

Newsletter for February/March 2020.



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Letter from the Board

Dear Fellow AWCCS Members,

I hope everyone had a lovely holiday season, all travels were safe and uneventful, and wish you all a HAPPY and HEALTHY NEW YEAR and -- DECADE! (wow, I don't know about you, but 2020 really snuck up on me).

The Halloween Party was a great time, the kids seemed to have a blast with the games that we put together and the spooky story time that Nancy lead. Thank you to everyone who pitched in from organising games and activities, making yummy treats and hot drinks, and crafting up decorations! A lot of items were re-useable and are safely stowed away in our storage unit in shed number ? on my in-law's property. I ran out and bought up (and in one shop - SCORED FOR FREE!) more decorations after the party, and I look forward to putting together next year's Boo! Bash! (maybe with a more imaginative name?) so keep an ear to the ground towards the end of summer, I'll be looking for help.

I missed Thanksgiving, it was our year to be in the states for the holiday, but have heard great things about it - including the fact that the club raised nearly £1600 for our collected charities! We also selected the charities AWCCS will directly support for the next two years: MS Therapy Centre Lothian and Revive MS Glasgow. At our board meeting this weekend it was decided that since the FAWCO Target Project charity has not yet been selected, we will make a donation of \$500 from that £1600 to FAWCO, towards the project announced in March at the Interim Meeting, we will also donate a couple items for the silent auction, and reserve the rest of the funds to split between our local charities. This will mean slightly more money will go to the local charities than if we had split between the two projects evenly, as we typically do.

Our stellar Thanksgiving Planning Committee are looking for volunteers to be part of the committee for the 2020 Thanksgiving Celebration. Please reach out to Nancy and Kathy as many hands make light work. It's a great way to get involved in our biggest fundraising event of the year, and learn what goes into planning it.

I finally made it to the Holiday Cookie Exchange in 2019! It was a lovely and the yummiest cookie of them all was wee Riva, dressed as one of Santa's elves. It was great seeing everyone who came out and we munched on a tasty variety of cookies after Maisie went to bed on more than a few nights over the holidays. Thanks!

On our club's public facing front page, we like to post events that are not exclusive to the club but are of interest to club members and to members of the public, especially potential members. If you hear of or know of interesting events, please let your nearest board member (listed below with email addresses!) know so that it

You Voted for Our New Charity for 2020-2022



MS Therapy Centre Lothian and Revive MS Glasgow*

Revive MS provides multiple forms of clinical therapy, advice, counselling and financial support for patients and their families in the Glasgow area. MS Therapy Centre Lothian provides treatment, therapy and support to those affected by MS and other neurological disorders in the Lothians. This Centre has directly supported two of our current AWCCS members. More information about the centres can be found here: www.mstc-lothian.org.uk and here: www.revivemssupport.org.uk

*Due to the very local nature of each charity, the AWCCS board has decided to combine the two MS centres to ensure the entire central belt of Scotland was represented. If chosen, charity funds will be split between the two charities

If you have any questions about the charities or the voting process, please contact Alanna Brady, Charity Chair, at alannakib@gmail.com



Notes from the Website

Thank you for your comments and help refining our new website.

We are still learning the new website system, hosted by Wild Appricot. Just a note to let you know that this company is constantly upgrading their system, which means our learning is constant. Thanks for being so patient as we learn.

Renewal Notice:

Since we are automated now, you will be receiving your **renewal notice** for the club on the month that you renewed last year. Please take a minute to go into the system and renew as soon as possible to avoid getting the reminders and

can be added to our site.

We'd also like to remind everyone that board meetings are open to the club, with the new site, we've missed out announcing the board meeting on our events calendar, but we will be updating the calendar with this very important event moving forward.

To that end - the next board meeting is on Saturday Morning, February 22nd at 10:30 am. Mark your calendars and watch the app events list for specifics!

In terms of upcoming events that are not yet on the calendar (as of this writing).

Feb 22 - AWCCS Board Meeting

April 18th - We're arranging for a family Easter themed event in Dean Gardens (think: picnic/easter egg hunt!)

I hope to see you either in Luxembourg or at my flat this spring - better yet - even sooner - maybe the next Birthday Bash?

Wishing you all the best in 2020,

Caroline Graves

AWCCS FAWCO Rep

You will need to be logged into your website for AWCCS in order to use the links below:

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eventually the removal from our active membership.

Not renewing on time does mean that the event notices that go out automatically all throughout the year will no longer be coming to your email.

Coordinating email with your Newsletter and Events:

When you receive our Newsletter email/pdf and our Event emails, you are asked to respond and/or referred to a section on our website for clarification. **To make this easier for you**, please do the following:

- **Log in to our website and save the password** on the device you normally use for reading emails. By doing this, you will not have to log on each time you respond to a RSVP or Poll, your device will save the password and take you to your page.
- If you use a **smart phone**, which many of you do, your smart phone will ask you to log in and give you log in options. You then choose that option, probably you will have to use your phone log in to bring up the password box and it will be filled in for you, so you just follow up on that page.
- On a computer, it is a bit easier as you probably already have certain sites that automatically remember your saved password.

Next month the Newsletter format will change once again as the system is being updated. I'll update you on any changes from the above if they are needed.

Problems using the site? Please let us know how we can help solve any problems. Many of us can work with you including the Membership chair, the Treasurer, the FAWCO Rep and me, your Website Manager. See Board Officers list on this page to send questions.

Happy February and March! The days are getting longer.

FAWCO Target: Health Project Selection Season is NOW.

At last year's FAWCO Biannual Conference hosted by AWCCS, the new Target Project theme was announced - Health. In the first year of the 3 year Target Project cycle, the R&D phase, projects within the theme are nominated, short listed, and voted on. The selected project will be announced at the 2020 Interim Meeting in Luxembourg at the end of March.

Our club, along with all the other member clubs will have 1 vote in this selection process. As our FAWCO Rep, I will receive the ballot around the 1st of February and it will be due by the 15th.

You can vote on your choice of charity on our [website](#).

And with that, on to the short listed project summaries - the following details are taken directly from the full length summaries available on the FAWCO website - please feel free to read the full project details here: <https://www.fawco.org/global-issues/target-program/health/blog-health-matters/4248-the-three-shortlisted-target-project-proposals>

You do not need to have a FAWCO.org login to access that page of the site - BUT - I do recommend you create a login as it gives you full access to the FAWCO site - so you'll be able to see all the links I post up on the Facebook Page, and our club website when I write up reminders about FAWCO news and benefits available to us.

AND NOW, IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER, THE NOMINEES:

1. Improving access to family planning and healthcare in rural Kenyan communities, a project of CHASE Africa1.

Who: Women, men and children in 4 counties in remote central Kenya

What and How:

- Train 18 local Community Health Workers (CHWs) to educate 41,785 women, girls and men about healthcare services and of sexual reproductive health rights (SRHR).
- Host 24 mobile health clinics in rural villages to provide: 12,960 women and girls access to free contraception of their choice for family planning purposes and 28,825 children and adults basic healthcare services.
- Budget: \$139,854
- 87% of funding will go to direct services: i.e., training CHWs, mobile clinics, contraception, medical supplies.
- 8% of funding will support project monitoring, support, and building capacity, which will contribute to quality work and sustainable outcomes.
- 5% of funding will go to administrative costs for project implementation.
- The long-term goal is to create behavioral change so that once women and men see the benefits of healthcare and family planning, they will be empowered to access these services independently and teach them to future generations.

2. S.A.F.E. (Safe Alternatives for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Elimination), a project of Hope for Girls and Women Tanzania

- **Who:** Women and girls in the Mara region of Tanzania.
- **What and How:** Safe haven for 500 at-risk girls coupled with family counseling services to ensure their safe return home, free from the threat of FGM.
- Provide healthcare and psychosocial counseling to 200 women and 300 girl survivors of FGM.
- Community sensitization through outreach programs and introduction of Alternative Rites of Passage as an alternative to FGM, with a potential reach of 25,000 individuals.
- Income-generating opportunities for 50 women and 50 girls and access to the National Health Insurance Fund plan.
- Budget: \$142,062.96
- 95% of funds will go to programs and services: i.e., psychosocial support, training, community outreach and education, Alternative Rites of Passage celebrations, safe haven, medical and healthcare.
- 5% of funds will be used to monitor and evaluate programming through the 2-year period.
- Developed according to guidelines created by the UNFPA and the Tanzanian Government, Alternative Rites of Passage (ARP) celebrate a girl's transition into adulthood, respecting the rich culture of the Mara region. ARP ceremonies preserve positive cultural traditions while eliminating the practice of FGM, demonstrating to communities how valued traditions can be maintained without compromising the health, well-being and human rights of girls. ... Each girl will also be presented with a Dignity Kit, which includes feminine hygiene products and health educational materials.

3. Stepping Stones to Health and Well-Being, a project of Safe Spaces Foundation

- **Who:** Young women and girls in the Eastland slums of Nairobi, Kenya
- **What and How:**
- Create a Recreational Semi Juniors Basketball Team adding 30 girls to the Healthy Bodies program.
- Expand the reproductive health program from 500 to 1500 girls by 2022 and enrich the program with a new e-learning tool, the World Starts With Me (WSWM).
- Fight malnutrition by providing health checks and nutritional support to 60 basketball players, 90 participants of WSWM, 30 peer educators and 10 staff members annually by 2022.
- Establish a community e-reader library with content geared toward reproductive health, nutrition and early learning, and facilitate reading groups for 400 girls and mothers with young children.
- Budget: \$139,850 of \$330,525
- FAWCO will join with seven foundations to form a Sponsor Consortium* to fully fund this project. FAWCO funding will cover 42% of the overall project budget.
- Safe Spaces views young women as a community's strongest asset. Their good health and well-being creates a continuous circle for community health. As they grow and develop with the support of Safe Spaces, they learn to care for their own health and best interests, they achieve economic empowerment, invest in their families, and teach their children to follow the same path to health and well-being. The community absorbs these benefits and the former unequal power balance is removed. Girls and young women are seen as valuable assets to the community and they are supported, instead of being ignored – and the circle begins again.

UPCOMING EVENTS

World Cancer Day
8 Feb 2020 11:00

February Daunder 'n' Blether
12 Feb 2020 13:00
Edinburgh Quay Behind Akva

Valentine's Weekend Tea
15 Feb 2020 15:00
The Butterfly and the Pig, 153 Bath Street, Glasgow, G2 4SQ

February 2020 Birthday Bash
20 Feb 2020 18:00
Peacock Lounge, Waldorf Astoria Caledonian Hotel

AWCCS Board Meeting
22 Feb 2020 10:30
2/2 Circus Gardens, Edinburgh EH3 6TN

March Daunder 'n' Blether
11 Mar 2020 13:00
Edinburgh Quay Behind Akva

FAWCO Interim Meeting 2020 Luxembourg!
20 Mar 2020 (UTC+01:00)
Alvisse Parc Hotel, Luxembourg

March 2020 Birthday Bash
26 Mar 2020 18:00
COTE Brasserie, 51 Frederick St, Edinburgh EH2 1LH

April Daunder 'n' Blether
8 Apr 2020 13:00
Edinburgh Quay Behind Akva

FAWCO Interim Meeting 2020 Round Up!
14 Apr 2020 19:00
55/6 Ashley Terrace Edingburgh EH11 1RX

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Special Interest Group Coordinators

Edinburgh: Dale Finlayson for Morning Book Group,
Coffee Plus Edinburgh and Voting Coordinator

Glasgow: Books Beverages and Banter hosted by
various individuals.

Fife: Pat Peters for Fife Dinner Club

American Citizens Abroad



I'm sure it hasn't escaped your notice that 2020 is an election year and Americans will be going to the poles on 3 November or mailing in their postal votes or absentee ballots in advance of that date. Americans abroad are eligible to vote for Federal offices (president, vice president, senators, representatives) in primaries and the general election, but Federal law requires overseas voters to (re)register in every year in which they mean to vote. **Although some states do not erase their overseas voter lists, don't take the risk: register to vote now.** You can make sure you are registered for the Presidential/Congressional and Primary elections by using FAWCO's dedicated [website \(https://www.usvotefoundation.org/\)](https://www.usvotefoundation.org/) to register as soon as you can. You should vote from your last address (or the last address from which you voted) in the United States.

Democrats Abroad Global Presidential Primary – 3 March in Scotland

Democrats Abroad send delegates to the Democratic National Convention to vote alongside delegates from other states, so this will be an **official primary**, not a survey or a poll. If you are a Democrats Abroad member, you are eligible to vote in the Global Presidential Primary. Go to www.votefromabroad.org. This is a non-partisan platform set up by Democrats Abroad to enable US citizens to vote from abroad. Like the US Vote Foundation site above, it produces the necessary Federal forms containing only the information required by your state for filling out Federal forms related to voting as US citizen overseas. At the end of the form you can join Democrats Abroad – it is free to join. You can also join at the Global Primary.

Early voting will begin on Tuesday, 18 February, when every Democrats Abroad member will receive a primary ballot in their inbox. The ballot can be returned electronically. You can also download the ballot from Democratsabroad.org starting on the 18th.

If you would prefer to cast your ballot with fellow Democrats, you can go to one of the two voting centers in Scotland on Tuesday, 3 March. The results will be announced on 23 March. The centers are:

<p>St Andrews University Students' Association 22 St Marys Place, KY16 9UZ 9am–5pm</p>	<p>Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House 7 Victoria Terrace, EH1 2JL 1:30–6:30pm</p>
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Democrats Abroad Scotland are looking for volunteers to help with the primaries in Scotland. If you would like to help, get in touch with me (dka.finlayson@gmail.com) or with DA Scotland at scotland@democratsabroad.org.

If you receive a primary ballot from your state, you can vote it – but your vote will be just one of a much larger number than if you vote the overseas ballot, where it will make a greater difference. You can vote for President on the overseas primary ballot and for other offices on your state's ballot – just make sure you skip the Presidential line on your state's ballot and don't "double dip"!

For further information, go to https://www.democratsabroad.org/the_2020_global_presidential_primary_facts_and_figures

Republicans Overseas do not have a global presidential primary or send overseas delegates to the Republican primary convention. Their website can be accessed at <https://republicansoverseas.com>.



News from American Citizens Abroad

ACA has launched the American Citizens Abroad podcast. Starting last November, every second Tuesday of each month ACA will produce podcasts discussing issues concerning Americans residing abroad, from taxation to finances to culture shock to trailing spouses and everything in-between.

There will be monthly interviews with ACA Directors and Board members along with other professionals and experts on a wide range of topic areas of interest to the overseas Americans community.

Although ACA is primarily known for its tax reform advocacy efforts, the organization also advocates on other community interests, including access to Medicare, Social Security benefits, Voting from abroad, and representation. ACA also provides the community with valuable resources to help them manage their lives while living overseas with products such as the [ACA-Member/SDFCU account](#) and the [ACA tax preparer directory](#). ACA hopes the podcasts will provide the American overseas community with updates on its work and provide resources and practical information.

Future podcasts will cover: ACA's re-launch of the Tax Professional Services Directory, the recently issued Government Accountability Offices (GAO) report on FATCA, the work of the Taxpayer Advocate, updates on the GILTI provision from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and current voluntary compliance programs.

The ACA podcast can be found here: <https://www.americansabroad.org/aca-podcast/>. The community can message the podcast team at: podcast@americansabroad.org. ACA looks forward to providing the community with valuable information and also hearing from the community with their suggestions on topics they would like to see addressed.

Dale Finlayson

ACA Submitted by Dale Finlayson

Member News

February

10- Heather Anderson

March

- 10- Tara Scott
- 16- Rosaline Marshall
- 19- Diedra Turner
- 24- Alexandra Harrington
- 24 - Susanne Hathon
- 30- Kathy McCarthy
- 30 - Michele Wirt



Members In Action

2020 AUCTION DINNER



New Members Welcome

Welcome new members!

- Hannah Brace-Thompson
- Jessica Goeller
- Alexandra Harrington
- Michele Henry-Woods
- Carolyn Hughes
- Allison Murray
- Myra Hollie Nielsen
- Pat Price

Everyone got together to take advantage of the Dinner bought at the 2018 AWCCS auction. Chef Angelo Cimini was chief chef aided by Gina Giubarelli and Joyce Halsan. Hosted by Dale and Niall Finlayson, the guests were Nancy Lynner and Joe Goldblatt and Susanne and Eric Hathon. The meal was served along with three cookery demonstrations: croutons for the mushroom soup, pepper sauce for the steaks and custard with the apple pie. What fun to do, maybe you would consider offering something like this at our next 2020 Auction?

Our Advertiser Olivia McLaren, Ltd.



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We are an award-winning U.S. law practice providing strategic immigration law advice and support for businesses wishing to establish or strengthen a U.S. presence and individuals interested in visiting, working in or immigrating to the United States of America.

About Olivia McLaren: A U.S. qualified attorney admitted to the bar of the State of New York, who worked in U.S. immigration and nationality law in New York City for a decade before opening Olivia McLaren, Ltd. in Edinburgh in 2014. Listed in *Who's Who in Corporate Immigration* (2015-2016). Co-columnist for the *New York Law Journal* bimonthly immigration law column between 2012 and 2014. Also selected as a Rising Star by Super Lawyers in NY Metro in 2013 and 2014, as published in *NY Times Magazine*. Graduated with a J.D. and LL.M. in International & Comparative Law from Duke University in 2004.

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Our AWCCS Advertisers, by Nancy Lynner

Our AWCCS has some long-standing advertisers whose support has helped our club during times when our bank account was low. One of those is **SKYCO**, which is an importer of US and Canadian brand foods that many UK-based folks miss having. SKYCO offers discounts on delivery, etc, if you're a member and that costs £10.00 annually. SKYCO will have specials for Valentine's Day and Pancake Day (Feb 25th) and those will show up on their website as of February 1st.

Personally, just seeing photos of all the brands I was used to when I lived in the US warms me with non-verbal memories of all the cooking, the meals, the camaraderie of the past.

You can find out more on their website which is posted within the Skyco ads in our newsletter and our website.

Another long-time supporter is **Mailboxes, Etc**, which has given our club a free mailbox for decades, in exchange for their advertisement within our newsletter and on our website. We encourage you to use both of these advertisers, and if you walk into Mailboxes, Etc, and if the timing seems right, don't be shy—speak to the staff person and thank their firm for supporting the club.

One of our members is also an advertiser—**Olivia McLaren** is a US Immigration lawyer, and she is a great resource to anyone with questions about US visas, etc. In 2019 she was voted **Best Boutique US Immigration Law Advisory Services!** For example, she advises: our Principal Officers of the US Consulate Edinburgh, Edinburgh-based businesses sending employees to the US, and any of you who might need more info on US visas, etc.

Finally, **Nomad's Tent** is a tribal warehouse with loads of fabulous Middle Eastern rugs, jewellery and furniture. A visit there feels like a trip to Turkey, without the expensive travel...which means if you're saving money on travel, perhaps you should buy that wee rug?

If you know of a business that might benefit from being an AWCCS advertiser, let me know and I will make an approach



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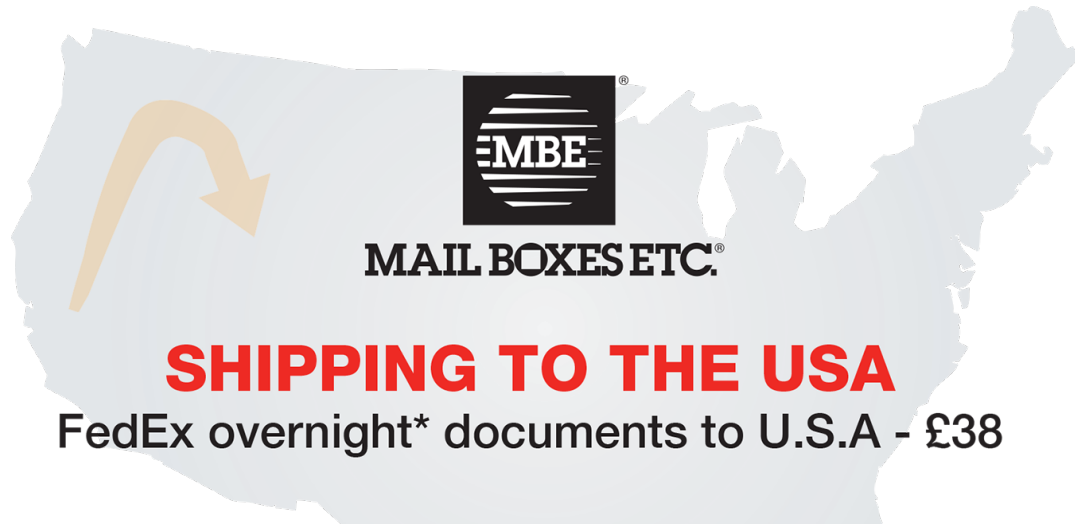
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dragged back kicking and screaming or if you can hardly wait to return home, you will probably find that as a "repat" you and your family members are different sorts of Americans from those who stayed behind. This can be a jolt, but there is help out there for you. Membership in the FAWCO Alumnae, USA, better known as FAUSA keeps you in touch with others who understand the life changing experience of living in other cultures.

Besides the pure psychological support of being a part of this network, there are other benefits, too. The Quarterly magazine carries articles of interest to "repats," and you may apply for the FAUSA Education Award for yourself or a child. In addition, FAUSA members may attend the FAWCO conferences overseas and the FAUSA Annual Meeting, which is in a different part of the US every fall. Learn all about FAUSA, contact someone in your region, and download an application at www.fausa.org. We would love to hear from you.

Jane IndrelandPresident, FAUSA

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