



GOVERNOR'S APRIL MESSAGE

I hope by now you are all registered to come to Founder Region Conference. I look forward to seeing you in San Ramon, May 1-3. That raises the question of why have an in-person conference-it's expensive, it's time-consuming... I suppose those things are true to an extent, but I want to give you my thoughts about that.

As to the expense, unfortunately life is expensive. The question is whether you get something for your money. While everyone's resources are limited, you have to evaluate how you want to use yours. I know that past Region Boards, the current Region Board, and I am sure the future Region Boards have worked, are working, and will work to provide absolutely the best value possible. If you have ideas on that subject, please share them.

Then there is the time-consuming part. I look at the time at Conference as a gift I give myself. It is an opportunity to see people I don't normally see and actually have time to connect with them. It is a time to meet new people and learn from them. Obviously, it is a time to learn about all things Soroptimist. What could be better? Sitting down over a cup of coffee or (dare I say it) a glass of wine creates and maintains relationships in a way that simply can't be done over a computer screen.

I urge each of you to think about these things. Keep them in mind as you plan your club meetings and your Presidents' Round Tables. You can't hug a computer screen.

As for me, I'm going to San Ramon.

Governor Elise

Reminders

- May 1-3- Conference
- June 6: Leadership Training-Concord
- June 13: Leadership Training -Eureka
- June 14: Memorial Grove
- July 1 to July 31 Pay SIA Dues in Portal

Member and Leader Code of Conduct and Signing Process Webinar

May 13 at 8:00 p.m. (ET) to learn more about the Code, the enforcement process, and the signing event happening later this club year.

[LINK TO REGISTRATION](#)

SIA DUES: Eligible users can [log in](#) to the member portal to pay the 2026-2027 annual club dues starting July 1. Clubs will have the entire month to complete payment by July 31. Please **do not** generate an invoice or pay before July 1, as your club's payment will not be attributed to the correct club year. Questions? Email siahq@soroptimist.org for more information.

FUNDRAISING — JOY SWANK, CHAIR

Happy April Soroptimist Friends,

I am at the finish line with our Dream Basket Numbers. Thanks to Gov-elect Jackie and Treasurer Holly they helped formulate a collection plan easier on the club treasurers this year. Fingers crossed!

Last year we made about \$14,000.00. I am hoping to top it.

Your hard-earned money goes to support our Dream Programs.

Here is how:

- LYD- The Region gives \$2,000 to each district winner, this is added to the money given to winners by SIA.
- Violet Richardson- District winners receive \$500.
- The \$1,000 LYD Incentives clubs can win to award additional awards.

Thanks for all you do to support women and girls. We are making a difference.

100 Stargazers
IN 100 DAYS April 1 - July 9

**SHINE BRIGHT,
Compete for Glory!**

The top three regions that recruit the most Stargazers (as a percentage of region membership) will receive extra recognition:

- 🏆 Special certificate
- @ Shout-out on SIA's social media platforms
- 📰 Feature in the Best for Women newsletter

Start a gift for as low as \$5 a month! You'll receive a special Stargazer pin to recognize your generosity.

Scan me with your phone's camera for information and to enroll!
Soroptimist.org/stargazers

Stop by the Region table at conference. We have some great things on sale. You can also sign up to be a Stargazer monthly donor or join the Laurel Society. Or scan the code and enroll today!

MEMBERSHIP — ANGIE HARAMOTO, CHAIR

I'd like to encourage everyone to take a moment and write down some ideas for what your club or even you personally can do to improve the Soroptimist experience. Listening to a new member's ideas, helping someone navigate their new leadership position, or making sure other members know to read Best for Women for all the latest news and information are all small ways that you can help increase retention and make Soroptimist the best it can be! Thank you!

PROGRAMS —JACKIE DE VRIES, CHAIR

Be sure you submit your reports for Dream It, Be It and BIG Goal Accelerator Projects.

Join us on May 3rd as we celebrate our Live Your Dream winners, Violet Richardson winners, and the "S" Club Outstanding Senior award.

PUBLIC AWARENESS — SUE PRETZER, CHAIR

Why Soroptimist Branding Matters! Even at the Club Level...

When people see your club's name, a flyer, a social post, or a news article, they are making a snap judgment—often in just a few seconds. Consistent branding helps them quickly recognize Soroptimist, understand our mission, and trust that your club is part of a credible, established organization. Even small things—like a flyer, a Facebook post, or an event banner—play a role in how people see your club and Soroptimist as a whole. This matters whether you're recruiting members, partnering with local organizations, or engaging the media.

Remember:

- ➡ Branding = recognition, trust and credibility
- ➡ Consistency helps people understand who we are and what we
- ➡ Strong brands attract members, partners and supporters

NEWS AROUND THE DISTRICT

DISTRICT I — DIRECTOR LAURA KOEHLER

Do you realize that the Founder Region website has a wealth of information for officers/members in your club? They range from the newsletter and logos to essential forms, and program and fundraising ideas just to mention a few. Under the Resources tab and then scrolling to Membership, there is an Induction Script, Business card templates, Recruitment cards and Soroptimist FAQ. One of my favorite things are Installation program ideas found under Resources using the Drop-down arrow. There are 12 different subject categories, each with many options. It is a great way to make the officer installations more interesting and fun.

DISTRICT II — DIRECTOR DANA HOLVE

Members of District II attended the 70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations. Read about their experience in the article at the end of this newsletter.

DISTRICT III — DIRECTOR NANCY KOSKI

We have barely two weeks until our 50th Annual Founder Region Conference! I can't wait to see everyone! Check Call to Conference for headlines & deadlines: [LINK](#)

- Pillars of Success Posters: email Director Dana Holve by April 15 (pg 19)
- Prepare to vote for your 2026-2028 Biennium Region Board, Fellowship Board, and three amendments to the Founder Region Bylaws [LINK](#)
- Bring your Dream Baskets (pg 21)
- Bring your dancing shoes and poodle skirts for the Fabulous 50s Saturday Night Party (pg 13)
- Reconnect with everyone you've missed in the last year!!

DISTRICT IV — DIRECTOR CRYSTAL ARBUTHNOT

Soroptimist International of Ukiah, the club farthest south in my district, continues to make a meaningful impact in the community through growth, service, and successful fundraising efforts. The club proudly welcomed three new members, after holding an open house at a local brewery: strengthening its commitment to empowering women and girls. One of its signature programs, *Live Your Dream*, saw an impressive 24 applications this year. After careful review, two outstanding recipients were each awarded \$1,500.

Fundraising thru See's Candy sales and the salad luncheon event, the club raised more than \$7,000 to support scholarships and local programs. These efforts also helped boost public awareness of both the Live Your Dream program and the club's broader mission.

In addition, Soroptimist International of Ukiah partnered with the Women in Business Club to raise funds for Project Sanctuary, a local shelter supporting women and children in need—further demonstrating their dedication to community collaboration and service. Great job SI of Ukiah!

DISTRICT V — DIRECTOR TERI LYNN SATO

In spite of less qualified applicants in the portal this year and we wanted more, District V, you all did a wonderful job serving our mission! Guam honored 1 deserving Live Your Dream Recipient and 2 other charity recipients. SI/Northern Marianas Islands honored 4 Live Your Dream Recipients. SI/The Marianas awarded 1 Violet Richardson, 1 Live Your Dream, 1 Ruby and 3 SIM Scholarships. SI/Honolulu, SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc. and SI/Central Oahu held a Joint Awards Reception and honored 15 Live Your Dream, 7 Violet Richardson, and 3 Ruby awards. We still have SI/North Oahu and Maui to finish up our season. District V, THANK YOU AND YOU ROCK! See you at Conference!



PROGRAM UPDATES

Dream It, Be It — Jackie Arnold, Chair

Soroptimists, now is the time to bring your Dream It, Be It projects to life! If your club has not yet submitted your program, there's still time—your work has the power to inspire and transform the lives of girls in your community. Let's finish strong and make sure every club is represented!

As we look ahead to our Conference the first weekend of May, excitement is building. This is our chance to celebrate the incredible impact of Dream It, Be It, share ideas, and honor the difference we make together. Let's show up proud, energized, and ready to connect.

Turn in those projects, spread the word, and get ready for an inspiring and unforgettable Conference!

Live Your Dream — Maida Herbst, Chair

Once again clubs have proved that they are invested in SIA's identifying program, Live Your Dream. All Founder Region clubs and members banded together and gave more awards to more deserving women all the way from Guam, The Marianas, Hawaii and the North-West of California up to Crescent City. Come to our Founder Region conference on Sunday morning, May 3 and listen to the 5 District LYD winners as they tell their stories and receive their awards. It will warm your hearts to know that you are truly making a difference by helping women and their families on the road to economic empowerment.

If you served as a club LYD chair - thank you and please consider doing it again in 26/27. If you are passing the baton, you will be a valuable resource for the next chair. The LYD Application Portal opens August 1, 2026 so start recruiting now. If you know a head of household woman who is back in school or job training, she can go to this link to receive a reminder when the portal opens: [LINK](#)

"S" Clubs — Dawn Shepherd, Chair

Be sure you check in with your clubs to verify that they have voted for a new board. Consider inviting them to a club meeting for a celebration. I hope you can join us on Sunday, May 3rd to meet the winner of the "S" Club Outstanding Senior award.

SIA Information

Key Deadlines for 2026

- June 23, 2026: Leadership Round Table (Virtual event).
- July 22–25, 2026: 49th Biennial Convention — Incheon, South Korea.
- July 26, 2026: Soroptimist Leadership Fellows Program in Incheon.

Leadership Round Table

Mark your calendars! Join us on June 23 for SIA's Leadership Round Table, a virtual event designed to strengthen your leadership skills and expand your impact. Stay tuned for more details—and get ready to grow, connect, and lead with confidence.

Technology Roadmap

We're making steady progress on two major initiatives—a centralized Member Resource Library and a more robust marketing platform—each designed to improve access to resources and deliver more personalized communications. To learn more about our approach and next steps, please visit our [full update on the blog](#).

SI & United Nations Updates

CSW70

Read CSW70 blog, [Overall Reflections From This Year's Events](#).

SI Voices Blog

Meet SI Director of Advocacy, Berthe De Vos-Neven, [International Womens Day 2026:](#)

[Introducing SI Director of Advocacy](#).

SOROPTIMIST AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Solano Soroptimists Join 70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women at United Nations

Priority Theme: *Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls...*

Solano County – Soroptimist International members from Fairfield and Vallejo (Solano County, California) participated in the 70th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70). They were selected as representatives of the NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) on the United Nations Committee on Sustainable Development in Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), of which Soroptimist International is a member.

Soroptimist members Jennifer Barton (Fairfield) and Erin Hannigan Andrews (Vallejo) participated in the UN Session March 13th – 19th at United Nations Headquarters in New York City, and Suzanne Ng (Fairfield) participated remotely in sessions March 9th – 19th. These District II Soroptimist members joined various session activities, side activities and discussions in support of the 70th anniversary Priority Theme of ***“Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including by promoting inclusive and equitable legal systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and addressing structural barriers.”*** Soroptimist International has General Consultative Status with the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and is accredited with several UN departments and programs. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is instrumental in promoting women’s and girls’ rights, documenting the reality of their lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

The CSW is the principal global intergovernmental body dedicated to the promotion of gender equality, the rights and the empowerment of women. A functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), it was established by [ECOSOC resolution 11\(II\) of 21 June 1946](#). ([n2600826.pdf](#))

“As the past Chair of the committee that formed the Solano Commission for Women and Girls in 2018, I am thrilled to participate in discussions and actions that benefit women and girls at the international level,” said Jennifer Barton “This has been a lifelong dream of mine. To represent Soroptimist International and SI Central Solano County is such an honor. At the United Nations we have a voice, supporting women and girls around the world,” said Suzanne Ng

“It’s an honor to represent my Vallejo Soroptimist club at the UN Session. We are focusing our advocacy to support women and girls around the world by strengthening access to legal systems that are equitable and inclusive and eliminating barriers for women and girls,” said Erin Hannigan Andrews.

One idea brought back from the UN Session on the 70th Anniversary of the Commission on the Status of Women is for Solano County Soroptimist Clubs to work in partnership with the *Solano County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls* to provide funding for a 2031 (after the 2030 census) Solano County Report on the Status of Women and Girls. Such a report would help inform the Clubs in Solano County on the needs in our communities and could help determine future Soroptimist funding and volunteer activities. It would also provide documentation to our County Board of Supervisors and individual cities on the needs and challenges of women and girls in our communities. It would be great public awareness!

Our District II participants from Solano County highly recommend the UN experience; they gained knowledge of international issues and policy needs, met Soroptimist sisters from throughout the world, participated in many sessions and discussions on challenges facing women and girls throughout the world, and came back to their clubs with a renewed dedication and appreciation of the work that Soroptimist does throughout the world. They say, “All of our Soroptimist sisters should apply for the next session, it was a wonderful experience!”



Commission on the Status of Women Seventieth session New York, 9-19 March 2026 Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda* Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled ***“Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”***: implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including by promoting inclusive and equitable legal systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices, and addressing structural barriers Report of the Secretary-General**

More Information about the United Nations

On Friday at Conference, during the Legislative Advocacy Lunch our speaker will be Linda Witong. Linda will be updating us on our presence at the United Nations.

Are you interested in going to the UN? Watch for information in the Best For Women Newsletter to apply for next years session. It is an impactful experience.



FELLOWSHIP REPORT

“Solving Puzzles by Degrees”

Greetings Founder Region,

Your Fellowship board is excited to be presenting grants at Conference to eight outstanding women finishing their PhD’s. If you are a Fellow, you are invited to attend the Friday Fellowship Reception from 5:30–6:30 pm prior to the awards dinner; this is your opportunity to meet our awardees personally and ask them questions about their research. This reception is for **Fellows Only** (not club Fellows) so if you are not a Fellow, there is still time to donate \$1,000 to become a Fellow prior to the event.

A great way to contribute to Fellowship is through our Conference puzzle games. Puzzles are \$90 each; each puzzle holds 9 pieces for a chance to win a Fellow in nine different games. Participating in the Fellowship games is an easy way for members to win a Fellow or level up, and your participation in these games allows Fellowship to award our grants at Conference; donations from our membership are key to these awards. You may contact your Fellowship Director to donate and receive a puzzle directly from her.

Effective fundraising continues to be central to the Fellowship mission. With the nominations for the 2026-2028 Fellowship Board included in the Call to Conference, we are pleased to have a couple positions with multiple qualified candidates. We encourage you to review each nominee’s résumé prior to Conference and share them with your club members to discuss who is **best qualified** to serve. Selecting the most capable individual for each office is essential.

Again, we ask you to consider enrolling in our monthly giving program. This convenient option makes it easier to reach the \$1,000 threshold required for a new Fellow or to level up your current commitment.

Enrollment forms are available on our website, or you may use the QR code provided here.

Please contact your Fellowship Director with any questions you may have. She is always ready and willing to help.

President Vicki



Fellowship Board

President—Vicki Ham

Treasurer—Danelle Tegarden

Fellowship Directors

District I—Amelia Benko

District II—Kay Kelley

District III—Laurie Gallian

District IV—Tess Albin-Smith

District V—Cindy Rasmussen

Website:

founderregionfellowship.org

Email:

vickiham01@gmail.com

Treasurer Email:

danelletegarden@gmail.com

Address:

3505 Pine Street, Eureka, CA
95503



OUR MISSION:

To advance the Soroptimist mission by awarding grants to outstanding women in the final phase of their doctoral program within Founder Region.





FELLOWSHIP Tee's



**SHOW OFF YOUR FELLOWSHIP PRIDE
NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!!**

Give the Gift of Fellowship



**Shirt proceeds will help amazing students
move on to make a difference in the world**

**M-XXL * V-Neck or Scoop Neck * Black or Purple * Cotton Poly Blend
\$35 plus shipping (if applicable)**

FOUNDRY REGION FELLOWSHIP
Investing in Dreams

**Founder Region Fellowship
Puzzle Game**
9 Chances to win a Fellowship

It's Easy
Make a donation for the puzzle for \$90.00.
Nine different color games with your own unique number.
Example, Puzzle number 16 has 9 individual pieces that will
be added to 9 different games. You will have 9 chances to
win a Fellowship!

Donate online or come to our table at conference.
Donations for the Puzzles and Pieces may be made to the Founder
Region Fellowship Store at <https://founderregionfellowship.org/> or you
may get them from your Founder Region District Fellowship Director

HONOR YOUR MEMBERS WITH YEARS OF SERVICE BRACELETS



**5, 10, 15 YR CHARMS AVAILABLE. (CAN BE
COMBINED TO = MORE YEARS) COMES
WITH 1 CHARM. ADDITIONAL CHARMS
\$5.00 EACH. AVAILABLE \$25.00
(QUANTITY DISCOUNT)**



Presidents Pins \$35



Pin Ribbons \$25



Cooler Bags \$15.00



Past Presidents Pins \$30

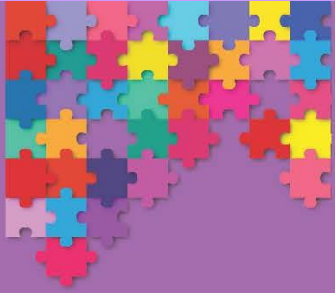


SI Bracelet \$5



Puzzle Key Chains \$5

All Proceeds go to Founder Region Fellowship Grant Program



SOROPTIMIST®
Investing in Dreams

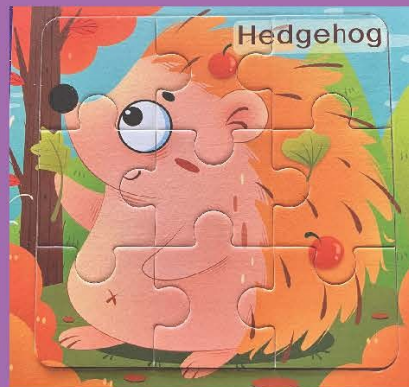


Founder Region Fellowship Puzzle Game

Win

9 Chances to win a Fellow

9 Pieces



9 Chances to
Win

It's Easy

Make a donation of \$90.00 for the puzzle.

You will have 9 chances to win a Fellow at the
Founder Region Conference in May 2026!

**Donations for the Puzzles may be made to the Founder Region
Fellowship Store at <https://founderregionfellowship.org/> or you may get
them from your Founder Region District Fellowship Director
or come to our table at Conference.**

Final Drawing is held at the conference in May. Need not be present to win!

“Solving Puzzles by Degrees”

