

A SPECIAL SECTION ON THE IMPACT OF

WOMEN IN THE CORONA BUSINESS COMMUNITY

## *Soroptimists: A role model for the businesswomen of tomorrow*

**By Ariana Kimes**

**S**oroptimist International of Corona is making a difference in the lives of the women who share its vision, and in the lives of young women in our community who today have positive female role models ready to champion them.

It is impossible to write about businesswomen in Corona without including the role of the Soroptimist club, a volunteer service organization made up entirely of professional businesswomen. There is no other single place in Corona where you will find as many accomplished, educated

and savvy women gathered regularly for a common purpose. Some of our city's most influential women belong to this organization, such as City Manager Beth Groves, City Councilmember Karen Spiegel and Chamber president-elect Rachel Rola.

Soroptimist, by definition, means "Best for Women," and the Soroptimist mission is to "improve the lives of women and girls in communities and throughout the world." This serves as more than a slogan, but rather a statement of their purpose and commitment to making a difference through service.

Soroptimist, in fact, has six areas of service: Human Rights/Status of Women,

Education, Economic & Social Development, Health, Environment, International Goodwill and Understanding, and all of their projects must fall into one or more of these categories. Current organizations and programs they support include Alternatives to Domestic Violence, Corona Vista High School Teen Parent Program, Settlement House, Peppermint Ridge, and the newest, Inspire Life Skills Training.

In addition, Soroptimist's own SOS (Saturday of Service) project, "Dreams & Decisions," has impacted countless girls in the community. This program is geared towards 7th and 8th grade girls, and works to teach important lessons in

*Photo by Jim Dorsey Photography*



*Members of Soroptimist International of Corona at their weekly meeting.*



building and maintaining self-esteem, goal-setting, and taking care of themselves, as well as impressing upon them that their dreams can be realized through wise decisions.

When asked what the biggest impact she has seen Soroptimist make, member Rachel Rola said, "I think and I hope the most impact that we make in our community is that Soroptimists serve as role models for young women. I hope that young women look to Soroptimists as examples of respected leaders in our community. I also hope that we are successful in encouraging young women to be leaders who value volunteerism."

Incoming Soroptimist president Marcy Decato shares those sentiments, "I have become so passionate about helping women and young girls to live a better life. One of my favorite things about being part of this organization is being surrounded by women who are so loving and compassionate, and where both professionalism and integrity thrives."

Asked about her upcoming year as Soroptimist president, Decato shared, "I am very honored that my fellow Soroptimists have appointed me to lead them this upcoming year. My theme will be Volunteers with Love. I have put my heart into this organization and I want to motivate all our members to give their best for our mission and goals."

In addition to service projects and programs that are far-reaching and life-impacting, Soroptimist also serves its members well. Rachel Rola explains how personally rewarding it has been for her. "I have found that Soroptimists are very giving, supportive, loyal and true friends. It is easy to be completely focused on one's career or business, leaving little time for other important things in life, but interacting with these great women has helped me find a good balance, and helped me focus on what is really important to me."

"Our membership roster is made up of business, community and government leaders, so imagine the mentoring that takes place. If I needed help or advice on a business issue, I would not hesitate to pick up the phone and call a fellow member to ask for her opinion and/or guidance. Any of our members would not think twice about helping, and I would do the same for any of our members."

City Manager Beth Groves adds, "Every individual can find value in working with a community service organization. Soroptimist is a good fit for me because it is made up of truly remarkable women. They are caring, committed and very ef-

ficient."

Asked what advice she would give Corona's women in business, Rola said, "We are women from all walks of life and at different stages in our professional lives. Some of us are just embarking on our careers, and some of us well on our way. Some of us are already established, and some of us are retired, but we all share the same passion: We are committed to doing what is best for women. My advice is: Find your passion, find

others who share it, and you will make a difference."

One way to be part of the difference Soroptimist is making is to support its only annual fundraising event, the "Chocolate, Wine & Jazz Festival." The festival will be held Oct. 27, and is "an event that the entire Corona business community has been talking about for the last six years," says Decato. For sponsorship opportunities and more information, visit its web site at [www.sicorona.org](http://www.sicorona.org). 

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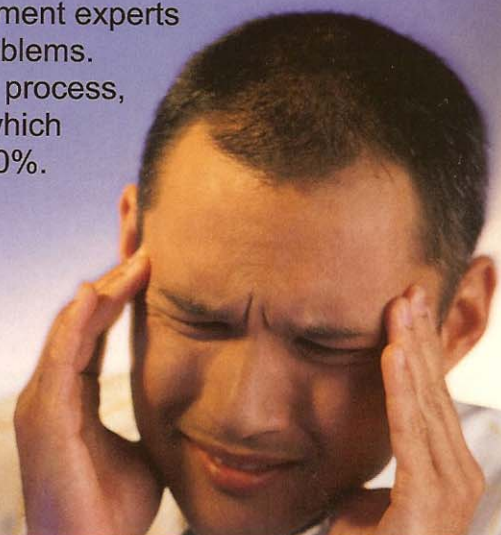


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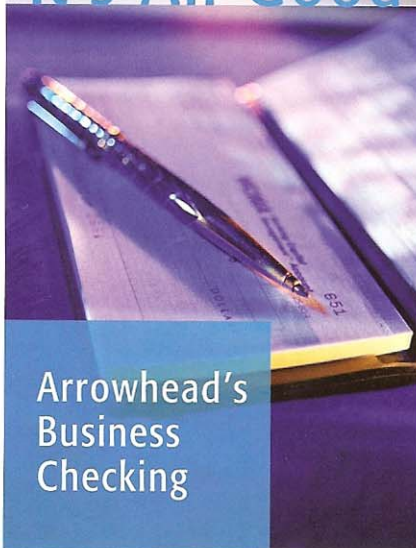
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