

SOROPTIMIST

Soroptimist International of Hamilton
Hamilton, Montana
Northwestern Region, SIA

Best for Women

Volume 22 Issue No.11 May 2020

Calendar

May

7 – ZOOM Meeting—12pm
14 ZOOM Meeting—12PM
21 – ZOOM Board
28 – Social—TBA

June

4 – Meeting
11—Meeting
18 - Board
25 -Installation

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May President's Message

Dear Soroptimist sisters,

Together within our families, together within our friends, together as an organization, together nationally and globally, we are on a roller coaster without seat belts. The learning process of not having control is showing us a new resiliency and some of us are evolving and pivoting easier than others. And that's OK. As someone who is deeply entrenched in the art world on a global level, this impacts everyone. The heartfelt joy from an artist who sells a painting in time to pay her rent, a closed gallery who has a successful online auction, or a museum who finds a clever way to give us all a view of a hidden collection ... this impacts everyone.

Whether it is a new mother living in a tenement in New York City or an elderly person living in the Discovery Center who hasn't seen her relatives in months, this impacts everyone. I have seen and heard countless stories in these months of incredible heroes who go to work everyday despite the odds of coming home. I've laughed hysterically at crazy memes on every social media of skinny day 1 and fat day 30 bodies (boy what I look like on day whatever this is!) And here we are, safely connecting in our zoom calls and taking walks with our buddies. Social media on many platforms has taken us out of our comfort zones but given us the necessary connectivity we desperately need, even for all the introverts who would prefer a good book!

Thank you for staying in touch with each other.

Thank you for being a sister in this great organization.

Thank you for every small gesture of kindness and every great virtual hug.

We will make it to the other side and be so much better.

I truly believe taking it day to day, coming to grips with technology and accepting the reality will help us change our perspectives to embrace the new normal...whatever this may be.

So with a salute to Dixie, wear a mask when you're out in public, be social distanced and give everyone a huge smile, because under mask, your eyes are sparkling!

"Life is a song that's already been written, that takes your entire life to hear."

Working today for a better tomorrow
All my best,
Anne



Membership Dues

You will receive your dues statement in May (\$140, new members \$150. Please mail them to Sue Smith, Treasurer, PO Box 1012, Hamilton, MT before June 11th. Dues can be paid by credit card on the website (\$3.00 fee applies).

There is SIA Relief Package Funding for members that are negatively impacted by COVID-19. Eligibility details are in the following link:

<https://www.soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/whats-new/2020/sia-relief-package.html>

Also a reminder that we have a Dues Assistance Program for members that can't manage \$140/\$150. We ask that you contribute what you can and ask for financial assistance to cover the remaining. If you receive financial assistance, we ask that you become actively involved at least one committee and attend meetings on a regular basis (either via ZOOM or in person when that becomes an option). Please contact Sue Smith for payment arrangements. *This program is totally confidential.*

Effortless Fundraising for Club

Two easy ways earn money for the club with your online shopping.

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice. . 1. Visit smile.amazon.com

2. Sign in with your Amazon.com credentials

3. Choose **Soroptimist International of Hamilton, MT**



iGive.com allows you to support your favorite cause with a percentage of your online shopping. It's totally free for you and your charity. Over 2300 stores to choose from. Go to [igive.com](https://www.igive.com), fill out the form.. Choose your cause (**SI Hamilton**) ... Start shopping



NWR Website

Are you registered on the Northwestern Region's Members-Only website at: www.soroptimistnwr.org to be able to view important documents and timely information?

If the answer is no, please take a few minutes to register on the website. You create your own unique password to access the site. Your membership is then confirmed.

We have recently updated our website security, and all Northwestern Region members will need to be registered to view documents in links.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the NWR website team at support@soroptimistnwr.org



4th GRADE

Unfortunately, but as it should be, it was decided by the Corvallis School Board to not reopen the Corvallis schools for the remainder of the year. So we won't be able to work with the kids for the rest of this school year.

We have, however, received letters from some of the students in our classroom. The kids are missing school, their friends, and us.

I wrote the kids a letter, and made a short video of me playing a little tune on my new guitar. They really enjoyed hearing from me. If you would like to send the kids a note, please send it to me and I will be happy to forward it to Liz to send out to her class.

Saundra

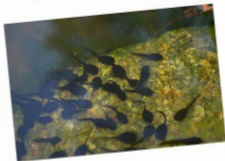
Dear Miss Mary Lou,

I miss you so much and I loved it when you came to Remington at Christmas and we decorated cookies. It was so fun! I did a zoom meeting yesterday and if you don't know what that is, it is an app called zoom and we have a meeting there and we get to see our classmates but some of them didn't do it yesterday but most of us did do it. How are you doing? I am doing pretty good so far, but I miss all my friends. I hope we go back to school this year because my birthday is in May and my parents said if we don't go back to school I won't have a party because I won't have anybody to invite and because everything is closed. I am 9 years old and on my birthday I will be 10. I love doing art with you!

Sincerely,
Zailey Herrera.

Dear Miss Alene,

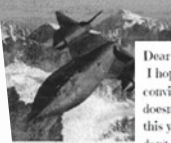
Miss Alene, I loved your letter and was glad to hear from you! The turtles were so cute, but the alligators would scare me with their big teeth!
My cousins, brother, and I caught about 150 tadpoles and sold them for \$20. We split the money up between the four of us. We all have been making a pot-a-potty for the ranch, but then it fell in the wind. (We will get it fixed up this summer. I only get the ranch, but then it fell in the wind. (We will get it fixed up this summer. I only get to see my cousins on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and sometimes Fridays, so that time is pretty special when they come! I wish I could go back to school this year!
I'm trying to make the best of this time! Thanks for the letter!



Thanks,
Vivian

DEAR MISS MARY LOU AND MISS SAUNDRA,
THIS IS LONDON FROM MISS JAMESON'S CLASS, WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE STUCK INDOORS FOR YOU? WELL IT SUCKS TO ME. YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GO OUT IN PUBLIC. WELL IT'S NICE TALKING TO YOU, YOU GUYS ARE THE BEST SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS IN THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD.

SINCERELY,
LONDON



Dear Miss Saundra,

I loved your letter - I am very lonely sometimes too. I have been going to my grandparents and working (playing) on the ranch they own.
I have been thinking a lot about school. I have worked on a lot of school work and hope I am keeping up. I miss my teachers, friends, and kickball, but I am lucky that I get to see my cousins on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and sometimes Fridays. I wish we could go back to school this year in 4th grade! :(
My cousins, brother, and I caught a lot (about 150) of tadpoles and sold them all for \$20! I'm trying hard to make the best of this time! :) Thanks for the letter!



Thanks,
Vivian

Dear Miss Saundra,

I hope you are having an awesome day! Today is earth day and I am gonna convince my mom to let me pick up garbage off the side of the roads. But she doesn't want me going outside because of the virus. I hope we go back to school this year. I miss my friends and miss Jameson. I wanna go to see them but I don't know where they live and because of the virus. I miss doing art with you and your mom. I love art! It's the best thing in the world! On Monday we did a zoom meeting and if you don't know what that is then I will tell you now. A zoom meeting is a meeting that is on our electronics and we get to see each other there and most of us did do it but some of us didn't do it but we will have more soon and we get to talk to each other and it's really fun! I hope you are doing good and being careful because of the virus! I will write another letter soon to you and your mom!



Sincerely, Zailey Herrera



Well, to everyone's surprise, I have been elected as your District 4 Director for this biennium. Dianne Yarrus of Whitefish is our District 4 Secretary. I hope you all know I will be asking you for help over this next two years to make this a successful cycle for Governor Kristi and our mission to improve the lives of women and girls.

This may be a challenging period. Our usual activities have been uprooted, and I am sure we are all feeling a bit out of sorts right now. So many of our events and activities have had to be cancelled to protect us right now. I expect this will be an issue for the next year or two, so we will likely be making more adjustments.

The usual inductions for newly elected members of the Region Board and supporting staff has been shifted to online training. It is a new way of doing business for all of us, so we will likely be stumbling a bit along the way.

As most of you know, our District 4 conference is held in October every year, this year it is set in Whitefish. That is quickly approaching. As of now, we aren't sure there will be a conference as there are concerns the Covid 19 will likely make resurgence in the fall. It is all a wait and see time.

Whatever the situation, I know we will conquer this and meet our goals.

At the top, you can see the logo and motto for Governor Kristi's tenure. I like it!

Saundra

2020 Award Recipients

Ruby Award Diane Thomas Rupert

This service award acknowledges a woman in our community that is working to improve the lives of women and girls through their personal or professional activities. SIH donates \$250 to the recipient's charity of choice.

Live Your Dream Award

Bridgette Langley	\$3,000
Linda Parks	\$2,000
Natasha Flint	\$1,000

Options

Chris Rowles	\$2,000
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Patti Furniss

Shannon Hochhalter	\$ 750
Josie Baggett	\$ 750

Trina Peterson Pro Tech

Samantha Johnson	\$1,000
Abigail Dunn	\$1,000

Fellowship Award

Kathleen O'Leary	\$3,000
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Options

Chris Rowles	\$2,000
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Patti Furniss

Shannon Hochhalter	\$ 750
Josie Baggett	\$ 750

Veteran's Award

Gracie Bradshaw	\$1,000
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*Violet Richardson

Gracie Smith	\$ 350
Jennifer Stoker	\$ 350



*Niki Shonkwiler presenting Violet Richardson Award Recipients Jennifer Stoker & Gracie Smith with The Greater Valley Foundation awards for \$250 each giving each recipient a total of \$600 each. In addition, each recipient picks a charity of their choice and SIH donates \$100 to that charity.



Tenacious Dames presented Trina Peterson Vo Tech awards to Abigail Dunn (Jenn Dunn standing in) and Samantha Johnson. They raised \$500 for the awards.



Jennifer Stoker, Bridgette Langley, Kathleen O'Leary, Natasha Flint, Samantha Johnson, Diane Thomas-Rupert, Gracie Smith, Josie Baggett, Shannon Hochholter, Chris Rowles

Thomas-Rupert presented Soroptimist Ruby Award

Michelle McConnaha Ravalli Republic April 2, 2020



Diane Thomas-Rupert was recently awarded the Soroptimist Ruby Award for her years of making a difference in people's lives
Perry Baukus.

Renaissance woman Diane Thomas-Rupert won the Ruby Award for Soroptimist in Ravalli County.

Thomas-Rupert has many talents, areas of knowledge and has helped women throughout her life.

According to Bitterroot Valley Soroptimist Mary Lyn, the Soroptimist Ruby Award is given for women helping women.

“The Soroptimist Ruby Award honors women who, through their professional or personal efforts, are making extraordinary differences in the lives of women or girls,” Lyn said. “Honorees are women who have worked to improve the lives of other women or girls. Their work has had a significant impact and also inspires and encourages other women.”

Lyn presented the award to Thomas-Rupert at an awards luncheon where valley Soroptimists gave away nearly \$20,000 to women helping women.

“A ruby is a gemstone, also associated with wisdom, importance, vitality, strength, power and love — all words embodying this year's recipient,” Lyn said.

Thomas-Rupert said she was honored to receive the award.

“I think it was very special and I really appreciated it,” she said.

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Thomas-Rupert said that in her 74 years her greatest impact on others was teaching women and children how to disarm bullies.

“That was something that I learned about at 6 years of age while attending rural school,” she said. “You probably cannot even imagine what seventh-and eighth-grade girls can cook up to try to do to little first-and second-grade girls.”

She developed a disarmament strategy from those experiences and has shared that information.

“Having spent most of my professional career in a man’s world when that was not very well accepted, I have had many opportunities to perfect my strategy,” Thomas-Rupert said.

“Domestic violence de-escalation training has been very useful. It is also helpful to have a fixer.”

Thomas-Rupert earned a bachelor’s in education from Minot State College, a master’s in education from University of Hawaii (where she learned to be an activist during the Vietnam War) and post graduate work at University of North Dakota and University of Southern California. She also received training to deal with “excessive power and control behavior as it affects domestic violence.”

In her professional career she taught special education and was honored as Nebraska teacher of the year, served as a school psychologist and taught graduate classes at the University of Montana and organized statewide conference to encourage women to seek non-traditional positions in education. She served as a consultant to large school districts throughout the US on individualized teaching and learning curriculum.

Thomas-Rupert was the first woman in the state of Montana to serve as assistant superintendent of a AA school and was responsible for Bozeman School Board hiring their first woman elementary principal.

She worked with the Montana Legislature to develop laws that governed programs for special education, served on the Montana Governor’s task force to evaluate special education programs in Montana and served as advocate for special education students.

Thomas-Rupert served in various professional organization positions such as executive director of Missoula YWCA and worked with Missoula law enforcement to de-escalate domestic violence situations.

Thomas-Rupert also served 35 years as a financial adviser, with 25 of those years as co-owner of the branch office. She served as consultant on Charitable Remainder Trusts with other RJ branches and was the first recipient of the Raymond James Circle of Life Award. The award is to honors associates throughout the firm who exemplify the Raymond James mission specifically those who go above and beyond their normal business responsibilities to enrich the lives of others in their communities.

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Thomas-Rupert also helped nonprofits. She worked with development of many nonprofit organizations, served in various charitable organization positions and advised nonprofit organizations on gifting to nonprofits through planned giving. She currently serve as board member of Rapp Family Foundation and is responsible for grant applications, board history and policies. She also currently serves as President of RSC Foundation (supporting Ravalli Services Corporation).

Other accomplishments by Thomas-Rupert include co-owning and operating a gourmet restaurant and guest ranch where top executives in corporate America were hosted, managing White Feather Ranch for 35 years and encouraging women to apply, raising and showing Clydesdale horses and traveling with an eight-horse hitch of Clydesdales. She raised registered sheep with the help of a wonderful working border collie and has sold registered Wensleydale rams.

Currently, she shows knitted items at fairs, sells fleece, yarn and finished items. Some of her fleece was selected as the “spinners choice” and won grand champion at Ravalli County Fair. She has shown rams and fleece at large shows on the west coast and her fleece has received first place in each class at the Trailing of the Sheep Festival.

She also grows lavender and extract essential oil with a real whiskey still and restores and sells old houses.

Thomas-Rupert said she has had a great and interesting life full of bold choices.

“My mother once said doing the right thing is the hardest decision you’ll ever make,” Thomas-Rupert said. “I think that is true and I don’t think you always get appreciated for doing the right thing. I think you tend to get more appreciation for doing what other people want you to do. I’ve never been a person to do what other people wanted me to do unless I thought it was right.”



“Women have the power to choose which path they wish to take. We have to believe great things are going to happen in our lives, and we have to do everything we can to make them happen.”

- Gabriela

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Submissions to the newsletter can be sent to:
<mailto:sinewsletter@gmail.com>

If you submit to any of the above locations, you are guaranteed it will reach us!