



SOROPTIMIST®  
Investing in Dreams

April 2026  
Issue

# SOROPTIGRAM

Soroptimist International of Harrisburg, PA Inc  
*Soroptimist International of the Americas, Inc.*  
North Atlantic Region  
District IV

Chartered June 1, 1938  
Making a difference for Women since 1921  
The vision of SI is:  
To be a Global Voice for women through  
awareness, advocacy and action.

## MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MARYBETH

April here, as it comes each year, but what a surprise it has offered, Summer in Spring. I don't know about you, but it has sure messed with my mind. Close to 90 degrees, whew! I am glad the forecast is bringing us back to "normal". We can enjoy what's left of the beautiful blooms and look forward to a beautiful May, hopefully without April showers.

The Tuesdays roll by quickly as does the year. We are coming closer to the end of our business year with much to do. We are still working hard in our efforts to serve women and girls. If you know of someone who should be recognized for the Ruby Award, please let Patty know. She has someone in mind, but that doesn't mean we can't have others too. Many hands light work makes.

Speaking of many hands, let's thank Cathy Mentzer for her efforts to move us forward. She has put much time and effort into having a Membership Mixer; however, due to a few women expected on April 27<sup>th</sup>, we are moving the mixer to our regular meeting place, Faith Presbyterian. We will have our regular dinner, and the program will entail each of us sharing all the wonderful things our committees do for women and girls and our community. Cathy is expecting to have five (5) interested women for us to woo! Thank you Cathy!

Blessings!  
Marybeth  
President



### *April Invocation .. Cathy Mentzer*



Our dinner meeting on **Tuesday, April 28th** will be held at Faith Immanuel Presbyterian Church located at 1801 Colonial Road, Harrisburg. The cost of the meal continues to be \$20. Please contact Billie Hawk by the Thursday before to inform her if you do or do not want a meal (717-545-6991 or [hawk4017@verizon.net](mailto:hawk4017@verizon.net)).

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**



- Apr 24-26, 2026 – NAR Spring Conference, Doubletree by Hilton Washington PA
- April 28<sup>th</sup> – SI Harrisburg Dinner Meeting – 6 p.m. at Faith Emmanuel Presbyterian Church – New Member Program
- May 7<sup>th</sup> – Bethesda Mission – Heart of Hope Dinner (Women only) – more info to come
- May 12<sup>th</sup> – SI Harrisburg Board Meeting – 6 p.m. Zoom
- May 26<sup>th</sup> Elections/Budget Calendar for 2026-2027
- June 9<sup>th</sup> – SI Harrisburg Board Meeting – Restaurant TBD
- June 23<sup>rd</sup> – SI Harrisburg Dinner Meeting – 6 p.m. at Faith Emmanuel Presbyterian Church
- August 17<sup>th</sup> – Bethesda Mission Golf Tournament – more info to come

- October 9<sup>th</sup> – Bethesda Mission Annual Gala – more info to come
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***Monthly Collections ...***  
***May 26<sup>th</sup> – Downtown Daily Bread***  
***(travel size soaps, shampoos, deodorants, etc.)***

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## LIVE YOUR DREAM WINNER!

And the winner is ... Nakeyla Everett! Congratulations Nakeyla!

## GIANT GROCERY CARDS

Treat a senior citizen, a family member and or give a gift to a family or individual in need of assistance. Giant grocery cards can be purchased in the amount of \$25, \$50, and \$100 by contacting Jacalyn Speaks at [jcspeaks@aol.com](mailto:jcspeaks@aol.com). The club receives 5% of the value of cards sold.



## WEAVER SCHOLARSHIP

We have received 20 applications from Dauphin County high school senior women. The applications have been shared with the Scholarship Committee, and scores are scheduled to be completed by mid-May. We will present our winner at the June meeting.





### **2026-2027 BUDGET/DUES**

A draft budget will be developed by the May board meeting and will be voted on by the club at it's May meeting. If you have suggestions for funding items, please send your suggestions to Alice Lubrecht by May 3. It will include a rise in the SIA dues as well as an increase in the SIA insurance.

### **2026-2027 Planning Document**

We will start reviewing activities and events for our 2026-2027 planning calendar at our May meeting. Do you have something you want the Club to do during the next Club year? Please let President Marybeth know before the May Board meeting (May 12).



### **SI Attendance at the 70<sup>th</sup> Commission on the Status of Women**

*Blog by Eva Skärner, SIE Vice President  
SI CSW70 Delegate*

This year's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) once again brought together policymakers, civil society, and

organisations from around the world to discuss gender equality and women's rights.

I repeat the themes again:

**Priority theme:** Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including by promoting inclusive and equitable legal systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and addressing structural barriers.

**Review theme:** Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

When reading these, to me, obvious themes, I cannot help but wonder: why haven't we come further, and why still do we, as 50 per cent of the population, not have the same rights and access as the other 50 per cent?

Many of the principles being discussed are actually basic – fundamental norms most of us learn as children:

- You do not hit another person.
- You do not steal from others.
- Everyone's voice should have equal value and the same right to be heard.
- Everyone has the right to their own opinions and to make decisions about their own body.

Yet when we look at what is happening with our goals to reach equality in societies and across the world, it becomes clear that we are not there. In many cases, we are actually moving further away from these goals.

Year after year, we attend meetings where the messages are largely similar – often with new perspectives or wording to align with the theme of the year. At the same time, we must ask ourselves: why do we seem to be moving further away from achieving gender equality?

The reality is that laws exist. But when will they truly be enforced to protect the real victims, especially women and girls?

We all learn early what is right and wrong. Yet we repeatedly see these norms being ignored – and some people acting as if the law simply does not apply to them.

Most countries have policies about equal rights and access to protection and support within society. But reality often tells a different story.

We see:

- human rights activists being threatened because of their engagement
- decreasing financial support for organizations working for the rights of women and children – in reality, the rights of all people
- increasing difficulty in reaching agreement, with too much time spent debating wording in documents rather than focusing on the underlying issues

When we become stuck in discussions about wording and prestige, we risk overlooking the forces that benefit from division and disagreement. While we debate details, others may act quietly in the background. That is why it is more important than ever to let go of prestige and instead ask us a simple question:

Why do we do this work and how did it begin?

The answer is simple:

- Because we want to create a better and more equal world for all women and girls.
- The wish for parity when we obviously are 50 per cent of the population.
- Peace, because war is not a solution.
- Common sense if we want to build a stronger and brighter future for our children.

There are many factors influencing the current situation – including powerful actors who actively work against progress on gender equality and human rights, but they are luckily not a majority yet.

At the same time, I also sensed something else during this year's CSW.

A renewed energy. A renewed determination. And a willingness to take action – TOGETHER. Perhaps it is in times of resistance that the real strength of collaboration becomes most visible. And perhaps that is where the next step in the work for gender equality begins. Maybe it's time for us and our collective efforts to rise like a phoenix from the ashes and reach for the sun once again. This reflection deeply connects to SI's pillars of Empowerment and Violence Against Women, underscoring the importance of ongoing advocacy and unified global action for gender equality.

**\*\*Call to Action:\*\***

Join us as we continue to work towards a world where women and girls live free from violence, inequality, and discrimination. Learn more about our advocacy efforts and how you can support equality for all.

**SOROPTIMIST PLEDGE**

**I pledge allegiance to Soroptimist  
and to the ideals for which it stands.  
The Sincerity of Friendship  
The Joy of Achievement  
The Dignity of Service  
The Integrity of Profession  
The Love of Country  
I will put forth my greatest effort to  
promote, uphold and defend these  
ideals, For the larger fellowship in  
home, in society, in business, for  
Country and God.**



Editor: *Cathy Mentzer*

Should anyone have questions of our Club, please feel free to contact Cathy Mentzer at 717-991-4025 or at [cmentzer@md.net](mailto:cmentzer@md.net). Please visit our website, [www.soroptimistharrisburg.org](http://www.soroptimistharrisburg.org) and our facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SIHarrisburg>