



Zonta Club of Caboolture Inc  
Charter Date: August 3, 1993  
District 22 ... Area 1  
Club Number 1428

**March 2013**

President: Patricia Clunes 0410 617 825  
Treasurer: Pam Berkett 07 5498 5556  
Secretary: Glenda Moor - 3385 6160  
Newsletter Editor: Patricia Clunes- 0410 617 825

### **FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK**

Thank you to the hardworking IWD committee who put together a wonderful celebration lunch on Friday 8 March. The PowerPoint presentation and music, the table decorations, the gift bags, the wonderful raffle prizes and the *fantastic* guest speaker. From all reports everyone enjoyed their meal, Carla's presentation and their gift bag. Some ladies who hadn't been before couldn't believe all the raffle prizes!!! Who do we get next year as our guest speaker?

Sue, Sara, Edith, Carole, Lorraine, Chris, Sandra and I attended the Area 1/3 workshop in Brisbane.

Currently Zonta International is in 64 countries with 32 districts, 1203 clubs and 30,050 members.

Where do we find new members was one of the topics and suggestions were -

Walk the street, in your workplace, through family/friends, chance, and previous JMK or YWPA Award winners.

Suggested that we make ZONTA a recognized brand with event attendees, employers, donors, which then attracts members and creates influences and hopefully increases membership.

Like our webpage to directories i.e. 'what's on' in the Quest newspapers, quarterly or other newsletters, libraries, school and church newsletters.

When sending a press release *define the story, keep to 1 or 2 pages, send to local journalists.*

Some banks or workplaces will take donation tins for such things as social club etc and donate the money to us.

Link ourselves to 'Linked In', QR Reader bar code, get a twitter account.

**Put into your diary now - District Conference on 27/28 September.**

*All the best to club members who have put their names forward to the 2013/2014 board positions.*

President Patricia

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE TREASURER!!!**

Treasurer's report should have been received by now.

The cost per member for our dinner meetings is \$30. The club charges us \$25 per meal with the other \$5.00 being for club expenses ie guest speakers dinner, guest speakers gift, stamps etc

**If you miss a meeting** regardless of apology, you need to pay \$5.00 at the next meeting you attend.

If you are **unable to attend a meeting** please give **Patricia** a telephone call on 5498 6066 or 0410 617 825. If she **doesn't hear from you by midday Monday PRIOR** to the meeting she will presume that you are attending. If you then unable to attend after this time **you will be liable for the cost of the meal - \$30.00.**

We are charged for 20 meals **regardless** of how many attend our dinner meetings

Treasurer, Pam B



April Birthdays - no one is celebrating this month  
Everyone have a wonderful Easter and don't eat  
too many hot cross buns.



I have been to visit Cathy and see what she has  
in relation of Service and picked some folders  
with relevant information.

Carole Tomvald  
Chairman



### MEMBERSHIP

Sandra prepared a revised calendar for  
membership committee use.

Roaring Twenties birthday event is  
progressing with the committee checking  
out venues and food choices. Venues  
suggested are "The Place to Be" Delaney's  
Creek" and the "Flying Nun" Samford also  
discussed the Pacific Harbour Golf Club.

More information as it comes to hand.

Birthday Ecards were sent to Cecil and  
Glenda.

Information Leaflet: Cecil contacted the  
Cairns Club and they agreed we could use  
their format and were okay with altering  
the leaflet for our use. Membership  
recommends the revised version be  
presented to the Board for approval.  
Sandra agreed to photocopy the discussed  
format.

A leaflet 12 Steps to becoming a Zontian  
prepared for the Caboolture Club  
previously was discussed and thought still  
relevant, it has some useful information  
and was suggested it be updated and given  
to all members of the club when completed

It was recommended for future IWD  
events we put Zonta information leaflets in  
the IWD bags as there were a few  
enquiries about who we are and what we do  
and it seemed a wasted opportunity not to  
promote ourselves when we have a captive  
audience.

As agreed by the Board and members at  
the February meeting the Membership  
Committee request a letter be sent to  
Family Haven inviting Simon and Gail to the  
June Meeting as guest speakers.

The Member Survey is being developed and  
will be distributed to all members when  
completed

Chris Ellis  
Chairman

### Advocacy Report

Committee discussed two projects for Club  
consideration, the "Afripad Project" and  
the "Zonta says NO" campaign.

Both these projects the committee felt  
would be excellent advocacy projects for  
the Caboolture club to support.

The Afripads Project brought to the  
committee's attention by Rebecca Kerston  
via an email sent to the various members of  
the Advocacy committee is a project where  
teenage girls are given a kit of reusable  
sanitary pads. These pads last for about a  
year and are stocked at health centres  
across Uganda. Many of these girls miss

out in schooling during the 4 days every month, due to embarrassment girls preferring to stay home at this time. This is a project involving locals helping themselves in answering a need and giving young women confidence

The Committee is preparing a mission statement and an action plan to be presented to the Board and the members. When all the information has been fully collated it will then be presented for a fuller discussion.

The Advocacy Committee recommend to the Board this project be considered as an advocacy project for the Zonta Club of Caboolture.

**Zonta Says No** is the International project recommending all Clubs become involved in raising the awareness of local communities with regard to the unacceptability of violence against women We would recommend to the Board and the members that we participate in this project which begins on the 13<sup>th</sup> November for a period of 16 days with 25<sup>th</sup> November, the "Violence against Women Day" incorporated in this period. The Committee is preparing a project to be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> with more information to follow

Suggested: The club prepare Safety Cards for handing out during this 16 day period.

The Advocacy Committee recommends to the Board: That the "Zonta says No Campaign" be accepted as an advocacy project.

Prepared by the Membership Committee



## FINANCE AND FUND RAISING

Our IWD luncheon was a great success and thank you to all who attended and for your help on the day. Feedback was very positive and although I'm still waiting for the invoices from North's, it looks like we may have made approximately \$2,000.

Estee Lauder shopping trip is on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April so we again ask that you circulate the flyer to your friends for them to save on the purchase of cosmetics and perfumes. Tickets only \$10 and the free gift you receive for coming is worth more than this. These are genuine products. They can travel by train to Milton Railway Station and it is only a short walk to Estee Lauder.

We have cancelled the Wine Tasting on April 21<sup>st</sup> as our committee felt it would not raise much money.

Sara Allard  
Chairman



## PUBLICITY

Sue has been busy at the local radio station promoting our International Women's Day function and other Zonta activities.

Glenda Moor  
Chairman

## CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS REPORT

The final Motions for Amendments to be considered for adoption in our Club's Constitution will be presented at the March Dinner meeting for discussion and then will be an agenda item at the 24 April 2013 Annual General Meeting.

The latest version from the Office of Fair Trading dated July 2012 of the form to Amend the Constitution for Incorporated Associations has been downloaded for completion after the Annual General Meeting by the Committee, Secretary and Treasurer with the appropriate documentation and payment required attached. This can be returned with the Club's Annual Report of Incorporated Associations form within the month following the Annual General Meeting.

Sandra Cooke  
Chairman

### UNITED NATIONS REPORT

Introduction

#### **Breast Ironing: An Emerging Type of Violence Against women in Cameroon**

Violence against women (VAW) is a global problem affecting millions of women and girls of all cultures, religion, socioeconomic strata, educational levels and other diversity. It is recognized as a human rights issue that manifests itself in physical psychological, sexual, social and cultural forms. Violence is the result of the complex interplay of individual, relational, social, cultural and environmental factors. Violence against women has serious consequences which are far reaching and includes the erosion of self-esteem, self-worth, physical, mental and psychological health etc. VAW is highly prevalent in particular within the family and remains widely socially tolerated. In Cameroon traditional harmful practices have existed for generations and the recognition of Female genital mutilation has set the pace for breast ironing.

The greatest challenge to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against

Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child which both contain legally binding obligations in relation to the elimination of harmful practices affecting girls under eighteen is the lack of a proper evaluation of the different cultures regarding women to see how well a comprehensive engagement can be carried out to end the different forms of violence against women and girls in the many cultures that exist and based on gender stereotypes and prejudices grounded in patriarchy.

Amongst the sociocultural practices including female genital mutilation, forced marriage, widowhood rites, child labour etc. Another prevalent form of violence against girl children in Cameroon is breast ironing.

#### **Context**

Situated on Africa's Guinean Gulf, Cameroon population as of January 01, 2010 stands at 19,406,100, representing 250 different ethnicities. Sharing borders with Togo, Benin, and Equatorial Guinea, the nation known as "Miniature Africa" has recently been receiving attention due to a harmful ritual imposed on the nation's prepubescent women: breast ironing. Breast ironing affects women in all 10 of Cameroon's provinces, crossing ethnic and religious boundaries. The practice is most prevalent in the Littoral province (53%), which houses Cameroon's largest city of Douala; numbers are generally higher in urban areas, where sexual advances are more common. Possibly due to the differences in attire, breast ironing is less common in the nation's north (7%), where the population is primarily Muslim.

However, regardless of location, religion, or ethnicity, the risk of undergoing breast ironing doubles amongst girls who show signs of puberty before the age of nine.

Unlike many other African nations, Cameroon enjoys general political stability, has a high ranking educational system and one of the highest literacy rates in Africa (79% as of 2003). While teen pregnancy rates have declined since 1996, with 60% of all teens experiencing one or more pregnancies, to 20% in 2003, numbers are still high and have obviously not been reduced by the breast ironing. The rationale behind breast ironing, which is to protect young girls from sexual advances, conflicts with the reality that these girls can still become pregnant. The 5,661 women between the ages of 9 and 82, who were touched by breast ironing in 2005, sheds light upon a desperate need for sex education in a country where the topic is still very taboo.

Breast ironing is an age old practice in Cameroon, as well as in many other countries in West and Central Africa, including Chad, Togo, Benin, Guinea Conakry, just to name a few, " said Flavien Ndonko, an Anthropologist and local representative of German Development Agency GTZ, which sponsored the survey.

### **What is breast ironing?**

Breast ironing, known as a form of mutilation is another weird practiced whereby pubescent girl's breasts are flattened. This involves pounding and massaging the developing breasts of young girls from about eight years with hot objects to try to make them disappear.

### **The trend of Breast Ironing**

The practice was initially done by women with the thought of improving a mother's breast milk. This thought has gradually changed and now inflicted upon 24% of Cameroonian women as young as the age of nine. While the practice is commonly performed by family members, 58% of the time by the mother, these young and naïve

girls buy into its reasoning and often continue inflicting the practice upon their own bodies.

### **Rational for breast ironing**

The practice performed usually by mothers chiefly in urban areas than villages is believed to be an efficient means in an attempt to protect the girl from sexual harassment and rape, to prevent early pregnancy that would tarnish the family name, or to allow the girl to pursue education rather than be forced into early marriage and delaying pregnancy; by "removing" signs of puberty, These girls are thought to no longer appear sexually attractive to men. It helps prevent early marriage and some mothers are equally worried that their daughters' budding breast would expose them to the risk of sexual harassment.

### **Objects used**

Breast ironing is a practice that involves pressing heated objects on the breasts to flatten them. To do this effectively, it has been noted that the usage of these objects range from : the hot wooden spoon/broom (24%), stones (20%), pestle (17 %), breast band (10 %), leaves (9 %), towel (5 %) and others (15 %). The group others comprised hot cook spoons, hot fufu, hot seeds of black fruits, hot plantain peelings, hot plumbs, bananas, ants, ice cubs, hot palm, nuts, salt and kerosene.

### **The perpetrators**

Mother, Aunt, Grand mother, Sister, Guardian, Nanny

### **Statistics on its perpetrators**

A survey on a research study indicated that 58% of the ironing was done by mothers of the victims, 10% by a nanny, 9% by a sister and 7% by a grandmother. The risk of having the breast ironed was

identified as depending on the age when breasts first develop. For girls whose breast developed before the age of 9, there was a 50% chance of having the breasts ironed. The rate was 38% for girls whose breasts grew before 11, 24% for girls whose breasts grew before 12 years of age and 14% for girls whose breasts grew before the age of 14 (2). The survey also found that 70% of the breasts were bandaged or attached with breast bands after the ironing while 30 % used undersized breast wears.

### **Breast ironing as Family violence**

According to violence research, "family violence" refers to many forms of abuse, mistreatment or neglect that children and adults may experience in their intimate kinship or dependent relationships. Therefore, breast ironing may be considered a type of family violence since the practice is imposed to the young girls without their consent. Furthermore, breast ironing should also be perceived as a type of female to female violence which is rarely mentioned in the African context. This is due to the overwhelming burden caused by the well known "Gender Based Violence" which is based on power relations between man and women and has become an important factor in the current feminization of HIV/AIDS in sub Saharan Africa.

### **The irony of breast ironing practice**

Young people make up most of the 5.5 Percent of the population living with HIV, and teenage pregnancy is a growing concern. One third of the 20 to 30 percent of girls with unwanted pregnancies are between 13 and 25 years of age, with more than half of them having fallen pregnant after their first sexual encounter, according to GTZ Ironically, Cameroonian men have only recently become aware of this practice through the growth of

campaigns against it. Organizations such as the National Network of the Association of Aunties (Réseau National des Associations de Tantines, RENATA), the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family, and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, GTZ) are leading the campaign to educate mothers and daughters about the dangers involved, and the better ways to prevent teen pregnancy. GeED has joined hands in this fight against breast ironing and in its ongoing project on identifying the different types of violence women undergo. GeED will definitely have a follow up on this as its priority to document this, sensitize raise awareness and put up measures that could help eradicate this harmful practice.

### **Effects of breast ironing**

While there is little research on the health effects of the practice, it is considered that the practice can cause tissue damage in addition to the pain of the ironing process.

The U.S. State Department, in its 2010 human rights report on Cameroon, cited news reports and said breast ironing "victimized numerous girls in the country" and in some cases "resulted in burns, deformities, and psychological problems." There are more than 200 ethnic groups in Cameroon with different norms and customs. Breast ironing is practiced by all of them.

According the GTZ/RENATA survey a plethora of illnesses was reported to be associated with breast ironing. Among them were severe pains, high fever; abscess in the breast; breasts pimples on and around the breasts nipples; cysts in the breasts,; itching of breasts, severe

chest pain; flow of breasts, milk infection of breasts as a result of scarification; one breast being bigger than the other; breasts never grow bigger and complete disappearance of the breasts. Other possible side effects include breast infections malformed breast and the possible complete eradication of one or two breasts. In addition ten cases of diagnosed breast cancer were identified in women who underwent breast ironing

**Current National Policies on Breast Ironing**

The government of Cameroon has over the years ratified various international instruments and conventions that recognize the rights of women as well as fundamental human rights that serve as a framework for developing a policy for the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against women. Even the constitution of the country is explicit on the need of human rights for the entire population. In addition in December 1986

Cameroon acceded to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

In 1994, the country also ratified the convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women; July 2003, Cameroon also ratified the protocol to the African Charter on Human Rights and rights of women in Africa. That protocol included the right to life and physical integrity and protection against harmful traditional practices. However, no law has been passed or enforced at the National level regarding breast ironing or any other "traditional harmful practice."

[ summary of a report: " Breast Ironing, A Harmful Practice that has been Silenced for Too Long" by BAEW Rosaline Ngunshi, August 2011 for the Gender Empowerment and Development - GeED]

**Hostess List Zonta for 2012- 2013**

If you aren't coming to the meeting can you please telephone the next person on the list and ask if they could be the hostess.

March	Sara Allard
April	Sandra Cooke
May	Coffee and Cake
June	Joanne Bakker