

# The Pointer

Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe  
August 2022



## President's Message — On the launchpad; ready for takeoff

If you attended our July meeting via Zoom and experienced technology glitches, our apologies. The manager of Waves Chill & Grill has collaborated with us to fix the Wi-Fi strength connection. Carol Hofer's friend has also offered to let us use his audio equipment for the August meeting since ours is no longer working. Thank you, Carol! We are working to smooth the transition back to in-person meetings and appreciate your patience.

On July 19, Membership Chair Diana Langlois and her committee got together at her condominium and worked on suggestions for Soroptimist spirit wear. (See article on p. 5.)

On July 20, Fundraising Chair Mary Ellen Burke and her committee met via Zoom. Excellent ideas were discussed and, beginning next month, we will be well on our way to fundraising events to support our mission: to provide women and girls access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment. Check your email and our website (<https://www.grossepointesoroptimist.net/>) for details. (See article on p. 7.)



On August 1, the Live Your Dream (LYD) portal opened and is ready to accept applications. Please direct all applicants to [LIVE YOUR DREAM APPLICATION](#). If there are any questions you may contact Bette Lepouttre at [elepouttre@gmail.com](mailto:elepouttre@gmail.com). Soroptimist's *Live Your Dream Award* program is a unique educational award for women who provide the primary financial support for their families. They give women the resources they need to improve their education, skills, and employment prospects. Every year, Soroptimist International (SI) distributes more than \$2.8 million in educational awards to about 1,700 women all over the world.

**I am calling on all members!** We need a volunteer to chair the *Madeline Colavito Continuing Education Award*. This award provides additional financial support to our Live Your Dream (LYD) Award recipients as they work toward completing their educational programs. Through an application process, we award LYD recipients with \$500 a year, for up to 4 years after receiving a LYD Award or until the recipient completes her GED, skills training, or undergraduate education program, whichever occurs first. Please contact President Elect and Program Chair Bette Lepouttre at [elepouttre@gmail.com](mailto:elepouttre@gmail.com) if you are interested in chairing this award.

Do you remember why you became a Soroptimist? Was it to help women and girls have the resources and opportunities to reach their full potential and live their dreams? Well now is the chance to help by joining a committee. Find your inner power and join one today. — Karrie Blankenship, SIGP President

The "Creator's" email address for our club is:  
*grossepointesoroptimist@gmail.com*



Have you noticed receiving different-looking emails inviting you to attend committee meetings or club events? As promised, SIGP is continuing to utilize more technology to improve communication with each of you. It will be particularly helpful to those who attend meetings via Zoom or cannot attend meetings on Wednesday evenings due to other commitments.

Our committee and event chairwomen are now using SignUpGenius to invite you to committee meetings, club events and, eventually, general meetings. We are all new to this tool and ask that you have patience with it and us while we all learn how to manage and use it.

SignUpGenius is an online software tool for volunteer management and event planning. It is a wonderful way to plan and fill volunteer slots/times for events all in one place.

Think of it as the clipboard we pass around at our business meetings to take attendance and sign up to volunteer or attend an activity. With SignUpGenius, you don't even have to be physically at the meeting to sign up for something that interests you. Between Zoom and SignUpGenius every single member is included.

When you receive an invitation/signup, we ask that you fill out the invitation-RSVP. Depending on the type of invitation, volunteer times and duties may need to be filled in along with your email address. After you have completed filling out the invite, you will receive an email the day before the event reminding you of your commitment. There's usually space where you can decline an invitation.

Not to worry. If you say "yes" and then something comes up and you are unable to attend or volunteer, simply contact the committee chair about your schedule change so she can make other arrangements. Or if you responded "no" and your schedule changes, please contact the chair and tell her of your availability, or use SignUpGenius, even at the last minute. The club email is checked daily and your email replies are sent on to the appropriate committee/event chair.

We are looking to start using SignUpGenius for our general meetings before the end of the year. So, look for your invitation coming soon.

P.S. Oh, and in the beginning, please check your spam/trash folders if you haven't been receiving these emails. Put SignUpGenius in your contacts and all should go smoothly after that.

P.P.S. Here the link to put the app on your phone: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/signupgenius/id1314654833>

## Meet our four new members on pages 9 & 10!

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Karrie Blankenship

*President*

Diana Langlois

*Vice President*

Bette Lepouttre

*President Elect*

Mary Bryk

*Secretary*

Nancy Solak

*Assistant Secretary*

Mary Ellen Burke

*Assistant Treasurer*

*Directors*

Roseanne Horne

Kerri Green

Carolyn Barth

The name Soroptimist was coined from the Latin *soror*, meaning sister, and *optimus*, meaning best.

Soroptimist is perhaps best interpreted as "best for women."

## MORE BANG FOR OUR BUCKS! DEADLINE TO GIVE IS SATURDAY, AUGUST 6

Do we have good news! Rocket Mortgage Classic Birdies for Charity has added Dow, its first-ever Giving Bonus Sponsor! This means that for every \$10 SIGP raises, SIGP gets an additional \$2! That's an increase of 20%!

If you or your friends and family have not already donated to the [Rocket Mortgage Classic Birdies for Charity](#) fundraiser (click to donate). Once you get to the site, you may have to scroll down to find "Soroptimist Grosse Pointe." This charity program helps SIGP raise funds for our scholarship and educational programs.

### Flat Rate Donations Are Due by Saturday, August 6!

*"For the first time in program history, we are excited to offer a bonus to donations made through the Rocket Mortgage Classic Birdies for Charity program! Dow, in its commitment to imagine a better future, is our first ever Giving Bonus Sponsor and will add a 20% bonus to every donation made. Thanks to Dow, your donation goes further through Birdies for Charity!"*

— Rocket Mortgage Classic Birdies for Charity

**So far, SIGP has received \$2,000 in donations. We will receive an additional 20% from Dow which amounts to \$400 in additional bonus money for a grand total of \$2,400. We will receive \$2 for every \$10. donated! This is so awesome! Let's take advantage of this "free" money and get the word out. Donations are due by Saturday, August 6.**

Thank you to those club members who have already contributed or sent letters to family and friends asking for donations. Don't forget to Post, Like and Share on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

To donate, you can also click here: [PartnerHQ](#)

Thank you for your support!



*PGA TOUR Golf came back to Detroit last weekend and SIGP is getting involved in the excitement by participating in the Rocket Mortgage Classic's Birdies for Charity Program!*



## Speaking of SignUpGenius ...

### After 6 on Kercheval — A family event, Saturday, August 27

You may have already noticed an email asking you to volunteer to staff our club's booth at the After 6 on Kercheval event on Saturday, August 27. The purpose of our staffing a booth is to increase awareness of our club (we'll have handouts with bulleted points as to what we do), and to increase awareness of our Live Your Dream award (we'll have applications at the ready).

Thanks to SIGP member and Secretary Mary Bryk, we'll have a tent, a table and chairs. We'll also have a children's game with small prizes at the table to attract people to come chat with us. Two members volunteering per hour will allow you spend time with another member, and then check out the rest of the festival.

If you can't find your email to sign up to help, click here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/>

### Next SIGP Business Meeting: Wednesday, August 10

**6:30 p.m. on Zoom or at Wave's Chill and Grill, 24223 Jefferson Ave, SCS, MI 48080**

SIGP's private room will be available for meet and greet at 6:00 pm. and the meeting starts promptly at 6:30

All meetings will be hybrid and recorded

### Get ready for the Sunshine Kitty raffle at the August business meeting

Sunshine Kitty 50/50 raffle tickets will be offered to interested members at this month's business meeting for **\$1 each**. Monies will be deposited to the General Fund for expenses for members, such as yellow roses, cards, stamps, decade birthday cake, etc. Participating in the raffle is strictly voluntary...but if you win...your share of the raffle will certainly offset the price of your dinner!

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## **Volunteers needed to help with newly formed Technology Committee**

SIGP is committed to making our meetings hybrid, so members can get together in person or join us on Zoom. SIGP is starting a Technology Committee to help ensure this process goes smoothly for each meeting. Calling all volunteers who would like to help determine what equipment is needed and assist with setup and troubleshooting. Please contact Kerri Green (586-651-9222 or jazzykerri@yahoo.com) to support this important initiative.

## **MEMBERSHIP CHAIR Diana Langlois reports ...**

### **Get ready for new Soroptimist spirit wear!**

An enthusiastic Membership Committee: Mary Bryk, Rasheda Williams, Robin Crawford, Karrie Blankenship, Bette Lepouttre, Mary Ellen Burke and myself met on July 19, at my condo to look at clothes and caps for our club. We selected a top that is not a tee shirt, and we are in the process of deciding where to put our SOROPTIMIST name on it! Come see it modeled on committee members at the August business meeting and share your suggestion as to where the logo might be printed! Also we plan to offer a regular style short-sleeve tee shirt and a baseball cap. Sale is scheduled for the month of September. Details and prices will be emailed to members.



## **Another innovative way for our club to raise funds!**

The Michigan Boating Industries Association (MBIA) will put on its Metro Boat Show at the Lake St. Clair MetroPark (Metro Beach Park) from September 15-18, 2022.

They need people to work the event as ticket sellers and other staffing positions. The pay is \$15 per hour. MBIA will send a check directly to Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe for our hours worked. This is a fun way for Soroptimist and their friends or families to help raise money for our club. Check out the event here: [Metro Boat Show – Boat Michigan](#)

A SignUpGenius email will be sent out to you shortly to sign up for specific days, hours and jobs.

Questions: Contact Roseanne Horne at 313-706-1801

## Mentoring for Success: Quick Update



Mentors and mentees have made their initial contacts via phone or Zoom. Contacts continue through August with a group ZOOM meeting scheduled for **SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, at 10:30 a.m.**

Here are the current mentors and mentees matched...

Code:

**LYD Awardee** = Live Your Dream Award

**VWEA** = Virginia Wagner Educational Award

Bette Lepouttre and Toni Adams mentor **Nealmetria Loper, LYD 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

Maureen Anthony and Tonesia Nesbitt mentor **Danyelle Easley, LYD 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022**

Marlane Washington mentors **Delia Mustin, LYD, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022**

Katherine Baetz and Diana Langlois keep in touch with **Denise Sargent, LYD<sup>4th</sup> 2022**

Maureen Anthony mentors Tonesia Nesbitt, **LYD 2nd, 2021**

Bette Lepouttre mentors Lavina Hutchinson, **LYD, 2020, VWEA, 2022**

*A note to Mentors: Please **email or bring to the business meeting your Monthly Mentee/Mentor Activity Log for July.** Thank you! Diana Langlois*





# FUNDRAISING “BIG” PLANS



We are thinking “BIG” this year, so we have several FUN events planned.

Our first BIG event is **Birdies for Charity** through Rocket Mortgage, the PGA Golf tournament sponsor. Thanks to members and their friends, so far, we have donations totaling over \$2,000. Thank you to Francine Pegues for chairing this event and successfully encouraging us to “ask” for donations. (See article on p. 3.)

Our next BIG event is our annual **For the Love of Wine Raffle**. We will follow the same plan as last year. Every member will receive their raffle tickets at our Holiday Dinner in December and will be asked to sell them until February 8, 2023, the date of our February our business meeting. Ross Braun and Bette Lepouttre volunteered to co-chair this year.

Get ready for the **Kentucky Derby on Sugarbush Road** BIG event on May 6, 2023. Karrie Blankenship is inviting everyone and their friends to come to her home to enjoy the Kentucky Derby, complete with a Derby Hat Contest. Everyone will be able to place their bets before the race and then enjoy watching it while sipping mint julips. You won’t want to miss this BIG event.

A service project at the **Michigan Boating Industries Association** (MBIA) needs help staffing the show at Metro Beach Park from September 15-18. Each hour one of our members staffs the show will earn our club \$15! (See p. 5.)

Our last BIG event will be an **Infinity Cruise down the Detroit River** in July 2023. We will be searching for sponsors at the beginning of 2023, so this fundraiser spans two fiscal years. Francine Pegues is chairing this event.

In addition to these BIG events, we will be continuing with some of our standard fundraisers. This includes the **Bottle & Can Collection**, **Accessory Sale**, and **Amazon Smile**. We also will seek corporate sponsors for our Award programs, as well as for a site for another **Golden Garage Sale**. Two members have already started their own Personal Fundraisers.

Please be ready to help us make these “BIG” events, as well as our ongoing events a BIG success.

## Get ready for a new service initiative! SNEAK PEEK

### DID YOU KNOW?



Soar Detroit is a nonprofit organization with a literacy program dedicated to helping children learn how to read. Their data on reading test scores shows a student improves by one grade level in just 11 weeks of one-on-one tutoring for 90 minutes a week.

Do you have 90 minutes a week to give to help a child learn to read? More information will be presented at our August 13 business meeting by Mary Bryk and Diana Langlois.

## Happy August Birthday to...

Bette Lepouttre, August 08

Diana Langlois, August 12

Robin Crawford, August 14

Susan Lewandowski, August 23

Ellen Chapin, August 27





## Give a warm welcome to our four new SIGP members!

**Dawn Riddle**, a retired social worker, moved to Grosse Pointe Park seven years ago with her husband to be near her son and daughter-in-law. And most importantly, they moved to be near her two lovely granddaughters who live in Grosse Pointe Farms.

Most of her adult life, she and her husband lived in the Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti area. Dawn says, "Although I am overjoyed to be near my family, it has been a bit of an adjustment acclimating to a completely new community as retirees. However there have been many interesting things to explore and enjoy.

"Discovering Soroptimist seems like what I have been seeking. A way to become involved and to contribute to an important and deserving cause. I am looking forward to learning more about what services Soroptimist provides and working with other members."

In her free time, Dawn enjoys being with her family, traveling, and she is an avid gardener.

**Annie Mae Holt** is a native of Birmingham, Alabama, and arrived in Detroit in 1967, the summer of the historic community rebellion. She is the mother of three daughters and has five grandchildren.



In her new hometown, Annie Mae soon became rooted in working for the progress of Detroit and its residents, especially its youth. She has always had a passion for education. At the age of 40, she earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from Wayne State University and later earned a Master's Degree there. During her 24-year career with the Detroit Public Schools, she taught middle school students. Annie Mae often worked with state and national leaders to prevent bias in standardized tests and to ensure best educational practices.

Annie Mae is very active in the community. She has volunteered with Michigan CASA, the court-appointed special advocate for children. As a member of Hartford Memorial Church, she served as co-director of the Rites of Passage Program to educate youth about their history and escorted youth to west coast Africa. She also conducted adult education lessons in a prison outreach program with the Fund for African and African American Cultural and Educational Solidarity. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta and a Michigan AARP-appointed volunteer advocate.

A resident of the Grandmont #1 Association subdivision since 1978, Annie Mae serves as a board member and as chair of its Senior 50+ Committee. She takes on numerous community projects, from working as a volunteer with the city's effort to survey every parcel of land to helping people sign up for medical coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

*New Members (continued on next page)*

Annie Mae Holt, who says she is “retired with a purpose,” became an at-large Police Commissioner in February 2019, following her appointment by Mayor Duggan and confirmation by the Detroit City Council.

**Carolyn Chandrasekar** came to SIGP by way of longtime member and former co-chair of our club’s Anti-Human Trafficking Committee, Laurie Jost. Carolyn, too, has a background in volunteering: Twenty years at Crossroads and working in the Beaumont Grosse Pointe gift shop.



Carolyn has four daughters, five grandchildren and five great grandchildren! This family started after she married her husband who she met at the hospital where she worked as an anesthesiologist assistant and administered EKGs and EEGs.

A lot of her knowledge comes from her expansive traveling; she’s visited at least 23 countries. Switzerland and Sweden are her favorites. She can’t choose a favorite U.S. state “because each has its own charm.” Being from New Jersey, she says she misses the smell of the ocean but is thankful to be here in Michigan with all its water.

**Barbara (Barb) Skelly** came to join Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe (SIGP) by way of long-time member Diana Langlois. The plan to help Live Your Dream Award winner Jeritha Brown was what caught Barb’s interest. Asking our 60 members for assistance with finding a home and later, an air conditioner while dealing with kidney issues, touched her heart.



Barb is no stranger to volunteering. Fluent in Spanish, she tutors children from Mexico at a community center in Pontiac and will start tutoring at nearby Grace Church in the fall. It’s only natural that she spends a month every year in Mexico. Her own children live in Virginia and Illinois.

Barb is a retired school counselor after 26 years with the Grosse Pointe School System. She did her undergraduate work at Kent State, and has a master’s degree in counseling from Western Illinois University.

## Our Ghana Girls — Bishop Peter Paul visits Detroit from Damongo



*SIGP member Carol Hofer with the bishop at the World Medical Relief office where he was requesting medical supplies for the school and hospital in Damongo.*

We were pleased to welcome Bishop Peter Paul from Damongo, northern Ghana, again to the Detroit area a few weeks ago where he began a mission appeal trip in the Midwest. Bishop Peter Paul is responsible for the girls SIGP helps support at St. Anne School. He reports that several of our graduates have taken good jobs in the administration of agencies. We have reason to be proud.

Another priest from Damongo will come in September. Perhaps we will have a chance to dine with him and learn more of what is happening at St. Anne.

Below is a section of a paragraph about one of our students from Karen Hunka, a volunteer from the USA who is working in Damongo as financial manager of the school, and who is helping us keep in contact with our girls. Our support makes a difference. — *Carol Hofer*

St. Anne student Rocklyn is special in that she has a very noticeable case of scoliosis. Over here, disabilities are not seen as we see them. It was challenging for her at first. There was a lot of talking to the girls about how they are to treat all individuals equally. I was a bit nervous for Rocklyn at the beginning. Now she is thriving. Happily, she was voted runner up at Ninos Night. Ninos night is when the freshman class is initiated. They choose a queen and Rocklyn made runner up. I was so happy.

— *Karen Hunka, Financial Manager, St. Anne School, and U.S.A. volunteer*

### Here are excerpts from the letters of two of St. Anne's students.

**Rocklyn writes:** "I am very happy to write you this letter. I want to use this opportunity to say I am very grateful for the support you have been giving me. I will like to tell you about myself. I am 16 years of age and am studying economics. I will like to be a dietitian in future. I promise to study hard to achieve my dream. I want to say I am very grateful for helping me pay my school fees. God bless you and all who are helping pay my school fees."

**Beno Alfridina writes:** "It is a great honor to write you this letter. I am writing you this letter because I want to sincerely say a very big thank you to you for all your support and also to tell you about myself and my family. My name is Beno Alfridina, 19 years of age, a form two student, and studying economics as my course. I am from a family of seven children, in future I will like to be a fire fighter. I promise to study very hard to achieve my dream. I am very grateful for the support you have been giving to me. Thank you very much and God richly bless you."

**FREE Advertising for Members:** If you would like to advertise your business, product, or service, please email *The Pointer* editor, Nancy Solak, at [solaksinitaly@yahoo.com](mailto:solaksinitaly@yahoo.com)

## Midwestern Region Board

Governor – **Christine Fowler Shearer, SI Cleveland**  
(fowlerartistic@gmail.com)  
Governor Elect: **Audrey Jarvey, SI Fond du Lac**  
(audreyjarv@charter.net)  
Secretary - **Sheila Zingler-Gilbert, SI Fond du Lac**  
(sheilasifdl@gmail.com)  
Treasurer - **Linda Alpers, SI NE Suburban Franklin County**  
(alpers.1@osu.edu)  
Treasurer - **Linda Alpers, SI NE Suburban Franklin County**  
(alpers.1@osu.edu)

## District III

District III Director - Kellie Klingel, SI Flat Rock Area  
(kktklingel@yahoo.com)  
District III Secretary - Laura Ferguson, SI Kenton/Hardin County  
(laura.r.ferguson@gmail.com)

## Soroptimist Websites

Grosse Pointe Soroptimist: <https://www.grossepointesoroptimist.org/>  
Soroptimist International Midwestern Region - [simwr.org](http://simwr.org)  
Soroptimist International of the Americas [soroptimist.org](http://soroptimist.org)  
Soroptimist International [soroptimistinternational.org](http://soroptimistinternational.org)

## Soroptimist Pledge

I pledge allegiance to Soroptimist  
and to the ideals for which it stands:  
The sincerity of friendship,  
the joy of achievement,  
the dignity of service,  
the integrity of profession,  
and the love of country.  
I will put forth my greatest effort to  
promote, uphold and defend these ideals,  
for a larger fellowship in home, in society,  
in business, for country and for God.



SOROPTIMIST®  
**Investing in Dreams**

## SIGP's PUBLIC AWARENESS COMMITTEES

WEBSITE: [grossepointesoroptimist.net](http://grossepointesoroptimist.net) ..... Nancy Solak  
or <https://www.grossepointesoroptimist.net/sigp-calendar-.html> for calendar

Submit photos, club information, news, upcoming events, and dates to this e-mail so the information  
can be accessed by all public awareness chairs.

E-MAIL: [grossepointesoroptimist@gmail.com](mailto:grossepointesoroptimist@gmail.com) ..... Nancy Solak

### SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS:

FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/soroptimistgrossepointe](https://facebook.com/soroptimistgrossepointe).....Geri Pleva

INSTAGRAM: [soroptimistgp](https://instagram.com/soroptimistgp).....Geri Pleva

### NEWSLETTER & MEDIA: *THE POINTER*

is on the club's website and is emailed to each member

Deadline is the 28th of each month .....Nancy Solak



Remember to use AMAZON SMILE [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)  
(Look for Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe)