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## Calendar

- Jan. 22 – STEAM
- Jan. 29 – 5<sup>th</sup> Thursday
- Feb. 5 -- Live Your Dream Award Recipients
- Feb. 10 – Board Meeting. Noon, Kay Dunham’s Office
- Feb. 12 – Business Meeting
- Feb. 26 – Ron Kmetovicz, AI
- Feb. 28 – District 5 Forum, National Auto Museum

### SITM Meets...

**Thursdays at Noon**  
at the Atlantis Casino Resort Spa  
Second Floor Convention Center  
\$34 plated; \$35 credit/debit.  
RSVP to [info@sitmnev.org](mailto:info@sitmnev.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.



## SITM Projects Getting Ready to Bloom



Happy New Year! With the weather warming up, my thoughts have turned to seed starting. I’ve ordered my seeds, gathered supplies, and planned my garden layout. I’ll be starting geraniums this week, planting seeds in trays then bringing them inside to nurture on a heat mat with a humidity dome to keep them cozy under grow lights. They’ll start to sprout, get some fertilizer as they grow, and then get planted outside to develop into a beautiful garden.

This analogy reminds me of our Soroptimist Year. We begin in the early Fall by organizing committees, conducting fundraising activities, and making plans for upcoming meetings and events. As plans “sprout”, we give them some “fertilizer” (hard work from members) and then watch them “develop into a beautiful garden” at our awards ceremonies in the Spring. These include Live Your Dream in early February, Thanks to Youth in May, and Women’s

Scholarships in June. Thanks to your hard work throughout the year, SITM provides life changing support to women and girls in our community and throughout the world. You can be proud of your “gardening” efforts.

One of the reasons Lisa and I are enjoying being your co-presidents so much this year is the commitment we’re feeling from YOU! Our meetings are well attended, our committees are providing interesting speakers and valuable content, new ideas are encouraged and implemented, and members are consistently welcomed and supported. Our well-planned, executed, and nourished club has grown into a beautiful garden. All because of your green thumbs!

Co-President Marilyn Pearson



## SIA Retention Award

SIA is excited to [spotlight the clubs](#) that achieved an impressive 85% retention rate or better in 2024-2025. Thank you for keeping our mission vibrant and our momentum growing

SI/Truckee Meadows is one of 24 out of 46 clubs in the Sierra Nevada Region recognized.

## STEAM is Rolling Full Steam Ahead

Crafting a prototype of a bionic hand. Learning about the properties of items that are the most and the least dense. Using a color wheel to explore colors beyond just the primary colors. Discovering how batteries work by creating an electrical circuit. These are all lessons the STEAM girls at Hunter Lake Elementary learned this Fall. The 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> graders meet twice a month after school for lessons in science, technology, engineering, art and math.

In photos shown here, Debbie Richard, STEAM Coordinator, commented, "They really are a great group of girls! We did a hands-on experiment where we created our own circuit using two strips of copper tape, a battery and some LED lights to show that the circuit was complete." One thing is for sure: The girls ask lots of questions.

Each girl was given a Science Notebook to decorate with science stickers and drawings at the beginning of the year. The girls are then taught how to take notes and write down their observations when they do experiments.

Some lessons in color and making a color wheel preceded the girls' favorite lesson each year – decorating cookies for the holidays. The lesson was reinforced as they were only given red, yellow and blue frosting to make their own colors for the cookies.



**Classroom instruction above.**



**Hands-on project at right. Notice the Science Notebook nearby for detailing observations.**



**Strategically placing the copper strips,**



**Adding the battery and LED light.**



**Debbie Richard instructing the girls on making their own bionic hand.**

# Understanding the SITM Service Fund in a few Easy Steps

By Service Fund Treasurer Cynthia Tashero Cramer

Have you ever wondered (or not) what all those numbers on the Service Fund Treasurer’s Report mean? Here is an overview of the Service Fund Balance Sheet.

The Balance Sheet is a picture of the club’s financial position at a given point in time. The first half of the report shows the assets of the Service Fund. The second half of the report shows how these assets are allocated.

**ASSETS:**

**TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS** are the funds held by the bank. We have invested \$105,000 in three (3) Certificates of Deposit to generate more interest income.

**OTHER ASSETS** are the Beneficial Interest in the Community Foundation of Northern Nevada (CFNN). This is the endowment fund for the Nepal Project, which is professionally managed by the CFNN. The earnings from the endowment fund will support the Nepal Project on an ongoing basis until the project is determined, if ever, to no longer be viable. It is labeled as “Beneficial Interest” as the club no longer owns these assets, having given them over to the CFNN, but still does have an interest in how the assets are managed and how the earnings are used.

**LIABILITIES & EQUITY:**

**NET ASSETS WITH RESTRICTIONS** are assets designated for a specific purpose and cannot be reallocated.

- **ENDOWMENT FUND** is the funds held by the CFNN for the Nepal Project.

- **DONOR-RESTRICTED ASSETS** are donations and grants received that are for a specific program or project. The club is required to formally designate these funds into the specific program. The funds cannot be used for another purpose.

□ **COMMITTED FUNDS** are the scholarships that we award in one year but pay in the following year. We have an obligation to pay these scholarships.

**NET ASSETS WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS** are assets designated for a specific purpose but can be reallocated through the club’s motion process as needs and circumstances change.

□ **SITM-DESIGNATED RESERVE** is the funds set up in reserve, as specified in the Club Policies & Procedures, to cover two years of operating and program costs in the event of extenuating circumstances. The current

reserve is \$50,000.

- **EARMARKED FUNDS** refer to the budget approved by the club for our scholarship programs. Earmarked funds are unrestricted in that the budget can be revised through the motion process.
- The combination of **AVAILABLE FOR OPERATIONS** and **NET INCOME** represents the assets that are not allocated and can be used, with club approval, for a specific program or purpose. As of December 31, 2025, the club had \$17,700 available

Our members work hard to raise funds and are generous in their donations in support of our programs. While the monthly Treasurer Reports may seem a little complicated, they ensure that every dollar is secure and directed as desired by our members and our donors.

Service Fund Treasurer Cynthia Cramer and General Fund Treasurer Pam Robinson are always available and happy to answer questions. (They would likely be



## The Fun of Holiday Fundraising

### The Fun of Holiday Fundraising

To cap off the end of the year and celebrate the holidays, SITM took the time on December 18 for a little fun and fundraising with a holiday social and annual bake sale. Members brought their favorite baked goods, which were then put up for a silent auction. There are always a few items that bring out the competitive spirit of the members. In the end, a total of \$1,322 was raised for the General Fund Treasury.

The luncheon was highlighted with some seasonal bingo games and prizes.

Two other favorite holiday fundraisers also raised more money for the fund. Annual sales of wreaths purchased by members from Christmas Forest netted \$196, a percentage of sales. The monthly flower cards from Sparks Florist were fast selling among members. At \$40 per card, with \$10 netted to SITM, members sold 79 cards. The cards entitle the holder to a monthly bouquet of flowers from the florist.



## Despite Busy Days, Jane Knipmeyer Makes Time for SITM

By Liza Chapen



**Husband Sam with Jane during a recent anniversary.**

SITM has a relatively new member who lives a very full, interesting life, and speaking for myself, she has such a friendly visage, when you speak to her one-on-one, you just want to be friends!!

Jane Knipmeyer joined our club last June, after having attended a Thanks to Youth event in May. She decided right then that she wanted to be a part of our club! Her friend and Renown co-worker Laurie Goodman, who had invited her to the TTY luncheon, then became her sponsor; now, of course, her favorite SITM project is Thanks to Youth. She recently worked at Project 150 for the first time and thoroughly enjoyed that, too. Jane shared that she won't ever forget the day she was inducted into SITM because her Certificate of Membership is dated June 12, 2025, and that's her father's birthday.

Jane grew up in Haven, Kansas, and graduated from



**Daughters Mary and Lara**

Haven High School in 1971. While there, she played the clarinet in the marching band and sang in the Girls' Glee Club. Jane was always very athletic, and it was a disappointment to her that there were no girls' sports teams when she was in high school because Title IX was initiated the year after she graduated. However, she spent her summers as a pitcher on the girls' softball team for the city league. Then, for many years as an adult, Jane was a pitcher on City League softball teams here in Reno.



**Jane's incredible rose trellis.**

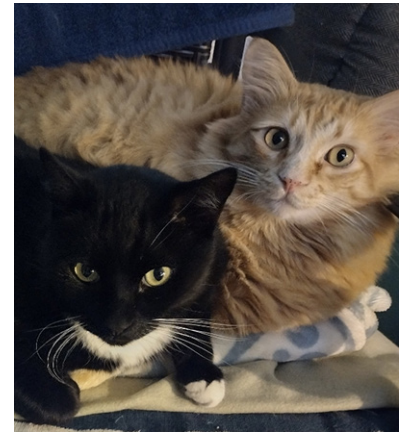
Jane graduated from Kansas State with a BS degree in 1975, and then later attained a Special Education degree from UNR. She started working as a Special Education teacher for the Washoe County School District when she was 50 years young (!) and didn't retire until 2019 after doing that job for 19 ½ years. However, when Covid reared its ugly head in the spring of 2020, she went back to work part time helping students and their parents via Zoom. She felt that she made a real difference in these families' lives by being "in their homes" each day as we all navigated the difficult months of isolation and anxiety. She said it ended up being a very rewarding experience as a special educator teacher.

Jane and her husband Samuel just celebrated their 53<sup>rd</sup> anniversary. They met on a blind date when Jane was still attending Kansas State. The story of how they met is great fun! (Ask her to tell you!) Sam went to seven elementary schools but then graduated from Reno High School and UNR. After serving in Vietnam, he really wanted to move back to Reno, so after their Christmas wedding (December 23<sup>rd</sup>), and a fabulous honeymoon in Hawaii, they visited Reno – and Jane loved this area. So, in 1978, they settled here. Both of their daughters also live here in Reno. Mary works in the medical field and Lara (named after the tragic heroine in the Dr. Zhivago movie) works as a property manager. They have no "grands," but two kitties, Panda and Riley. I'm sure you can guess what color Panda is, but Riley is a tri-pod cat (only three legs), and that doesn't slow him down one bit!

**Continued on page 6**

Continued from page 5

Here is an outline of Jane's busy life: She works part time as a Patient Safety Assistant at Renown. She also still works part time substitute teaching, but not on Thursdays!! Jane has sung with the Reno Phil choir as an alto for over 20 years. She loves to travel and has been on two European trips with the choir and has even sung at Carnegie Hall! She is a voracious reader and describes herself as a big-time gardener who loves sharing photos of her garden on Facebook. As an active member of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, where she sings in the choir, one of the most rewarding parts of Jane's life for the last 15 years has been working in conjunction with multiple churches in the Reno/Sparks area on a project called Shared Harvest which delivers groceries once a month to 84 low-income residents of motels and mobile home parks. Jane is also a huge sports fan, of course, and to keep her brain bright, she has played Lumosity on line every day for 445 days in a row!!



Panda and Riley

Welcome to SITM, Jane. We are so lucky to have you as a member of our club!

## Preserving a Year's Worth Of Memories



Above: Line Cousineau and Liza Chapen.



At right: The hard-working Scrapbook Committee having more fun than work during the holidays. Clockwise from left, Dot Watts, Deb Thomas, Co- Coordinators Line Cousineau and Liza Chapen, Barbara Foss, Bev Perkins and Laurie Goodman.

Below: Deb Thomas



### District 5 Forum Feb. 28

District 5 Clubs will meet for their Winter Forum on Saturday, February 28 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the National Automobile Museum in Reno. Cost is \$45 and includes continental breakfast, buffet lunch and dessert. District 5 Director Susan Horst has themed the meeting, "Driving Change: Women on the Move". See the attached for more information and link to register.

Meet and Greet with no-host bar and appetizer menu will be held Friday night, February 27 from 5-7 p.m. at the Renaissance Reno Downtown Hotel and Spa, One South Lake Street (across the street from the museum).

See attached flyer for registration information.

## Live Your Dream Awards Luncheon Set for February 5 by Pam Robinson

Be sure to bring guests to our upcoming Live Your Dream Awards luncheon on Thursday, February 5. Our club received 9 eligible applications, and we will be awarding \$10,500 to 6 very outstanding women! We have also invited Lori McDonald, Director of TMCC's Dental Hygiene program and a past Soroptimist scholarship recipient, to join us for a few words of encouragement.

Soroptimist International of America (SIA) has been empowering women through access to education since 1972 through the Live Your Dream Program and has disbursed more than \$49 million to 47,000 women who have overcome life challenges and determined to turn their lives around. Last year, SIA distributed more than \$3.4 million in Live Your Dream education grants to 2,353 women. Soroptimist invests in women's education because it transforms lives and communities. Our program has been recognized for its effectiveness and long-term impact.



Our club has awarded over \$71,000 to 57 women since 1998. "This year's awards represent a 75% increase from last year, thanks in large part to our successful fundraising and the generous contributions of our donors. 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 program.

## SITM Food Drive During the Month of January

Members of the Community Outreach and Advocacy Committee are collecting canned food for distribution to seniors in need during the month of January. Specifically, they have asked to supply soups, stews and chili, which are protein-rich items that can be heated with limited kitchen facilities. The donations will be made to the Food Bank of Northern Nevada.

Canned goods can get heavy, so donations can be dropped off at the homes of Doris Phelps or Diana DeMatei, or the office of Kay Dunham. They will arrange to get the donations to the Food Bank. If anyone is interested in a tour of the Food Bank, Doris will arrange for a date and time.

The Food Bank is nearly 40 years old. Last year the Food Bank distributed enough food to provide 21 million meals across its 90,000 square-mile service area spanning 13 counties in Nevada and parts of 10 counties in California. 160,000 people were served, mostly seniors and kids. Working families make up a large percentage of those served as well. In Nevada, 1 in 5 children are "food insecure," meaning they cannot count on having their next meal of the day available at home.

## Third Annual Walk for Women Gear Available Now!

SIA's third annual Walk for Women gear is available for pre-order, featuring an exciting new design! Order today to ensure you have your gear ready before the campaign kickoff in March. Stay tuned for more campaign announcements and resources!



## January Board and Business Report

By Faye I. Andersen

SITM's Board members began the new calendar year with the record's shortest Board Meeting. From beginning to end it lasted 17 minutes. The Business Meeting took a little longer, because of the usual protocol items of announcements, R.O.S.E. time, birthdays and Happy Dollars.

### New SITM Website Underway

One item of business was reported by Pam Sutton, Co-Coordinator of the Technical Support and Oversight Committee. She gave an update on the tech-overhaul of our website. RFPs to do the work were distributed. The one selected is a woman web designer from Canada. Our old website and email accounts attached to it will still be functional while the new design is in progress. The time for completion is expected to be two to three months. Watch for further updates.

### Nominating Committee Forming

At the February Business Meeting, a member will be selected for the Nominating Committee. The President will select the coordinator, the Board selects one member and the membership will select one member. This committee will develop a slate of officers for next year. If you would like to be a part of this committee, speak up at the February Business Meeting.

### Tax Return Completed

SITM is in compliance with the IRS, having completed and submitted our 2025 Tax Return. (Yes, even non-profits must file with the IRS, even though we pay no taxes.) Our ever faithful member, CPA Bev Perkins, finally retired. So this year the task was undertaken by Albright & Associates at a deep discount of \$800. Thanks Bev for your years of service and thanks to our outstanding Treasurers Pam Robinson and Cynthia Cramer for their work to keep us out of trouble with the IRS.

### Happy Dollars and Money Matters

Happy Dollars collected in December totaled \$260 for the Jo Ann & Dee Ann Roberts Memorial Scholarship for Education Majors. SITM also received additional donations: \$5,000 from Faye I. Andersen, for Women's Scholarships; \$1,000 from Meg Price for the Jo Ann and Dee Ann Memorial Scholarships.



### December Birthdays

**Celebrating December Birthdays were, from left: Patte Robnett (January 2); Pam Sutton (January 4); Paula Ringkob (January 7); Mary Eklund (January 16); and Barbara Foss (January 25). Missing the celebration was Norma Rash (January 30).**



**The SITM Board, hard at work at the January 2026 Board Meeting, clockwise: Debbie Richard, Delegate; Billie Mendiola, VP/Membership; Holly Nash, President-Elect; Jeanne Naccarato, Director; Marilyn Pearson and Lisa Robinson, Co-Presidents; Doris Phelps, Parliamentarian; Cindy Tashiro Cramer, Service Fund Treasurer; Bev Perkins, Secretary; Mary Ann McCauley, VP/Program; Pam Robinson, General Fund Treasurer.**



# SITM Update

**Co-President Marilyn Pearson**  
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## Contributing to this issue

Marilyn Pearson	Kay Dunham
Lisa Robinson	Margie Hermanson
Jeanne Naccarato	Debbie Richard
Liza Chapen	Debbie Handke
Cynthia Cramer	Jane Knipmeyer

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

**Co-President**  
Marilyn Pearson  
Lisa Robinson  
**President-Elect**  
Holly Nash  
**Vice President/Program**  
Mary Ann McCauley  
**Vice President/**  
**Membership**  
Billie Mendiola  
**Secretary**  
Bev Perkins

**Treasurer/General Fund**  
Pam Robinson  
**Treasurer/Service Fund**  
Cynthia Tashiro Cramer  
**Delegate**  
Debbie Richards  
**Director**  
Jeanne Naccarato  
**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)



SOROPTIMIST®  
Investing in Dreams

## Did you know . .

### Let's Get Ready for Incheon, South Korea!

SIA's 49th Biennial Convention in Incheon, South Korea, will be an unforgettable experience filled with connection, inspiration and global celebration. Early registration opens soon!

#### Convention Registration Launch Party

Join us for a live walkthrough of the convention website and registration process on January 21 at 8 p.m. (ET). We'll highlight special events, what's included with registration, and where to find menus, attire details, and more. Since all attendees must register online, this is a great opportunity to learn the process and ensure you don't miss a thing.

[Register Now](#)

#### Airline and Hotel Discounts

We've secured exclusive flight discounts with two airlines to help make your trip to convention more affordable and stress-free, whether you're traveling from across the country or around the world. SIA has also arranged a special discount rate at the INSPIRE Entertainment Resort—just a 15-minute shuttle from Incheon International Airport and home to world-class shopping and entertainment. More information will be available on the convention website when registration opens.



Inspiring Dreams  
49<sup>th</sup> SOROPTIMIST  
INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS  
Biennial Convention



Soroptimist International of the Americas  
Sierra Nevada Region  
**District 5 Winter Forum Leadership Summit**  
Hosted by SI Sierra Reno

Friday, February 27, 2026

5:00-7:00 pm

**Meet and Greet** with no-host bar and appetizer menu.

Renaissance Reno Downtown Hotel and Spa

One South Lake Street

Reno, Nevada 89501

775-682-3900

Saturday, February 28, 2026

9:00 am-3:00 pm

**Driving Change: Women on the Move** – a fun-filled day with activities and a compelling message from our guest speaker, Tracy Ostrem. Our District 5 Club Presidents will be sharing membership success stories.

Location:

National Automobile Museum

1 Museum Dr.

Reno, NV 89501

Registration Link:

<https://registration.soroptimistsnr.org/events/2026-d5-wdm/>

\$45 fee includes continental breakfast, buffet lunch and dessert.

Guest Speaker:

Tracy Ostrem, Vice President for Advancement, University of Nevada, Reno. Tracy specializes in fundraising campaigns, notably 'Creating Futures' and 'Be Boundless.' She is a dynamic presence in engaging individuals and organizations about the pivotal role we play in the future of our communities.

Market Place:

Shop with local artisans during breaks!

Hotel Suggestion for overnight guests:

Renaissance Reno Downtown Hotel and Spa

One South Lake Street

Reno, Nevada 89501

775-682-3900

*Room block with discount is available*