



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 30, Issue 10

Soroptimist International of Sequim

Celebrating 78 Years of Service

April 2026

Officers 2025 — 2026

President:

Roxann Harr

President-Elect:

Natasha Merkuloff-Nichols

Secretary:

Christy Holy

Treasurer:

Sandy Lawrence

Assistant Treasurer:

TBD

Director: 2 year

(one year remaining)

Kathy Purcell

Director: 2 year

Shirley Legg

Director: 1 year

Colleen Blazier

Director: 1 year

Patty Lebowitz

Immediate Past-

President:

Linda Klinefelter

Newsletter Staff:

Kathy Purcell

Jan Hartig

Jane Manzer

Pat Willis

Spring is when
life's alive
in everything".
~Christina Rossetti

President's Message

Dear Members,

Spring has sprung - and with it the satisfaction of a successful Gala Garden Show. Thank you to everyone, especially the core GGS team, for the talent, time, and dedication you poured into the event. At our committee recap we captured great ideas and improvements to carry into next year.

April is a quieter month, but there's still plenty happening. We're finishing the club storage move to the MLC, Dream It Be It is progressing, and the Awards & Scholarships committee is reviewing many strong applications. Elections for several board positions will take place at the business meeting; it has been an honor to serve as your president and I am grateful for the opportunity to run again. Serving on the board is a rewarding way to learn more about our club and help shape our work - please encourage anyone interested to reach out so we can make joining easy and welcoming.

April is also Sexual Assault Awareness Month. In Washington in 2024 there were 5,341 reported sex offenses; 85% of victims were female and 16% were age 10 or younger, with most incidents occurring at home. These stark facts remind us why our support for organizations like Healthy Families of Clallam County matters. The effort we invest in events like the Gala Garden Show directly funds services that help women, girls, and families in crisis.

Thank you again for your energy and commitment. Together we turn volunteer hours into real community impact - and that is something to be proud of.



Warm regards,
President Roxann



“Day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment there are ordinary people who use their freedom to work for the freedom of others.” ~Bruce Springsteen

Letter from the Editor

Dear Friends,

It's April, the first full month of spring. President Roxann mentions in her article on page one that April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. I thought April was National Volunteer Month; I went online to verify that.

To my surprise, at <https://www.nationaldaycalendar.com/> I found 46 different listings for the month of April.

Here are just a handful: Sexual Assault Awareness Month, National Volunteer Month, Stress Awareness Month, National Garden Month, National Month of Hope. It's also National Humor Month and Canine Fitness Month.

I have that last one covered; Blue and I do an early morning walk along the Discovery Trail—rain or shine. And we also do a walk about town after we get into the office. Who needs a gym when you have a dog?

It is still dark in the morning when we walk so I need a headlight. This morning while we were walking, I was thinking about the headlight I use. Inside of it there is a rechargeable battery; you don't even need to remove it to charge it. You just plug in a cable like the one that charges your cell phone. On the back of the battery compartment there is a battery level indicator which consists of four small lights. As the headlight is used, one of the small lights goes out while three still show on. After more usage, another light goes out and two lights are left. After more usage . . . Well, you get the idea. I usually plug it in to charge once a week or when it gets down to two lights left.

My mind then went to Soroptimist. We are like the headlight. We use our heads to light the way for women and girls by providing avenues for them to gain access to education, empowering them to live their dream. That takes work and effort on our part. One of those lights is scholarships. Cat Xander has an article on page four about the Awards & Scholarships committee reviewing the high school scholarship notebooks for this year.

Those scholarships come about through our fundraising efforts. We have just completed our 27th Annual Gala Garden Show. And what a success it was! It took countless hours (though we are now starting to count and report all our volunteer hours) along with lots of energy and brain power to make it happen.

Like the headlight we sometimes need to plug into whatever gives us power—playing with the cat or dog; taking a walk in nature; reading a new book; writing a new book; reconnecting with a friend; going out into our garden; putting our feet up and looking out the window at the new growth that is happening.

We have something to celebrate! A **BIG THANK YOU** to all our members and their families and friends for being part of the 2026 Gala Garden Show. It was successful because of you!

As we move through the month let us be aware of—and let go of—stress; let us be grateful for all the lovely gardens; let us recognize that even though it is National **Month** of Hope, we can carry that beyond April. Also, let us remember to embrace our *sense* of humor; maybe we could call it our sixth *sense*. Keeping these things in mind we continue to Empower Through Encouragement.



Light and Love
~Kathy Purcell, Editor



**“See the light. Find the light.
Embrace the light. Be the light.”
~Matshona Dhliwayo**

CALENDAR

APRIL 2026

- 7 GGS Core Cmt Mtg
- 10 Board Meeting
- 14 Business Meeting
- 23-26 NWR Conference
Grouse Mtn Lodge
Whitefish, MT
- 28 Program Meeting

MAY 2026

- 8 Board Meeting
- 12 Business Meeting
- 26 Program Meeting

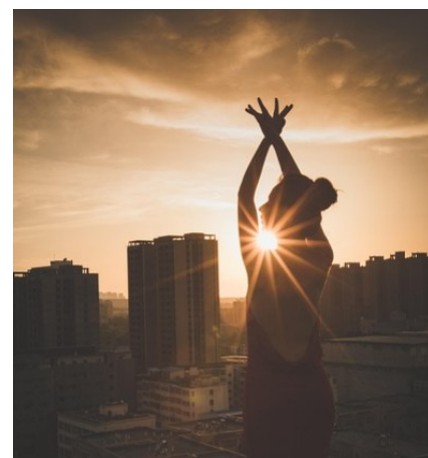
*Evening Meeting

EMPOWERING



Through Encouragement

**“Take time to recharge your batteries.
It's hard to see where you're going
when your lights are dim.”
~Robert Conelly**



**“The light within us gives power
for good actions.” ~Lailah Gifty**

Celebrate Life!

APRIL 2026

Christy Holy
Chris Snow

MAY 2026

Pauline Geraci
Jan Hartig
Linda Klinefelter
Jeanne Martin
Lucinda Soha
Kelli Ward



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



“Science has never drummed up quite
as effective a tranquilizing agent
as a sunny spring day.”
~*W. Earl Hall*

A REMINDER—2025-2026 MEETING LOCATION

We meet at
Fifth Avenue Senior Independent Living
500 W. Hendrickson, Sequim at 8 a.m.

See you April 14th.



APRIL PROGRAM MEETING

Our Program meeting for April consists of two presentations: One will be Lucinda and a Stephanie, a member. They will be joined by Wendy Bonham, of Clallam County Special Olympic Orca Team Coordinator. Also present will be athletes to talk about their participation in Special Olympics here in Clallam County, and statewide.

The second speaker will be Kim Rosales of the Sequim Boys & Girls Club, who will bring us up to speed on the Great Future’s Preschool which we have supported with a spend-down contribution.

It’ll be a really interesting meeting!

“The beautiful spring came; and when Nature resumes her loveliness,
the human soul is apt to revive also.” ~*Harriet Ann Jacobs*

SOROPTIMIST MEETING DATES TO REMEMBER



NWR Conference
Grouse Mountain Lodge
Whitefish, MT
April 23-26, 2026



49th Biennial SIA Convention
Incheon, South Korea
July 22-25, 2026

MEET OUR FEBRUARY AND MARCH GIRLS OF THE MONTH

HAYLEE WATKINS



Our club is pleased to announce our February Girl of the Month, **Haylee Watkins**. Haylee is an honor roll student and has been honored as an English Student of the Month. As a student in advanced placement English, Haylee indicates she enjoys this class because it challenges her. She aims to attend Western Washington University and obtain a degree in art education after graduating from high school.

“Self-study, self-exploration, self-empowerment
— these are the virtues of a great education.”
~*Shimon Schocken*

SOPHIA RHYNES

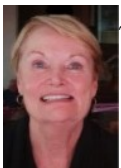


We are excited to announce that **Sophia Rhynes** has been named March Girl of the Month. Sophia is highly active both in school and in her community through various volunteer efforts. She has maintained honor roll status since beginning high school and is earning a letter in basketball. Aspiring to become a nurse, she particularly enjoys her favorite class, Human Body Systems. In addition to her academic achievements, Sophia is also employed while attending school. After graduation, she plans to enroll at Western Washington University with the intention of transferring to the University of Tennessee College of Medicine.

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS BUSY SEASON

The Scholarship and Awards Committee is now at its busiest time of year. We received 60 **Scholarship Notebooks** from high school students to read and review. Each notebook will be read and scored by two different committee members—about 12 apiece. The scores will be figured, and then the committee will re-read the top 15 scorers. The second-round numbers will be calculated. The committee will then determine the number and amounts of scholarships to be awarded. The high school counselor will also be consulted to ensure that our awards are going to the girls who are facing obstacles and need the encouragement and financial support our scholarship would give them to succeed. The Sequim High School Awards Night is May 27, 2026, and all members are invited to attend.

Continuing Education Scholarship Applications will be available May 15th. The Continuing Education Scholarship is for women who have completed 24 semester or 30 quarter units. Because many women receive scholarships in high school that only help fund their first year in post-secondary school, this award is intended to help them continue their education. There is no age limitation for this award, so please encourage women to apply who may be returning to school to change careers or need training to support themselves after divorce or widowhood. The applications are due August 15, 2026.



~Cat Xander, Awards & Scholarships Co-chair



“Educators don’t necessarily have to teach. Instead, they can provide an environment and resources that tease out your natural ability to learn on your own.” ~*Shimon Schocken*

DREAM IT BE IT AWARDED A \$1,500 GRANT FOR UPCOMING PROGRAM

Our club is thrilled to announce the award of a \$1,500 grant from **Walmart** in Sequim to support their **Dream It Be It (DIBI)** program. This initiative is dedicated to empowering girls ages 13-18 by providing them with valuable resources and guidance to help them either pursue college or achieve successful employment after graduation.



We invite young women to join us for a transformative one-day event on **May 16th, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** During this program, participants will engage in discussions on essential topics such as financial literacy, mental health and well-being, effective employment strategies, and opportunities within the Running Start program. Additionally, attendees will receive support and guidance regarding college pathways through Peninsula College. Participants will receive gift cards and other amenities for their participation.

Interested applicants can request an application by emailing Linda Klinefelter at kliney523@gmail.com.



~Linda Klinefelter, DIBI Co-chair



Pictured left to right: EJ Hernandez-Murata, Walmart Vision Manager; Linda Klinefelter, Co-chair for Dream It Be It; Roxann Harr, President of Soroptimist International of Sequim & Co-chair for Dream It Be It; and Liza Baudais, Walmart Store Manager.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

NATASHA MERKULOFF-NICHOLS



Natasha Merkuloff Nichols is a long-time member of Soroptimist International who transferred to our organization from Calistoga, California. Although she is now retired, she brings a wealth of skills that greatly benefit Soroptimist. Natasha has an impressive background, having served as the editor of two small-town newspapers. She was elected as City Clerk and later appointed City Administrator for Calistoga, CA. Additionally, she worked as a county budget analyst, a public works administrative manager, and ultimately retired as the Director of Child Support Services for Napa County.

At the top of her list of proudest achievements are her marriage to Jim, her management of the flooding emergency, her FEMA claims for Napa County, and her service on the first California Commission on the Status of Women. To add to her accomplishments, she won her first election by just three votes. However, her opponent requested a recount, which indicated that she had actually lost by three votes. This situation frustrated the members of Soroptimist International of Calistoga, prompting them to invite her to join their organization. When Natasha learned that their focus was on programs for women and girls, she happily accepted the invitation. Fortunately, her election story has a happy ending—she ran again and won.

Natasha is passionate about her role as the lead for the Live Your Dream Award and finds it incredibly rewarding. She also actively participates in the Medical Loan Closet and the Gala Garden Show, showcasing her commitment to community service. Furthermore, she values our support for vital organizations such as Women for Women International and Peninsula Behavioral Health, which make a meaningful impact on many lives.

CHRISTY HOLY



Christy Holy joined Soroptimist in February 2024. In addition to her commitment to the organization, she runs a full-time business called Better Call Christy. This business is dedicated to providing support services for seniors, including assistance with organizing, finances, companionship, shopping, and various other activities.

Moreover, Christy teaches Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction classes. When she isn't working with seniors or teaching, she enjoys expressing her creativity through theater arts, as she holds a Master of Fine Arts degree. While foregoing keeps her busy, she is proud to have been elected in 2025 to serve on the Charter Review Commission in Clallam County and expresses that her life is surrounded by kind, compassionate, proactive people.

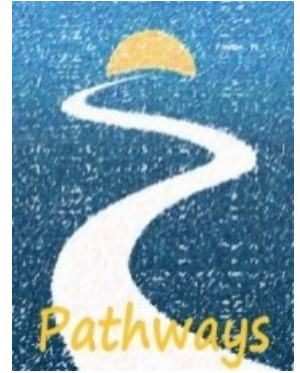
Christy explains that she joined Soroptimist because of the organization's direct impact on the community and its funding for educational support for women and girls. As a member, she has enjoyed participating in the First Step Diaper Drive through Pathways and currently serves as a co-chair for the Tea with SHE and, most recently, has committed to a larger leadership role by accepting the nomination to the position of President-elect.

“It was character that got us out of bed, commitment that moved us into action, and discipline that enabled us to follow through.” ~Zig Ziglar

PATHWAYS REPORT

Roxann Harr was the presenter for our March meeting, and she gave a good overview of the Board of Directors: duties, terms, slate of officers and election of officers. It stimulated several questions and a great discussion.

Suzanne Plemmons gave an update on the project with the Sequim Free Clinic. Since we have accomplished getting new shelves and some food items for them, the next step is to decide if this was a one-time project or a long-term one. Suzanne will check with the Community Food Bank for some options with them, if possible. We may want to ask the Board to consider having it as an on-going project, or just a few members who are passionate about it to continue (with help from other members, of course).



~Jan Hartig, Pathways Co-chair



HAPPY DOLLARS

March 10 2026

Patty Lebowitz—is happy that there will be an event at the Sequim Food Bank Hail and Farewell Community Gathering from 1-3 Saturday March 14th. She invited everyone to come and say goodbye to Andra Smith and hello to Jen Colmore the new Executive Director.

Roxann Harr—is happy we're in the last stretch of the 2026 GGS.

Natasha Merkuloff-Nichols—is happy Jeanne Martin is doing better and should be up and walking soon.

Virginia Kostanich—is happy that she's almost ready for this year's GGS raffle, bigger and better than ever before.

Shelley Huntington—is happy and grateful to us for welcoming her even though she can give minimal participation at this time.

*“People can't be just tied together. They have to connect.
Otherwise, they'll find themselves bound hand and foot.” ~Ai Yazawa*

FRIENDSHIP CONNECTIONS

An email from a past member. . . . Hi Kathy. Just wanted to let you know that I so enjoy reading about what the Sequim club is doing even though you have more members I do not know than I know. I look forward to your quotes as well. I have been busy helping our club get ready for their Centennial Event; we chartered in 1926. One of the first eight clubs on the West Coast. We have a multitude of archival materials, the original charter and much more. I think of you when going thru some of it. I get to step down from being President after this year and am looking forward to a more relaxed pace. Take care and thanks again for all your support.

Rose Jaeger, Past-President SI/Sequim (2009-2010)

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MEDICAL LOAN CLOSET

Ribbon Cutting Day!



Ribbon cutting

The Sequim Chamber of Commerce and members of SIS celebrated the move of the MLC with a Ribbon Cutting ceremony on March 4th. A Sequim Gazette photographer took pictures, and Matt Nash wrote an article that appeared in the March 11th Gazette.

After almost two months, we have completed hanging all the equipment and found good storage areas for equipment that can be stored on a storage rack or on the floor.



Our call and equipment volumes increased this month. During the month, we answered **221** calls and lent **155** items. We received **116** equipment returns or donations and received \$407 in contributions from our generous community.



We expect to have a new agreement with CCFD3 relative to CERT and CCFD3 access in the event of a major disaster shortly.



With gratitude,

Susan Coffee, Elaine Powlesland, and Chris Snow
Medical Loan Closet Co-Chairs



TEA WITH S.H.E.

Tea with SHE is excited to announce our April event! Our Spring event will air on the radio on **April 29th at 12:30**, featuring **Chief Mike Hill** of the Sequim Police Department. Listeners can tune to KSQM 91.5 FM and hear about the latest phone scams. Chief Hill indicates there are lots of scams going around. You will hear how to identify a phone scam and what to do about it. Make sure to save the date for this insightful radio show so you can stay up to date and safeguard yourself.



~Linda Klinefelter, Tea with S.H.E. Co-chair

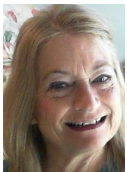


“The best and safest thing is to keep a balance in your life, acknowledge the great powers around us and in us. If you can do that, and live that way, you are really a wise man.” ~*Euripides*

Attention Members!

2026 Leadership Round Table June 23

Our President has graciously extended an invitation to attend this **Federation Leadership Roundtable**. It is a Zoom conference and requires a \$50 registration fee. Join Soroptimists from across our organization to share perspectives and insights; and explore timely leadership strategies and best practices. You will gain a deeper understanding of Soroptimist’s mission, structure and key focus areas. Contact Sandy Lawrence to register.



~Sandy Lawrence



Leadership Round Table

June 23, 2026

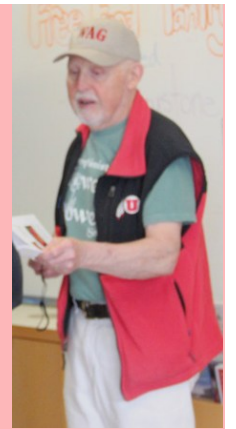
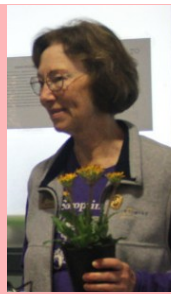
7 – 9 p.m. EDT

Fully interpreted

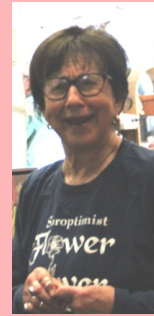
Virtual

[REGISTER NOW!](#)

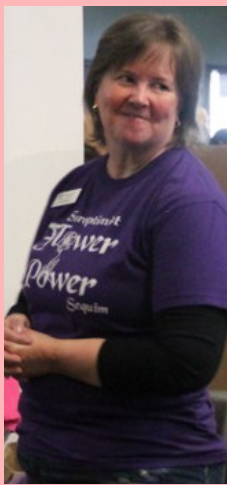
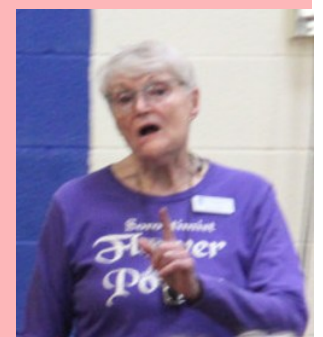
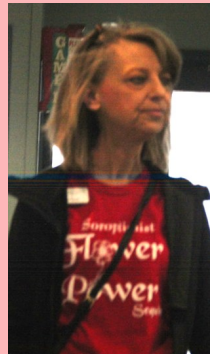
All Soroptimists are invited!



Thank you to all our Members, Family Members & Friends!



27th Annual
Gala Garden Show





After Garden Show Potluck Celebration

More Pics:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/108582458@N03/albums/72177720333060278>



Futures in Bloom

2026
AWARDS & SILENT AUCTION

Soroptimist Seattle Metropolitan



Tickets On Sale Now!
Tuesday, May 19th 2026

Honoring our Scholarship & Grant Winners

Seattle University
901 - 12th Avenue, Seattle, WA, 98122
Student Center, Fr. Le Roux room on 1st level
Parking- Murphy Garage - E. James St.
5pm Doors Open/Silent Auction
(must be present to claim prizes)
6:30pm Awards Program

Hors d'oeuvres - Beverages - Desserts



TICKETS \$40

We also accept checks by Mail / Please Include names of guests

Soroptimist Seattle-Metro/Awards Event

P.O. Box 2676
Seattle, WA 98111

April 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH Christy Holy Chris Snow 						
5 	6	7 GGS Core Committee Mtg Debrief	8	9	10 BOARD MEETING	11
12	13	14 Business Meeting	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 NWR Conference Grouse Mountain Lodge- Whitefish, MT	24 NWR Conference Grouse Mountain Lodge- Whitefish, MT	25 NWR Conference Grouse Mountain Lodge- Whitefish, MT
26 NWR Conference Grouse Mountain Lodge- Whitefish, MT	27	28 Program Meeting	29 Tea with SHE 12:00—1:00 pm On KSQM	30		

May 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH Pauline Geraci Jan Hartig Linda Klimefelter Jeanne Martin Lucinda Soma Kelli Ward					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 BOARD MEETING	9
10	11	12 Business Meeting	13	14	15	16 DIBI 9 am-3 pm B & G Club-Sequm
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 Program Meeting	27	28	29	30
31						

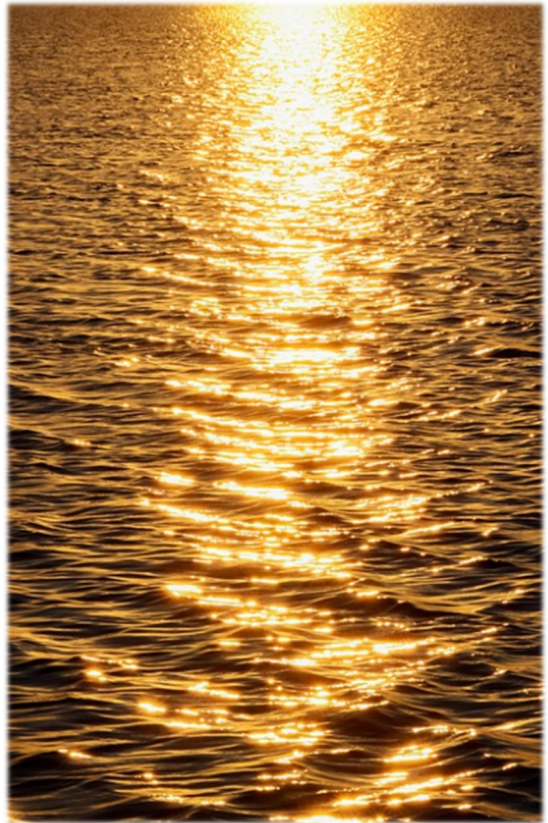
Influence

by Joseph Norris

Drop a pebble in the water,
And its ripples reach out far;
And the sunbeams dancing on them
May reflect them to a star.

Give a smile to someone passing,
Thereby making his morning glad;
It may greet you in the evening
When your own heart may be sad.

Do a deed of simple kindness;
Though its end you may not see,
It may reach, like widening ripples,
Down a long eternity.



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