



The Forum

Newsletter of the Federation of the American Women's Clubs Overseas Inc.

Summer 2005

2005-2007 Board of Directors

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2005 Conference Highlights

"To the Heart of the Matter"

Thirty-eight FAWCO clubs were represented in March 2005 at the 37th Biennial FAWCO Conference in Birmingham, England. Conference business was condensed to keep expenses down and encourage attendance, further enhancing the conference theme, "To the Heart of the Matter." FAWCO was honored to welcome the Rt. Hon. Ann Clwyd MP as a special guest speaker. Described by the Observer newspaper as "one of the world's most distinguished figures in the field of human rights," Ms. Clwyd spoke passionately of her personal experiences in Iraq before the war when in 1991 she was an eyewitness from the mountains in Iran and Iraq, as thousands of Kurds fled on foot from the attacks by Saddam Hussein. As British Prime Minister Tony Blair's Special Envoy on Human Rights to Iraq, Ms. Clwyd has returned several

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2005-07 FAWCO Board members (l-r): Pam Dahlgren, Parliamentarian; Ashley O'Reilly, 2nd VP; Celeste Brown, 1st VP; Emily van Eerten, President; Sunny Eades, 3rd VP (not pictured, Betsy Greene, Treasurer and Meg Brew, Secretary).



times to war-torn Iraq. She gave a moving account of the complex emotions evident on Iraq's first election day.

(Continued on page 6)

"FAWCO House" in Sri Lanka Under Construction

Arline Coward, FAWCO President 2003-05
Emily van Eerten, FAWCO President 2005-07

Shortly following the devastating Asian tsunami of December 26, 2004, FAWCO activated its Emergency Relief Fund to receive donations from FAWCO member clubs and individuals. Rather than contribute these funds to one of the larger humanitarian organizations, FAWCO looked within its membership for help in identifying a specific local project where our collective money could make the largest impact. The American Women's Group in Languedoc-Roussillon knew of just the right project.

Hans Eysselinck, husband of AWG Languedoc-Roussillon member Genette Eysselinck, is an architect and serves as treasurer of the Beruwala Village Association. Beruwala Village is on the southwest coast of Sri Lanka, 60 kilometers south of Colombo. The association was founded in 2000 and therefore, when the tsunami hit, they were on the scene as of January 1st. In addition to immediately implementing a food distribution chain and helping clean up the village, association volunteers were

able to identify a very specific need. Twelve fishermen from the village had been killed, leaving sixty dependents without homes, husbands or fathers, or any other means of financial support. FAWCO agreed to dedicate ERF funds to building a house of twelve small apartments for the widows and children in the greatest need.

Within three months, FAWCO collected \$48,000. Mr. Pierre Vivier, founder and president of the Beruwala Village Humanitarian Association, reports that the association purchased land for the building in February 2005 at a central location, prior to changes in government policies making it more difficult and expensive to obtain land for construction. The lot was purchased with association funds and all FAWCO funds will be used to construct the house. The "FAWCO House" is scheduled for completion between December 2005 and March 2006.

AWG Languedoc-Roussillon Club President Linda Lavin made the following observation: "I love the idea that a woman living in a small village in France would be helping another woman in a fishing village on the other side of the world. After the tsunami, I could help her build her house, feed her children and enhance the community that she lives in. . . one woman helping another woman: UNITED."

U.S. Liaison Report

Overseas Americans Week

Lucy Stensland Laederich
U.S. Liaison
usliaison@fawco.org

FAWCO was represented at the fourth "Overseas Americans Week" in Washington, May 9-13, 2005. Incoming President Emily van Eerten was flanked by U.S. Liaison Lucy Laederich, Counselor Pam Dahlgren, France Regional Coordinator and President of the American Club of Lyon Eric Way, and FAUSA President Dale Koepenick. In addition, it shared two delegates with the AARO delegation: Barbara Stern, AAWE Paris and AARO Voting Chair, and Pam Perraud, FAWCO NGO Director. Over twenty representatives of 5 organizations (AARO - Association of Americans Resident Overseas; ABCGC - American Business Council of the Gulf Countries; ACA - American Citizens Abroad; ALLAMO - Alliance of American Organizations; Iberia; and FAWCO) met for a working dinner on Sunday, May 8, and then spent 4 to 5 days meeting with Congressional staffers; government agencies, including the Census Bureau, Federal Voting Assistance Program and the GAO (recently renamed "Government Accountability Office"); the State Department; and "think tanks" on both sides of the political spectrum. The issues explored: voting from abroad; Social Security and Medicare for eligible overseas Americans; counting Americans abroad; double taxation; a possible caucus of Congressional members particularly interested in overseas issues; banking problems; and protection of citizens arrested abroad.



As on previous occasions, FAWCO focused on election reform and the census, though the focal point had changed in both instances: the main concern now with respect to **election reform** is that the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) is still underfunded and, with the recent resignation of Commissioner DeForest B. Soaries Jr., the Election Assistance Commission is hampered in its decision-making capabilities. Despite current attempts to cut much non-defense-related funding, FAWCO consistently advocated full funding for HAVA to enable the states to implement its provisions and the National Institute for Science and Technology to come up with much-needed guidelines for voting systems and technology in time for the 2006 election. Although it was not part of our position paper, as the resignation was too recent, we also urged the rapid appointment of the necessary fourth EAC Commissioner. In addition, we presented to the FVAP, the GAO, the EAC and the appropriate House and Senate committees the results of the FAWCO voting survey, carried

out and compiled by Voting from Overseas Chair Kathy Webster this year.



In light of the disappointing results of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2004 trial enumeration of Americans in Mexico, Kuwait and France, it would have been unreasonable to continue to advocate our inclusion in the 2010 **Decennial Census**. Acting on a recommendation by the GAO, however, FAWCO and AARO met with

The following is from a letter received shortly after Overseas Americans Week from Senator Dodd of Connecticut, Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration and one of the four recipients of the FAWCO Fellowship Award, 2005:

"I am honored to receive the Fellowship Award from the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas for my work in authoring the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). This landmark legislation establishes, for the first time in our history, an appropriate role for the Federal government to play in ensuring that every eligible American citizen, regardless of where they may reside, will have an equal opportunity to cast a vote and have that vote counted. HAVA builds on the important protections established for overseas civilian and military voters under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA).

It was my pleasure to work with you (...) on the development and passage of this important legislation. (...) While HAVA is a good first start, once it has been fully implemented, there will be additional opportunities to ensure both expanded access to the ballot box and the integrity of the results. I look forward to your continued advice and counsel on ways in which we can ensure that overseas Americans can fully participate in our representative democracy by exercising their right to vote.

The advocacy and commitment of FAWCO to expanding voting rights is commendable. It is a great privilege for me to be associated with the work of this organization and to be recognized by it."

Sincerely,
Christopher J. Dodd
United States Senate



high-level representatives of the National Academy of Sciences to discuss alternatives and we expect to continue this dialogue.

Armed with a mandate defined by the 2005 FAWCO Resolutions and Recommendations, we met with several people, including staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee responsible for recommendations on treaty ratification, to urge that the U.S. ratify the CRC (Convention on the Rights of the Child) and CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women).



Eric Way, AC Lyon, was FAWCO's key representative on **tax issues**, which centered around ending America's policy of "Citizenship-based taxation." While it seems that Section 911

of the IRS Code, which protects up to \$80,000 of foreign-earned income, is fairly safe from repeal for the moment, there are several proposals being discussed which could increase the tax burden of many overseas Americans.

Eric writes: "In January the Joint Tax Committee published a proposal for capping the 'reasonable housing' exclusions associated with Section 911. The proposal would limit the exclusion to housing costs at or below 1/3 of an employee's total salary. A second, perhaps more onerous proposal would implement a 'stacking' clause for all non-excluded income. Today, with the Section 911 'foreign-earned income' exclusion, any passive income or earned income in excess of the excluded amount is taxed as if it were one's only income, falling into a lower tax bracket than it would if added to the first \$80,000 of foreign-earned income. The proposal would 'stack' this income on top of the \$80,000, raising the tax rate for non-excluded income.

"On the positive side, the idea of territorial taxation, as opposed to citizenship-based taxation, is being examined by various groups in Washington including the Presidents' Panel for Tax Reform. Few people believe there is much chance of enacting such a fundamental change any time soon." Nonetheless, the problem has been raised in many offices and overseas Americans' concerns have certainly been heard.



Following the FAWCO survey on **representation in Washington** (see results on the FAWCO website), we began to explore possibilities for the formation of a caucus of Congressional members interested in the issues of importance to overseas Americans. We spoke to various people about the idea, including Congressman Bob Ney, Chairman of the Committee on House Administration, responsible for registering

Congressman Bob Ney, Chairman of the Committee on House Administration, accepts the FAWCO Fellowship Award from U.S. Liaison Lucy Laederich in the Committee hearing room.



U.S. Liaison Report



House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer accepting the FAWCO Fellowship Award in his office in the Capitol. (l-r: Dale Koepnick, FAUSA President; Pam Dahlgren, FAWCO Counselor; Emily van Eerten, FAWCO President; Congressman Steny Hoyer; Andrea Singh, ACA; John Fredenberger, AARO; Lucy Laederich, FAWCO U.S. Liaison; Barbara Stern, AARO Voting Chair).

Certainly a highlight of the week was the presentation of the FAWCO Fellowship Award to the four “fathers” of the Help America Vote Act of 2002: Senators Mitch McConnell (now Senate Majority Whip) and Christopher Dodd, and Congressmen Steny Hoyer (now House Minority Whip) and Bob Ney. As President Arline Coward said at the Birmingham Conference, “Championing their bills through their respective houses and leading the conference negotiations aimed at harmonizing the provisions, the four crafters succeeded in October 2002 in securing the passage in Congress of the most comprehensive election reform legislation ever passed, signed into law by the President a week before the 2002 elections. FAWCO salutes their vision and their constancy, and promises to work with them and their colleagues on all future efforts to improve the voting process for civilian and military voters outside the United States.”



Every year that we go back, we have a few more friends on the Hill and in key agencies. Overseas Americans Week has become a regular date on the FAWCO calendar and has given FAWCO and overseas Americans in general new and important visibility in Washington. Rest assured, we will continue to make strides in all of these areas in the coming year!

congressional caucuses. We were also graciously received by the Swiss Ambassador who described the way Switzerland deals with its expatriate population.



Voting from Overseas

FAWCO's POST-ELECTORAL VOTING SURVEY

*Kathy Webster, Voting from Overseas
Committee Chair 1993-2005
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In the four months following the November 2004 General Election, FAWCO conducted a post-electoral voting survey. The bottom line of this survey is that 88.5% of those who wished to vote from overseas were able to do so. That sounds like success, but it also reveals a continuing need for improvement as 11.5 % were disenfranchised because of persistent obstacles. We must increase our efforts to convince all Americans to vote while living overseas. There are undoubtedly many more than the 6% in our sampling who chose not to vote.

The full survey report is posted on the FAWCO website: US Concerns Committees/ Voting from Overseas. It was delivered by FAWCO U.S. Liaison Lucy Laederich to key people in Washington during “Overseas Americans Week” in early May. These results should highlight the areas where improvement in the system of voting from abroad is most urgent. Our aim is the complete elimination of obstacles faced by so many overseas voters.

Our sampling was sound: 457 US citizens completed surveys from around the world: from Europe, North Africa and the Near East, to the Far East and Australia. Each area was

statistically well represented. There was also a good spread of voting states, from the most represented abroad (CA, NY, TX, IL, FL, MI, PA) to those with no voters responding (LA, MS, MT, NE, NV, ND, WY). A full list is on the website.

Of the 457 surveys returned, 428 registered to vote and 29 chose not to. The main reason given for not voting was that they had lived abroad, not voting, for too long and doubted they still could - or should. At the FAWCO Conference in March, we tried to make clear that, where our right to vote is concerned, you “do not lose it if you don't use it!” What you lose is a stake in democracy.

Our survey asked respondents to detail the problems they encountered. Specific ones were transmitted directly to Polli Brunelli, Director of the Federal Voting Assistance Program. Recurrent ones were grouped and presented in our report. For 312 voters the system worked smoothly, but there is still work to be done because 100 people - over 23% - had problems. The most common was late receipt of ballot. Almost all of the Michigan voters decried this state's notarization requirement. The persistence of voters was impressive: of the 379 who declared that they received their ballots on time, 67 had labored to overcome obstacles.

A group of 193 voters, or 42%, declared that they had little or no confidence in the system, mainly because they doubted their votes were counted. On the other hand, 344 from our sample said they would vote by Internet

if it could be guaranteed secure.

While a good majority - 319 - did not find the process difficult, 81 did. That's a worrying 20% for whom the fight must continue to achieve a totally user-friendly system for voting from overseas. As a result of studying the responses to this survey, we have the following recommendations:

- ◆ *Extension of suffrage to include all children of U.S. citizens residing overseas, even if the children have never lived in the U.S., so they can register at their parents' voting address (12 states offer this already);*
- ◆ *Increased attention to, and emphasis on, the training of Local Election Officials;*
- ◆ *Implementation of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 recommendation that all states create a single state office to handle electoral lists and to process absentee ballots;*
- ◆ *Increased use of electronic transmission of electoral materials; and*
- ◆ *Installation of a system (email or phone contact by voter, for example) so that a voter can determine if their ballot was received – and hopefully counted.*

These improvements would immeasurably increase the desire of Americans overseas to participate in the democratic process offered by their country.

NetWorks

Taking up the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals

Malaria is one of the world's great tragedies. Despite the fact that this disease is preventable, controllable and curable, this parasitic infection attacks over 300 million people each year and claims the lives of up to 2.7 million yearly. In Sub-Saharan Africa, vulnerable children under the age of 5 are dying from malaria at a rate of 3000 each day. It is a disease that not only kills, but destroys families and nations and shatters hopes.

Impoverished countries suffer the most from malaria and these countries are caught in a vicious circle of disease and poverty. Malaria drains national economies, discourages foreign investment and tourism, depletes family resources by increasing health care expenditure and decreases income through sickness and absenteeism. It hinders the harvesting of crops contributing to hunger and starvation. Malaria is responsible for children missing school, hampering their learning and impeding long-term physical and cognitive development. Malaria is a disease of poverty, but it is a disease that can be stopped.

Insecticide-treated-bed-nets (ITNs) are widely accepted as one of the most cost-effective malaria prevention measures. The mosquito that transmits malaria (female Anopheles) bites exclusively at night. Use of ITNs prevents mosquitoes from biting and infecting individuals sleeping under the nets. The nets also have a repellent and vector killing capability, that provides some limited protection for others in the room. A long lasting insecticide treated bed net costs approximately \$5. – an unaffordable price for people living in extreme poverty.

At the recent FAWCO Conference, the delegates *“resolved to address the tragedy of malaria by encouraging FAWCO’s members*

Paula Daeppen
Malaria Chair, CONGO and UN Representative
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to make a significant commitment to worldwide malaria prevention. In a shared vision to halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria, FAWCO sets a target of \$75,000 to be reached by its 75th anniversary in Berlin, March 2006.”

With this mandate, FAWCO has now launched NetWorks, a malaria prevention program that aims to supply long lasting insecticide-treated-bed-nets to some of the world's most vulnerable women and children. Our dream is to supply at least one net for every member of FAWCO – a goal that we are sure to reach with your support.

You will be able to monitor our exciting progress in reaching or surpassing the \$75,000 target on a new malaria web section of the FAWCO site that will promote NetWorks. Here you will find information on malaria, how to get certificates for bed nets, activities, fundraising ideas, information on donating and valuable links to promote malaria prevention and FAWCO's challenge.

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Committee Reports

Environment

Trees of Life in Aalsmeer, Netherlands

Joann van Loon and Karen Lewis, AWC Amsterdam, and Valerie Garforth, FAWCO Environment Committee Chair

The saying goes that 'God made the world, but the Dutch made Holland' and in April, AWC Amsterdam members joined local volunteers to help restore and protect a small, but important part of that country. The project fits within a FAWCO-wide tree-planting campaign to reduce CO2 in the atmosphere and counter global climate change. Aalsmeer is close to Amsterdam and Schiphol airport and serves as an important recreational area, but over time the local natural habitats have become fragmented and surrounded by houses, farms and recreational facilities.

The *Stichting Bovenlanden Aalsmeer* was created over ten years ago with the goal of reestablishing the delicate balance between nature and civilization. Currently this foundation is working to return a lilac orchard to natural forest made up of native Dutch species such as oak, hazelnut, birch, beech, ash, poplar, willow, and linden. The foundation's work includes restoring reed banks, which prevent soil collapse, and their aim is to reconnect Aalsmeer with the nearby Amsterdamse Bos (woods) and the Green Heart of Holland.

On April 16th, thirty AWCA and local volunteers worked to plant a forest of a thousand trees: the planting site was an "island" in the Westeindeplassen, a large man-made body of water in Aalsmeer. Nico Borgman, chairman of the foundation, personally rowed volunteers across the waterway from the main road. Forest Ranger John Beintema explained that the trees will consolidate the soil, preventing the earth from crumbling into waterways which are vitally important in the Netherlands' low-lying terrain, and will provide shelter, food and habitat for wildlife.

AWC Amsterdam raised funds to buy the planted trees through sales of "Tree of Life" cards, designed by AWCA members Joann van Loon and Miki Geijsen. Over fifty of these cards were sold at the FAWCO 2005 conference in Birmingham. FAWCO conferences are designated "Carbon Neutral" which means that delegates buy trees in various tree-planting projects around the world to compensate for CO2 generated by their travel to the conference. Other projects supported at the conference include the British Woodland Trust, which will dedicate a strand of trees near Birmingham in honor of FAWCO; Trees For Life, working to restore the ancient Caledonian Forest in Scotland; and FAWCO's own Millennium Forest in Morocco.

AWC Amsterdam members (l-r): Emily van Eerten (FAWCO President); Meg Brew (FAWCO Secretary); Michaël Gachet; Joann van Loon (Trees of Life project coordinator) and Cheryl Steenman-Bash.



Education

ESC Goes to Prague

From October 30 – November 1, 2005, the Educational Support Committee Chair, Susan van Alsenoy, AWC Antwerp, will be presenting the FAWCO research project, *LD Support for Mainstream Teachers Worldwide*, at the INCLUES Conference in the Czech Republic. INCLUES (www.inclues.org) is a European Comenius network of individuals, organizations and universities devoted to the implementation of inclusive education for all learners.

INCLUES considers it to be a human right that all children, whatever their level of difficulties, should be able to access individually-tailored, high quality education together with more able peers, and not be excluded from the mainstream because of learning difficulties. Some of the reasons they put forth to support their position are:

- ❖ *Mainstream schools are the best place to develop social and cognitive abilities;*
- ❖ *Inclusion is a means of fostering critical thinking, an attribute needed to combat a pan-European spread of extreme-right thinking and narrow-mindedness; and*
- ❖ *Inclusive education fosters teacher development and challenges current methods of evaluation.*

LD Support for Mainstream Teachers Worldwide was undertaken to provide assistance for educators at all levels, from pre-school through university, in their efforts to enable the LD (learning differently/specific learning disabled) students in their classes. It is the result of a two-year research project which investigated best practices from many international sources. A panel of experts was assembled from various countries, and with their help, a one-page strategy sheet was agreed upon, which was considered to be a basic, first-step aid for teachers with little or no prior education in LD remediation. To date this project has been translated into nine languages, which are available at <http://studentswholearn.fawco.org>.

Relocating Overseas This Year?

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Committee Reports

2005 Conference Highlights

(Continued from page 1)

Another highlight of the Conference was the panel discussion by distinguished cardiologists Jane Flint and Sara Thorne who were joined by Suzie Hutchinson, the director of "Little Hearts Matter." They addressed the extended effects of heart disease whether it was diagnosed prenatally or later in life. Although much has been learned about the medical treatment of heart disease, care specialists are also involved in helping patients and families cope with the psychological and ancillary medical consequences of managing a lifetime with heart disease.

Former AW of the Eastern Province FAWCO Rep Dianne Reed recounted her harrowing experience of being shot during a terrorist assault on a residential compound in Khobar in May 2004. As a second bullet to her leg brought her to the ground a few meters from safety, Dianne looked directly at her attacker and shouted "I can't believe you just shot me!" By addressing the young man directly, she felt she was able to impress on him that her life mattered and he withdrew. As many FAWCO members have followed Dianne's remarkable recovery progress, it was especially inspiring to witness her positive attitude in the face of this life-altering event.

The Lord Mayor of Birmingham delighted the assembly at a dinner in the Birmingham Council House with a sincere message on the importance of the good work done by FAWCO and a personal tour of the historic council chambers.

Conference attendees participated in a wide array of workshops. U.S. Liaison Lucy Laederich presented a "Washington 101" seminar where she gave an extended update on the status of various issues of interest to Americans living overseas, focusing on voting and representation, but also touching on taxation, social security and Medicare. Educational Support Committee Chair Susan van Alsenoy presented her "We all Learn Differently" workshop, helping participants learn more about their learning styles and how to create a learning passport. Professor Eric Sandström and Jann Mitchell-Sandström gave us a realistic perspective regarding the ongoing crisis of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, while Veronica Oakeshott reported about the work of 2003 Foundation Relief and Development Grant winner Cecily's Fund,

(Continued on page 7)

Mark your calendars Interim FAWCO Conference & 75th Anniversary BERLIN 2006 March 2 –6

The next FAWCO conference will take place in Berlin where the original 7 clubs came together to found this organization 75 years ago. With this anniversary, FAWCO celebrates American women living in many different countries, yet striving together for mutual goals.

"TEARING DOWN WALLS" Education, Knowledge, Tolerance and Understanding

For more information contact
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Recommended literature: Christopher Isherwood "The Berlin Diaries"

Recommendations & Resolutions

FAWCO delegates unanimously approved Resolutions and Recommendations to help guide the organization over the next two years.

- 1) Resolves to promote the rights and welfare of women and children through education and awareness-raising efforts, and recommends:
 - a) Continuing to work through the UN to advocate women's rights and child rights with support for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC);
 - b) Affirming a woman's right to accurate information about reproductive and sexual health, including AIDS; supporting health education programs aimed at preventing, controlling and treating diseases; and promoting awareness of practices harmful to women;
 - c) Supporting efforts to protect women and children in abusive and conflict situations;
 - d) Continuing to contribute to educational needs, especially for dual national children and for students who learn differently;
 - e) Disseminating basic information on legal and employment rights of foreign women in host countries;
 - f) Publishing information on cardiovascular disease, cancer and other women's health issues;
 - g) Promoting active aging and disseminating information on health, finance, care and security for the elderly;
 - h) Raising awareness of the dangers and implications of substance abuse and providing information about available treatment resources;
- 2) Resolves to work to improve conditions for Americans living, working and retiring overseas, and recommends:
 - a) Continuing to organize informative and dynamic overseas voting campaigns;
 - b) Working for easier and more secure procedures for voting from abroad, particularly by actively promoting and assisting the rapid implementation of the Help America Vote Act of 2002;
 - c) Working on means of reliably counting the civilian overseas American population;
 - d) Exploring means by which overseas US citizens can be effectively represented in Washington;
 - e) Continuing to monitor citizenship issues specifically affecting overseas Americans, including inequalities in citizenship rights for adopted children;
 - f) Promoting spousal employment rights for Americans living abroad;
 - g) Working toward the abolition of double taxation of overseas US citizens.
- 3) Resolves to promote mutual respect and understanding between the US and other countries, and recommends:
 - a) Endorsing the United Nations as a forum for the peaceful resolution of conflicts;
 - b) Encouraging respect for international perspectives on current issues by arranging for qualified speakers and workshops at Conferences and Regional meetings;
 - c) Disseminating information about current situations which infringe on basic human rights.

The FAWCO Foundation

And the Winner is...

The Foundation is very proud to announce the 2005 Awards and Development Grants recipients. Congratulations to this most deserving group of winners.

2005 Foundation Awards

The AW of Surrey ARTS AWARD of \$4000 was given to **Benjamin Hecht**, Chilterns AWC, who will be studying at the prestigious Parsons Arts Institute in Paris with a view to a career in photo journalism. The SCIENCES AWARD (in memory of Frieda Bacigalupo Natali) of \$4000 went to **Nicole Voutsina**, AWO of Greece, who is enrolled in an undergraduate program at the University of La Verne in Athens in Exercise Science and plans to become a physical therapist. The HUMANITIES AWARD of \$4000 (in memory of Gertrude de Gallaix, AAW Paris) was awarded to **Maria Claudia Prieto**, AWC of Zurich. Maria is currently enrolled at Yale University where she is majoring in history with an emphasis on religious history, specifically Buddhist and Christian monasticism. **Nancy Bell**, AWC Bern, who intends to become a certified public accountant and will study online with the Becker Conviser CPA review course, was the recipient of the \$4000 FAWCO MEMBERS AWARD, sponsored by AWC in Stockholm. **Eliza Jahn**, AWC Düsseldorf, who received the DUAL CULTURAL AWARD of \$2500 will attend one semester of the 11th grade at Mount Leba-

non High School in Pittsburgh in order to experience the "American way of life." The Chilterns AWC SPECIAL CHALLENGES AWARD of \$3000 was awarded to **Morgan Van der Weele**, AWA Vienna, who suffers from severe health problems including a deviated septum, speech defects and learning difficulties. Morgan is enrolled in the Johnston and Wales Career University in Providence, Rhode Island, where she will work towards an associate degree in baking, pastry and nutrition. **Margaret Mallon Pujol**, AAW Paris, received the \$500 ANGELICA AWARD FOR VOLUNTEERISM, sponsored by Dina Lang AILLO Florence. Margaret is a committed volunteer in the Dons Solidaires (Gifts in Kind France), a non profit organization that collects in-kind donations from major corporations which are then distributed to the needy throughout France. The FAUSA AWARD of \$3000 went to **Thea Fortune**, FAUSA. Thea is pursuing an online Master degree in library and information science through Drexel University which will prepare her for the international job market.

2005 Foundation Development Grants

The AWC Basel HEALTHY LIVING DG of \$3000 was given to **Obstetric Fistula: Prevention and Treatment**, proposed by AWC Basel, and will be used for surgeries for young women in rural sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia suffering with obstetric fistula. **Prevalence of Malnutrition in**

villages in the district of Ngara, Tanzania, proposed by AWC Bristol, was the recipient of the \$3000 AW of Surrey FEED THE WORLD DG. The grant will significantly fund the work in this organization's second year and enable an expansion of the program to more villages in the region. The EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE DG of \$3000 went to **AIC Girls Rescue Centre, Kajiado in Kenya**, proposed by AWC Kenya, and will be used to solve a serious water problem by providing a water tank and gutters for rain harvesting and storage as well as other essentials. The **Madagascar Support Children's Literacy Project**, proposed by AIWC Genoa, won the \$3000 HOPE THROUGH EDUCATION DG, sponsored by AWC in Stockholm. The grant will be used for school registration, tuition and maintenance for 30 children, ages five to ten years, 20 of who are orphans. The AWC Berkshire & Surrey PEACE THROUGH UNDERSTANDING DG of \$3000 was awarded to **2005 Recruitment of Big Brothers and Big Sisters in Antigua and Barbuda**, proposed by AWC of Antigua & Barbuda. The grant will be used primarily for marketing and promotional materials to build awareness of the program and to recruit and train mentors for the youth. The **Kugeria Women Water Project**, proposed by AWC Cologne, received the \$3000 SKILLS FOR LIFE DG which will be used to build a tank, using youth and young adults, as part of a vocational awareness project for water conservation.

Conference Highlights

(continued from page 6)

a group dedicated to supporting the education of AIDS orphans in Zambia. David Farrier from the British Woodland Trust explained how their small group is successfully working to save a single ancient forest that was facing ruin. Nancy Slessenger led an entertaining and informative session on how to deal with difficult people. During the FAWCO Fair, participants were able to learn more about the work of FAWCO committees, the FAWCO Foundation and FAUSA, as well as discovering the possibilities of long-distance learning programs offered by FAWCO and conference sponsor Lesley University.

The creative talents and varied activities of our 75 member clubs were showcased in a well received "Clubs in Action" PowerPoint presentation by 2nd Vice President Kathleen Simon and Presidents' Liaison

Melissa Mash. Webmanager Alice Grevet unveiled the revamped FAWCO website designed by Stephanie von Ohain (AWC Stockholm) to much acclaim.

The FAWCO Foundation announced the winners of the 2005 Development Grants and Awards. A total of \$18,000 was awarded to development projects nominated and chosen by our member clubs and several FAWCO members and their children received scholarships totaling \$25,000.

Following the report of FAWCO NGO Director Paula Daepfen, conference delegates and attendees were inspired to take direct action and, as a result, the FAWCO NetWorks campaign to raise \$75,000 for FAWCO's 75th anniversary celebration is now well underway.

The Birmingham conference also saw the election of a new board. FAWCO would

like to thank Arline Coward, President (AWC Madrid & Barcelona Women's Network) and her 2003-2005 Board of Directors: Charlotte De Witt (AWC in Stockholm); Kathleen Simon (NAC & AWC London); Louise Greeley-Copley (AW Surrey); Margot Humby (AWC The Hague); Ashley O'Reilly (AWC Bern); and Pamela Dahlgren (AW Surrey) for their leadership and service to the organization. The 2005-2007 Board members were welcomed: Emily van Eerten (AWC Amsterdam); Celeste Brown (AWC The Hague); Ashley O'Reilly (AWC Bern); Sunny Eades (North American Connection, Birmingham); Elizabeth Greene (AWC Zurich); Meg Brew (AWC Amsterdam); and Pamela Dahlgren (AW Surrey).



A True Hero

by Elinor Badanes,

FAWCO Foundation Development Grant Committee Chair

This is the story of a true hero, a headmistress fighting against the odds to rescue young girls from forced marriages. The FAWCO Foundation is proud to support the AIC Girls Primary School and its headmistress Priscilla Nangurai with a 2005 Development Grant of \$3000. Located 40 miles south of Nairobi, this school has been home to hundreds of child brides who have escaped a life of chilling exploitation. Despite the fact that marriage before the age of 18 is illegal in Kenya, girls are at risk everyday. Headmistress Nangurai is a true advocate for girls, often fighting against parents who view girls as mere property to be sold.

A ten year old named Naatosim was told by her father that she must drop out of school and get married. Fortunately, Naatosim knew where to go for help. She said, "I ran as fast as I could until I was inside here." She found safety at AIC Primary and with Headmistress Nangurai who has spent 22 years making sure girls like Naatosim are allowed to get an education.

Young Massai girls have often experienced by the ages of 9, 10, and 11 more than girls in developed nations will know in a lifetime. In a society that equates the value of a girl to that of five cows, the fight to educate girls is truly an uphill battle.

Headmistress Nangurai tells the story of a ten

year old girl being forced into an adult life, including sexual intercourse, on the pretext that because she was circumcised (genital mutilation), she was therefore an adult. She says, "An early arranged marriage is often an unfair act and a trap. It is an unfair act to an innocent and immature being, whose rights are infringed by being caught unaware and unprepared for parenthood."



Priscilla Nangurai

Our hero, Headmistress Nangurai, is on the front lines fighting for girls. We applaud her for her work and thank FAWCO member club, AWA of Nairobi, for proposing this project for a 2005 FAWCO Foundation Development Grant. For more information about AIC Primary School and its Headmistress, contact the Development Grant Committee Chair at grants@fawco.org.

2006 Awards and Development Grants

Information and applications will be available from mid-August via the Foundation website:

www.fawcofoundation.org

THE FAWCO FOUNDATION ONLINE CHARITY AUCTIONS

Since May 2001 The FAWCO Foundation has hosted eight Online Charity Auctions raising a grand total of \$12,020. With the introduction of this annual event, FAWCO club members, regardless of where they live, can now participate as donors and/or bidders in a Foundation auction.

The Online Charity Auction not only raises funds to support the worthwhile programs of The Foundation, it also provides an excellent **advertising possibility for donors**. Links to donor websites are provided free of charge as well as advertising on the description of the donated item. These ads and links remain up on the auction site until the next auction, usually the following year.

Our next auction opens on **October 3, 2005**, and closes on **October 21, 2005**. In the past, items of special appeal have been quilts, jewelry, gourmet delicacies, and offers of cruises, B&Bs or holiday homes.

Visit our home page at:
<http://auction.fawcofoundation.org/>

There you will find a link to an auction item donation form as well as information on how you can be a bidder in the October auction. Participation is open to everyone.



The FAWCO Foundation would like to give a special thank you to the following who have made a monetary or in-kind contribution of \$1,000 or more this past year.

ABC Cards
AAW Aberdeen
AWC Basel
AWC Berkshire/Surrey
AWC Bern
AWC Brussels
Chilterns AWC
Costa Cruises
AILO of Florence
Gertrude de Gallaix Trust
AIWC Genoa
Dina Lang
AAWE Paris
AWG Paris
AWC Philippines
AWC in Stockholm
AW of Surrey
AWC of The Hague



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The FAWCO Foundation is the philanthropic arm of FAWCO. It was created in 1967 as a not-for-profit corporation registered in the State of Missouri to administer all awards and grants on behalf of FAWCO. For more information, please contact info@fawcofoundation.org

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