

AWA HIGHLIGHTS

MAR 2022

THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB OF VIENNA



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From the Editor



Look closely at the March cover. Can you see yourself? Somewhere in the tiny words is your name, your country, perhaps your current or former occupation. Now hold the cover further away to see the aggregate. We are quite the international group! Look at all those unique names! See the contributions we've made in the world. We are Amazing Women All (or AWA)!

In our club, difference is valued and celebrated. Not so for women in many corners of the world. This is why the website for International Women's Day.(8 March) asks us help 'Break the Bias' and to stand for a gender-equal world free of stereotypes and discrimination'.

In this issue, several of our member-writers share their encounters with gender inequality. Connie reminds us that many expat women lost their home citizenship when marrying someone of another nationality – while expat men retained their rights. Sandra recalls losing a promotion to a low-performing male colleague – despite creating a successful program for her company. (Undaunted, she moved on to work that earned one of Britain's top honours, the OBE).

Other writers show the type of grit and determination women were once told we did not naturally have. Carol hiked the Camino de Santiago for 40 days, alone (p16). Elizabeth stands for a more environmentally-friendly world, even if it means training her cats to toilet without litter (p7). Urte explores an other-worldly landscape and sleeps in a cave in Turkey.

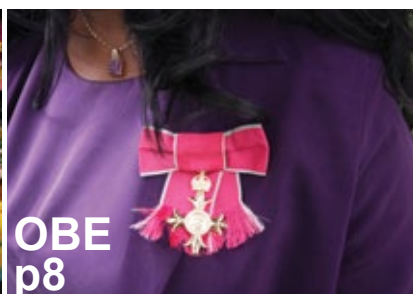
The visual reminder for 'Break the Bias' is crossed arms (see my photo above). A very strong statement of 'No more!' We can also uncross our arms and open them up to each other in a gesture of inclusion.

Here's to inspiring women everywhere, *Virginia*

Content Highlights

“The more words we string along, the angrier we are.”

See page 4



Cover: A word cloud of AWA member names, countries and occupations. Many thanks to Erin for providing the text and Angie for creating the image!



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Organisation zu informieren.



Home Country Q & A

AWA Member Francine Mihalasky

Country: Canada (Northern Ontario)

Where were you born? I am from a small town in Northern Ontario, in the Sudbury area. I moved to the United States in my mid-twenties.

Favourite regional dishes? *Tourtière* (a savoury meat, onion and spice pie), *Cipate* (a Québécoise layered-meat dish traditionally made with hunted game) and Butter Tarts (pastry filled with a butter, sugar and egg mixture). When I bake these (rarely), I also make *des Pets-de-Soeurs* with the leftover pie crust. (Literally translated as 'nun farts', these desserts were served by Sisters in Quebec boarding schools and are often prepared during the Christmas season). Preparation: Roll out the leftover pie crust, spread with butter, cinnamon and brown sugar, roll up, cut into one-inch pieces, lay in a baking dish, cover with milk and bake until golden brown. (Fun fact: If made without milk, they are called *Nombrils de Soldat* or soldier navels).

Books that capture Ontario? At the moment, I am enjoying the Louise Penny mystery novels, which are set in Quebec). I love the occasional French word and the atmosphere of the little town. As a teenager, I loved reading *Les Filles de Caleb*. It takes place at the end of the 19th century and romanticises the way I was told my grandparents lived.

Family heirlooms? My Catalogne blankets. I have several woven by my mother and aunts from long strips cut from old sheets. They can only be made on very large looms and are a perfect way to reuse something that usually ends up in the landfill. I've been inspired to continue this crafting tradition and have woven woollen lap blankets on a smaller loom that I acquired a few years ago.

Special memory? Summers always involved a lot of camping. We set off with our tent trailer to many different campgrounds every year. My sister and I would run around in the woods, muck about looking for all sorts of creatures, swim in rivers and lakes, eat freshly caught fish and ride around in the small boat (which she always piloted). We gathered around campfires every night.

Place to take visitors? Bell Park (a waterfront nature area) and Science North ("Northern Ontario's most popular tourist attraction and an educational resource for children and adults across the globe", according to the museum's website). We visit both every time we return home. Sometimes we stop by the Big Nickel. It's a replica of a 1951 Canadian Nickel and is the largest coin in the world – 64,607,747 times the size of the real thing! It was built in 1964 to commemorate the 200th anniversary of naming the element Nickel and also recognises Sudbury's contribution to Canada's economy through mining. There's a guided underground mining tour from the base, and a history light show projected onto the Big Nickel surface (and King George VI's face).

Fun fact? Sudbury's nickname is 'Nickel City'. It's a mining town and one of the largest nickel producers in the world. My father was a miner and very proud that he worked on the largest Raisebore (a machine that makes 12-foot-diameter holes), the only one in the region. It was moved from one mine to another.

What do you miss most from home? Poutine and fish and chips from a roadside stand.

About French-Canadians? My husband says that we all sound like ducks when my family gets together, and he gets easily confused because we constantly speak 'Frenglish'.

Teach us a fun phrase All of our swear words are associated with the church. The more words we string along, the angrier we are!





SYBILLE VON RÜDEN



Your AWA introduction? MAWA. Through my husband. I met some of your charming members and decided to join. **Favourite food?** Swiss chocolate. **Address in Vienna?** Döbling, a calm and beautiful neighbourhood. **Lived where else?** We spent most of our lives in Geneva, for work reasons. **Nationality?** German. **Profession?** A Math and Physics teacher. **Family?** Husband and one son (and his family). **Favourite piece of music?** Rachmaninoff, piano concerto No. 2. **Favourite cities?** Singapore and Vienna.

MARCIE BEHM-BULTZ



Fun Fact? Spouse and I carry the risk-taking gene. We compete to see who can jump out of the plane first. It makes for an adventurous life. **Hobbies?** Travelling, with the local cemeteries being the first stop because headstones tell stories and set me on my professional path. **Feel Strongly About?** Political Activism and Human Rights, particularly Women's Empowerment through education and reproductive rights. **Profession?** Population Scientist/Demographer/University Lecturer on global trends in migration, fertility, and mortality. **Previous Jobs?** Went through Army Basic Training expecting to become a medic. Instead, I joined the Military Police, then later owned a bar near a Navy Base. Breaking up fights was *de rigueur*. **Talents?** I wrote bleak (and therapeutic) poetry in the 1970s and returned to it decades later. I have been published in more than 20 anthologies and became a Pushcart nominee (a prestigious award but no cash prize). **Music?** Hooverphonic, Gotan Project and anything by Gershwin. **Favourite Places?** Edisto Island, South Carolina, anywhere in Cornwall and Taormina, Sicily. **Restaurant?** Gießbach Café in Grinzing. **Mantras?** "The world in which you were born is just one model of reality. Other cultures are not failed attempts at being you. They are unique manifestations of the human spirit." Wade Davis. **Advice?** If you're too short to kick, bite.

SANGEETA KUMARI



Passions? Running. **Favourite food?** French Fries. **Where in Vienna?** Oberlaa. **Nationality?** Indian. Born in Bokaro. **Where else have you lived?** In the US and Germany. **Favourite weekend activity?** Doing nothing or sitting in a park. **Profession?** I am a coder. I am a programmer by profession. **Why in Vienna?** My job. **Anything else?** I like to be social and to learn about people's beliefs and thoughts. **Bucket list #1?** Going camping with my son. **Pastimes?** Watching old movies. I like cooking sometimes. **Sweet or spicy?** Sweet. **Fun fact?** I get tense while shopping, especially clothes shopping. **Night owl or early riser?** Night owl! **Family?** In India, Pune.

Please remember to renew your membership

We appreciate your continued support and friendship in 2022!

KELLI DUVALL



Passion? My husband and I love to ski, cycle, hike, travel and more! I run to eat and am always looking for a walking/running partner in every new city, so please reach out if you are that person! **Why AWA?** I was a member of international clubs while living in China and Amsterdam. I joined the International Club of Philadelphia in the US to keep connected. I love meeting new people and being part of the expat community. **Interests?** I ran photography classes for expats in Amsterdam. **Profession?** I was a Registered Medical Surgical Nurse in Seattle until we moved abroad. I am now a photographer specialising in travel, family and school photos and business headshots. **Home in Vienna?** We are empty-nesters with a dog, looking for a place in the city centre. **Nationality?** From the US. **Lived where else?** We have had ten moves in twenty years all over the US (Seattle, Philadelphia, Kentucky, the Carolinas), China, Amsterdam, and now Vienna. **Family?** Two boys, ages 23 and 25, living in our home state of Washington.

FRANCA DE NITTO



Why AWA? It was a birthday present from my brother! Also, I joined because I love meeting new people. **Profession?** I am Head Of Department at OMV. I am a Chemical Engineer with a second degree in risk management. I obtained my master's degree in Italy and a second master's with Liverpool University. **Previous club connections?** Mainly with Internations in Denmark, Romania, and Italy. **Lived where else?** I grew up in Italy but lived in Mexico, Denmark, France, Romania and now Austria, mainly for work. **Fun fact?** I love wearing Snoopy T-Shirts! **Family?** Two lovely kids and a lovely husband. **Where in Vienna?** We live in the 22nd district. I still haven't found my home, but I like the area because it is green, and we have a lovely garden. **Nationality?** Italian. **Favourite weekend activity?** Walking in vineyards and spending time with family and friends. **Customs?** On New Year's Eve, I look for something new and something red to wear! **Passions?** I love Opera and Art in general, and I love to paint and swim. **Food?** Sushi and Japanese cuisine in general. **Restaurant?** Sakai and Elissar. **Film(s)?** *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. **Bucket list?** Relaxing holiday at the seaside.

Be an AWA AMBASSADOR!

When it comes to members, the more the merrier! Please help us to connect with other English-speaking expats and Austrians in Vienna and beyond by:

- * Sharing a digital copy of *Highlights*.
- * Inviting potential members to Weekly Coffee, Wine Night or Quiz Night.
- * Speaking about AWA in your other networking circles.
- * Letting us know about friends and potential businesses that may want to advertise with us.

BOOKS TO CAPTURE THE IMAGINATION

By Penny Doulgeris

When I was a child, many of the books I read became so real that I was convinced their worlds existed. I was sure I could find a wardrobe entrance to Narnia, Charlotte's children in neighbourhood spider webs and white rabbits running around with watches.

Now that I am grown, the stories spark my imagination differently. Books transport me to new worlds which I now know are not real, but I willingly experience them. Sometimes the impact is so visceral I almost feel the words wrap around me and carry me away.

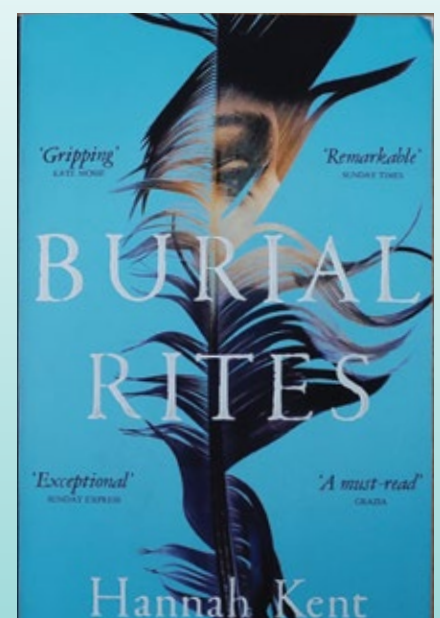
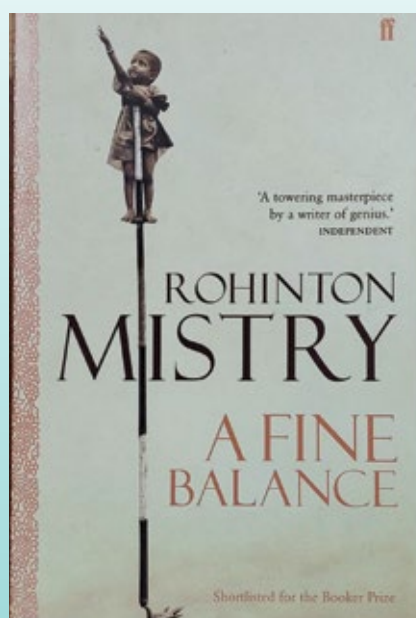
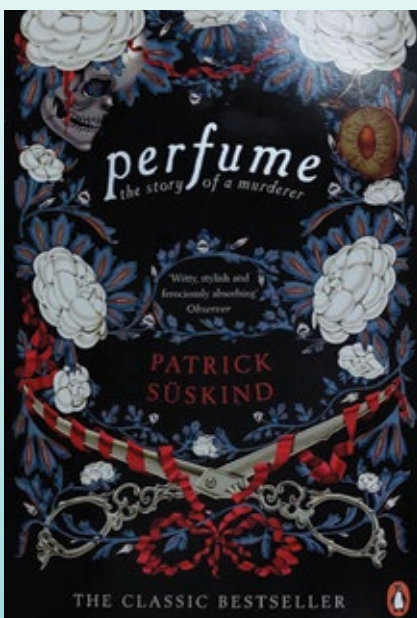
This month I want to tell you about three such engaging reads. All examine humanity in the extreme. They are not exactly 'happy' stories, but they all offer rich rewards for those prepared to read them.

Perfume: The Story of a Murderer (1985) by Patrick Süskind (initially published in German and since translated into 49 languages). Set in 18th century France, *Perfume* is a 'literary historical fantasy' story of Jean-Baptiste Grenouille, born without a scent but with a superhuman sense of smell. The author grounds his descriptions in odours, stench and olfactory sensations, and we follow Grenouille as he learns how to distill perfume, then tries to recreate the scent of a young girl to whom he is strongly attracted. He eventually discovers that he can manipulate people and opinions based on his formulations. The novel, which begins and ends in the malodorous fish markets of Paris, catapulted me into a world where scent has "a power of persuasion stronger than that of words, appearances, emotions".

A Fine Balance (1995) by Indian-born Canadian author Rohinton Mistry. The sizeable novel (603 pages) unfolds in an unnamed large seaside city in India in 1975 during the rule of Indira Gandhi (although she is never mentioned by name). It follows the stories of four people from different backgrounds who find themselves sharing one apartment during a 'State of Internal Emergency'. Described as a 'hymn to the human spirit in an inhuman state,' the story is filled with humour and hope, even as it addresses heartbreaking issues such as poverty, repression, corruption and human rights abuses. I wanted so badly for a happy ending for Dina, Maneck, Ishvar and Om, but the title is 'fine balance' for a reason. It is this relentless truth between hope and despair that ignited my imagination.

Burial Rites (2013) by Australian author Hannah Kent. The book was inspired by the true story of Agnes Magnúsdóttir, the last person to be executed in Iceland (in 1829), and was written by Kent when she was an exchange student in the country. The story is fascinating in and of itself, but it is the detailed and beautifully descriptive language that drew me in. I felt like I was standing in the cold, damp rooms with the characters, working beside them as they did their chores - a fantastic accomplishment in a first novel. Indeed, when I was in Iceland last year and visited some of the sites associated with Agnes' life, I felt like I had already been there thanks to Hannah's evocative storytelling.

If you are looking for stories that will transport you to another world, then I hope you will consider one of this month's books - all of which explore the richness of the human experience in lyrical detail.



Carbon Paw Prints

By Elizabeth Koyama

In my Youtube research for this article, I came across an effusively happy dog owner who practices 'zero waste dog care'. She feeds Himalayan Yak chews to her hound and brushes its teeth with a homemade mix of coconut oil, baking soda and cinnamon ('for taste'). Another eco pet owner keeps her apartment 'all natural' to reduce the toxic load of the cat that she grooms with a coconut fibre brush. Kitty's litter box is lined with walnut husks.

Impressive, but don't worry – here I will focus on the basics of how to reduce a pet's carbon paw prints. True, my cats spend most of their time lying around, but the concern is what goes in and what comes out: food and faeces.

Food Meat is a huge luxury in terms of climate. A quarter of the impact of meat production – in terms of land, water, fossil fuels, phosphates and pesticide use – comes from the pet-food industry, according to an article in *The Guardian* (June 2018). Although dogs are *Allesfresser* (omnivores), cats are exclusively carnivorous. What to do?

At a minimum, we should buy pet food made from meats with a smaller environmental impact. That means choosing poultry and fish over beef and pork. I found a low-impact homemade cat food recipe consisting of oatmeal, sardines, and carrots. I knew a woman in Russia who mixed all of her dog food with *kasha* (buckwheat) to give it bulk.

“If we pet owners can shift our thinking on our pet-care practices, it's possible to reduce our furry friends' impact on the environment.”

And now for the controversial stuff

Insects for cats and dogs. Insects are a good source of protein, and they don't produce methane. This delightful new diet is already available in Vienna – I found cans of insects for canines in the pet shop near me and a feline insect food product on Amazon. I tried the dog version on my cats. They were not thrilled. Next time, I will try mixing the insects with the fish-based food I usually use. Whether they like it or not, my cats will have to contribute to global efforts to reduce

emissions. We must also consider pet food packaging/waste – a reason to serve homemade instead of Amazon-purchased.

Faeces We all know that doggy poo is a big problem. I remember when it was still legal to leave it where it was dropped. Since then, laws have been in place to prevent poo-poo piling up on pavements. That solution created another problem: millions of poo-filled plastic bags. Worldwide, pet owners dispose of 500 million plastic poop bags annually. A single plastic bag can take over 500 years to decompose in a landfill (Cleanup News, 2021).

The alternative? Try this clever trick that 'kills two fleas with one squish': recycle used magazines and newspapers into environmentally friendlier 'bags'. Search YouTube for a how-to. I was surprised by how well the paper containers held their form.

Some dedicated owners compost their dog waste in their backyards or buy pet poo recycling systems to bury in out-of-the-way corners. Worms and microorganisms can be added to transform the waste into a resource for the garden.

Finding an eco-friendly cat-loo solution can be a challenge. I read recommendations for biodegradable plant-based litters made from such materials as wood pellets, newspaper, sawdust, barley husks, and dried orange peel. My solution is to eliminate litter. I trained the cats to pee and poo onto a grate suspended (on four metal feet) over a deep, rectangle stainless steel container. At first, I scattered small stones on the grate and cleaned them regularly, but eventually, I removed them. The cats don't seem to mind. Every day, I pick up the poop with chopsticks and empty the pee into the toilet. I had 'designed' our kitty commode with kitchen supplies, but it's possible to buy a similar style of cat toilet.

If we pet owners can shift our thinking on our pet-care practices, it's possible to reduce our furry friends' impact on the environment. We are the ones, after all, who add to that impact by buying pre-packaged food and enclosing poop in plastic. Left to their instincts, our pets would forage, hunt and poo food from nature (not from a can) back to nature. We've domesticated them, so now our pawprints are our responsibility.



SHINING & Inspiring



By Virginia Sheridan

You are to be awarded the prestigious 'Order of the British Empire' (OBE) by Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II at St James Palace. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, you may bring only one guest. Or you can receive your medal from a proxy Lord-Lieutenant in your home city and invite all your family and friends. Which option do you choose?

Most likely, you would opt for the once-in-a-lifetime chance to meet royalty, knowing you can share the photos with any left-out loved ones. Not Sandra Pollock. "A lot of what I do is showing women and girls what they can achieve. It's why I was chosen for the award. So how could I leave my daughter (pictured right, below) at home?" She pauses, then adds with a mischievous smile, "And if I didn't bring my husband, he would have divorced me".

For Sandra, the recognition is a welcome "stamp of approval" on her life's work with women and equality issues. But the OBE medal is not on display in her home. When I asked to see the cross-shaped insignia, she had to hunt around her office shelves to find it. Her reaction was equally low-key when she received the nomination email in December 2020. "I thought it was spam and nearly deleted it!" recalled the Leicester (Midlands, UK) resident. In addition to formally accepting the nomination and verifying biographical information, she was required to maintain secrecy until New Year's Eve, when the awards were officially announced. "That was by far the hardest part", admitted the loquacious public speaker.

What is predominant in Sandra's office are the covers of *SHINE* magazine, the empowering passion project she launched in May 2021. "During the lockdown, I encouraged women to share

their stories. This spurred me on to consider other opportunities to support this growing community. And my dream to publish a magazine returned to my heart." The online-only magazine that is "by, for and about women" covers "any topic of interest to any woman" and includes international contributors ranging in age from 16 to 80.

Although the self-proclaimed "serial entrepreneur" had written several books, online publishing was unfamiliar territory. But what's clear in speaking to Sandra is that she is not afraid to learn on the job. "Not knowing has never stopped me", explained the powerhouse who found guidance for her magazine via her various networks, including a contact who happened to be a cousin of *Highlights* designer Angie Trask. "Angie was instrumental in getting the magazine started. She helped me figure out what tools to use and where to start".

'Unstoppable' should be Sandra's nickname. Interviewing her is both inspiring and exhausting – luckily, I recorded our Zoom because my hand could not keep up with her anecdotes and accomplishments. Results-oriented Sandra dreams big and seemingly ceaselessly – though when she sleeps is anyone's guess. As chairperson of the development network Women in Management UK, she expanded membership from 5,000 to 23,000 (UK-wide). She founded The Women's Awards to recognise the impact of women across society. The training program she created for a UK bus company in 2008 reduced driver turnover from 55% to 5%.

"Our bus drivers were trained in driver safety but not in customer service", Sandra explained. Rider complaints were high, and



drivers were frustrated because they did not know how to handle day-to-day situations. "For example, underaged young people without the proper fare should still be allowed to board. There's a protocol for this, but most of our drivers did not know it". From scratch, Sandra created a comprehensive five-day training program and secured government funding to cover the costs. Drivers felt valued, and the company was nominated for an award. But when it came time for her annual review, Sandra was passed over for a raise in place of a male colleague who made no new contributions to the workplace. That's when Sandra decided it was time to be her own boss and start her own business.

A "people development specialist", Sandra podcasts, blogs, coaches and makes motivational speeches. She is a go-to expert in Diversity, Equality and Inclusion. As a woman of colour, the daughter of an immigrant (from Barbados to London) and a passionate presenter and educator, Sandra has found an approachable way to cut to the heart of racism and sexism. "In my seminars, I remind people that we're all human, that racism and sexism exist because we 'other' people", she explains. "All entrenchment comes from fear – the belief that we will lose something of value, that there is a limited pot of benefits. But there really is enough to go around. Company procedures don't change behaviour. We have to understand our own biases".

For a complimentary subscription to the online magazine *SHINE* or to contribute content, email Sandra at sandra@sandrapollock.com. To learn more about Sandra's diversity work and other projects, visit www.sandrapollock.com

About the OBE

- + An OBE is a British honour awarded by the Queen to recognise extraordinary contributions to the UK in the arts and sciences, work with charitable and welfare organisations, and public service.
- + King George V created the Orders of the British Empire during World War One in 1917 to honour the efforts of civilians and servicemen in non-combat roles.
- + From the start, the Orders were open to women – the first time, they were accorded official recognition for public service.
- + OBE is not a title (such as 'Sir' and 'Dame'), but a 'post-nominal'. Recipients may use the letters after their name.
- + OBEs are awarded to civilians twice a year – at New Year and on the Queen's official birthday. Only British nationals or citizens of the 15 Commonwealth countries can receive the OBE.
- + Anyone can nominate a candidate (except themselves) for an OBE by visiting the Cabinet Office website and filling in an application form.
- + There are five classes of British Empire (BE) Orders: 1. GBE, Knight/Dame of Gold Cross; 2. KBE/DBE, Knight/Dame Commander; 3. CBE, Commander; 4. OBE, Officer; 5. MBE, Member.



The Long Road to Citizenship Equality for Women

By **Connie Philipot**

In connection with the official matter checked below, you are directed to meet a representative of this office at 1:00 P.M. on April 23, 1942: (X) Your failure to register as an alien under the Alien Registration Act of 1940.

The letter addressed to my grandmother was amongst piles of photographs and postcards left to me by my mother. Its content was surprising. At that point, my grandmother, born in the Russian Empire in what is now Belarus, had been living in the United States for 30 years. How could she have been an 'alien'? Her husband, also born in the Russian Empire, had become a naturalised US citizen as a result of service in the First World War. Didn't his wife assume his citizenship when they married in 1923?

No one in my family who knew the answer was still alive, so I turned to the Internet. I discovered a history of US (and European) discriminatory treatment of women regarding citizenship. From 1855 to 1922, even though an American man could automatically confer citizenship on his non-citizen wife, a woman in the same position could not do the same. A female American who married a non-American man had no such rights and, in addition, had her American citizenship revoked. In terms of children born abroad, only those with an American father received US citizenship.

Similar practices were in force for European citizens. For example, Great Britain's 1870 Naturalisation Act stipulated that "married women shall be deemed to be a subject of the state of which her husband is, for the time being, a subject". In 1907, during a period of high immigration to the US, an additional amendment to US immigration law further restricted women's rights by preventing the wife from being naturalised on her own. My grandparents immigrated to the US from the Russian Empire during this time.

This discrimination did not escape the attention of the women's voting rights movement in the US and Europe. Following the 19th amendment to the US Constitution, which granted women's suffrage, the US Congress passed the Cable Act (also known as the Married Women's Independent Nationality Act). The intent was to remove some of the discriminatory aspects of previous immigration legislation. An American woman no longer automatically lost or gained US citizenship through marriage (in unions after 1922). Instead, women not born on US soil would have to go through the standard naturalisation process, albeit with residency requirements eased from five years to one. But many of these non-American-born women became essentially stateless, given discriminatory legislation in Europe that revoked the citizenship of women married to nationals of other countries.

But the Cable Act continued to link citizenship for a US woman to her husband's residency in the case of mixed-nationality marriages. If such a woman lived for two years in her husband's country or five years in any other country, she lost her US citizenship. Suppose she did manage to obtain a US passport after the Cable Act. In that case, it may not have been recognised by her husband's nation because she would have already received his citizenship through marriage (and it wasn't possible to be a citizen of two countries at that time). In addition, if an American woman married a man who was an anarchist, a polygamist, Asian-born or in any other 'ineligible' category (due to other discriminatory practices), she lost her US citizenship. Despite the assertion of 'independent' in the Cable Act, women could not stand alone from their husbands in terms of US citizenship.

Due to lobbying by activist organisations, including FAWCO, subsequent amendments to US law completely removed the link between marriage and citizenship. But it was not until 1947 that all racial barriers to spousal citizenship were removed. Many European countries also ended discriminatory provisions, including France in 1927 and Great Britain in 1933. The League of Nations (the precursor to the United Nations) also took up the issue in the mid-1920s.

I found something else in my grandmother's box of memories — a large, formal photo of a group of people beside an American flag. They are all smiling, my grandmother included, as newly naturalised American citizens.



Sign up for the following tours/trips/social events by emailing awa@awavienna.com, calling the organiser, the AWA office at 01 966 2925 or by clicking on the links in the Weekly News. For charity/fee events, pay to AWA Vienna using IBAN AT25 2011 1843 8273 8100

Languages

SPANISH CONVERSATION via Zoom

Mondays at 12:00 (note new time!)

Teresa Benet/ftmirella@yahoo.com

A1+ GERMAN CONVERSATION via Zoom

Tuesdays at 11:30 / mona.angel.nilsson@gmail.com

FRENCH CONVERSATION via Zoom

Wednesdays at 11:15 / francoise@delannoyandassociates.com

Games & Art

DRAWING via Zoom

Mondays at 16:00. Together we take on various drawing challenges, learn techniques and share our work. Open to all skill levels.

Urte Paulus / urte.paulus@gmx.at

AMERICAN MAHJONG

Tuesdays at 13:00 in the Clubhouse.

AWA Office / awa@awavienna.com

BOARD GAMES

Thursdays at 10:00 in the Clubhouse.

Words, Scrabble, and numbers for fun.

AWA Office / awa@awavienna.com

TRIVIAL PURSUIT via Zoom

Saturdays at 17:00. Urte Paulus/ urte.paulus@gmx.at

Reading & Study

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP via Zoom

Tuesday, 8 March at 13:00

Around Mary's dining room table (hopefully) or via Zoom. In March we will read *Did Ye Hear Mammy Died*, a memoir by Irish writer Séamas O'Reilly. This story of the bereaved family of 11 children is told by Séamas who was nearly six when his mother died. A reviewer wrote that it is "a fantastic, freewheeling, funny exploration of the most dreadful time in this Northern Irish family's life ...". Our book for April, date TBA, is *The Island of the Missing Trees* by Turkish-British author Elif Shafak about a family affected by the Greek-Turkish division on the island of Cyprus. All readers are welcome.

Contact Mary Wagener / mary.l.wagener@gmail.com

BIBLE STUDY via Zoom

Thursdays from 10:00-12:00.

Sandy Shaffer/ sshaffer@entrust4.org / 02243 28 701

WORDS & WINE via Zoom

Wednesday, 30 March at 17:30. We gather together and read our favourite poem or passage.

Jo Czechowska dulwichjo@yahoo.com

Fitness & Wellness

TUESDAY CASUAL WALK

Tuesdays at 9:00

Meet in front of the Staatsoper Tour Entrance at the corner of Opernring/Operngasse. We will end at the Weltmuseum for coffee.

Helen Johnston h.c.johnston38@gmail.com or 0678 1221334

AWA/UNWG WALKING & RUNNING GROUP

Tuesdays & Thursdays, at 08:30. The group meets for fitness and fun with lots of chat, walking or running about seven kilometres. All abilities and partners are welcome! Doris Parker, parker.danda@gmail.com, 0664 877 1074 or join the WhatsApp group to receive information about the meeting point.

KUNDALINI YOGA WITH EDA via Zoom

Tuesdays at 09:00

The ultimate goals of Kundalini are to increase self-awareness, build strength, improve mood, lower blood pressure and heart rate, enhance memory and focus and boost the metabolism and digestive system.

The class has three parts: an opening chant (known as 'tuning in') followed by a brief spinal warm-up, a kriya (a sequence of postures paired with breathing techniques) and a closing meditation or song.

Eda Karaatli Rentsch eda.karaatli@gmx.net

YOGA WITH IVY via Zoom

Fridays at 09:00.

These sessions incorporate Birthlight Well Woman Yoga, working on pelvic muscles, accessible poses and short relaxation exercises. Payment: €15 per class payable to Ivy at least one day beforehand, with 20% going to AWA Clubhouse funds.

Ivy Melchor ivy.melchor@gmail.com

Other Activities

AWA SPONTANEOUS GROUP via WhatsApp

Spur-of-the-moment activities. Contact Urte Paulus, 0676 676 5829, to be added to the group.

Charity & Outreach

WORKING FOR GLOBAL WOMEN via Zoom

Tuesday, 15 March at 17:30

To join the team, contact Bev Bachmayer awafawcorep@mail.com

CHARITY COMMITTEE MEETING via Zoom

Thursday, 10 March at 11:30. New members are welcome.

Naira Mazzini awavpfundraising@gmail.com



Weekly Coffee

WEEKLY COFFEE

Tuesdays from 10:00 to 11:00

Café of the Weltmuseum, Heldenplatz 1010

Well-spaced tables and high ceilings allow for healthy air circulation.

Entry to the Café is free.

Weekly Coffee Chair: Elizabeth Koyama, elizabethkoyama@yahoo.com or 0699 180 34026

MAWA (Men of AWA) COFFEE

Wednesdays 10:30 at Kaffee Alt Wien

Bäckerstraße 9, 1010

Gustav Stangl gstangl123@gmail.com

President's Coffee

Monday, 14 March at 11:00.

Join Sheila for conversation via Zoom. Sign up by 13 March. awa@awavienna.com or click on the link in Weekly News.

MARCH CALENDAR

KEY: Z = Zoom @ AWA Clubhouse @ Off-Site Location

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
FEB 28 12:00 Spanish Conv Z 16:00 Drawing Z 18:30 MAWA Dinner	1 08:30 AWA/UNWG Walk & Run 09:00 AWA Casual Walk 09:00 Kundalini Yoga Z 10:00-11:00 Weekly Coffee 11:30 A1+ German Conv Z 13:00 American Mahjong	2 10:30 MAWA Coffee 11:00 Van Gogh Live 11:15 French Conv Z
7 11:00 AWA Board Mtg Z 12:00 Spanish Conv Z 16:00 Drawing Z	8 08:30 AWA/UNWG Walk & Run 09:00 AWA Casual Walk 09:00 Kundalini Yoga Z 10:00-11:00 Weekly Coffee 11:30 A1+ German Conv Z 13:00 American Mahjong 13:00 Book Discussion Group 17:00 Mila's Monthly Meal Z	9 10:30 MAWA Coffee 11:15 French Conv Z 18:00 Dagmar's Walk Z 18:30 Ladies Dining Experience
14 10:30 World Dance Class 11:00 Presidents Coffee Z 12:00 Spanish Conv Z 16:00 Drawing Z 18:00 MAWA Aperitif Hour S	15 08:30 AWA/UNWG Walk & Run 09:00 AWA Casual Walk 09:00 Kundalini Yoga Z 10:00-11:00 Weekly Coffee 11:30 A1+ German Conv Z 13:00 American Mahjong 17:30 Working for Global Women Z	16 10:30 MAWA Coffee 11:15 French Conv Z 17:00 Charity Cookalong Z
21 12:00 Spanish Conv Z 16:00 Drawing Z	22 08:30 AWA/UNWG Walk & Run 09:00 AWA Casual Walk 09:00 Kundalini Yoga Z 10:00-11:00 Weekly Coffee 11:30 A1+ German Conv Z 13:00 American Mahjong	23 10:30 MAWA Coffee 11:15 French Conv Z 12:30 Lunch in the Clubhouse
28 12:00 Spanish Conv Z 16:00 Drawing Z 18:30 MAWA Dinner	29 08:30 AWA/UNWG Walk & Run 09:00 AWA Casual Walk 09:00 Kundalini Yoga Z 10:00-11:00 Weekly Coffee 11:30 A1+ German Conv Z 13:00 American Mahjong 17:00 Happy Hour Cocktails	30 10:30 MAWA Coffee 11:15 French Conv Z 17:30 Words & Wine Z



Thursday	Fri/Sat/Sun
3 08:30 AWA/UNWG Walk & Run 10:00 Board Games 10:00 Bible Study Z	FRI 4 09.00 Yoga with Ivy Z
	SAT 5 17.00 Trivial Pursuit Z
	SUN 6
10 08:30 AWA/UNWG Walk & Run 10:00 Board Games 10:00 Bible Study Z 11:30 Charity Committee Mtg Z 18:00 Charity Quiz Z	FRI 11 09:00 Yoga with Ivy Z
	SAT 12 17.00 Trivial Pursuit Z
	SUN 13
17 08:30 AWA/UNWG Walk & Run 10:00 Board Games 10:00 Bible Study Z	FRI 18 09:00 Yoga with Ivy Z 18:00 After St Patrick's Day Cocktails
	SAT 19 17.00 Trivial Pursuit Z
	SUN 20 10:00 SDG Walk
24 08:30 AWA/UNWG Walk & Run 10:00 Board Games 10:00 Bible Study Z 16:00-19:00 MAWA Repair Café 18:00 Charity Quiz Z	FRI 25 09:00 Yoga with Ivy Z 12:00 Veggie Vienna 14:00 Fun in the Burggarten
	SAT 26 17:00 Trivial Pursuit Z
	SUN 27
31 08:30 AWA/UNWG Walk & Run 10:00 Board Games 10:00 Bible Study Z 19:00 Wine Night	Interested in volunteering at YOUR club? There are many opportunities to get involved and learn new skills! We'd love to hear from you! awa@awavienna.com




Enjoy live while its happening

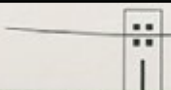
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Sign up for the following tours/trips/social events by emailing awa@awavienna.com, calling the AWA office, 01 966 2925, the organiser, or clicking on the links in the Weekly News. For charity/fee events, pay to AWA Vienna using IBAN AT25 2011 1843 8273 8100

Dining & Drinking

MILA'S MONTHLY MEAL via Zoom

Tuesday, 8 March at 17:00

Watch, chat and cook a delicious seasonal, three-course, plant-based dinner in less than 60 minutes. Collect easy, versatile recipes! Learn about flexible substitutes and ingredients! Pricing: Per-class €10 or sign up for an annual subscription. Sign up to get a Zoom link and the ingredient list. Mila WhatsApp: +1-301-655-2464 or milasnutation@gmail.com

LADIES DINING EXPERIENCE: KANZLERAMT

Wednesday, 9 March at 18:30

Schauflergasse 6, 1010

Join Annick at the Kanzleramt (Chancellery), whose motto is "only the best for our guests". Reserve your spot by 4 March. Annick Gauthier europolitan@chello.at or 06991 968 8173

MAWA APERITIF HOUR via Skype

Monday, 14 March at 18:00

Gustav Stangl gstangl123@gmail.com

VEGGIE VIENNA: HOLLEREI

Friday, 25 March at 12:00

Hollergasse 9, 1150

We'll lunch at this cosy cafe-restaurant with a weekly changing menu of vegetarian and vegan dishes in 15th district. Contact Mila via WhatsApp: +1-301-655-2464 or milasnutation@gmail.com

MAWA DINNER

Monday, 28 March at 18:30

Gustav Stangl gstangl123@gmail.com

COCKTAILS: MARRIOTT HOTEL

Tuesday, 29 March at 17:00

Parking 12a 1010

The Cascade Bar is open again, and we will meet in the right-hand corner of the bar. Two cocktails for the price of one and a buffet for the hungry. Sign up by 28 March. Sheila Hargreaves awa@awavienna.com

WINE NIGHT: WEINORGEL

Thursday, 31 March at 19:00

Bäckerstraße 2, 1010

Twice we've set to meet here, twice Covid has caused a cancellation. The third time's the charm? Weinorgel is housed in a Gothic monastery vault and features an organ behind the bar that plays on the hour. Guests are encouraged to drop peanut shells on the ground to contribute to the 'cosy' atmosphere. Austrian and international wine selection and snacks available. Non-wine drinkers and friends/potential members welcome! Email awahighlights@gmail.com to be added to the Wine Night WhatsApp group.

Charity & Outreach

QUIZ NIGHT via Zoom

Thursday, 10 March at 18:00

The Charity Committee invites you, your family and friends to test your knowledge and have fun while benefitting our charity, Die Möwe, on this special Quiz Night. A donation of €10 is appreciated. Naira Mazzini awavpfundraising@gmail.com

COOKALONG via Zoom

Wednesday, 16 March at 17:00.

Join Mila in her kitchen as she teaches us the benefits of a vegan meal. This month: one savoury and one sweet vegan dish. Cook with Mila or watch and learn. Thank you, Mila! The ingredients list will be published in Weekly News. €10 donation for Die Möwe (through the AWA account) suggested. Naira Mazzini awavpfundraising@gmail.com

AFTER ST. PATRICK'S DAY COCKTAIL

Friday, 18 March from 18:00-20:00

AWA Clubhouse, Singerstrasse 4/11, 1010

Join us for a fun themed evening and a lesson on concocting a special green cocktail. €10 for one drink and nibbles. Naira Mazzini awavpfundraising@gmail.com

CLASSY CLUBHOUSE LUNCH

Wednesday, 23 March at 12:30

AWA Clubhouse, Singerstrasse 4/11, 1010

Join us for a Thai-inspired, home-cooked, plant-based lunch hosted by Irene (who returns from her Thailand trip in early March). Three tasty courses and beverages (and spices!) included. €20 donation suggested, benefiting Die Möwe. Register early (deadline 18 March) as spaces limited! Contact Naira Mazzini awavpfundraising@gmail.com

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FUN IN THE BURGGARTEN

Friday, 25 March at 14:00

Burggarten, Josefsplatz 1, 1010

Join us for a charity afternoon in the park to welcome Spring! We'll play games (such as Croquet), have a dance-along, and of course share food and conversation. Please bring a rug/camping chair and drinks and nibbles to share. Kids, partners and friends welcome! Donations for Die Möwe are greatly appreciated. Further details will be available in the Weekly News closer to the event. Naira Mazzini awavpfundraising@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE: SPRING BAKE SALE

Friday, 1 April at 15:00

AWA Clubhouse, Singerstrasse 4/11, 1010

Join us for an Easter-themed afternoon with tea, bubbles, baked goods and a raffle. Further details will be available closer to the event in the April Highlights and Weekly News. Contact Naira Mazzini awavpfundraising@gmail.com

AWA FAMILY VOLUNTEERS

A hands-on/hearts-on team of members paired with needy families to assist with small tasks like bringing the child to play in a playground. If you want to see the positive effects of support up close or enjoy spending time with small children under three years of age, this is the group for you!

Naira Mazzini awavpfundraising@gmail.com

Tours**DAGMAR'S WALK via Zoom**

Wednesday, 9 March at 18:00

A focus on Gustav Mahler. On February 21 1911, Gustav Mahler

conducted his last concert in New York. Already very sick then, he returned to Vienna, the city of his musical education. Here, he reformed opera productions and found the love of his life. Zoom with me to trace his life and listen to some of his music. Duration: 1.5 hours. Cost €10 (per single or couple). Sign up by Tuesday, 8 March at awa@awavienna.com

TOUR WALK: VIENNA & SDG GOALS

Sunday, 20 March at 10:00

See details below.

Sign up early as participant numbers are limited. A second tour will be offered in April. Contact Teddie Weyr at weyr.clark@mac.com or 0660 802 4672 before March 15. Tour cost is €12 per person.

Other**MAWA REPAIR CAFÉ**

Thursday, 24 March at 16:00

AWA Clubhouse, Singerstrasse 4/11 1010

Visit the Repair Café with your broken electronics and other items, and the Men of AWA will do their best to help. Past participants have had success reviving non-functioning blow dryers and lamps. What can we help you fix to keep out of the trash? Donations are welcome for refreshments, parts and materials. Contact Wolfgang Von Ruden on vonruden@me.com if you have questions.

WORLD DANCE CLASS

Monday, 14 March at 10:30

AWA Clubhouse, Singerstrasse 4/11 1010

Learn an Irish dance (soft shoes, not tap) with Urte Paulus. Contact: urte.paulus@gmx.at.

Water, Water (and SDGs) Everywhere

By Teddie Weyr

It is the most utilitarian of water spigots. A small green sign attached to it reads: "Drinking Water. Please use with care." A larger sign on the concrete basin pleads: "Turn me off! I am too valuable to be wasted. Thank you. Your water."

Yes, OUR Vienna water. Pure and clear as the Alpine springs from which it is sourced, unfiltered, untreated, and one of the reasons Vienna has repeatedly been voted the most livable city.

Although the Viennese have enjoyed this quality water for over a century, they do not by any means take it for granted. They cherish their water as a precious resource. That is clear from the signs on the spigots in the Gersthof cemetery.

And for many people in the world, it is a very precious resource indeed. More than a quarter of the world population does not have access to safely managed drinking water. One of the aims of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to ensure safe drinking water for all by 2030.

Impossible, you say? There was a time when Vienna, too, faced the seemingly impossible task of providing clean water to its citizens, who were dying – at times in large numbers – due to poor quality water and poor sanitation.

The Romans – ingenious engineers – had sourced clean water via aqueducts from the surrounding hills into their encampment Vindobona, which later formed the nucleus of what would eventually become Vienna. But with the decline of the Roman Empire, that knowledge was lost for centuries. It was only in 1873 that the first Alpine water line opened, providing the spring water we cherish today. The Viennese also value their history as a source of inspiration for the future. Looking back in history, we can see that generations before us



faced many similarly seemingly insurmountable challenges. Looking at how they were addressed and overcome in the context of the times – and often considering future generations – may give us a different perspective on the challenges we face today.

Join me for a tour on Sunday, 20 March at 10:00 to apply the problem-solving of the past to the SDGs of the present. While the theme of water will accompany us on this tour through the city's historical centre, we also will touch on Vienna as a forerunner in health, education and the concept of sustainable cities. Sign up early as participant numbers are limited. A second tour will be offered in April.

Contact Teddie at weyr.clark@mac.com or 0660 802 4672 before 15 March. Tour cost is €12 per person.



Finding My Way

By Carol Guarrieri

"Why on earth do you need to walk 500 miles across a foreign country?"

"I have no idea... I just do". My family and friends looked at me with complete shock as I tried to explain my plans to walk the Camino de Santiago – the way of St. James.

It was August 2017, and I decided to quit my job and change careers. I bought a 45-litre backpack and a plane ticket to Madrid and decided to make the famous pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James the Great. What started as a group trip with friends with bus rides and lots of touristy activities turned into a journey of self-awareness, self-forgiveness and self-discovery.

The Camino de Santiago is considered one of the top three Christian pilgrimages in the world (behind Rome and Jerusalem) and one of the last pilgrimages travelled on foot. Its network of ancient paths that cross through Spain, France and Portugal leads to Galicia, Spain and the Catedral Basílica de Santiago de Compostela. The Romanesque cathedral (with Gothic and Baroque additions), consecrated in 1211, is believed to be the burial site of St. James, one of the 12 disciples of Jesus. More than 300,000 people a year hike the well-worn paths established in the Medieval period and marked with a scallop shell – the pilgrim's symbol.

So, how does one prepare for a journey like this? Why would someone choose to walk 500 miles with a backpack? What do you bring? How do you find your way? Where do you sleep? There are countless questions you get when you talk about your plans. Not to mention the questions you have for yourself. So, where did I begin? With the Internet, of course.

There are blogs, newsletters and websites dedicated to the Camino. Groups, associations and special clubs have been created to help pilgrims along the way. Then you have books, documentaries and YouTube videos made by those who walked it before. It was initially overwhelming. So, I started following some of the suggestions I found. I packed my bag with soup cans to get used to carrying weight on my shoulders and carried it up and down the stairs. I walked as much as possible in hilly areas. I also packed, unpacked and repacked my bag about fifteen times before I finally got it down





to a manageable amount of stuff. But nothing could have prepared me for the journey that became my Camino.

The photo of me on the Pyrenees was taken after I stopped to take a break. Although I was smiling in the shot, I was dying inside. It was probably my most challenging day of physical activity ever. It didn't help that I was severely jetlagged, dehydrated and barely had enough food in my belly to last me two hours of standing upright. Late that morning, I reached the top of the mountains and realised I had only walked eight kilometres! Then the wave of doubt washed over me. What on earth was I doing here? How the hell did I get here? Am I nuts? I must be nuts. I called home in a somewhat defeated state and told my Mom that maybe this wasn't such a good idea after all. She told me I was just tired and needed a little salty food and rest. And she was right. Day two was much better!

Pilgrims who have walked 'the way' say it's a metaphor for life. The ups and downs of the mountains, the people you meet, the challenges you face, the beauty of the landscapes... all of it connects back to the journey of life. How do we navigate the rough rocky roads when we get a little lost? How do we find our way back to the trail? What happens when we mess up? I can't say I have the answers to these questions, but I can share what I learned along my journey.

Lesson 1 Remain open. When we close ourselves off to possibilities, we limit our stories. Remain open to what is out there and see how it can change your perspective.

Lesson 2 Talk to others. Put yourself out there. When we listen to each other and share our stories, we find common ground and unity. We can celebrate our differences and take comfort in our similarities. It makes life a little easier to know we aren't alone in our journey.

Lesson 3 Be patient with setbacks. Because they will inevitably happen! Blisters, illness, stolen cash, broken shoulder straps – you name it, anything is possible on the Camino. The same is true in the journey of life. We must learn to be patient with ourselves and with each other. Patience is a virtue on any journey.

Lesson 4 Learn to accept the kindness of strangers graciously. There are good people in the world. Really good people. In our time of need, it may be strangers who show up for us, care for us and help us take our next steps forward – if we let them. I am most grateful for the people I encountered on my Camino and in my life.

Lesson 5 Enjoy the journey. Don't rush it. Each step has something new to provide – a new path, a new person, a new view. I stepped off the plane in Madrid and immediately wanted to be in Santiago. I pushed myself and overlooked people and experiences in my first week, all because I thought I had to be in Santiago as fast as possible. But that is not what the Camino is about. But we will only experience the fullness and richness of the journey if we allow ourselves to enjoy it.

Forty days after I started my Camino, at about 09:00, I finally arrived. I walked into Santiago and kissed the ground in front of the cathedral. I laughed, I cried, I hugged friends I met along the way. I was not the same person who started this journey.

In the following days, I chatted with fellow pilgrims, caught up on sleep, bought souvenirs and took a bus to 'the end of the world' where the 0-kilometre marker for the Camino stands at the edge of the sea. As I looked out over the water, I thought about the movie *The Way* (2010), in which a doubting father (Martin Sheen) eventually completes the Camino for his son (Emilio Estevez – the real-life son of Sheen). "People can't just pack up and leave everything behind," says the father early in the film, explaining that he's happy with the life he's chosen. "You don't choose a life, Dad. You live one", the son replies.

The Camino is all about living.

Finding a Fairyland: Cappadocia-Göreme-Turkey



By Urte Paulus

Why Cappadocia? My daughter chose the destination. I had no clue that there was such a wonderful spot on this Earth. It's located in the Anatolia region, in the centre of Turkey.

Overall impression? The landscape was absolutely amazing and beautiful. It was difficult to stop looking at it. The "Fairy-Chimneys" are unique in the world (formed by the erosion of ancient volcanic and sedimentary rock deposits). Göreme is so small that you can easily walk from one end to another yet wander in awe for hours. The area was a monastic centre from 300–1200 AD, and some of the churches carved into the rocks have frescoes that date back to that period. The food was delicious, and the people we met were friendly.

Where did you stay? In 'Cappadocia Cave Land', a three-star hotel built into the rock formations. It was like being in a medieval castle, but dry and warm. It was also dark because there was only one tiny window near the top of the wall. We left our door open for light.

Souvenirs purchased? Coaster, necklace pendant, tiny bowl – only small things because I was limited to a 30-litre backpack as luggage. I had to squeeze purchases in with my clothes, tenor recorder, music sheets, music stand and pillow.

The waterside photos? We visited one of the largest rivers in this area, a rare water source. People love to stroll there. The platforms along the water are for visitors to cool down and enjoy food.

Highlights? A balloon ride over the area! We were lucky and floated on the only day on our visit without strong winds. Because of the lack of tourists, the ride was discounted to only €65 (usually €200).

Interesting facts? The early Christians hid from enemies in the underground city (including sleeping rooms, a kitchen, chapels and storage areas) about 70m deep. They communicated through small holes, had a ventilation system and a very effective defence system: the passages were only a shoulder's width and sometimes only one-metre high. The Göreme national park and rock sites have been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1985.







Podcast PERSPECTIVES

By Virginia Sheridan

Podcasts are the soundtrack of my exercise and housework, educating and entertaining me without requiring my visual attention. My favourite shows exude a just-hanging-out-with-my-clever-friends vibe and have ingenious names such as *You're Dead to Me* (history/comedy), *This Podcast Will Kill You* (crazy medical conditions) and *My Favourite Murder* (true crime and female empowerment).

Now I can listen to an Austria-based program devoted to the woman expat experience: the 'IWA Podcast' (name soon to be upgraded), created by members at our sister organisation in Graz, the International Women's Association. I can also listen to myself on a podcast since I was invited to share my experiences in the program.

How did a volunteer-based group smaller than the AWA develop a monthly audio show? It all started with the vision of one podcast-loving member, Aza. She thought that the format could be used to share information, help existing members get to know each other and attract potential members – and posted a request for help.

"I had no idea what to do, but I was willing to meet and brainstorm ideas", said Andrea, who answered the call motivated by a personal goal of working on a podcast. The Croatia native is now the editor and coordinator of the program.

Soon after, Andrea drafted Carol, an American, to be co-planner and co-host. "I told her I am a big-time talker", Carol joked. "Andrea and I discovered that we work well together in terms of ideas, organising a schedule and putting together the concept".

The two identified a mission and target audience and listed general topics and themes that might appeal to listeners. They tapped into the IWA community for potential guests and created a publishing schedule. Fitting the project into their busy lives is an ongoing challenge, but the feedback from listeners keeps them going. "It's rewarding when you know someone is out there listening to something you produced for their benefit", Carol said.

The first episode was a simple conversation between the hosts about relocating to Graz. "We talked about the challenges and the circumstances surrounding COVID-19 and our early attempts at speaking German. We shared some funny anecdotes", Carol explained. Other episodes have touched on finding work in Austria, navigating anxiety and stress during troubling times, schooling for young children and reflecting/preparing from one year to the next.

My audio interview with Carol was fun and easy, conducted via a Zoom link. "I only use the audio part, but I find most people feel more comfortable being interviewed when they see the person they're talking to," Carol explained. We happen to know each other well –

Carol's Dad hired me when I was in my 20s, and Carol was still in primary school. So our challenge was not in finding something to talk about but rather deciding when to stop talking. Our interview focused on my 25 years as an expat in five countries.

What are some of the takeaways from the podcast project? "All our members have experienced some 'lost in translation' moments and insecurities and had to let go of some of their expectations", Andrea reflected. "I also learned that it's up to us to decide whether these situations are obstacles or opportunities. Any situation is easier if we engage with people who are going through, or have already gone through, similar things".

Listen to IWA Podcast episodes via links on iwagraz.org or search for IWA Graz on Spotify (or any podcast consolidator).



TOP EXPAT SURVIVAL TIPS



(culled from the IWA Podcast)

- Find your tribe/network/group. Sharing the experience makes things easier.
- Be curious – about people, culture, food, everything. Try new things and always ask questions.
- Ask for help. It can reduce frustration, speed things up and connect you to others.
- Be patient with yourself. Give yourself permission to have bad days, but keep putting one foot in front of the other. It will all fall into place in time.
- Cultivate joy and make time for fun.
- Believe in the goodness of others, assume the best.

FAWCO International Connections

Did you know... that AWA is one of the 60 member clubs of FAWCO? Founded in 1931, the group was originally known as the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas, but it now includes members of many nationalities. The FAWCO website provides access to global topics (particularly involving women and children), education, United Nations policies and US voting, citizenship, and tax issues. The AWA Working for Global Women team is the liaison between AWA Vienna and FAWCO.

As an AWA member, you have free access to FAWCO benefits such as:



Cross-Club Calendar a list of activities (some free, some requiring a registration fee) hosted by partner clubs and available to AWA members. A session on Self-care or Ashtanga yoga? A game of Bridge or an artist lecture? For more information, scan this QR code.

FAWCO Book Discussions a topical reading selection with a Zoom discussion offered every few months. The March book, selected by the Environment Team, is *The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for an Endangered Planet* by Jane Goodall and Douglas Abrams. In extraordinary conversations with her co-author, Jane weaves together stories from her travels and activism.



CELEBRATING International Women's Day

“Imagine a gender-equal world. A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. A world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated. Together we can forge women's equality. Collectively we can all **#BreakTheBias**.”



With contributions from Sara Crockett

Did you know... that International Women's Day (IWD) was first proposed in 1910 at the Congress of Working Women in Copenhagen and first celebrated in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland? From March 1913, it's been marked as an annual event held on 8 March. Organisers fought for better working conditions, higher wages and shorter working hours, and reasonable housing and living conditions. Early goals included supporting equal rights for women, women's suffrage, and the emancipation of women workers

In 1977, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution for a UN Day for Women's Rights and International Peace. Since then, women worldwide have celebrated 8 March (and other dates specific to country traditions) with a focus on Equality, Justice and Freedom. I warmly invite women of the AWA and IWA to join together and participate in events in their cities.

Graz hosts various IWD events, including demonstrations, candlelight walks, art and theatre exhibitions, games, info sessions, workshops and talks. A highlight last year included the popular series of 'Frauen*banker!' when women were invited to 'meet' others on benches located throughout the city and simply... talk. The 2022 program includes a 'chalk back' event on the Graz main square on 6 March, during which participants write the 'catcalls' they've received on the street pavement.

These events are planned and coordinated with one goal in mind: to empower women. The 2022 motto in Graz is "Solidarity – let's go!" (At the IWD website, it's "Break the Bias".) I think we can all use a bit more solidarity in our lives, given the events of this past year.

Sara is the Publications Officer of our sister organisation, IWA Graz.



She offers readers a new understanding of the current crises and offers hope and a compelling path forward. The discussion will take place via Zoom on Sunday, 6 March at 17:00 via HOPIN in conjunction with the Interim meeting. Register by scanning this QR code.

FAWCO Foundation The philanthropic heart of the organisation. Direct donations are tax-exempt in the US. The money raised by member clubs is distributed as development grants and education grants to the club members (AWA members are eligible to apply). Additionally, the FAWCO foundation raises funds for the Target Project. You can find more information at www.fawcofoundation.org.



Club Connections FAWCO has clubs in more than 55 cities around the world! As a member of a sister club, you can access local connections and insider viewpoints. Scan this QR code for more information.

Win a handmade quilt! Purchase raffle tickets via www.fawcofoundation.org for the 'Bluebirds of Happiness' quilt created by FAWCO members.

The FAWCO website A world of information! To learn more about issues, online learning, in-person events and more, click on www.fawco.org. You will need to create a login initially for member access.





CLUB NEWS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

These days I am reminded of the song "June Is Busting Out All Over", from the 1956 film *Carousel* (based on the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical).

March goes out like a lion / A-whippin' up the water in the bay

(Windy days are a nightmare for teachers; the children get so excited!)

Then April cried / and stepped aside / And along comes pretty little May!

April showers and May blossoms immediately come to my mind! With any luck, these three months will also bloom with activity as we return to a semi-normality. Hopefully, the caveat 'subject to short notice cancellation' can finally disappear. I have been so impressed with the willingness of our members to keep paying their fees despite the clubhouse closure and reduced activities. I am sure that I am not alone in wanting to meet members and catch up after such a long period of exile. In the meantime, keep safe and warm!

Sheila

BEHIND THE SCENES: MEMBER RENEWALS

Every month, Treasurer Jillanne writes to all members up for renewal, reminding them of the payment amount, methods and current IBAN. Most members pay almost immediately, and she sends a follow-up reminder to those who don't. If that fails, she sends in the big guns (me)! In February, I phoned ten late-paying members (a small number considering we had 121 members up for renewal in December). We caught up, sometimes chatting for an hour. Lucky for me, I know many of the members (having joined in 2009 and worked as Office Manager and later President), so these calls are enjoyable.

This extra effort is one example of how AWA cares for its members. We don't assume that failure to pay equals dropping out. Sometimes members forget, are moving or are going through difficult times. Our members are people, not numbers and euros. Many thanks to Jillanne for her work in this area!

NEW: SEEKING BUDDIES

The early days in a new city can be stressful. We want to help our new members feel welcome and guide them through the settling-in process – or introduce them to all the club offers if they have long been residents in Vienna.

The Membership Team is creating an AWA "Buddy Network" and is looking for volunteers in each Bezirk to meet one-on-one with a new member and introduce them to the area. It can be as easy as a phone call, a walk or a coffee. Interested in learning more and becoming a Buddy? Please send an email to Georgine Hoppenbrouwers at awamembershipchair@gmail.com

VOLUNTEER/SKILL-BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

Highlights Editor After more than three years of producing the monthly member magazine, Virginia and Angie have decided to 'retire' and focus on other work and family commitments. They have enjoyed their *Highlights* experience ('a labour of love') and recommend it as an excellent opportunity for a new set of members to build or grow their skills while getting to know our endlessly fascinating members. The new team would start in August, but a training overlap before June is

suggested. A few members have already raised their hands to help with the magazine design (Angie's role), but we need an Editor-in-Chief to lead the team and organise, plan, edit, and write. Interested, or know of someone who might be? Contact Virginia at awahighlights@gmail.com

Website Manager An immediate opening for someone to collect content and add it to the AWA Website. Excellent experience to add to the CV or to build tech skills! Interested? Email the AWA office or call Office Manager Erin (who has been doing the work thus far) on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 01 966 2925.

Facebook and Instagram Moderator The AWA Public Facebook page (separate from the members-only page) and the Instagram account need a manager to collect content and keep the images fresh to attract new members. Email the AWA office or call Office Manager Erin (who has been doing the work thus far) on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 01 966 2925.

Highlights Advertising Manager This role involves contacting known advertisers at contract renewal time (each November), securing print-ready ads, collecting fees and informing the *Highlights* and office staff about monthly ad placement. The ability to secure new advertisers and follow-up with member leads is a bonus. Email the AWA office or call Office Manager Erin (who has been doing the work thus far) on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 01 966 2925.

BOARD NEWS

FROM THE FEBRUARY AWA BOARD REPORT

Meeting of 7 February

Highlights Pickup Choices Members can pick up a printed copy from the Clubhouse, have it posted to the home address, or receive just the digital copy via email. During lockdowns and clubhouse closures, all magazines were delivered, but with the high cost of postage, we're hoping to reduce that number. If you can pick up your issue or are happy to receive a digital-only issue, please let the office know by 1 April.

New: Tech Education Group Board Secretary Humera has taken on the task of compiling the Calendar. She now proposes to set up a technology education group to help those who want to learn more about online tools, including Zoom, social media, email accounts, etc. Contact Humera at awasecretary@gmail.com for more information.

AWA Charity for 2023 AWA has had a close relationship with our charity of the past three years, Die Möwe (and the related Gutbegleitet, which supports parents of children under three years old). With schools shut and families isolated, children have been at risk of abuse and neglect in their homes, and our efforts have been meaningful. But as the charity is well-supported by the Vienna government, we are considering the addition of a new cause for 2023. One idea mooted was the House of Hope. If you have any connection to this charity or wish to suggest others, please contact Naira at awavpfundraising@gmail.com




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Influential W O M E N

Q: Tell us about an outstanding woman who made a significant contribution to your life.

"My German teacher in college, Helga Döblin (her husband's uncle was the famous author, Alfred Döblin), had an outsize influence on my life. She inspired me with her knowledge, wisdom and insight. In addition to being the entire German language department at the small liberal arts college I attended in upstate New York, she also taught Latin and classical Greek.

The first day of my first-year German class, she said something about language that has stayed with me all my life: *With every new language, you gain a new soul.* Indeed, without understanding the history and culture of a place, you cannot truly master the language. I have often been reminded of how true that is - the first time I elicited a laugh telling a joke to Viennese friends, when I returned to Vienna after 14 years away and realised that my German was no longer *au courant*". – **Teddie Weyr**

"My influences are women composers: Clara Schumann and Juhi Bansal (living, from Hong Kong / India / USA). I am hosting a concert in honour of International Women's Day featuring the music of women composers on 6 March, from Westminster Presbyterian Church in downtown Sacramento, California. You can watch on the Solmaaz Adeli YouTube channel. We are ALL fabulous women!" – **Solmaaz Adeli**

"One of the most influential women in my life was the choreographer Agnes DeMille (niece of the great film director Cecil B. DeMille) for whom I had the luck to work as a dancer and staging assistant. Although she was related to a famous man and working in an environment dominated by men, she made her mark with women's themes, using dance to treat subjects ranging from tragic psychology to the funniest of comedies. Just as her expressions were authentic and unique, she never demanded that her dancers copy the interpretation of a predecessor. Instead, she drew out each artist's own contribution". – **Ilene Kreshka**

Wine Night!

A residential address, a secret door and a password (Wein!) led members to a private wine cave where they sipped a Sicilian Pinot Grigio, a Spanish Rioja Blanco, a French Rhone blend and an Australian Shiraz. At last, an in-person event!

In attendance (clockwise from left): Erin, Jacqueline, Teresa, Lisa, Nadine, Agnieszka, Mary Anne and Susanne.





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Celebrating 30 Years of Excellence

- DISV is an IB World School (with Öffentlichkeitsrecht/public status), celebrating its 30-Year Anniversary in 2021/22.
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- DISV students are innovative, passionate learners who are globally minded and empowered to lead



ABOUT US

We are an amazing group of 300+ international women who support one another and have fun

WHAT WE DO

We organise 100+ monthly entertaining and educational activities in our Clubhouse, around Vienna and online

JOIN US!

We welcome English-speaking women interested in enjoying life and building lasting friendships!

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