

The Signpost

Making a Difference for Women and Girls for 97 Years

Soroptimist International of Kansas City
South Central Region



SOROPTIMIST® July 2023

Investing in Dreams



The Signpost

President's Message
Margaret Smith, MD



Welcome to our 2023-2024 club year!

Last week we celebrated the first day of summer and the installation of our new officers. Next week we celebrate the fourth of July! As we step into the new year remember the words from immediate past-president Melanie Simpson, "it takes all of us", as we look forward to a time of renewal and revitalization.

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We can do this together!

Margaret L. Smith
President



Kay Stewart, Editor

T-shirts are coming!

Grace Boswell is arranging to pick them up and hand them out at our July 19 business meeting.

Be sure to come so you can get yours!



www.kcsoroptimist.org

Soroptimist Kansas City Foundation
Soroptimist International
of Kansas City
1221 West 103rd #224
Kansas City, MO 64114

July Calendar



Board Meeting

July 12, 2023

6:00 p.m.

Shepherd's Center
9200 Ward Parkway
Kansas City, MO 64114

Foundation Meeting

July 17, 2023

6:00 p.m.

Shepherd's Center
9200 Ward Parkway
Kansas City, MO 64114

Business Meeting

July 19, 2023

6:00 p.m.

O'Neill's Restaurant
9417 Mission Road
Leawood, KS 66206



July Birthdays

Mysti Meiers July 4

Melanie Simpson July 17

Amelia Earhart July 24

Tanya Johannes July 26

July Business Meeting

Wednesday July 19, 2023

O'Neill's Restaurant

9417 Mission Road

Leawood, KS 66206

5:30 p.m. Social Hour

6:00 p.m. Dinner

6:30 p.m. Business Meeting

Menu

BLEU PINE SALAD

Peanuts, oranges, tomatoes, red onions, red pepper, scallions, crispy wontons, and bleu cheese crumbles. Served with honey citrus vinaigrette.

Dinner roll.

Brownie & Cookie Tray

Cost - \$22

(payable at the door)

Program

Ms. Maura (Mo) Orpin

Executive Director

Don Bosco Centers

RSVP to Marie Parker at
attendance@kcsoroptimist.org
no later than Friday July 14.



Committee News

Last month, your Community Service committee served dinner to the families and staff of hospice patients at the Kansas City Hospice and Palliative Care House. Danielle Sidney pulled together a really nice event that allowed the families to relax a little and have a nice meal. The Mexican Fiesta we prepared was a big hit.



L-R: Caitlin Miller, Jerri Cofran, Grace Boswell, Norma McKelvy, Margaret Smith, Melanie Simpson, Tanya Johannes, Marcia Boutz, Kay Stewart and Doug Simpson.

Thank you to the staff for hosting us.



Installation of Officers

After enjoying social time together and a delicious dinner at Hereford House, nine SIKC members, who were elected to serve on our Board and Foundation, were installed in at our Installation Ceremony on June 21, 2023. Those members are:

Board Officers: Margaret Smith-President, Lynn LeCount-President Elect, Heather Rollins-Secretary, Angie Guynes-Director, Mysti Meiers-Director, Grace Boswell-Treasurer.

Foundation Trustees: Candy Routledge (2024), Jerri Cofran (2026), Marie Parker (2024), Danielle Sidney (2026), Tanya Johannes (2026), Marcia Boutz (2025)



President Melanie conducting the installation of our new board.

Presenting incoming President Margaret with her president's pin.



Installing our two newest Directors, Angie Guynes and Mysti Meiers.

Melanie liked her president's gift.





Enjoying our activities.



President Margaret sharing her plans for the upcoming year.



President-elect Lynn LeCount, President Margaret, Immediate Past President, Melanie Simpson.



Lynn LeCount showing off her little Soroptimist "doll" presented by Jerri Cofran to the new board and Foundation trustees.

Tanya Johannes presented roses to all.

Sharing some fun....



Losing Norma....

Editor's note: Norma Tilton was a wonderful member and mentor for all in our club. After several years of declining health, she passed away on April 23, 2023.

Norma was a member of SI Kansas City for 40 years. She served on every committee and even started an adhoc committee "Soroptimists for Life". Since our club has been around for almost a hundred years, it stood to reason there were always women who had served for a long, long time but couldn't really make it to meetings and serve on committees like they had in the past. They were such good friends and wanted to have a way to meet occasionally to continue that friendship. Soroptimists for Life was formed and anyone who wanted to come was welcome. They met at Waid's in Prairie Village at noon once a month for many years.

Whoever could come, did, and those that couldn't make it came another time. There was no business, no commitment, just camaraderie and keeping up with each other. I enjoyed getting away from the office once in a while to join them.

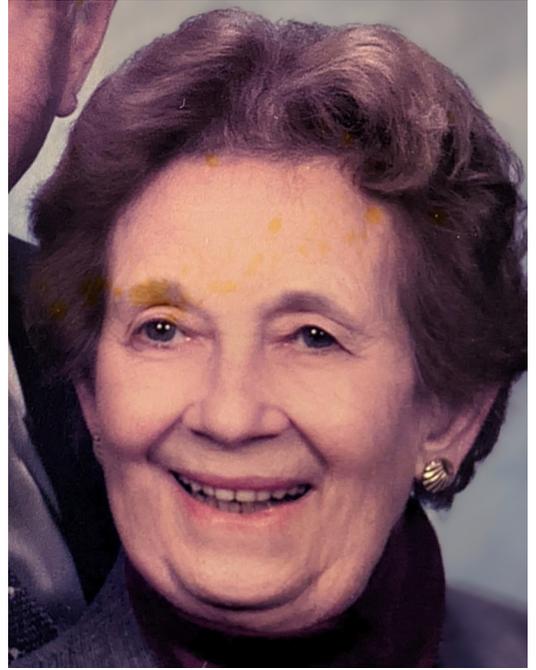
Norma was part of what I always thought of as "The Old Guard". She knew all the history and traditions of Soroptimist and believed in our mission passionately.

During her decline, I kept in touch with her with phone calls and when she could no longer manage the phone, little notes and cards in the mail. Her daughter Linda asked me to speak at the memorial. I was honored. Below is a note from Linda.

"Dear Kay, Thank you again for speaking at Mom's service. She so loved the Soroptimist Club! It was one of her great joys to "grow" young women into a successful life. I learned a great deal about her as you spoke. It was a joy to have so many from the Soroptimist Club come to share that moment with us. Linda"

I was very touched to find that Linda had our Soroptimist Pledge printed on the back of the program. I read it aloud to the congregation. Norma lived by it.

She is missed....



Member News

On June 22, The Black Achiever's Society of Greater Kansas City and SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) selected Heather Rollins as Achiever of the Year. She received her award at their 49th Annual Black Achievers in Business and Industry Awards Ceremony.

Congratulations, Heather!



Norma McKelvy is traveling again!



Nueva Gorgona, Panama



El Valle, a city in the crater of an extinct volcano, Yikes!

From SIA...

As we are getting ready to celebrate our 100th anniversary, you should find this article about SI New York City of interest.

June 28, 2023

100 Years of Service: SI/New York City, NY (North Atlantic Region)

Congratulations to SI/New York City, NY (North Atlantic Region), who celebrated the 100th anniversary of its chartering on June 27, 1923!

The New York City club was the sixth Soroptimist club formed and the fifth chartered directly by Stuart Morrow. It was also the last U.S. club he chartered for several years, as he turned his attentions across the Atlantic in London and Paris before returning to America.

Unlike the clubs that preceded it, information about SI/New York City's chartering is a bit of a mystery. Perhaps because the city was so large with so much happening, there is little information available now in publicly available newspapers. The only news story found from the chartering period is a *New York Times* article published on June 21, 1923, which announced the election of the club's first officers. There were 102 charter members.

The club's officers were an impressive group, and many had deep associations with other woman-focused organizations.



Mary Rutter Towle

- Charter president, Mary Rutter Towle, an attorney, was an assistant U.S. district attorney, and was the first woman to hold that position in a federal judicial district east of the Mississippi. A suffragist, she served as the general counsel for the National American Woman Suffrage Association from 1913 through 1919.
- Virginia Wheat, the first vice president, came from the New York School for Secretaries.
- Second vice president Grace Thompson Seton was a writer using the pen name Dorothy Dodge and vice president of the National Penwomen. Grace was also a former suffragist who served as president of the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association during the push for the 19th amendment in the United States.
- Third vice president, Sara Coe, an author, was active with the New York State Federation of Women's Clubs and the League of Women Writers; she was also known as one of the social leaders of New York society at that time.

SI New York City, NY

- Rose Bingham, a public accountant, served as treasurer.
- Helen Bridges, a stenographer, was the recording secretary. Helen would go on to be the first secretary of the American Federation of Soroptimist Clubs (SIA's first name) when the federation was first formed in 1928.

However illustrious a group of members, the club's 1935 history makes clear there were serious internal difficulties almost immediately. Helen Ball, the club's president in 1935 wrote: "During the first year there was considerable dissension in the club and it was so bad that a few members decided to disorganize for the purpose of getting rid of five members they did not wish. The 102 charter members, therefore, were lost..."

In an unusual circumstance, a second charter was presented to the club by Stuart Morrow upon its re-organization in October 1924, and shows 35 charter members. However, this re-charter is not otherwise reflected in the early records accumulated by the federation's first historian, Helena Gamble.

After this re-charter, the club stabilized and flourished. In the late 1920s, it echoed many other early Soroptimist clubs and started significant work in the realm of women's employment issues.

Later Dora S. Lewis, a professor at Hunter College who was elected club president in 1951, went on to serve as the federation's president from 1960 to 1962.

From the promise of its original 1923 chartering, and its unusual re-chartering fifteen months later, the club continues to flourish in its service to the women and girls of the New York area.

SIA Headquarters sends its congratulations to all the members of SI/New York City — past and present—on achieving this noteworthy anniversary!



*Dora Lewis, SI/New York City, NY,
member and 1960-1962 SIA President*

Speaking of Women's History

Amelia Earhart's birthday is June 24



If you haven't had a chance to trek up to Atchison to see the Amelia Earhart Hangar Museum, PLEASE plan to do it soon.
This small woman didn't let gender, age, or social standing get in her way of reaching for the stars.
She was amazing!

