



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 2

Soroptimist International of Sequim

**Celebrating 78 Years of Service**

August 2025

## President's Message

Hi everybody,

Summer is almost halfway over, and I'm really looking forward to our START event on August 26th. Recently, I've been enjoying the warm weather on my deck and noticed the balloon flowers (*Platycodon grandiflorus*) blooming in my garden. I originally bought them for Linda's Installation last year and ended up keeping a couple for myself. I didn't expect them to return, let alone bloom this year!



It got me thinking—kind of like my thoughts lately that are ballooning in my mind. They're either going to blossom into beautiful ideas or just explode! I've been calling this sensation the "newbie syndrome." I think it's quite common—Wikipedia describes it as the tendency to start projects from scratch repeatedly instead of building on previous knowledge and experience. I definitely want to avoid that!

My goal now is to review with the Board and our long-term members all the successful fundraisers our club has hosted over the years and compare them to what we're doing today. With the wealth of knowledge and skills in our membership, we should prioritize our events based on which are the most profitable—whether in funds raised, community goodwill, or both. Given the uncertain economic landscape and the reduction of government grants, it's essential we use our resources wisely. That includes being mindful of member burnout, which is increasingly common in non-profits.

On a bright note, we have new members joining us with fresh ideas and passionate energy. They, too, might be experiencing a bit of "newbie syndrome." So, I encourage everyone to share your knowledge and experiences. Take the time to get to know our new members and help them find their place where they can truly fulfill their passions in support of our mission.

I know you'll all extend warmth and friendship to our newcomers, and the START event is the perfect opportunity to do so. Please consider joining us—let's have fun, reconnect, and get to know each other better. And don't hesitate to share your great ideas; we wouldn't want to miss any, whether they blossom into brilliant plans or simply provide food for thought.

Looking forward to seeing you there!



Warm regards,  
President Roxann



### Officers 2025 — 2026

**President:**

Roxann Harr

**President-Elect:**

Natasha Merkuloff-Nichols

**Secretary:**

Christy Holy

**Treasurer:**

Sandy Lawrence

**Assistant Treasurer:**

Brandi Larson

**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

*“Creative thinking  
inspires ideas.  
Ideas inspire change.”  
~Barbara Januskiewicz*

## Letter from the Editor

Dear Friends,

Though we are still in summer, I've noticed the daylight is showing up a bit later than when summer began. I've been wearing a headlight when Blue and I do our morning walks. I don't have to use it for the entire walk, but it is helpful when we first hit the trail.

One day last week while Blue and I were on our morning walk, I saw something unusual. We were coming up to the place where we turn around and head home. Daybreak had arrived but there were a lot of trees nearby that blocked some of the light. I looked beyond our turn-around marker and saw what looked like a silhouette of a cat. Once we got to the marker I realized what I was looking at was the end of a fallen branch that had some foliage near it. I laughed at myself. We turned and headed back.

I was still smirking when out of the corner of my eye I noticed a downed tree to my right, one end was a short distance off the paved path. That end was thick; I thought it had to be the base of the tree because it was thicker than the rest of the trunk. I follow the trunk with my eyes. The wood went out a distance and then I saw a crack that was across most of the diameter of the tree. I continued to follow the trunk finding it went straight down to the ground—which of course, led to the true base of the tree.

I walked very close to the end of the trunk that was near to the path. How could that be so thick? How could the base of the tree support that? I turned on my headlight so I could see better. That's when I saw there were multiple flat round areas—these were where limbs once were attached. This thick part was where limbs branched out. One of those branches might have been part of the imaginary cat. I'm guessing the tree had fallen across the trail and the limbs had been cut so the path was once again traversable by hikers and bikers.

Perhaps the cut branches have gone to become part of someone's wood project or to become fuel to produce heat for someone when the winter comes.

The tree brought to mind our Soroptimist club. The base of the tree was a firm foundation supporting the limbs farther up the trunk; it gave an avenue for nourishment to go to the farthest branch, the farthest leaf—every leaf. I see our club history—and those who are part of it—as our foundation much like the base of the tree, and our current board as the nutrients that go up and out to all members, encouraging growth. As our members work on committees and branch out with new ideas, we are supported.

I was thinking about the imaginary cat that I saw. Sometimes we mis-identify a situation or thing we think we see or hear. When we look closer we discover what it really is and what message it brings.

The summer is waning but our dedication to our mission stands firm. As we live it we continue Empowering Through Encouragement.



~Kathy Purcell, Editor



**“Life has no meaning. Each of us has meaning and we bring it to life. It is a waste to be asking the question when you are the answer.”**  
~Joseph Campbell

## CALENDAR

### AUGUST

- 5 GGS Core Cmt Mtg
- 26\* S.T.A.R.T. Meeting

### SEPTEMBER

- 2 GGS Core Cmt Mtg
- 5 Board Meeting
- 9 Business Meeting
- 23 Program Meeting
- 30 5th Tuesday

\*Evening Meeting



**“Reason is the natural order of truth; but imagination is the organ of meaning.”**  
~C.S. Lewis



**“If you don't know history, then you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree.”**  
~Michael Crichton

*Celebrate Life!*

**AUGUST**

Amanda Beitzel  
Colleen Blazier  
Roxann Harr  
Janet Real  
Cat Xander

**SEPTEMBER**

Cheryl Easterling  
Sara Maloney  
Pat Willis



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



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*“Within each such social group,  
a feeling of solidarity prevails,  
a compelling need  
to work together  
and a joy in doing so  
that represent a high moral value.”  
~Christian Lous Lange*

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**A REMINDER—2025-2026 MEETING LOCATION**

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



See you September 9th.

**It's Happening!**

**S.T.A.R.T. Meeting**  
**(Soroptimist Team And Reunion Time)**  
**At Shawn Dredla's Home**  
**Potluck**



**Tuesday, August 26, 2025**  
**5:30 p.m.**

**End of Summer Picnic at Shawn's**

We'll be starting our new Soroptimist year with an end of summer bash at Shawn Dredla's home on August 26th, beginning at 5:30.

There will be door prizes and a "Getting to Know You" activity. Plan on being at 197 Thunder Road, Port Angeles, and being part of the fun.

For potluck assignments: last names beginning with A-H, please bring appetizers;  
I-R please bring sides and  
S-Z, please bring main dishes.

And for dessert.....drum roll please.....we'll be serving strawberry shortcake! The Lavender Festival Gang became experts at this mouthwatering dessert and have agreed to provide it and let the rest of us taste how delicious it is.

Please RSVP to Shawn at [shawn1199@gmail.com](mailto:shawn1199@gmail.com)  
or 951-538-3538.

## AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS NEWS

The Continuing Education Scholarship Applications are due **August 15<sup>th</sup>**, and the new Awards and Scholarships Committee will be meeting to decide on recipients shortly after. These awards go to girls and women who have completed at least one full year of post-secondary school.

Here are some of the things we have been hearing from our past scholarship winners.



### **Christina Caples** High School Scholarship

“Just know that I’ve been thinking of you guys and am forever grateful for your efforts! I finished my associates degree this June and currently work full time as an EMT. I just got into Montana State University for a pre-nursing program.”



### **Yang Zhang** 2024 Peninsula College Associate in Nursing Degree with support from Continuing Education Scholarships

“Currently, I just have started two jobs. One is to continue working in a nursing home as a charge nurse (Avamere in Sequim), another one is from home health (one to one care ) aiming to expand my working experience in different healthy settings, and hone my skills, critical thinking and decision making.”



### **Karlie Viada** Continuing Education Scholarships

Nursing: “I am looking forward to working with the actors who present as patients next year! Other validations I completed this semester were catheter insertion and full body assessments. I’ve also learned how to give an intramuscular injection for vaccines.”



### **Teagan Moore** High School Scholarship

“I actually just got accepted into the Eastern Washington University dental hygiene program! I will start that next fall. I am also working in a dentist’s office as a children’s dental assistant and I could not love it more. Through this I think I have found my passion for children’s dentistry and hope to do more of that in the future. The scholarship I got last year has helped me tremendously and I cannot thank you guys enough for your generosity.”

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“Education is only a ladder to gather fruit from the tree of knowledge, not the fruit itself.” ~**Author Unknown**

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## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Welcome to a new Club year! We are starting off the year with our feet running already. There have been a few inquiries about Club membership that have come in over the summer. Kathy P. has updated the membership page. Please plan on attending the S.T.A.R.T. meeting on August 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm. This is our opportunity to get to know each other on a personal level. If you are unable to attend meetings, think about making an appearance at a social event this year. That way, we can see your face! As Sandy Lawrence would say: “There’s no better food than at a Soroptimist potluck.”



~Shawn Dredla, Membership Co-Chair



## FRIENDSHIP CONNECTION

Just finished reading The July 2025 Soropti-Scoop. What a surprise to see my picture in the newsletter! I still have very warm feelings about my time in SI of Sequim! I have lived in DesMoines, WA, in a retirement facility for 13 years and still have very supportive feelings about my time and efforts in the Sequim Soroptimist club! My best regards to all of you, keep up the great work!!!!

~Louella Hanson

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Wow! What a year of blessings have I had. When I met the women of SI/Sequim I never imagined how my life would be so enhanced. From day one I felt so welcomed and appreciated. A phenomenal group of strangers were only strangers for a matter of minutes. And at 8 a.m. on a Tuesday morning too! LOL Every member made me feel welcomed, respected and listened to. No matter how silly my idea was, they still listened. Never in my 71 years and all the places I've traveled to, was there another group—no matter where or when—who welcomed me with such open arms (including family). Every project, no matter how much work there was, it was a joyful event.

At the end of the year, when I stood in front of you all with tears in my eyes because I felt I had to return to SIPA, my heart was filled even more as I was welcomed as an honorary member of SI/Sequim. I do not take this gift lightly it means the world to me. My heart is full because of all you amazing women. Thank you and love you all.

~Deb Alwine

SAVE THE DATE

Let Your  
*Dreams*  
Become your Story

**D1 District Meeting**

October 17-19, 2025  
DoubleTree by Hilton-Seattle Airport Southcenter  
Seattle, WA

 **SOROPTIMIST**<sup>®</sup>  
Investing in Dreams

## 2025-2026 COMMITTEES

### **Awards & Scholarships**

Chairs – Kris Osborn and Cat Xander  
Colleen Blazier  
Debbie Cottrell  
Athena Dunn  
Patty Lebowitz  
Glen Varvil  
Kelli Ward

### **Live Your Dream**

Chair – Natasha Merkuloff-Nichols  
Shelley Huntington  
Patty Lebowitz

### **Dream It Be It**

Chairs – Linda Klinefelter, Roxann Harr, Shirley Legg  
Kelli Ward

### **Finance**

Chair – Shelle Paulbitski  
Dave Fickes  
Sherry Lacey  
Shirley Legg  
Sandy Lawrence  
Jeanne Martin  
Janet Real  
Cat Xander

### **Membership**

Chairs – Shawn Dredla and Jane Manzer  
Becky Archer  
Amanda Beitzel  
Christy Holy  
Brandi Larson  
Natasha Merkuloff-Nichols

### **Sub-committee Pathways**

Chairs – Jan Hartig and Shirley Legg

### **Public Awareness**

Chairs - Linda Klinefelter and Kathy Purcell  
Jan Hartig (Proofreader)  
Sara Maloney  
Jane Manzer (Proofreader)  
Caroline Smith  
Kelli Ward  
Pat Willis (Proofreader)

### **Medical Loan Closet**

Chairs - Susan Coffee, Elaine Powlesland and Chris Snow  
Becky Archer  
Debbie Cottrell  
Virginia Kostanich  
Patty Lebowitz  
Shirley Legg  
Jane Manzer  
Natasha Merkuloff-Nichols

### **Tea with SHE—Sorooptimist Helping & Empowering**

Chairs - Linda Klinefelter and Christy Holy  
Becky Archer  
Susan Coffee  
Jan Hartig  
Virginia Kostanich  
Patty Lebowitz  
Janet Wicker  
Pat Willis

### **Fundraising**

Chair/s –TBD  
Dave Fickes/Pauline Geraci – Lavender Festival  
Jan Hartig  
Virginia Kostanich  
Patty Lebowitz

### **GGs—Gala Garden Show**

Chairs – Roxann Harr and Kathy Purcell

“Collaboration is like carbonation for fresh ideas. Working together bubbles up ideas you would not have come up with solo, which gets you further faster.” ~*Caroline Ghosn*

## JULY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MEDICAL LOAN CLOSET

We're thrilled to share that July was a record-breaking month at the Medical Loan Closet!

**📞 Call Volume:** We answered **299 calls**—our highest monthly total since Chris began tracking in 2019.

**📦 Lending & Returns:** We lent out **158 items**, including four loans by our newest MLC volunteer and Sequim Community Paramedic. We received **139 items returned or donated**.

**♿ Generous Donation:** Sherwood Assisted Living donated **eight wheelchairs** and several pairs of spare wheelchair footrests—thank you!

**💰 Community Support:** We received **\$1,187 in donations**, marking our **second-highest monthly total** since 2019. We are deeply grateful for this incredible support.

### 👉 **Need a Stand-Up Walker?**

We currently have an **excess of stand-up walkers**. If you or someone you know could use one, please contact Chris or Susan.

### 📧 **Client Appreciation:**

We recently received a heartfelt thank-you card from a client:

“Thank you for the loan of equipment I used in my recovery after surgery. I truly appreciated this service you provide!”



With gratitude,



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

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“One of the marvelous things about community is that it enables us to welcome and help people in a way we couldn't as individuals. When we pool our strength and share the work and responsibility, we can welcome many people, even those in deep distress, and perhaps help them find self-confidence and inner healing.” ~*Jean Vanier*

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**BLAST FROM THE PAST: A PAST S.T.A.R.T MEETING**



**Cooks in the Kitchen**



**Getting Started at 2012 START Meeting**



**Su's Sweet Pea**



**Who's the Backup?**



**Monica & Amanda**



**Su's Su's ALL Allium**



**Shelle is Sharing**



**More STARTing at Su's**



**Shelle & Sally Sue**



**What's the Point?**



**Su's Garden**

## LAVENDER FESTIVAL OFFERS SWEETNESS

Sequim Soroptimists had a booth selling strawberry shortcakes at the Lavender Festival. This was the first year we were at the main festival location at Carrie Blake Park and the first time doing strawberry shortcakes, so there were quite a few things we had to figure out both before and during the festival. We baked our own biscuits and used Graysmarsh strawberries. Since the main festival requires that food is prepared in a commercial kitchen, we used the Boys and Girls Club to bake and freeze hundreds of biscuits the week before the festival; thanks to all who helped in the baking and to the Boys and Girls Club for the use of the kitchen.

The strawberry shortcakes were well received, and selling a single item simplified the operation, allowing us to staff the booth with fewer people. We sold over 530 shortcakes in the three days, grossing \$5,066 and netting \$2,465. There were some startup costs this year that won't recur, and the festival takes 15% of the gross once you surpass \$1,500. Based on the smiles and joy we saw from people, the shortcakes are an item people will look for in the future, and we will be able to generate more sales and further improve the process. Thanks to all who helped with the operation during the festival.



~Dave Fickes, Lavender Festival Committee Co-Chair





## FEATURED ARTIST FOR THE 2026 GALA GARDEN SHOW

### KAREN SISTEK



Introducing our esteemed featured artist for the 2026 Gala Garden Show: Karen SisteK. After dedicating 26 years to life as a Coast Guard family, Karen and her husband found their forever home in Port Angeles. This transition to the breathtaking Olympic Peninsula ignited her passion for painting on silk blouses and jackets, marking the beginning of a vibrant artistic journey.

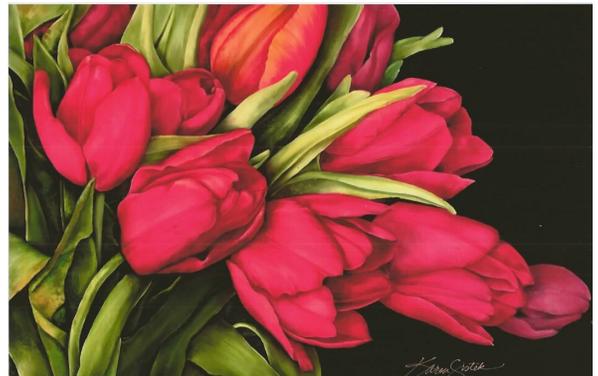
A self-taught visionary, Karen's artistic foundation is rooted in her enriching experiences volunteering at her children's schools. Here, she combined art with education, inspiring young minds through creative expression. A pivotal moment in her career came through her friendship with Eileen Knight, a member of the Soroptimist in Port Angeles. Eileen gifted Karen the chance to showcase her artwork at the "Bergsma Showroom," which sparked a flurry of interest as customers clamored to learn the art of silk painting. Soon, galleries were vying to display her exquisite creations, and the rest is a beautiful tapestry of success.

Karen is a master of silk painting, employing special dyes and an innovative technique entirely of her own design. She not only creates but also teaches, drawing students from across the globe eager to learn her unique method firsthand. With a relentless spirit, Karen shares her journey, expressing that after more than 30 glorious years, she continues to explore, experiment, and uncover the captivating wonders of painting on silk.

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## FEATURED ARTWORK FOR THE 2026 GALA GARDEN SHOW

The 2026 Gala Garden Show Committee met on August 5, 2025, to review the entries sent in for the 2026 GGS Artwork Contest. Each member was asked to choose their top three; the votes were tallied and the artwork that was selected is titled Adelaide. It is a 12 x 17 photo of one of Karen SisteK's many designs painted on silk.



Adelaide by Karen SisteK



~Roxann Harr & Kathy Purcell,  
GGS Co-chairs

**FUTURE GGS MEETING DATES:**  
September 2 / October 7 / November 4

**Note the future dates** for upcoming GGS Core Committee Meetings. Please try to work your schedules around these dates. For continuity and effectiveness, it is important to have as many of the core committee members present as we get closer to the show.

# August 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH</b> Amanda Beitzel Colleen Blazier Roxann Harr Janet Real Cat Xander		5 GGS Core Committee Mtg 1st Security Bank Yam			1	2
3	4		6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 S.T.A.R.T. Meeting 	27	28	29	30
31						

# September 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 	2 GGS Core Committee Mtg 1st Security Bank 9 am	3	4	5 BOARD MEETING	6
7 BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH Cheryl Easterling Sara Maloney Pat Willis 	8	9 Business Meeting	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 Program Meeting	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 5th Tuesday				

## Voice of a Fallen Tree

by: Terri Simon

You, visitor in my woods,  
see me laying on my Mother,  
roots to the sky,  
and think "dead tree"  
or "so sad."  
Let me tell you, you are wrong.  
The insects that could not live  
in me when my sap ran  
have found a home in my dry wood,  
weave their trails upon my bark.  
Amid my roots,  
covered in clay and dirt,  
live lizards, safe and warm.  
Though my branches don't reach as high,  
nests are still built upon them.  
My leaves that were,  
give comfort to the ground,  
and the seeds of me have been  
sown on the winds  
and grow in distant lands.

I serve a purpose  
well beyond my supposed death.  
When I finally rot and fall apart,  
I will be the nurturer  
for another's seeds.  
I hope that your bones  
will someday be as blessed,  
that you understand death  
is just a passageway,  
and the most mighty  
live by their service.



Soroptimist International of Sequim  
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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