



ZONTA
INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 3
EMPOWERING WOMEN
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

Zonta Club of Trenton/Mercer 2017-2018

Service

Our club bought, prepared, and bagged 250 meals (sandwiches, fruit, snack, drink) for The Salvation Army of Trenton which were used to feed families in the Trenton area through their Mobile Feeding Program.

Our Book Bag Program consisted of the club purchasing enough school supplies to pack 100 book bags. The book bags were given to Shine & Inspire, a local non-profit helping disadvantaged children in the Trenton Area. The book bags were handed out at their annual event in June. Several members attended the event, helping and engaging with the children who also received new sneakers, food and clothing.

Our club volunteered at the annual Easter Egg Hunt hosted by the Kiwanis Club of Mercer County. Over 200 children attended the free event. Our club helped with hiding the eggs, registration, refreshments and cleaning up. Our club donated \$50.00 in prizes.

Our club collected school supplies for Franklin Elementary School in Trenton. The school had asked for supplies due to a storage towards the end of the school year. We donated hundreds of items including, pencils, scissors, paper, notebooks, glue, etc.

Our club participates every year in Early Mercer Reads sending members to read in Pre-Schools around Mercer County. Our members take their favorite books and spend an hour reading to the children. Often times the time is extended and our members stay longer playing with the children.

Our annual Paint & Sip was held in April. We had 45 people attend the event, raising over

\$1,500.00 to be donated to Anchor House of Trenton. Donations of personal care items were also donated by those attending. Anchor House attended the event to accept the donations. Member brought light refreshments. We raffled off three baskets and held a 50/50.

Our Club hosted the International Day of the Family in May. Children from schools in Mercer County submitted essays on "What Does Family Mean to Me". We received hundreds of submissions. Our club held a judging night and selected 27 entries to receive a \$25.00 Barnes & Noble gift card. The gift card was presented to the children at our event which was attended by teachers, family and friends of the students. We served a light dinner which was provided by the Mercer County Status of Women Council.

Held our Annual Gourmet Garden Awards banquet at which we awarded funds to five area non profits who had applied to our annual Gourmet Garden Grant program. The major award of \$5000 was granted to Anchor House for their program to help young girls who have been homeless and often abused to cope with issues of sleeplessness.

Four other organizations each received \$750: Salvation Army for the STEM tutoring program, Rescue Mission of Trenton for their Women's Shelter; CASA – court appointed advocates for foster children, many of who have been in the juvenile justice system, Mercer Street Friends for their Send Hunger Packing project which provides meals for needy children on weekends.

The Club Days of Activism – our club adopted the White Ribbon Campaign which reaches out to men to join the “No Violence ..No Silence” initiative to prevent violence and gender harassment and discrimination against women and girls. Committee prepared materials and a display at a booth in the Quakerbridge Mall in Princeton on December 1. Volunteers handed out materials and white ribbons to family members, friends and colleagues to wear during the 16 Days. Plan to expand the campaign next year on local college campuses.

Guest Speaker Dr. Susan Wysor Nguema addressed the club and shared her experiences with a family in Benin and the girls in need of assistance to pursue their education. The membership directed the board to pursue the possibility of partnering with the local Benin club and perhaps the Philadelphia Zonta Club to develop a program to help fund their educational needs on a sustainable basis. It was decided we would donate \$1,000.00 to her foundation to help the girls in Benin. She is going to contact Zonta International for further assistance.

Bell Ringing for Salvation Army - 10 Zontians volunteered to ring the bells for the annual Salvation Army campaign.

Donated and Collected Toys for children through the Angel Wishes program (Salvation Army) WomanSpace shelter for abused women/girls – members purchased pajamas and slippers and club purchased pajamas as well. Club members assembled the pajama sets at the dinner meeting. Each member wrote handwritten messages of inspiration and fellowship to the women and committee chairs delivered to the Woman Space facility.

Club donated \$750 in gift certificates to LifeTies , a residential facility which houses teens who have aged out of the foster or justice system and are in transition to becoming independent.

Club members collected funds for Children's Home Society for the purchase of high chairs for foster children.

Membership/Mentoring

The Trenton Mercer increased club membership this past year with a sustainable member retention rate, increasing our members by 7. Holding three Zingers we were able to engage both our newer members and those just looking for more information with an informative and fun evening. At two of the Zingers we invited past nonprofits to come and speak about what our club has done for them and how members can participate in their efforts as a non-profit helping women and children. All seven members renewed their membership for 2018-2019.