

SITM Update

Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows



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www.sitmnev.org

Life of an Afghan Woman

"I love my freedom!" These were the words from our guest speaker, Asma Aimal when she spoke about what she liked most about America. These words continue to echo in my head as it is hard to fathom that in the 21st century, many women often continue to be subjected to inhumane and barbaric treatment.

Asma spoke about her life as a child and young woman growing up in a primarily male-dominated society in Afghanistan. The Taliban regime, something Asma was raised with, brutally repressed women. They were forbidden to be educated, forced into marriage at very young ages, publically beaten, and succumbed to sexual and psychological violence.

The Taliban collapsed around fourteen years ago, but shortly after, it regrouped on a smaller scale. Afghanistan is still considered to be one of the most challenging places in which to be a woman. It holds a culture that is defined along traditional values and honor. Asma's parents believed

that their children should have an opportunity to an education, but are a family driven by honor and conservative values. Her mother, a doctor, does not practice medicine as it is the belief that the man of the

Asma is fortunate. Her husband, Aimal, believes in equal rights for women and men. It was a promise he made to Asma that she may continue her education after they were married. She is currently a student at UNR. It is their goal to both become Peace Ambassadors of Afghanistan. Asma would like to become a teacher for young children in her country.

It is my hope that these dreams become a realization as every individual should have the opportunity to have freedom of choice, which includes an opportunity to an education. This can be no further explained than by an excerpt from a poem written by Dr. Zieba Shorish-Shamley, "I remember you...when you take the solemn oath that you will struggle, resist and fight that you will gain your freedom

with all your might that you will never give up, no matter how heavy the cost never again will you be confused, pitiful and lost...I remember you." (www.afgahn-web.com).

Thank you to the IGU Committee and Kay Dunham for inviting Asma to share her story and remind us, as Soroptimists, why we must continue to support our mission.

As we continue to move forward let's continue to "Aspire to Inspire" and see what transpires.

President Vivian



Asma joined several members after the August 27 meeting where she spoke. From left are: Monica House, IGU Coordinator; Kay Dunham, who was instrumental in making arrangements for Asma to come to the U.S., plus escorted her from Afghanistan; and President Vivian Ruiz.

household is responsible to provide for his family.

Another custom is that when in meetings or during greetings, Afghan woman should not look at men in the eye or shake their hand. Families commonly arrange marriages for their young children and factors such as social status, tribe and wealth contribute to forming a choice. If the female child has an opportunity to an education this is often discontinued when they become older or married.

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August Board & Business Update and Meeting Highlights

By Faye I. Andersen

Joanna Moran was inducted and welcomed as a new member of SITM at the September Business Meeting. Her sponsor is Kay Dunham. Welcome Joanna. We're glad you've joined us.

August Happy Dollars

Happy Dollars collected in August totaled \$244 and were designated for Step 2, a nonprofit working to break the cycle of addiction for women and children. September Happy Dollars are designated for Sierra Nevada Journeys, a nonprofit that delivers innovative outdoor, science-based education programs for youth to develop critical thinking skills and to inspire natural resource stewardship.

Happy Dollar Designations Complete

Upon recommendation of the board and approval of the membership, the remaining two open months of Happy Dollars were designated for February and April. February's Happy Dollars were designated for Eddy House – the Youth Resource Center, providing services for homeless, runaway, foster and other at-risk youth. April was designated for the Sierra Nevada Stitchers, a local group of women who love to make quilts for women, children and newborns to help replenish their supplies.

SI President's Appeal Targets Nepal

SI President Yvonne Simpson has designated her 2015 -2017 President's Appeal to focus on providing education and leadership skills to women and girls rebuilding their lives following the Nepal earthquakes of April/May 2015.

At the request of the Human Rights/Status of Women Committee the December Happy Dollars have already been designated for the SI President's Appeal. In addition, having a well-established relationship with the people of Thulipokhari, Nepal, the International Goodwill and Understanding Committee is preparing a response to SI's Request for Proposals to undertake projects in Nepal that fit the SI President's Appeal criteria. The deadline is **October 1**.

Member Leaves & Changes

The Board granted leaves of absence for Kathy Hudson, through March 1, for health reasons; and Lynne Carrow for lunch meeting through December 31, for personal reasons. Remaining on leave are Jan Bogikes through October 11 for personal reasons; Monica House through March 1, for professional and personal reasons; and Jean Neddenriep for medical reasons. Hurry back ladies!

The Board accepted with regret the resignation of Susanna Money.



The gentleman in the photo, Aimal, was brought to the U.S. to study at the University of Nevada, Reno, by Colonel Kirk Neddenriep (member Jean's son), after serving with Kirk as a translator for American troops in Afghanistan. Last year he was able to marry his betrothed wife Asma. Two of the many people who have helped support Aimal and smooth his transition into American-life, and are now doing the same for Asma, are at far left Ana Nadimi and far right Kay Dunham.

Aimal graduated this spring and is currently in England studying conflict resolution. Both Aimal and Asma hope to return to Afghanistan as peace ambassadors for their people.

Calendar

- September 17 – Traci Davis, WCSD Superintendent
- September 24 – Health Committee
- September 24 – Wine Charm Assembly, 5:30 p.m. at We Olive Wine Bar
- October 1 – Maximize Your Committee's PR - Public Awareness Committee
- October 6 – Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Disability Resources
- October 8 – Business Meeting, Atlantis
- October 21 – Beads for Strength assembly, 5:30 p.m., Marilyn Pearson's home

You can follow our weekly activities on:



Important Dates, Deadlines & Upcoming Meetings You Don't Want to Miss

Special Speaker Traci Davis September 17

The Education Youth Committee is hosting the meeting on September 17, 2015. What better way to kick off the school year than to hear from Traci Davis the Superintendent of the Washoe County School District at the Thursday, September 17 meeting. Washoe County is the second largest school district in Nevada serving over 63,000 students. The Superintendent, as Chief Executive Officer, oversees the day-to-day activities of the district.



At our meeting next week, she will be sharing her vision of the future of the school district and offering in depth insight into the challenges facing our community in the schools this year.

This would be a wonderful meeting to bring guests too. Be sure to come and bring your questions with you!

Wine Charms Need Your Help



The Membership Committee needs help finishing the assembly of wine charms that members began at the September 3 meeting. If you can help, a "charming party" is set for Thursday, September 24, after work at We Olive, 4991 S. Virginia St., Unit B.

Have a glass of wine while making wine charms.

Learn to Maximize Your Committee's PR Efforts October 1

At the October 1 meeting, the Public Awareness committee will show you how to maximize your PR efforts for your upcoming events and guest speakers. Do you want to learn how to "share" the Facebook posts? Tag yourself in a SITM photo? The committee will show you how to best utilize social media.

Beads for Strength Party October 21

The next beading party for Beads for Strength bracelets will be held Wednesday, October 21 at 5:30 p.m. at Marilyn Pearson's



home. The bracelets are made for the patients at The Renown Oncology Infusion Center and given to patients in recognition of completing their treatments. Let Marilyn know you will be attending.

Seeking Office Beyond SITM? See Margie

The Sierra Nevada Region is looking for a few good women to stand for election for region officers and district directors. Margie Hermanson is the District V Nominating Committee representative soliciting nominations for Region Secretary, Region Treasurer, Region Governor-Elect and District Director. Deadline to declare interest is November 15. Elections will be held at Region Conference in April 2016. Terms of Office are July 2016 through June 2018 biennium. See Margie for more details and to express your interest.



In Memorium for Bala Bhadra Subedi

Bala Bhadra Subedi, Purna Subedi's father, and "construction chief" on SITM's girls' dormitory project back in 2000-2001 has passed away. Bala Bhadra was a teacher at the Janata Sudarsham Multiple Campus in Thulipokhari, Nepal, where Purna grew up. He came out of retirement and was instrumental as a conduit between SITM and the Village Council to obtain land, materials and workers to build our dormitory. Bala Bhadra and his wife Tica immigrated to the United States and he was living in Irvine, California at the time of his passing.

A debt of gratitude is owed to the senior Mr. Subedi, and all of the Subedi family for their work and passion to help provide the infrastructure necessary to educate girls in Nepal and further the prosperity of the Village of Thulipokhari through other SITM projects.



Bala Bhadra Subedi, crouched, offers colored rice to his wife Tica, in the trench, during the 2000 laying of the cornerstone ceremony for the girls dormitory in Thulipokhari, Nepal.

Wine Charm Construction Zone at September 3 Meeting

Testing our creative and craft skills, members assembled wine charms at the September 3 meeting. Since July members were asked by the Membership Committee to donate beads from broken or discarded bracelets and necklaces, or just purchase and donate some beads. Beads and convenient hoops were also provided by Rikki Henley-Ricker and Jennifer Burnitt and the race was on.

The wine charms will be offered to participants of a wine walk in Reno in October for a small donation. SITM will be the featured non-profit organization for that walk. Club members and guests assembled a couple of hundred wine charms during lunch. An additional 100 or so are still needed.

A wine-charming party will be held Thursday, September 24, after work at We Olive, 4991 S. Virginia St., Unit B. Have a glass of wine while making wine charms.



Like so many of us, Kay Dunham and Kathy Benson pulled out the "cheater glasses" in order to thread some of those tiny beads.



Some of our "beading experts", from left, Bev Perkins, Marilyn Pearson and Dor Watts, show poise and creativity as they create wine charms at their table.



President-Elect Jennifer Burnitt and President Vivian Ruiz, busy working on their wine charms.



Becky Moody and Pam Robinson make careful selection of beads for their wine charms.

Member Feature: Scarlet Ewy

Rancher's Daughter, Cheerleader, RN, Merchant Marine, Land Developer and Landlady.

By Liza Chapen

It was my pleasure to interview Scarlet Ewy for this month's Member Profile. For me, the name Scarlet conjures up images of Rhett Butler and Tara. But, no, Scarlet has downsized since owning a 5000 acre ranch in Arizona known as the Ruby Star. She now runs a piece of property on a tranquil hillside on the far west side of Reno that is called SUM Ranch. It was initially to be a home for her niece and junior college students, but when her niece married she turned the rambling ranch house into a home for veterans, students, and those who would benefit feeling home and dry for a while. She and her tenants are constantly making improvements. At this time, the infrastructure is done and she says it's time to beautify and simplify the property. Scarlet said if we want to visit, she'll buy us a Starbucks and put us to work. Let's plan a work party sometime soon. Sounds like fun!



Scarlet is shown here doing something she never does when she's at SUM Ranch ... sit down!

various Soroptimist projects.

I've always seen Scarlet as an elegant, sophisticated lady, but she claims she was a tomboy in her youth. She says she went to school with ultra-wealthy kids, but never felt poor although she lived in a home with an outhouse and showered at the school gym. One terrific detail I learned about Scarlet is that she was a cheerleader in both her junior and senior year. Can you just imagine Scarlet with pom-poms?

Her mother enrolled her in college and after she became an RN, she volunteered in kidney transplant research labs in her spare time, but then decided to become a merchant marine and travel for a while. When she returned to the Bay area, she started taking chemistry classes and got straight A's and was on the Honor's list and the Dean's list – "Just to make her husband proud," she says. Scarlet earned a BA and a Masters and later, in 1977, a BS from UNLV. She is currently working on learning options trading, and is about to start a course on Revelations via nondenominational BSF.

Scarlet shared that the Catholic Church has guided her since 2006 and she finds her greatest peace, courage and strength when she stays tuned in while working, praying or just living. "Like SITM, you get much more than you give," she says. "This reality far exceeds anything on earth. I wish everyone would sincerely ask to know it."



Scarlet with some of her birds at the SUM Ranch in West Reno.

Scarlet became a member of SITM many years ago after being sponsored by former member Pam Parenti. She experiences great pleasure in what she calls "the random acts of kindness" that our club facilitates, helping people we don't even know in Nepal and helping women locally and around the world with

Another Garage Sale Success Thanks to SITM Members

Chalk up another successful SITM garage sale, sponsored by the IGU Committee. Friday afternoon, September 11, 20 SITM members along with 10 family members and friends, descended on Connie Steinheimer's garage for the semi-annual sorting ritual and making ready for Saturday's sale. Besides the members' drop-offs during the week, Jeanne Baxter's Ethan Allen crew with three trucks delivered furniture, household goods, clothing and other items stored at the store in anticipation of the next garage sale. The usual pizza and Margarita party started shortly after set-up.

The weather on Saturday turned out to be cooler than expected until 11 am, when it unfortunately started heating up! Fifteen SITM members, along with eight family members and friends worked the Saturday sale. Once again Enid Oliver created the "Designer Boutique", selling the higher-end items and clothing, contributing significantly to the bottom line of the sale.

Recycle and reuse is a staple at SITM Garage Sales. IGU Coordinator Monica House selected clothing from the sale appropriate for use in the Clothes Closet at the upcoming Making a Difference for Women Skills Training Seminar. Education-Youth Co-Coordinator Teresa Mentzer rounded up about 30 unsold bags and backpacks to take to the Youth Resource Center for homeless children.

When it was done, the staff and residents of Ridge House swooped in, packed everything up and hauled it away. Ridge House provides comprehensive re-entry services for former offenders in Nevada, helping clients become productive members of society. SITM has a long partnership with Ridge House to haul away the "left-overs" from the garage sale for use by their clients, or to sell in their own thrift store.

The IGU Committee will be announcing the proceeds from the sale at the September 17 meeting. Drum roll, please! Thank you everyone for volunteering your time and donating your treasures for the garage sale.



Carol Dinneen showing off skis for sale at the garage sale.



Delivering pizzas to a hungry set-up crew is Monica House's friend, Dr. Steve Friedlander.



The household items section of the garage sale is shown in the foreground, with the cashier's table and Designer Boutique in the background.



Linda Lamke, with husband Craig modeling his new "hair hat".



Anna McCardle and Linda Lamke ready to help customers "fill-a-bag".



Garage Sale organizers Monica House and Connie Steinheimer.



Teresa Mentzer, dressed for a hot weather Saturday.



New member Jeanne Naccarato and Life Member John Hughes helping with set-up. That's Bev Perkins in the background.



From left, Eileen Fuller, Doris Phelps and President Vivian Ruiz surrounded by merchandise for sale.

The Friday Night set-up crew with just a small sampling of clothes for sale.



Even More September Club Happenings

With no sales to perform at the Reno Air Races this year, members Kay Dunham and Margie Hermanson were at a loss of what to do this time of years. Kay typically made a hundred or so dozen cookies to keep hungry volunteers satisfied at the RARA merchandise tent. She and Margie teamed up to provide cookies for auction at the September 3 meeting and raised \$ 130 for the club's service fund. They plan more surprise cookie auctions in the future.



Joanna Moran, at right, was inducted into SITM membership at the September Business Meeting. Kay Dunham is her sponsor. Congratulations Joanna. We're glad you have joined us,.



Celebrating September birthdays at the Business Meeting with Toblerone Chocolate presented by Georgia Baker-Flambures were, from left: Kathy Benson, Joanna Moran and Bev Perkins.

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SITM meets every Thursday noon at the Atlantis Resort & Spa, 3800 South Virginia Street in Reno, second floor convention center. For reservations www.sitruckeemeadows@hotmail.com. no later than 7 p.m. on the Monday before the meeting. Lunch is \$19.

Soroptimist is an international organization for business and professional women who work to improve the lives of women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world.



For information about our organization, check out these Soroptimist Websites:

Sierra Nevada Region: www.soroptimistsnr.org

Soroptimist International of the Americas: www.soroptimist.org

Soroptimist International: www.soroptimistinternational.org



Did you know . . .

Soroptimist International President Yvonne Simpson Announces the 2015-17 President's Appeal Project



For the December 10 President's Appeal that coincides with my term in office from 2015-2017, I seek to support a process and projects that will:

1. Bring together the four federations around measurable, sustainable projects transforming the lives of women and girls
2. Focus on the SI theme of education and leadership
3. Assist women and girls to rebuild their lives following the 2015 April and May earthquakes in Nepal
4. Build partnerships with leading educational organizations working in Nepal
5. Measure and report outcomes of the funded projects
6. Create public awareness opportunities for SI and the federations as measured by the message that Soroptimists make an impact on education and leadership for women and girls
7. Provide opportunities for site visits if possible
8. Define a process and guidelines for future President's Appeals