



## Newsletter issue 7 September 2018



Dear Agora Ladies,

Newsletter 7 is here !! Hope that you all enjoy reading the great reports and view all the beautiful photos.

Big thanks to all of you that are sharing the great work that you are putting your effort into. It is truly inspiring and heartwarming.

Looking forward to see you in Gent.

María Erla,

ACI Secretary

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# ACI President Isabelle - Intro

My dear Agora Ladies,

As my Presidential year is coming to an end very soon, this newsletter NL7 will be the last one made by our efficient secretary Maria Erla, for my year. I really hope that you will like it as you liked the others.

One of the highlights of my year was the fabulous success of the 4 missions worldwide of “Eyes For The World” during which we gave 1000 adjustable glasses to children, adults and elderlies. In this newsletter, you could read the reports of the missions in Zimbabwe and Zambia which were held last July. I had the privilege to attend one of them in Zimbabwe... What amazing women I met there!

AC Zimbabwe which will be chartered next year, don't miss it!

You will also discover other amazing report in this newsletter about charters, charity events... Agora life worldwide!

One of the other highlights of my year will also be our ACI AGM which will be held in less than a month in Gent, Belgium. More than 450 Agora members or Friends of Agora registered! For the first time, you will be more than 400 to attend the ACI Conference !!! It is fantastic!

Thank you to all of you for your commitment in Agora Club International!

The ACI AGM Booklet will be on the internet one week before the AGM. Please download it and take your time to read every report of the ACI Board members, the AC Countries, Nominations, proposals of amendments... Yours in Friendship and Love

Isabelle



# EYES FOR THE WORLD (EFTW) PROJECT - ZAMBIA

## EFTW project visit from 8<sup>th</sup> July 2018 to 12 July 2018

On Sunday evening 08 July, 2018, we welcomed the EFTW team of five comprising Sandy van Nierkerk, Chris Helsen, Carina, Christine and our EFTW Optometrist Dr Koen Van Pottelbergh. The Agora ladies met the team at the airport and escorted them to the Mint Leaf Lodge (a lodge run by one of the Agora members), where they were all accommodated. Having all the guests stay in one place worked well for hospitality and logistical purposes.

Appointments for the EFTW project team were secured (well before the team arrived) in various institutions. In a little shift from the first visit where we only focused on school going children, this time, on day one, we visited the Matero aftercare center, a home for the aged. The facility is home to the elderly in our society that have been abandoned and neglected by their families.



Figure 1- People braving the scorching sun from 07.00 hrs waiting to be screened and receive glasses and the EFTW team and Agora Zambia team ready to work.

The team quickly set up after a few formalities and introductions. By the end of the day, we screened **160 people and gave out 95 glasses**. What a joy it was to see all those happy faces after they received their glasses. *A great reminder of why the EFTW project is close to our hearts (Veerle de Jong, ACI NL 6).*



Figure 1- Broad smiles from Dr Koen and a happy client. Sandy also shares the joy of a happy couple after the husband received glasses.

On the second and the third days, we visited three community schools, a local parish and Dr Argawal's eye hospital.



Agora Club Zambia has in the past worked with the Eye hospital for prescreening. On this particular visit, were extremely grateful to be allocated **40 free consultation slots** for patients screened by EFTW but could not be helped due to various eye complications. The first to receive the free consultation is 12 year old **Hope Phiri** whom we met on the third day at Kamanga School.



Figure 2- Dr Koen assuring Hope that not all is lost after she was told the glasses would not help improve her vision. Florence encouraging Hope to remain confident.

Hope was born with Cataracts and received surgery as a baby to remove them. The initial operation was successful although her sight has been deteriorating over the years. After consultation, a number of tests were booked for her to further investigate the cause of deteriorating sight. Agora club Zambia will sponsor some of the tests required. By the two days, we managed to screen a total of **197 people and gave out 103 glasses**. Thanks to the project team who endured long hours of standing to facilitate the screening process, we registered successful accomplishment of the tasks.



On the last day, just before Sandy and Dr Koen left for the airport, we visited the Lusaka Eye Hospital, a faith based organization also involved as sight savers and working with the rural communities of Zambia. They were recipients of **52 pairs of glasses** to distribute to the under privileged in the remote areas. Dr Koen trained their ophthalmologist on how to use the glasses. The institution is looking forward to further partnerships with EFTW in championing the cause for sight to all.

By the end of the week, after a lot of hard work and travel to different sites, the team managed to screen a total of 357 people and distributed 250 pairs of glasses. It was a remarkably successful week. It was not all work for the EFTW team. The ladies managed a few hours of sightseeing in the city of Lusaka and surrounding game reserve areas. We had several dinners together and enjoyed watching the world cup. Fantastic fellowship and knowledge sharing.



Cub Agora Zambia is privileged to have been chosen as one of the beneficiary countries of the EFTW project. Our communities have really benefited from the project and we stand tall and proud to belong to such a wonderful family. The charitable service rendered to the under privileged, who cannot afford to pay for glasses, makes the work of the EFTW very special and endearing. The power to transform lives, especially the lives of those young school going children and the elderly, who, through this gift have been given a new lease of life is amazing.

Long live the EFTW project. **Eyes truly make a difference in our lives!!!!**

Written by

**Florence Muhundika Kaunda**

Agora Cub Zambia President 2018/19

# EYES FOR THE WORLD (EFTW) in Zimbabwe

As the incoming president of the Agora Club Zimbabwe and our inspired members held our first international service project this year, between July the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018, what an amazing time of friendship, service and cementing community ties it was. - The team that came to Zimbabwe included members from Austria, Belgium, The Netherlands, France and South Africa to work with the Ladies Circle and Agora Club Zimbabwe.



The very first project to be carried out was a collaboration with Eyes ForThe World (EFTW) also its first mission in Zimbabwe a new Agora Club in formation. For this project we also partnered with “Ladies Circle Zimbabwe” who helped with pre-screening children and organized eye tests. Eventually one hundred and eighty seven very grateful people received glasses.



We knew we had succeeded when dozens of kids trying on their glasses for the first time couldn't contain their excitement and cried out "I can see!" This touched mine, and many other hearts that day. This result on its own proves our success and made us all more determined to continue with this and other future projects.

In the run up to the project, a small but dedicated team of Agora Zimbabwe and LCZ members, the Eye Institute and Optometrist Chris Kumora banded together to successfully pre-screen more than 1050 children. Many came from disadvantaged communities and from ALL over the country desperate for help.



Let Them Trust Schools Arts Festival acted as a platform to hand out glasses, inspire and entertain the children, of which is also run by myself, Chido Musasiwa-Gutu. Another thank you to Ruth Hungwe's whose guidance in organizing the project and in securing the partnership with the Ministry of Health was invaluable.



Despite the freezing weather and the high's and lows from the FIFA world Cup, we laughed, danced and celebrated friendship together.

Almost all the international guests were home hosted and some even managed to visit the historic Victoria Falls. This project really cemented Agora Club Zimbabwe.

Chido





# Project Eyes for the World – Zimbabwe

## Part two by Carina van Bruijne

For me it was the first time as well I met Koen Van Pottelbergh and Sandy van Niekerk and it was nice to join one of their projects. We did a lot of eye-tests in several locations in Harare. It was so beautiful to see a smile on the faces of the people after they received their own pair glasses.

The last day we were located on the annual school arts festival, LetThemFestival, in Harare, a place where children showed their dancing, singing, acting and painting.

Thank you Carol and Ruth ( Ladies Circle Zimbabwe) for having us in your homes during our stay in Harare!!

After the festival Christine, Chris and I went to the Victoria Falls. All the ladies of Agora Zimbabwe told us we had to go there, and they were so kind to organize the trip to the falls for us. The 'Vic' Falls ( how they call them) were amazing and we had a lovely time over there.

On Sunday we had to leave for Lusaka, Zambia, where our next project would start on Monday.

The whole experience was amazing! Eyes of the world is an incredible project and they do such a good job. I hope I can join another project of Eyes for the World in the future!!

Carina de Bruijne,

Agora Club 8 the Netherlands



# Project Eyes for the World – Zimbabwe

## Part three by Chris Helsen

After our free time at the falls it was back to business. We nearly missed our flight from Harare to Lusaka. That is what happens when you are with 4 women waiting and talking.....

In Lusaka we (Christine, Carina and Sandy and me) stayed at the guesthouse: the mint Greenleaf lodge. The ladies of AC Lusaka spoiled us with their hospitality. Thank you ☺

We had a full schedule with EFTW. First day we handed out glasses at the Matero care center, a house for the elderly and mentally handicapped people. Giving glasses (most of the time reading glasses) to the elderly is so much appreciated. To read again, to do some needlework.....



Day 2 at the the St.Joachim Catholic mission, we screened the elderly and the school children. Again a very positive, busy day with a lot of smiles.



# Agora club Austria 1 Spittal Successful Charity Art Exhibition

In June we organised a very special charity evening in favour of the international service project “Eyes for the world”! Supported by Wolfgang Daborer, an artist and graphic designer, lots of wonderful pictures were painted by Agora Ladies – as colourful as life itself.



The exhibition was accompanied musically by talented young musicians and visually by a presentation of the EFTW project.



Because not only of the participation of Christine Wernitznig in Zimbabwe and Zambia the EFTW project is close to our hearts and we could give good information to our donators.

Now we are more than happy to be able to support **EFTW with €uro 1500,-**

We would like to thank Veerle and Sandy and all of you working hard for this important project to make such an important difference in these children's lives!



# Agora Sariaka Madagascar Action Service

## AGORA SARIAKA MADAGASCAR ACTION SERVICE in the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 2018

Since its creation in 2014, the AC Sariaka Madagascar had a strong affinity with the small community of west Ankorondrano, where they brought some gifts to 50 elder women one to two times a year in different ways.

During the winter season in 2018, it was particularly too cold in Antananarivo so the members of the Agora Madagascar had an idea to share some « warmth » to them and decided to give them something.

Therefore, with the gift of the AC Holland from their President Carla Kessler, the AC Madagascar ladies gave as a gift a blanket to each of the 50 elder women, a very colorful warm blanket which was pleasant and useful to them. Smiles were on all of their faces and the Agora ladies were also happy doing their action service with their President 2018-2019 Landy Rakotomalala.



# Agora Club USA

Agora USA attended the Halifax Charter with two of their members; Oxana and Mirela, travelling from Detroit to join their friends in Israel.



Agora Detroit members supported Romanian writer Corina Ozon at the opening of her new book in Detroit !!



Upcoming Fundraiser by agora Detroit being held for cancer patient Victoria.

The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook event page. At the top, it says 'SEP 15 Fundraiser for Victoria' with 'Public · Agora Detroit and 1 other' below it. There are buttons for 'Interested', 'Going', and 'Share'. It indicates '131 going or interested including M Oxana and 4 others' with small profile pictures. The event is scheduled for 'Saturday, Sep 15 at 7 PM' at 'Holy Trinity Romanian Orthodox Church' in Troy, Michigan. A 'GOING' button is visible. An overlay shows a photo of a man and a woman with text: 'Mirela Elena shared an event. Thursday at 1:46 PM ·' and 'SAT, SEP 15 AT 7 PM Fundraiser for Victoria Holy Trinity Romanian Orthodox Church... Anca and 9 friends'.

Agora Club Seattle gathers for Go Red supporting heart health awareness for women



Mirela's birthday party.



Anca's Birthday celebration with the Mariachi band!!



Seattle Agora club members (and Babe Kelly's dog) walk in support of Federal Way Coalition Against Trafficking – bringing awareness and education to the public and schools on child trafficking and slavery.



Agora Seattle join Tacoma's walking along with others in support of Not One More  
Everytown for Gun Safety.



Agora Seattle supports Tacoma Families Belong Together Event



Vandana & Kelly prepared and Indian Fundraiser meal for EFTW & Elder Care Center in Pune, India



Agora Seattle visits Lakewood Gardens on Gravelly Lake



Detroit made over \$10,000 at their fundraiser for cancer patient Victoria !



# Agora Club Germany

## News from Agora Tangent Club Germany

Immediately after our summer break we jumped back into serious ACT business. On September 1<sup>st</sup> our club TC 63 Dortmund was chartered and a bunch of 5 Ladies were welcomed into full membership within our circle of friends. In every way it was a 4 clubs 1 vision event as the Ladies were clever enough to organize their Charter together with the summer party of area 7 of Ladies' Circle. This is a tradition where, apart from all the clubs of LC of this area, also Round and Old Tabler together join in every summer to celebrate their friendship and summer in general. We had a lovely afternoon in "Westfalenpark" – a beautiful setting for a start into the new life.



Just one week after we had another club joining in: TC 51 Mönchengladbach. Previous to this Charter we had our Board Meeting in order to go through all the proposals of the upcoming ACI Conference and all other topics. It was quite a discussion, but we managed to finalize just in time before heading to the ceremony.



It almost felt like a home party at Birgit's place – a stunning place – beautiful house and amazing garden, though much more festive – at least at the beginning 😊

Also on this occasion the strong bond between Ladies and Tablers, including members of other service clubs, and the spirit of side by side had been showcased. With all the members of TC 51 having been members of the former Ladies' Circle club and even 6 of them having been charter members, they proved that their relationships through LC remained strong and ongoing. It was a very warm and welcoming atmosphere during the whole evening and we enjoyed it until the late hours.

A very warm welcome to Agora Tangent Club Germany dear Ladies of Dortmund and Mönchengladbach!



# Agora club Austria 1 Spittal Introduction Dinner

Due to the election of the new board of Agora Club Austria 1 Spittal we invited friends of other Service Clubs to an Introduction-Dinner at Lake Millstättersee. We could welcome representatives from Ladies Circle, Round Table and Club 41. So thankful to spend a very nice evening in friendship with speaking, eating and laughing!







**Board 2018/19**

- President:** Gabi Golger-Oberwinkler  
**Past-President:** Christine Wernitznig  
**Vice-President:** Silvia Fister  
**Secretary:** Sigrid Panser  
**Treasurer:** Christiane Schnorpfleil



# Agora Club Romania

Wind of change in Romania



Agora Club 2 Brasov started the new Agora year with a new border

Our meetings were full of joy, inspirational and fun.

We have participate to concerts, we visited an exposition of illusions.



Celebrate our friend's Domnita birthday.....



We also took care of our mission , to continue the campaign EFTW in Romania , by taking her to a doctor ophthalmologist to evaluate the damage of her eyes , to help her to recover her life

Unfortunately, the weather was very good and we spent our meetings outside...



See you in Gent!

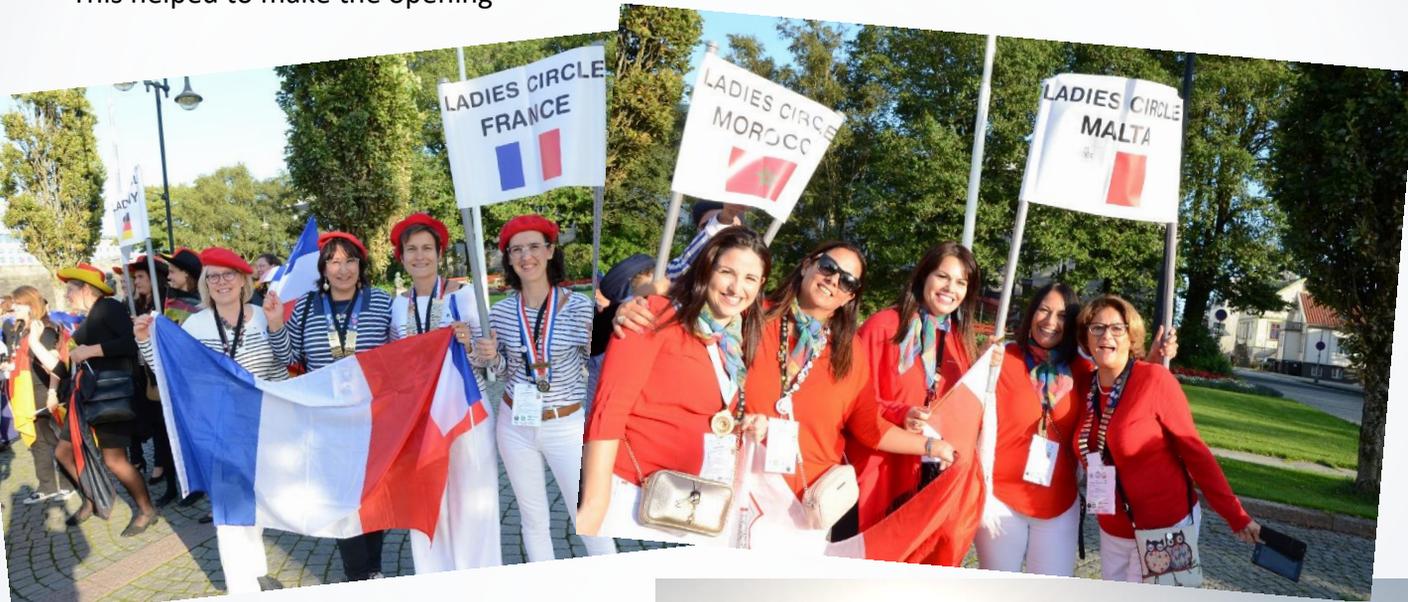


## ACI at LCI conference

For those of us that attended LCI conferences, then you will know that there is something about them that makes you think young again. It is so refreshing, inspiring and to be perfectly honest, much more exhausting today than it was many years ago. But the spirit of Friendship and Service remains, and seeing some of our friends from the past, some of who are Agora and some Tangent adds to that special event.



The conference took place in Haugesund, Norway where the weather, incredibly, was beautiful. This helped to make the opening



ceremony memorable with more than 500 women from all over the world in their national colours or costumes reflecting the global reach LCI has. It was a fantastic ceremony and we must say a big well done to Therese the convenor, and her team for a great AGM.

Ladies Circle is indeed doing very well, with 12,500 members worldwide and still growing. During this conference, these ladies have adopted an additional clause to the Aims and Objectives of LCI to endorse



and acknowledge that both Agora and Tangent offer a continuation after LCI, and that we are all part of the Round Table family as 5 clubs 1 vision. The new adopted item reads as follows:-

**D. To promote, co-ordinate and develop working relationships with Round Table International, Tangent International, Agora Club International and Club 41 International wherever possible.**

A big thank you goes to the outgoing President Anne Ahlefeldt and her board, who were instrumental in bringing about talks with all the Round Table family clubs to speak to each other, to appreciate each other and to speak to each other. Knowing very well that all clubs together as 5 clubs 1 vision can make a difference.

After the AGM, Anne as IPP, and Kenza the new President from Morocco, Paula President of Tangent Int. President from the UK and us, Isabelle and Anna from ACI and 2 members from TCI



had a very cordial meeting with a promise that this is the first of many opportunities to sit round

the table to find ways of working together and it was decided that as a start, we should have a short meeting with all 5 whenever possible, with the next one in Gent during our AGM.

It is now up to us Agora ladies worldwide to embrace this way forward with our brothers and sisters in our own countries first and foremost and subsequently on an international basis.

During the AGM, there was an update about the ISP **Happy Hearts**, a project spearheaded by LC Botswana to build a home near a hospital for children undergoing treatment for cancer. This project needs more funds for it to materialise but the commitment of the ladies in Botswana and the whole of LCI will surely make it happen! On behalf of ACI, Isabelle gave a donation towards this project, whilst an update about our own ISP Eyes for the World urging the members to have more successful side by side missions as happened in Zimbabwe was received with interest.



When all the work was done and dusted, the Norwegian Agora ladies, Anita, Guri, Aina, Nina, Aase, and Tone treated us to a great day of sight seeing and a great picnic lunch and visited the best sandy beach in Norway, with white sand and wonderful turquoise sea that was of course freezing!



We enjoyed having Siham from Morocco and Kragh who lives in Denmark, posing at the foot of the miniature statue of liberty in Kopervic which is where the copper to create the Statue of Liberty in New York came from!

We would like to congratulate the new LCI Board Kenza Sbihi (Morocco)President, Alexandra Bennett(GB & I) Vice President, Anne Annefelt(Finland) IPP, Prachi Argawal (India) Treasurer, Marieke van Gent (The Netherlands) Secretary, Criss Lengyel (Romania) Weblady and wish them a great year ahead.



The motto that Kenza has chosen is Dream, Achieve, Inspire is befitting for the celebration of the 60 years of Ladies Circle



International the Diamond Anniversary which will be held at the next AGM in Rotterdam.





# Agora Club France is candidate to host the ACI conference in 2020



We are proud to present you the project of 3 French Agora Clubs to organize the ACI Conference weekend in 2020

The site “**Puy du Fou**”, unique place, magical environment was voted the best European park. Every Meetings and Party will take place in the same area!

**Nantes** : International airport, castle of Dukes of Brittany, machines Island, shopping

**Les Sables d’Olonne** : the most beautiful beach of “la côte de Lumière”, city of “Vendée Globe”(Sailing Race)



**PUYDUFOU**  
is waiting for You!

# Agora club the Netherlands is candidate to host the ACI AGM in 2020



47 members from the Netherlands, who will be present in Gent, will show you their enthusiasm to support this candidature.

We are very proud that next to our loyal "senior" members a lot of representatives of recently started Agora clubs will come to the ACI AGM 2018 in Gent.

In 2020 we would like to welcome you in one of the most beautiful cities of Holland, the royal town the Hague, located at the North Sea and famous for its dunes and sandy beaches.

But more important is that the Hague is home to our royal family and our government, with its beautiful house of parliament, its palaces and international embassies.

The Hague is an historical city where you can walk through old streets with palaces, museums, historical buildings but also lovely shops; everything is on walking distance from the hotels.

You will enjoy the atmosphere in this international city with the combination of old and new architecture and many good restaurants.

Or just take the train to arrive in Amsterdam or Rotterdam within an hour.

Holland is a small country with many different parts and you can travel to the north or the south in less than three hours.

The ladies of Agora Club The Netherlands will be happy to guide you and we hope that you will visit us in our beautiful country in 2020.

*We would give you all a royal treat!*



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The ACN board 2018-2019

# AGM 2018 Gent - Program

## **5/10/2018 : Councillors Meeting**

**Councillors 2017-2018 or on invitation**  
14:00-16:30 Coffee break included

**At NH hotel**



## **6/10/2018 : AGM & Lunch**

**Welcome to everyone !**  
9:00-15:00 Coffee break and lunch included

**At the beautiful and historical**  
**AULA of the University of Gent**



# AGM 2018 Gent - Program

## **5/10/2018 : Welcome Party**

Welcome to everyone for good food & dance party!

19:30-..... ☺

### **At the Old Fishmarket**



## **6/10/2018 : Gala Dinner & Dance**

Welcome to everyone for a delicious dinner & lots of dance ☺

19:00-02:00

### **At the ESKIMO FABRIEK**



# AGM 2018 Gent - Dress Code



## DRESS CODE

### 😊 Vree Wijs:

Pack raincoat (Belgian weather!)  
Pack walking shoes

### 😞 Not so Vree Wijs:

Wearing stiletto heels on  
Gent cobble stones...!

Councillors  
Meeting

Casual

Walking  
distance

Welcome  
Party

Wear the colours of  
your country  
Smart  
casual

Walking  
distance

AGM

Smart  
casual

Walking  
distance

Gala Dinner  
& Dance

Cocktail  
dress

Suit & tie

By bus

