

President's Report – Maria Zaluski

There is a saying “*if you want something done ask busy people*”. The same can be said about clubs. No sooner has the club enjoyed the success of our 35 year Gala celebrations and before the dust has settled members are preparing for our next major event.

The Zonta Club of Geelong is a participant of the Barwon Month of Action Initiative. This Geelong initiative involves Geelong organisations, businesses and community groups coordinating various activities to raise awareness and ultimately put an end to domestic and family violence. Our club works closely with the Barwon Month of Action committee. We support and also contribute to this annual initiative. This year we secured **Rosie Batty** to speak at our November dinner. We welcome Rosie to Geelong and are honored to have her participate in the Month of Action. We admire her personal strength and courage to discuss and raise awareness on an important issue, in such tragic circumstances. For further details please see Cheryl Gibbons' Service and Advocacy Report.

Close to the hearts of many Zontians is the need to eliminate the practice of female genital cutting which is occurring abroad and also locally. The Royal Womens Hospital has developed a strategy to raise awareness and stop this practice. To support their efforts Zonta Clubs in Area 1 and Area 4 raised \$7000.00 for the Royal Women's Hospital Deinfibulation Clinic to help women affected by Female Genital Cutting. We received a thank-you letter from the Royal Womens Hospital. Their letter provides us with encouragement. Below is an extract of the letter:

“It is invaluable having thought leaders, such as yourselves, who understand and accept that FGC is a cultural practice that must be changed but also understand that the communities who practiced FGC in their countries of origin should be engaged and not demonised.”

Over the past 5 years, Zonta International has contributed more than US \$3million towards efforts by UN Women and UN Trust fund to end violence against women and girls around the world. Examples of some of the good outcomes achieved include:

- Cambodia has passed an Acid Attack Law and begun to pursue convictions
- Tonga has adopted its first law against domestic violence
- in Africa five countries can tap into an award – winning mobile phone app that documents evidence of sexual violence and facilitates access to justice and medical care.

Looking forward to the future, new ventures are on the horizon including *Voices against Violence*. One of these is an initiative developed by UN Women and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girls Scouts. The initiative is a co-educational curriculum designed for age groups ranging from 5 to 25 years. It provides tools so that young people can understand the root causes of violence, educate and involve their peers and communities to prevent it, and learn about where to find support if they experience violence themselves.

Through conviction commitment and courage we CAN make a difference.

Membership/Fellowship Committee Report - Lisa Savage

We will hold our next **Zonta Awareness Hour** on **Wednesday, 12 November 2014** at the Mercure Hotel Geelong, corner of Myers and Gheringhap Streets, Geelong, between 6:00pm and 7:00pm. Members are asked to invite friends anyone who they know that have shown an interest in our Club and our Projects and would like to know more about Zonta and what we do.

Finance/Fundraising Committee Report - Anna Milner



Our committee is still on cloud 9 smiling and content with the success of our 35th Anniversary Gala Ball held on 6 September 2014. Our night of celebration recently made it to the pages of the Geelong Business News. We are extremely grateful for the 2-page spread that shared photographs our night and the post event media and well wishes from community members and guests for achieving and celebrating an important milestone in our clubs history.

Service & Advocacy Report - Cheryl Gibbons

Our committee has been finalizing the details for our November Dinner, 'An Evening with Rosie Batty' on 5 November 2014 at the Mercure Hotel, Geelong. We are delighted Rosie is coming to Geelong to be our guest speaker. Her visit has gained much publicity with more than 200 tickets being sold.

Rosie was awarded both the Pride of Australia Courage Award and Victorian Australian of the Year.

Many families are touched by violent tragedies. It is important to get stories like Rosie's out to the public and raise the much needed awareness on this issue. People are becoming more and more inclined to speak out about domestic violence, there has been a lot of interest from people who are keen to hear Rosie's message.

Rosie was recently quoted in the Herald Sun on 9th October 2014 saying "that there was a 'deep ambivalence' towards violence in the home and questioned why domestic violence was still accepted".

Kevin Godfrey of Geelong Police Family Violence Unit will introduce Rosie.

Members of the committee have also been working on the Awards Dinner to be held in March 2015. Watch this space for news on the exciting guest speaker chosen for the evening...

Applications for our Awards Categories and Scholarships including Young Women in Public Affairs have been distributed. Details are also published on our website and Facebook page.

On 23rd October 2014, Christine Denmead and I attended the Launch of "Elephant in your Room" coasters project. This project is part of Barwon Month of Action where various organisations hold events to highlight the issue of violence against women. These drink coasters will be placed in venues across the region. People will notice the coasters and they will create discussion. Hopefully, people considering seeking assistance will discreetly be able to take the coaster and utilise the contact details in their own time. We also used the chance to display our Zonta Banner & give out Zonta Flyers.



The Coaster Project:

During the Barwon Month of Action, various organisations hold events to highlight the issue of violence against women and encourage individuals, groups and organisations to stand up and take action to prevent it. Building on the success of the 2012 project, this year we are placing drink coasters in venues across the region. By taking the message to the public sphere, this project is designed to get the community talking about the issue and rejecting violence against women and children. People will notice the coasters and they will create discussion. People considering seeking assistance will easily and discreetly be able to take the coaster and use the contact details at a later date.



PR Communications Report – Robin Turner

At our last club meeting Jane Kennedy, our 2014 Young Women in Public Affairs award recipient attended and spoke about her involvement in the Gil Rising Project and the importance of educating girls on the importance of education and the doors it can open for young women later in life.

The club is also very thankful for the extensive publicity we have had in GC Magazine, the Geelong Advertiser, the Geelong Independent and on radio to publicise our November Dinner with Rosie Batty, but also our Gala Dinner in September and our club generally.

Our Facebook Page is gaining followers each day and our website is looking fantastic and up to date with current events and topics relevant to our Club and Zonta International.

Z Club Report – Joanne Metzger

Two groups of Year 8 students continued the Z Club Food Bank collection for their major project as part of the “Make Poverty History” studies. Extra boxes were distributed around the school for students to donate packaged and tinned foods. October was “Feed Geelong Month” and October 16th was the United Nations World Food Day so the timing was perfect for the project. Next week the food will be delivered to Geelong Food Relief where 2,000 meals are supplied each week for the disadvantaged and homeless. I recently visited the Year 8 class to photograph some of the girls involved and to hear about the success of the project.

The funds raised from the recent Salvation Army’s ‘Sleep Out’ for the Homeless in the school hall amounted to \$800.00 and the 40 hour Famine event fundraised \$1,500.00 which was donated to World Vision in Rwanda. These 2 events were jointly organised by the Z Club and the Community team who work well together and more can be achieved.

Next week I will be meeting the incoming Z Club President and it is hoped posters can be distributed around the school ready for White Ribbon Day on 25 November 2014. An invitation was given to all Matthew Flinders Secondary College staff to attend ‘An Evening with Rosie Batty’ as our Club’s significant event for White Ribbon Day and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence.



CALENDER OF EVENTS

5 November 2014	An Evening with Rosie Batty Mercure Geelong, 6:00 for a 6:30 start
12 November 2014	Zonta Awareness Hour, 6:00pm – 7:00pm Mercure Hotel Geelong Corner of Myers and Gheringhap Street, Geelong.
18 November 2014	Board Meeting – 5:30pm start at Lunan Avenue, Drumcondra
10 December 2014	President’s Christmas Dinner Meeting

Congratulations to Shani Cain who departed Australia in late October to embark on a 4 month journey of a lifetime to Argentina. During this time Shani will be working with L.I.F.E organisation and in orphanages helping socially marginalized children and raising awareness of the situations faced by these children daily including donating clothing and footwear in impoverish regions of Argentina. Great Work Shani. We look forward to your return and hearing your travel stories.

Bereavement: During October, fellow Zontian Sharon Parker, lost a close family member.. We extend our condolences to Sharon and her family at this difficult time.