



## Message from President Denise

Dear Soroptimists,

The New Year symbolizes rebirth, fresh beginning, good fortune and hope. Let's not forget all the wonderful accomplishments in 2025 however, starting with our fundraiser. Our 2nd annual Music

Bingo Party raised nearly \$100k, thanks in great part to Carolyn Theisen's leadership as Fundraising Director.

In April we awarded a total of \$58,250 to 40 women including 16 runners up for the Live Your Dream Award. It's so gratifying to be able to help girls and young women further their education in the hope that they can attain economic empowerment.

We received large community donations from:

City National Bank: \$10,000 in March

Anonymous Donor: \$4000 to be used for Live Your Dream

Credit Union of Southern California - \$25,000 in August

Women in California Leadership - \$2500 in December (nominated by Assembly Member Lisa Calderon)

An ADHOC Committee was put together to distribute the funds from the Credit Union of Southern California. We donated the following: \$3000 Bridge of Faith, \$2500 Interfaith Food Center, \$5000 Rio Hondo CARE program, \$5000 Welcome Home Project and \$5000 Whittier First Day. In addition, \$5000 from the Credit Union went towards sponsorship for our Music Bingo Party Fundraiser. Other donations included \$2500 to Shelter's Right Hand for sponsorship of the 5K walk, \$5000 to the Women's and Children's Crisis Shelter and \$2500 to CAPC which came from the Service Fund. It was such an honor to be able to make the donations in person and to hear about the need and how our donations will help.

Soroptimist Village had a net operating income of \$89,937 for the first 5 months, 47% better than budget. However, the largest accomplishment was the completion of the rebuilt unit 4 building which burned in 2018. Soroptimist Village is now at 100% occupancy.

August 2nd, we lost past Soroptimist Past President Kathy Mischo, who died from complications due to ALS. Kathy fought her illness to the very end and was truly an inspiration; Kathy never gave up. May she rest in eternal peace!

Although we never really know what the future holds, we know that success will be achieved through determination and teamwork and of course by having a good time doing what we do. Thank you to everyone who made 2025 such a fabulous year. I look forward to 2026 and I'm very hopeful for all the great things to come!

*President Denise N. Fasheh*

*Celebrating 100 Years of Soroptimist*



A global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment. Our name means "best for women." And that's what we strive to be—women at our best, investing in other women and girls to be their best.

## SI WHITTIER NEWSLETTER 2026

### CLUB CALENDAR

#### JANUARY

- 6th – Business Meeting, HAPPY NEW YEAR, 12 Noon, Mimi's Café
- 13th – Fundraising Program Meeting, 12 Noon, Mimi's Café
- 20th – Music Bingo Rehearsal, 5:30 pm, Mimi's Café, Sign up, \$25  
DARK NOON MEETING
- 27th – Program Meeting, Noon Mimi's Café
- 28th – STAT Webinar, 6:30 pm, Zoom Meeting (see flyer)

#### FEBRUARY

- 3rd – Business Meeting, 12 Noon, Mimi's Café
- 10th – Fundraising Program Meeting, 12 Noon, Mimi's Café
- 12th – **MUSIC BINGO VALENTINE'S PARTY**, 5:30 pm  
Doubletree Hotel
- 17th – **NO MEETING AT NOON**
- 19th – Board Meeting **ONLY this week**, 12 noon, Chamber Office
- 24th – Program Meeting. Speaker TBA

#### MARCH

- 3rd – Business Meeting, 12 Noon, Mimi's Café
- 6th – Women's History Conference at Río Hondo College
- 7th – DCR District 1 Spring Meeting, hosted by SI Fullerton
- 10th – Program Meeting, 12 Noon, Mimi's Café
- 19th – Board Meeting, 12 Noon, Chamber Office
- 24th – Program Meeting, TBA, 12 Noon, Mimi's Café
- 31st – DARK. No noon meeting

#### APRIL

- 7th – Business Meeting, 12 noon, Mimi's Café
- 14th – Program Meeting, 12 Noon, Mimi's Café
- 21st – **SIGNATURE AWARDS LUNCHEON**, 12 Noon,  
Doubletree Hotel, Uptown Whittier
- 23rd – Board Meeting, 12 noon, Chamber office
- 28th – Program Meeting, 12 noon, Chamber office

#### MAY

- 1st-3rd – DCR Annual Spring Conference, Hotel Zessa, Santa Ana

#### JULY

- 22nd-25th - 49th Biennial Convention, Incheon, South Korea

**NEW!!!**

### CHANGE IN MEETING SCHEDULE EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 1, 2026

We will now have only **3 regular meetings per month**. On the **1st, 2nd, and 4th Tuesday** of each month we will meet at 12 Noon at Mimi's Café.

**No regular meeting the 3rd week of the month.** The Board of Directors will continue to meet on the 3rd Thursday of each month. **The 5th Tuesdays of any month will be DARK.**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

# MUSIC BINGO VALENTINE'S PARTY! IT'S TIME! LET'S ALL RISE UP, SHOW UP AND JUST SAY YES

Submitted by Ruthie Flores Retana, Fundraising Director

As we begin 2026, we are so grateful for your continued support and are excited about our upcoming Soroptimist International of Whittier (SIW) Music Bingo Valentine's Party.

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, we want to remind you that our **3rd Annual Music Bingo Valentine's Party** is **less than one month away**—and reservations are filling quickly!

We are thrilled to invite you to our **Music Bingo Valentine's Party**, our **major fundraising event of the year**, taking place on **Thursday, February 12 at 5:30 p.m.**

This fun-filled evening brings together music, bingo, laughter, and community—all in support of our mission to **invest in the dreams of women and girls** right here in our community.

Guests will enjoy an exciting Music Bingo experience, a voice auction, great company, and a festive Valentine's atmosphere—while helping us fund scholarships, career support, and life-changing programs for women and girls.

### Make an Even Bigger Impact

We are also offering **sponsorship opportunities** at several levels, from **\$300 to \$5,000**, each with valuable recognition and event benefits. Sponsorships are a wonderful way for businesses and individuals to show their support while making a meaningful difference.

**Tickets and sponsorships are available now**, but space is limited and this event will sell out—so don't wait!

For more information **visit [www.siwhittier.org](http://www.siwhittier.org), email us at [info@siwhittier.org](mailto:info@siwhittier.org) or call us at 562-652-3451.**

Thank you for starting the New Year by supporting our mission and helping us create brighter futures. We can't wait to celebrate Valentine's season with you!

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF WHITTIER PRESENTS:

SOROPTIMIST® Investing in Dreams

3RD ANNUAL

# MUSIC BINGO VALENTINE'S PARTY

Thursday  
**February 12, 2026**  
**5:30 p.m.**

**\$130** per reservation

DoubleTree by Hilton Whittier  
7320 Greenleaf Ave.  
Whittier, CA 90602

Open seating. Reserved tables of 6, 8 or 10 available.

**SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:**

- CHAMPAGNE \$5,000** Website, Social Media, Recognition at the Event & 2 tickets with VIP Package
- ROSES \$3,000** Website, Social Media, Recognition at the Event & 2 tickets
- CHOCOLATES \$1,200** Website, Social Media & Recognition at the Event
- CUPID \$600** Website & Social Media Recognition
- HEARTS \$300** Website Recognition

To purchase Tickets and Sponsorships visit [www.siwhittier.org](http://www.siwhittier.org), e-mail [info@siwhittier.org](mailto:info@siwhittier.org) or call 562-652-3451



UPCOMING EVENTS

STAT! THE MANY FACES OF PREVENTION: ONLINE AWARENESS EVENT

Submitted by Lynn Flanagan, DCR Secretary



As you may already know, January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Many of our DCR clubs support and participate in events that bring awareness to their communities about this widespread problem. Soroptimists Together Against Trafficking II (STAT II) invites you to attend a virtual webinar on **January 28, 2026**. There will be four outstanding guest speakers, including Jenna McKay, the author of *Grit and Grace: An Unforgettable Memoir of the Human Spirit*, which chronicles her experience as a trafficking survivor.

Please add this to your calendar - it's an excellent opportunity to hear more about how we can all advocate for victims and survivors. Don't forget to share this message with all your club members. The Zoom link appears on the flyer. Feel free to contact STAR Dawn Marie or STAR Susan with any questions.



## SOROPTIMISTS TOGETHER AGAINST TRAFFICKING II

a coalition of clubs from  
LOS ANGELES, ORANGE, RIVERSIDE, SAN BERNARDINO & VENTURA COUNTIES



*Presents*

### THE MANY FACES OF PREVENTION: ONLINE AWARENESS

*Featuring Guest Speakers*

**Natalie Salinas**

**Kendra Tankersly**

**Happy Medina**  
Founder  
**STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING NOW**

**Jenna McKay**  
An Online Survivor  
**JENNA MCKAYE FOUNDATION**

**You Don't Want to Miss This Amazing, Informative Event**

JOIN ZOOM MEETING  
<http://bit.ly/4oXZHZL>  
-- --  
Meeting ID: 838 5087 4210  
-- --  
Passcode: 979519

**THURSDAY**  
**JAN 28, 2026**  
**6:30-8:00PM**

For information contact  
**DAWN MARIE LEMONDS**  
[dawnmarie.lemonds14@gmail.com](mailto:dawnmarie.lemonds14@gmail.com)  
- or -  
**SUSAN GILBEY**  
[gilsky10@aol.com](mailto:gilsky10@aol.com)

**TOGETHER, WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!**



SOROPTIMIST®  
Investing in Dreams



UPCOMING EVENTS

# The Next Big Thing!!!

SAVE THE DATE

## SIGNATURE AWARDS LUNCHEON

APRIL 21, 2026 AT THE  
DOUBLETREE BY HILTON, UPTOWN WHITTIER





## SI WHITTIER CLUB NEWS

### THE ANNUAL MEETING OF SOROPTIMIST VILLAGE FOUNDATION

Submitted by Cynthia D. Nickell

The Annual Meeting of Soroptimist Village Foundation took place Tues 10/28/25 in the Community Room at the Village. Currently six clubs participate in Soroptimist Village, three from Desert Coast Region (SI Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs, SI Puente Hills and SI Whittier) plus three from Camino Real Region (SI Bellflower, SI Downey and SI Long Beach). Attendees enjoyed pasta and salad for dinner, and had the opportunity to tour a newly rebuilt unit. Twelve members from SIW were there. Many attendees donated cleaning supplies for use by the residents. Thank you to all who participated.

Teresa Molina of SIW presided as Foundation President. Luis Lopez, Office Manager and Stephen Comstock, maintenance manager provided annual updates. The five-unit building which burned down in 2018 has now been completely rebuilt, and certificate of occupancy was issued in March, so new residents are moving in.

Financially, the Village is in good shape. We have no mortgage on this project, and it operates at a surplus. In the coming year capital improvements will be necessary, such as replacing all the electrical panels throughout the property.

A \$125,000 grant is expected from Janice Hahn. At the June grand re-opening event, we were presented a symbolic check for \$125,000, as pre-approval for an actual grant request. We have submitted and received verbal approval for a grant for roof repairs, but are waiting for contract paperwork.



*Soroptimist Village Foundation Executive Committee 2025-2026:  
Cynthia Nickell (SIW), Treasurer; Teresa Molina (SIW), President,  
Linda Haines (SI Downey), Vice President, Betty Mackenzie (SI Bellflower), Secretary.*



## Meet MARTHA CARREON, our newest member!



Martha is currently a professor of Humanities at Río Hondo College. Her formal education includes a Master's Degree in Political Science and International Relations earned at CSULA. She began her career in education by teaching Spanish at Whittier High School but then was recruited to teach at Río Hondo. At Río, Martha has served in the capacity of Chairperson for the Humanities Department, Director of Transitional Services, Interim Director of the Multicultural Institute, Title 5 Coordinator, Study Abroad Program Lead Professor, as well as being active in numerous advisory boards such as Task Force on Minority Studies, Speaker's Bureau, Travel Advisory Committee, Accreditation Committee, Faculty Senate, Sabbatical Review Committee, Title III Multicultural Task Force, etc. She was also a Mecha club advisor for over 14 years. She coordinated several Open House activities, staff retreats, and at least 10 Women's History Month Conferences at Río Hondo College. She developed a Humanities Class called Introduction to Mexican Culture and has published a textbook titled "A Brief History of Mexican Culture: Its Origins, Its Conflicts and Its Celebrations. Currently she is teaching a new class called Women in the Humanities.

Throughout the community, Martha has been active as a consultant on minority and diversity issues, giving numerous workshops and conference presentations on curriculum development and cultural diversity. She has served as consultant to the Los Angeles Children's Museum, the Los Angeles County Multicultural Task Force, and the CSULB Teacher Education Program. As a member of the Latina Leadership Network of the California Community Colleges, she has served on their Executive Board as Regional Representative, Vice President, President, Past President, Recording Secretary, Conference Co-Chair for 1999 and received the prestigious Madrina Award for her commitment to the advancement of Latinas. Working with Loyola Marymount University she helped plan the Jornada Pedagógica attended by numerous dignitaries from the Mexican and Spanish consulates. She worked closely with CABE in writing the curriculum for Parents's Education workshops. As a Title V coordinator, she worked with the Pico Rivera, El Monte, Santa Fe Springs and Whittier to bring leadership training to students in the various school districts.

She has always been active in the community. For twelve years, she coordinated the "Letters to Santa" toy drive for over 2,000 children in the East Los Angeles area.

Currently she serves on the Hispanic Outreach Taskforce Board, the SPIRITT Family Services Board, and recently joined Soroptimists. In education, she has recently served on the California Community College Statewide Board as a representative for Women's Issues for two and a half years and currently serves on the Río Hondo College Faculty Association Board.

She loves to travel and take people with her. She has led over 50 summer travel tours to Mexico, all of South America, Eastern and Western Europe, Russia, Egypt, Israel, Dubai, Thailand, Greece, etc. As a hobby she participated in at least 10 Whittier Village Festival performance with the Sultan's Delites, a Middle Eastern dance troupe. She was a professional dancer for 18 years. Martha was born in Guadalajara, Mexico, and is married with two children of her own.



## Village Christmas Party 2025

All 59 residents of Soroptimist Village were invited to a Christmas party on Thursday, December 18. Guests enjoyed freshly prepared tacos, soft drinks, live Mexican music and a santa hat and gift bag. Northgate Markets contributed with a donation and also gave \$25 grocery vouchers which were door prizes. The room was filled to overflowing with food, fun, laughter and dancing. The residents immediately requested to do it that way again next year!



Visit the new Soroptimist Village website at:  
[Soroptimistvillage.org](http://Soroptimistvillage.org).



## Women in California Leadership Grant by President Denise Fasheh

I wanted to share some good news with you. A few weeks ago, I received an email from Ruby Duenas, District Director working for Assembly Member Lisa Calderon. Assembly Member Lisa Calderon wanted to nominate Soroptimist International of Whittier for the Women in California Leadership Grant. I provided the requested information and to my surprise, we received a grant for \$2,500 last week.

We thank Assembly Member Lisa Calderon for the nomination and the grant and for her support of the women and girls in our community. We are sincerely grateful!



### Great News for Soroptimist International of Whittier!

Soroptimist International of Whittier receives  
**Women in California Leadership Grant**

**\$2,500**





# A DASH OF SOLT



## SOROPTIMIST ORIENTATION AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING

### NEW AND SEASONED MEMBER ORIENTATION

Moderated By LORRAINE QUIROZ, DCR Membership Chair



Zoom meetings were held November 14th at Noon and at 6pm.

Lorraine led a panel of experts from our Desert Coast Region, including members as well as past and current governors, who shared information on everything from our history, our values and mission, to the Big Goal, Soroptimist acronyms, Protocol, SIA resources and milestones, and the 4 PILLARS.

Great job, Lorraine and Teresa Molina from SIW! It was a worthwhile hour of learning and reviewing.

### INVESTING IN DREAMS — USING THE NEW SIA CLUB ROADMAP

You will notice some name changes around the communications and graphics from SIA. To strengthen our efforts and enhance our recognition, clubs are asked to focus on these...

## 4 KEY PILLARS

- |                      |                                  |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. IMPACT            | <i>Formerly Program</i>          |
| 2. ENGAGEMENT        | <i>Formerly Membership</i>       |
| 3. BRAND RECOGNITION | <i>Formerly Public Awareness</i> |
| 4. PHILANTHROPY      | <i>Formerly Fundraising</i>      |

*See the following flyer for more information.*



## SOLT: SOROPTIMIST ORIENTATION AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING CONT.

# SIA Club Roadmap

## For Success in 2025-2026



SIA's clubs are dedicated to delivering an engaging and impactful experience centered around our mission. We understand and value our members' time, and that serving those who face challenges such as poverty, violence, and teen pregnancy—both locally and globally—can be a demanding task.

To help streamline and support the achievement of our organization's goals, we've created a simple club roadmap for your use. This guide is designed to help provide a fulfilling club experience while also contributing to our broader mission of empowering half a million women and girls through access to education. To strengthen our efforts and enhance our recognition, we ask clubs to focus on the following:

### 1 IMPACT

Help us reach our 2021-2031 Big Goal by serving more women and girls through *Live Your Dream Awards*®, *Dream It, Be It*® and Big Goal Accelerator Projects.

### 2 ENGAGEMENT

Grow and retain members by creating an enjoyable and inclusive member experience. Ensure club members are attending SIA's Leadership Round Table.

### 3 BRAND RECOGNITION

Gain greater recognition by promoting your club's impact through our Dream Programs.

### 4 PHILANTHROPY

Grow Soroptimist's culture of philanthropy by increasing funds raised to support our Dream Programs and by celebrating member generosity.

**That's it! If your club accomplishes the above, we guarantee you will be providing a superior member experience, fulfilling our mission and strengthening Soroptimist's global brand.**

**For more ideas on how to accomplish the strategies on this roadmap, please consult the following resources:**

- [Soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/federation-information/sias-big-goal/index.html](https://soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/federation-information/sias-big-goal/index.html)
- [Soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/program-resources/index.html](https://soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/program-resources/index.html)
- [Soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/for-clubs/index.html](https://soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/for-clubs/index.html)
- [Soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/federation-information/recognition-and-branding-tools/index.html](https://soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/federation-information/recognition-and-branding-tools/index.html)
- [Soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/donate/index.html](https://soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/donate/index.html)



**SI WHITTIER CLUB NEWS**

**BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS FOR MEMBERS  
OCTOBER, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER**



**NOVEMBER:**  
Liz A. 11/22



**OCTOBER:**  
Elaine K. 10/5  
Martha C. 10/10  
Diana G. 10/13  
Dana P. 10/16

**DECEMBER**  
Cheryl E. 12/3  
Mary Ann P. 12/3  
Cynthia N. 12/12  
Kathy D. 12/25



# YOU MISSED A MEETING? HERE'S A RECAP OF BUSINESS MEETINGS

## HIGHLIGHTS OF BUSINESS MEETINGS OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025

*Please refer to the Official Meeting Minutes as distributed by President Denise*

### OCTOBER 7, 2025

President-Elect Ana Maria Ramirez led the meeting in the absence of President Denise Fasheh.

Membership Director Veronica Franco asked for volunteers to staff the attendance table in future. A training session will be held.

### NOVEMBER 4, 2025

President Denise reported that Women in California Leadership Grant in the amount of \$2,500 is in the application process.

President Elect Ana Maria Ramirez announced the DCR Spring Conference will be held May 1-3, 2026, once again at the Zessa Hotel in Santa Ana.

SI/SIA Director Liz Camp reported that we have 20 applications for LYDA!

Membership Director Veronica Franco announced there will be a FINES Christmas Party, hosted by Dana, in December!

Soroptimist Village has a new website, check out [soroptimistvillage.org](http://soroptimistvillage.org).



*Ruthie and Cynthia invited guests and prospective members to our Oct. 7 meeting! Thank you Gloria and Bonnie for coming!*



*District 1 Fall Meeting in San Dimas*



*FINES Christmas Party, hosted by Dana*



# Some Thoughts For Today

*Generosity is giving more than you can.*

*“Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace, and gratitude.”*

— DENIS WAITLEY

American motivational speaker and writer

*“For me, I’d rather be the inventive one, and if something doesn’t work, I’ll go back to the workshop, put it on the bench, and pound on it for a while.”*

— JANET FITCH

American author