



**SOROPTIMIST**  
Best for Women

# Soropti-SCOOP

*A Communique by  
women dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls  
in local communities and throughout the world.*

Vol. 10, Issue 7

Soroptimist International of Sequim

January 2007

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Colleen Blazier

**President-Elect:**  
Kathy Purcell

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## TRADITIONS - A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the New Year gets underway, I have broken a long-standing tradition and replaced it with a new one. With 13 inches of snow right after Thanksgiving, I decided not to accompany friends to select the “perfect” Christmas tree. Traditionally, I have my German tannenbaum downstairs with white lights and red satin ornaments; the tree with multicolored lights and sentimental ornaments decorates a corner in the living room. With our member Rose Jaeger’s help, I found a wonderful long needle pine tree at Henery’s Garden Center; it will have a lasting home on a knoll in the back yard some day soon.

I wonder how many members sung “Auld Lang Syne” New Year’s. It’s a Scottish song from 1796 that was popularized by Guy Lombardo, who played it for the first time in New York City in 1929. The tradition was born. There are so many wonderfully interesting New Year’s traditions celebrated around the world.

Germany is known for the visit from St. Nicholas. There is a green pickle ornament placed on the tree for a special gift. If you are the first to find it, you are rewarded with an extra present.

In Holland, the Dutch burn bonfires of Christmas trees on the street and launch fireworks. The fires are meant to purge the old and welcome the new.

In Spain, the Spanish ritual on New Year’s eve is to eat twelve grapes at midnight. The tradition is meant to secure twelve happy months in the coming year.

In Greece, New Year’s day is also the Festival of St. Basil so one of the traditional foods served is St Basil’s cake. A silver or gold coin is baked inside the cake. Whoever finds the coin will be especially lucky during the coming year. My Canadian friends make a Christmas pudding that also has a coin or two for the lucky person that finds it.

What are your family traditions? What do you think is the most popular tradition in the United States? Would it be the dropping of the New Year ball in Times Square? That tradition began in 1907. The ball is made of Waterford crystal and weighs over 1000 pounds. I have friends in Charleston, SC that make the traditional southern New Year’s dish – Hoppin’ John with black eyed peas and ham hocks. The saying goes, “Eat peas on New Year’s day to have plenty of everything the rest of the year.” Maybe the American tradition is the Tournament of Roses parade with the elaborate and inventive floats. The first parade was held in 1886. The exquisite flowers and designs are truly a labor of love. Fireworks and noisemaking on New Year’s eve originated in ancient times, when noise and fire were thought to dispel evil spirits and bring good luck.

Whatever traditions you celebrate, I hope that good luck, happiness and the best of health are bestowed on each of you and your loved ones throughout the New Year.

Blessings in Soroptimist Friendship,  
President Colleen

## Letter from the Editor

What does it mean to be connected? If you're referring to Tony Soprano and the mob, well, it might mean one thing. But if you're talking AOL and Earthlink or Spint and Verizon, then it means you're talking about internet or cell phone connections. Of course, when we refer to family or friends, then we mean a heart connection.

On New Year's Day I phoned my youngest brother, Dave, in Illinois. Answering the phone he said, "I can't believe this! I'm on the other line with (brother) Steve and I just mentioned your name and here you are calling!" They had been on the phone for two hours (...and they say women gab!). Dave was finishing up his conversation with Steve; he put me on hold (not the hug kind unfortunately) and then came back to the line. (A heart connection for sure!)

Biological families are not our only heart connections. Our Soroptimist family is also connected. One example comes from Jeanne Martin, who traveled to New Zealand in December. While there, Jeanne was able to visit with two Soroptimist clubs – even attending their Christmas parties! One of the clubs mentioned the Soroptimist chatline to Jeanne, and she brought it up to our club after her return. I had heard the term 'Soroptimist chatline' before, but was not sure what it was. Jeanne's reference to it peaked my interest, so I decided to find out more. I couldn't find any information about Soroptimist chatline on either our Northwestern Region website or the SIA website.

Not to be deterred, I wrote Jeanne to ask for a contact name in New Zealand. It turns out that person was Sheilah Downs from SI Lower Hutt. Sheilah provided the information on how to subscribe to the chatline. I followed the required steps, and on January 5, 2007 I received my official welcome. I am now a Soroptimist Chatliner!

A chatline is a type of internet forum (a mailing list) that allows widespread distribution of information to many users. Once you subscribe to it, you receive a copy of all email messages posted to the chatline. You don't have to respond unless you have something to say. You can send a reply to the entire group, or if you choose, you can reply to an individual directly.

A good explanation of the chatline is expressed in one of the postings I received from Stella Funk Butler from SI Portland. She wrote as follows:

Dear Kathy,

Welcome to the chatline from another NWR Soroptimist. You will enjoy being on the chatline....there is so much friendship, warmth, links to other countries and cultures that you will have much more friendship links than you will know what to do with! Enjoy.....

Stella Funk Butler  
Corresponding Secretary, Historian  
Soroptimist International of Portland, OR INC.  
Northwestern Region, USA, SI of the Americas

## CALENDAR

### JANUARY, 2007

- 5 Board Meeting
- 9 Business Meeting  
(GOM Dec & Jan)
- 28 Program -  
The Dream Center
- \* 30 SOCIAL Meet our  
Women's Opportunity  
Award Winner

### FEBRUARY

- 9 Board Meeting
- 13 Business Meeting
- 27 Program - Violet  
Richardson and  
Making a Difference  
for Women  
Award Winners

### \*EVENING MEETING

## SAVE THIS WEEKEND

## ROOMIES NEEDED APRIL 27 – 29, 2007

There was a definite process  
by which one made people  
into friends, and it involved  
talking to them and listening  
to them for hours at a time.  
~ *Rebecca West*

# Celebrate Life!

## BIRTHDAYS



### JANUARY

- 3 Nan Cramer
- 6 Rose Jaeger
- 10 Kate Creasey
- 21 Dovie Carson
- 30 Brenda Dunlap

### FEBRUARY

- 6 Sharon Vera

Note the phone number for our  
MEDICAL LOAN CLOSET

**504-0231**



The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed. ~ *Carl Jung*

**Help a Sister  
Soroptimist club in  
Liverpool  
Celebrate their  
80th Birthday!  
See page 7**

## MEDICAL LOAN CLOSET GIVES AND RECEIVES

*Just after our snowstorm in November a call came thru to the Medical Loan Closet (MLC) from a man asking for a motorized cart/scooter for his brother Chris. Our MLC had exactly what he was looking for. Sally Sue Barry was the member on-call. Her story (below) is wonderful testament to the value of what we provide, and what we receive in return. (Sounds like the gratitude coin coming back to us.)*

Chris didn't say a lot, but he was able to swing out of his brother's truck, lower himself on, get settled on the scooter — and then he took off in the snow. I was concerned because he was going over near Safeway to meet a relative with a pick-up, who would take the scooter home. His brother wasn't worried and was clearly very glad that Chris would have this method to get out and around.

Chris has been paralyzed from the waist down for quite awhile — result of an automobile accident. He appeared to be in his mid thirties. He hasn't been very mobile since his electric wheelchair was vandalized and stolen about three months earlier.

Wish I'd had my camera then and had gotten a picture of Chris taking off in the snow. Seeing someone like Chris able to use our equipment really makes me glad I'm serving on this committee.

The paperwork our clients receive when they borrow equipment explains that there is no charge, but that we gladly accept donations. And they certainly must be thankful for the loan closet, because they've been very generous. So far this Club year – July thru the end of December, we have received \$1756 in cash donations! That more than pays for the rent of the storage unit and the Vonage phone message system.

If any of you have not visited the closet, we would like to show you what we have to offer the community. Give one of us a call & we'll give you a tour.

Sally Sue Barry  
MLC Co-Chair

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## MAKING CONNECTION ~continued from page 2

I was amazed at how many Chatliners sent me messages of welcome – many from other federations. I may not be sprinting into the chatline just yet, but I see it as an earthlink, or at least a world link with A-O-L (All Our Lives) linked together. This is surely a heart connection enabled by the cool communication technologies of our times. I look forward to learning and sharing with my world-wide Soroptimist family.

With Gratitude & Love,  
*Kathy Purcell*, Editor

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS

November was Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Two Saturdays in November, our club handed out information about this important topic. We also sold raffle tickets for a purple quilt that was hand-made by Mary Christensen. She is a 93 years young friend of President Colleen who is legally blind. What an inspiration she is! A quilt stand, hand-made by Soropti-Mister Tim Creasey was the perfect accompaniment.

At our December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, members snatched up last minute raffle tickets. Lyell Fox, our newest member, picked the winning ticket. The winner of the quilt and stand was Gail Frick. She, in turn, gave the quilt and stand to a women who is a survivor of domestic violence. A total of **\$380** was collected from the raffle, and that money was given to Serenity House. What a perfect ending to a Dream that we all played a part in Making Happen. What a blessing!  
~kp



Speaking of blessings, we also collected **\$185.00 plus a COSTCO gift card** for the Salvation Army Kitchen



and **\$105.00** for the Kids Kloset along with some wonderful clothing that was brought to our Christmas party.

*Thank you for your generosity and for sharing the spirit of Christmas.*



## A CHRISTMAS TO REMEMBER

Our annual Christmas Party was filled with good food, good friends, good cheer and good music. The Sweet Adeline's were decked out in Christmas colors as they harmonized some well-known holiday favorites, and a few we don't hear too often. Thanks to Rose Jaeger for heading up the festivities and to Mayme Faulk, President Colleen and Janet Wicker who helped decorate. The food, Cornish hens no less, was catered by Cindy and Kathy, formerly Café Café.

Technology is a wonderful thing – when it works. The Christmas gremlins, or maybe the minihoonies, were in play at our annual Christmas Party. Some of you who tease me about always having my camera out, will be interested to know technology got in the way. My video camera's hard drive got 'confused' and had to be reformatted. All the photos and videos I took at the Christmas Party were lost. Lucky for us the memories are imprinted on our hearts. ~kp

There is a wonderful mythical law of nature that the three things we crave most in life — happiness, freedom, and peace of mind — are always attained by giving them to someone else.

*~ Peyton Conway March*



Can you see the Baby in this picture?

## THE SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS

When does bell ringing not sound like a bell? When you sing instead of ring. And that's just what we did outside of Safeway in Sequim on December 19, 2006. Although it was not the traditional bell ringing, we were still able to spread holiday cheer as we supported this time-honored Salvation Army project. I was lucky enough to join my voice with those of Kate Creasey and two girls from the high school who are in chorus. How cool is that!? It was particularly meaningful to me because it brought me back to when I was a kid, and we went Christmas Caroling in my neighborhood. Christmas is a time to find the kid inside and enjoy with abandon.

While Kate lead our group at the west entrance, Heather and Amanda Cerutti were at the east side. Those two are always thinking ahead! They brought along soft mints to offer shoppers. They had enough so that the groups at both doors could hand out the treats. The Stratton Trio (sisters) that performed last year, were there again this year. Their enthusiasm is contagious. Ann Salmon and Terry Coe offered greetings and gratitude to people, as did Willadee Tallman and Jane Manzer. When all the monies were tallied, the amount collected during those 7 hours was \$536.10. That's 70% more than last year! It is wonderful to see so many giving people in our community. What a blessing to be able to share.

Kathy Purcell  
Program Chair



## W.I.N. BELL-RINGERS

By Amanda Cerutti  
WIN Reporter

The true meaning of Christmas, in my opinion, is giving. The citizens of Sequim showed me that, when a number of them gave money to the Salvation Army on Saturday December 16, 2006. Mix together, happiness, fun, and really cold weather, and you get the WIN bell ringers. Besides the cold, the only downside was that we didn't have any bells to ring! Whoever heard of "Silent" bell ringers? I guess Safeway and the Salvation Army agreed that there would be no bells this year. While my mom and I were standing there, wishing everyone a good day, I found that more and more of those who gave money were younger people. There had been numerous children who put quarters, dimes, and nickels into the red pot, and did that with smiles on their faces.

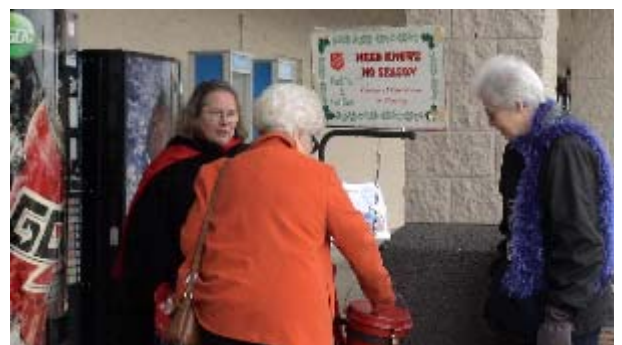


It wasn't until Janaye, Alyssa, and Staci Stratton came along that our little spot became the coolest spot! Those girls sure do know how to turn winter cold into winter fun! They started singing, and spreading the cheer! They even got some of citizens to join. It was only then that I had to leave. Right when the fun was at its highest. That had been a lot of fun, and I recommend that you try it!

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If you make it plain you like people, it's hard  
for them to resist liking you back.  
~ Lois McMaster Bujold

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## CHATLINERS UNITE

*Being connected to our Soroptimist sisters via the chatline opens a world of unlimited possibilities for friendship, sharing, and growth – both as clubs and as individuals. My schedule is a bit busy right now, so I haven't had much time to get involved with it. But that will be changing soon. Expect to hear a lot more from and about the chatline in the future.*

*Once I was officially subscribed to the group, I started receiving welcome messages from many Chatliners. I was surprised to see one from Laxmi, who visited SI Sequim as a Grant of Friendship visitor several years ago. There was also a message from Joc Hanby, an Aussie sister.*

*A lot of you will remember when Joc visited our club last spring. I was happy to hear from her via the chatline and wanted to share her words with our members. Sandy Reed and her husband Jim were in Australia in December and Sandy had an opportunity to meet up with Joc. You can see their picture at the bottom of this page.*

Hi Kathy, welcome to this most amazing Soroptimist club in the world.

Thanks to the amazing Nancy Hansen and Julia, I was granted a Grant of Friendship to the NW Region in April 2006, what an absolute, fantastic, wonderful, fun, time made 'in heaven' I had, thanks to the clubs that offered to host me.

They were just at the most absolutely, knockout, friendly, fun loving, dedicated Sorops I have ever met.

The Conference in Tacoma was to me, a huge eye opener, and made more so for my friends from Friday Harbor.

I do feel that I have a say in you joining our wonderful Chatline! How fantastic is that!

Jeanne (Martin) emailed me when she was planning to visit NZ, wanting any helpful information. I referred her to Sheilah Downes whom I had known from the Chatline since 1999 and had met in Helsinki, the rest is what they say is 'history'!

Chatliners, I met Kathy when I was a Grant of Friendship visitor last year (2006) when I was hosted in Sequim – pronounced Squim – and stayed with the lovely Nanc (Smith) & Eric; that club is just so fantastic, and so welcoming to a strange Aussie. Colleen (Blazier), who gave me afternoon Tea, the most beautiful wind breaker & told me to keep it. The visit to the Medical Closet & of course you, Kathy.

Kathy, I still have your pink pen & treasure it; I stole it off her one night at a Pot Luck Supper at Nanc's & Eric's home, where the Sequim Club had a 'pot luck supper'. I can close my eyes and see everyone there, Kate, with her most amazing book for me, everyone else who attended and the most lovely woollen scarf to keep me warm.

I haven't forgotten my promise to tell you about Aussie speak, will send it to you privately. Welcome Kathy.

That grant of friendship changed my life!

Joc.

Jocelyn Hanby  
Director Soroptimist House  
Past President SI Victoria 2002-2004  
SI Victoria Environment Coordinator  
SISWP Coordinator 'Project Independence 2004-2006

**Know that although in the eternal scheme of things you are small, you are also unique and irreplaceable, as are all your fellow humans everywhere in the world.**

**~ Margaret Laurence**



Sandy Reed with Joc Hanby

*Here is a message received from Sheilah Downs from SI Lower Hutt, New Zealand who graciously welcomed Jeanne Martin when she was visiting there in December.*

Well Kathy, what can I say, but welcome, welcome, welcome. I was delighted to see you join our wonderful international 24 hour club where we meet daily! I'm so glad that Jeanne (Martin) passed the information on to you and hope that Jeanne and others will also join us. I know that Jeanne is going into her busy period as a tax consultant so perhaps that will have to come first.

I certainly enjoyed my time with her and Corby, brief though it was, and hopefully we will meet up again before too long.

Like the others I will look forward to hearing about your club activities etc. From what Jeanne told me you are certainly a very active club.

Kindest regards  
Sheilah

Sheilah Downs  
SI Lower Hutt, New Zealand, NZ Central Region,  
SISWP

[www.visithuttcity.org.nz](http://www.visithuttcity.org.nz)

"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

Mother Theresa

## A SPECIAL REQUEST



Dear Chatliners,

On **25 February 2007** SI Liverpool will be celebrating its **80th birthday**.

We are the third oldest club in Britain and the **19th oldest in the world** - so good reasons to celebrate.

Needless to say the Club has organized some very special events and some members from our international friendship links are also coming to celebrate with us.

I am hoping to compile a telegram for our President, Sharon Bird, and **it would be nice to include greetings from the chatliners**.

Anybody wishing to send greetings please contact me on my home e-mail  
[christina.spencer@virgin.net](mailto:christina.spencer@virgin.net)

Many thanks.  
In friendship and with cyber hugs  
Christina Spencer  
Editor and Archivist  
SI Liverpool

Check out the diagram showing the structure of Soroptimist International on page 10.

There are four federations:

Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific (**SISWP**),

Soroptimist International of the Americas (**SIA**),

Soroptimist International of Great Britain & Ireland (**SIGBI**),

Soroptimist International of Europe (**SIE**).

The **Northwestern Region** is the largest region of our federation, **SIA**.

**District 1** is the largest District in the **Northwestern Region**.

To cement a new friendship, especially between foreigners or persons of a different social world, a spark with which both were secretly charged must fly from person to person, and cut across the accidents of place and time.

~ *Cornelia Otis Skinner*

The sharing of joy, whether physical, emotional, psychic, or intellectual, forms a bridge between the sharers which can be the basis for understanding much of what is not shared between them, and lessens the threat of their difference. ~ *Audre Lorde*

## The Soroptimist Chatline

In 1998 it was decided to set up an on-line facility to be known as The Chatline so that members with email access could share worldwide their ideas, discuss projects and share comments on a wide variety of subjects and promote International Friendship.

Today there are more than 700 Soroptimists networking through The Chatline.

The Soroptifun Line has developed as an offshoot for more lighthearted and personal contact and there is a regular exchange of anecdotes, jokes, craft ideas, travel reports and web site photos.



The Quilt (see below) was made by Chatline members throughout the world to raise funds for Limbs for Life Project. The quilt traveled all over the world being displayed by member's clubs in a variety of venues. It will be presented to the IRC, Geneva who were the partners in this project.



"TQ's Official Photocall" From left to right: Kate Moore; Helene Van Themsche, IPP of S.I.E and International Liaison for the Limbs for Life Project; International President Jane Zimmerman; Judy Dreis

The person who tries to live alone will not succeed as a human being. His heart withers if it does not answer another heart. His mind shrinks away if he hears only the echoes of his own thoughts and finds no other inspiration. ~ *Pearl S. Buck*

## CHATLINERS' WELCOME

Dear Kathy:

I don't think chatliners would mind your using information from their messages posted to the chatline in your club newsletter. I know I wouldn't. Actually it's a very nice compliment that you would want to do so. Welcome again to the chatline!

Cyberhugs, Susan

Susan Joyce, SI/Central Solano County, Founder Region, SIA

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Dear Kathy

I can only speak for myself, but I am happy for you to use any of my messages in your club newsletter.

We have all learnt so much from each other on the Chat Line - and the friendships formed on line are one of the most wonderful things about the Chat Line. Welcome to the largest, best and friendliest Soroptimist club in the world ;-)

Registrations for the International Convention in Glasgow in July 2007 show that already 71 Chat Liners have registered for our lunch!!! This will be Soroptimist friendship at its most exciting and best!

Love and cyber-hugs  
Kate

(Kate Moore)  
SI Nantwich, Region of Cheshire, North Wales & Wirral  
Federation Councillor, SI Gt Britain & Ireland

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Dear Kathy: I just checked out SI/Sequim's website and your newsletter...WOW!!

Congratulations on having an excellent website as well as an excellent newsletter!

I especially loved the winter wonderland photos in the newsletter...exquisite!

I also saw many good ideas for other clubs to consider!

I'm so glad you joined the chatline and I look forward to your future postings.

Cyberhugs, Susan Joyce  
SI/Central Solano County, Founder Region, SIA

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Dear Kathy,

Welcome to the Chatline, you will be amazed at the 'topics' which are discussed look forward to hearing about your club.  
In friendship Jean.

Jean Lord  
Hon. Secretary  
S.I. Rishton & Great Harwood  
Region N.W. & I of Man.  
S.I.G.B.I. UK.

Hi Kathy

Glad to add you to the list and glad to see you are enjoying our Chatline. It is a great place to share ideas and learn what other clubs in different parts of the world are doing. And you are certainly welcome to use any of my contributions at any time. I doubt if anyone else will mind either. I know several members use snippets for their club newsletters.

Kind regards  
Sheilah (Downs)

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Hi Kathy

A warm welcome from UK!

Well actually it's extremely windy and raining hard, but still....  
I'm Pam, a member of one of 5 Clubs on the Wirral in North west England.

Echoing what others have said, the Chatline is a wonderful means of communication, friendship and support. You'll experience the whole gamut of ideas and opinions and hopefully have fun too!

Re your request to use quotes, I have no problems if you wish to use anything I have said go ahead.

Looking forward to hearing from you and learning more about you.  
love and cyberhugs  
Pam

Pam Cheesley-Hollinshead  
SI Bebington  
Cheshire North Wales and Wirral UK

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Kathy,

Welcome to the Chatline from your neighbor (only 600 miles more or less) in Boise, Idaho. I have a relatives in Gig Harbor, Elma & Olympia and have visited your area a few times. You do live in a beautiful area—all the green lush vegetation. When I get tired of the heat and dry summers here in Boise I like to go to the Oregon or Washington coast.

Hope you enjoy the chatline and our discussions.

Representative Phylis K. King  
Idaho House seat 18 B  
Professional Photographer  
Boise, Idaho

The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people so full of doubts. Bertrand Russell

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A warm welcome to Kathy Purcell from your sister chatliner "down under" in sunny Queensland, Australia.

Maddie Wright  
SI Brisbane South  
SI South Queensland - Where it is beautiful one day and perfect the next  
SISWP



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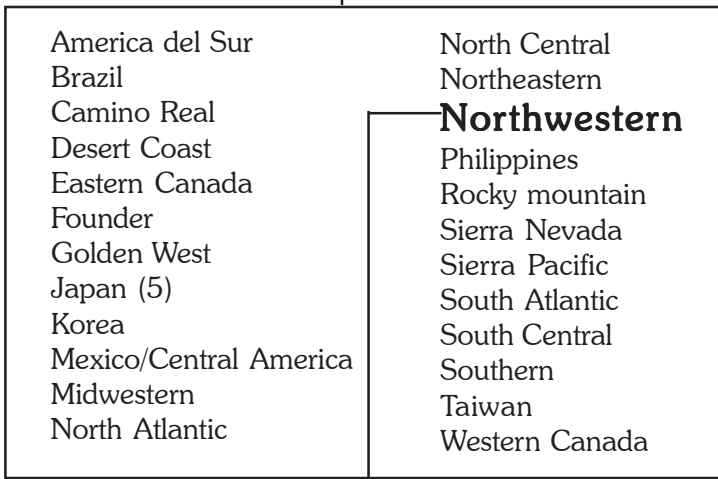
Soroptimist  
International  
of the  
South West Pacific

Soroptimist  
International  
of the  
Americas, Inc.

Soroptimist  
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Great Britain &  
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<p><b>District 1</b> (40 clubs)</p> SI Anacortes SI Anchorage SI Auburn SI Bellevue Metropolitan SI Bellingham SI Burlington SI Centralia-Chehalis SI Cook Inlet SI Coupeville SI Everett SI Fairbanks SI Federal Way SI Fidalgo Island SI Friday Harbor SI Greater Bremerton SI Greater North Kitsap SI Kenai Peninsula SI Kent SI Kodiak SI La Conner	<p><b>District 1</b> Cont'd</p> SI Marysville SI Mount Vernon SI Oak Harbor SI Olympia SI Olympic Rain Forest SI Port Angeles SI Port Angeles Jet Set SI Port Orchard SI Port Townsend SI Renton SI Seattle Metropolitan SI Seattle North SI Seattle South SI Sedro Woolley SI Sequim SI Sitka SI Sno-King SI So. Whidbey Island SI Tacoma SI Vashon Maury	<p><b>District 2</b> (34 clubs)</p> SI Albany SI Ashland SI Bend SI Brookings SI Carmas-Washougal SI Coos Bay Area SI Coquille Valley SI Corvallis SI Emerald Empire SI Eugene SI Florence SI Gold Beach SI Gresham SI Hillsboro SI Hood River SI Junction City SI Keizer SI Klamath Falls SI Lakeview SI McMinnville SI Medford SI Mount Adams SI North Valley SI Portland SI Portland East SI Portland North SI Prineville SI Redmond	<p><b>District 2</b> Cont'd</p> SI River Valley SI Rogue Starlight SI Rouge Valley Sunrise SI Salem SI Southwest Washington SI Vancouver	<p><b>District 3</b> (18 clubs)</p> SI Baker County SI Chelan SI Coeur d'Alene SI Goldendale SI Grangeville SI Greater Hermiston SI La Grande SI Lower Yakima Valley SI Mid-Columbia SI Moses Lake SI Newport SI Okanogan Valley SI Pasco-Kennewick SI Spokane SI Three Rivers SI Wallowa County SI Wenatchee SI Yakima	<p><b>District 4</b> (18 clubs)</p> SI Anaconda SI Bigfork SI Billings SI Choteau SI Crimson Bluffs SI Dillon SI Glasgow SI Great Falls SI Hamilton SI Havre SI Helena SI Helena Heritage SI Kalispell SI Livingston SI Missoula North SI Polson SI Shelby SI Whitefish
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# MULTI-TASKING

Excerpt from *The Costco Connection* January 2007

When the word “multi-tasking” was coined, it referred to a computer that could run more than one program simultaneously. Now, multi-tasking evokes images of people scanning e-mail while talking on the phone, writing a report while listening in on conference calls or cooking dinner while supervising homework. The key to success, we’re told, is how many different jobs we can complete at the same time.

But some experts say the more tasks we juggle – particularly unrelated tasks – the less efficient we become at performing any one task. What’s more, they argue, multi-tasking increases stress and may cause discomfort or health problems.

## From experts in the field:

**Emily Wilska**, owner of The Organized Life, a professional organizing company serving business and residential clients.

In the real world there will always be times when two (or more) things demand your attention at once. Here’s how to do what you need to do efficiently and effectively.

**Set a time limit.** When you need to shift gears from one task to another – or to do two tasks at once – give yourself a deadline for returning to the original task. For example, if you receive an important phone call while you’re in the middle of writing a proposal for a client, let the caller know you’re able to talk for only 10 minutes; at the end of 10 minutes, politely but firmly end the call, making plans to follow up later if need be.

**Keep tabs on what you were doing.** Before shifting your attention away from the task you were working on, take a moment to note where you were, what your next step was going to be and where to pick up when you come back to the task. If you’re pulled away from dinner prep by a child clamoring for your attention, for example, take a second to remind yourself that you were just about to move on to step three of your recipe; when you return to cooking, you’ll know what’s next.

**Use stop-loss measures.** At the very least, make sure multi-tasking doesn’t undo any progress you’ve already made. Stop-loss measures – turning down the stove before answering the phone, say, or saving the document you’re writing before chatting with the colleague who comes into your office – can help ensure you don’t wind up further back than where you were.

**Learn how to manage your time effectively.** In *Time Management from the Inside Out* (Henry Hold, 2004), author Julie Morgenstern proves that whatever your personality or work style, there’s a time-management system for you. K.J. McCorry’s *Organize Your Work Day in No Time* (Pearson Education, 2005) covers everything from setting daily goals to using technology wisely and managing your information intake. David Allen’s *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity* (Penguin, 2001) is one of the most popular productivity books on the market for good reason: It sets out a simple, effective, easy-to-follow system for making the most of your time.

**Michelle M. Weil**, Ph.D, a clinical psychologist, keynote speaker and consultant and co-author of *TechnoStress: Coping with Technology @Work@Home@Play*

The more tasks we learn, the less efficient we become at performing any one task. Moreover, the longer we go before returning to an interrupted task, the harder it is to remember just where we left off.

Laboratory research shows that multi-tasking increases stress, diminishes perceived control and may cause physical discomfort such as stomachaches, headaches and more. My own research on more than 35,000 people worldwide demonstrates that multi-tasking makes it even harder to concentrate for extended periods.

You might notice that as you are working on one task thoughts about another creep into your consciousness. Another sign of what I call “multi-tasking madness” is the feeling that your memory is not quite as good as it used to be. You start working on something and then find yourself not being able to remember what you wanted to do or say.






Still another symptom is inability to sustain a peaceful night’s sleep or to enjoy what used to be calming, recreational times. Too many thoughts are buzzing in your head. In the end, multi-tasking madness diminishes your productivity and makes you work harder just to feel like you are barely keeping up with all your work.

How to stop the madness? First, try getting better at estimating the time it takes you to complete a task. Ask yourself how long it will take to download, read and answer your e-mail. Then check the actual time it takes. You’ll generally find that you underestimated the time required. This discrepancy leads you to pile more expectations on yourself. You multi-task more and more, and soon you have way too much to juggle.





Second, develop an “external memory” to take some of the load off your brain. (An external memory can be as simple as a pad of paper where you list your tasks.)

Third, give yourself a chance to persevere on a task until completion. This is the most productive way to work. Eliminate such distractions as checking your e-mail frequently. Turn off the ringer on your phone and fax. Of course, you also have to learn to say no to tasks you don’t have time to complete. Remember, technology can multi-task 24/7. You cannot.

# January 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Happy New Year!	2	3 Nan Cramer 	4	5 BOARD MEETING	6 Rose Jaeger 
7	8	9 Business Meeting	10 Kate Creasey 	11	12	13
14	15 Martin Luther King Day Observed	16	17	18	19	20
21 Dovie Carson 	22	23 Program Meeting Dream Center	24	25	26	27 UN Int'l Day of Com- memoration in memory of the victims of the Holocost
28	29	30 Brenda Dunlap EVENING SOCIAL Meet the Women's Opportunity Award Winner 	31			

# February 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Library Lover's Month 				1	2	3
4	5	6 Sharon Vera 	7	8	9 BOARD MEETING	10
11	12	13 Business Meeting	14 Valentine's Day 	15	16	17
18	19	20 President's Day 	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 Program Meeting Meet the Violet Richardson and Making a Difference for Women Award Winners	28			

## God's Coffee:

A group of alumni, highly established in their careers, got talking at a reunion and decided to go visit their old university professor, now retired. During their visit conversation soon turned into complaints about stress in their work and lives.

Offering his guests coffee, the professor went to the kitchen and returned with a large pot of coffee and an assortment of cups – porcelain, plastic, glass, crystal, some plain looking, some expensive, some exquisite – telling them to help themselves to the coffee.

When all the alumni had a cup of coffee in hand, the professor said, “Notice that all the nice looking, expensive cups were taken up, leaving behind the plain and cheap ones.

While it is normal for you to want only the best for yourselves, that is the source of your problems and stress. Be assured that the cup itself adds no quality to the coffee. In most cases it is just more expensive and in some cases even hides what we drink. What all of you really wanted was coffee, not the cup, but you consciously went for the best cups... and then you began eyeing each other's cups.

Now consider this: Life is the coffee; your job, money and position in society are the cups. They are just tools to hold and contain Life. The type of cup one has does not define, nor change the quality of Life a person lives. Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the coffee God has provided us.

The happiest people don't have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything.”

God brews the coffee, not the cups... Enjoy your coffee! Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Spend time with God over your coffee.



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