



SOROPTIMIST®
Investing in Dreams

South Central Region Spotlight

February 2026



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Hello members,

I hope you've all been able to stay warm this winter. Illinois has been a roller coaster of weather with everything from 63 degrees to 12 degrees. I'm ready for Spring and our Region conference.

This will be a special year for us, as we host our 100th South Central Region Conference. To make this an extra special year, I am asking all of our members that attend for the installation to come dressed up, think cocktail attire. This is my own nod to our past when members often wore gowns to the Saturday night banquet where we inducted our new Board members. We will also be celebrating the 100th anniversary of the SI Kansas City, Missouri club. Did you know they were the 16th Soroptimist club to be chartered!

In this issue of the Spotlight you will find information on the Convention in Incheon, the high points of the Call to conference and updates on the activities of our clubs.

Until I see you in Kansas City, stay safe and warm. I'm always here if you need me.

Yours in friendship,

Governor Leigh

scrsoroptimist.org

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Let's Get Ready for Incheon!

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!

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.

On January 1, clubs received the \$825 mandatory convention club fee invoice that was sent to all club emails and automatically applied to your club account.

49th Biennial Convention News

UPDATE 1/6/2025: Thank you to the clubs who applied. SIA's Mandatory Club Convention Fee Relief application is now closed. Applications already submitted will be reviewed shortly, and clubs will be notified about their application status by March 2.

If your club would like to discuss a payment plan for the convention fee, or if you have any questions, please email siahq@soroptimist.org.

Convention Sponsorship Opportunities

As a sponsor of our biennial convention, you or your organization can support our mission and engage firsthand in the impact our members are making throughout the world! These special opportunities are open to members, clubs and businesses. Plus, each partner will receive special recognition and other benefits.

Picture Requests from your SCR Governor

I am asking all of our members to share pictures of past governors and charter members of our clubs. Pictures of the people our Region awards are named after are also requested. Norma Caldwell, Maxine Pease, Lou Kirby, or Lucy Keller. We would love to have a pictorial history of our Region to share during the 100th Region conference. Please submit to governor@scrsoroptimist.org with a note telling us who is pictured and what club they belong to. Please submit your pictures no later than April 1st.

YOUR EXPERTISE IS NEEDED. WORKSHOP PANEL REQUEST

Are you familiar with any of these apps? Do you use them regularly? Square, Venmo, Go Fund Me, apple pay, google wallet, samsung wallet or paypal? Would you be willing to share your experience in the workshop during the Region Conference? Our members are curious about other ways to accept payments as part of their fundraising effort. If you would like to be in on this panel discussion please email Governor Leigh at Governor@scrsoroptimist.org. Be sure and tell her which app or service you are knowledgeable about.

100th South Central Region Conference on April 24th-25th, 2026

THE CONFERENCE VENUE

Hilton Kansas City Airport

8801 NW 112th Street, Kansas City, MO 64153

Free breakfast up to 3 people per room ◊ Complimentary airport shuttle

Fitness room and pool ◊ Free parking (car must be on conference registration form)

Soroptimist Int'l Special Rate Expires March 31st, 2026

Booking Link:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?ctyhocn=MCIAPHF&groupCode=91M&arrivaldate=2026-04-22&departuredate=2026-04-26&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT>

Want an ADA-accessible room? Make your online reservation through the above portal. Then call 816-891-8900 to have the Hilton adjust your reservation.

Your stay Hilton Kansas City Airport Wed, Apr 22 – Sun, Apr 26, 2026 (4 nights)

Edit stay **22** APR WED **26** APR SUN 1 room, 1 guest **Special rates**

Step 1 of 4
Select a Room

Your stay with Hilton Hotels & Resorts includes
 Non-smoking rooms Airport shuttle On-site restaurant Indoor pool Outdoor pool Fitness center Pet-friendly rooms

Special rates Use Points & Money

Filter By: Connecting Rooms

Compare 2 rooms

Daily Mandatory Charge includes: Arena Fee

We're showing Soroptimist Internet rates.

2 rooms found. We're showing the average price per night.

2 Double Beds
[View room details](#)

- Sleeps 4
- Dual vanity
- Workspace

Quick Book
Soroptimist Internet **\$139**

1 King Bed
[View room details](#)

- Sleeps 3
- Dual vanity
- Workspace

Quick Book
Soroptimist Internet **\$139**



100th South Central Region Conference on April 24th-25th, 2026 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Registration fee before March 20th, 2026: \$30 per person

Registrations post-marked after March 20th: \$50 per person

**Please complete this form and mail with your club check,
payable to South Central Region, no later than March 20th, 2026 to:**

Marie Parker, Treasurer
SIKC 2026 Conference
18185 W. 94th Street
Lenexa, KS 66219

If additional space is needed, feel free to copy this form. Please print all required information.

Name	Registration received by 3/20/26: \$30.00	Registration effective 3/21/26: \$50.00	Friday Centennial Banquet \$73.00	Saturday Lunch \$44.00	Saturday Dinner \$60.00	Supply Make, Model & Lic # for free parking	First Time Attendee?	Total [\$177 All Meals + \$30 Registration = \$207) After 3/20/26 +\$20
President	prepaid	n/a						
Delegate	prepaid	n/a						
Delegate	prepaid	n/a						
Alternate Delegate								
Non-Delegates & Guests								
Totals								

If additional space is needed, feel free to copy this form. Please print all required information.

Please indicate food allergies/restrictions on the back of this page with name(s) and dietary notes

CLUB _____ PHONE/EMAIL _____

CLUB CONTACT PERSON _____

Silent Auction Donations Needed!

Help Make Our Silent Auction a Success

We're getting ready for our upcoming Silent Auction and we need your help!

We're looking for exciting items to include in our auction lineup.

Your generosity will directly support our

South Central Region Dreams In Action Awards.

What Can You Donate?

Gift baskets

Gift card

Jewelry

Tea or Coffee Baskets

Chocolates

Soroptimist Swag

Books and Journals

Artwork

Crafts or craft supplies

Regional Items

Wine and Spirits



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

Each club is asked to donate at least one item to the silent auction event.

REMEMBRANCE



A memorial tribute will be held on **Saturday, April 25, 2026**, in the memory of Members who have passed away since April 2024.

Please complete the form below and email it with a picture of your deceased person on or before **March 31, 2026**, to:

Cheri Nolle
Region Remembrance Chair
SI Greater St. Louis, Missouri
314.578.8510
cnollejd@gmail.com

Please provide the following information about the deceased member: any Club, District, Region, Federation, or International offices or positions; whether or not she was a Past President or Charter Member of your club; any other comments or information you would like to share about her.



SOROPTIMIST®
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SOUTH CENTRAL REGION REMEMBRANCE FORM	
Name of member to be remembered:	
Member of which Soroptimist Club:	
Year member joined the club:	
Number of years as a member:	
Charter Member:	
Soroptimist involvement (offices, committees, etc.):	
Personal information (occupation, children, etc.):	
When member passed away:	

Submitted by _____ **Name**

Club: _____

District: _____

CONFERENCE AGENDA

THURSDAY APRIL 23, 2026		
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Pre-Conference SCR Board Meeting	
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	SCR Board Dinner	
FRIDAY APRIL 24, 2026		
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	SCR Board Meeting	
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	SCR Board Luncheon	
12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration Open	Elevator Lobby
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Hospitality Open Silent Auction Set Up/Drop Off	
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Federation Visitor Workshop SIA Board Treasurer Gail Dekreon	
4:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Delegate Briefing on Bylaws Region Bylaws Chair Eileen Hildebrand & Governor Leigh Hedgpeth	
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Cash Bar	
6:00 p.m.	Come to Dinner Welcome by Mayor Protem	
6:15 p.m.	Inspiration Kay Stewart, SI Kansas City, MO Soroptimist Grace	
7:30 p.m. – 7:35 p.m.	Opening Ceremonies Governor Leigh Hedgpeth	
7:35 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.	Honoring our Country / Flag presentation Governor Elect Teresa Young	
7:45 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.	Federation Visitor Presentation SIA Board Treasurer Gail Dekreon	
8:45	Announcements	
9:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.	Hospitality and Silent Auction Open	

CONFERENCE AGENDA

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2026 BUSINESS SESSION	
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Registration
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Buffet Breakfast
9:00 a.m. – 9:20 a.m.	Business Session Convenes
	Inspiration Teresa Young, SI Plainview, TX
	Standing Rules Parliamentarian Freda Powell
	Credentials
	Appointments/ Agenda Governor Leigh Hedgpeth
	Minutes' Approval Region Secretary Kelly Landry
9:20 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Treasurer's Report Region Treasurer Kathy Newsom
9:30 a.m. – 9:40 a.m.	Budget Presentation and vote Region Finance Chair Tricia Elam
9:40 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.	Bylaws Change Proposals Region Bylaws Chair Eileen Hildebrand
9:50 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Break
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Directors Reports
	District I Bebee Thomas
	District II Jacque Sappington
	District III Shebra Hackett
10:30 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.	4 Pillars
	Membership Karen Ackerman
	Fundraising Sue Rea
	Public Awareness Kelly Fogarty
	Programs Governor Elect Teresa Young
11:50 a.m. – 12:00	Presentation of Slate of Officers Nominations Chair Rosemary Robinson
11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Break

CONFERENCE AGENDA

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 20256 AWARDS LUNCHEON		
12:30 p.m.	Inspiration Jacque Sappington, SI Carthage, MO Soroptimist Grace	
12:45 p.m. -1:15 p.m.	Live Your Dream Awards Region LYD Chair Michelle Radcliffe	
1:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.	Speaker Jassma Thomas	
1:45 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Recognitions Region Board, Federation Visitor	
	First Time Attendees Outstanding SCR members Governor Leigh Hedgpeth	
	Remembrance Remembrance Chair, Chéri Nolle	
2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Break	
2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Workshop – Fundraising accepting payments. Governor Leigh Hedgpeth	
4:00 p.m. -5:30 p.m.	Hospitality and Silent Auction open	
4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Former Governors Reception <i>By Invitation Only</i>	Boardroom

SATURDAY APRIL 25, 2026 BANQUET AND CLOSING		
6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Governors Reception (cash bar)	
6:30 p.m.	Inspiration Judy Brown, SI Austin, TX	
6:30 p.m.	Dinner is Served	
7:15 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.	Governors Presentation Governor Leigh Hedgpeth	
7:45 p.m. – 8:15 p.m.	SCR Awards Lucy Keller Dreams In Action Region secretary Kelly Landry	

CONFERENCE AGENDA

	Lou Kirby Lifetime Achievement Award	
	Public Awareness Olympics District III Director Shebra Hackett & Public Awareness Chair Kelly Fogarty	
	Laurel Society Pinning Region Fundraising Chair Sue Rea	
8:15 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Installation of Officers Former Governor Brenda Nipper	
8:30 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.	Invitation to 2027 Region Conference SI Rockwall, TX	
	Announcement 2028 & 2029 Region Conference Locations Region Invitations Chair Cindy Perkins	
	Silent Auction Closeout and Announcement of Winners	
	Announcements	
	Soroptimist Pledge / Closing Governor Leigh Hedgpeth	
8:45 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.	Hospitality	

Notice from Governor-elect Teresa Young

- **Governor-Elect Teresa Young is seeking help to fill some region chairs for the 2026-28 biennium. If you have an interest in serving in any of these roles, please reach out to Teresa at teresa.young@wbu.edu or by phone at (806) 239-8979.**
- **Spotlight Editor - This person gathers any news items from the region and puts together the quarterly newsletter.**
- **Invitations Chair - Works with clubs who wish to host future region conferences.**

Our chairs will also be needing help with district representatives in various areas, so be thinking about where you might want to serve for the biennium. Please reach out to Gov. Elect Teresa if you have an interest. Cell (806) 239-8979

Join Us and Save the Dates! INFO FROM SIA

Pull out your 2026 calendars and make note to join us at these upcoming events!

Together in Giving: How Clubs Strengthen the Soroptimist Mission!

The success of our Dream Programs is made possible by the dedicated efforts and generosity of clubs like yours. Join us for an engaging discussion on how Club Giving and Founders Pennies fuel our mission, measurable impacts, and ideas to enhance your club's contributions. Interpretation will be provided.

February 18, 2026

8:00-9:00 p.m. (ET)

5th Annual Tea Party & CSW NGO Parallel Event

Join SIA's President Sue Riney to learn more about the CSW70 theme, ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls. Interpretation will be provided.

March 18, 2026

8:30-9:30 p.m. (ET)

Federation Leaders Meeting

Our second federation leadership meeting is approaching. Join us to connect, learn, share insights and strengthen Soroptimist. Interpretation will be provided.

March 25, 2026

7:00-9:00 p.m. (ET)

2026 Leadership Round Table

Enhance your leadership skills and contribute to the ongoing growth and transformation of Soroptimist – now and in the future! This training is aimed at helping you grow and become a more effective leader in our vibrant community! Interpretation will be provided.

June 23, 2026

6:00-9:00 p.m. (ET)

49th Biennial Convention – Inspiring Dreams

Registration is Open!

Our 49th Biennial Convention [registration is open!](#) We are looking forward to an amazing event and seeing you in Incheon, South Korea.

Didn't get a chance to attend our launch party? Have questions about the registration process? Register for the convention with confidence and [watch the recording](#). We walk you step-by-step through the registration website, share tips so you don't miss key options or deadlines. Plus, it's interpreted in all languages.

Soroptimists UpliftHER Second Quarter Focus: Human Trafficking

January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month – a meaningful time to focus on projects that increase access to education for women and girls who have experienced trafficking. Clubs can participate in the quarterly project focus by sharing SIA posts and posting their own projects with the hashtag #SoroptimistsUpliftHER. email program@soroptimist.org with any questions.

SI Winfield, Kansas News

Community Giving



SI Winfield members Kimela Woods, Christina McDonald, Kim's granddaughter Millie, Donna Thompson and Tania Richardson purchased Christmas gifts for some Winfield USD 465 students.

Shoes were also purchased through the club's Little Soles program.

The gifts, wrapping paper and shoes were donated to the "Holiday Assistance Program",

SI Rockwall, Texas News (continued)

Club Members enjoy their Fall Retreat



L-R: Giovanna Psolka, Debbie Branch, Penny Maris, Sandy Webb, Jody Wright, Ariana Kistner, Karen Coughlin, Deanna Tucker, Jenni Hakes; Back row: Farrah Brabson, Mary Rodriguez, Bethany Janes, Jaqui Morris, Trisha Rea, Charisa Hauser, Delia Watts, Debbie Roan, Susan Edwards



Debbie Roan, Trisha Rea, Susan Edwards, Deanna Tucker, Giovanna Psolka, Jacqui Morris, Jenni Hakes, Mary Rodriguez, Danna Taylor



Debbie Roan wins! Deanna Tucker



Giovanna Psolka, Jacqui Morris, Mary Rodriguez



Jody Wright, Deanna Tucker, Debbie Roan, Susan Edwards



Jenni wins!!

SI Arkansas City, Kansas News

Fall Is Busy Fundraising Time

Ways & Means: Members worked on three main fundraising projects this fall. In late September a food concession stand was ran during The Last Run Car Show in partnership with Ark City Optimist Club with proceeds split. October 22-25 during Arkalalah, Soroptimist members took orders, prepared food, and collected payment for four days to earn money. A new vendor for nuts was located, orders taken, and delivered.



Dream Locally Committee At Work

Sweats, socks, underwear, and hygiene items were delivered to elementary schools and middle school early fall. The Dream Locally committee bought 10 frozen turkeys along with the foil pans for baking. We delivered them to Angels in the Attic for distribution to families in need for Thanksgiving. For committee members purchased groceries for two local families through Angels in the Attic so the families can have a delicious dinner on Christmas Day plus food for other meals.



A \$100 donation was given to Huxley's Halo of Hope after our November program meeting.



Dream Locally activities in photos: Top right – Items delivered to schools. Above – Christian and Tehillah Smith founders of Huxley's Halo of Hope presented our November program. Halo of Hope provides gift baskets filled with comfort items, resources, and reminders of hope to families experiencing pregnancy loss.

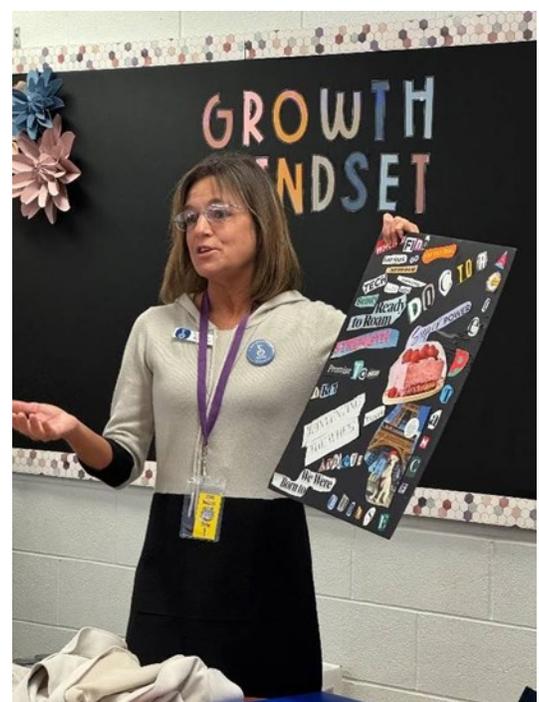
Top left – Sandy Smith, co-chair, delivers turkeys to Angels in the Attic. Bottom left – committee members Virginia Donaldson, Shelley Gardner, Cynde Feste, Pam Zimmerman, Sandy Smith, Top left – Sandy Smith, co-chair, delivers turkeys to Angels in the Attic. Bottom left – committee members Virginia Donaldson, Shelley Gardner, Cynde Feste, Pam Zimmerman, Sandy Smith, and Linda Neal purchased groceries for two local families.

SI Arkansas City, Kansas News (continued)

Dream It, Be It Program Launched With Great Results

The **Dream It, Be It** committee kicked off this year's program on November 15th at the Middle School during the MTSS (multi-tiered support system) period with a presentation by Kristi Shaw on the Japanese concept of Ikigai (purpose in life). In addition to working on vision boards, the 12 girls heard presentations from Krystian Caywood (former Miss Kansas) who spoke about embracing differences, inclusivity and kindness; Blanche Schmidt on small step goal setting in 8 areas of life; and Courtney Sendal about opportunities at WSU Tech in addition to demonstrating the WSU robotic dog. The 9 sessions (30 minutes each on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for 3 weeks) ended on December 4 with completion of their Vision Boards.

Nest semester sessions are slated to begin February 24—subject to school scheduling.



SI Rockwall, Texas News

Club Members joined the Rockwall County Library to celebrate their annual Christmas luncheon



Table decorated by Holly Lyons, Norma Morris & Amy Blumhardt



L-R: Holly Lyons, Norma Morris, Amy Blumhardt, Jacqui Morris, Giovanna Psolka, Debbie Roan, Linda Johnson, Mary Rodriguez



L-R: Back row - Mary Rodriguez, Danna Taylor, Delia Watts, Giovanna Poslka, Angela Furguson, Holly Lyons, Amy Blumhardt, Jacqui Morris, Norma Morris, Front row - Karen Straughan, Linda Johnson, Frances Roberts, Gail Scoggin, Rhonda Wright



L-R: Delia Watts, Holly Lyons, Mary Grace Frasier, Angela Furguson

SI Grand Prairie, Texas News

District III Director Shebra Hackett and Marilyn Ey attended SI-Rockwell's Black and White Casino Night fundraiser. We were impressed with their event and decided to "borrow" a few of their ideas for our fundraiser. During the fun filled evening Shebra won two baskets.



Shebra



Shebra, SI-Rockwell President Jody, Marilyn



Vice President Tami, Claudia

At our Honoring Her Sneaker Ball, Claudia Hermann was recognized as our Business Advancing Women award winner. Along with a trophy she received a one year SI-GP membership and has become a valuable club member.



President Dawn, Jenna

At one of our Program Meetings, Jenna Pecor spoke about her new endeavor, Faces of Grand Prairie (<https://www/facesofgrandprairie.org>). She was impressed with Soroptimist's Mission, applied for membership and was recently inducted.

SI Grand Prairie, Texas News (continued)



(back) Donna, Vivian, Tami, Debra SI-Dallas, Melinda, (front) SI-President Ginny, Shebra, Rebekah, Lala (SI-Dallas).

SI members wore Western digs while attending the Boots 'n Bandanas gala benefiting Camp Summit. Founded by SI-Dallas in 1947, the camp was designed for the physically disabled and developmentally delayed with the help of SI clubs including SI-Grand Prairie. In the 1990's the camp was turned over to the community which continues the mission set 80 years ago. The event featured Texas BBQ, auction items, Western music, and testimonials on how Camp Summit has benefited campers and their families.



Thanksgiving was a quiet, relaxing, yummy affair. Soroptimists and their family members gave thanks while enjoying each other's company.



Unable to attend a club event, non member Marketta Nimo donated food. How giving. She applied for membership and is now a member.

Family members attended our December GOTM (Girl of the Month). breakfast. They proudly supported the young ladies who were recognized by their school.



SI Grand Prairie, Texas News (continued)

Our Christmas gathering included a secret Santa gift exchange, catered food and fun games. A dance off was held for those who tied. The men's outlandish performances won the day.



Donna, Michelle, Dawn, Tami, Bre, Shebra, Pat, Dandreon, Reace, Marketta, Vivian, (seated) Kelly, Rebekah, Marilyn, Ling, Melinda, Detra



Ling, Donna, Shebra's husband



Reace's husband doing his sprinkler dance, and Kelly



President Dawn, Ginny, Debra, Lala, and photo of Nanell.

In January, members of former SI-Dallas were officially inducted into SI-Grand Prairie. We are so thrilled they are part of our team!

