



ZONTA

CLUB OF
QUABOAG VALLEY

THE ZONTA BOG
NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2025

Mark your Calendar 2025

Several volunteer opportunities this fall!
Check out page 6 for listing and dates

October 13 ZQV Meeting—details on page 2 & 7
Ludlow Country Club 5:30 Social 6:00 Dinner *

October 24-26—Fall District Conference
Embassy Suites, Boston Logan Airport.
REGISTER TODAY!! See page 8

November 10 ZQV Meeting—details TBA
Ludlow Country Club 5:30 Social 6:00 Dinner *

December 8 ZQV Meeting—details TBA

2026

January 13 ZQV Meeting—ZOOM

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 *

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!

Zonta International Convention
July 11-14, 2026
www.zontaconvention.com/
Registration opens in October
Hotel rooms open!



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

Dear Zontians and Friends,



Summer has come and gone in the blink of an eye and we are into the busyness of fall. In September we hosted our annual golf tournament and raised about \$6000 to support projects for women and girls in our region and around the world. Many thanks to Debbie Wood and Karen Keough-Huff and all the Zontians who contributed time and raffle items for another successful event.

The Zonta District 1 conference takes place in Boston this year. This biannual event offers a chance to be exposed to a powerful array of diverse thinking and connect with dedicated members from across the district. The fee to register increases October 1. so don't miss out. Many Zonta sisters are looking for people to care pool with or share a hotel room. Please check out the info on page 8.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, a cause central to our mission. We hope you'll consider participating in the Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force Awareness Walk and Gathering on Sunday October 5th at Veteran's Park in Ware at 1 pm. See details and other volunteer opportunities on page 6.

Our October meeting will take place at the Ludlow Country Club featuring author Jen Deaderick who will speak about her book *She The People*, a history of women's suffrage in the United States. Copies of her book will be available for purchase. We will also be formally inducting new members Deborah Alm, Crystal Rondeau, and Patricia Hallberg [and others]. This promises to be a rich event celebrating so much of what it means to be a Zontian. **Members and guests are asked to RSVP at info/zontaqv.org by October 8th**

Finally, please review the urgent message on page 5 about the need for a **Treasurer in training**. If a current member or someone who is interested in joining does not step up to take this position, we will need to hire an outside bookkeeper—necessitating an increase in dues to cover operations.

See you soon!!
Cyd Melcher
President

Birthday wishes to
Elizabeth Reeves 10/10



OCTOBER 13 Meeting at the Ludlow Country Club

Planning is under way for the October meeting. You are encouraged to bring guests! Highlights:

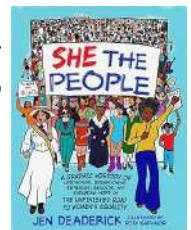
Induction of three new members—we are delighted to formally welcome Deborah Alm, Crystal Rondeau, and Patricia Hallberg to our Zonta Quaboag Valley club.



Our speaker this evening will be Jen Deaderick



With over 18 years of experience as an author and communicator, Jen Deaderick specializes in using writing and social media to amplify narratives about gender, history, and social justice. Her book *She the People* published by Seal Press, examines the evolution of women's citizenship in the United States, and her writing has been featured in outlets like *The New York Times*, *Dame Magazine*, and *Huffington Post*. As a founder of the Equal Rights Amendment Facebook page, Jen has fostered an engaged community of over 30,000 members, advocating for legal gender equality and raising awareness through impactful content and campaigns. Jen is a frequent panelist on Greater Boston, a daily news show on WGBH.



Copies of *She the People* will be available for purchase at the event.

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

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—September 8, 2025 6pm Ludlow Country Club

Present: Cyd Melcher, Mary Knight, Liz Reeves, Joanne Turner-Chiacchia, Pam Albertson, Debbie Wood, Connie Mahoney, Karen Keough-Huff, Trish Pupek, Cherie Braun, Mary Ann Rubis, Pattie Hallberg

Absent: Chris Keough-Huff, Kris Goold, Marge Cavanaugh, Deb Alm, Andreea Rotaru, Colleen Moynihan, Crystal Rondeau

Guest: Kathy Fleury

We had yet another lovely potluck dinner. Many thanks to Keough-Huff's for their hospitality!

Business Meeting

We did not take a vote on the June reports – they will be included in the October Consent Agenda

Minutes from June 2025 - included in Zonta Bog

Treasurer's Report for June 2025 (emailed)

DISCUSSION AGENDA

Fall Conference Action Items DUE 10/1

Fall Conference Attendance encouraged for all who are able – see agenda for the breadth of experiences available:

www.zontadistrict1.org/fall-conference-2025/

Delegates needed for online voting (Nominees for next biennium, Budget, Bylaws, Rules of Procedure). Cherie Braun voted Delegate and Trish Pupek as backup. Mary will get the paperwork ready to send to the Fall Conference committee.

Service Project – creating 50 Emergency Preparedness Bags – Our club was asked to model this project. Each club will bring an item for the bags (see what has been pledged so far: www.zontadistrict1.org/fall-conference-action-items/ Connie has donated whistles for the club's efforts – 50 will be used for the District project. **Note: we are donating 50 notebooks and pens for the bags**

It is cost-effective and important for keeping important notes and phone numbers.

Online Raffle to benefit Zonta International Foundation for Women or Zonta District 1. Club and individual

We are donating a \$60 gift card and a lovely shawl

Marketplace store item to raise money for the club. **We will raffle off a chocolate & wine gift basket. Trish has volunteered to put it together. If you are able, please bring donations of wine and chocolate to the October meeting.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Golf Tournament Committee – Karen and Debbie thanked members for their contributions to another successful fundraiser. Although we had fewer players, they were generous in participating in the raffles. We anticipate a profit of \$6000. Mary will get a letter out to players and members with a detailed summary, thank you for playing, and save the date message for 2026.

“Scholarship” Committee – Women under 35: Business and STEM Awards –Joanne reminded us that we voted to increase our scholarship/awards in 2026, from \$1000 to \$2000. Mary will update the website zontaqv.org/scholarships/

Trish shared that her committee is reviewing candidates for the Women in Business award. We are still looking for applicants for the Women in STEM. We look forward to hearing from Colleen about a fourth scholarship she is researching for women over 35. If you are interested in joining this committee which is tasked with promoting our awards and reviewing applications, please contact Trish.

Service Committee – Liz and Mary Ann shared info about this committee and invited interested members to help with outreach and reviewing service requests. Service Grants deadlines are April and October, with awards being announced in May and November. Joanne later provided this update: “Our Club has \$23,887 for service expenditures in the 2026 budget. Of that amount, \$14,003 has been earmarked for specific purposes. The remaining \$9,884 is available for grants, projects and other requests.”

Membership and Outreach (tabling, follow up with guests, promotion on website, news releases, social media) Committees – Mary and Cherie also welcomed members to get more involved in sharing the chance to make the world a better place for women and girls. We are delighted to formally induct our three newest members – Deborah Alm, Crystal Rondeau and Patricia Hallberg - at the October meeting. Several of our like-minded partners have events this fall – fundraisers, walks, tabling opportunities – and our participation is invited. We can make a bigger impact together!

Advocacy – Karen shared that the 16 Days of Advocacy and Zonta Says No (11/25-12/10) is an opportunity for Zontians worldwide to have one voice. She is looking for interested members to help plan activities

Continued on page 4

September Minutes continue

that promote our ideals.

Connie and Mary shared more information on our Climate Action project to educate the public on the need for Emergency Preparedness, as noted in the discussion about the Fall Conference service project. We need your help to fill our 'go bags'! We're asking every member to identify companies—small and large—that we can approach for donations. A letter with all the details is ready for you to share with potential partners

Poinsettia Fundraiser – Liz shared that letters will go out in October to our network about ordering Poinsettias in November. We will have a letter and order form on the website for members to share with companies and individuals who might want one of these beautiful plants. We also need help in delivering the plants the first week in December. Let Liz or Mary know if you can help.

May Calendar Fundraiser – This is the final fundraiser of the Zonta year. We are looking for 31 gift cards to businesses and restaurants valued at \$25 and up. Please email Mary with details as cards are collected. Deadline is 3/25. We will sell tickets for the fundraiser during the month of April.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

October 13 at the Ludlow Country Club - guests encouraged. RSVP to Mary

We will induct Deborah Alm, Crystal Rondeau and Patricia Hallberg. Our speaker is Jen Deaderick, author of *She the People*
NOTE: Please start finding locations for Period Project collection. Mary will bring posters. Liz and Karen will bring boxes.

November 10 at the Ludlow Country Club – guests encouraged. RSVP to Mary

We will present Service Grant awards to a select group of non-profits.
Our program will feature members of the Writing Sisters – who participated in last year's 16 Days of Advocacy

December 8 will be an informal get-together at a location to be announced
January 12 will be a Zoom meeting with a featured speaker

January 13 will be a Zoom meeting—Program to be announced

February 21 (Saturday) Period Project event from 9-12 at Venture Way in Hadley , followed by a lunch meeting.

March 9 at the Ludlow Country Club – guests encouraged. RSVP to Mary

Special evening recognizing Women Making a Difference. The honorees for 2024 and 2025 are noted below. Please share your suggestions of who to nominate to Cyd Melcher.

April 13 and May 11 meetings will be at the Ludlow Country Club
June 8th will be a wrap up meeting at a location to be announced.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Knight, Secretary


On March 10th at the Ludlow Country Club we celebrated Women Making a Difference in honor of International Women's Day.

Each year in March, the global community celebrates International Women's Day (IWD), recognizing women for their achievements regardless of national, ethnic, linguistic, economic, or political divisions. The Zonta International community also celebrates Zonta Rose Day, a time to reflect and give tribute to the women who have empowered us.


In this spirit, the Zonta Club of Quaboo Valley proudly announces its **Women Making a Difference Award** dinner on **March 10th at the Ludlow Country Club**. As the theme of this year's International Women's celebration is **"Inclusion & Belonging"**, the club has chosen a keynote speaker who heads an organization funding progress toward gender equity by funding the most promising solutions, collaborating with results-oriented partners, and by elevating the collective power of local women to take charge, and to lead with purpose, and four women leaders in the community deserving of recognition for exemplifying the ideals of Zonta and inspiring inclusion in their day-to-day work and volunteer efforts.

Keynote: **Vanessa Fabón-Hernández** – CEO of the Women's Fund of Western MA. She will be awarded the Zonta Club of Quaboo Valley's Honorary Member status for 2025-2026.


Honorees:




Yanisha Akins is a Black woman in community leadership as the Executive Director of AHEAD for Social Justice – navigating the world's most vexing intersection, the space where race, gender, culture, identity, politics, and the law all collide.



Attorney Elizabeth Dineen serves as Chief Executive Officer of the YWCA of Western Massachusetts. Throughout her career she has been a strong advocate for women and children.



Dr. Grace Mahajan, a breast cancer specialist and her most recognized as Professor Emerita, University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School, Dartmouth, in western Massachusetts.



Elizabeth Villa-Gilve, board member and interim director of Counseling the Community (C2C), is a first grade teacher and graduate teacher and has made it her mission to address hunger and a shortage of fresh foods in western Massachusetts.

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In this spirit, the Zonta Club of Quaboo Valley proudly announces its **Women Making a Difference Award** dinner on **March 11th at the Ludlow Country Club**. As the theme of this year's International Women's celebration is **Inspire Inclusion**, the club has chosen a keynote speaker who has spearheaded numerous initiatives to address the inequities experienced by many populations in Western MA, and four women leaders in the community deserving of recognition for exemplifying the ideals of Zonta and inspiring inclusion in their day-to-day work and volunteer efforts.

Keynote: **Dr. Christina Royal** – Zonta's 2023 Women of the Year for her commitment to equity and equality. She will be awarded the Zonta Club of Quaboo Valley's first Honorary Member status.

Honorees:



Andrea Bordenca—Working with organizations committed to equity, engagement and positive mental health.



Lisa Bakowski—Raising the bar for self-advocacy, self-awareness and self-empowerment of women and children.



Charlotte Chartier Cote —Creating positive change in dental practices and owner of Cote Cattle Company



Roxanna Harper RN, MSN—Empowering staff and families to provide exceptional home health, hospice and palliative care.



Contact Joanne or Pam, or email info@zontaqv.org.

URGENT:
To club members and potential members:

The Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley is seeking a volunteer to step up ASAP to serve as Treasurer in Training between now May 2026 and then to serve in the elected position of Club Treasurer for the 2026-2028 biennium.

Without one, we'll need to hire a paid bookkeeper — which means increased dues for all members.

What you'll do:

- Keep accurate financial records
- Prepare clear reports for the Board
- Manage budgets & payments
- Help plan for Zonta's future

Time: A few hours/month, with participation in board zoom meetings.

Skills: Comfort with numbers

Mentors Joanne Turner-Chiacchia and Pam Albertson are available to answer questions and help with the specific requirements of the job.

The Quaboag Valley club is looking for women-friendly locations and groups willing to help us collect feminine products for the annual Period Project. Boxes and posters available. Send location details to info@zontaqv.org.



THE PERIOD PROJECT

Join Zonta in distributing dignity to women and teens in need.

- You can donate items to create monthly menstrual kits for homeless women and to stock supplies at local shelters.
- You can help assemble kits on **February 21, 2026** at the **Venture Way Collaborative, Hadley** 9:30 Set up/ 10:00 – 12:00 Assembly and Pick up, followed by Pizza and Salad luncheon to celebrate. **RSVP by 2/19 to 413-219-8260 or info@zontaqv.org**. More info at www.zontaqv.org/period

Facts about monthly periods, homelessness, and poverty:

- Basic menstrual hygiene products are costly, especially for women struggling to support themselves and their families.
 - Pads and tampons are considered non-essential by the federal government, so are not covered by SNAP and WIC programs.
 - Women and teens who are homeless often lack consistent access to hygiene products or to safe sanitary spaces.
 - Ask a Zontian about pending legislation in MA to fix this.
- Together, we can make a period just a little easier for women and teens in need.



We are back!
Period Project
Assembly will be
on 2/21/26 @
10:00 – 12:00
Venture Way
Collaborative,
Hadley MA

**DONATIONS
NEEDED by
2/19/2026**

**Sealed boxes of
Pads / Tampons
Cleansing wipes
Hand sanitizers
Soap
Pantyliners
&
Assistance in
filling the kits**

**Collection Boxes
AND Link to
Amazon Wish**



At this year's District 1 Fall Conference, the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley will introduce 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 will assemble 50 'Go Bags' filled with a few important items and an educational pamphlet that provides insightful tips. Clubs will take home a few bags each as templates to use as appropriate in their communities.



Details about the project that our club is working on can be found at 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.

Volunteer Opportunities—Join if you are able!

Sunday October 5th @ 1pm

Veterans Park, Ware MA— If rain, gathering will be at Town Hall, across the street.

Join us for a community gathering and a short walk through downtown Ware. There will be speakers, raffle, music, hotdogs and more. Sponsored by the Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task force.



Girls on the Run Western MA Sneaker Soirée! October 9th at 5:30 p.m. @ Springfield Country Club.

Take advantage of early bird pricing of \$40 a ticket until September 9th. **Let Mary know if you are interested in getting a table. Wear your sneakers and** enjoy a memorable evening filled with tasty hors d'oeuvres and drinks, a fantastic silent auction, and an inspirational program featuring GOTR participants and coaches. All proceeds will go toward our financial assistance fund, making it possible for more girls to participate in Girls on the Run.



Rays of Hope—Sunday October 19th

Rays of Hope walk (10:30) or run (8:30) toward the cure of Breast Cancer steps off from Temple Beth El – Springfield and follows a 2-mile and 5-mile scenic route through Springfield's Forest Park and surrounding neighborhoods. Survivor Cyd Melcher, President of the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley invites you and friends to join her team: **TEAM LUCKY**, donate to her team or start their own team!

While there is no minimum donation to participate, each participant who raises at least \$50 will receive the official 2025 Rays of Hope Participant T-Shirt. Search "Rays of Hope 2025" to find the secure *convio* registration page.



Girls Inc of the Valley

480 Hampden St., Holyoke, MA,

Girls Inc. is the leading expert on girls. We apply that expertise to support girls in becoming strong, confident leaders.

Volunteers are needed periodically to help with mailings, bag assembly and events. To get on the notification list, please contact Sasha via email SVinnands@girlsinvalley.org or 413-335-0059 .



Note: "Tabling" events (having a table with Zonta information) is a great opportunity for raising awareness for our causes and increasing grassroots support by engaging with the public directly, and generating leads or recruiting new members. It offers a cost-effective way to connect with a large audience in a casual setting, allowing for personal interactions, detailed Q&A, and immediate action such as signing petitions or making donations. It also provides valuable market insights and serves as a key opportunity for networking and building community. All we need are volunteers, signage, literature and maybe a raffle gift to attract attention. If you know of an opportunity for tabling, please share it with a Board member!

Thanks Cherie for organizing a tabling at Belchertown Farmers Market on Sunday October 5th

We will have materials on the Period Project, legislative issues, and upcoming meetings—those who sign up for the newsletter will have free dinner at their first event.

Thanks Connie for identifying other opportunities—keep us in the loop.



Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley
 Mary Knight, Communications Chair
 PO Box 1034, Belchertown MA
Info@zontaqv.org
 413-219-82660

“She the People” Author to Speak on October 13th



Western MA ~ With over 18 years of experience as an author and communicator, **Jen Deaderick** specializes in using writing and social media to amplify narratives about gender, history, and social justice. She will join the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley in October at the Ludlow Country Club to bring her insights on the evolution of women’s citizenship in the United States and the impact of our country’s recent withdrawal from its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically regarding gender equality as a fundamental human right. *

Jen is the author of *She the People*, published by Seal Press. Her writing has been featured in outlets like *The New York Times*, *Dame Magazine*, and *Huffington Post*. As a founder of the Equal Rights Amendment Facebook page, Jen has fostered an engaged community of over 30,000 members, advocating for legal gender equality and raising awareness through impactful content and campaigns. Jen is a frequent panelist on Greater Boston, a daily news show on WGBH. Copies of *She the People* will be available for purchase at the event.

The public is invited to join us at the Ludlow Country Club on October 13th.
 5:30 Reception, 6:00 Dinner, followed by the Program.
 Buffet cost is \$30 - pay at the door or [pay online](#).
 RSVP by October 6th at info@ZontaQV.org.

*The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global goals, adopted by the United Nations in 2015, to create a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030. Zonta’s mission is focused primarily on Goal 5 Gender Equality and its intersection with the other goals. [Zonta International has issued a statement calling for reaffirmed commitment to the SDGs](#)



Since 1919, Zonta has been working to create a more equitable future for women and girls. We believe that fostering a diverse and inclusive global community is a powerful platform to bring about the social change needed to make our vision for gender equality a reality. For more information, visit Zonta.org or contact info@zontaqv.org. Join us in building a better world for women and girls.



The District Conference is almost here, and it's your chance to dive deep into everything Zonta has to offer!

This isn't just another event—it's a high-impact opportunity packed with inspiring speakers, powerful learning sessions, and dynamic idea sharing. You'll walk away with fresh perspectives, concrete knowledge, and renewed energy.

Especially if you've only attended club meetings, you need to be there. Step outside your usual circle to witness the wider impact of our work, connect with members you've never met, and bring back a rush of inspiration and new thinking to our club.

Don't miss out on the fun, the growth, and the wider Zonta experience. Register today!

DETAILS: www.ZontaDistrict1.org Click on Fall Conference 2025

Notes:

- ~ Registration cost increases October 1st
- ~ Need a roommate and want to carpool? Mary Knight is trying coordinate
- ~October 20th @ 7pm EST Information Session on Ballot items - join delegates Cherie and Trish to meet the candidates, ask questions about the budget and amendments.

Join us and unlock the full scope of your Zonta journey!