



**ZONTA**  
INTERNATIONAL  
DISTRICT 23

*Newsflash*

Biennium 2022-2024

Build a better world for women and girls.

Issue Six October 2023



**DISTRICT 23 GOVERNOR**  
KAY STEWART

### **Governor's Message October 2023**

I trust that the District Conference in Bunbury in September is more than just a distant memory. There was a lot of energy in the room, where we heard from a number of inspiring speakers and heard the voices of young Zontians and Z-club members. The buzz continued during the breaks as members caught up with old friends and established new links with like-minded women. I trust that you feel rejuvenated for the Zonta work ahead.

My hearty thanks and gratitude are extended to the Conference Committee: Sandra Burns (Chair), Jo Wittorff (Conference Coordinator), Ute Schierhorn (Treasurer) Beth Talbot (Secretary), Kimberley Robbins (Gala Dinner Coordinator) and Kerry Kerr (ZC Bunbury President). A separate report on the conference is to be found later in this newsletter – thanks to Jo Wittorff for putting it together and also for posting on Share Your Story on the ZI website.

No changes to the Bylaws were brought to the Conference, but two motions to

go forward to ZI for consideration for the 2024 Convention were passed with significant margins:

Birthing Kit Project

That Zonta International and the Zonta Foundation for Women support the Birthing Kit Foundation Australia's work in supplying clean birthing kits and education projects into developing countries for the biennium 2024–2026 (40/44 votes)

Extension of Women in STEM Scholarship pilot

That the Women in STEM Scholarship be continued as a pilot project for women in all STEM fields for the 2024-2026 biennium. An evaluation of the Scholarship shall then be presented at the 2026 Convention. (44/44 votes)

**The D23 team for the 2024-26 biennium is:**

Governor	Debbie Schmidt	ZC Geelong
Lieutenant Governor	Wendy Quinn	ZC Hobart Derwent
Treasurer	Chris Frick	ZC Gawler
Area 1 Director	Fiona MacDowall	ZC Geelong
Area 2 Director	Jenny Trewren	ZC Adelaide Torrens
Area 3 Director	Kimberley Robbins	ZC Bunbury
Area 4 Director	Donna Fabris	ZC Kyneton
Area 5 Director	Jill Taylor	ZC Hobart
Nominating Committee	Pru Blackwell	ZC Gawler
	Faith O'Brien	ZC Perth
	Lesley Siegloff	ZC Adelaide Flinders



### **Club anniversaries**

Congratulations to the following clubs and their members past and present. I am confident that you fulfilled biennial Goal 4: Celebrate Ourselves in style!

- October – ZC Albury-Wodonga
- October – ZC Ballarat



### **Add Your Voice Campaign 2023**

Results of the campaign were released at the beginning of September.

Congratulations to two clubs in the district achieved recognition as being in the top 30 recruiters in their size tier.

- ZC Cradle Coast
- ZC Geelong



## Share Your Story

It's easy to add your club's story to the ZI website. Go to [www.zonta.org](http://www.zonta.org); type Share Your Story into the 'Keyword search' box and you will be taken directly to instructions and a form to do this.

Recent D23 posts have come from:

- ZC Wangaratta, 18 May – Boys' Career Breakfast
- ZC Bendigo, 26 June – Women's Flood Recovery luncheon
- D23, 11 Sept – District 23 Conference
- ZC Adelaide Torrens, 28 Sept – Sustainable Fashion (Zonta Says NOW)

## Remarkable Women, Powerful Stories

**Thulile Khanyule** – lecturer and doctoral candidate at the University of Witwatersrand, brings science to the public through blogging and podcasting, intending to normalise technology and innovation as an economic driver.

**Melanne Verveer** – the first US ambassador for global women's issues (appointed by Barak Obama in 2009). She led efforts to integrate women's rights and participation into US foreign policy.

To view their stories, visit *Remarkable Women Powerful Stories* on the ZI website under My Zonta, News and Events, Remarkable Women Powerful Stories.

## Resources

Check this out!

I'm Safe: The Free Women Safety App

A free, reliable, easy to use safety app for women all around the world.

Available at <https://www.imsafe.app>

## Women in Afghanistan

Be informed about the situation of Afghan women under Taliban rule using the following resources.

Direct Link to Full 9-Page **Women without Borders 2023 Document**:

<https://wwb.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Nargis-Nehan-Afghanistans-Forever-Crisis.pdf>

***Afghan Women Under Taliban Rule: Are There Any Good Options?***

*An Afghan Perspective on the Second Anniversary of the Taliban's Return*

A policy paper by Orzala Nemat, Afghan scholar, women's rights activist, and think tank leader Policy Paper N°11, August, 2023

**Kay Stewart**

**ZI District 23 Governor 2022-24**

## **D23 Bunbury Conference Report**

### **District 23 Conference Report, September 1-3, Bunbury W.A.**

District Governor Kay Stewart and her fellow Zontians gave a warm welcome to Annikä Bränström, Zonta International Board Liaison for D23 and ZI representative for the Conference. Other special guests included the Mayor of the City of Bunbury, who officially opened the Conference, and state and federal government leaders. Local First Nations Elder, Phyllis Bennell, performed the "Welcome to Country".

Carole Theobald, Chair of the Zonta Says Now working group, reviewed the progress of the working group, including the launch of a leaflet on disaster preparedness and response, a focus for next year. Carole then introduced Natalie Isaacs, founder and CEO of 1 Million Women, whose keynote address showed how women and girls can take practical action to fight climate change by changing their lives.

A welcome reception followed a conversation between Carole and Natalie. After the reception, members of the Zonta Club of Bunbury led the "Dine Around Bunbury" group dinners. Ninety-five Zontians, in groups of 9-18, dined at 12 of the city's restaurants.

Under the conference theme, "A Better World," Saturday's program was a blend of important Zonta business, including Annika's presentation of the newly released Zonta International Strategic Plan, reports from Governor Kay and Membership Chair Debbie, and a presentation of the 2024 Convention in Brisbane.

Keynote presentations included:

- WA 2023 Australian of the Year, Professor Samar Aoun, speaking on Compassionate Communities
- Megan McCracken, a long-time advocate for gender balance in historically male-dominated industries.
- Award winners Phoebe Bourke (2023 Young Women in Public Affairs), and Amy Zahra (2022 Jane M. Klausman Women in Business) shared their stories and what the awards meant to them.
- Bella Burgermeister and Lexy McDonald, two local young women, shared how they contributed to a better world.
- Kristi McVee, a former specialist child interviewer and a detective senior constable, talked about strategies to help prevent child abuse and break the cycle of trauma that victims often experience.

Zontians reignited their Zonta Spirit at Saturday evening's gala dinner, enjoying an evening of fellowship, frivolity and food. They left their seats for the overcrowded dance floor to "let their hair down"!

Sunday was a day of celebration:

- The Ceremony of Remembrance honoured the lives and service of seven Zontians who had passed away since the last conference.
- A number of awards were presented:
  - Certificates acknowledging clubs' ongoing involvement in organising assembly days for the Birthing Kit project
  - Badges in recognition of length of membership (given in five-year increments starting at 20 years)
  - Greater Visibility awards
  - Service and Advocacy awards

Foundation Ambassador, Alison Martin, gave an update on donations to the Zonta Foundation for Women – there's still a way to go to reach our biennium goals.



A Young Zontians Forum focused on the opinions of Z club, Golden Z club and Young Professional members about what attracted them to Zonta and what they would like to see in the future. This was a well-received segment of the conference.

The conference ended with Kay presenting her Governor's Award to two exemplary Zontians, Dr. Catherine Mair (posthumously) and Margaret Lynch.

**The Zonta Club of Devonport was announced as the host for the 2025 district conference and shared their excitement with a presentation of attractions in Devonport, Tasmania.**



## Zonta Australia



**ZONTA**  
INTERNATIONAL  
**AUSTRALIA**

**Zonta Australia – Discussion Paper – October 2023**

A discussion paper is being developed currently to put the proposition to the three Australian Zonta Districts to join forces in establishing a 'Zonta Australia'.

The concept of a Zonta Australia is not to replace the three Districts across Australia but to provide a framework that facilitates consistent advocacy at the Commonwealth level on issues that have importance to women and girls nationally. As a federated model of government, having Zonta Districts and three levels of government is an ongoing challenge for the three Zonta Districts. A Zonta Australia provides the framework to ensure consistency and at the same time reduce duplication of effort.

This discussion paper is a starting point for Zonta members across the 3 Australian Districts to consider the various models that currently exist across the Zonta world and decide what will provide the best model in the Australian context. The Zonta districts are not delineated by state borders or structures. While this structure does not impact on the way service occurs it often has an impact on the way advocacy is operationalized across districts thus impacting on the way the objectives of the organisation can be met.

This body will facilitate a united and consistent position to address Advocacy issues as such as legislative and policy changes that are being discussed and have relevance only in Australia. 'Zonta Australia' could have representation from all districts and act on behalf of them. They could communicate with a single Zonta position on many issues that may be under considered by the various government bodies, rather than three opinions from what would appear to be one organisation, for example Coercive Control and women's housing security, two issues currently of concern across Australia.

Australian Zontians as members of Zonta International, a leading global organization of individuals working together to build a better world for women and girls and in line with the current Strategic Plan need a framework that enables them to act ....*as a credible and visible voice on gender equity and deliver initiatives addressing education equality, climate justice, ending gender-*



*based violence, and ensuring women are represented in decision-making positions on an equal basis with men.* In Australia this voice needs to be the one heard by the Commonwealth government and the framework being developed provides this potential.

The first draft of the discussion paper has been circulated to all Districts with a presentation to the District 23 Board at the Bunbury Conference and a workshop at the District 22 Mackay Conference recently. All Districts have indicated support for the concept. Feedback has been provided from District 22 and 23 members and we are currently awaiting feedback from District 24.

The timetable going forward:

- October 23 - Further refinement to draft paper
- November 23/February 24 - Paper presented to International Committee Board Meeting. The concept or model does not need endorsement from Zonta International.
- January 24/February - Final draft for implementation – possibly immediately or by 2024
- 
- June 24 -Launch and Celebration of Zonta Australia at Convention in Brisbane!

Bridget Mather PSM  
D22 Governor 2020-2022  
Member ZC Adelaide

Lesley Hills Siegloff PhD  
D23 Area 2 Director  
Member ZC Adelaide Flinders

## **ADVOCACY: Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs)**

### **Ending the Silence – Ending the misuse of Non-Disclosure Agreements**

On 2 August, ZC Geelong welcomed Carolyn Dunbar, Lead of the Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC) Women's team, and Wil Stracke, Assistant Secretary of the VTHC, to discuss their campaign to introduce legislation in the Victorian parliament to ban the misuse of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) in cases of workplace sexual harassment. Representatives from other clubs, Areas 1&4 Advocacy Committee and the Geelong Women Unionists Network joined via Zoom.

NDAs, often referred to as confidentiality agreements, are used frequently in

the settlement of workplace sexual harassment cases. NDAs protect employers from accountability and release them from their obligations to address systems of work that allow sexual harassment to occur, enabling repeat offenders to continue and prevent workers from talking about their experiences. Victim-survivors, predominantly women, are disempowered by being forced to stay silent. To end sexual harassment at work, we need to end sexual harassment coverups and hold employers accountable.

The following is an excerpt from a fact sheet from VTHC “The Facts, End the Silence, End the Misuse of NDAs”:

### **What is a non-disclosure agreement (NDA)?**

A non-disclosure agreement is a legal contract that establishes confidentiality (keeping secret) of a sexual harassment or other workplace issue. It requires the worker who suffered harassment to keep their experience completely confidential - that is, they are not allowed to talk about what happened to them. Although NDAs require all parties (employer, victim-survivor, and sometimes the perpetrator) to maintain confidentiality, the agreement is almost always requested by the employer, not the employee. Victims of workplace sexual harassment often feel they have no choice but to agree to confidentiality to resolve their complaint.

### **What’s the problem with NDAs?**

#### Harm to the victim survivor:

NDAs and confidentiality clauses are usually ‘forever’. That means a worker who has experienced sexual harassment is not able to speak about what happened to them, or how it was resolved, ever. Workers have reported that being silenced through an NDA is disempowering and isolating and can worsen the trauma of the initial harassment. “I had to sign an NDA in order to get any compensation, and it wasn’t much. I felt distressed that I couldn’t speak about my situation with my supports.”

#### Cover ups:

Employers are required to provide safe workplaces, free from the risk of sexual harassment and other hazards. NDAs are a powerful tool that employers use to cover up

failings, avoid accountability and protect their business reputation.

*“NDAs cause a great deal of anxiety for those who have raised concerns and it’s just another way for the employer to maintain power and control.”*

#### Put others at risk:

We can fix issues collectively when we know there’s a problem. When workers

can't openly talk about their experiences at work, it puts other workers at risk. NDAs exacerbate cultures of silence around harassment, increase feelings of shame and isolation and prevent organising.

*"If they did the wrong thing, why should they be protected? It puts other people at risk of experiencing similar concerns."*

#### Misrepresent the nature of harassment settlement:

Settling a harassment claim is about compensating a worker who has suffered due to the employer's failure to provide a safe workplace. It is NOT about buying the silence of that worker. Workers deserve compensation for workplace injury - and should be free to share their experience with others.

*"The organisation's perpetrators go off to continue their careers while victim/survivors are the ones who have to rebuild their lives."*

#### Skew the data:

NDAs send a message: "protecting our business reputation is more important than the safety of other workers". Knowledge is power – without accurate data and transparency, we can't eradicate violence from the workplace.

*"They were so manipulative, unethical and immoral. They just wanted to get rid of me rather than working on preventing the problem from happening again."*

#### **Are NDAs ever ok?**

Confidentiality should not be seen as a standard term of settlement of a harassment complaint, but there are valid reasons why a victim survivor may want and request confidentiality as part of any settlement agreement. The victim survivor may want to protect their own privacy, they may be happy with the proposed resolution and feel more in control with an NDA. Resolution of workplace sexual harassment matters should always be victim-centred and trauma informed.

#### **What is happening?**

A proposal to introduce legislation in Victoria to ban the misuse of NDAs in cases of workplace sexual harassment other than those initiated and expressly requested by victim survivors to protect their own privacy. Where an NDA is initiated by a victim survivor, there should be clear safeguards in place. These include that the worker has not been coerced and has been able to obtain legal advice. Any agreed confidentiality should be time limited, and the worker should be able to speak out in the future.

Many International jurisdictions have introduced legislative restrictions around the use of NDAs in sexual harassment matters, most notably Canada, Ireland

and California. Under the Irish model, an NDA can only be requested by the victim, can be reversed (opted out), cannot cover conversations between the victim and defined authorities/supporters and must have a default time limit.

### **How can we advocate and raise awareness?**

- Circulate information around your networks. [NDAs – The Facts](#) flyer – a good conversation starter with friends and colleagues. Can be downloaded and printed
- Sign the petition: [NDAs petition](#) – feel free to share widely
- Volunteer with other



activists [https://www.weareunion.org.au/nda\\_network\\_august](https://www.weareunion.org.au/nda_network_august)

- Share your experience with an NDA [https://www.weareunion.org.au/nda\\_share](https://www.weareunion.org.au/nda_share)

Further reading: [How Many More Women?](#) Jennifer Robinson and Keina Yoshida

Together with Area 1 and 4 joint Service and Advocacy committee and fellow Zontians and their networks, we hope to be able to provide some support to this campaign as a way of building a better world for women and girls.

**Nicole Sanders,**  
**Areas 1&4 Advocacy Committee**

## **News from Area Directors: Celebrating our Clubs**

### **Showcasing Club Activities**

#### **Area 1**

##### **MELBOURNE ON YARRA**

Manned the Glen Waverly Lions Op Shop for two weeks in October – both a fundraiser and an opportunity to continue links with another service club.

Thanks to a generous grant from Bendigo Bank, the club now has a club marquee. It has been erected on the Alphington Football Club grounds twice this season, showing support for girls and women in sport, raising awareness of

Zonta, and developing an ongoing relationship with a local sporting club.

### **MELBOURNE'S SOUTH EAST**

The club's relationship with the Frankston City Council is growing and they were asked to be a member of the steering committee to rewrite the policy around domestic violence. They are also members of the Frankston & Mornington Peninsula Family Violence Primary Prevention Collaborative.

### **MELBOURNE'S WEST**

Received a second grant Ford/Global Giving for an additional two Mental Health First Aid Training courses. Continuing support for the McAuley Community Services for Women refuge and McAuley House clients. Stage 3 involves filling tubs with basic household items (cutlery, crockery, tea towels, utensils and much more) plus a throw rug and cushion. These will be given to women who have been homeless and are transitioning into housing in the community.



On Saturday 14 October, the Zonta Club of Melbourne's West hosted one of their Infamous International Luncheons, their first post the dreaded pandemic!!! There were over 30 current and former members and guests attending, representing over 10 nations.

There was so much delicious traditional food to sample – I meant stuff your face on – finishing off with Apple Strudel and Baklava. Melbourne put on fabulous weather and we enjoyed socialising the afternoon away outdoors.

Playing on the International theme, we were encouraged to participate in a flag quiz game (which was really quite tough) and a 'get the ping pong ball into the Stein' game (which was immensely funny to watch). Between the raffle, door prize, and games, everyone had an opportunity to win some great international food as the prizes.

The Melbourne's West members shared photos of themselves at famous



international landmarks from their past, so guessing who was who was another great talking point. Lastly, there was the opportunity to try on hats from countries across the world! It was a fabulous day, and hopefully the start of many more to come. One member summed up the event by saying “I was proud to be a Zontian at such a fun day for our club.” Thanks for everyone that contributed and participated in making the day enjoyable.

## **ZC MELTON**

Chartered the BMZ Club on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at Bacchus Marsh Grammar. PIP Val Sarah inducted 26 young women and since then, 14 more students have shown interest in joining.

Donated two “Sensory Chairs” to the women’s only Western Inpatient Psychiatric Unit at Footscray Hospital at the beginning of July.

In conjunction with Melton South Community Centre, a workshop was arranged to deal with bank issues. A guest speaker from the Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA) spoke to members and guests on various issues regarding banking, insurance etc.

## **Yvonne Lockwood** **Area 1 Director**

### **Area 2**

The clubs are strongly focused on taking a collaborative approach to Advocacy, specifically the 16 Days of Activism and Housing Security of women. A combined program of events from across the Area 2 clubs will be prepared for the 16 Days of Activism so that clubs can support each other’s events when possible. With regard to housing security, a combined event “A Roof over my Head: Actions not Words”, was hosted by **ZC Adelaide**.

A small group comprising six Zontians and one Soroptimist was formed to write an initial draft submission to both the Australian and South Australian Governments supporting a National Housing Strategy and State Housing Strategy.



**Lesley Siegloff**

**Area 2 Director**

### **Area 3**

Congratulations and thanks to the Bunbury Club, and the Conference team, for hosting the successful District 23 conference September 1-3, in the CUBE at the Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre.

Now spring is here most clubs are actively involved in fundraising activities including golf days, fashion parades and jazz in the garden.

### **BUNBURY**

The Zonta Club of Bunbury and the organizing committee have been congratulated by many, however as Area 3, we are proud of the manner in which they hosted the District Conference supported by Zontians from Area 3 and District 23.

### **DUNSBOROUGH**

Considering a name change to embrace the wider geographical area and also alternating meeting between Dunsborough and Busselton.

### **PEEL**

Collecting old shoes (to be painted orange) for Silent March display during 16 days of activism.

### **PERTH**

Collaboration on Cultural Connections Initiative of Zonta House Refuge Association project has been proposed for consideration as an Area 3 project. Considering expansion of the Golden Z Club to encompass the broader UWA student community as the current St Catherine's College at UWA is dormant.

### **PERTH NORTHERN SUBURBS**

Encouraging nominations to submitted for the Western Australian Women's Hall of Fame.

**Pauline Vukelic**  
**Area 3 Director**

**Area 4**

Memberships numbers are on the increase for most clubs; **ZC Geelong** now has three Young Professional members.

All clubs are again gearing up for the 16 Days of Activism

**ZC Ballarat** recently celebrated their 45<sup>th</sup> Birthday with members, past members, guests and visitors. PIP Val Sarah, the charter president of the club, also received her 45-year length of membership badge on the night.



In October, **ZC Bendigo** assembled 1000 birthing kits, making a total of 45,000 birthing kits assembled by the Club since joining the D 23 project in 2003. This year saw members gather together for the assembly day for the first time in three years, since the pandemic, and it was a great opportunity for fellowship – especially for newer members.

ZCB also supported a bus shopping trip to the nearby town of Rochester to assist with a Flood Recovery Project and help the Rochester community recover from the devastation of the 2022 Floods.

In addition, the Club allocated funds to support Women's Health Loddon Mallee in reducing period poverty amongst their young and multicultural clients. Vice-President Kathryn Patarica presented WHLM with a donation of 130 period panties which will be distributed to women and girls via the Well Women's Nurse.

A donation of \$3000 to Sunshine Bendigo to assist in the provision of prams and cots to families in need was also made. **Sunshine Bendigo** provides necessary baby supplies to families on referral, and its services are currently in high demand with a cost-of-living crisis impacting many in our region. (photos: packing birthing kits, Period panties and Sunshine donations)



**Chris Denmead**  
**Area 4 Director**

## **Area 5**

Many of the clubs are having a difficult time with loss of members and illness; death of a key member in **ZC Launceston** is having a large impact. There is a real need for some fresh approaches to recruitment of new members and management of key roles and activities.

Despite this backdrop, all clubs continue to do some amazing work with service and advocacy.

Clubs are working together to reimagine the International Scholarships, including JMK and STEM.

Discussion of proposal to work with D23 Web Administrator Sandy Nicholson to increase consistency of Website presence approach by each of the Tasmanian clubs to provide clear information for key coordinated functions. This could also provide a united front for Tasmanian clubs to get their message across to non-Zontians visiting the D23 website.

## **ADDRESSING the problem of DRESSES in landfill**



As part of the Zonta Says Now to Climate Change Action, the **Zonta Club of Launceston** has partnered with another local project called the Redress Hub. This regionally funded project has established a shop in our city.

In order to stem the huge mass of fabrics going into landfill and encourage people to reuse and extend the life of clothing, the hub offers courses which

address the fast disappearing skills of sewing and mending that have been slowly eradicated by the advent of cheap, low quality retail fashion which is the main proportion of landfill fabric. These fashions are also very often produced in 'sweat shop' conditions in less developed countries that exploit women and child labour, so the Redress Hub project is taking action against two of Zonta International's main concerns; EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS and CLIMATE CHANGE.

The courses offered at the Redress Hub include clothes repair and re-fashioning, dressmaking, knitting, crochet, darning and creative uses of fabrics, along with the sale of recycled fashions, a formal wear hiring system for school leavers' dinners and clothing swap opportunities.

The latest Redress project is a fashion parade and competition to encourage the reworking of recycled clothes. The main judging criteria for the competition are circular design and sustainability as well as creativity and innovation, skill and craftsmanship.

**ZC Launceston** is proud to sponsor this special prize in the name of Zonta Says Now to Climate Change Action.

Carol Fuller, President

**Wendy Quinn**

**Area 5 Director**

## Awards

**Zonta International Awards**

***Amelia Earhart Fellowships***

*The 2023 AE Fellowship applications are now OPEN!!!*



Spread the word and encourage women studying at the PhD/doctoral level in aerospace engineering or space sciences to apply. The universities and industries where eligible applicants may be found include aerospace, aeronautics, astronautics, and mechanical engineering, astrophysics, geology, physics and astronomy. Contacting local universities, tapping into your professional and social networks, and simply sharing the flier widely is probably the best way to

get started.

All AE Fellowship applications MUST be completed online using the following link: <https://zontainternational.awardspring.com/> Applicant will need to register to access the necessary documentation needed to complete their online submission. All applications must be completed in English and submitted online with all materials by 15 November 2022 to be considered for the 2023 Amelia Earhart Fellowships.

For more detailed information on the Amelia Earhart Fellowship, and to access associated materials, visit the Zonta International website at: [Amelia Earhart Fellowship \(zonta.org\)](https://www.zonta.org/amelia-earhart-fellowship)

**Kaliope Vassilopoulos**  
**Amelia Earhart Fellowship Coordinator**

***Women in Business Scholarship (Jane M Klausman)***

The JMK winner for 2023 has been selected and her application forwarded to ZI. Each of the district winners receives an award at the international level of US\$1000 (provided all requirements have been met).

The winner's identity is embargoed at present as ZI has not yet released the results – they are expected in mid-November.

**Linda Tinning**

## **JMK Scholarship Coordinator**

### ***Women in STEM Scholarship***

The pilot Women in STEM Scholarship program is operating this year after a name change from Women in Technology. Three applications were received and the district winner's application forwarded to ZI. Each of the district winners receives an award at the international level of US\$1000 (provided all requirements have been met).

I am pleased to announce that the 2023 winner is Beth Thompson, nominated by ZC Bunbury. Beth is studying at Edith Cowan University, WA, and her field of study is Psychology (Chemistry, Mathematics, Psychology and Biology).

## **Prue Cowled**

### **Women in STEM Scholarship Coordinator**

### ***Young Women in Public Affairs Award***

I trust all D23 clubs have seen the YWPA application form and supporting documents on the Zonta International website for 2024 and Presidents and YWPA Chairs are working with the schools in your area to promote this award. It is an excellent opportunity for visibility and to plant the seed for membership growth.

- Consider press releases to publicise the award in your community.
- Send emails to school principals and school counsellors to elaborate on details of the YWPA Award. Maintain personal contacts with school principals and school counselors. Follow up to provide more information and guidance on how to complete the application form.
- Reach out to other youth and community organizations to find applicants.
- Use the collateral developed by Zonta International e.g. posters.

DEADLINE DATE FOR D23 SUBMISSION: to [pincombej7@gmail.com](mailto:pincombej7@gmail.com) by 1 April 2024

**Julie Pincombe**

**YWPA Coordinator**



## Women Taking Climate Action Award

### ***Women Taking Climate Change Action***

This award is currently administered by ZC Melbourne on Yarra and judged by member Sue Lees and Carole Theobald, both from the Zonta Says NOW Think Tank. Other clubs contribute funds and applications are drawn from across the district.

This year, due to an anonymous donation, two worthy women received awards, a wise, older indigenous climate leader, and a dedicated younger climate leader who, along with her colleagues, has managed to put an end to native forest logging in Victoria. The winners are:



- Professor Anne Poelina, a Nyikina Warrwa Traditional Custodian from the Mardoowarra, lower Fitzroy River, in Western Australia. She is an active community leader, human and earth rights advocate, film maker and respected academic researcher.

- Alana Mountain, from Cottles Bridge, Victoria is Events and Fundraising Coordinator for the Victorian Forest Alliance, which advocates for protection of Victorian forests for the benefit of wildlife, climate, water supply, First Nations peoples, safety against bushfires and for communities.



## District Projects

## Birthing Kit Project - BKFA AMBASSADOR REPORT

Zonta D23 and Birthing Kit Foundation  
Australia



### Recognising Your Phase 2 Champions – We Need Names By 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

The Birthing Kit Foundation Australia, BKFA, partnering with Zonta Districts 22, 23 and 24, wishes to recognise our ex-Zontian organisers of Birthing Kit Assembly Days and groups or organisations that have partnered with Zonta Clubs to fund assembly days.

Presidents, please forward details of these organisers including a short statement about the role they played in promoting and facilitating this program. Please refer to the previous request for this that was sent out prior to the District 23

Conference. **Email:** [houghton@westnet.com.au](mailto:houghton@westnet.com.au)

Joy O'Hazy and the Zonta Club of Adelaide Hills in 1999 developed Zontians' Vision by believing, 'A world in which all women have access to a clean and safe birth' was achievable.



Every hour 33 women die of complications related to pregnancy and childbirth. An estimated 385,000 women die annually in childbirth, many from preventable infections. At birthing kit assembly days simple clean birthing kits are constructed and then sent to help birthing assistants in developing countries. Kits cost \$5 each and consist of a sheet of plastic, gauze, string, a blade, soap, and gloves.

Find out more [at the BKFA website here.](#)

### Gaining Sponsorship and Donations to Fund Kits-- How to Do It

Corporate networks seeking tax deductible donations can use one of the three options below.

Option 1 – Make a tax deductible deduction direct to the Zonta Club. BKFA to provide tax deductible receipt on request.

Option 2 – A Zonta Club can set up a MyCause page and provide a link to the Corporate body or others as required. Donations can go direct to the specific project

as specified by your Zonta Club.

Option 3 – Donate directly to BKFA via the QR code on the postcard (include relevant Zonta Club/AD as reference when making donation for accounting purposes).

**ZONTIANS AND ZONTA CLUBS AS BKFA MEMBERS – Consider becoming an individual member or suggest your club becomes a member of BKFA. \$70 for individual membership would be a wonderful gift for the person who shares our vision.**

Partnerships to fund and assemble kits are so rewarding. Please share your success stories and promotional activities by sending photos and articles to me.

Let's 'Build a Better World for Women and Girls', recognise our Birthing Kit Assembly Day Phase 2 Champions and continue to raise the profile of Zonta in our communities.

**Tyrl Houghton**

**District 23 BKFA Ambassador**

[houghton@westnet.com.au](mailto:houghton@westnet.com.au)

## **Breast Care Cushions Project**

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month!

The awareness campaign encourages more people to organise a check-up and, in the past, has led to stronger demand for Zonta Breast Cushions in November.

So hopefully clubs are ready!

Regular contact with BCN is vital, not only to ensure that we are able to meet the demand but also to evaluate the cushions supplied and obtain any recommendations for improvements.



I'm sure this is happening as we all strive to maintain a high standard for ZONTA breast care cushions. We don't want lumpy cushions, cushions that are filled too much/not enough or cushions that slip around.

Across the District there are variations in the straps, types of fabric used and in the packaging. However, what is most important is the shape of the cushion and that 100 grams of filling is used per cushion.

Based on the club reports received from 27 of the 30 clubs participating in the

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project, 2597 cushions were made in the six months ended 30 June 2023. This is a great achievement!

The next report request is for six months ended 31 December 2023. I will also be requesting each club to send me a photo of their club's cushions and how they are packaged as I am interested to see the variations across the District.

**Jasmine Koch**  
**D23 Breast Cushion Project Coordinator**

## Membership

### **District 23 Membership update**

Just before I started to write this article, I had replied to a contact my Club received via Facebook regarding volunteering with us and wanting to know more about Zonta. This person had spoken to a member at our Bunnings sausage sizzle fundraiser.

This got me thinking about our Club's membership campaign as we move into the 16 days of Activism and how membership recruitment can sit side by side with our advocacy work. Clubs will be engaging with the public during this time, so I encourage Clubs to have a membership overlay on their interactions as well as importantly getting our message out.

District 23 has welcomed 8 new members since Conference so well done to those Clubs and a warm welcome to those new members.

Zonta's voice becomes stronger when we recruit great individuals to work with us to further the mission and vision of Zonta.

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As Clubs continue their membership campaigns, a reminder about Zonta International's Add Your Voice campaign which runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> May each year. Half Year Dues Period is 1<sup>st</sup> December to 31<sup>st</sup> May year (These periods are set by Zonta International). However, new members paying full International Dues in APRIL or MAY of each year shall be considered fully paid for the following year. We can use International Women's Day activities to kick start your clubs Add Your Voice membership drive. More information will be forwarded to Clubs in the new year.

*"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."* – **Helen Keller**

**Debbie Schmidt**

**Lt. Governor and Membership Chair 2022-2024**

## **Zonta International Service Programs/UNICEF**

### ***Enabling Girls on Climate Change in Madagascar***

In our first world environment, we rarely stop to think about the impact our lack of action on climate change has on developing countries. The ZI/UNICEF project in Madagascar provides food for thought! In Madagascar, climate change has had a major impact, with adverse effects on health, nutrition and WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), impacting on drinking water resources and access to sanitation and hygiene products.

The WASH program in Madagascar is helping to reduce vulnerability and improve

resilience in local communities. With the support of Zonta International, UNICEF is implementing WASH programs in five pilot schools, focussing on girls and promoting sensitivity toward the environment. The schools are addressing climate change through:



- Tree planting and tending to school gardens and greenhouses;
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- Safely managing waste and constructing improved sanitation and hygiene infrastructure (e.g. latrines with hand washing stations);
- Emphasizing the specific needs of young and adolescent girls, including needs around mental health and menstruation (e.g. private showers and supplying sanitary pads at school).

## SAVE THE DATE

### **Area Meetings 2024**

Areas 1&4 – 16 March

Area 2 – 4 May

Area 3 – 20 April

Area 5 – 23 March

### **Zonta International Convention 27-30 June 2024**

#### ***Learn more about volunteer opportunities***

From registration and credentials to elections, monitors and more, volunteers are essential to the success of every Zonta International Convention.

Interested in volunteering or learning more about the opportunities available?

Please email [zontabrisbane24@gmail.com](mailto:zontabrisbane24@gmail.com) to express your interest in volunteering and your area of preference. The Convention Committee will contact you.

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*Founded in 1919, Zonta International is a global organisation of professionals empowering women worldwide through service and advocacy.*

This is the official newsletter of Zonta International District 23.

**Governor: Kay Stewart**

**Our email address is:** [info@zontadistrict23.org.au](mailto:info@zontadistrict23.org.au)

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