

CECR Spring Conference
Delegates and Presidents Meeting

April 28, 2025

via ZOOM

The Annual Spring Conference Delegates and Presidents Caucus was conducted by Zoom and recorded.

Governor Robin Davis welcomed the conference delegates and declared Central East Coast Region's 7th Spring Conference to be in session on April 28, 2024, at 7:01 PM.

Governor Robin presented the CECR Board Members, the CECR Parliamentarian, and the CECR's SIA Federation Visitor.

Peggy Gentile-Van Meter, SIA 2024-2026 Board Director, and CECR's 2025 Spring Conference Federation Visitor from SI/Cumberland County, NJ

Kerry Ardner, CECR Governor-Elect, SI/Fairfax, VA

Linda McCann, CECR Treasurer, SI/Salisbury, MD

Heather Jankovich, CECR Secretary, SI/Williamsburg, VA

Cathy Brinsfield, CECR Board Member, SI/Salisbury, MD

Deb Mackes, CECR Bylaws and Resolutions Chair, CECR Parliamentarian, SI/Manassas, VA

Unable to join us this evening, Marcia Attmore, CECR Board Member, SI/Raleigh, NC

Governor Robin Davis, CECR Governor, SI/Woodbridge, VA

Governor Robin stated that Region procedures allow for the appointment of a parliamentarian and that Deb Mackes, a member of SI/Manassas has been appointed as the CECR parliamentarian for the 2024-2026 biennium, to oversee the conference and to keep the meetings flowing in an orderly manner. The standing rules of the Region were printed in the Call to Conference and a link to those rules was posted in the chat.

Deb stated that Standing Rules were distributed in the Call to Conference. A link to the document was also posted in the Zoom chat. Deb further stated waiving the traditional reading of the standing rules and accepting them as printed in the Call to Conference.

Governor Robin requested Governor-Elect Kerri Ardner provide a Preliminary Credentials Report. Kerri stated that 10 out of 13 Clubs in the Region were represented and are on the call. For the purpose of quorum 10 out of 13 Clubs constituted a quorum.

Governor Robin asked Secretary Heather Jankovich to present the Official Call to Conference.

Secretary Heather announced that in accordance with the Region Bylaws, the Official Call to Conference was emailed to all members of the Region who have a valid email address on record with SIA and also to

CECR guests on March 15, 2025. This was 30 days in advance of the Conference. Heather announced that we would dispense with the reading of the Official Call to Conference, and that a link to the Call to Conference was available in the Zoom Chat.

Governor Robin asked that Heather present the Minutes of CECR's 6th Spring Conference.

Heather announced that the Minutes of CECR 6th Spring Conference were prepared and included in the Call to Conference and asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, Heather stated that the Minutes of CECR's 6th Spring Conference would be put on the consent agenda for approval of the minutes at CECR's 7th Spring Conference. The Consent Agenda will be voted on during the Business Meeting in Natural Bridge, VA on Saturday morning.

Heather stated the names of the three Club members who agreed to serve as the committee to approve the minutes of the 7th CECR Conference would be: Deb Mackes, SI/Manassas, Molly Whetzel, SI/Williamsburg, and Beverly Moore, SI/Frostburg.

Governor Robin asked Treasurer Linda McCann to present CECR's Financial Report.

Treasurer Linda reported that the Financial Report was included in the Call to Conference and a link to the documentation was available in the Zoom chat. Linda reminded everyone that it is a 2-year budget and we are in the first year of the biennium. She asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, Linda stated the Financial Report be included in the Consent Agenda for approval during the business meeting at Spring Conference on Saturday morning, so that it can be filed for audit.

In addition to presenting the financials, Treasurer Linda also reminded attendees of Club financial obligations.

Region dues (\$25.00 per club member) are due to be paid 7/1/25 to the CECR Region Treasurer, and can be paid by Zelle, check or credit card. The information will be on the invoice that will be sent to all Club treasurers.

SIA Federation dues are also due to be paid by 7/1/25 to SIA.

Form 200 should be submitted to the Region Treasurer along with Club dues even if there are no changes in the listed officers. In addition to the names of club presidents and treasurers, Form 200 should also include the names and contact information for LYD chairs and club DIBI chairs. Linda further reminded Clubs that SIA sent Club Presidents and Treasurers an email on March 21 and Treasurer Linda stated she would repeat the information on Saturday during the Region's continued Business Meeting and follow up with an email to make sure all Clubs are aware of this information.

Governor Robin reported that at the 2024 Spring Conference, a 2024-2026 Biennium Nominations Committee was voted to develop a slate of officers for the CECR Region for the 2024-2026 Biennium. As required by the Bylaws, the Nominating Committee was comprised of three members.

Governor-elect Kerri presented the members of the Nominating Committee. The CECR Board nominated Carolyn Skowron from SI/Raleigh, Governor Robin nominated Cathy Brinsfield from SI/Salisbury, MD to serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee, and Donna Jones with SI/Upper Montgomery County, MD has submitted her resume to become the third member of the Nominating Committee if approved by

the Delegates at Spring Conference. Governor-elect Kerri further stated that a copy of the Committee Members and Donna's resume are posted in the chat.

Governor-elect Kerri specified the vote will take place in person on Saturday morning and thanked Carolyn, Cathy, and Donna for volunteering to take on these roles.

Governor Robin asked if there were any further items to be discussed. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 7:31pm.

Governor Robin thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and said she looked forward to seeing everyone Friday, May 2, at Natural Bridge.

Minutes of Central East Coast Region 7th Spring Conference

Natural Bridge, VA

Friday, May 2, 2025

The Region began Spring Conference with Registration from 5pm-7pm hosted by SI/Salisbury.

Governor Robin welcomed everyone and shared a few highlights of Spring Conference, which included a Treasure Chest and Club Raffles announcements.

Governor Robin asked Ginny Dempsey, CECR Board Member and Co-Fundraising Chair, SI/ Woodbridge, to speak about the Laurel Society. Ginny explained the work of the Laurel Society and the different levels for membership, and how to become a member of the Laurel Society and a Star Gazer. Members of the Laurel Society have a special ticket in their Conference packet to an invitation only Laurel Society Reception Saturday evening. Anyone who becomes a Star Gazer prior to the reception may also attend.

Governor Robin asked everyone to enjoy the dinner.

Following dinner, Soroptimists participated in Camp Games.

Governor Robin closed Camp Games with an invitation to a camp fire outside for dessert, followed by visiting the Hospitality Suite (sponsored by SI/Salisbury).

Central East Coast Region 7th Spring Conference

Saturday, May 3, 2025

Business Session

Following the parade of current CECR Club Presidents and CECR Past Governors, Governor Robin Davis called the Business Session of the Central East Coast Region 7th Spring Conference to order at 8:35am and welcomed members and guests to the Conference.

Deb Mackes, SI/Manassas, called on representatives to present the flags of the member states of Central East Coast Region. Deb then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Governor Robin presented the head table:

Peggy Gentile-Van Meter, SIA 2024-2026 Board Director, and CECR's 2025 Spring Conference Federation Visitor from SI/Cumberland County, NJ

Lisa Mangiafico, Associate Senior Director of Records & Risk Management at SIA

Kerri Ardner, CECR Governor-Elect, SI/Fairfax, VA

Linda McCann, CECR Treasurer, SI/Salisbury, MD

Heather Jankovich, CECR Secretary, SI/Williamsburg, VA

Cathy Brinsfield, CECR Board Member, SI/Salisbury, MD

Deb Mackes, CECR Bylaws and Resolutions Chair, CECR Parliamentarian, SI/Manassas, VA

A video message from Ginger Cole, SIA President, was viewed on the big screen, followed by a video greeting from one of last year's Spring Conference visitors, SIA Executive Director/CEO Michelle Burnett.

Governor-Elect Kerri introduced the Memorial Table in memory of Soroptimist members lost since last Conference. Kerri read a poem of a life well lived. The Memorial Table will be displayed for the duration of Conference in lieu of a slide show.

Johann Dretchen, SI/Upper Montgomery, provided inspiration by having the audience close their eyes and envision ways to inspire others and impact women and girls through Dream Programs and community service.

Jamilah Dalton, SI/Manassas asked that all those attending this year's spring conference as a first-time spring conference attendee come forward and be recognized. Eight first-timers were presented with a gift and learned the privileges associated therewith.

Jamilah then asked Soroptimists with 30 or more years of membership to come forward. Each woman shared her name, club affiliation, and years of membership. After eleven members received a token of appreciation, Treasurer Linda came to the podium and shared the total years of service of these seasoned attendees which was 360 years!

Governor Robin announced her appointment of Deb Mackes, SI/Manassas to serve as the parliamentarian for Spring Conference.

Governor-Elect Kerri presented the preliminary and secondary credentials reports. There were 11 clubs in attendance represented by 33 voting delegates. This constituted a quorum. It was moved by Mary Dunivan, SI/Woodbridge and seconded by Margaret Hockenberry/SI Havre de Grace that the credentials reports be adopted. The motion was approved.

Cathy Brinsfield, SI/Salisbury moved that the agenda for Spring Conference be approved, with any modifications as may be needed to carry out the business of the region. The motion, seconded by Beverly Moore, SI/Frostburg, MD was approved.

Secretary Heather, SI Williamsburg, presented the items on the Consent Agenda for voting by delegates. Heather explained the Consent Agenda process discussed in the Delegates Meeting on April 28th via

ZOOM. The Consent Agenda streamlines meeting procedures by collecting routine, non-controversial items into a group whereby all are passed as a single motion and vote. Included in the Consent Agenda were the Minutes of the 2024 Spring Conference and the Region financial reports. The intention of the Consent Agenda allows additional time for workshops and presentations. The motion carried.

Secretary Heather thanked the 2024 Committee that reviewed the minutes of last year's Spring Conference: Deb Mackes, SI/Manassas, Margaret Dyer, SI/Manassas, and Molly Whetzel, SI/Williamsburg.

A motion was made by Roxanne Aaron SI/Wake Forest seconded by Danielle Bograd, SI/Upper Montgomery, and approved by the Delegates for the Consent Agenda to be accepted. Governor Robin noted that the Treasurer's Report will be filed for audit.

Governor Robin further announced and introduced the members who agreed to serve as the committee to approve the minutes of this 7th Regional Conference: Deb Mackes, SI/Manassas, Molly Whetzel, SI/Williamsburg and Beverly Moore, SI/Frostburg.

Governor Robin asked Governor Elect Kerr to present the 2026-2028 Nominating Committee tasked with developing a slate of officers for the CECR Region for the 2026-2028 Biennium. As required by the Region Bylaws, the nominating committee is composed of three members: one selected by the CECR Governor, one selected by the CECR Board, and the final one voted on by the CECR Delegates at Spring Conference.

Governor Elect Kerri reported the CECR Board nominated Carolyn Skowron from SI/Raleigh; Governor Robin nominated Cathy Brinsfield from SI/Salisbury to serve as the Chair of the Nominating Committee, and Donna Jones from SI/Upper Montgomery County has submitted her resume to become the third member of the Nominating Committee. A copy of the Committee Members and Donna's resume is available in the link in the agenda. The delegates then voted on the final member of the 2026-2028 Nominating Committee, Donna Jones from SI/Upper Montgomery County, MD. Acceptance of Donna Jones as the final member of the 2026-2028 Nominating Committee was moved by Beverly Moore SI/Frostburg MD and seconded by Carol Padgett, SI/Woodbridge VA. The motion carried.

Governor Robin called on Treasurer Linda to close out the morning business session with any reminders for clubs. Treasurer Linda reminded attendees of Club financial obligations.

Treasurer Linda reported Region dues (\$25.00 per club member) are due to be paid 7/1/25 to the CECR Region Treasurer, and can be paid by Zelle, check or credit card. The information will be on the invoice that will be sent to all club treasurers. Treasurer Linda will provide Clubs the breakdown for SIA when received. SIA Federation dues (with a slight increase) are also due to be paid by 7/1/25 to SIA.

The net total increase for annual membership: \$3.31

The SIA 2026 Convention Fee is now \$825 per club

Form 200 should be submitted to the Region Treasurer along with Club dues even if there are no changes in the listed officers. In addition to the names of club presidents and treasurers, Form 200 should also include the names and contact information for LYD chairs and club DIBI chairs.

Governor-elect Robin called on Parliamentarian Deb Mackes who introduced Federation Guest, Lisa Mangiafico, Associate Senior Director Records and Risk Management at SIA headquarters.

Guest Lisa gave an informative bylaws presentation, providing conference attendees with what revisions are necessary and why updates are needed. SIA is starting a multi-year project to help Clubs modernize and update their bylaws and procedures to reflect current and future needs to administer clubs effectively. Lisa stressed her availability and willingness to work with Clubs to bring Club Bylaws up to date.

Treasurer Linda introduced Federation Visitor Peggy Gentile-Van Meter. Visitor Peggy's Call to Action for Soroptimists was an interactive speech that emphasized the importance of three key actions: embracing change, celebrating successes, and committing to inclusivity. She invited all members to commit to these shared values, envisioning a supportive community that empowers women and girls to achieve their dreams.

Ginny Dempsey, CECR Board Member and Co-Fundraising Chair, SI/ Woodbridge spoke about the Laurel Society. Ginny explained the work of the Laurel Society and the levels for membership, including Star Gazer. Ginny explained the Laurel Society Board. When the Board is full, a winner will be selected by pulling a name out of a bowl. Members of the Laurel Society have a special ticket in their Conference packet to an invitation only Laurel Society Reception Saturday evening. Any new Stargazers will also be eligible to attend.

Following an explanation of the Pillar Presentations Workshops and small group discussion, Governor Robin adjourned the meeting for attendees to transition to workshops.

Pillar Presentations and Small Group Discussions

Recognition/Public Awareness Pillar Session

Creating an Effective Club Website: From Vision to Launch

Governor Robin Davis SI/Woodbridge, helped members discover key steps for creating a professional, impactful and user-friendly website. From forming a committee and selecting tools to design a homepage and maintain security, attendees learned how to craft a site that aligns with their Club's goals and SIA brand while staying manageable and budget-friendly.

Impact/Program Pillar

Reaching the Big Goal Together: Best Practices

Tara Ayers, CECR Program Chair, Member, SI/Wake Forest, NC shared ways to motivate Clubs to achieve the necessary Big Goal increases to enable them to reach the 2031 Big Goal. An overview of best practices provided ideas to increase a Club's outreach through the Dream Programs and Big Goal Accelerator Projects. Successful Club and Region projects were shared.

Federation Visitor Presentation

Thriving Through Change

SIA Board Director, SIA Peggy Gentile-Van Meter stressed that navigating change is crucial for Club success. Her presentation explored how to thrive in the face of evolving circumstances, drawing on insights from personal experiences and individual change management principle

Live Your Dream Program Luncheon

Governor Robin welcomed everyone to the Live Your Dream Program luncheon held to honor and celebrate the Region's top three Live Your Dream honorees. Governor Robin noted all 13 Clubs participated in the Live Your Dream Program, offering a total of \$52,050 in scholarships to 43 deserving women.

Following lunch, Governor Robin invited Mary Woodward, President of SI/Raleigh filling in for Live Your Dream Chair, Terri Craig, SI/Raleigh NC. to share information about the program and announce the winners of the CECR Live Your Dreams Awards. Mary explained the Soroptimist Live Your Dream program provides cash awards given to motivated women who are the primary financial supporters of their families. The recipients of the awards seek to improve their lives by gaining additional skills, training, or education, but do not have the resources to do so. These cash awards are meant to offset any costs associated with the recipient's effort to attain higher education, including tuition, supplies, childcare, or transportation costs.

Three women were recognized at the luncheon. Stephanie S, nominated by SI Salisbury, was awarded \$1,000, Bryanna G, nominated by SI Frostburg, was awarded \$3,000, and Andrea A, nominated by SI Woodridge, was awarded \$5,000. They each shared a little more of their stories and how much the award meant to them and thanked Soroptimists for the opportunity to continue their education and achieve their dreams.

Governor Robin noted that by participating in the Live Your Dream Program our Clubs create ripples of change for these women, and society.

Pillar Presentations Continued

Governor Robin invited everyone to take a break before afternoon workshops.

Philanthropy/Fundraising Pillar Session

Building Your Fundraising Confidence: Overcoming Your Fear of the Ask

Cathy Brinsfield, CECR Co-Chair/Fundraising presented an enlightening session providing helpful tools and strategies for successful fundraisers. Cathy shared some best practices for building donor relationships, engaging potential donors in local initiatives, and tips to confidently making the "ask."

Engagement/Membership Pillar Session

Combating the Great Membership Decline

CECR Membership Chair Jamilah Dalton presented an insightful session on declining membership in most service club organizations. During the interactive workshop members shared why they think membership in Soroptimist is declining and brainstormed and shared strategies on how to grow and retain members.

Governor Robin thanked everyone for their shares and great discussion in the afternoon Pillar sessions. She announced that due to weather conditions the evening Night Sky Program at the Natural Bridge State Park is canceled. However, she reminded Laurel Society members of the invitation-only Laurel Society Reception, followed by the Denim and Diamond Dinner.

Denim and Diamonds Dinner

Governor Robin welcomed everyone to Denim and Diamonds dinner. She invited all to stop at the photo area, purchase keys to the CECR Treasure Chest and club raffle tickets, Laurel Society Lottery squares, and enjoy the sumptuous buffet.

Club Anniversaries

Following dinner Secretary Heather recognized clubs celebrating milestone anniversaries this year.

Clubs recognized and celebrated for club milestones were:

- SI/Fairfax, VA – established 1945- 80 years
- SI/Mid-Atlantic Online – 10 years

Governor's Trophy

Governor Robin presented the *"We Dream Big" Betty Jean "B.J." Cook CECR Governor's Trophy*. This award recognizes those clubs who have been creative in recruiting new members and in keeping their club members engaged and excited about being members of Soroptimist: SI/Woodbridge and SI/Manassas, Each Club was presented with \$300 to be used toward their future membership programs. Governor Robin asked them to report at next Spring Conference on what they did with their award. Governor Robin asked everyone to be on the lookout for a webinar with these clubs so we can all learn from their success.

Sunday, May 4, 2025

Bee's Knees Recognition Brunch

Governor Robin welcomed everyone to the Bee's Knees Recognition Brunch and called the final session of the 7th Spring Conference to order. Governor Robin thanked the Conference Planning Committee, subcommittees, and volunteers, with a special thank you to SI/Salisbury for making Spring Conference so successful. She then invited everyone to enjoy their brunch.

Dream It Be It

Following a delicious brunch Governor Robin invited Johann Dretchen, SI/Upper Montgomery County, MD, Dream It, Be It Region Chair, to share the success with the DIBI program. Johann recognized SI/Fairfax, SI/Hagerstown, SI/Manassas, SI/MidAtlantic, SI/Raleigh, SI Upper Montgomery, SI/Wake Forest, and SI/Woodbridge.

She Dreams Big Award

Governor Robin presented the 'She Dreams Big' Award. The Award recognizes a Soroptimist member whose actions contribute significantly to the greater good or mission of Soroptimist, at her club, region and federation and international levels. The following Soroptimists were recognized for their contributions:

- Upper Montgomery - Claudia Chitty
- Raleigh – Jennifer Prevatt
- Havre de Grace – Paige Mitchem Maggie McHolme
- Mid-Atlantic – June Wallace
- Fairfax – April Carter-Chou
- Manassas – Katie Smith
- Woodbridge – Terri Pritchett
- Hagerstown – Millie Stankey

Governor Robin announced that each of these winners were eligible to be reimbursed for a scholarship of \$50.00 from the Region, if they registered and attended SIA's Leadership Round Table Program in June.

Laurel Board / Laurel Society and Stargazer Updates

Governor Robin asked Ginny Dempsey, CECR Board Member and Fundraising Chair, SI/ Woodbridge, for an update on the Laurel Society Board and membership.

Ginny reported there are 28 squares left on the Laurel Board if anyone is interested in purchasing a square.

Additionally, both Heather Jankovich and Molly Whetzel from SI Williamsburg, VA, are now Laurel Society Members, achieved Attache level, and received their pins at the Laurel Society Reception. Also, Pam Sinclair of SI Raleigh, NC, updated her status to the Envoy level and received her pin. All three women continue to be Stargazer donors.

Carolyn Skowron of SI Raleigh, NC became a Stargazer prior to Conference, and received her pin as a new monthly donor.

Bennie G. Mendelson Recruitment Award

Governor Robin asked Governor Elect Kerri to present the award to the club having the largest net increase in members from April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025. SI Williamsburg, runner-up received a certificate. SI/ Salisbury, as the club with the largest increase in membership, received a \$100 certificate from the Region, towards the club's Dream Program.

Closing Remarks

Governor Robin invited Peggy Gentile-Van Meter, SIA 2024-2026 Board Director, and CECR's 2025 Spring Conference Federation Visitor from SI/Cumberland County, NJ to provide some closing remarks. Peggy shared that many attendees had spoken with her about how much insight they gained from Conference. Peggy noted that she has also learned a lot from the attendees. She urged Soroptimists to reach out to Headquarters as needed.

Lisa Mangiafico, Associate Senior Director of Records & Risk Management at SIA thanked those who have already worked with her on updating their club bylaws. She encouraged everyone to feel free to reach out to her with questions.

Governor Robin thanked everyone for a great Conference. She put forth a challenge to do one, two, or three things to improve attendees' individual engagement with Soroptimist. Robin encouraged Conference participants to share the information learned with those members of their Clubs who did not attend. She urged Soroptimists to reach out to Headquarters as needed.

Announcements:

Treasurer Linda announced that in coming weeks, all Club presidents and treasurers will receive an invoice for dues and payment is due by July 1.

Additionally, Form 200 listing new officers is also due by July 1. Officers need to be submitted regardless if there are no changes.

Mary Woodward, SI/Raleigh, NC, filling in for Live Your Dream Chair, Terri Craig, SI/Raleigh NC reminded club presidents to identify a chair or chair of LYD and submit the names by June 1. The LYD Kick Off Webinar is Thursday, June 26.

Peggy Gentile-Van Meter invited everyone to SIA's 49th Convention in Korea in July 2026.

Governor Robin announced CECR's Spring Conference in 2026 will be in Annapolis, MD, and Fall Meeting will be in-person, location TBA.

Lisa Mangiafico reminded everyone she is available to assist with by-law revisions.

Governor Robin thanked everyone for attending CECR's 2025 Spring Conference!

Governor Robin invited all attendees to stand and join her in saying the Soroptimist Pledge

The 7th CECR Spring Conference was adjourned on Sunday, May 4, 2025 at 9:40am.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Jankovich

CECR 2024-2026 Secretary