

A word from your President



"To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all." Oscar Wilde

Brooke Canham, our guest speaker for March, was an example of the desire to live a full life: to let nothing hold her back from experiencing and giving her all! Our internal dialogue either inhibits or supports what we do in life: we are in control! However, let's not forget that good people supporting our journey are also needed as none of us is an island.



Their journeys have enhanced the communities in which we live.

Our Zonta Club's WAWHF Inductee for 2024 was **Emeritus Professor Elizabeth Rakoczy PhD**. Elizabeth is a **Molecular Biologist** who founded the **Department of Molecular Ophthalmology** at the **Lions Eye Institute** and was the first person in Australia to apply molecular techniques to investigate eye diseases. Her group developed the gene therapy

treatment for wet Age-related Macular Degeneration. Elizabeth received the prestigious **CSL Florey Medal** in 2017 (read more about this through the above link). **Wow what do I say!** We are so proud of Elizabeth's achievements!

This **International Women's Day / Zonta Rose Day** was a great beginning for our **YouthGuard** initiative. The response to **Dr Kim Farrington's** presentation on the effects of online pornography on our children and youth was mind boggling; as I keep saying, so many people in the community are totally ignorant to this scourge on our society. The event was a great launching pad for our advocacy work on this subject.



At this point I would like to thank our Breakfast Committee ably lead by **Shelley** who willingly took over this role from former member **Genevieve**, our coordinator for several years. Thank you also to **Chris** and her team for coordinating the raffle prizes, a novel idea of each Club Committee being responsible for a themed basket. This was very popular and netted around \$1,000! In fact, the morning's proceeds produced an approximate profit of \$2,000 which will go towards our vision to **Build a Better World for Women and Girls**. Although numbers were down from 2023, the event was, nevertheless, another huge success.

Of course, it goes without saying, we are indebted to all our friends and associates who make these events possible. Thank you for your ongoing support which helps and encourages us to continue the work we do.

The Breakfast also gave Club member **Linda Tinning** (District 23 Coordinator of the **Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarship**) an opportunity to present **Pearl Pyae** with her **Zonta International JMK Award**. Pearl was winner of the Area 3 JMK Scholarship last year after which her application was submitted to the District which has now culminated in her International recognition. What a delight she is! It warms my heart to see how much her confidence has grown since receiving this award. Pearl is blooming and is determined to use her skills to make a better community and help young students in Myanmar. She has also offered to help incoming President, **Lesley**, form a Golden Z Club at ECU. More about that in a later issue.

This week, my birthday week, has been full of female energy which makes me so happy. Each one of you has made my 70th very special without even knowing!! I am so honoured to be part of this wonderful organisation.



Sue Perle

It's No Joke!

Do you feel like you need a fun night out? We've got just the answer!

Note the date, gather up your friends and book your tickets [here](#) to register. Tables of 8 very acceptable! The event is being held at the **Sorrento Tennis Club, 46 Warwick Rd, Duncraig**.

If you missed the one in 2021 you won't want to pass this one up. Everyone had a blast and are still talking about it!

Joke NIGHT

FRIDAY, 12 APRIL 2024

AT 6:30 PM

SORRENTO TENNIS CLUB
46 WARWICK RD, DUNCRAIG

\$25 PER TICKET

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER

DON'T MISS IT!

GET YOUR TABLE OF 8 TOGETHER - BRING A PLATE FOR YOUR TABLE
BRING YOUR FAVOURITE FUNNIEST JOKE AND WIN A PRIZE
BRING SOME COINS FOR EXTRA FUN GAMES

It's never been easier and so much fun to contribute to our Club's kitty. All proceeds will go towards our scholarships and service projects.

DON'T DALLY AS PLACES ARE LIMITED!

Most importantly, bring your favourite funniest joke, nibbles to share and some coins for extra fun games.

Also, be aware that the Tennis Club has a licensed bar for your drinks.

Inspiring Speaker in Brooke!

What a wonderful young lady we met at our dinner meeting earlier this month.

Brooke Canham, having been born with Down Syndrome, was an absolute inspiration to us all as she shared her life journey. She is shown here with sister **Jess** who is obviously one of Brooke's greatest supporters.

In her presentation Brooke spoke about her Mum, saying—*"My Mum was the one who got me started early in life to be the best person I can be."* Together they have certainly managed to achieve this, along with help from other family members.

Brooke was born in 1995 to a very young 24-year-old first-time mother. It wasn't until Brooke's first birthday and quite by chance that she was diagnosed with Down Syndrome. Being told by doctors that Brooke would not be able to talk or walk was enough for her to forge an early learning path for the two-year-old Brooke. *"How wrong were they—..... my family nickname is 'have a chat' as I don't stop talking. I'll talk to anyone, anywhere, anytime"*, Brooke remarked.

Western Australia, **Kim Beazley AC** and **Kurt Fearnley AO** Paralympic Gold Medallist.

One of her favourite pastimes is volunteering, especially the **Up All Night 42km Marathon for Ronald McDonald House**. This year was extra special as she welcomed back and gave her sister a medal for completing the walk. She said—



Brooke was soon enrolled in the Kim Beazley Early Learning School for three full days per week which entailed a huge commitment and a lot of driving. Education continued into kindy at St Simon Peter Catholic Primary School in Ocean Reef where she completed Year 7. After primary school Brooke went to Sacred Heart College in Sorrento, completing Years 8 to 12 graduating with her peers and achieving her high school certificate of education. Wanting

"I really enjoy volunteering and helping the community and people where I can as I have seen how much a little bit of kindness and help can do for someone."

Brooke now has her own home and with the help of her Mum and support worker, is becoming much more independent, which she says—*"Makes me feel like everyone else!"* She's even parasailed and learnt stand-up paddle boarding.

From being that little two-year old with learning difficulties, Brooke now works with **Inclusion Australia**. This has opened up all sorts of interesting work for her with a focus on assisting people with disabilities. Through this she is also a member of a Reference Group which involves travelling to conferences and other meetings which she enjoys.

Hobbies are something else she is pursuing, one of which is ballroom dancing. She belongs to Ballroom Fit an all inclusive dance sport organisation that has many different categories. She dances in the All Abilities section with partner James competing in a number of competitions. She has her sights on one day competing in the Special Olympics World Games.

to attend classes with her peers she received support to make this possible.

While in high school Brooke was selected to attend the Special Olympics National Games in Adelaide for softball. They won the Gold Medal for WA. She still plays softball and loves being in a team as she plays alongside people without disabilities.

Like most teenagers not knowing what she wanted to do she enrolled in TAFE and completed a Certificate 2 in business and sat her learner's permit test working towards

getting her driver's licence.

The Down Syndrome Association has been a huge part of Brooke's and her mother's lives. She attributes where she is today to this group, being given opportunities to help others and travel, assist in the creation of videos, speak about how people with DS want to be treated and helped in medical settings. During this time she has met a number of dignitaries like our then Governor of

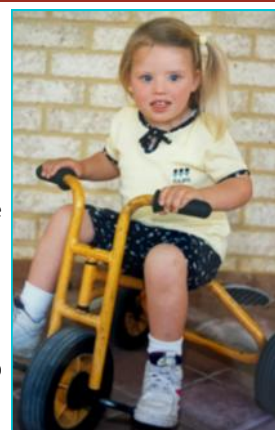
cont'd below...

Another goal is to travel to America with friends or a support worker to meet some of her favourite movie stars!

While there is much more to Brooke's story, she summed up as follows—

"I have a very well-rounded life and although I would like to meet someone and have a partner one day, I am very happy with the life I have—if it happens it happens! Going forward with all I have done, I really do believe I could do anything. My family is my main support, and I wouldn't be where I was today without them. Each one helps me in a different way and I like to believe that I also help them."

What an amazing young lady! She is an inspiration to everyone and we wish her well for her future endeavours. From an early age, a very determined little 'mite' on her trike! And so she's proven. What a star!



Dr Kim Farrington & Pornography

A Senior Forensic Practitioner, **Dr Kim Farrington's** presentation at our IWD Breakfast certainly threw some light on how pornography is affecting society, especially school-age children, and its relationship to sexual assault.

Kim has worked at the Sexual Assault Resource Centre for 19 years. She is a Founding Fellow of the Faculty of Clinical Forensic Medicine of the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia and has served on several National Committees.

Some of the statistics Kim shared regarding pornography were extremely confronting and mind-blowing to most of us. Many parents would not know how much pornography is affecting their children, nor their families.

Pornography: How big is it?

Pornhub, for instance, is the 4th most visited website in the world. Monthly there are 12.8 billion visits and 2 billion unique users.

It is estimated that 30% of all internet traffic is porn-related. 20% of the top 20 websites are pornography sites. The combined monthly traffic amounts to 30.42 billion visits!

How much is there to watch?

In 2021 just under 2 million videos were uploaded to Pornhub and 1.7 million photographs!

Who is doing the watching?

90% of boys and 60% of girls (13-16 years) have seen pornography on line. In the 15-20 year old boys/men age group, 17% use on a daily basis and 56% use weekly. The average age of first viewing is 11 in boys. The age of first sexual contact is 15 in Australia.



Wendy Dowling AM, Dr Kim Farrington & Sue Pertil 

The average age of first viewing pornography is 16 in girls.

These are just some of the statistics that Dr Farrington covered which are alarming enough. However, so much of this behaviour leads onto sexual assault and unhealthy relationships.

Our Club is passionate about addressing this matter through our advocacy platform [YouthGuard](#).

Highlights from IWD / Zonta Rose Day



All smiles—Jane & Amalea Halls with their gourmet raffle prize

Linda Tinning (centre) with Amy Zahra (l) and Pearl Pyae (r)

Another happy raffle winner

Two more winner grinnings!

cont'd over...

More from IWD

We were thrilled that the morning was such a success and that **Libby Mettam** MLA, **Mark Irwin** (Mayor City of Stirling), **James Rowe JP** (Deputy Mayor City of Wanneroo), **Kath Mazzella OAM** (Area 3 Woman of Achievement 2005), **Amy Zahra** (ZI D23 JMK Awardee 2022) and **Amalea Halls** (Club Young Women in Public Affairs Awardee 2023) were able to breakfast with us.



L-R: Dawn, Wendy and Sue with Libby Mettam MLA and Mark Irwin, Mayor City of Stirling



Sue with Hannah (l) & Rebecca (r) from Zonta House



Kath Mazzella OAM, Amalea Halls and Amy Zahra

It was lovely to meet **Rebeca Ion** and **Kim Sobey** who were representing **Bespoke Wills and Estates Lawyers**, great Club supporters and one of our event sponsors of the Young Women in Public Affairs Award. We were also pleased to welcome **Marie Scott** and **Robbie Hayes-Hearse**, both former members of our Club, and **Claire Hetherington** from the Zonta Club of Peel.

Below: Irene's husband Tony who won the '**Any Treatment**' at **Bonnie Beauty** door prize. He's got until 2025 to take this up. Plenty of time to decide Tony. We'll look forward to seeing the transformation!!



2024 Hall of Fame Inductees—Congratulations!



Another amazing and inspirational group of women were inducted into the **WA Women's Hall of Fame** on 14 March two of whom were nominated by PNS members **Jill-Esme Bowen** (left) (Business) and **Jean-Elizabeth Rakoczy** (Health). Jill and Jean are pictured above with Elizabeth who will be our Club's May Guest

Speaker. Emeritus Professor Rakoczy is an internationally recognised scientist and Founder of the Molecular Ophthalmology Department at the Lions Eye Institute.

Sandy Chong from UN Women was a nominee too. Sandy is well known to our members as she has been associated with PNS for many years and particularly on United Nations Day events in October each year. She is shown at right with our members who attended the ceremony.



Nominations for 2025 will open late September, early October 2024, and close in December 2024. Think about who you might be able to nominate for next year.

The WA Women's Hall of Fame was first established in 2011 in recognition of the Centenary of International Women's Day held annually on 8 March. One hundred women were inducted at the centenary, across a range of sectors and celebrating a diverse set of achievements. Its purpose is to recognise and celebrate the achievements of Western Australian women past, present and future. More information can be found on [this website](#).

Around the Club

Annual Reports, AGM & Elections

Easter is almost upon us after which we must turn our minds to the above topics.

Our **Nominating Committee** will be seeking candidates for a few vacancies on the Club Board, etc. So be prepared for a tap on the shoulder from one of the team—**Wendy, Kaye** or **Irene!**



Who me? Why not? Think about how you might be able to serve our Club. Think about what young Brooke has achieved by just taking a few new steps!

Annual Reports are required **before 15 April** so Kaye will be looking for these to include in the 1 May AGM documents. Please, if you are responsible for one of these, ensure that you send it to Kaye in **Word format** in good time. Thanks.



Fellowship Opportunities

Unfortunately many of us were otherwise engaged last month (or forgot) our Bodhi Tree coffee morning. Alison was the only one who remembered and said she found it boring and tiring talking to herself! The next dates are—

- * March 20 Bodhi Tree
- * April 17 WA Golf Club Dinner
- * May 15 Bodhi Tree

Future dates TBA as many of us will be heading to Brisbane for the Convention in June.

Fundraising Events

- * April 21 Joke Night—we hope everyone can participate as this will be one of our bigger fundraisers for the year.
- * October 25 Fashion Parade—details to come.

Sponsorships—HELP!

As has been mentioned, the Club is keen to seek out anyone—corporate groups, businesses, individuals—who perhaps align with Zonta's Vision and Mission and who would like to support our programs and projects.

One such undertaking is to continue **"Gillian's Gift"**. This was established via a bequest to assist student nurses, mainly to support them financially through their practicums. During this time many of them are unable to work and struggle to pay rent, provide for children (as many are single Mums) and just exist from day to day. In 2023 we provided five grants with another five planned this year. We would like to see the grants continue well into the future.

We are appealing to anyone who might be able to assist these students rather than losing them to nursing.

Bits & Pieces

AREA 3 'WORKSHOP' GEOGRAPHE BAY



Further details will come to hand regarding this 'workshop'. Busselton is a great tourist spot to spend a weekend so put the date in your diaries and plan to join other Area 3 Zontians on this day. These events are excellent ways to 'value add' to your Membership. There is wonderful camaraderie making for a fun time as well.



Sending loving thoughts and good vibes to several of our members who are dealing with health issues at the moment.

We look forward to your speedy return to our Club activities.

BIRTHDAY 'GIRLS' FOR APRIL

- April 5 Irene
- April 8 Dawn, Elaine & Gillian



Wendy, Letitia, Elaine and myself enjoying the City of Stirling reception held on behalf of the WA Branch of The Order of Australia Association. What a whirlwind time we've been having since Australia Day. It will be nice to have a break over Easter and replenish one's energy for the next round of events in May! Take care everyone over the break. Dx



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