

**Rotary Club of Castro Valley  
Meeting Highlights – November 21, 2017**

**Billie Knight and Lynn Levin, Soroptimist International of the East Bay**



Billie Knight (left) and Lynn Levin (right) presented a very informative program on the history of the Soroptimist International of the East Bay and the great works that it provides for women. In the presentation, Billie and Lynn answered:

***Our Vision** is that women and girls will have the resources and opportunities to reach their full potential and live their dreams.*

***Our Mission** is to improve the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment.*



What is Soroptimist?

Soroptimist is a global women's organization whose members work to improve the lives of disadvantaged women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment. Soroptimist programs focus on providing disadvantaged women and girls with access to education, which is one of the most effective ways to end social problems disproportionately affecting women and girls.

What does the word "Soroptimist" mean?

Loosely translated from Latin, Soroptimist is a coined term meaning "best for women."

When was Soroptimist formed?

The first Soroptimist club was formed in 1921 by a group of 80 women in Oakland. Our organization was founded in 1921 right here in the East Bay to provide an opportunity for professional women to participate in charitable activities specifically benefitting local women in need. The organization is represented by local clubs and has grown to an international organization with clubs formed in more than 130 countries worldwide.



What programs does Soroptimist offer?

Soroptimist members belong to local clubs. Clubs participate in the Dream Programs of Soroptimist, *Live Your Dream: Education and Training Awards for Women* and *Dream It, Be It: Career Support for Girls* to help disadvantaged women and girls achieve social and economic empowerment. The Dream Programs of Soroptimist ensure women and girls have access to the education and training they need to reach their full potential and live their dreams. Soroptimist is committed to investing in programs that have a sustainable, measurable change for disadvantaged women and girls.

Soroptimist also sponsors [LiveYourDream.org](http://LiveYourDream.org), an online community empowering volunteer action and activism. The self-motivated network is made up of people who wish to support women and girls in their quest to lead better lives, while gaining inspiration in their own lives. Members of the free online community work on topics such as women's economic empowerment, ending violence against women, human trafficking, and more. They also have access to inspirational articles, tips, and blogs that can help them live their own personal dreams.

Soroptimist International of the East Bay provides the following Programs and Projects:

- *Live Your Dream: Education and Training Awards for Women* - \$1000 to deserving woman going to school to improve her financial standing
- *Fellowship Ph.D. Grants* (specific to East Bay Region) that awarded \$100,000 last year to



10 women

- *Ruby Award: For Women Helping Women*
- *Dream It, Be It: Career Support for Girls*
- *Violet Richardson Award* - \$500 to high school student doing exceptional volunteer work
- *Disaster Grants for Women and Girls*

They support the following community programs: Davis Street Family Resource Center, East Oakland Youth Development Center (EAYDC), Building Futures for Women and Children in San Leandro, Alameda County Deputy Sheriff's Activity League (DSAL), Hayward Community Action Network, Ruby's Place, and Calico. Fundraising activities include a Fashion Show and Luncheon for scholarships, a Holiday Boutique on December 2 at the Hill and Valley Club, a Dinner Feast for scholarships, and an annual Yard Sale (next one scheduled for March 2018.)

Soroptimist International of the East Bay meets the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm The Englander Restaurant in San Leandro. The meetings are open to all – women and men. Website <https://www.soroptimist.org/whoweare/faq.html>. The PowerPoint presentation from Billie and Lynn is available at <https://tinyurl.com/yaglaho5>.

### What's New in Castro Valley?



Carol Darcey, President of the Castro Valley Women's Club, In the second installment of What's New in Castro Valley? Barbara Russell and Helen Fowler founded the Women's Club in 1948. The primary purpose of Castro Valley Women's Club was, and is, to work towards the betterment of the community while building friendships. Information about the Club is available at <http://castrovalleywomensclub.weebly.com/>.

Carol shared the following *What's New*:

- The Club is celebrating its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and has partnered with Meals on Wheels (MOW) to dedicate donation funds to help seniors-in-need.
- In September, the Club had a table at the Castro Valley Fall Festival and had MOW cater the Welcome Back Dinner that raised \$800.
- In October, the Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting at the Club's meeting, which featured MOW speakers.
- In November, the Club held its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Boutique with MOW selling sandwiches and chili.
- Upcoming events include: Saturday afternoon Bunco game with raffle in January (date TBD); Jim Knudsen, member of the 100 Club Board of Directors will be the January meeting speaker; and , Hungarian Dinner at the Clubhouse on February 22 (the Club is looking for raffle and silent auction prizes).



### Announcements:



- President Jim Negri thanked all the members and friends who helped serve the H.A.R.D. Thanksgiving Lunch at the Kenneth Aitken Senior Center.
- Randy Vanderbilt, Mark Poniatowski, and Bill Nott announced that the December 14<sup>th</sup> Planning Meetings for the Chili Cook-off, Rodeo Parade, and Texas Hold Poker Tournament will be canceled in December. The next meetings will be January 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Mark Poniatowski announced that the **Texas Hold 'Em Poker Tournament will be Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>**, at Stack Center at Our Lady of Grace Church. Details will follow, but mark your calendar now.
- Mark Poniatowski reminded everyone that the **Children's Christmas Party is December 12<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.** in Room 10 (Multi-Purpose Room) at Castro Valley Adult and Career Education. All Club members are expected to help out during the cooking, setup, the event, and clean-up.
- Charles Mortimer reminded Club members to sign up for the **Club Christmas Party on December 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.** Cost is \$45 per person. Please RSVP via the online invitation by November 30<sup>th</sup> so that sufficient food and drink can be ordered.
- President Jim reminded Club members to return their Focus Group input postcards by December 1.
- Dwight Perry announced that his daughter, Joyce, is getting married and contributed to Polio Plus.
- Castro Valley/Eden Area Chamber of Commerce CEO Ashley Strasberg announced the December Mixer on December 14<sup>th</sup> at Eden Medical Center. The Mixer is jointly sponsored by Castro Valley/Eden Area, Hayward, and San Leandro Chamber. Attend and meet someone new.



## Upcoming Speakers and Events

- November 28 – Dennis Waspei - Director – East Bay Regional Parks District - *What New at the Park District?*
- November 28 – Special Presentation - *Adopt a Family* and Gift Wrapping after the lunch
- December 5 - Nick Lavingia – Global Management Consultant - *Challenges Executing International Mage Energy Projects*
- December 5 – Dan Termini – What’s New in Castro Valley? – Technology security breaches
- December 9 – *Club Christmas Party* – RSVP by November 30<sup>th</sup>
- December 12 – Children’s Christmas Party – **No lunch meeting**
- December 19 -Emily Griego, CEO San Leandro Chamber of Commerce – *What’s Happening in San Leandro?*
- December 26 – Dark at lunch
- January 2 – Dark at lunch

