

# AIWAV NEWSLETTER

March 2026



THE PLAGUE DOCTOR (Medico della Peste) is an iconic Venetian mask featuring a long, bird-like beak, designed in the 17thC to protect physicians from plague miasma using aromatic herbs.

## INSTAGRAM TAKEOVER

Take over our Instagram account for a day.

We are looking for people to help us represent what it is like to be part of the Venice community. At the same time as showing the different people and contexts that make up our member's days, we hope to reach new communities of international women connected to Venice.

Please volunteer to take over our account and show the life of the city through your eyes. **Contact Olivera for details:** [aiwavpublicrelations@gmail.com](mailto:aiwavpublicrelations@gmail.com)

## NEWS FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Many thanks to everyone who made this year's Carnival event such a success – the generous donors who supplied such excellent charity items, members and friends who purchased tickets, raffles and silent auction items, the musicians and photographer, and the hard-working Carnival team! This great work raised over 1,000€ and achieved our largest charitable donation for the gender-balancing Women Artists of Venice project of Save Venice.

This energy is also fuelling our monthly aperitivos. Such a pleasure to see so many people every month – and new people! And the new Environment group is actively engaged in figuring out a program to benefit Venice.



HAVE YOU READ OUR [FAQ](#).

*“I’ve learned that making a living is not the same as making a life,”  
Maya Angelou.*



## BEHIND THE SCENES

A number of members have mentioned how confusing our sign up and RSVP system has been for them. The database was set up with nine steps to membership. A time-consuming task also for the administrator, as the system is manually managed at every stage. Integrating this into the busy working lives of our volunteers has been a stretch. As a result, we're working towards a two-step membership sign-up process and a general review going forward.

Clarissa, a new member who also donated her services to the Carnival event, is working to identify the best way to integrate the website, database and communications to create a seamless flow. This will allow us to also use html email.

Many members will have their own experiences with any number of these different tools and understand their benefits – once you've come to grips with all their myriad possibilities. Please get in touch if you have experience and would like to help!

In preparation, we have signed up for Stripe — a payment system that is simple to use and more automated than current individual payments. However, you can still pay cash at a club event or make a direct bank transfer. One significant change will be creating recurring payments. That means there will be an announcement in late August reminding you your membership will renew in 30 days **unless otherwise cancelled**. To cancel you still just need to send us an [email](#).

At this point we intend to retain the use of AirTable for the database. However, the working group is reviewing this for the future as it becomes increasingly important to serve our growing membership. We are very happy to have Cobi and other members volunteering their skills. If you're interested in volunteering to help with some aspect of this work, we'd love to hear from you. **Contact Gina or Hermione via Whatsapp or by [email](#).**

## LOCATIONS FOR UPCOMING MONTHLY APERITIVO

HUGE THANKS TO OUR HOSTS THIS YEAR

Home hosting is the best.

Let us know if you'd like to host!

March, Giudecca

April, San Polo

May, San Marco

June, Cannaregio

NB. June is our last aperitivo before the summer.



Detail: Venice: The Giudecca with The Zitelle, Francesco Guardi, 1712-93. Oil on canvas, National Gallery, London



## FEATURED MEMBER: JULIA CURTIS

A new member, Julia has already made several contributions to AIWAV with her vast network and knowledge of Venice. Originally from California, Julia now makes her home on the Giudecca, where she will host us for the March aperitivo. By day she offers a dazzling array of Yoga-related classes and experiences at the studio she founded, [Yoga Venezia](#).

### ***AV: What brought you to Venice?***

When I was about three years old, my father — an opera conductor and “wannabe Italian” — spent a year in Venice. I still carry a few vivid memories of being carried through this magical city of water and adventure – including being dropped on my head next to SS. Giovanni e Paolo which may have altered my consciousness to a “wannabe Venetian”. Forty years later, I returned with my own child, convinced Venice was the coolest and safest place to raise a family. My love of art history, boats, and all things connected to water made staying feel natural. I never expected to remain so long, but Venice is such a unique place that it’s hard to imagine readjusting to life in a big, car-filled city.

### ***AV: How has Venice changed over the many years you have come and visited here?***

Venice is unique but mass tourism has made it less liveable. Forty years ago, it felt more vibrant, full of young people and true artists and craftspeople. Despite its small size, Venice has always been deeply international, shaped for centuries by exchanges between East and West. If you look at the Venetian paintings of the 1500s, they are far more diverse and international compared to their counterparts. Today, it can be harder to distinguish between transient visitors and those wanting to truly connect with the city. Many local shops have become chain stores that sell nothing uniquely Venetian. Still, I believe Venice has the potential to be one of the most modern cities in the world. Its walkable lifestyle encourages daily movement and social interaction, contributing to a healthy, connected way of living — and offering a powerful model for a sustainable future.

### ***AV: What would you like to change about the future of Venice?***

My focus is on livability and the pressures created by tourism. Venice is a real Petri dish for environmental and urban challenges — from rising sea levels to air-quality concerns linked to the industrial legacy of Marghera, as well as the fragile livelihood of the fishing community. What I would most like to change is the tendency toward social fragmentation. Instead of working in separate circles driven by individual agendas, we need stronger collaboration to protect this extraordinary city. Restoring a unique mosaic floor is important, but if we can’t keep the sea level from rising or managing tides that destroy them, we will all sink faster than we can save our city. I have worked on climate change policy issues since the early 1990s, so I have a strong environmental lens from which I see the world, and this has affected how and where I want to live and raise my family.

### ***AV: What would you like to contribute and bring to AIWAV?***

When women come together, we create beautiful things and see things perhaps differently and more holistically. I want to help organize more cultural events and also volunteer opportunities to help local causes in need. I love to exercise (yoga, dance, row, sail, swim, bike, hike, climb, etc), to share my knowledge, and learn more from others about art, our ecosystem, politics, religion, music and history. I want to help create a greater, more open, progressive place to live and meet, with a melange of nationalities and beliefs. We all have something to learn from each other and this city could really benefit from a greater inclusive community.



### **VENICE TRIVIA**

*When is the best time to see the flamingos in Venice?*



## VENETIAN HERITAGE WITH TOTO BERGAMOT ROSSI

A special private tour of one of Venice's most iconic landmarks with *Toto Bergamo Rossi, Director of Venetian Heritage*. Join an intimate exploration of some architectural highlights and masterpieces of Galleria Giorgio Franchetti alla Ca' d'Oro.

### **Event details:**

Wednesday, 18 March, 10am, Calle Ca' d'Oro, 3932, Venezia. RSVP [here](#) by Sunday, 15 March

## FAWCO CORNER



Register online as a FAWCO member and sign up to the various publications. It's the best way to learn about this dynamic organization. The new *"Inspiring Women"* is dedicated to *"Women Behind the Scenes."* US citizens should remember tax year deadlines. And, for the first time AIWAV will attend the Interim Conference in Malta, March 20-22. Irene Woodbury will report on the world of FAWCO.

More FAWCO news [here](#).

## ACCOUNT OF A FIRST TIME HOST BY SABRINA DE LIBERA

What a pleasure it was to host the February AIWAV Meeting at our family apartment in San Barnaba! I am a new member of AIWAV and eager to jump right on the opportunity to foster friendships abroad. Actually, I will revise my diction choice to "What a delight it was to host the February AIWAV meeting at our family apartment in Campo San Barnaba". Delight is my word for 2026, fated to me at a New Year's Day yoga workshop in my home town of Columbus, Ohio. My charge is to create delight every day, and as we all know, this is quite easy to do living in Venice!

Thirty years ago, my parents bought and renovated this apartment as an "added dimension" to strengthen the roots in our Italian heritage. My Nonno Antonio was born in Vittorio Veneto and my Nanna Angelina in L'Aquila. I don't know if you noticed, but they were all with us at the meeting! I could feel their love and pride through that thin delicate lace veil between dimensions. I am grateful I can follow the dream of my father to retire in Venice and welcome into our home the beautiful community it has to offer. That community includes my fiancé, Alessandro, a very, very delightful gondolier at San Tomà (our photographer!) and now all of you. My favorite part of our meeting was when we gathered in a circle to introduce ourselves and share something favorite about Venice.

Thank you for welcoming me into this international community. It is an honor to be in the presence of such bright, inspirational and courageous women. I appreciated finding other people navigating the same issues of living this unconventional Venetian life. I felt a connection to hear stories, suggestions and advice for solving problems such as What is the best way to learn Italian? Where can I get rugs? Who knows an honest accountant to do Italian taxes? How do I get my son off video games and into the dolce vita!? Seeing other women cross the same bridges normalizes the lagoon fog I can feel and provides those yellow arrow signs that makes the journey more delightful! Or at the very least, you all reflect back on a Murano mirror that I am not the only crazy one!





## SUNDAY 19 APRIL SAVE THE DATE

Fiona is leading a **Family Cycling Day** to Lio Piccolo to see the flamingos. We would love you to bring your kids so they can meet each other. We'll stop for lunch and then meander or race home depending on your inclination. Details coming soon. [RSVP here](#) by 10th of April, so we can make a plan and have the best day possible.

## VOLUNTEER

Volunteer to help or make your own event/group. Just reach out to the Leadership Team or Group Leaders.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

- **Leadership Team** first Wednesday of the month, 4 March, time and location TBC.
- **FAWCO Open Human Rights Team** virtual meeting: Celebrating **International Women's Day**. Thursday, 5 March, 5pm
- **Book Club**, Saturday 7 March TBC.
- Second Tuesday of the month, **Social Aperitivo**, 10 March from 6pm on Giudecca. [RSVP](#) to receive the address the night before the event. Select your name and the event you'll attend. You will not receive a confirmation unless we have reached capacity.
- **Venetian Heritage & Toto Bergamo**, Wednesday, 18 March, 10am, Ca' d'Oro, Cannaregio 3932, Venezia. [RSVP here](#).
- **FAWCO interim conference** 20-22 March, 2026, Malta.
- **Stolpersteine** (Stumbling Stones): Join the Whatsapp group to coordinate or [RSVP here](#) Wednesday 25 March, 10am. Meet at S. Angelo vaporetto stop.

## TUESDAY 2 JUNE SAVE THE DATE

We're working on a last aperitivo event before the summer break. It will be held the week prior to our usual second Tuesday — on the **first Tuesday, 2 June — in Cannaregio**. If you'd like to help plan or host this event, please [get in touch](#) with Irene.

## 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!

American &  
International  
Women's  
Association  
Venice

AIWAV.ORG

New members always welcome. Bring someone to an aperitivo or ask them to first [make an enquiry](#), and then [RSVP](#).

P.S. We do not reply to RSVPs — unless there is limited capacity.



AIWAV-AMERICAN-INTERNATIONAL-  
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