

The Bridge

District 15
Zonta International

Issue 6 of 8 (April, 2008)

www.zontadistrict15.org

The Official Newsletter of District 15

District Insights from your Governor Carole Calvert-Baxter

District 15 has certainly seen its share of winter this year. But as sure as the crocus, nature's symbol of cheerfulness and gladness, will triumph through the snow in a couple of weeks, we will soon enjoy spring and will be out in our gardens assessing the toll of months of snow and dark days. Spring is just around the corner and with that comes the promise of new growth. And just as we nurture new growth – we need to nurture our clubs.

Zonta International has been making a concerted effort for each district board to deliver the message to club leaders and to the individual members of those clubs, the reality that ***Zonta is indeed a strong international organization***. While we tend to focus on local service projects, it is important to keep in mind that our individual efforts are all a part of a worldwide organization, and like the crocus, Zonta blooms with possibility and embodies the promise of bright days ahead.

To assist you in your efforts Zonta District 15 Area Directors have been diligently working to develop Spring Workshop programs that are timely, pertinent and will prove rewarding for all who attend. We as a District Board strongly believe that if women are willing to commit their time to a service organization, the leaders of that organization have a responsibility to assure that their commitment of time is honored by the best workshops that we can present. I believe that you will not be disappointed with this spring's schedule of workshops and that you will definitely realize a solid return on your time invested in attending.

One of the most valuable steps that you can take to really realize the true nature of Zonta is to attend an international convention. I cannot impress upon you strongly enough the value that you can receive by attending the upcoming CONVENTION 2008 in Rotterdam. When you have the opportunity to meet and to listen to the stories of women from countries all over the world, who are working, just like you, to make their worlds a better place for women, it can inspire renewed enthusiasm for the ideals expressed in Zonta. Only at an International Convention can you fully realize the diversity and unique talents that come together to make Zonta the organization that gives you a sense of pride at being a member. I hope to see many of you from District 15 as possible at this exciting event. For a full description of the city of Rotterdam and of the programs that will make up the convention, I refer you to the October 2007 issue of the Zontian magazine and www.zonta.org.

As a reminder, there are forty-five Zonta clubs in District 15. I sincerely hope that each club will have a member or members attending the Convention. That would be a great expression of support and a strong statement of the commitment level that we have in District 15. However, in the event that a club cannot have a member in attendance, it is necessary to have another club carry your proxy to the convention. Timely attention to this issue is important.

I look forward to seeing each of you at one of the Spring Workshops and to seeing as many of you as possible at the 2008 Convention in Rotterdam. I believe that every member of Zonta should attend at least one International Convention as some point in their membership in order to really get a grasp on how vast Zonta is on the world stage and to really feel a part of that united effort to improve the status of women worldwide.

If you are unable to make Rotterdam, I hope you will make to your Area Spring Workshop to ensure you have some personal nurturing as a member of Zonta International.

ZONTA CALENDAR

2008

March 7-9	MI Girl Scout Trainers Conf.—see Issue 6
March 8	Zonta Rose Day (International Women's Day)
April 1	YWPA Club candidates due to district
May 1	Club officers report form 2008-9 due to HQ
April 26	Area 4 Workshop--Milford
April 27	Area 3 Workshop—Windsor-Essex County Area
May 3	Area 2 Workshop—Newaygo County Area
May 4	Area 1 Workshop--Cadillac
May 31	Klausman club candidates due to district

**Zonta International Convention, Rotterdam
June 27- July 2**

**Zonta District XV Fall Conference, Frankenmuth
October 17-19**



Two of the other 12 rose varieties in the District Rose Sale this year.

http://www.zontadistrict15.org/what's_new.htm

DISTRICT 15 BOARD MEMBERS 2006-2008

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Congratulations and welcome to the Zonta Club of Cadillac as the newest Zonta club in District 15. An excellent membership with a wide variety of talents and backgrounds that should be a strong voice for women in the Cadillac area.

Deadlines: Send articles for the "Bridge" to Editor Phyllis Clark at: pclark@gfn.org; or mail: 2447 King Rd.; Lapeer, MI 48446. For questions contact her at: 810/664-1445. *Please add Phyllis to your Club's newsletter mailing list (email preferred).*

Date copy due: August 1 for Summer Issue; November 1 for fall; February 1 for winter; May 1 for spring
Planned publication by the first of the following month (September, December, March, & April).

District Features

Status of Women Report by Martha Belfour, Committee Chair

The District 15 Status of Women committee is gearing up to receive your club's Young Women in Public Affairs winner's application. The YWPA award recognizes young women, pre-university or pre-college women students (ages 16-20), demonstrating commitment to volunteerism and leadership in their communities. The district award recipients receive US\$500 from the Zonta International Foundation YWPA Fund. International award recipients are selected from District Recipients and receive US\$1,000. Information and application are available on the Zonta International website, *Member Resources, International Scholarship and Awards* section.

Please observe the April 1, 2008 deadline for submitting your club's recipient's application to the District. Send original application to: Martha Belfour, District 15 YWPA, 635 N. Stony Point Road, Suttons Bay, MI 49682. Telephone: 231.271.3429. E-mail: mhb635@hotmail.com.

The Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarships 2008 program information is available on the Zonta International website. This program was established to encourage undergraduate (entering the third or fourth year of a first university degree at an accredited university/college/institute) women to enter careers and to seek leadership positions in business-related fields. The program operates at the club, district and international levels of Zonta. The District 15 SOW committee will receive your club's recipient application until July 1, 2008. Please send original application to Martha Belfour.

I encourage the Zonta District 15 clubs to develop the Young Women in Public Affairs Award and the Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarship programs. Information is on the Zonta International website. The District 15 board members and the Status of Women committee are available to guide you through the development and implementation process.

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District XV 10th Annual Rose Sale by Phyllis Clark, Rose Project Coordinator



The first roses for the District Rose sale were all Zonta roses (a yellow rose). That was 1999. Since that first sale, other varieties have been added so Zontians can have a Zonta rose in their garden and/or other roses to complement that Zonta rose. The Lapeer Club coordinates this sale for District XV.

Visit the rose selections at http://www.zontadistrict15.org/what's_new.htm . Orders should be submitted prior to the Spring Workshops. The roses are delivered to the Spring Workshops for members. See the calendar above for workshop dates and hosting clubs. There are 12 rose varieties including various types as well, i.e. hybrid tea, floribunda, climber, shrub, and grandiflora. With a very limited number of each variety, sales are on a first come, first served basis. The proceeds from the rose sale support the District's Jane Klausman award. District needs to sell 60 roses, which is less than 2 roses/U.S. club (Canadian deliveries are prevented by customs costs). They are great gifts (Mother's Day, birthdays, thank you, etc.), auction donations, memorials or honor plantings, and in your garden. There are some care tips both with the rose and on the Lapeer website.

Other Important District News

Congratulations

District XV Board of Directors 2008-2010

Governor	Sandra Vosper,
Lt. Governor	Denise Quarles
Treasurer	Karen Armaly
Secretary	Amy Fraser Maple
Parliamentarian	Hilary Henley
Area 1	Patricia Utter
Area 2	Joanne R. Lose
Area 3	Sally Randall
Area 4	Connie Dutcher

Nominating Committee: Bonnie Odom, Chair
Kitty Buchan, Virginia Panoff

Remember the Dues Increase

Effective with this upcoming dues year, the District dues is \$20.00 as approved at the Fall Conference. Be sure to include that in your budgeting and dues collection this spring for the 2008-9 Zonta year.

District Website

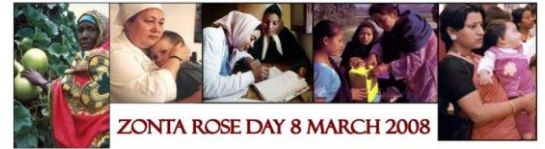
Have you checked out the recently updated District XV website?

<http://www.zontadistrict15.org>

Remember this is valuable resource for Club members and officers.

Welcome to the new Zonta Club in Cadillac!

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



International Women's Day



Zonta Rose Day 8 March

Join Zonta Club members worldwide in celebrating the advances made in women's rights and in raising awareness to the continuing global need of equality for all people.

Inequality by the numbers

- **513 million** women who are illiterate
- **91 million** women living on less than US\$1 a day
- **60 million** women "missing" due to gender-based violence
- **55 million** girls who are not in school
- **4 million** women and girls bought and sold every year
- **7,000** women and girls who will contract HIV today

Zonta International works globally and locally to help women overcome barriers to equal education, health care, legal rights, credit and employment through education, service and advocacy programs funded by the Zonta International Foundation.

Learn more at www.zonta.org.

Visit www.zonta.org for ideas to celebrate Zonta Rose Day.

Farewell to our “Queen”

It is with a mixture of sadness and great respect that we must mark the passing of the “Grand Dame” of District XV. Geraldine “Gerry” Gesaman lived a life of commitment to her family, to her community and to the life-long devotion to advancing the status of women. If ever there was an “old school” founder upon who’s shoulders we stand, it surely was this great lady.

As a long-standing member of the Zonta Clubs of Highland Park and later Pontiac-North Oakland, she served two terms as club president, held many club offices, served as chair of countless committees. She acted as mentor to many, many new members and leaders. At the district level she served as Secretary, Area Director, Lt. Governor and Governor of the District from 1974 thru 1976. Gerry attended 5 International Conventions and was extremely proud of her membership in an organization with such a world-wide impact on advancing the status of women. She was a consistent attendee at district conferences where she participated in many workshops and earned her title as “Queen” of District XV. Her tiara was one of her prized possessions and she wore it with humor, panache and authority. She was indeed a shining example of a woman who took from life all that it had to offer and gave back to her family, friends, community and Zonta International all of the commitment, love and dedication. All of us who knew her have a special place in our heart for her memory and we will always cherish her enthusiasm and passion.

For those of you who may not have known Gerry well, the following is a copy of an email from Jacquie Gudmundsen describing Gerry’s funeral service that may give you some insights on the depth of this woman and the love that she gave and received from us all.

Governor Carole Calvert- Baxter



**Geraldine “Gerry” Gessaman
The Queen
District XV Governor
1974-1976**

Farewell to our “Queen”

“Friends,

I thought you’d like to know about Gerry’s service.....Gerry’s visitation and funeral service were lovely. It was so hard to say goodbye. Her family brought her crown to the funeral home and to the church as well. They talked about how important that it was to her and how much fun she had with it.

Sue (Noakes) came down from Traverse to go to the visitation and funeral and Mary Lou (Gharrity) came to the funeral home on Monday. Paula (Somerville) represented the area and Gerry’s first club and it was so nice to see her. Gerry’s youngest daughter, Barb, with whom she lived the last 10 years or so, recognized the past governors pins that Sue, Mary Lou, and I were wearing and asked if we would tell Gerry’s grandchildren something about Zonta and what it meant for Gerry to be a Governor. What an audience. Eleven young men and women were fascinated to learn about the organization and what Gerry’s role in it was. One of the girls said that they used to think of Zonta as Gerry’s secret society. Her oldest granddaughter, who lives on the Big Island, had visited Gerry at the Hawaii Convention and remembered how many people stopped to visit or greet Gerry. She and her mom, Gerry’s oldest daughter, Edie, came to Michigan when Gerry had the stroke and along with all of the other family members had been with her for her last two weeks.

There were 10 Zontians at the funeral, internment, and luncheon at the church after the cemetery. During the service, the minister spoke (the last of 4 that Gerry “trained” when she worked as secretary at the Church, after she retired from her position in the Highland Park Schools), then her son Bill spoke about what she gave her family, and then Joanne Dembinski Steinmayer spoke about Gerry and Zonta. Joanne was great. She never lost her

composure as she shared a little of Gerry’s history and experiences in Zonta. Bill said he inherited from Gerry the willingness to speak if offered a chance—and he did a great job as we have heard her do—both with smiles and tears about what an amazing woman she was.

She was a widow for 40 years and raised 5 children alone; the youngest was only 4 when her husband died. She worked full time, was an active Zontian in her club and a district officer, from District Secretary, to Area Director when the District included Ohio and West Virginia, to Lt. Governor to Governor. During her term as Governor, (1974-76), her oldest son, Everett, was diagnosed and ultimately died of Hodgkin’s disease.

No one ever heard Gerry bemoan how difficult her life was, or how many tragedies she suffered. In fact, it was just the opposite. She was always cheerful and optimistic and talked about what a wonderful life she had and how good Zonta was to her. She was fun and brought fun to our organization. At Fall Conference, we will have to retire Gerry’s crown as Queen of the past governors—no one else could or would want to fill her shoes.

Memorials to the Zonta Club of Pontiac-North Oakland, which is the Zonta organization the family wanted for her memorials, will fund scholarships for young women—and effort Gerry always supported and was grateful to for the scholarships her younger daughters received.

I smile as I write this because I can picture Gerry smiling and cheerful—and gently and diplomatically letting people know the right way to do things in the kingdom. She taught us well and loved us all and our district is better because of her.

Jacquie Gudmundsen