



Midwestern Region  
112th Spring Conference  
April 26-28, 2019  
Columbus, Ohio

Friday Evening

MVG - Most Valuable Governor Kris Armstrong welcomed Midwestern Region members and guests to the Marriott Hotel in Columbus, Ohio. She opened the 112th conference by reminding attendees that it is time to focus on Soroptimist and to put all other responsibilities on hold for the weekend.

Region Conference Committee chair Vicky Hicks shared a welcome message from the hostess clubs SI Columbus and Franklin County and SI North East Suburban Franklin County.

Governor Kris introduced Soroptimist International of the Americas, Federation Visitor Sherry Pearson from Sierra Pacific Region. She is a member of SI Los Banos. Introductions continued with Governor Kris introducing the members of the Midwestern region board. She then introduced the former region governors and asked those in attendance to stand. Former governors in attendance included Monica Phillip of SI Milwaukee, Terry Phillips of SI Chicago, Joan Stallard of SI Mt. Vernon & Knox County, Karen Fleming of SI Bloomington Normal, Bev Bucur of SI Illiana, Missie Austin of SI Kenton/Hardin County, Vicky Hicks of SI Columbus & Franklin County, and Vivian Walczesky of SI Monroe.

Region Celebrating Success chair, Vivian Walczesky, reminded attendees of the rich history of region clubs and why we celebrate their success. A total of 29 entries were received: Fundraising 8, Membership 6, Program 9, and Public Awareness 6. The winning clubs announced will represent the region at federation judging in the summer. Winning clubs for the four pillar areas are:

Fundraising:	SI Canton & Stark County Honorable mention: SI Fremont
Program:	SI Grosse Pointe Honorable mention: SI Hancock County Area
Public Awareness:	SI Fremont Honorable mention: SI Canton & Stark County
Membership:	SI Monroe

Honorable mention: SI Mount Vernon & Knox County

Standing in for Region Membership Chair Roseanne Horne, Fran Ingram from SI Suburban Chicago shared membership information. Her presentation is available on the SIMWR website. Packets of seeds were distributed to attendees. She reviewed the goals of SIA's four year Diamond Campaign. To reach our region goal, ten new members are needed by May 31. As phase one comes to a close she congratulated ten clubs that met their membership goal:

- SI Indianapolis Metro
- SI Dayton
- SI Anderson
- SI Kenton/Hardin County
- SI Urbana
- SI Grosse Pointe
- SI Monroe
- SI Trenton Area
- SI Wyandotte, Southgate, Taylor
- SI Mount Vernon & Knox County

Governor-elect Darcy introduced first-time attendees. Governor Kris and Region Treasurer Audrey pinned 20 members that were in attendance. An informal reception for first time attendees was held in the atrium just prior to dinner.

Region Dream It Be It chair Ruth Waggoner from SI Kenton/Hardin County opened her presentation with a short video from SIA. She continued with an overview of success of the program federation wide. Ruth then focused on the success of the region with fifteen clubs reporting participation between July 2018 and April 2019 reaching 335 girls. She congratulated SI Mount Vernon & Knox County for winning a thousand dollars from SIA for submitting their evaluation data online before June 1st. In closing she reminded clubs to report online within one month of completing the program and to notify the region chair. She further advised SIA will be forming a Dream it Be it curriculum advisory group and if anyone was interested to let her know.

Break: 7:34pm - 7:50pm

Session resumed with additional comments about Dream It Be It from Terry Phillips, SI Chicago. She shared her experience with a work study program within the Chicago schools and a positive outcome by building a community relationship.

Region Fundraising Chair Patricia Cavell from SI Monroe announced she filled the Laurel Society wallhanging - Kelly Klingel from SI Flat Rock was the winner. Patt shared examples of the impact of giving at the region and federation levels. She further stated we need to work together as one to invest in the future. As a region, 16 clubs, 53%, report participating in club giving with a total of \$13,526.45 donated. May 31 is the deadline to report club giving for this club year. Her presentation is available on the SIMWR website.

Lee Ann Schwope-Cochran, SIA Fund Development Council chair and member of SI Cleveland, surprised Patt by presenting her with the diamond Diplomat Laurel Society pin that she had earned.

District IV Director Christine Fowler-Shearer led attendees in a very challenging team building activity with Legos.

Governor Kris requested Federation Visitor Sherry Pearson pull the winning ticket for the 50/50 drawing. \$1023.00 was collected; Ruth Ann Cook of SI Kenton/Hardin County won \$511.50

After announcements were made by Conference chair Vicky, Governor Kris adjourned the meeting.

Saturday

Governor Kris reconvened the Midwestern Region 112th spring conference at 9am.

Veteran and SI Zanesville member Kim Brandfass led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Veronica Stemem from SI Columbus and Franklin County inspired attendees with the Dare Creed (*printed at the end of the minutes*).

Karen Fleming of SI Bloomington Normal was introduced as Parliamentarian. Conference body was reminded only official delegates may vote.

Wendy Stern from SI Columbus and Franklin County presented the Credentials report. Wendy moved the adoption of the credentials report on behalf of the credentials committee. Julie Morse of SI Anderson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Credentials Report

	Saturday April 27, 2019
Number of Clubs in the Region	31
Number of Clubs in Good Standing	27
Number of voting Region Officers	11
Number of Delegates in District I	16
Number of Delegates in District II	19

Number of Delegates in District III	18
Number of Delegates in District IV	19
Total Voting	83
Number of non-voting Soroptimists	72
Number of Guests	1
Total Attendance	156

Region Secretary Missie Austin moved the adoption of the standing rules for the conference and the adoption of the agenda. The motions were approved unanimously.

The minutes for the 111th Spring Conference (2018) were emailed to all club email addresses. Hearing no corrections, the minutes are approved as distributed.

Secretary Missie indicated that correspondence consisted of two letters presented in the front of the conference program.

Next on the agenda was the appointment of pages and tellers:

Conference Tellers:

District I - Aggie Ressel SI Milwaukee

District II - Barb Donnell SI Anderson

District III - Pam Bradford SI Wyandotte Southgate Taylor

District IV - Malinda Devine SI Columbus and Franklin County

The Chair of the Tellers will be Malinda Devine

Conference Pages:

District I - Jean Rabe SI Milwaukee

District II - Linda White SI Dayton

District III - Cathy Infantado - SI Trenton Area

District IV - Rhonda Gherman - Mount Vernon & Knox County

The Chair of the Pages will be Jean Rabe

Official timekeeper is Bev Todd from SI Greater Macomb

Wendi Stern introduced McKenzie Hopkins, volunteer and engagement manager of Choices - A Lutheran Social Services residence for victims of domestic violence.

McKenzie spoke about Lutheran Social Services and the different services they provide as a network of hope. She shared Choices is the only domestic violence shelter in Franklin County

and it can get overcrowded very easily. Mckenzie explained what domestic violence is and shared some harrowing statistics. She stated it is a heavy topic but communities need to educate themselves. She challenged attendees to find a way to advocate with a shelter in their community. She closed by thanking attendees for the generous donations of products that were greatly needed.

Region Treasurer Audrey reviewed highlights of the balance sheet and profit and loss statements. She further advised the 2014-16 biennium books were audited last summer. The audit committee made several suggestions for process improvement, but otherwise the books were in good order. She thanked the auditing committee for their hard work. There were no questions for the Treasurer and the report will be filed for audit.

Public Awareness Chair Karrie Blankenship from SI Grosse Pointe presented “Let’s Grow our Brand”. Karrie spoke about SIA’s efforts to cultivate a stronger brand. She shared branding comparisons between Soroptimist, Starbucks, and McDonalds. She explained the importance of consistent use of SIA’s brand identifiers and suggested clubs utilize resources available from SIA. Her presentation is on the SIMWR website. Karrie closed thanking Chris Speedie, SI Trenton Area, for her time and effort as webmistress.

Governor Kris hoped everyone enjoyed the slideshows that had been playing. They are photos from SIA Convention held in Yokohama and CSW in New York. She feels it is important to follow what is going on with our organization on social media. She challenged each club to share online output with all members whether at a meeting or visiting with a member who is not online.

Continuing with the dialog on branding, Gov Kris reminded the audience that the last date to use the Laurel Lady emblem will be Dec 31, 2019. Starting January 1, 2020 the Dot S logo should be used on all materials. She pointed out the two new Dot S retractable banners in the room. She then unveiled the new region banner that will be put into use next year. The banner proudly displays the region logo with the Dot S Best for Women tagline. The old Laurel Lady emblem banner will be passed from Governor to Governor.

Valencia Clark from SI Zanesville was introduced as Nominating Committee Chair. She addressed the membership on the process of running for a region position. She stated if anyone is interested in serving on, or being a chair of one of the region committees to let her or the committee know. Nominating forms will be on the region website in August and are due by December 15th.

Nominating Committee

Valencia Clark, chair

District I Mary Dale Donald, SI Illiana

District II Judy Sallee, SI Kenton/Hardin County

District III Amanda Melkert, SI Greater MaComb

District IV Barb Eberts, SI Columbus and Franklin County

Conference Chair Vicky Hicks made announcements and the session was adjourned to attend workshops.

Workshops: Social Media; Club Finances & Budget; Soroptimist Advocacy

### Awards Luncheon

The Spring Conference Awards Luncheon is a time to honor those women who have made an impact in their lives and the lives of others.

Governor-elect Darcy Merritt, Region Program Chair, welcomed everyone to the awards luncheon. She highlighted success of region clubs for the past year which included:

100% participation in the Live Your Dream Award for the 14th year.

29 clubs gave 49 Live Your Dream Awards and disbursed a total of \$53,050, a 7.93% increase over last year.

Clubs gave 29 Virginia Wagner Educational Awards totaling \$29,050 which is an 8.80% increase over last year.

Clubs provided other awards throughout the year, and the total of the 32 other awards was \$20,470, which is a decrease over last year.

In all, monetary awards decreased by 2.04% for a grand total of \$102, 570.

Rachel Yost of Canton and Stark County provided an inspiration before lunch.

Governor-elect Darcy filling in for the Live Your Dream and the Virginia Wagner Award chairs introduced award winners.

#### Live Your Dream:

District IV Daniella Cortez submitted by SI Canton & Stark County

District III Rikki Austin submitted by SI Wyandotte Southgate Taylor

District II Brandi Benton submitted by SI Middletown

District I and Region winner Emily Harley submitted by SI Fond du Lac

#### Virginia Wagner:

District I Molly Dull submitted by SI Chicago-----

District II Paige Forrester submitted by SI Anderson

District IV Jillian Decker submitted by SI Canton & Stark County

District III and Region winner Erinma Elibe submitted by SI Trenton Area

The program concluded with Governor-elect Darcy congratulating award winners and thanking clubs for their support of the award programs.

Fifteen minute break

District IV Director Christine Fowler-Shearer introduced afternoon speaker Suzanne Lewis-Johnson. Suzanne is the CEO of RAHAB, a ministry of hope. Prior to her work with RAHAB she was an FBI agent coordinating and working with task forces that addressed violent crimes against children and human trafficking. With her Women's Advisory Committee colleagues, she received the 2017 Director's Award for Excellence from FBI Director Christopher Wray.

Patt Cavell announced the Laurel Society quilt was filled for the 2nd time and the winner is Sandra Groves from SI Bloomington Normal

Announcements were made, the session was adjourned, and the membership went to afternoon workshops

Workshops: Leadership Panel; Women's Health; Soroptimist Advocacy

### Saturday Evening

Governor Kris gave opening remarks for the evening.

Following dinner, Governor Kris distributed participation awards to clubs from SIA. Region Treasurer Audrey Jarvey from SI Fond du Lac joined Governor Kris to announce the next awards.

The Henderson Award is presented to the club with the greatest percentage of growth in membership - SI Dayton.

The Mileage Award is presented to the club having travelled the greatest number of miles collectively to conference - SI Fond du Lac.

Governor Kris then presented 5 Governors awards to:

- SI Bloomington Normal
- SI Indianapolis Metro
- SI Flat Rock
- SI Canton & Stark County
- SI Grosse Pointe

Jackie Wajer, 2018 Outstanding Soroptimist, presented the 2019 Outstanding Soroptimist Award to Vicky Hicks of SI Columbus and Franklin County.

The purse raffle raised \$950 with Valerie Rader SI Flat Rock winner of the \$100.

After announcements the evening was adjourned.

### Sunday

Governor Kris called the meeting to order at 9am.

Laura Ferguson of SI Kenton/Hardin County provided the inspiration. She read a poem entitled *Friends* written by Judy MaGaw. Judy was a club member until her passing . She was witty, funny and a wicked poet (*poem is included at the end of the minutes*).

Federation Visitor Sherry Pearson shared a message from SIA with a garden theme. Seedlings cultivated to mature into something beautiful. She closed with a quote from Audrey Hepburn "To garden is to believe in the future."

SI Anderson member Barb Donnell conducted the Celebration of Life ceremony. The region lost 12 members in the past year to higher service. The program book included the bios of 10 women, the additional two are Lula Bohlender and Freda Ferguson.

Governor Kris gave her State of the Region speech. She closed with her signature tagline - "Keep being intentional, stand strong and stay bold. Get out there and be great, because we are."

The invitations report was given by Governor-elect Darcy

District I and III meeting  
October 18/19, 2019  
Das Dutchman Essenhaus  
240 Hwy 20  
Middlebury, Indiana 46540

District II and IV meeting  
October 25/26, 2019  
Double Tree by Hilton  
50 N. 2nd St  
Newark, OH 43055

113th Spring Conference  
April 24-26, 2020  
Kensington Hotel  
3500 S. State St

Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Governor Kris recognized Eve Johnson-Timmons for 50 years of membership; she received a standing ovation.

The basket raffle, organized by SI of Columbus and Franklin County raised \$3665.

Governor Kris received one written request for registration refund from Terry Phillips, SI Chicago on behalf of JoAnne Klein due to her medical emergency injuries 4/25.

Governor Kris adjourned the 112th Spring conference, and the 2019 Outstanding Soroptimist, Vicky Hicks led the membership in the Soroptimist Pledge.

Respectfully submitted,

Missie Austin

Region Secretary 2018-2020

## The Dare Soroptimist Optimist Creed

I DARE YOU...to promise yourself to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

Promise yourself to talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.

Promise yourself to make all your friends feel that there is something in them.

Promise yourself to look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.

Promise yourself to think only of the best, to work only for the best, and expect only the best.

Promise yourself to be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

Promise yourself to forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

Promise yourself to wear a cheerful disposition at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.

Promise yourself to give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.

Promise yourself to be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

I DARE you to promise yourself these things

## Friends

By Judy MaGaw

If I could float upon the breeze  
Over verdant fields and white capped seas  
My homing beacon with each mile  
Would be your laugh, your gentle smile  
If I were given treasures rare  
And untold wealth beyond compare  
My premier choice, my greatest prize  
Would be the gleam of your sparkling eyes  
If dreams became an avenue  
Life's winding path that I'd pursue  
I'd find my steps as the journey ends  
Would be guided by the hands of friends  
If God would grant one wish to me  
As part of my life's destiny  
My one request,  
A gift sublime  
Would be to share with friends my time

