

SOROPTIMIST

Soroptimist International of Hamilton

Hamilton , Montana

Northwestern Region, SIA

Best for Women

Volume 23 Issue #6 Dec 2020

CALENDAR

Dec 3 noon	Business mtg. BJ's / ZOOM
Dec 10 noon	SOLT/Speaker mtg BJ's/ZOOM
Dec 17 noon	ZOOM Christmas Social
Jan 7 noon	Business mtg. BJ's / ZOOM
Jan 14 noon	SOLT/Speaker mtg BJ's/ZOOM
Jan 21 noon	BOD mtg. BJ's / ZOOM
Jan 28 noon	ZOOM Social

TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	1, 2
SEE'S	2
Senior Women	3
SIH History Links	4
Website Updates	4
International Scholarship Program	4, 5
Birthdays	6

PRESIDENT'S DECEMBER 2020 MESSAGE

I can't believe December is here – can you?

I also can't believe how proud I am of SI Hamilton! You are an amazing group of women. During this most unusual year, you continue to amaze me with your creativity as we work to persist in our mission. Our club's determination to stay engaged with our members and our community has been an inspiration. I am so pleased to serve as your President this year!



The Christmas holiday is rapidly approaching. And, our traditions will change a bit this year due to the pandemic. First of all, I'd like to encourage you all to order your See's Candy. Tell your friends and family too. This is a great way to help build our service fund. It's been a disappointment not to greet the community from our red trailer. But, the See's Committee did a fabulous job in coming up with an alternative using on-line ordering. Just click on this link https://www.yumraising.com/secure/soroptimisti_soroptimist_of_hamilton_sees64/candy?h=MarBab2901&c=fb5880

There are only a few days left – help us get the word out!

While we just won't be able to have our traditional Christmas party and gift exchange this year, we don't want to lose our holiday spirit. Nancy Bussiere and Joan Richards have been our ad hoc social committee and we've had some really fun Zoom socials. If you missed November's social with it's special Lori Matz bingo – you really skipped a fun time! There is no finer medicine during stressful times than laughter. And, our membership is really good at laughing together. So, you won't want to miss the December social on December 17. Just watch for the Zoom invitation, grab your favorite beverage and get ready to have some fun! Our usual gift exchange has a limit of \$20 and the Board of Directors suggest that you might consider donating that to the Club. We also will make certain that our server at BJ's is given the traditional card with a cash gift. This year has been exceptionally difficult for those working in the service industry. If you would like to contribute to that effort, just let me know.

The Award Committee is working hard to get word out about our scholarship programs. And, again we're asking for your help in getting the word out. It is going to take much more than a world-wide pandemic to stop our efforts to bring scholarships to deserving women and girls in our community!

And, lastly, it is so gratifying to see our membership continue to grow! Since it is the holiday season, why don't you think about women you know who might want to join our ranks. I still am so thankful to a Hamilton businesswoman named Mildred Greer. She had owned the Hamilton Creamery and she was the woman who first invited me to a meeting. Introducing me to this great club was truly a wonderful gift. Let's share the magic of SI Hamilton!

Be of good cheer - this pandemic won't last forever. Vaccines will be released soon. So, now is the time to lay a solid foundation for our return to normal. It may not happen for several more months but we want to be prepared!



Merry Christmas everyone. And, please accept my best wishes for a very Happy New Year. Knowing each and every one of you is a gift to me!

President Teri

TIME IS RUNNING OUT

Friday, December 4, 2020 is the last day to order **See's Candy** on line.

Unfortunately, with our trailer unavailable we are running far behind our normal fundraising goal.
*Spread the word as far and wide as you can—FAST**

If you wish to buy some candy yourself and don't want to pay shipping, Contact Nancy Bussiere helene6816@gmail.com or (651) 334-4677 by Thursday December 3rd. She will do a large order for our members so there will be no shipping charge.

*Here is a sample email you can send to family and friends ASAP

Subj. A Delicious Treat for You or Your Friends?

If you are interested in treating yourself, or treating someone special in your life with

See's Candy at the holidays, my Soroptimist club is holding a fundraiser!

Click on www.sihamilton.org and you will see a link to our storefront.

Absolutely delicious chocolates, and free shipping to you with a \$65 order.

Shipping under that amount is under \$5.

The profits we earn will be used for these and more projects: Bitterroot Literacy, Linda Massa Youth Home, SAFE, Stop Human Trafficking, Senior Women Projects, Adopt-A-Classroom, Christmas Families.

Order Now through December 4th at www.sihamilton.org



Senior Women's Project

Our card writing campaign is continuing as we head into the Christmas Season. We have lost a few of our senior ladies, so 28 of us are presently writing to 97 ladies. Corvallis Elementary 4th graders have joined our campaign, signing up for 2 ladies for the class to write to. I have participants wanting more action, so if you know of a woman in the community aged 90 plus, please let me know. Here are letters from two of our ladies:

"Dear Nancy - Nice to get a letter from you. Yes, I miss your Senior Teas. I've been there every year after I became 90. I am 98 now and I had a few bad months and was in and out of St. Pats starting in March. I'm doing fine now but have arthritis so put stuff on my knees AM & PM. I have a problem with hearing & hearing aids are a BIG headache. Yes, it is cold - my daughter is with me part time and we have the furnace going. She lives in Othello, WA so is back and forth. It's awful lonesome when she leaves. I have a caller button to use if I need help. Did you see the Mayor & me dancing in the local paper, taken before the Virus? It's going to be a long winter but hope all is good by spring. Thanks for thinking of me. Laura Instness"

"Good morning! Sorry I haven't answered your letters. It just seems like a lot of work, since most of my communication is done by phone. I live at Kootenai Creek Village and have for 20 years. Am alone, still drive, but am supported by my daughter, so I need to obey her. Celebrated my 100 years a couple of months ago so don't have a lot to do and am really not interested. I came to MT in 1946 as I had met a man in the service who was from Kalispell. Have been ready to leave this earth and meet again with my John. Am having thanksgiving with my daughter and family who live in Florence. I'm from Maine, worked for government in D.C. There I worked in War Department, coding and encoding secret messages - met John in Miami,, FL. Have a great day on the 26th. God Bless You. Lily"

A follow-up card to Lily emphasized that she can just enjoy the cards she receives and should feel no pressure to respond. Thank you to all of you writing cards, and to those of you that contributed cards to the project.



COVID-19 has found its way into both Discovery and Valley View, and so we have not yet been able to add those ladies to our card list. If you know someone in this demographic living at those centers, or you know of a woman age 90+ living independently, be sure to let Nancy know so we can add them to our project.

And another thing to be excited about:

Sandra has made a large number of flat, machine-embroidered lace ornaments for us to tuck into an envelope with a card, to our senior ladies.

Teri Polumsky has agreed to have them available at her offices if you would like to stop by and pick out one for each of your ladies. 410 N. 1st Street. **If you are a snowbird**, and wish me to mail one to your lady/ladies with a card that has YOUR name on it, I would be glad to do that. Let me know.

Nancy Bussiere

NEW FEATURE FOR YOU

Several of our members have spent a great deal of time putting our Club History in pictures. Each month we will add an album or two for you to peruse and see where we started in 1974 and how we've progressed through the years. The albums are in an SI Dropbox and our Home Page on the Web has direct links to them.

This link is right under our See's notice and the Scholarship notice. sihamilton.org

SI Hamilton History in Photos

Charter Night - June 14, 1974

First Scrapbooks - 1984 -1988

WEBSITE UPDATES

Our Photo Roster has been updated, but as you'll see there are many missing photos and some information. Please check out your listing to see if you need to fill (or change) information. On the main Members Only Page, there is a link (bottom right) that will take you to an email to the site. There are also updates going on in our Photo Gallery, some of which are still "in the works" as WIX is trying to fix a problem they have with editing albums.

SI International Scholarship Organization

This month we will receive the applications for the SI 2020 International Scholarship Awards. In order to stay updated about some of their ongoing community work Sara, the SERES director, sent this article about an important project located in a Guatemalan rural village. This is just one of the many projects completed by their youth. During the past 10 years, this international award winning organization has trained over 5, 000 young leaders, 100 youth trainers, and supported multiple youth-led community projects.

Alene Tunny

SERES leaders build a center of action in Uspantán, Guatemala

JUN 12, WRITTEN BY EMILY NEIL

Youth activities at ConeXpacio Center in Uspantán.

Before, the SERES Uspantán youth leaders held their meetings in the central park of Villa de San Miguel, Uspantán. They would gather there, or sometimes in an office space lent to them by one community organization or another, to discuss their action plans to benefit their community and the surrounding communities in the municipality of Uspantán, located in the department of El Quiché, which sits northwest of Guatemala City. Though the location of their gatherings was always in flux, the commitment of many of the young changemakers working to create positive impacts in their communities remained constant. But now, youth leaders like Johana Lopez, a SERES ambassador and active participant in the SERES network of youth leaders in Uspantán since November 2015, have a central space to facilitate that continued planning and further their commitment to their community. Johana said that she has seen a lot change in the past year - much of it due to a brand-new office hub space, called the ConeXpacio, which SERES Uspantán established and opened in May 2019.

(cont'd from previous page)

The ConeXpacio: A place to grow

Young people in Uspantán now have a welcoming, safe place to congregate - something that was not available to them prior to the opening of the hub. She noted, “We now have this space to bring about our projects and work on our action plans, and to prepare well for our Activate programs in surrounding communities in Uspantán,”

The office serves as a “reference point” for a number of different activities planned by the approximately 20

youth who are heavily involved in SERES Uspantán, Julio commented that they are connected to a wider network of at least 70 other young leaders in the municipality who participate in leadership retreats, hikes, teaching reading classes for young children, reforestation efforts, cleaning campaigns, and other activities. Julio, Johana, and Ema Lopez, Johana’s sister, also a SERES ambassador, agreed that having a physical office space has helped expand their SERES Uspantán network. Youth have connected with them via their Facebook page and visit them in person at the ConeXpacio.

Ema said that in addition to working on their action plans or carrying out other projects, the hub has served as a space for youth to connect with each other by giving different presentations or talks about different topics.

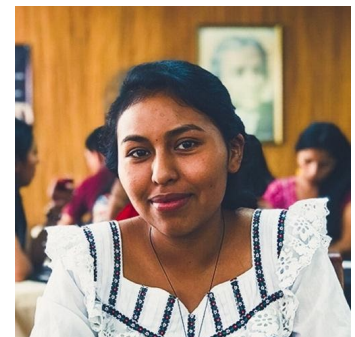
And according to Johana, the space and efforts of the youth leaders has already had an impact throughout the community and municipality. “We’ve involved other people, institutions, and the actions that we are doing are now greater,” Johana said, noting that public officials who form part of the local COCODEs, or community councils, in surrounding towns have complemented the group on the “great job” that they have been doing. “I think that it’s been a space that’s allowed for the community to also be involved,” she added.

Building in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic

Right now, plans for the leaders of Uspantán for the growth of the hub are temporarily on hold, as are so many others throughout the world, due to the coronavirus pandemic and social distancing regulations put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19. However, the network is still keeping up their work, despite quarantine. Julio said that they communicate by Whatsapp and try to organize video calls and chats once a week.

The mostly rural communities of Uspantán face a significant risk due to the spread of COVID-19. In some places, Julio noted, it takes five hours to reach a hospital. Many of the smallholder farmers in the region are also suffering due to the economic restrictions imposed by the lockdown. Julio said that once they are able to, they want to meet again in person, and do more visits with young people in other communities in the area to follow up and listen to them.

“As young people, we have this space to be able to realize the activities that we can do, and those which can develop more leadership skills, even for the very young. From 12 years old, they can do something for their community, because they have the capacity. It’s just that often they don’t have a place. So I think that this is the importance of opening this space, so that they can do something for their community,” Johana said.



Johana Lopez

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Submissions to the newsletter can be sent to: <mailto:sinewsletter@gmail.com>
If you submit to either of the above locations, you are guaranteed it will reach us!