



Welcome to the Spring Edition of Bunny Tales
Soroptimist International of Conejo Valley



Happy Spring!

I'm hoping everyone had a nice holiday and that you are enjoying this California weather. I need to start this President's message remembering our well-loved SIOCV member Carole Blake, who passed away unexpectedly on March 7, 2023. It is hard to believe and I'm sure we are all having a hard time accepting the fact we will not see Carole's smiling face or hear her cheerful words in days to come. I actually spoke with Carole that day. She heard I had a new title "Boss Lady" - lol. Carole had some ideas for "Big Goal" and wanted to present them to the Club. Carole was originally working with Ramona to hold the Club's very first Dream It Be It (DIBI). Carole partnered us with James Storehouse and she was thrilled to hear the good reviews the DIBI attendees gave the Program.

The club held our second DIBI where we partnered with the Girl Scouts under Ramona's direction. That too went very well thanks to the members. Jacque, Dixie, Susanne, Leslie, Kristin, Sandy and myself worked tirelessly to help with the planning and preparing weeks ahead of the event and the day of. Ramona has written a second Grant for a DIBI Program with the Girl Scouts. This will be a big undertaking. But now that we think we know what we are doing, next year's DIBI will not be easier (because it takes a lot of preparation), but definitely achieved without difficulty.

This year's Live Your Dream Awards Program was very successful. We honored seven worthy recipients. More than we ever anticipated. All women juggling the day-to-day responsibilities of children, school, home and work. Planning and hoping for a better future for themselves and their children. Thank you Debbie and Susanne for bringing these women to our club's attention so we might help them to Live Their Dream.

Ten members are anxiously awaiting the CRR Spring Conference. The theme is Amazing Women. We will honor Carole Blake as our "Amazing Woman."

And we will hold our ever-famous Margarita Mixoff on September 21st. This year will be better than last year and last year was "Great." Lots of food, fun and friends. And of course MARGARITAS!!!!

SI Conejo Valley Loses a Dear Friend and Dedicated Member Carole Blake



**Carole Freas Blake, 70, of Simi Valley, CA passed away
on March 7, 2023 after a short illness.**

A Memorial Service will be held at Stonebridge Community Church, 4832 Cochran St., Simi Valley, CA at 10:30 am on Saturday April 22, 2023. In lieu of flowers the family requests you make a donation to either Americas Teaching Zoo at Moorpark College, (Moorpark College Foundation, Americas Teaching Zoo, 7075 Campus Road, Moorpark, CA 93021, in memory of Carole Blake) or to Soroptimist International of Conejo Valley, (SIOCV, P.O. 3634, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359, Attn: Dixie DiCeglie, in memory of Carole Blake).

Carole was born on August 15, 1952 to parents Howard Russell Freas and Olive Pemberton Halsey outside of Cleveland, OH. She graduated from Clearfield High School, class of 1970, Clearfield, PA and from Waynesburg University, class of 1974, Waynesburg, PA with a Bachelor's Degree in English.

Her adult working career was mostly as an administrative assistant for several defense contractors. Most recently for AeroVironment here in Simi Valley.

The love of her life was Animals! Any Kind! She often said if environmental career paths existed when she was in school that would have been her life. Her other love was the sisterhood of Soroptimist International. Introduced to this international women's organization about 28 years ago she fully embraced the mission, ideals and goals of that organization. A third love shared with her husband Andy for more than 20 years would be vintage cars. Members of Model A Ford clubs, the Horseless Carriage Club, Corvette Clubs and Packard Clubs kept them very busy.

Carole is survived by her husband Andrew (Andy) Blake of Simi Valley, brothers Robert (Bob) Freas and wife Judith of Brentwood, TN and Henry (Pete) Freas and wife Ann of Chesapeake, VA. Step-daughter Sabrina Juliano and husband Joey and step-granddaughters Taylor and Harper of Valencia, CA. Step-daughter Shannon Albrecht and husband Kevin and step-grandson Angus of Franklin, TN. Nieces and nephews Thomas Freas (Sarah) of Cumming, GA. Robin Katzman (Rich) of Brentwood, TN. Jeannette Follmer (Bill) of Orlando, FL. Paul Freas (Vickie) of Beach Grove, TN. Christa Freas of Washington D.C. and Rick Freas of Chesapeake, VA. Great nieces and nephews include Devon Freas of Cumming, GA., Tim Katzman of Brentwood, TN., Kyle Freas of Atlanta, GA., Kent Katzman (wife Kelsey and son Waylen) of Evansville, IN., Kate Katzman of Brentwood, TN and Samuel Freas of Beach Grove, TN.

Carole was preceded in death by her parents, Howard and Olive Freas, and her great nephew Cameron Freas.



Carole will be honored at the upcoming Spring Conference April 21 thru April 23 as we celebrate "Amazing Women." She was truly a dedicated Soroptimist and advocate for the club.

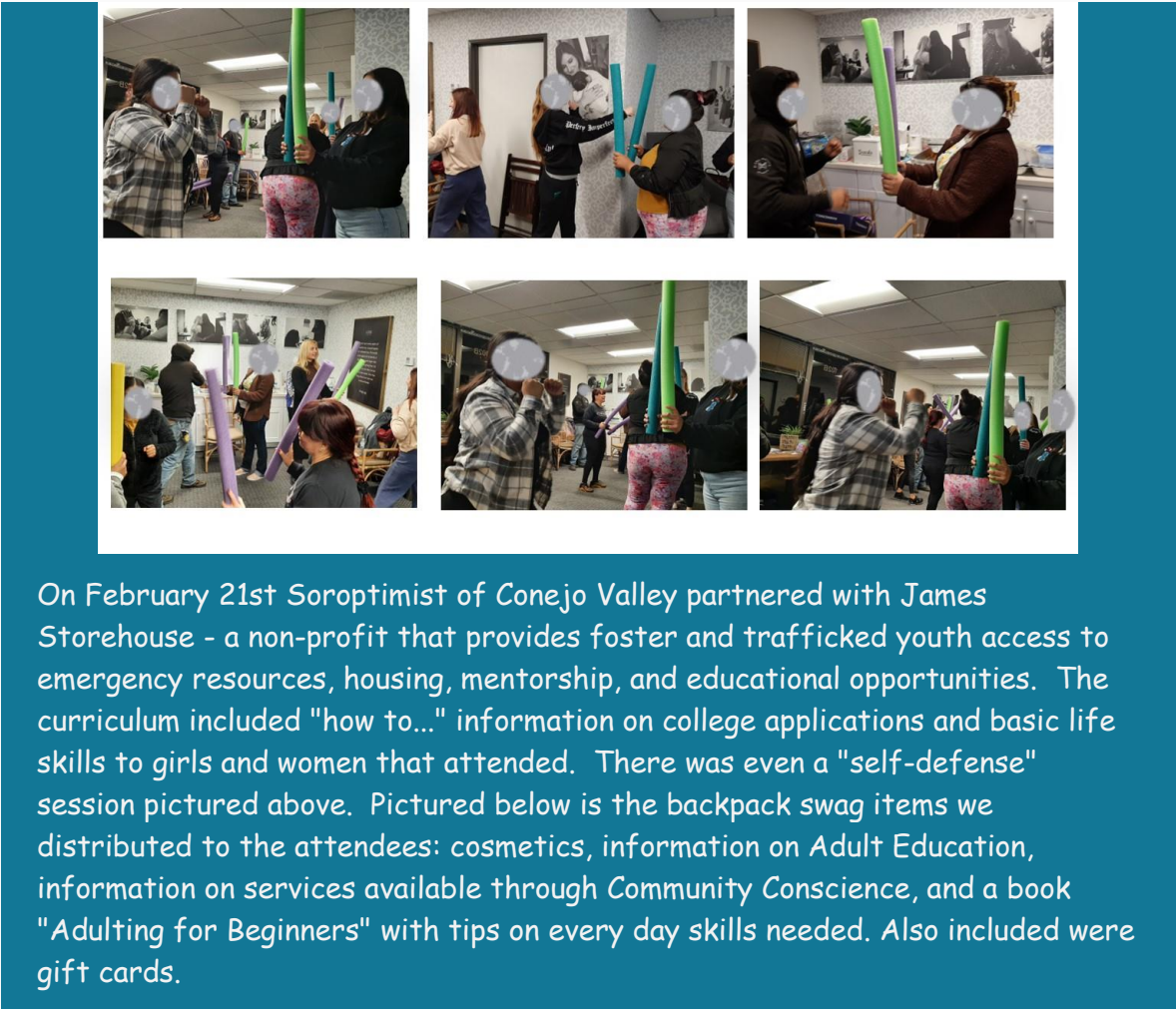
DREAM IT ★ BE IT ★

CAREER SUPPORT

{for girls}

Discovering Your Dreams

SI Conejo Valley hosts two
Dream It Be It programs in 2023.





Dream it Be It - Round Two!

With the help of a grant submitted by Ramona Evey, SI Conejo Valley was able to host a second Dream it Be It program on March 25th with the Girl Scouts of California Central Coast at a beautiful location Camp Arnaz located in Ojai. Presenters gave information in multiple sessions, Discovering Dreams, How to create Achievable Goals by exploring career paths, Balancing your stress with a Yoga Class, Rising Above Obstacles, Putting Dreams into Action. Overall it was a success!



Above Left is Tammie Helmuth, CEO of the Girls Scouts, teaching Discovering Your Dreams and Exploring Career Opportunities; top Right is Tonantzin teaching "Balancing your Stress" with yoga and Health and Wellness techniques; below left is Judy French giving tips on "Overcoming Obstacles and Rising Above Challenges"; and a dynamic duo Janika Domingo and Laura Navarro with "Finance 101 and Investing in SMART Goals."

Below are some of our attendees including Cynthia Jarvis, Gov-Elect Camino Real Region, Ramona Evey, District 1 Director, and Tammie Helmuth with one of the parents of the participants. On the right is a group shot of the presenters. All were so excited and they are willing to come back for more "Dream It Be It" events.



Our members put together swag bags with lots of goodies - pictured above Susanne White, Sandy McDougall and Kristin Irwin with the backpacks loaded with items for the participants. The girls were awarded with Girl Scout Badges along with the filled backpacks.



Live Your Dream Award Banquet was held March 21 at Los Robles Greens. This year we had seven recipients of financial assistance, selected by a committee of judges who reviewed the applications. Live Your Dream Awards is a program that assists women who provide the primary source of financial support for their families by giving them the resources they need to improve their education, skills, and employment prospects.

Pictured below are three of women who were able to attend the banquet. Thanks to the committee chairs, Debbie Cutler, Jacque Turner and Susanne White. In addition to cash the recipients received a bag of gifts including gift cards, cosmetic and hair items, toys and color books, movies and popcorn and a gift certificate for the Conejo Free Clinic Dental.



What have the club members been up to....



Above: a group relaxes & unwinds at Enegren Brewing Company on March 26th, celebrating the successful Dream It Be It event. Susanne White's friend Shawn played in a band for a lovely afternoon.

Below: Kristen and boyfriend, Mark, take pictures in Iceland.



SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF CONEJO VALLEY



SOROPTIMIST®
Investing in Dreams



Calendar of Events

- April 18 - Program Meeting Los Robles Greens
- April 21-April 23 - Spring Conference Woodland Hills Marriott
- May 2nd - Business Meeting Los Robles Greens 6:00 pm
- May 16 - Program Meeting Los Robles Greens 6:00 pm
- June 6 - Business Meeting Los Robles Greens 6:00 pm
- June 20 - Officer Installation Banquet - Los Robles Greens 6:00 pm
- July 4 - No Meeting



Greek Salad with Lemon Dressing - Great for a Spring or Summer Meal

Salad

- 5 cups Romaine Lettuce Chopped
- 1 small Red Onion sliced thin
- 1 English Cucumber chopped
- 1 Cup Cherry Tomatoes halved
- 1 Cut Kalamata Olives - halved or whole but with pits removed
- 15 oz Garbanzo Beans - drained and rinsed
- 2/3 Cup Feta Cheese Crumbled

Dressing

- 4 Cloves of Garlic - chopped
 - 1 Teaspoon Dried Oregano
 - 1/2 Teaspoon Dijon Mustard
 - 1/4 cup Red Wine Vinegar
 - 1 Teaspoon Salt
 - 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (add more for taste)
 - 2 Teaspoons of Sugar
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Soroptimist Vision & Mission

VISION

Women and girls have the resources and opportunities to reach their full potential and live their dreams.

MISSION

Soroptimist improves the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment.

CORE VALUES - Soroptimist International of the Americas is committed to:

Gender Equality: Women and girls live free from discrimination.

Empowerment: Women and girls are free to act in their own best interest.

Education: Women and girls deserve to lead full and productive lives through access to education.

Diversity & Fellowship: Women from varied backgrounds and perspectives work together to improve the lives of women and girls.

Soroptimist Pledge

I pledge allegiance to Soroptimist
And to the ideals for which it stands;

The Sincerity of Friendship,

The Joy of Achievement,

The Dignity of Service,

The Integrity of Profession,

The Love of Country.

I will put forth my greatest effort to promote, uphold and defend these ideals for a larger fellowship in home, in society, in business, for country and for God.