

# SOROPTIMISTS IN ACTION

## Western Canada Region – Winter/Spring 2023

### 2022-2023 Board

**Governor:**

Suzanne Heron  
(SI Victoria Westshore)

**Governor-Elect:**

Chari Grant  
(SI Tri Cities)

**Treasurer:**

Susan Barber  
(SI Chilliwack)

**Secretary:**

Shirley Stewart  
(SI Langleys)

**Member-at-Large:**

Shelley DellaMattia  
(SI Langleys)

**Parliamentarian:**

Joan Jackson  
(SI Victoria Westshore)

### 2022-2023 Committee Chairs

**Membership:**

Donna Duvall (Abbotsford-Mission)

**Public Awareness:**

Feezah Jaffer (Surrey Delta)

**Fundraising:**

Heather Rollins (Chilliwack)

**Program:**

Colleen Schmidt (Abbotsford-Mission)  
Melanie Kenny (Saskatoon)

**Celebrating Success:**

Megan Eastwood (Tri Cities)

**Advocacy:**

Janneke Lewis (N&W Vancouver)  
Carrell Wingrave (Canada West Online)

**Friendship:**

Darlene Jameison (Surrey Delta)

**Conference 2023:**

Dana Martin (Chilliwack)

**Newsletter Editor:**

Colleen Penrowley (Tri Cities)

### Governor's Message

How would you spend \$100,000 - 200,000?

As you are reading this, a proposal is making its way through the Powers That Be for federal funds. The Community Services Recovery Fund is to help organizations like ours to recover from and build back better from the impacts of the pandemic. It's not for program funds; it's to invest in our people, to become more adaptable and create new approaches.

WCR and Eastern Canada Region are working together to access money that will enable us to:

- Produce professional videos with Canadian content to use on social media and at recruitment events
- Provide training in social media, website management, media relations, sponsorship engagement and video production
- Fund the Soroptimist Leadership Institute workshops
- Provide every club with the equipment to have great hybrid meetings: microphones, speakers and Zoom
- Kick-start the Virtual Career Library
- Fund fall area meetings to develop leadership and strategic planning
- Hold a Canada-wide 2024 Conference in Winnipeg, with free registration, with a focus on diversity and reconciliation learning, leadership development and new approaches.

The results? How about:

- Reduced geographical barriers to membership and program delivery
- Increased clubs and membership that is more diverse in every way
- New paradigms for funding and delivering our programs to more women and girls
- Resilient mental health of members
- Expanded leadership skills, member engagement and retention to continually improve our clubs, programs and communities

A single club would not be able to access this kind of assistance. Alone, reaching gender equality is a heavy slog. Together, supporting each other, we can create a sea change in our membership and for the women and girls we serve. Gratitude to Rhona Beaumont and Colleen Penrowley for flagging this opportunity, and to Shirley Stewart, Past ECR Governor Jennifer Oliver and ECR Governor Gertrud Hocke for working on the proposal. I'm pretty excited!





**International Women's Day** (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating women's equality.

IWD has occurred for well over a century, with the first IWD gathering in 1911 supported by over a million people. Today, IWD belongs to all groups collectively everywhere. IWD is not country, group or organization specific.

The theme for IWD 2023 is, **"DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality"**. This theme is aligned with the priority theme for the upcoming 67th Session of the [Commission on the Status of](#)

[Women \(CSW-67\)](#), **"Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls"**.

SIA will host an International Women's Day Tea Party on March 8th, 7 pm Eastern Time. Check it out here: <https://www.soroptimist.org/events/index.html>

Is your club planning an IWD event? Post about it in our WCR Members Only Facebook group!

### Gender Equality Word Search by Cathy Waters

Autonomy  
Challenge  
Change  
Diversity  
Empowerment  
Equal  
Fair  
Girls  
History

Mothers  
Opportunities  
Pay Gap  
Progress  
Rights  
Strong  
Understanding  
Unity  
Women

T	S	R	E	H	T	O	M	S	T	I	E	F	G	S
H	U	P	O	W	T	H	G	E	D	E	I	P	E	T
E	N	N	W	O	M	E	N	I	W	F	S	I	Q	A
W	I	D	D	U	T	Y	V	M	A	R	T	A	U	R
Q	T	O	U	E	F	E	H	I	G	I	R	S	A	M
S	Y	H	U	O	R	E	R	O	N	G	O	S	L	D
T	J	I	G	S	O	S	T	U	M	X	N	E	K	E
H	V	S	I	I	H	B	T	W	L	U	G	R	Y	G
G	K	T	R	A	O	R	X	A	S	O	O	G	O	N
I	Y	O	L	T	O	L	K	Y	N	Q	U	O	B	E
R	Z	R	S	P	S	D	R	O	W	D	U	R	U	L
A	N	Y	P	L	E	S	F	V	C	M	I	P	E	L
P	L	O	E	M	P	O	W	E	R	M	E	N	T	A
A	U	T	O	N	O	M	Y	K	R	E	N	C	G	H
P	X	P	A	G	Y	A	P	J	E	G	N	A	H	C

## The Dream Big Campaign - Investing in our Future

### Submitted by Governor Suzanne

I'm late to the Dream Big party: after 2 years, the campaign ends this August 31. Because I'm Canadian, I'll apologize. Why? Because I believe in the importance of the changes this fundraising campaign will enable, and I wish we'd gotten started earlier. There's still time to make a difference !

To support the dreams of half a million women and girls by 2031 - and realize the tsunami of change that can bring about in our world - we need more capacity: more members, productive clubs, bigger outside sponsors. The campaign aims to pour money back into clubs for Dream Accelerator Programs and DIBI; to invest in our members with training, lots of transferable skills; and to update the SIA information system to give clubs and HQ access to all our program and outcome data - so that we can show potential donors the significance of our work, the impact we have on the lives of women, girls and communities.

Our Region leadership is 100% committed to this campaign. Please join in. You can become a Stargazer for as little as \$5 US per month. The price of a couple of cups of coffee. Sign on to Stargaze until August, and you will get an email asking if you would like to continue - which is a path to becoming a Laurel Society member. They throw great parties! Here's the link: it's time to Dream Big. <https://www.soroptimist.org/?form=SIADONATE>

## Dream Big Campaign: Investing in Capacity & Change

- Supporting the **Big Goal**: to invest in half a million women and girls by 2031
- **Investing in Members**: training, webinars, leadership
- **Investing in Clubs**: Club grants are back, lots for Dream Accelerators
- Investing in systems: a database that gives **Clubs ongoing information**, and outcome data to approach big donors



- Removing barriers: translating the LYD portal into 6 languages
- Public awareness & program tools clubs can make their own
- Clubs get access to Information on donors, members, women and girls served
- Laurel Society giving can be directed to the DBC
- Be a "Stargazer" for as little as \$5 USD/ month





## SI Conference Kelowna 2023

April 27-30

### A Note From Your Conference Chair

I hope you are as excited as we are about Conference in Kelowna. Lourdes Rodriguez de Hall (AKA the Hotel Queen), and Veronica Loat (AKA Registration Queen), and myself have been working hard to put all the pieces in place. Having these two work horses on the team has helped me immensely!

Our next step will be to bring in the rest of team that will be on ground in Kelowna. For all of you that signed up to help us we will be in touch with you shortly. We will have a meeting over Zoom and go over all the details so please watch out for the invite.



Dana Martin 2023 Conference Chair

I hope by now you have heard that we have a **NEW Facebook page** specifically for Conference. The page is: **SI Conference Kelowna 2023**.

This is the page we want everyone to post on before, during, and after the conference. If you are not on this page, **STOP** reading this right now and go immediately to the page. **CLICK FOLLOW**, and then come back and read the rest of this note.

The social media team is helping us with this and will be regularly posting information.

Now that the page is live, and the Call to Conference has gone out, the conference team and the social media team will shift their focus to this page until the end of conference. We will not be monitoring the other WCR pages. So, if you have a question, need help with something, please post it on the new page.

On the new page right now are two posts you *really want to look for* ("Add this page to your Favorites on PC/Mac"). One is **PINK** and the other is **GREEN**. Why would you want to do this? When you make it a fav you won't miss out on any important information about conference!

I can't wait to see you all in Kelowna. April 27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>.



## Meet our incoming SIA Board Member for Canada **Melanie Kenny**



SIA board members are elected for a two-year term. The board member for Canada alternates between Eastern Canada Region and Western Canada Region. Tanna Edwards of SI Peterborough in ECR holds the position until August 31, 2023. The clubs in WCR recently elected Melanie Kenny of SI Saskatoon to be the next member from Canada. Here is an interview with Melanie.

**Melanie, you have been elected to be the Canadian member on the SIA Board of Directors for the next two years. What are you most looking forward to?**

I'm really looking forward to working at the Federation level of Soroptimist. I am so interested in hearing about how other cultures handle the Soroptimist mission and vision and what they find important. What are their challenges and how can we best address them? We have so many different countries and cultures to deal with in SIA and they are all equally important. It is imperative that everyone's culture is considered when we are making decisions at the Federation level and that we ensure every Board member feels comfortable to speak up. I feel very privileged to have been given this opportunity. I can hardly wait to get started!

**What do you expect to find challenging?**

I think the most challenging part for us all may be making sure every Board member truly understands what is being agreed to. When I worked with women from other cultures, during my career, whose first language was not English, I sometimes found that they said they understood what was going on, but did not fully understand. It is easy for subtle but critical differences to get lost in translation. I think it will be terribly important to make sure that decisions we are making at the federation level are fully understood and agreed to by the whole Board.

**What do you expect to be doing as a director?**

As a Director I am expected to represent all members. I expect to have an opportunity to hear about everything that is going on in the whole Federation. I expect to help make decisions to guide the Federation that are inclusive and beneficial for all Regions that are fiscally responsible, while advancing our Soroptimist mission. I am really looking forward to having the opportunity to make presentations for the Board at other Regions' conferences too.

**Please tell me about your Soroptimist experience. When did you become a member? Why?**

I became a member in September 2010. A good friend of mine had been invited to a dinner put on by my SI Saskatoon to raise awareness about human trafficking and she told me about it at lunch one day and said she was going to join. We didn't have a lot of opportunity to see each other because we were both busy with our careers so I thought that I would join too and then we would see one another more often. I told my husband not to worry because I wouldn't take on any leadership roles. I said that because no matter what organization I've belonged to I have ended up being on the board, but I was really busy with my career and felt I had enough commitments to deal



with. After a few meetings, I discovered what being a Soroptimist really meant and what the mission was. I was hooked! I was so impressed by the members of SI Saskatoon, the women I met at Retreat and with the work that all the clubs were doing. How could I not be part of this organization and help to move its mission forward? Education for women is a huge passion of mine.

**You were Governor of Western Canada Region from 2018 – 2020. What did you find most rewarding about being Governor? What was most challenging?**

I absolutely loved being Governor. Having the opportunity to travel around the Region with the help of Governor-Elect Roseanne and Colleen Penrowley and meeting all the women in the clubs was great fun and very informative. The final five club visits had been scheduled but the pandemic hit and those had to be done by Zoom. I was very disappointed about that. I loved the Board meetings and making decisions at that level to improve the Region and help the clubs. Best of all I made some firm friends. Sadly, Roseanne

(Governor-Elect when I was Governor) has passed on, but I really enjoyed being on the Board with her. We had a lot of laughs together. I still think about her regularly. I got tremendous support from the Board and I'll never forget that wonderful feeling. Soroptimist women make fabulous friends. When you take on a leadership position in Soroptimist you are never alone. You are part of a team and help one another.



There were some challenges too during my two-year term. I had two particularly big challenges. My stepfather passed away in January 2020 and I went to London for four months to look after my 94-year-old mother until we could get her settled somewhere safe as she was unable to look after herself. The work of the Region had to go on and there were quite a few weeks when I was not able to think clearly. That's when my team stepped in and really helped out. We were putting the finishing touches on the Call to Conference and they did a superb job. It's amazing how a death in the family really takes up an enormous amount of space in one's brain for a while. Following the Call to Conference going out, Covid had taken hold. This was new to all of us on the Board and we had to make the difficult decision to postpone conference in April. Finally, we organized a zoom conference the following September. Thank goodness Linda Cunliffe, the Conference Chair, had a young woman in mind to help us with the technical side. I could not have managed without the help of Linda, Roseanne Ham

and Angie Bunting in particular. Clubs also call the Governor for help with concerns and so it

was also my job to help them sort out issues. Things always worked out for the best in the end even if it took a while to figure out best way to address what was going on. It was very satisfying to help find positive resolutions.

**Please tell me a bit about your life outside Soroptimist. I know you were born in the UK. When did you move to Canada?**

I was born in London and I moved to Canada in 1977 because I met my husband, Bob, who was in the UK on vacation. We were introduced through friends. We fell in love, and got married within six months. His visa was going to run out at the end of November and if we hadn't got married, we would have had to be apart for a year and that felt like forever to a 21 year old. So we got married, and moved to Saskatoon so Bob could finish University. Saskatoon is where he was born and where his family lived. 45 years later we have four grown children and six grandchildren ranging in age from 3 to 24. My oldest granddaughter, Haley, is a Soroptimist too.

I stayed home with my children for the first part of our marriage, but as they got bigger, I went back to work. I started out as a secretary at the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN). I quickly discovered that I could have a career that would be more satisfying to me if I got some more education. It took seven years of working at a variety of courses and going to night school at the University of Saskatchewan before I finally was hired as an employment relations officer for SUN. I loved that work. I was proud to represent nurses who are the backbone of the health service. My work was part advocate, part detective, part teacher, and part researcher. Very varied and never dull. I retired in December 2018 after 25 years of service to SUN. I am still connected to the organization and work as a union nominee for arbitrations. I also have my own human resource consulting agency.

**Here's a photo of you from 2014, I think at our WCR retreat, where you had offered to eat your hat. Do you remember what that was about?**



I do remember that very well. I was Board Member at Large. We were at a board meeting and Governor Heather said she wanted to get an appointment to go to the bank that afternoon because we needed to change the signatories on the bank account. I said, "if you can get an appointment that quickly I'll eat my hat". She did and they bought me a fruit 'hat' to eat at lunch.







## Building Update Submitted by Carla Busnardo

In case you have not heard, SI Vancouver with an all woman professional team is redeveloping their 21 suite apartment into 135 affordable homes for senior women, single mothers and workforce women. The affordable rents will be made up of deep subsidies, rent geared to income and lower than market (in Vancouver).



We were successful in obtaining the majority of needed funds in the form of a federal government loan that is being managed by BC Housing. We had to compete with all the other proposals across Canada and were the largest project awarded financial recognition in B.C. The loan and all other payables will be our mortgage in the sum of some \$62 million dollars. We are hoping that the cost of construction can hang on for a little while longer as our developer continues to find new funding. The grants we have obtained help offset the additional costs incurred each month we are not building.

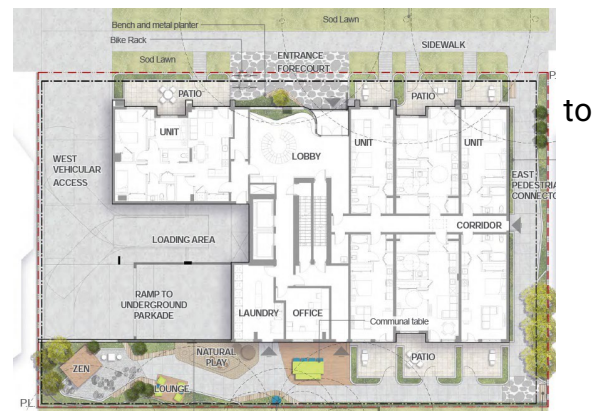


The City of Vancouver granted us 6 million dollars, CMHC granted us almost 10 million dollars, federal government grant of almost 15 million and the team continues to seek out funding partners. Vancity grants and extremely low interest loans allowed us to do the start up work for the project. Thank goodness we hired Purpose Driven who are more than our development partners, they are the heart beating behind the project.

SI Vancouver successfully relocated all of the tenants from 546 West 13th Avenue with our last tenant leaving in December 2022. We are now waiting for our permit to demolish so we can get on with our affordable housing project. We are hoping to have approval of permits by March so we can start construction in the spring of 2023.

There will be a ground breaking event and we'll be inviting all of you to come out if you are in the neighbourhood. More to follow and if you have any

questions, do not hesitate to contact the redevelopment chair, Carla Busnardo at [sivcarlab@aol.com](mailto:sivcarlab@aol.com)







**SOROPTIMIST  
FOUNDATION  
OF CANADA**

# 60!

This year, June 27th, is the 60th anniversary of the Soroptimist Foundation of Canada (SFC)! The Foundation is a Canadian registered charity created by, and for, the Soroptimist clubs in Canada. It is a separate entity from SIA. The Annual General Meeting is held in October, these days on Zoom. Each club appoints one voting delegate.

The Foundation receives donations from Canadian Soroptimist clubs and individual members. It funds programs related to education for girls and women. SFC Club Grants provide funding for club projects like Dream It, Be It: career support for girls, and other educational programs for teens. The main program is Grants for Women in Graduate Studies which awarded over \$100,000 to women in graduate studies since 2020. Last year six women received \$8,500 each for their education. SFC has recently begun participating in SIA's Live Your Dream program, first by giving LYD awards to several Canadian non-local applicants and this past year by funding 20 awards given by clubs to Canadian women who do not live near a Soroptimist club. The bulk of those applications went to our two new online clubs, SI Canada West Online and SI Atlantic Canada Online, allowing the clubs and the regions to receive credit for the extra awards.

The SFC Board of Directors is made up of Soroptimists elected by clubs in Eastern and Western Canada, to serve a three-year term. The number of directors was recently increased from five to seven. The current Board Chair is April Neave of SI Chilliwack.

The history of the Foundation makes for an interesting read. Ten years ago, in honour of the 50th anniversary, a committee produced a book, "The Soroptimist Foundation of Canada Celebrating 50 Years", that tells the story. This is available as a PDF, downloadable from the Foundation's website [here](#).

The Soroptimist Foundation of Canada endowment fund is built primarily by member donations or club donations and bequests. Since 1963 the endowment has been building, one donation at a time. In 60 years, the Endowment Fund has grown to over two million dollars.

A Red Pin is awarded to recognize individual members whose cumulative donations have reached \$500, a Silver Pin is recognizes cumulative donation amounts totalling \$1000, and the Gold Pin recognizes \$2500. For some members these milestone pins are reached in a relatively short period of time. For other members they represent several years of faithful donations.

To make your donation and receive a tax receipt, go to the [Donations page](#) of the Foundation website. Thank you for supporting the education of women in Canada!

These are the donor recognition pins, red, silver and gold.



## **Membership Tips**

### **Submitted by Cari Moore**

Cari, a member of SI Chilliwack, is part of the Region membership committee.

1. Have a “sunshine girl” to welcome newcomers at meetings, be in charge of sending flowers for major occasions, sending birthday cards to members.
2. Plan social events outside of business meetings and committee meetings.
3. We have a June wrap up party a Christmas party and a BBQ mid-summer at someone's house.
4. We have a member that coordinates “Guess who is coming to dinner!” 1 or 2 a year.
5. People sign up to host or attend and then are given a course that they are to bring to a given address – the host doesn’t know who is coming and people only know who else is there when they arrive.
6. During COVID we put people into threes and then shuffled the groups into couples. People were to check in with one another, share recipes or book suggestions, go for walks or hikes. Some really great friendships were formed from continuing to do this.
7. As committee members and executive – be willing to let others step up and lead things. Co-Chair if new people are not ready – but have a succession plan! If you don’t ask others to do things and never mentor or step down from a position – people will not feel included. As leadership – you have to be ok with change and be willing to let things sometimes not turn out the way you want them to.
8. Speaking of committees – we really try to not have anyone on the executive be committee chairs – this leads to burnout – and people get the impression that the same few people can do all the work.
9. We also encourage members to be on 1 – maybe 2 committees – anymore and people tend to get burnt out and quit. We also encourage new members to not join any committees the first year if they are still wondering where they fit in. All meetings are open to all club members so everyone can get their toes wet before diving in.
10. We put out a calendar at the beginning of the year with business meetings, executive meetings and committee meetings dispersed accordingly. The majority of our meetings all happen on one day of the week so people don’t feel like they have to be out every night of the week.
11. Planning days every 1-2 years.
12. A weekend day where club members do team building exercises, personality tests, share a meal together and do strategic planning. Have different people facilitate and make the day fun.
13. Encourage all club members to attend fundraising events – even if they can’t contribute financially. People that volunteer are just as valuable as people that give financially.
14. We also offer an honorary one-year membership to any of our Live Your Dream winners and Judges and have increased membership because of this.

## Soroptimist Leadership Institute (SLI)

Submitted by Janet Gilmour

What is SLI - SLI offers women and businesses the opportunity to sponsor candidates to gain leadership skills through Soroptimist membership.

How SLI works – candidates apply to the club for the SLI. Their membership to the club and fees to attend at least one Region event, Conference or Retreat, are covered. The sponsor, if a business, receives recognition on the club's social media and website, and our logo and information to display on their website.

What SLI interns give - the intern has the time to commit to attending all club meetings, volunteering on at least one committee, participates in the 5 leadership development workshops held throughout the year on Zoom, meets with either their sponsor or a Soroptimist twice in the year to discuss what they are learning and their thoughts on their future.

SLI benefits – as a Soroptimist, the SLI intern contributes to the empowerment of women and girls across the globe. She gains leadership skills and contacts to carry throughout her life. She gains knowledge of the plight of women around the world and how women can come together to be the voice and strength these women need to fight for their rights.

What the club receives – through this program the club gains the membership of an amazing woman, for at least one year, who is dedicated to volunteering and community exposure. The Soroptimist Leadership Institute is a venue for clubs, mentors, and SLI interns to empower and educate women and girls.

Any questions on SLI can be directed to Sandra Sterling-Weicker [sandra.sivw@gmail.com](mailto:sandra.sivw@gmail.com); any other Membership questions can be sent to Chair Donna Duvall [dduvallosoroptimist@gmail.com](mailto:dduvallosoroptimist@gmail.com).



SL Victoria Westshore Interns Vinny Awasthi (left) and Heather Adams (right).







## Soroptimist Friendship Links

Submitted by Jayne Carr

It has been a year now since Western Canada Region Friendship Chair Darlene Jamieson and WCR Governor Suzanne introduced and hosted World Friendship Zooms and they have been a great success! Soroptimists from all five Federations have joined in the experience, sharing worldwide club and federation information - real time within our Soroptimist World of amazing empowered women.

SI Edmonton has Friendship Links with clubs from all five Federations!

SI Edmonton's longest standing friendship links are with SI Bath, England (SIGBI) and SI Nayoro, Japan (SIA). Members of our respective clubs have had the wonderful opportunity to meet in person at SI World and SIA Federation Conventions in locations including San Francisco, Calgary, Honolulu (twice), Montreal, Istanbul, and Kuala Lumpur. Dublin is next! SI Edmonton and our friendship link clubs share information and greetings by snail mail, email, social media and now by these WCR hosted world friendship zooms.

**How do clubs connect and form a friendship link with each other?** Sometimes by social media posted invitations when clubs from overseas are looking for a connection with a club in Canada. Such was the case with SI Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine (SI Europe) and SI Albany, Western Australia (SI South East Asia Pacific).

SI Edmonton sponsored school desks and a girls empowerment art project in Uganda; the "Mighty Fingers Facing Change" girls' finger smear mural world tour - a visit by artist Kelly Sullivan. They connected with Dorothy Sophie, when SI Tororo, Uganda (SI Africa Federation) was chartering their club. We have been friendship links ever since, chatting via social media.



Fluent in Hungarian, SI Edmonton President Anita was able to connect with SI Budapest, Hungary (SI Europe) and form a friendship link with that club.

Often, while traveling a personal connection is made. Before internet was available, mail and faxes were it for communications. Such was the case when Jayne was accompanying her husband to a 1995 conference in Japan and wrote ahead through SIA asking to connect with the nearest Soroptimist club. By fax received at that conference, she was invited to attend a Soroptimist meeting. Corresponding over the next year with Tomie of that club resulted in our Friendship Link with SI Saitama, Japan (SIA).



Members of SI Budapest

Scouting Soroptimist club connections for a more recent trip destination to Medellin, Colombia, Jayne discovered that no clubs existed, but that SI Peterborough had a school program supporting two elementary school girls in Medellin. After connecting with Catalina, of SI Peterborough, who made introductions and arrangements, Jayne was able to visit the school and report back to SI Peterborough at their January club meeting and invite Catalina to share about the Medellin school program at SI Edmonton's February meeting.

A few words about our Friendship Link club SI Dnepropetrovsk located in Dnipro. Last year, President Nataliya and Founder Olga were able to join the first WCR Friendship call just prior to the invasion by Russia. Since then, they have been able to attend other WCR Friendship Zoom calls and Olga recently spoke on a Zoom event via video. However, their internet is unreliable; down for hours each day and thus they were not able to attend the most recent. Nataliya and Olga are in grief by the recent Dnipro apartment bombing as they knew some of the victims. They have sent a list of the women that most need financial support from that building. If anyone is interested in helping, please email and we can send you the list. Olga is planning to visit her grand daughter in the Canadian Maritimes again and we dearly hope to meet in person one day.

6th Annual  
*Pajamas & Pearls*  
SOROPTIMIST®  
Investing in Dreams

*Presented by Soroptimist International of Chilliwack  
April 15, 2023*

SOROPTIMIST®  
TriCities Investing in Dreams

*Give Her Wings*

*Awards Event April 12, 2023  
Port Coquitlam C.C.*



## Update on Perogies for Ukraine Submitted by Donna Duvall



At the end of May 2022, Bella Montgomery hosted online perogy making classes with all proceeds to go to SI Europe's Disaster Fund to help women and children suffering in Ukraine because of the Russian invasion. Susan Barber, past WCR Treasurer, has reported that **\$12,752.80 CAD** was transferred to SI Europe!

Susan reached out to SI Europe for information on their projects and received this response from Jie at SIE headquarters.

Now SIE supports more than 20 projects by SIE Disaster and Recovery Fund to help women and girls in warzones. Here are some of them. Please find enclosed the pictures that we have received regarding those projects. (Editors note: these are just a few of the pics she sent.)

### **Stefan Vodá, Moldova**

Project is to assist refugees from Ukraine with food, medicine, transportation, accommodation and everything else that is needed.

### **Kosice, Slovakia**

The aim is to provide material humanitarian help to the refugees by providing women with children with accommodation and basic supplies and assisting them with the necessary administrative tasks and getting medical and psychological help

### **Lviv / Warsaw, Ukraine / Poland**

The project is composed to assist war victims in Ukraine with food, medicine, medical bandaging materials, diapers for children and adults, hygienic products and everything else that is necessary.



### **Chisineu, Moldova**

The project is to get involved in Government Action to support the refugees and assist the governmental initiatives.



### **Edinet, Moldova**

To provide shelter, washing machines, beds, mattress, hygienic means, food, etc.



Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any question.



## Cross Canada New Year's Levee

Submitted by Brooke Gordon, SI Dundas-Ancaster-Flamborough



We have been using video conferencing as clubs for 3-years now and we haven't gotten together for a social as Canadian Soroptimists. But on January 3, members from across Canada joined me online for an informal New Year's Levee.

For those who haven't met me, I'm Brooke Gordon - an Executive Coach for women who feel ready to make a change in their life and an advocate for entrepreneurs. I've been a member of SI Dundas-Ancaster-Flamborough since 2006, which is part of Eastern Canada Region.

My passion is connecting women together: for over an hour and half we laughed and shared stories.

- We celebrated our personal joys, and the many innovative and impactful projects of our Soroptimist clubs across the country.
- We lied to each other with the intention of getting to know each other (aka we played the game "two truths and a lie") and it was hilarious.
- We explored some of the common challenges we face as clubs and how we're addressing them.
- We wrapped up the evening with a guided meditation.

Most notably, we brainstormed ideas for the 2026 Celebration of 100 years in Canada (yes! You read that right! SI Vancouver was founded 1926).

A quick poll showed that 3 of the attendees have been members for 30+ years; another 11 attendees indicated they have been members for 10+ years; and there were others on the call who have been members for 5+ years. Imagine over 200 years of collective wisdom... the ideas were free flowing about gathering together, public relations campaigns and celebrating the impact of clubs and successes of members!

When asked if they would recommend other members of their club attend another Soroptimist virtual social event - the answer was a strong yes. I hope you'll join us at the next one! Get notified at: <https://landing.mailerlite.com/webforms/landing/e8i1w1>

## Sponsors of our Programs

Clubs were asked for sponsor logos and stories. Several sent logos but not stories, so this issue has just the logos. Please, next time, send a story about the club's relationship with the sponsor and we'll give them more space.

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