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No photos

Soroptimist International of Twentynine Palms champagne social raises more than \$5,000 for Prudie Underhill Journalism scholarship

TWENTYNINE PALMS — Nearly 100 people from across the Morongo Basin sipped champagne, nibbled on gourmet hors d'oeuvres, listened to music by pianist Harry Taylor and the Hafler Duo, and bid on a dozen unique live and silent auction items during Soroptimist International of Twentynine Palms' inaugural Pioneers in Print Champagne Social here Saturday evening, Oct. 18.

The event, held under the stars at Broadview, the home of late newspaper pioneers Prudie and Bill Underhill, raised more than \$5,000 for the Prudie Underhill Journalism Scholarship created by SI-29 Palms in conjunction with The Desert Trail after Underhill's passing in June 2007.

Live and silent auctions of items that included paintings by artists John and Kathi Hilton and Pat Flynn, a one-of-a-kind cowboy hat painted by artist Chuck Caplinger, a creosote cross crafted by Larry Bowden, a giclee print by artist Audrey Gillick, a photograph by Trail features editor Kelly O'Sullivan, baskets assembled by the Retired Officers' Spouses and Desert Women of 29 Palms, and a decadent banana crème pie made by Roughley Manor Bed & Breakfast owner Jan Peters, brought in \$2,545.

"We are so grateful for the fantastic community support we received for this event, which we hope will become a staple of Pioneer Days," SI-29 Palms President Donna Johnson said. "Prudie would have been extremely proud of this event, and we know she would be thrilled about helping young women with a passion for her chosen field of journalism pursue their dreams.

Johnson thanked Underhill's daughter and son-in-law, Ann and Mike Congdon, for helping the club carry on Underhill's legacy of giving to the community by making Broadview available for the soiree and helping plan and carry out the event.

"What a grand location," Johnson said of the historic homestead, which offers prime views of the city and surrounding mountains.

"Pioneers in Print was a fabulous event, with great food, good company and a more than worthwhile cause," said Cindy Melland, publisher of The Desert Trail, who attended with her husband, Scott. "While I know Prudie would be so proud of the journalism scholarship, I am also thrilled about the future that this scholarship represents for the newspaper business. History is documented in the printed word and many books cite newspapers as their reference, so we must preserve the art of journalism for our past and future's sake. "Thank you to SI 29 for championing this scholarship, to Kelly and Kurt of our Desert Trail staff for being a part, to the donors of such lovely auction items and to Mike and Ann for sharing Broadview – what an appropriate venue!"

All of the evening's proceeds will go toward the scholarship. Each year, \$1,000 and a summer internship with the newspaper will be awarded to a female Twentynine Palms High School senior planning to pursue a degree in print, broadcast or online journalism at an accredited college or university. Each recipient will have the option to renew the scholarship for up to three additional years if she remains in an accredited journalism program.

Kyla Cook, daughter of Jess and Kelly Cook of Twentynine Palms, was awarded the first Underhill scholarship in June 2008. After interning at the Trail over the summer, she is in the midst of her freshman year at North Iowa Area Community College in Mason City, where she works on the student newspaper, The Logos,

and plays on the volleyball team. The next scholarship winner will be named in June 2009.

For more information about Si-29 Palms or the scholarship, call April Gibson at 367-1673 or go online to [www.si29palms.org](http://www.si29palms.org)

Anyone wishing to contribute to the scholarship may send checks to SI-29 Palms, P.O. Box 245, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277. Be sure to indicate on the check that the money is for the Underhill scholarship.