

AIWAV NEWSLETTER

January 2026



WISHING YOU HEALTH
& HAPPINESS IN 2026

NEWS FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Our first four months have been a roller coaster! As many of you will know, growing an organisation comes with unexpected hurdles and pleasures. The monthly aperitivo continues to be a highlight of the club as we tap into new pockets of expat and Italian women connected to the city. We're delighted to continue to introduce people to this unique opportunity.

As of today, we have 45 members with 16 pending applications. We have 6 members in leadership roles and running groups and 2 member Group leaders. The vital Events role remains open to 1+ inventive and organised people. Thanks to everyone for joining us, making suggestions, stepping up and contributing to our success.

FAWCO CORNER

Don't forget to apply for FAWCO's Education Awards for you or your family members in January! On another note, AIWAV will be doing another cleaning of the Stumbling Stones next month for the Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27th. There are more FAWCO Zoom calls scheduled on the topics of menopause and goal-setting, and there's an opportunity to meet the FAWCO Board. If you would like to speak with someone about FAWCO, Irene Woodbury is our representative.

Read more on the [website here](#).

FAWCO CONFERENCE Come join Irene, our FAWCO rep, in Malta (20-22 March, 2026) for AIWAV's first-ever attendance at the annual FAWCO conference. Get to know FAWCO better and network with other like-minded women face-to-face. The program is now [available](#).



PLEASE SEND US
SUGGESTIONS OR
VOLUNTEER FOR A ROLE:
WE WANT YOUR INPUT.
We need an Events person.

FEATURED TOPIC: CARNIVAL FUNDRAISER

Carnival comes early this year! Our event will be a **Prosecco Brunch** from 11am on Saturday, 7 February at Cannaregio's **Grand Hotel Palazzo dei Dogi**, Fondamenta Madona de l'Orto 3500.

There will be a full standing buffet brunch and flowing prosecco. As well as a raffle, a costume contest, and a silent auction, we will have other surprises in store for you as this is a work in progress!

The Committee is keen to hear from anyone with a talent or an item at home that could be donated to help raise money for the selected charity: Save Venice (below). For more information join the Carnival Group or contact Constance via Whatsapp.

Carnival Tickets On Sale Here

Limited availability. Don't miss out.

55€ members, friends & family

Non members 65€

All tickets 65€ from 1 February.

SAVE VENICE PROJECT WOMEN ARTISTS OF VENICE

Women artists are documented in the history of Venetian art but their lives and methods of production are obscured by better known male artists. The lives of these women are being discovered and elaborated by Save Venice. At the same time, their works are being investigated scientifically using pigment analysis, x-ray and infrared photography as well as being restored. The project began in 2021 and works from five artists working at the beginning of the modern era have been completed. The artists are Giovanna Garzoni(1600-1670), Sister Isabella Piccini (1644 – 1734), Giulia Lama (1681-1747), Rosalba Carriera (1673-1757), and Marianna Carlevarijs (1703-1750) held in Venetian churches and museum collections.



DID YOU KNOW:

This year the Accademia Galleries will exhibit a living female artist for the first time in their history.



FEATURED MEMBER: CONSTANCE ALSTAD

After retiring from her working life in the US, fun loving Wordle enthusiast, Constance Alstad began living her dream in Italy. She's also helping to bring Venice back to life as a mentor for the Giudecca incubator SerenDPT. Resident since 2018, Constance recently uprooted her plants from Cannaregio to Sant'Erasmus and herself to Castello. Originally from Minneapolis Minnesota Constance has a degree in Sociology from Purdue University and is the proud mother of Amanda.

Why did you choose to join AIWAV?

I thought it would be a great way to meet like minded women in Venice.

Is Carnival your first experience running a charity fundraiser?

My charity fundraising work began in the States. In a nut shell, I've worked for the March of Dimes, Muscular Dystrophy Association and The Ronald McDonald House. Everything from galas, to celebrity golf tournaments, to Bid for Bachelors. So much fun.

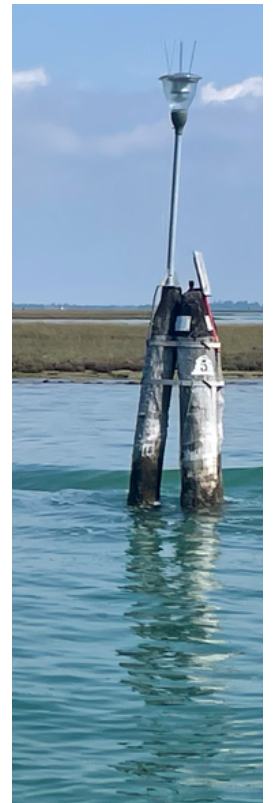
Tell us the most interesting project you've mentored at SerenDPT?

So hard to choose as these hopeful entrepreneurs are all so brilliant and driven. My recent favorite is two sisters who have developed new solar powered lighting for the bricole (navigational posts in the lagoon). The purpose is to save the lives of our citizens. As we know all too well there are frequent accidents as well as deaths due to poor visibility. They have already sold 100 to the Comune di Venezia.

AV: What's your favourite spare time activity in the city? I love my book club!

AV: What's your best buy prosecco label?

My favorite Prosecco was served to me over seven years ago by a dear friend. It is produced by friends of hers. Not too bubbly, easy on the palate and even easier on the pocketbook. It's called Cescon and is readily found at Conad.



VENICE TRIVIA
How many bricole in the lagoon? 6K, 8K or 18K?

MEET THE CARNIVAL TEAM

Constance volunteered to run the Carnival Group in October this year. The team is made up of six other members: Phoebe Bebo, Gina Giovannini, Gillian McGuire, Nicole McKeivitt and Haylee Rose-Kagel. Eileen Morgan contributed a great deal before heading home to the US in December. Cindy Russell started out with the group but was overtaken by other commitments. Thank you all for this important work!

MORE VOLUNTEERS ALWAYS NEEDED

DO YOU OR A FRIEND
HAVE GOODS, SKILLS
OR A SERVICE YOU
CAN DONATE TO OUR
SILENT AUCTION OR
RAFFLE?

Contact one of the Carnival
Team by Whatsapp and we
will follow up.

FORMAL INCORPORATION

A nonprofit association is a common form of entity in Venice. It offers a membership structure and accrues some tax benefits, such as being able to receive 5x1000 donations, and favourable treatment by organisations. For example, the commercial day rate rental for the fish market is 15,000€ but a non profit may be offered this important city space for free. Formal structure also enables us to open a bank account and limit personal liability.

BACKGROUND

AIWAV is a young, informal organisation. It came into being late in 2019 and, after a few quiet years, was reignited in 2022. It adopted its most recent **Constitution** in December 2024.

The current six person **Leadership Team** — made up of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and two Advisors, one doubling as our FAWCO Representative — are serving a two year term which began in July 2024. Candidates are voted in, by majority vote, and can serve two terms.

AIWAV's mission is to bring together English-speaking women of the Venetian community to be a network of support by holding social/cultural activities; be a resource and a voice for its members especially in the areas of human rights, health, education and the environment; and seek to improve the lives of women and girls worldwide but with a focus on the Venetian lagoon.

DIRECTION

We are strengthening the small base of members we inherited to ensure our future viability. AIWAV offers a vehicle for a collective contribution to our host city and a united voice — especially as the population continues its decline.

This growth also increases our potential contribution to the region, supporting a wider cross-section of women, diversifying the opportunities we can offer, and raising more money for charity.

In January 2026, the incumbent LT will begin the process of formally incorporating an **Associazione di Promozione Sociale** We will present this work at the January aperitivo. The current Constitution will be used as the basis for the new organisation. Any significant modifications will be put to the vote. We look forward to discussing this with you but don't hesitate to start sending us **your comments, advice and support today.**

*“People who are truly strong lift others up.
People who are truly powerful bring others together.”*

Michelle Obama

NEW TREASURER DIAHANN HUGHES HAWKINS

We are delighted Diahann has volunteered to take on the role of Treasurer. With invaluable experience managing projects and interfacing with nonprofits, AIWAV benefits from having both Diahann's knowledge and working examples to draw on. Membership dues are used to run the Association, in the form of things like subscription services or aperitivos. The club runs events, such as the Carnival Prosecco brunch, to raise money for charities.



THANK YOU DIAHANN.
Learn more about our new
Treasurer in the November
newsletter.



SUMMARY OF LAST MONTH

Thirty people came to wish each other well at the **December aperitivo** near Rialto. Described as a “blast” by one member, there were lots of cookies and new member faces and friends.

We spent a glorious **sunny day in Verona** for the Christmas market and Pandoro and managed to also visit the 15th century, Italian Gothic Basilica of Santa Anastasia.

We saw **Pietà by Giovanni Bellini** (Venice, 1430–1516) at Ca d’Oro but it should not be missed so **make sure you see it before it leaves 22/2. Tue-Sun, 10-19h, 6€**

WHAT’S HAPPENING NEXT?

- **Gallery Hop**, Sunday 11 January, 11am Guided tour Albero d’Oro (residents 5€). Meet 10.50 Campo San Polo by the fountain.
- Second Tuesday of the month, **Association Aperitivo**, 13 January, 6.30pm, location TBC
- **Save Venice** behind the scenes, Monday 19 January, 10.30am, more details coming soon.
- **Book Club**, Wednesday, 21 January evening TBC
- **Coffee Morning**, Thursday, 22 January, 10.30am Procuratie Vecchie, The Cafe
- **Stolpersteine Cleaning**, Tuesday 27 January, 10am, Sant’ Angelo Vaporetto stop
- A range of **FAWCO** events (see p.1 & website)

APERITIVO HOSTS

You can host anywhere: your favourite bar, around your campo well, or at home.

GET INVOLVED

Join a group to help make decisions, or:

MAKE A SUGGESTION.

OFFER AN EVENT.

BE INTERVIEWED.

WRITE THE NEWSLETTER.

SEND US A PHOTO OR TAG US!



NEW WHATSAPP GROUP

MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS

WATCH OUT FOR THE NEW

ENVIRONMENT GROUP

New members always welcome.

Bring someone to an aperitivo

or just make an enquiry.

MEMBERS ONLY

WEBSITE PASSWORD:

A I W A V m e m b e r s 2 6

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