

# HISTORY OF SOUTHERN REGION

1996 - 2006



## SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS, INC. SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

1996 – 1998 Governor Ann Decatrel	The Palm Beaches, Florida
1998 – 2000 Governor June Wallace	Orlando, Florida
2000 – 2002 Governor Shirley McCormick	Huntsville, Alabama
2002 – 2003 Governor Irma Galloway	Lake County, Florida
2003 – 2006 Governor Voncile Rayner	Atlanta, Georgia

1996 – 1998

## Governor Ann Decatrel

The themes chosen for this biennium were: Region – “*ONE LINK IN THE CHAIN*”, with the District theme being “*STRENGTHENING THE LINKS*”.



Davie FL, Jacksonville FL, Columbus MS and Manchester TN hosted the fall 1996 District Meetings.

The 71<sup>st</sup> Regional Conference was held in Delray Beach FL, in 1997, and hosted by SI/Boynton Beach-Delray Beach FL. A net profit of \$3,000 was realized. These funds were divided between Recruitment & Retention and the '98 Conference budget. The Region now handles spring Conference, with clubs assisting as hosts.

The Conference Body voted to **incorporate The Ruby Lee Minar Memorial Soroptimist Loan Fund** and Directors were elected at the District Meetings. The elected officers are President Martha Lannom and Directors, Sara Sopkin Prugh, Brenda Gamboa and Tam Knight.

Celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries:

SI/Coral Gables, Florida	06/18/47
SI/Fort Lauderdale, Florida	10/18/46

Homestead FL, Orlando FL, Atlanta & Gwinnett County GA and Music City TN hosted district meetings.

Celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Atlanta, Georgia hosted an afternoon at the Jimmy Carter Library in Atlanta. On December 5, 1997. They were chartered on December 11, 1947.

The SI/Stuart and St. Lucie clubs hosted the second conference of the biennium. With funds from the '97 Conference, we were able to obtain a professional speaker. It was proposed and accepted that Active Life members pay \$10.00 in annual dues. The **Ruby Lee Minar Memorial Soroptimist Fund, Inc.** held their first annual meeting.

During this biennium, there were many **Firsts**, for the Region. The first **Southern Region Youth Forum** was held in Ft. Lauderdale FL, in October 1997, an **E-mail Directory and Business Directory** are under way and the **First Two Southern Region recipients for Laurel Society** Membership, Doris Thompson and Joanna Crane were selected. Planning has begun for the **First Officers' Leadership Retreat**, in July 1999.

Two clubs were lost: Jones County, MS and Tupelo MS.

Southern Region officers and Board members for the biennium 1998 2000 were elected as follows:

Governor	June Wallace	Orlando, FL
Governor-elect	Shirley McCormick	Huntsville, AL
Secretary	Priscilla Tatarsky	Music City, TN
Treasurer	Ramona Blankenship	Montgomery, AL
District I Director	Carol Hodnett	Stuart, FL
District II Director	Irma Galloway	Lake County, FL
District III Director	Judy Calland	Gwinnett County, GA
District IV Director	Robin Brewer	Huntsville, AL

With the advent of a New Century and the rapid advances in computer technology, the theme chosen for the biennium was "FOCUS ON THE FUTURE."



The 1998-2000 Southern Region Board met for the Interim Board meeting three weeks after the SIA Convention in New York City. A great deal of time was spent in Strategic Planning sessions led, at the request of the Board, by Past Gov. Mary Jo Horton. The resulting Strategic Plan for Southern Region include the following:

Mission Statement

- To enable clubs to reach goals through leadership, education and communication.
- To promote community awareness

To accomplish this mission, the Board set six Goals, with accompanying objectives:

- Goal #1: Recruitment and Retention
- Goal #2: Community Awareness
- Goal #3: Leadership Training
- Goal #4: Communication
- Goal #5: Ongoing Orientation
- Goal #6: Future Survival – Quality vs. Quantity

The Board planned a uniform agenda for the District Meetings. The Board also planned the Program and Workshops for Conference implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Use of email and the establishment of our Southern Region Web Site [www.Soroptimist.net](http://www.Soroptimist.net) were a vital part of our "Future Survival" efforts. As a result of the use of email, 138 Southern Region members, including 7 Past Governors, received our Southern Accent newsletters and bulletins, rather than just the 30 club Presidents who previously received those communications via regular mail. Also, emails replaced letters and phone calls within the Region Board and committees. This was a costs savings for Region for printing, postage, stationery and long distance phone charges. Tamara Brower, S/I Atlanta North, and her husband Jeffrey set up the Web Site without charge to the Region. Various clubs in Southern Region have also set up their own web sites.

Fort Lauderdale, FL, Lake County, FL, Columbus, GA and Huntsville, AL hosted the 1998 Fall District Meetings.

**The 73<sup>rd</sup> Southern Region Conference** was held at Savannah Marriott Riverfront, Savannah, GA from April 29 – May 2, 1999. Federation visitor was Donna Walker. The Loyal Order of Soroptimists was reinstated, showing our appreciation for the assistance of our husbands and “significant others.” Renowned author and speaker, Linda Pulliam, helped us stay “on the light side.” Both, Friday and Saturday afternoon workshops were well attended. The Conference Body voted to rename Southern Region Procedures and Regional Guide. They are now named Southern Region By-Laws and Southern Region Procedures respectively.

Soroptimist International Convention was held July 4-8, 1999 in Helsinki, Finland. Several Southern Region members attended. Region Governors were invited to attend as observers at the Pre-Convention Board Meeting. The definition of qualifications for membership was extensively changed. The Quadrennial International Service Project, “Limbs for Life” consists of working jointly with the International Red Cross to provide artificial limbs for land mine victims.

The First Southern Region Leadership Training Retreat was held at Camp Weed, Live Oak, FL on Jul 23-344, 1999. Past Governor Ann Decatrel prepared the extensive workbook, secured the site for the Retreat, and planned the entire program, including hiring professional trainers to train club leaders.

St. Lucie, FL, Tampa, FL, Montgomery, AL and Franklin, TN hosted the 1999 Fall District Meetings.

**The 74<sup>th</sup> Southern Region Conference** was held at Four Points Sheraton, Tuscaloosa, AL, on April 27-30, 2000. The visitors were Federation Board Member Dawn Marie Lemonds and Foundation Board Member Debra McKinnon. Keynote Speaker Charlotte Drennen kept us laughing with her “Southern Fried Therapy.”

**Other items were:**

1) Southern Region Contributions to Foundation were used to provide Laurel Society Memberships for Past Governor Mary Jo Horton, and Dorothy Quick member of S/I Upper Pinellas County, FL.

2) A motion was passed to set aside from Southern Region Service Fund (formerly known as Project Fund) the amount of \$2,000 to match, on a \$1 for \$1 basis, clubs’ contributions to the Soroptimist International Quadrennial Service Project, Limbs for Life.

3) Gladys Overall, SI Orlando presented the Federation Nomination Committee Report noting that Past Governor Ann Decatrel had been elected as the member of the Federation Board from Electoral Area II.

4) A new club is to be chartered in Naples, FL by S/I Fort Lauderdale, FL.

5) Past Governor Ann Decatrel issued an invitation to the Leadership 2000 Retreat, August 4-5, 2000, at Live Oak, FL.

Three clubs were disbanded: Miami, FL, Memphis, TN and Murfreesboro, TN

The biennium ended with SIA Convention in Honolulu, Hawaii, June 28-July 4, 2000.

Southern Region Officers and Board members for the biennium 2000-2002 were elected as follows:

Governor	Shirley McCormick	Huntsville, AL
Governor Elect	Irma Galloway	Lake County, FL
Secretary	Ramona Blankenship	Montgomery, AL
Treasurer	Sharon Singletary	Homestead, FL
District I Director	Grace Haven	Stuart, FL
District II Director	Paula Harvey	Upper Pinellas, FL
District III Director	Glenda Madison	Tuscaloosa, AL
District IV Director	Brenda Parton	Huntsville, AL

## 2000 – 2002

## Governor Shirley McCormick

Soroptimist International of the Americas 36<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention “Celebrating Diversity” was held June 30 - July 4, 2000 in Honolulu, Hawaii with 14 members from Southern Region in attendance. The Governor’s Roundtable preceded the Convention with 29 Governors present. SIA’s core purpose is to advance human rights and the status of women. The Violet Richardson Award: Honoring Young Women for Volunteer Action was unveiled to replace the Youth Citizenship award. The themes for the biennial are: International “A Global Voice A Global Vision”, Federation “Making a Difference for Women” and Southern Region “ ‘Bee’ the Difference.”



Southern Region’s Interim Board meeting was held July 2000 in Guntersville, Alabama. Time was dedicated to the rewriting of the District Director’s handbook. Leadership 2000 training retreat was held August 4 –5, 2000, at Camp Weed in Live Oak, Florida under the direction of Past Governor Ann Decatrel.

District I in Coral Gables, Florida, District II in Orlando, Florida, District III in Columbus, Georgia, and District IV in Nashville, Tennessee hosted the 2000 Fall District meetings. A quilt with squares made by chat line members was displayed at District meetings and money was donated to the quadrennial project, “Limbs for Life.”

The 75<sup>th</sup> Southern Region Conference, with the theme “2001 A Space Odyssey” was held in Huntsville, Alabama on April 27 – 29, 2001. Our Federation visitor from Brazil, Flavia da Silva, enhanced the international flavor of our organization.

May 5, 2001, was a great day with the chartering of Naples, Florida. Connie Desko and Alicia Zachman had worked long and hard for over 2 years to make this dream come true along with the support of the Ft Lauderdale club.

On July 25 – 27, 2001 the Governor and Governor Elect attended the second Governor’s Roundtable in Philadelphia, PA. On July 28<sup>th</sup> they attended the Train the Trainers Seminar, with the goal to provided resources and training techniques to Region leaders.

On August 10 – 11, 2001, the Region met in Orlando, Florida for a Joint Leadership Retreat and District Meetings. This was the first joint District Meeting held in the Southern Region.

A day to never forget was September 11, 2001. The terrorist's attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon changed the way we live. It pulled the United States together, with people helping others and lives given to save other lives. The dedicated men, women and children who lost lives and love ones, the brave people who gave their lives and the HEROES that responded to the emergency of September 11, 2001, are to be honored.

The 76<sup>th</sup> Southern Region Spring Conference convened in West Palm Beach from April 25 – 28, 2002. The conference theme was "Sand, Sea, Sun and Soroptimist! The Best of Everything." We were privileged to have two special guests, LouAnne Hunnicutt, member of SIA Board of Directors, and Deborah McKinnon, President of the Soroptimist Foundation. After losing their charter, San Juan, PR was rechartered at Conference 2002. District Director Grace Haven, and Governor Shirley McCormick helped this club to rebuild.

Mims Hendrickson of SIA Lake County, Florida and Past Governor Millie Grammer of SIA Music City, Tennessee were presented with a membership in the Laurel Society.

Southern Region had 3 clubs to receive the "Making a Difference for Women Grants" in 2002 for a total of \$21,000. Music City received \$5,000, to target elderly low-income women. This grant provided household repairs, clothing, food, and other basic needs for women isolated by disability and poor health. Stuart received \$8,000 for their project, "Save Our Selves, Save Our Sisters". The purpose of this project is to provide breast cancer education and free mammograms for women of Martin County who do not have health insurance or are under insured and without the funds to pay for their own screening. Tuscaloosa also received \$8,000 for their project, "Onward and Upward." This project will provide women recovering from substance abuse, with educational materials to aid them in acquiring, keeping, and improving employment opportunities. They have developed an eight week curriculum that will include employability skills, social skills in the workplace, and work adjustment issues culminating a make and take planner.

One Club lost their charter: San Juan, Puerto, but was re-chartered in 2002.

Officers and Board Members for the biennium 2002-2004 were elected as follows:

Governor	Irma Galloway	S/I Lake County, Florida
Governor-Elect	Voncile Rayner	S/I Atlanta, Georgia
Secretary	Susan Klein	S/I Stuart, Florida
Treasurer	Lucy Lueg	S/I Stuart, Florida
District I Director	Connie Desko	S/I Ft. Lauderdale, Florida
District II Director	Marsha McKenna	S/I Tampa, Florida
District III Director	Theresa Carrington	S/I Atlanta North, Georgia
District IV Director	Beverly Teasley	S/I Huntsville, Alabama

2002 – 2003

## Governor Irma Galloway

In 2002 the 37<sup>th</sup> SIA Convention was held in San Diego, CA, July 17-21, and the theme was *“Soroptimist Meeting the Challenge.”* The Governors’ Roundtable preceded the Convention. Southern Region had a number of members in attendance.

The Region’s Interim Board Meeting was held at the Governor’s home in Lake County, FL. The Region’s theme was *“Mentors and Me, We Make The Difference.”*



The 2002 Fall District Meetings were hosted by Pompano Beach, St Petersburg, FL, Columbus MS and Manchester, TN,

In 2003 the 77<sup>th</sup> Southern Region Conference was held May 2-4 in Columbus, GA with the theme *“Springtime On The Chattahoochee”* and the SIA Federation guest was Board Member Carol Kirkby from Burlington, Washington.

The 2003 Soroptimist International Convention was held July 27-31 in Sydney, Australia. Due to bad health the Governor was unable to attend. The Governor-elect represented Southern Region at the International Board Meetings July 22-26. The SI incoming President’s Appeal was the *“Dignity Program: Helping women in Paraguay”* and followed with *“Children of Peace”* in 2004.

The SIA 2003 interim Governor’s Roundtable was held August 20-22 in Osaka, Japan, and was attended by Governor-elect Voncile Rayner. The Governor was unable to attend.

The 2003 Fall District Meetings started with the Governor traveling with the Governor-elect to the District IV Meeting, and she was unable to attend the others.

The 2003 Fall District Meetings were hosted by Davie, FL, Lake County, FL, Atlanta, GA and Music City, TN.

Governor Irma Galloway was hospitalized early October and passed away November 7, 2003. The Governor-elect took office and the Board vacancy was filled.

The 2004 78<sup>th</sup> SR Conference was held April 23-25 in Tampa, FL with the theme *“Come Grow With Us”* sharing the plants the members grow. The SIA Federation Board Member was Vicki Hobbs from San Diego, CA, along with Fund Development Council President Connie Baehr from Anchorage, Alaska. The Conference opened with a tribute to the deceased Governor.



SIA's five-year Renaissance Campaign was introduced at Conference, and four Renaissance Chairs were appointed following the Conference. The Chairs were for Programs, Membership, Fund Raising and Public Awareness, and each Chair was invited to a day of training at the SIA Convention in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Four Clubs were disbanded: Jacksonville, FL, Manchester, TN, Savannah, GA and St. Petersburg, FL

The Southern Region Officers and Board Members for the biennium 2004-2006 were elected as follows:

Governor	Voncile Rayner	Atlanta, GA
Governor-elect	Connie Desko	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Secretary	Betsi Lewis	Dunedin, FL
Treasurer	Lucy Lueg	Fort Pierce, FL
District I Director	Kathi Pease	Palm Springs, FL
District II Director	Marsha McKenna	Tarpon Springs, FL
District III Director	Theresia Carrington	Alpharetta, GA
District IV Director	Caroline Feagley	Huntsville, AL
Parliamentarian	Jackie Ashworth	Murfreesboro, TN

The 39<sup>th</sup> 2004 SIA Convention with the theme "New Frontiers" was held July 4-7 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, and the Governors' Roundtable took place July 1-3 with the Governor attending. All 28 Regions in the SIA Federation were represented.



Regions were given a new direction from SIA with the launching of the five-year Renaissance Campaign at the 2004 Convention. Three Renaissance chairs attended their perspective workshop at Convention. The Chairs are for Programs, Membership, Public Awareness and Fund Raising working directly with SIA Headquarters' staff.

The 2004 Leadership Retreat took place at Camp Weed in Live Oak, FL. The Southern Region interim Board Meeting was in Atlanta, GA and the four Fall District Meetings followed. The Renaissance Campaign was presented with a Power Point presentation at District Meetings by one of the RC Chairs.

Davie, FL, Upper Pinellas, FL, Tuscaloosa, AL and Huntsville, AL hosted 2004 District Meetings.

2004 was a turbulent year. Florida survived but with much destruction left by Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Jeanne and Wilma. December 26 will not be forgotten as the news reported the earthquake and Tsunami in Asia taking over 230,000 lives. In 2005 Hurricane Katrina stormed the Gulf coast moving inland, breaking the levies around New Orleans and flooding the city leaving thousands dead and homeless.

Regrettably the Region's Secretary and Treasurer resigned but were quickly replaced.

2005 Southern Region Conference was held May 21-24, in Nashville, TN, with the theme "Music is the Service of Our Life" describing it well. The keynote speaker came from the United Nations, the People's Population Fund. The SIA Federation Board Member was Teresita Choa from the Philippines. There were a couple of updates to the Bylaws. Members of Southern Region were proud to have a member, Past Governor Alicia Zachman, to be the second member named to the Laurel Society Inter Circle; Alicia was pinned by SIA Board Member Teresita Choa.

July 2005 was the interim Governors' Roundtable in Los Angeles, CA and attended by both Governor and Governor-elect. In August the Soroptimist International Board Meeting was held in Denver, CO, and was attended by both Governor and Governor-elect. The Governor and Governor-elect shared information from the GRT and the SI Board meeting at District Meetings. Project Five-O, the "*Project Independence: Women Survivors of War*" updates and videos were shown along with other information on projects within Soroptimist. International Celebrating Success certificates were presented to each Federation President at the International Board Meeting for the seven programs of service to first place winners in all four Federations. SI of Stuart, FL won first place under "Health" for their "Partnership Light of the World Charities" project.

Stuart, FL, Holiday Isles, FL, Columbus, GA and Franklin, TN hosted 2005 District Meetings.

In 2006 the first Southern Region Conference to be held outside the continental U.S. was held in San Juan, PR, May 5-7 with the theme "*Sharing Our Island Treasures*" and SI of San Juan did just that! The Federation guest was Board Member Jo Ann Stallings from Texas who shared updates with SIA Executive Leigh Wintz. A Bylaw to increase the annual club Conference fee was successfully passed increasing the fee from \$100 to \$125 per club. The fee is used to supplement the cost of hosting the annual Region Conference.

Two Laurel Society memberships from Southern Region were presented to Shirley McCormick, Huntsville, AL and June Wallace, Largo/Upper Pinellas County, FL.

The 39<sup>th</sup> SIA Convention was held July 19-22 in Philadelphia, PA and the theme was "*Free to Dream*" giving members an opportunity to visit the newly purchased Headquarters located at 1709 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA. Members were able to register online for the Convention for the first time.

**The following are Region accomplishments for biennium 2004-2006.**

- With many thanks to Past Governor June Wallace a new club was chartered. SI of Largo/Mid-Pinellas County, FL with 40 members.
- With a commitment to move Region ahead with technology this biennium Internet Training was offered at all 2005 District Meetings.
- All Club Presidents are using the Internet and receiving information quickly from SIA and Region.
- SI of The Palm Beaches received a \$12,000 Grant from SIA to repair a Woman's Shelter damaged during one of the hurricanes. SI of Naples Florida received a \$19,500 Grant from SIA for the PACE home for Girls which was damaged during one of the hurricanes.
- A new Region website is under construction with a new Domain name [www.Soroptimistr.org](http://www.Soroptimistr.org) which will be launched in 2007.
- A Laurel Society Lottery Board was begun in 2004 providing one membership each year to the Laurel Society to the winner, which is drawn at each Conference.
- The 1709 Guild appeals from SIA for two years ending June 1, 2006, were exciting for Southern Region members. Clubs and members made contributions exceeding the goal of \$5,000 to purchase furnishings for the sitting room where the Ruby Lee Minar picture hangs at headquarters. A plaque indicating the contribution by Southern Region will be in the room.
- One Club was disbanded: Atlanta North, GA.

Southern Region Officers and Board members for the biennium 2006-2008 were elected as follows:

Governor	Connie Desko	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Governor-elect	Nidia Bernstiel	Stuart, FL
Secretary	Deborah Hultquist	Gainesville, GA
Treasurer	Sonja Davis	Port St. Lucie, FL
District I Director	Elaine Hollander	Boca Raton, FL
District II Director	Betsi Lewis	Dunedin, FL
District III Director	Caroline Feagley	Huntsville, AL
District IV Director	Caroline Feagley	Huntsville, AL
Parliamentarian	Sandra Baumann	Coconut Creek, FL