



ZONTA
COOS BAY AREA ZONTA
SERVICE FOUNDATION

EMPOWERING WOMEN
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

PRESS RELEASE

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Zonta Celebrity Dinner to Honor Senator Joanne Verger

The Zonta Club of the Coos Bay Area is pleased to honor Senator Joanne Verger as 2019 Zonta Celebrity during the 21st annual Celebrity Dinner on Saturday, March 16th, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. at the Mill Casino Hotel's Salmon Room.

Joanne Verger is recognized for her 50 years of public service in Coos County and the State of Oregon. Moving to Coos County with her late husband Lawton in 1969 to open a car dealership, she became the face of the Easter Seal Telethon for 15 years. Elected to the Coos Bay City Council in 1990, Verger went on to become the first female Mayor of Coos Bay serving 4 terms, before her election as Oregon State Representative 2001-2004. In 2004 she was elected to the Oregon State Senate serving the South Coast from 2004 until her retirement in 2012. Verger was a member of the Joint Ways and Means Committee and a longtime advocate for women and children, introducing legislation in Salem to combat child pornography, legislation to aid harassment victims and supporting breast and cervical cancer treatment for low income women. She was one of the co-sponsors of the first anti-human trafficking legislation passed by the OR Senate and was an original member of the Legislative Anti-Trafficking Task Force. Her anti-bullying bill, passed during the 2010 session, is according to Verger, a highlight of her career. Verger was inducted into the Oregon Women of Achievement Hall of Fame in 2014.

Now in its 21st year, the Zonta Celebrity Dinner fundraiser will include a dinner, dance party with DJ Daryl Elkins and auction. The theme is Zonta's Greatest Show: 100 Years of Empowering Women, to commemorate Zonta Internationals 100 Centennial Anniversary 1919-2019.

Proceeds from the charity event will benefit Zonta's initiatives to support women and children both globally and locally in our community, including scholarships and community grants. Zonta also provides programs such as the Little Red Schoolhouse, which provides thousands of dollars of school supplies in Coos County each fall, Dress Your Best, a seminar for women returning to the workforce, and Girls Rock, scheduled for April 27th, a STEM workshop for young women to learn about opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math.

The mission of Zonta International is to improve the legal, economic, health, educational, and professional status of women through service and advocacy. Those interested in donating to or attending the event can contact Julie Reed at oceanbreeze@epuerto.net, 541-290-1270.