

GIFTS FROM THE SEA I

INTRODUCTION

Tonight, as I officially install the new officers of the Soroptimist Club of _____, I shall draw throughout from Anne Morrow Lindberg's "Gifts from the Sea". Her words have certainly touched a responsive chord in the hearts of men and women alike. Mrs. Lindberg's delightfully penetrating thoughts will serve us well.

Tonight we can see the beginning of the ebb tide for those officers and board members who have served Soroptimist this past year -- selflessly, efficiently and progressively. However, the ebbside goes only so far -- and then it returns. As Ann Lindberg says: "Purposeful giving is not apt to deplete one's resources; it belongs to the natural order of giving that seems to renew itself even in the act of depletion." I know that the members of the outgoing board of this club will show that their resources have not been depleted. They will be found always riding high on the crest of the flow tide wave in purposeful service to others.

On behalf of the Soroptimist Club of _____, I express to each of you sincere appreciation for your service and leadership. (Rise--applaud)

Outgoing President _____, the double-sunrise shell was one gift from the sea which Mrs. Lindberg referred to. She said: "One learns to accept the fact that no permanent return is possible to an old form of relationship; and, more deeply still, that there is no holding of a relationship to a single form. All living relationships are in process of change, of expansion, and must perpetually be building themselves new forms. My double-sunrise shell comes first--two flawless halves bound together with a single hinge, meeting each other at every point, the dawn of a new day spreading on each face."

President _____, these words express the relationship between you and your past president _____. And this particular relationship is almost ended. There is no permanent return. However, your gift from the sea is a double-sunrise shell and you now will have half of the experience yet to enjoy. You now move into a new relationship with your newly elected President, and with her Board. They will lean upon your experience and seek your advice.

Your service to the club and to Soroptimist will continue, I know, in this second half of the double sunrise. I wish to publicly express the love and appreciation of the Soroptimist Club of _____.

ALL OFFICERS ELECT:_____ Please come forward.

The shell of the channelled whelk brought to Anne Lindberg many thoughts about the shape of life. Among them, she expressed these: "I want a singleness of eye, a purity of intention, a central core to my life that will enable me to carry out these obligations and activities as well as I can. For life today is based on the premise of ever-widening circles of contact and communication. It involves not only family demands, but community demands, national demands and international demands----through social and cultural pressures, through newspapers, magazines, radio programs, political drives, charitable appeals, and so on."

To the newly elected officers, I give the shell of the channelled whelk. Mrs. Lindberg wrote: "The problem is basically: how to remain whole in the midst of the distractions of life; how to remain balanced, no matter what centrifugal forces tend to pull one off center; how to remain strong, no matter what shocks come in at the periphery and tend to crack the hub of the wheel. The bare beauty of the channelled whelk tells me that one answer, and perhaps a first step, is in simplification of life; in cutting out some of the distractions."

Right now you are probably all feeling that your life has grown more complex, and distractions added because of your election as officers and Board Members. We have full confidence that you will remain whole in the midst of many distractions. You will remain balanced to withstand those forces that tend to pull you off center, you will remain strong in the face of problems. We know you will have purity of intention and singleness of eye as you interpret and promote the spirit of service and Soroptimist in your community and your club.

Vice Presidents _____ You will become the right hand and eye of the President.

We find yet another gift from the sea in the oyster bed. Anne Lindberg says, "I am very fond of the oyster shell. Its form is not primarily beautiful, but functional. Its tireless adaptability and tenacity draw my astonished admiration--"

Your job _____	as Treasurer
yours, _____	as Recording Secretary
yours, _____	as Corresponding Secretary
and Board Members _____	

are not primarily beautiful, but they are most certainly functional. We know that you will adapt yourselves tirelessly to the needs of your club, and your board. We know you will serve with tenacity in these duties that are most necessary, time-consuming, and sometimes even monotonous. You are, indeed, the pearls of the oyster bed. Your value to the club and the board is

priceless.

PRESIDENT ELECT: _____

The central core of the thoughts expressed in "Gifts from the Sea" lay in the Moon Shell which Anne called her "island shell". She says: "For to be a woman is to have interests and duties, radiating out in all directions from the central core, like spokes from the hub of a wheel. The pattern of our lives is essentially circular. We must be open to all points of the compass; husband, children, friends, home, community; stretched out, exposed sensitive like a spider's web to each breeze that blows, to each call that comes. -----"Thrown together on this island of living, we stretch to understand each other and are invigorated by the stretching." "The final answer is always inside" for the outside of our shell is only the starting point in finding the answer to life's problems.

So, President-elect _____, I give to you Anne Lindberg's Moon Shell. In order to carry the responsibilities that will soon be ours as President of the Soroptimist Club of _____, you will find you may renew your inner resources---an absolute necessity as you stretch to solve the problems of your Club. I know that you will vigorously foster a renewal of the inner resources of the club members as well.

Your past service in other capacities is such that you are already looking through a periscope out at the world--with your mind open to all points of the compass. Your service as a leader will begin to widen even as the circles of waves upon the sea.

Anne Lindberg closed her book with this: "The waves echo behind me. Patience--Faith--Openness is what the sea has to teach. But there are other beaches to explore. There are more shells to find. This is only the beginning."

Patience, Faith, Openness---all qualities you need as a President. All that is past in Soroptimist is only a beginning. We look to you to lead us in the exploration of new beaches of service.

CONCLUSION:

There is one more gift from the sea--which I would leave with you--The Argonauta or the Paper Nautilus. It was named for the fabled ships of Jason that went in search of the Golden Fleece. Sailors consider the Argonauta Shell as a sign of fair weather and favorable winds.

As I now officially declare you installed as officers and board members, I give to you, as a group, the Argonauta Shell--fair weather and favorable winds from the hearts of all of the members of the Soroptimist Club of _____.

Submitted by Lily E. Quarnberg, Vancouver, Washington
Props: Seashells (craft stores or pet store or bath shop)