



The Vision



Happy Holidays Midwestern Region,
I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday season and had time with your loved ones. I'm sure the holidays looked a little different than our Christmas' in the past and I'm positive next year we will cherish all our traditions we may have missed this year. I know many of our clubs were able to help families in need, during this holiday season and Thank you too all of you.

This year has been a challenge for many of us and tragic for others. Remember to reach out to fellow Sorooptimist sisters who may need a call just to let them know we are thinking of them. This year is unlike any we ever have experienced and the most important thing I try to remember is be kind to yourself. Selfcare is now more important than ever. With 2021 coming I am looking forward to a brighter tomorrow and when we can gather with our Sorooptimist family.

In 2021 we will be publishing the Vision on a quarterly schedule. The Region is using Slack as our way to communicate on a more daily basis if we need to. We are encouraging our clubs to use Slack as well. Slack enables us to keep the region informed of upcoming events and messages as they are happening. If you need assistance with slack reach out to the Regions Public Awareness chair, Alex Coon. The schedule for the Vision will be January, April, July and October.

I look forward to seeing you all in 2021 and until then keep yourself safe. Thank you for everything you have done during this pandemic to continue to help women in your communities and everything you will do in the future.

Best Regards,

**Darcy Merritt
Governor
Sorooptimist International of the Americas
Midwestern Region**



**Inside
January 2021
Edition are:**

**Articles from
your
Midwestern
Region
and
Board
Members,
Chairs
&
MUCH MORE!**



**SOROPTIMIST
Best for Women®**

SI of Fond du Lac, WI

Soroptimist International - Fond du Lac has completed our Winter Giving, supporting Shop with a Cop which enables underprivileged kids to shop for holiday gifts with local law enforcement (remotely via lists this year), and the Family Resource Center (FRC), which supports mothers and families in a variety of ways including monetary support, supplies for infants, children, and parents, and family education and visitation opportunities. Our group has an ongoing drive for hygiene items for the FRC and also local schools, and did our annual Adopt a Family for Christmas. Additionally, some of us connected with the local Parent Life program (support for teen moms) to help them host a Christmas shopping event so that those parents could give their kiddos a happy holiday experience. We have great connections with so many local opportunities, with members who are also involved in fantastic local nonprofits that dovetail with our Soroptimist mission.

We continue to meet via Zoom, with a fun program in December that included a Bingo game and silly hats with ugly Christmas sweaters (and leggings).

It is still a difficult time; we have one member currently in hospice and another who has lost a spouse to coronavirus, along with many members who are being affected by the illness in their work situations and personally. In this time, we are working hard to support one another by keeping in touch via phone and email, ding-dong-ditching treats to one another, and a Secret Sister program that will be ongoing through the year.

We are making some progress on a teen scholarship to replace the retired Violet Richardson award; hopefully details will be ready to share soon. Our Club 250 raffle is ready to go; all tickets were sold and we will begin drawings the first Wednesday of January. Thanks to those from other clubs who supported us!

Best wishes to all of you for a better New Year!



SI of Trenton Area

PRETTY PRINCESS ROAD RALLY

Trenton Soroptimists held a unique fundraiser entitled, the “Pretty Princess Road Rally”, on October 24. The little princesses traveled to Instinct Salon, For the Love Bakeshop, Atwater Street Taco, Whimpy Burger, Vintage Bloom, and Blue Heron Trading Company to enjoy some fun activities, a light lunch with a treat, and experience a magical moment and photo ops with “real princesses” (Downriver Actors Guild provided the royalty).

Clue sheets and start times were sent to participating families via email after online pre-registration. Participants were encouraged to bring a new pair of children’s pajamas or a new baby doll to be entered into a raffle to win a “Grand Princess Prize,” a Disney princess doll set. Thirty-two pairs of donated pajamas and fifteen dolls were given to Downriver Foster Closet. BACA, Bikers Against Child Abuse, also contributed stuffed animals for the children.

Special thanks to the participating Flat Rock businesses, and sponsors StraitLine Painting, Mary Booth, and Patsy Hancz; and especially to Soroptimists Abby Premoe and Paetra Thompson Collins for organizing this memorable and magical event.

The Trenton Soroptimist organization meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. All women are welcome to attend. You may contribute to the foundations that the Soroptimists support on smile.amazon.com and krogercommunityrewards.com. If you are interested in learning more about the Trenton Area Soroptimists and our other activities, check out our page on Facebook@Soroptimist Trenton, MI or sioftrentonarea@gmail.com.

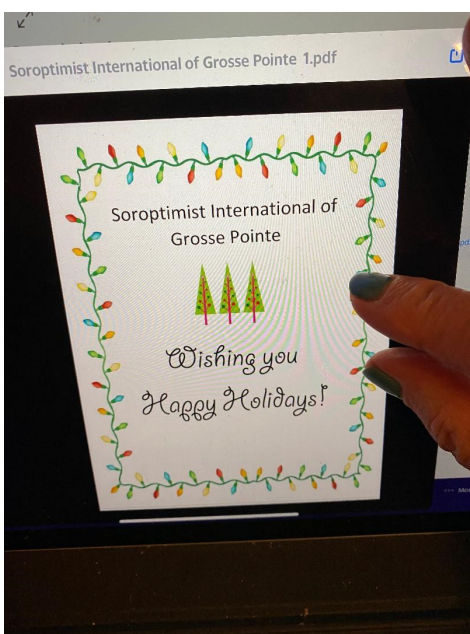


SI of Grosse Pointe

The November meeting of Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe featured Mr. Charles Graham, representing the Gleaners Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan. Attendees at the Zoom meeting learned how Gleaners grew from one man, buying potatoes, and passing them out to hungry people from the trunk of his car, to a \$75,000,000 per year organization that only spends 7% of its annual budget on overhead. Mr. Graham underlined the food insecurity that exists in the five counties his organization serves. Gleaners is a volunteer driven organization that is currently forced to fulfill its mission with a skeleton crew. SIGP is looking forward to the day when we can tour the Detroit facility and interested members can take advantage of the many volunteer opportunities offered by the organization.

As a follow-up to Mr. Graham's visit, SIGP, will conduct a "Family and Friends" food drive in January. Members can inspect their early Pandemic non-perishables and share their over-stock with the less fortunate.

The month of December gave our Club a chance to support the Grosse Pointe business community, obtain some local recognition, and maybe win a cash prize. With the annual Santa Parade cancelled due to COVID, the Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce, solicited members to get creative and design a gingerbread house for display in a shop window. Although our Club doesn't have a display area, El's Boutique, a long time mainstay in the Grosse Pointe retail community, offered us her window, already outfitted with lights and a tree. Two of our creative members, Anita Sandercott and Donna Fitzgerald, designed the gingerbread house; it has been on view throughout the holiday season. While we didn't win any money, the "house" garnered many fans who judged it a winner in their eyes.



SI of Grosse Pointe

SIGP'S Holiday Celebration raises \$1000 for SI Annual President's Appeal: Road to Equality

Twenty-eight Soroptimist Grosse Pointe club members attended its December 9, 2020, Holiday Celebration dedicated to the SI President's Appeal (SIPA). The door prizes alone raised \$611. With the addition of cash donations by members, the total came to a whopping \$1000! Every dollar will go toward the SIPA fund called "The Road to Equality." Thank you to all who contributed so generously. Special thanks to SIPA Committee members: Carolyn Barth, Mary Ellen Burke and Roseanne Horne.

The celebration wasn't all about raising money—as important as that was. It was also a party on Zoom that included a trivia quiz, a scavenger hunt, and an ornament making contest. Co-presidents Ellen Chapin and Marya Rosenthal, along with Vice President Laura McCourt, came up with each clever activity right down to providing crafts for each member to conjure an ornament of her own making. The committee's creativity went above and beyond by including a charcuterie tray of goodies put together by Grosse Pointe's own Cornwall Bakery. Marya, Ellen and Laura were assisted by Carol Hofer in delivering the trays the same afternoon as the actual party. And lest we forget, an individual bottle of Brut champagne came with the package.

The committee even arranged for a musical conclusion to the festive event by enlisting singer and guitarist Julie Beutel to lead everyone in seasonal songs.

In the days following, emails poured in complimenting Ellen, Marya, and Laura, for putting together such a noteworthy event.

Kudos to the planners, to the participants, and to Zoom which made it all possible.



Liz Lucas won the ornament contest!

SI of Grosse Pointe



Soroptimist members assembled baskets for the women of Positive Images.

COURTESY PHOTOS

Soroptimist performs service work, seeks scholarship nominees

Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe, a global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment, has not let COVID-19 stop it from giving service and staying in contact with others via Zoom.

Members wore masks and worked in a garage as they assembled 50 gift baskets for the women of Positive Images, a therapeutic residential center in Detroit for women recovering from substance dependency. Members also donated clothing and a gift for the children of Positive Images women.

A Zoom holiday party was complete with a charcuterie plate created by Chef Freeman Gunnell III of Cornwall Bakery, a challenging holiday trivia quiz, an in-your-house scavenger hunt, an ornament decorating kit and a sing-a-long with guitarist Julie Beutel.

As 2021 approaches, Soroptimist is looking for applicants for the Virginia Wagner Educational Award of \$3,000. Applications are due Jan. 15.

To qualify, applicants must:

- ◆ be enrolled full time in a bachelor's, master's or doctorate degree program;
- ◆ have overcome obstacles to get her



Soroptimists members also donated clothing and gifts for children.

education;

- ◆ have given back to the community in some way; and

- ◆ submit a current complete transcript.

Applications may be made online at grossepointesoroptimist.org or simwr.org.

For more information, email Maddy Colavito at mcolavito48@gmail.com.

Soroptimist International of Zanesville Presents
THE ANNIVERSARY RAFFLE



The Zanesville, OH club was founded in 1941. This year marks 80 years of improving the lives of women and girls. 2021 is also the 100th anniversary of Soroptimist!

We are holding an Anniversary Raffle. During the month of March 2021 a drawing will be held each Monday. There will be a total of five winners: One \$80 winner each week for the first four weeks and on the fifth week, one \$100 winner. Winning tickets will go back into the pot, so one person can win multiple times.

Tickets are \$20 each and will be sold until Feb. 25, 2021.

To purchase tickets contact Amy Hursey with your Name, Address and Phone #, and the number of tickets you wish to purchase. Call, text or e mail: (740) 607-1476 amyjohursey@yahoo.com (Ticket receipt will be mailed)

Payment can be made by check payable to Zanesville Soroptimist or pay pal friend and family Amy using this e mail: amyjohursey@yahoo.com

SI of Chicago

SI...Chicago

Thanks to those that supported our virtual charity auction. Our profit will enable us to continue to assist the local causes we do every year. Last week, our club enjoyed our Holiday Zoom party. We played bingo, exchanged secret Santa gifts, found out who our inner actress was, and talked about our seasonal traditions. Have a healthy, happy, holiday from the fantastic women in our Chicagoland group.

JoAnne 

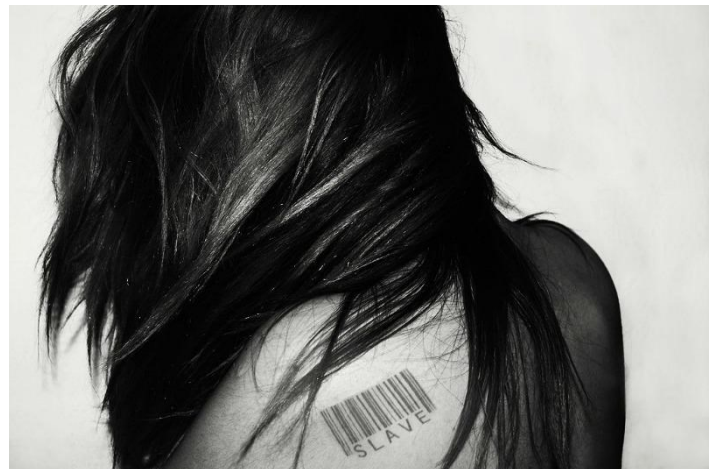


SI of Dayton, OH

Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Day is recognized each year on January 11th; like many of our collaborating anti-trafficking organizations, Soroptimist International clubs engage in awareness raising campaigns and programs all year round.

Human Trafficking victims are hidden in plain sight, they are all around us and the COVID pandemic has exacerbated issues of vulnerability.

Our Soroptimist International of Dayton club will continue transforming anti-trafficking work efforts through our Missing Children Poster and STOP restroom label programs. Working with our collaborative partners, we seek to end commercial sexual exploitation through advocacy, awareness, legislation, policy, and action.



Let's eradicate human trafficking in all its forms this month and every month!

We are Soroptimist Strong!

SI Columbus and Franklin County

Members of SI Columbus & Franklin and SI Northeast Suburban Franklin partnered to make 72 fleece blankets for Choices Domestic Violence Shelter. These blankets will be picked by the mothers for the children currently residing at the shelter and a few additional children for Christmas. This need was mentioned to Vicky Hicks during a volunteer session and after discussing it with Cheryl Fouts and all club members, it was decided this was something that could be accomplished during the Covid crisis. Members bought the fleece and make the blankets during the past few weeks. The blankets were then wrapped with ribbon and a coloring book was included in each one.

This was an easy and great project that members of two Midwestern Region clubs could enjoy and work on to benefit not only the mothers sheltered at Choices so they would have a present for their children but it met our goal of again helping women.

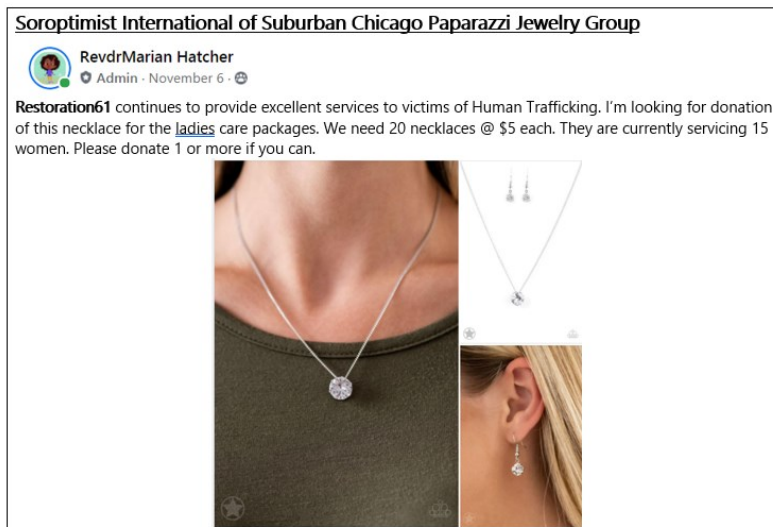
Way to go ladies.



SI of Suburban Chicago Donated 24 Necklaces to Restoration61 & their Touching Thank You Note ...

For the Month of November- Marian Hatcher – for our SI of Suburban Chicago Paparazzi Group was collecting \$5.00 donations (to gather at least 20 Necklaces to be purchased and donated to Restoration61) in order to be delivered to Restoration61 for the upcoming holiday seasons of Thanksgiving & Christmas.

In total 24 necklaces were donated by following collection of members; *Marie Delos Santos, Aidell Nosnu, Leslie Schwartzstein, Kelly Klingel, Fran Ingram, Sue Schumacher and Marie Denise Czech.*



Dear Soroptimist Sisters,

I just received a wonderful package of beautiful jewelry for the women we are working with!!! The impact it makes on their life: allowing them to feel valued, confident, and hopeful for the future is so very important.

A story of a necklace...

Two years ago, I had a woman come out of the life who brought nothing with her. In the package of clothing she received there was a tiny necklace with a heart on it. In the journey to get her help and with the her trafficker pursuing her she had to change locations three times before getting to a safe house.

At her second location, she had to pack up quickly because her location had been compromised, her trafficker had learned where she was. Halfway to her new location she realize that she had not gotten the necklace, it was still hanging on the bed post at her former location.

She was distraught.

After getting her safely settled, I traveling two hours back to the former location to get the necklace. Having this one small thing of value that belong only to her, that had been freely given to her, meant so much.

To each of us this gift seems small, but when it is your ONLY thing of value, it often can be the thing that anchors you. It helps you continue your journey, because you feel like someone else believed in you enough to give you something special.

I love the amazing women that are part of Soroptimist International of Suburban Chicago.

The work you do truly helps equip and empower women to make life changes that lead to success.

Thank you for your advocacy for and support of [Restoration61!](#)

Gratefully,

[Kara Doan](#)
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SI of Suburban Chicago Bringing Christmas Cheer to one of our local Women's Shelter; Family Shelter Services of Downers Grove, IL.



Our club; **SI of Suburban Chicago** started collecting \$25.00 Gift Cards (back in September to the end of November) to donate to one of our local women's shelters; **Family Shelter Services of Downers Grove, IL.**

We typically in past years would have our Holiday dinner & entertainment party for the women & children of this shelter each year -but due to covid restrictions this year- our club came up with this alternative idea of bringing Holiday Cheer to the women & children of Family Shelter Services we typically would celebrate Seasonal Holiday dinner parties together.

Our club was able to collect & donate \$505.00 in gift cards (equating twenty \$25.00 gift cards) which our **President Elect; Marie Delos Santo** along with our **Secretary; Diane Kegley** delivered to our **Family Shelter Services-shelter contact; Marybeth Glenn** on **December 1st, 2020** for their shelter to distribute to each of the families to use for purchasing their own Christmas gifts for the season.

SI of Suburban Chicago Brings Christmas Cheer of "Bath & Bling Gift Bags" to our local Women's Shelter; Constance Morris House, La Grange IL.



Our club, **SI of Suburban Chicago** started collecting Jewelry donations from purchases from our **SI of Suburban Chicago Papparazzi Jewelry group -** to make up nice gift bags with boxed jewelry sets and pampering bath supplies as presents to the women at one of our local women's shelters, **Constance Morris House, La Grange, IL.**

Our club was able to collect & donate 13 Gift Bags containing nice boxed sets of Jewelry and lovely scented bath & body products for pampering along with a \$50.00 Target Gift-card for shelter supplies - which our club's **President ; Marie Denise Czech** along with our **President Elect; Marie Delos Santos & Secretary; Diane Kegley** delivered to **Constance Morris House (contact; Kimberly Stephens)** on **December 16thth, 2020** for their shelter to distribute to each of the women to have and enjoy something special just for them giving them some

SI of Mt. Vernon and Knox County



Food for the Hungry

Soroptimist of Mt. Vernon and Knox County participated in a friendly competition sponsored by the Knox County Chamber of Commerce involving other local organizations to raise donations for Food for the Hungry. The combined group donation total was \$6,167.00 with Soroptimist members personal contributions winning the competition with the most donations!

Organizations included the Exchange Club of Mount Vernon and Knox County, Kiwanis Club of Mount Vernon, Lions Club of Mount Vernon, Psi Iota Xi, Rotary Club of Mount Vernon, Soroptimist of Mount Vernon & Knox County.

Carol Grubaugh, (left above) Executive Director of the Knox County Chamber of Commerce congratulates Diana Oswald, (right above) Soroptimist President, on local MVNU.TV December 11.

Cash donations are encouraged because each \$1 donated is equivalent to \$10 of buying power through the Mid-Ohio Food Bank. In Ohio, the Army National Guard helped with food distribution in the Akron-Canton region according to the USA Today. During a drive thru distribution before Thanksgiving, the line of cars stretched for a mile.

Soroptimist International Midwestern Region Board

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Governor-Elect *Chris Fowler Shearer*

SI Cleveland

Region Secretary *Shelia Zingler-Gilbert*

SI Fond du Lac

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SI Fond du Lac

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SI Fond du Lac

District II Director *Ruth Waggoner*

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THE WEB!
WWW.SIMWR.ORG



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Soroptimist International Midwestern Region 2020 / 2022 Board



Front Row L to R: Region Treasurer Audrey Jarvey; Region Governor Darcy Merritt; Region Governor-Elect Christine Fowler Shearer; D4 Secretary Mary Lorenzo
Back Row L to R: D2 Secretary Laura Ferguson; D2 Director Ruth Waggoner; D3 Secretary Patricia Cavell; D3 Director Kellie Klingel; D1 Secretary Connie Gindt; D4 Director Abby Bouton; D1 Director Susan Frankel;
Not pictured: Region Secretary Sheila Zingler-Gilbert .

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Treasurer - **Audrey Jarvey** - (audreyjarv@gmail.com)

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Soroptimist Websites

Soroptimist International Midwest Region - (simwr.org)

Soroptimist International of the Americas (soroptimist.org)

Soroptimist International (soroptimistinternational.org)

Soroptimist Summary (soroptimistsummary.org)

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Tweet us [@SoroptimistMWR](https://twitter.com/SoroptimistMWR)

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