

*Soroptimist
International of
Willimantic*

1966-2003

*37 Years
of
Women Helping Women*



A Heritage of Commitment

HISTORY of SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

by

Terry Case

Almost simultaneously in three areas of the world, America, Great Britain and on the European Continent, an idea was germinating to start a Service club for women in Business and the Professions. What was the catalyst that brought the idea into being? World War I with its shortage of male labor and the need to enlist all available into military services opened the door for women into business and the professions. Post-war years with its prosperity gave impetus to the idea. The movement had begun years earlier — the Bloomer girls met in 1843 in Seneca Falls, N.Y. They drew up a “Declaration of Rights for Women” but were unable to lift the restrictions of the right to higher education and the right to vote. Similarly the British Suffragettes led by Mrs. Emmeline Parkhurst challenged Englishmen to end exclusion of women. The parades and spectacular tactics of the Suffragettes led to suppression as well as laughter and no change in status.

But the post-war years brought changes. 1918 - 1920 saw women achieve the right to vote in Belgium, The Netherlands, Germany, Canada, the United States — and if you were over 30 years of age — Great Britain.

So it was in 1921, when Mr. Stuart Morrow was knocking on the door of the Secretarial school in Oakland, California. Mr. Morrow was a professional organizer of men’s Service clubs, including Rotary, which had been founded in 1905. Much to his surprise, the head of the school was a woman. The result of his conversation with Mrs. Adelaide Goddard led Mr. Morrow to stop organizing men and organize women’s Service clubs based on vocation. After 6 months of research and meetings, the first Soroptimist Club was chartered in Oakland, California in October of 1921.

The name “Soroptimist” was coined from the Latin word “Soro”, meaning sister, and “Optima”, meaning best. Thus, Soroptimist has been interpreted as “the best for women”. As stated in the Constitution of the Oakland Club, the purpose of Soroptimist was:

“To foster the ideal of service as the basis of all worthy enterprises and to increase the efficiency of its members in the pursuit of their occupations by broadening their interests in the social, business, and civic affairs of the community through an association of women representing diverse occupations.”

Who were the 80 members of that first Soroptimist Club? The group included women in various branches of the medical profession, a lawyer, dry goods business, foods, finance, real estate, education, publishing, the arts, and even a railroad president.

Meanwhile in England in 1920, women of different vocations had come together in Bristol with the idea of a women's Rotary Club. The name "Venture" was adopted as being appropriate. Their motto was "Looking Forward".

The first Soroptimist Club in Great Britain was founded in London in 1924 by Mr. Morrow. By 1929 the Venture Clubs in Great Britain were aware of the Soroptimists and on June 2, 1930, the 11 Venture Clubs and the Soroptimist Clubs united, taking the Soroptimist name and the Venture motto.

The first club in Europe had been founded by Mr. Morrow in Paris. It was difficult to organize. Remember, French women were not given the vote until after World War II. It was largely through the efforts of the amazing Dr. Suzanne Noel that the Paris club came into being in 1924. She was a plastic surgeon. She traveled extensively, promoting Soroptimism and the cause of women wherever she went. She organized the first club in the Orient in Peking, China – as well as many others. She advertised the issue of the Frenchmen versus Women's Rights by wearing a button on her hat that read, "I want to vote".

With Mr. Morrow's agreement the 10 Pacific Coast clubs met in Oakland in 1926 with a plan to form a Federation. The powers of the assembly were ambiguous in view of the ownership of the operation by Mr. Morrow. Don't you know that was some kind of discussion that brought the final decision to negotiate with him for control! Stuart Morrow finally agreed to sell all rights, title and interest in the same "Soroptimist" and all rights to the corporation for \$5500.00 cash. With 1927 buying power it was a great deal of money. He had been collecting a portion of the initiation fees. He was then 71 years old and lived for ten more years. He also agreed not to organize women's clubs for 20 years. While 8 clubs underwrote the purchase, all clubs, including those in Great Britain and Europe, contributed.

Soroptimists were extending throughout the world. By the first International meeting held in Washington in June 1928, there were 16 clubs in America, 1 in Canada, 5 in England, 3 in Scotland, and 3 in Europe. This meeting laid the groundwork for future growth. Federation of the Americas and the Federation of Great Britain and European Clubs were to make up Soroptimist International.

The Soroptimist International Constitution was drawn up and approved. The emblem was designed by the Oakland Club members.

Today we have 4 Federations. The Federations meet in Convention every 2 years and Soroptimist International meets every 4 years.



HISTORY OF SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT

CHARTERED MARCH 26, 1966

DEDICATED TO ALICE DARLING

PAST GOVERNOR, EXTENSION CHAIRPERSON, AND CLUB ORGANIZER

THE ROAD AHEAD

Have you ever stood at the foot of a high hill and seen the road winding up to the top? How steep it looked - how long - how hard to climb? But as you traveled upward it seemed to straighten out and you arrived at the top thinking it wasn't such a hard road after all.

Such was our experience working with Alice Darling, who was appointed as extension chairperson by Mary K. Connors, Governor of the New England region.

Each year we stand at the foot of another high hill to seek out broader horizons of service, and realize the need of courage and vision to carry on if we are to give substance to our purpose and meaning to the significance of Soroptimism for the "Road Ahead".

In the fall of 1965, Alice Darling and a small group of women worked together to formulate plans for chartering a Soroptimist Club in Willimantic. We reviewed eighty names, and sent invitations to these business and professional women to meet with us at the Nathan Hale Hotel, for the purpose of establishing an affiliated branch of the SIA (Soroptimist International of the Americas) in Willimantic. Two such meetings were held with Alice Darling explaining the aims and objectives of the Soroptimist Clubs.

By the January 28th organizational meeting, we had 22 eligible women. Eighteen is required to charter. The nominating committee was appointed by Terry Case.

Temporary Chairs were: Marjorie Thompson, Laurie Hauschild and Gladys Perfetto.

At the February meeting, the following slate of officers were presented for the ensuing year: President, Terry Case; Vice President, Joyce Sands; Corresponding Secretary, Janice Clarke; Recording Secretary, Helen Gurnack; Members at Large were Lillian Ahern and M. Phyllis Blair.

Our Charter night on March 26th, 1966 was a memorable evening with about eighty people in attendance.

All of the New England Regional Board was present with the exception of one. Many of the New England Regional Clubs were represented; and a representative from each of the local men's service Organizations. The Mayor and First Selectman were guests and the Rev. L. Linden gave the invocation. Several Lions Club members attended and presented us with a floral centerpiece for the head table.

Our New England Regional Governor, Mary K. Connors, presented the Present with the Charter. The Hartford Club, our sponsoring club presented us with our President's pin. Lower Connecticut River Valley gave us our Guest Book. The Boston Club presented our Scrap Book and the Manchester Club our Gavel. The Middletown club, who worked so diligently with us during the organizing, furnished corsages and flowers for the sub-head tables. We received several monetary gifts, telegrams and congratulatory letters from Federation Officers and governors of other regions.

Our Federation President, Ethel Lord in her congratulatory letter added, "I don't know what your destiny will be, but the only ones among you who will find happiness are those who have sought and found a way to serve". (Dr. Sweitzer)

The Seoul, Korea Club was chartered on this same night and a letter was sent to them from our club expressing success and good wishes in all their future endeavors. A charming letter in return from President-Elect, Mrs. Chinge K. Cook thanking us for "the warmth of fellowship from your kind letter which was very encouraging. Thanks for your good wishes and we look forward to many years of association with your club". We had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Cook at the Federation Convention in Boston in 1976.

President Terry Case - 1966-68

In April of 1966, several members attended the New England Regional Conference at the Sheraton Hotel in Boston. It was a great experience for us, meeting other Soroptimists, making new friends and learning about their charitable endeavors and their Ways and Means Projects. In June, we held an Antique Show and Flea Market on the grounds of the Armory. We had barbecued chicken, salads, home baked goods and pies. We netted \$500. The Fall brought our sale of handcrafted goods made at our workshops. This was followed by a "Snow Ball Formal" dinner dance held at the Elks home. These two projects earned us \$1000.

In June of 1967 we joined with Lower Ct. River Valley and South Eastern Connecticut clubs for our combined installation. Our special quest speaker was Ella Grasso, the CT Secretary of State who spoke on the "Importance of Women in Public Life".

The following is a list of our first few years' projects: Gavel to the new Glastonbury club; Gift of money to the new Venture Club of Keene, N.H.; Contributed to Founders Week Fund; Toys and gifts to the Salvation Army; Participation in the Regional \$2000 Medical Scholarship; Sale of dresses and tote bags; Monetary gift to the winner of the Youth Citizenship Award and a gift to the runner-up. A club member served as a liaison between our club and the Willimantic Beautification Commission; Campership to the Willimantic Association for Retarded Children for their day camp; Mailed 760 follow-up letters for the Easter Seal drive; Supplied fourteen Girl Scout manuals to the Library and Scout leaders. A Polaroid Camera with flash attachments and film were presented to the Red Cross to be used in conjunctions with their "Messages From Home" tape recordings. Two YMCA memberships for underprivileged children and a contribution was made to the "Save The Children Federation" during the Western States blizzard emergency.

Three large cartons of good used clothing were shipped to Father Paul Jean in Peru for a poor parish. Father Jean was a former resident of Willimantic. A Hat Fashion Show and Tea at the Nathan Hale Hotel and \$190 given to the Soroptimist Foundation, an individual earned project by each member. Participated in "Heart Bowling Week" collecting contributions.

Alice Jordan and Terry Case attended the Soroptimist International Convention in July, 1967 in Toronto, and the New England Soroptimist served as hostesses for the New England breakfast. We wore lovely pilgrim costumes, complete with bonnets and white aprons. Joyce Sands and Gloria Geno attended the Federation Convention in Atlantic City in July 1968.

It was voted to send a Farm animal to the 4th Program of Korea, under the American Korean Foundation. This project was instituted after the Korean War. Our donation of \$25 paid for a pig, that we affectionately called "Willy" from Willimantic. We were informed that the gift of one pig to a Korean family would increase their income by \$80 to \$450 a year.

President Laurie Hansen - 1968-69

Former U.S. Representative, Chase Going Woodhouse was a guest speaker at our 1968-69 installation.

A check for \$337 to the YMCA for a six burner stove to be used for their cooking classes. The library exhibits, by three of our very talented members had been well received by the community through articles in the local newspaper.

Plans are being formulated for the sponsorship of a Venture Club, and the Venture Governor and Regional Secretary visited with us and both spoke to a group of young women. A cash award of \$100 was given to the YCA winner whose application was sent to the regional committee and \$25 each to the other contestants. Awards will be presented to the various schools at graduation time. Publicity was released on the \$2000 Medical Scholarship for a woman medical student. This scholarship was sponsored by our N.E. Clubs.

A Soroptimist pin was presented to Mrs. Maria Bankerckhoven, of Brugge, Belgium, a Soroptimist who was visiting her daughter in Storrs. Both were invited to be our dinner guests at a beautiful International Goodwill and Understanding event.

Once again at Xmas, we adopted a needy family with several children, each getting several toys and clothing. We were interested in helping the Historical Society acquire a beautiful old stone house that has much to do with the history of Willimantic. This building is now a museum called the Jillson House.

The Christmas sale of hand crafted articles was profitable and the workshops were most enjoyable. An afghan was also raffled and later on a Tupperware Party was profitable and fun.

President Alice Jordon – 1969-70

Our Lt. Governor installed the officers. Several of the *Soroptimisters* were present, plus members and guests. The fall conference was held at the Farragut Inn, Rye Beach, NH, with SFA President Elect Katherine Stinson as our special guest. We had fine accommodations and OH! those Lobsters! A special committee was established to assist with plans for the 50th anniversary of Soroptimist. Venture plans are proceeding and to date we have 18 interested women. We held a Barn Bash and dinner at a member's barn. A "Personal Project" was started for each member to earn at least \$15 for our general fund. We earned this money by selling hand made items, baked items, held a Sara Coventry Jewelry party, etc.

Special stairs were given to the Windham Community Memorial Hospital for their Physical Therapy Department at a cost of \$300. Member Lil Ahern was delighted with the stairs, as she is head of this department.

At the SFA Board meeting held in Philadelphia in July 1969, action was taken to approve a Golden Jubilee Project, a float in the Tournament of Roses Parade in 1971. A voluntary contribution of \$1.00 or more per member was suggested. The cost of the float was estimated at about \$15,000 to \$20,000 (The actual cost was over \$30,000).

Presentation of a Soroptimist Banner at our Oct.'69 meeting was given by our first three presidents: Terry Case, Laurie Hansen and Alice Jordon.

Ditty bags were made for our Vietnam Servicemen, which consisted of socks, razor blades, pens, stationary, paperbacks, candy and gum. This was sponsored by the Red Cross. We attempted through our local newspapers to encourage other service clubs to participate. It was well received. More on "Personal Projects": a knit sweater raffle, a member entertained the members at her expense in her home and all proceeds went to the club. A member sold a piece of jewelry and another raffled a baby carriage, robe and afghan.

On 12-29-69 we announced our petition to the Venture Council of the Americas requesting a Charter for the Venture Club of Willimantic. The young women have elected their officers and are proceeding with plans for their Charter night.

The club entertained two foreign students from Thailand and New Zealand. Both showed colorful slides and spoke to us about their country. They were two delightful people.

At the Spring conference in April, our Federation President, Ethel Lord announced that the 1-84 coupon idea carried out by our club in a newspaper ad, be presented at the St. Louis Federation convention in July of 1970, as one of the three outstanding Public Affairs Projects. Joyce Sands and Terry Case motored to St. Louis and Terry presented the project with visual aids. At this same convention, Ethel Lord announced that the President-elect of Soroptimist International "is Ethel Lord", and added "How about that!" her favorite expression.

President Marge Bernard - 1970-71

Our 1970-71 President Marge Bernard met with our Mayor Fred E. Noel, Jr. to proclaim the week of October 3rd to the 9th as "Soroptimist Week". A great article with president Marge and the Mayor signing the proclamation appeared in our local newspaper, along with our activities. Our club earned the Golden Jubilee certificate for Outstanding Achievements during the 50th anniversary year. Our one big Jubilee project to the Mercy Ship, S.S. Hope, were funds to inoculate 500 children for a lifetime against Whooping Cough, Diphtheria and Polio.

President Lillian Ahern - 1971-72

Member Ethel Rice of the Radio Station WILI spoke of having a "Soroptimist Saturday" in March to coincide with our sixth anniversary. Members will sell air-time Ads and all proceeds will go to the club toward our charitable endeavors. This was taken on by the clubs as an ongoing Ways and Means project each year to the present time.

Katherine Stinson was elected SFA President at the St. Louis Convention. We had as our guest speaker, Astronaut John L. Swigert, Jr. of the Apollo 13 crew. Katherine has been connected with NASA Space Program since its inception and is a member of the Federal Aviation Administration in Washington, D.C. Katherine, whose idol was Amelia Earheart, met Amelia and exclaimed she was very interested in learning how to fly. Amelia responded "it isn't enough to just learn to fly a plane, you have to learn what makes it fly". The distinguished Alumnus Award was bestowed by the Engineering School faculty, upon North Carolinas States foremost woman engineer, Katherine Stinson.

President Gloria Geno – 1972-73

President Gloria Geno, in 1973-73 had a Xmas tree raffle. We learned Mouth-to-Mouth Resuscitation on a training mannequin sponsored by the CT Light and Power Co. Sale of our glove business is booming. A case of Instant Coffee was given to the Perception House and toys and gifts to the Salvation Army for needy children. Radio ads under way and a May dinner dance scheduled. Our program meeting given by member Eleanor McQuire's topic was "Viet-Nam". We gave books and paperbacks for Eastern Connecticut College's Book Sale. We had a very interesting educational quiz by Barbara Shay.

Ethel Rice gave an interesting talk on her trip to Barbados. She was invited, along with her husband Herb, to be the dinner guests of the Barbados Soroptimist Club. Their big project was raising funds for a home for the elderly retarded. Our club was pleased to send them a donation.

President Gloria Geno – 1973-74

Our club was hostess for the Saturday Night Banquet at conference. Our guest from SFA headquarters in Philadelphia was Valerie Levitan, Executive Director of SFA. She presented slides of the headquarters and staff.

We rang the bell for the Salvation Army Kettle Drive. We visited the Eastern Connecticut Planetarium and Professor Gene Moore gave an excellent talk and demonstration. A dinner meeting in the faculty dining room preceded the program.

Our YCA winner was Anne Aronson of Coventry, CT. Conference was held in New Port R.I. and a great time was had visiting the stately homes and the Great Gatsby look. Our Soroptimist Saturday netted \$360. and Gloria Morris, member of the Commission of Special Services spoke of the New CT Lottery.

President Joyce Sands – 1974-75

An Audiometer (Hearing Testing Machine) was given to the Mansfield State Training School at a cost of \$480. and an EEG machine to the Hospital. A magazine cart was given to the Eastford Library and one is being considered for our local Hospital. We gave 4 Camper ships and a \$100 contribution to AFS. We collected toys and gifts for the youngsters serviced by the Salvation Army. We are selling the felt decorated Xmas door knobs covers as we did last Xmas, and expect to sell at least one gross, plus the Corning Collection Series of Glass Xmas ornaments.

President Mary Jezierski – 1975-76 and 1976-77

This was a memorable year for all in the Federation of the Americas. The New England Region hosted the convention and all worked for two or three years on plans and preparations for this bi-centennial convention held at the Sheraton Hotel in Boston, MA. The "Yankee Peddler" shop sold donated home made and hand crafted goods and all proceeds went to the Soroptimist Endowment Fund.

Our club donations were given to the International Farm Youth Exchange, The American Field Service, Save The Children Foundation and the Guatemala Relief Fund. At the Convention, we attended work shops, served in numerous capacities and the delegates attended the business sessions. We were hoping that our Soroptimist Foundation would reach the \$1,000,000 goal by the '76 Convention. It was attained in July of '78. Our charitable donations of \$1324. went to 22 appeals plus a Wheelchair for Pediatrics for the Hospital and also participated in a Phone-A-Thon for them, Bell ringing for the Salvation Army and a Tape Recorder and Sharp Memo Writer for the Mansfield Training School both used in the Therapy Department.

President Marge Green – 1977-78

At the Portland, ME Conference in 1977, we became a newly formed region! We merged with the Maritime Region and lost our status as the “New England Region”. We became the one and only International Region. We have been and will continue to strengthen within our own Federation that spirit of togetherness within our organization that demonstrates that National boundaries and personal differences can be easily surmounted for all in the service of mankind.

President Rose Ferreri - 1978-79

Our theme for the “Year of the Child” was “Working together Works”. We worked together to sponsor many child abuse programs and supported a needy family with three children at Christmas by buying them clothes, toys, and a family dinner. We donated a child’s wheelchair to Windham Hospital. We collected Toys for needy Children and rang the bell for the Salvation Army.

We chaired the spring conference fundraising event in Burlington Vermont. We put on a raffle with 8 prizes with a mini vacation as the top prize. Governor Marian Irwin was very pleased that we raised \$345.

I was appointed “Member at Large on the State Board. In February while on a brief vacation in Pompano Beach I read about a Soroptimist club that was having a re-organizational meeting inviting new members. I attended as a guest to answer their questions about fundraising and our club activities. When I explained our WILI fundraiser they were excited about starting a similar program because a member was an owner of a radio and television station. Terry Case got involved in helping them. It was a very successful year for our club.

President Betty Macky – 1979-80

We continued our fundraising event with WILI and rang the bells for the Salvation Army. The club members worked very hard to support the many service objectives throughout the year. One of the projects was helping a needy family at Christmas with food, toys and clothes.

President Gladys Forryan - 1980-81

A total of \$1324 was disbursed for the following appeals and service objectives: American cancer Society, Salvation Army Christmas Fund, Italian Earthquake Fund, YMCA Little Pal Program, YCA, Coffee Hour for the Windham Community Memorial Hospital, TAP Award, Windham-Tolland 4H Campership Fund, Windham County 4H Foundation Fund (Building Fund), Red Cross, Willimantic Historical Society, Willimantic Assoc. for Retarded Children, Wheelchair for Pediatrics (W.C.M. Hospital), Job Services for Seniors, Barbados Building Project, Fiji Project (water wells for women), Project Independence, UNICEF, Cassette Tape Recorder for Mansfield Training School (Speech Therapy Dept.), Sharp Memo Writer for Mansfield Training School Speech Therapy Dept., McSweeney Senior Center, Participation in a Phone-A-Thon for the Hospital.

President Elna Daniels – 1981-82

We had a very good year with many new projects. We were hosts of the Fall Workshop. As usual, we sent our yearly contribution for the Medical Scholarship. We dressed dolls for the Salvation Army Christmas giving. Those that were especially lovely were of bride dolls, dressed by Ida Anatti. We had a Flea Market and gave financial aid to the Episcopal Soup Kitchen. A contribution was sent to the Endowment Fund as a Memorial gift for Ann Saba. We served as hostesses for the Jillson House Museum and assembled personal toiletry kits for the residents staying at the Battered Women’s Shelter. Our regional TAP Award winner, Melissa Dunton received \$1250, which greatly pleased the club. We addressed and stuffed envelopes in place of telephoning for contributions for the Hospital. A donation to the International Project in Barbados, to the International Drinking Water Supply, the Cancer Society, the 4H Club, \$200, the Soup Kitchen and held our WILI ads. We contributed \$200 for a Wheelchair for a girl in Willimantic. The Little League Baseball Team sponsored by our Club won third place in the finals and we presented them with a trophy.

President Laura Potvin – 1982-83

We had a very busy and profitable year. The club participated in a Fall Home Products Show, netting \$313.50. We rang the Bells for the Salvation Army Kettles and the TAP and YCA awards. Under IGU, we entertained Saffa Hegagy from Egypt. Our WILL ads enriched our coffers by \$960, and a raffle netting \$430. In August of '83, President Laura and past President Elna Daniels attended the International Convention in Istanbul, Turkey. They also spent a week in Israel and a week in Greece. A Personal Sacrifice Day, a Personal Appeal by International President Catherine Salts amounted to \$60. and our candy sale netted \$240. The Soroptimist Road Signs are in. A guest speaker Rohanna Sentore from Indonesia and another, Lorna Cameron from Melbourne, Australia, who is active in Women's affairs. We contributed items of food for the Soup Kitchen. Our President Laura participated in a Salvation Army Swim-A-Cross and raised \$127.50 for her 50 laps \$738 given to International and Community Appeals in the 1982-83 term and \$1293 for the 1983-84 appeals.

President Laura Potvin - Second Term - 1983-84

The term was equally busy and profitable. Once again, the Home and Product Show, attended and Open House at the newly renovated Half Way House for the Retarded to which the club had sent a cash donation. Again, we rang the bell for the Salvation Army. The YCA winner and runner up were our dinner guests, and were presented with certificates of \$100 and \$50 respectively. The TAP winner was invited to dinner and presented with a certificate and \$15.

Ways and Means raised \$2,592.90. Four International Projects received donations, plus our Foundation and Founders Pennies, ten Community Health Societies, Camperships and the YMCA.

President Marion Schultheiss – 1984-85

We participated in the Home Product Show, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce in August. At the Show, we raffled a \$25 Money Tree, a Food Basket and sold other items, which netted us \$916.25 At a program meeting, Edward Jezierski, a Finder of Lost Heirs, gave a very interesting talk.

Workshops at the Spring Conference in Worcester were well attended. Guest speaker Patricia Hubbard spoke of "Family Problems and Abused Elderly". Once again, we rang the Bell for the Salvation Army, gave a \$199 check to the 4H Building Fund and \$100 to the ADA. We again sold Ads for the WILL Radio Soroptimist Saturday. We gave a baby gift to member Ellen Jo for her new baby. Eight new members were inducted and we celebrated our 19th anniversary. We sold chocolate bars with our name "Soroptimist" on it.

Our TAP winner was Marion Green. Steve Agbow and wife from Western Africa told of their different tribes and customs.

A trophy was given to each YMCA Little Pals Baseball player plus a \$100 to the club. We contributed to the Soup Kitchen, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Dial-A-Ride, and \$50 to UNICEF. Speaker Diane Collins, spoke of the "Wish Come True" organizations and was given a gift of \$100.

There were five new clubs established in New Hampshire. What a tremendous undertaking.

President Marion Schultheiss - Second Term - 1985-86

The chamber of Commerce Product Show netted the club \$673.75. We gave a check of \$25 to the Salvation Army, and a Thanksgiving Basket to the WIC (Women, Infants and Children), for the Xmas holidays. \$50 was sent to the Earthquake Fund for the Mexican Disaster, a donation of \$250 for Camp Rising Sun, and a gift for the Dial-A-Ride. In March, we had the pleasure of having our Governor, Joan Ferguson as our guest. Member Elna Daniels gave a history of our Soroptimist Club during a WILL radio show. Our WILL ads netted us \$780. Our YCA winners, Mary Ellen McQuire and Holly Gruge and parents were our guests for dinner.

A plaque was given to WILL for donating air time for these many years. Both Colin Rice and his wife attended our installation.

President Jerry Petrus – 1986-87

Many Ways and Means projects were carried out. We participated in the Home Product Show sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, Candy Sale, Tag Sale, Fashion Show, Raffles, Bake Sale, Card Parties, Dinner Parties in members homes proceeds to the club.

A donation was given to the “Human Rights and Soroptimist Day Appeal for the Destitute Women of the World”.

A plaque was presented to member Marion Schultheiss. The TAP Award winner was Susan LeBonte, a UCONN student. YCA winner, Tracie Molinaro was given \$100 and the runner up, Heidi Nebelhoph was awarded \$50.

President Laura Potvin – 1987-88

The Soroptimist club of Willimantic, sponsored the 7th Annual Fall Workshop which was held at the Elks Club in Willimantic. Our guest speaker, Dorothy Goodwin, member of the State Board of Education. The workshop titled “Marketing Soroptimists” and “Networking” presented by member Judy Hopkins. “Retaining Members” by former member, Terry Case of the Boynton-Delray Beaches Soroptimist Club and “Soroptimist as Business Women” by Josephine Chapman of the Greenwich Club. It was a very interesting and educational workshop.

\$1975 was contributed to Windham Textile Museum, Camp Rising Sun, Literacy Volunteers, Abused Children Services, Diabetes Foundation, Rape Crises Center, D.E.B.R.A., WCM Hospital, 4H Carnperships, S/I Foundation, Women’s Development Project - Peru, Nature Conservancy, McSweeny Senior Citizens Center, TAP and YCA Award.

President Elna Daniels – 1988-89

The highlight of the year was the purchase of a Brick to help with the remodeling of Windham Hospital in which \$1000 was pledged over a five year period.

Our local TAP Award winner also won the Star Award given by the region.

President Patricia Tokarz – 1989-90

During the year, we hosted for the Willimantic Thread Museum, the Education Wine and Cheese Reception, the Media Reception, the Charter Member Weekend and were present at the Radio WILI taping of a tour through the museum and also marched in the opening day, a Labor Day Parade at the museum.

A program “Dealing with Difficult People”, a seminar to help us understand ourselves and dealing with people better, was well received.

We sold Xmas Wrapping Paper and candies for the Holiday, and made up to 20 baskets for the Battered Womens Shelter, and donated articles for a Food Basket at the Home and Product Show. We donated gifts to the Foster Children’s Program for DCYS and gave a trash receptacle to announce Soroptimist in Willimantic.

Our TAP winner was Cheryl Jordan and we had a speaker from China for IGU on the same evening. We sponsored “Positive Images” seminar, and sold 77 tickets for a profit of \$770. We sold 24 Ads for our Soroptimist Saturday on WILI. Twenty more baskets were made for the Battered Women’s Shelter. Our YCA winner was John Kaczowski, of the Windham Tech High School.

President Patricia Tokarz - Second Term – 1990-91

We honored both a TAP and YCA winner at a presentation dinner. Through the combined service of the Red Cross, Windham Area Interfaith Ministry and the Windham Homeless Intervention we donated monies to aid Homeless individuals find housing. At Christmas, we donated presents to DCYS Foster Children in the Windham area.

An evening of five hours was spent Ringing the Bells for the Salvation Army which netted \$400 and a \$200 gift to the Soroptimist Foundation Endowment Fund plus funds in memory of Geraldine Petrus, a member and past president of our club.

We donated Toiletry Baskets, as usual for the Domestic Violence Shelter and we prepared Food Baskets during the Christmas holidays for the Women, Infants and Children program.

At the beginning of the Gulf War, we decided to do something for the families in our area who had loved ones serving in the Gulf. We sponsored a gathering of families in our area that had family in the Gulf. This was titled "Friendship and Information Gathering". The club provided the friendship and the Red Cross provided the information regarding what was available in help and aid. We also prepared with the Red Cross and the families that gathered 16 boxes of supplies to our troops.

President Patricia Gaenzler – 1991-92 and 1992-93

We participated in the following Awards programs and each of the following recipients was given a cash gift: TAP, Kathleen Brewster (1992), and Patricia Kirnlingen (1993); STAR, Kathleen Brewster (1993); YCA, Linda Olszewski (1992) and Amy Henry (1993); Youth Forum, Kiela Cubi (1992).

Projects completed: Windham High School Graduation Party, Red Cross CPR for Young Mothers, 4H Campership, Donation of an Infant Car Seat for the Community Baby Shower, Xmas gifts for DCYS Teenage Girls, Toiletry Baskets for the Domestic Violence Shelter, Thanksgiving Baskets, Windham Community Baby Showers (1992-93), Windham Community Memorial Hospital Brick (\$1000 over 5 years). The club hosted the Tercentenary Fashion Show at the Windham Textile and History Museum. Members also volunteered as docents at the museum.

We inducted our first Male Soroptimist in the N.E. Region in 1991 and attended the Inaugural Northeast Regional Legislation Workshop (1991) and welcoming a newly chartered club in Bridgeport, (1992) and a membership drive.

Several speakers were presented by the Program committee: A Team Building Workshop, Report of the International Conference of Soroptimist by Joanne Blake, YMCA Director, United Services Rhonda Kindaid, director of our local Perception House, a Drug Prevention Center. International Exchange, also an Interior Designer, speakers from the Windham Adult Education and the Holy Family Shelter and a Showing of Custom Dolls.

Networking with local Service Clubs in future projects with Lions, Rotary and Kiwanis. We attended the Regional Soroptimist Governors Anniversary Meetings of Marcia Petrillo (1992) and Mary Prunty (1993). Our fundraisers included a Fashion Show and Buffet in Oct. 1991, our WILI Ads in 1992 and '93 and Card Party.

President Malvina Medeiros – 1993-94

We participated in a huge Tag Sale on the Towns Jillson Square. We also sold home baked cookies. At the Lebanon Fair, we also sold cookies, baked in our two ovens in our booth. We made toiletry baskets for the Battered Women's Shelter; Purchased and installed 4 Soroptimist Road Signs at four major intersections leading into Willimantic; Co-sponsored a very successful fashion show in conjunction with the Willimantic Chamber of Commerce; donated Thanksgiving baskets to the Salvation Army and the WIC Program; donated Christmas gifts to the CT Department of Children and Family Services for adolescent girls and toiletry baskets to the Battered Women's Program for Christmas; Co-Sponsored the Day For Women Conference at Eastern CT State University attended by Governor Mary and sponsored the main media workshop: the Clothes Line Project from Boston; hosted the Spring Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with a nautical theme: five members and two husbands made the trip up in a van, it was really a great time for all who attended; other projects sponsored were: Windham Hospital Paramedics Fund, Project Graduation, Children's Law Center, Windham Historical Society, Domestic Violence Program, American Red Cross, Holy Family Shelter, Town of Lebanon Social Services and Neighbor Helping Neighbor, 4-H Campership, Community Baby Shower and the Clothes Line Project.

President Malvina Medeiros – Second Term – 1994-95

Many members attended the Fall Legislative Workshop in Sturbridge; club was awarded the Service Club Badge at the Cincinnati Convention; donated toiletry baskets to the Battered Women's Shelter, two Thanksgiving baskets were donated to the Salvation Army and WIC; rang the Salvation Army Bell at Christmas time; participated in the Lebanon Social Services Secret Santa program by sponsoring a single parented family with three children, hosted a visiting Soroptimist from Bangladesh, Mrs. Islam who is a teacher, and visiting her family in CT;

The Club established a club project of paying for the first-time mammogram for working women who can't afford a mammogram. Funds were raised for this service by the sale of radio ads on WILI Radio (\$1980), and pin sales from a dove pin designed by a club member specifically for this project.

We raised \$2,507 through sales of Christmas Wrapping Paper, Teacup Auctions, Pecan Sales, Tag & Plant Sales, and Entertainment Book Sales. Donations were made to: Walk of Life Project, Clothes Line Project, Battered Women's Shelter, Holy Family Shelter, 4-H Campership, St. Joseph's Living Center and Baby Shea Liver Transplant Fund. Malvina created a Rose of Appreciation that was presented to all members who participated in her two years of service to the community. Malvina stated "the word Soroptimist means the best for women, for us to accomplish all that we have, we had to start first with the best of women".

President Mary E. Webb – 1995-96

The club again participated in the Lebanon Fair by having a Country Crafts Booth; continued in our participation of making Breast Cancer issues a club advocacy project, we celebrated National Mammography Day collaboratively with Windham Hospital by receiving a proclamation from the First Selectman from the Town of Windham for our Free Mammography project, were interviewed by the Willimantic Chronicle for an extensive article on Breast Cancer, members spoke on a local radio show discussing our Free Mammography program and discussing woman's health issues and members went to the State Legislative Offices to participate in a day long program of State wide advocacy for Breast Cancer funding and research.; we participated in the first Windham Balloon Fest where we sold beautiful T-shirts, Willimantic's famous Hosmer Mt. Birch Beer Soda, and popcorn;

We participated in the following award programs: TAP: Donna Smith, who went on to win the Northeast Regional TAP Award; YCA: Joanna Wisniecka, of Coventy, CT; Facilitated the Regional STAR Award, won by: Nancy Wong of Meriden CT; sponsored two Youth Forum participants: Lauren Doyle, of Willimantic, CT and Jessica Mather of Lebanon CT.

We attended the Legislative Workshop in Sturbridge where we contributed to regional sales by submitting a Bonsai Tree Hat for Auction which celebrated the Women's Conference in China; participated in an advocacy letter writing campaign to support continued funding of Birth to Three programs in CT.

We donated three Thanksgiving baskets; participated in two Community wide baby showers; donated 300 DO IT YOURSELF monthly breast exam cards at a health fair and local homeless shelters and transitional living facilities; worked collaboratively with a rural Social Services department to sponsor a local family for the holiday by providing the family with presents and holiday meal; donated \$50.00 to Federation for the annual Presidents Dec. 10th appeal; donated a decorated X-mas tree to the Wadsworth Athenaeum fund-raiser, raised \$2160 in the clubs annual WILL radio fund-raiser, participated in the Willimantic Home and Products Show by selling a record amount of hot dogs and nachos with cheese; participated in the first ever club Foxwoods Bingo Fund-raiser where we not only had a great time and raised funds but we also had members win!.

We celebrated our 30th Anniversary with cocktails and a buffet dinner at the Elks club. Mary Prunty, Northeast Regional Governor was our guest speaker along with our First Selectman, Walter P, who presented the club with a Proclamation highlighting the clubs activities both locally and globally. Many past presidents attended the event. Numerous awards were given to community leaders and supporters of the club.

We attended the Spring Conference in Boston MA where we were hosts for both the Awards Luncheon and the Installation Dinner. Our committee did a spectacular job transforming both rooms into creative and festive places. We were lucky enough to witness the installation of our new governor, Patricia Tokarz, from our own Willimantic Club! It was an exciting moment for all of us. We were all so proud of Pat!

We attended a fundraising event sponsored by the Haverhill club: a comedy night, which was great fun; participated in the Special Olympics by working at the registration table; made mothers day baskets for the Domestic Violence Shelter and the Holy Family Homeless Shelter-, participated in the Breast Cancer Race For A Cure in New Britain; Co-Sponsored Day For Women with ECSU by providing the registration breakfast and sponsored a workshop on genderized spirituality. We installed two new active members and provided eight free mammograms.

We raised and returned over \$5,500. to the greater Willimantic community by sponsoring the following projects: Camp Horizons Capital Improvements Fund, St.Paul's Soup Kitchen, YMCA Campership, TV/VCR for the Windham Heights Day Care Center, 4H Campership, Campership to Wesleyan Drama Camp, donations to the Domestic Violence Shelter included a Dining Room Table, a Couch and Loveseat and 4 First Aid Kits from the Red Cross, a donation was made to the local Red Cross, donation was made to our Mammography Fund for future free mammograms, donations of cash and gift certificates to the E.O. Smith Project Graduation, Computer Fund of Windham Area Interfaith Ministries, donations were made to the Holy Family Homeless Shelter and to a local Kidney Transplant Foundation.

President Martha Frappier – 1996-97

The club continued in our participation in Breast Cancer issues including the free mammogram program. We participated in the second Windham Balloon Fest where we sold beautiful T-shirts, Hosmer Mt. Soda hot dogs and chile. We participated in the following award programs: TAP, YCA, sponsored two Youth Forum participants.

We attended the Legislative Workshop in Sturbridge where we contributed to regional sales by submitting a basket for the Auction.

We made three Thanksgiving baskets; participated in two Community wide baby showers; and sponsored a local family for the holiday by providing the family with presents and holiday meal. We donated \$50.00 to Federation for the annual Presidents Dec. 10th appeal; donated a decorated window pane to the Wadsworth Athenaeum fund-raiser.

We participated in the clubs annual WILI radio fund-raiser, where we raised a record amount of club funds, and sold tickets for a night of Foxwoods Bingo.

We attended the Spring Conference in Mystic CT where we heard many speakers talk about the value of volunteering. The theme was patriotism and we were entertained by a wonderful high school band. The enthusiasm of Governor Pat Tokarz was contagious.

We participated in the Special Olympics by working at the registration table; made mothers day baskets for the Domestic Violence Shelter and the Holy Family Homeless Shelter-, participated in the Breast Cancer Race For A Cure in New Britain; We again Co-Sponsored the Day For Women with ECSU by providing the registration breakfast and sponsored a workshop.

We also raised and returned over \$4,600 to the greater Willimantic community by sponsoring the following projects: Camp Horizons Capital Improvements Fund, St.Paul's Soup Kitchen, YMCA Campership, 4H Campership, donations to the Domestic Violence Shelter, A donation was made to the local Red Cross, donations of cash and gift certificates to the E.O. Smith Project Graduation, Windham Area Interfaith Ministries. Donations were made to the Holy Family Homeless Shelter. We planted a garden at the corner of Main and Bridge Streets.

President Martha Frappier – Second Term – 1997-98

Our club continued to focus on Breast Cancer issues including the free mammogram program. We participated in the third Windham Balloon Fest where we sold beautiful T-shirts, Hosmer Mt.Soda hot dogs and chile. We participated in the following award programs: TAP, YCA, sponsored two Youth Forum participants.

We attended the Legislative Workshop in Worchester where we contributed to regional sales by submitting a basket for the Auction. We made four Thanksgiving baskets; participated in two Community wide baby showers; and sponsored a local family for the holiday by providing the family with presents and holiday meal. We donated \$50.00 to Federation for the annual Presidents Dec. 10th appeal; donated a decorated wreath to the Wadsworth Athenaeum fund-raiser. We participated for the first time in the Shoe Box project and hosted a tea for the Salvation Army at Rajeau's Bridal Shop. We participated in the clubs annual WILI radio fund-raiser, were we again raised a record amount of club funds, and had another fun night of Foxwoods Bingo. Diane Potvin started a fundraiser at Hallmark Card shop where we earned money for working in the Buckland Mall store that was very successful. Paula Wollman set up a candy fundraiser in local stores and offices and we raised \$2958.

In December member and Regional Governor Pat Tokarz passed away suddenly. It was a tragic loss.

We attended the Spring Conference at the Cliffhouse in Ogunquit, Maine where we had the honor of hosting the Federation guest, past President, Janet Stevens. We had a wonderful time.

We participated in the Special Olympics by working at the registration table; made mothers day baskets for the Domestic Violence Shelter and the Holy Family Homeless Shelter-, participated in the Breast Cancer Race For A Cure in New Britain; Co-Sponsored Day For Women with ECSU by providing the registration breakfast and sponsored a workshop. We also raised and returned over \$6,500 to the greater Willimantic community by sponsoring the following projects: Camp Horizons Capital Improvements Fund, Children's Law Center, St.Pauls Soup Kitchen, YMCA Campership, 4H Campership, donations to the Domestic Violence Shelter, A donation was made to the local Red Cross, donations to the E.O. Smith Project Graduation, Windham Area Interfaith Ministries and the Holy Family Homeless Shelter, Salvation Army, Susan B.Koman Foundation, and X-mas donations.

We decorated the new gazebo at Alex Caisse Park for Memorial Day, Fourth of July and again planted the garden at the corner of Bridge and Main Streets.

President Barbara Straub – 1998-99

Our club members participated in numerous events during the year starting in August when four of our members volunteered to cook hot dogs and hamburgers for the Windham Youth Day Recreation Department. At our first board meeting in August, a membership drive was discussed. This was brought forth to the members at our first business meeting in September with the idea of having a book signing. One of our newer members, Agatha Hoover, has a book of poetry printed and she volunteered to do a reading of her poetry. Two other authors, David Morse, author of "The Iron Bridge" and John Volkmar, author of "On Becoming Powerful" also agreed to be guest authors. The Windham Textile Museum agreed to open the evening of 9/23/98 for our membership drive. We then went to work sending out 150 invitations to Chamber of Commerce members and names brought forth from our own members. Club members made food and our local newspaper, The Chronicle, did a story on our membership drive on 9/22/98. Two members appeared on our local radio station, WILI, to discuss our membership drive and the radio station then did public service announcements during that day and the next day about our membership drive. On that evening, a reporter from the Norwich Bulletin came with a photographer with her and they did a wonderful story on our club. We had each woman who attended sign a guest book and then sent each woman a personalized letter inviting her to be our guest at our next business meeting. I also received phone calls from the newspaper articles and sent each of those women a letter inviting them to a business meeting. Our membership drive was a tremendous success due to the efforts of all our members!

Also, during September, we had five members participate at the Aim for the Cure by setting up a table with Soroptimist brochures and selling our pins.

We had an unexpected fundraiser in October in which we sold hot dogs at the Thread City Autumn Car Show. In October, we sponsored the Mammogram Van at the Relay for Life at Windham High School and had several members participate in this event. Ten members attended the Fall Workshop in Auburn, MA. Our club was awarded a membership campaign award at the workshop. Our guest speaker at our October business meeting, was our own Jennifer LaFlam who spoke about domestic violence from her perspective as a CT State Trooper. Joyce Burdick made purple ribbons that were distributed at the meeting. We had three guests (potential new members) attend this meeting.

We had a very busy November starting with our business meeting in which ten new members were inducted into the club. Three members attended the celebration of SI/Hartford 60th anniversary. Nine members and two mini-helpers gathered at Barbara's house on 11/22/98 to assemble 4 Thanksgiving Baskets that were distributed to WIC, WAIM, Windham Aids Program and the Domestic Violence Program. We also assembled 24 toiletry baskets for the Domestic Violence Program. Barbara and Joan Merritt served hot chocolate at the Willimantic Christmas Tree Lighting on 11/27/98 and on 11/29/98, members gathered at Joan's house to decorate a wreath for the Wadsworth Athenaeum. They also made favors for our holiday party. During this time, members were also selling Yankee Candles, wrapping paper, candy and members were still volunteering for Hallmark. We also sold tickets for a bingo at Mohegan Sun.

In December, we had our holiday party at the Altnaveigh and were holiday angels for the Salvation Army and members participated in the Shoe Box Project. We also bought gift certificates for DCF's tots and teens program. A Salvation Army Holiday Tea was held at Rajean's on 12/10/98. We decorated the Alex Caisse Park Gazebo for Christmas. Elinor Bray, our life member, passed away. We purchased a brick from the Walk of Life in her memory.

We were fortunate to have three members participating in both the Federation and Region level: Marti Frappier was on the Soroptimist International Program Council as Chair of International Goodwill and Understanding, Joyce Burdick was on the regional board as a director and she was chair for the Northeast Region of the YCA award and Barbara Straub was chair for the Northeast Region for the WOA award.

We again participated in the WILI fundraiser and raised \$2,960 from the sale of radio ads and \$5900 in candy sales. Several members volunteered for the Special Olympics Swim Meet by helping with set-up and registration. At our March, 1999 business meeting, we inducted four new members into our club.

Our Anniversary and Awards Dinner was held at Zenny's Restaurant in Storrs. For our anniversary celebration, we presented Terry Case with life membership and recognized the following members for their years of service: Rose Ferreri – 27 yrs., Elna Daniels – 21 yrs., Malvina Medeiros – 21 yrs., Laura Potvin – 21 yrs., Marion Schultheiss – 17 yrs., Christina Bastek – 14 yrs and Patricia Gaenzler – 14 yrs. All were presented with a framed certificate. Our Women's Opportunity Award was presented to Joyce LeBaron, our Youth Citizenship Award was presented to Kelly Donahue. We recognized Ann Marie Orza as the Woman of Distinction, Gene Kupec was recognized for Women Helping Women and The Access Agency, Inc. was recognized for Advancing the Status of Women. Our club was also awarded a special plaque from Dr. Charles Wynne for our years of service to the Special Olympics.

We had twelve members attend the Spring Conference in Cape Cod, which was the largest turnout at the conference. Our club was the hostess club for the conference. Several members adopted a cabin at Camp Horizons and were heavily involved with their landscaping project. Our club was awarded with certificates and patches from Federation for being semi-finalists in the 1999 Soroptimists Celebrating Success Awards Program for our Membership Drive, our Willimantic Garden and our WILI/Soroptimist Weekend.

We again decorated the Alex Caisse Park Gazebo for the summer holidays. We had members attend the 50th anniversary of CT River Valley.

During the year, club members raised a total of \$12,763 which was distributed to the following organizations or projects: Albanian Refugees, Alex Caisse Park, American Red Cross, Baby Shower, Books for Babies, Camp Horizons, Children's Law Center, CRIS, Dept. of Children and Families, Domestic Violence Shelter, Ecuador, Hearing Aid, Holy Family Shelter, Homeless Coalition, Hospice, Le Leche League, Laubauch Literacy, local libraries, Literacy Volunteers, Mammograms, Relay for Life Mammograms, Mansfield Senior Center, Jessica Mather's trip to Japan, McSweeney Senior Center, Medicine for Melissa, Memorial for Pat Tokarz, Police Benevolent Assn., Safe Graduation (4 towns), Salvation Army, Senior Olympics, Service Objectives, Soroptimist Foundation, Special Olympics, St. Paul's Soup Kitchen, Susan Koman Foundation (bricks), WOA, Turkey Basket, Wadsworth Atheneum, WAIM, Willimantic Garden, Wilcox Basketball Camp, Windham Boxing Assn., Windham Textile Museum, X-Mas Decorations, YCA,

During the year, I sent letters to members to keep them informed of events and also issued a Newsletter in November/December, 1998 and again in January/February, 1999. We had terrific club participation and I would like to thank everyone for their help and participation during the year. Thank you members!

President Diane Potvin – 1999-2000

We started the year off with the Annual Festival of Ballooning and in October we sold hot dogs at the Thread City Autumn Car Show. In October, we paid for mammograms through certificates given at the Relay for Life at Windham High School and had several members participate in this event. Ten members attended the Fall Workshop in Avon Ct.

Members gathered at Marti's house to assemble 4 Thanksgiving Baskets that were distributed to WIC, WAIM, Windham Aids Program and the Domestic Violence Program. A Soroptimist from Bangladesh helped. We also assembled 20 toiletry baskets for the Domestic Violence Program and decorated a wreath for the Wadsworth Athenaeum. The wreath was made to honor the new Club that Marti helped to charter in Ecuador. Diane and Joan Merritt served hot chocolate at the Willimantic Christmas Tree Lighting. We sold Yankee Candles, wrapping paper and lots of candy.

We again participated in the WILI fundraiser and raised \$3,000 from the sale of radio ads and \$6600 in candy sales. We gave \$500 to the Special Olympics Swim Meet and several members volunteered by helping with set-up and registration.

Our Anniversary and Awards Dinner was held at Zenny's Restaurant in Storrs. Our Women's Opportunity Award was presented to Linda Bellanger and our Youth Citizenship Award was presented to Callie Evans. We recognized Dr. Cynthia Adams from the UConn School of Allied Health as Advancing the Status of Women, and Colleen Harrington from the Domestic Violence Program was recognized for Women Helping Women. Lt. Governor Jodi Rell was honored as the Woman of Distinction but could not make the celebration.

We gave a \$2000 millennium grant to the Domestic Violence Program to produce an awareness video, \$500 to Safe Havens (home for Pregnant teens), \$500 to the Community Prevention and Addiction Services, and \$500 to WAIM for their new building on Main Street in Willimantic.

We had twelve members attend the Spring Conference in Avon CT. Several members adopted a cabin at Camp Horizons and Joan, Her husband Steve and Joyce finished the landscaping project with a water feature. Our club was awarded with certificates and patches from Federation for being semi-finalists in the 2000 Soroptimists Celebrating Success Awards Program for our Candy Fundraiser and Second place for the Landscaping of Camp Horizons. It was a great honor and accomplishment for the club. We again decorated the Alex Caisse Park Gazebo for the summer holidays.

Joan Merritt and Joyce Burdick attended the Soroptimist Conference in Honolulu. The Conference was attended by 10 women from the Northeast Region. The new youth award honoring Club Organizer Violet Richardson was unveiled.

During the year, club members raised a total of \$13,288 which was distributed to the following organizations or projects: Turkey Earthquake Relief, Alex Caisse Park, American Red Cross, Baby Shower, Camp Horizons, Children's Law Center, Dept. of Children and Families, Domestic Violence Shelter, Ecuador, Holy Family Shelter, Homeless Coalition, Hospice, Le Leche League, Mammograms, Relay for Life, McSweeney Senior Center, Safe Graduation (4 towns), Safe Havens, Salvation Army, Soroptimist Foundation, Special Olympics, St. Paul's Soup Kitchen, Susan Koman Foundation (bricks), WOA, Wadsworth Athenaeum, WAIM, Willimantic Garden, Wilcox Basketball Camp, Windham Boxing Assn., Windham Recreation Department, Windham Textile Museum, X-Mas Decorations, YCA,

President Diane Potvin – Second Term – 2000-2001

We started the year off with selling Hot Dogs at the Thread City Autumn Car Show. In October, we helped to register survivors in the Relay for Life at Windham High School and had several members participate in this event. Several members attended the Fall Workshop in New Britain CT where we gathered in Walnut Park to dedicate the Benches for Pat Tokarz and Marjorie Hamilton.

Members gathered at Joyce's house to assemble 4 Thanksgiving Baskets that were distributed to WIC, WAIM, Windham Aids Program and the Domestic Violence Program. We also assembled over 20 toiletry baskets for the Domestic Violence Program and decorated a wreath for the Wadsworth Athenaeum. The wreath was made to honor the United Nations International Year for the Culture of Peace. We also planted 2 flowering crabapple trees and Rhododendrons and decorated the Gazebo to honor Peace. The 1st Selectman, John Lesco read a proclamation. We won a runner up patch for Soroptimists Celebrating Success for this project.

We sold Yankee Candles, wrapping paper. We again participated in the WILI fundraiser and raised \$2,800 from the sale of radio ads and over \$6000 in candy sales. Several members volunteered for the Special Olympics Swim Meet by helping with set-up and registration.

Our Anniversary and Awards Dinner was held at Zenny's Restaurant in Storrs. Our Women's Opportunity Award was presented to Jolette Frazier and our First Violet Richardson Award was presented to Emily Norman a 14-year-old volunteer for CRIS Radio. We recognized our own member Bernice Szafarek as the Woman of Distinction. Liz Lipa was recognized for Women Helping Women and The UConn Women's Athletic Department was recognized for Advancing the Status of Women.

We decided to continue to award the \$2000 Advancing Women grant. It was awarded to the Access Agency for their Windows for Windham Women. Three \$500 awards went to WAIM for their Career Closet, CPAS for an awareness project and the Domestic Violence Program for their awareness program.

Our club members raised a total of \$11,953.04 which was distributed to the following organizations or projects: The Access Agency Windows for Windham Women, Alex Caisse Park, American Red Cross, Baby Shower, CRIS, Dept. of Children and Families, Domestic Violence Shelter, Holy Family Shelter, Homeless Coalition, Hospice, La Leche League, Mammograms, McSweeney Senior Center, Community Prevention and Addiction Services, Relay for Life, Safe Graduations, Safe Havens, Salvation Army, Soroptimist Foundation, St. Paul's Soup Kitchen, WOA, Wadsworth Athenaeum, WAIM, Willimantic Garden, Windham Little League girls team, Windham Hospital (VCR), and WRCC.

Joan Merritt 2001-2002

We sold Hot Dogs at the Thread City Autumn Car Show. In October 19 members participated in the Relay for Life. For the first, time we had a team and raised over \$5,000. Several members helped to register survivors and several members were on the planning committee. Eleven members attended the Fall Workshop in New Britain CT where we gathered in Walnut Park to dedicate the Benches for Pat Tokarz and Marjorie Hamilton. As a club we continue to support this project by buying bricks in memory of loved ones or to honor Soroptimist members. The Northeast Region has donated over \$50,000 to the Susan B Koman Foundation for Cancer research. In June, Joyce Burdick and Joan Merritt attended a ceremony to honor the Northeast Region and governor-elect Rose Marie Burton for the work on this project.

In October we lost a longtime member and friend, Marion Schultheiss. We gathered at St. Joseph Living Center to dedicate the bench to honor our First President, Terry Case.

Members gathered at Joyce's house to assemble 5 Thanksgiving Baskets that were distributed to WIC, WAIM, Windham Aids Program and the Domestic Violence Program. We also assembled over 20 toiletry baskets for the Domestic Violence Program and decorated a wreath for the Wadsworth Athenaeum. The wreath was entitled Sweet Surprises and featured gingerbread houses and ribbon candy. The money for the sale of the wreath goes to the Athenaeum. We decorated the Gazebo in Alex Caisse Park for the Holidays and again May for Memorial Day and the Fourth of July. We also sold Yankee Candles.

Pete and Linda Johnson hosted our annual potluck holiday party. We all had a wonderful time. Many members were recognized for the many years of being a Soroptimist, including Malvina Medeiros, Elna Daniels, and Laura Potvin for twenty-five years of service,

We participated in the WILI fundraiser and raised over \$3,000 from the sale of radio ads. We raised over \$5000 in candy sales.

In March, several members volunteered for the Special Olympics Swim Meet by helping with set-up and registration of volunteers. Special Olympics honored our Club for their continued commitment to people with Special Needs.

Several members attended the Spring Conference in New London. Joan Merritt was elected Secretary of the Region Board for 2002-2004. Our Anniversary and Awards Dinner was held at Zenny's Restaurant in Storrs. Our Women's Opportunity Award was presented to Tamara McLennon. We recognized Geri White as the Woman of Distinction for her community service and lifelong commitment to Special Olympics. Judy Sanborn, a nurse from Windham Hospital, and Ann Williams, a teacher from Parrish Hill were awarded the Women Helping Women Award. The UCONN Women's Center was recognized for Advancing the Status of Women.

The club voted to change the name of our \$2,000 grant to the Marion Schultheiss Advancing Women grant. The grant was awarded to The Salvation Army for their English as a Second Language Program. A second award was presented to Safe Havens to buy a computer for the residents to help with obtaining their GED. The additional money had been donated to the club to honor Marion Schultheiss. Marion's daughter, Lynn Duval, presented the award.

Our club members raised a total of \$11,724 which was distributed to the following organizations or projects: The Alex Caisse Park, American Red Cross, Baby Shower, Camp Horizons, CRIS, Dept. of Children and Families, Domestic Violence Shelter, Holy Family Shelter, La Leche League, Mammograms, McSweeney Senior Center, Safe Graduations, Safe Havens, Salvation Army, Soroptimist Foundation, St. Paul's Soup Kitchen, Susan B Koman Foundation, WOA, Wadsworth Athenaeum, WAIM, Willimantic Garden, Windham Little League girls team, Windham Hospital (VCR), and Windham Textile Museum. We sent \$200 to our sister club in Ecuador to help with programs including their Shelter.

In May we held our Pot Luck Dinner Meeting at Camp Horizons. The Violet Richardson Award was presented to Darcy Young, a volunteer for Hebron Area Interfaith Ministries. A young dance troupe, Arts in Motion provided the entertainment. Rose Ferrari was honored for 30 years of Soroptimist Service.

We participated in the Third Thursday Festival to promote Soroptimist membership, Domestic Violence and The Relay for Life. We adopted new bylaws thanks to the hard work of past president Barbara Straub.

In July, Joan Merritt and Joyce Burdick attended the Soroptimist of America Convention in San Diego. The Northeast Region Won the Region Celebrating Success Award for the Walk of Life project at Walnut Hill Park.

Pat Brown 2002-2003

We sold Hot Dogs at the Thread City Autumn Car Show. In October 30 members had fun participating in the Relay for Life. Our Soroptimist Friends team raised over \$10,000. Several members helped to register survivors and several members were on the planning committee. Five members attended the Fall Workshop in Providence Rhode Island.

We continued to support the Brick Walkway project by buying bricks in memory of loved ones or to honor Soroptimist members.

Members gathered at Neida Rosada's house to assemble 5 Thanksgiving Baskets that were distributed to WIC, WAIM, Windham Aids Program and the Domestic Violence Program. We also assembled over 20 toiletry baskets for the Domestic Violence Program. We decorated the Gazebo in Alex Caisse Park for the Holidays and again for Memorial Day. We sold Yankee Candles and flower bulbs.

Pete and Linda Johnson hosted our Annual Potluck Holiday Party. We all had a wonderful time. Many members were recognized for the many years of being a Soroptimist.

We participated in the WILI fundraiser and raised over \$2,800 from the sale of radio ads. We raised over \$5000 in candy sales. In February we worked with the Elk's Club, and other service organizations to raise money for the Hospital. Our Heart of It All Ball raised \$6,000 for Windham Hospital.

In March, several members volunteered for the Special Olympics Swim Meet by helping with set-up and registration of volunteers. Our Anniversary and Awards Dinner was held at Zenny's Restaurant in Storrs. Our Women's Opportunity Award was presented to Rosalie Muce, a nursing student at Three Rivers College. Rosalie also won second place at the Region level. We recognized member Joan Merritt as the Woman of Distinction for her community service. Joyleen Albarracin, director of the Even Start Program, and Juanita Vazquez, a Social Worker at Windham Hospital were awarded the Women Helping Women Award for their work in the community. The Windham Region Community Council was recognized for Advancing the Status of Women for their work with people with AIDS.

The \$2000 Marion Schultheiss Advancing Women grant was awarded to The Windham Even Start Program Childbirth classes. A second award was presented to CPAS for personal care items for residents of their Sober Houses. The award was presented by Marion's daughter, Lynn Duval.

Several members attended the Spring Conference in Hyannis on Cape Cod. We hosted the Saturday night dinner. We got rave reviews for our sing-along with Bernice and Stephanie Szafarek at the piano.

Our club members raised a total of \$10,262.00 which was distributed to the following organizations or projects: Alex Caisse Park, Camp Horizons, Domestic Violence Shelter, Ecuador, Holy Family Shelter, Hospice, Mammograms, Safe Graduations, Salvation Army, Soroptimist Foundation, Special Olympics, St. Paul's Soup Kitchen, Susan B Koman Foundation, WOA, WAIM, Willimantic Garden, Windham Even Start, Windham Hospital, Windham Textile Museum, and Windham Regional Community Council.

In May we held our Pot Luck Dinner Meeting at Camp Horizons. The Violet Richardson Award was presented to Lynsi Halle for her volunteer work for the Windham Relay for Life. We presented a special Woman of the Year Award to Lisa Maruzo-Bulduc, Willimantic's first Woman Chief of Police.

Submitted by the Soroptimist International Club of Willimantic, Connecticut
Prepared by: Mrs. Sotera (Terry) Case, President 1966-68
Updated in 1995 by President Ms. Mary E. Webb
Updated in 2001 by Joan Merritt and Barbara Straub
Updated in 2003 by Joan Merritt

Presidents of Soroptimist International of Willimantic, Connecticut

1966-1968	Terry Case*
1968-1969	Lorraine Hansen
1969-1970	Alice Jordan*
1970-1971	Margaret Bernard*
1971-1972	Lillian Ahern*
1972-1974	Gloria Geno*
1974-1975	Joyce Sands
1975-1977	Mary Jezierski
1977-1978	Marge Green
1978-1979	Rose Ferreri
1979-1980	Betty Mackey
1981-1982	Gladys Forryan
1982-1984	Laura Potvin
1984-1986	Marion Schultheiss*
1986-1987	Jerry Petrus*
1987-1988	Laura Potvin
1988-1989	Elna Daniels
1989-1991	Patricia Tokarz*
1991-1993	Patricia Gaenzler
1993-1995	Malvina Medeiros
1995-1996	Mary E. Webb
1996-1998	Martha Frappier
1998-1999	Barbara Straub
1999-2001	Diane Potvin
2001-2002	Joan Merritt
2002-2004	Patricia Brown

*deceased

Taken From Our Regional Bulletin

I cannot say, "I pledge allegiance to Soroptimism"
If I don't know what it is.

I cannot say, "And to the ideals for which it stands"
If only my mouth speaks the words.

I cannot say, "The Sincerity of Friendship"
If my friends are for personal gain.

I cannot say, "The joy of achievement"
If my yardstick is dollars.

I cannot say, "The dignity of service"
If I am doing only because it is expected of me.

I cannot say, "The love of country"
If my votes, participation and prayers do not support it.

Because I want to say all these things,
"I will put forth my greatest effort to promote, uphold and
defend these ideals, for a larger fellowship in home, in society,
in business, for country and for God."

Federation and International Conventions Attended

International Convention in Toronto, Canada in July, 1967
Attended by Alice Jordan and Terry Case
Our New England Region were hostesses for the New England breakfast

Federation Convention in Atlantic City from June 30 to July 5, 1968
Attended by Joyce Sands and Gloria Geno

Federation Convention in St. Louis, MO in July, 1970
Attended by Joyce Sands and Terry Case

International Convention in Boston, MA in July, 1976
Our New England Region sponsored this convention

International Convention in Istanbul, Turkey in August, 1983
Attended by Laura Potvin and Elna Daniels
They also visited Egypt and Greece

International Convention in Australia in 1987
Attended by Marion Schultheiss and Elna Daniels

International Convention in Helsinki, Finland 1999
Attended by Joyce Burdick

Federation Convention in Honolulu, Hawaii 2000
Attended by Joyce Burdick and Joan Merritt

Federation Convention in San Diego in 2002
Attended by Joyce Burdick and Joan Merritt

International Convention in Sydney, Australia in 2003
Attended by Joyce Burdick
Also attended Governor's Round Table in Japan