

Ben Brown
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Currently in the Community Case is a display from the Soroptimist International of Eureka, who is celebrating their 80th anniversary.

Since the founding of the very first Soroptimist club in 1921, Soroptimist International has sought to bring change to the lives of women and girls worldwide. As the oldest and largest women's service organization in the world, the club contributes time and financial support to community-based and international projects that benefit women and girls. Through its global network of four Federations and its dedicated volunteer membership of over 75,000, SI is driven by its mission of transforming lives through education, empowerment, and by enabling opportunities.

Rooted in the vision that women and girls will achieve their individual and collective potential, SI's advocacy work and on-the-ground projects seek to drive the realization of these aspirations and ensure that women and girls have an equal voice in creating strong and peaceful communities, now and in the future.

In 1921, the first Soroptimist club was formed in Oakland, California with over 80 business and professional women members. Violet Richardson was the first president, the group met weekly to debate service projects and hear speakers on various worldwide issues that would broaden members' horizons. The first project was to "Save the Redwoods," the club lobbied the legislature, taking on powerful lumber companies and winning public support, which resulted in a major portion of the forest being set aside as protected land that still exists today.

The name Soroptimist was coined from the Latin soror meaning sister, and optima meaning best. And so Soroptimist is perhaps best interpreted as "the best for women."

Locally, Soroptimist clubs give thousands of dollars every year to women who need to improve their job skills through education and training. Most are single moms and many are domestic violence survivors. They also work on other projects that reach out to women and girls, including those that prevent and end domestic violence.

Soroptimist of Eureka raises money to support such organizations as: Game Over- STOP Human Trafficking, Food for People, Betty Chinn Center, Humboldt Domestic Violence Services, Eureka Mission's Women & Children Shelter, the Girl Scouts, and many more organizations that support local women and girls.

If you would like to help change lives, help people while having fun, please consider joining a Soroptimist Club. All the local clubs have a Facebook page, you're welcome to visit and attend meetings and are highly encouraged to attend their fundraisers and award ceremonies. Please join them in celebrating their 80th birthday at a free party on June 8th from 5:30-8pm at the Eureka Woman's Club.

The display will be up until mid-June, make sure to stop by the Clarke Museum at 240 E street in Old Town Eureka.