

A word from your Vice-President



Hi everyone!

It's been quite a roller-coaster for **President Lesley** over the past couple of months following further surgery but I am pleased to report

that she is doing well. I have been keeping in touch and passed on her message to members at our dinner meeting last week, ie—

"Can you let the members know I am recovering. It is slow progress but positive. Steve is being wonderful!.....I am enjoying keeping up with Zonta news vicariously and the adventures of members on Facebook."

We are certainly missing Lesley's input and cheerful countenance around the Club and look forward to her return, fully recovered, sooner than later!

In the meantime, although it's been very busy, I have enjoyed stepping up to fill the breach. But isn't that the purpose of a Vice-President? However, being the Club that we are, with a wonderful Board and membership, I have had so much support during my

'caretaker' role, which I have cherished and appreciated. So thank you!

Last week we held our Annual General Meeting. Thank you to **Linda**, (Chair of the Nominating Committee), **Rosemary** and **Jean** who worked diligently to present the Slate.

This year we didn't have to fill all positions so the task wasn't as onerous as some years. There were four Board nominations—three Directors and a Secretary, and an additional role of Minute Secretary for our general Club meetings. All vacancies were filled which is very pleasing, although we usually have four Directors. Thank you to those members who stepped up. We can look forward to another productive and fulfilling twelve months.

Treasurer **Sue**, who does a remarkable job of keeping our finances in order, presented her report for the twelve months 1.4.24—31.3.25. She explained that while the figures looked healthy, because of timing, some payments have crossed into the next financial year.

The new Officers will be inducted in June, also our birthday month. Our Club was chartered on 22 June 1981 so we will be celebrating and reflecting on

our 44 years of achievements over those years. And, as our most staunchest supporters, we hope husbands and partners—and others— will join us on 4 June to mark the occasion. We can be proud of our local and global service so far, but there's much more we can achieve in the future.

Following the AGM we reviewed the ZI/D23 2024-2026 Goals that were set at the beginning of this biennium. Each of our committees will now re-examine their individual contributions to these goals for 2025-2026, which will then be incorporated into the overall Club goals.

Time was also taken to inform members about the 69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) meeting in New York—attended by ZC of Perth member **Carole Theobald** (Chair, Zonta International Zonta Says NOW Working Group)—and the recent Area 3 Meeting.

I shall be away now for several weeks but look forward to joining you all upon Ross and my return from overseas.

Keep up the Zonta Spirit!

Wendy

It so happened that our Club dinner meeting on 7 May coincided with **National Family Violence Remembrance Day** and the **Candlelight Vigil** taking place in Yagan Square, Perth. This event was arranged by the **Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing**.

In true Zonta Spirit and solidarity, we decided we would also light candles to honour the lives lost to family and domestic violence and to express our support to families of the victims.

The lighting of candles symbolises remembrance, a collective commitment to end violence against women and children and hope. We reflected on the impact of this crisis, reaffirmed the importance of the work still to be done and pledged to strive for the promotion and protection of women's and children's rights, interests and well-being, not just for the night, but all year round.

Toast on National Family Violence Remembrance Day "Lighting the Way: in Memory and Mission"



We charged our glasses and proposed a toast to all those organisations who are working tirelessly to build a better world, particularly for women and girls, so they can live free from violence and fear.

ZI & UN Future



The **Priority Theme** – *“Reviewing and appraising the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 23rd special session of the General Assembly, which was a progress assessment held five years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, was created. All current challenges prohibit-*

ing the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women by the Platform for Action will be addressed and assessed.”

Carole was one of 15 Zonta leaders who had entry into the United Nations building where the government consultations were held. She was in her element mixing it with—

- * *over 13,000 participants from 186 countries, including 5845 representatives from NGOs—a new record for the CSW;*
- * *nearly 100 Zontians from 32 countries and 9 supporting members; and*
- * *2 youth observers invited by Zonta.*

While the entire agenda was of great interest to Carole, she expressed horror and disillusionment at outcomes for the

UN's aid programs emanating from this year's United States' election. Zonta has been keeping a watchful eye since the USAID stop work orders and decreased funding for development and humanitarian assistance, were announced.

During the Commission the leadership of ZI had the opportunity to meet in person with our partners at UNICEF USA, UNFPA, and UNFPA-UNICEF, to discuss how the USAID funding situation could impact our Zonta International Service Projects. These projects were approved by our members at the 2024 Convention in Brisbane. Zonta International will continue supporting the three projects delivered by UNFPA and UNICEF to prevent violence against women and girls, advance climate justice and end child marriage. ZI will be monitoring the situation diligently to ensure these projects can proceed as planned.

Read what **ZI President Salla Tuominen** said in relation to the above—

“We want to reassure all our members and supporters that our commitment to advancing women's rights remains steadfast and unwavering, regardless of the political or societal pressures we may face. Our mission is rooted in

cont'd below...

the belief that every woman and girl deserves equality, justice and the opportunity to thrive.

With the dedicated support of our members, friends of Zonta and our Zonta International Headquarters Team in the United States, we will continue to stand up for these values with courage and resilience, ensuring that the voices of women and girls are heard and respected, and advocate for the restoration of funding and the protection of women's rights as key pillars of global progress. Together, we will not back down in the face of adversity—we are stronger as a global community united in our cause.”

Another disappointment brought to light was the withdrawal of the United States from its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals which emphasise gender equality as a fundamental human right and catalyst for sustainable development.

Achieving SDG5 is more critical than ever, especially in light of recent push-backs on gender equality. The time to act is now—we must not allow decades

of hard-won progress to be reversed. In relation to these matters ZI has issued a number of statements which you can read more about [here](#).

As we know, Carole's pet focus is on climate change and how it affects women. She reconnected with some of her **Zonta Says NOW** Team while at the Commission to deliver a seminar at the NGO CSW which was such a treat from their regular meetings on screen via Zoom!

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General has said more than once—



Carole with some of her Zonta Says NOW Team and Stevan Lynn from the Men Engage network.

“The climate crisis is a human rights crisis—and a women's rights crisis.”

Since Carole's 'light-bulb' moment in 2020, the D23 **Zonta Says NOW** initiative has taken off (like Gout Gout out of the blocks) and is now ZI's campaign for gender-equal climate justice. Never shy of a challenge, Carole has become our 'expert' on this topic. Take time to view this clip and you will see why she is so passionate about promoting changes.

[Why do we need Zonta Says NOW](#)

Here are some of her thoughts after attending CSW69—

- *Gender equality and climate action are under threat.*
- *We need Zonta on steroids.*
- *Stand up and speak out—especially to our politicians.*
- *We do not want to end up like the USA.*

Is the United Nations under threat?
NOT IF WE CAN HELP IT!

More on the Think Tank



The **Zonta Says NOW Think Tank** brings together Zontians from around Australia (and overseas) who are interested in progressing gender-equal climate action. Meetings are via Zoom with interesting speakers, exchange of ideas and discussions on what is happening at home and abroad.

The Australian Think Tank meets the second Saturday of 'even-numbered' months, unless otherwise indicated. **The next meeting in WA is 1.00-2.30 pm on Saturday 14 June.** For further information and to register, click on the poster opposite. Please note that if the form already has name/s, just delete and add your own.

The guest speaker for this meeting is **Maya Farmer**, a **Zonta Young Women in Leadership Awardee**, from **Generation Justice**. This is a group of nine young people who are 'over' climate inaction. They have teamed up with Environmental Justice Australia to lodge a human rights complaint with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Climate Change. They want this entity to hold the Australian government to account for failing to protect our rights—to life, health, culture—and ensure a safe future for all of us.

Let's see what we can learn from this young dynamic group—a conversation not to be missed! Everyone welcome!

Area 3 Meeting—12 April

This year's Area Meeting, which our Club agreed to host on behalf of **Area 3 Director Kimberley Robbins**, turned out to be a very pleasant and successful event. Much of this can be attributed to our hard-working Board members who, with input from Kimberley, prepared a very full and informative agenda. The Pagoda Resort and Spa venue in Como was well suited to the occasion. The facilities, food and staff all helped to make the day a success.

After welcomes by **Wendy** and **Kimberley**, Club member **Anne** facilitated a very chatty and fun 'Ice-breaker' to get the day off to a bright start. **D23 Governor, Debbie Schmidt** (right) addressed where our District sits in relation to the **2024-2026 Biennial Goals** and **ZI's 2024-2030 Strategic Plan**.

She also reminded Clubs to return the Survey on **Biennial Goal 1** (due by **16 June**) relating to both Advocacy and Service projects. This is required for a comprehensive report on Club outcomes to be given at the Devonport Conference.

Debbie also spoke of the USA's funding cuts to the United Nations aid programs and how this might affect our affiliated projects. Refer to the coverage on p.2.

PROGRAMME

09:15	REGISTRATION & MORING TEA
10:00	OPENING & WELCOME (5 MINS) Wendy Dowling AM, Vice President of Zonta Club of Perth Northern Suburbs Inc.
10:05	INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME (10 MINS) Kimberley Robbins, D23 Area 3 Director
10:15	ICE BREAKER (15 MINS) Anne O'Shannon
10:30	GOVERNOR'S UPDATE (15 MINS) Debbie Schmidt, D23 Governor 2024-2026
10:45	FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN (10 MINS) Faith O'Brien, D23 Area 3 Advocacy Coordinator
10:55	UNITED NATIONS (10 MINS) Carole Theobald
11:05	2025 CONFERENCE UPDATE (5 MINS) Debbie Schmidt, D23 Governor 2024-2026
11:10	BY-LAWS (10 MINS) Jo Wittorff, D23 By-Laws & Resolutions Committee
11:20	ZONTA CHARADES #1 (15 MINS) Zonta Club of Bunbury Inc.
11:35	ZONTA AUSTRALIA UPDATE (10 MINS) Debbie Schmidt, D23 Governor 2024-2026
11:45	MEMBERSHIP REPORT (20 MINS) Wendy Quinn, D23 Lieutenant Governor



PROGRAMME

12:05	BIRTHING KITS UPDATE (10 MINS) Tyril Houghton, D23 BKFA Ambassador
12:15	GOLDEN Z AND Z CLUB UPDATES (10 MINS) Tyril Houghton, D23 Golden Z and Z Clubs Coordinator
12:25	ZONTA CHARADES #2 (15 MINS) Zonta Club of Perth Inc.
12:40	ADVOCACY UPDATE (5 MINS) Faith O'Brien, D23 Advocacy Committee
12:45	ZONTA THANKS Lorraine Webb
	LUNCH (1 HR)
13:45	MINDFUL LEADERSHIP (30 MINS) Dr Johanne Klap
14:15	ZONTA CHARADES #3 (15 MINS) Zonta Club of Peel Inc.
14:30	RETAIN & ATTRACT (1 HR) Dr Johanne Klap
15:30	ZONTA CHARADES #4 (15 MINS) Zonta Club of Perth Northern Suburbs Inc.
15:45	CLOSING REMARKS (15 MINS)
16:00	SUNDOWNER
18:00	DINNER Venue: Waterwall Restaurant & Bar

She also touched on Zonta International's Statements in response to these developments and how **we remain steadfast** in our mission to **Build a Better World for Women and Girls**.

Although **'Earth Day'** on 22 April is now well past, Debbie enumerated several points on which to reflect—

- **Learn how to recognize local sustainable groups and businesses.**
- **Take action to ensure your community addresses the needs of women and girls within their disaster-ready and emergency response plans.**
- **Continue supporting the Zonta Says NOW to Gender-Equal Climate Action campaign.**

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More on the Area 3 Meeting

On the matter of **District Projects**, there is strong participation in assembling **Birthing Kits** and **Breast Care Cushions**. Both projects need to be re-endorsed at this year's Conference.

While on this topic, **Tyrl Houghton, D23 Birthing Kit Ambassador** (ZC of Bunbury) gave Awards to three kit 'champions' who have assisted clubs on assembly days—shown here L-R **Louise Caspersz-Loney** (ZCP), **Amanda Whittle** (President, ZCB on behalf of **Carol Carter**), and **Connie Coltrona** (ZCPNS).



Faith O'Brien (D23 Area 3 Advocacy Coordinator) gave a comprehensive talk on advocacy—its definition, how do we advocate, when do we advocate, and an outline of the skills required to make advocacy successful. I'm sure Faith would be happy to share her presentation as this can be a confusing subject for many. The four focus areas for this Biennium are—

1. **Elimination of violence against women.**
2. **Climate justice.**
3. **Women in decision making.**
4. **Education equality.**

Did you know that the **WA Women's Congress**, made up of the **Country Women's Association, Karrakatta Club, Soroptimist International, UN Women WA and Zonta International**, was set up to speak with a unified voice to the WA Government and report directly to the

WA Parliament ensuring that the voices, issues and concerns of women and girls across the State, are genuinely heard and justly addressed?

Faith also gave a short presentation on the **Zonta Foundation for Women**, and how important this is in providing funding for the many programs and projects we undertake. She urged members to consider making donations through the ZI web page [Donate link](#).

Membership across District 23 is an important issue with **Lt Governor Wendy Quinn's** stats showing there has been quite a large decline from 2021. Much of this could be age related, a result of COVID, the economic climate or family circumstances. Sadly, since then, we have also lost 5 clubs, including Dunsborough. Worldwide, since 2024, almost 1900 members have left

Zonta. But hopefully, with 44 clubs now in formation, numbers will increase.

As Wendy pointed out, membership matters are critical to the life of Zonta. We must focus on five key areas—

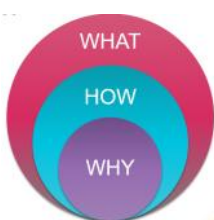
Recruitment, Retention, Engagement, Leadership and Recognition

She also announced ZI's **'Add your voice Membership Campaign'** which runs from **1 April to 31 May** and provides a toolkit with unique ways to participate, new messaging and materials and ideas for recruitment. It is a comprehensive guide and can be downloaded from the 'My Zonta/Tools' section of the ZI website although at this stage the deadline would not allow us to arrange a recruitment event and take advantage of the possible US\$700 grant offered by Zonta. But we could use the tools to run one later on.

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Wendy touched on other topics like our **Zonta Spirit—Fun with Purpose**—supporting clubs to create a strong culture of community, fun and friendship in an inclusive approach. She also referred to the **Leadership Development Tools** that are readily available for training and assistance through ZI's 'My Zonta/Tools' web page.

High on her agenda was the District's **Membership Strategy**—and the value of Zonta. What do we value? Finding our Core Values like **friendship, women's rights, respect, kindness and community**. What makes ZONTA unique? Why are we memorable? Why do we commit our time and energy to this organization?



**What do we do?
How do we do it?
Why do we do it?**

These are some of the questions we need to add to our recruitment plans.

D23's membership is everyone's business. Grow our Club and we grow the District and Zonta!

Following the lunch break, we were treated to a wonderful presentation by **Dr Johanne Klap** (shown here) who, with much interaction, worked us through her topics—

Mindful Leadership and **Retain & Attract**.

Jo is a dynamic executive leadership coach, experienced learning specialist and skilled facilitator with a strategic focus on aligning organizational culture and values with mission-critical goals.

She has a PhD in Philosophy, Graduate Diplomas in Psychology and Education from Murdoch University and Master of Education from Melbourne University.

Her leadership training and facilitation style is centred around fostering introspection, stimulating new learning, and encouraging individuals to see the potential in others. Possessing a robust academic background and practical experience, Jo excels at working with individuals and teams to realise their goals.

Not only did Jo make us think laterally, but it was a lot of fun as well. At one

particular time she asked how many of us thought we were multi-taskers!

Being females, of course, many of us put up our hands. She gave us an exercise that required full focus but with interruptions, so many of us soon found out we weren't!!



Another time she asked us to quickly draw a house. Most were four walls, a roof, two windows and a door! Why? From a young age this is how we perceived a house should look. Maybe they were, back then, for some of us!

We were certainly challenged to think creatively, and actively explore strategies for retaining and attracting new members. It was such a lively, inspiring and worthwhile session, and complemented Wendy Quinn's talk earlier.

Thank you Jo! We loved it!

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More on the Area 3 Meeting

It was a full-on day which ran very well, and on time, considering the packed agenda. Many other topics were covered such as **Jo Wittorff's** outline of the **By-Laws**, **Debbie's** update on the activities of **Zonta Australia** (which you can read about [here](#)) and more information about the September Conference, **Tyrl's** reflection on **Golden Z and Z Clubs**, and **Judy Gorton's** explanation about the process for International nominations and how voting procedures will change for Vancouver. She stressed **"Clubs and club members must take candidate selection seriously. We need the best leaders at the forefront of Zonta's important cause!"**



Around the Club

After such an exceptionally busy three months at the start of 2025 in and around the Club, we can now continue on a much steadier pace. However, the Board is still busy as are several other members involved in fundraising, service, public relations and membership, not forgetting others who contribute behind the scenes—always someone helping somebody somewhere!

Talking of which, through **Liz's** connections, we are now assisting **North Balga Primary School** families, doing it tough, with household products, as mentioned in our March news. Here's Liz handing over this month's delivery to **Karen** the **Student Services Coordinator**.



We've been so responsive to this good-will that Liz reports we have enough goodies stored for a month or two!

Assembling **Birthing Kits** is one of our D23 projects. The next such day is on **Saturday 27 September** so please make a note in your diary. We are fortunate, again, to have a \$5,000 sponsorship from



which will enable a further 1000 kits to be made. Our **'Kit Queen' Connie**, received a certificate of recognition at the Area 3 Meeting for her involvement in this project—see pic on p.4.

We also have two fundraisers being planned. Confirmation dates and more details will be forthcoming, but in the meantime, please keep the following in mind—

July 19—Mystery Dinner. We've had these in the past and they are a lot of fun. We are looking for 6 hosts so talk to the Fundraising Committee if you're keen to make a name for yourself!

End September / early October (date TBA) - High Tea. Last year we held a very successful HT in the Swan Valley. Nothing better than a drive to the Valley during Spring to partake of a traditional high tea with friends.

Balcony Drinks & Nibbles at Ruth's—As Ruth and Kevin's home overlooks the

Swan River, Ruth has offered to host the occasional 'fellowship' get-together. Thank you Ruth for this suggestion.

Another member, **Anette**, opened her holiday home in Myalup in April for a long-table luncheon. This resulted in 10 takers and \$700 added to our kitty which included breakfast Sunday morning for four overnight stayers.

Anette provided a great start with a variety of tasty deli items, dips, cheeses and crackers. Lunch was a treat with a smorgasbord of roast meats, baked vegetables, salads and a fresh out of the oven hot loaf. We didn't really need dessert, but there were several including Jillian's speciality *scrumptious* cheesecake!



It was a great idea and a delightful day of relaxation and enjoyment watching the many water and other birds around the lake at the bottom of the property. **So, well done Anette and Rob.** Apart from the preparation and cooking, events like this are a reasonably easy way to raise funds. Other members may also like to consider something similar.

More from Around the Club

We had an excellent Guest Speaker for April in **Jo Agnew, Director Agnew & Associates**, who facilitated a members only **Interactive Workshop** in which we discussed ways and means to maximise our sponsorship/gift fundraising resources.

Jo has extensive experience in this capacity working as a presenter with small business to large corporations in London, New York and Perth. Over the years she has raised millions of dollars for many hundreds of entities and worthy causes.

With Jo's guidance, all members were involved in brain-storming, thinking and discussing ideas. She introduced some

strategies we can apply to raise much needed funds for our programs and projects. However she stressed the best way to undertake this is through a personal approach using the following Giving Cycle sequence—

1. *Identify your 'target'.*
2. *Plan, research and engage the person.*
3. *Just ask!*
4. *Close.*
5. *Stewardship (acknowledge and report back to the person).*

It was suggested each member make a list of at least three people they could approach personally which would be a much better way to seek sponsorship rather than through a letter. More work is to be done with regard to this matter as we look at new ways to fundraise.



Jan McNaught thanked Jo and presented her with a small gift.

As we know, it is not up to the Fundraising Committee to do all the heavy lifting; we all need to be involved!



Here we have members **Linda, Wendy and Irene** enjoying lunch with **Tyrl** at the Area 3 Meeting.

Our 'travelogue' is far too extensive for this news, suffice to say, several of our members have been exploring various pockets of the globe. **Jill** and **Steve** are by far our biggest 'nomads' and one wonders whether they will ever stop their wander



lust! This pic was taken in March in Norway. Since then they've visited Wurzburg while on a cruise from Amsterdam to Budapest. However, despite being on the move constantly, Jill keeps herself in touch with our Club agenda and quite often suggests advocacy topics for consideration.

PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT BETWEEN ALCOA FOUNDATION AND THE ZONTA CLUBS OF PEEL AND GEELONG

D23 Governor, Debbie Schmidt, announced this exciting initiative at the Area 3 Meeting on 12 April. In essence, here's what it means for Zonta.

As we all know, there is a need for fostering greater gender diversity in traditionally male-dominated fields. Women remain vastly under-represented in engineering, making up only 14% of Australia's engineering workforce. Of the 61% of women completing bachelor degrees, only about 17% are engineering graduates.

The **Alcoa Foundation** has generously agreed to support the **Zonta Women in Engineering Scholarships** to the tune of **\$US10,000** which will be managed by the **Zonta Clubs of Peel (WA)** and **Geelong (Vic)**, the States in which Alcoa has a physical presence. These two clubs are extremely grateful to the **Melbourne on Yarra Club** for auspicing the application as it has charity status which was a requirement of the application.

It is anticipated the grant will provide **ten scholarships for women aged 18-35, resident in Western Australia and Victoria**, who are in their second year of a tertiary level course (University or TAFE) in which engineering is a major component.

Applications will open in Semester 2 this year.

This collaboration marks a significant step forward in supporting local initiatives that align with Zonta International's Mission. With the support of the Alcoa Foundation, our clubs will be better equipped to deliver impactful programs and projects across these two regions—creating real and lasting change.

Following our Area Meeting, **Connie, Wendy Quinn and Alison** visited the Maritime Museum's **Josephine's Garden Exhibition**. It is a pictorial story of the garden Empress Josephine created at **Château De Malmaison** outside Paris. She sent explorer **Nicholas Baudin** around the world to bring back plants which are still there today!



Thank you Alison for sharing this interesting snippet. A reminder to remember how beautiful our world is, particularly since you visited leading into Earth Day on 22 April, and that we must protect it for our future generations.



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