

**SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS**  
**NORTH ATLANTIC REGION**  
**93rd Annual Spring Conference**  
**June 5, 2021, 10 a.m. to noon**  
**June 12, 2021, 10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**  
**June 12, 2021, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.**  
**Via ZOOM**

**Saturday morning, June 5:**

**Call to order** – NAR Governor, Diane Savidge called the meeting to order at 10:02 am

**Presentation of the Region Flags** – NAR Co-Administrator Elizabeth Peterson gave a brief explanation of the tradition of the Presentation of Colors/Flags. She proceeded to introduce the flag of each state represented in the North Atlantic Region through a video presentation.

**Pledge of Allegiance** – NAR Co-Administrator Patti Yuengling lead the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Inspiration** – District I Director, Cindy Rivera provided the inspirational moment for the opening of the conference. The title was “Obstacles in our Path” and the message that we can all grow within ourselves by meeting and over-coming obstacles, and we can accomplish things we never thought possible, making the world a better place.

**Welcome** – Governor Diane welcomed Soroptimist members from the North Atlantic Region as well as around the country to the 93<sup>rd</sup> annual North Atlantic Region Spring Conference. And a special welcome to SIA Board Member Stephanie Smith who will be joining us for all sessions.

Governor Diane thanked everyone for the cards and well wishes after her surgeries and continued recovery.

She continued by stating we have divided this online conference over 2 weekends so as not to keep any of you longer than 2 hours at a time and to hopefully make this a positive experience for all.

She hoped the attendees would garner some new information, can at least virtually greet friends and that as they leave the conference, they have a renewed energy to support the Soroptimist organization and its mission of educating and empowering women and girls.

**Approvals**

- **Survey Monkey Results** – Joanne Moore gave the Survey Monkey results for each.
- **131 Surveys were sent to:**

- 17 Board members
- 35 District 1 Delegates (12 clubs)
- 10 District 2 Delegates (3 clubs)
- 23 District 3 Delegates (9 clubs)
- 27 District 4 Delegates (9 clubs)
- 19 District 5 Delegates (7 clubs)

○ This question is for members from NER:

I vote to approve the minutes of the 2020 NER Spring Conference

Yes 12

No 0

I approve with the following additions or corrections.

○ This question is for members from NAR:

I vote to approve the minutes for the 2020 NAR Spring Conference

Yes 70

No 0

I approve with the following additions or corrections: 1 (we did not hear what the correction was.)

○ The minimum balance of the Ethel F. Lord Fellowship account shall not fall below the following amount:  
(Your NAR Board recommends \$10,000)

\$5,000 10

\$10,000 72

\$20,000

○ I approve the 2021-2022 Proposed Budget

Yes 82

No 0

○ Approve that at least one (1) Ethel F. Lord Fellowship in the amount of \$2,500 but not less than \$1,000 is awarded annually (as account funds permit and the account balance doesn't fall below the amount approved in the previous survey.

Yes 76

No 3

○ Approve that the NAR Board may determine the number of Ethel F. Lord Fellowships to be awarded and these amounts (total monetary amount of Fellowships awarded in a fiscal year shall not exceed \$5,000), and that the NAR Board may also approve paying some or all of the recipients' expenditures to attend Spring Conference to receive the Fellowships.

Yes 78

No 2

○ Approve that the monies remitted to the Ethel F. Lord Fellowship fund shall be considered contributions vs. fees, and as such, any member who does not wish to contribute these monies shall still be considered to be in good standing with the Region (as long as other obligations to be in good standing have been met)

Yes 76

No 2

○ Approve that funding criteria pertaining to the Ethel F. Lord Fellowship shall be outlined in the NAR Financial Policies and Procedures (P&Ps). These funding criteria shall be reviewed by the NAR annually on or before the end of January, and Financial P&P's updated accordingly.

Yes 80

No 0

- **For the 2021 Spring Conference**, the following have agreed to serve as minutes reviewers: Karen Hedberg, (SI/Connecticut Shoreline), Martha Venditto (SI/Staten Island) and Sheri McLaughlin (SI/West Shore).

- **Approval of the Conference Agenda**

○ Alice Lubrecht presented a revised agenda and recommended it be approved – The agenda as amended is accepted.

**Welcome** – SIA President, Penny Babb sent a video message welcoming all to the conference and conveying best wishes for a successful, informative meeting.

**Welcome** – SIA CEO, Elizabeth Lucas sent a video welcome and congratulations on the 2021 NAR Virtual Conference.

**Introduction of NAR Board Members** – NAR Co-Administrator introduced current North Atlantic Region Board Members and thanked them for their hard work on the conference this year.

**Toot Your Own Horn Presentation** – Debbie Reichenbach, District IV Director congratulated clubs on their creativity and perseverance in continuing to fulfill out mission throughout the pandemic. She presented a PowerPoint presentation on the activities submitted by each club for the presentation. Thirteen clubs were recognized:

- SI/Adirondacks participated in a local mall's tree decorating event. The trees and "presents" were then distributed to deserving local families.
- SI/Butler again supported *A Place to Lay My Head* by furnishing several apartments for single women and their children.
- SI/Central Jersey Coast replaced its major fundraiser of the year with a mail campaign titled "Celebrate Your Mom – Join our Virtual Tea Party". Over 175 people responded, and money raised equaled their traditional Bingo fundraiser.
- SI/Centre County worked with the "Little Bags of Sunshine" group to provide health and personal hygiene products to students in the rural areas of Centre County through the Philipsburg schools.
- SI/Farmington Valley created welcome kits to the Prudence Crandall Center for its emergency shelter.
- SI/Fayette County continued to support Naomi's Closet and the Nurse Family Partnership with personal hygiene products, hats, scarves, diapers, etc.

- SI/Five Points Magneta celebrated their LYD winner and supported the Sojourner House Transitional Housing with gift cards and miscellaneous items needed.
- SI/Greater Bridgeport hosted an International Women’s Day event on May 6<sup>th</sup>. The event was outside due to the pandemic but allowed up to hear about how other local women are working to improve the lives of women and girls in the greater Bridgeport area.
- SI/Greater Hartford held a virtual Tea Party on International Women’s Day to honor women who have dedicated their careers and or/volunteer work to helping others.
- SI/Hackettstown held a Holiday Cheer food drive for the local NJ Division of Child Protection and Permanency.
- SI/Indian Rock honored a true “Rosie the Riveter”. May Krier was selected as their 2021 Women Helping Women Awardee. The 95-year-old made over 5,000 masks since the pandemic began. During WWII she had been called to replace the men in the workforce and once again was called into service this year to help others.
- SI/Manhattan partnered with BASICS International’s mission to ship backpacks fill with school supplies to the children of Ghana.
- SI/SUN provided a holiday meal to a family in each of their counties and presents were supplied to the children of each family. And funds were provided to *Transitions PA* – a crisis center dedicated to end patterns of violence and abuse.

**“100 Years of Soroptimist” Video Presentation** – The video outlined the beginning and the history of Soroptimist clubs and their mission of women helping women through education and economic empowerment. The video also presented a look at where we are going. Bright Past – Brilliant Future is our mantra as we move into the next 100 years. Our “Big Goal” is to provide a half million girls with access to education, not just locally but around the world. We can accomplish this through re-imagined financial commitments, igniting passion in our membership to put Soroptimist first. The video invited every member to join the celebration.

**Federation Visitor Presentation** - Patti Yuengling, NAR Co-Administrator introduced Stephanie Smith, SIA Board Member giving an overview of her professional accomplishments as well as those accomplishments related to her involvement in Soroptimist.

Stephanie encouraged members to continue giving of their time, talent and financial support to their local clubs, regions and on a national level. She said that empowered women, empower other women and we must lead the way. Stephanie reminded us that education is the best tool for economic empowerment.

Our dream programs grant access to education and clubs are encouraged to align local activities with the Big Goal.

Stephanie responded to a question from the attendees regarding ways to recruit new members and she encouraged all clubs to use the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events to assist. She also said that women join to be a part of what your club is doing. Use fundraising events and community service projects in tandem with recruitment efforts.

Other attendees asked Stephanie for some fundraising ideas, and she advised the items listed below:

- Virtual fundraisers such as on-line auctions, and she recommended Auctria as one of the vendors that can help with this type of event.
- Look for local interests around which you can develop a fundraising event.
- Shred-it events
- She recommended fundraising first and then decide what project to support.
- Corporate donations/sponsorships – points to consider
  - Get to corporations early
  - Find a local contact – personal connection is best
  - Put together a sponsor package that details on levels of sponsorship and what the company will get in return for a certain level of sponsorship.
  - Possibly allow advertisements in our monthly/quarterly newsletters.

Attendees also asked questions about re-engaging members who may still have fears regarding Covid-19. While we should not be asking for proof of vaccine to attend meetings, some meeting venues may have requirements to which we must comply, and we should communicate any restrictions or requirements to our members before a meeting, and a recommendation was to have a hybrid meeting offering a Zoom option for the meeting for members who cannot attend in person.

- Is it a HIPAA Violation to Ask about COVID Vaccines?

No. HIPAA would not apply to SIA, since it is not in the business of health insurance nor in the business of health care delivery. Nor does it apply to someone personally outside of health insurance or care. Any organization can ask any employee, customer, or relevant third party whether or not they have been vaccinated against COVID-19 without violating HIPAA. However, before asking the question, organizations should be prepared for how they will respond to individuals' answers, or how they will respond if an individual refuses to answer the question.

- Does HIPAA Apply to COVID Vaccines?

Only organizations that are HIPAA Covered Entities or Business Associates are subject to the HIPAA regulations with regards to how information about vaccination statuses is collected, maintained, used, and disclosed.

Organizations not covered by HIPAA may be subject to other federal, state, or international laws.

Governor Diane asked about district and regional in-person meetings. Stephanie replied that SIA approved Club and Regional meetings could start as of May 1<sup>st</sup> as long as you follow local guidelines. For any event that includes nonmembers a declaration form must be filed with SIA.

SI President Sharon Fisher commented that when you are having Zoom meetings there are many SIA leaders who are happy to speak at your meetings about topics of your choice. It is a great way to recruit.

Our Federation Visitor, Stephanie Smith asked about the Peace Begins at Home Grants.

A: The Peace Begins at Home grants are for club projects that focus on helping women and girls in their community. For example, SI Fayette partnered with the local Crime Victims Center to provide training to first responders regarding human trafficking.

Diane Thompson added that the grants began in 1992.

Karen Gehers continued that any contributions to support the Peace Begins at Home Grants may be sent to me at Karen Gehers, PO Box 222, Kreamer PA 17833. Thank you for your support!

And Peggy Gentile-VanMeter reminded the attendees that the grant applications are on the website.

### **Pillar Presentations**

- **Fundraising** – Barbara Andre-Maxwell, NAR Fundraising Chair presented information on the following topics:
  - Club Giving is a 10% contribution from a club’s fundraising effort supporting the Dream Programs
  - More than 1,750 women have been impacted through LYD
  - More than 17,100 girls have been impacted through DIBI
  - 16 Clubs or 38% of our region participates in club giving
  - Funds support:
    - LYD Awards to women who do not live near a club
    - Resources for Region and Federation LYD efforts
    - Provide Resources to conduct DIBI programs locally
  - Laurel Society – 125 members in the North Atlantic Region

- Stargazer – Barbara announced a donation of \$200 to their Laurel Society account for the first 25 members that commit to becoming a Stargazer before July 1, 2021.
- **Membership** – Lenore Scurry, NAR Membership Chair discussed the following topics:
  - Member Retention
    - Goal 85% or better member retention
  - Member Engagement
    - Provide an exceptional experience for club members
    - Use the e-tool kit on the SIA website to assist with Member engagement and retention.
  - Club Growth
    - Goal to add 15 new clubs
  - Best Practices
    - Provide regular opportunities for members to connect virtually or in person.
    - Social Media – use this as an avenue to engage members
      - Post Club Spotlights highlighting programs, and events as well as club history
      - Post a Member Spotlight monthly
    - Connect offline
      - Postal mail cards and letters
      - Phone calls
      - Develop new member packets and hand deliver them
- **Program** – NAR Region Co-chairs, Alice Lubrecht and Karen Gehers presented information on the Big Goal of increased collective impact to reach a half million women and girls through Soroptimist Dream programs. They also outlined the Big Goal Accelerator Projects that could qualify toward meeting the Big Goal. A handout outlining the program and the criteria was distributed to members before the Spring Conference.
  - To be eligible, club and region work must meet all four of the following criteria:
    - Work only with women and/or girls who are facing obstacles
    - Provide access to education
    - Ultimately lead to economic empowerment
    - Be reported to SIA through the official reporting link
- **Public Awareness** – Jocelyn Valentine, NAR Co-chair for the Public Relations Committee, provided the following best practices and resources to assist clubs in gaining public awareness in their community.

- Digital tool kits can be found on the SIA website in the Clubs and members
- Do a virtual Dream It Be It Event
- Create an engaging promotional video on Facebook or Instagram
- SIA Recruitment ads on Facebook
- Virtual/On-line fundraisers to create awareness
- Engage local media personalities and entities by tagging them on your posts.
- Celebration in a box for Soroptimist 100 Year Celebration
- Remember to hashtag #Soroptimist100 on your Soroptimist posts

Before the meeting was adjourned for the day, there were 3 prizes awarded as follows:

- Barbara Andre-Maxwell won a Soroptimist scarf donated by Karen Gehers
- Deb Cook won a designer purse donated by Tracy Scala
- Lori Rankin won a gift card donated by Karen Gehers

Governor Diane adjourned the meeting until Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am.

### **Saturday morning, June 12:**

The meeting was re-convened on Saturday, June 12, 2021 at 10:02 am by Governor Diane.

**Words of Inspiration** about strong women were provided by District V Director, Heidi McNamar. Soroptimists are all strong women who will continue to improvise to provide for women and girls.

**Treasurer's Reports** were provided by Region Co-Treasurers:

- Tracy Scala: NER report through April 2021 was presented and is filed. Approximately \$14,000 will be carried over into the NAR account. 2018-2020 audit has been done. One recommendation is that we take photos of checks prior to deposit. Also, recommended that audits will be done annually, and this will be done this year to be sure of accuracy before the merger.
- Karen Gehers: 2018-2020 financial audit was completed by Joyce Black (thank you). No deficits were noted.
- Appreciation was expressed to Phyllis Matseur for selling merchandise, which can be ordered and shipped. The new revision to the website was the largest cost this year but made the pages readily useable, SoroptimistsNAR.org. Check it out. There will be no meeting fees charged for spring conference /fall district meeting next year.



- The 2021-2022 budget was approved. Per Survey Monkey: Yes 80; No 0, as reported last week.

Barbara Andre- Maxwell (SI/Schenectady) spoke to encourage member giving to support Dream programs at the international level. As an incentive, she is offering a Matching Star Gazers program. Barbara will reward 25 brand new NAR Star Gazers, who pledge at least \$50 per month prior to a deadline of July 1. If a member makes that pledge, a \$200 credit toward their Laurel Society recognition program will be made in November.

### **Dream Big Campaign** – Diane Thompson, SIA and Former NAR Governor

#### “Dreaming Big for the Big Goal”

- Our Big Goal: Reach 500,000 girls by 2031.
  - She reported that as a reference, last year, we reached 19,000 girls and women. To reach the big goal, we would need to reach 50,000 a year by 2031; increasing our numbers 4 to 5 times over the next ten years.
  - She described the impact such a goal met would have on each woman and on their families and communities.
  - And it would promote the Soroptimist organization, boosting memberships.
- What are you willing to do to make these dreams a reality?
  - Work together, expand our dream programs, increase our presence on social media.
  - We need to invest in ourselves, modernizing ourselves to succeed for the future.
- Campaign will launch this fall to raise funds. Invest in our members; support our clubs. Attract new partners. Leadership development, decrease fund raising responsibilities for clubs (more grant opportunities from our corporate partners), increase brand awareness, update databases at SI headquarters.
- There will be training opportunities on the new tools which will help clubs expand their efforts to help women and girls in their regions.
- “Glow Around the Globe” Barbara Andre-Maxwell encouraged all clubs to participate in Club Giving (asking for 10% of all funds raised, to support women around the world).
  - But do not make LYD awards less than \$1000, as that amount has been shown to be transformational.
  - Encouraged clubs to expand DIBI programs. Be sure to report the number of participants in any program for girls that have faced obstacles and that promotes education.
  - There will be grants available for Big Dream accelerator programs.
  - Stephanie reported studies that demonstrated that giving more awards was more helpful than giving just one big award to one woman only. The community became more aware of the Club’s name recognition. The award also gives women a sense of being supported, even beyond the financial support.

- Staff at headquarters can answer questions about eligibility of club programs for the Big Goal.
- Tracy Scala is also on the Dream Big Campaign.

Diane Thompson provided her email so that members can direct questions to her: [D27thompson@gmail.com](mailto:D27thompson@gmail.com).

### **LYD Award Winners**

Region Chair, Jayne Cooper and Co-Admin Elizabeth Peterson presented the regional award winners.

Jayne stated that every woman and girl has a right to achieve their dreams. Past experience can turn them into warriors, and we have an opportunity to help them overcome their obstacles to reach their goals. Over the last eight years, NAR provided awards to 66 women and the LYD survey indicated that 79% were able to increase their standard of living and 90% have improved their self-esteem.

With that in mind, our winners are:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Alyssa M, future social worker, criminal justice, addiction certification. Wants to be a role model so her son is honest and a hard worker. She wants to show her gratitude by paying it forward to other women. (Butler Co, **District 4**)
- Fausta K– from East Africa; studying geriatric nursing, as she was raised by a grandmother.

NAR provided two additional awards:

- **D1** Darcy M: Even smaller awards boost confidence and allowed her to invest in a business (bought a truck for her landscaping business and was able to hire a woman, thereby helping support another woman). She is working toward a BS in business at Russell Sage.
- **D3** Melissa G: Pursuing nursing career after dropping out of high school due to challenges. Award was valuable financially and for her confidence.

**NER/D5:** Elizabeth thanked Amina Weiland, chair of D5 LYD program, who is a past LYD award winner. Every club gave an award this year. NER winner is:

- Sabrina S (Northeastern MA and New Hampshire) Bunker Hill Community College. Emigrated from Algeria. English was a new language for her. Unaware of how to deal with domestic violence in this country. Studying business and IT. Award was encouraging to her.

NER was also able to provide two additional awards:

- Shian E (Greater Hartford). Engaged in community and church. Sophomore at Capitol Community College. Wants to become a pediatric surgeon. While she intended to be here this morning, Shian was in an auto accident in the last week and will not be able to make the meeting.
- Holly D (Meriden Club). Thanks for encouragement and financial support. Studying to become a Physical Therapist Assistant.

Checks and certificates were mailed to recipients by Stephanie Smith. Hearing from these winners shows us why we do what we do.

Jayne thanked the District Vice Chairs and reported that Districts 4 & 5 reported 100% of the clubs giving an award this year. These women are not alone. 9.6 million women are eligible in our Soroptimist Countries around the world.

Stephanie Smith commented that she is in awe of what our region has done. “This is why we need to dream big.” Thank you for sharing your stories.

Raffle Drawing: Kyra spun the wheel to determine winners.

- Scarf: (Will be mailed by Karen) – Martha Venditto
- Handbag - Choice of light or dark gray and beige handbags (will be mailed by Tracy): Leona (SI/Manhattan)
- Gift card (will be mailed by Karen Gehers) winner chooses card: Sandy Trossbach

SI President, Sharon Fisher: Reminded us that similar awards are given all over the world.

62 countries are registered for our digital event on October 2 & 3 to celebrate moving into the next century. Our work makes a big difference. Still working on FGM, trafficking. She is open to invitations to speak at our future events.

Adjourned at 11:45 am by Governor Diane.

## **SATURDAY evening, June 12:**

Governor Diane reconvened the meeting at 6:32 with 70 members present.

**Remembrance Service** – Past NAR Governor, Peggy Gentile VanMeter  
We remembered and honored: Dr. Judith Tobin, Joyce Warne, Dottie Kasper, Nancy Kershaw, Anne Voelmle, Helen Drothler, Dorothy Henwood with the following Resolution of Respect:

### **RESOLUTION OF RESPECT**

We, **SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC REGION**, submit this resolution to our membership in recognition of our departed members.

Whereas, GOD, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, did open the book and call **some of our members** from the toil of earthly life to their eternal reward,  
and

Whereas, it was with saddened hearts that we learned of their death and that their work on earth was finished, and

Whereas, we have lost a dear friend and faithful member with whom we have shared the SINCERITY OF FRIENDSHIP and the JOY OF ACHIEVEMENT, and

Whereas, we are well aware of the fact that we, as well as others, have been blessed with the inspiration of their association with us,

Now, therefore be it resolved that we extend to

### **SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL NORTH ATLANTIC REGION CLUBS**

Our most heartfelt sympathy, love, understanding and peace in the loss we all share. May each club be comforted by the knowledge that all of our Soroptimist Family sincerely care for our loss and that they will be missed.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution shall be entered into the records of the *North Atlantic Region 2021 Spring Conference*.

*Respectfully,  
Peggy Gentile-VanMeter  
Remembrance Chair  
SIA North Atlantic Region*

Stephanie (SIA Federation Visitor) sent her regrets that she is unable to join us this evening.

### **Grab your Lemonade cocktail and Join in the Fun:**

A video promoting the 2022 Convention in Seoul, Korea was shared.

**GOVERNOR'S REGION UPDATE:** Governor Diane. Wow! The pandemic influenced all aspects of our function, but we remain a force. The merging of the regions has begun and will be complete this coming year. She expressed thanks to the board for their collaborative style. Clubs and members have stepped up. Virtual meetings have kept us engaged. Virtual fund raising and even increasing membership. Look forward to meeting in person (be sure to invite her!) Continue to invest in women and girls. Congratulations to all for keeping clubs viable.

### **CO-ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS UPDATES:**

- Patti Yuengling: Expressed appreciation to all. We have lost 2 clubs, but other clubs have grown. We need to continue to plan for our future. We need to maintain a sustainable organization to help make dreams become reality. Please share your events with your district director so you can be supported. Looking forward to new friendships and attending our meetings.
- Beth Peterson: Merger update: Bylaws have been established. Transitional policies and procedures have been established, including co-treasurers. We have a

pilot program for regional mergers. New friendships are being enjoyed. More money can go to our programs with less overhead. NER's unused funds will transfer to NAR. Planning fall and spring conference for next year. DIBI is continuing via Zoom. Our region gave 7 LYD awards; supported anti-domestic violence programs, backpacks, camps.

**CLUB AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:**

*Spirit of Soroptimist Award (replaces **Unsung Hero award**)* – Co-Administrative Officer – Elizabeth Peterson described that the winner is someone who supports global mission, consistently available and volunteers, making community more resilient, one girl, one woman one family at a time.

**NAR SPIRIT OF SOROPTIMIST AWARD NOMINEES**

|    | <b>LIST#NOMINEE</b>   | <b>CLUB</b>                  |
|----|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1  | Darlis Varano         | Montour County, Danville, PA |
| 2  | Deborah “Dee” Bagshaw | Centre County                |
| 3  | Alexandra Z. Canales  | Five Points Magneta          |
| 4  | Connie Sullivan       | Saratoga County              |
| 5  | Maritza Ahmed         | Hackettstown, NJ             |
| 6  | Amina Weiland         | Farmington Valley, CT        |
| 7  | Diane DiMaggio        | Indian Rock                  |
| 8  | Emma Palzere-Rae      | Connecticut Shoreline, CT    |
| 9  | Marianne Hill         | Butler County                |
| 10 | Heather LaTorra       | Greater Hartford, CT         |
| 11 | Pam Barnhart          | Fayette County               |
| 12 | Frieda Tanski         | Schnectady, NY               |
| 13 | Susan Daly            | Schnectady, NY               |
| 14 | JoAnn McCann          | Central Jersey Coast, NJ     |

|    |                |   |
|----|----------------|---|
| 15 | Sarah Weir     | Snyder, Union & Northumberland Counties |
| 16 | Eileen Jackson | SIM                                     |
| 17 | Susan Stephen  | Greater Waterbury, CT                   |
| 18 | Cindy Breen    | Somerset                                |

Dee Bagshaw from SI Centre County and Connie Sullivan from SI Saratoga County were the overall winners for the region.

***Club Anniversaries*** – Co-Treasurers, Karen Gehers and Tracy Scala

Co-Treasurer, Karen Gehers, Districts 1-4

- 25 Years: Center City Philadelphia
- 65 Years: Fayette County, Huntington County, Cape May County, Hammonton, Long Beach Island.
- 70 Montour County
- 75: Phoenixville, Pottstown.

Co-Treasurer Tracy Scala, District 5

- 30 Years: Greater Waterbury
- 55 Years: Willimantic CT

***Celebrating Success Awards*** – Chairs, Patti Yuengling and Kathie Lang

**Chair Patti Yuengling – Districts 1-4**

- Fund Raising: \$2500. Staten Island: Luncheon, auction, Queen of Clubs, Wine continual fund raising (\$200),
- Membership: Fayette County: hosted fall district meeting,
- Program: S.U.N. Club. Domestic violence. Adopted a family in each of 3 counties. Single moms of daughters with financial need – holiday gifts
- Public awareness: Staten Island: Signage, social media, newsletter. Donated \$1000 to provide meals for first responders.

**Chair Kathie Lang – District 5**

- Membership: SI of Haverhill Merrimack Valley club won for their "BYOB (Bring Your Own Bra) Event." Members and invitees were asked to bring a new bra to Ruth's House in Haverhill. The event was a dinner, awards ceremony, and guest speakers about the Soroptimist organization and what we do. The club gained 4 new members from this first event, and 3 more members from two following events.
- Program: SI of Willimantic won for its "Live Your Dream Grants", an ongoing grant program which began in November 2018. The club puts aside funds each year to be granted to help women who are in financial need and struggling, to get ahead and achieve their goals. They need not be head of household, but must be accepted to, enrolled in, or have completed a vocational/skills training or undergraduate degree program. The grant program funds up to \$500 which can be used for licensing fees, testing fees, tuition, or transportation including bus passes and gas

cards. Applications are accepted throughout the year and, if approved for licensing/testing/tuition, checks are issued directly to the licensing/testing/tuition organization on the winners' behalf. The program helped 4 women in the first six months and has consistently expanded each year since.

- **Public Awareness:** SI of Connecticut River Valley won for the "100 Years - Votes for Women" project. The club became actively involved in the statewide committee of women's organizations gathered by the CT Secretary of State to plan a year-long celebration of Women's Suffrage. The club, in conjunction with several other CT Soroptimist clubs, planned and carried out three events. The first was a display about Soroptimists at the State Capitol building to kick off the year-long celebration and to educate lawmakers and the public about our organization. Soroptimist clubs then sponsored a statewide essay contest for high school students describe to changes for women in the past 100 years after the vote and imagining the changes in the status of women that might happen in the next 100 years. A celebration dinner with awards for two essay winners was held on International Women's Day (March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020). the event included a performance as Victoria Woodhull by Emma Palzere-Rae, a Soroptimist and a professional actress, describing Woodhull's run for President of the USA and her other efforts towards furthering the empowerment of women during the late 1800's. The collaborations during this project were extensive, the events got a lot of notice and attendance, and the publicity on the state website, newspapers, social media and local TV was a great way to get the Soroptimist message out to hundreds of people in the Connecticut area.

NER had no applications in the Fundraising Category.

Certificates will be mailed to the winning clubs.

This is the month to submit accomplishments to be considered for an award next year.

***Club/Member Retention Recognition*** – District V Vice-Chair of Membership – Joan Merritt

**Diamond Campaign** recognizes Club/Member Retention of those clubs with at least 85% retention– District V Vice-Chair of Membership – Joan Merritt.

Eight clubs had 100% retention: Schenectady, Monmouth, Rancocas Valley, Center City Philadelphia, Bucks County, Rittenhouse Square and Metro NY

With 85 to 99% retention, the following clubs were also recognized: Greater Waterbury, Suffolk County, Saratoga County and Greater Providence

What do we need to get there numbers up? A Magic Wand? No! We need a new attitude to retain the new member we recruit; your magic wand is YOU!

Secret to retention: smiles, listening to new ideas. Patti suggested inviting new members to attend conference.

### ***DIBI Awards***

Chair, Ruby Mercado: SIA has lots of information to be shared on social media. You can do auto-share on a weekly basis.

Even with the pandemic issues, the following clubs were able to have a DIBI event this year: Saratoga County, Staten Island, Snyder, Union, and Northumberland Counties (SUN), CT Shoreline. These are based on reports filed by June 1. Be sure to submit your DIBI projects to document our progress toward the Big Goal.

### **GOVERNOR'S CUP – Governor Diane**

The following clubs submitted an application for the Governor's cup: SI Central Connecticut, SI Central Jersey Coast, SI Fayette County, SI Hackettstown, SI Indian Rock, SI Manhattan, SI Staten Island, SI Snyder, Union, and Northumberland Counties. Gov. Diane announced that the winning club for the year 2020 to 2021 is: **SI Fayette County**

The winning application described the following accomplishments: Program: human trafficking; Membership: Attended virtual leadership training and attended spring conference, checks emails, completed club assessment, held member training event; Public awareness: newsletter, Facebook page; Fund raising: Founders Pennies and Club Giving. Many members are in the Laurel Society. Attended virtual convention in 2020. Members serve on regional committees. Attended CSW. Cared for their own members.

### **Raffle Drawing,**

- Lemongrass basket: Heidi McNamar.
- Scarf: Paige Rumble
- Gift card: Cindy Rivera

### **Closing remarks – Governor Diane**

I hope that each of you will share the wonderful time you have had at conference with your club members.

I want to thank our Federation Board Director Stephanie Smith for sharing the past 2 weekends with us. Thank you to all our presenters, Barbara Andre Maxwell, Lenore Scurry, Alice Lubrecht and Karen Gehers, Jocelyn Valentine and Brenda Millhomme, and Diane Thompson, you have all given us a lot to think about.



Thank you to Jayne Cooper and Amina Weiland (and Beth Peterson who stepped in for Amina) for all they have done for our region with the Live Your Dream Awards program.

I would also like to thank Peggy Gentile VanMeter for her dedication and time spent on the Remembrance Service.

Thank you to those who were willing to take part in the presentation of the various awards, Beth Peterson, Karen Gehers, Tracy Scala, Patti Yuengling, Kathie Lang, Joan Merritt, and Ruby Mercado. And last but certainly not least, thank you to each of you who took time out of your weekends to be a part of this conference.

My sincere gratitude for all the hard work and dedication my board has given this past year, especially with all my surgeries and issues with my knee replacement. No matter what was asked, no-matter what obstacle was set in your path, each of you stepped up and through creativity and perseverance, we have achieved so much. I've always said, it takes a team and each of you have demonstrated your willingness to be part of that team. You are team players that I would be more than willing to work with again and again.

I cannot wait to see what the next year brings. Are there any final remarks or comments?

With that, I hereby call for adjournment of the 93<sup>rd</sup> annual NAR Spring Conference.

Past Governor Peggy Gentile Van Meter made remarks thanking Governor Diane for her incredible leadership during a most challenging year. She then moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m., seconded Wanda Price. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Lubrecht  
Joanne Moore  
NAR Co-Secretaries