

Membership Matters

August 2018



Welcome

Membership Matters is now settling into a steady format, featuring items that I hope you will find interesting, helpful and occasionally light-hearted. I am grateful to those clubs and members who send me items and pictures, without them this publication wouldn't be possible. The Podcast is fun and interesting to do and I hope some of you will have found it to listen to, on the SIGBI Communications and Membership Group Facebook page.

This month we look at the use of reusable bags and consider 'Are we listening?' plus showcase an event at the Royal Cheshire Show. Please see my new easy-to-remember email address: membershipdirector@sigbi.org do drop me a line, I look forward to hearing from you.

Judith Grocott
Director of Membership

Bags Matter!

Since we published the picture of SI Apapa members with their membership bags back in February, several other clubs have sent me pictures of their bags and I am beginning to realise what a big part these bags play, not only in advertising Clubs and Soroptimism but in beating plastic pollution. Both SI Apapa and SI Tororo are mainly using the bags for promoting their clubs and Soroptimism. The members of SI Newtown have gone one step further and are not only selling the bags but are including the letter below about the scourge of plastic pollution in each bag .



It would be remiss here if I didn't mention our Federation jute bags which are on sale and available at a very reasonable price of £4.50 from Headquarters. As President Sue said in her last blog, they are a very useful talking point whilst packing your bag at the supermarket checkout.



Soroptimists Beat Plastic Pollution

Beat Plastic Pollution, the theme for World Environment Day 2018, urges governments, industry, communities, and individuals to come together and explore sustainable alternatives and urgently reduce the production and excessive use of single-use plastic polluting our oceans, damaging marine life and threatening human health.

World Environment Day is a UN Environment-led global event, the single largest celebration of our environment each year, which takes place on June 5 and is celebrated by thousands of communities worldwide.

Since it began in 1972, it has grown to become a global platform for public outreach that is widely celebrated across the globe.

Most of all, World Environment Day is a day of everyone around the world to take ownership of their environment and to actively engage in the protection of our earth.



Plastic Pollution facts:

- Every year the world uses 500 billion plastic bags
- Each year, at least 8 million tonnes of plastic end up in the oceans, the equivalent of a full garbage truck every minute
- In the last decade, we produced more plastic than in the whole last century
- 50 percent of the plastic we use is single-use or disposable
- We buy 1 million plastic bottles every minute
- Plastic makes up 10% of all of the waste we generate



The ladies of SI Newtown urge you to utilize our donated bags for all your shopping needs and reduce your use of single use plastics, for example, straws, Styrofoam food containers and disposable utensils."

Royal Cheshire Show

Each year the Cheshire, North Wales and Wirral Region organises a Soroptimist stand at the prestigious Royal Cheshire Show and members from around the Region help to run the event. This year it was held on Tuesday and Wednesday 19th and 20th June 2018.

They talked to many visitors about Soroptimist International and collected a number of details from women interested in joining.

The theme for this year was the Purple Teardrop Modern Day Slavery Campaign, and they collected at least 8 pages of signatures for the Purple Teardrop "Ban Sex for Sale" petition. They erected a beautiful Purple Teardrop Tree – "Stop the Traffic Stop the Tears" – and encouraged members of the public to write a message on the teardrops and pin them to the tree.

Some examples of the teardrop messages:

- STOP! Stop selling girls, this HAS to end
- This HAS to stop, it is immoral and degrading
- We need to do more to STOP this awful Trade – It MUST END
- STOP the suffering – It needs to END – NO MORE



The Soroptimist presence at the show is, and always has been, to raise awareness of our great Organisation, to increase membership and also to highlight some of the campaigns they have taken up such as Breast Cancer, Domestic Violence, Toilet Twinning and Modern-Day Slavery.

Are you Listening?

When recruiting members, listen carefully for clues as to what potential members might be looking for from their membership. Then you can emphasize what your club can offer to meet their needs.

Members and potential members' commitments are strengthened when they understand the benefits of their commitment to others and to themselves. By tailoring your approach, you will make members comfortable with working with you toward the Soroptimist mission.

- Keep an ear tuned to gain an understanding of specific issues that are important to potential members
- Promote opportunities to utilize or develop skills/talents of potential members
- Encourage conversations that tune into the needs of the women and girls we seek to help

Mastering the skill of really listening involves finding something in what is being said that can be used to help generate a meaningful dialogue. The more face-to-face, ear-to-ear listening we do, members and prospects learn you care about their input and ideas. By identifying what

talents or interest's members/prospects have, what they can and like to do, you can identify ways for them to become involved that match their expectations.

Focusing on members reasons for joining and ensuring that their expectations are met, will not only help with recruitment and retention but will also show through in the quality of your club's work. Everyone wants to feel important, needed, respected, and appreciated. The secret to recruiting prospects as well as retaining members is to know their talents, their areas of expertise, to assist them to see how they fit in with those talents, and how they can contribute in an important and meaningful way.

Once new members are onboard, relationship building becomes even more important. Not exactly sure how or where to begin? Start by asking. How about sending a short "How Are We Doing?" email or note to new members after a specified period of time—three or six months? This is a great way to find out if your club is meeting members' expectations early on and to identify strengths, weaknesses, and establish priorities.

Then be prepared to listen—really listen and take action to make improvements!

Useful Links

www.sigbi.org/members/clubs/membershiptoolkit

www.facebook.com/SoroptimistSIGBI

www.twitter.com/SIGBI1 when tweeting, always mention @SIGBI1

www.sigbi.org/members/communications-2/websites-and-social-media/social-media

Get in Touch



Any questions or ideas?

Got something to shout about?



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Podcast – I hope you have heard the Podcasts previewing this new look Membership Matters? Keep listening for further tasters of things to come!