



ZONTA
 CLUB OF
 BALLARAT INC
 MEMBER OF ZONTA INTERNATIONAL
 EMPOWERING WOMEN
 THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

BAZ

ZONTA CLUB OF BALLARAT INC.
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AUGUST 2021

District 23 Area 4

**Our Dinner Meetings
 are held the fourth Thursday of the month.
 This Thursday, via Zoom at 7.00 pm
 Our next meeting will be
 23rd September 2021
 Phone Loretta on 0466 499 864**

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**PRESIDENT  
 CAROLINE NOLAN**



Dear Zontians,

Early last week, I read a Facebook post that quite possibly sums up my feelings at the moment, "When we watched the movie Groundhog Day in the 90s, did we realize that we would be living it, three decades later?".

Sure enough, by the end of the week, we were advising our students to ensure that they had everything they needed, for possible return to remote learning on the Monday. This week we are again changing our August Dinner Meeting from a face-to-face dinner to a Zoom call and we have also had to reschedule our proposed Birthing Kits Assembly Day, again.

We do, however, continue to do what we can and somewhat optimistically plan for the rest of 2021. I was able to catch up briefly with Maria Sozanski this morning who informed me, that despite not being able to meet, she and Helen Eyres have been independently sewing more Breast Cushions and hope to deliver them this week. There is more information about this Zonta project on [Zonta Breast Care Cushions | Zonta International District 23 \(zontadistrict23.org.au\)](#)

Meanwhile, Young Women in Public Affairs 2022 forms have been sent out to school and Sharelle Knight has approached people to form a committee, with interviews and presentations planned for October. Loretta Kaval and I also met with Karin Miller, recently retired Ballarat Grammar Careers teacher and the ex-chair of Ballarat Careers Network to work on the Great Girls meets Great Women event, currently planned for the 4<sup>th</sup> November.

The Zonta Club of Ballarat has also been well represented at both the recent District 23 'Zonta Says Now' and the joint Areas 1 and 4 Advocacy meetings. We will hear about the latter at our August meeting as Catherine Taylor leads us in a discussion about what we can do as a Club to work to advocate for women in this current climate. This follows a very informative, 3BA Winter Appeal focused July meeting where we were able to have representatives from Ballarat's Salvation Army highlight for us the reality of the homelessness in our city. As this was a Zoom meeting, we decided to donate the cost of a dinner to the 3BA appeal and raised almost \$400. The focus of the Advocacy committee for the next few months will be the Sixteen Days of Activism and our club has submitted an application to the City of Ballarat for our twilight walk on the 25<sup>th</sup> November.

Finally, our thoughts this week, must go to our sisters

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*Malala Yousafzai*

in Afghanistan as we watch events that are unfolding in the media. Zonta International's statement on the situation can be found at [Girls' education must remain a priority \(zonta.org\)](https://www.zonta.org). At this sad time, we can hear hope in the words of 24-year-old Malala Yousafzai, "At night our fear is strong . . . but in the morning, in the light, we find our courage again."

**Yours in Zonta  
Caroline**



**Statement by UN Women on the situation in Afghanistan**

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

In line with the statement by the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, UN Women remains fully committed to support women and girls in Afghanistan. We will remain operational and engaged with our partners at this critical juncture for the country.

Women's and girls' rights in Afghanistan must have only one direction and that is forward. Afghan women and girls have played a pivotal role throughout the history of their country. It is essential that they continue to do so and that their hard-won rights are protected. We are following the recent events with grave concern.

We call on Afghanistan to secure the fundamental human rights of all, including women and girls, and to meet obligations to protect civilians and to provide humanitarians with unimpeded access to deliver timely and life-saving services and aid. Women's and girls' rights must be at the core of the global response to the current crisis.

Details of the UN Women Afghanistan Emergency Appeal can be found online and at UN Women Australia.



"Afghan women have laid down their condition for the peace talks. In their diverse collective voice, they have said the 'price of peace cannot be women's rights'".

**Aleta Miller  
UN Women Representative  
in Afghanistan**

**DIARY DATES**

- |                                               |                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 26 <sup>th</sup> August                       | Dinner Meeting                           |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> September?                    | Board Meeting                            |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> September | District 23 Conference via Zoom          |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> September                    | Dinner Meeting                           |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> October                      | Board Meeting                            |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> October                      | YWPA Award Breakfast Meeting             |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> October                      | 43 <sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Celebration |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> November                      | Great Girls meet Great Women             |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> November                     | Board Meeting                            |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> November                     | 16 Days of Activism                      |



*Young women participate in a literacy class in Kabul as part of the Women's Learning Center project with the Afghan Institute of Learning in 2002.*

From these partnerships in Afghanistan and from our work with partners in many other parts of the world, we understand and value the importance of girls' education to achieving gender equality. It is a fundamental human right. It can prevent a girl from being forced to marry too young, as we have seen through our support of the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage. Education has the power to save and improve the lives of women and girls, which leads to healthier families and stronger, more stable societies.

It is for these reasons, we acknowledge and share concerns that Afghan women will have imposed limitations that prohibit them from being actors in their own decision-making, which is a fundamental human right. We will work through our General Consultative Status at the United Nations to continue to advocate to ensure that women and girls in Afghanistan and elsewhere are able to participate fully in their societies and that girls have access to a quality education and can pursue that education without fear for their safety.

18 AUGUST 2021

## Girls' education must remain a priority

As the world watched the news unfolding from Afghanistan over the last week, we at Zonta International had one thing on our minds—the rights of women and girls.

Zonta International has fought for gender equality for more than a century, and much of our efforts have focused on ensuring women's full and equal participation in society and securing equal opportunities for girls to pursue an education and realize their full potential.

This work brought Zonta to Afghanistan where, from 2002-2006, we partnered with UNICEF USA to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus and supported the immunization of more than 50,000 women. From 2002-2008, Zonta International also partnered with the Afghan Institute of Learning to provide access to quality education and vocational skills training for approximately 650 women and girls each year in rural or poor urban settings by improving programs offered by community-based educational organizations. The project also supported basic health services and education for at least 24,000 women and children each year in clinics, community-based organizations and women's learning centers.

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## SERVICE COMMITTEE REPORT



The Covid19 restriction preventing visitors to our home has thwarted our attempts to have a breast cushion sewing and stuffing day. However, Maria has stuffed and sewn twelve breast cushions and delivered them to St John of God hospital to replenish their supplies. Well done, Maria!!! Hopefully we will be able to arrange another breast cushion stuffing day once restrictions are eased.

The toiletry bag filling day has suffered the same fate, but again we will do this when we can have visitors to our homes. We hope to fill 40 bags and to deliver these to Berry Street.

**Maria Sozanski & Helen Eyres**

## PLASTIC FREE JULY

Inspired by the efforts of our June guest speaker, Ellen Burns and her quest to find better packaging for her snack bars, I decided to try for a plastic free July.



*Ellen Burns*

I expected that my biggest challenge would be forgoing my regular bottle of sparkling water. Two weeks into my quest and I have already decided that a dry July may have been significantly easier. I knew that there was a lot of plastic bottles in my weekly shop but not quite the extent to which so many things are packaged in plastic. The first thing to be cancelled was Hello Fresh because although yummy, there is too much plastic packaging.



The first challenge was toast, where most of the 2020 Covid weight gain could be attributed to working too close to the toaster. No sliced bread in plastic free July so it was Bakers Delight kindly putting the whole loaf into a paper bag and it was back to the bread bin for keeping bread fresh. A better woman would obviously bake her own but I had my share of baking disasters in 2020. The margarine was also replaced by butter wrapped in foil or waxed paper.

The next challenge was the morning coffee, as Covid bought an end to keep cups, takeaways are out.

Fortunately, the Fairtrade coffee pods are compostable, but milk was the problem. I am old enough to remember milk being delivered in bottles with a foil top and the race in the morning was to get to the bottle before the magpie. These days you can choose from a plastic bottle or a carton and I was in the habit of grabbing the litre bottles but opted for the cartons in July. Day three and the first fail, as the cartons are lined with plastic and the cartons have plastic screw tops; ditto for orange juice. It appears from all the Facebook responses that the only place you can still get milk in a bottle, is in Western Australia. The orange juice was replaced with a mandarin, as there was no time for juicing.



I was fully prepared for purchasing the fruit and vegetables and had the 2019 Christmas present of cloth bags at the ready. When I forgot the fruit was rattling around and knew mushroom bags can be used for things other than mushrooms. The lazy habits of pre-prepared vegetables were put aside and I found the vegetable knife in the back of one of the kitchen drawers. I may still need to learn how to grow baby spinach and herbs. The second fail was Italian herbs, because there on a cold Monday afternoon, I couldn't find fresh oregano for the lasagna.

Although to be totally plastic free, I think one needs to be a vegetarian or develop a taste for tinned Spam, with all due respect to the Python team, that is a step too far. It didn't take long until I had emptied the freezer of all the frozen meat and found that even butchers insist on wrapping meat in plastic. Many years ago, I spent a week in the Sinai Peninsular where, because there was no electricity, the restaurant had an extensive menu of dishes made with tinned tuna. After three days, however, I was over tuna and bought a cooked chicken wrapped in plastic... third fail.

As we approach the end of July, it looks like rice, pasta and cereals are starting to run low. It may be time to take some empty jars and to search out the Ballarat Wholefood Collective. Watch this space!

**Caroline Nolan**

## HOMELESSNESS IN BALLARAT

We were honoured to have **Fiona White**, Chaplain, The Salvation Army Homelessness Ballarat and also The Salvation Army Delacombe, and **Sonia Le Fevre**, MEA Team Leader, The Salvation Army Homelessness Ballarat as our guest speakers at our July Dinner Meeting.



*Our guest speakers, Fiona and Sonia, are in the middle row on the right*

Fiona began by explaining that homelessness in Ballarat often looks different to what we see in Melbourne or other bigger cities.

Couch surfing and staying in a friend's spare room (often only at night), sleeping in a car or camping are all ways homelessness can be hidden from us. Overwhelmingly Homelessness Ballarat deal with single women and children who are struggling to stay together. None of these shelters are sustainable. Even staying with family leads to over-crowding and breakdowns in relationships.

Sonia talked about the help that the Salvation Army bring to these families. Sonia works with women over 25 with accompanying children. Another team works with younger mums.

Currently Homelessness Ballarat are supporting about 30 families and 80 individuals.

70% of their clients have recently experienced domestic violence. During 2020 they worked with about 55 families and 100 children. There is also a

specialist children's support worker and case workers who work with the whole family.

For the over 25s, there is a tenancy manager and 3 case workers who work to help stabilise the family who are often under great stress, keeping them alive, well and together.

A mother's priority is often ensuring their children get to school. This is difficult financially, as well as difficulties with hygiene and keeping school clothes clean, and being able to make appropriate school lunches. Sometimes it can appear easier to just keep kids home. Mums and their children can spend much of their day in a coffee shop, or library, or even Mc Donald's because it's an easy place to gather for homework.

The entry point for homeless people in Ballarat is through Uniting Care. Hotels are often used for emergency accommodation and the cost is shared between the services and the family. Once the crisis is dealt with, transitional housing is arranged and then eventually, ideally, the family will move into Public Housing. However, the process is very slow meaning there is a backlog of awaiting families.

Government funding is available for 8 weeks of emergency accommodation; however, some families remain at this stage for up to 2 years. Salvation Army supports the family after this, partly through the Red Shield Appeal. More funding would help for domestic violence support as well.

So, what can be changed to make a difference?

More Public Housing certainly, as it does help to create a secure base. However, the issues of family violence, mental illness and associated trauma underline much homelessness.

How can we help?

Mothers in this situation are often exhausted with holding everything together. So, we were encouraged to be aware of our body language. If we see a mother with kids really struggling in the supermarket, smile at them, smile at the kids. Avoid looking at these women as "other". Be kind. Notice people. In a practical way, donate for example, the cost of a school uniform to the local school.

And for Zonta especially, get the message out about homelessness, locally and beyond.

**Loretta Kaval**



**A REPRESENTATIVE’S REPRESENTATIVE**



***Florence Fischer-Herber***  
*Director, Luxembourg,*  
*Luxembourg District 27*

In May, Zonta International President Sharon Langenbeck advised that our District 23 International Board Liaison - Florence Fischer-Herber from Luxembourg in District 27 - would be unable to enter Australia due to the COVID pandemic.

The International Board **Liaison** is appointed to engage closely with the District Governor throughout the biennium, offering advice and support, and reporting back to the International Board, at regular intervals.

It has not always been the case, but we have been fortunate during recent District Conferences to enjoy

opportunities to meet our Board Liaison *in person*, as the ZI Board **Representative**.

The role requires presence at the pre-and-post Board Meetings, and attendance at all events and sessions during the Conference, with a detailed report back to the ZI Board afterwards.

Florence has endeared herself to those taking part in recent ZONTA Says NOW to gender equality and climate action Think Tank Meetings, by joining us at 6 a.m. her time – quite a commitment!

It is our loss that we will not be enjoying her company as our ZI Board Representative in September.

Following an invitation from President Sharon and acceptance by Governor Sandra Burns, it will be my privilege to act in place of Florence at our D23 Conference.

All those who have worked so hard to ensure its success have done a mighty job, not only preparing for a face-to-face experience, but also preparing for the worst-case scenario, a digital Conference.

We wish Catherine Taylor all the best as she prepares to act as our Delegate. Her experience as the immediate Past Area Director and attendance at numerous Conferences and Convention in Japan will be invaluable.



Cheers,

**VAL**



From 30<sup>th</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021, Paris hosted the second part of the Generation Equality forum. As this fell in the middle of the cold winter holidays in Ballarat, I decided to register and reset the body clock for some late night, early morning presentations. I recommend watching the opening ceremony, [Opening session, Generation Equality Forum \(Paris, France\) - Accelerating Progress for Gender Equality by 2030 | UN Web TV](#), perhaps at a more sensible hour than 1am. From the opening ceremony where President Macron began assisting guests missing the earphones needed for translation and Hillary Clinton sharing the centre stage with 17year old Chilean activist Juliette Martinez, it was clear that this forum was different from any I have witnessed before.

Convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the governments of Mexico and France, in partnership with youth and civil society, the Forum brought governments, feminist leaders, youth and change makers from every sector, to announce trailblazing gender equality investments, programmes and policies. The Forum comes at a critical moment to reverse rising gender inequality caused by COVID-19. Even before COVID-19, almost [one in three](#) women worldwide experienced abuse; during the pandemic, calls to helplines increased five-fold in some countries. At the current rate of progress, it will take another [130 years to reach gender equality](#) at the highest positions of power.

Some of the sessions I chose to join included: Defending Gains and Demanding Women's Rights in Contexts of Shrinking Civic Space and Growing Extremism; Africa Young Women United for the Decade of Action; Shifting Power: Leader to Leader (with Julia Gillard); Girls' education: a critical pathway to Gender Equality; Economic

justice and rights; Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Bodily Autonomy.



Despite the occasional technical hiccup and the frequent buffering, it was amazing to see people of different nations, sexual identities and generations joining together to work for one cause – gender equality. Read more about the Forum's 5-year action journey in the Global Acceleration Plan. [UNW - GAP Report - EN.pdf \(generationequality.org\)](#)



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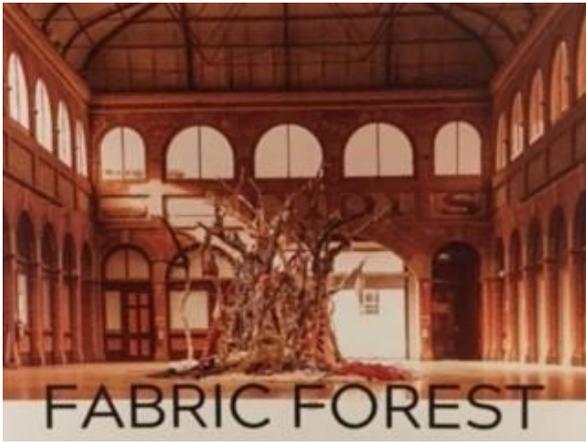
### **2021 Young Women in Public Affairs Award**

Still celebrating the success of the Club's 2020 YWPA Award winner, planning is underway for the 2021 Young Women in Public Affairs Award.

Schools have been notified that we are currently receiving nominations for the Award and plans are underway for online interviews early October and finalists invited to speak about their leadership journey at an Awards breakfast event on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021 (to be held in person pending restrictions). Our 2020 YWPA Award winner, Eloise Amirtharajah, will be the guest speaker at our breakfast.

Further information will be available when details confirmed. All current and past members are welcome to attend.

**Sharelle Knight**



Caroline, Sharelle & I recently attended a youth-led art piece 'Fabric Forest' at the Mining Exchange, which was created as part of Vic Youth Week 2021. Our very own YWPA 2020 winner, Eloise Amirtharajah confidently took on the role of MC.



*Left: President Caroline Nolan, YWPA 2020 Winner, Eloise Amirtharajah and Treasurer, Sharelle Knight*

The display used recycled fabric from clothing and upholstery too damaged to resell or wear, and sustainably sourced tree branches, to illustrate the way pollution from the fast fashion industry is suffocating our environment.

Did you know:

- Every 10 minutes, 6 tonnes of textile waste is discarded in Australia
- Australians discard 23kg of clothing per capita annually
- The clothing industry alone is responsible for 20% of the world's waste water
- Textile waste and the fashion industry are responsible for close to 10% of total global emissions
- It takes 700 gallons of water to make 1 cotton shirt .... Which is the same amount of water required to keep someone hydrated for up to 900 days

- In Australia alone, enough waste is produced to fill the MCG 10 times over annually
- Whilst Australians are some of the most wasteful people in the world, we also have many of the resources to address the problem

A time for us all to reflect and examine our clothing needs and how they may affect the environment, with an opportunity to do much more to address this huge issue.

**Alison Round**



Exciting news just in from Julie Monis-Ivett with updates on our Birthing Kit Program.



Many Zontians were aware of the issues at the BKFA and the current BKFA Board are setting up processes for the future. At Board level last week, it was moved that:

To acknowledge the origins and support from Zonta for the birthing kit project, "That BKFA will recognise Zonta on all individual birthing kits (bags) assembled in Australia". This motion was supported unanimously by the board.

So, ALL clean birthing kits made in Australia into the future will be recognised with Zonta on them.

**No one can take Zonta off our kits.**

We are now back on the right path with the right people.

Many thanks!

**Julie Monis-Evett**