



Save our Sanity

SI:MK founded in 2015
with support from MK
Community Foundation



31 July 2024

MK Soroptimists

Newsletter 61

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Editorial Welcome

Standing up for Women and Girls

Hello everyone and what did we get up to in July, I hear you say. Well, I am just about to update you and I hope you find it a fascinating read.

At the beginning of the month, a number of us took part in a domestic abuse training course kindly provided to us by MK Act. The idea of the training was to provide us with a better understanding about domestic abuse and to help us be better prepared when holding our Orange cafes. A big thank you to MK Act and their trainer for a very informative and insightful course.



10 July was the 10th Anniversary of MK Rose. Scottie was delighted to attend and it was also lovely to see our linked charity Ukraine Appeal there, celebrating with Milton Keynes this anniversary.

Installed in 2013 and designed by internationally renowned artist Gordon Young, The Milton Keynes Rose is a vast and impressive open-air circle with markings based on the mathematical beauty of a flower. 106 granite pillars of varying heights emerge from the surface, many of which are inscribed with dates of events that have local, national or international significance.

The Milton Keynes Rose provides a place where citizens and visitors can gather to mark national, local or personal occasions, be they historical, in joy or in remembrance. It is a place where hundreds can gather to mark Armistice Day or one person can remember another in a personal moment. It is not a sombre place, but a place of coming together and celebration.



Soroptimists were very privileged this month to be invited to the Lord Lieutenants Garden Party for Unsung Heroes. We had a wonderful day, were very lucky with the weather and were in great company. It was lovely to see our friends and fabulous charities MK Snap, Ukraine Appeal MK and MK Act amongst the guests. All these charities deserve the recognition of the hard work they put in supporting the local community.



On the 16 July we held our monthly branch meeting and must thank Scottie for a great presentation on the work she does raising funds for the Anlung Pi Free school.



Anlung Pi free school was begun to help children who lived on the largest dump in Cambodia and those children of the local village a chance of free learning in Khmer, English and simple maths. The school was thriving with over 300 pupils until Covid meant no travelling or mixing with others. This had a huge impact on our school as it meant that all fundraising came to an end and after a year the charity had ran out of money.

Scottie told us that once the covid restrictions were lifted the school and nursery were reopened, but that the numbers are down from the 300 children to under 100, because the parents have got used to sending their children out onto the rubbish dumps to earn income. This means at present the teacher numbers are down to 2 full time 2 full time and 1 part time from 6 adults and they no longer have a cook. At one time the charity was able to fund cooking and feeding 80 nursery children but sadly until more funding can be brought in this has had to be stopped. What funding they are raising is paying for the teachers. The charity are trying to rebuild to be able to give these children an opportunity to get away from a life spent on the dumps. Scottie told us that she tries to go out once a year to help and in order to be able to then come back and tell as many people as possible about the charity and to ask for donations. At the end of the branch meeting, members made a donation of £130 towards this charity.



It was lovely to attend the YMCA community lunch, held this month on 18 July and we had perfect weather, which enabled it to be held on one of their roof gardens and you can see us taking in the sun.

on Thursday 17 October, with their Soupfest lunch theme. We will need volunteers to help out please. Any ideas for soups to provide please let Mala know.



And on the 18 July, we received a lovely message on Facebook from our linked charity Works For Us after making our donation of a clothes steamer.

“Sending a big shout-out to Soroptimist for their generous donation of an industrial steamer!”

Thanks to Soroptimists who purchased this new equipment, we're quickly processing donations received through our Retire your Attire Event. Your support is invaluable in helping us prepare clothing donations for those in need. Thank you so much; it has been a godsend! Your contribution makes a real difference in helping us better support people using our service. We deeply appreciate your kindness and commitment to making a positive impact to the women we support”. The following week Vanessa was able to drop off a black sack of more working clothes donated by members. Both these donations will help enable people to get on the ladder of job hunting and getting back into the work environment.



And our monthly Orange café took place on 23 July at Dobbies. I can report our collection tin which we started doing from our 2nd café now holds just over £45, which will be donated to MK Act.

A big thank you to the patrons of Dobbies for giving us these donations. Our next café is on Tuesday 27 Aug at Dobbies. We then will be taking our Orange Café to MK College on 24 Sept at their Chaffron Way site and 25 Sept at their Bletchley site. If you can help with a few hours especially the Sept days which will be 9am to 4pm, please let us know. Thank you.



Our 90 for 90 challenges are still going strong. SIGBI is celebrating 90 years this year and Ruth Healey, our President set us the challenge of what 90 things could you do.

This month we completed our 6th challenge by collecting and donating 90 items of food to MK Foodbank, who are continuing to see significant requests for their services.

All our 90 challenges completed to date, 90 Bras: 90 pairs of pants: 90 pairs of socks: 90 items of food at Easter time for MK Foodbank: £90 donation towards a Cervical Cancer center and this latest 2nd donation to MK Foodbank, all go to also support SIGBI's Day of Action, which annually takes place in July, and this year's theme is Poverty. And this links with Soroptimists support of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), specifically this Action Day of SDG 1 - No Poverty and SDG 2 – End Hunger. Thank you every one who has helped but we have more ideas for the rest of the year and hope you will be able to continue to help support this 90 for 90 projects and by doing this help others.



And July finished with us sorting out the toiletries received from our friends and donation stations at Great Linford Parish Council offices, The Mead Centre, Newport Pagnell, The Redhouse Surgery Bletchley and MK Snap.

3 large boxes of toiletries and sanitary wear were sorted and MK Act, YMCA and Unity MK received a box each.

Our next toiletries sorting day will take place on Monday 28 October, 3.30pm at MK Snap. Any donations from members in the mean time can be handed in at branch meetings.

I hope you have found this yet another interesting month of activities and thank everyone for your help. Well done. Don't forget, if anyone has any interesting articles, they think the rest of us would like to learn about please send to me or if you want write an article for the newsletter, that would be most welcome.

Next month, look out for the article from Angela who took part in the Zimbabwe Heritage/Culture/Landmarks Showcase event held at MK City Library in July.

And before I go, just a note, please check your diaries are up to date with all the meetings and events we have running up to Xmas and if you are able to let friends and families know and can come along to support our events that would be great. Thank you.

As always, happy reading everyone.

Soroptimists standing up for Women and Girls Sue Key, Chair

Here are the next few months Dear Diary dates.

Dear Diary Dates	
Tues 20 Aug	Summer Party – Jeans House. Theme is Pink
Tues 27 Aug	Orange Café, 10 till 1.00pm, Dobbies, Fenny Stratford, Bletchley
Wed 28 Aug	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Sat 31 Aug	Fundraising Fish and Chip Quiz, 7.00pm at Simpson Village Hall
Tue 17 Sep	Branch meeting. 5.30pm, Westcroft Morrison Community Room (back of Café), Westcroft
Wed 18 Sept	Afternoon Tea 3.30pm to 5.30pm at MK Snap, 20 Bourton Low, Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes, MK7 7DE
Tues 24 Sept	Orange Café, 9am till 4.00pm, MK College, Chaffron Way, Woughton
Wed 25 Sept	Orange Café, 9am till 4.00pm, MK College, Bletchley
Wed 25 Sept	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Tue 15 Oct	Branch meeting. 5.30pm, Westcroft Morrison Community Room (back of Café), Westcroft
Thurs 17 Oct	YMCA Community Lunch, 12 till 20pm at YMCA, CMK Soupfest theme
Thurs 17 Oct	Theatre Trip, Cabaret, MK Theatre with meal before
Tues 22 Oct	Orange Café, 10 till 1.00pm, Dobbies, Fenny Stratford, Bletchley
Wed 30 Oct	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Tue 19 Nov	Branch meeting. 5.30pm, Westcroft Morrison Community Room (back of Café), Westcroft
Sat 23 Nov	MK Snap Xmas Fayre, 1 to 5pm, MK Snap
Mon 25 Nov	MK City Council White Ribbon Event, 12 till 2pm, Room 1.02, Civic Offices

Tues 26 Nov	Orange Café, 10 till 1.00pm, Dobbies, Fenny Stratford, Bletchley
Wed 27 Nov	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Sat 30 Nov	Xmas Fayre, 10.00am to 5pm, Mead Center, High Street, Newport Pagnell
Sat 14 Dec	MK Musica Charity Choir Fundraising event, 7.00pm Mead Center, High Street, Newport Pagnell
Tues ? Dec	Members Christmas Dinner. Date and venue to be confirmed

	2024 Regional and SIGBI Conference Dates
19 Oct	SILC Region Conference AGM/Conference. 10am to 1pm on Zoom. Details to be confirmed
1-3 Nov	SIGBI Conference Edinburgh Details to be confirmed

International Day of Friendship



30 July is International Day of Friendship. The day is intended to promote a shared spirit of human solidarity and mutual understanding, which can help address and resolve various challenges facing the world.

Why is it important. Read SIGBI's blog all about it by Soroptimist Deborah Joseph. [Click here](#)

Soroptimist International Global Voice newsletter



The July 2024 issue of Global Voice is now available. This issue includes 2023 Annual report; SI Foundation Educating Women and Girls from War Torn Countries Fund; Blogs on The Current Digital Age and The Eleventh Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.

[Click here](#) to read the newsletter in full

SIGBI latest News/blogs



[Click here](#) to read all the latest news articles and blogs. Includes:

- Trafficking in Persons – 30 July
- Friendship – 30 July
- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day – 15 June 2024
- World Food Safety Day – 7 June 2024

Soroptimist International News and Blogs - read the latest



Read the latest Soroptimist International News articles including, [click here](#):

- The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024
- SI Board Meeting and AGM
- Celebrating World Environment Day 2024 Across our Federations
- SI Global Policy Update July 2024

[Click here](#) to see all the Soroptimist International blogs, including:

- Closing The Gender Gap in Science: Call to Action
- Older Women Count and Should be Counted
- Unveiling The Shadows in the Trafficking of Women and Girls
- The UNESCO recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence

I've invented an alternative to uncomfortable smear tests

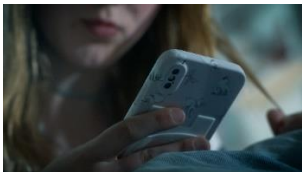


When Sanziana Foia went for her first smear test at the age of 25, she was surprised by how uncomfortable she found the whole experience.

The post-graduate student thought there must be different and better ways of testing women for the signs of cervical cancer.

The device looks for signs of cancer-causing HPV strains, in the same way a traditional smear would but there is no need for a doctor's appointment or to wait for results. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article. (Venture Builder Incubator Image)

How the sending of one photo led an 11 year old girl to become a victim of physical sex abuse



The girl sent a photo to a boy in her class before the image and her phone number were added to all male online chat groups – she later started disappearing before being abused by unknown men. A mother has told Sky News how her 11-year-old daughter was groomed into sending sexually explicit photographs of herself to men online and how this spiraled.

The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) says this is a growing problem and is calling on the new government to make keeping children safe online a priority. To read the full Sky News article [click here](#) (Sky News Image)

Justice system complicit in stalking escalation



The criminal justice system is failing stalking victims, a review by London's victim's commissioner has found.

Claire Waxman's review found that two-thirds of stalking offences in London are committed by repeat offenders. "The system has become complicit in allowing stalking cases to escalate," she said.

Jess Philips, the new safeguarding minister, said the Home Office would treat violence against women as "the national emergency that it is". [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article. (BBC Image)

Prisons crisis must not jeopardise Labour's pledge on domestic abuse, Starmer told



Government adviser warns efforts to halve violence against women and girls will increase numbers heading to nearly full jails.

Keir Starmer's pledge to halve violence against women will put more pressure on prisons, a Home Office adviser has warned, adding that there could be an additional 10,000 domestic abuse convictions if just one in three victims came forward. [Click here](#) to read the full Guardian article. (Andrew Aitchison/Corbis/Getty Images)

The Baird Inquiry just published



In August 2023, The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, commissioned Vera Baird to carry out an independent Inquiry into the treatment of women and girls who have been arrested and taken into custody in Greater Manchester. To read the full report and its recommendations [click here](#).

Rural domestic abuse convictions still “woeful”



Victims of domestic abuse in the countryside are still being let down by a “woeful” number of convictions five years after a report criticized the work of several rural police forces, says Julia Mulligan, author of the report.

Former North Yorkshire police commissioner Julia Mulligan said the latest figures for rural areas obtained by the BBC suggested there has been not “significant

improvement in outcomes for victims and survivors”. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article. (Julia Mulligan Images)

Spiking to be made specific offence in King’s Speech



The government is set to introduce a new law to make spiking a specific offence. It has been included in the King’s Speech along with a further 35 more bills.

Spiking is already a crime, covered by other pieces of legislation including the 1861 Offences against the Person act. But Labour’s manifesto, alongside the Conservative’s, said creating a new specific offence would help police better respond to incidents. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article. (BBC Images)

Violence against women and girls-related crime reaches staggering levels



VAWG crimes – which include domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault, stalking and harassment – accounted for 20% of total police recorded crime in England and Wales between 2022 and 2023.

Violence against women and girls related crime rose almost by 40% between 2018 and 2023, to “staggering” levels amounting to a “national emergency”, according to a leading female police chief. [Click here](#) to read the full Sky article.

Unis told to improve sexual harassment protection



Universities in England need to step up efforts to protect students from sexual harassment, their watchdog has said.

The Office for Students (OfS) said it will introduce certain bars that need to be reached when it comes to reporting systems, disciplinary processes and staff training.

[Click here](#) to read the BBC article. (picture GETTY Images).

“Game changer” AI detects hidden heart attack risk



Technology that identifies people at risk of a heart attack in the next 10 years has been hailed as “game changing” by scientists.

The artificial intelligence (AI) model detects inflammation in the heart that does not show up on CT scans, which involve a combination of X-rays and computer technology. A pilot project, supported by NHS England, is running at five hospital trusts in Oxford, Milton Keynes, Leicester, Liverpool and Wolverhampton.

[Click here](#) to read the BBC article. (picture BBC Images).

Works For Us Summer Schedule of support courses

EMPLOYMENT AND DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING



SUMMER SCHEDULE

works for us
Part of Citizens Advice Milton Keynes



Digital Training

1:2:1 Digital appointments

- Introduction to Digital Skills
- Next Steps to Digital Skills



Employment

1:2:1 coaching and employment support.

- CV guidance
- Interview Coaching
- Advice on training



Courses

- Understand AI for job searching
- Guide to Job Searching
- Exploring Volunteering

LOCATIONS






07852 963744
info@worksforus.org.uk

EMPLOYMENT COURSES

works for us
Part of Citizens Advice Milton Keynes



Introduction to Digital Course

Support for beginners with getting online, using computers and digital services.

Centre:mk | 6x sessions | Wednesdays 10am to 12pm
7th August to 11th September

Broughton Pavilion | 5x sessions | Thursdays 10am to 12:30pm
29th August to 26th September



Next Steps to Digital

Continue to build on your existing Digital skills and online confidence with and Introduction to using different software and online learning resources.

Centre:mk | 6x sessions | Wednesdays 1pm to 3pm
7th August to 11th September



Understanding AI for Job Seekers

Understanding how AI is being used by recruiters and how you can prepare whilst ensuring you represent your true self from application to interview.

Broughton | 2 sessions | Thursday 10am to 1pm
15th August and 22nd of August

Centre:MK | Monday 10am to 3pm
2nd September



Guide to Job Searching

A step by step guide on what to look for when job searching and how you can tailor job preferences to suit you.

Centre:MK | 2 sessions | Monday 10am to 3pm
12th August and 19th August



Explore Volunteering

Alongside a preparing to volunteer workshop, are will be working with organisations who have voluntary roles in a wide range areas and interests

Centre:MK | 2 sessions | Thursday 10am to 1pm
Courses and visits throughout August and September

07852 963744
info@worksforus.org.uk

Works For Us are running a summer schedule delivering 1:2:1 support courses at different outreaches across Milton Keynes.

Inspiring Women - Be Inspired



Eluned Morgan
Wales first female first minister 2024)

On 6 August 2024 Eluned Morgans has been confirmed as the first female first minister of Wales.

She told women watching events unfold in Cardiff Bay "you (women) need to know your potential is limitless". To learn more [click here](#).



"Art is a way of survival"
Yoko Ono

91 year old artist and peace activist

"Every moment in our lives is a miracle we should enjoy instead of ignoring"

To learn more about Yoko Ono [click here](#)

UN International days and Awareness days - Aug 2024

International days/weeks are occasions to educate the public on issues of concern, to mobilize political will and resources to address global problems, and to celebrate and reinforce achievements of humanity.

UN International Days - Just a few dates for your diary. **Click on each subject to learn more about each of these UN Days/Weeks via the UN Website.**

1-7 Aug	World Breast feeding Week
9 Aug	International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
10 Aug	World Steelpan Day
12 Aug	International Youth Day
19 Aug	World Humanitarian Day
21 Aug	International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism
22 Aug	International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief
23 Aug	International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition (UNESCO)
29 Aug	International Day against Nuclear Tests
30 Aug	International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances
31 Aug	International Day for People of African Descent

Our Twitter feed and web page - don't forget to have a look



Click here to see our Milton Keynes Soroptimists Twitter feed and what we are currently talking about



Click here to see our Milton Keynes Soroptimists web page and what we are currently talking about

Click here to go Back to the top

SI:MK support these local charities:

