



# SITM Update

Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows

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December 2016

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

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## Calendar

- Dec. 15 – Holiday Social
- Dec. 22 & 29 – DARK for Holidays
- Jan. 5 – Speaker Kelly Ranasinghe, JD on Human Trafficking
- Jan. 5 – “Sip & Social”, Napa Sonoma South, 5:30 p.m.
- Jan. 10 – Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Staybridge Suites
- Jan. 12 – Business Meeting
- Jan. 19 – Making a Difference for Women Kick-off
- Jan. 26 – Live Your Dream Award
- Feb. 1 – Making a Difference for Women, Atlantis

## SITM Meets...

**Thursdays at Noon**  
 at the Atlantis Casino Resort Spa  
 Second Floor Convention Center  
 \$20 for lunch  
 RSVP to [sitmtruckeemeadows@hotmail.com](mailto:sitmtruckeemeadows@hotmail.com) no later than noon on the Tuesday before the Thursday meeting.

### Soroptimist Is:

a global volunteer organization working to improve the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment.



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

## Christmas Greetings from President Jennifer



Christmas Greetings from our house to yours. May the Season be bright and the year that’s ahead turn out to be just right. With warmest wishes for Good Health and Happiness. Have a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year!  
 Jennifer Burnitt, President

## Bring Toiletries and Ugly Sweaters to the Holiday Social



SITM’s annual Holiday Social will be held on December 15. Wear your “ugly Christmas sweater” and join in the fun.

## 50/50 Raffle Tickets Due This Week

The winning ticket for the 50/50 raffle will be drawn at the December 15 Holiday Social. If you still have tickets or money left, please turn it in to Barbara Atwell and/or Penney Leezy. Currently, the “pot” is approaching \$5,000 and the winner will take home one-half of the pot. The other half will benefit SITM’s Service Fund.



In lieu of a gift exchange, the membership approved having members bring toiletries for the young women served by the Nevada Youth Empowerment Program. This community-based youth service provider develops, implements and evaluates programming targeting homeless, aged-out, unprepared, parent less youth (ages 18-21).

Appropriate items to bring include baby wipes, shampoo and conditioner, deodorant and chap stick.

# A "Sip & Shop" Success Story

Special credit goes to "Soroptimisters" Bob Hermanson, Craig Lamke and Jeff DeMatai who acted as bartenders and helped with the "heavy lifting" to stage the event.

A "big thank you hug" to Jeane Baxter and her staff at Ethan Allen Interiors for hosting and making this event a big success.

Fun shopping for unique and unusual gifts, along with delicious food (and lots of it), combined with wine to sip, was the featured fare at the first "Sip & Shop" fundraising and membership recruitment event, held November 15 at Ethan Allen Interiors in Reno. The fundraising net was \$1,736.

Fundraising Coordinators Barbara Atwell and Penney Leezy, along with Membership Committee Coordinator Kay Dunham and their respective committee members staged an enjoyable evening and profitable event. Good comments were offered by the 15 vendors who signed up to sell their wares. Patrons remarked favorably about the selection of vendors, the food and wine. Members happily volunteered where needed and expressed approval during and after.

Thanks to all of the members who worked on set-up and tear-down, tending the food tables to make sure our guests were comfortable and well-treated and assisting the vendors with their booths and merchandise. Also thanks to so many members who brought food and wine to make the event a success. .



*Niki Ewing's young entrepreneurs, Parker and Tanner, donated a portion of their sales to Sip & Shop.*



*Fundraising Co-Coordinator Penney Leezy with her beautiful jewelry, and Jo Ann Roberts with Margie Hermanson's cookies.*



*Member, artist and vendor Eileen Fuller shows off her art work and creations to Dot Watts, Jan Bogikes and Dot's friend Arthi.*

*Dr. Carmela Sipollina was (wo)manning the raffle table.*



*Pam Robinson presents one of the raffle prizes to a lucky patron.*



Sip & Shop..Continued from page 2



Assisting in the We Olive booth for the evening were Rikki Hensley-Ricker, Jeanne Nacarrato and President Jennifer Burnitt.

Soroptimisters Jeff DeMatai and Bob Hermanson pour wine for Sip & Shop patrons. The bar netted over \$200 in tips that night.



Kay Dunham pulls the winning tickets from the raffle.



Pam Robison and Fundraising Co-Coordinator Barbara Atwell with Barbara's unique fabric creations.



Craig Lamke visits the Wood Wizard vendor.



A view of the action from the second floor.

**Member Profile - Jo Ann Lessly****Impressed With Thanks to Youth - Now a Member**

By Jo Ann Lessly, as told to Jo Ann Roberts

Jo Ann Lessly is another of our native Reno members. Jo Ann grew up in Reno and she says she grew up in a great neighborhood. The best part of where they lived was that her grandparents lived right next door and she and her siblings (an older and younger brother and a younger sister) were constantly back and forth between the two houses. Jo Ann and her husband had the opportunity to buy her parents' house and still reside there. Jo Ann was in the first class of first graders at the brand new Hunter Lake School in 1955 and then attended Hunter Lake School, Central Junior High and graduated from Reno High School.

Jo Ann raised her children, a daughter and a son, in Reno and they both graduated from UNR. Her daughter and her family, including two of Jo Ann's grandchildren live in Bend, Oregon. Her son also has two children and they live in Maple Valley, Washington. Her oldest



Jo Ann Lessly

granddaughter is back in Nevada, attending WNCC. Although the other grandchildren are not in the Reno area, Jo Ann and her husband, Larry, have been able to visit them and attend as many of their activities as possible. The grandchildren are involved in softball, football, skateboarding, golf, raising pigs for 4H and music concerts.

When Jo Ann's daughter started her family about 15 years ago in Bend, Jo Ann and Larry decided to purchase a second home in Bend so they could spend as much time as possible with the grandchildren. Now they split their time between Bend and Reno, which involves a lot of driving back and forth between the two cities. As Jo Ann said, "Many retired people are snowbirds in the winter to avoid cold, snowy climates but we just exchange one snowy situation for another!"

Larry Lessly is retired from the Air Force and from the practice of law. He is from Texas, but loves Reno as much as Jo Ann does.

Jo Ann worked as a legal secretary for over 20 years and realized she didn't find any emotional satisfaction in it. She wanted to do something to help others, particularly children. Jo Ann decided that she wanted to be a teacher, so in her forties she enrolled at TMCC and earned an Associates of Arts degree while still working full time in the legal field. After her AA she quit her day job and began taking classes at UNR to work towards earning a dual degree in Elementary Education and

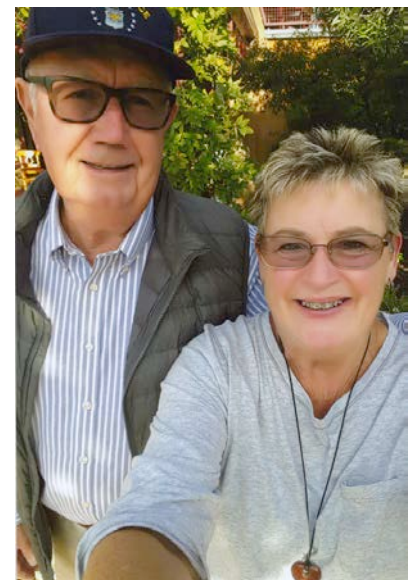
Special Education. Although she was usually the oldest person in the class, she found it refreshing to be around all the energy of like-minded people who wanted to enter the education field. She taught two years of special education K-6 and then transferred schools and began teaching second grade, which she enjoyed for the next nine years.

Jo Ann knew it was time to retire when Larry (who had already retired) kept traveling and enjoying their grandchildren without her. She made the hard decision to leave the classroom, but she continued to be around children by substitute teaching and volunteering in her grandchildren's classrooms.

Jo Ann's hobbies are gardening, reading, movies, TV, collecting recipes and cooking, walking, dining out with friends and family and playing a variety of card games. She and Larry love to travel and Jo Ann's goal is to see all 50 states. Recently they have been to California, Washington, Arizona, and to the beautiful island of Kauai. She volunteers time at the Second Hand Prose gift shop in the Northwest Library in Reno. Jo Ann also plays Bunko with two groups of wonderful women.

During her years as a teacher, Jo Ann felt she was making a difference and helping children and their families. Several years into retirement, she felt it was time to continue working with children in a meaningful way. She had heard about Sorooptimists throughout the years and knew that her former teaching partner's mother had been active for years. The teaching partner's mother is Jo Ann Roberts, who invited her to attend the 2016 "Thanks to Youth" luncheon. The former teacher was impressed by the enormous heart of the members of SITM.

Jo Ann said she is excited to be a part of an organization that does so much good on a local, national and worldwide basis. She is looking forward to participating in helping improve the lives of the women and children that SITM works with!



Larry and Jo Ann Lessly

## An Update on Girls Scholarships & Micro-Lending in Nepal

By Monica House, IGU Co-Coordinator

Member Jeanne Baxter recently received an update from Dr. Purna Subedi on our Nepal Project. This calendar year we have 119 girls attending school in Thulipokhari, Nepal. Twenty- nine young women are living in our girls' dormitory, 57 received full scholarships and 33 received half scholarships. The first day of school in Thulipokhari, Nepal is highly dependent on the weather as it is in monsoon season. This year, our girls started mid-August. Our girls start school between 5:30 and 6:00 AM with everyone eating breakfast in the dormitory. College and higher secondary school courses start at a slightly different time according to the Bikrm Sandat Calendar (B.K.), following the monsoons of June, July and August. During the monsoons, communication is difficult to impossible – both for technical reasons and due to everyone working in the fields daylight to dark.

We are sad to report our cook Dev is terminally ill (most likely cancer) and we hope to have an update on his condition within the next few months. Our Campus Chief Hari is now married and happily has one new child.

SITM's micro-lending program which includes vital seeds, animal husbandry, the women's empowerment project and animal assistance continues to be a huge success. Because of our support, there has been an abundance of vegetables this year and villagers are able to borrow at a rate of approximately 12% interest. This might sound high here in the U.S, but when you compare it to the normal lending rate in Nepal of 60% it is extremely low.

Recently, I found out Mahesh, the son of Mr. Guru



*Mahesh, far left, is seen in this photo with SI Assistant Director for Advocacy Sharon Fisher; Mr. Guru Prasad Subedi, Chairman of our Scholarship Committee in Thulipokhari (and Mahesh's father); Mahesh's mother and SI President Yvonne Simpson.*

Prasad Subedi who is the chairman of the Soroptimist Scholarship Committee in Thulipokhari was in Nepal. Mahesh is also the person who designed our dormitory in the village. I asked him if he would be visiting Thulipokhari while there. Though he had not planned on going, he made a special trip for SITM prior to returning to the United States. Unfortunately, school was closed for one of the biggest festivals in Nepal, "Dashain", when he arrived on Nov 9th. He was, however, able to meet with our Campus Chief Hari. Hari said our girls are doing well and he will coordinate with Purna to get some updated pictures and stories to us.



*While visiting Thulipokhari, Mahesh Subedi encountered this group of village children asking him to take their picture and post it on Facebook.*

### Contact Info for Georgia Baker-Flambures

If you attended the December Business Meeting, you heard the news about Georgia Baker-Flambures. She retired and she and Jon moved to Arizona last month. While pursuing her exercise regimen of walking, she took a trip/fall and broke her jaw. According to reports, she has her jaw wired and is now enjoying most foods through a straw these days. If you would like to send wishes to Georgia, here is her new contact information.

Georgia Baker-Flambures  
20100 N. 24th Drive  
Buckeye, AZ 85396  
[gabake@aol.com](mailto:gabake@aol.com)

## Making a Difference for Women Coming Up February 1

By Rikki Hensley-Ricker and Jeanne Naccarato  
Co-Coordinators, Making a Difference for Women

Making A Difference for Women will be held February 1, 2017. This is a Wednesday as opposed to the traditional Saturday.

The reason behind the change is that after the committee coordinators sat down with five of the organizations providing participants for the event, the unanimous voice was that Saturdays are challenging for two reasons: lack of childcare and lack of staff to provide transportation to the event on Saturdays.

It was decided by the committee that this change in day of the week was worth a try, given the lack of participants the event has seen over the past few years.

The committee understands that due to the day of the week some of our members will not be able to volunteer as they have in the past. We understand and are sorry if this is a disappointment to any members. However if Wednesday works best for the ladies we are providing this event for, the committee feels it's what we need to do.

Thank you for understanding and for your support!



Kelly Ranasinghe, JD

## Don't Miss This Meeting January 5

Human Rights/Status of Women Coordinator Doris Phelps has arranged for a special speaker for our January 5 meeting to celebrate National Human Trafficking Awareness Day (which is January 11).

Kelly Ranasinghe, JD, is a Senior Program Attorney at the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) in Reno, Nevada. He was a featured speaker at this past summer's Sierra Nevada Region Soroptimist Development Retreat training session.

Kelly is lead attorney on the National Judicial Institute on Domestic Child Sex Trafficking, and trains widely in commercial sexual exploitation of children and domestic violence. Prior to coming to NCJFCJ, Kelly was a public defender and guardian-ad-litem for abused and neglected children in Imperial County, California.

### How to Raise Funds for SITM Without Really Trying

You can support Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows by shopping and swiping your Rewards Card, entering your phone number and designating SITM to receive a percentage of your qualified purchases.



Sign-up by visiting [www.SmithsCommunityRewards.com](http://www.SmithsCommunityRewards.com). Create an account and designate SITM. Our organization number is #17204, or search "Sor" to find SITM. Swipe your Smith's card each time you shop.

If you do not have a Smiths Rewards Card, they are available in store at the service desk and there is no charge. SITM will receive 3% of all eligible purchases.



Sign up at [www.escrip.com/shares/](http://www.escrip.com/shares/) with your email, your 10-digit phone number and create a password. Then designate SITM as your chosen charity. Our group ID number is 500825778. SITM can earn up to 3% back on qualified purchases at Save Mart Supermarkets (excluding items like alcohol, tobacco and milk).



Shop at AmazonSmile. Go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). You can use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. On your first visit to AmazonSmile, select SITM to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases.



Register for eScrip + Benefits at [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) and download the Benefits App to your mobile phone. Link your app to your credit card or bank account and pay for your purchases, in person and online, using the app (instead of an individual credit or debit card). When you sign up, select SITM as your favorite nonprofit and the club will receive a percentage of your purchase, depending upon the merchant. Lists of participating merchants can be found on [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com).

## Bringing Cheer to Hunter Lake School Children

Hunter Lake Elementary School Principal Amanda McWilliams spoke at the November 17 meeting to inform members about the Children in Transition (CITs) attending her school. These are students whose families live in the weekly motels or are homeless.

Members previously approved the Education-Youth Committee's proposal to "adopt" the children and their siblings by purchasing holiday gifts for them.

According to Co-Coordinator Eileen Fuller, a speed-wrapping party was attended by 20 committee members, family & friends on December 6 at the Artists Co-Op Gallery of Reno. Three members of the gallery pitched in to help with the wrapping. Thirty gifts were wrapped and prepared for the kids. The estimated donation by members was over \$2,000.



*Shirley George dispensed gift tags at the November 17 meeting for Children in Transition from Hunter Lake Elementary School.*

*Principal Amanda McWilliams*



*Teresa Mentzer, in the foreground with her helper and granddaughter Ellie. Connie Steinheimer is wrapping in the background.*



*Annette Friedlander diligently wraps children's gifts.*

*Putting on the finishing touches are, from left, Carol Dinneen, Dot Watts, MaryAnn Decker (who spent most of the evening on the floor) and Shirley's mother.*



## Thanks to Youth Needs Your Contacts

Do you know a business, individual or organization that might be interested in sponsoring a table, making a donation or supplying an item for a fundraising raffle at Thanks to Youth? The Thanks to Youth Committee would appreciate hearing from you. Maybe it's your employer, an employer of a family member, a business owner you know, or someone that supports our area's youth.

Co-Coordinator Ana Nadimi and Lynn Robins are asking each member to come up with three contacts and they will send them letters seeking donations. Large donors, table sponsors and ticket sales are the backbone of the fundraising effort for Thanks to Youth each year. Money raised at this year's event support youth scholarships the following year.

Here are the sponsorship levels"

**Diamond Level** will receive the highest recognition in all publicity during the event and prominence in the program and a reserved table for eight. **Contribution of \$1,500.**

**Emerald Level** will receive recognition in the program and a reserved table for six. **Contribution of \$1,000.**

**Ruby Level** will receive four tickets to the event and recognition in the program. **Contribution of \$500.**

## Committee Presents an Eye-Opening Human Rights Day

The Human Rights/Status of Women Committee presented the December 1 program on the Human Rights Day and SI President's Appeal.

Handouts were provided describing the SI President's Appeal, Educate to Lead: Nepal to bring education projects to girls and women in Nepal following the devastating earthquake there in Spring 2015. SITM was one of the first three recipients of an SI grant to support our "Removing Barriers to Education for Girls in Thulipokhari, Nepal" program

The committee also presented 11 different scenarios "Ripped from the Headlines" of incidents of human rights abuses of women and girls around the world. Following table discussions among members, the committee shared the correct countries and details of each incident.

The program was an eye-opening experience to learn of the (sometimes) daily abuses of women and girls around the world.



Members of the Human Rights/Status of Women Committee who presented the program are, from left. Lynn Robins, Coordinator Doris Phelps, Pam Sutton, Faye Andersen, Moshay Akala, Carmela Cipollina and Jo Ann Roberts.

*It's a year-long process, but the hard-working members of the Scrapbook Committee gladly take on the task to create a lasting memory for President Jennifer of her year. Working on pages are, from left, Dot Watts, Co-Coordinator Marilyn Pearson and Patti Doty, Jan Bogikes and Bev Perkins.*



## Wrapping up the Holidays for Seniors

Sharing the holiday spirit with senior citizens in our community has long been a December tradition for SITM. For many years, club members, family and friends have undertaken the task of delivering gifts to seniors, collected by the Salvation Army through their Silver Angel Tree program.

This year was different. The Army decided to host holiday parties at the various senior housing complexes, distributing the gifts at the parties. SITM was then asked to wrap the presents, instead of delivering them. Two diligent teams of workers, spent Friday and Saturday mornings, December 9 & 10, to package, wrap and catalog nearly 500 gifts for seniors. Saturday morning's wrapping party was preceded by breakfast for interested members at Nothing to It Culinary Center.

A big thank you is due to Diana Dillon for coordinating SITM's participation in this project again this year. Her organizational skills and attention to detail made both days run smoothly.



Some of the dozen members of the Friday wrapping crew are from left, Malia Go, Niki Ewing, Scarlet Ewy, Carmela Cipollina, Ana Nadimi, Vivian Ruiz, Eileen Fuller, Hannah Lerman and baby Piper, and Heidi Anderson.

Getting ready for breakfast at Nothing to It Culinary Center.



Asma assisted Kay Dunham with a particularly large gift.



Organized chaos in progress.



Vicki Schultz in wrapping mode.



Valerie Hahn was joined by Savannah and Summer for breakfast and wrapping duties.

Soroptimister Jeff DeMatai spent his time carrying and sorting packages for the "wrappers".



Concentrating on their package wrapping Saturday morning was Bev Perkins and Jeanne Naccarato, with Aimal standing in the background.



Rikki Hensley-Ricker, center, is joined by Caleb and Maddie, along with Jeanne Naccarato, receiving instructions on reconciling the lists and packages from Diana Dillion and Kay Dunham.



Some 21 SITM members, family and friends joined the Saturday wrapping team.

## December Board & Business Recap

By Faye I. Andersen

**Please note: SITM will be DARK (i.e. no meetings) on the following Thursdays, December 22 and 29, due to the holidays. The regular meeting schedule will resume Thursday, January 6.**

### Holiday Social and Toiletries Round up

The December 15 regular meeting will feature SITM's annual Holiday Social. Wear an "ugly Christmas sweater" and enter the contest for laughs and prizes. Members are asked to bring toiletries for donation to the Nevada Youth Empowerment Project. See the complete story on page 1.

### After the Holidays Social

The Hospitality Committee will be hosting a "Sip and Social" gathering Thursday, January 5, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Napa Sonoma South (7671 S. Virginia St. in the Longley West Shopping Center). Here's a chance after the holidays to gather for good fun, some recuperation and camaraderie. Contact Hospitality Coordinator Vivian Ruiz for more information.

### Sip & Shop Success!

Fundraising Co-Coordinators Barbara Atwell and Penney Leezy reported on a successful first "Sip and Shop" event held on November 15 at Ethan Allen Interiors. The fundraising net was \$1,736. For the complete story and photos see page 2 & 3.

### Making a Difference for Women set for February 1

Making a Difference for Women Co-Coordinator Rikki Hensley-Ricker announced the date of the upcoming event as Wednesday, February 1. The change from a Saturday event to one during the week was a response to agencies' request to host a week-day skills training event, due to participants difficulties in attending a Saturday event. See the complete story on page 8.

### Members Meet with Community Foundation

Members of the International Goodwill and Understanding (IGU) Committee, along with members of the Finance/Governance Committee met with Chris Askin, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Northern Nevada on December 6. Chris provided an overview of the foundation's work and investments. As a result, the joint committee proposed, and the membership approved, designating the IGU Committee's



*Celebrating December birthdays at this month's Business Meeting were Barbara Atwell and Penney Leezy.*

directed funds at the foundation to be professionally managed by the foundation's investment committee going forward. Previously the funds were limited to investments in only one fund. The Finance/Governance Committee will review the Club's Bylaws, Policies and Procedures to see if any additions need to be made to accommodate any changes.

### Happy Dollars for November/December

Happy Dollars collected in November were \$227 and designated for Noah's Animal House, a boarding facility providing safety and shelter for the pets of domestic violence victims who are being served by the Committee to Aid Abused Women. December's Happy Dollars are designated for the SI President's December 10<sup>th</sup> Appeal, Educate to Lead: Nepal.

### Other Money Matters

Service Fund Treasurer Kay Dunham was seeking advice on the disposition of two checks allocated to Volunteers of America from SITM's Happy Dollars and donations. The checks were never cashed and Treasurer Kay made a motion recommending the funds of \$427.75 be re-deposited in the Service Fund account. During discussion President-Elect Rikki Hensley-Ricker offered to personally deliver the amount to the Executive Director at VOA. The amended motion passed.

## SITM Update

*Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows*

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### Contributing to this issue

Jo Ann Roberts  
 Jennifer Burnitt  
 Niki Ewing  
 Rikki Hensley-Ricker  
 Doris Phelps  
 Monica House  
 Marilyn Pearson

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**Board Meets monthly on Tuesday**  
 following the first Thursday, 5:30 p.m.  
 Staybridge Suites  
 10559 Professional Circle, Reno

### SITM Board 2016-17

President  
 Jennifer Burnitt  
 President – Elect  
 Rikki Hensley-Ricker  
 VP/Technical  
 Barbara Atwell  
 VP/Service  
 Alysia Peters  
 Recording Secretary  
 Doris Phelps  
 Corresponding Secretary  
 Jeanne Naccarato

Treasurer/General Fund  
 Anna McArdle  
 Treasurer/Service Fund  
 Kay Dunham  
 Director, 2 Years  
 Vivian Ruiz  
 Director, 1 Year  
 Pam Sutton  
 Delegate  
 Bev Perkins  
 Alternate Delegate  
 Lynne Catrow  
 Parliamentarian  
 Margie Hermanson



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 . . .

### December 10 is International Human Rights Day

December 10 is International Human Rights Day and SITM Happy Dollars will be collected throughout the month of December to commemorate International Human Rights Day, and our Club's donations will support the SI President's Appeal.

International recognition of basic human rights began nearly 70 years ago. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948. The Declaration arose directly from the experience of the Second World War and represents the first global enunciation of rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled. It was commissioned in 1946 and was drafted over two years by the Commission on Human Rights which consisted of 18 members from various nationalities and political backgrounds. Notably, the UDHR Drafting Committee was chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, a strong human rights advocate.

The Declaration was explicitly adopted for the purpose of defining the meaning of the words "fundamental freedoms" and "human rights" appearing in the United Nations Charter, which is binding on all member states. The principles of the Declaration have served as the foundation for important international treaties on the subjects of discrimination against women, rights of the child, the convention against torture, civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights.