

EMPOWHER

EDITION 5

NEWSLETTER

January 2025



STRONG & INDEPENDENT
Soroptimist International of Fayette County

NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING

PREVENTION MONTH

Human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the world, and it's happening closer to home than many realize. Defined as the use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit individuals for labor or sex, this crime impacts millions globally—and Fayette County is not immune.

According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, Pennsylvania consistently ranks among the top states for reported cases, with over 200 annually. These numbers only scratch the surface, as many incidents go unreported. Traffickers often target vulnerable individuals, exploiting their circumstances through manipulation and fear. This can happen anywhere—online, in schools, or even at community events. Raising awareness is key to prevention and protection.

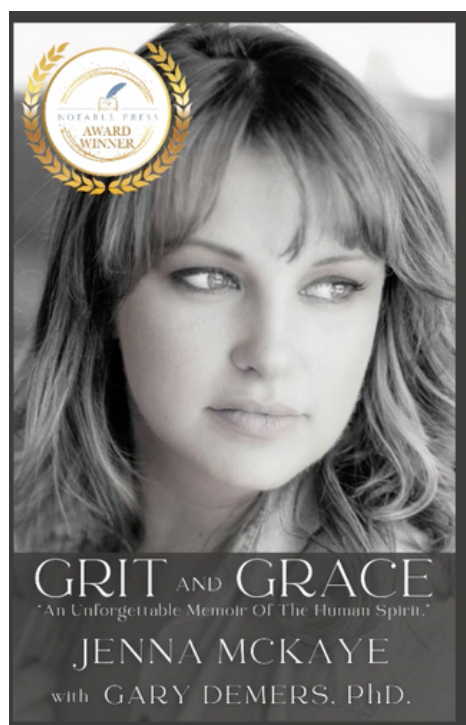
How You Can Help:

- **Educate Yourself and Others:** Learn to recognize the signs of trafficking, such as unexplained absences, fearfulness, or restricted freedom. Share this knowledge with friends and family.
- **Support Local Organizations:** Groups like the Fayette County Human Trafficking Task Force and the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Human Trafficking (PCAHT) work tirelessly to provide education, advocacy, and victim support.

- **Report Suspicious Activity:** If you suspect trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 or text “BEFREE” to 233733. Your vigilance could save a life.

Get Involved: Volunteer your time, donate to organizations fighting trafficking, or host awareness events in your community. By joining forces, we can disrupt this crime and provide survivors with the resources and dignity they deserve. To learn more about how you can make a difference, visit humantraffickinghotline.org.

This is an UpliftHER Initiative.



Book Club

"When nightmares blur with reality, finding safety feels impossible."

In *Grit and Grace*, Jenna McKaye shares her story with unflinching honesty and inspiring resilience. This powerful memoir recounts her journey as a survivor of human trafficking, detailing her struggles, recovery, and determination to reclaim her life.

Rising from the depths of unimaginable trauma, Jenna becomes a beacon of hope, transforming her pain into purpose. Her work through the Jenna McKaye Foundation has provided support for survivors and raised awareness to prevent trafficking.

Grit and Grace is more than a story of survival—it's a testament to the indomitable strength of the human spirit and the power of transformation. Now in pre-production for a film adaptation, Jenna's journey continues to inspire change.

Ask Julie Reagan for more details if you want to participate in our book club!

March is

NATIONAL SINGLE PARENT DAY

March 21, 2025

Celebrating: Strength, Resilience, and Support

March is Single Parent Awareness Month—a time to recognize the incredible strength and resilience of single parents in our community. In the United States, over 15 million children are being raised by single mothers or fathers, and in Pennsylvania alone, nearly 30% of families are headed by a single parent. These individuals balance work, childcare, and countless responsibilities to provide for their families, often facing unique challenges along the way. Single parents frequently encounter financial stress, limited time, and the emotional toll of doing it all alone. Yet, they also display remarkable perseverance and love, shaping their children's lives with determination and care.

How You Can Help:

- Offer Support: A simple act of kindness, such as offering to babysit, preparing a meal, or lending a listening ear, can go a long way for a single parent.
- Advocate for Resources: Support organizations that provide affordable childcare, career training, and financial assistance for single-parent households.
- Encourage Community Connection: Help single parents connect with local groups like Fayette County Community Action Agency or Parents Without Partners for emotional support and resources.

For Single Parents:

You're not alone. Organizations like Single Mothers Outreach and National Parents Organization offer guidance, advocacy, and tools to help you navigate the journey of parenting. Local churches, community centers, and libraries often host parenting workshops and support groups tailored to your needs.

Let's use this month to celebrate the courage and dedication of single parents and work together to ensure they feel supported, valued, and empowered. By lifting each other up, we strengthen families and create support.

Walk For Women



[Get Info Here](#)

Get ready for the second annual Walk for Women! Throughout March, we're inviting members to highlight Soroptimist's global impact. Gather friends and fellow members to plan a Walk for Women event and engage your community. Need help? Our Walk for Women Toolkit has all the resources and tips you need to get started. Raise awareness, funds, and spirits in your matching Walk for Women shirts!

Why Pre-Order T-Shirts?

- **Be Ready:** Have your shirt in hand for the March 1 kickoff and wear it proudly all month. International orders may take up to five weeks, so order early!
- **Celebrate in Style:** Show your support for empowering women everywhere.

Plus, a portion of every purchase benefits SIA and our Dream Programs.

The campaign kicks off March 1, with special events all month, including an International Women's Day celebration on March 8.

Join Us for the 4th Annual International Women's Day Virtual Tea Party!

[LEARN MORE AND REGISTER](#)



Mark your calendars for **March 10 at 8 p.m. (ET)** as we gather for an evening of connection and empowerment. This year's theme, **#AccelerateAction**, highlights the urgency of achieving gender equality.

Together we'll explore ways we can drive economic empowerment for women and girls. Dress up in your favorite tea party attire—whether that's traditional dress, a fabulous hat, pearls, or gloves—and bring your favorite beverage to toast the resilience and strength of women everywhere.

Looking Forward.



The North Atlantic Region Board met in Philadelphia the weekend of November 9 and took a tour of the SIA Headquarters in Philadelphia.

The Board met to begin planning our annual spring conference and has some great plans to make this an interactive and fun event.

Sisterhood In Action

**“When women support each other,
incredible things happen.” — Cher**



Member Spotlights



Karen Nickman

A dedicated Soroptimist member since 2002, Karen values the opportunity to network with like-minded individuals who share a passion for making a difference. With a deep understanding of the social issues that shape our world, she finds inspiration in seeing women achieve success. Karen believes that while everyone is responsible for their own destiny, Soroptimist provides the tools, mentorship, and connections to help women take their next steps with confidence.

Inez joined Soroptimist in September 2023 and quickly embraced the community outreach opportunities the group provides. Inspired by her husband and children, she believes success is a personal journey defined from within. Passionate about bringing people together, Inez volunteers for the Ronald McDonald House and supports elderly communities with her time and care. Her next big adventure? Traveling to Panama and the Galapagos Islands to fulfill her dream of exploring these incredible destinations.



Inez Felix

Warm Up

January



**Marry Me Chicken
Noodle Soup**