Zonta Australia
Zonta Says NOW Think Tank
FEBRUARY UPDATE

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Finding joy in tough times



What is going on in our world? Are we descending into chaos, or are we already there?

If you feel anxious about what lies ahead, you are not alone. I came across a useful resource the other day called *Coping with Climate Change Distress*, that provides practical tips on how to manage yourself through uncertain times. What does it recommend? Take action, take a break – especially from the news – have fun, establish a healthy routine and focus on only a few issues. Sounds like a plan. So, like the daisy above, we can push through the chaos and bloom!

Our Think Tank earlier this month explored the theme that ‘elections offer more than a sausage’ and highlighted some of the key issues relating to gender equality and climate action that we can raise with candidates.

Yesterday, Zonta International hosted a webinar entitled *A Closer Look at Zonta Says NOW* that featured the new Zonta Says NOW video.

In March, the spotlight is definitely on gender equality with International Women’s Day on 8 March and the Commission on the Status of Women’s CSW69 event that convenes in New York from 10-25 March.

Don't forget that entries for the Virtual Art Gallery need to be submitted before 8 March. You don't have to be an artist and I had a lot of fun doing my entry - it was a cathartic experience. The 2025 Collection will be launched on Earth Day, 22 April. Zontians and their families can enter, it's free, and it's not a competition. Have some fun with it!

Our next Australian Think Tank will be held on Sunday 13 April - it was pushed back a day as it clashed with some area workshops. Our speaker will be A/Professor Carly Cook - a leading conservation scientist.

In today's edition, we'll look at these topics, and much more...

Keep breathing, keep smiling and have fun!

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Elections offer more than a sausage



The February Think Tank focused on the theme - *Elections offer more than a sausage*. We explored issues relating to gender equality and climate action that we can raise with candidates at the upcoming Federal election. The election has to occur before mid May, so we are expecting the election date to be announced very soon.

The Western Australian state election is also happening on 8 March (International Women's Day!).

In the Think Tank we shared the USA Caucus video that explains how Zonta is political but not partisan and went through a range of gender equality and climate action issues. We had a poll to determine which issues resonated most with those in attendance.

In the climate area, duty of care for future generations scored highest. This was undoubtedly due to us all being inspired by Anjali Sharma when she spoke at our October Think Tank.

The highest ranking gender equality issue was gender based violence. We are liaising with Gender and Disaster Australia to explore what opportunities there may be for us to work more closely to reduce harmful stereotypes that contribute to loss of life in disasters.

We also shared some tools to show how to find your local members and their voting records and how to track bills that are going through Parliament. It is always good to do your homework before meeting with you local member or candidate! Ask them what they are doing about gender equality and climate action.

Please check out the slides from the event as they provide an overview of what it is in place now and links to all the sources of informatoin used. Be informed - we don't want to lose ground on these issues.

February Think Tank Slides and Video

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April Think Tank - Conservation



Our Think Tank in April has been pushed back to Sunday 13 April, as it clashed with some area workshops.

This meeting will focus on women in conservation - yes we will have a conversation about conservation!

Join Associate Professor Carly Cook, a leading conservation scientist and ARC Future Fellow, as she shares how women in science are shaping evidence-based conservation.

As a member of the IUCN Green List Expert Assessment Group, Carly works to identify and support places where nature thrives, ensuring protected areas meet the highest standards. Don't miss this inspiring session on the power of women in conservation!

We will also be sharing feedback from the NGO CSW69 in New York.

Please share this pdf flyer in your networks and note your meeting times below:

- 1.00 pm-2.30 pm in WA
- 2.30 pm-4.00 pm in SA and NT
- 3.00 pm-4.30 pm in Qld, Vic, Tas, NSW, ACT

Register for the 13 April Think Tank

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March Forward



March Forward is UN Women's theme for International Women's Day 2025. UN Women's signature fundraising IWD lunch event will be held concurrently around Australia on 7 March. This year the keynote speaker will be Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland, lifelong climate justice advocate and founder of Project Dandelion.

Many clubs are hosting IWD events including the Zonta Club of Kyneton in Victoria where Carole Theobald will speak on Zonta Says NOW. Carole will be

'dropping in' to Kyneton on her way to New York where she will be attending the Commission on the Status of Women 69 (CSW69) at the United Nations.

The CSW will review progress made in the 12 focus areas outlined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BfPA). It is 30 years since the BfPA was adopted as the blueprint for gender equality. Given the international pushback on both gender equality and climate action, this event is more important than ever before. Discussions will be intense.

Across the road from the UN, civil society holds a parallel event called NGO CSW69. You don't have to be in New York to participate in the NGO CSW69 as there are over 350 online sessions in addition to the 350 in-person events. The Zonta Says NOW Working Group will be joined by our Zonta International Youth Observer

The NGO CSW69 is managed through the Whova app, that many Zontians would have seen used at International Conventions. Please register using the button below. All sessions are free to attend.

There will be no Intercontinental Think Tank in March to accommodate CSW.

Register for NGO CSW 69

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Postcard from Bangkok



As you may know that Sharyl Scott is a Zonta International representative at the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). She is currently in Bangkok attending the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development where stakeholders from the region are preparing a report for the 2025 World Summit on Social Development.

Sharyl is attending a series of roundtable dicussions that cover many gender equality and climate action issues including universal social protection and decent work to support inclusive development and a just transition - and transforming the care economy.

The Pacific region is at the frontlines of climate change.

Christine Trenorden shared a fascinating article about a four-year survey of over 300 girls in six Pacific countries. The survey examined the impact of climate events on the lives of girls and young women. Overall, half the girls reported missing out on school due to climate events but this figure rose to nearly three quarters in Tuvalu. Nearly a third said that climate change was affecting the quality of their food and over a quarter said that there was less food available with nearly one in five girls reported feeling hungry.

The results paint a clear picture of how climate change poses a direct threat to the health and wellbeing of Pacific girls, creating urgent gaps in basic needs and fundamentally changing the course of their lives and their families' lives.

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WCC Castlemaine Congress



Some Zontians are also members of the Women's Climate Council (WCC). There are many opportunties for synergy between Zonta Says NOW and the WCC - for example they have regular Climate Conversations with excellent speakers, and hold six-weekly member forums and book club meetings. They are very strong in research and have a growing membership. While they appreciate donations, it is free to join the WCC which is a volunteer-run organisation.

The *Women Changing the Climate* event in Castlemaine, Victoria, will be their first 'regional congress'.

As they explain, the stage is set for an unparalleled gathering of visionary leaders, changemakers, and advocates at the Victorian Congress 2025, taking place from 28–30 March 2025 at the iconic Castlemaine Town Hall. This event is a beacon for women, in all diversity, and women's organisations committed to driving meaningful action for climate sustainability, women's leadership and community empowerment.

The Congress will feature a dynamic program of keynotes, workshops, and panel discussions that delve into critical issues facing Australia and beyond, from climate resilience, innovative governance and business practices, to cultural inclusivity and women's leadership.

With its theme of *Building women's empowerment in the climate crisis*, the event offers a unique platform for collaboration, learning, and action.

Highlights include:

- *Climate Conversations with Invited Speakers*: Renowned thought leaders, politicians and innovators will share insights on the global and local challenges of our time, inspiring attendees to turn vision into action.
- *Interactive Workshops*: Participants can engage in hands-on sessions to build skills, foster innovation, and explore sustainable solutions.
- *Networking Opportunities*: The Congress will bring together diverse voices from across sectors, enabling connections that catalyse impactful partnerships.

For more details, tickets etc, please check out the link below.

Register for the Victorian Climate Congress

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Spotlight on the Foundation



Did you know March 8 is International Women's Day and Zonta's Rose Day?

Rose Day is a time to reflect and give tribute to the women who have empowered us. The yellow rose is a symbol of friendship and happiness - so who would not want to receive one!

Many Zontians share yellow roses with women who have inspired them. In some clubs roses are used to promote Zonta's mission and attract new members. (Members remove the thorns and attach an information card to each rose before handing them out!)

Alternatively, you may choose to deliver a 'virtual rose' to a friend or someone you admire, by donating to the Zonta Foundation for Women and sending an eCard to them with a yellow rose on it. (You do this by selecting the Honor/ Memorial Tribute option on the donations page.)

On Rose Day, don't forget to take some time for yourself - and stop and smell the roses.

Donate to the Foundation

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