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The Zontapreneur

Volume 20, Issue 11 - March/April 2026

Welcome to another edition of The Zontapreneur

Welcome to our latest edition of **The Zontapreneur**. We kicked off February with the Zonta Leadership Institute, where we spent time reflecting on our past and planning our future. Zonta is all about giving and supporting our projects and programs, but it's also about building leadership, strengthening our clubs, and creating a culture, uplifting both here and overseas, that opens all of opportunities to offer help and service.

Women Australia has now been given the dubious life of the Australian State with the worst record for domestic violence. Our Government has promised to do better but last year Government has still not formulated genuine victim based laws despite being insisted four years ago. NSW and Queensland criminalised coercive control laws in 2022 and 2024 respectively. Victoria criminalised coercive control in 2025 following coronial inquiry. This is an area which concerns all Zontians both at home and overseas.

Therefore, it was very timely that our **International Women's Day** speaker, **Jenna Koshiyama**, presented on the topic of coercive control. Jenna has her in everyday life and, sadly, has been a victim herself. Her journey has her by her and beyond her family and her business. Jenna's story is on Friday 6 March. She was interviewed by our **Women Staging and Equality Club** (WSAC) on a beautiful autumn morning with many guests attending. Jenna's presentation was very powerful and very moving. It was also very informative and very practical. Jenna's work is contributing to the Medicare Hangers which stated much needed project funds.

WSAC is a Band 4 club which joins Zontians around the world celebrate **Zonta Rose Day**. As Zontians recognising women of Manningtree, the yellow rose ordinary as a reflect of our Zonta Rose Day celebration. Our Zonta Rose Day is a time to reflect on and celebrate living our mission to be leaders in Manningtree. You can read about the backgrounds of these young women further on.

Our next meeting was **Wagon Inn Gheegulla**. This group delivers a simple service that makes a powerful difference for people dining it tough. Through their mobile kitchen and community spirit, they provide nourishing meals, companionship, hospitality, and dignity, while also creating a safe space for connection and conversation. Thank you to new member **Christine Cole** for arranging the venue and for her hospitality. Christine is also the President of the ZWA Executive Committee and she knows our 2026 Zonta Rose Day is in Manningtree.

As a club here and now, but particularly, during 2026 and beyond, we are grateful for all the support and enthusiasm as we move towards a new Manningtree.

> *"Leadership is not about being in charge. It is about taking care for those in your care and enabling them to do the same."* - Audrey Hepburn
>
> Wendy Downing AM
> Club President

Young Leaders Awarded

As mentioned, we hosted another wonderful evening on March 26 at the WSAC, when we presented our *2025 Zonta Young Women in Leadership Award* to Sunshine, Jessica and Molly. Sunshine is a Year 12 student at Tuncurry High School and is the author of the celebration meeting's inaugural Zonta Club of Tuncurry-Forster grant to the winner. As far as we are concerned **all are winners** and we have been very fortunate to have had Sunshine, Jessica and Molly in our lives. Their presentations were stunning. It is a little thing but the "Logan" stepping backwards in support until the envelope is opened.

Sunshine's presentation was a powerful and very moving piece. Sunshine is the **Women Who Inspire Me Award** of which grants are very different insights into the lives of our young women and the challenges they face. Here is a series of what the girls shared with us.

Let us start with Molly Rychlik, as she had spoken from the country who been **Zonta Club of Tuncurry-Forster's Young Leader in Leadership** for the past year. **Australia**. She is studying at Kingston, including agriculture, animal husbandry and horticulture, and will pursue work handling and shearing alongside her family. Molly's goal is to become a vet and she is currently completing her Certificate 3 in Veterinary nursing. Molly's main goal in pursuing her passion is under the agriculture sector. While better to encourage her than Rowanna, a caring vet and who lives in the heart of her hometown, the subject of Molly's address.

> *"She has a rare passion for gardening, and her front yard always beautiful, and her garden is full of flowers and herbs. She is a natural leader, and she does everything from my day-to-day-to her stories of planting seeds to her dream of being a vet. She is a young woman who is quiet, but she is very, very, very,

May General/AGM Meeting

Ali O'Connor (General Manager - Program & Impact) from the ***Future Female Leaders Program (FFLP)***, has kindly offered to guest speak at our 6 May meeting. Ali attended our ZYWLA Presentation Dinner and considers Zonta and the FFLP have much in common, empowering and up-skilling Year 11 female students to succeed in the uncertain and ambiguous world in which we live. Once further particulars have been received we will email a flyer with full details, but in the meantime, please earmark 6 May in your diary.

The evening will also incorporate our AGM when elections for Club Office Bearers will take place. With the Slate already prepared by the Nominating Committee, this should be a reasonably quick process.

Twinning Club Announced

In early March we learned that Zonta International had twinned us with the *Zonta Club of Bad Bergzabern*. We heard from their very excited President, *Ann-Kathrin Butscher* shortly afterwards that they were thrilled to be twinned with us. She sent some details about their size - 27 members - the fact that they were celebrating their 25th Anniversary and have dedicated the whole year to a new project – "*Women's Hearts Beat Differently*".

Unfortunately, with two major events for us in March, we haven't been able to respond fully to their message, apart from dedicating our *April 'Toast'* to them. We will share this with Ann-Kathrin very shortly, along with *'The Zontapreneur'*, to set the *'Zonta Spirit'* ball rolling.

Talking of 'Zonta Spirit'

Our club has recently produced a new banner, of which we are very proud, featuring this icon and which we've added to our banner wardrobe. The 'Zonta Spirit' is the heart and soul of clubs and supports clubs to create a strong culture of community, fun and friendship in an inclusive approach. Our club has always enjoyed a wonderful spirit which we plan to continue!

Celebrating 60 in Spectacular China

Irene celebrated her 60th birthday in China, which she said was truly a journey of a lifetime and was guided by some incredible local experts who brought China's rich history and culture to life.

From the moment they arrived in **BEIJING** (a city of 21.8 million people!), they were immersed in experiences they'll never forget. Walking through Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City, exploring a 700-year-old Hutong village by rickshaw, and enjoying a homemade lunch with a local family gave them a meaningful cultural connection.

They rode the cable car up to the Simatai Great Wall and said that standing at the top was simply breathtaking. She made it to Tower 6, while Tony pushed on to Tower 7! Knowing the Wall stretches over 21,000 km and dates back more than 2,500 years made the experience even more surreal.

Their journey continued by bullet train to **ZHENGZHOU** and **XI'AN**, where they visited the incredible Terracotta Warriors—over 8,000 life-sized figures guarding Emperor Qin Shi Huang's tomb for more than 2,000 years. They also attended a Tang Dynasty Music & Dance Show that evening, which was spectacular and world-class entertainment.

In **CHENGDU**, they embraced the local "*POETS*" lifestyle—Pandas, Opera, Eating (hot pot), Tea Houses, and all things Spicy! They saw the giant pandas up close, and learning about conservation efforts was such a special experience.

They then boarded their 3-night Yangtze River cruise in **CHONGQING**, travelling through breathtaking landscapes and visiting historic sites, including the impressive Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric power station in the world. The open-air performance of the "Romance of the Three Kingdoms" with over 200 actors and 25 horses was absolutely unforgettable!

Their journey wrapped up in **SUZHOU** and **SHANGHAI**, strolling through beautiful gardens, learning the art of silk-making, and taking in the dazzling skyline along the Huangpu River at night.

She said, "A very special moment was celebrating her birthday in Shanghai with their tour group—complete with a surprise cake thanks to Tony".

Survey

Click on the survey button below to tell us how you read our Club Newsletters!

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Around the Club

A note from your Editor

Dawn Newman OAM

Time certainly flies when you're a newsletter editor! Here it is April already, lots of news having been generated over the past three months as you will have seen from this edition. We hope you've enjoyed the read and taken note of the dates for our upcoming events, booking details for which will be forwarded soon. We'd love to have your support and look forward to welcoming you along.

However, before you close, we would appreciate you taking a few minutes to complete the above Survey.

Cheers, catch you next time!

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