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## Calendar

- Feb. 20 – Erin Schiller, Real Estate Scams
- Feb. 27 – The Assistance League
- Mar. 6 – Attendance Committee
- Mar. 11 -- Board Meeting, Pam Robinson’s Office/Zoom
- Mar. 13 -- Business Meeting; Atlantis
- Mar. 20 – Public Awareness
- Mar. 27 – 5<sup>th</sup> Thursday Event

### SITM Meets...

**Thursdays at Noon**  
at the Atlantis Casino Resort Spa  
Second Floor Convention Center  
\$33 plated; \$35 buffet lunch  
RSVP to [info@sitmnhv.org](mailto:info@sitmnhv.org) no later than noon on the Sunday before the Thursday meeting.

### Soroptimist Is:

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



## Interesting Meetings and Projects

Here we are in February, and it appears we remain nothing if not busy learning and sharing in all aspects of SITM’s weekly luncheon meetings. Early January the Region Chair for Membership, our own Holly Nash, presented an overview of membership from SIA level to club level. WOW! Lots of great information and ideas were presented, complete with handouts and references to the SIA Website.



On January 23, Doris Phelps presented her “New Member Tips Sheet” and asked the members to comment and add thoughts, ideas, and words of wisdom. As with everything SITM members attempt, the room was abuzz with discussions and sharing and included numerous suggestions for the “New Member Tips Sheet”. Our 5th Thursday Event was grand as usual. The event involved recipes brought in by members, compiled by Niki Ewing, and shared in an accessible format to all members.

There were questions about food favorites, food dislikes, and my personal fav, the strangest food one had ever eaten. All good fun and an

opportunity to get to know each other better. Thanks to Diana and Niki for their creativity in keeping our 5th Thursday Social Events memorable and fun.

March 1, we will be gathering at the Sparks Marina for the Walk For Women. So dust off your walking shoes! The Walk for Women is a worldwide event during the month of March to celebrate Women’s History Month and International Women’s Day (March 8). Everyone can participate—just get moving and share your #WhyIWalk! Check

out the different ways to help us spread awareness about women’s stories, struggles, and strength.

March 8 will be the District 5 Winter Forum, themed “A Time To Bloom”. I encourage all to attend an informative gathering of Soroptimist from District 5. There will be food, sharing from the clubs of District 5, and a guest speaker who will tell us about Ayurveda. Plan to attend and enjoy a day of socializing and learning.

When I look back over the past seven months, I see SITM as a highly successful, vibrant nonprofit with a clearly defined mission, passionate members, a diverse source of funding, and a measurable impact in our community. We continue to grow, adding 10 new members to our club of current members. The dedication of Leadership, Committee Coordinators, and Committee Members

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actively contributing their time and expertise, as well as their monetary investments, maintains our commitment to improving the lives of women and girls without interruption.

As with any growing community, there are also losses. On February 2, SITM experienced one of those losses. Jo Ann Roberts, Charter Member, and all around celebrated Soroptimist in numerous leadership roles, passed on to her Heavenly home. To say she will be greatly missed is a vast understatement. The knowledge and expertise she brought to all manner of things Soroptimist is irreplaceable. Her Soroptimist legacy, however, will carry forth in each and every one of us that she touched along the way. Rest in Peace, our dear Jo Ann.

Soroptimist all,  
President Jeanne

## Nominations Open for 2025-2026 Club Year



Would you like to become part of the leadership team to guide SITM in the 2025-2026 year? It's time to nominate a member whom you think would be good in these positions, including yourself.

At the February Board and Business Meetings a Nominating Committee was named to prepare a slate of members willing to stand for election. Diana Dillon was named committee coordinator by President Jeanne Naccarato. The board selected Kay Dunham and the membership selected Margie Hermanson.

In the next month these three members will be distributing nomination forms for the following positions, and the Nominating Committee will ascertain members' willingness to serve.

President-Elect  
Vice President – Programs  
Vice President – Membership  
Secretary  
Treasurer – Service Fund  
Delegate

The positions of President, Director and Treasurer – General Fund are completing their terms of office.

For further information, please contact Nominating Committee Coordinator Diana Dillon, or members Kay Dunham or Margie Hermanson.

A slate of members willing to stand for election will be available next month, along with candidate bios. The election will take place at the April Business Meeting.

## Important Dates to Put on Your Calendar

**February 20** -- The Sock Drive for Project 150 has been extended through February 20<sup>th</sup>. Bring socks for high school-aged young men and women. Bring them to the Thursday meeting, or drop them off at Diana DeMatei's home.

**March 3** – Crochet Gathering from 5-7 p.m. at Kay Dunham's office (190 Huffaker Lane, Suite 405). All are welcome to attend. Instruction and supplies available for beginners.

**March 8** – District 5 Winter Forum, 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Reno Town Mall Library, \$23 for lunch. Register at: <https://registration.soroptimistsnr.org/events/2025-d5-winter/>

**March 10** -- Second Monday of each month, volunteering at Project 150 (1340 Foster Drive, Reno) to sort clothing, food and other items for donation to disadvantaged high school students.

**April 23** – SI/Sierra Reno will be hosting a Nepal Fundraiser at the Auto Museum, \$50 per person. More details to follow.

**June 6-8** – Sierra Nevada Region Conference, Atlantis Casino Resort Spa, Reno.

## In Memoriam

### Jo Ann Zubieta Roberts

#### July 9, 1935 – February 2, 2025



Heaven gained a new angel on February 2, as Jo Ann Roberts completed her work here on earth.

Jo Ann was born July 9, 1935, the eldest of five siblings to Frank Arian Zubieta and Helen Escalle and grew up on a small

ranch/farm in Sparks.

Her father was a shepherd, emigrating from Basque country to Nevada. She recalled it was a humble beginning, during a difficult time in our country's history.

Jo Ann excelled in school, graduating from Sparks High School with a \$4,000 Smith Scholarship (named for Harold Smith of Harold's Club). It was a "king's ransom" in the 1950s and would cover four years tuition to the University of Nevada. She was the first and only member of her immediate family to go to college or graduate from college.

Among Soroptimist programs, women's scholarships were always her favorite, because she felt without her own scholarship so many years ago, she would never have been able to attend and graduate from college.

As a new graduate with a degree in secondary education, Jo Ann was ready to tackle classroom teaching. Unfortunately, there were no teaching jobs open at the time. So, she went to work for First National Bank, starting at the bottom as a clerk/typist. It was an inauspicious beginning to a lifetime in banking.

Jo Ann married O.B. Roberts in 1962 and became an "instant mom" to his pre-teenaged

son and daughter. A year later Jo Ann gave birth to her daughter Dee Ann.

Tragedy struck in 1977, when O.B. was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) and died three months later. Jo Ann then became a single mom to teenaged Dee Ann.

All the while Jo Ann worked her way up at the bank to become the first female branch manager in northern Nevada. "We would have meetings of branch officers," she recalled. "And there would be 100 guys and me." But she was quick to point out, "I never had any problems with my peers." Her branch experience was supplemented a couple of times with work assignments in administration and Human Resources.



***Jo Ann on Mother's Day with her grandchildren Madison, Daniel and Travis.***

Recognizing her well-rounded experience and talents, Jo Ann was promoted to senior vice president of Human Resources for what had become First Interstate Bank, as the highest-ranking female at the bank at the time. As the bank was transitioning to become Wells Fargo, Jo Ann retired in 1983, after 35-plus years in banking.

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*This photo is a couple of years old. Jo Ann had attained 39 years of Perfect Attendance..*

Through the years Jo Ann engaged in many volunteer and appointed community positions, serving on the State Board for March of Dimes, the City of Reno Task Force on Affordable Housing and the Nevada Self-Employment Trust, developing the state's first micro-lending fund. The City of Sparks appointed her for an eight-year term on the city's Civil Service Commission. She was an early inductee into the Nevada Women's Fund Hall of Fame; was named a Soroptimist Woman of Distinction; received the Hannah Humanitarian Award from the Committee to Aid Women; and was a Sparks High School Outstanding Alumna.

Jo Ann joined Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows (SITM) as a charter member in 1978 and remained active throughout her life. She served as SITM's President from 1983-84. She went on to

become Sierra Nevada Region Treasurer for two terms, Governor-Elect and Region Governor from 1990-1992, followed by many years as the Region Archivist.

Speaking of her community service, Jo Ann once said, "The service we provide in our communities is the rent we pay for our place on earth."

Jo Ann is survived by her sister Deynese Cassidy of Kentucky; her daughter Sharen Roddam of Oregon; granddaughters Jennifer Kincaid of Arizona and Alesis Mees of Oregon; grandchildren Travis Clinton, Madison Clifton and Daniel Roberts-Smith of Sparks; plus, numerous



*Sierra Nevada Region Governor Jo Ann, 1990-1992, with daughter Dee Ann.*

nieces, nephews and great grandchildren. She was pre-deceased by her parents; husband O.B. Roberts; sister Charlene Urizar; brothers Frank and Dennis Zubieta; daughter Dee Ann Roberts and granddaughter Amanda Curtis.

A memorial service is planned for Friday, February 28, 2025 at 10 a.m. at Mountain View Mortuary 425 Stoker Ave., Reno. A reception and graveside burial will follow. In lieu of flowers, please send donations in Jo Ann's name to Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows for the Jo Ann and Dee Ann Memorial Scholarship, at P.O. Box 20125, Reno, NV 89515, or [www.sitmnev.org](http://www.sitmnev.org).

## Welcome New Member Tess



**Welcome to newly inducted member Tessita "Tess" Sprinkel. Tess was sponsored by Darlene DeLancey and welcomed to SITM by Membership Co-Coordinator Billie Mendiola.**

### **District 5 Winter Forum (Winter Meeting) SATURDAY March 8, 2025**

**"Letting Your Inner Self 'Spring' Forth"  
SPEAKER: Marie Harger, Ayurvedic Health  
Medicine Practitioner.**

Ayurveda is an alternative medicine based on the elements found in everything that exists. Marie will share how the 'Science of Life' works with individuals and groups. She will also educate us on nutritional, life-style and herbal formulas to improve our quality of life.

**OTHER TOPICS:** District 5 Director, Susan Horst will share Federation news on the UpliftHer engagement initiative.

Representatives from each District 5 Club will share information on her club's most effective service program.

First Time Attendees are encouraged to attend and will receive a welcome gift.

Provisions provided: beverages plus soup, salad, sandwich and dessert lunch.

Questions? Please contact District 5 Director Susan Horst at 530-559-2475



## New Member Tips Sheet Under Review

**By Doris Phelps, Membership Co-Coordinator**

SITM lunch attendees reviewed and discussed a proposed draft of a New Member Tips Sheet being developed by the Membership Committee. These tips are shared with every incoming member during her orientation meeting with the Membership Committee; the orientation is an opportunity for new members to learn more about the Soroptimist organization, specifically SITM.

The Tips Sheet covers topics such as dues, attendance, lunch reservations, Soroptimist resources (website, Facebook page, the Club Roster, Club Newsletter, President's Friday Digest and more), Happy Dollars, Club Committees and the Soroptimist Pledge.

Following the lunch discussion, club members offered suggestions about our club's funding and treasuries, additional contact information about the Sierra Nevada Region, Soroptimist International of the Americas



**Membership Co-Coordinator  
Doris Phelps presented the draft  
of the New Member Tips Sheet at  
the January 23 meeting**

Federation and Soroptimist International levels, opportunities to attend the conferences at these levels, and a new document on ways to help new members' sponsors. Several other ideas addressed ways to clarify the wording in several sections of the Tips Sheet. The committee will have a new and improved Tips Sheet completed soon.

Membership Committee: Doris Phelps and Billie Mendiola, Co-Coordinators; Carmela Cipollina, Line Cousineau, Margie Hermanson and Holly Nash.



## Live Your Dream Recipients Are Meeting Challenges

By Pam Robinson, Co-Coordinator, Women's Scholarships & Awards Committee

This year marks the 52<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Soroptimist International of Americas Live Your Dream awards. SITM recognized four amazing women as Live Your Dream Award recipients at our February 6 luncheon.

The Live Your Dream Award is intended for women who are the primary financial support of themselves and their dependents, have a financial need, and are enrolled or accepted into a vocational/skills training program or an undergraduate degree. Our club has disbursed over \$65,000 to 51 women since 1998 as part of this program.



**Alexis Lamar with Billie Mendiola.**

We were fortunate to receive a generous grant from the Helen Close Foundation and a donation from one of our own members, and we awarded \$6,000.

Alexis Lamar was our first-place recipient, and her application was forwarded to the Sierra Nevada Region for further consideration.

Alexis is a single mother of two children. She is starting over after being in an abusive marriage for 21 years. Her life has not been easy. Alexis came from a broken home, leaving when she was 16 and working to support herself until she found who she thought would be her life partner.

This resulted in years of mental abuse and a feeling of entrapment. Alexis found work so that she could eventually leave the relationship for the well-being of her and her children. After a series of jobs, she found a position as a project manager for a nationwide construction contractor, ultimately finding a career that she loved. However,



**Karina "Katie" Roberts**

as a woman in the male-dominated construction industry, Alexis has faced roadblocks and gender inequalities. She hopes that a degree and additional certifications will be beneficial to her advancement and help boost her self-confidence. Alexis is currently enrolled at Truckee Meadows Community College and is pursuing an Associate of Applied Science, Architecture, Construction, and Construction Management.

Our second recipient was Katrina "Katie" Roberts. Katie is a survivor! From an early age, Katie has endured and survived child abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence and addiction. She became a single mother of two sons when her partner and abuser died of an overdose. While she was no longer in an abusive relationship, she struggled to care for her children and stay sober. Katie is currently a client of Step 2, a local treatment program for women struggling with substance use disorder. She is working to break the cycle of addiction and violence in her family. Katie's life-long passion is hair styling, specifically custom color and cut. Her dream is to be a hair stylist in a salon and to compete at fashion conventions. She is enrolled and will attend cosmetology school to obtain her hair design license.



**Alicia Giles**

Our third recipient was Alicia Giles. Alicia is a single mother of a 6-year-old son. Her love for her son and desire to make a better life for him are the driving forces in her life. Alicia had her son at the young age of 20 and worked multiple jobs to support her and her son. At 26, she made the decision to go back to school to improve her life and make a better future for her son. Alicia is currently attending Truckee Meadows Community College and pursuing a degree in Business Management & Administration. Alicia's early childhood was fraught with physical and mental abuse by her father, of which she was unable to tell her mother until much later in her life. Alicia suffers from PTSD because of this but still pushes through each day for the sake of her son. She maintains a positive attitude, even when times are tough. She stated, "I will

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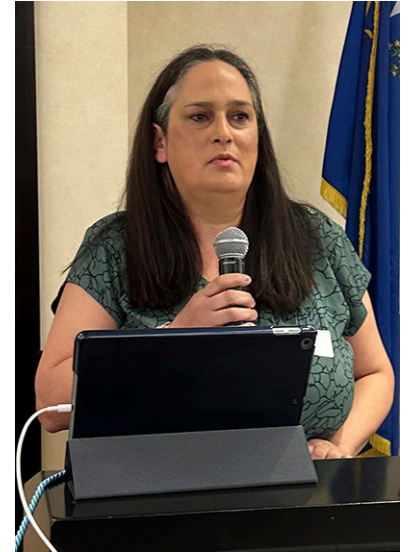
Jennifer Perico with Dot Watts

always find a way to make everything work.

Our final recipient was Jennifer Perico. Jennifer is a single mother, raising four boys while attending school full-time. After suffering an injury at work, Jennifer had to re-evaluate her career path and select something with less physical

restrictions. This led her to pursue her dream of starting her own business. Her first step in achieving this goal is to further her education. She is working towards her Certificate of Achievement in Business and an Associate degree in Economics. Jennifer's role model growing up was her mother who worked hard, always maintaining a positive attitude despite having to provide for the family when her father was no longer around. Jennifer has inherited this same drive and positive attitude. She takes her challenges and setbacks as opportunities. She wants to set an example for her children that hard work and perseverance can lead to success.

Our speaker this year was our former Dreams Moving Forward scholarship and one of our last year's Live Your Dream awardees, Jasmine Maraldo. Jasmine has two wonderful children and graduated last spring from Truckee Meadows Community College with a degree in radiology technology. She currently works at Northern Nevada Medical Center as a radiology technologist. She shared words of encouragement to our recipients and our club.



The Live Your Dream Program has been recognized for its effectiveness and long-term impact, and our club is honored to have recognized these four women.



**From left: Membership Co-Coordinator Pam Robinson, Alicia Giles, Alexis Lamar, Katie Giles, Jennifer Perico, Co-Coordinators Linda Walker and Billie Mendiola.**





## Valentine's Day at NYEP

President Jeanne, Kay Dunham and Pam Robinson returned to the Nevada Youth Employment Project (NYEP) in early February to help the girls create valentine boxes and cards. The three SITM members worked with these young women before Christmas to create special Christmas cards and were a big hit. So, Kay employed her Circuit to help create Valentine designs so each participant could create cards and build a personalized Valentine box keepsake. You can tell from their smiles they were all very proud of their creations.



Working alongside the highly trained NYEP staff, SITM volunteers assist in the empowerment of these young woman to gain self-confidence, personal independence and personal growth, while learning to meet their obligations and fulfill their responsibilities to themselves, their families, and their community.

The Nevada Youth Empowerment Project (NYEP) founded by Monica DuPea, gives homeless young women (18-24) in the Reno area a chance to reroute their lives through a structured program that provides housing and basic needs, life skills training, opportunities to practice new life skills, and the support and love of a family. NYEP is a principle-based organization



## March 3 is the Next Crochet Social



*President Jeanne Naccarato took the opportunity at the last Crochet Social to give us a peek into the activities. From left is Pam Robinson, Kay Dunham, Bev Perkins (hiding), Liza Chapen and Carol Kitchuk.*



## 5<sup>th</sup> Thursday Social Features Recipes

Niki Ewing and Diana DeMatei presented our 5th Thursday Social Event and Favorite Recipe discussions at the January 30 meeting. Members were asked to bring their favorite recipe and Niki Ewing is putting together a collection for members to keep.



# January Board and Business Recap

by Faye I. Andersen

Welcome to newly inducted member Tessita "Tess" Sprinkel. Tess was sponsored by Darlene DeLancey and welcomed to SITM by Membership Co-Coordinator Billie Mendiola.

## Motions, Appointments, Reports

Back in action, the February Board and Business meetings were packed with motions and the appointment of the Nominating Committee to nominate officers for the 2025-2026 Club Year.

## Nomination Committee Appointed

A Nominating Committee of three has been empaneled to develop a slate of members to stand for office for the 2025-26 Club Year. Diana Dillon was appointed by President Jeanne; Kay Dunham was nominated by the Board; Margie Hermanson was nominated by the membership. Over the next two months they will be contacting members about their willingness to stand for the election. See page 2 for more details

## Amending the Dee Ann Roberts Scholarship

A motion by Faye Andersen and Pam Robinson was recommended for approval by the board and approved by the membership to amend the name of the scholarship to read: The Jo Ann and De Ann Roberts Memorial Scholarship for Education Majors.

## Parking Lot Sale Set for May 16 & 17

A motion by Kay Dunham and Wendy Dennis was recommended for approval by the board and approved by the membership to host a parking lot/garage sale on May 16 and 17 at 190 Huffaker Kabe, suite 405. Full club participation is needed for Friday, May 16 for set-up and Saturday, May 17 sale and clean up.

## Nepal Endowment Funds for Distribution

A motion was made by the Finance/Governance Committee to open a non-endowed fund account at the Community Foundaton of Western Nevada to hold Endowment Fund annual distributions until needed to wire girls' scholarships to Nepal. The board recommended and the membership approved the motion.

## Thanks to Youth Set for May 15

The Thanks to Youth Committee made two motions. The first wud set the date of the 2026 TTY Luncheon

for May 8. That would necessitate moving the regular Business Meeting to May 15. The committee also presented their preliminary expense and predicted income for the event. The Board and membership both approved the motions.

## Tax Preparer Approved

Our faithful member and annual CPA service provider Bev Pekins is retiring. She has been doing the club tax returns each year for many years. She wishes to retire and recommended the club hire Albright and Associates, CPAs at an expense of \$800. The motion was seconded by Kay Dunham and recommended approval by the Board, and membership.

## Money Matters

A big thank you to Niki Ewing for donating \$1,000 to the SITM Service Fund from the Niki Ewing Family Trust. A big thank you also to Faye I. Andersen for her \$5,000 donation to the Jo Ann and Dee Ann Memorial Scholarship for Education Majors.

January Happy Dollars collected \$408. Happy Dollars are designated for a scholarship in the name of recently deceased member JoAnn Roberts and her daughter Dee Ann Roberts, for a deserving Education Major(s).

## February Birthdays

All four members with February birthdays were on hand to be celebrated at the February Business Meeting. From left is: Gayle Kmetovicz (February 22); Millie Mitchell (February 23); Mary Ann Macauley (February 20); Marilyn Pearson (February 8).



## SITM Update

Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows

**President Jeanne Naccarato**

[naccsitm@gmail.com](mailto:naccsitm@gmail.com)

**Editor Faye I. Andersen**

[fandersen@att.net](mailto:fandersen@att.net) or

775-358-5149 or 775-432-5822

### Contributing to this issue

Jeanne Naccarato

Doris Phelps

Liza Chapen

Pam Robinson

Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows

P.O. Box 20125 • Reno, NV 89515

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

**Board Meets monthly on Tuesday**

following the first Thursday, noon.

### SITM Board 2023-24

#### President

Jeanne Naccarato

#### Co-President-Elects

Marilyn Pearson

Lisa Robinson

#### Vice President/Program

Dot Watts

#### Vice President/

#### Membership

Linda Walker

#### Secretary

Debbie Handke

#### Treasurer/General Fund

Pam Robinson (Interim)

#### Treasurer/Service Fund

Cindy Burk

#### Delegate

Billie Mendiola

#### Director

Kay Dunham

#### Parliamentarian

Doris Phelps



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)



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## The Walk for Women Collection

The Walk for Women Collection celebrates a powerful global movement dedicated to uplifting women and girls. Held throughout March to honor Women's History Month and International Women's Day (3/8), the **Walk for Women** is a global initiative in support of Soroptimist International of the Americas' mission to empower women through education, resources, and support.

This collection is more than merchandise—it's a way to raise awareness, engage your community, and support a cause that inspires women and girls to achieve their full potential. **The back of t-shirts and sweatshirts are subject to change throughout the campaign due to evolving sponsorships.**



For more information on the Walk for Women, visit: <https://blog.soroptimist.org/walkforwomen>



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