June 2026

Soroptimist International of La Mesa

SOROPTIMIST

A global women's organization whose members work to improve the lives of women & girls through programs leading to social & economic empowerment.

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President Lisa's Message

June President's Letter

As summer begins, it offers a wonderful opportunity to step back, recharge, and renew. The slower pace of the season reminds us that rest is valuable, too. Summer gives us time to reconnect with family and friends, enjoy longer days, explore new experiences, and simply pause for a breath before the next busy season begins. Rejuvenation is not a pause from purpose, it is what allows us to return with fresh energy, creativity, and enthusiasm.

I hope each of you takes time this summer to celebrate all that you helped accomplish this year. Be proud of the difference you have made "in home, in society, and in business." Your dedication strengthens not only our organization, but also the spirit of service that inspires others to become involved far beyond our club.

While many of us will enjoy moments of relaxation this summer, we will also be busy preparing for another exciting year ahead. Plans are already underway for our signature events, service projects, and social activities. Looking ahead, I am excited for all the coming year will bring. New ideas, new opportunities, and continued fellowship await, and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to move forward together.

Until then, may your summer be filled with rest, joy, sunshine, and many well-deserved moments of renewal.

Thank you for all you do, not only for Soroptimist, but also for the many organizations and communities you so generously support.

With gratitude,
President Lisa

UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

Business Meeting: June 4, 2026 (7:30 am @ Denny's)
Board Meeting: June 18, 2026 (5:00 pm on Zoom)
Summer Planning Meeting & Installation: August 1(alternate date of Aug. 8).

Soroptimist International Foundation: "Greening Our Horizons"

Funded and supported by Soroptimist International, **Club Nairobi Central has launched an ambitious pan-African initiative aimed at empowering women and girls as environmental leaders.** Beginning in Kenya, the project addresses the growing environmental degradation witnessed across Africa, such as deforestation, soil erosion, and biodiversity loss. At its core, the initiative promotes the planting of indigenous trees, fruits, and vegetables, linking environmental restoration with food security, nutrition, health, and poverty reduction.

Recognising that women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change, the project focuses on building their capacity through hands-on education in agroforestry, sustainable agriculture, and water conservation techniques like rainwater harvesting and drip irrigation. Over the next three years, the goal is to plant 500,000 native trees and edible plants across five regions in Africa. Through facilitated workshops, participants will gain the knowledge to care for trees, grow food sustainably, and become environmental stewards in their communities.

The project will also engage communities through seasonal awareness campaigns using powerful messages such as "plant a tree, grow a forest" and "plant a fruit tree, feed your family." **These campaigns aim to inspire action, boost visibility, and mobilise support using local and social media.** A strong advocacy component will work to influence local and national environmental policies.

Key aims of the project include empowering women to lead climate action, increasing green cover to improve air quality and ecosystem resilience, and integrating agriculture and forestry for long-term environmental and economic benefit. Monitoring and evaluation systems will track tree survival and community impact, ensuring continuous learning and scalability. **Ultimately, "Greening Our Horizons" strives to uplift women, restore the environment, and inspire a sustainable future—led by women, for the benefit of all.**

SI Internation Website

WHAT IS THE SOROPTIMIST CHAT LINE?

If you can, I'd like you to imagine you were back at the beginning of 1997! At that time had you ventured onto 'the internet'? I seem to recall there were two ISPs: AOL and CompuServe.

In February 1997 I had invited two SI Executives to visit. They were interested to see exactly what I was doing on the computer –involving contact with my fellow Rotarians around the world. Hilary immediately recognised the potential for Soroptimist – to extend International Goodwill and Understanding. **She challenged me to provide and maintain an 'on-line' facility that would be in harmony with and enhance the work of Soroptimist.**

I set up a pilot scheme and this was launched in October 1997. Membership soon rose and declined as work and family circumstances changed. However, once a Chat Liner – always a Chat Liner! Today, despite Facebook and other social media platforms there are still over 200 members.

Our first such event was the **Chat Line Breakfast** at the International Convention in Helsinki in 1999. Can you imagine over 60 women who had become friends on the internet - meeting each other for the first time? It was a very noisy event – exchanging real – not cyber hugs.

The Chat Line Quilt

Since the beginning we have initiated many exciting and worthwhile projects – the meeting in Helsinki was the beginning of our 'Chat Line Quilt'. Fabric squares were given out and members were invited to produce a square to represent their Clubs, Region or Union. A member in Alaska who arranged for the quilt to be sewn.

It commenced its journey around the Soroptimist world - raising awareness of the scourge of landmines – and raising money for **'Limbs for Life'** – the Soroptimist Quadrennial Appeal with our partner the International Committee of The Red Cross. 10,000 Quilt Postcards and 1,000 small bears were sold around the world for The Limbs for Life Project.

The Chat Line Soropti-Sheep Project

In September 2000, the first club in Mongolia was chartered in Ulan Baatar. Chat Liner Sachiko from Japan learned that remote people affected by drought had lost their livestock and were at risk of starvation. Led by Sachiko the Chat Line started raising funds. We donated over 100 sheep (and 2 rams). The village of Mogod had were 37 single-mother families and had no animals. Recipients promised to increase the number of sheep as quickly as possible.

In 2001 a daughter of a member of SI Ulan Bataar was diagnosed with leukemia. A request went out to Chat Liners and almost immediately Annemarie, a doctor and Soroptimist from Germany responded. Her Club raised the money to purchase the drugs the child needed and transportation to Germany for treatment. German Clubs, Chat Liners (and many of their Clubs) and members around the world raised funds, and by February 2002 we knew the child would survive and with her mother she returned home that June. Her return visits to Lubeck for follow-up appointments were also funded.

AIDS orphans produced blankets sent to Vaththumo and to other AIDS orphanages in South Africa.

(Continued on next page)

(Chat Line continued)

Our girls

Chat Liner, Iona Sacks (the President of SI Lion's Head in South Africa) told us about two young AIDS orphans who lived in dreadful circumstances in a township. They had no home, no care and were in desperate need. The SI Lion's Head Club raised money to provide a small home in the township where they could live with a relative - and be supported by their Social Worker. The Club covered other items including shoes and clothing, but more monies were required to cover costs including food, education, and an annual visit their grandmother in The Transkei.

We employed grandmothers in South Africa who were caring for grandchildren orphaned by AIDS – they produced beaded AIDS badges. Before long they were producing a range of beaded items including Angels and Christmas tree ornaments , it just went on and on. These items were brought to the SIGBI Federation Conference each year by delegates from South Africa. They were sold across the world by Chat Liners and the money sent to SI Lion's Head to provide education for our girls.

The two words that have epitomised Soroptimist for me over the past 44 years, have been **Service and Friendship**. Through our Chat Line we have definitely extended the opportunity for service in different parts of the world. In addition, through the friendships that developed, we have provided incredible opportunities to visit each other and learn of different cultures. **All under the umbrella of Soroptimism - our amazing international organisation – women who have worked since 3 October 1921 to change the world and are still transforming the lives of women and girls.**

Excerpts from: Kate Moore MBE The Soroptimist Chat Line kate@kate-george.co.uk
If requesting to join The Chat Line, please email Kate, giving your name, Club, Region, Federation

Congratulations to Felicity Fierro our Live Your Dream Award Winner for graduating from San Diego State University with a Psychology Degree.

As a third-generation single mother, Felicity has made it her mission to break cycles that once defined her family's story. Through many personal obstacles, she made the courageous decision to choose safety, education, and opportunity not only for herself, but to model strength and self-worth for her daughters.

She intends to continue her studies in a Marriage & Family Therapy program following her bachelor's degree. Her lived experience fuels her calling: to serve women and children facing foster care, homelessness, abuse, and survival-mode living.

Upcoming Events

SOROPTIMIST®
Investing in Dreams

Save the Date!

Thanks For Giving

BRUNCH

Mark your calendars early! Join **Soroptimist International of La Mesa** at our annual Thanks For Giving Brunch. More information and formal invitation to follow. You don't want to miss this!

Sunday, November 15, 2026
Southwestern Yacht Club
2702 Qualtrough St, San Diego, CA 92106

Invitation to Follow

President Lisa's Monthly Reminders:
SILM Members: Don't forget to record your In-Kind donations to our club this month! Click this link to list all monetary or service hour contributions to our club.

We've got a date! Looking for your copy of the SILM Club Calendar? Click this link for the most updated calendar of events.

SI La Mesa Members Birthdays

June 13 - Elena Totten

June 15 - June Bredestege

2018-2019 SOROPTIMIST CLUBGIVING We Support Women & Girls

2019-2020 SOROPTIMIST CLUBGIVING We Support Women & Girls

2020-2021 SOROPTIMIST CLUBGIVING We Support Women & Girls

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Soroptimist is a global women's organization whose members volunteer to improve the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment. Approximately 80,000 Soroptimist in 130 countries and territories support community-based and global projects benefiting women and girls. The organization is particularly concerned with providing women and girls access to education, as this is the most effective path to self-determination.

The name Soroptimist means "best for women" and that's what the organization strives to achieve. Soroptimists are women at their best working together to help other women to be their best.

Business Meeting - First Thursday of each Month - 7:30 am at Denny's on Fletcher Parkway.

Program Meetings will be announced one month before occurring.

Third Thursday of each Month—Committee Meeting - As needed

Notes: Only one meeting is held in the months of July and August—date to be determined by club President

Scribbles Editor: Linda Newell - Contact: scribbles@silamesa.org

Officers, Board Members and Delegates - 2025-2026

President: Lisa McCully

President-Elect/Fundraising: Linda Barbod

Vice-President/Programs of Service: Open

Recording Secretary: Felis Wolven

Treasurer: Savannah Henderson

Corresponding Secretary: Kristen Frelke

Past President: Linda Newell

Director - One Year: Becky Burgstiner

Director - Two Years: Elena Totten

Delegate - One Year: Frances Wolven

Delegate - Two Years: Sara Yates

If you wish to unsubscribe to this newsletter, please contact Linda Newell - newell92071@gmail.com

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