



March Governor's Message

This is a busy time of year in Founder Region. Lots of fun fundraisers and awards ceremonies. It's a time to feel proud and recommitted to our Soroptimist mission.

It's also time to choose your club officers for the next Soroptimist year. Take the opportunity to be part of the direction your club is headed. If you take that step for the first time or the tenth or, if you're just thinking about it, make sure to come to one of our Leadership Training sessions in June. That is a wonderful opportunity to get information and to share your club's challenges and successes.

There's a stop to make before that though. Do not miss Founder Region Conference May 1-3 at the San Ramon Marriott. The Call to Conference is out. Make sure your club takes a good look at it and gets registered by the April 10 deadline. We will kick off with a wonderful day planned by our Legislative Advocacy Committee. Women's mental health is the topic, and you will go away with tools and things to think about. As always, we will hear from our Fellowship grant recipients for 2026. They are sure to amaze. We will do the Region's business and celebrate our new leaders. Soroptimist we have lost the past year will be honored and we will hear from our Live Year Dream and Violet Richardson Award recipients. We will have the pleasure of welcoming SIA Secretary/Treasurer Gail Dekreon as well as SIA CEO Michelle Burnett. Most of all we will all be together, seeing old friends and making new ones.

It's almost spring. Stop and smell the flowers and celebrate all that is Soroptimist. I will see you in San Ramon.

Governor Elise

Link to Governor's [March Blog Post](#).
FYI Blogs are posted on the First of the Month.

- **March 15** – Mandatory Convention fee due
- **March 24** – Call to Caucus (virtual)
- **April 1** – Club Grant Applications due
- **May 1-3** – Region Conference, San Ramon Marriott
- **June 6, 13, and 26/27** - Leadership Training-see flyer



March UpliftHER Focus: Single Mothers

- More than 50% of first-time student parents leave college within six years of enrollment without completing their degree (source: IWPR).
- More than 2 million single mothers currently attend college in the US (source: IWPR).
- Past Live Your Dream awardees identify flexible financial support for things like childcare as the best support to finish their education (source: SIA past recipient surveys).
- In Japan, 56% of single-mother households live below the poverty line (source: Borgen Project).
- Single mothers in Latin America have the highest unemployment rate of any group (source: The Economist).



FUNDRASING, CHAIR JOY SWANK

Happy March, fellow Soroptimists!

It is basket raffle time—all treasurers received the number logs last month. Due date: April 10.

Thank you to the treasurers who sent in suggestions for improvement last year. Your feedback was heard and appreciated. Money raised goes to our Dream Programs.

Club Giving is due by the end of the month if you would like recognition at our May conference. Please notify Treasurer Holly when you send your amount to SIA with amount sent.

May the luck of the Irish be with us all, and may the road rise up to meet you!

Regards, Fundraising Chair, Joy

MEMBERSHIP, CHAIR ANGIE HARAMOTO

Aloha,

Thanks to SIA for the form they created, we have been getting quite a number of interested women who want to join Soroptimist clubs. I have been sending these inquiry forms to your District Director to follow up with clubs that were in areas that would fit their interest. I hope you are one of those clubs.

Mahalo for all that you do to help women and girls!

PROGRAMS, CHAIR JACKIE DE VRIES

BIG Goal Accelerator projects. Please remember that to be acknowledged at conference you must submit your project to SIA by March 31, 2026. REMEMBER- There will be certificates!

Club Grants are now open.

Deadline to apply has been extended to **April 1, 2026. Need help? I am happy to review all grant applications- just send to me! Grants are a way we receive money back that we have paid into club giving.**

You can also submit a grant request to Founder Region for “S” clubs or Dream It, Be It projects. You can find the application on the resource page. The grants are for \$500.

We have exciting news—at our Sunday award celebration a former Live Your Dream winner will be a speaker. Come and hear how her life was impacted by our Live Your Dream Program.

Submit your Dream It, Be It projects so your club can be recognized at conference.

The winning **Violet Richardson** young ladies come from the following clubs: District I-SI/Oakland-The Founder Club, District II-SI/The Delta, District III-SI/Napa, District IV-SI/Crescent City and District V-SI/Maui. Thank you to committee members Carol Dippel, Jan Schults, Laurie Gallian, Dyann O’Brien, and Rene Tokunaga.

PUBLIC AWARENESS, CHAIR SUE PRETZER

A family friend recently shared a reflection on how life can change—sometimes in the most unexpected ways. She spoke about how the small decisions we make along the way can have an outsized impact on the outcomes we experience. Each choice can shape the path we take and the opportunities that follow.

When her friend complimented her by saying, “You made that happen. What you did enabled that outcome,” it was a powerful reminder that our actions truly matter. She also shared something equally important: women should support and lift one another up, even when it doesn’t always come naturally to recognize our own role in success.

As we reflect in March, a month when we celebrate International Women’s Day, let us remember that, as Soroptimists, we honor the strength, resilience, and spirit of women and girls every day—through our club friendships, our programs, and our awards. We witness the journeys of women and the impact they create when we help them make the decision to invest in their futures.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

District I- District Director Laura Koehler

The 2026 **Call to Convention** has been emailed to all clubs along with the registration forms. The convention is from May 1-3 at the San Ramon Marriott. As usual, it will be an interesting event, complete with official visitors, seminars on Empowerment in Women's Health, Fellowship award winners, Election of new officers, Fabulous Fifties Dinner and Dance, Live Your Dream and Violet Richardson award winners just to mention a few. Please also take advantage of the local venue! In April, SI/Richmond is having a **Culinary Caper** fundraiser from 1-4pm on 4/26/26, at the Old Homestead in Crockett. Please support SI/Richmond.

District II- District Director Dana Holve

Soroptimist International of Rio Vista celebrated its 70th Anniversary — chartered February 18, 1956 — with a powerful tribute to local leadership, historic club photographs, and a series of celebratory films. The club honored International Women's Day by hosting a Film Festival for the community. SI Rio Vista recognized outstanding community women, including two Live Your Dream awardees, four Violet Richardson Award winners, and five Women of Achievement honorees. The club continues its mission through several ongoing projects: Menstrual Equity (sewing sustainable kits sent to a school near Kisumu, Kenya) and Bags of Hope, providing essential supplies for domestic violence survivors in partnership with the Solano County Center for Family Justice.



Charter Party in 1956 attended by Violet Richardson.

District III- District Director Nancy Koski

It's still winter, but Spring is definitely in the air! District III clubs are in high gear with fundraising (support your sister clubs if you can):

- In January SI/St. Helena Sunrise hosted 220 Bingo players, raising nearly \$8,000!
- In early February SI/Sonoma Valley held their Annual Southern Boil fundraiser, this year adding a Comedy Show to the event!
- The first Friday & Saturday in February SI/St. Helena held their extravagant two-day 49th Annual Havana Nights Crab Feed & Auction!
- SI/Santa Rosa held its annual 6th Street Playhouse, "Mary Poppins," on Feb 5th.
- On March 7th, SI/Oakmont is holding its Annual Afternoon Tea.
- Also on March 7th, SI/Calistoga is hosting its Crab Feed in the evening.
- SI/Novato is preparing for its Annual Spring Luncheon on April 19th.

District IV- District Director Crystal Arbuthnot

Greetings from The Redwoods Club

Soroptimist of The Redwoods, located in the Garberville area is excited to welcome **one new (former) member, Julie Lyon**. We look forward to her energy and involvement in the months ahead.

Our awards committee has been busy making an impact in the lives of women and girls. We gave **one Live Your Dream (LYD) Award** and **one Violet Richardson Award (VRA)**, which we will honor at our upcoming luncheon later this month. We continue our commitment to education and empowerment in our community.

Fundraising efforts are in full swing. We have **launched a new monthly Bingo**, which is already generating enthusiasm and support with almost 40 people in attendance. Members are also gearing up for two of our signature summer fundraisers — our **annual Fireworks sales** and our popular **food booth at the local rodeo**.

Looking ahead, Soroptimist of The Redwoods is honored to be **one of the host clubs for the upcoming Founder Region Conference in May**, along with Noyo, Eel River Valley and Humboldt Bay. We hope to see everyone there! It's an exciting and productive season for our club, and we look forward to all that's ahead!

District V- District Director Teri Lynn Sato

Aloha and Hafa Adai District V!

By now, you should have received The Call To Conference and Nominee Information for our new Boards Elections from your President. Your President should be informing you on how to register within your clubs. It's going to be an exciting conference! Legislative Advocacy Committee has prepared a day on Women's Mental Health. Your Fellowship Board has been working hard with interviews and selections so you can meet them our recipients Friday! Saturday you will be voting for new Region Boards, Installations and then rockin' to the 50s. Sunday, you get to meet our Region Live Your Dream and Violet Richardson Winners and more! Let's Rock DV!

Program Updates

Dream It, Be It- Jackie Arnold- Chair

Hello Founder Region!

As we melt out of winter and welcome in the fresh energy of spring, it's a wonderful time to refocus on the inspiring work we are doing through Dream It, Be It. This program continues to make a meaningful impact by helping girls imagine and pursue their future goals. As the season moves quickly, please remember to get your projects submitted before the June deadline so they can be recognized and celebrated. We love seeing the creativity and dedication from our clubs! Also, be sure to mark your calendars for the Founder Region Conference coming up the first weekend of May. It's always an exciting and energizing time to connect, learn, and celebrate the incredible work happening throughout our region.

As always, with any questions please contact Jackie Arnold.

Live Your Dream- Maida Herbst- Chair

Founder Region clubs worked diligently, and their efforts have been exceptional. Together the clubs gave Live Your Dream awards to 123 deserving women. This effort took commitment by the LYD chairs in all Founder Region clubs.

LYD club chair results were aided by close communication with the 5 District Directors: Jennifer Chiarelli District I, Judy Lloyd District II, Nancy Giltner District III, Debbie Coles District IV and Wendy McDonald District V. The District Directors' responsiveness ensured that the clubs had the support they needed.

Founder Region could not have achieved these results without the outstanding response from the LYD group at SIA. Even at the busiest of times, they worked quickly with the club chairs and District Directors to solve problems or challenges.

Imagine what all of this work means to the women who won the awards. The ripple effect of these awards moves women and their families closer to economic independence.

“S” Clubs- Dawn Shepherd- Chair

Hello lovely “S” Club Liaisons! Happy March!

Our “S”-Club Outstanding Senior Award application deadline has passed. The winner will be invited to attend our Founder Region Conference. Be sure to mark your calendars to attend.

Now would be a good time to start talking with your existing “S” Clubs about Officer nominations for the coming school year. “S” Clubs should begin soliciting interest and then voting on “S” Club President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. The new Board should be voted on in April and installed in May, before the school year comes to an end.

Have a fabulous month! Dawn



Save the Date

**Founder Region 50th Conference
May 1st through 3rd in San Ramon.**

Look for the Call to Conference being sent in early
March.



Conference Highlights

- Friday – Legislative Advocacy Presentation on Women's Mental Health
- Friday Evening – Fellowship Awards
- Saturday – Voting for Founder Region and Fellowship Boards
- Saturday Evening – Installation Ceremony & 50's Dance Party
- Sunday – Memorial Service
- Sunday – Awards Presentation: Live Your Dream, Violet Richardson, and "S" Club Awardee



Founder Region Leadership Training

Saturday, June 6, 2026
Concord Senior Center, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
2727 Parkside Circle, Concord, CA

Saturday, June 13, 2026
Red Lion Hotel, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
1929 4th St., Eureka, CA
(same weekend as Redwood Memorial Grove)

Friday, June 26, 2026
Zoom Training
6:00 p.m. HST, June 27 at 2:00 p.m. ChST
Note: In person District V follow-up
Oct. 18 in Honolulu
Members may attend any training they choose.

SIA Information

Key Deadlines for 2026

- **March 15, 2026:** Deadline for clubs to pay the **mandatory convention club fee** of \$825.
- **May 17, 2026 (11:59 p.m. EDT):** Regular registration rate closes.
- **May 18, 2026:** "Just in Time" registration rate begins.
- **April 23, 2026:** Official "Call to SIA Convention" sent to all clubs.
- **June 23, 2026:** Leadership Round Table (Virtual event).
- **July 22–25, 2026:** 49th Biennial Convention held at the [INSPIRE Entertainment Resort](#)
- **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.



FELLOWSHIP REPORT

“Solving Puzzles by Degrees”

Greetings Founder Region,

Your Fellowship Board is so excited for Conference. We have spent the past several weeks reading and reviewing applications, interviewing candidates, and selecting our 2026 recipients. You will be amazed with these women and their research projects. Our ability to give these awards depends on **YOU!** Without your generosity, we would be unable to give these awards to well-deserving women in the final stages of their doctoral degrees. And we truly appreciate your generosity to Fellowship.

A great way to contribute to Fellowship is through our Conference puzzle games. Puzzles are \$90 each and 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 awarding grants. So please contact your Fellowship Director to donate and receive a puzzle directly from her.

Nominations for the 2026-2028 Fellowship Board were included in the Call to Conference. We are pleased to have several positions with multiple qualified candidates. We encourage you to review each nominee’s resume in advance of 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, as effective fundraising remains the core mission of Fellowship.

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 at the bottom of this page.

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.





SOROPTIMIST®
Investing in Dreams

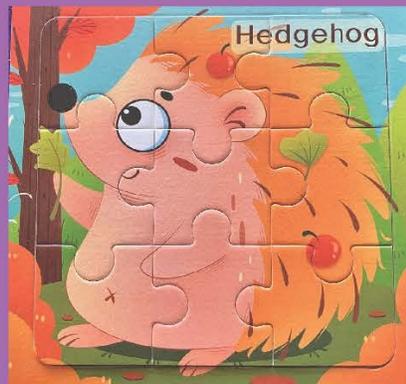


Founder Region Fellowship Puzzle Game

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”

