

# THE ZONEWS

November 2025  
Volume No 76



## ZONTA CLUB OF ST. CLOUD

Board of Directors-  
FY 2025-2026

- **President:** Rachel Thompson
- **Vice President:** Lyndsey Stram
- **Treasurer:** Shawna Retka
- **Recording Secretary:** Mary Garding
- **Communications Secretary:** Rachel Thompson
- **Board Members- 2nd term**
  - Carol Barrymore
  - Mary Robak-Saari
- **Board Members - 1st Term**
  - Gayle Borchert
  - Susan Voletz
- **Past President:** Veronica Villeneuve

## NOTICE:

**CHRISTMAS HOUSE IS NOVEMBER 21-22**  
Thursday evening CH Decorator  
party/mixer 5-7pm

**BARNES & NOBLE BOOK FAIR FUNDRAISER**  
**NOVEMBER 24**

## THIS EDITION:

**Calendar of Events**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Financials**  
**Club Updates**

**BUILD A BETTER WORLD  
FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS**



**Zonta Board Meeting Minutes**  
**10/2/25**  
**Anna Marie's Alliance, St Cloud, MN**

**Present:** Rachel Thompson, Mary Garding, Mary Robak-Saari, Lyndsey Stram, Susan Voeltz

**Absent:** Carol Barrymore, Gayle Borchert, Lauri Oppel, Shawna Retka

**Guests:** Debra Kellerman

The meeting was called to order by President Rachel Thompson at 12:05 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance and Zonta Code followed the call to order. Pin Penalty was invoked. The agenda for today's meeting was presented for approval. Additions include report on Haiti Project and no September Treasurer's Report. Mary Garding moved to approve the agenda, Mary Robak-Saari seconded the motion. Motion was approved as amended.

**Consent Agenda**

Board meeting minutes from September 2025

Treasurer's report of September 2025 – report incomplete at this time.

**Correspondence & Requests:** Found in ZoNews. The newsletter went out without the treasurer's report due to timing. It will continue to be reported one month later for this reason.

**Business:**

**Month of October:** This month is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The I35 bridge and St. Cloud water tower will be lit up purple on 10-2-25. Take Back the Night event which is sponsored by Sexual Assault Center is scheduled for 10-2-25. The event starts with a rally at 5:30pm and speaker at 6:15pm.

**Golden Z Club:** The club could not be registered at the college for an on-site club because a sponsor is needed. Debra Kellerman is looking at that issue. The club will have meetings at 4:30pm on Wednesdays.

**October Business Meeting:** This will be an evening meeting at 5:30pm at Bad Habit Brewery. Anna Marie's Alliance and Terebinth will present information. This evening meeting will also allow members to attend noon event for Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid.

**District 7 Conference:** Notes about the meeting were posted in the ZoNews. Overall it was a good meeting. Money was raised for Zonta International with the donated baskets. A decision was made to increase district dues by \$10. The club will need to decide if that cost will be

passed on to members for next year. Haiti project was clarified as not a district project. The club will need to decide actions for our club. All presentations for the meeting have been uploaded to the District website.

**Calendar of Events:** Barnes and Noble has indicated an available date of 11-24-25 for our club to their fund raiser promotion. Consensus was to continue the activity with the on-line option. The certificates could again be passed out at Christmas House for increased awareness.

**Advocacy and Service Update:** There was much discussion regarding activities for 16 Days of Advocacy. It was mentioned that some strategic planning is needed to prioritize activities. The next service event will be gingerbread houses at Anna Marie's on 12-15-25. Potential meal for this date will be sandwich bar and mashed potatoes. Volunteers will be needed to assist in serving. Members from WOW may wish to assist in event. Anna Marie's Alliance Open House is scheduled for 10-23-25 from 3-6p. Breakfast for Anna Marie's Alliance will be on 10-29-25.

**Marketplace Update:** The committee did have some sales at the district meeting. Also black t-shirts with Zonta logo will be presented at next business meeting. Those interested in the t-shirts can place an order.

**Scholarship Update:** No updates at this time.

**Kayak Update:** No updates at this time.

**Christmas House Update:** Fliers are ready and tickets will be provided to all members. Decorator tour of the home went well.

**Finance Report:** Sponsorships are down this year possibly due to tariffs, business uncertainty and businesses changing. This seems to have impacted community giving and makes ticket sales especially important this year. As of 10-1-25 the foundation checking account balance is \$24,356.05 and CD balance in Falcon Bank is \$91,87.02 including \$772.62 for October interest. There also were interest payments for April and July with approximately \$3100.00 for the year. This interest is noted to be 4.039% or approximately 4.1% for the year.

**75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event:** The group is looking for new sponsors and members who wish to contribute to the foundation. Also the group is looking for places to hold the event.

**Announcement:** Lyndsey Stram announced she will be moving to New York in the next few months. A new Vice President will be needed to fill her position. The nominations committee will be looking for candidates.

**Adjournment:** Mary Robak-Sarri made a motion to adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 1:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Mary Garding*

**Recording Secretary**



**Zonta Business Meeting Minutes**  
**9/11/2025**  
**Crooked Pint, Waite Park, MN and Zoom**

**Present:**, Laurie Ann Oppel, Acting President; Kati Blum, Gayle Borchert, Susan Dege, Mary Garding, Debra Kellerman, Joal Peitz, Shawna Retka, Lyndsey Stram, Susan Voeltz, Pat Undersander

**Absent:** Diane Aurthur, Carol Barrymore, Jan Benson, Paula Capes, Deb Dingmann, Debra Eid, Deborah Grant, Barb Johnson, Karla Krueger, Linda LaSota, Alice Lenzmeier, Linda Linn, LeAnne Miller, Kim Nagle, Mary Nimmerfroh, Glenny Olufson, Lori Rebischke, Alicia Reif, Mary Robak-Saari, Belinda Ryan, Rachel Thompson

**Guests:** Erica from Community Angels and Michele from Phases Family Support

**Call to Order:** Acting President Laurie Oppel called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance and Zonta Code followed the call to order. Pin Penalty was invoked. Zonta Elevator Pitch was also recited along with member introductions.

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Susan Dege, seconded by Gail Borchert. Motion was approved.

**Consent Agenda:**

Minutes of Business meeting of August 2025

Treasurer's reports for August 2025

Shawna Retka made a motion to approve the consent agenda as published in the ZoNews. Debra Kellerman seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

**Correspondence and Requests:** Found in ZoNews.

**Business:**

**Agency Report Phases Family Support:** Michele thanked the club for the support which was used to fund a recipient with unexpected expenses. Michele started this non-profit in 2012 and it a 100% volunteer organization. The organization recognizes all life phases for individuals who struggle and works to provide the support needed. This could with donated items such as food and clothing or with funds for unexpected expenses such as car repairs. Most domestic abuse survivors and/or single parents with children are often in need of diapers, wipes and similar items. The organization has funded weekend home packs for Albany School district students in need and is looking to add another school district. Since car repairs are a frequent need, they are also looking at a vehicle repair program. The immediate needs are assistance in spreading work about the agency and also monetary awards. They are also frequently in need of personal hygiene products, baby items and kitchen items.

**Agency Report Community Angels:** Erica works full-time at Anna Marie's Alliance. She recognized the financial barriers for individuals in difficult situations. She registered her program as a non-profit in 2020. The program does not get any state or federal funding. It relies solely on private donors. She now receives referrals from counties and school districts. She often works to provide clothing needs but also miscellaneous needs such as getting ID and birth certificates needed to get a job. She thanked the club for the grant that provided the funds to get that information and assistance in avoiding an eviction. Their ongoing needs are on their Amazon wish list and website.

**Calendar of Events:** October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The I35 bridge will be lite up in purple on 10-2-25. On 10-4-25 there will be Jindo Music Bingo at Bad Habit Brewery. On 1-9-25, the business meeting will be at 5:30pm at Bad Habit Brewery including speakers from Terebinth and Anna Marie's Alliance. There will also be a social after the meeting.

**Advocacy and Service Update:** The next service event will be serving tacos at Anna Marie's on 9-13-25. Volunteers are needed to assist in serving. More information will be sent out on Take Back the Night event on 10-2-25 and Anna Marie's Alliance open house on 10-23-25 and Anna Marie's Hope Breakfast on 10-29-25.

**Marketplace Update:** New phone bracelets were displayed. These will also be available at District meeting marketplace.

**Scholarship Update:** No updates to report at this time.

**Kayak Update:** No report.

**Christmas House Update:** The sign-up sheet for volunteers was passed around. It was announced there will be a social for volunteers and decorators on the Thursday before the open house.

**Finance Update:** No Update.

**Zonta 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** No report due to time.

**District Meeting:** Items for basket were on display. There was no official input for delegates going to the meeting.

**Adjournment:** Susan Dege moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 1:02 pm.

**Respectfully submitted,**

*Mary Garding*

**Recording Secretary**

## Voeltz, Susan, A

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**From:** cheryl mothes <cmot5902@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 8, 2025 5:16 AM  
**To:** voeltzsusan@gmail.com; Voeltz, Susan, A; Andrea Sachse  
**Subject:** EXTERNAL: Zonta Haiti Update  
**Attachments:** Haiti Update, District 7 meeting.pdf



[What's this?](#)

Please use caution clicking links or opening attachments in this message: you do not have significant email history with cmot5902@gmail.com



Good morning, Susan and Andrea -

We so appreciate your interest in helping the children in Haiti. Our efforts particularly support girls in Haiti, where the future can be improved most by supporting their education, safety, health and economic growth. I'm attaching my notes from the recent conference. Andrea, if you could please connect with Susan from the St. Cloud Zonta Club and send her the sponsorship application and any other information you want to share, that would be excellent.

Many thanks to you both!

Cheryl Mothes, MSN, MBA, PhD  
Natural Health Nutrition Counselor



Haiti is a country located less than 2 hours from Miami, and 15 years ago they experienced a devastating earthquake. Shortly after, a young college student by the name of Samuel Darguin, a Haitian-born American, went to his father's community to help with the aftermath of a demolished small elementary school. He planned to return to the US soon and complete his dream to become an attorney, but his dreams changed, and he stayed to help his father. Two years later, our Cape Girardeau Zonta Club sent an exploratory group that found Haitian American Caucus, this struggling, bombed-looking, out in the middle of nowhere school and formed a partnership with them.

Because of this partnership, their nearly 60 malnourished students from kindergarten to 6<sup>th</sup> grade grew to 500 students including pre-K all the way through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and we sent dental and medical teams from our club and community every year. The children were fed with shipments that included vitamins and minerals, they had primary, essential care, and they thrived! Ten years ago, member Andrea Sacshe took over a tiny sponsorship program for their students and grew it to the point that thousands of dollars were donated to support their growth, and for many years their students were #1 in the country in academics, and this is changing the face of Haiti.

Tragically, gang violence escalated in 2019, and we have not been able to return. The remote school that educated and fed the students was protected for some time by agreements with certain gangs, and because they weren't in Port au Prince. But in the past two years, the gangs moved out to more remote areas and the school was vandalized and taken over by the gangs. Samuel and his team relocated the most vulnerable, 12 little girls in an orphanage that had been near them for years, other girls who were at risk, and as many families as possible...but Haitian American Caucus school was splintered and families, including teachers, scattered. Samuel and the teachers continued to locate and feed and support the families, and since that time they have restarted school operations in a location on the southern coast of Haiti where his father originally was from. They are also supporting two other schools and orphanages, and as you can see in the photo's, which are recent, they are

thriving in the worst of conditions. They continue to be fed and educated, and their academics are strong.

We really don't know how Samuel, and the others, have kept going. To see everything destroyed, to live in a country that continues to get worse, it seems, rather than better... but they know that these students are the future leaders of a better country, and that the more they are educated, the better the country will become. You can see that for these students, they are flourishing. Our sponsorships, your donations, are needed more than ever, because of inflation of prices to the level of 300% for food and propane. They have gone back to using wood and charcoal which is very unsafe, to cook the rice and beans, because propane is so expensive. We know that in countries like this, girls are the most at-risk, and their safe transport, protection and education is a priority for Samuel's team. We invite you, we ask you to consider, sponsoring a child to help them in their educational journey. Your sponsorship of \$450 provides their food, education, uniforms and more.

Andrea couldn't be here today, but we have information for you to take back to your clubs. And we have children you can sponsor that you will know by name, and very soon, hopefully in December, Andrea and others will be able to return to Haiti and provide updates for you regarding your sponsored student.

I want to share a story of the young man in the center, with his arm around his mother. This is David Placid and his mother, Madame Placid – one of the loveliest women I've ever met, so many years ago. David's mother has an orphanage many miles from Haitian American Caucus, but she wanted her son to attend Samuel's school, and David moved to H.A.C. to live there when he was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. My assistant in my office, Tracy Hillman, became his sponsor and sponsored him until he graduated from high school. In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, he scored the highest in the country on his state tests, and he is now completing law school. Madam Placid's orphanage continues, with the support of Samuel's team. This is the future of Haiti, for which we have much hope.

# Zonta Club of St Cloud

## Treasurer's Report

### Period Ending September 30, 2025

<b>Balance 8/30/2025 Checking account</b>	<b>\$ 6,671.51</b>
<b>Receipts</b>	
Interest	\$ 0.60
Christmas House - slotted for sponsorship	\$ 1,000.00
C4C	\$ 52.37
Marketplace	\$ 80.00
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 1,132.97</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>	
Thrive ( from May 2025 )	\$ 100.00
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ 100.00</b>
<b>Balance 9/30/2025 Checking account</b>	<b>\$ 7,704.48</b>
<b>SAVINGS ACCOUNT REPORT</b>	
<b>Balance 8/30/2025 Savings account</b>	<b>\$ 19,178.00</b>
<b>Receipts</b>	
Interest	\$ 9.46
<b>Disbursements</b>	
<b>Balance 9/30/2025 Savings account</b>	<b>\$ 19,187.46</b>

**Zonta Club of St Cloud  
Treasurer's Report  
Period Ending September 30, 2025**

<b>Total Accounts</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>26,891.94</b>
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wait for interest to post

change dates

balance forward prev month ending balances into NON HIGHLIGHTED fields

email to Deb and Rachel



# Zonta

## CHRISTMAS HOUSE

**NOV 21-22, 2025**

**1408 Antler Creek Court, Sartell, MN  
FRIDAY 2-8 PM, SATURDAY 9 AM - 3 PM**

**VIEW BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS DISPLAYS CREATED  
BY LOCAL BUSINESSES AND DECORATORS!**

**CHRISTMAS MARKETPLACE ON-SITE FOR YOUR  
EARLY CHRISTMAS SHOPPING NEEDS**

The Zonta Christmas House is an annual fundraising event hosted by the local Zonta Club of St Cloud, Minnesota. The event features a local home with beautifully decorated spaces which is opened to the public for viewing. Local designers and stores transform each room of the home into a festive holiday wonderland, showcasing unique decorating styles and inspiring holiday cheer.

Proceeds from the Zonta Christmas House support non-profit agencies in our area whose missions are to empower women and build a better world for women and girls.

**PURCHASE TICKETS (\$20) ONLINE OR IN PERSON AT: COBORN'S SAUK RAPIDS, ST. JOSEPH, PINECONE, COOPER AVE, AND CASH WISE WEST, ZONTA CLUB MEMBERS, AND PARTICIPATING DECORATORS. TICKETS CAN ALSO BE PURCHASED AT THE DOOR OF THE EVENT.**

**PURCHASE TICKETS**



**FOR MORE DETAILS AND TICKET INFORMATION**

[zontastcloudmn.org/christmas-house](https://zontastcloudmn.org/christmas-house)

# Zonta CHRISTMAS HOUSE

## CHRISTMAS HOUSE EXPECTATIONS

### CLUB MEMBERS:

#### 1. SELL AT LEAST 5 CHRISTMAS HOUSE TICKETS

A. DEB KELLERMAN WILL GET YOU YOUR TICKETS

#### 2. WORK AT LEAST ONE SHIFT AT THE HOUSE

A. PAT UNDERSANDER HAS THE SIGN-UP SHEET.

#### B. FRIDAY SHIFTS

I. 2:00 - 5:00 PM

II. 5:00 - 8:00 PM

#### C. SATURDAY SHIFTS

I. 9:00 AM - NOON

II. NOON - 3:00 PM

III. "TEAR DOWN & CLEAN UP " 3:00 - 5:00 PM.

#### 3. PLEASE ALSO SHARE VIA FACEBOOK OR EMAIL

ABOUT THE EVENT WITH YOUR NETWORK!

BARNES & NOBLE  
**BOOKFAIRS**

# Zonta Club of St Cloud

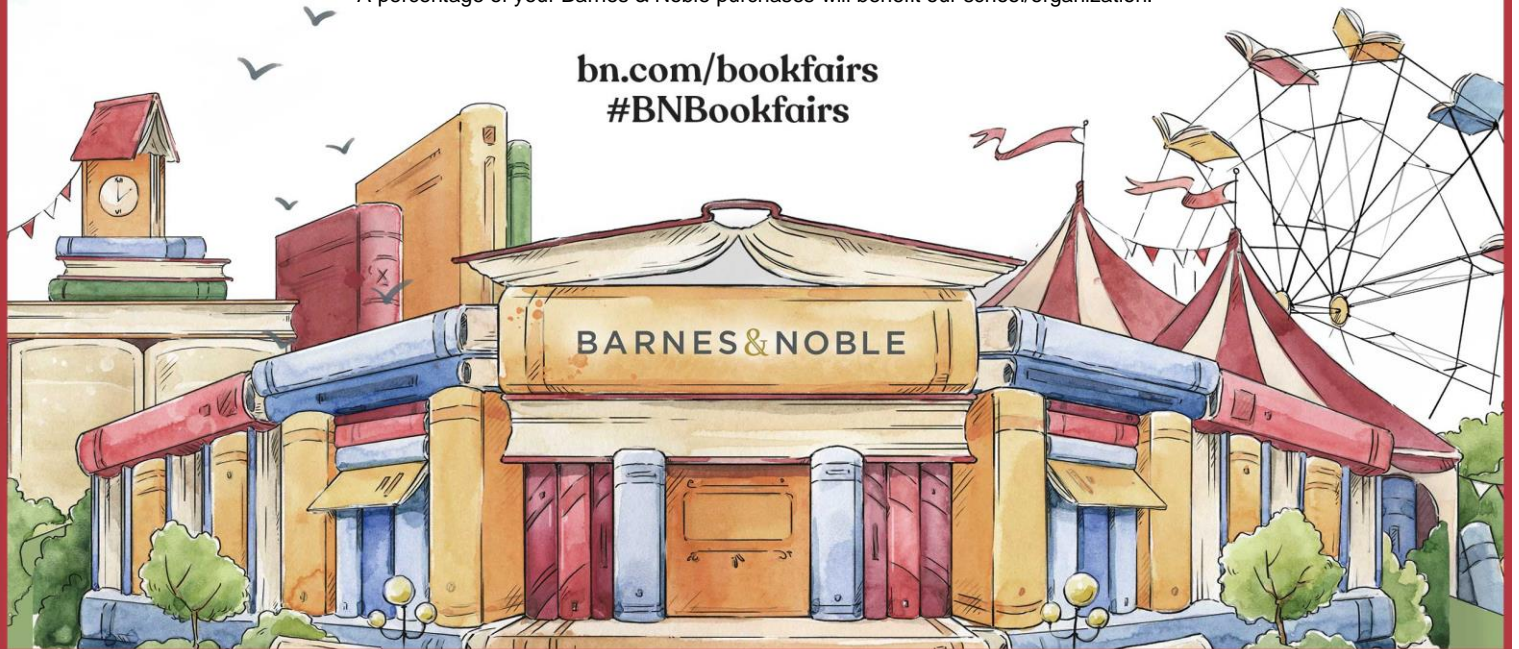
**Monday, November 24, 2025**  
**Barnes & Noble St Cloud**

**Can't attend our bookfair at Barnes & Noble?**

Visit [bn.com/bookfairs](https://bn.com/bookfairs) to support us online from 11/24/2025 to 11/30/2025  
by entering Bookfair ID 12919296 at checkout.

A percentage of your Barnes & Noble purchases will benefit our school/organization.

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**#BNBookfairs**



# Anna Marie's



ALLIANCE



**GINGERBREAD  
HOUSES + SANTA  
FOR THE RESIDENTS**



**We're shining a light on a critical issue. 💜**

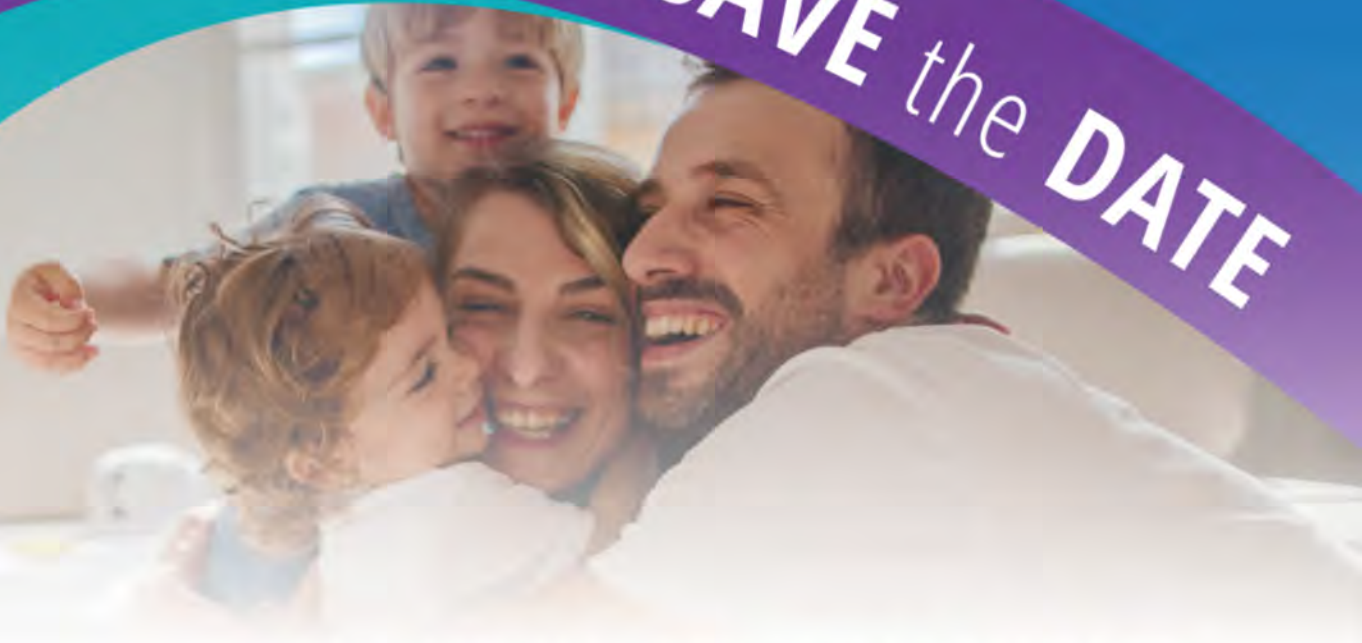
**The Zonta Club of St. Cloud is proud to be part of lighting the I-35W Bridge in Minneapolis purple this month for Domestic Violence Awareness Month!**

**Every 9 seconds, someone in the US is abused by an intimate partner. This purple glow isn't just beautiful—it's a powerful reminder that we must work together to end the cycle of violence. Know the signs. Support survivors.**

**#ZontaStCloud #ZontaSaysNO**



**SAVE the DATE**



**23<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL BENEFIT BREAKFAST**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2025 | 8 AM–9 AM**

**ST. CLOUD RIVER'S EDGE CONVENTION CENTER**

Doors open at 7 am. The event will begin promptly at 8 am.

**REACH OUT TO  
DIANE ARTHUR TO  
RESERVE A SPOT!**



**The Zonta Foundation for Women has been on the front lines, supporting critical work and programs to promote and protect women's and girls' rights across educational institutions, workplaces, and local communities around the globe. But there is still work to be done.**

**Upon our 40th anniversary, we ask you to consider what Zonta means to you and make a special gift in honor of all we have accomplished and all we still need to do.**

**EVERY MEMBER EVERY NOVEMBER  
1 November - 2 December 2025**

**This November, the Zonta Foundation for Women continues celebrating its 40th anniversary with Every Member Every November. Together, we have the power to ensure that women and girls worldwide can live free from violence and pursue education and opportunity. Your gift this November is more than a donation—it is a statement that you believe in equality, empowerment, and a future where women and girls everywhere can thrive.**

**Each contribution, no matter the size, directly supports Zonta's global mission to:  
End gender-based violence by protecting women and girls and empowering communities to break the cycle.**

**Expand access to education by opening doors for girls to learn, grow, and lead.  
Support women in decision-making by equipping women with tools to achieve independence and resilience.**

**Collectively, we can create a brighter, more equitable future. Together, we'll honor our legacy while propelling Zonta's future.**

**How You Can Get Involved**

**Donate: Make a one-time donation or set up a recurring contribution. Every dollar counts!**

**Spread the Word: Use your social media platforms to raise awareness and share our mission.**

**Honor Zonta Foundation for Women's 40 Years of Impact: Celebrate our anniversary by giving in honor of your club, a fellow member, or a woman who inspires you.**



**GOAL: 100% PARTICIPATION**

**NOVEMBER 1-DEC 2, 2025 (must be done by nov 28 for the match)**

**WHAT: EVERY MEMBER TO DONATE A MINIMUM OF \$10**

**BONUS: PLEASE LET SUE DEGE KNOW THAT YOU HAVE DONATED AS SHE WILL BE WORKING WITH THE MATCH DONOR TO MAKE THAT DONATION - THANK YOU, SUE**

**HOW: DONATE ONLINE AT <https://www.zonta.org/Foundation40>**

# LETTER FROM ZI PRESIDENT

Engaging the next generation is about more than just providing a platform and a voice; it is also about listening to and valuing their ideas and thoughts and connecting with them. When we hear and support young women and girls, it encourages them to pursue their dreams with confidence, knowing that their voices matter and can ignite change. Numerous studies support this idea:

The Zonta Club of Bunbury Inc, Australia, chartered a new Z Club at Manea Senior College, a powerful example of how Zontians are already investing in the future.

- **Gives them agency:** By actively listening to adolescent girls and young women, we give them a voice and agency, allowing them to lead and take responsibility for influencing decisions that affect them.
- **Builds inter-generational trust:** Young people often feel that adults don't fully listen to them, even when they are knowledgeable about important issues. Listening bridges that gap.
- **Creates positive changes:** By understanding the unique challenges they face, we can support their growth and help them become a generation that creates positive change.

I envision Zonta as a dynamic forward-looking community that embraces and enables the next generation. Many Zontians are already taking action through the Zonta International Mentorship Program, collaborating with Z clubs, Golden Z clubs and other youth groups on local service and advocacy projects and engaging in this year's Audit the World campaign. These efforts are more than programs or projects; they are relationships that nurture resilience and open doors. It is through our ongoing efforts and the relationships we cultivate that we help young women and girls to overcome challenges while fostering growth and resilience.

As we build a better future for women and girls, let us inspire the next generation to recognize that Zonta stands with them, not just in words but in action. Our newly launched core values, Global Community, Friendship, Equality and Inclusion, Respect, and Integrity, are not just words on paper. They are also the foundation of how we engage with young people. We build a global community by connecting across generations and cultures. We foster friendship through mentorship and shared purpose. We uphold equality and inclusion by ensuring every voice is heard. We show respect by listening deeply and valuing diverse perspectives. And we act with integrity by staying true to our mission and promises.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to our mission and for helping Zonta remain a beacon of hope and possibility.

Kind regards

Salla Tuominen  
President 2024-2026  
Zonta International and Zonta Foundation for Women



ZONTA

CLUB OF  
ST CLOUD

**75th**  
**ANNIVERSARY**  
**CELEBRATION**  
**+ SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS**

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**APRIL 9, 2026**  
**ANNA MARIE'S ALLIANCE 5-7 PM**