



January 2026

Soroptimist International of San Diego

Sorop-Times

Volume 94, Number 7



President's Message

As we step into a new year, we're reminded that new beginnings don't mean starting from scratch—they mean building forward with purpose. A new year brings fresh energy, renewed hope, and the chance to recommit to what matters most. For us, that commitment remains clear: empowering women and girls, and creating opportunities for them to thrive.

While the calendar may turn, the work continues. Empowerment isn't seasonal, it's sustained through action, advocacy, and showing up for one another. This year, we will keep investing in education, leadership, and community support, knowing that every effort, big or small, helps open doors for women and girls everywhere.

As we embrace what's ahead, I invite you to move forward as one. Together, we can honor new beginnings while staying rooted in our mission to give back, lift voices, and create lasting change this year and beyond.

President Jessica

January Birthdays

January 6 th	Mildred Neal
January 9 th	Kathy Biewenga
January 9 th	Susan Rathbun

January Club Anniversaries

1974	Jennifer Keller
1981	Judy Lawton
1985	Nancy Goodrich

January Calendar

January 6th: Happy Hour: 5:15 p.m., Business Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Bankers Hill Club, 3030 Front Street, San Diego, CA 92103

January 10th: "Soup & Sip" event. 5:30 p.m. Brittany Tower social room. Guests are invited & encouraged!

January 13th or 14th: Program Meeting: Stat! Screening. See info in the body of this bulletin for information regarding time/place/dates available.

January 27th: Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m. via Zoom

Save the Date

February 17th, 2026: SISD program meeting. District Attorney Office presentation subject: Scam and Fraud Prevention.

March 7, 2026: SISD Fundraising Event, '95, *Reaching for the Stars!*, Bankers Hill Club, a Save the Date flyer is attached to the email that brought you this bulletin.

March 17th, 2026: SISD Program meeting. Field trip to the Sheriff's Department for a tour of the crime lab & communications room See article in this bulletin for more information.

May 1-3, 2026 - Desert Coast Region Spring Conference

Committee Meetings

January 24, 2026: Spring Event Fundraising, 11:00 a.m., - 2:00 p.m., Judy Lawton's home. Lunch will be provided!

January 15, 2026: Recruitment & Retention (Membership), 11:30 a.m., Susan Ritchey's home.



Instead of our January 20 program meeting, all members are invited to attend one of the STAT! screenings of *The Journey* on Tuesday, January 13 or Wednesday, January 14.

Tuesday, January 13 – 5:30 pm
College-Rolando Branch Library
6600 Montezuma Road, San Diego 92115
Wednesday, January 14 – 3:30 pm
One Safe Place
1050 Los Vallecitos Blvd., Suite 104, San Marcos 92069

See the image below or contact Paula for more details.

Screenings are free, but attendees are to register at this link...

<https://statsandiego.org/events/the-journey-2026/>. Please share with friends and family.



The **Live Your Dream** Committee is about to get very active. We have applicants, and we have judges. Now we need the committee to come up with a plan to award our chosen recipients and to celebrate them. I have some suggestions and hope to meet with my committee in January to start the ball rolling. Any of our members can join in. Contact me for more details. Ruth Turoff (619) 813-3386.

Special Events Calendar for the 2025-26 Club Year

- January 10th** Soup & Sip
- February** First Friday - Café Coyote in Old Town-
- April 11th** Bunco
- May** A Day of Wellness
- June** Installation

*Don't leave anything for later.
Later, the coffee gets cold.
Later, you lose interest.
Later, the day turns into night.
Later, people grow up.
Later, people grow old.
Later, life goes by.
Later, you regret not doing something when you had the chance.*

Recruitment & Retention Outreach



SISD's Recruitment & Retention (Membership) committee participated in the Point Loma All Souls Christmas Marketplace event on December 6th. The committee distributed information highlighting the club's long-time participation in Soroptimist Dream projects, as well as information about the club's friendship links, vision and mission. Our market place item was vintage art notecards originally painted by a 1935 San Diego Soroptimist member and handmade purses made by Turkish women who are supported by SISD & their Istanbul friendship link.

SOROPTIMIST
DESERT COAST REGION

SHOE DRIVE

START SAVING GENTLY WORN SHOES

Further details to follow...
GOVERNOR ELECT
TERRI WELTER

Community event flyers & newsletters are received electronically by SISD. To view, please click on the links:



SI La Mesa December Newsletter:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1i65JJYj56SMqM4xvazpzeoO1K3Iv7GjMF/view?usp=sharing>

SI Vista & North County Inland Newsletter:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/17mbuxwErG2u5qUNvKkuuexdT8ogBbdQ4ZWlwfZjvOOQ/edit?usp=sharing>

Human Trafficking Awareness Event and Walk:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1L0tOsCxsXmW_RlOtdmRc74qJTMndvxzE/view?usp=sharing

Message from Desert Coast Region Governor, Bonnie Mendenhall



Hello, Desert Coast Region Friends,

We have some great news! The period for candidates to submit nomination forms to run for officer positions on the Desert Coast Region Board for the 2026-2028 Biennium, which our current Governor-Elect Terri Welter will head, has been extended. Initially, the deadline was set for December 15, 2025, but we understand how busy the holiday season can be and that you may have been planning to run but missed the deadline. The board unanimously approved extending the deadline to January 15, 2026, to allow you to submit the forms and declare your candidacy.

Thank you to everyone who has already submitted their nomination forms. We can't wait to hear your inspiring speeches at the Winter Meetings and the 2026 DCR Spring Conference!

If you've been thinking about getting involved, I encourage you to check out the attached candidate position descriptions. I can honestly say that my experience on the DCR Board since 2018 has been one of the highlights of my life. I've learned so much about the Soroptimist vision and mission and made incredible friends—not only with board members but also with amazing club members throughout our region. Plus, I've had the chance to represent the DCR Board at SIA and SI conventions and create international connections. I promise you that serving as an officer on the DCR Board will offer you a similarly fantastic opportunity.

You'll find the DCR Board Position Descriptions, the Nominations Form, and the Candidate Statement Form attached. Once you've filled out the Nominations Form and Candidate Statement, please send them to STAR Laurel at Laurie.Lanham@pahc.com.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can contact STAR Laurel, Governor-Elect Terri at terriwelter55@gmail.com, or me.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon!

Bonnie Mendenhall,
2024-26 Governor, Desert Coast Region

Great news! Our County Sheriff, Kelly Martinez has agreed to be our guest speaker on March 17, 2026, for our Program Meeting. **BUT** the best news is, she has invited us to take a tour of the Sheriff's Crime Lab and also their Communication's Room!

This "Field Trip" is a great time to invite your friends, co-workers,

spouses/significant others and especially prospective new member! Plans are underfoot, but we'll plan to meet at 4:00 at Bud's Louisiana Café, which is right down the street from the Sheriff's Department Building in Kearny Mesa. More information will be forthcoming as it's received.



SAVE THE DATE!!
Tuesday, March 17, 2026
FIELD TRIP TO THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT FOR A TOUR OF:
SHERIFF'S CRIME LAB and
SHERIFF'S COMMUNICATION ROOM



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that has...Margaret Mead

International Projects

In 2025, SISD's Friendship Link in Edinet, Moldova, successfully integrated a program addressing gang violence into the local school systems. Originally it was launched with six seminars, the program now includes a summer camp for vulnerable refugees and individuals from Russian orphanages, identified through collaboration with school principals across the region. The initiative emphasizes building trust among participants in an area affected by conflict

A key contributor, Ecaterina, a doctor and member of SI Edinet, leads SALVE, an NGO offering free medical and psychological support to youth.

SISD provided financial assistance for a series of educational classes and seminars focused on "Female Rivalry and How to Stop It", in North Moldova. The program aims to reach 1,000 young women aged 14-18 through classes, seminars, videos, and mentorship opportunities.



DREAM IT • BE IT
CAREER SUPPORT
{for girls}

SOROPTIMIST
Investing in Dreams

Join us in celebrating

95

years of empowering women and girls!

SAVE THE DATE

Reaching for the Stars!

Soroptimist International of San Diego
Experience the Elegance – An Evening of Music & Giving with YV

MARCH 7, 2026
6PM-9PM
BANKERS HILL CLUB
3030 Front Street
San Diego, CA 92103

www.sisandiego.org
sisandiego@soroptimist.net

Cocktail attire

DREAM IT • BE IT
CAREER SUPPORT
{for girls}

live
YOUR dream



SOROPTIMIST®

Investing in Dreams



**Empower Women, Transform Futures
Your Gift to Soroptimist International of San Diego
Makes it Possible!**



Scan this QR code to donate today

Soroptimist International of San Diego: www.SISanDiego.org
PO Box 81766 SISanDiego@Soroptimist.net
San Diego, CA 92138

President: Jessica Barajas jessicabarajas@gmail.com
Editor: Jennifer Keller jenniferkeller323@gmail.com



"Soroptimist ... A global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment."



Get Connected San Diego

We're on LinkedIn! Join our new group! <https://www.linkedin.com/grp/home?gid=6986070>

And we're on Twitter! Follow us... https://twitter.com/Soroptimists_SD
[#SoroptimistAtWork](https://twitter.com/Soroptimists_SD)

Like us on Facebook 

Club Year 2025-2026 Board of Directors

- President: Jessica Barajas
- 1st Vice President: Susie Hartmann
- Recording Secretary: Jennifer Keller
- Treasurer: Paula Day
- 1-year Director: Susan Ritchey
- 1-year Director: Beverly Parsons
- 2-year Director: Kathy Biewenga
- 2-year Director:
- 1-year Delegate: Judy Lawton
- 1-year-Alt Delegate: Victoria Hobbs
- 2-year Delegate: Ruth Turoff
- 2-year Alt-Delegate: Grace Meyers
- Parliamentarian: Victoria Hobbs