



ZONTA
INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 23
BUILD A BETTER WORLD
FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Newsflash

Biennium 2024-2026

Build a better world for women and girls

December 2025 Issue



District 23 Governor
Debbie Schmidt

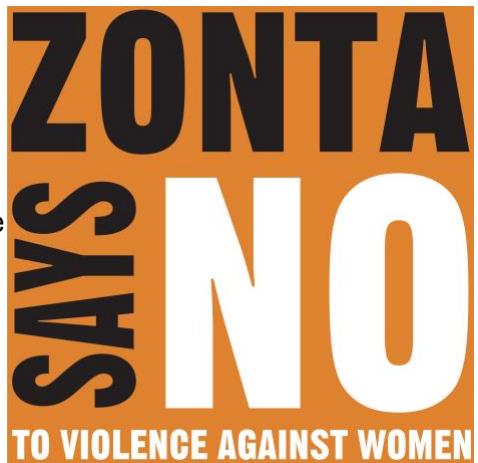
Governor's Report...

WOW! haven't we all been busy since we met in Devonport for our District Conference in September. Thank you to all who provided valuable feedback about the Conference.

There is so much in this issue that I will try not to take up your valuable reading time however there are just a few things I would like to mention.

Zonta Says NO – so much work goes into this (and all our) campaigns. I thank our Clubs and every member of our District for putting your heart and soul into this campaign. Area Directors have prepared a report outlining all the wonderful events, displays and visibility that Clubs have been doing and achieving which you can read below. I am proud that we have reached our goal of 100% participation in this campaign.

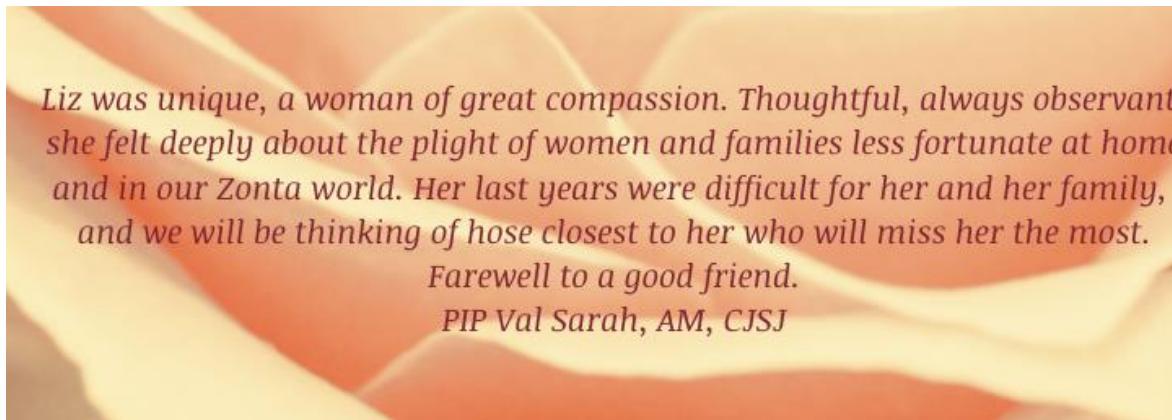
Be sure to [submit your club's action](#) with Zonta International before the end of the year.



VALE LIZ WOODGATE

Some of you would have already heard the sad news that our Past District Governor, Elizabeth Woodgate has passed away. Elizabeth was Governor during the 2002-2004 biennium.

In the words of PIP Val – *“Every Governor has brought her own distinct talents and personality to the role, and how different we all are!*



Member Survey - I want to thank those members who have taken the time to complete the Survey - Club Officer Training & Leadership Opportunities. If you have not already done so, please take the time to complete the survey. Whilst we have only had 56 responses (as at 29/11), I am excited by some of the results already.

[Your voice matters! Click here to start survey!](#)

District Banner Grant - I want to remind Clubs that you can apply to the District for reimbursement of up to \$200 to update or create new banners for your Club. The grant is available until the end of this biennium. Details have been forwarded to all Clubs. Please contact your Area Director if you need some assistance or would like to share designs.

I encourage all members to find out what **Zonta Australia** has been up to. Please visit the website <https://www.zontaustralia.org.au/> and check out the news and updates page as well as the resources page.

2025 Women Taking Climate Change Action Award winner has been chosen, and you can find out who she is further down in this issue. Nine clubs have contributed to this District Project so far and I encourage more clubs to consider a contribution of \$50 towards this Project. Details of how to do this is also below.

This really is a bumper issue of our Newsflash. While you are having a well-deserved break from Zonta over the festive season, please take the time to have a read and find out about all the wonderful things happening in our District.

I am a proud Governor! 

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season.

Debbie

**Debbie Schmidt
Governor 2024-2026**

AREA NEWS & 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM ACTIVITIES

AREA 1

Z e-club of Central and Southern Australia:

Back in August the club held a webinar fundraiser with Erin Holdorf, Amelia Earhart Fellow, as guest speaker. We had some 20 attendees and raised \$310.



At the November Club meeting on 26 November we marked the 16 days of Activism where President Carolina gave a brief presentation on the aims and objectives of this yearly event and we did a brief exercise where we each posted up a message around violence against women.

One of our members, Heather Phillips, attended a White Ribbon Day of Action at Mt. Martha where proceeds to support Moonah House a crisis accommodation facility for women and children to open in 2026. There was a hands on activity painting a red bench to be placed in a public area where family violence conversations can be held. Many participants with 'lived experience' of violence.



Work is continuing by the Membership committee on how to attract new members, especially trying to link up with Z Club members leaving school this year.

Our social media has been ramping up and getting good results. The Comms Committee is working on some new strategies to get this going a bit more.

ZC Geelong:



The club proudly participated in the global 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence campaign with a series of impactful community events:

Public awareness campaign where a local bus has been fitted with signage, front page coverage in the Geelong Independent newspaper and President Nicole was interviewed on Pulse community radio emphasising the importance of community awareness, grassroots advocacy and role of Zonta in mobilising local action. Zonta Geelong also hosted a community organisation stall at the Geelong city market.



Orange ladies have been placed in libraries and community centres, yarn bombing has been placed around trees and sculptures and various community and public buildings around Geelong have been illuminated in orange.





On Sunday 23 November and community supporters including the local federal member for Corangamite, City of Greater Geelong councillors and a representative from Women's Health and Wellbeing South Barwon gathered for the Zonta Says NO to Violence against Women walk along the Geelong waterfront. There was also a Walk in My Shoes display and an Honouring Women Lost to Violence Display. Jacque O'Brien from Respect Victoria was the guest speaker who addressed the current challenges in preventing violence, emphasising the importance of systemic change and community led solutions. The morning concluded with the

Wondrous Merry Singing Group and an outdoor yin-style yoga class by Upstate Yoga.

Zonta Geelong continues to strengthen partnerships with community organisations with President Nicole is collaborating as a presenter on a 16 Day of Activism webinar hosted by Women's Health and Wellbeing South Barwon and club member and District 23 Parliamentarian Beryl being invited to speak at Rotary Torquay's Walk Against Family Violence event.



ZC Melbourne on Yarra:



Melbourne on Yarra and Melbourne West walked together for the Respect Victoria annual Walk Against Family Violence Friday 28 November in Melbourne. This gave us opportunities to network with like-minded

organisations. Speakers were powerful, particularly from the indigenous groups involved in the domestic violence areas and a Muslim woman who managed to change her existence, when she learnt that the hideous life she had been leading was actually coercive control. Natalie Hutchins, Minister for Prevention of Family Violence and for Women, assured the enormous crowd that although coercive control has been included under existing family violence laws since 2008, she and the Attorney-General are working to make it a stand-alone criminal offence. It was positive that a record number of men participated in the March and a number of families, showing a move in society towards seeing violence against women as totally unacceptable

A shared aim is to stop 'The Lost Petition' from growing! This is a textile work that lists women and children killed

by men's use of violence since 2008. The work is now 38 metres long



The Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra organised a screening of the international film 'Shayda' on Saturday 29 November at Ivanhoe Library. 'Shayda' tells the true story of an Iranian woman who flees domestic violence and spends time in a Queensland refuge. The film is emotional, confronting and memorable. It explores the issues of life in a refuge for the women and staff, ongoing marital conflict, raising children in a refuge, the effects of family violence on a child and societal judgement. The real 'Shayda' joined us for a Q&A.



Yaz, the real 'Shayda' talked about the relived emotions during film

development as her daughter, Noora – the child who had lived in the refuge, was

the film director. Yaz was in fact one of the first women to use the Women's Legal Service Queensland 35 years ago, because she had discovered from a small book she saw at a newsagent, that she did have the right to apply for a divorce in Australia, even though she was, at that time, an Iranian citizen. As well, she lost her study visa in Australia as soon as she left her husband and had to be on a bridging visa for years. Her legal requirements were complicated and the legal aid made it possible for her to wade through them.

Yaz and her present husband Jonathan, both reiterated how important it was to have written material/posters available for women to easily access. Yaz hid her small book at home and worked on reading and translating the contents in secret. Ultimately that small book enabled her freedom. The film also strongly resonates with the Iranian women's campaign 'Women.Life.Freedom' and has been an important and meaningful opportunity for Noora and her generation to make a statement re women in Iran. Noora has toured internationally with the film and everywhere women have said to her 'This is my story, thank you for recognising me'. Yaz's dream is that people who view the film will understand why it is important for us, governments and for society to support and believe women in domestic violence situations, to give them an opportunity to rebuild their lives and their children's lives. When we do this, we see people like 'Shayda/Yaz' become successful individuals as Yaz and her daughter are – Yaz, an audiologist with a PhD and Noora – an extraordinary film-maker.

ZC Melbourne's West:

For the past 2 years, we have liaised with local government through representation on a Working Group for 16 Days of Activism engagement in the Hobsons Bay municipality. The Working Group is made up of four community-based service providers with Zonta Melbourne's West as the fifth, facilitated by the Community Services Department. Last year was a one-day event.



Early planning for 2025 revealed the strain on services directly relating to women and their children through family violence and the increasing numbers seeking assistance from organisations which are neither funded nor set-up to provide the support required. As a result, it was decided to turn ADVOCACY into ACTION throughout the 16 Days and beyond to inform and educate councillors in order to take a stand and prioritise action to address the gaps in services and support surrounding family violence. A formal motion to have a round table discussion was presented to council on 28th October and unanimously accepted. In addition, a letter to State and Federal MPs was co-signed by council and the Working Group alerting them to some of the issues faced and requesting further discourse. The subsequent round-table meeting enabled service providers and Zonta to present their experiences to the Mayor and attending councillors, which were all well received.

The Working Group will meet later this week to set timelines for the next step which will depend on replies from the MPs and council regarding their further actions, and will continue to advocate for change into 2026.

We approached the Hobsons Bay Men's Shed to have some small orange ladies made and the Women in the Shed (aka the WITS) took on this project with great enthusiasm, developing their skills to complete 16 sturdy, brightly painted ladies which have found their way, along with the larger version and some signage, to centres in Williamstown, Laverton and Altona for display during the campaign. Three members attended the Men's Shed Open Day where we had an open marquee – it was a rainy, cold and windy day so attempts at a well-presented

Zonta promotion were not to be, but we were able to interact with a few members of the public.



Several members of our club donned their orange t-shirts and hats to take part in the 16 Days of Activism Walk in Melbourne, proudly displaying the “Zonta Says No” banner with Zontians from other clubs.

And last but not least – we made it to the FRONT PAGE of the Maribyrnong/Hobsons Bay Star newspaper!



ZC Melton:

Unfortunately the planned walk by members holding “Zonta Says No” banner in Djerrawarr Festival Street Parade was cancelled the day prior due to very inclement weather.

MELTON & MOORABOOL **Star Weekly**



16 days of activism

Catapults of orange ladies will be appearing across Melton later this month to raise a global campaign aimed at ending violence against women and girls.

The 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women begins on 25 November, marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and concludes 10 December, also International Human Rights Day.

It serves as a call to action to increase awareness and strengthen efforts to eliminate gender-based violence.

The Zonta Club of Melton began its 16 Days of Activism early, visiting the City Council's website on 8 November with their 'Zonta says no' banner.

Group members will also be distributing the orange ladies catapults to libraries and community centres across the municipality.

President Annette Prudencio said the club had also reached out to Melton women's groups and local schools.

On 30 November, Zonta members will also take part in Melton council's Walk With Her event from Hanmer Woods Park to the Melton Amphitheatre on Wednesday 2 December.

The local paper Star Weekly photographed 4 members with our "Zonta Says No" banner for article on upcoming 16 Days of Activism activities for their Nov 18th edition of the weekly paper.

Our extensive Orange Ladies family, with their messages against family violence, were distributed on Nov 25th to libraries in Melton, Bacchus Marsh and Sunbury, also to Melton community centres. They will stay there for duration of the 16 days



Orange Stumps held with Melton Women's Cricket team on afternoon Sun Nov 30th. Our banner displayed on fence, players wore orange caps, members provided orange-coloured food, plates, serviettes for half time afternoon tea and President Annette gave short speech to the two teams on ways all of us can help in fight against family violence.



Members plan to walk in Melton City Council's "Walk for Inclusion and Respect" on morning of Wed 3rd Dec in our Zonta polo shirts and Orange Caps, plus we will be displaying our Zonta Says No banner at the venue at end of walk, where walkers will all congregate and speeches will be made.

Fiona MacDowall
Area 1 Director

AREA 2

Zonta Action in South Australia

Along with Zonta clubs around the world, our South Australian clubs have put together an amazing calendar of events for the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence.

The passion for "Orange-ing the World" is infectious, with members taking every opportunity to share the orange message.

It was a pleasure to induct two new members at the Zonta Club of Adelaide Hills meeting on November 26th – a fabulous "orange" event.



Under the leadership of NCWSA, a collaboration was formed with the aim of improving the profile of the 16 Days campaign across South Australia. Zonta SA was represented on the committee along with Soroptimist International, Women's International League of Peace & Freedom, Business & Professional Women and Women in Agriculture & Business.

The collaboration has allowed us to significantly raise the profile of Zonta events which are being held across South Australia, and for Zonta members to be aware of events organised by other member organisations. The NCWSA website now includes a 16 Days calendar, which has been a great opportunity for Zonta events to be highlighted and advertised - <https://www.ncwsa.org.au/16days>

The Mt Lofty Twilight Vigil, hosted by Zonta Club of Adelaide Hills was one of the highlights of the program in South Australia. A lone bagpiper marked the start of the powerful service during which all present reflected on the lives lost – far too many.



There have also been two “Men Leading Change” rallies held in Adelaide during the 16 days campaign, with Zonta Club of Gawler and Zonta Club of Adelaide Flinders involved in the organisation of these community events.



MEN LEADING CHANGE

COMMUNITY MARCH FAMILY EVENT

SUNDAY 30TH NOVEMBER 2025

MEET AT 11:00AM ROTARY PARK CHRISTIES BEACH
WALK TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT TO END VIOLENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY

NO COST EVENT TO FOLLOW AT
MARKET SQUARE NEXT TO COLES
FROM 11:30AM

CARS AND MOTORBIKES DISPLAY,
GREETING TO COUNTRY

The Zonta Club of Port Lincoln hosted a dinner on November 25 held at the Port Lincoln Yacht Club in collaboration with Yarredi Services. Stakeholders from the city of Port Lincoln as well as members from other service clubs and the community.

Lived experiences were read out, sharing answers to prearranged questions.



The silos were lit with orange and Orange ladies were revamped with a QR to explain their history and what they represent. The Orange ladies were placed around the city. The entrance to Port Lincoln hosted our 16 days poster.



Club members participated in the local walk for respect, and "oranged" the local parkrun.

The Zonta Club of Lower Eyre members are responsible for "yarn bombing" Cummins and Tumby Bay – there is no missing the orange which has been spread through these communities.



The Zonta Club of Adelaide Torrens has once again collaborated with Burnside City Council in creating a powerful digital display in the Burnside Library which aligns with the UN theme of #NOExcuse for Online Abuse.



Walk for Respect – October 11th 2025

Zonta SA partnered with Rotary to hold the 2025 Walk for Respect in Adelaide on October 11th. The parade was a peaceful, non-confrontational walk of solidarity and support for one another to raise awareness of Coercive Control and Physical Violence issues in our society, as they affect Women, Men, Children and even Pets!



As always, I am completely in awe of the extraordinary work which is done by Area 2 clubs and their members to highlight and promote the 16 Days against Gender Based Violence Campaign – every year the bar is lifted and this year is no exception. Collectively “walking, talking orange ladies” are taking over the world!

Jenni Foreman
Area 2 Director

AREA 3



ZC Bunbury:-

Bunbury has celebrated International Literacy Week since 1995, marking this year as a 30th celebration. On the 18th September 2025, the Chartering of Manea Senior College Z Club. This was posted on the Zonta International's Share Your Story

- November dinner meeting, the guest speaker was Mel Birrell, "Coercive Control"
- Respect Artwork Presentation. Children from local schools presented artwork on what respect means to them. Each year 12 student's artwork is selected for the Respect Calendar.
- Bunbury members attended the "Silent March" in Busselton.
- White Ribbon distribution at local Shopping Centre.
- Members wear orange throughout the 16 days along with the campaign badge to spark conversation and awareness.
- The Zonta Club of Bunbury and its members, "Model Respect Online".



ZC Peel:-

Planning is well underway for the Area3 Meeting next year on April 18th, stay tuned

for more information.

ZC Peel have two new awards. The Zonta Award to a young woman in the SES for outstanding achievement and results, and the Inspirational Leader Award.

A Birthing Kit Workshop was held in October with 25 members completing 600 birthing kits. Ongoing Breast Cushion workshops with another 78 made in November.

- Friday 21st Members participated in the silent march in Mandurah where many community groups march through the City of Mandurah in purple and the distinctive orange Hi-Vis shirts to honour those victims of family domestic violence and to bring to attention that DV is unacceptable in our society. We meet at the Mewburn Gardens and Claire Hethrington (ZC Peel) will MC the commencement which will include a victim of DV speaking to the group prior to the march.
- Display of Orange shoes at the Performing Arts Centre.
- Zontians and friends attended Grilled”, they made a donation of \$10 for every meal purchased and then a walk to the Mandurah Bridge to see the bridge lit up in orange to mark the days of activism.
- Daily quotes will be placed on Zonta Club of Peel Facebook page from 25th November through 10th December.



ZC Perth

- ZC Perth Involved the Golden Z Club with assembling 400 Birthing Kits on 27th August.
- Continuing support to RUAH with women's items needed.
- Club has issued a similar program to Bunbury's for members to participate individually.
- Daily quotes will be displayed on Facebook
- Advice given to all members regarding the online courses and information seminars –

- Workplace Sexual Harassment and Active Bystander Training
- DVassist's Counselling Model and Impact in Regional, rural and Remote WA - CSI UWA
- Economic Abuse Awareness Day
- Also, members to be aware of what policies their workplaces and sporting facilities have in place regarding domestic violence.
- Members were able to join in Perth CBD Silent March. Handouts were also printed to hand out during the Silent March in Perth CBD on 25th

ZC Perth Northern Suburbs

1 October - Carole Theobald presented to members on the advocacy work of UN and Zonta International, focused on the 69th session of the Commissioner on the Status of Women. A few Club members also joined online to view of this event.

27 October - the club's YouthGuard committee conducted a workshop with Kayeleen Kerr eSafekids "Talking about Children and Pornography" to 30 parents and stakeholders.

4 November - Bush Heritage Australia (BHA) presentation 'Storytelling, science and hope' attended by members. A follow-up from session presented at the 2 July meeting by speaker Jaclyn Smith titled BHA returning a global biodiversity hotspot to good health. These Environmental focused sessions raise the awareness for members of Zonta Says Now, extension of the online think tanks attended by many members.

5 November - club presented the Lucy Bowen Nursing Bursary Award. This program has been run for past 35 years by the club to ensure ongoing support to disadvantaged nursing students to support and grow their leadership. Ramsay Health Care is the annual \$2000 sponsor of this event. This year's awardee was Jeddelyn Yenko.

Gillian's (Elder) Gift club bursary has distributed \$10,000 in recent years awarded to ECU Nursing students struggling to attend their placements.

- 2025/2026 Young Women in Leadership award program involving 10 members, securing 3 Silver sponsors, engaging Future Female Leaders Program team, is in full swing with the interviews of 4 the nominees in November.
- The club monthly support North Balga Primary School families with Household Hamper Items chosen and distributed by the school.
- Breast Cushion are made (2 session) and distributed to metro and regional hospitals including Geraldton.
- The club supports Trauma Sensitive Yoga.
- The club supports People Who Care – Starting Over Support with donations of goods to support disadvantaged families.
- The club is supporting Zonta House Xmas Gifting and wrapping providing pleasure and caring to mothers and children.
- The club attended 16 Days of Activism supporting DV in Forrest Place.



Kimberley Robbins
Area 3 Director

AREA 4

It was fabulous to catch up with many D23 Zontians at the Devonport Conference. It is always a great event to inspire and motivate. I always come away with new friendships and ideas. It was wonderful see almost all of the Area 4 Clubs represented.

The Area 4 clubs have been very busy this last part of the year. With the end of the school year student awards and scholarships, birthing kits, breast cushions and 16 Day activities, I am so proud and amazed how much our clubs can get done in run to the end of the year.

This is a snapshot of Area 4 clubs activities:

Bendigo

Being one of our bigger clubs, the Bendigo club are always busy with fundraising and events. They had a full 16 Calendar including special movie screenings and community presentations.

Outside of the 16 Days, the club had a very special celebration in November of the clubs 45th Anniversary. Club members past and present, joined other Zontians and guests at a wonderful lunch celebration. Congratulations to Bendigo on 45 years of service.

Bendigo Club would also like you to Save the Date for their IWDD on 3rd March. Special guest speaker will be Diana Williams – Owner and Founder of Fernwood Fitness.



Kyneton

Kyneton Club 16 campaign if also very full with many events. They held a free financial education event for 15 local women, where financial considerations through all the ages of life were highlighted. They held their annual community

café Pop Up where members painted community nails ‘orange’ and discussed the campaign with locals.

The club also sponsored the community choice award for the annual shire wide ‘Free to be Me’ photographic competition which encourages expression and discussion of the 16 Days campaign.

To end their campaign they have partnered with the Woodend Cricket Club for the cricket clubs first ever RESPECT Round.

The Kyneton Club would also like you to Save the Date for their IWDD on 4th March, Special guest speaker will be Sarah Barnbrook – Volunteer of the Year 2025, and International advocate for digital safety.



Ballarat

The Ballarat club in conjunction with the shire council and other government organisations developed a 16 Days campaign with 16 activities including ‘Walk the Talk, Chalk the Walk’ where the community come together to talk about gender based violence.

Another activity the club is involved in is the shire wide old mobile phone donation drive. Old phones will be refurbished and given to women in need.

The club also had a successful birthing kit assembly (600 kits) in conjunction with the Ballarat Grammer Boarders and the Wendouree Cricket club.



The Ballarat Club would also like you to Save the Date for their 2026 Amelia Earheart Event on 8th February. More details to follow.

Central Goldfields

Central Goldfields really do think outside the box on how they can reach out to their community during the 16 Days campaign. From starting conversations while finger nail painting at the local shops, orange lady community garden displays, and flooding the local cafes with 10,000 coffee drink cups with RESPECT and ZONTA messaging. Absolutely brilliant idea and great community partnership getting a community bank grant.

Of course they have been busy making their zillions (only a slight exaggeration) of short breads for their Christmas fundraiser. They are always highly sort after.



Mitchell

Mitchell club have run a very active daily social media and print media campaign for the 16 Days. They also recruited their community to knit and crochet, allowing

them to colour bomb the shire 'Orange', along with banner displays, and library information posters.

The club joined their community in the 'Steps Towards Change Walk' along the picturesque Goulburn River Trail, and had a stall to educate and promote all things 16 Days and Zonta.

The club has their annual Christmas Craft Market this weekend, which is their biggest fundraiser for the year.



The club have also been very busy with their plans to host our 2026 Area 1 + 4 Meeting on 21 March. They have secured the Carlton Football Club to come speak to our members regarding their RESPECT Round, their RESPECT educational program, and leading the way in AFL.



Wangaratta

In November I joined the club at their annual Silent Auction Dinner where they raised an amazing \$5,800 for future projects. It was wonderful for me to finally meet many of their members including a charter member.

Their 16 Days campaign has included dressing the town in banners and 'orange', Zonta displays and attending events including the Jelena Dokic talk.

They held the very successful inaugural 'Orange Up' Golf Day where 100 participants wore orange and played golf while standing up against gender violence.

They are also busy with their end of year scholarship and award presentations, and IWD breakfast planning.



Albury – Wodonga

As well as attending the Jelena Dokic talk with fellow Wangaratta club members, the club have been busy 'Orange Yarn' their community trees at Junction Square, and many Zonta Orange Ladies displays in local stores and businesses.

Club members had a stall and walked the Albury 'Walk Against Violence', and the 'Unite Walk' in Wodonga.



Please follow your fellow clubs in their social media posts. It all helps with our combined reach.

The Area 1 + 4 Meeting in 2026 will be on Saturday 21 March in Kilmore, kindly hosted by Mitchell Club. They are excited to welcome you to their shire and have an inspiring guest speaker planned. Save the date and we look forward to seeing you there.

I wish everyone a safe, healthy and fun festive season. I look forward to more catchups in 2026.

Donna Fabris
Area 4 Director

AREA 5

Around the Clubs:-



Hobart Derwent

The club held an event in November to start the 16 days of activism. Guest speaker was Janet Saunders CEO of the Hobart Women's Shelter. The event served as a fund raiser as well as an advocacy event. The club is hopeful of having some new members join following this event.

The club continues to make and supply breast cushions to the Royal Hobart Hospital. It also coordinates for the supply of the Zonta logos for the cushions in District 23 as well as some clubs in other areas.

The Hobart club arranged for the Tasman Bridge over the Derwent River to be lit up in orange on 25 November 2025.



Hobart

As Area Director I inducted 2 new members into the Hobart club in November. This brings the membership number to 14 from 8 prior to the rebuilding grant event.

For the 5th consecutive year, the club held a cocktail party to raise funds for girls in the Kennerlye Kids “Moving On” program. This program caters for young people who are unable to live at home but are committed to continuing their education. The funds raised goes to the provision of educational items for girls in the program.

Members are making personal donations of cash or perishable items to the local Hobart City Mission’s Christmas appeal.



Devonport

The Devonport clubs has had some high-profile guest speakers at their recent meetings including Alison Jarman the Mayor of Devonport who conference attendees may remember from her welcome to Devonport.

The club commenced the 16 days of activism with their regular 'Walk the Talk' and were joined by the local Soroptimists.

Zonta Devonport participated in Devonport Council's "Expo of Everything" and were able to profile the club.

The exciting news is that at their December meeting, eight new members will be inducted bring the total membership to 28.



Cradle Coast

The club has designed posters regarding domestic violence that includes statewide telephone contact numbers to be placed in public toilets in their municipality. These have been made available for purchase by other Zonta Clubs in the Area.

The club has been successful in seeking donations from local businesses that can be included in personal packs to be distributed during December through local communities.

Jill Taylor
Area 5 Director

D23 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Recruiting new members and sustaining the members that we already have in each of our Zonta Clubs continues to be of vital importance. Without members our membership-based organisation will fail to achieve most of the mission of Zonta International.

We currently have just over 600 members in District 23 and our budget target is 630. This means that if every Club in the District recruited just one new member in the next few months we would reach out target. I know that several Clubs have already exceeded this but encourage everyone to keep focussed on this goal.

The D23 Membership Committee has been focussed on identifying and working up possible solutions for key issues that we think are impacting on membership in our Clubs. All Presidents and any members with interest or responsibility for membership are invited to a **Membership Issues Think Tank** to explore positive solutions to **Membership Issues on Tuesday 24th February 2026 7.30-9.00pm (Aust Eastern Summer Time) : Facilitated by Wendy Quinn, Donna Fabris and Fiona Macdowall.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89744651874?pwd=nBBTmPjTbg3qRXxtXppDnfXhaBxkqd.1>

Meeting ID: 897 4465 1874 Passcode: 874290

Issues will include :

- How to involve everyone in your club, including new members, younger members and those not easily able to attend meetings and those who are ageing?
- Attracting new members and retaining existing members
- Bringing new members into an older well-established Club with entrenched ways of doing things
- What to do with older members who are not willing to change
- Getting 30-40-year-olds involved in clubs (both existing and new members)

Zonta International Values:

Have you heard the news? The results of the Values consultation process undertaken earlier this year by ZI have been announced. Our agreed top values are:

Global Community, Friendship, Respect, Integrity and Inclusion/Equality.

Check out the resources on the ZI

Website. <https://www.zonta.org/images/docs/aboutus/ZontaInternationalValues.pdf>

Wendy Quinn

Governor-Elect, D23 Membership Chair

AREA MEETING DATES 2026

Victoria (Area 1 & 4)
Tasmania (Area 5)
Western Australia (Area 3)
South Australia (Area 2)

Saturday, 21st March, Kilmore
Saturday, 28th March, Cradle Coast
Saturday, 18th April, Mandurah
Saturday, 2nd May, Victor Harbour

BREAST CUSHION PROJECT UPDATE

During October, the Breast Cancer Network Australia (more commonly known as BCNA) launched a new self-check [30-second film](#), - Know Yourself. Feel Yourself. The new national campaign is focused on education, empowerment, and early detection. It empowers us all to understand the importance of 'knowing our normal' and knowing when something isn't and recognising changes sooner to seek help earlier. It's definitely worth watching.

October was breast cancer awareness month and I'm sure this has resulted in a very busy October and November for all participating clubs. I am pleased to advise that ZC Lower Eyre is also sewing breast cushion casings for the ZC of Adelaide Hills to stuff and distribute where needed. Now there are 28 Zonta Clubs participating in the project. Plus the countless friends, community groups and sewing groups. I don't know what we would do without their contribution.

I will be sending out the 6 month report request shortly. It may seem tedious, but it is important to know the stats, so we can see how many cushions are made across the District. It is also useful information when applying for grants, when asked about the project and when asked to give a presentation about the project.

The feedback we receive about our Zonta breast care cushions is amazing, making it all worthwhile. I would like to share a heartfelt message received recently from BCN Mandy:

Dearest Jennifer,

Thank you so much for delivering the beautiful breast pillows today. The work effort and time to make these beautiful pillows does not go unnoticed. I want to remind you all that your breast pillows mean so much to the newly diagnosed breast cancer ladies. And I want to thank you and your team for the wonderful work you all do.

The pillows symbolise hope, comfort and support, many of the ladies cry when I present them with your beautiful pillows. I always give them a little story as I am presenting their pillows, highlighting goodness and care that Zonta provide.

"Women helping women!!!! And as a team we make a difference 

Wishing everyone, a wonderful festive season and all the best for the New Year!

Jasmine Koch
D23 Breast Cushion Project Coordinator 2024-2026

BIRTHING KIT FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA - UPDATE

Celebrate Mother's May with BKFA

In May 2026, the Birthing Kit Foundation Australia will proudly celebrate 20 years of supporting safer childbirth for women and newborns around the world. To mark this significant milestone, we're inviting Zonta clubs and supporters across the country to join us in a National Assembly Event running throughout the month. Our goal is to collectively pack **20,000 Clean Birth Kits** during May - an ambitious target that reflects two decades of dedication, partnership and impact. Achieving this together will not only honour our 20-year anniversary but also set a new record for the largest Clean Birth Kit production month in BKFA's history.

Mother's May aligns beautifully with several important dates, offering a meaningful backdrop for your Assembly Day:

- **International Day of the Midwife – Tuesday 5 May 2026**
- **Mother's Day – Sunday 10 May 2026**
- **International Nurses Day – Tuesday 12 May 2026**

If your Zonta club is planning to host a packing event next year, we warmly encourage you to schedule it during May and become part of this national moment

of celebration, gratitude and collective action. Your participation will help us honour the past 20 years while inspiring the next chapter of impact.



WOMEN TAKING CLIMATE ACTION AWARD

At our Conference in Devonport, the Women Taking Climate Action Award was unanimously passed to continue for a further two years as a District Project. The award was started by the Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra and they continue to manage this award. All District 23 Clubs are invited to contribute towards the cost of the award which is \$1000.00 annually. A donation of \$50 per club per year will enable continued funding of the award, with any excess funding being carried over to the following year.

Your clubs \$50 annual donation can be transferred into the Zonta Club of Melbourne Bendigo Bank account.

Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra

o BSB 633-000

o A/c 162221642

Reference: 'WTCA' & Club

Please see the announcement of the 2025 winner below:



The 2025 Women Taking Climate Action Award winner is Sally Quinn, Co-Founder and CEO of Green Collect <https://greencollect.org/> located in Braybrook, Victoria.

Green Collect is a social enterprise that is transforming typical approaches to waste management. Based on circular economy principles, it delivers new regenerative practices and services that generate measurable social and environmental outcomes.

Driven by deep care for people and the planet it extends the lifecycle of commercial office and E-waste items, while operating a workplace inclusive of people facing some of life's hardest circumstances.

Green Collect focuses on verifiable data to demonstrate clear, measurable climate action at scale. 1500 tonnes of waste have been reused, recycled, repurposed, saving approximately 1000 tonnes of CO2 each year, combined with benefits to the ozone layer, air and chemical pollution levels.

Green Collect services range across Victoria and the business has built strong partnerships with businesses such as Officeworks, banks such as Westpac, and

Local and State government organisations.

There is a strong and sincere commitment to social inclusion with programs focusing on providing employment pathways for refugees, youth and women. This is particularly important in the suburbs around Green Collect, where the unemployment rate for women from refugee backgrounds is over 60%.

Gender equity is fundamental to the organisation's model. The leadership team is 80% female, with more than 50% of its 65 staff being female, which is significant in an industry that has less than 20% representation of women.

The workplace is designed to provide a culture that actively attracts, develops and supports women, with aspects such as training and mentoring central to the targeted employment model.

Green Collect runs circular economy education workshops, publishes data and case studies that are helping businesses and community organisations to take greater climate action. The business is growing, and in doing so providing increased employment pathways and successful climate mitigation.

Green Collect links economics and data with ecological limits, social justice, embeds women's inclusion as an important part of a climate solution.

Green Collect is impactful, innovative and strongly aligned with Zonta as a living model of gender-equal climate action.

Sue Lees
Women Taking Climate Change Action Award Co-ordinator

ZONTA SAYS NOW
-UPCOMING EVENTS-

Zonta Says NOW Australia

IS THE CLIMATE CRISIS A WOMEN'S RIGHTS CRISIS?

THINK TANK on Saturday 13 December

1.00-2.30pm WA | 2.30-4pm NT | 3pm-4.30pm Qld | 3.30- 5pm SA
4-5.30pm Vic, Tas, NSW, ACT | 6-7.30pm NZ

Join Nicki Lees, Special Counsel in Maurice Blackburn's Social Justice Practice.

Nicki will speak about the cases she has run that champion gender equality, women's rights, and climate justice. These cases include representing First Nations women in their fight against a nuclear waste dump on their land and a separate case regarding the right to clean drinking water in First Nations communities.

Nicki will discuss how law and advocacy can drive gender-equal climate action.

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

BUILD A BETTER WORLD
FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



zontasaysnow.org.au/think-tank

Zonta Says NOW

HOW CAN CITIES LEAD A JUST AND CLIMATE-RESILIENT FUTURE?

Intercontinental Think Tank - Asia
and Oceania



SPEAKER

Krista Milne

*Director of Climate Change and City
Resilience and co-Chief Heat
Officer at the City of Melbourne*



SPEAKER

Huey Yoong

*Head of Implementation for C40
Cities in East and Southeast Asia and
Oceania*



SUNDAY
11 JANUARY 2026
11:00AM AWST



Register on Zoom
[HERE](#) or the QR
code below

BUILD A BETTER WORLD FOR
WOMEN AND GIRLS



registration QR code



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST CLUB
- MANEA SENIOR COLLEGE Z CLUB -

On the 18th September the Zonta Club of Bunbury was proud to install the new Z

Club. Manea Senior College Z Club. Below are some photos of the afternoon

Isabella Chalker - President, Jhuleinne Buncal - Vice President, Lilliana Lyon - Secretary, Kimberly Cox - Treasurer, Melissa Yew, Michala Gibbsone, Claire Ainsworth, Giselle Karasek - Board Members and Nomin - Z Club Member



AMELIA EARHART FELLOWSHIP EVENTS FOR 2026

Traditionally we celebrate Amelia Earhart, a Fellow Zontian and renowned aviatrix, in January. Although Zonta International designated 11 January as Amelia Earhart Day, any day in January is an Amelia Day. I would like to encourage you and your clubs to get together in her honour, pick a day, pick a theme and enjoy! Take lots of photos and we can share them in the next Newsflash.

****SAVE THE DATE****

The Zonta Club of Melbourne's West in conjunction with the Zonta Club of Geelong wish to invite you to our Amelia Earhart Celebration.

Private screening of "Hidden Figures" at 1pm on Saturday 17 January at the Pivotonian Cinema in Geelong. Ticket prices are \$30 each. Try booking details will be available shortly, and sent to your club's separately, for you to pre-book your tickets to this great event!! Everyone is welcome.

I'd encourage all clubs to host their own event to celebrate Amelia Earhart and looking forward to hearing all about it. Wishing everyone a safe and happy Christmas period.

Kaliope Vassilopoulos
Zonta Club of Melbourne's West

District 23 Amelia Earhart Co-ordinator
Amelia Earhart Fellow – 1994



WOMEN20 SUMMIT- JOHANNESBURG, OCT 2025

In mid-October I had the great privilege of attending the [Women20 \(W20\)](#) Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa — the official G20 engagement group dedicated to advancing women's economic empowerment. This year's theme, "Women in Solidarity Towards a Just Future," brought together representatives from across the G20 nations to strengthen the global agenda for gender equality.

The Australian delegation was led by Chiou See Anderson (National Council of Women Australia) along with Fiona Dorman, Chantelle Stratford and myself. It was an inspiring experience to contribute to global policy discussions that so closely align with Zonta's mission to build a better world for women and girls through service and advocacy.

The W20 was established as an official G20 engagement group to ensure gender equality and women's participation are embedded in global economic decision-making. Its purpose mirrors Zonta's own objectives: advancing women's education, leadership, and economic independence. Participation in the W20 provides a powerful platform to extend Zonta's advocacy to the international stage and influence lasting policy change.

This year's summit centred on economic empowerment, financial inclusion, women and technology, the care economy and women's leadership. There was a

strong emphasis on how environmental and social challenges — such as climate change and inequality — disproportionately affect women, particularly in developing regions. The sessions reflected [South Africa's G20](#) theme of solidarity, equality, and sustainability, reinforcing that empowering women is key to a resilient global economy.

At the close of the summit, delegates endorsed the [W20 Communiqué](#) — a document capturing the group's key policy recommendations for G20 leaders. This communiqué now feeds into the G20 Sherpa process and ultimately the G20 Leaders' Declaration, ensuring gender considerations remain central to global decision-making. Importantly, it also serves as a guide for national advocacy, enabling organisations like Zonta to align local action with global priorities.

Attending the W20 was a powerful reminder that gender equality is not only a social imperative but an economic one. It strengthened my conviction that the work we do within Zonta — in our clubs, district, communities and across Australia — is part of a much larger global movement.

I'm deeply grateful to have represented Australia at this year's summit, and I look forward to bringing the energy, insights and networks from Johannesburg back to support our ongoing advocacy for women's equality and empowerment.

By Bridget Mather, Zonta District 23,
Zonta Australia Chair, 2024-2026

ZONTA EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE & ADVOCACY AWARD

Zonta districts and clubs are invited to apply for the 2024-2026 Zonta Excellence in Service and Advocacy Awards.

The Awards recognize outstanding service and advocacy projects undertaken by Zonta clubs or districts that benefit women and girls.

Eligible projects can be in any one of the following three categories:

1. Women and girls' equal rights and access to legal, political, economic,

educational, health and professional resources.

2. Prevention of violence against women and girls.
3. Climate justice

[Click here](#) for the complete award guidelines. (YOU MUST LOG-IN TO YOUR ZI PAGE TO SEE GUIDELINES)The deadline for applications is 28 February 2026. Winners will be announced at Convention in Vancouver in July 2026.

GREATER VISABILITY AWARD 2024/2025

My apologies for an error on reporting the Greater Visibility Award Winner for Engagement of Audiences and Allies in my Conference round up. The winner was Zonta Club of Bendigo.

- Credible & Visible Voice:
 - **Winner: Zonta Club of Bendigo**
 - Highly Commended: Zonta Club of Gawler
- Club Success:
 - **Winner: Zonta Club of Bunbury**
 - Highly Commended: Zonta Club of Perth Northern Suburbs Inc
- Leadership & Sustainability:
 - **Winner: Zonta Club of Bunbury**
- Engagement of Audiences & Allies:
 - **Winner: Zonta Club of Bendigo**
 - Highly Commended: Zonta Club of Para District Area

Debbie

Governor 2024-2026

ZONTA INTERNATIONAL CORE VALUES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Zonta International has recently adopted **renewed Core Values** and a **Code of Conduct** reflecting who we are as a global organisation. These are excellent discussion points for a club meeting or training session.

https://www.zonta.org/Web/Web/About/Mission_Vision_and_Values.aspx?hkey=560f3576-6d5b-4b08-b434-688ec549503d

ZONTA DISTRICT 23 MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID PROJECT REPORT (omitted from Conference handbook)

The Zonta District 23 Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Project has been providing front line skills and knowledge to local Zonta D23 communities since 2019.

The project was first conceived by the Zonta Club of Kyneton and club champion Judy Rothe. Since then, over 50% of District 23 clubs have sponsored or coordinated a MHFA course.

For those that undertook the accredited course, the feedback was unanimously positive. The course gave participants the tools and confidence to recognise and tackle the sometimes difficult conversations to assist someone to get the help they need.

Due to the increasing mental health awareness, services and assistance, many D23 clubs found that other local organisations were also championing this area of need. It is for this reason that this D23 project will not be continued into the next biennium.

Thank you to all the clubs that participated in this much needed project. I hope that the knowledge and skills have helped your community.

As Zontians, I know we will forever champion mental health in our own way.

Donna Fabris
D23 Mental Health First Aid Coordinator

ZONTA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

Thank you for your generosity!

Zonta Foundation for Women 2024-2026 Giving Totals*



Rose Fund

349%

US\$1,554,807.47
US\$445,000.00



Amelia Earhart
Fellowship

34%

US\$186,757.78
US\$552,000.00



Zonta Young Women
in Leadership Award

48%

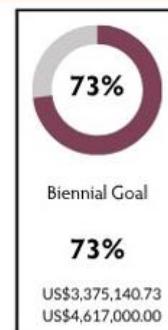
US\$176,178.98
US\$370,000.00



International Service
Program

45%

US\$1,457,396.50
US\$3,250,000.00



*As of 31 October 2025

Donate

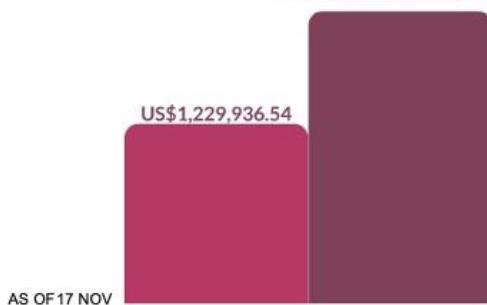


40 YEARS
BUILDING A BETTER WORLD
BEGINS WITH A STRONG FOUNDATION

Campaign Update

HELP US REACH OUR GOAL

US\$2,000,000



ZONTA INTERNATIONAL YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Do you know about **Zonta International YouTube channel**?

There are many videos and podcasts on our international projects as well as Remarkable Women series and more:

<https://www.youtube.com/@ZontaInternational/videos>

ZONTA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION - VANCOUVER JULY 11-14 2026

Registration is now open – early bird closes March 15, 2026
<https://www.zontaconvention.com/registration>



JULY 2026



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: Debbie Schmidt

Our email address is: info@zontadistrict23.org.au

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