

SNEAK PREVIEW

Soroptimist OSF Pillow and Blanket Rentals

It gets cold when the sun goes down on summer nights at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's Elizabethan Theatre. Keeping theatre-goers warm and comfortable has been the major fundraising project of Soroptimist International of Ashland for the last 61 years.



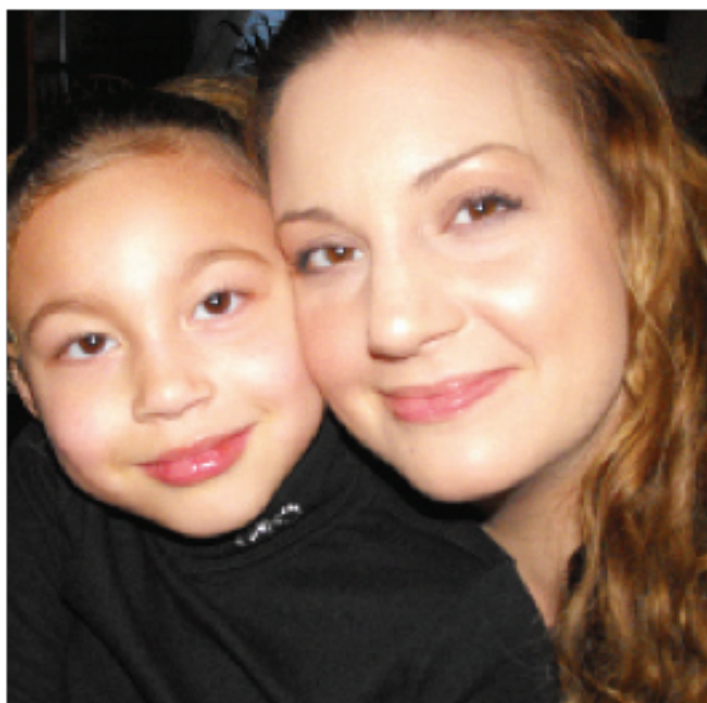
Soroptimists Polly Arnold and Sara Brown renting pillows and blankets at the OSF Booth.

Since 1949 SI Ashland has operated the pillow and blanket rental booth at the outdoor theatre. In the early years, proceeds were small—\$28 in 1949. Later, blankets were added. Members loaned their clean cotton blankets to the booth. When it rained, members collected wet pillows and blankets after the show and spent many late hours at a laundromat drying them. Now, Soroptimist members operate the booth 114 nights from June to October and outsource the drying chore. Last seasons' proceeds were \$51,768.

The real story, however, is how these proceeds were used for the benefit of the community. Half, \$25,884, was donated to OSF's FAIR project that supports the

next generation of theater artists. Over \$10,000 was given in scholarships and awards to women and girls including the Women's Opportunity Award given to a female head of household in a college or vocational program. Soroptimist Strong Girls Strong Women, the club's signature project at Helman Elementary School, received \$3,000. The club also provided funds for women's health such as mammograms and supported programs that fight violence against women such as Dunn House, SART and a Stop Trafficking campaign. Encourage out-of-town guests to rent a pillow and blanket; the proceeds go to good causes.

Soroptimist is an international volunteer organization for business and professional women whose mission is to improve the lives of women and girls locally and globally. To learn more, go to www.soroptimistRV.org.



Kimberly Thompson, with daughter Anissa Lamberg, won 2010 Women's Opportunity Award

Note: This article was written and submitted to Sneak Preview by Sara Brown for publication. It ran in June, 2010. Having no copy of the published article, I reprint as submitted. —Linda Anderson, SI-Ashland.