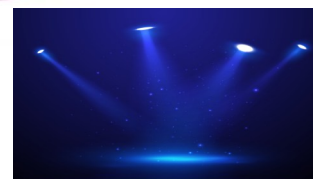




South Central Region Spotlight

May 2026



Governor Leigh's Message

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scrsoroptimist.org

Carolyn Holt - Editor
carolynholt@ymail.com
214-384-5580



Another South Central Region Conference is over. What a great turnout we had for this, the 100th South Central Region Conference. With over 122 attendees, a special video from Soroptimist International of the Americas President Sue Riney celebrating our 100 years, Federation visitor Gail Dekreon's workshop on leadership and the South Central workshop on payment options

for clubs, we learned several new things. The friendships, joy and support between our members, our clubs and your Region board was exhilarating. What a way to finish up these past two years. SI Kansas City did a great job of hosting and gave us a weekend we won't soon forget.

I want to thank each and everyone of you for your support and help during my term as your Governor. Your incoming board for the 2026-2028 biennium will continue to support our clubs and grow our Region. They are a strong group of dedicated Soroptimists, striving to support our mission.

Until the next time we meet, may you all stay active in your clubs, your Districts and your Region.

Governor Leigh Hedgpeth

New 2026-2028 Region Board

Stephanie Beaty, DII Director

Kelly Landry, Region Secretary

Teresa Young, Governor

Bebbe Thomas, DI Director

Kathy Newsom, Region Treasurer

Shebra Hackett, DIII Director

Jacque Sappington, Governor Elect

Eileen Hildebrand, Parliamentarian



Maxine Pease Membership and Growth Award.

District II. With a 1.05% increase



Gail Dekeron, Federation Secretary/Treasurer

Jacque Sappington, District II Director

Leigh Hedgpeth, Region Governor

Lou Kirby Lifetime Achievement Award

Former Governor Brenda Nipper, SI Amarillo



Laurel Lottery Winner

Petra Carrillo SI Grand Prairie



Already a Laurel Society member. She bounced to the next level!

SI Winfield, Kansas News

A Beautiful New Chapter for Cowley County Families!

The March 28, 2026 Community Baby Shower was a huge success! 131 community members joined at Cowley College to celebrate the "New Chapters" beginning in their lives. The Impact for the community was:

131 total participants (including 49 parents/expecting moms).

34 Criбетtes® were given to families who completed our life-saving Safe Sleep training.

Critical Need: 7 of those families shared that they would not have had access to a safe, clean crib without this event.

25 Community Agencies provided face-to-face support and resources.

40+ Door Prizes awarded!

Cowley County Early Childhood Collaborative, Inc and the planning committee (representing 10 local agencies) organized the event.

Sponsors and event partners:

Breakfast Spread & Swag Bags: **Legacy Regional Community Foundation**

Picture Book Partners: **United Way of the Plains & Child Start**

Photo Booth: Gala Glam & **City-Cowley County Health Department**

Media: **1025 The River** , **KSOK Cowley Post** , BobFM

General: **William Newton Hospital & Soroptimists of Winfield**

Plus, program supporters:

Safe Sleep: **Kansas Children's Service League** & Child Start

Crafts & Activities: **Arkansas City Public Library** , **Winfield Public Library • Winfield, KS**, and **Cowley College** Early Childhood Education program

We are so proud to help our newest residents get the safe, healthy start they deserve! ❤️

SI Plainview, TX News

Walk For Women

Several Soroptimist members got together and participated on March 14 in the third annual Walk for Women in celebration of International Women's Day and Women's History Month. This was the first time that Soroptimist Plainview had participated. Nine members took different routes around the downtown area of Plainview during the Second Saturday monthly festivities. Wearing Soroptimist labeled/logged attire, they were able to raise awareness for the Soroptimist mission by reaching out and engaging with the community. We also promoted our spring flower sales! We talked to people we otherwise may not have met and made new friends and sold some flowers. It was a beautiful (almost) spring day.



**Walk for
Women**
powered by
 SOROPTIMIST®



SI Plainview, TX News (continued)

Dream it Be It

We had a 1-day conference for Dream It Be It on March 11 from 9:00—3:00 at the Plainview ISD Board Room. We were able to incorporate all 7 sessions of the curriculum throughout the day. We had 36 girls that attended, ages ranging from 15-18, along with eight Soroptimist members who volunteered time on the day of the event. It was a huge success! We had a great turn out, 4 impactful professional women speakers, and all the supplies needed for activities designed to inspire growth and long term career goals. The curriculum SIA gives is so very helpful! It's like a whole playbook. The reviews the girls gave us were complimentary and useful for future planning. Thank you to all who assisted on the day of the event, helped collect supplies or packing the gift bags for the attendees. We could not have done it without you!



SI Plainview, TX News (continued)



SI Plainview, TX News (continued)

Live Your Dream

Thursday January 15 at 6:00 pm was the Awards Banquet, held on the Wayland Baptist University campus. We honored 4 very deserving young women and each spoke and shared a piece of their story. Not a dry eye remained.

(pictured left to right) Reynelda McDonald received the Craig-Mitchell Award, given in honor of our local club charter members. Alanna Cornell, Margarita Fonseca and Vannessa Martinez all received a Live Your Dream Awards.



Arkansas City, Kansas News

Soroptimist Members Impacting the Arkansas City Community Are Honored



Pumpkin Pants Ranch, co-owned by Soroptimist member Shelley Gardner, was selected as the 2025 Business of the Year at the Arkansas City Chamber banquet held on February 7th in the Burford Theatre. Shelley and husband John opened the business in the fall of 2023 and have rapidly grown into a community-centered destination bringing tourism and

Kelly Dillner (on left), Soroptimist member, won the 2025 Chamber Champ Award given to an individual who is a cheerleader for the chamber and the business community.



Melanie Beltz (shown above on left) organized the food concession stand flanked by members Angie Bruce, Mendy Pfannenstiel, and Sarah Standerfer. Bottom photo are Sandy Smith, Virginia Donaldson, Karen Zeller, and Edie Sumner ready to take orders.

All Aboard! Soroptimists Fuel the 11th Annual Train Show

The whistle blew and the crowds gathered Saturday, March 21st, for the **11th Annual Train Show**. While enthusiasts from across the region marveled at the intricate layouts and browsed over 50 vendor tables, our Soroptimist members were busy behind the scenes ensuring no one went hungry.

The Agri-Business Building was buzzing with energy, and our concession stand was a central hub for the day's excitement and turnout was steady throughout the day! Attendees enjoyed a hearty menu featuring chicken and noodles, which were generously donated by dedicated members. Alongside the comfort food, we served up classic hot dogs, fresh popcorn, sodas, and delicious brownies for those with a sweet tooth.

Events like these are a wonderful reminder of the power of community. The funds raised from our concessions will go directly toward supporting our local programs.

A Heartfelt Thank You:

To every member who donated ingredients or supplies, spent their Saturday serving with a smile, or helped with the cleanup—thank you! Your time and generosity are what make our impact possible.

Arkansas City, Kansas News (continued)

Dream It Be It Program Finishes with Celebration!

Soroptimist Arkansas City offered a pilot program through our Dream It Be It Program for 20 young ladies from AC Middle School. The celebration of two semesters of mentorship/empowerment training ended with a very successful luncheon and egg hunt on March 26th. Thank you to Shelley Gardner for allowing us to use Pumpkin Pants Ranch barn and for taking the girls on a “ranch walk.” Thanks to Pam Crain for taking care of all the arrangements for food, tableware and decorations. Thank you to Tricia Blatchford, Melanie Beltz and Karen Zeller for shopping for candy and prizes, and for filling and hiding eggs. Appreciation to Candace Stephens for helping with last minute preparations and lunch plating. But without Rakiyah Taylor, DIBI would still be in the dream stage. Thanks to Rakiyah for handling the tee shirts and arrangements at school so the girls could attend. Also Jill Hunter and Angie Bruce were able to attend and help serve lunch, thank you.



Dr. Brook Istis spoke on turning failure into success during DIBI sessions held at Middle School

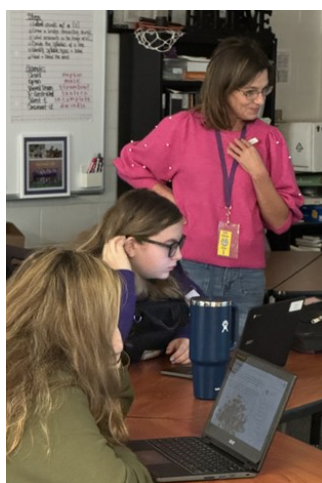


Photo on left is President Tricia leading a session in second semester.

Other 5 photos are from March 26th celebration at Pumpkin Pants Ranch.



SI Rockwall, Texas News

SI Rockwall is a long-standing supporter of Children's Advocacy Center for Rockwall County.



The Children's Advocacy Center for Rockwall County is an interagency, multi-disciplinary partnership dedicated to providing intervention, hope and healing for children and families affected by abuse, trauma, and violence, and to the prevention of child abuse through education and training.

Every April during Child Abuse Prevention Month, Children's Advocacy Center for Rockwall County (CACRC) initiates our Go Blue for Kids Campaign to highlight and make an extra effort to create awareness of the importance of strengthening families and preventing child abuse.

Blue is the official color to raise awareness about child abuse and we encourage all Rockwall County residents to join us in our efforts to Go Blue for Kids to show that our community cares about keeping children safe from abuse.

Please pray for the protection of children in Rockwall County.

- Pray that God would bring an end to child abuse.
- Pray that children would have the courage to speak out about abuse they may be facing.
- Pray for the victims who have come forward to feel supported and loved as they heal from the wounds of abuse.
- Pray for wisdom for parents to recognize the potential for and impact of child abuse.
- Pray for strength and stamina for those who investigate and seek to eliminate child abuse in this county.
- Pray that God would change the hearts of perpetrators of child abuse.
- Pray that the community would become more aware of the impact of child abuse here and that we would become more supportive of the victims who come forward.

SI Rockwall, Texas News

The Pink Bag Project



L-R Mary Rodriquez, Janet Patrick
& Rhonda Wright

The SI Rockwall Pink Bag project established by Rhonda Wright, stuffs and delivers 50 pink bags semi-annually for women who are undergoing treatment at the Rockwall Oncology Center. SI members provide pick-me-up items for the bags, such as lotion, lip balm, nail care items, etc. and encouraging notes.

The Diaper Bag Project

Twelve diaper bags filled with diapers, bibs, onesies, lotion, burb cloths, etc., have been delivered to Selah's Creek Pregnancy Center for first time moms. The SI members provide the baby care items. The Club pays to add the "What to Expect When You're Expecting" book.

This project was also established by Rhonda Wright.



L-R: Brooke Conley & Gail Scoggin

Joplin, Missouri News



Comedy for Camp 2026 More than 200 community members gathered for Comedy for Camp 2026 on February 20th, an evening of laughs with an even bigger purpose: supporting Camp Soroptimist in Joplin. With 205 attendees, the event featured opener Jody Fuller and headliner Kevin Farley, who brought the energy and helped make the fundraiser a standout success.

Thanks to generous sponsors, donors, and guests, the fundraiser netted \$100,535 to directly fund Camp Soroptimist—a week-long summer camp offered free of charge to foster kids in our county. At camp, kids get a safe place to make friends, try new activities, and—most importantly—forget their worries for a while and simply be a kid.



Joplin, Missouri News

Dream It, Be It: Career Exploration and Goal Setting SI Joplin presented Dream It, Be It at Joplin High School on April 15, welcoming 19 high school girls for a full day of career exploration and goal setting. Five Soroptimist members presented interactive sessions and led hands-on activities. Several more members helped facilitate group discussions, and a panel of local business women shared their paths, lessons learned, and advice for students soon heading into their senior year. By the end of the day, participants left with new ideas, greater confidence, and concrete next steps for turning dreams into plans.



SI Grand Prairie, Texas News



Seated Dawn. Caroline, Tami, standing Dandreone, Liz, Melinda, Donna, Kelly V, Debby, guest Amber, Claudia, Tarrance, Mary, Detra

Purchasing voting tickets help Lifeline for Families raise funds. Numerous local organizations compete for the bragging rights by donating and serving their soup. Soups On 4 Love is quite the tasty fundraiser.



Melinda, guest Amber, Donna, Tami, Ling, Petra, Shebra, Claudia, Tarrance, Marilyn



Tami, Debbie, Amber and Marilyn holding Angela's picture

Carolina Selvidge from Chili spoke about every day diplomacy. How we use our words matter. She shared how it's ok to agree to disagree, to analyze before responding, and always try to find rapport.

Amber Alexander was welcomed into our club along with SI-Dallas transfers Debbie Davis, and former SCR Governor Angela Standish (via zoom).

SI Grand Prairie, Texas News (continued)

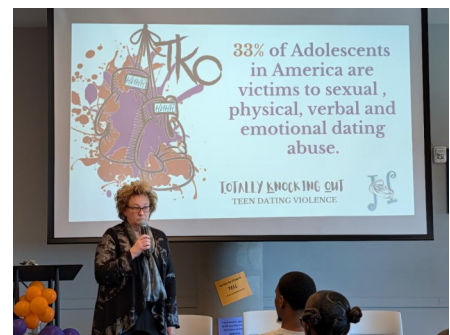
Our club partners with Help Us Help Her to present the Teen Dating Violence event. President Dawn and her mother, Debby Blubaugh, spoke on losing Dawn's twin, Christine Blubaugh 25 years ago. Christine's ex-boyfriend killed her and then killed himself. This led to the Christine Blubaugh Act, requiring Texas schools to teach about domestic abuse, teenage dating violence, and child abuse.



Shebra, Amber, Marilyn



Dawn, Debby, Marilyn, Dandron



Debby

In March we celebrated women and girls' achievements at our Honoring Her Sneaker Ball. The event includes trophies, certificates, monetary awards, dancing, dinner, a 360 photo area along with live and silent auctions. Numerous LYD awards were presented. Local ladies recognized and the President's Award was earned by Tami. As always Dandreon was our wonderful emcee. Kelly F and Ginny made photo taking of guest's outfits and sneakers a breeze.



Carol Bell (Liggett), Liggett Scholarship winner, Dawn



Front; Alicia, Kelly F, Donna, Detra. Marilyn. Rear; Tarrance, Pat, Ginny, Melinda, Dandreon, Drawn, Ling, Tami, Doranna, Vivian, Shebra, Reace, Petra



Tami & Dawn

SI Grand Prairie, Texas News (continued)

Lori Skinner shared how she and others at Isiaha 117 House make a huge difference in the lives of children. Isaiah volunteers provide items and comfort to those children removed by Child Protective Service from an unsafe environment. To learn more visit www.Isiaha117House.com



Marilyn, Lori



L-R, Donna, Debbie, Lori, Jeannie, Detra. Standing Vivian, Doranna, Dawn, Debby, Liz. Shebra, Ling, Pat, Melinda, Tami, Ginny

In April we held a new DIBI career workshop at the Grand Prairie Airport. It included teenage girls, club members presenting Soroptimist modules, women panelists, a presentation and tour by a young woman flight instructor.



Teen group

Below: Aviator with plane and teens



SI Grand Prairie, Texas News (continued)



At the Women's Club luncheon in Grand Prairie, Marilyn shared Soroptimist's Vision and Mission, Soroptimist history and how our members help women, girls and our community.



At our club's Information Dinner Donna spoke on Soroptimist History, Ginny on Live Your Dream, Dandreion on Dream It Be It, Shebra on Our Programs, and Reace on "Why Soroptimist?" Getting to know you games were a hit. Six guests are interested in attending our meetings and events, and hopefully becoming members. Enjoy the photo collage.



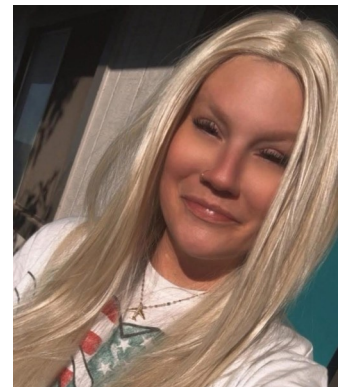
SI Grand Prairie, Texas News (continued)

Eleven club members attended the South Central Region Conference. Ling Clifton received recognition as our club's Outstanding Soroptimist Member. A minute of silence honored our Live Your Dream award winner, Andrea Perkowski. She passed away during treatment for cancer. Rest in peace, Andrea.



Front row: Ginny, Liz, Detra, Debra; Back row: Kelly, Dawn, Shebra, Marilyn, Tami, Petra & Angela

Our club received the SCR Public Awareness Olympics Bronze medal. We have dynamic members who'll want to win the Gold. Watch out. Petra reached a new Laurel Society level due to her previous donations and having her ticket drawn! Lucky, lucky lady.



Andera



Dawn with Ling's Certificate



L-R: Governor Leigh, Dawn, Kelly & Shebra



Petra, Governor Leigh, Gale, Paula ticket seller extraordinaire.