



SOROPTIMIST FOUNDATION OF CANADA
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Bulletin from the SFC Chair

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Happy New Year and all the best in Health, Happiness, & Prosperity to everyone.

Gold & Pearls - Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of SFC

On November 16th, 2013 SI Vancouver and past SFC Chair Cora Salvador hosted a Gala at the Floral Hall, Van Dusen Gardens in Vancouver. The Floral Hall is a lovely old building full of character and was a terrific venue for the event. SI Vancouver's members and some of their spouses came early and spent the day transforming the large room into a glittery wonderland of gold and white and pearls. The music was lovely and the tables sparkled with flowers and pearls, the food was delicious and the evening was enjoyed by all.

The lovely program contained a message from Premier Christy Clark.

Present were Senator Mobina Jaffer, SIA Program Chair Sharon Fisher, SI WCR Governor Dana Martin, past SFC Chair Cora Salvador and Ed Salvador, SI Vancouver President Ching, Miss Grace Chan, Mezzo Soprano accompanied by Leona Griffin pianist, RBC Investment councillors Warwick Holland and Lisa Holland, SFC Grants for Women award winner (2011) Raven Bowen, Alex and I along with about 70 other guests. Master of ceremonies Karen Blunderfield did a great job and kept things lively and entertaining.

Raven Bowen was a wonderful guest and reminded me of what a great need SFC fills in this vast country of ours - she has recently begun a career with Simon Fraser University and it looks like she is off to a successful career - she is such a warm, friendly, lovely individual and it was a pleasure to be able to meet her.

I was particularly touched by the speech given by WCR Governor Dana Martin and therefore I am including it here and hope that you find it as moving as I did.

Madeline Albright said, 'Real leadership comes from the quiet nudging of an inner voice. It comes from realizing that the time has come to move beyond waiting to doing.'

And that is exactly what happened 50 years ago when a group of bold women stopped talking and rolled up their sleeves and went to work to put together the Soroptimist Foundation of Canada. From its humble startup with donations of \$4,125.00 to its current funds of approximately \$1.3 million SFC has much to be proud of.

The foundation believes in the principle that they can make a difference in the lives of women and girls. Over these past years, SFC has empowered women by consistently advocating for women's rights, equality, and by providing educational funding for women.

We know that when a woman is educated we empower her. Her children and her family will be better off. If families prosper, cities and towns flourish, and eventually, so does the whole country. SFC has not only changed lives but their work has changed the course our nations.

We heard earlier from Raven Brown about how receiving the SFC Educational Grant was life changing for her. Here is what Lauren Payne the 2009 Soroptimist Grant recipient, had to say about the impact of receiving the SFC educational grant.

'I am humbled to read biographies of past and recent winners. Reflecting on the breadth of advocacy efforts women across Canada are engaging in through academia, one certainly looks to the future with excitement.

The Soroptimist Foundation of Canada, through its Foundation grants, highlights the importance of higher-level education as a tool for change at both the community and societal levels. The significant support the Foundation provides to its awardees not only alleviates some of the financial burden inherent in the pursuit of further education, but also sends a message to women in academia that our communities recognize the importance of the work we do.

As a Master's of Public Health student at Simon Fraser University, the support from the Soroptimist Grant allowed me to spend time engaging with communities in Northern Ontario in order to ultimately create a birth model at the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win health centre that met each community's needs. I was able to pursue course work that pushed my boundaries, challenged my patterns of thought, and instilled in me a new way of approaching inequity as it pertained to public health issues. Now finishing a degree in medicine, I will be continuing my work in public and community health and adding a clinical component to my work through family medicine. My goals remain centered on looking for new ways to improve the health of Canadian women through better primary and reproductive health care. I now have the tools to approach both broad scale systems challenges as well as the population health challenges of my local community. The encouragement and support of the Soroptimist Foundation of Canada was certainly integral to getting to where I am now.

Education gives us the tools and expertise we need to truly affect change in the lives of other women. Through the Foundation's grants and national network of support, you in part enable us to achieve our educational goals and thereby encourage progress and positive change in our communities. For this and the other great work you do, I cannot thank you enough.' - Lauren Payne.

On behalf of the Western Canada Region board, and our members I want to thank all of the women who have contributed to making SFC the success it is. I am proud to be associated with all of you. Happy 50th Anniversary, and all the best for the next 50 years.

Our thoughts and prayers are with our Soroptimist members in the Philippines and to all those suffering this terrible tragedy.

Thank you all for coming tonight and supporting SFC. Your generosity is truly appreciated. Once again please join me in congratulating the wonderful women of this organization." - Dana Martin, SIA, WCR Governor

There was also a silent auction with many lovely items including jewellery, candles, clothing, trip to Whistler area, etc. There were several art pieces donated by Jane Romanishko, <http://www.janeromanishko.com/> and William H. Webb, both Alberta artists of the highest caliber, and myself.

The event raised \$3150.00 plus a donation from ICBC, Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, on behalf of past SI WCR Governor Colleen Schmidt and Chari Grant; the presentation was made by Chari Grant and the message from ICBC was "thank you for making a difference in our community." Very fitting, I thought, and such a lovely surprise and so important to our work.

History Book

While in Vancouver, it came to my attention that there is a typo on page 27, fourth paragraph, and it should read "The AGM that year featured a fundraising event called "Hair Raising Experience", cutting a member's hair, with donations done per inch, raising \$10,640.00." Our apologies for this oversight, Megan.

Please remember to make SOROPTIMIST FOUNDATION OF CANADA your charity of choice and when you do please specify whether your donation will go to our operating fund or to the endowment fund.

Elizabeth Jane Gallagher (BJ)
Chair, Soroptimist Foundation of Canada
gallagherbj17@gmail.com
1-780-689-1091