. Maria, the municipal government and ALS department of DepEd joined hands to help and encourage many of our teenage girls and boys, young and adult women and even married and solo parents to take A & E Program of DepEd under the Alternative Learning System or ALS.

This system is a big factor for all youths and adults who were not able to finish Grade Six or even High School Education. Through a wide campaign by both Soroptimist and DepEd, it was successfully implemented. There are about 38 women and girls enrolled in this kind of schooling held in ALS building. A Mobile Teacher is assigned to teach and conduct meetings and orientation on how they can avail of this program. They have to complete the prescribed number of hours in attendance to be able to qualify for the A & E (Accreditation and Equivalency) test given by the DepEd. Lessons on different subjects are taught and modules are provided for their self learning practice at home. Once they have completed the number of hours (120hrs) attendance in their classes, they are prepared to accomplished application forms for the A & E Test. Incidental expenses like food and transportation allowance and materials used in taking the test were shouldered by the Soroptimist of Sta. Maria and the municipal school board.

Through this program, many of our young people and even adults who were deprived of the basic education have now access to basic literacy that will improve their lives through proper education and in one way or another lift the socio-economic status of the community and they will become useful and upright citizens of the country.



Soroptimist members assisting their clientele (participants) in one of the sessions in the Alternative Learning System Class for women & girls (solo parents) of our adopted barangay Poblacion. Required numbers of hours to complete the course is 120 hours.



SI Sta. Maria soroptimists with SIA President Elect Cathy Standiford

Club & District Projects



DD Carmencita Martinez
Bulacan North District



DD Corazon M. Pedro
Bulacan South District



DD Lourdes M. Javier
West Central Luzon District



SI Bocaue leads cleanup and tree-planting activities in Sitio Partida, Muzon, City of San Jose del Monte last July 24, 2009, with the theme "Reform our lives..... Save the Earth!"



SI Olongapo rehabilitated Soroptimist marker in Cabalan



SI Marilao adopts a PNP WCPD



SI Pampanga - Ms. Lucy Mendoza volunteered to provide Computer Literacy Training for their club members



SI San Miguel - Pres. Nene Saucó at the actual session on Meat Processing at their adopted Barangay in San Miguel, Bulacan



SI Norzagaray initiated a Family Planning Seminar



SI Cabanatuan supports Palayan Crisis Center



SI Tarlac conducted Livelihood & Skills Training Program on sewing, food processing and cosmetology in their adopted barangay Sta. Maria, Tarlac City



SI Pampanga conducts breast feeding program



Club President Mercelita Sta. Maria spearheads the Canal Cleaning efforts of the womenfolk of Towerville, Brgy. Sto. Cristo for the "Cash for Work" Program.



SI San Rafael - Mobile Library in partnership with DEP-ED Alternative Learning System

Club & District Projects



DD Amaryllis T. Torres
MM Northeast District



DD Gloria E. Felipe
MM South District



DD Girlie J. Piccio
Northeastern District



DD Avelina C. Agra
Southern Luzon District



SI Congressional Inducted new members in early June.



SI Albay Magayon Wheelchair Donation



SI Cagayan de Oro conducted a seminar on "STOP TRAFFICKING FOR WOMEN" & "FAMILY PLANNING" at its adopted Barangay in Consolacion, Cagayan de Oro City.



SI Alabang conducted a Teen Dating and Stop Human Trafficking Seminar last Oct. 3, 2008.



SI Las Piñas Monthly Feeding Program in cooperation with Capt. Juliet Ignacio WCPD Las Piñas City feeds 50 children & mothers from adopted Brgy. Talon II, LPC.



SI Tagum regularly conducts an Eye Care Program & Medical Mission.



SI Gumaca Crisis Center



SI Iligan has a Radio Program



SI Quezon City celebrates International Women's Month



SI Lopez adopts Barangay Bebito, Lopez, Quezon

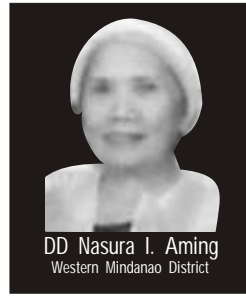
Club & District Projects



DD Mary Milagros A. Hechanova
Western Visayas District



DD Natalia D. Sabado
Southern Mindanao District



DD Nasura I. Aming
Western Mindanao District



DD Annabelle P. Estepa
Northern Luzon District



June 10, 2009 - Livelihood Project Seminar regarding vegetable farming with SI Silay Lyn Gamboa and Liway Javelona together with the "Seedlings Queen" Awardee of Unsung Women Heroes Desiree B. Duran and Lenn Berroya in Barangay Patag, Silay City



March 14, 2009 - Unveiling and Blessing of SI Zamboanga Marker / Signage Adopted Brgy. Sta. Maria, Z.C.



President Elect Linda Caja lectures on Family Planning in Sitio Veraño, Barangay Lantad, Silay City



Mother's Congress on Nutrition "Sa Galing ni Mommy, Siguradong Healthy ang Family" A Joint Project By The Nutrition Foundation and the SI Hope of Baguio. Cobalt Auditorium, Department of Health Compound on October 27, 2008. This event was attended by more than 150 mothers.



SI Koronadal distributed gifts to (30) thirty abused women and girls, residents of the DSWD XII Group Home for Girls located in Zone III, Koronadal City, our adopted Barangay. The event was held at the SI Koronadal Clubhouse.



SI General Santos joins the yearly Alay Lakad for Cancer Awareness and Prevention



SI Pines City conduct organic farming in their adopted barangay



SI Jolo - Cleaning along the streets of Upper San Raymundo Jolo, Sulu



DD Nels Aming and other SI Jolo members giving food stuff to the victims of tidal waves at Port Area Jolo, Sulu in the presence of Brgy. Capt. Elsid Gonzales.

Conference Workshops



TEAMS THAT SHINE

As follow through to the Governor's Biennium Theme of "Building Teams to Live Our Dreams", SIPR conducted a training session on "Teams That Shine" facilitated by Rosalinda R. Grande, CP of SI Eastwood City and a member of the Professional Team of the Officers Leadership Training Program.

The skills building session held on May 9, 2009 at the Sarabia Hotel was attended by 27 Soroptimists. The methodology focused on lecturettes and included a team activity and video clips and drew lessons from the 90/10 Principle of Stephen Covey on the importance of Attitude. Participants enthusiastically shared their team building insights in an interactive, friendly and open atmosphere. The hour spent was productive and fostered camaraderie whilst learning. An action plan was presented by participants to the conference body at the plenary session calling for increased participation among teams and for SIPR to conduct a continuing education program for Soroptimists which may include presentation and other leadership skills. So much was done within one hour; it is truly amazing how much can be accomplished when it doesn't matter who gets the credit!

Briefly, the 5 key points learned during the training session were:

1. Shared Values

Team members look for a values fit within their teams. Without it, members may find it difficult to give the team their best. Team members should participate in establishing the shared values of their team base on their goals. These shared values become the team's code of behavior as they define actions which are acceptable and which are not.

2. Mutual Thrust

In a team, members work in a climate of trust. They are encouraged to openly express opinions, feelings and doubts. Members share important information and ideas. They are fair and willing to be influenced by others. They fulfill promises. Mutual trust is the shared belief that you can depend on each other in order to achieve your common purpose. It fosters enthusiasm ensuring the best performance from everyone.

3. Team's Vision

An inspiring vision provides direction and motivates members to action. To attain the team's objectives and to exceed the satisfaction of all stakeholders, there must be a fiery vision that will guide the team. This vision must be well communicated to everyone. Interaction fuels action.

4. Diversity

Members coming from different backgrounds bring different frames of reference to each situation that creates a spark of excitement and cross-pollination of ideas. Members should seek to leverage, rather than diminish, diversity. Diversity enhances creativity and inspires innovation.

5. Synergy

Teams that build on the core competencies of members develop synergies. Teams that build on each others strengths, rather than weaknesses, make them more productive together than independently. All team members have a place where they can add the most value.

The above 5 key points were underpinned by a discussion on ATTITUDE. Here are some of the lessons imparted:

- 10% of life is made up of what happens to us; 90% is made up of how we react (90/10 principle, Stephen Covey)
- Each one has the ability to put our potentials into action and to get the desired result. But one thing that determines the level of our potential that produces the intensity of activity and predicts the quality of the result we receive, is our attitude.

Conflict Resolutions



One of the well-attended workshops in the last Mid-Biennial Conference held May 8-9, 2009 in Iloilo was the Conflict Resolutions Workshop facilitated by GE Ma. Paloma B. Papa. This was deemed a timely subject for conference participants to acquire a working knowledge of how to handle actual conflict situations in their respective Club /District levels.

Conflict management skills can be learned and acquired-as conflict occurs whenever disagreements exist in a situation over any issue, whether related to substantive issues or those which have emotional undertones. The relevant question is: As a woman leader how well prepared are you to encounter and deal effectively with different levels of conflict in our own setting?

Therefore, it is imperative to know what is (1) Latent (2) Perceived (3) Felt (4) Manifest and (5) aftermath types of conflict. Within our own Soroptimist clubs and districts we oftentimes experience misunderstanding and conflict brought about by personality differences and emotional reactions in interpretation of facts, even in our methods of implementing programs of action within the district or club and in defining our goals. Conflict is inevitable in any organization, and we are not trained to effectively resolve them. That's why we have to consider the following outcomes and Win-Win solutions.

We can be trained on different styles of conflict handling

1. We can downplay the disagreement or find a neutral position
2. Accommodating the other party to have her way; thus we accede to the wishes of the other party by smoothing one's differences to maintain harmony and peace.
3. Seeking partial satisfaction of one another's concerns by "compromising" and trying "acceptable" solutions rather than actual solutions to the problems.
4. In a forceful mode, protagonists work against the wishes of the other party, usually through hard conversations and forceful means. This oftentimes results to a win-lose outcome.

The most ideal, however, is problem solving by addressing the concerns of all parties involved and working through their differences, finding and solving the problems so that everyone gains as a result of the resolution. The key is "consensus" building. Harmony, if sustained, assures stability of clubs.

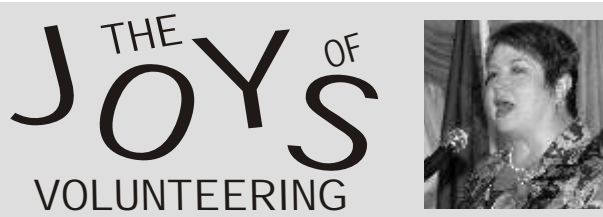
By: GE Paloming B. Papa

- No one can "make us angry". We make ourselves angry when we surrender control of our attitude. What a team member may have done is irrelevant. It merely puts our attitude to a test. If we choose to become hostile, angry or suspicious, then we fail that test. Watch your words!
- If we care about ourselves, we must accept full responsibility for our own feelings. We must strengthen feelings that can show us confidently into a better future.

A positive attitude is person's passport to a better tomorrow. Our attitude is our asset, a treasure of value which we must protect.

Teams that shine use the above learnings, skills and positive attitude to bring out the best in each other!

By: Rosalinda R. Grande



Here is a list of 14 ways that your volunteer work can help you. Remember them to assure yourself that you are experiencing all the joys of volunteering and be able to articulate to others in order to attract new volunteers into your chapter.

1. Volunteer work can help you develop and practice new skills, and gain new knowledge by being exposed to new vistas.
2. Volunteer work can help you keep present work skills current while taking a break to improve education or raise children.
3. While volunteering, you can practice and improve undeveloped skills. No one can fire you with disabled children, teenaged girls, impoverished women?
5. It can help you discover a new interest area or become more knowledgeable about one already identified.
6. Explore and test a potential career field through your volunteer work.
7. It can help you link with a clearly defined career goal.
8. Volunteer work can help you discover other available career areas
9. Through volunteer work you can build a network of community, business and social contacts.
10. Use volunteer work to enhance self-esteem and build self-confidence. You can practice public speaking, keeping books, writing reports, letters.
- 11 Participate in important decisions.
- 12 Improve problem-solving capabilities. This is the backbone of club work - see a need and fill it.
13. Volunteer work allows you to increase qualifications for a civic or political role.
14. Provide leadership opportunities. You know what leadership is don't you? It's the art of leading people astray with confidence.

In our humanitarian pursuits, we have three encompassing possessions; our time, our talent and our treasure. Our time, of course, we cannot keep. Only that which we give to others is not lost. We also cannot keep our talent. We muse use it or we lose it. Our treasure, at last, is not permanent either. Most of us have lived long enough to know that we really keep only that which we give away.

But to maintain your joy in volunteering, there are certain rules you should follow. You may not be aware that our federation president, Alice Wells, recently returned from an international seminar held atop a large mountain. Following a conversation with a burning bush, she returned and has instructed me as Executive Director to issue the following Ten Commandments for Soroptimist club members:

The Lord spake unto the leaders and gave them commandments that shall be set up to govern clubs

1. Thou shalt not sign up for everything that passeth through thine hands. Thou shalt be selective with thine volunteer time lest thou becometh disenchanted.
2. Thou shalt NEVER sign up and not show up lest thy chairman heap iniquity upon the member and the member's children and the children's children to the third and fourth generations.
3. Thou shalt not vote yes on anything that thou hast no intention of supporting.
4. Honor thy chapter's leadership, for even if thou doest not agree with them, they still deserve thy respect.
5. Thou shalt not bear false witness against another member, for thou usually comest out the loser.
6. Thou shalt not present another's ideas as thine own. If thou bringest ideas to club which are new, thou shalt give credit to others where credit is due.
7. Thou shalt not covet another member's man servant, nor her maid servant, nor her gardener, nor her lexis, nor her figure, nor her husband, nor anything that is another member's.
8. Thou shalt not indulge thyself in idle gossip for thou may find thyself the topic of conversation.
9. Thou shalt not make thine telephone into a graven image. If thou hast a gripe, thou shalt air it at thine club meeting.
10. Thou shalt remember thy club meeting day and keep it as an appointment

By: Leigh Wintz, SIA Executive Director

from page 1...conference sidelights

In the meantime, SIPR officers led by Governor Mimi A. Flor, together with SIA President-elect Cathy Standiford and SIA Executive Director Leigh Wintz, made a courtesy call on Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Treñas and Iloilo Province Governor Neil B. Tupas. At the pre-conference board meeting of SIPR held in Hotel del Rio, the Fund Development Council was activated. Nominated and elected as members of the Fund Development Council, tasked with raising funds for SIPR are Lorna Silverio, Dulce Gozon, Linabelle Villarica, Chit dela Cruz and Luz Un Ocampo. Congratulations and Good Luck.

The City Tour gave us a glimpse of Iloilo's glorious past. We saw the palatial homes of the old rich and the once majestic homes of "sugar barons" as they were called once upon a time. Then we went to place where women meticulously embroidered church vestments. We toured the Iloilo Museum. We saw centuries-old churches such as the Jaro Cathedral where the Blessed Mother is said to grow miraculously 1cm every year to her present 6 feet, so her clothes needed a change every so often. One church had all female saints and another one had all male saints. The church with the female saints was the more beautiful and imposing. It was an afternoon well spent.

The heat and fatigue from the tour did not dampen our enthusiasm in attending the Early Bird Dinner held at the famed Nelly's Garden, owned by the family of the late Mariquit Javellana Lopez. SI Iloilo ladies Bombing Co, Val Maravilla and Titit Chua frantically went around to ensure that the unexpectedly large number of attendees were well accommodated. A press conference was arranged by Hermie Villa. As the hosts gave us a tour of the house, heavy rains and thunderous lightning suddenly blacked out the entire property. But that did not stop the affair, no, not at all; the program went on until electricity came back.

The first day's breakfast at the Sarabia Manor proved quite chaotic. The hotel was not ready for the great number of visitors. Service plates ran out of food and were replaced only after a time lag. One could just see the harassed servers and the arched eyebrows of the delegates. Anyway, the fiasco did not happen again. Thereafter, all food served at the conference were kept flowing. The Glamour and Glitters fellowship night held at Punta Villa was so bright that even if the lights went off, it would still be like daylight. Handsome cadets in white regalia escorted the ladies up the stairs. The eyes of PNP Di Baluyut were all lit up in enjoyment at having two cadets as her escorts. Myra Paz Abubakar of Jolo, svelte and tall, glittered all the way to receive the Best Costume Award. Adding to the joyous ambience were the presentations from SI Silay, MMSED and MMNWD. The ballroom dancing that followed was fun. Those who loved to dance stayed up until past midnight. They must have hated Gov. Mimi's wake up call at 5am the next morning! Leave it to the Soroptimist ladies to know how to have a good time.

Recognition Night - the most awaited night - saw bejeweled ladies in different Filipiniana dresses. Leigh and Cathy loved the Filipiniana gowns gifted to them by SIPR. Since it was the third and after so many activities during the two days of the Conference, one would think everybody would be tired. But with SI Iloilo's fashion show and the fantastic mini-concert of the Kabayao Family, it was like watching an event at the Cultural Center. Their music enriched the evening's program. The excitement grew more intense as the Special Awards were given out and the Ten Outstanding clubs and the Most Outstanding Club and Club President were declared.

Everybody wanted to have pictures with SIA guests Cathy Standiford and Leigh Wintz that - this you won't believe - pictures with them were taken even inside the comfort room while the ladies were lined up and awaiting their turns! Both gamely posed and were really accommodating.

Thank you SI Iloilo, led by President Jane Frances Jarantilla, and congratulations for hosting one of the best, if not the best, SIPR Conference!

By: Cely Ng & Dolly Buenafior



Three muses of the night Myra Paz V. Abubakar, Louie Sebastian & Eva Uy w/ escorts above.



Bulacan North District



MM Northwest District



Kabayao Family



MM Southeast District



Mar w/ Marivic Vergel de Dios



SI Jolo



SI Jolo and SI Siasi Members



SI Bocaue



SI Silay



SI Koronadal



SI Kalibo



SI Bacolod

SIPR CALENDAR 2009-2010

JULY

- Governor's Round Table, June 30 - July 2, Chicago Illinois
- Soroptimist Institute Seminar, July 3-4, Westin Michigan, Chicago Illinois
- New President and Treasurer must submit signature cards to their chosen banks.
- Send payment of SIPR dues to Headquarters. Individual membership dues is P1000 / member and Mandatory Club dues is P2,500 / club.
- Finalize plans for the club year
- Conduct SOLT for new members (all-year round)
- Plan for Soroptimist Week (August 25-31) activities
- If clubs failed to remit the SIA dues before end of July, the club must pay the \$100 penalty.
- Charter new clubs and invite new members (all year round)
- Order materials for WOA, VRA, RUBY and Sia Celebrating Success! Club may order forms direct to SIA (free of charge). Ruby and Celebrating Success forms can download from SIA website
- Introduce / continue implementation of programs and club projects

AUGUST

- 1st SIPR Board Meeting - Aug. 7, SIPR Headquarters, Mandaluyong City
- Soroptimist Week - August 25-31
- Soroptimist Peace Day - Birthday of Mariquita S. Castelo - August 31
- If clubs failed to remit the SIA dues before end of August, the club must pay the \$150 penalty
- Districts to coordinate with SIPR on Governor's itinerary for district meetings
- Distribute WOA, VRA, RUBY and Unsung Women Heroes application forms.

SEPTEMBER

- District Meetings commence
- Submit nominees for SIPR Governor-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer
- Ensure all financial obligations are met
- Finalize preparations for United Nations Day celebration.

OCTOBER

- District Meetings continue
- United Nations Day Celebration
- Prepare for Soroptimist Workplace Campaign to End Domestic Violence.
- Start club level application, judging and deliberation of nominees for WOA and VRA and RUBY Award.
- 1st Raffle Draw

NOVEMBER

- Prepare for Human Rights Day Celebration (December 9)
- Soroptimist Workplace Campaign to End Domestic Violence - November 25
- District Meeting continue

DECEMBER

- 2nd SIPR Board Meeting
- SIPR Christmas Party and Grand Raffle Draw
- Human Rights Day Celebration
- Send club donations for SI December 10th President's Appeal to SIA - December 10

JANUARY 2010

- Send entries on SIA Celebrating Success! to SIA
- Send Call to Conference to the 22nd Biennial Conference
- Hold Preliminary meeting of Conference Steering Committee
- Invite Official Visitor from SIA and / or Keynote Speaker
- District-level judging of WOA, VRA nominees
- Submission district winner of WOA, VRA and RUBY

FEBRUARY

- Finalize preparations for SIPR's International Women's Month (March 8) celebration
- Read and discuss the official Call to Conference. Encourage attendance and send in conference registration fees, club souvenir ads, and names of voting delegates to SIPR
- Hold another Conference Steering Committee Meeting
- Region-level judging of WOA, VRA, RUBY and Unsung Women Heroes Winners

MARCH

- Submit Region winner of MOA, VRA, and RUBY Award to SIA
- Submit program Focus Reports to SIA for possible inclusion in the annual Federation program report - March 1
- Hold Recognition Program for Ruby Award winners (club/district level) in observation of International Women's Day
- Soroptimist Leadership Training Seminar
- Submit proposals to Sia on Soroptimist Club Grants for Women & Girls, March 18
- Accomplish and finalize Governor's Awards Entry Forms in coordination with Districts
- Pre-registration of delegates to the 22nd Biennial Conference
- Submit club ads (list of officers and club activity photos) for Souvenir Program of 22nd Biennial Conference.
- Submit Governor's Awards to SIPR - March 31

APRIL

- Discuss Resolutions and/or Amendments to Bylaws to be presented during the Conference
- Finalize itinerary for Conference's Official Visitor/Keynote Speaker - notice to steward
- Hold meetings with Conference host clubs/district. Finalize plans for program activities, workshops, speakers, tokens, etc.
- Deliberate on Governor's Awards and Special Awards

MAY

- Pre Conference Dry Run by Conference Hosts and Region Board
- Soroptimist Leadership Training Seminar
- 22nd Mid-Biennial Conference
- Post Conference Evaluation

JUNE

- Send payment of SIA & SIPR dues to SIPR not later than July 1st.
- Submit Club Award to SIA-June 1
- Install new officers for clubs with one/two-year term
- Facilitate the smooth turn-over of Club materials and documents from outgoing to incoming Club Officers.

*** Events ,dates and venues will be set in due time. Notices will be issued accordingly.**

ADOPT-A-BARANGAY

Amparo J. Araullo, Chairperson, Adopt-a-Barangay

The 2009 Best in Adopt-A-Barangay Award went to a club which excelled in focusing projects that improve the lives of women and girls in local communities.

The Canal Cleaning Project of San Jose del Monte I, in Barangay Sto. Cristo, Towerville is a very commendable project. With this sustainable project, the club started a project that saves the environment and prevents pollution. As the saying goes "Cleanliness is next to Godliness". The project outcomes are: harmony with the environment; a healthier community; empowered women who actively partner with the local government for wider cleaning programs.

This project is very timely with the nationwide campaign of the government against the outbreak of the AH1N1 flu of the Swine flu. The department of Health is seriously advising all communities to go on an extensive cleaning campaign especially in schools, malls and other areas where human traffic is heavy.



Pres. Marcelita Sta. Maria spearheads the Canal Cleaning efforts of the womenfolk of Towerville, Brgy. Sto. Cristo for the "Cash for Work" Program.

ADOPT-A-PNP WOMEN AND CHILDREN PROTECTION DESK

Guia C. Martinez, Chairperson

The PNP Women and Children Protection Desk (WCPD) provides services and protection to women and children who are victims of abuse, violence and gender-based crimes. Since 1994, the Adopt-a-PNP WCPD has become a tool for forging SIPR's enduring partnership with the PNP.



Bohol Summit on Women in Policing

Women police and Soroptimists gathered on September 11-12, 2008 at the Bohol Plaza Hotel, Panglao Island, Bohol for the 5th National Summit on Women in Policing. The Summit was jointly sponsored by the PNP, SIPR and the Friends of PNP Foundation. Around 550 police women and 50 Soroptimists attended the summit. The Summit's theme was **Empowered Women: Capable and Effective Managers of the PNP**; Police Director General Avelino I. Razon delivered the key note address. Other speakers focused on the developments in the field of women policing, design and strategies for systems change, the PNP program on general development and current issues concerning RA 9208 (Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act 2003) and RS 9262 (Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004). Congresswoman Lorna Silverio gave an inspirational talk, while AIM Associate Dean Mario Lopez spoke on "taking stock, moving forward", and Prof. Gertie Tirona spoke on "true empowerment". Atty. Ana Crystal of the Free Legal Assistance Bureau received the most queries during the open forum.



Chief PNP Jesus Versoza and Congresswoman Lorna C. Silverio were guest speakers at opening ceremonies

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE PHILIPPINES REGION (A FOUNDATION), INC.



Atty. Maripaz Tagle - Chua
Chairperson, Laws & Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 01 Series of 2009

RESOLUTION INCREASING THE MEMBERSHIP DUES BY P558.00

WHEREAS, the governance of SIPR needs funds to continue to exist and the be effective;

WHEREAS, except for the P1 annual increase, SIPR has not increased the membership dues since 2002;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that membership dues be increased by P558.00 effective upon approval by the voting delegates during the May 2009 conference

(approved by the SIPR Board of Trustees on July 31, 2008 and by the conference body during the 22nd Mid-Biennial Conference on May 9, 2009, Iloilo City)

RESOLUTION NO. 02 Series of 2008

RESOLUTION MANDATING COMPLIANCE WITH THE TEN STEPS TO CHARTERING A NEW SOROPTIMIST CLUB AS RECOMMENDED BY SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS

WHEREAS, the Region recognizes the importance of chartering new Soroptimist clubs to maintain the vibrancy of the Soroptimist organization;

WHEREAS, proper orientation and education about the responsibilities of Soroptimist membership have to be instilled and inculcated in the new clubs for them to remain strong Soroptimist clubs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in order to create and sustain strong Soroptimist clubs, sponsoring clubs are required to observe the Ten Steps to Chartering a New Soroptimist Club recommended by the Soroptimist International of the Americas and available at its website www.soroptimist.org as follows:

Step One	Enlist a Charter Team
Step Two	Develop a Plan/Determine Areas of Opportunity
Step Three	Create a List of Prospective Members
Step Four	Host a Series of Informational Meetings
Step Five	Follow-up with Prospective Members
Step Six	Host New Club Organizational Meetings
Step Seven	New Club Emerges
Step Eight	Apply for a Charter
Step Nine	Charter Celebration
Step Ten	Nurturing the New Club

(approved by the SIPR Board of Trustees on July 31, 2008 and by the conference body during the 22nd Mid-Biennial Conference on May 9, 2009, Iloilo City)

RESOLUTION NO. 03 Series of 2008

RESOLUTION SETTING THE GUIDELINES IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SURPLUS DERIVED OR LOSS INCURRED IN HOSTING A REGION CONFERENCE

WHEREAS, it has been observed that there have been problems in the manner and distribution of surplus or loss from hosting a Region Conference;

WHEREAS, the Region recognizes the need to set guidelines in the distribution of the surplus or loss from hosting a Region Conference;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that any surplus or loss incurred in hosting a Region Conference shall be distributed in accordance with the following rules:

1. The surplus shall be distributed as follows:

60% to the Host Club/s
40% to the Region

Any surplus derived from the Region Conference shall be distributed within TWO (2) weeks from final liquidation of the accounts and expenses.

2. In case of loss

- a. The Host District/s and Host Club/s do not have to return the FIFTY THOUSAND (50,000.00) seed money given by the Region in case the loss is more than the seed money. However, if the loss is less than the seed money, the balance should be returned to the Region.
- b. Should the loss be more than the seed money, any excess shall be born by the Host District/s and Host Club/s.

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER that the aforesaid guidelines shall take effect after its publication in the SIPR newsletter and written notices sent to all Clubs setting forth the effectivity date.

(approved by the SIPR Board of Trustees on July 31, 2008 and by the conference body during the 22nd Mid-Biennial Conference on May 9, 2009, Iloilo City)

RESOLUTION NO. 04 Series of 2008

RESOLUTION CLARIFYING THE PROCEDURE IN THE DISTRICT JUDGING OF WOA, VRA AND MADWA APPLICANTS CANDIDATES

WHEREAS, it has been observed that the districts do not follow a standard procedure in the district judging of the Women's Opportunity Awards (WOA), the Violet Richardson Award (VRA) and the Making a Difference for Women Award (MADWA) and has resulted in the disqualification of some applicants / candidates;

WHEREAS, there is a need to clarify any confusion resulting from such practice and to standardize the procedure;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in the district judging of the WOA, VRA and MADWA, the following rules shall apply:

1. During the deliberation and judging, the following are required to be present:
 - a. Three (3) credible judges who are not Soroptimists and who are nominated by the Clubs
 - b. The Club Presidents and/or Chairpersons of the Club Committees concerned.
2. The personal appearance of the applicants/candidates is not necessary and their absence cannot be a ground for disqualification;
3. The winners shall be judged only on the basis of the duly completed application forms of the applicants/candidates, with supporting documents.
4. The district activity should be simple.

(approved by the SIPR Board of Trustees on July 31, 2008 and by the conference body during the 22nd Mid-Biennial Conference on May 9, 2009, Iloilo City)

A DIFFERENT ENCOUNTER WITH THE POLICE

The Soroptimist International of the Philippines Region (SIPR) has been designated by the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) as the Representative of Non - Government Organizations (NGOs) in the Recruitment and Promotion Board of police officers. The members of the Board are Police Chief Superintendent Danny Ramon E. Siongco, Chairman; NAPOLCOM Director Jose S. Concepcion, Jr., Vice Chairman and SIPR Public Awareness Chairperson, Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng, Women's/NGO Representative.

The first assignment was to conduct final interviews of Special Action Force (SAF) applicants from different regions in the country. The SAF is the elite but low key unit of the Philippine National Police (PNP). The SAF is envisioned to be a specially trained unit with the most modern equipment and members who are highly motivated and disciplined working in partnership with the community. The headquarters of the SAF is located at Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan, Taguig City. With this premise in mind, the Board started the interview last June 3, 2009.

Before the SAF applicants are presented for final interview, they should have passed the required physical, medical and mental examinations. They must be licensed professionals with a minimum four-year college degree. Other documentary requirements should also be in order. SAF recruitment is done once a year.

In a period of almost three weeks we had interviewed a total of 204 SAF applicants, composed of 169 males and 35 females. The SAF applicants are diversified in educational attainment, personality, communication skills and self projection. Most of them are BS Criminology graduates. It was observed that majority of the SAF applicants was conducted last July 18, 2009. Drug test is the last requirement. NAPOLCOM mandates that the oath of office shall be on July 1, 2009.

Conducting the final interview is a learning experience with a lot of pleasant surprises. It was a discovery of so many things about human nature. It is also a wake-up call. Things we take for granted, others consider as their primary need. Many professionals look up to the police organization as a step towards a higher professional level. After the long hours of personal interviews I realized that the Philippines is not wanting for good and dedicated professionals to serve the country through the police force. **By: Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng, Chairperson, Public Awareness**



Interviewing applicant, Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng Chairperson, Public Awareness
Police Chief Superintendent Danny Ramon E. Siongco and
Chairman Jose S. Concepcion, Jr. Director NAPOLCOM

25TH ANNIVERSARY - A MILESTONE FOR SIMAKATI

The Soroptimist International of Makati, celebrating 25 sterling years of proactive volunteer service, recently held the first of a series of its Silver Jubilee year activities - a fundraising Dinner Dance to rehabilitate the wounded lives of young Filipino girls / victims of trafficking. SI Makati's major thrusts for Biennium 2008-2010 are ANTI-TRAFFICKING and EDUCATION. The Club has memorandum of Agreement with the Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women to fund the rescue and holistic healing of young girls / victims. SI Makati received the SIA Celebrating Success 2008-2009 as the Finalist for Public Awareness Recognition.

SI Makati initiated the establishment of a PNP Women's and Children's Desk in 1993 and won the first SIA Celebrating Success under Human Rights Category

To its credit, the Club has established over 30 Friendship Links with Soroptimist Clubs worldwide. SI Makati co sponsored the chartering of 6 clubs : SI San Juan, SI Parañaque, SI Alabang, SI Mandaluyong, SI Ortigas and Environs, SI Dasmariñas Salcedo & SI Pinili. A major program under taken by SI Makati in 2008-2009 was the "Reproductive Health Program for Muslim Women". This was made possible through a \$7000 grant from the Soroptimist International of the Americas. 300 Muslim Women benefited from the series of seven half-day educational sessions on Reproductive Health with free medical consultations and pap smear tests. All sessions were conducted in Brgy. Maharlika. The *Chairperson Leni Cuesta*, is also the President of an HMO - Friendly Care. SIPR Governor Carmen Flor awarded SI Makati *first place for the Best Impact Program* during the SIPR Conference in Iloilo. SI Makati got Governor's plaque for Excellence and P10,000 cash.

Through 25 years, SI Makati has projected the spirit of Soroptimist, with 14 Presidents from 1984 to 2009 setting the pace in excellence in volunteer work, starting with Charter President Villa *Granada de Guia*, Leonor O' Leary, Teresita B. Choa, Nilda S. Rotor, Carmen A. Flor, Celestina C. Ng, Ligaya L. Tankeh, Rosario Mercader, Yolanda F. Bacani, Elizabeth Cristobal, Evelyn R. San Buenaventura, Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng, Ma. Dolores C. Buenaflor and Clarita T. Ordoñez. *Carmen A. Flor* served as the first Governor from SI Silay.

SI Makati has the distinction of being the First Club that was elevated to the *SIPR Hall of Fame*, and the only one cited as the "Most Outstanding Club for Five Consecutive Years", a leadership position unmatched to this day.

SI Makati is home Club to Soroptimist luminaries - the Region's Charter *Governor, Milagros A. Villazor*; two Region Governors: Teresita B. Choa, Carmen A. Flor; three Region Secretaries: Villa Granada de Guia, Imelda R. Ostrea and Celestina C. Ng, the SIA Federation's First Filipina President Teresita B. Choa.



SI Makati Presidents

SI KALIBO DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAM

SI Kalibo received a US\$20,000.00 grant from the SIA Disaster recovery fund. The fund was utilized to build a women ecology and livelihood center for the purpose of training women victims of typhoon Frank in the age old tradition of weaving of natural fibers. Trainings on the whole process of Abaca Weaving from fiber classification, knotting, warping to weaving of the Abaca fiber into abaca cloth was conducted. After the trainings some women worked in their homes. Six trainees were given capital for weaving. Their produce were bought by Soroptimist International of Kalibo, then sold to loom-weaving firms in Aklan as their raw materials. There were trainees who were employed by the other loom-weaving firms. According to Pres. Billie Calizo-Quimpo, trainings will continue to be conducted, funds to be sourced from the Local Government Unit / Government Agencies who are mandated to promote, and create economic activities from the weaving industry.



The SIK Members and Pres. Billie Calizo-Quimpo with the Contractor Erwin So & Mr. Ramon of LGU Kalibo

Weaving of Abaca fiber will continue since the approach is entrepreneurial. Whatever the trainees will produce, Soroptimist International of Kalibo will sell to loom-weaving firms. Proceeds from the sale of abaca cloth will be used as capital for the next batch of weavers. Souvenir items made of Abaca or Piña fiber is expected to be very popular with tourists. It is interesting to note that Aklan province is host to the number one tourist destination of the Philippines because of Boracay Island, voted by leading tourist magazines as the best tropical beach in the world.

Governor's Round Table: The View from Chicago

Governor-Elect Paloma and I attended the annual Governor's Round Table on June 30 - July 2 held at the Westin Hotel in Chicago this year. This annual event brings together the 28 Region Governors from all the regions of the SIA Federation. The Governors Elect are invited to join this event, every odd numbered years, to prepare them for their assumption to the position of Governor in even numbered years. The event began with cocktails and dinner on the 30th where we socially met the governors from other regions. It was heartwarming to meet the ladies who share the same passion and dedication to the Soroptimist mission of improving the lives of women and girls. The next two days were serious work, where Executive Leigh Wintz, President Alice Wells and President Elect Cathy Standiford took turns in briefing the ladies on the paths we have to take and the projects we have to undertake in achieving the goals of the Renaissance Campaign. SIA has extended the Renaissance Campaign till 2011.

SIA has appealed for more donations to implement various SIA programs notably the fight against prostitution and human trafficking. President Elect Cathy mentioned the cash awards of the "Women's Opportunity Awards", SIA's signature program, given annually to 28 Region winners and finalists, the VRA, the Club Grants and the Disaster Relief Funds. The Philippines alone received a total of \$104,000 US Dollars last year.

SIA has reiterated the need for our members' computer literacy in this day and age. They have provided all club presidents an email address for easier and faster communication. It has been observed that not many clubs have activated those email addresses. SIPR was cited for achieving 100% participation in WOA. SI Makati and SI Founder Manila were recognized as Gold Clubs for having donated 1K USD for the Annual Club Campaign. Clubs given Bronze Certificates are SI Metro Cabanatuan, SI Caloocan and SI Bocaue for having donated 500 US Dollars to the annual club campaign. Let us campaign for more participation in this fundraising event of SIA. At the Recognition Banquet on the last evening, SIPR received a major Renaissance Award, "First Place" in the Public Awareness Category for having worked hard in establishing a Soroptimist Brand in the country. The SIPR delegation was visibly proud. Our congratulations to our Public Awareness Chair, Cherry Tumaneng, our Website chair, Bing Grande, our Unsung Heroes Chair, Lorna Silverio and our SIPR clubs for their support.

We have lost members, disbanded a few clubs last year and did not merit recognition in the membership category. In the coming months (the last few in my term) let us focus our energies towards increasing our membership, chartering new clubs, recruiting committed members who will remain Soroptimists forever. It is very encouraging that in July alone we have inducted more than a hundred new Soroptimists. Let us respond to SIA's call for Soroptimists to spare a few dollars to help in its various forms of assistance extended to women worldwide, including Sierra Leone and Afghanistan.



Gov. Carmen A. Flor receives the Federation Renaissance Award for Public Awareness from SIA Pres. Elect Cathy Standiford



Philippine delegation at the SIA Recognition Banquet in Chicago w/ SIA Executive Director Leigh Wintz in Filipiniana Attire L-R: GE Paloming Papa, IPG Linabelle Villarica, FD Dulce Gozon, Leigh, Gov. Carmen Flor, PFD Letty Yap, PDD Ruth Flores, Pres. Alma Twaño, DD Lou Javier, FDC Minda Garcia

On the Club Matching program, we have received offers of assistance from Western Canada Region and some clubs in Japan who are willing to help clubs with innovative projects but need financial assistance in achieving goals. Let us look into establishing "friendship links" next year. Our SIPR delegation included Immediate Past Governor and incoming Federation Director, Linabelle Villarica, outgoing Federation Director Dulce Gozon, Past SIA President Tes Choa, and Fund Development Council Minda Garcia. GE Paloma Papa, Past Program Chair Ruth Flores, Past Federation Director Letty Ya, DD Lou Javier, President Alma Twano of Guagua attended the Soroptimist Leadership Institute.



A fellowship event Women's Month, March 14, 2009. L-R: Marilee Victorio, SI Alabang, Linda Caja, Gloria de Oca, SI Silay, (3rd place winner Argentine Tango), Gov. Carmen A. Flor, Rowena Lee (1st place winner Argentine Tango), Mary Jazul and Cristy Lee, SI Founder Manila, Rida Aznar, SI Valenzuela. CHAIRPERSON: MARGIE S. VITUG

SIPR Dream Raffle 2009

- First Prize - 1 unit car Toyota Vios 1.3 model 2009
- Second Prize - Four (4) Draws of P 50,000.00 each
- Third Prize - Ten (10) Draws of P 10,000.00 each
- Special Prizes - Round Trip Ticket for two (2) to Hong Kong
Round Trip Ticket for two (2) to Boracay



Agnes Paynor Winner of Toyota Vios, Dream Raffle 2008 poses with DREAM RAFFLE Chair Conchita dela Cruz (center). At right is Agnes in her new car.



The Publication Team

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Ma. Dolores C. Buenaflor | Contributing Photographers |
| Rosalinda R. Grande | Romina Vical |
| Yolanda C. Hernandez | Ma. Dolores Buenaflor |
| Celestina C. Ng | |
| Ma. Paloma B. Papa | Lay-out Artist |
| Ma. Rosario A. Tumaneng | Judy May Jadulco |
| Staff Services | |
| Nerie P. Escoto | |
| Lerma C. Sajor | |



Human Rights Day Celebration
SYMPOSIUM ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH was sponsored by SIPR with speakers Congressman Edcel Lagman, Congresswoman Janette Garin, former Senator Kit Tatad and Bishop Teodoro Bacani on the occasion of Human Rights Day. In photo above, (at extreme right) is Past President Dolly Buenaflor of SI Makati. Family spacing is one of the Governor's Biennium Thrusts. Copies of Reproductive Health Bill No. 5043 were distributed to all those who attended.

THE ROMBLON EXPERIENCE

Out of Disaster came the Blessings
AN SIA FUNDED PROJECT



Soroptimist members of the Romblon Expedition
Naty Agra, Chit dela Cruz, Evelyn San Buenaventura,
Mary Jazul, Mimi Noble & Lerma Sajor
with AFP escorts & Fr. Joey



TIP Trainers
w/ Nerie Escoto

Soroptimist Livelihood Training Center



Natural Disasters have a way of drawing out the best in people. The tragedy that struck the Philippines in June 2008 affirms this perception. Super typhoon Frank hit the Philippines directly causing immense damage and losses in properties and lives especially in the Visayas. To aggravate the situation a passenger ship, the MV Princess of the Stars carrying more than 800 passengers and a cargo of highly toxic chemicals, capsized near the Sibuyan islands of Romblon. The threat of poisonous chemicals contaminating the waters in the vicinity banned fishermen from the area. It meant loss of income to the residents of Barangay Espana, San Fernando, whose principal source of livelihood was fishing. In the face of hopelessness, the people gathered courage to seek help and address the situation. Fr. Joey Valencia, parish priest of Our Lady of Remedies church in San Fernando appealed for assistance to the public through the media. Help started to pour in from government and various sources but it was not enough. Something more should be done.

Meanwhile, back in Manila, two concerned women got interested in the plight of the people of San Fernando. SIPR Auditor Evelyn San Buenaventura and her client-friend Julie Ann Ramos responded to the appeals of Fr. Joey. Through their networks, they get in touch with the parish priest and assessed the situation personally by traveling for 15 hours by boat to reach the remote area. Initially, Evelyn joined her friend in a medical mission to San Fernando but later, realizing the great need of people for support she knew that, being an active Soroptimist herself, it was time to call on the Soroptimists for action to meet the needs of the women and girls of Barangay Espana and their families.



Graduation Day



Computer Literacy Class



Cooking Class

SIKAP KABUHAYAN LIVELIHOOD TRAINING

The construction of the SIPR Multi-Purpose Livelihood Training Center in far off Espana, San Fernando is a great blessing as far as the Soroptimists are concerned. It was built through community efforts, reminiscent of the "bayanihan" way of work which early Filipinos were known for. The completion of the Center was the collaboration of the Catholic Diocese of Romblon, the Philippine Army 51st Engineering Brigade represented by Gen. Jaime Buenaflor then Col. Greg Almirol, the Parish Council, SIPR, local officials, the DepEd and other supportive agencies.

Many times work had to be halted on the construction due to bad weather. The Philippine Army engineers who built the center, free of charge, had to travel far and wide from station to reach the place. Here is a description on how to reach the barangay from Manila. "One has to motor to Batangas Pier, some three hours away from Manila, board the public transport called Roll on-Roll Off or "Ro-Ro" for some ten hours to reach the island of Romblon; then transfer to a smaller boat (pumpboat), to travel for another three hours to Sibuyan, and then proceed by land to Mabini, San Fernando town. Transportation is not readily available, so you may have to wait for sometime at the pier".

The SIPR Livelihood Center is situated within the compound of the church property. The Catholic Diocese of Romblon through Fr. Jojo Flores, Social Action Director, allowed the multi-purpose structure to be built in this area. On May 18-21, 2009, the doors of the newly-built SIPR training center were opened to the women and girls of Barangay Espana for the first Sikap Kabuhayan Livelihood Training sponsored by SIPR in cooperation with the Technological Institute of the Philippines. Mrs. Adelina I. Ranga, head of the Social Community Involvement Program of TIP together with Directors of the Student Personnel Services of Manila and Quezon City campuses, undertook the arduous trip to Romblon with SIPR staff Nerie Escoto.

SIA DISASTER RECOVERY GRANT

SIPR Governor Carmen A. Flor lost no time in meeting the challenge. With the help of Evelyn, a project proposal was prepared and submitted to the Soroptimist International of the Americas Disaster Fund. After a few months a grant of \$20,000 was released. Governor Carmen immediately mobilized a formidable team for the much needed SOROPTIMIST ACTION.

In the meantime, an initial survey of the needs of the residents was made by Fr. Joey and the school principal of España National High School Ms. Remedios Mayor. Their findings: There is a need for livelihood skills training for the women and girls of the barangay. SIPR prepared a training package for the women and girls of San Fernando. First, they tackled the need to enhance the communications technology of the place. The Department of Education had donated ten computers for the school but an instructor was needed to train the students for the task. SIPR got a trainer, Arben Rosas, who handled the computer training class from January to March 2009. Sixty-seven graduated and received their certificates. SIPR also donated a new computer and a printer for the use of the barangay.

Under a Memorandum of Agreement which SIPR penned with Splash Foundation of Valenzuela a five-day training program was also held last February to teach women-participants cosmetology, hair-cutting, manicure-pedicure and foot spa massage. With new-found skills, SIPR hopes that these women could be self-employed or find jobs in local beauty parlors or in more populated places in the province.

Blessing and Turn-Over Rites

At long last, the much awaited date! On May 23, a group from SIPR flew in from Manila and motored to San Fernando to attend the blessing and turn-over of the SIPR Multi-Purpose Hall and Livelihood Training Center. The group was composed of Evelyn San Buenaventura and Mimi Noble of SI Makati, Mary Jazul of SI Founder Manila, Chit dela Cruz, SI Baliuag, Southern Luzon District Director Naty Agra and SIPR staff Lerma Sajor. With the networks established by Naty Agra who is also the President of React and of Chit dela Cruz with the Department of Public Works, SIPR gained more friends and support in Romblon.

The Manila group arrived at San Fernando at 1:00 pm and attended the graduation exercises of 87 participants of the "Sikap Kabuhayan Livelihood Training". Evelyn gave a message and distributed the certificates. The blessing and turn-over rites were attended by San Fernando Mayor Nanette Tansingco, Parish Priest Noel Sixon, President of the Parish Council Domingo Marin and other local officials and guests.

What Lies Ahead

With the training of the Barangay Espana women and girls in place and a multi-purpose center constructed for them, what is next? The sustainability of a project is very important. The graduates of the training program have already formed a group and elected their officers to continue what they started through a cooperative. There are also plans to seek new partners who could help San Fernando in other productive ways. SIPR is also looking into micro-financing. Although it might not be possible to organize a Soroptimist club in San Fernando because of economic reasons, a club could be chartered in the capital town of Romblon through the help of its women leaders. It may truly be a challenge to do this, but Soroptimists will always find a way to make the impossible possible. And of course, there is the Romblon experience to attest to this.

By: Yolanda Canseco Hernandez

Improving the Lives of Women and Girls