

**First Timer Delegate at the 64<sup>th</sup> Zonta International Convention**  
**Yokohama, Japan – July 2018**  
**A Recap of My Experience**  
*(Submitted by Rosa Goldsmith)*

This event was my first time going to a Zonta Convention and my first time as a delegate for the club at the international level. I prepared a three-page write-up of my experience of which I plan to add some pictures. Below is a recap of my experience:

**MOST FAVORITE PART OF THE CONVENTION:**

The Opening Ceremony and Flag Parade by far. There were delegates from 52 countries attending the convention; however, the flag parade had 66 flags representing the countries that have Zonta Clubs. Ladies carrying the flags and attendees wore their native dresses. The African and Asian clubs had beautiful costumes.

**MOST FAVORITE MOMENT OF THE CONVENTION:**

I have two memorable moments.

- 1) I gave DC club pins to four young members of a Tokyo Z Club. In unison, they said “Thank you” to me and bowed. It was very special.
- 2) At the breakout workshop, an African lady was talking about some correspondence they had with a club from Bangladesh, sharing pictures and ideas. She said that no one in their club had ever met the members from Bangladesh. The lady next to her said “Oh, my gosh! I’m from the Bangladesh club!” It definitely was an AH HA moment!

**WHAT IT WAS LIKE BEING A FIRST TIMER:**

On your name tag, you get a Green “First Timer” ribbon, so everyone knows it’s your first time. Typically, a First Timer has pins from their club and hands them out to other First Timers. This starts a conversation and you learn about each other’s club, experience of being a Zontian, and length of membership. As you collect pins, you put them on your lanyard and then your bag, if you get a lot. I gave a lot of pins away but did not always receive one back. It seems that this practice is slowly dying out but it is still fun.

**HOW IT FELT TO BE A CLUB DELEGATE:**

I felt special! This was the first time I have used an electronic voting machines. I felt like I was a UN delegate voting on important items. I took being a delegate to heart, meaning, that I read the issues, discussed them with other delegates, and was present for every vote. I also met some of the candidates prior to the elections. I sat with other District 3 delegates and got to know them better. We hung out in the evening. I was never alone. There was always something to do and to discuss!

Gale Allen, from the Fairfax Club and incoming Area 4 Director, saved seats for the District 3 delegates at every session. She had a US flag that she would wave so that we could find our seats. I took it over for one session and a few US delegates from District 9 asked me where their seats were. Again, I felt special!

## **BYLAWS SESSION:**

Wow! It was marathon session!

First, the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee Chairman would read the proposed amendment to the bylaws and ask for any discussions. There were three types of microphones: Pro, Con, and Procedural. Delegates would go to the microphone, wait for recognition, state their name and club name & district, and then ask questions. Some proposed amendments passed without discussions while others had heated discussions about procedures, against the proposal and/or for the proposal.

The discussion of the proposed amendment to change the name of the YWPA award lasted over half an hour! The two ladies from Denmark sitting next to me noted I was a First Timer and said in their broken English, "Are you having fun yet! Tomorrow we may be here until 11 at night!". I think they were referring to the electronic voting proposals scheduled for the next day.

The biggest issue was electronic voting. First there was a proposal to add "electronic voting" to the Glossary under "Vote". If this passed then seven additional proposals would be up for discussion. Long story short, the proposal to add the language did not pass and there was no further discussion. However, after the break, someone requested to open the discussion up again. Again, it did not pass. I'll just let Mary Ellen Bittner brief you on this one!

## **WOULD I DO IT AGAIN?**

Absolutely! In a heartbeat, even if it is halfway around the world again! I'm looking forward to attending the Chicago Convention in 2020 and then the Hamburg Convention in 2024.

I thank the Zonta Club of Washington, D.C. members for nominating me to be a delegate and providing the opportunity to attend the 64<sup>th</sup> Zonta International Convention. See you soon in Chicago....