



# Zonta Club of Toronto

*Member of Zonta International*

## Annual Report 08-09

### *President's Remarks*

It has been a rewarding and challenging year for our club. It has been challenging because we are enduring the financial uncertainty and demographic shifts that are facing all of North America. Fundraising and time for service work are difficult in these circumstances.

We have been fortunate this year to have had three new members of our club join and will welcome a fourth new member in May. We must celebrate the essential fact that 'the heart of life is good' with solid people willing to give back to their community. We recognize the excellent work of our membership committee.

I would like to thank the Board, Lisa, Nita, Cassie, Kathie, and Marg for their excellent work and leadership.

We face with understanding but regret the retirement of Margaretha Cloke from our club. Marg has done so much for our club that it is hard to imagine replacing her many roles.

I found the Workshop held this past month was particularly good for me to reflect on how to face change and move forward. The workshop focused on leadership and 'marketing' of Zonta. In Zonta we have a relationship with our members, our community, those who support us with donations, and our service partners. The relationship is defined by the promise that we are a group of women who provide service and leadership to improve the status of women at both the international and local levels. We are unique in that Zonta offers service for women by women and our service is entirely outwardly directed.

In order to attract women to membership in these challenging times we need to focus on development of leadership and opportunities to learn. Marg Cloke told the board at our May meeting that she learned much from her membership in Zonta. From Marg I learned the importance of clarity of message when asking for decisions.

Leadership is not doing it all but learning that it is ok to ask for help and, it is ok to sometimes fail. I recognize that this year we started to develop a strategic plan; however, in the next year, I hope to develop it further and will ask the District for help in doing so. We need to identify what we do well and what did not go well.

We need to make the club a safe place to try new things to improve the status of women. It is important to remember that it should be fun and we should support each other. We may have to ease back and find our path forward, even if it means taking more time to accomplish some goals.

I hope that we will improve the visibility of our club in the community. Our new website should assist in that goal. We must forge relationships with other organizations in our community. It is hoped that our local service and awards will assist us in doing so. I have been recently contacted by the city of Toronto to request that Zonta participate in a panel on making Toronto an age-friendly community.

It is important to raise our own awareness of our international impact through Zonta district wide, and world-wide. Participation in area and district events helps us to see the bigger picture.

We offer women an opportunity to practice and learn new leadership skills that are viable in the workplace whilst serving their community and meeting new people. I hope that in the next year we will develop a strategic plan that will allow the club to face the demographic and financial challenges and grow in membership, enjoyment and purpose.

*Thank you very much for a great year.*

Holly