

50th Edition

see news

Soroptimist International South East England Region Newsletter

November 2023

President Alison's message Inside Out and Outside In



WELL, WHAT A conference! I am sure all who attended – and there was record representation from our region – were encouraged and enthused by the programme as a whole and the individual speakers in particular. The blogs readily available on the website give a fulsome account of the various sessions but if you would like a synopsis, please do read the

succinct report by SI Sevenoaks' Isobel Groves on page 07. Members from eight different clubs in the region enjoyed the informal supper on Friday when we were pleased to welcome guests from SI Harrogate and SI Winchester (see page 07). What's more Pat Dale had invited Arif Zaman Executive Director, Commonwealth Businesswomen's Network to join us and it was so interesting to talk with him.

In her inaugural speech, new SIGBI President Ruth Healey threw out two challenges to commemorate next year's celebration of 90 years of SIGBI:

- (1) Do 90 things in the year (there will be the opportunity to show posters at Edinburgh about any ensuing initiative).
- (2) Increase your club membership by one (over and above any lost).

Of course, Ruth also referred to the next stage of the Modernisation Proposals consultation and the list of FAQ's has now been circulated. Four seminars to allow further discussion were planned for December but all places were taken up virtually immediately. Hopefully more dates will soon be on offer.

Sadly, I am not yet in a position to give an update on my regional project but I know you will join me in yearning for mutually positive progress on the appalling situation for our brothers and sisters in Israel/Palestine. I hope to have some good news at least early on in 2024.

I write this message during the 16 Days of Activism, something I'm sure many clubs are observing, and I guess that on Saturday various events took place to highlight the International Day of Violence against Women (page 05).

I participated in the Silent March in Canterbury where despite the frosty weather Christmas shoppers were out in force and our walk of witness certainly made an impact: Awareness, Advocacy, Action? Yes, all three boxes ticked but still so much more work needed before we can declare "mission accomplished"!

Also, earlier this month I attended a SI Sevenoaks club meeting, during which two new members were installed (page 06). What a privilege to represent our region on such an occasion and I look forward to seeing them again soon at a regional meeting – perhaps at our December ZOOM meeting. Hope to see many of you then too.

YOURS IN FRIENDSHIP, ALISON

What's in this month's newsletter?



Val sleeps out to support the homeless in Bromley, and raises £12,000, page 02.



The finer points of Sushi making, page 03.



Soroptimists Remember, page 04.



Sponsored knit for Blythswood, page 06.



Julia tree planting at Tovil, page 08.

Val sleeps out for Bromley Homeless

SI BROMLEY is very proud of Val Carrier who slept out overnight to raise support for Bromley Homeless. It was a cold and windy night and members thought of ringing her to say "Stay inside and we will still support you", but she braved it out and raised over £12,000 in sponsorship.

Val wrote an account of her adventure and here are some extracts:

"The evening started with a curry meal that the Mayor and Mayoress attended. At about 21:30 the guests left. The sleepers sought out their slots. I chose a place on the path next to the wall of the hall as someone had recommended sleeping next to a wall or in front of a gravestone – no choice!

"The thunder and lightning passed but the rain persisted. I lay in my sleeping bag as snug as a bug in a rug, but the ground was hard, the rain was now pouring down; the graveyard was eerie and sleep would not come. What was I doing here? I was here raising money for people who have fallen on hard times, often through no fault of their own, and just sink into the mire unless a charity can help them. What was one night of discomfort?

"The highlight of the night was when I woke up and the sky was the most beautiful I have ever seen, bright blue with ribbon clouds streaming through it and the full moon shining down brightly on me.



"When I woke and went inside, the cup of tea and bacon butty were most welcome. Then I went home to a warm bed under a good roof". Well done, Val.

CHRISTINE THOMAS, SI BROMLEY



The Monday Afternooners



AT THE END of October, SI Sevenoaks members provided tea for the "Monday Afternooners", a Bromley-based group of young adults with varying disabilities.

Held in Bromley United Reformed Church, it was an enjoyable occasion, where substantial refreshments were consumed. Everyone took part in a quiz, which was won by the Golden Girls.

It was a pleasure to resume what had, until Covid restrictions, been an annual pre-Christmas tradition. Our connection with the "Afternooners" is through former SI Sevenoaks President Ann Hines, who has strong links with the group and organises the catering for such events.

PAULINE PAYNE, PRESIDENT, SI SEVENOAKS



The Monday Afternooners is a monthly recreation club for people with cerebral palsy who live independently or who are isolated in the Borough of Bromley.

The annual programme, set by members of the club, is varied with two or three indoor meetings and eight or nine outings.

Originally set up by Bromley Scope, the club transferred to Bromley Mencap, a much larger organisation which could offer access to more services.

Members and volunteers can be seen in the photographs above. On the right, Sorooptimists Sandie Higgs, Pauline Payne and Ann Hines can be seen standing.

Women in Revolt!

ART AND ACTIVISM IN THE UK 1970-1990



THIS IS THE title of a new exhibition at TATE BRITIAN which is on until April 07, 2024. Fifty years on from when women first had the vote in the UK, sees the first Women's Liberation conference in 1970 and the men ran the creche for the children.

This exhibition is the first of its kind. It includes art from over 100 women artists working in the UK. It explores how networks of women used radical ideas and rebellious methods to make an invaluable contribution to women's liberation and how this was achieved against a backdrop of social, economic and political change.

The multi-media exhibition showcases the lived experiences from a very diverse range of women. It includes subjects like Punk, Greenham Common, Art by Post and more, bringing the challenges of being heard up to date with Race, Disability and LGBTQ+.

Personally speaking, I can't say I enjoyed it, but it is certainly an interesting exhibition, a commentary on how things have changed. If you get a chance to go, I'd be interested to hear what you thought of it.

CAROL INFANTI, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE



International Women's Day

International Women's Day Film Festival

Saturday, March 09, 2024

The Depot, Lewes, East Sussex

THE LEWES SOROPTIMISTS club are putting together an afternoon of short films about or by women to celebrate IWD in memory of our late member Wilma De Jong. Wilma was a documentary film maker and lecturer who set up a documentary film making degree course at University of Sussex.

We are planning on having two sessions of short films. The first session for women students and ex-students on Wilma's course and we are working with the UoS for submissions. The second session is to showcase projects around the world supported by Soroptimist clubs. We are still short of submissions from projects and would be very grateful if you could email us with suggestions or links.

Please put the date in your diaries. It will be a wonderful way to commemorate a past member and International Women's Day and we hope many of our local club members can join us.

Contact anjascj@gmail.com for more information or to suggest a film. <https://lewesdepot.org/>

VERA GAJIC, SI LEWES

Learning the finer points of Sushi making



Miki showing club member Anne Walter how to roll Sushi



Club members Anne, Jill Ruddock and Ann Greenfield rolling Sushi

SI TUNBRIDGE WELLS is fortunate to have as a club member a wonderful Japanese lady, Miki. Last year Miki gave members an amazing tutorial on the delights of Sake, and this year has followed up with a session on the finer points of preparing Sushi.

In early November twenty club members and guests gathered together to learn about the best ingredients for the task, how to prepare the perfect Sushi rice and then practice how to roll our own tempting delights. Great fun and serious learning all at the same time. In addition, a small sum was raised to add to our funds to be used for charitable purposes. All in all a productive afternoon.

ANGELA MCPHERSON, PAO, SI TUNBRIDGE WELLS

International President's Appeal



AFTER TWO YEARS of dedicated efforts, Soroptimist International (SI) is thrilled to announce the successful conclusion of its President's Appeal, "Opening Doors to a Bright Future," which officially ended in September 2023. The initiative, led by SI President Maureen Maguire, was a remarkable journey that transformed the lives of 3,000 women and girls across the world, she wanted to establish a project in each Federation.

The fourth project was in our Federation, SIGBI. It was a collaboration with 'Restore a Sense of I Can' (RSC), which aimed to bridge the gender digital divide and provide training and resources to women and girls in the Caribbean, addressing socio-economic and academic barriers.

Maureen said "Opening Doors to a Bright Future underlined the Soroptimist commitment to education throughout the life-course. This two-year journey has left a lasting impact on thousands of lives, paving the way for brighter, more promising futures". Read the full update <https://www.soroptimistinternational.org/opening-doors-for-3000-women-and-girls/>

CAROL INFANTI, AMBASSADOR SI PRESIDENTS APPEAL, SIGBI



SI Folkestone Remembers



ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, members of SI Folkestone joined the Remembrance Day parade to the war memorial to lay two wreaths and remember those who lost their lives in two world wars and other times of conflict.

The first wreath on behalf of Folkestone Town Council, was laid by The Mayor of Folkestone, Belinda Walker, who is also a member of SI Folkestone.

Club member Jacalyn Wood and her mother Pat Wood joined the parade and laid a wreath on behalf of SI Folkestone.

YVONNE FREEMAN, SI FOLKESTONE



SI East Grinstead Remembers



ON NOVEMBER 12, PRESIDENT Jane Griffiths, President Elect Alison Skinner and other members of the Club took part in the Remembrance Sunday service in memory of those killed in two World Wars and other conflicts around the world.

President Jane (above right) laid a wreath on behalf of the Club alongside representatives of other local organisations. A vast crowd turned out to mark the occasion and to give thanks for those who sacrificed their lives to give us freedom.

ROSEMARY STONE, SI EAST GRINSTEAD



FROM LEFT: Anne Sanders, President Jane Griffiths and President Elect Alison Skinner waiting to join the parade.

Raising funds at the Eastbourne Airshow



AT THE ANNUAL Eastbourne Airshow this year Eastbourne Soroptimists supported the Eastbourne Dementia Action Alliance with the Bucket Collection organised every year by the Rotary Clubs.

Three Charities, EDAA, The Air Ambulance and The Salvation Army each received a donation of £2,696 at a presentation at the International Lawn Tennis Centre in Devonshire Park.

The Eastbourne Club has supported the EDAA for several years and will be helping out again at several events around Christmas time.

LUCY MCKEON, SI EASTBOURNE

Orange The World for UN International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Sevenoaks' monthly Orange the World event



SI SEVENOAKS HAVE been Oranging the World again, this month at the Bullfinch pub in Riverhead, Sevenoaks – they kindly let us in early for coffee and we could serve our own cakes! We wanted to make this one special as it was the actual UN International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

We had extra balloons and posters and most of the members and guests who attended are pictured here enjoying a friendly chat and, of course, the cake! We left posters and leaflets for the staff and other guests at the pub; we are hopeful that the Bullfinch Social Media Manager will put an item on their website to help spread the word!

SANDIE HIGGS, PAO SI SEVENOAKS

Launch of Safer Internet Day poster competition at Orange Cafe



DURING 2022 TUNBRIDGE Wells club produced a report 'Spotlight on Safety' which dealt with the issue of how safe women and girls feel out and about in our local community. This formed part of our work on SDG5: Gender Equality and the issue of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). As a follow up to this the club has launched a poster competition inspired by the annual 'Safer Internet Day' scheduled for February 14, 2024. The competition, aimed at 11-18-year-olds, is designed to get young people thinking about how to be safer on the internet, as well as aware of what they post and the potential harm it can do to others.

In line with the worldwide VAWG theme of "oranging the world" we launched the competition at our "Orange Café" in the foyer of Trinity Theatre, Tunbridge Wells on November 25, day one of the UN 16 days of activism against gender-based violence.

Through this competition we hope to raise awareness of the shadow cast on society by the high incidence of VAWG and hopefully encourage young men to think about, and be aware of, their potential role in it. Information about our competition can be found on our club webpage at <https://sigbi.org/tunbridge-wells/current-activities/>

ANGELA MCPHERSON, PAO, SI TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Tunbridge Wells members take part in the Reclaim the Night walk



AFTER BEGINNING DAY one of the UN 16 Days of Activism by holding an Orange Café, Tunbridge Wells Soroptimists gathered on the evening of November 25 to join the local Reclaim the Night Walk.

This event is held every November to highlight how women can feel unsafe travelling or walking dark streets at night, and the aim of the walk is to advertise the fact that women should be able to walk the streets and feel safe. So, at 19:30 we set off walking from two different venues to converge in the centre of town on The Pantiles, where we listened to a couple of short talks.

The opportunity was then taken to network and socialise with other local women's groups. Tunbridge Wells members see this as an adjunct to our work highlighting the issue of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and are delighted to join this event and together with other women in our community work to 'Reclaim the Night'.

ANGELA MCPHERSON, PAO, SI TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Protection from Sex Based Harassment in Public becomes a law

A JOURNEY WHICH started in October 2021 became a Law of the Land in September 19, 2023. It is amazing what dedicated club members and partnership working can achieve.

A Survey was carried out by club members after a young lady was attacked on the common in Tunbridge Wells. The attack happened the day before our 75th Birthday which incensed us.

Having analysed our survey and produced a Spotlight on Safety report we then contacted our Local MP. Working with us were Plan International and our local Reclaim the Street group. Our MP was lucky to be picked for a Friday Private Members Bill.

So, on Friday, December 09, 2022 a few of the club members were in the Public Gallery at the House of Commons to hear the third reading of the Bill, supported by all Political Parties.

Having then travelled its way both to the House of Lords and the Commons all that was left was for the bill to receive Royal Assent. This happened on September 19, 2023.

Soroptimist International is now in Hansard the official record in print form of proceedings in the House of Commons and will be there for evermore. A truly remarkable achievement for our club and something every Soroptimist in every club should be shouting from the rooftops .

LORNA BLACKMORE, SI TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Sponsored Knit raises £200 for Blythwood Shoebox Appeal



A MEDWAY AND Maidstone Soroptimist Knitting Team took part in a sponsored knit organised by a Blythwood Volunteer on October 16, at the United Reform Church Hall in Gillingham. The team was made up of Sue Hunt, Carol McKeough, Stella Barnes, and Jane Barnes (pictured on the cover).

We were sponsored by family and friends and contributed £200. The total amount raised through the efforts of all the knitters involved was £1485. This was considered to be an extremely good amount in the light of the cost-of-living challenges.

The monies will go towards the transport costs for taking the filled Christmas shoeboxes to Ukraine.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

Croydon Club's Friendship with Park Hill Park still going strong



WHEN CO-CHAIRS, Catherine and Josi, of the Friends of Park Hill Park visited SI Croydon and District they delivered a talk on the 10 year impact of providing a voluntary service to the local community. Some of the activities discussed included:

- The park volunteers litter picking – collecting over 1,200 bags of rubbish.
- Creating five major festivals.
- Crowdfunding to create disabled access and a meeting space – raising £31,000.
- Park arts projects.
- A very successful community garden, which has a designated Soroptimist section, complete with a commemorative bench, a peace pole, and much more.

The late Grace Onions was an active member of the Friends of Park Hill Park and was featured in many of the images shared on the night. Plants donated by Grace were the starting point for what is now referred to as the Park Hill orchard. SI Croydon members are still active within the group, in particular the joint club President, Heather Bailey, herself an avid gardener.

ROXANNE M ST. CLAIR, SI CROYDON

New members welcomed

SI Bromley



SI BROMLEY IS very happy to welcome two new members, Sherry Eskander and Carmelita Kalloe. They are both thrilled at joining the club and have already become very active. They have each written a few lines to introduce themselves to the club.

“My name is Sherry Eskander, 42 yrs old. I am a medical doctor, public health consultant, a mum and a wife. I moved to Bromley in December 2021 from Kenya. The charity sector has always been my passion, especially supporting women and young girls to strive and thrive. I came across Soroptimists at a local Charity fair where I met Lesley and we clicked right away. I found the club members to be loving, accepting and determined to make a difference. SI Bromley is about sisterhood, service and community. I am happy and proud to be a Soroptimist and would recommend it to like minded women.”

Carmelita has written a short report of her experiences at her first Soroptimist conference:

“2023 has been a very special year for me. Not only have I celebrated my 60th birthday but also I became a member of SI Bromley. I want to thank the Bromley club members for making me feel so welcome.

“It was a real experience to be part of such an impressive conference. I have learned a lot and met Soroptimists from many different walks of life and various countries around the globe. Almost without exception, I have found Soroptimists to be very warm and friendly.

“I look forward to developing within SI Bromley and becoming more engaged with fundraising, advocacy, recruiting younger members and being involved in meaningful projects.

“Thanks to SI Bromley for the support I know they will continue to offer.”

CHRISTINE THOMAS, SI BROMLEY

SI Sevenoaks



From left: Region President Alison Driscoll, Barbara Ropek, Jean Bright and President Pauline Payne

SI SEVENOAKS WERE delighted to welcome new Region President Alison Driscoll to their club meeting on November 14, when President Pauline Payne enrolled two new members, Barbara Ropek and Jean Bright. This brings our membership up to 25 in total!

SANDIE HIGGS, PAO, SI SEVENOAKS

Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland [SIGBI] Federation Conference November 2023 Friends' Meeting House, Euston Road, London Report by Isobel Groves, SI Sevenoaks

Climate for Change

Two days of learning and listening to inspirational speakers. Welcoming countries belonging to the federation with their opening Parade of Flags. This is always moving as you realise you really do belong to a global women's organisation. Two days of making new and renewing old friendships. A joy to do so. The theme of the conference focused on:

- Reconnecting with the Planet: ensuring that the future generations are introduced to the planet from a very early age. Speaker: Monty Halls, British Marine Biologist, Broadcaster, Author well known for his Great Escape series.
- Elimination of Violence against Women: Speakers: Louisa Rolfe Assistant Commissioner Met. Police, Hasina Safi, former Afghan government minister for women's affairs, Divya Arya, Women's affairs reporter, BBC news Delhi, India
- Microfinancing Lend with Care: Tracey Horner, Head of Individual Giving for care International UK.

All speakers spoke passionately about their subjects, Monty Halls, held the audience in the palm of his hand as he took us through his expeditions particularly to the Galapagos islands where he lived with his young family introducing and connecting them to the ocean and its teeming life. Not only did he emphasise the importance of connecting children with coastal life but with nature in all its aspects eg, primary schools having gardens and access to woodlands.

Tracey Horner gave a succinct exposition of the Lend It with Care scheme which provides life changing loans to small business owners in low-income countries from Pakistan to Malawi

Elimination of Violence against Women

This was the most powerful session of the conference. Louisa Rolfe, Metropolitan Police, started by apologising for the 'rogue' police officers who had abused their power by preying on women and then addressing the robust police response. There was acknowledgement from her and the many questions from the floor that the dynamics of domestic abuse is highly complicated. The current situation of reporting this type of abuse does not encourage victims to seek redress.

Hasina Rafi spoke with passion about the plight of women in Afghanistan. She spoke movingly about the strides women had made in the interlude between Taliban regimes only to be plunged into darkness again. She could not over emphasise the need for solidarity of women globally in supporting their Afghan sisters. There was a standing 500 women ovation at the end of her presentation.

Equally Divya Arya spoke with great passion about the much-publicised Gang Rape cases which shocked India. She was involved in the reporting of these crimes and how it had destroyed the victims' lives due to fear. Her main message to conference was the need to use education in order to change cultural attitudes.

Programme Action Sessions

Listening to stories of the chosen best practice awards is always impressive. Here is a sample of the 10 entries submitted:

- SI Madurai: Anaemia Awareness Campaign.
- SI Newtown: Mammogram campaign.
- SI Bombay Chembur: Eco Empowerment, Say No to Plastics.
- Delegates' winner was SI Barnstaple and District: Anti Spiking Campaign.

Modernisation Proposals

Board members gave a brief update. 430 responses had been received and all read. It is the first stage of a genuine consultation with every member a stakeholder. A list of FAQs will be circulated. There will be four meetings online in December. Emphasised these are constitutional changes which would need to be debated. A revised document will be published in mid January 2024 with ensuing resolution by end of April 2024 to be presented at AGM 2024. There was clarification that both individual members' and club responses were acceptable at this stage of the consultation.

Next year's conference is in Edinburgh and I do encourage members to have the federation conference experience as it really brings alive our work when put in the global context.

PS there was a strong plea throughout conference for Programme Action Report Forms [PFRFs] to be completed!!

Fish Friday's Chip Supper



ON THE FRIDAY evening during conference, members of the South East England Region and guests met for a fish and chip supper at The Wesley. It was a lovely informal evening with lots of chatter about the first day of conference and gave everyone time to catch up with members from other clubs, which may not have been possible during the day at conference.



The food was very good, and the team at The Wesley did Alison proud organising us a separate room, and supplying each table with extra bowls of chips. The consensus was that it was an enjoyable evening before people headed off home or to their hotel to be fresh faced for day two of conference.

JACALYN WOOD, SI FOLKESTONE

East Grinstead members share London Conference highlights and food



AT THEIR NOVEMBER meeting East Grinstead Club enjoyed a meal together whilst listening to reports from the London Conference.

Members turned out in force to share a tasty meal of chilli, rice and salad, with chocolaty nibbles and grapes to follow, all prepared by members of the Club. Once the main course was finished, the Conference feedback began with each person who attended covering one or two aspects of the programme.

The reports were succinct and punchy so that the audience could easily assimilate the information. Some new members who were present were particularly interested to learn more about Soroptimism in its widest sense and are now keen to attend next year's Conference in Edinburgh.

The meeting being the nearest to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, members were encouraged to wear something orange.

Also during the course of the evening the Regional President Elect's badge was presented to Sue Edgar who was unable to be with us in London.

This was a very enjoyable evening and a great opportunity not only to be brought up to date with what is happening in SIGBI but also to chat to friends old and new.



ROSEMARY STONE, SI EAST GRINSTEAD

Closing Date

for the next edition of SEE News
Wednesday, December 27, 2023

2024 Closing Dates are:

January 25; February 23;
March 24; April 24; May (TBA); June 24;
July 25; August 25; September 24;
October 25; November 24; December 27.

Email your text and photographs to Patricia at
pat.painting@btinternet.com 020 8668 2681

Tree Planting at Tovil



SIX MEMBERS OF SI Medway and Maidstone (Carol, Jane, Julia, Sharon and Stella), plus a Soroptimister, returned to the former landfill site at Tovil on Saturday, November 25. This was where we planted 420 tree whips in January 2021 and returned the following year to install a bench and commemorative plaque.

We were equipped with spades and wearing Hi-Viz vests ready to do some tree planting. Although the weather was cold, the sky was blue and dry this time, very different to the damp fog in 2021.

We were aware that a significant number of the 420 trees planted in January 2021 had not survived the extreme hot weather conditions that summer.

Sharon Forghani had ordered 60 tree whips from the Woodland Trust to replace those that had not survived. These whips are provided free to community groups such as Soroptimist clubs. There were a variety of native species including dog rose, hawthorn, hazel, crab apple, dogwood, silver birch, rowan and wild cherry.

The UK needs millions more trees to reach its 2050 carbon net zero target. By digging in with the Woodland Trust, we are helping to achieve this important goal.

On arrival we could see that Maidstone Borough Council had cut down all the overgrown foliage in the wildlife area so we could do the tree planting more easily. Unfortunately, this action had resulted in further damage to the original tree whips. Before we started any further planting we set about locating as many of the tree whips and ensuring they were supported with canes.

After a productive morning planting the 60 new tree whips, we marked the whips on the perimeters using the green packaging to identify them more easily. A commitment was made to return to the site and take responsibility in future for cutting the area in between the whips ourselves and not rely on the council contractors.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE



SI Sevenoaks celebrate CAMFED's success

SI SEVENOAKS HAVE been supporting CAMFED, the charity which supports the education of girls in Africa, for many years now. We have been lucky to have Valerie Caton in our club; until recently she was a trustee of CAMFED and has always given us regular updates about the work of this wonderful charity. We were delighted to hear that the highly influential commentator Nicholas Kristof and the New York Times have just made CAMFED their top recommended non-profit to support.

Below is a photo from a visit Valerie made to Tanzania in 2014 to meet CAMFED Alumni and to see some of the rural schools where CAMFED operates. Here she meets a Mother and Father Support Group who have been making nourishing meals for primary school children supported by CAMFED. They have grown their own cereals and made porridge to give the children a nourishing lunch to keep them happy in school and able to concentrate on learning. Valerie is at the back on the far left and next to her at the front is Ann Cotton, who founded CAMFED in 1992, was its President until a few years ago, and is now a Trustee/Board Member. The current CEO (since January 2023) is Angeline Murimirwa.

VALERIE CATON AND SANDIE HIGGS, SI SEVENOAKS



In the New York Times on November 18, 2023, Pulitzer Prize winner Nicholas Kristof names CAMFED as a top cause to support this giving season.

"Of the dozens of nonprofits I've recommended, CAMFED is the top audience favorite [...]" – Nicholas Kristof, New York Times.

This year's 'greatest hits' version of Kristof's annual holiday gift guide highlights the top causes he has recommended to readers over the last 15 years. He singles out the unique multiplier effect of an investment in girls' education.

"Female education can change the course of our world. It's the key that CAMFED uses to unlock the potential of young women and the communities they belong to. As CAMFED empowers girls, these young women, in turn, become the architects of change in their nations." – Nicholas Kristof, New York Times.

To multiply your support, CAMFED partners, the Phay Charitable Gift Fund and Marcella NYC, have stepped forward to amplify the Prize's impact, and are matching the first \$250,000 of donations made in response to Kristof's endorsement.

And it all starts when you support a girl to walk into the classroom.

How Medway and Maidstone's donations to local Hygiene Banks were spent

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESSFUL Bagathon fundraiser at the Faversham Hop Festival in September, the £250 raised was split between donations to our two local Hygiene Banks. We asked that the funds be spent on products for women and teenage girls. It was really good to receive feedback from each of the schemes:

Katie from The Hygiene Bank Maidstone said "Please see the photo of my Aldi haul!! I was super excited to be able to



purchase sooo many products – I spent precisely £124.70! Very finely tuned indeed! I focussed on period products although didn't buy period pants as they are so pricey and, with so many young women and girls sadly in need, we can

help so many more individuals by buying disposable products. It's less green I know but does extend our helping hand so much further.

"In Maidstone, we support organisations who help girls aged 8-18 in trouble with the law, young mums who have often been rehoused far from home for their own safety, women's refuges and a primary school with very many Pupil Premium families (many girls start their periods before leaving primary school these days). In addition to period products, I was able to buy a huge amount of general, everyday basic hygiene products like shower gel, shampoo/conditioner, deodorant and dental products. So, once again, a huge thank you to you and your organisation for helping THB Maidstone support those amongst us who are in such need of these products!

Everyone deserves to feel clean!"

Emma from The Hygiene Bank Medway said, "The delivery has arrived. I have



attached a picture and a thank you certificate for you. We managed to buy an amazing amount of sanitary towels and period pants with your generous donation and I know it will help many women and girls in the area. They will start going in our self-care kits this week and out to our partners in deliveries. Thanks again for all your support."

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE