



SOROPTIMIST®

Investing in Dreams

Soropti-SCOOP

*A Communiqué by
women and men dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls
through programs leading to social and economic empowerment.*

Volume 28, Issue 6

Soroptimist International of Sequim

Celebrating 75+ Years of Service

December 2023

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Director: 2 year

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“Christmas is the gentlest, loveliest festival of the revolving year—and yet, for all that, when it speaks, its voice has strong authority.”
~W.J. Cameron

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

As we close another calendar year, I probably should be using this space to outline SIS achievements in an end-of-year report from the President’s perspective. However, I think this is more appropriate for the January message.

I thank you all for the opportunity to serve as President. I thank you all for your energy, time, and dedication that you provide in fulfilling the mission and goals of SIS in service to our community. I thank you all for your patience, your advice, your input, both constructive and critical. There is still much to achieve as we move into 2024 and I have no doubt that there will be obstacles, but we will continue to forge a path forward together.

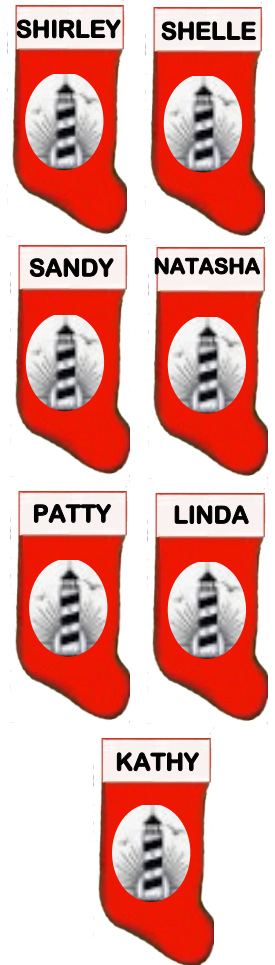
December is a time for reflection and taking personal assessment of what the holiday season embraces beyond commercialism. Most of us call it Christmas, but the holiday season embraces the goodness of the human spirit regardless the choice in celebrating.

Thus, I give you the following—see top of page 3.

May your holiday season be filled with good health, love, gratitude, and merriment.



~President Shirley



“One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas day.
Don’t clean it up too quickly.”
~Andy Rooney



Letter from the Editor

Dear Friends,

It's December. The holidays are here. It's a time for family, fun, food, and frolic. It's a time of gift giving and gift receiving. Most often both are together.

Speaking of gifts . . . There is a tradition in our club to participate in the Holiday Joy program through Healthy Families of Clallam County. Individuals or groups adopt a family for the holidays. Each family member makes a wish list and the 'adopters' find some/most/all of the desired items. Last year Sunni Becker, Kim Renfro and I partnered to adopt one of the families. We decided to team up again this year. Our adopted family is a single mom with two not-quite-teenage sons. Each of us took one of the family members: Kim took the mom; Sunni took the younger boy; I took the older boy.

Sunni and I were talking a couple of weeks ago and I said it might be cool if we could get stockings for each of the family members. She added it would be cool if we could put their names on the stockings. I said that sounded like something perfect for Kim to do—she is so crafty. Kim took it a step further; she **made** the stockings, and she embroidered the names and a design on them—each one is different.

The younger boy's list included a basketball and a football. Sunni went to work looking for those. In the process she found out a lot of information about these sports' tools that she didn't previously know—see her article on page 6. What struck me about this is how when we do something for someone else, we often learn something along the way.

I volunteered to wrap the gifts, just as I had last year. Sunni and Kim dropped off the presents at my office. Kim also provided wrapping paper, bows, and ribbon—the kind you can curl with scissors. The beautiful stockings that Kim made have a fluffy white border at the top; she had them in a bag—barely sticking out, along with some of the gifts for the mom. I put everything in the back office until I could wrap them.

The next day I looked up and saw Blue walking happily toward me with one of the stockings held gingerly in his mouth. The fluffy white fabric must have looked like one of his toys. I laughed and went to retrieve it from him; he released it right away. Blue has a gentle mouth and does not destroy his toys. In some small way, Blue was participating in Holiday Joy also.

The gift of the stocking became a temporary gift to Blue, and his joy became a gift to me. One gift can touch the hearts of many. This was a perfect example.

As you know I am a word person; I see things in words that others might not. I was thinking about the word **GIFT** and I saw it as an acronym for several things:

Growing In Friendship **T**ogether;
Gaining Inspiration **F**rom **T**ogetherness;
GratITUDE **I**ncreases **F**ound **T**reasures.

I'll stop at those three. Just the mere *word* **GIFT** provides a gift.

There are so many gifts—and not just the ones you tie with a ribbon. Many of them are mentioned in the lovely poem President Shirley gifted us on page 3. This holiday season let us remember that every gift touches the giver and the receiver—and others in between. We are all tied together with the ribbon of love as we continue living the Soroptimist Mission by Lighting the Path Forward. Thank you all for the gifts that you are.



~Kathy Purcell, Editor



“It isn't the size of the gift that matters, but the size of the heart that gives it.” ~*Eileen Elias Freeman*

CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2023

- 5 GGS Core Meeting
9 am 1st Security Bank
- 8 Board Meeting
- 12 Business Meeting
- *19 Holiday Party-5:30 pm
Natasha's home

JANUARY 2024

- TBD GGS Core Meeting
9 am 1st Security Bank
- 5 Board Meeting
- 9 Business Meeting
- 23 Program Meeting
Human Trafficking
Awareness
- 30 5th Tuesday

*Evening Meeting

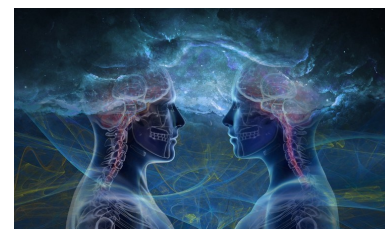
Lighting



the Path Forward

“Give freely to the world these gifts of love and compassion. Do not concern yourself with how much you receive in return, just know in your heart it will be returned.”

~*Steve Maraboli*



“The greatest gift is to give people your enlightenment, to share it. It has to be the greatest.” ~*Buddha*

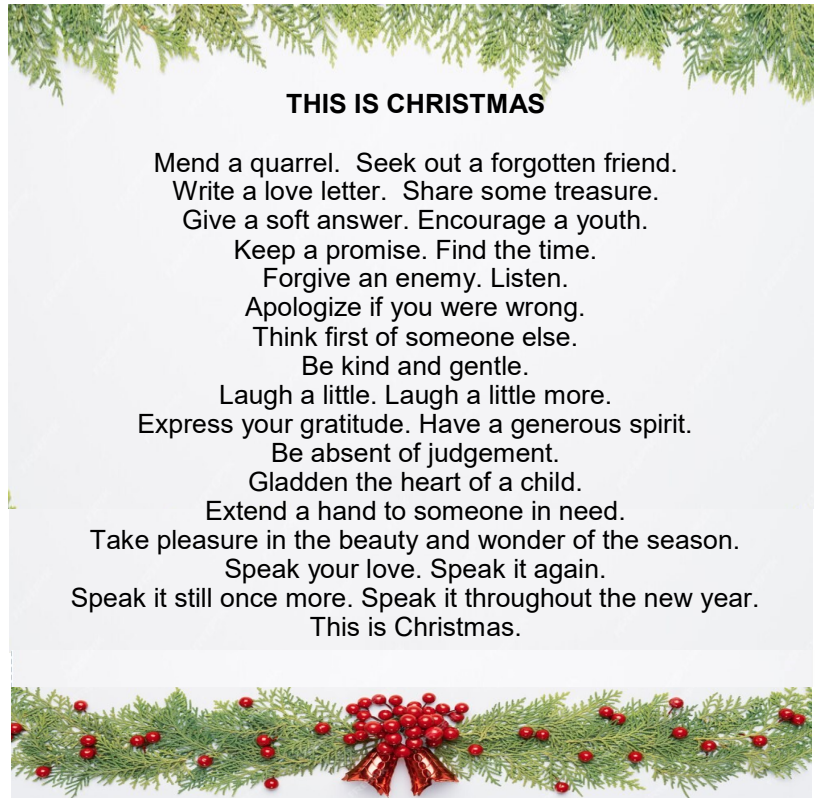
Celebrate Life!

DECEMBER, 2023

Dave Fickes
Sandy Lawrence
Elaine Powlesland

JANUARY, 2024

Susan Coffee
Kathy Cunha



THIS IS CHRISTMAS

Mend a quarrel. Seek out a forgotten friend.
Write a love letter. Share some treasure.
Give a soft answer. Encourage a youth.
Keep a promise. Find the time.
Forgive an enemy. Listen.
Apologize if you were wrong.
Think first of someone else.
Be kind and gentle.
Laugh a little. Laugh a little more.
Express your gratitude. Have a generous spirit.
Be absent of judgement.
Gladden the heart of a child.
Extend a hand to someone in need.
Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the season.
Speak your love. Speak it again.
Speak it still once more. Speak it throughout the new year.
This is Christmas.

“Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness.
To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service.
To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect.”
~Oren Arnold

Note the phone number for our
MEDICAL LOAN CLOSET
360-504-0231



SOROPTIMIST MEETING DATES TO REMEMBER

Olympic Peninsula Area Meeting
TBD
February 2024



NWR Conference
Lake Washington Hyatt
Renton, WA
April 25-28, 2024

“Christmas, my child, is love in action.
Every time we love, every time we give.
It’s Christmas.” ~Dale Evans Rogers

MEET THE GIRLS OF THE MONTH

Taylee Rome



Taylee Rome is our **October** Girl of the Month. Softball is her favorite thing to do, and she has played shortstop for nine years. She says, “My life has revolved around playing softball; growing up it has been my rock and has taught me many things even outside

of the game.” She has shared her love of the game with younger kids by helping at Little League Softball. Taylee is a member of Varsity Club, which is a club in the whole Olympic league to promote sportsmanship in all sports while still being competitive. Taylee was Athlete of the Month this April. She hopes to attend Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, for a Bachelor’s degree in Kinesiology, an MA in Exercise Science and eventually to become a physical therapist.

Mattea Brillhart



Mattea Brillhart is our **November** Girl of the Month. She has been on the Honor Roll every semester and has had a 4.0 GPA since 9th grade. In her freshman year she was awarded “Most Inspirational.” Mattea has been a Link leader,

mentoring incoming students and belonging to the Interact and HOSA clubs. She has worked at Dungeness Valley Creamery as a calf feeder and milker, and at Johnson Creek Veterinarian Service as a cleaner helping the veterinarian and vet techs.

Mattea is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL). She received an extra year of credit in ASL by test and goes to Helen Haller every Thursday to help sign. She plans to go to college and pursue a career as an ASL interpreter or medical professional.

“For somehow, not only at Christmas, but all the long year through, the joy that you give to others is the joy that comes back to you.” ~*John Greenleaf Whittier*

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

My goodness! My husband always says time just races after Halloween. Here it is almost Christmas and everyone is shopping, spending quality time with family and friends. Speaking of friends, we inducted our newest member, **Roxann Harr**, on November 28th. She is a Master Gardener and is the coordinator for them for our Gala Garden Show. Welcome Roxann. For those of you who are recruiting new members, from January – June, the dues are pro-rated to \$128. A BIG thank you to our hosts **Shelle Paulbitski** for the Business Meeting and **Pat Willis** for the Program Meeting. Please let Shawn or Jane know if you would like to host a meeting and bring a delicious goodie! Merry Christmas, friends!



~Shawn Dredla and Jane Manzer, Membership Co-chairs

MEET OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

HARR, Roxann



Hello, I am Roxann Harr. I have lived in Sequim since June 1, 2022. I moved from Maple Valley, WA. We wanted to build a home with a view and Sequim has everything we wanted; we love it here! I learned about Soroptimist when a fellow Master Gardner asked me to take over coordination of speakers for the Gala Garden Show. I retired after 33 years from Mutual of Enumclaw Insurance Co. as Director of Corporate Services. I have experience in Project Management, Human Resources, Facilities Manager and was part of the Executive Management Team. I have managed Weekend Meals Backpack program for five elementary schools, raised money during

MS walks for 10+ years, organized fundraisers for LWAF and currently volunteer at the Sequim Boys and Girls Club along with many Master Gardeners events. I have been a Master Gardner for 5 years, board member on the Maple Valley Farmers Market for 2 ½ years, President of the Board for Lake Wilderness Arboretum Foundation for 3 years. I have very strong organizational and project management skills.

In my younger years, I had no help getting an education or support as a single mother. Joining SIS gives me the opportunity to help girls, women and their families who are in similar situations.

I have a husband, Brian, and three adult sons, Kyle Johnson, Alex and Matthew Harr. I love gardening and working with the community to help children and families in need. I am also an amateur wine collector and started a Master Gardeners social wine club called Hops and Vines.

Best advice I've received: "Whatever you decide to do, always make a difference."

Virginia Kostanich



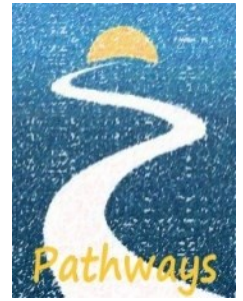
Hello, my name is Virginia Kostanich. I have lived in Sequim for nine years and I moved from Seattle. My friends brought me to this area. I read about Soroptimist and then used the Medical Loan Closet for a dying friend. I have worked in sales and fundraising. I have volunteered in the Rotary in Everett, WA. I am a member of Women in Wine, and Teamsters. I have one son here and one sister and one son in Seattle. I like sales, gardening, and cooking.

The best advice I have received: How to eat an elephant? One bite at a time (in reference to a large task).

"When we recall Christmas past, we usually find that the simplest thing—not the great occasions—give off the greatest glow of happiness." ~Bob Hope

NEWS FROM THE PATHWAYS

The Pathways committee met at 10 a.m. on December 2 at the Lodge. Roxann Harr was welcomed to the group as the most recent inductee. Not only is she new to Soroptimist, but she is also new to Sequim having moved here on June 1, 2022, from Maple Valley, Washington. We're excited to have her joining the other energetic new members, Brandi Larson, Virginia Kostanich, and Sam Fouts. Two other members, Debbie Cottrell and BZ Zabora, were not able to attend the meeting. We each shared some personal information to get to know each other a little better.



Natasha Merkuloff Nichols, our distinguished guest, gave us an overview of the Gala Garden Show. She admits that it's on-the-job training for all of us since she volunteered to Chair the event without having been involved with it previously. We all understand that it's the type of event that needs the support of every member in the club, and we're ready to assist in whatever capacity we can.

Having answered all of our questions, Natasha said farewell so we could continue with our main objective—selecting a project where we can volunteer our time. First Step is asking for help again this year to sort diapers, and a date and time will be determined as soon as possible.

The meeting ended with some ladies taking gooey caramel brownies home.



~Jan Hartig and Amanda Beitzel, Co-chairs

*“Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love.”
~Hamilton Wright Mabie*

MEMBERSHIP—COOL STUFF

THE RIGHT SIZE

Christmas time, Christmas spirit ... the music, the decorations, the colors, ... sharing love and joy—not only with those close to you, but with total strangers. Finding the perfect card, the perfect gift. If it's something to wear—we all know to get the right size. Of course, that applies not only to clothes, skates, boots, etc., but even to items like bicycles.

But did you know it also applies to footballs and basketballs? When you think about it, it makes a world of sense. There are five different football sizes, with even more for basketballs. And that's before they move to the official size. The rationale is substantial.



Smaller sized footballs are easier for young players to handle, and larger sizes cater to the capabilities and skills of older players. Same applies to basketballs. The size influences control, passing, shooting and player development. The wrong size leads to poor habits while learning the fundamentals, compensating for the wrong-sized equipment. If the ball is too heavy or too big, they are more prone to injury; their grip or throwing accuracy may be off; shooting with two hands, using improper hand placement on the ball become ingrained. And these habits are hard to correct as they get older and stronger.



Same thing applies to us. Those habits that we developed as children, some good, some not so great—they stick with us throughout life. And even when we know there's a better way—it can be a real challenge to make the change. Maybe it's time to say: “Santa, I tried.” And just keep trying...



~Sumi Becker



HOLIDAY JOY

SIS is yet again proving to be a significant supporter in teams or individuals adopting clients of Healthy Families of Clallam County through Holiday Joy. We have **24** club members and **7** former club members taking part!! Even as families were very recently put into emergency housing, one of those families (of 8 extended family members) was just adopted by **Patty Lebowitz**, new member **Roxann Harr**, and **Sara Ellen Peterson**. Thank you to you three for stepping up in a big way at this late date!!

Our Holiday Joy liaison, **Kelli Ward**, is planning to attend our business meeting on December 12th, so I hope many of you can be there so she can meet you. Kelli is also contemplating membership so that's another reason to show up and welcome her. Her son, whom she homeschools, will also be coming with her.



Additionally, Kelli will be able to take gifts on in to Healthy Families that day so feel free to bring your gifts and save yourselves a trip to Port Angeles!! Remember, gifts must be delivered to Healthy Families between Monday and Wednesday, December 11-13.



~Jane Manzer, Holiday Joy Liaison



“The joy of brightening other lives, bearing each other’s burdens, easing other’s loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of Christmas.” ~W.C. Jones

Soroptimist of Sequim Holiday Party

Tuesday, December 19th / 5:30 p.m.
Natasha and Jim Nichols' home
202 Lands End in Sequim
Your GPS will take you right to us.

We live at the end of Blue Ribbon Airport. You will see signs saying you're on a taxiway, no traffic. Ignore the signs; you're our guests, keep coming. **Car-pooling is helpful.**

Please drive past our house, driving toward the ocean for parking. There will be lights showing the way. We have 5 steps to get to our doors. If that is difficult, please let me know and we will have you come through the garage which only has three broad steps.

Menu is potluck Baked Potato Bar. Baked potatoes will be provided. Please bring toppings (get creative, ladies!) or appetizers, salads, beverages or desserts. Coffee and tea will be available.

Please bring a wrapped gift of not more than \$20, nice or naughty, to exchange.

Please RSVP to Natasha



MEDICAL LOAN CLOSET UPDATE

We have had an abundance of bedside commodes for quite a while and this month we were able to meet the right Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) person. Through the efforts of Butch Zaharias, we gave **34** bedside commodes to our local CERT on November 27th. We will also provide the CERT groups with excess wheelchairs and four-wheel walkers in the future. This is a temporary diversion of our excess equipment. Once local CERT needs have been met, we will send this type of equipment overseas. In addition, we gave six cases of adult disposable underwear to the Sequim Food Bank.



Becky, Chris with 34 Bedside Commodes waiting for their new home.



Bedside Commode donation to our CERT members. Pictured are four of the eleven CERT members who picked up BSCs.

Despite the colder, wetter, and windier weather, things have not cooled down at the Medical Loan Closet. We received **165** calls during the month. We lent **116** items and had **89** items returned. Our generous community donated **\$550** in November. We would love to have at least two or three more members. If you are interested in learning about the MLC, please call Chris or Becky.



~Becky Archer and Chris Snow, MLC Co-chairs

“This is the message of Christmas: We are never alone.” ~Taylor Caldwell

GALA GARDEN SHOW UPDATE

It's December. Our thoughts are on the holidays, which is appropriate. However, the Gala Garden Show is not far from our minds. Janet Real is the GGS T-shirt Organizer Extraordinaire. She will be attending the December business meeting, bringing sample T-shirts, and explaining the options. If you're not able to attend the meeting, don't worry; the information will be sent out in an eblast. New members get a T-shirt at no charge as part of their membership benefits. For the rest of us—whether we already have one or multiple Flower Power T-shirts—we have the option to add to our Garden Show wardrobe. But before ordering, check with Natasha who has some available. The deadline for ordering **T-shirts** is **January 16, 2024**.



The GGS website is starting to grow in pages; there is now information about the speakers—a page with their bios; another page with a list of times and descriptions of the sessions of the Speakers Series. There's also a page showing the vendors who have already signed up to participate in the show. Check things out at: <https://sequimgardenshow.com/>. Facebook posts will start to show up on a more regular basis starting this month. The Raffle Team has several donations—including a two-night stay at Holiday Inn Express—and a few in the wings that promise to come to fruition after the first of the year.

We will hit the ground running in January. The deadline for **sponsors** to be included in the Gazette insert is **January 26, 2024**. If you know of anyone who believes in our mission, consider asking them to be a sponsor of the show. All donations are welcome. We'll also soon see car magnets showing up, followed shortly by yard signs.

We will be trying some additional ways of publicity this year through the Gazette. This will include geo-fencing and Social Media ads. It will be interesting to see the results of this.

Enjoy the holidays! Looking forward to a great new year!



~Kathy Purcell & Natasha Merkuloff-Nichls, GGS Co-chairs

“Christmas is not a date on a calendar. It's more than a state of mind. It's a condition of the heart.” ~Toni Sorenson

SWEET FUNDRAISING

Hello Sweet Lovers! We're happy to report we've sold about \$4,000 worth of See's Candy in the last three weeks. Kudos to Sandy and all her volunteers for “womanning” several holiday bazaars to get this sold. Sandy is working on more sales the weekend of December 9th and if necessary, Saturday the 16th. The See's candy will appear at the SI business meeting on Tuesday. We need to sell the remaining candy to maximize our profits. Please ask your friends, family and neighbors if they need See's for gifts. We have about 24, one-pound boxes left (\$30/ea) and about 20 small boxes. (\$10) left.



~Natasha Merkuloff-Nichols & Sandy Lawrence, Fundraising Co-chairs

December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH Dave Fickes Sandy Lawrence Elaine Powlesland					1	2 Pathways Meeting
3	4	5 GGS Core Cmt Meeting 8 a.m. KSQM 	6	7	8 BOARD MEETING	9
10 Distribution of December Soropti-Scoop	11	12 Business Meeting	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 Holiday Party 	20	21	22	23
24	25 		27	28	29	30 Deadline for articles for January Soropti-Scoop
31 New Year's Eve 						

January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH Susan Coffee Kathy Cunha 	1 	2	3	4	5 BOARD MEETING	6 Pathways Meeting
7 Distribution of January Soropti-Scoop	8	9 Business Meeting	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 Program Meeting Human Trafficking Awareness	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 5th Tuesday	31			

Recipe for Christmas All Year Long

by: Joanna Fuchs

Take a heap of child-like wonder
That opens up our eyes
To the unexpected gifts in life—
Each day a sweet surprise.
Mix in fond appreciation
For the people whom we know;
Like festive Christmas candles,
Each one has a special glow.
Add some giggles and some laughter,
A dash of Christmas food,
(Amazing how a piece of pie
Improves our attitude!)

Stir it all with human kindness;
Wrap it up in love and peace,
Decorate with optimism, and
Our joy will never cease.
If we use this healthy recipe,
We know we will remember
To be in the Christmas spirit,
Even when it's not December.



Soroptimist International of Sequim
PO Box 126
Sequim, WA 98382

SOROPTIMIST®

Investing in Dreams

Soroptimist®: a global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment.

To a Person Making a Difference for Women