



ZONTA
CLUB OF
MILWAUKEE

NEWSLETTER

August 2026

Area 2 • District 6

2026–2027

Zonta Club of Milwaukee

Officers

Helen Ludwig, President
Karen Smith, Treasurer
Ruth Robertson, Secretary

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Janan Atta-Najeeb
Kate Gay
Margaret Holzbog
Pam Knackert
Diane Lindsley
Laureen Ward

Foundation Board Officers

Cheryl Nowak, President
Barbara Wyatt Sibley, Vice President
Dawn Zehren, Treasurer
Donna Conant, Recording Secretary/
Corresponding Secretary

Foundation Board

Diana Barnett
Joann Harris-Comodore
Judith Lehman
Carol Mangold
Joni Reese

Send your newsletter submissions
to jonizonta@gmail.com

Visit us online at
www.zontamilwaukee.org

August 26 Member Meeting

Welcome back Milwaukee Zontians! Please plan to attend our August meeting, to be held on August 26 at the New Berlin Public Library.

Watch for an email from **Ruth Robertson** with details on how to RSVP for our upcoming meeting and meal.

We hope everyone has enjoyed a wonderful summer! While we have been enjoying the season, there has been plenty happening within the Zonta International community. Our **August meeting will provide an important opportunity to reconnect, hear updates, and discuss proposed changes from Zonta International.** We will also have an opportunity to share our thoughts and provide feedback as a club.

We look forward to seeing everyone and beginning another exciting season together!

Meeting Program Focus

Zonta International has been working for several years on revisioning the organizational structure to address challenges with declining membership, language and cultural challenges, and expense structures for both Zonta International and Club members.

The proposed changes have been shared with membership and changes to board structure were voted on at the Zonta International Convention in 2026. Changes related to the organizational structure are scheduled to be voted on at the 2028 convention with implementation to immediately follow. In the meantime, there has been a committee designated who will work through the many challenges and questions/concerns that come up with a goal to deliver an organization that will be better suited to take Zonta into the future.

www.zontamilwaukee.org

Meeting Information Continued



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Please continue to read this information to prepare, engage and have your thoughts heard.

In advance of our August meeting, please take a moment to review the Blueprint for the Future, Executive Summary and the Q&A that Zonta International has provided in previous club mailings. This is an important time for our organization and we want to be sure we have our voice heard.

<https://zonta.org/images/docs/myzonta/tools/membershiptools/clubmailing/2026/1.2.1GovernanceBlueprintfortheFutureReport.pdf>

<https://zonta.org/images/docs/myzonta/tools/membershiptools/clubmailing/2026/1.2GovernanceBlueprintfortheFutureExecutiveSummary.pdf>

<https://zonta.org/images/docs/myzonta/governance/BlueprintfortheFuture/GovernanceBlueprintQA27June2026.pdf>

Aug 26, 2026	New Berlin Public Library	Business Meeting
Sept 23, 2026	New Berlin Public Library	Business Meeting
Oct 28, 2026	Shorewood Public Library	Business Meeting
Nov 18, 2026	New Berlin Public Library	Business Meeting
Dec 16, 2026	TBD (St. Camillus)	Social – Holiday Party
Jan 27, 2027	Zoom	Business Meeting
Feb 24, 2027	Zoom	Business Meeting

We look forward to seeing everyone on August 26. We welcome all help with setting up in advance of the meeting, around 5:30 PM.

ZONTA
INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 6

**2026
DISTRICT 6
FALL
CONFERENCE**

**FORWARD TOGETHER:
HONORING OUR LEGACY.
SHAPING OUR FUTURE.**

"I warmly invite you to join us for a day of learning, inspiration, service and fellowship."

**SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 10, 2026
8:00am**

REGISTER NOW

Visit our website
WWW.ZONTADISTRICT6.ORG

You also should have received an email invite to register for the District 6 Fall Conference this week!

President's Message



ZONTA
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I hope everyone is enjoying the summer. It's hard to believe that it will already be the end of August when we meet again.

At our August meeting we will be discussing Zonta International's *Blueprint for the Future*. ZI is proposing significant changes to the international structure. The summary of the *Blueprint for the Future* is attached. The entire report can be found here and is attached to the newsletter distribution:

<https://www.zonta.org/images/docs/myzonta/tools/membershiptools/clubmailing/2026/1.2.1GovernanceBlueprintfortheFutureReport.pdf>

Our responses to the proposed changes are due to Zonta International by October 31, 2026. We intend to send comments as a club but I also encourage everyone to respond individually as well. Please review the documents and be prepared to discuss the impact you see for our club, district and the international organization under this proposal.

At the International Convention in July, delegates voted on the International Service projects. Zonta International will continue to support:

- [*Gender-Transformative Mechanism in Climate Adaptation \(GTM\)*](#)
- [*Global Programme to End Child Marriage*](#)
- [*Laaha: A Virtual Safe Space for Women and Girls*](#)

In addition, support for a new service project will begin: *Standing with Afghan Women: Expanding Community-Led Solutions*. This project was overwhelmingly supported by the delegates. More information about the project is attached to the newsletter email. Information about all of the international service projects can be found on the ZI website. It is rewarding to know that our support helps women throughout the world.

On a local level, we will be circulating committee sign-up sheets at the August meeting. All members are encouraged to belong to at least one committee. Please feel free to reach out to me if you would like more information regarding a specific committee. Planning continues for our *Centennial Celebration*. All members are needed to make this event a success.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the August meeting!

Respectfully submitted,
Helen Ludwig
Zonta Club of Milwaukee President





Zonta International Convention Delegate Report

Thank you for electing me as the delegate for the Zonta Club of Milwaukee at the recent Zonta International Convention in Vancouver Canada. It was an amazing experience, with more than 1,500 like-minded Zontians from around the world in attendance.

I volunteered to work at the registration table which was a wonderful opportunity to meet fellow Zontians and welcome attendees as the convention got underway.

The convention began on Saturday with a *Zonta Says NOW Walk* along the harbor in Vancouver. Attendees then had the opportunity to choose from a variety of break through sessions throughout the day. I attended an interactive session entitled *Speak Up! A Zonta Says No Interactive Session to Engage, Empower and Energize*. During the session, we divided into small groups to discuss the strategies and activities our individual clubs are using to promote and communicate the Zonta Says No campaign. It was interesting to hear the many different approaches clubs are taking around the world.

The business meeting began on Sunday after the opening ceremony. The international officers gave their reports and each day, keynote speakers shared personal stories that demonstrated how their experiences connected to Zonta's mission.

One of the highlights of the convention for me was a panel featuring former Amelia Earhart Fellows. They shared their experiences and spoke about the positive impact the award has had on their lives and careers. Hearing their stories was a wonderful reminder of the importance of Zonta's commitment to supporting women and encouraging them to pursue their goals.

Convention Business

As a delegate, I voted on a number of proposed amendments to the Zonta International Bylaws and Resolutions.

As part of Zonta International's reorganization, several bylaw amendments were adopted. These changes will:

- Allow Zonta International officers and directors to be elected electronically prior to convention.
- Reduce the size of the Zonta International Board by eliminating the Vice President position and one Director position.
- Expand the potential pool of international candidates by changing the qualifications for international leadership positions.

The ZI Board recommendation to allow the President-Elect to consult with nominating committee did not pass.

Several other amendments to the bylaws were adopted that provide individual clubs more flexibility in establishing their own bylaws, particularly with regard to officers, directors and committees. As a result, our club will have the ability to change our bylaws as deemed appropriate based upon these amendments.

Two resolutions regarding the STEM and Women and Business Leadership awards (scholarships) passed. Both awards will now become annual awards. However, the award amounts will be reduced from \$10,000 every two years to \$5,000 per recipient each year. The STEM award eligibility was amended. Rather than

Club Updates



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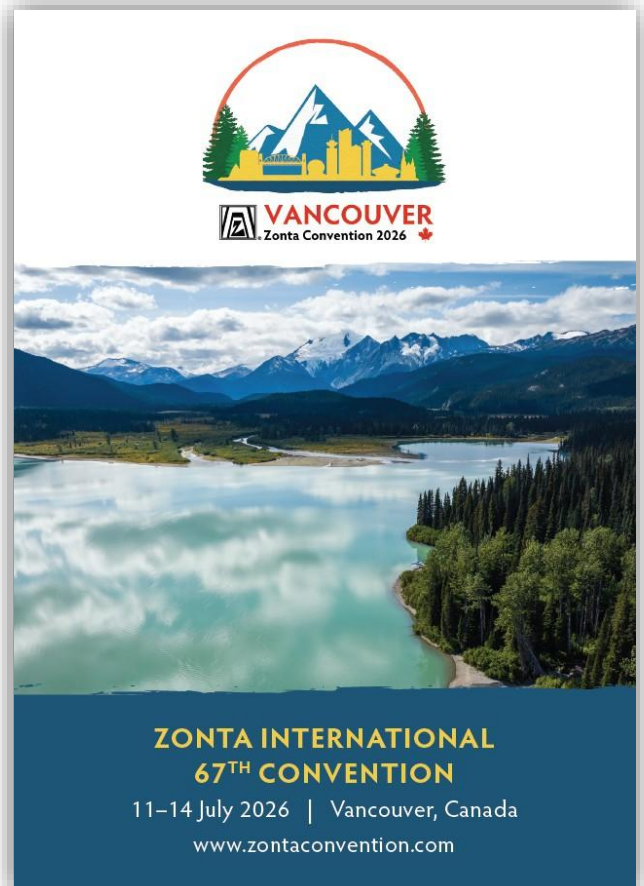
being limited to a specific age range of 18–35, the award will now be available to students from the second year of an undergraduate program through the final year of a master's program.

All of the enacted changes will be available to review on the ZI website. I did reference the new service project that was adopted in my President's message.

Overall, attending the Zonta International Convention was a wonderful and rewarding experience. It was inspiring to meet Zontians from around the world, learn about the work being done by clubs in different countries, and participate in decisions that will shape the future of our organization.

I strongly encourage our members to attend an international convention if you have the ability. It is a great way to experience the breadth of Zonta's work, connect with other members, and gain a deeper appreciation for the difference we can make together.

Respectfully submitted,
Helen Ludwig
Zonta Club of Milwaukee President





Centennial Celebration Fundraiser Updates

Strong Foundation – Stronger Future

All Centennial Committee subcommittees are making tremendous progress as we continue planning for our spectacular Centennial Celebration on November 7, 2026, at Harley-Davidson Museum in The Garage venue.

Centennial Celebration: Important Updates & Ways to Help

Invitation Distribution – August 26

We will distribute Centennial Celebration invitations at our **August 26 meeting**. If you have not yet let Pam know how many invitations you would like, please do so as soon as possible. If you are unable to attend the August 26 meeting, we can either mail your invitations to you or arrange for another member to pick them up on your behalf. Please let Pam know your preference.

We will also be mailing invitations to our designated invitee list shortly after the August meeting. An electronic version of the invitation will be available and emailed by the end of August.

Reservations & Ticket Information

Our GiveSmart ticketing and fundraising platform will be ready on **August 15** at **Zonta100.givesmart.com**. The **reservation deadline is October 15, 2026**, and we strongly encourage guests to make their reservations online.

- **Ticket price:** \$175 per person
- **Tables:** Seating will be arranged at tables of 10, with a goal of filling **30 tables**
- Members are encouraged to purchase tickets and/or invite family, friends, colleagues, and community partners to attend.

If someone you invite is unable to attend, please consider asking them to support our Centennial Celebration with a **monetary donation** through the Donate button on our website. Every contribution helps, and we still have a **\$10,000 matching challenge** to meet!



Club Updates



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Silent Auction Donations

We will be collecting **silent auction donations at the August 26 meeting and no later than September 23**. Now is the perfect time to consider putting together a themed basket or reaching out to businesses you frequent to request a donation.

Gift cards and gift certificates are welcome and will either be combined with other items or grouped together to create attractive auction packages.

Our goal is to offer **40–50 silent auction packages**, with individual packages ideally valued at **\$200 or more**.

Solicitation letter templates and donation forms were emailed on June 1. If you need another copy, please contact Pam.

Exciting Live Auction Item: Green Bay Packers Tickets!

We are excited to announce a **fantastic Live Auction package** for our Centennial Celebration!

The package includes **two Green Bay Packers tickets** for the **November 15, 2026, game against the Minnesota Vikings at Lambeau Field**. The seats are located on the **50-yard line behind the Packers bench**—an incredible opportunity for any Packers fan!

The package also includes:

- **Two-night accommodations at a Wild Rose cabin**
- **Parking at a private residence**, providing an option to avoid the Milwaukee game-day traffic

Please start talking about this package up with family, friends, and fellow Packers fans now. Encourage them to attend the Centennial Celebration and **come prepared to bid!**

Thank you for helping make our Centennial Celebration a tremendous success. Whether you sell a table, purchase a ticket, secure a silent auction donation, or make a financial contribution, **every effort brings us closer to celebrating 100 years of Zonta service, advocacy, and empowerment for women and girls.**

100 YEARS
Empowering Women & Girls
7 NOVEMBER 2026

DINNER AND PROGRAM
6 PM APPETIZERS, CASH BAR, SOCIALIZING,
RAFFLE AND SILENT AUCTION
7 PM DINNER & PROGRAM

LIVE AUCTION
9:30 PM EVENT CONCLUDES

MENU: YOUR ENTREE CHOICE OF
Braised boneless beef short ribs (avoiding gluten)
Pumpkin & butternut squash ravioli (vegetarian, w/nuts)

Tickets: \$175 Per Person
\$50 per ticket is tax deductible

Purchase online at Zonta100.givesmart.com
or use the QR code below by October 16, 2026

Ticket price includes one drink coupon and a H-D Museum ticket.
Space is limited so reserve your ticket early!
Music by
Chanda "Chae" Harris Band

Club Updates



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Opportunity to Attend Community Advocates 50th Anniversary Milestone Event



COMMUNITY ADVOCATES
Where Meeting Basic Needs Inspires Hope

Community Advocates (CA), our partner in Project Wellspring, is celebrating its 50th anniversary in Milwaukee on Friday evening, September 18 at the Baird Center. As an expression of gratitude for our partnership and our pledge for Project Wellspring in 2027, they have reserved a table of 8 for Zonta Club of Milwaukee and will reserve another if more are interested in attending.

The event is a great opportunity to begin to get to know our partner better and learn more about housing issues in Milwaukee. The keynote speaker is Yusef Dahl who will present "What It Takes to Build a Thriving Milwaukee: Housing, Stability, and Opportunity". He has a moving back story and is a passionate advocate.

There is a reception 5:30-6:30, program 6:30-7:30, and an after-party until 10 PM including staff and partner recognition from 8-8:30. We will also be recognized in PR materials, on screen, etc. during the main program.

If you are interested in attending the event as a representative of the Club, please contact Donna Neal before September 4. She will then provide names and contact information to CA. Let Donna know if you plan to be there until 8:30 - we want to make sure we are represented during the special recognition for partners.

If you can't attend the event but are interested in volunteering, there may be opportunities to help at registration, welcoming guests, and check out.

Join Us for an Unforgettable Evening of Impact and Celebration
Nurturing Hope for a Thriving Community

Program

5:30-6:30 PM | Social Hour
Begin the evening with a vibrant social hour featuring live musical entertainment, curated grazing stations, drinks, and opportunities to connect with fellow supporters, community leaders, and changemakers.

6:30-7:30 PM | Program
The program will include powerful, real stories of impact, a dynamic 50th anniversary video experience, and a live Fund-a-Need appeal that offers a meaningful way to make a difference. A highlight of the program will be a keynote presentation from **Yusef Dahl**, "What It Takes to Build a Thriving Milwaukee: Housing, Stability, and Opportunity," offering insight and inspiration rooted in bold vision and community transformation.

7:30 - 10:00 PM | After-Party!
Staff & Partner Recognition
Following the program, stay and celebrate with us at a lively staff and partner appreciation gathering—an energetic close to the evening filled with music, connection, and inspiration.

RSVP by September 4
secure.agiv.com/event/communityadvocates50th/

If you have any questions or need help with registration, please contact Deb Heffner at dheffner@communityadvocates.net.

For More Info Visit communityadvocates.net



Club Updates



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Membership

If you have any prospective members, please invite them to our upcoming August, September, October and/or November meetings. We will probably not be having a prospective member event until the spring, so if you have anyone interested, please invite them to a meeting and/or give Pam their name so she can follow up.

Meet New Member: Pat Knoebel!

Pat and her husband John are retired in Delavan and have two adult children Jonathan (DC, CCSP, CKTP) and Carly (CPM) and 3 granddaughters ages 5, 6, 7 who they love spending time with.

Pat was an Accountant for General Instrument and its subsidiaries for 25 years before a career change led her to Sales in the position of National Account Manager for the next 20.

Over the years Pat has volunteered numerous hours for women and children's shelters, homeless shelters, food drives, school and community events and animal rescue.

Pat enjoys the outdoors and she and John have recently completed their bucket list of officially visiting all 63 US National Parks and all 50 states.

She enjoys spending time with family, friends old and new and taking on new and different ways to help people in need.

Joni Reese, whom she met at a women's luncheon recruited her to Zonta and the rest is history.





Meet New Member: Paula Fink!

After a career in corporate communications, direct marketing, and nonprofit management, **Paula** is enjoying retirement while staying actively involved in the communities and organizations she cares about. Throughout her career, she worked in healthcare communications with Aurora Health Care and Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare/Ascension, serving both the Chicago and Milwaukee markets. She also worked in direct marketing with Quad/Graphics and in nonprofit leadership with the Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce and Wauwatosa Avenue United Methodist Church.

Paula earned her bachelor's degree in Journalism and Public Relations from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and a master's degree in Business Management from Keller Graduate School of Management. One of the highlights of her early career came in 1984 when, as a newspaper intern, she became the first female reporter permitted to cover the Green Bay Packers training camp. Growing up just four blocks south of Lambeau Field, Paula truly grew up green and gold! She and her husband, William, have been Green Bay Packers season ticket holders since 1988.

Today, Paula enjoys volunteering with Milwaukee German Immersion School, the Milwaukee County Zoo, the Pabst Mansion, Rooted & Rising, and German Fest. She previously served for nine years on the Board of Directors of the German Immersion Foundation, supporting German-language education in Milwaukee Public Schools. She remains active at Wauwatosa Avenue United Methodist Church and is also a member of a local P.E.O. chapter. Paula enjoys spending time with her mother in Green Bay and staying connected to her hometown through the Ashwaubenon Historical Society and DAR.



Paula and William recently celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary and are the proud parents of two children, Forrest and Catherine. Retirement has given Paula the opportunity to devote more time to family, volunteer service, and the organizations and causes that have always been important to her. When she is not volunteering, she enjoys traveling, reading, kayaking, and spending time with family and friends.

Paula is happy to be back with Zonta after previously serving as a charter member of a Zonta e-Club. She looks forward to connecting with fellow members, building new friendships, and supporting Zonta's mission of creating a better world for women and girls through advocacy, education, and service.





Advocacy

Women's Equality Day

Observed annually in the United States on August 26, Women's Equality Day commemorates the 1920 certification of the 19th Amendment, guaranteeing some women the constitutional right to vote.

Each year, the Wisconsin Women's Network recognizes Women's Equality Day with an event that honors the progress that's been made while acknowledging persistent inequalities, at the polls and beyond, faced by many Wisconsinites due to their gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexuality, ability, identity, and socioeconomic status.

Come together with us on Thursday, August 27, from 5:00–8:00PM at the Goodman Community Center in Madison for an inspiring evening of connection, reflection, and empowerment.

General Admission Ticket: Suggested price of \$50



From The Wisconsin Women's Council....

Women are living longer than ever, making retirement planning one of the most important financial decisions they will make. Yet many women face unique challenges including: wage disparities, career interruptions, caregiving responsibilities, and lower lifetime Social Security benefits, that can make building long-term financial security more difficult.

To help address these challenges, the Wisconsin Women's Council is partnering with Summit Financial Education for Women, the Wisconsin Women's Network, and the Wisconsin Women in Government to present:



Advocacy Continued

Women and Investing: Building Confidence for Retirement

Wednesday, September 30, 2026

12:00–1:00 p.m.

This free webinar is designed to provide practical, actionable information that can help women make informed financial decisions at every stage of life.

Register here:

https://summitcreditunion.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_B7GNJRfFoSJmNxuDhSXHL0A#/registration

“Violence prevention cannot begin with death.”

The Ideas Lab section of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel included an editorial by **Antonio Drew Norton**, Founder and Executive Director of Asha Family Services; and **Carmen Pitre**, President and CEO of Sojourner Family Peace Center. Due to space in the Cub Newsletter, I will only highlight a few points but I encourage all of you to read and share the article in its entirety.

“Imagine a Milwaukee where domestic violence prevention is as coordinated as our domestic violence response. Imagine stronger connections between healthcare, schools, behavioral health, community violence intervention, neighborhood organizations, faith communities, and victim services. Imagine recognizing high-risk situations earlier, reaching families sooner, and intervening before violence escalates to homicide.”

“The time has come to invest just as intentionally in preventing violence before it becomes irreversible. At Asha Family Services, prevention means engaging men, strengthening families, addressing trauma, and confronting the community conditions that contribute to violence. At Sojourner Family Peace Center, we stand beside survivors and their children during the darkest moments of their lives, helping them find safety, healing, and hope while navigating complex systems.”

“If we invest as boldly in prevention as we have in response, Milwaukee can once again lead the nation, not only in how we respond to domestic violence, but in how we prevent it. That means investing across the full continuum of prevention: survivor safety, accountability for those who cause harm, trauma-informed care, culturally specific services, behavioral health, healthy relationship education, community violence intervention, and earlier engagement with individuals whose violence is escalating.”

- “Ask your elected officials how they are prioritizing domestic violence prevention.”
- “Support legislation creating a Missing and Murdered African American Women and Girls Task Force.”

<https://enewspaper.jsonline.com/>

- I would also add that we need to find out why the **Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women Taskforce**, now 6 years old, has yet to release a report.

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/local/wisconsin/2026/08/04/wisconsin-report-on-missing-murdered-indigenous-women-is-unreleased/91038917007/>



Centennial History

Celebrating our Impact Throughout the Years!



THE 1940s: A ZONTIAN'S WAR EFFORT

During World War II, Zonta member Alma Wright organized a group of women who manufactured parts for B-17 Flying Fortress bombers from her Lake Drive basement.



IN 35 MONTHS, she and 10 of her friends, working 40-45 hours a week, turned out



SEVEN MILLION PARTS.

THEY MET QUOTAS OF

92,000

PIECES A WEEK.

WOMEN DIDN'T JUST SUPPORT THE WAR EFFORT. THEY BUILT IT.

Alma is shown using a micrometer on a rod that was part of the landing gear on a Flying Fortress bomber. (Milwaukee Journal photo)



THE 1940s: A ZONTIAN'S WAR EFFORT

The parts made in one basement helped keep our airmen in the sky and our country free.

★

“Women didn't just support the war effort. They built it.”

* By the way, Alma was the daughter of A.O. Smith founder Charles W. Wright and wife of the president of Badger Meter Manufacturing Co.

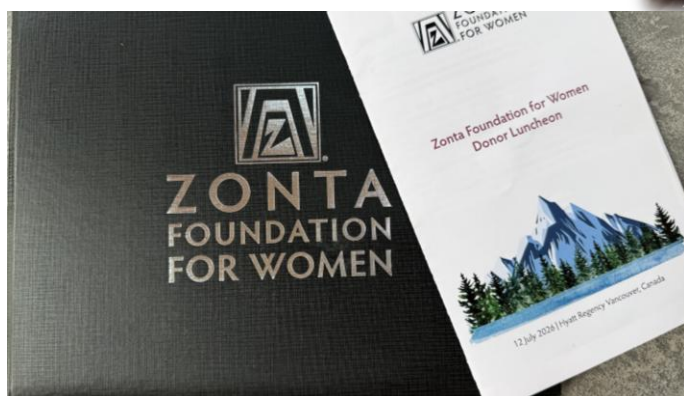
Club Updates



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Foundation Updates

As representatives of our Milwaukee Club and our Foundation, Helen Ludwig and Joni Reese attended the **Zonta Foundation for Women Donor Luncheon** while at the Zonta International Convention in Vancouver. It was an honor to attend with other clubs who achieved an award status as we did, and many individual donors reaching significant milestones over the 2024-2026 Biennium and/or other individual with even more significant lifetime giving milestones.



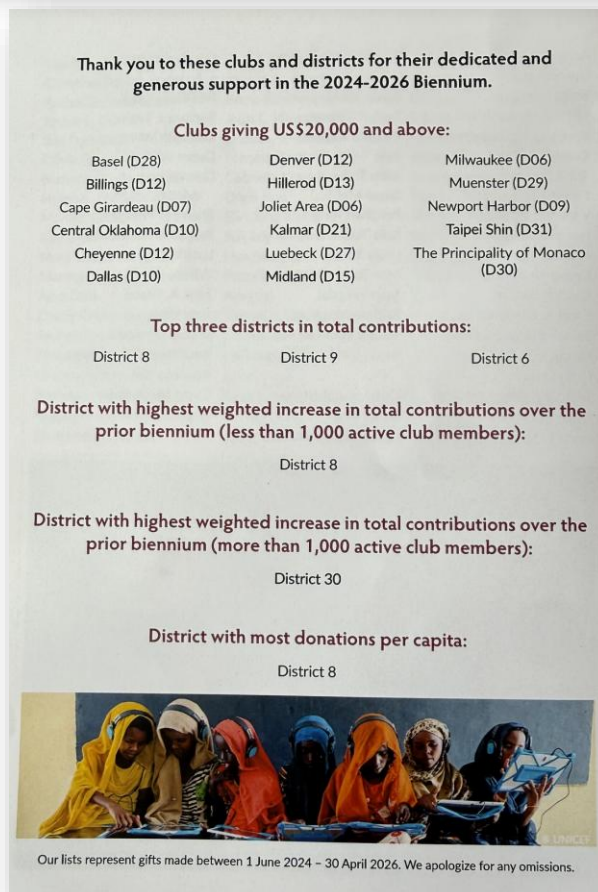
Additionally, Joni represented the Foundation on the main convention stage to receive the Zonta Club of Milwaukee's Foundation Recognition Award certificate presented for contributing \$20,000 or more to the Zonta Foundation for Women during the 2024-2026 Biennium. The certificate will be brought to the August meeting.



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District 6 Updates



Pictured: many of your District 6 Representatives at the Zonta International in Vancouver in July!

District 6 also received acknowledgement for being one of the top three Zonta International Districts in total contributions for the 2024-2026 Biennium! Way to go!! **Please see the images of the program and banner shown on the previous page!**

Here is an excerpt from the end of biennium report from Jeni Royalty, our past D6 Foundation Ambassador:



District 6 Foundation Ambassador Report – June 2026

(Updates to May Report bolded)

District 6 clubs and members have made donations totaling ***\$212,901.42** as shown here:

** Does not include the \$161,851.20 bequest to the Endowment Fund from the Estate of Linda Hiltbrand*

AE Fellowship Fund	\$ 8,701.44	International Service Fund	\$ 26,223.77
Rose Fund	\$141,866.81	Young Women in Leadership Award Fund	\$ 9,183.56
Endowment Fund	\$ 26,925.84		

This is **140%** of our \$152,000 District 6 goal with **all 21 clubs**, along with **153** of our **407** members donating. District 6 was one of just **five** districts/region with more than 35% of our members giving at 37.5%. We also rank second in average contribution per member at just under \$457. **We should be proud of this support yet just imagine these numbers if every member of District 6 gave!**

The graphic below shows the total donations to the Foundation from around the world during the 2024-2026 biennium. Gifts in support of this biennium's International Service Projects and Educational Programs totaled **\$5,279,728.39** or **114%** of the \$4,617,000 needed. Gifts to the endowment funds came to **\$2,218,631.71** bringing overall contributions to the Foundation to **\$7,498,360.10** between June 2024 and May 2026.

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Views from Vancouver!!!



August 2026

www.zontamilwaukee.org