



# SI Los Angeles NEWS *Fellowship with a purpose!*

## Greetings!



Greetings SILA Members,

We had a busy month during March and expect April to be even busier. We began March with a Day of Service at the Downtown Women's Center where we cooked and served breakfast to the residents and visitors. Many thanks to **Pam, Carole, Karen, Janet, Daniela** (Janet's little sis), **Ginger, Sheila, Ann**

and **Diane** (potential new members) and yours truly, who rolled up their sleeves and donned their SI Los Angeles aprons to participate in this wonderful experience.

Great News! Five women have submitted applications for membership and were accepted by the club at the meeting on March 16. An induction of new members will be held at the meeting on April 6. This meeting will be held at Taix Restaurant and I hope you can all make it. The combined Board/Business meeting will begin at 5:30pm and our inductees and guests will arrive at 6:30pm.

I strongly encourage you to sell the tickets for the annual luncheon at The Castaway Restaurant in Burbank. We have some stellar honorees and should have a full house in recognition of their achievements. Remember, this is our only fundraiser and it requires everyone's participation. The silent auction promises to be quite lavish as well.

The meeting on April 20 will feature a presentation from the staff at 1736, the domestic violence shelter we support. Then we close out the month of April with a visit to the Grammy Museum.

President Jeri

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## Quick Links

- [SILA's Website](#)
- [Camino Real Region Federation \(SIA\)](#)
- [International \(SI\)](#)

## 2010-2011 Board

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- Treasurer: Janet Elliott
- Directors 2009-11: Barbara Jury and Irene Recendez
- Directors 2010-12: Karen Johnson and Dona Lawrie

## Contact Information

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## Cooking Breakfast for 100 Homeless Ladies



SILA members and friends shown here with DWC's Katie Escudero, Volunteer Coordinator

As part of Soroptimist's "Saturday Day of Service", ten SILA members and friends met at the Downtown Women's Center (DWC) on Saturday, March 5 at 6:30am and successfully prepared and served breakfast to about 100 women. Using the DWC's beautiful new kitchen facilities that are part of their Day Center that is located in downtown LA's Skid Row, **Karen Johnson, Ginger Cole, Janet Elliott, Daniela Aragon, Ann Read, Sheila Tatum, Carole Oglesby, Pam Smith, Jeri Durham and Diane Vernon** made french toast casserole, "super" scrambled eggs which included lots of vegetables, and a fresh fruit salad for women who live in DWC's residential building, in other

downtown shelters, or are just on the street. Following breakfast, SILA members were given a tour of DWC's Residential Facility and learned more about DWC's programs which provide a safe and healthy community to downtown women and advocates ending homelessness for women. For more about this innovative program, see the article below. All agreed it was a most interesting and satisfying activity.



In 1978, **Jill Halverson**, a local social worker, opened a storefront day center for women on LA's Skid Row. With the support of others in the community, she used her life savings to expand into [the first Downtown Womens Center](#). In 1986, Downtown Women's Center acquired and renovated a 47-room residential facility. SILA was an early supporter, contributing funds to pay for one room at the original residential facility.

Recently, the Downtown Women's Center has expanded its facilities on Skid Row including a new 71-room residential facility. Currently, the DWC is nationally recognized as a prototype for progressive programs striving to meet the unique needs of homeless women. In addition to providing housing, it offers a [day center](#) that provides clean private bathrooms and showers, day beds, laundry facilities, personalized case management, a weekly on-site medical clinic, and practical classes to meet the changing job opportunities for women, as well as serving over 57,000 meals - breakfast, lunch and a "hearty" afternoon snack 7 days a week - to over 2,500 women each year.

Photos from our "Cooking Breakfast for 100"



Preparation and serving counter



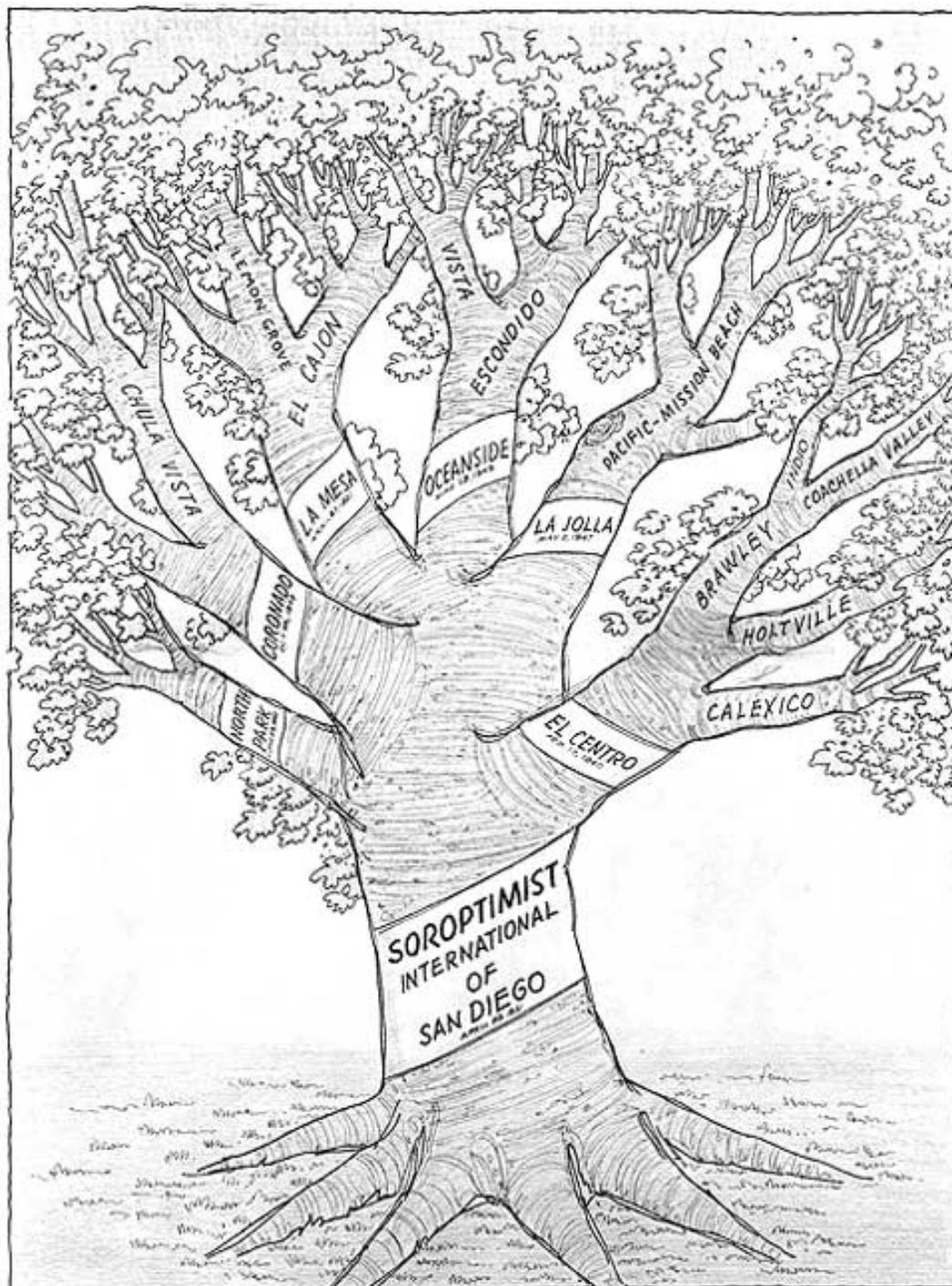
Dining room



Second floor residents patio



.Second floor computer classroom



SILA

joined Soroptimist International of San Diego (SISD) in celebrating their 80 years of service. On March 12, **Ginger Cole, Sheila Tatum, Carole Oglesby** and **Janet Elliott** attended SISD's High Tea at the Sheraton Harbor Island in San Diego. The event was preceded by an extensive shopping boutique and included a mini fashion show of clothes from each decade of the past 80 years and presentations to SISD's four Ruby Award honorees.

Every Soroptimist Club is formed by being sponsored by an existing Soroptimist club. In 1931, SI Los Angeles sponsored SI San Diego. In honor of our "mother-daughter" relationship, **Ginger** presented SISD with a Resolution from SILA highlighting SISD's 80 years of service to the San Diego community and their participation and leadership many Soroptimist programs and activities. **Ginger** also presented SISD with a check for \$250 from SILA for their service fund.

## Sign Up to Build Connections

It's not too late to sign up to attend the combined Camino Real Region and Desert Coast Region Spring Conference to be held on May 13-15 at the Sheraton Resort & Spa in Carlsbad.



**Annual Spring Conference**  
**May 13-15, 2011**

>> [get more information](#)

The theme for the Conference is "Building Connections." For more details about the Conference, including the schedule of events and the costs of individual meals, see the [Call to Conference](#). **President Jeri** will be taking final reservations at the meeting on Wednesday, April 6th. Come prepared to write a check for whatever activities you want to attend.

## Who Was Violet Richardson?

You've heard about the Soroptimist Violet Richardson Award honoring high school girls for their community service. But who was **Violet Richardson**?

**Violet Richardson Ward** (1888-1978) was a Charter Member Founder/President of the first Soroptimist Club, the county-named Alameda Club. An attendee of the *First Meeting of Members Committee Luncheon*, Violet later accepted the Presidency only on the condition that the Soroptimist Organization be international in scope. She was an early and determined feminist and an innovator in the Physical Education field for women.



Violet Richardson Ward.

In 1911, while still a student at the University of California in Berkeley, she organized the Berkeley Women's Gymnasium, shocking the local populace by allowing her students to wear bloomers while exercising or playing basketball, unheard of before that time.

While in her second year of study at the University, Violet had also begun to teach physical education classes to the underclassmen, and in addition substituted in the physical education departments at Mills and Holy Names Colleges in nearby Oakland. On discovering that she was being paid only \$20 a month by the University when the man who was merely taking attendance was paid \$40 per month, she insisted on equal pay, and when she was refused, she quit. The University President rehired her at \$40, but raised the man's salary to \$60, so she quit again, and did not return to teaching until the University Board of Regents signed an employment contract which guaranteed her an equal \$60 a month.

In 1916, she received a Master's Degree from UC Berkeley and was hired by the Berkeley School District as Supervisor of Health and Physical Education for the District. She established physical education classes for boys and girls in grade schools and established the first girls' physical education classes at Berkeley High School.

She actively participated, and frequently led, numerous activities involving women, physical education and civil rights in the Bay Area. So it was only natural that she would be one of ten women approached by Stuart Morrow when Soroptimists was formed in 1921. Violet was 33. In spite of the promise of Soroptimist being a club dedicated to service, when first getting organized the Soroptimists met as a luncheon or friendship club. But Violet insisted that members be on time for meetings, and that meetings end on time. Her goal of service was put into action immediately. In their first calendar year of only three months, Violet's first President's Report lists the projects for the year as installation of a heating plant for a Rescue Home, and care of three destitute families at Christmas.

Violet's non-profit work over the years extended well beyond just Soroptimist activities and duties. Later when she had to drop out of several organizations because she was so impossibly busy, it was her mother who urged her to stay with Soroptimist because "There you shall be able to sit between a Catholic and a Jew, and this will be a broadening influence, make friends of other women in addition to educators, artists, physicians, lawyers and women of all kinds of occupations, then you shall learn a lot that can be applied to your own occupation."

Violet met and married Stanley Arthur Ward when she was 38 in 1926, whom she always referred to as her "friend-husband". They had one son, John, in 1927.

In 1971, the Fiftieth Anniversary of Soroptimist, the Golden Jubilee, was celebrated. Violet, then 83, Stanley and granddaughter, Sandra, traveled to Rome for the International Convention where she was accorded the recognition she so justly deserved. Back home in Oakland there were also major 50th Anniversary events. A giant redwood tree in the Soroptimist Grove of Humboldt County in northern California was named "Violet Richardson Ward" and SIA Southwestern Region further celebrated the anniversary at Goodman Hall in Jack London Square in Oakland as the "Pilgrimage to Oakland - Where It All Began in 1921". A bronze bust/portrait of Violet was dedicated at the event, which now resides proudly in the Oakland Library. Over 1000 Soroptimists from around the world attended the celebration.



Violet with her bust/portrait, and Katherine Stinson, SIA Federation President in Oakland, Soroptimist 50th Anniversary, 1971

For more information about Violet Richardson, click [here](#) to read an excellent article researched and written by Soroptimist International of San Diego member **Ann M. Curren** and posted on the SI San Diego website. Many thanks to Ann for preserving this important part of Soroptimist history.

**Tickets on Sale Now!**

The SILA annual Women Making a Difference Luncheon and Silent Auction will be held on Saturday, April 16th, at the Castaway in Burbank. Presentations will be made to **Wendy**

**Greuel**, LA City Controller, as SILA's Ruby Award Honoree, as well as to other outstanding young women as honorees of the Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Award, Violet Richardson Award and SILA's Graduate Fellowship Award. In addition, a great array of items are going to be offered at the Silent Auction, including a week in Maui (available anytime before the end of 2012) and an open-cockpit biplane ride.

Tickets are on sale for \$65 each and can be downloaded from the SI Los Angeles website by clicking [here](#). The deadline for reservations is April 7.

For more information, contact [Carole Oglesby](#).



Wendy Greuel, SILA's 2011 Ruby Award Honoree.

## Come Explore The Grammy Museum

# THE GRAMMY MUSEUM®

Devoted to exploring and celebrating music

SILA members and friends will be visiting [The Grammy Museum](#) on Saturday, April 30. Opened in December 2008 in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Grammy® Awards, The Grammy Museum "explores and celebrates the enduring legacies of all forms of music; the creative process; the art and technology of the recording process; and the history of the Grammy® Awards, the premier recognition of recorded music accomplishment." The Grammy Museum is an exciting and interactive celebration of the power of music located at L.A. Live in downtown Los Angeles. It contains four floors of cutting-edge exhibits, interactive experiences and films which provide a one-of-a-kind visitor experience - engaging, educational, celebratory and inspirational. SILA's group tickets will allow us and our guests to enter and exit the museum at our leisure all day on Saturday. A few tickets at \$10.50 each are still available. Contact [Ginger Cole](#) immediately if you are interested in joining us.

## Member News



Former SILA member Jerri Patchett, left, with San Diego Supervisor Bill Horn and major donor Arlyne Ingold

Long time SILA members will remember former member **Jerri Patchett**. **Jerri** worked in the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office for many years and was a member of SILA until she retired and she and her husband, **Frank**, moved to Fallbrook, California. Now well established as a "community leader" in Fallbrook, an unincorporated area in northern San Diego County, on January 22, 2011, Jerri enjoyed the culmination of a 10 year project: the opening of the brand new Fallbrook Library. As chair of the Library Building Task Force, Jerri helped raise nearly \$3 million to insure the library opened not only debt free but open to the public 7 days a week, at a time when the library's operating budget had already been cut 24%. The library includes a planted "green roof", 12 major art installations, and greatly expanded computer access for the local population of about 50,000. Click on the short video below to learn more

about this amazing project:



Fallbrook Library Grand Opening Event

As Founder and President of the Fallbrook Beautification Alliance (FBA), Jerri is also passionate about this local nonprofit volunteer organization that coordinates local projects, people, and

funding to insure a better and more beautiful Fallbrook. FBA takes on everything from graffiti removal to roadside cleanup to e-waste roundups to Fourth of July fireworks - things that might normally be handled by a city government, if Fallbrook were a city. On the weekend of SILA's annual luncheon, Jerri will be helping to set up more than a city block of booths for Fallbrooks Arts, Inc's "Avenue of the Arts", part of the 25th Annual Fallbrook Avocado Festival. Having finished the library project, Jerri's next project is to raise \$5 million for the local Art Center. "Their current rent is holding them back," Jerri says. "They have to buy their buildings." Talk about a "woman making a difference". Way to go, Jerri!



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