



2025-2026 Club Year

Founder Region Newsletter

Putting the Puzzle Together




Elise Balgley, Governor

Issue 2 Volume 2

August Governor's Message

It has been brought to my attention that there are some incorrect dates on the biennium calendar on the Founder Region website. I am working on getting those corrected and a revised calendar will be posted very soon (maybe even before you are reading this newsletter). In the meantime, let's review some things we can be looking forward to.

Live Your Dream applications are hopefully flowing in through the online system. Get that review process started now and avoid the rush in November.

Same thing with Violet Richardson Awards. Get your applications out now. Students are returning to school and hopefully will be motivated to investigate this opportunity.

District Meetings are almost here. Watch for the Calls to District Meeting. We have Districts I and II on October 4, 2025, in Concord. SIA CEO/Executive Director Michelle Burnett will be joining us for that meeting.

We are planning a meet and greet for her on the evening of October 3, 2025. Stay tuned for details. Districts III and IV will have their District Meeting on October 11, 2025, in Redwood Valley (just north of Ukiah). As always, there will be a meet and greet on Friday night, October 10. Then, District V will have their District Meeting on October 18 on Maui. There will be a meet and greet on that same night and Leadership Training the next day.

Nominations for the 2026-2028 Founder Region and Founder Region Fellowship Boards will be completed in November-December. Start thinking about that now.

Region Conference will be on May 1-3 in San Ramon. You do not want to miss that.

From July 22-25, 2026, will be SIA's Biennial Convention in Incheon, South Korea. Start making plans for that now.

Never a dull moment. I will see you soon.

Governor Elise



Fundraising- Joy Swank, Chair

Happy August my Soroptimist friends,

I assume most of you are back at your meetings and planning for your upcoming fundraisers. Best wishes to you all. Please send me any great ideas you are willing to share!

Last month I asked all presidents to please encourage becoming a Stargazer.

This month I am requesting you all consider becoming Laurel Society Members. We have 189 Laurel Society members to date. 134 of you are near next level of membership. Attache advances to Envoy, then Diplomat and beyond. Why you ask? Because all money raised helps so many women through Live Your Dream, Dream It Be It, and Club Grants, being a monthly giver is painless and so important. Please consider Stargazer and Laurel Society membership.

Happy fundraising everyone,
Joy Swank your Region Fundraising chair

Membership- Angie Haramoto, Chair

Aloha,

Congratulations Founder Region, we were one of nineteen regions that saw increases in membership in February compared to January, a testament to the energy and effectiveness of local leadership and outreach efforts. This upward trend illustrates that when women and girls are empowered through connection, purpose, and community, we all benefit. It serves as a powerful reminder that every new member represents more than just a number, they bring fresh energy, ideas, and a commitment to creating a better world. With each voice added to our movement, our impact grows stronger and reaches farther. Together, we're building a global network of changemakers who uplift one another and lead the way toward equity and opportunity. Let's maintain the momentum—welcoming, engaging, and inspiring women everywhere to join something bigger.

The future shines brighter because of the work we're doing together, one member, one club, one empowered life at a time. I am available to attend PRT's or other meetings if invited.

Programs- Jackie De Vries, Chair

LIVE YOUR DREAM is in full swing, and our LYD committee is working hard to make this our best year yet! Thank you, clubs, for your dedication to our signature program. You are making a real difference for women and girls.

Every LYD award is more than recognition, it's a lifeline. We often hear recipients say, *"I was ready to quit"* or *"You believe in me!"* For many, this is the first time someone has stood in their corner.

As you plan your budgets, consider: *Can we give one more award?* Even small adjustments such as giving your winner a similar or slightly higher award than others can stretch our impact. Your winner still advances to district judging, with the chance at an even larger award as a region winner.

More awards mean more lives changed. We can do it! We are Soroptimists!

If you are interested in seeing the updated application, with the additional finance information click this [LINK](#)

District Reps- District I- [Jennifer Chiarelli](#), District II- [Judy Lloyd](#), District III- [Nancy Glitner](#), District IV- [Debbie Coles](#), and District V- [Wendy MacDonald](#) Live Your Dream Chair- [Maida Herbst](#)

VIOLET RICHARDSON AWARDS

Since this is a region-specific award, clubs are free to set their own internal deadlines, but remember, your club winner must be submitted to your District Representative by **February 1**. That's when we judge the club winners and select our District winners, each of whom will be honored at Region Conference with a **\$500 award**.

This year, we've made it even easier for you to participate. The evaluation form has been revised for clarity, and the application now emphasizes that awards should recognize work benefiting women and girls.

Not all clubs participate in this award, named after the first Soroptimist president, **Violet Richardson**, but I encourage you to consider it. I love this program because it shines a light on the community service of our young women. These honorees could be our future Soroptimists, and even if they aren't, they often inspire others in the community to learn about and support what we do.

Think of this as more than just an award, it's a **public awareness opportunity**. By celebrating the remarkable ways young women are making the world a better place, we spread hope, inspire action, and show our communities the power of service.

Let's lift up their voices, share their stories, and keep building a future where women and girls thrive.

Violet Richardson Reps: District I- [Carol Dippel](#), District II- [Jan Schults](#), District III- no Rep, send to chair [Jackie De Vries](#), District IV- [Dyann O'Brien](#), and District V- [Rene Tokanaga](#)

Public Awareness- Sue Pretzer, Chair

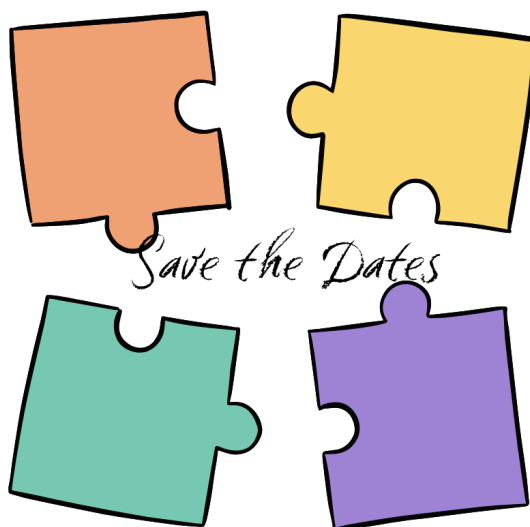
Does your Club have a Public Awareness Chair? This key leadership role is vital to raising awareness about Soroptimist and promoting your club's activities within your local community—and beyond. While enthusiasm for the mission is important, anyone who's well-informed about your club and Soroptimist's goals can thrive in this position.

To support your planning, here is a list of important observances to consider when building your club's publicity calendar. These dates offer great opportunities to align your messaging with timely events and holidays. Of course, you can always recognize Club officers, anniversaries, birthdays, or important events.

September Observances

- Labor Day
- National Hispanic Heritage Month
- International Day of Charity – September 5
- Fight Procrastination Day – September 6
- International Literacy Day – September 8
- International Day of Encouragement – September 12
- International Equal Pay Day – September 18
- World Dream Day & National Daughter's Day – September 25
- New Club Year / New Club Officers

As your club's Public Awareness Chair, staying on top of key dates will help maximize your impact. Be sure to gain access to your club's social media platforms so you can post about events, achievements, and awards. Check out these club [publicity chair guidelines](#) for more information and resources.



AUGUST: Presidents' Round Tables

OCTOBER: District Meetings – Oct. 4- I & II Oct. 11-District III & IV, Oct. 18- District V

NOVEMBER: LYD Closes on 11/15. Presidents' Round Tables

DECEMBER: FOUNDER REGION BOARD AND FELLOWSHIP NOMINATIONS DUE BY DEC.1

SIA grant opens- closes on March 1, 2026

JANUARY- Early LYD club submissions due by January 15 for incentive drawing

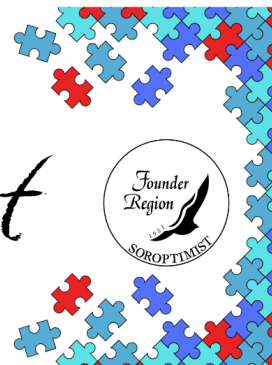
FEBRUARY 1- LYD club winners due, if not submitted earlier. Violet Richardson Club winners due to VR District Reps. Presidents' Round Tables.

MARCH – Call to Caucus

APRIL 1- Conference Registration due.

MAY- Founder Region Conference May 1-3, 2026

JUNE- Leadership Training



Around the District

DISTRICT I- DIRECTOR LAURA KOEHLER

I realize that many of our clubs “Go Dark” during July and August. However, I would like to highlight the reported current/upcoming events for District 1. SI/24/680 had a summer planning retreat in July. SI/Benicia staffed a wine tent at the Benicia Waterfront Rocks Festival July 26-27. SI/East Bay is having a Garage Sale on September 6, 2025, location and details to follow. SI/ El Cerrito is having a visioning meeting on August 16. SI/Martinez is hosting a Bunco Luau on Saturday, September 6 from 1:30-6:00 pm at the EBEW Hall in Martinez. I look forward to hearing about more events in September.

DISTRICT II- DIRECTOR DANA HOLVE

Soroptimist International of Central Solano had an exceptional year, investing \$125,000 in community causes, including \$30,000 for local high school girls’ athletic programs and uniforms. Their Assist-a-Grad program honored seven recipients, fueling bright futures. The club’s Big Goal Accelerator projects, *Chance to Rise* and *Girls Circle*, empower girls through mentorship, skills, and confidence. This summer, *Girls Circle* will feature a 10-session “Voice & Choice” curriculum on boundaries and consent. The Hands-On Committee also provided a grant for period products to Fairfield PAL, promoting dignity and support, continuing the club’s mission to create lasting, positive change.

DISTRICT III- DIRECTOR NANCY KOSKI

Welcome back to our 2025-2026 term! Our next big Region event is District III & IV Meeting on October 11, 2025, at Wyndham Hotel Redwood Valley.

In the meantime, some of our clubs have fundraisers scheduled. Mark your calendars, check their websites and FB, and show up, if you can!

- SI/Clear Lake: Sept 26, Mystery Dinner Theatre
- SI/Napa: Aug 26, Bingo at the Fink; Sept 23, Bowling Night; Oct 18, Lobster Festival
- SI/Oakmont Wine Country: Nov 15, Authors Book Faire

Come have a good time while supporting scholarships and programs dear to us all! Look for more events in next month’s newsletter.

DISTRICT IV- DIRECTOR CRYSTAL ARBUTHNOT

Greetings Founder Region from your District IV Director from up here in the Redwoods. This month I’m highlighting SI/Arcata President Peggy Dimmick. I had the honor of doing their installation of officers this past June and it was my first time actually coming up with a script for Peggy’s Theme: Shining Stars – Lighting the Way for Women and Girls. It was so fun to do. SI/Arcata, while a small club is very active. They continue to do See’s Candy sales, support 2 youth girl sports programs, give out scholarships to graduating seniors and participate in the Dream Programs. They also have a Girl of the Month at 2 local high schools, since their membership is a combination of both Arcata and McKinleyville residents. This year they will be one of the host clubs for our upcoming District Meeting in October. I look forward to working with them on this event.

DISTRICT V- TERI LYNN SATO

I’d like to introduce District V’s Dream It, Be It District Chair, Keiki Kobayashi of SI/Central Oahu. She has done a wonderful job spearheading DIBI in her club previous years. While the year has just begun, congratulations to SI/Central Oahu who had completed their Dream It Be It program already! SI/Honolulu is working on their event happening this fall. For the rest of DV, please check out this website for all your club resources to plan your DI,BI program this year. [Website](#)
I’m here to support you!



SOROPTIMIST
BIG
Goal
ACCELERATOR
PROJECTS



Dream It, Be It, Chair Jackie Arnold

Dream It, Be It – Let's Get Started!

We're so excited for the start of this inspiring new Soroptimist year! Wishing each of you a fabulous Dream It, Be It program in your club.

Be sure to visit the Founder Region website to download everything you need: the updated curriculum, student workbook, facilitator workbook, and grant application—it's all there for you.

If you have any questions or need support, please don't hesitate to reach out to Jackie Arnold at jarnoldnow@gmail.com.

Let's make dreams happen!

Live Your Dream, Chair Maída Herbst

🎉 **GREAT NEWS!** 🎉

The Founder Region Board of Directors has approved an exciting new incentive program!

Any club that submits their **Club Winner** to their District Representative **by January 15** will receive an **extra ticket** for the **Incentive drawing at May conference**.

This bonus ticket is **in addition** to the entries your club will already earn for having more than one award—so your chances of winning just got even better!

Don't miss this opportunity to win big while supporting our fabulous Live Your Dream awardees.

The application system (formerly known as “the portal”) opened for applicants on August 1, 2025. If you are a LYD club chair, you should have received an email invitation to join the application system. If you did not receive this email invitation, please let me know ASAP and we will get you signed up.

Get ready to promote your club's program by going to the SIA link on recruiting applicants for the information you need.

One way to promote your club's LYD award is to share this link to the online application system with your community partners, on your website, Facebook page, and in your emails: <http://bit.ly/LYDA-apply>

When you meet with your community partners to find applicants, bring along a poster that advertises your award program. The poster has a QR code whereby an applicant can use her phone to go straight to the application system. You can find this customizable PDF poster by going to the above SIA link on recruiting applicants.

Maída Herbst
Founder Region Chair Live Your Dream Program
707-337-7673 (before 8PM)
MaídaRHIA@aol.com

“S” Clubs, Chair Dawn Shepherd

Happy new club year, ladies! Hope your July was amazing and filled with fun.

The school year will begin soon. Now is the time to think about planning your first meeting with your “S” Club Advisor and “S” club officers.

Schools typically begin to recruit for the various clubs soon after the school year begins; therefore, it's a good idea to get a jumpstart with your “S” club team and help them with ideas to prepare for their recruitment fair.

Have a great month!!!



FELLOWSHIP REPORT

“Solving Puzzles by Degrees”

Greetings Founder Region,

We look forward to seeing everyone at District Meetings this October. Remember to have your club furnish a basket worth at least \$75 and bring it to your District Meeting. These are fun to put together and members enjoy winning the lovely baskets along with the chance to become a fellow; the definition of a “Fellow” is a person that has been honored, won, or purchased a fellowship for \$1,000. That said, this is a major fundraiser for Fellowship and we need all clubs involved. Your Fellowship Director will be distributing club tickets at the August PRTs or mailing them to your club president if your meeting is virtual. Tickets are 1 for \$5 and 5 for \$20. Your club will receive 5 tickets per member and we ask that you sell all your tickets; please have the club purchase any tickets not sold to individuals. You can sell the tickets to family and friends as well, so if you need more tickets, you can contact us.

District Meeting will also be your opportunity to visit the Fellowship table and learn more about what we do and how you can help. Fellowship is funded almost entirely by the membership so we encourage you to consider making a one-time donation or signing up for Monthly Giving. The Fellowship Directors will be on hand to help you with these transactions.

Fellowship will soon begin our process for selection of next year’s grant awardees. We will be opening the application portal on September 15th and hope to be able to give more awards. However, to give more awards, we need our donations to increase. I have said before, our ability to give these awards depends on YOU! Without your donations, we would not be able to give these awards to well-deserving women. And we truly appreciate your generosity to Fellowship.

Don’t forget to purchase your opportunity drawing tickets for a chance to win the beautiful “One Block Wonder” quilt made by District II Fellowship Director Kay Kelley. Tickets are \$10 each or 3 for \$25 and can be purchased directly from Director Kay. Our drawing will take place after the District V Meeting in October.

Our beautiful T-shirts are still available for purchase. You can contact your Fellowship Director to purchase one or you can check out our store on the “Home” page of the Founder Region Fellowship website.

Again we ask you to please consider signing up for monthly giving. This is a relatively easy way to bring your donation to \$1,000 for a new Fellow or level up. Forms are available on our website or scan the QR code below.

Please contact your Fellowship Director with any questions you may have. She is always ready and willing to help.

President Vicki



Fellowship Board

President—Vicki Ham

Treasurer—Danelle Tegarden

Fellowship Directors

District I—Amelia Benko

District II—Kay Kelley

District III—Colleen Ganaye

District IV—Tess Albin-Smith

District V—Cindy Rasmussen

Website:

www.founderregionfellowship.org

Email:

vickiham01@gmail.com

Treasurer Email:

danelletegarden@gmail.com

Address:

3505 Pine Street, Eureka, CA
95503



OUR MISSION:

To advance the Soroptimist mission by awarding grants to outstanding women in the final phase of their doctoral program within Founder Region.



FOUNDER REGION FELLOWSHIP



OPPORTUNITY DRAWING

Opportunity Drawing to Benefit Founder Region Fellowship Program

Tickets on sale now
through October 19th,
2025 . The quilt will be
displayed at all district
meetings

The Drawing will be held
at the District V Meeting
in Maui, Hawaii

TICKETS 1 FOR \$10.00
3 FOR \$25



The Quilt is 94 x 104 and can be used on either a Queen or King-size bed. It is made of the best quality 100 % cotton from the Asian fabric designed by Robert Kauffman. The batting is woven bamboo, and it is machine washable. The Quilt's design is called "One Block Wonder";

For Information about purchasing tickets
before the district meetings, contact
District II Director Kay Kelley
kaykelley221813@gmail.com

Need not be present to win!



SOROPTIMIST®
Investing in Dreams