



### **Zonta International District 13**

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### **Governors letter no 4. November 2011.**

Dear Zontians in District 13.  
The year 2011 is coming to an end and it has been full of interesting events in our District.

#### **District Conference in Akureyri.**

The biggest event was our District Conference. It was attended by 182 Zontians which surpassed our greatest expectations. Lynn McKenzie President Elect was the International Representative and Vigdis Finnbogadóttir the former president of Iceland and an Honorary Member of Zonta International attended the Conference. The theme was “Gender and Climate Change” and three Icelandic ladies gave lectures on the issue. I am

convinced that all attendants know much more about global warming and the greenhouse gas emissions than they did before. They also know that this global problem affects women more seriously than men. Our consumption is important and women can have influence through their household and some people say that women can save the world.

**It was criticized that the Conference did not hold a discussion about the theme and then issue a statement about the matter.** I agree that we should have done so. To the best of my knowledge it has never happened that a District Conference sends out a conclusion about important and relevant issues but I think that this should be revised.

#### **Thanks to the Zontaclubs in Akureyri**

Once again I want to thank both Zontaclubs in Akureyri for their unselfish, and effective work preparing the Conference, last but not least I thank my Conference Committee and its Chairman, Þóra Ákadóttir.

#### **Language problems**

The Conference was conducted in English and the lecturers gave their lectures in English. Some of our participants from Denmark and Norway complained about having difficulties understanding the language and this is a problem that is not easy to solve. **The District board’s proposal that the future language of the District Conferences should be English did not pass. I must say that I was disappointed.** It is really a paradox because the board meetings are held in English and the minutes from the Conference and the board meetings are written in English and so is for example

the Governors letter and the homepage zontadistrict13.org Zontians from Lithuania and the International Representative do not understand Scandinavian and many of the Icelandic Zontians prefer English. Of course we are a minority. Danish and Norwegian Zontians are in majority. It is democratic but not very considerate towards those that do not understand Scandinavian at all.

#### **A proposal from Zonta Sønderborg.**

The Zontaclub of Sønderborg proposed that Zonta has one and only one world wide project. This has also been discussed at Head Quarters. The proposal did not pass but this will probably be discussed further in the future.

#### **Evaluation of the District Conference**

Evaluation papers were sent out and we got answers from about 50% of the attendants. Governor and secretary will go through all the answers and publish them at the board meeting that will be held in Copenhagen on the 3rd of March 2012.

#### **Minutes from the District Conference.**

It was approved at the conference that the board could approve the minutes and it should then be put on the home page zontadistrict13.org and also sent out to all club presidents. This has now been done and the minutes will not be sent out with the documents for our next conference in Sandnes in Norway.

#### **New clubs.**

I attended two Charter Celebrations in Denmark what was a great pleasure for me.

**The Zontaclub of Vestsjælland** held their Charter Celebration on the 27th of August at Kobæk Strand. The SOM

clubs are Køge Zonta club and Næstved Zontaclub. This feast was very well organized and was a succes. I must thank Inge-Lise Søbjerg from Køge, the chairman for the SOM committee and Maibritt Isberg Andersen the club president in Zonta Vestsjælland and of course all the others for their great and successful work.

On the 29th of October I attended the Charter Celebration of **the Zontaclub of Skagen**. It was very impressive to come to Skagen. The feast was attended by 57 Zontians from Denmark and very well organized by Susane Røntved the club president and her board. The Zontaclub of Silkeborg is the SOM club with Anne Marie Christensen as the chairman of the SOM committee. These events will be unforgettable to me and I congratulate both clubs on a good beginning of their Zonta life.

**The Zontaclub of Borgarfjörður** in Iceland will most likely be chartered in December 2011 and hold their Charter Celebration in April 2012. They have got 24 very well qualified members. We look forward to welcoming these new members in our organization.

#### **Area Meetings and Leader meetings**

**The Norwegian Area Meeting** was in Akureyri in connection with the District Conference and so **was the Icelandic Leader meeting**. I attended both meetings for a very short time.

**The Danish area meeting** was in THY on the 1st of October. Unfortunately I could not attend the meeting but I heard that it was a good and effective one. The YWPA winner in District 13 was honoured at the meeting. Her name is **Amalie Gye Larsen** and she was appointed by the Zontaclub of Sønderborg and she is very well worthy of this award. At the meeting Zonta in

Denmark gave a stipendium of 50 thousand DKK to a female scientist at DTU **Trine Julie Abrahamsen**. This stipendium is awarded to women in natural science and technology and the winner also gets a membership to a Zontaclub for two years thus getting admittance to Zonta's network.

**Trine Julie Abrahamsen** was selected from 125 applicants so that the competition was very hard. Well done Denmark.

### **The Service Projects**

Our Foundation Ambassador Aud Aakre has set the goal for this biennium to give 125.000 USD to ZIF. We are very optimistic that we can reach this goal.

**On the 31st of August our District had given US dollars 77.735.00 and we thank you all for your generosity.**

### **Anniversaries.**

**The Zontaclub Trondheim II** had their 25 year anniversary in November. They celebrated with a big jubileum and we congratulate them with their 25 year anniversary. **The Zontaclub of Reykjavík** had their 70 year anniversary also in November and they celebrated with a big jubileum on the 8th of November. I was able to attend that jubileum which was attended by many Icelandic Zontians. That was an enjoyable evening and we congratulate the Reykjavík Zontaclub that has been a pioneer for the Icelandic Zontaclubs and has been a SOM club for five out of the eight Zontaclubs in Iceland.

### **Nobel Peace Prize winners 2011.**

Three women received the Nobel Peace Prize and we are proud of them and congratulate them. They are **Ellen Johnson Sirleaf** president of Liberia, **Leymah Gbowee** Executive Director of

the Women Peace and Security Network Africa and **Tawakkul Karman** a Yemeni journalist who founded Women Journalists Without chains. **The Zontaclub Oslo I** is going to participate in a procession on the 10th of December to honour these ladies. We will join you in our mind Oslo I.

### **Two female Prime ministers in District 13.**

In the year 2009 **Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir** became the Prime Minister of Iceland and in the year 2011 **Helle Thorning Smith** became the Prime Minister of Denmark, This is to confirm that **Women can** as was the theme in Roskilde. We congratulate them and we are proud of them.

### **Convention in Torino.**

The convention will be held in Torino on the 7th to 12th of July 2012. We hope that many Zontians from our District will be able to attend the Convention. It is a very good opportunity to find out what Zonta really is about. It is very informative and enjoyable.

### **Home pages**

I encourage you to use the home pages there you can access all information that you need about Zonta. I advise you to read Lynn McKenzie's reflections from Liberia. She is telling us an interesting story.

I thank you all for your dedication and good work for Zonta and I look forward to working with you for the last few months of my biennium as your Governor.

Best regards  
Ragnheidur Hansdóttir  
Governor in District 13



**Govenor and Lynn McKenzie at the conference dinner**



**The brilliant toastmaster Sía Jónsdóttir**



**Charter Celebration the Zontaclub in Vestsjælland**



**Charter Celebration the Zontaclub in Skagen**