

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Meet Laurie McCauley

Welcome back to another Soroptimist year! Last year, we started the “Member Spotlight” feature in our newsletter, and it was a hit! We decided to continue so you can get to know more about members of our club. This month, we are shining the spotlight on Laurie McCauley.



Laurie RVing with her cat Mui Mui.

Laurie describes herself as a jack-of-all-trades, and a road warrior. She grew up in Boulder Colorado, and is as well traveled in this country as one can be, having visited all 50 states at least once! Over the course of a year and a half, she traveled the states west of the Mississippi up close and personal via RV with her cat, Mui Mui. She has lived in Colorado, Venice Beach, California, New York City, and moved to Saratoga Springs in 2009. On arriving upstate, she was still working for School Link Technologies, a K-12 Food Service software corporation. Laurie had numerous roles with them for 25 years including: support, product testing, development, implementation, training, Director of Professional Services, the Executive Project Director for the NYCDOE and last but not least the Project Manager and developer of all the companies On-Line Learning resources and curriculum.

In 2003 from the road and while working for SL-Tech, Laurie started her company, Onward & Upward, Inc., providing programs for leadership training and coaching. In 2010, exploring options for her next career phase, she attended a National Association of Senior Move Management (NASMM) conference. Through that conference, she found a mentor, and soon after, retired from SL-Tech, became 100% self-employed, and shifted the focus of her company. She now provides a number of services-from move and project management, downsizing and professional organizing with an occasional detour back to technology rich projects. Her website, www.onupward.com gives you a taste all the different services she provides.

Laurie explored numerous volunteer opportunities in the area when she first moved to Saratoga. She was on a mission to fill her spare time volunteering for meaningful projects that have a local impact. At her BNI group, she met Joan Taub and Debbie Verni, who introduced her to Soroptimists. Laurie joined our club in 2014. She was on the Secret Garden Committee in her first year. After the February retreat in 2015 focused on reworking the Hope and Power program, Laurie felt her experience was a good match to work on that committee. Since then, she has done a fabulous job of organizing curriculum, updating handouts and power points for all eight classes as well as helping improve the content’s overall relevance and continuity. She has just finished another update of the curriculum for this year with the help of Lyn Whaley and Holly Zapp.



Laurie with her partner Chris at their new property

Laurie and her partner, Chris Moynihan, recently purchased their dream property in Providence (Middle Grove). It is a 290 acre property, with a large post and beam home that they are in the process of improving. They look forward to snowshoeing and hiking their own property, taking photos of all the local critters, learning about the flora, and using the wood-fired pizza oven! It is a labor of love, keeping Laurie and Chris very busy!



One of Laurie's award winning photographs

Laurie has a lifelong passion for photography and creative writing. She's a regular at writing, creativity and photography retreats in VT, NY & MA. She has written poetry her entire life and posts pieces old and new along with a blog, and a few of her photos on her personal website, www.onupard.net. She plans to author a regular column with organization and downsizing tips for a local magazine publication in the near future. Laurie also has interests in Native American culture, and plans to use her property for activities such as Pipe Circles, Sweat Lodges and possibly Vision Quests. In November 2017 she began leading "Creative Clusters." These clusters are a 12-week "creative recovery" venture, based on books like The Artists Way or Never To Late To Begin Again by the famous author Julia Cameron.

Laurie is certainly correct when she says she is a jack-of-all-trades, and we are lucky to benefit from her many talents in SISC.

Marie Buckley Hoffman