

# ZONTA

CLUB OF  
QUABOAG VALLEY

THE ZONTA BOG  
NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2025

## Mark your Calendar 2025

December 8 ZQV Holiday  
Meeting—See page 7



November 25 to December 10  
Zonta Says No and 16 Days of Advocacy  
Ending with the Zonta Says NO Summit

## 2026

January 13 ZQV Meeting—ZOOM  
Amelia Earhart month

February 21 Period Project, then lunch meeting  
Venture Way in Hadley—Thanks Andrea!

March 9 Women Making a Difference event  
Ludlow Country Club 5:30 Social 6:00 Dinner \*

April 13 ZQV Meeting—Ludlow Country Club \*

May 2 —District-wide Spring Retreat  
Hampden Inn, Wells, Maine  
Hotel rooms available for Friday and Saturday.  
Stay tuned to see the agenda for this one-day retreat!

May 11 ZQV Meeting—Ludlow Country Club \*

June 8 ZQV Meeting—details TBA

Zonta International Convention  
July 11-14, 2026  
[www.zontaconvention.com/](http://www.zontaconvention.com/)  
Registration is open for  
INPERSON and VIRTUAL  
attendance. Check it out!



\* RSVP required Dinner is \$30  
Please see a board member if help needed.

Dear Zontians and Friends,

### "The Shortest Day" by Susan Cooper

*Through all the frosty ages you can hear them  
Echoing behind us—listen!  
All the long echoes, sing the same delight,  
This Shortest Day,  
As promise awakens in the sleeping land:  
They carol, feast, give thanks,  
And dearly love their friends,  
And hope for peace.  
And so do we, here, now,  
This year and every year.  
Welcome Yule!*



The holiday season is upon us and I wish the best for you,  
your family and friends.

We will gather on December 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM at the Grapevine  
Grill in Belchertown. You will find more details on page 7.  
Please bring a small wrapped fun gift (<\$10) for an exchange.

Please consider doing something to support the **Zonta Says  
No** message during the 16 Days of Advocacy. Advocacy Chair  
Karen Keough-Huff has put together some suggested "calls to  
action on page 6.

More information will come soon about our January program  
which will be virtual. For February we will gather to put to-  
gether menstrual product kits for our Period Project. If you  
know of a potential drop-off site in January, please find out if  
they need a box provided and let Mary Knight or me know so  
we can get them the appropriate signage.

We are also looking for nominations for our Women Making A  
Difference Awards which take place in March. If you know a  
woman in the greater Quaboag Valley who could use the  
recognition for her focus on improving the lives of women and  
girls, please submit a short nomination statement to  
[info@zontaqv.org](mailto:info@zontaqv.org) for the board to consider.

See you soon!!  
Cyd Melcher  
President

Birthday wishes to  
Chris Keough Huff 12/11  
Pamela Albertson 12/22  
Cherie Braun 12/29



# The Poinsettia Fundraiser has begun!

Liz Reeves has sent invitations out to our master database and all members are asked to share this fundraiser with their favorite vendors. It is a great opportunity for companies to brighten up their office space while supporting a great cause. These plants also make great holiday gifts for neighbors and friends—the medium size at \$25 makes a classy but affordable gift.

Please get orders in as soon as possible so we can get started on deliveries the week of December 1st. If you have a couple of hours to help us deliver, contact Mary Knight with your preferred schedule.

Forms: [www.zontaqv.org/poinsettia/](http://www.zontaqv.org/poinsettia/)

## The ZONTA Club of Quaboag Valley Annual Poinsettia Fundraiser



We invite you to participate in our annual poinsettia fundraiser. These plants brighten up the office and home during the holiday season, and make wonderful gifts for friends, colleagues and clients. These florist-quality Poinsettias in foil-covered pots are available in two sizes and four colors. Deliveries will start December 2nd.

To order: Complete the order form and (1) mail OR fax to the Committee Chairs (contact info below) or (2) provide to the Zonta Club member who will call you in the next two weeks. Payment is due at delivery. Make checks payable to "Zonta of Quaboag Valley".

Business/Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity	Size / Cost		Color Selection		Subtotal Multiply quantity times cost
	Medium (5-7 blooms) \$25	Large (10-14 blooms) \$32.50	Red	Pink White Pink & White*	
Example: 2	Large		Red		\$65

\* limited quantities of pink & white, so please note 2nd choice on same line.

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

Zonta of Quaboag Valley – Poinsettia Fundraiser Committee Members  
Committee: Liz Reeves, Mary Knight, Patricia Pupek

Phone: (413) 583-4283 Fax: (413) 547-0024 E-mail: [Info@ZontaQV.org](mailto:Info@ZontaQV.org)  
Mailing Address: Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley, PO Box 1034 Belchertown, MA 01007-1034

### Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley District I, Area II, Charter 1317 of Zonta International Club Officers 2025—2026

**President:** Cynthia Melcher  
**Vice President:** Karen Keough-Huff  
**Treasurer:** Joanne Turner-Chiacchia  
Pam Albertson  
**Secretary:** Mary Knight  
**Directors:** Patricia Pupek  
Andreea Rotaru

**Website:** [www.zontaqv.org](http://www.zontaqv.org)

### Committee Chairs/ Members 2025—2026

**Finance/Audit:** Pam Albertson,  
**Membership:** Mary Knight, Cherie Braun  
**Visibility:** Mary Knight, Andreea Rotaru  
**Advocacy—Zonta Says No, Climate Action:** Karen Keough-Huff  
**Service—Hands-on projects, Grants:** Mary Ann Rubis, Liz Reeves  
**Scholarships:** Patricia Pupek  
**Poinsettia Fundraiser:** Liz Reeves,  
**Golf Fundraiser:** Karen Keough-Huff, Debra Wood,  
**Spring Fundraiser:** TBD

**Nominating:** Joanne Turner-Chiacchia, Patricia Pupek

## Business Meeting—November 10, 2025 6pm Ludlow Country Club

**Present:** Cyd Melcher, Mary Knight, Liz Reeves, Debbie Wood, Cherie Braun, Pam Albertson, Karen Keough-Huff, Trish Pupek, Mary Ann Rubis, Pattie Hallberg, Chris Keough-Huff, Kris Goold, Crystal Rondeau

**Absent:** Joanne Turner-Chiacchia, Marge Cavanaugh, Deb Alm, Andreea Rotaru, Colleen Moynihan, Connie Mahoney,

**Guest:** Dana Carnegie (GSCWM), Jacqueline Farrow (Wellspring Cooperative), Roger & Kathy Fleury,

**Writing Sisters:** Darlene Elias, Marissa Quintero, Jupong Lin, Kaia Jackson, Mydalis Vera, Jacqueline Velez

Stephanie Mahar (Cyd's guest), Mydalis Vera, Christopher, Judy Luddy and Lexie Johnson from the Northampton Zonta Club.

We had a full program tonight after reciting the Zonta blessing and partaking of the buffet.

### Service Grant Awards

Mary Ann Rubis and Liz Reeves, co-chairs of Service, introduced the winners of our fall Service Grants: Girl Scouts of Central and Western MA, Wellspring Cooperative and the YWCA of Western MA (not present this evening).

**Dana Carnegie**, GSCWM Communications Director accepted the award and shared how the grant will fund the Council's Community-Based Programming (CBP), which brings the lessons taught through Girl Scouting to girls who may not have the opportunity to participate in a traditional troop setting through after-school and summer programming



**Jacqueline Farrow**, Director - Recovery Through Innovation Program, accepted the award for Wellspring Cooperative. Shell shared how the grant will support their Cooking with a Recoveree series and invited us to learn more about the organization's work.

### Kick-off for the 16 Days of Advocacy and Zonta Says No to Violence Against Women

Karen Keough-Huff, chair of the Advocacy Committee, explained that all clubs around the world are united during this campaign to educate about and advocate for preventing violence, protecting victims, and prosecuting perpetrators. She then introduced the table of Writing Sisters, who are here tonight to share their personal writings and inspire action in support of women survivors. **Karen aka 'Q'** started with her poem, followed by presenters **Darlene Elias, Jupong Lin, Jacqueline Velez, Mydalis Vera, Marissa Quintero, and Kaia Jackson**. One after another, the readings were heartfelt, inspiring, and professionally delivered. Zonta is proud to stand with these amazing women. The orange scarves were handmade by the Zonta Club of Concord NH for the 2025 District Conference.



### Business Meeting

**CONSENT AGENDA** – Hearing no questions, the following were approved:

**Minutes** from October 2025 - included in Zonta Bog

**Treasurer's Report** for October 2025 (emailed)

**Announcement:** We are pleased to announce that **Susan Seaver** is rejoining the club and will help out with Treasurer responsibilities. We are still looking for a 2<sup>nd</sup> individual to be mentored and step up to the leadership position of Treasurer.

### DISCUSSION

*Continued on page 4*

November Minutes continue

### Fall Conference ballot—Delegate report

Cherie shared that her experience as a first-timer at the Boston event was a positive one. Sessions were inspiring and informative, and meeting other Zontians in the District and beyond was a highlight. The Chocolate and Wine basket was very well received and netted the club \$200. Members were encouraged to visit the Conference website – ZontaDistrict1.org and click on 2025 Fall Conference to review a Summary of the event. The Presenter tab includes links to speaker slides and resources, and check out the Pictures tab.

### December 8 Meeting

After a brief discussion, it was decided that we would meet at a local restaurant for our holiday meeting. Kris Goold and Trish Pupek volunteered to make the arrangements.

### Holiday Giving

We have designated funds of \$400 in the budget for local Food Banks. Joanne or Pam will get those checks out. Over the years, we have purchased toys, books, and gift cards for families in need. After discussion, a motion was made and voted to use \$500 in service money to buy \$25 gift cards split between two organizations: the Palmer Domestic Violence Taskforce and Children's Advocacy Center (Northampton and Belchertown). Mary will contact the organizations to see which stores would make sense for this purpose.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Advocacy -

**Period Project** – Mary asked members to let her know where posters and boxes are set up for the collection of feminine products. Details of the project and locations are posted at ZontaQv.org/period.

**16 Days of Advocacy** – Karen announced that we will run a social media campaign during the 16 days and Zonta Says No to Violence Against Women from 11/25 – 12/10, including a daily call to action. Members were asked to keep alert for related legislative actions that we want to support.

Scholarship – Trish announced that we have an applicant for the Women in STEM award. She is attending MIT and is a German citizen. The committee will review the paperwork in the next two weeks.

She reminded us that the club's winner of the Women in Business award is **Casey McDermott**, age 35, a resident in Dartmouth Nova Scotia. We did not have anyone from our area who applied, but this was not just a "shoe-in". Casey was an outstanding candidate. Trish will share more information in the next Bog, and we will arrange to have a Zoom meeting with her.

Poinsettia – Liz announced that poinsettia sales are underway. The order form and details are on [www.zontaqv.org](http://www.zontaqv.org). Please let Liz or Mary know if you know a business that should get an invitation to purchase these beautiful plants. So far, Pattie, Cherie, and a friend of Connie's will help in the delivery of the plants.

Service – Members of the YWCA of Western MA were unable to attend tonight. Mary will arrange to get the check to Liz Dineen and get a picture. We still have not had a chance to recognize **Liz Wills Ogilvie**, 2025 Woman Making a Difference Awardee; Cyd suggested that we visit her at her place of work.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**December 8 Holiday Gathering T.B.D.**

**January 12 Zoom Amelia Earhart month** Featured speaker

**February 21 10-12 Period Project** Venture Way in Hadley, followed by lunch meeting

**March 9 @5:30 Ludlow Country Club** Women Making a Difference Awards – please make suggestions!!

**April 13 and May 11 Ludlow Country Club**

**June 8 Informal Gathering T.B.D.**

Respectfully submitted, Mary Knight, Secretary

**PS: Pampered Chef Zonta's link:** <https://table.pamperedchef.com/party/2428063mhn>

Food bank donation of a loaf of bread that only requires water:

[www.pamperedchef.com/shop/Pantry/Baking+Mixes/Italian+Herb+Bread+Mix/101283?queryID=0d9a9e04db31fa4a8e6aca9740bb820e](http://www.pamperedchef.com/shop/Pantry/Baking+Mixes/Italian+Herb+Bread+Mix/101283?queryID=0d9a9e04db31fa4a8e6aca9740bb820e)

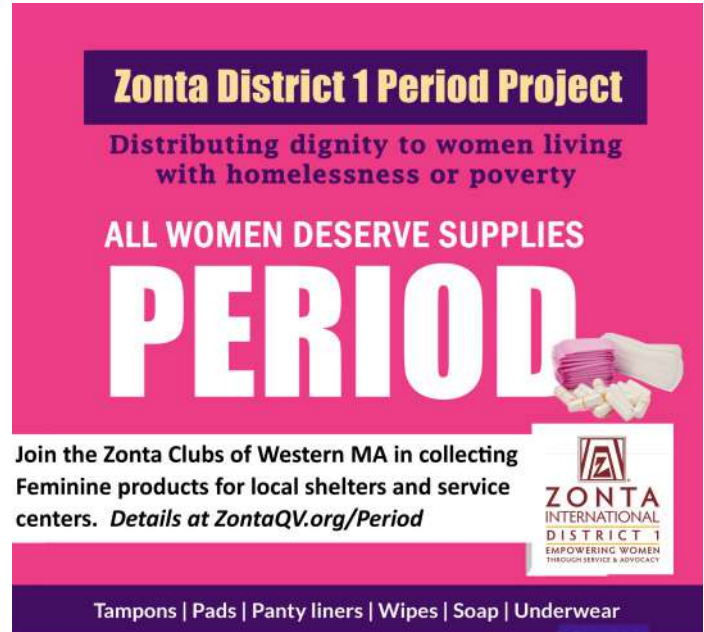
## Zonta's Period Project seeks hygiene products

The Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley, a nonprofit organization, is panning its annual Period Project collection. This fundraising and supply drive program purchases and collects women's hygiene supplies for packaging and distribution to shelters, food pantries, schools, and organizations serving women and teens in need.

Feminine hygiene products are considered non-essential by the federal government, so they are not covered by SNAP and WIC programs. The project seeks donations of sealed boxes of individually-wrapped pads and tampons, cleansing wipes, hand sanitizers or soap, panty liners, and new underwear in any size. Also in need are personal care products for all skin and hair types.

Find addresses/maps for drop-off locations throughout Hampden and Hampshire counties, and a link to an **Amazon wish list** at [www.zontaqv.org/period](http://www.zontaqv.org/period). Cash to purchase items in short supply are gratefully accepted. Checks can be made to Zonta, PO Box 1034, Belchertown MA 01007-1034.

Period Project kits will be assembled Saturday, 2/21/26 beginning @10am at the Venture Way Collaborative, 200 Venture Way, Hadley MA.



**Zonta District 1 Period Project**  
 Distributing dignity to women living with homelessness or poverty

**ALL WOMEN DESERVE SUPPLIES**  
**PERIOD**

Join the Zonta Clubs of Western MA in collecting Feminine products for local shelters and service centers. *Details at [ZontaQV.org/Period](http://ZontaQV.org/Period)*

Tampons | Pads | Panty liners | Wipes | Soap | Underwear

ZONTA INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 1  
 EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY



The YWCA of Western MA received their Service Grant money from Quaboag Zonta for establishing a food bank for women and children in need during these difficult times.

At this year's District 1 Fall Conference, the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley introduced a project to educate women/families about the importance of planning for an emergency evacuation that no one wants to think about. With the help of all clubs in the District – conference attendees assembled 50 'Go Bags' filled with a few important items and an educational pamphlet that provides insightful tips. Clubs took home a few bags each as templates to use as appropriate in their communities, and guest speakers were given a bag as a gift.



**Details about the project that our club is working on can be found at [www.zontaqv.org/advocacy](http://www.zontaqv.org/advocacy).** This page also includes a pdf of the educational pamphlet, a link to an Amazon wish list and a sample letter to businesses and individuals asking for their help in collecting items or donating to the project. To minimize the expense, the intent is to get donations of items (with or without logos) from local businesses and like-minded organizations, and ask students to help us collect/advertise for donations. All who contribute will be named as PARTNERS for this project..

For now, we need help in getting donations and Ideas on how to distribute the sample go bags—individually, during a workshop for families with first responder speakers, etc. Contact Connie, Trish or Mary with ideas for the committee.



During the [16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence](#), you can support women and girls by learning about and sharing information, supporting local service providers that help survivors, and advocating for stronger laws and policies. Participating in or organizing events like webinars or walks, showing support by wearing or displaying the color orange, and promoting online safety are also effective actions. **The following are Call to Action suggestions to get you started. Pick an action during the 16 days and share what you are doing to encourage others to do so as well!**

November 25 – Day 1 – Support the **Center for New Americans** ([CNAM.org](#)) by donating to the 30 Poems in 30 days initiative, learning about their services, donating or volunteering.

November 26 – Day 2 – Cuts to the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**, have severely impacted vulnerable families in our community. Learn about [springfieldfoodpolicycouncil.org](#) and other organizations who are fighting hunger and nutrition inequity. Donate to local food pantries as you are able.

November 27 – Day 3 – Contact legislators to support the I AM Bill (H.4611) to support the menstrual equity initiative to provide menstrual products to shelters in Massachusetts. **Join Zonta in sponsoring the [Period Project](#).**

November 28 – Day 4 – Like, comment and share the 16 Days postings at [www.facebook.com/ZontaQuaboagValley](#). We expect the **Writing Sisters** to share some of their poems in support of survivors.

November 29 – Day 5 – Add your name to the [Zonta Says NO to Violence Against Women Pledge](#)

November 30 – Day 6 – Learn about HR.4392/S.2531 **Uterine Fibroid Intervention and Gynecological Health Treatment (U-FIGHT) Act of 2025**; encourage your representatives in the U.S. House and Senate to support research funds.

December 1 – Day 7 – Donate to the [Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts](#), an organization that works to advance gender and racial equity. CEO Vanessa Pabón-Hernandez is an honorary Zontian with the Quaboag Club.

December 2 – Day 8 - This is **Giving Tuesday**. Consider donating to the [Zonta Foundation for Women](#) and other programs that provide resources for ending violence against women and girls.

December 3 – Day 9 – **Listen to and elevate survivors' and advocates' stories**. Search for podcasts such as Voices of Hope that will increase your understanding of the issues.

December 4 – Day 10 – Contact [CASA \(Court Appointed Special Advocates\)](#) about how you can support children

December 5 – Day 11 – Because we are stronger together, organizations like [Indivisible.org](#) and the [Women's March](#) are mobilizing actions to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. Commit to joining a local event in your area.

December 6 – Day 12 - Read [statements from Zonta International](#) to see how gender-based violence (GBV) is connected to larger global issues.

December 7 – Day 13 Check out [Safe Passage](#), which offers support and services for survivors of domestic violence and relationship abuse. **Sunday December 7th is their Hot Chocolate Run or Walk fundraiser—donate to [Zonta Zooms](#) team!**

December 8 – Day 14 – Support climate action by starting your own Go Bag for a weather or other emergency that forces you to leave your home. An informational Preparedness pamphlet and links can be found at [ZontaQV.org/advocacy](#).

December 9 – Day 15 – Participate in collecting menstrual products for the **Period Project taking place in February of 2026**. Details at [zontaqv.org/period](#).

December 10 – Day 16 - Register to attend the [Zonta Says No Virtual Summit](#) on the critical role of male allies in preventing and addressing gender-based violence (GBV). The cost is \$25 (plus fees) to attend or get a recording.



YOU'RE INVITED TO

*Quabaag Zanta  
Holiday*

**DINNER**

**MONDAY**

**8**

**AT 5:30 PM**

DECEMBER

Grapevine Grille

[www.thegrapevinegrille.com](http://www.thegrapevinegrille.com)

62 Turkey Hill Rd., Belchertown

*RSVP by 12/1 to Kris at [KMGoold@aol.com](mailto:KMGoold@aol.com)*

*Please bring a wrapped fun gift (<\$10) to exchange.*

*We will order from the menu. Check it out!*