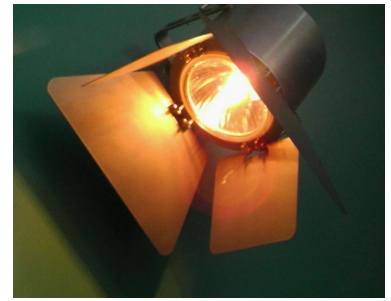


The Spotlight

Soroptimist International South Central Region
Investing In Dreams



February 2024

Governor Angel Speaks...



Happy New Year 2024!!!

Hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday season and are weathering our cooler temperatures without incident.

In this February newsletter there are a couple things that need to be addressed as we work our way through the last half of our biennium.

By now, each of your Treasurers should have received the application to apply for SIA Convention Mandatory relief. If you have not filled this out by now, please jump on this immediately. The email went out January 9, 2024 from SIA Membership Manager Luz Aponte. Please reach out immediately to Luz Aponte siahq@soroptimist.org if your club has not yet applied. It has not been communicated to me yet when the clubs will be notified of their status. Will let you know as soon as I know.

For more information on the SIA's 48th Biennial Convention – registration, hotel, airlines, etc – refer to the January 2024 Best for Women e-newsletter. If you plan on attending, please let Governor Elect Leigh know. On Thursday evening of the Convention, Regions attend dinners, that Leigh will be planning. Reservations are generally needed for this outing.

Next, the Call for SCR Conference is scheduled to go out February 19, 2024. As a reminder, the Conference is being held April 19-21, 2024 in Vandalia, IL. Soroptimist International of Vandalia, IL is graciously hosting our weekend and planning some fun events. As this is the time to elect the 2024-2026 Board and set the budget for said biennium, I encourage everyone to attend so we can complete our business. I am excited to announce that our Federation Visitor is SIA Secretary/Treasurer Board Member Sue Riney, SI Oak Harbor, WA. I have had the pleasure of knowing Sue since our Venture days and am looking forward to the members of South Central Region showing off how wonderful our Region is.

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Governor Angel Speaks continued...

Last, I am reaching out to all the Committee Chairs to please have your biennium reports to me by April 8th. At our District Meeting in October 2002, I gave each chair a jump drive and folder asking you to put together a handbook (soft or hard copy) so that it can be turned over to the next administration. Some of you, this will be the 1st Conference presentation, others have been working diligently over the last 1 ½ so your report may be small or large, depending on that work. I implore all to reach out to myself or Governor Elect Leigh if more assistance is needed for these tasks.

Reminder – Governor Elect Leigh has asked that 2024-2026 elected Board members please plan on meeting at 8:00am Sunday morning (April 21st) at the Chuck Wagon Restaurant to pass on relevant materials. Please plan travel arrangements accordingly if you are running for 2024-2026 SCR Board

As always, keep up the great works within your communities and I'll see each of you in Vandalia!!!!

Yours in Soroptimist

Angel Standish

Angel Standish
Governor 2022-2024
South Central Region

Soroptimist Grants

Soroptimist Club Grants should be submitted by March 1, 2024. Grants can range from \$500 to \$3000. Club grants are to be used to increase access to education in line with our Big Goal. For this reason, Grant applications must be used to support Live Your Dream, Dream It Be It and Big Goal Accelerator Projects. Funds requested cannot be used as a monetary award or scholarship, as a donation to another organization, to pay for speakers or as volunteer stipites. Grant funds can be used to cover GED training certificates, workshops that help women and girls complete scholarship applications, uniforms or tools needed for a job, operational supplies, media post and Facebook ads to advertise or promote a scholarship or Live Your Dream Award. Food and prizes to encourage participation at workshops. Educational training and skills training events.

Detailed information can be found on the SIA website Soroptimist.org.



Notes from the Governor Elect Leigh Hedgpeth

Come to Vandalia in April for the South Central Region Conference

Plan now to attend the South Central Region Conference April 20th and 21st, 2024 in Vandalia, Illinois.

SI Vandalia was chartered in November of 1965 and we are pleased to share our town with you for this fun and informative weekend.

Rooms have been reserved at the Quality Inn and Suites, 1920 N Kennedy Blvd in Vandalia, Illinois. Two double bed rooms or a king bed room are only \$70.00 + tax per night and include a free breakfast bar. Reservations can be made by calling 1-618-283-4400, please mention SOROPTIMIST to get this special rate. Rate is good for Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, so come early and see our town.

Friday evening, we will be in downtown Vandalia at Charters Patio, and we have arranged for distillery tours at Witness Distillery for those that are interested. Make sure and send your reservation for the tour with your registration. Charters Patio is across from the Old Illinois' State Capital that will also be open and providing tours. Abe Lincoln once worked in this very building!

Saturday will be a busy day with bylaws discussions, Live Your Dream Awards and all of our other business to attend to. We have a wonderful speaker for lunch and a workshop on Women's health. Not to mention the election of our 2024-2026 Region officers.

Saturday night we will say "Well Done and Thank You" to Governor Angela, install our newly elected officers and play musical bingo.

I hope you will all try to come see my town, renew friendships and **create** memories.

I hope to see you all soon.

SCR Governor Elect

Leigh Hedgpeth

Mandatory SIA Convention Fee

The mandatory \$800 convention fee is due by March 15th. SIA has sent information to the club presidents regarding a reduction of \$200 for clubs that are struggling.

Criteria for the reduction are as follows:

- * Has experienced a significant decline in membership
- * Is a new club of under 18 months that has not had time to establish a solid financial base
- * Payment of the fee would have a negative impact on their ability to serve our target audience

In addition, clubs can request a waiver or additional help by reaching out before March 29, 2024. IF the club has

- * been impacted by a disaster in the last 18 months
- * is an area that is suffering a historical financial decline
- * other issues will be considered on a case by case basis.

A club that does not pay the required Mandatory fee will be “not in good standing” until this fee is paid. There is no time limit on this.

But the funds are limited and are on a first come basis. So if your club needs to file the waiver, do it now.

In a zoom call with SIA many questions were presented by Governor Angela from the feedback we received at the District’s meeting. Below is a brief recap of that call.

Clubs are encouraged to plan for a 20% increase in this fee for the next biennium. SIA will work to get the cost of the 2026 convention out in a more timely manner for the 25-26 club year budgets. The mandatory conference fee can only be used by your club delegate to the convention, it cannot be used by another club, even if your club is not sending a representative. A change to the mandatory fee is that it will now cover the cost for the delegate to attend the Friday friendship reception, the second day lunch, dance party and the Saturday night Gala event. In the past these events have cost an average of \$450.

Governor Angela also asked about a reduced fee for additional attendees, the possibility of a remote attendance option, and the use of translation technology. SIA stated that all three items will be looked into for future events but are not realistic at this time. Translation technology is too new and expensive. SIA is not capable of hosting a mixed attendance event and a reduced fee for additional attendees from the same club is not financially possible at this time.

Club News...

SI Winfield, Kansas



DUCK JAM PROCEEDS BENEFIT BLESSINGS BOX

Proceeds from one of the Duck Jam proceeds this summer was used to restock supplies for the Blessing Box. Winfield S/I members bake homemade goodies to sell at each of the Duck Jam free concerts in Island Park. Members man the “goodies” table and go out into the crowds to sell these delicious treats. This summer membership voted to use the proceeds from one of these nights to go to restocking the Blessing Box located outside the Winfield American Legion. Pictured to the left are Projects and Community Service Co-Chairs Tania Richardson and Christina McDonald who purchased and put away new supplies.

SI Winfield Celebrates Christmas

Winfield Soroptimist members and spouses gathered to celebrate the season at Luigi's Italian Restaurant on December 9th. Good food, fellowship and fun was had by all. Dirty Santa was played with lots of laughs, steals, some happy recipients, and some unhappy recipients.

Secret Sister gifts were also exchanged.

There were 17 members, 12 spouses and 1 guest in attendance.

Dirty Santa was a hit with everyone.



Members in attendance, Front row: Roxann Taylor, Pam Anderson, Dee Ledy, Terri Seidel, Sheryl Clower, Treva Harrod, Kathryn Schuster, Back Row: Donna Thompson, Diane Williams, Tania Richardson, Judy Kunkel, Nancy Martin, Cassandra Davis, Stephanie Nulik, Cheryl Crow, Ruth Parman, Lori Aikins.

SI Rockwall's Rubber Duck Race Entry



Created by Cassandra Jones talented husband, Ian.
Second Place in People's Choice Award

SI Rockwall's Public Library Display



With her daughter Kinsley's help, Jennifer Najmabadi created an extensive SI Rockwall Club display for the library's entry display case.

Club News...

SI Rockwall, Texas continued...

Welcome New Member Allison Hamilton



L-R Dell Osborne, Allison Hamilton, Delia Watts

SI Rockwall Members Out and about in the Community



Penny Maris, Sharon Donnegan & Sandy Webb attend Bubbles & Bags fundraiser for The Children's Advocacy Center for Rockwall County



President Sherri Fite rocks the runway during the Helping Hands Fashion Show.



Michelle Van Parys and Delia Watts enjoy appetizers at Sear Steakhouse in appreciation of Sear's support of SI fundraisers.

Club News...**SI Joplin, Missouri****Our club is growing strong!**

SI Joplin welcomed 14 new members in the fall of 2023:

Anita Archer

Director of Business Development/ Co-Owner at Unearth Potential

Kristi Benefiel

Executive Asst / Realtor at The Independent Living Center / PRO 100

Wendy Chrisenberry

Instructor / Nurse Practitioner at MSSU Nursing Department

Michelle Ferguson

Consumer and Mortgage Lender at Southwest Missouri Bank

Lisa Francis

Director of Adult Community Care at Ozark Center

Emily Gibson

Communications Coordinator at Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Four States

Samantha Martin

Sales and Service Manager for Destination Rogers / Rogers Lowell Chamber of Commerce (Ark.)

Kate Mays

Asst. Director of Adult Community Care at Ozark Center

Liz Nicholson

Interim Sr Director at Community Support Services of Missouri

Sarah Park

Founder of Collaborative Catalyst Consulting

Amanda Stone

Executive Director at Bright Futures of Joplin

Jayde Thomas

Senior Director, Development at Community Support Services of Missouri

Karen Watts

System Director of Laboratory Services at Freeman Health System

Heather Wimsett

Director at SHINE Joplin

WELCOME TO ALL!!

Club News...

SI Joplin, Missouri continued...

Programs of Service donations 2023-2024:

Our club has received applications from and distributed funds to several Joplin-area nonprofit organizations since September 2023. These organizations have programs that align with Soroptimist values and mission, and we are proud to support them in performing important work in our community.

\$500 to St. Mary's Elementary School, Early Childhood Division to help fund playground equipment such as a sensory table, water table, and rock climbing wall, which will aid in the development of gross motor skills of the children at the school. (September 2023)



\$500 to Ronald McDonald House to purchase books for Freeman Hospital's NICU to fill the bookshelf that was installed earlier in the year, so that parents with babies in the NICU have the bonding experience of reading to their babies. (September 2023)

\$2,500 to Boys and Girls Club of Southwest Missouri to implement a program called SMART Girls, a small-group health, fitness, prevention/education, and self-esteem enhancement program designed to meet the developmental needs of girls ages 8 to 18. (September 2023)



\$500 to purchase meals for our volunteer efforts in serving meals at Building Bridges, an organization that facilitates programs to help members of the community live better, more prosperous lives through partnerships with community leaders. (October 2023)

\$500 to Miracle League of Joplin to sponsor the 2024 baseball season which empowers people with special needs through inclusive play. (January 2024)

\$200 to Jasper County CASA to fund an art class (hosted by Spiva Center for the Arts) for 50 kids in foster care. (January 2024)

Club News...

SI Vandalia, Illinois



SI Vandalia celebrated Christmas with Santa...



Good Little Munchkins...



Club News...

SI Vandalia, Illinois continued...

SI Vandalia held a “Build a Snowman” Event.

Creative work going on there...



Great Results!





Soroptimist International of Amarillo

No Boundaries International Community Dinner November 30, 2023

SI Amarillo members prepared and served dinner to over 250 at NBI in November. NBI fights human trafficking in our city and beyond. We also had teen helpers from Amtech Academy.



Soroptimist Attendees: Lynette Benge, Tina Brandon, Jo Ann Eudy, Joy Lane, Rhonda Stephenson, Denise Stephenson, Chris Palafox, Brenda Nipper, Marsha Goebel, Dena Gann, Carrie Miller

Downtown Women’s Center

Si Amarillo held our annual Christmas Party for the Downtown Women’s Center on December 7, 2023. The evening featured food, gifts, music and story sharing. The Amarillo DWC is a Christ based program for women in recovery from alcohol and drug addiction.



Club participants back row: Tina Brandon, Rosemary Robinson, Denise Stephenson, Dena Gann, Mary Pepper, Monica Williams, Jo Ann Eudy, Brenda Nipper Front row: Darlene Moore, Rosemary Eaves, Eileen Hildebrand, Lynette Benge



Club News...

SI Amarillo, Texas continued...



SI Amarillo installed our first new member of 2024 at our January program meeting. Welcome Mollee Vogler to Soroptimist!!



Joy Lane of SI Amarillo presented our current ongoing scholarship awardees, Britney and Alma, with this semester's \$1,250 checks in January



Live Your Dream award Winners: Kristen, Emily, and Elise

Presented by Brenda Nipper

Brenda Nipper presented Live Your Dream awards to Kristen W. (\$1,000), Emily E. (\$1,000) and Elise R. (\$1,500). Elise will compete at the next level. We are so proud of these outstanding ladies for their commitment to better their lives and lives of their children.

Gratulations!

Club News...

SI Dallas, Texas



Soroptimist International of Dallas partners with Journey of Hope, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting children and their families grieving the loss of a loved one. On November 16, 2023, a few of our members prepared and served dinner to their clients and counselors before the evening counseling sessions begin.



SCR Governor Angela Standish, SI Dallas President Cindy Jan, and SI Dallas President-Elect Ginny Lloyd attended the Girls Embracing Mothers (GEM) Christmas Party held on Saturday, December 16. SI Dallas provided gift bags for the 40 girls who attended the event with their families. GEM is a non-profit organization whose mission is to empower girls with mothers in prison to break the cycle of incarceration and live successful lives. SI Dallas partnered with GEM over three years ago and has presented the Dream It Be It program to the young girls.

Club News...

SI Grand Prairie, Texas

Our club is a member of the Hispanic Chamber of Grand Prairie. At their Magic Christmas event SIGP helped these kids enjoy a special celebration. Thank you Pat, Petra and Mary,



The club and members provided funds for a family recommended by Lifeline for Families (www.lifelineforfamilies.org). Numerous gift cards were presented to the recipient located on the left by SIGP members Jennifer, Tami and Melinda.



Club News ...

SI Grand Prairie, Texas continued,,,



Our first Girl of the Month event happened in November. Grand Prairie ISD selects an outstanding young lady from each school. Our club invites them and their guests to be honored at our GOTM Saturday event. After everyone enjoys the food provided Shebra asks each Soroptimist to introduce herself and share why she's a member. Shebra then shares general information about Soroptimist, our club activities, and awards. She then presents a certificate to each girl as President Petra gives each a glass rose. Many proud family members attend



Club News...

SI Grand Prairie, Texas continued...



Our Honoring Her Sneaker Ball FUNdraiser takes place March 2, at Pioneer Event Center, Grand Prairie. A scholarship will be presented to a Senior girl. Our Live Your Dream winner will be featured. Women who make a difference in our community will also be honored. Enjoy dinner, dancing, a Wine Pull, plus live and silent auctions. To attend or donate contact sigp.technology@gmail.com.



Club News...

SI Grand Prairie, Texas continued...

Two club grants were awarded to deserving local nonprofits Help Us Help Her (www.HUHH.org) and Grand Prairie Homeless Outreach Program (Facebook). Here Dandreon is accepting for HUHH a check from President Petra and Treasurer Pat.



Club News....

SI Grand Prairie, Texas continued...

It's important take time for some fun and bonding. We celebrated holiday pot luck luncheon with games and crafts at Shebra's home. Some relaxed in pajamas! Here our "normal" members on the stairway. Top to bottom: Marilyn, Pat, Dandreon, Liz, Dawn, President Petra and Shebra hugging her mom, Detra.



Club News...

SI Greater St. Louis, Missouri

Proceeds benefit the "Live Your Dream" Award and our Soroptimist scholarships
Check us out at soroptimiststlouis.com

**SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF GREATER ST. LOUIS
PRESENTS**

80'S BLACKLIGHT BINGO

**OVER \$1200
IN CASH
PRIZES!**

**50/50 AND
BASKET
RAFFLES**

CHECK THESE DEETS:

When: Saturday, February 17, 2024

Doors open at 6:00pm | Bingo starts at 7:00pm

NEW LOCATION: James J. Eagan Community Center, #1

James J. Eagan Dr., Florissant, MO 63033

Cost: \$40 per person or \$300 for a Table of 8

Includes beer, wine, soda | Bring your own bodacious snacks

BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!

TICKETS:



Club News...**SI Ponca City, Oklahoma**

The Ponca City Club this year is re-emphasizing ways to have hands-on service with many of the organizations we have funded in past years. We have volunteered to help clients at the New Emergency Resource Agency (NERA), our local food bank and plan to do it a couple of more times this year. We plan to volunteer to help the Survivor Resource Network (our domestic violence program) with their annual Purple Party fund-raiser and the spring Herb Festival.

Cindy Wigley again has chaired our Dream It Be It Program where we work seven times during the school year with the eighth grade girls at our local middle school. We have held five of the seven sessions providing lunch at each session. Using the program information on the SIA website we have expanded the program and included local speakers to motivate the girls to overcome failures and be successful women. This will conclude in March with a luncheon with local professional women where girls can learn about careers in which they are interested.

As an offshoot of Live Your Dream, our club has created a program for seventh grade girls we call Believe It Achieve it. Four times during the school year we bring in a woman who has overcome personal difficulties to be successful to inspire these girls and hopefully interest them next year in signing up to participate in Live Your Dream as eighth graders.

Because of our connection with the eighth grade counselor through Dream It Be It, we have discovered a need to help with the clothes closet at the Mid-High. This spring we plan to have a service project cleaning and organizing this area to make it more user friendly.

In February we will honor our Live Your Dream recipients at a luncheon organized by Robyn Armstrong. Last fall applications were announced through area college and vo-tech programs. We continue to search for new ways to reach these women to apply for the program.

Five members attended the South Central Region Meeting in Oklahoma City and we plan to have some attend the Spring Conference in Vandalia, IL.



Club News....

SI Kansas City, Missouri

Just before the holidays, SIKC sponsored a CPR training review for club members. Our instructor was Andre Sidney, Red Cross Certified First Aid/CPR/AED instructor and the husband of club member Danielle Sidney. Good training and a good review.



SIKC member Jerri Cofran has collaborated with KC Shepherd's Center for several years in their "phone pal" program. She had never met Betty officially, but after many, many conversations, she was able to invite Betty to one of our club meetings.

Here they are, finally enjoying face to face conversation. Betty is a delightful woman, full of wisdom and energy.



Club News...

SI Kansas City, Missouri continued...

In December, SIKC took part in our annual combined club Holiday Party. We joined with SI Liberty (the host club), SI St. Joseph, and SI Kansas City Northland for an evening of good food, fun and holiday spirit. This is one of our favorite social events of the year. So good to see old friends and celebrate the holidays.



The SI St. Joseph contingent...



SI Kansas City was represented...

The best necklace of the evening...



Club News...

SI Kansas City, Missouri continued...

These two get into mischief a lot!
Jean Rube and Kay Stewart.



Tanya Johannes trying to
unwrap a package while
wearing oven mitts before
Marcia Boutz rolls a six on a
pair of dice. Grace Boswell
cheering them on.

Whoever wrapped that package
went crazy with the cellophane
tape.