

# SITM Update

Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows



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[www.sitmnev.org](http://www.sitmnev.org)

## Committees Working Hard Towards Spring Programs

Welcome to 2015! Even though the weather in Reno right now would suggest otherwise, winter is upon us. Holidays have given way to those three months where nothing seems to be happening but, in reality, a lot is going on just below the surface.

This is the time when the heavy lifting takes place for our spring award programs and celebrations. Committees are meeting and planning, getting everything ready. This week we find out who receives the Live Your Dream Award and before we know it 100-plus women will receive job skill coaching, business clothes and grants during our Making a Difference for Women event (be sure to sign up to help and bring any clothes to Ethan Allen).

The Education Youth Committee is busy evaluating scholarship applications and nominations

for Unsung Hero awards, while the Thanks to Youth committee are planning our big gala to honor the recipients. The Human Rights/Status of Women Committee is evaluating nominations for the Ruby award and the Education Women Committee will soon be receiving scholarship applications to evaluate as well. The Advance Strategic Planning team and, in particular "Pam's Posse", are assessing our key programs, with the goal of presenting results and recommendations to our membership in mid-April. And -- we will soon have a new, state-of-the-art website!

So far this year we have welcomed four new members, with two more on deck for February. The Membership Committee has been doing a fantastic job of reaching out to prospective members, helping them get to know what we do at SITM and, if they're interested, getting them involved. I appreciate the fresh ideas and energy our new members bring to the club.



*Displaying handmade Christmas ornaments made by Libby Booth students as a thank you for making the Book Pillows are from left: Education-Youth Co-Coordinators Teresa Mentzer and Connie Steinheimer with President Pam Sutton. See the story and more photos on page 2.*

Thanks to all of you for making the first half of my term as President exciting, fulfilling and lots of fun!

President Pam Sutton

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*SITM's Holiday Party was held on December 18 and included a gift exchange. Participating in part of the "left-right" exchange are: MaryAnn Decker, President Pam Sutton and President-Elect Vivian Ruiz. For more photos, see page 6 & 7.*

## Thank you SITM for the Reading Pillows

Libby Booth students who received handmade Reading Pillows sewn by SITM members recently wrote thank you letters to members. In return, the students sent handmade paper Christmas ornaments for each member.



Libby Booth students with their Reading Pillows.

Dear Pillow Volunteers,  
 Thank you so much for creating the beautiful reading pillows for my students. They really are special and the children adore them. It's such a great way to instill the love of reading in our kiddos. Thank you again.  
 Kim Mattinson, First Grade Teacher

Dear Pillow Friends:  
 I like the pillows because you can hold your stuff in the pockets and the first book that I'm going to read with my reading pillow is Green Eggs and Ham.  
 From Keenyn, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade



Each student wrote a thank you note and sent it to SITM members in a beautifully colored envelope.

### Calendar

- January 22 -- Live Your Dream awardees, Education Women Committee
- January 29 -- Finance and Bylaws Committee
- January 29 -- Thanks to Youth Committee meeting, 5:15 p.m., Pam Robinson's office.
- February 5 -- Making a Difference for Women Committee (event planning), plus some past graduates will speak
- February 10 -- Board Meeting, Disability Resources.
- February 12 -- Business Meeting, Atlantis
- February 20 -- Education Youth
- March 14 -- Making a Difference for Women event

You can follow our weekly activities on:



Bristlecone Family Resources was the recipient of hand-crocheted scarves from Bev Perkins to keep clients warm this winter. Modeling them are left to right: Sharmaine Lopez, Admissions Manager, SITM member Rikki Hensley-Ricker, Jonathan Trujillo, Counselor, and Katie Duncan, Accounts Payable.

## Education Youth Committee Helps Libby Booth Families Celebrate Christmas

By Doris Phelps

The joy of giving was never more apparent than the December events of the Education Youth Committee. Committee members and other SITM members volunteered their time, dollars and kitchens to make sure that the Libby Booth teachers and students enjoyed their holiday party on December 16.

Committee Co-coordinators Connie and Teresa delivered Christmas coffee mugs filled with goodies to the teachers and staff on Monday, December 15 in a blizzard of snow! The next evening, more than 250 students, brothers & sisters and parents gathered in the school's multipurpose room to celebrate.

Thanks to SITM members' donations of cookies, hot chocolate, marshmallows & whipped cream, serving trays, coffee makers, disposable plates and napkins along with other gifts, the teachers and staff joined in with Committee volunteers to serve refreshments and help out with party activities. Everyone at the school was so very grateful for the volunteer help and huge contribution of goodies, and the students and their families met new helpers and got to see how much SITM cares for their school.

The fun and the food kept flowing all evening in spite of Libby Booth's ancient wiring which conked out on the coffee makers more than a few times. There were so many cookies donated that dozens were left over at the end of the evening but did not go to waste – the teachers used them for class room parties during the remainder of the week. Principal Sara Cunningham couldn't get over how much help our members were to them.

School librarian Suzanne thanked Dot Watts and last year's committee for all that they did to provide the reading pillows. She presented hand-written thank

you notes from the kids to pass along to the Club. Also, Vanessa Olivera (Outreach Coordinator) extended a very special thank

you gift for every SITM member from the children for our help with the Craft Fair night and other things we are doing for the school.

At Thursday's lunch meeting,

SITM members were surprised and delighted with their gift of hand-made paper ornaments from the students. We surely all felt the true spirit of the season from those at Libby Booth.



From left: Dot Watts, Carol Dinneen and Jo Ann Roberts sampling refreshments.



Happy grandparents Stan and Teresa Mentzer.



Vanessa Olivera, Site Coordinator for Communities in Schools, Connie Steinheimer and Shirley George "wo-manning" the coffee pots at Libby Booth.

## Barbara Atwell - Truck Driver, Quilter and SITM Member!

By Paula Ringkob

In getting to know Barbara better before writing this profile, I met a bright, hard-working, resilient, down-to-earth woman with a cynical sense of humor.

At first, I focused on her lifetime of work, three marriages and recent health issues that have impacted her day-to-day life. She was raised in a small town in southwest Missouri where her high school graduation class was 24 students. She started sewing early because her mother and two grandmothers sewed. She learned lots more in 4-H plus four years of home economics in high school.

After high school, she worked in restaurants and then married an Army man and spent three years in Germany where her two children were born. She started sewing children's clothing and sold them at the resale shop on the base. When her husband got out of the service, the family returned to Missouri in the early 1980's. The marriage ended and Barbara started work at the Juvenile Shoe Company machine-stitching designs in children's shoes. She also learned how to quilt using a long-arm quilting machine. About this time, Barbara and her mother started doing craft shows together selling the items they had made.

Four years later the factory and Barbara took a hard look at the available jobs in her area and decided to attend truck driving school. Truck driving had an appeal because there were always jobs available and there was no wage discrimination since all drivers get paid by the mile. She would carry small quilts with her to have something to do when laying over. She met her second husband when they were randomly assigned to the same truck.



*Barbara Atwell and Anna McCardle sharing a laugh at this year's Halloween Social.*

They got married and, in 1986, they moved to Pennsylvania and continued to team drive. After a few years, Barbara had to stop driving because she had carpal tunnel in both hands from driving and too much use of her hands. She needed surgery on both

hands and rehabilitation. In 1990, they settled in Verdi, NV. Her husband died the following year.

Barbara decided to stay in the Reno area and did telecommunications work from home from 1991-1996 and got back into sewing. She also decided to try teaching at a truck driving school north of the Reno/Stead area. Most of the students were men in their 40's who were overly confident of their skills but needed help in order to pass the required tests to be fully licensed.



*Penney Leezy sponsored Barbara for Soroptimist membership. Barbara is wearing the coat she made for Penney.*

One of her students was Steve Surman. She started driving with him in 1996. They fell in love, married and team drove until 2000. Then Barbara took another hard look at her life and alternatives and decided to drive with FedEx. FedEx

is a LTL (less than truckload) company which paid twice as much as running over the road (long haul). Plus she could be home every 2-6 days rather than being gone a month at a time driving long haul.

She drove with FedEx until 2010 when one night the truck's exhaust system malfunctioned and she was

breathing diesel exhaust and ammonia. Barbara suffered a serious inhalation injury resulting in induced asthma, vocal cord distortion and collapsing airways. Many

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*Barbara Atwell shows off her quilts, table runners and other handmade items to Soroptimists at the 2014 Soroptimist Development Retreat.*

medical tests, exams and treatments have not brought her relief. On a recent trip to Denver, doctors there recommended against further surgery and discussed medical options available to her today.

Barbara filed for workmen's compensation saying she was permanently disabled and could no longer drive a

truck. She has twice won her case and is hopeful to soon start receiving compensation.

She was able to get back into sewing while off work and also got involved with the Truckee Meadows Quilters group. She heard about Soroptimist from a friend who was in Marilyn Pearson's sewing group and told Barbara about the opportunities for vendors at the Soroptimist Sierra Nevada Region annual conference each spring at the Atlantis. Barbara signed up to be a vendor at the 2010 conference and heard more about SITM from Penney Leezy. She attended meetings with Penney and joined SITM in 2012 when Penney was her sponsor. She likes serving on the Education-Women Committee and the Attendance Committee and has made many afghans for SITM's afghan project each winter. She also signs up to work as a vendor at the annual SNR conferences each spring. She likes the active women in SITM!

Barbara also enjoys Facebook and has connected with old friends and made new ones from all over the world. During her life, sewing has always played an important role. The skills she learned from her mother and grandmothers growing up have enriched her in many ways and were also the link that led her to hear about SITM. On Facebook you can see the wedding gown Barbara made for her daughter and some of the quilts she's made.

## Live Your Dream Recipients to be Honored January 22

By Pam Robinson

Two deserving women will receive an SITM Live Your Dream award at our January 22 meeting. The Education Women Committee received applications from several amazing women, and you will be excited to hear about the two women we are honoring. We will be awarding \$1,500 to the applicant whose information will be forwarded to the Region for consideration, and we will award \$1,200 to a second woman.

Our guest speaker will be Farah Rashdan, a previous Nancy Gomes/Mary Gojack scholarship winner who graduated from UNR with a major in human development and family studies. She has a strong interest in helping children affected by abuse and preventing human trafficking.

The Live Your Dream award is given to women who serve as the primary wage earners for their families and seek financial assistance to continue their education or receive training and was formerly known as the Women's Opportunity Award.

Be sure to bring a guest to this memorable presentation!

live  
YOUR  
dream  
education & training awards for women

## Holiday Gatherings, Deliveries and Greetings

SITM held its annual Holiday Celebration on December 18 with a gift exchange of candles. Involving all attendees standing in a circle, we learned who doesn't know their left versus their right. But in the end, everyone left with a gift and hopefully a big smile.



Following the gift exchange directions, from left, are Kay Dunham, guest Asma Aimal, Ana Nadimi and Linda Lamke.



Members contemplating their "left versus their right" are, from left, Bev Perkins, Eileen Fuller, Liza Chapen, Doreen Rogers, Vicki Schultz and Dot Watts.



Check out these Christmas sweaters on, from left, Chris Fegert, Linda Lamke, Jo Ann Roberts, Liza Chapin and Barbara Arwell.



Asma Aimal, right, with Kay Dunham attended SITM's annual holiday party. Asma is one of seven Afghan students to receive a Visa for study in the U.S. this year.



More fancy Christmas sweaters from left: Patty Downs, Georgia Baker and Pam Robinson.

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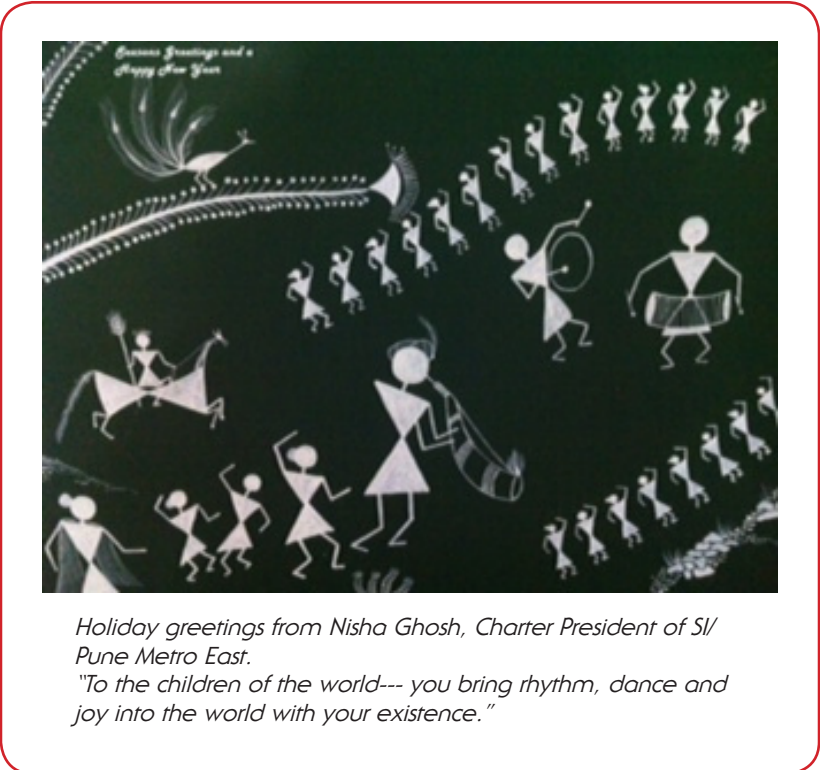
Ready for more package passing are, from left, Linda Lamke, Joan Griswold and Sande Reimers.



Cindy Burk, right, and her Mom Wanda Beaman show off their holiday gifts.



A follow-up from last month's Salvation Army Senior Gift Delivery: Pam Robinson and Margie Hermanson delivered gifts at Washoe Mill Apartments. Herman, one of the residents, helped carry their bags and pointed out the appropriate apartments. Such a nice man! Margie and Pam had a wonderful day!



Holiday greetings from Nisha Ghosh, Charter President of SI/ Pune Metro East. "To the children of the world--- you bring rhythm, dance and joy into the world with your existence."

## Your Help is Needed for our Upcoming Making a Difference for Women Skills Training Seminar.

Georgia Baker, Co-Coordinator of the MADFW Committee, has announced the needs of the committee for the upcoming March 14 event. Let her know if you can help with any of the following.

- Mark your calendar for Saturday, March 14 and plan to attend and volunteer your time to staff the event.
- Gather chatzkes or give-away items to be stuffed in the participants' gift bags. Approximately 100 bags will be assembled, but if you don't have exactly 100 items, donate them anyway and the committee will mix and match amongst the bags.
- Clean out your closets for serviceable work clothes in good condition for the MADFW Clothes Closet. Purses, accessories, even jewelry will be accepted. Take them to Ethan Allen for storage until the event.

Georgia also mentioned that Bev Perkins has been making very popular beaded bracelets for each of the recipients. The committee is working on a speaker on the topic of human trafficking, plus past MADFW graduates will be speaking.



## Women's' Scholarship Applications Now Available

By Pam Robinson

The Education Women Committee has distributed applications to TMCC, UNR, and other northern Nevada colleges for our Gomes/Gojack and Jack Simon scholarships. The Gomes/Gojack scholarships are for undergraduate, re-entry women who are pursuing a four-year degree or a health sciences degree of some kind at the community college level. The maximum award for the undergrad scholarships is \$6,000. The Jack Simon scholarships are for graduate students. The maximum graduate award is typically \$4,000.

The deadline to apply for the SITM scholarships is February 13, 2015. The scholarship application is on

the SITM website. The scholarship application is now fillable and was revised to make it easier and less time consuming for our applicants.

Over the past 34 years, we have awarded \$916,100 in scholarships to over 350 women. If you know of a deserving woman, please ask her to apply for one of these scholarships!



*Doris Phelps and Joan Griswold speak about the Food Bank of Northern Nevada, the recipient of January Happy Dollars.*



*Rhona Reynolds, Program Coordinator and Executive Director Andrea Gregg of High Sierra Area Health Education Center (AHEC) spoke at the January 8 meeting. AHEC's mission is to enhance access to quality health care through education and outreach services.*

## January Board & Business Update and Meeting Highlights

By Faye I. Andersen

The results of several fundraising ventures, an update on Advance Strategic Planning and announcement of upcoming events were featured at the January SITM Board and Business meetings.

### Advance Strategic Planning Update

Doris Phelps reported on the progress of the Advance Strategic Planning Committee that has been reviewing the results of the advance held last fall. They have been evaluating all of SITM's projects/programs according to relevance to club mission; resources required; financial requirements; public awareness value and some other considerations.

Affectionately dubbed "Pam's Posse", the members working on this project are: Vivian Ruiz, Jennifer Burnitt, Michelle Jones, Doris Phelps, Jeanne Baxter, Norma Webster, Cindy Burk, Patti Dory, Patty Downs, Marilyn Pearson, Connie Steinheimer and Tracy Turner.

The committee will have a full report and recommendations at the April 16 meeting. Make sure to mark your calendar and be there to participate in the discussion.

### Multiple Money Matters Discussed.

#### SI President's December 10<sup>th</sup> Appeal Donations:

December Happy Dollars in the amount of \$237 were collected. They were combined with a \$250 budget line item donation for a total of \$487. As voted by the membership, the amount was split 50-50 for donation to the SI President's December 10<sup>th</sup> Appeal, "See Solar, Cook Solar", for solar cookers and solar lighting and Soroptimist International of the Americas Club Grants.

January Happy Dollars have been designated for the Food Bank of Northern Nevada back pack program, providing food for needy kids on weekends.

**Books for Libby Booth:** The Education Youth Committee was collecting money last month to purchase selected books for the Libby Booth School Library. Thanks to all who donated.

**Air Races Proceeds:** Air Races Co-Coordinator Diana Dillon reported that SITM has received a check in the amount of \$12,654 from the Reno Air Racing Association for members, family and friends' work this fall. Thanks to everyone who helped make SITM's fundraiser such a success.

### MADFW Could Use Your Help

The Making a Difference for Women committee needs members help collecting items, donating clothes and preparing to volunteer for the event on March 14. See page 8 for more information.

### Potluck Welcome for Asma Aimal.

Ana Nadimi and Kay Dunham are organizing a member potluck on February 18 for Asma Aimal, from Afghanistan. She is one of seven students granted a Visa this year. Watch for more information and a sign-up sheet to be circulated at meetings.

### Crochet Brigade Closing in on Totals Needed

SITM's talented and generous crocheters have completed approximately 70 afghans so far and are shooting for 110, one for each family in the Women's Shelter in Reno. If you'd like to crochet afghans, or just donate yarn, see Diana Dillon for what's needed. When the total is reached, they will be delivered to the shelter.

### Membership Update

The Board approved a leave of absence for Doreen Rogers for January 12 through February 20 for travel reasons.



*Celebrating their January Birthdays with tiaras and chocolate were Paula Ringkob, Teresa Mentzer, President Pam Surton and Jennifer Burnitt.*

## SITM Update

Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows



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### Newsletter Committee

Pam Robinson

Doris Phelps

Paula Ringkob

### Also contributing to this issue

Jo Ann Roberts

Pam Sutton

Teresa Mentzer

Margie Hermanson

Rikki Hensley-Ricker

Connie Steinheimer

SITM meets every Thursday noon at the Atlantis Resort & Spa, 3800 South Virginia Street in Reno, second floor convention center. For reservations [www.sitruckeemeadows@hotmail.com](mailto:www.sitruckeemeadows@hotmail.com). no later than 7 p.m. on the Tuesday before the meeting. Lunch is \$17.

Soroptimist is an international organization for business and professional women who work to improve the lives of women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world.



For information about our organization, check out these Soroptimist Websites:

Sierra Nevada Region: [www.soroptimistsnr.org](http://www.soroptimistsnr.org)

Soroptimist International of the Americas: [www.soroptimist.org](http://www.soroptimist.org)

Soroptimist International: [www.soroptimistinternational.org](http://www.soroptimistinternational.org)



## Did you know . . .

Soroptimist International of the Americas President Poco Davis sent congratulations and New Year greetings to Soroptimist while outlining achievements during the Fiscal Year 2013/14. Some of them included:

- \* 1,277 women were served through Live Your Dream Awards programs. An increase of 3%.
- \* \$1.74 million was given. An increase of 7%.
- \* 80% of clubs participated in the program. An increase of 6%.
  
- \* 27,337 Program Actions were taken through LiveYourDream.org. An increase of 371%.
  
- \* 90% of members said they were satisfied, very satisfied are extremely satisfied with SIA HQs support of clubs and members.
- \* 60% increase in engagement across all SIA social media platforms.
- \* 165% increase in downloads of member resources sat Soroptimistd.org.
  
- \* \$2,013,624 raised in FY13/14. An increase of 14%.
- \* \$690,890 raised in club giving. A 15% increase.
- \* 80% of SIA clubs contributed. An increase of 3%. 19% more clubs reported giving at least 10% or a total of 67%.
- \* \$703,390 contributed to the Laurel Society. An increase of 36% with 371 new Laurel Society donors.

may your  
*dreams*  
GROW BIG IN THE NEW YEAR! ★

