



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 7

Soroptimist International of Sequim

Celebrating 78 Years of Service

January 2026

President's Message

Embracing the New Year with Joy and Purpose

The holiday season has always been a time we strive to create warmth and happiness for our families. As the kids grew up, the excitement shifted from opening presents to cherishing moments spent together. Now, New Year's celebrations are something they pursue on their own as adults.

On New Year's Eve, my husband and I enjoy a light meal and some bubbly as we discuss our ideas for what we want to do in the year ahead. As a gardener, I begin to think about the days growing longer and warmer and consider what projects I might want to start or finish in the garden.

As President of the club, I'm pleased to report that our goals for the New Year remain steadfast. Our members are fully engaged in finding a new home for the Medical Loan Closet. The Gala Garden Show committee is diligently organizing for the event, and the Dream It Be It committee is making great progress in planning an inspiring event for May.

Additionally, the Live Your Dream Award has attracted more applicants than last year, and Membership is preparing to distribute a survey to gather feedback. The Pathways program is welcoming new members, and the Awards and Scholarship committee has made excellent strides toward achieving their goals. Finance is currently navigating necessary software updates and financial institution changes. Pat Willis is reviewing old documents and photos, determining what we need to preserve as official records and what to retain as part of our club's rich history.

In January, I hope to bring together a group of members interested in developing strategies for storing our documents online. Additionally, we'll explore upgrading our communication methods to better reach young girls and women, as well as recommending other technological improvements that can enhance our club's operations.

As we look ahead, we know that each year as a non-profit presents its own set of challenges, and 2026 will likely be no different. With the unique contributions each of you brings, I am confident we can achieve our goals together while supporting one another and preventing burnout. The energy and camaraderie you all bring to the club make being a member truly rewarding.

Thank you for allowing me the honor of serving as your President. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity and look forward to what we can achieve together in the coming year.

Wishing you all a joyful and prosperous New Year!



Warmly,
President Roxann



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

*“The more you lose
yourself in something
bigger than yourself,
the more energy
you will have.”*
~Norman Vincent Peale

Letter from the Editor

Dear Friends,

The holiday decorations have been taken down and stored away. New calendars are found on desks, refrigerators and walls. Welcome to 2026. It's bound to be a perfect 10 year—the numbers add up: $2 + 0 + 2 + 6 = 10$.

It's January. Later this month we expect to announce the chosen recipients of our Live Your Dream Awards for this year. The Live Your Dream Award is a signature program of Soroptimist. It is a unique education award for women who provide the primary financial support for their families. The money given can be used for anything—from childcare to transportation, to new shoes as they walk their educational journey. The women who apply for this award all have the same goal—to obtain an education so they can provide a better life for themselves and their families. However, the path to that goal is as individual as each of the women.

A week or so ago, while Blue and I were on our morning walk, the Live Your Dream Award came to mind. What stood out was the word Award. The award is given not to someone who has already achieved her goal, but to someone who is stepping onto the road to get there. The award shows our belief in them and their ability to accomplish what they desire.

The women who are selected for the Live Your Dream Award through our club are chosen by non-Soroptimist judges. The recipients of this award get more than just a monetary gift. Our club's Awards and Scholarships co-chairs, Cat Xander and Kris Osborn, periodically reach out to these women, checking in to see how they are doing. We stay in touch. We follow up. We support them in a real way. This applies to all the awards and scholarships we give. We are empowering through our encouragement. The power is already within the women, we merely are part of igniting it.

Little did I know when I decided to write about this for my article, that Cat Xander would receive replies to her holiday check-in with past recipients. You can read those on pages 4 – 7. The biggest take-away from what the women wrote is that they genuinely appreciate that we care enough to ask about their lives. True caring cannot be hidden.

This brings to mind our Medical Loan Closet (MLC). Our members who work the MLC have a true caring for those who have a need for durable medical devices. From the very first phone call to set up an appointment, to the pickup of the equipment, our members show compassion, care and understanding. Those who come to pick up or to return items are met with a listening ear and a loving heart. It is a two-way street; our MLC volunteers often learn something. Each encounter offers a unique experience. Those who use the MLC express their gratitude—sometimes in a hand-written thank you note; sometimes in making a monetary donation; sometimes in leaving a post on social media. To read one such post—seen on Nextdoor, check out the MLC article on page 10 of this newsletter.

The above reflects our Soroptimist Spirit. As we move through this perfect year, we will continue Empowering Through Encouragement together.



~Kathy Purcell, Editor



CALENDAR

JANUARY 2026

- 6 GGS Core Cmt Mtg
- 9 Board Meeting
- 13 Business Meeting
- 27 Program Meeting
Human Trafficking
Awareness

FEBRUARY 2026

- 3 GGS Core Cmt Mtg
- 6 Board Meeting
- 10 Business Meeting
- 21 Area Meeting -
PA JetSet
- 24 Program Meeting

*Evening Meeting



Through Encouragement

**“To get through the hardest journey
we need take only one step
at a time, but we must
keep on stepping.”
~Chinese Proverb**



**“Without passion man is
a mere latent force and possibility,
like the flint which awaits
the shock of the iron before
it can give forth its spark.”
~Henri Frederic Amiel**

Celebrate Life!

JANUARY 2026

Susan Coffee

FEBRUARY 2026

Becky Archer
Sherry Lacey
Patty Lebowitz
Glen Varvil



Note the phone number for our
MEDICAL LOAN CLOSET



*“Leadership: Converting dreams into goals and goals into success.”
~T Jay Taylor*

A REMINDER—2025-2026 MEETING LOCATION

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

See you January 13th.



JANUARY PROGRAM

January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. For our program meeting in January, Clallam County Prosecuting Attorney Mark Nichols will present a program on human trafficking.

Mark has held this position since 2014. Previously, he served as Clallam County’s Hearing Examiner. He also has been a U.S. Park Ranger, and has extensive prosecution experience.

LIVE YOUR DREAM AWARD

The Live Your Dream Award applicants are in the hands of the judging committee, which is composed of non-Soroptimists.



~Natasha Merkuloff-Nichols



SOROPTIMIST MEETING DATES TO REMEMBER

Olympic Peninsula Area Meeting
Port Angeles Jet Set
February 21, 2026



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



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

COLLEEN BLAZIER MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT UPDATE

On Tue, Dec 23, 2025 at 5:32 PM Cat Xander wrote to Kayla Blodgett:

Colleen Blazier emailed me today that she had met you in person in your capacity as a nurse in the Radiology Department at OMC. She was thrilled, especially because you were one of the first recipients of the Colleen Blazier Medical Scholarship. She got to see what a great person her funds were helping to support!

Your first quarter is complete and we are anxious to hear how this year is going. Has Walden's Online program been useful? How does it compare with the in-person training you received at Peninsula College?

You have a major balancing act with the work, the online course, and your very young child. When you have a minute, please drop a note about all that is going on for you. We are very proud of your dedication to developing this career that will enable you to both help others and provide for your child.

We wish you the happiest of holidays and good luck in the New Year,
Cat Xander and Kris Osborn
Awards & Scholarships, Soroptimist International of Sequim

To Cat and Kris,

Thank you so much for your email! Meeting Colleen on Monday was truly a highlight—it brightened my entire week. She was incredibly kind, a joy to talk to, and I feel deeply honored to be a recipient of her scholarship. Soroptimist has made a profound difference in my educational journey, offering not only financial support but also invaluable encouragement and motivation.

I have completed nearly three years of school and have just one year and four months remaining! Attending Walden has been a wonderful experience. The program has been extremely valuable, and I have gained a wealth of knowledge. As it is an online program, my experience has been quite different from my time in the nursing program at PC. However, both have challenged me and equipped me with the essential tools to provide quality care to my patients.

Currently, I am enrolled in advanced pharmacology and have one more class to complete—advanced health assessment—before beginning a year of clinical rotations. My first rotation will be at Jamestown Family Health Clinic, followed by the Children's Clinic in Port Angeles, then the Women's Clinic on the third floor of OMC. I am still finalizing my fourth and final rotation, in a specialty of my choice.

As Soroptimist knows, I have a beautiful 17-month-old daughter named Quincy, who is truly the light of my life. My days are quite busy—caring for her takes up most of my time, so I fit my studies into the quiet moments when she naps or after she goes to bed. While this routine can be exhausting, it helps me truly absorb what I'm learning and reminds me to cherish each moment with her. Quincy encourages me to live in the present and appreciate the simple joys—like picking up rocks together or watching planes pass by. Motherhood is, without a doubt, the most rewarding and meaningful part of my life. My greatest goal is to create a happy, nurturing environment for both of us. Although some days are more challenging than others, I wouldn't trade this experience for anything, knowing that every effort I make helps build a brighter future for my family.

Thank you again, from the bottom of my heart, for your unwavering help and support—it truly means the world to me. I am deeply honored to be a recipient of the Colleen Blazier Scholarship and to be associated with Soroptimist.

I hope to meet everyone in person someday and introduce you all to my daughter—she truly is an angel.



Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a safe, joyful holiday season.
God Bless,
Kayla Blodgett

CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS UPDATE

Hello, Ms. Xander and Ms. Osborn,

A few updates!

School at the University of Montana is going wonderfully. I achieved a 4.0 GPA this semester, and made a minor switch in my major, going from Computer Science and Data Science to Computer Science and Software Engineering. I am now proficient in Java and Python, two fundamental coding languages.

The war in Ukraine and Russia is changing warfare as we know it with the use of drones. The US is definitely going to be diving into that world stronger than ever, and Cyber specialties will be in high demand. So thank you for supporting an education that can help the need!

R.O.T.C and the Army in its nature is male dominated, and although there are incidents of harassment and crude attitudes towards women, the senior Cadre members (full Army Non-Commissioned Officers) who serve as our instructors and overseers do not play when it comes to that stuff! It is a blessing indeed to have dedicated people who take their responsibilities of upholding standards very seriously. And although the class above my grade has only two women, and the senior and freshmen class have no women, the class of 2028 has nine women, which is unheard of. All of this has allowed my experience to be quite pleasant. I feel quite frustrated for the other recipient, and I hope she can be as fortunate as me to have people looking out for her.

All of this to say, I have done well in school this year and have ranked very highly (2nd in the class) in the R.O.T.C. department, and I thank you all for the generous support that allowed me to be dedicated to my academics and performances.



Happy Holidays,
Krista Charters



Christina Caples intended to go to the University of Montana last year, but ended up at Peninsula College. She's trying for Montana again this spring: "I've signed a lease and I'm moving in the next couple weeks for the semester. I'm super excited but also nervous and sad to leave my current job. I'm hopeful it will all work out the way it needs to. Thanks for keeping in touch!"



Kyah Fukunaga is working on an MS in Computer Science online through Boston University. "School has been so good, I just finished my first semester. I have enjoyed being back in school again. It is really nice that it is online and I think for computer related fields it is actually very smart and there are a ton of resources for live environment classes and proctored exams to keep it challenging.

I have made some good connections with professors and have a hard semester coming up next starting January 20th, but I am ready for it. Now that I am in a graduate program I have felt really confident in some new study habits and it paid off this last semester. "



Kaitlyn Viada had to return a part of her scholarship for graduate school because of how the shutdown affected her job. She was in charge of a re-vegetation project for the National Park. "It's definitely been a turbulent time, but my crew and I are sticking with it. Firstly, I gave school my all and finished the 2025 school year strong on 12/13 with a 4.0 GPA. Thank you again to all the Soroptimists who encouraged me to persevere through all the chaos this year! These grades mean that I'll be in good academic standing whenever I'm able to return to school in the future. I contacted the financial aid office and they should be returning all the remaining scholarship money to the Soroptimists.

As for work, we were able to plant 303 native plants out in the Quinault before the atmospheric river, record-breaking rains, and high winds hit the west coast. We've had to modify our goal due to understaffing, and trying to plant 9,000 plants this winter (so we're currently 3% complete with the project). I'll be out in the Quinault most weeks throughout Jan, Feb, and March. Hoping to get a lot more plants in the ground out there (weather permitting!)"

CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS UPDATE

Dear Cat Xander,
Happy Holidays!

It is so wonderful to hear from you, I am so incredibly grateful for your support. I am going into my second semester as a sophomore at Wayne State College, running both cross country and track has been a major learning experience. Finding ways to balance my time and priorities came with its difficulties, however going into my second year I am much more confident in my abilities to do this. I stepped away as MVP of my cross country team and qualified in both track and cross country for NCAA championships and NSIC Regionals, I was also awarded the NSIC Fall All-Academic Team for 2025.

I have to say the weather here was very hard to adjust to. It makes me miss the mild natured weather that Sequim has to offer. The winter here is absolutely brutal and I heard this year is destined to be worse. But the people here are so incredibly kind, and my favorite part is watching the sunsets. Because Nebraska lacks trees you can watch the horizon for miles and the view is spectacular. Nebraska is vastly different from Washington, but it is incredible traveling and seeing the pros and cons of each. Being raised in the PNW for the majority of my life I had always assumed seeing the ocean was a given for everyone. Since I've been here I have realized I was greatly mistaken, the majority of the people I have talked to have never stepped foot on a beach or seen mountains. It is something I never even thought of before coming here but makes me that much more appreciative of my experiences.

As for my degree, my love for science hasn't wavered. It's taken a great deal of dedication and persistence to continue down a stem degree, labs, weight lifting, studying, and running all takes a copious amount of time. But it has not deterred me from wanting to put in the work. However, I have steered myself in a slightly different direction. Instead of specifically veterinary work I have changed my major to Applied Biological Sciences. This consists of jobs such as Biochemistry, Biologist, Biological technician, and many others. Although being a Veterinarian is something I know I can do, and I keep the door open for as a possibility, college has put me in a position to really think about what I want in life. In high school it seems like adulthood is a millenia away but stepping into college it seems to be at my doorstep. I've reflected on this for a long time, and my conclusion is that I only live once. The amount of time I have spent in the library studying this past year has really impacted me. That being said, veterinary work would require me to put my life on hold while Applied Biology simply opens the door for a variety of possibilities. Of course work and dedication will still be needed for this, but I loved my molecular genetics class so I think it would be a good fit, of course this is still something I am pondering about. The Applied Biological Bachelor's degree consists of a 3 + 1 program meaning I would do 3 years at Wayne then one more either online or in person at the University of Nebraska Lincoln, and I would get my Bachelor's degree from both schools.

It really is a lot to think about but having dedicated people like Soroptimist sets me up for success. Your generosity means the world to me, it's the reason I have so many pathways and resources accessible to me. I cannot relay the extent of my gratitude.



With Appreciation and Thanks,
Kaitlyn Bloomenrader

“If you feel like there’s something out there that you’re supposed to be doing, if you have a passion for it, then stop wishing and just do it.” ~Wanda Sykes

HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT UPDATE

Dear Cat,

Happy Holidays, and thank you so much for reaching out. I truly appreciate your continued support and encouragement. I apologize for my brief delayed response since it was the holidays I was not staying updated with emails since I really just wanted to spend time with family.

This past semester, I took 15 credits and am proud to share that I finished with a 4.0 GPA! College has been both challenging and rewarding, and I've really enjoyed adjusting to a higher level of academic responsibility. For J-Term, I'll be taking International Honors, which focuses on ancient texts, and I'm looking forward to engaging deeply with the material. In the spring semester, I plan to take 17 credits, including math, science, continuing International Honors, Pickleball, and Spanish 300 as part of my Spanish minor!

Outside of the classroom, I've been getting involved on campus in ways that have helped me feel more connected and grounded. I work at The Pantry on campus, and through that work I became involved with AmeriCorps, and am now a member! Volunteering at our Wellbeing and Service Resources building has been amazing, I now volunteer weekly and also plan events. Being able to support others while balancing my academics has been incredibly meaningful to me and has provided me a way to stay engaged with service even in a new environment.

Socially, I've made about five close friends so far, two of whom are in my major. One of them is also pursuing a Spanish minor, which has been really encouraging, and the other friendships have come together naturally as our paths crossed. I've also attended a variety of performances and campus events, and I'm continuing to explore opportunities that help make campus feel like home.

The scholarship from Soroptimist has played an important role in supporting me during this transition, and I am truly grateful for the impact it has had on my college experience. Thank you again for your generosity and for taking the time to check in - it means a great deal to me.

I have attached a few pictures! Once again, I just wanted to say a really huge thank you for all that your organization is doing, it's giving me the opportunity to pursue a college degree and for that reason, I am so grateful.



Warmly,
Skylar Paige Krzyworz



*“With consistency, we become one step closer to our dreams and while witnessing small victories on the way!”
~Purvi Raniga*

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

A survey will be coming to your e-mail inbox mid-January. Unless you choose to give your name within the survey, all responses will be anonymous. Information gained will be helpful to the board and to OUR whole club going forward, so P L E A S E complete and return it.



~Shawn Dredla and Jane Manzer, Membership Co-chairs

“Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another,
‘What? You too? I thought I was the only one!’” ~*C.S. Lewis*

PATHWAYS UPDATE

This month Pathways met with Roxann Harr and Patty Lebowitz from Fundraising to learn more about Soroptimist Sequim’s fundraising efforts and how opportunities are evaluated based on time, budget, and impact.

We received updates on the Gala Garden Show, our largest fundraising event of the year, including new features such as accepting credit cards for ticket purchases and a table decorating contest. Members will find many opportunities to help throughout the event weekend. We also learned about the Medical Loan Closet, which provides medical equipment to the community as a service rather than a fundraiser.

Patty Lebowitz shared information about the Live Your Dream Award, which supports women who are the primary financial support for their households, have at least one dependent, and are enrolled in an educational or training program (excluding master’s and doctoral programs). Applications are reviewed by non-Soroptimist community members, and unlike scholarships, funds are awarded directly to the recipients.

For our Pathways project this year, the committee selected support for the Sequim Free Clinic by expanding shelving for its food pantry. This project will increase the clinic’s capacity to provide free food to clients by improving storage and stocking those shelves. More information on how to help will be shared soon!



~Kecia Gilliam, Pathways Committee



“Coming together, sharing together, working together, succeeding together.” ~*Author Unknown*

HAPPY DOLLARS

November 25, 2025

Natasha Merkurukoff-Nichols—is happy Kathy and Rob Purcell were able to fix her computer.

Jane Manzer—is happy because of the great speakers and for our Holiday Joy participation.

Shawn Dredla— is excited her kids are coming for Christmas and also for the great speakers.

Jeanne Martin—is happy for how easy it is to give to the food bank, for Roxann doing a great job as president, for Sandy being a great treasurer, and for our new members.

Cat Xander—is happy about our speaker who was the recipient of one of our scholarships.

Linda Klinefelter—is excited her daughter is coming for 10 days.

Glen Varvil—had a nasty fall, had PT and is happy to be doing better.

Patty Lebowitz—is thrilled with the lovely thank you note she received from Stephanie thanking her for the fleece with the Soroptimist branding. She's wearing it proudly.

December 9, 2025

Patty Lebowitz—is happy to have celebrated her 36-year anniversary.

Suzanne Plemmons—is happy to have had a great visit with her niece and sister.

Deb Alwine—is happy the PA Soroptimist group gave 50 Soroptimist-baskets to homeless girls through the Salvation Army. Basket included shampoo, conditioner, caps, gloves, socks and misc.

Jane Manzer—thanked Deb Alwine for continuing to help stay in touch and help us.

Shawn Dredla—is happy to see so many members in person and online.

Sandy Lawrence—is emotional this holiday season in her happiness.

Sara Maloney—is excited to be invited to lunch with 30 local British ladies.

Denise Bayer—is happy to have survived thanksgiving.

Kecia Gilliam—is happy to have expanded house space thanks to her husband.

Virginia Kostanich—is happy to have had a great thanksgiving with friends and family.

Roxann Harr—is happy to be going to the Minnesota Mall of America.

Lucinda Soha—is happy she made it to the meeting after she slept in, something she never does.

*“Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.”
~Marcel Proust*

TEA WITH SHE SPRING EVENT PLANNED

Tea with SHE (Soroptimist Helping and Empowering) has set a date for their spring event. **April 29th at 12:30 p.m., Chief Mike Hill, Linda Klinefelter, and Christy Holy** will offer a **Question-and-Answer session** on KSQM. Chief Hill will discuss the various fraudulent schemes targeting the older population.

The KSQM audience will be invited to call in and ask questions. Mark your calendars and share with family, friends, and co-workers.



DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MEDICAL LOAN CLOSET

December Activity Overview

Our call and equipment volumes remain steady. During the month, we answered **181** calls and lent **134** items. We received **124** equipment returns or donations and received **\$660** in contributions from our generous community clients.

New MLC Volunteers

We continued the process of welcoming and training new members of the MLC Committee. **Suzanne Plemmons** volunteered for her first week at the Closet in December. **Susan Coffee** had two friends spend time with her at the Closet during her week in December and they are interested in joining the team. **Denise Bayer** will spend a week with Chris Snow at the Closet in January. Reaching our goal of 20 MLC volunteers feels like it is a distinct possibility! Please reach out to any of the MLC Co-Chairs if you would like to know more about joining the MLC. We are hoping to boost our committee to 20 members, which would comfortably enable us to have two MLC volunteers per week at the Closet and enable us to pair new MLC members with ‘veteran’ members.

A Unique Client

We meet the most interesting people at the Medical Loan Closet. One slow Saturday, a mom called saying her *very tall* son needed crutches—and maybe a knee scooter—after breaking his foot. In walks the son (roughly 6’7”) with his dad. While I’m sizing him up, he casually says he broke his foot *at the circus*. I smirk, assuming he’s kidding. Spoiler: he was **not** kidding.

Crutches? Check. Knee scooter? Check. As they’re heading out, Dad turns back and says, “Come see him this summer—the Flynn circus is coming to Port Angeles.”
Wait. WHAT?!

Yep—he’s an actual circus performer. If you see a guy at the Y juggling five soccer balls, stop in and say hi—when he is healed up, of course. Honestly, I was glad it was a quiet day—who knew medical equipment loans came with circus invites *and* a shout-out on Nextdoor for the MLC? Here’s his mom’s Nextdoor post along with 67 people who also love the Loan Closet:

“A big shout out to the Sequim Soroptimist Medical Loan Closet and Susan! Our son came home with a broken foot and was in need of crutches and a knee scooter. Susan was able to get those for him. THANK YOU! We are very grateful! “

 **67 reactions**

With gratitude,



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



Celebrating the Season: Our Christmas Party!

Eighteen members of our club gathered together for our festive Christmas Party, celebrating the incredible work we've accomplished throughout the year while enjoying each other's company! The party took place at The Riverhouse Bakery and Bistro in Sequim on Tuesday, December 16th.

Owner Denise Ferguson and her talented chef prepared a delicious buffet dinner featuring appetizers of bruschetta and stuffed mushrooms. For the main course, we enjoyed lasagna accompanied by a fresh salad and warm focaccia bread.

After dinner, each member drew a number from a bag and selected a gift from under the tree, adding a fun and festive touch to the evening. Additionally, we had a Giving Tree where members generously donated cash to the First Step Family Support Center. We collected a total of \$246, which was then delivered to their office in Port Angeles.

First Step serves families across Clallam and Jefferson Counties, providing vital support to those in need. If you'd like to learn more about their important work, visit their website at: <https://firststepfamilysupport.org/>.

Thank you to everyone who participated in making this event a success and for your ongoing commitment to empowering through encouragement.



~President Roxann



WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL

We have two new sisters through WFWI's *STRONGER WOMEN, STRONGER NATIONS* program. The club budgeted \$960 for the sponsorship of these two women, and we also budgeted another \$740 which will be directed to WFWI's Adolescent Girls program. As the liaison between the sponsored women and our club, I've written to them both and look forward to hearing from them. As the official language of Nigeria is English, we will most likely get handwritten notes as opposed to translated text. Any communication received from them will be shared with you. Here's their profile as seen on the supporter portal:

YOUR CURRENT SISTER(S)



Maryam Abubakar

SEND A LETTER

COUNTRY: Nigeria
GRADUATION DATE: October 2026
CHILDREN: 3

ENROLLMENT DATE: November 2025
WOMEN'S GROUP: Rigochikun 6



Fadila Kabirua

SEND A LETTER

COUNTRY: Nigeria
GRADUATION DATE: October 2026
CHILDREN: 7

ENROLLMENT DATE: November 2025
WOMEN'S GROUP: Rigochikun 5

And here's the description of the *STRONGER WOMEN, STRONGER NATIONS* program as it relates specifically to Nigeria:

"With limited access to health services and education, patriarchal norms, and mounting violence, Nigerian women struggle to gain economic opportunities and equality. Common discriminatory practices, amplified by extremist groups, subject women and girls to dangers, including forced early marriage and the possibility they will face violence for going to school.

When supported by her peers and provided with the right resources and opportunities, even the most marginalized woman can develop the confidence and skills to transform her life, her family and her community.

Women for Women International has developed a program that offers Nigerian women a constructive, dignified way to regain control of their lives. Our foundational training helps women know and defend their rights, influence decisions at home and in their communities, initiate activities that generate income, and save money for the future, contributing to economic self-sufficiency in their lives and for their families."



~Jane Manzer, WFWI Liaison



SOME 2026 GALA GARDEN SHOW NEWS

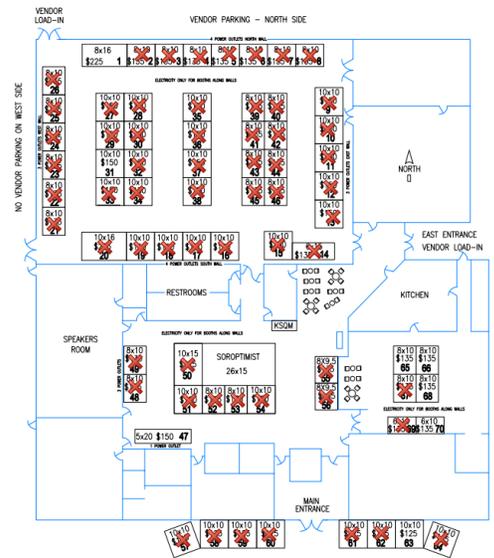
Chamber Luncheon: The 27th Annual Gala Garden Show is just 10 weeks away! To promote the show, the club paid to sponsor the Sequim Chamber of Commerce Luncheon on Tuesday, January 27. **Linda Klinefelter** will have 10 minutes to speak about our club and the Gala Garden Show. The club has purchased eight seats at the luncheon with the idea that some members would attend and represent SI of Sequim along with Linda. Multiple members make a good showing. If you are interested in being one of those people, let Treasurer Sandy know.



T-shirts: It is important that all members wear Flower Power T-shirts while working at the show. Why is this important? Only Soroptimists wear the Flower Power T-shirts. If a vendor or visitor has a question, they simply look for the Flower Power logo and know who to ask. **Janet Real** volunteered again this year to coordinate ordering T-shirts; see page 15 for full details on how to order yours. Janet will be placing the order after the business meeting on **Tuesday, January 13th** so get your order to her before then.

Staffing for the GGS: There are many parts to the Gala Garden Show. That is why we have a core committee, and why all members of the club are important to the production and success of the show. **Chris Snow** is our Volunteer Staffing Coordinator for the 2026 show. She has already started organizing her spreadsheet. Chris will be contacting Chairs of the GGS Sub-committees to find out how many worker bees each one needs. It is recommended that there be a written job description for each job so the workers know what their responsibilities will be.

Vendors: There are only a few vendor booths still available. Currently there are 45 vendors, 11 of which are new! It's always good to have some new products available that attendees to the show feel they must have. If you know anyone who you think would be interested in being a vendor, please contact **Shawn Dredla** or **Shelle Paulbitski**. Click the map to see what is available.



Raffle: We will be having a few handmade wooden items in the raffle. There will be some large planters and what looks like a wishing-well. We have purchased some special wooden sign holders to display descriptions of all the raffle items.



Roxann Harr and Kathy Purcell, 2026 Gala Garden Show Co-chairs

“The greatest gift of the garden is the restoration of the five senses.” ~Hanna Rion

FUTURE GGS MEETING DATES:
February 3 / March 3

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.

Garden Show Flower Power T-Shirts

It is time to order T-shirts for the Garden Show. I will be taking orders until January 16th. You can order by sending me an email (jack.janet.real@gmail.com).

There are four different styles to choose from: short and long sleeve classic fit and short and long sleeve feminine fit.

The base prices are as follows and they include the charge for screen printing:

Short Sleeve, cotton, classic fit -	PC54	\$ 9.13
Long Sleeve, cotton, classic fit -	PC54LS	\$14.63
Short Sleeve, cotton, feminine fit –	LPC54	\$ 9.13
Long Sleeve, cotton, feminine fit -	LPC54LS	\$14.63



The above price is based on ordering twelve or more shirts in any style.

If less shirts are ordered, the price will increase (for example: if eleven shirts are ordered, the cost of each shirt will increase by approximately \$4.00, if six shirts are ordered the cost will increase by \$5.00, and if three shirts are ordered the cost will increase by \$8.00). An additional \$1 is added for size XXL and \$2 for 3XL. Tax will be added. I will not collect payment for the shirts until they are delivered.

Each type of shirt is available in a range of colors specific to the style selected. To find the colors, go to <http://www.captaints.com> and click on CATALOG.

To find the colors available for the different style shirts:

- Put the style # in the search box
- Click on the word GO in the red circle next to the search box
- The shirt you chose shows up in the 1st box on the left
Click on the chosen shirt to find the colors available for that style
Hold the cursor over the color you want and the color name will display.

Avoid ordering light colored shirts as our logo is in white and will not show up well.

Please send me the following information when ordering a shirt: your name, style of shirt, the color desired (include full name), and your size.

I will bring examples of the different shirts to the December and January business meetings. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank You,
Janet Real, 2026GGS T-shirt Coordinator

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Dear Soroptimist of Sequim,
I really cannot thank you enough for the scholarship! My schedule has been so busy with school and work and I've been so worried about finances and so this scholarship has been a lifesaver. You have been so generous with me and I appreciate it more than you know! It is definitely going to help me on my way to being a nurse and I hope one day when I'm older I can pay it back by helping others! Thank you again so so much!!

♥ Amanda Weller

Thanks Soroptimist family for the beautiful bouquet! Your care and support mean a lot to me!

Susan

Thank You

FOR BEING AT THE TABLE WITH THE
SEQUIM FOOD BANK



EVERYONE AT THE TABLE
SUPPORTING COMMUNITY,
COMPASSION AND CONNECTION.

January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH Susan Coffee</p> 				1 	2	3
4	5	6 GGS Core Committee Mtg 1st Security Bank 9 am	7	8	9 BOARD MEETING	10
11	12	13 Program Meeting	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 Program Meeting (Human Trafficking Awareness)	28	29	30	31

February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH Becky Archer Sherry Lacey Patty Lebowitz Glen Varvil 	2	3 GGS Core Committee Mtg 1st Security Bank 9 am	4	5	6 BOARD MEETING	7
8	9	10 Business Meeting	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Human Trafficking Awareness	18	19	20	21 Area Meeting PA JetSet
22	23	24 Program Meeting	25	26	27	28

Plain Old Oyster
by Unknown Author

There once was an oyster, whose story I'll tell
Who found that some sand, had gotten into his shell.

It was only a grain, but gave him great pain,
For oysters have feelings, although they are plain.

Now, did he berate the harsh workings of fate
That had brought him to such a deplorable state?
"No," he said to himself, "Since I cannot remove it,"
I'll lie in my shell, and think how to improve it."

The years rolled around, as the years always do
And he came to his ultimate destiny stew.
Now the small grain of sand that had bothered him so,
Was a beautiful pearl all richly aglow.

This tale has a morale, for isn't it grand
What an oyster can do with a morsel of sand?
Think...what could we do, if we'd only begin,
With some of the things that get under our skin.



Soroptimist International of Sequim
PO Box 126
Sequim, WA 98382

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