

THE FORUM

SERVING OVERSEAS AMERICANS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SINCE 1931

Summer 2010

FAWCO Board 2009-2011

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The FAWCO FORUM is published twice a year. Email submissions to the editor at editor@fawco.org. For advertising information, please email advertising@fawco.org

Overseas Americans Week

April 19-23, 2010

As usual this year, FAWCO representatives worked hard with their colleagues in AARO, ACA and Overseas Vote Foundation in the weeks and months leading up to Overseas Americans Week (OAW) to prepare position papers, fine-tune arguments and schedule appointments with key Congressional offices. FAWCO supporter Clements International once again agreed to sponsor a reception in the elegant Atrium Room at the Capitol Visitors' Center, to discuss this year's issues.

And then the volcano blew

None of the FAWCO delegates made it to OAW except our resident Washington Liaison. Half of the delegates were grounded in Europe and those who made it to Washington found themselves stretched to the limit trying to cover over 100 appointments.

Flexibility is the name of the game

OAW Coordinator Lori Hakulinen lost sleep revising the schedule each time delegates confirmed their flights were cancelled. The ACA banking expert had to be replaced for all of his meetings; the OAW tax team was reduced by half, despite a record number of appointments; Eric Way participated from France in a key meeting on taxes; Dale Koepenick added voting meetings to an already full schedule; Lucy Laederich rearranged most of her meetings as conference calls from Paris; FAWCO UN Rep Paula Daeppen, hoping to advocate ratification of CEDAW at her first OAW, only met her contacts "virtually".

Run-up to election 2010

One FAWCO focus for a number of years has been legislation to facilitate voting by military and overseas voters (covered by the same law: UOCAVA). Seventeen "voting" meetings were

rescheduled and held by phone with all members of the House Administration Committee (with jurisdiction over voting bills), the appropriate Counsels in both House and Senate, and selected members of the two Armed Forces Committees.

Congress is understandably reluctant to pass new voting reforms immediately before a federal election. In upcoming hearings on absentee voting, FAWCO will submit comments, asking in particular that provisions of the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act on online ballot tracking be extended to include confirmation that a ballot has been counted (H.R. 2510 by Susan Davis of California, passed in the House and now under review in the Senate).

"Voting" discussions also centered on eliminating witness and postmark requirements and ensuring that young people who have not yet established residency in a state can use the voting address of their eligible parent (now allowed in 17 states).

Hopes are high for improved ballot return rates following passage of MOVE, and it will be important for voters to report impediments to registration or voting so that remedial measures can be adopted quickly after the 2010 election and in time for 2012.

Bank accounts of overseas Americans

Increasing press coverage has been given to the problems Americans are having maintaining their U.S. bank accounts if they have a foreign address, and maintaining accounts abroad as U.S. citizens.

Though the OAW "tax and banking" team was vastly reduced, our pleas fell on receptive ears and, at the mid-week reception, Americans Abroad Caucus Co-Chair Carolyn Maloney (D-NY)

Continued on Page 9





30 YEARS of FOOT DRAGGING!

by Paula Daepfen

The **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women** is an international bill of rights for women. The US is one of only 7 countries, including Iran, Somalia and Sudan, not to have ratified this human rights treaty, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 and signed by the US in 1980. The Treaty has never come before the full Senate for a vote, although it enjoys popular bipartisan backing across the country: AARP, the American Bar Association, League of Women Voters, National Council of Churches, YWCA, American Jewish World Service, United Methodist Church, to name just a few.

The current US administration is strongly in favor of CEDAW. With the new Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on human rights and global women's issues, the time is right to get the 67 Senate votes required for ratification.

CEDAW provides for equal access to education, health and employment and equal opportunities in political and public life. It affirms women's rights to acquire, change or retain their nationality and that of their children. It is the only human rights treaty to affirm the reproductive rights of women; it does not address the matter of abortion and according to the US State Department is "abortion neutral." CEDAW would help enhance US laws with respect to violence against women, access to legal protections and other human rights. US ratification would strengthen CEDAW as an instrument in support of women's struggles to achieve full protection and realization of their rights at home and abroad.



CEDAW parties in dark green, countries which have signed but not ratified in light green, non-members in grey.

The treaty has been valuable in numerous countries in expanding political rights, developing domestic violence policies and improving girls' education; in fighting sex slavery and trafficking of women; improving health care services that save lives during pregnancy and childbirth; enabling millions of women to secure essential loans and the right to own or inherit property. It has proven to be an important tool to reduce violence and discrimination against women and girls, even in countries with poor human rights records.

US ratification would lend weight to the treaty and provide support to women seeking reforms around the world. The US should accept virtually all of CEDAW's obligations without "Reservations, Declarations and Understandings" – unnecessary limitations now being proposed undermine key provisions of the treaty – that show no responsibility for the US to undertake efforts to expand maternity leave, improve access to women's health care services or take more effective efforts to address sex-based pay discrimination and other objectives.

FAWCO's adopted Resolutions and Recommendations have long called for ratification of CEDAW. It is time to contact your Senators and the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to call for this long awaited step.

UN Women's Conference

By Pam Perraud, UN NGO Director

Over 3500 delegates and representatives from NGOs came to UN headquarters in NYC to the 54th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Declaration and Platform from the Beijing Women's Conference. Women leaders, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, were on hand to speak to delegates about what progress had been made on global women's issues.

Several key resolutions were passed including one urging world leaders to generate the political will, resources, commitment and assistance to reduce maternal mortality and improve maternal and newborn health. This issue is now being highlighted by world leaders as it is the only MDG where there has been virtually no progress.

New UN Entity for Women

Representatives from over 60 countries, including the US, urged the General Assembly to create a new entity within the UN which would consolidate four existing offices into one. The purpose would be to strengthen overall support for gender equality and empowerment of women.

The new entity would merge DAW (Division of Advancement of Women); the OSAGI (Office of the Special Advisor for Gender Issues); UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women) and INSTRAW (UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women). The assumption is that through consolidation current overlap can be eliminated and that the new entity (whose name has yet to be determined) will be more powerful than the many smaller ones.

On March 8, International Women's Day, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon urged the government to adopt the resolution for the new entity "without delay."

Girls' Leadership Workshop

Alexandra von Moos, daughter of AWC Bern member Sara von Moos, is one of 33 lucky young women chosen to attend the 2010 Eleanor Roosevelt Girls' Leadership Workshop in Val-Kill, New York this July. FAWCO has been a sponsor of GLW since 2008.



Alexandra von Moos

The 9-day program aims to empower and develop leadership skills for future public activists. Successful women leaders facilitate the discussions and act as role models and mentors for the girls. The program includes a field trip to the UN in New York as well as sessions on the topics such as feminism, human rights, social justice, citizenship and civic participation, and leadership.

Alexandra began to show her interest in social issues when, at only 8 years of age, she went door-to-door to raise over \$2500 to help alleviate the suffering of children injured during the Iraq war. Now 15 and in the 9th grade, Alexandra's attention is on the social issues facing the teens of today with a particular focus on teenage suicide, which has a high incidence in her home country of Switzerland. Look for her report-back in our Winter issue 2010.

New 3rd Vice President

Sallie Chaballier

Newly appointed 3rd Vice President for Committees Sallie Chaballier of AAWE Paris is a native of Mansfield, Ohio, and has lived in Paris for 23 of the past 26 years. After earning a B.A. in Russian Studies from Yale University and an M.A. in Soviet Studies from Harvard University, she worked for many years as an analyst of Soviet politics for the research divisions of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Munich, Paris, and Washington. She and her French husband François-Marc have two sons, Benjamin and Alexander.

In recent years, Sallie has been active in volunteer work in the Anglophone community in Paris: with MESSAGE, an Anglophone parents' support group; with the parents' association of the Ecole Active Bilingue Jeannine Manuel of which she is currently Vice President; and above all, with AAWE, serving as President since May 2008.

Previously Sallie was AAWE Membership Chairman, chairman of the AAWE Education/Bilingualism Committee, co-editor of the 7th edition of the AAWE Guide to Education in France, and a member of the AAWE News staff; she has also been AAWE liaison for the annual Paris College Day since 2004. In May 2010, she will become AAWE's FAWCO Rep.

Sallie initially caught FAWCO fever from her first Conference in 2007 in Lyon. She immediately volunteered as Bilingualism Coordinator for the Educational Support Committee. In the autumn of 2009, Sallie served on the Target Selection Committee and was Finance Committee Chair for the 2010 FAWCO conference in Boston. Sallie reports that she is honored at the prospect of joining the dynamic women of the FAWCO Board as 3rd Vice President.



Sallie Chaballier

**President's Message**

The highlight of our conference in Boston (see conference report on pages 6 and 7) was the announcement of Water as FAWCO's Target Issue, with selection made by our member clubs. FAWCO will focus the next three years on education, raising awareness and fundraising with the ultimate goal of "increasing the sustainable access to safe drinking water globally." Proposals for a "bull's-eye" organization and project that FAWCO will financially support were due June 30th and I am certain we will receive some great recommendations (see Target Program article on page 4 for more details).

We also hope that we will continue to learn about the other two finalist issues that were not chosen: Empowering Women through Education, submitted by Anne Cameron Rutschmann (AWC Zurich) and Representing Maternal Health, submitted by Regina Weber (AIWC Cologne) and Sylvia Behrman (AILO Florence), Co-Chairs of the Health Issues Task Force.

The FAWCO board is very pleased to announce the appointment in Boston of Sallie Chaballier (AAWE Paris) as our 3rd Vice President Committees. Sallie will be an asset to the board with her great experience and enthusiasm (see article on this page for Sallie's biography).

Since 2001, the US Liaison's major focus has been the election reform legislation introduced in Congress to facilitate and harmonize voting procedures for UOCAVA (Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act) voters (both the military and overseas civilians). Lucy Laederich, FAWCO's US Liaison, recently received an accolade for this work. While in Munich for the Overseas Vote Foundation's "UOCAVA Summit" this March, Lucy received a Merit Award for "outstanding achievement and service toward the cause of overseas and military voter enfranchisement".... Congratulations to Lucy! This is a fantastic acknowledgment of her contribution to election reform, and FAWCO is very proud and appreciative of her hard work and effort!

Many of you are preparing for your summer breaks and some are even relocating and repatriating! Best wishes for a brilliant summer full of sunshine and fun.

Kathleen

Kathleen Simon (AWC Bern)
president@fawco.org

The devastation – January 19, 2010 Port-Au-Prince, Haiti



Thanks to the generosity of FAWCO members, friends and clubs, our **Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) for Haiti** has finished with a total of \$17,546 to aid in the

relief effort following the earthquake that struck the island in January 2010. Donations went to Oxfam America, a highly respected organization with over three decades of experience in Haiti. During the Boston Conference FAWCO President Kathleen Simon and Treasurer Carol

Kamphuis presented a check to Oxfam America Development Officer Lucy McGovern and Kim Williams, a Leadership Council Member.



FAWCO's Target Program: Winner Announced in Boston

FAWCO & Water... Changing the Flow

by Anne van Oorschot

One year ago in Vilnius, the new Target Program was introduced with a goal to focus efforts on one global issue in order to make a significant impact. In the Winter Forum, the 3 finalist issues were announced: Water, Maternal Health, and Empowering Women through Education. At the Interim Conference in Boston, Water was declared as the winner. Water is one of the necessities of life for everyone and everything, and there are many worldwide problems caused by, and connected to, water. During the Target submission and selection process, the Water Task Force, a subgroup of the Environment Task Force, headed by Anne van Oorschot-Warwick, started the process of informing FAWCO members about water challenges by sending out 2 general bulletins about why water is important and 3 bulletins linking water to other global issues (all available on the FAWCO website).

Why Water as our Target issue ?

Water problems affect half of humanity and 884 million people lack access to safe water supplies – that's approximately one in eight people! Without food a person can live for weeks, but without water one can expect to live only a few days.

Furthermore, water is related to many serious global problems in the world, so if water needs are not addressed first, it is hard to make positive changes in other areas. We would like to focus our efforts towards raising awareness of the water choices each of us make in our daily lives, and work towards solving one of the larger global water problems: Increasing the sustainable access to safe drinking water globally. Fortunately, focusing on water directly or indirectly address all eight of the UN's Millennium Development Goals! This strong link between Water and other global problems makes Water an excellent Target focus!

Our next step is to choose the specific organization FAWCO will support, financially – the Bull's-Eye Organization & Project. We encourage Task Forces, clubs, and individual FAWCO members

When it comes to essentials for life, water is top priority!

to submit a project for consideration. Projects must have **SMARTS**, that is, be **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, **T**ime limited & **S**ustainable.

While the Bull's-eye project will increase sustainable access to safe drinking water, we hope it will use a multi-disciplinary approach that will start a ripple effect, resulting in positive changes for other Target issue submissions! Meanwhile, the Water Task Force will continue to provide resources and information on water problems all over the world, and we encourage clubs to inform and educate their members about global water challenges as well as local water issues. Make use of the information on the FAWCO website – it will make your job easier.

We invite you to join in and help... Together we can work through FAWCO to change the flow!



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For a **Bull's-eye submission form** or more information on criteria, see www.fawcofoundation.org.

The following time line is in place:

| | |
|--------|--|
| 30 Jun | Submission deadline |
| 1 Sep | Announce 3 finalists |
| 15 Oct | Deadline for clubs to cast their vote for the Bull's-eye |
| 1 Nov | Announce Bull's-eye winner! |

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Fistula:

What is it and what can we do to help?

By Sara von Moos, FAWCO UN NGO Rep, member FAWCO Health Issues Task Force.

The UN World Health Organization (WHO) estimates there are over two million women living with *fistula*, a hole in the lower cavity of their bodies, who as a result cannot control the passage of their bodily discharges.

Obstetric vs. Traumatic Fistulas

Fistulas are classified into two categories: obstetric fistulas and traumatic fistulas. Obstetric fistulas are childbirth injuries caused by prolonged obstructed labor and account for the majority of fistula cases. Traumatic fistulas are caused by violent sex, rape or vaginal / rectal torture, and are part of the grim reality facing many women who live in militia-controlled conflict areas and war zones.

Suffering of fistula victims

Regardless of the type, fistula victims suffer a life of physical and psychological pain, social isolation and humiliation. Constant pain and discomfort, ulcerations in the vaginal tract, nerve damage to the lower limbs (i.e. "foot drop" condition), kidney disease or failure. Because of their shameful condition, they are likely to be abandoned by their husbands, shunned by their families and cast out from their communities, often left to suffer the loss of their babies, their severe medical condition and their psychological trauma in social isolation.

\$300 for Treatment

While the effects of fistulas are traumatic, the condition is surprisingly easy to treat and has a 90% healing rate. One operation costs US \$300. Unfortunately, most afflicted women do not know about the treatment or cannot afford it. The majority of women with fistulas live in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and some Arab regions. They tend to be poor, live in remote areas, have little to no education, are bound to cultural norms, and have no access to medical care.

The Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital in Ethiopia, founded by Australian Drs. Catherine and Reginald Hamlin in 1974, is recognized as the world's leading hospital in fistula repair. It is known not only for repairing women's internal wounds, but also for restoring women's lives and dignity. Most doctors, charities and foundations involved in fistula repair are in one way or another connected to the Addis Ababa hospital.

Prevention

While traumatic fistula is inextricably linked to war and requires more challenging measures for prevention, obstetric fistula is almost entirely preventable. If quality maternal health care services such as family planning, skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care could be made available to all women, incidences of obstetric fistula would practically disappear.

Fistula Advocacy

In 2003, UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) spearheaded the global campaign to End Fistula, a collaborative initiative to prevent fistula and restore the health and dignity of those living with its consequences. Since then, and thanks to partnerships with organizations such as UNICEF, the World Bank, WHO, and funding from high profile humanitarians such as Bill & Melinda Gates and Richard Branson, it has succeeded in bringing fistula to the attention of the general public, policy makers, health officials and affected countries.

How we can help

The involvement of individuals like you and me will also make a difference. Here are some things we can do:

1. Give a woman with fistula her life back. Get together with your family, your friends, your office colleagues, your church group, your book club, your local FAWCO club, and sponsor a woman's operation.
2. Get informed and spread the word; most people do not know what fistula is.
3. Join a fistula advocacy group and be a voice for these voiceless women.
4. Go to www.fawco.org or contact the FAWCO Health Issues Task Force healthissues@fawco.org for more details.

For more information, see the **Fistula Resource Box** on page 10.



A DAY IN Your City

Have you ever thought about the fabulous places in which there are FAWCO clubs? Have you ever gotten insider information and realized how fortunate you were? The **Sharing Cultures task force** is trying to create a forum for members to have access to the little unknowns about cities in which we have member clubs. The task force is rejuvenating the **Day in Your City** program. Whether you are trying to decide where to go for a weekend or you would just like a bit more information about the city you have planned to visit - there is no better source than our members, who live in these communities and who have the inside scoop.

Each club will receive a **Day in Your City** form to be filled out. We're asking each club to provide highlights about their city. The information about each city will be posted on the **Sharing Cultures section** of the FAWCO website. AILO the FAWCO club located in Florence, Italy has already completed their form. Check it out for ideas or if you are interested in visiting a beautiful city.

2010 INTERIM CONFERENCE IN BOSTON

In March 2010, FAWCO Alumnae USA (FAUSA) hosted FAWCO's Interim Conference in Boston. FAWCO traditionally holds its conferences abroad, but has come back to the USA every 10 years (the first time was Washington DC in 2000).

In her opening speech, FAWCO President Kathleen Simon reconfirmed one of the founding aims of FAWCO - the importance of cooperation among women and the impact such cooperation can have on advancing social progress. She emphasized that this is even more critical today as our member clubs are responding to a changing world where relationships between countries have become more fluid and the need is even greater to build cooperation with local communities. Through FAWCO and through better technology, member clubs are able to build stronger links with each other to share their experiences and purpose.

As FAWCO approaches its 80th year in 2011, the aim of cooperation remains paramount to FAWCO's mission,

"Cooperation remains paramount to FAWCO's mission"

— FAWCO President
Kathleen Simon

through FAWCO, we have the chance to make a difference, today, tomorrow, and for the next 80 years. Long may it continue!"

Besides FAWCO business, delegates discussed issues of interest to Americans living abroad: American journalism in the modern world and how it impacts those living abroad; new challenges for American tax payers; the latest voter registration tools; taking care of our elders from abroad; and understanding the population trends in America today.

Delegates received tips on volunteer leadership, online social networking, and international banking within the economic crisis. The Grameen Foundation introduced micro-financing as a way of empowering women. Member club presidents and FAWCO Reps discussed common club-level issues (e.g., membership, volunteer management, and use of technology), as well as how to promote FAWCO within their clubs.

One of the conference highlights was guest speaker Robert Ellis Smith, a graduate of Harvard College and Georgetown Law Center, whose discussion on the right to privacy in the US, threats to personal privacy and measures for protecting it captivated the audience.

Another workshop entitled, "Leadership that Works in Non-Profit and Voluntary Organizations," was presented by Atema Eclai, Director of Programs, Unitarian Universalist Service. Atema provided solid, practical and applicable advice for NGOs, sharing her experiences on leadership of non-profits.

Left to right:
Jim Haley,
Kirstan Boettger,
Rick Chizmadia



Kathleen Simon, FAWCO president and Shirley Van Ooijen presented Shirley's gift of \$3000 to Sandra Adams, of the Grameen Foundation.

Emily van Eerten,
Debbie Hastings



Rachel McNally,
AWC The Hague;
Janet Darrow-Winter,
AWA Dubai

Panelist Robin Young,
PRI/WBUR-FM
syndicated
host, "Here
and Now."

Diane
Reed,
Sara von
Moos



3 boards of directors: FAWCO, The Foundation, FAUSA

"I am only an apprentice in the field of human rights, learning each day to question and challenge unjust power structures," says Atema. "Human rights work moves me from a place of easy excuses to a space of seeking real, just solutions. It gives me hope and the courage to believe that the world we live in can change."

Paul Taylor, Executive Vice President of the Pew Research Center, gave an eye-opening talk about the face of America today, presenting current statistics and population trends.

Another workshop was offered by Paula Lucas, Founder & Executive Director of Americans Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Center (AODVCC), who recounted her own experiences with abuse in a talk titled, "How It Works for American Women Abroad." On April 16, 2010, the US Attorney General Eric Holder recognized the AODVCC for its outstanding work on behalf of crime victims with the National Crime Victim Service Award, at a ceremony hosted by the Department of Justice in Washington DC.



Jim Greene of FamilySearch.org spoke on the many tools available to family historians. Based on the Wiki concept of a user community, it provides access to birth, death and marriage records from an expanding variety of sources.

Delegates were welcomed to Boston by the Congressman from Cambridge, Americans Abroad Caucus member Mike Capuano, who told them about his commitment to responsible health care reform and reminded them of their great responsibility as overseas voters.

FAWCO thanks Jane Indreland (FAUSA) and her team of volunteers for hosting the FAWCO Conference. For complete coverage of the Boston Conference, please go to the FAWCO website and click on Boston2010.



Conference Chair Jane Indreland (FAUSA) receiving a thank you gift from FAWCO President Kathleen Simon
↩

Diana Smith-Walsh, Dolores Cuéllar
↩

Elsie Bose (left), Foundation outgoing President and Jane Indreland (right), Conference Chair, presented a donation to Paula Lucas (center), Founder and Director of AODVCC. ↓



↑ Panelist Clayton Jones, chief editorial writer, Christian Science Monitor



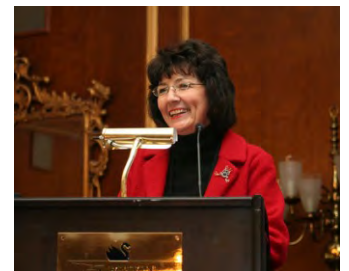
↓ The Foundation Silent Auction



My-Linh Kunst, FAWCO 1st VP and Robin Goldsby, AIWC Cologne
↑

Panel moderator Charlotte DeWitt (FAUSA)
→

Kathleen Simon, Lee Sorensen
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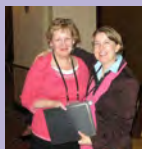
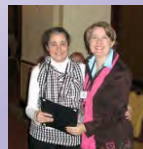


↑ Conference Planning Team (FAUSA) (l to r): Dale Koepenick, Jean Lawrence, Eileen O'Duill, Priscilla Dysart, Debbie Hastings, Marline Holmes, Nancy Thornley, Pam Dahlgren, and Yolanda Henry. Not pictured: Pat Fennell, Charlotte DeWitt, and Jane Indreland.



REPS APPRECIATION AWARD

In 2008, the FAWCO Board initiated the Rep Appreciation Award to recognize ongoing commitment, dedication and achievement of FAWCO Reps in member clubs. That year, the first FAWCO Rep Appreciation Award was given to three deserving Reps from AWC Vienna, AW Surrey and AWC Naples. In 2009, three Reps from AWG Languedoc-Roussillon, AWC Greece, and AWC Zurich received the award. This year, at our Boston Conference, 2nd VP Janelle Mason announced the recipients of our appreciation for 2010. They are Nan de Laubadere - AAWE Paris (left), Jonsi Andrews - AWO Ticino and Eileen Green Doyle - AWC Dublin (right).



Regional Meeting - Region 8

Florence, Italy February 12-14

By Ann De Simoni, FAWCO Region 8 Coordinator

The A.I.L.O. Florence hosted the Region 8 meeting in Florence, Italy from February 12 to 14 with the theme of "Getting to know your Region Sisters." 24 ladies came from 6 countries: Italy, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, USA, Spain and Belgium, with all of the Italian clubs present.

Our first event was a welcome cocktail, hosted by AILO members who kindly offered and prepared delicious Tuscan food and wine specialties. We had a difficult time calling an end to the cocktail as the ladies had begun bonding and sharing their stories with one another.

The following morning began with welcomes, introductions and putting names with faces. Presentations & gifts were received by the Reps from Regional Coordinator Ann De Simoni and FAWCO's 2nd VP, Janelle Mason. Ann and Janelle officially presented Tricia Reynolds, President and FAWCO Rep for IWC Naples, with her framed Rep Appreciation Certificate, as she was not present at the conference in Korea to receive it.

Janelle then presented "Connecting with FAWCO," followed by Elizabeth Kelley, Co-Chair of the "Sharing Cultures" Task Force. Both sessions were followed by Q&A. The group then broke out and discussed relevant issues for one hour, with the largest group reporting back their ideas for fundraising.

After a nice Tuscan lunch, the participants had the afternoon off to enjoy Florence sightseeing, escorted by local AILO members. Our first day ended with a most wonderful evening enjoyed by all participants at their in-home dinners.



Sunday continued with 2 more presentations: Elizabeth Abbot of AWAR Rome gave a brief history and update of the Aquila Project, a Region 8 joint effort to raise money for the construction of a children's playground in the new development area of Aquila, which was devastated by an earthquake last April. After Elizabeth's presentation all the clubs in Italy came forward with their donations for this particular project, including a representative from the Outreach committee of St.

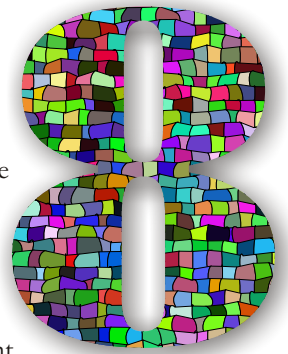
James church in Florence, which also made a contribution. In addition, the participants gave a further 400 Euro to Elizabeth for the Aquila project.

Michelle Samson of IWTC of Torino stood in for Cinzia Ballesio and presented about 'American Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Center.' There were several interventions from the audience and a strong feeling of communal desire to help women and

children in distress and a series of pamphlets and information sheets giving information on organizations available to help those in need was distributed.

Through this meeting we were able to spread the FAWCO Fever, sharing ideas, exchanged invitations for club visits, and new friendships were made.

In closing as Caterina Corsini, VP of AILO Florence said she already knew and liked FAWCO but now after this meeting she added, "the meal is so much better than sharing the recipe."



Regional Meeting - Region 3

Montpellier, January 22-24

By Kim Mousseron, AWG-LR, FAWCO Rep.

American Women's Group of Languedoc Roussillon hosted a Regional meeting on the weekend of January 22-24 in Montpellier, France. Over 40 individuals participated in the "Mediterranean Currents" themed weekend, from Paris, Lyon, Barcelona, Switzerland and the South of France.

The weekend events began Friday with a welcome cocktail party, reuniting old friends, introducing newcomers, and giving everyone a chance to taste some Mediterranean fare.

On Saturday morning participants were greeted by our friendly pink flamingos at AWGLR's meeting place, The Martin Luther King Room, in the center of historical Montpellier. After a brief welcome message from Denise Parent, President of AWGLR, Katharine Claringbull, our speaker coordinator introduced morning speakers Janelle Mason, FAWCO 2nd Vice President and Elsie Bose, the FAWCO Foundation President. Before breaking for lunch, Consul Philip Richards highlighted typical problems and issues that he deals with at the US Consulate in Marseille.

After an enjoyable light Mediterranean lunch, prepared by members of AWGLR and served on site, participants took a stroll outdoors for a group photo at nearby ancient ruins.

The afternoon session continued with *Health for Women and Children*, presented by Dr. Maquita Guild-Schwarz and Dr. Julie Milstien, members of AWGLR. The presentation addressed various health issues and examined how FAWCO and FAWCO member clubs could effectively work on projects in alignment with the Target issue. FAWCO US Liaison Lucy Laederich was the final speaker of the day and her *Update from Washington* sparked many questions.

The day ended with four round table discussions: Media and communication tools used to communicate with members; Mediterranean cooking and diet; American/ International members; and a further discussion of US Issues. It was a weekend filled with information, exchange, friendship and fun.



L'Aquila

by Elizabeth Abbot, FAWCO Rep, AWA Rome

Member clubs in FAWCO's Region 8 collected over 7,000 Euros for a project in support of the women and children of L'Aquila, a city in central Italy that was devastated by a 5.8 magnitude earthquake on April 6, 2009 (see article in the Winter 2009 FORUM, page 10). The project underwrites playground equipment for children living in a new housing area just outside the still off-limits historic center and near two schools.

In addition to funds raised by the Region 8 clubs from Rome, Genova, Naples and Turin, the project received donations through our network from the St. James Church of Florence (for a substantial amount), the Children's Library of Florence, and three individuals: the President of the Benvenuto Club of Milan, a member from AW of Eastern Province, and a family member from AWA Rome. Topping it off were proceeds from the Region 8 February meeting in Florence.

A site for the playground has been identified, which was not a small task given the enormous amount of rebuilding work in L'Aquila. We will soon have an estimate and design from the equipment company, and the playground should open later in the Spring – with a plaque thanking FAWCO Region 8. Women working together get things done!

Continued from Page 1

announced that she and her fellow Co-Chair Joe Wilson (R-SC) were writing to the House Committee on Financial Services, of which Ms Maloney is a senior member, asking for a "timely hearing about reports of American citizens living overseas being denied access to U.S. banking institutions."

We have repeatedly been assured that there is no basis in law for U.S. banks to refuse overseas American clients, and again ask anyone who has encountered a refusal to document it to USLiaison@fawco.org. Regarding accounts with foreign banks, now reluctant to have "U.S. person" clients because of the burdensome reporting requirements now imposed on them by the U.S. Treasury, we also need documented cases (USLiaison@fawco.org).

This is the first time that Members of Congress have taken such a direct interest in this problem affecting growing numbers of Americans abroad and we are cautiously optimistic!

Prospects?

This is a Congress dealing with vast, overreaching issues – health care reform, financial regulation, energy – and as always, overseas Americans seem far away. It did seem, however, that as Overseas Americans Week hit its 9th year, we were received better than ever by Congressional staffers more attuned to our concerns and more willing to work with us, in person or by phone, to find solutions.

Lucy Stensland Laederich
AAWE Paris, U.S. Liaison

AWA Dubai

AWA Dubai (www.awadubai.org) is excited about joining the FAWCO family. In 1991, a small group of American women living in Dubai began meeting for coffee mornings at the Consul General's home. Since then the American Women's Association of Dubai and the Northern Emirates has grown into a vibrant organization that connects more than 330 women with a supportive network of fellow expatriates, cultural integration, charitable works and plenty of fun activities.

Today the AWAD feels that it has a lot to offer its members, but also that its members can contribute much to their community. The Philanthropy Committee and Scholarship Program are developing and looking forward to becoming active with the new FAWCO Target Program. As many of our members are associated with international companies and find themselves uprooted fairly regularly, they appreciate the continuity that membership in a FAWCO club can give them. They also constitute a large pool of potential FAUSA members when they repatriate back to the United States. AWA Dubai is looking forward to a rewarding relationship with FAWCO and its member clubs.

FAWCO's Newest Club

AWC The Hague Celebrates 80th Birthday!

by Club President Leslie Collingridge

I couldn't have been more proud and honored to be part of this organization on the evening of May 8. Thank you to each and every one of you who took part in the evening which was not only fun for everyone, but has raised over €20,000, which benefits the club, its charities and the ERF fund.

It was an honor to have FAWCO board members and friends, along with U.S. Ambassador Fay Hartog Levin and her husband among our many distinguished guests.

It was truly a celebration! The room was lovely, the auction no less than impressive, the food - delicious, the hotel staff service - terrific, the band - fabulous, everyone looked smashing and there were smiles, laughter, kissing, more laughing and lots of dancing.

Thanks to Marilee Watts and Terry Stracke, our Steering Committee Co-Chairs, the evening was an amazing success. And Yoke van der Louw and Sophie Dencher reminded us all what John Adams observed about the Dutch - "there are no friends more faithful than they."

It is a credit to the Club and to the many volunteers who donated so much of their time and talent. This successful and rewarding evening reminds us all why we are part of this truly special AWC Club.



Leslie Collingridge, US Ambassador Fay Hartog-Levin, and 3 members of the Steering Committee

AIWC Casablanca - Running for the Foundation!

Gwen Dellar and Cynthia Smith-Ayed (AIWC Casablanca) have taken marathon running to the extreme! On April 4th they embarked on the **Marathon des Sables**, a six day, 254 km (156 mile) ultramarathon, which is the equivalent to six regular marathons on behalf of The FAWCO Foundation to help raise funds for the Members' Skills Enhancement Award. This multi-day race is truly a test of endurance, with the longest single stage being 91 km (55 miles) long. Held every year in the southern Moroccan desert and heat, it is considered the toughest foot race on Earth.

Of the 1050 runners registered, 926 remained in the race. Cynthia had to withdraw during Stage 3 due to unbearable foot blisters (she had covered an amazing 77.3 kilometers on sand), while Gwen completed the race, albeit a dramatic Stage 5 and rescue.

During Stage 5, Gwen took a wrong turn, realizing only hours later that she was lost in the desert. While Cynthia waited for her at camp, Gwen spent the night by herself in the middle of the desert, with only the low hanging stars as her companions. Gwen was retracing her steps the next day, when she heard a helicopter. Her flare caught their attention, and the helicopter rescue team finally found Gwen.

"It was an interesting experience. A week without bathing or washing your hair is not that hard. Sleeping on the ground isn't so terrible. You really learn the difference between what you want and think you need, and what you really need to get by. I (Cynthia) learned I can go further than I had thought... Gwen has learned she can spend the night alone in the desert and keep her wits about her. But things have changed subtly and we don't think we'll ever be quite the same again. We

don't think the little, unimportant things will bother us so much any more."

FAWCO salutes Cynthia and Gwen's courage and applauds their momentous accomplishment. (For pictures and daily blogs, go to www.fawcofoundation.org).

Below: Gwen with the race winner, Mohamed Ahnsel.
Lower left: Gwen and Cynthia.
Lower right: Long line of runners in the desert.



Continued from Page 5

Fistula Resources

Give a woman with fistula her life back. Sponsor a woman's operation.

www.fistulatrust.org, www.fistulafoundation.org,
www.womenshope.ch
http://www.kiva.org/team/fight_fistulas

Get informed and spread the word.

www.unfpa.org, www.who.org, www.gatesfoundation.org,
www.ourbodiesourselves.org

Join a fistula advocacy group.

www.endfistula.org, www.virginunite.org

Recommended reading.

Hospital by the River, by Dr. Catherine Hamlin.
Nicholas D. Kristof in the *NY Times*/obstetric fistula.

Recommended viewing.

Youtube: "A Walk to Beautiful" – award winning film about the journey of obstetric fistula patients.
Youtube: "A Doctor and his Patient" – story about a rape survivor with traumatic fistula in Congo DR, as told by *NY Times* columnist, Nicholas D. Kristof.

Upcoming Regional Meetings

- September 25: Region 1 Fun-Day Regional Meeting
- October 29-31: Region 4 Regional Meeting hosted in The Hague
- November 5-7: Region 5 Regional Meeting hosted in Munich

Club Anniversaries in 2010

The following list shows the club name, the founding year, and years in existence.

AC Hertfordshire, England, 1970, 40th Anniversary
Thames Valley, AWC, England, 1980, 30th Anniversary
AWC Finland, 1970, 40th Anniversary
AWC Naples, Italy, 1970, 40th Anniversary
AIWC Torino, Italy, 1960, 50th Anniversary
Munich IWC, Germany, 1990, 20th Anniversary
AWC The Hague, Netherlands, 1930, 80th Anniversary
AWOT, Ticino, Switzerland, 1990, 20th Anniversary

FAWCO Board of Representatives Elects the 2010-2012 FAWCO Foundation Officers

The new FAWCO Foundation officers were elected at the FAWCO conference in Boston. The incoming Board will be charged with spearheading the Bull's Eye project selection and fundraising campaign in support of the FAWCO Target Program. In keeping with the legal requirements of The Foundation's rules of incorporation the President, the VP Communications, the Secretary and Treasurer are elected by FAWCO's Board of Representatives, and the VP Fundraising and VP programs are elected by the outgoing Foundation Board.



Melissa Mash

Newly elected officers are: **President** - Melissa Mash, AW of Surrey; **VP Communications** - Andree Kibilus, AWC Luxembourg; **VP Fundraising** - Ann De Simoni AIWC Genoa; **VP Programs** - Dolores Cuellar, AWC Bogotá, FAUSA; **Secretary** - Terri Knudsen AWC Aarhus; and **Treasurer** - Kathleen Coughlan AW of Surrey.

20082009

The Foundation was also pleased to announce that Jean Meir-Boelinger of AWC of the Taunus was the recipient of the **2010 Counselors Volunteer of the Year Award**. This award recognizes the invaluable role that volunteers play in the success of FAWCO clubs and in their communities.

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The FAWCO Foundation is the philanthropic arm of FAWCO. It is a 501 (c) (3) not for profit organization registered in the State of Missouri. Direct donations to The Foundation are tax exempt to the fullest extent allowed by law. For more information please contact: info@fawcofoundation.org.



The FAWCO Foundation 2010 Development Grant Recipients

The FAWCO Foundation received 23 worthy nominations for the 2010 Development Grants. The nominated projects were placed on a ballot and all FAWCO clubs were eligible to vote for the recipients. This year each development grant was worth \$4,500. The eight recipients were announced at the FAWCO conference in Boston.

- **The Effects of Violence and Human Trafficking**
Co-sponsored by AWC of The Hague and AWC Hamburg
Aa Ran Seumter in Korea
Nominated by AWC of Korea
- **The Right to Food and Water**
Sponsored in part by AWG Paris
Water Well Protection and Improvement Project in Kenya
Nominated by AWC Bern
- **Critical Health Concerns**
Sponsored in part by AWC of Basel
Fistula Foundation in Ethiopia
Nominated by American Women of the Eastern Province
- **The FAUSA Hope through Education**
Co-sponsored by AWC of Zurich
School Aid in South Africa
Nominated by Chilterns AWC
- **The Edith Beyer A Place to Learn**
Sponsored in part by AWC of Denmark
Tsarang Nunnery School Mustang in Nepal
Nominated by AIWC Cologne
- **American Women of the Eastern Province Skills for Life**
Sponsored in part by AILO Florence
Teachers Without Borders South Africa
Nominated by AILO Florence
- **Around the Corner, A World Away**
Co-sponsored by AWA Vienna and AWA Dubai
Spread the Sunshine in Moscow
Nominated by AWO Moscow
- **AW Surrey Ending HIV/AIDS**
Mothers Averting AIDS South Africa
Nominated by AILO Florence



The 2010 FAWCO Foundation Education Award Recipients

The FAWCO Foundation has been supporting education since it offered its first education awards almost 40 years ago, in 1972. Created by and for FAWCO clubs, the Awards Program recognizes and honors the academic excellence and all-around achievement of the children of FAWCO members as well as FAWCO members themselves.

- **The Arts Award**
Claire Mannle
Claire's mother is a member of AWC Finland
- **The Sciences Award** sponsored in part by AIWC Genoa in memory of Frieda Bacigalupo Natali
Brett Kirchner
Brett's mother is a member of AW of Surrey
- **The Humanities Award** sponsored in part by AAWE in memory of Gertrude de Gallaix
Emily Bowman
Emily's mother is a member of the American Women's Auxiliary to the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne
- **The Members Skills Enhancement Award**
Sheridan Becker
Sheridan is a member of AWC Brussels
- **AWC Basel FAWCO Members Award** for University Degree Study Programs
Sponsored by Shirley Kearney
Michelle Jackson
Michelle is a member of AWC of the Taunus
- **Dual Cultural Award** (in memory of Suzanne Erismann), sponsored in part by Donna Erismann and AWC Bern
Maxime Pennaud
Maxime's grandmother is a member of AAWE Paris
- **The Special Challenges Fund**
Sponsored in part by Chilterns AWC
Kelsey O'Brien
Kelsey's mother is a member of AWC of Brussels
- **The Richard E Hallock Foundation**
sponsored two awards for dual cultural children of members of AAWE Paris.
Leo Janin received the 2010 Academic Award, and
Michael Berzon received the Non-Academic Award.

