



The Pointer

SAVE THE DATES!

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 8, 2020 - MEMBERSHIP MEETING at VILLAGE GRILLE

16930 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe; Parking & Private Entry Door in Rear

General Meeting starts promptly at 6:30 p.m. — Meet and Greet at 6:00 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKER: Gail Marlow, Director, Motor City Mission

Kerri Green — Ghana Presentation

01.15.2020 — **Virginia Wagner Award Deadline:** Contact Liz Lucas, Diana Langlois or Maddy Colavito

02.28.2020 — **Ruby Award Deadline:** Contact Laura McCourt or Rosanne Morrow

02.28.2020 — **WINE TASTING AND ACCESSORY SALE:** At the home of Ross Braun (515 Middlesex, Grosse Pointe Park), 6:30 p.m. Consider inviting a guest to this enjoyable social event. Details to come.

03.11.2020 — **SIGP Awards Dinner,** Assumption Cultural Center. Details forthcoming.

04.24-26.20 — **Midwest Region Spring Conference,** Ann Arbor, Michigan. Consider getting a group of SIGP members to attend together!

07.22-25.20 — Register NOW (before January 15) for **SIA's 46th Biennial Convention** in Bellevue, Washington, July 22-25, 2020, and get two chances to win free registration. Register between January 16 and May 15 and get one chance.

How SIGP Grosse Pointe has supported girls' education in Ghana AND how three of our members got to meet them! (For details, read pages 3 & 4)



Students at St. Anne's Girls Secondary School in Damongo, Ghana

Kudos to SI Grosse Pointe's members who visited Damongo, Ghana, in November 2019. They are Kerri Green, Rosanne Morrow and Carol Hofer. Carol led the delegation to the village where she'd served as a Peace Corps volunteer "100 years ago" (her words!). The fact that she has continued to keep in contact, raise money for, and visit throughout the decades is an extraordinary feat. Thank you, Carol! And thank you to the private individuals and to SIA and SIGP for contributing to the girls' education over the past six years. When girls are educated, a community is educated.



SIGP member Kerri Green with 2019 graduates: Evelyn, Rejoyce, and Francesca



With 2018 graduates: Irene Allen, SIGP member Rosanne Morrow, Patience, SIGP member Kerri Green, Agnes, SIGP member Carol Hofer



SIGP members with our club's six currently supported students: Jennifer, Helen, Sylvera, Prudence, Hilda, and Hanifatu.

PART II: Meeting the Students of St. Anne's Girls Secondary School in Damongo, Ghana!

Read PART I in the December 2019 edition of the Pointer

by SIGP member Kerri Green

Three SIGP members (Kerri Green, Carol Hofer, and Rosanne Morrow) recently traveled to St. Anne's Girls Secondary School (SAGISS) that the club supports in Damongo, Ghana.

The club, along with other donors, provides tuition support for 6 girls each year. The tuition is \$500 per term, and with 3 terms per year, the grand total is \$9,000. The school consists of three grades, which are referred to as: Form 1, Form 2, and Form 3. This is the standard in Ghana for high schools.

SAGISS is a boarding school, which is also common in Ghana. I consider this to be a good thing for the students because attendance is more regular. Girls are not distracted by having to take care of younger siblings, the harvesting season, or other family obligations that could limit their schooling. The girls often live far away from the school, and only go home for breaks between terms. Transportation can be difficult, expensive, and time-consuming. Multiple times we experienced the trip on the dirt road from Damongo to the school as an eternity even though it is only 4.3 km (2.6 miles)! It is so bumpy, rough, and dusty, and it takes about 20 minutes to cover it. The potholes in Michigan are no competition for the terrible road conditions all over Ghana.

Since SIGP has been supporting this school for six years, we also had the pleasure of meeting some girls who had already graduated thanks to our support. They came back to Damongo to meet us and express their gratitude. We had a nice group dinner so we could get to know these young ladies.



Francesca (2019 graduate) currently works in an office (typing, making copies, etc.). She wants to become a teacher and hopes to start training school next year.

Rejoyce (2019 graduate) currently lives with her family locally in Damongo and hopes to attend teaching school next year.

Agnes (2018 graduate) lives in Tamale and is taking an additional mathematics course. If she receives favorable results on her math exam, then she will begin training to be a midwife.

Patience (2018 graduate) lives in Abuesi, about 5 hours south of the school. She plans to take an additional mathematics course in 2020 and wants to study to be a nurse.

Continued on next page

Ghana (continued from previous page)

As for our club's six current students, we have two in Form 2: Jennifer and Helen, and four in Form 1: Sylvera, Prudence, Hilda, and Hanifatu.

I sat by Prudence at dinner, and we had a nice conversation. She lives with her mother and younger brother in a small, rural village far away from the school. (Her father is deceased.) Coming to SAGISS in September was the first time she had ever left her village. At this time, Prudence hopes to become a nurse at a hospital.



Carol Hofer (SIGP member who led the group to the village she served when she was in the Peace Corps), SIGP member Rosanne Morrow, Madame Pauline (SAGISS headmistress), Irene Allen, and SIGP member Kerri Green

I will admit that when we first met students in Ghana, I was very awkward with them. I had trouble finding things to talk about. "What are your hobbies?" Most teenagers have chores and responsibilities and very little free time.

Life is about survival, and is vastly different from the packed schedules and extra-curricular activities of American teenagers. Sports aren't common, except for football (what we call soccer), and I found that it was mostly played by boys. "Where did you go on your last family vacation?" People in rural Ghana may never even leave their village, so they certainly don't travel for pleasure. I finally landed on asking students if they had siblings. Everyone could tell me about their brothers and sisters, and if they were younger or older.



SIGP members with our six current students: Jennifer, Helen, Sylvera, Prudence, Hilda, and Hanifatu.

Also, music and dancing are wildly popular, so I often asked students if they could play an instrument. I was in awe at the variety of musical talents these girls had with singing and cadence, especially during church services and the traditional dances they greeted us with on the first day. You can see by the photos what a wonderful experience this was.

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POSITIVE IMAGES (PI)

Not only does our club support women and girls in Ghana, Africa, but also right here in our own back yard at Positive Images in Detroit on Warren & Coplin!

CHRISTMAS STORE @ PI by SIGP member Diana Langlois

The Christmas Store at 4825 Coplin, the residence center of Positive Images, was great fun this year! We brought our 54 baskets and all the clothes, and everything was set up and ready for the women to "shop" by 9:45. SIGP, you did a fantastic job of shopping this year for clothes and toys!



At Coplin each of us helped in a room: Infants, Girls, Boys, Teens, Adults. Mary Ellen Burke brought 250 donated bras. The women were thrilled to be able to choose not one, but two bras!

Positive Images also gave new long-sleeve tees and a scarf and gloves to each woman. Refreshments were enjoyed by all!

Many thanks to the following volunteers: Mary Ellen Burke, Myra Golden, Peggy Hart, Diana Langlois, Bette Lepouttre, Liz Lucas, Marya Malkovich Rosenthal, Anne Schwartz, and Nancy Solak. It was a wonderful morning! *(See more photos on next page.)*



(Photo above, center page) Empty baskets waiting to be filled by the gifts (above left). Filled baskets (above right) are wrapped in cellophane and topped with a festive bow.



Above left: SIGP “elves” put the baskets together. Above right: All 54 baskets ready to be given away to women in recovery at Positive Images.



Right: SIGP member Anne Schwartz works one of the clothing rooms



SIGP member Myra Golden (left) assists Maisha Kenyatta (right), Executive Director and Founder of Positive Images. Taking a page from the Soroptimist Dream It Be It program, each client created a “Dream Board” and presented it to everyone assembled.

SIGP members Diana Langlois and Peggy Hart staff the toy room.



SIGP members Mary Ellen Burke and Marya Rosenthal Malkovich stack donated bras. Each client was able to choose two. They also received a scarf and a long-sleeved T-shirt.

PARENTING at Positive Images - by Diana Langlois

Bette LePouttre shared with me that at a December Parenting Meeting, 15 women attended and were totally engaged. While all sessions are fulfilling, this one was particularly satisfying.

Bette and Diane Kashuba began with a 3-minute thought-provoking word: SHOE. (Really... that was the word!) The women wrote anything they could think of about SHOEs and then, if they wanted, shared what they wrote! How simple it was to make the group comfortable!

The topic for the day was ADOLESCENCE which is always a hot topic as adolescents can be difficult! The session ended with an ornament given to each woman.

Hats off to Bette, Diane and Dorothy Wasinger who are the mainstays for PARENTING and to Jane Lightfoot and Ellen Chapin who volunteer when they are in town.

All members are welcome to observe a session to see if they would like to become part of this team: TUESDAYS from 12:45-2:15 at 4825 Coplin, at the Positive Images residence center. Call Dorothy if interested: 313-618-6871.

JOURNAL WRITING at Positive Images

Nancy Solak is again offering a four-week writing workshop at Positive Images this month. Women who live in the Coplin residential center volunteer to participate in this safe and peaceful space. The sessions are called, "Hear My Voice!"

The clients along with Ms. Nelson (the staff member on duty who shares her love of writing with Nancy) write in response to a prompt and then share their writing with the group. Nancy, a certified instructor of the Amherst Writers & Artists method, reports that the women are creative, wise and supportive of each other.

An example of such a prompt was the day Nancy brought a small vase filled with Forget-me-Nots from her garden. Placed in the middle of the table, the group was asked to respond to the following prompt: I will never forget ...

Each person, including the facilitator, silently writes about their response. Those who wish read their writing aloud. After each reading, the others give feedback on what struck them about the writing style or the content itself. Feedback on the workshops is pretty consistent: "I love this class!"

'Twas a Festive Evening at SIGP's Holiday Dinner, December 11, 2019, at Assumption Cultural Center



We all gather to not only give thanks and celebrate another great year serving women and girls, but also to raise funds for the current SIA President's Appeal. This year, it is focuses on, "The Road to Equality." At left, SIGP President Aleksa Andjelkovic gives a brief presentation about the appeal.



*Carolyn Barth
and Marya
Rosenthal
Malkovich*



*Bette Lepouttre and
Rasheda Williams*



*Anita Sandercott, Donna Fitzgerald
and Liz Lucas*

Self-described "wild child" Myra Golden (far right) is up to something ... again. Mary Ellen Brayton is on to her! Both did a great job selling raffle tickets to benefit the SIA President's Appeal.



SIGP Members at 2019 Holiday Dinner



Above: Anne Schwartz and Peggy Hart, who collected the prizes for the raffle and set it up.



Above: Mary Clare Toffanetti, Karrie Blankenship and Anne Schwartz



Homemade cookies provided by members. Yummmm!



Judi Dara, Helen Clarren and Maddy Colavito

Above: Past Co-Presidents Ross Braun and Roseanne Horne



Carol Hofer leads us in seasonal songs with Dorothea Williams.

SIGP Members at 2019 Holiday Dinner



Dorothea Williams and Paula Davis



Jane Evola and Rosanne Morrow



Laura McCourt, Debbie Weatherston (Welcome!), and Ellen Chapin



Other newcomers: Nancy Kelley, Kathy Thomas and Maureen Anthony. Welcome!



Crazy Nana

Be someone who matters to someone who matters: January Is National Mentoring Month *by Rasheda Kamaria Williams*

January is National Mentoring Month – a time for individuals and organizations across the country to bring awareness to the need for caring adults to serve as role models for youth.

According to [MENTOR](#), the National Mentoring Partnership, 1 out of 3 children will face growing up without a mentor. That means millions of children throughout the country may never have powerful, positive interventions.

From children and teens in foster care to those with incarcerated parents, there are specific populations of youth who need positive role models.

Consider one-on-one or even group mentoring in your community. There also are opportunities to mentor youth across the country through online or e-mentoring programs.

It only takes a few hours a month of face time and a phone call or text a week to help increase a child's self-esteem. In addition to the mentee's development, the mentor benefits in many ways. My mentees have helped me aspire higher in my career and in life. And knowing that they're looking up to me keeps me living in integrity.

If you're interested in becoming a mentor but not sure if you have what it takes, answer these questions: 1. Do you have a big heart? 2. Do you have a little time? If yes and yes, then you've got it! At the end of the day, you don't need a fancy job title or curio cabinet full of plaques and medals to make a difference for young people.

Still unsure? Download EmPOWERed Flower Girl's [FREE Mentoring Guide](#) for some insight. Ready to become a mentor? Visit the MENTOR organization [search tool](#) to locate a program near you.

SIGP member Rasheda Kamaria Williams is an award-winning mentor, motivational speaker, author and chief empowering officer for Empowered Flower Girl. She is a dedicated youth advocate and was recently named to the Michigan Community Service Commission's Mentor Michigan + Consultant Network.



**TWO-THIRDS
OF AMERICANS
CONSIDER IT
HIGHLY IMPORTANT
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
TO HAVE MENTORS**

The Power of Relationships Report



Special Interest Groups

Our club has spawned two unofficial interest groups: Foodies and Book Club. Although both are full at the moment, you are encouraged to start your own group of food lovers, book lovers or any other thing you happen to love. Chances are, you're not alone.

Standing before their homemade food at right are: Carolyn Barth, Laura McCourt and Diana Langlois.



(Below and at right) This night's dinner theme centered around cooking beef tenderloin ala Chef Rorabek as he described the process step-by-step via YouTube.



JANUARY — Happy Birthday to ...

Marlane Washington, January 16

Myra Golden, January 21





Bellevue, Washington • July 22-25, 2020

Registration for SIA's 46th Biennial Convention in Bellevue, July 22-25, 2020, is in full effect. **However, the early registration deadline will be here before you know it on January 15!** [Register now](#) for your chance to win a prize in the ...

Registration Contest!

Register before January 15 — Early deadline and get two chances to win.

Register January 16 — May 15 and get one chance to win.

You can register via the convention webpage.

Everyone who registers before the deadlines will be entered to receive one of the following prizes:

- ◆ One of three 1-night stays at the Hyatt Regency Bellevue Hotel (can be used during the convention). The certificate includes one (1) complimentary breakfast, complimentary parking, and a 2 p.m. check out.
- ◆ One of three \$50.00 gift certificates to the Soroptimist Store in Bellevue.

The drawing will be held after May 15. Winners will be notified and the results posted on the convention page of the website and the convention Facebook page. This contest is open to all Soroptimist members purchasing a full registration or registering as a delegate. Daily registrations are not eligible.

How to enter

Register and pay registration fees in full by January 15 or May 15.

Wait to hear if you won a prize.

It is that easy. [Register now](#), save money and be entered for your chance to win!



Save the Date
Spring Conference 2020
 April 24, 25, & 26
 Kensington Hotel Ann Arbor MI

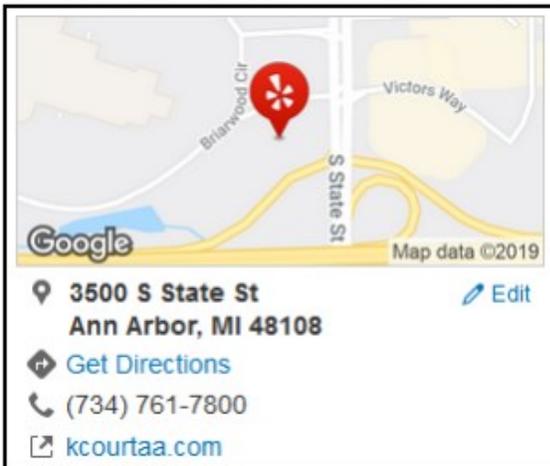
ROBPTIMIST
 Best for Women

ROBPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
 MIDWESTERN REGION

Educate to Empower

Darcy Merritt
 Installed as Governor of the
 Midwestern Region

The poster features a blue sky background with a sunburst effect. At the bottom, there is a silhouette of a group of women holding hands. The RobpTImist logo is in the top left, and the RobpTImist International Midwestern Region logo is in the top right.



Google Map data ©2019

3500 S State St
 Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Get Directions
 (734) 761-7800
 kcourtaa.com

The map shows the location of the Kensington Hotel at the intersection of S State St and Victors Way. A red location pin is placed at the hotel's address.



**MORE INFORMATION
 TO FOLLOW**

**Helping women and girls
 live their dreams**

District III Emails

Governor- **Kris Armstrong** - (krisquin@msn.com)
Governor Elect- **Darcy Merritt** (dmerritt81@hotmail.com)
Secretary - **Missie Austin** - (missieaustin@gmail.com)
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Soroptimist Websites

Soroptimist International Midwest Region - (simwr.org)
Soroptimist International of the Americas (soroptimist.org)
Soroptimist International (soroptimistinternational.org)
Soroptimist International of the Americas -
(soroptimist.org/about-us/contact-us/index.html)
For upcoming SIGP events and information, click the link
<https://www.grossepointesoroptimist.org/>

Soroptimist Pledge

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.



The Who's Who of SIGP's PUBLIC AWARENESS COMMITTEES

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

WEBSITE: grossepointesoroptimist.net Carrie Petrocelli
or https://www.grossepointesoroptimist.net/calendar_of_events.html for calendar

E-MAIL: grossepointesoroptimist@gmail.com Anne Schwartz

SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS:

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/soroptimistgrossepointe Renee Rodriguez
INSTAGRAM: [soroptimistgp](https://instagram.com/soroptimistgp) Sarah Sheppard
TWITTER: [@soroptimistgp](https://twitter.com/soroptimistgp) Jean Kroll

NEWSLETTER: THE POINTER is on the website and
is emailed to members Nancy Solak

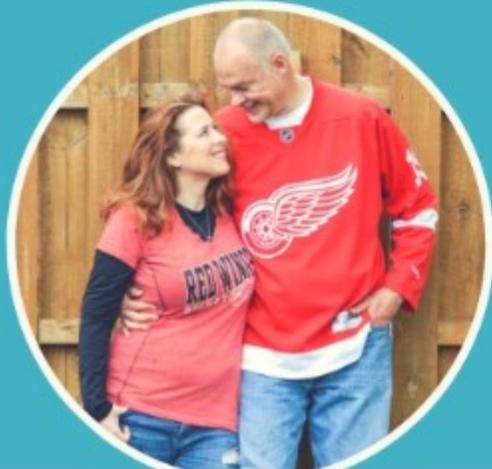
MEDIA: Newspaper articles, radio PSAs, etc. Carolyn Barth



Remember to use AMAZON SMILE smile.amazon.com
(look for Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe)

SIGP Member Ads

RENÉE RODRIGUEZ
PHOTOGRAPHY



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