



SOROPTIMIST

Soroptimist International of Hamilton
Hamilton, Montana
Northwestern Region, SIA

Best for Women

Volume 21 Issue No. 9 April 2019

Calendar

Apr 4—Business Meeting
@ noon BJ's

Apr 11—Speaker/SOLT
Meeting @ noon BJ-s

Apr 18—Board Meeting @
noon BJ-s

Apr 24—NWR Conference

Apr 25—Evening Wrapped
in Chocolate 6-9pm @
Bitterroot River Inn

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April President's Message



I've been bragging to any one who'll listen how incredible our scholarship program is. Saturday at the Area Meeting in Dillon I just kept repeating how proud I was of our club. We rock!!!! And it all happens because of what our members do. Its you guys that make it happen. Again, thank you for all you do.

It's true. What we do is making a difference.

However, on a darker side, theres still so much to be done to help raise awareness on issues that affect women and girls.

April is both ***Sexual Assault Awareness Month*** and ***Child Abuse Awareness Month***. I spent some time this morning reading about rape. Historically rape was not about women. It was seen as a crime against men whose theft of a woman's virginity or embezzlement of a mans fair price for a daughter resulted in laws being created to reimburse men. Punishments varied depending on whether the woman was a virgin, unwed or married. In this country, the subject of rape as a crime against women surfaced in the 1960s as part of the women's movement.

But think about this: a survey in 2015 (8,000 men & women) revealed that many people still view women as partially or completely to blame for being raped if she:



- Acts flirtatiously (30% of those surveyed)
- Is drunk (25%)
- Has many sexual partners (20%)
- Clearly failed to say "no" to the man. (30%)



A woman is blamed for being in the wrong place at the wrong time: a parking garage, a street not well lit. At home, it was legal to rape your wife until 1975 -1993, depending on what state you lived in.

This is ridiculous. Rape is against the law. Period.

AN EVENING WRAPPED IN CHOCOLATE

AN EVENING WRAPPED IN CHOCOLATE is coming down to the finish line! The committee has been hard at work in making this a very prosperous event. We have \$5500 in sponsor monies this year so this more than pays our expenses. We have 9 exciting Live Auction Items and right now we have 13 silent auction items. It will be at the Bitterroot River Inn on April 25th which is a Thursday so we hope that will bring some people in that are busy on the weekends. Dominic will be our auctioneer so that should be more than fun to watch. Now we need the membership to help us sell tickets. Invitations have been mailed to people on our mailing list, but we need new people to come that night. So put the word out to everyone you know talk it up and let's have a great evening, make more this year so we our scholarships can grow!



Please Join us for

An Evening Wrapped in Chocolate

April 25, 2019

A fundraiser for Soroptimist awards & scholarships for Ravalli County women

Red Rooster
Assorted chocolate desserts
& heavy hors d'oeuvres

**Blodgett Canyon Cellars
Higherground Brewing Co.**
No host
Complimentary 1st Glass

6pm to 9pm

\$40.00 per person
\$75.00 per couple
\$300.00 table of 8

Tickets are available online at sihamilton.org
Chapter One in Hamilton or call 406-360-3902


SOROPTIMIST
Best for Women

Bitterroot River Inn, 139 Bitterroot Plaza Dr. Hamilton

Educate a woman, change a community

Note from Vikki

Thank you all for your past and continued support! All is quiet at my house as I move forward with lots of things to do and learn about. I will pop in on Thursday meeting to say hey. On my way that day to a a soul-healing quilt retreat with some more good buddies (and wine!)

I will not be at the April 11 meeting either. I am flying out to Seattle to be with my older daughter during her Spring Break from school duties and going to see the La Conner tulips in full bloom! I will return to see Judy Collins at the PAC on Friday nite; that was the concert that Ken really wanted to see.

Anyway, thanks to all of you for your wonderful support and love shown to me!! I am truly grateful.

I will be picking up See's deposits the second week of sales, so I'm back in the thick of it!!

And, hey Patti and Joan, I will be participating in the Evening Wrapped in Chocolate.

Love and hugs to you all!!! Thanks for all of the wonderful messages. Thanks to all of you who attended Ken's memorial service. I know I did not see you all but it was a wonderful retrospective of a life well-lived.

-Vikki



SEE'S CANDIES brought in **\$1,504.86** in **Valentine sales**. Considering the weather, that wasn't too bad.

The Easter order is coming up soon and we'll start the booth toward the end of March.

Congratulations Hannah Wilson!

Hannah Wilson is a \$1,500 NWR Live Your Dream winner. She was our 1st place Live Your Dream recipient this year.



We look forward to hearing Hannah speak at the Evening Wrapped in Chocolate fundraiser on April 25th.



2019 Award Recipients

Ruby Award

Stephanie Beck

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 charity of choice.

Live Your Dream Award

Hannah Wilson	\$3,000
Jodi Waliser	\$2,000

Fellowship Award

Laura Wathen	\$3,000
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Options

Denise Dandrige	\$2,000
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Pro Tech

Sydni Rose	\$1,000
Brandi Stewart	\$1,000

Patti Furniss

Krista Hayward	\$1,000
Laura Newby	\$1,000

**Violet Richardson

Maizie Mendenhall	\$ 250
Alis Auch	\$ 250
Ivy Semple	\$ 250
Sydney Powell	\$ 250
Elizabeth Varner	\$ 250

*Pro Tech/Phlebotomy

Darci Lewis	\$2,300
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* Soroptimist is honored to partner with a local woman, Sue Major, whose medical issues and experiences have resulted in her having more close encounters with phlebotomists than she would care to have. In recognizing the kindness, compassion and skill of a couple of phlebotomists at Marcus Daly Memorial Hospital, Sue reached out to family and friends and raised \$5000 to support women enrolled in the Phlebotomy program at the Bitterroot College. Sue has entrusted Soroptimist of Hamilton to administer these funds.



1st place Violet Richard award winners Maizie Mendenhall and Alis Auch receiving matching Awards from The Greater Valley Foundation.

**The top two Violet Richardson awards given to Maizie Mendenhall and Alis Auch were matched by The Greater Valley Foundation, giving each recipient a total of \$500.00 each. Each recipient also picks a charity of their choice and SIH donates \$100 to that charity.



Saundra Amsden presenting Laura Wathen with \$3,000 Fellowship Award

March Social

Members at the SI Social this month were inspired by the presentation of our guest, Dr. Sherry Miller. Sherry, a native of Montana has lived and worked in Guatemala for over 20 years. During that time she has been a co-founder of two innovative service programs that we support with our International Scholarship Fund.

One program is Becas Especiales, (Special Scholarships). This year BECAS provided funding for 66 Guatemalan students in the village of Uspantán who are unable to pay the fees for public school. Schooling past the primary grades in Guatemala is not free. Each student must pay the equivalent of \$220 in middle school and \$350 in High School for tuition and supplies. Most families in this rural area are subsistence farmers and have very little income. All of this work is supported on a budget of \$28,000 a year. Young volunteer members of the local board of directors in Uspantán have committed to doing all they can to raise 15% of the budget locally. This is truly a labor of love.

Sherry spoke about Rufina, who walks miles on Sundays to take 10 courses. She completes her homework during the week while helping her single mother farm and take care of the greater family. Rufina is determined to be the first one in her family to complete high school thanks to this program.

Sherry also co-founded SERES, a program that cultivates and energizes youth leaders to create just and sustainable communities in Central America. During its 10 years the SERES program has trained almost 7000 young people in Guatemala and El Salvador to become engaged community leaders in their local communities. This year, SI Hamilton provided a \$500 scholarship for one of their advanced leaders. Upon receiving her award for further education, she said, "Everything about SERES has changed me to be a better human being and what I saw happen to youth at a recent Activate Congress took my breath away. I could literally see them awakening to the possibilities of change for the good they could do in their own communities".

For more information about these programs and how to donate, you can go to their websites.

<https://www.becasuspantan.com>

seres.org



The cows on the highway slowed us down but we got there!

Soroptimist Area Meeting

Dillon MT, Saturday March 30



About 15 folks attended, mostly from Dillon but we had a contingency from both Missoula and Hamilton (Saundra, SueMac, Mary Lou and Amy)

Next District Meeting is Oct 4-5 in Kalispell. It's not that far to go. Put it on your calendar. It will be fun. We discussed what would be good topics: Trafficking and the U.N, conflict resolution. Saundra suggested discussing the psychology of poverty. ***What would you be interested in hearing about? Contact SueMac if you have ideas.***

Teri Kunz, our D4 Director is thinking about the Hamilton area for the following District Meeting. She inquired whether the newly opened Medicine Hot Springs could accommodate us.



District and Region looking for candidates to fill positions (Director, Secretary, Regional Committees)

Missoula has started a ***Dream It, Be It*** program for girls. Dillon continues to do a big auction event with themed "purses". Both clubs do monthly fun activities. The Missoula club just recently got together on this "thirst bus" where they pedaled around Missoula to the Breweries (yes, theres a driver of this bus). They had a blast!

Note from Mary Lou on Area Meeting

One car load, with four club members, made our way to meet with old and new friends. What better way to get to know the club members in the car than to spend several hours together.

It was a good day for traveling.

Celebrating Success Awards: Submitted to SIA, Category Public Awareness



If you look up as you're driving along Highway 93 through the Bitterroot Valley you will see a billboard with some of the members of Soroptimist International of Hamilton, Montana. We are supporting white ribbon week (October 21-27) to help raise awareness of the issue of Domestic Violence in our community.

The billboard was paid for by SAFE (Supporters of an Abuse Free Environment), a women's shelter and crisis center that was founded by our club in 1988. The billboard recognizes the longstanding leadership of our club and our continued support for issues that affect women and girls in our community.

Soroptimists is a well-known organization in our valley with an impressive record of helping women and girls since 1974. Early on, our club members went beyond just raising awareness about domestic violence. We recognized the vital need to provide shelter for these women and we made it happen. Decades later, we were the seed for the community Mammogram program where women could get a needed mammogram free of charge. Now administered by our local hospital, this program provides free screening and support for all types of cancer. Currently our efforts are directed towards building our *Live Your Dream* program. This spring our club awarded \$19,000 to 20 women, funding 9 different awards and scholarships that ranged from phlebotomy classes at our community college to a nursing degree at the University of Montana and funding for 2 Live Your Dream scholarships. And the more we give, the more the community supports us. The philanthropic side of our club is growing by leaps and bounds.

We're getting our name out there so people know who we are. It helps us build membership, instills club pride, and helps fund the programs that we support.

Yes, look up! See the smiling Soroptimists along the highway. Consider joining us in our mission to improve the lives of women and girls in our community.

**Soroptimist of Hamilton
PO Box 1012
Hamilton, MT 59840**

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!