



American Women's Group

P.O. Box 393

Madinat Al Sultan Qaboos 115, Muscat

A Message from the AWG President Margaret Hurtado

Come Join Us...

Welcome to all Members, new and returning, to another great season with AWG. We are planning many activities and events, including our annual Holiday Bazaar, Omani Night, a host of great speakers for our General Meetings, more "Meet the Chef" demonstrations, and our orientation of newcomers to Muscat. Read about these programs elsewhere in the newsletter.

We have a mix of new and returning AWG Board members. It is a terrific team and we are lucky to have such talented people volunteering their time to create the inner workings of our organization:

Sandy Schmierer – Honorary President
Margaret Haas Hurtado – President
Leslie Bosch – First Vice President
Elizabeth Zahl – Secretary and Business Coordinator
Rani Rozario – Treasurer
Revati Sanzagiri – Special Projects Director
Charlynn Alderman – Communications Director
Payal Khazanchi – Press and Marketing Director

Elizabeth Hawley – Memberships Director
Veronica Reider – Newcomers and Volunteers Director
Rukhsana Mohamed – Website Manager

We owe a debt of gratitude to our members who transitioned to AWG Board Alumni: Cindy Lundberg, Michelle LaVigne, Janette Gill, Katie McManus, Jillian Macduff, Diane Van Vuuren, Lynn Shen, and Trish McDermott. Without the work of these women from last year, we would not enjoy the foundation we rest on today.

Our September membership registrations were a big success and we increased membership from 500 to 700 members and counting!

Each week we will continue to communicate AWG events and notices through our weekly *AWG News and Information* emails. Also, consult our website, www.awgoman.com for our Calendar of Events, our Business Partners Discount List, and photos of recent outings.

One new item we wish to develop this year is putting members in direct touch with local Omani charities. Our Charity

Committee is developing these contacts so that members can volunteer directly with



Margaret Hurtado, AWG President

organizations. Look for more information to come on this topic.

Organizations like ours exist only with the input and volunteer efforts of our members. I invite all of you to involve yourselves directly in what we do. The Board has already received many contacts from members who want to do just that, and it pleases me to see that we are a group of active participants.

I look forward to meeting many of you throughout the year, and take great pleasure in the friendships I have made within AWG during my two years in Muscat. I am looking forward to another great season.

Upcoming Events

October 25: Newcomer's Meeting Home of AWG President, Margaret Hurtado

Welcome all Newcomers! The first Newcomers Meeting will be on Monday, October 25th. We are looking forward to welcoming our newcomers with a great morning filled with some valuable information and an opportunity to meet new friends. Currently some exciting monthly gatherings are being organized to help introduce Newcomers to Muscat. Look for upcoming announcements. You may contact Veronica Reider at awgnewcomers@gmail.com.

October 29: AWG Holiday Bazaar at Omani Women's Association HQ from 1-6 pm Full flyer available on page 7 of newsletter!

The AWG Holiday Bazaar is the American Women's Group's annual showcase event. This year the Holiday Bazaar will be at the **Omani Women's Association Headquarters located in Shatti Qurum (past the Opera house and round about) on Oct 29, 1-6 pm.**

Every year we arrange the Holiday Bazaar during the month of November. This year, however, it is being held in October as we wanted to celebrate the festivals of Eid, Diwali and Christmas through our Holiday Bazaar and let everyone shop ahead of the festive season.

There will be various stalls by AWG members and AWG discount partners. We will also showcase the talents of Omani ladies specializing in bead work, shaillas and other designer works. There will be food stalls sales by Caribou Coffee, Pizza Inn, and Thai Basil restaurant.

This year all the proceeds from the bazaar will go for the **Oman Association for Disabled**. Please come support this worthy organization. The bazaar is open to the public. **Entry ticket is RO 1.000** and first 300 entrants will get gifts from Muscat Pharmacy.

November 7, 2010: Omani Night Al Bustan, Cost 21 OMR

Come to the Al Bustan for outdoor traditional seating and Omani meal. Come enjoy local handicraft demonstrations and music under the stars. Tickets are 21 OMR/person. AWG members, spouses and guests welcome. RSVP to Leslie Bosch at awg1stvp2010@gmail.com.

December 12, 2010: Christmas Luncheon US Ambassador's Home Stay tuned for details.



HOLIDAY BAZAAR

OCTOBER 29, 2010 FROM
1PM-6PM

OMANI WOMEN'S
ASSOCIATION HEADQUARTERS

REVATI SANZAGIRI AND HER TEAM
HAVE PUT TOGETHER AN
AMAZING EVENT. YOU WON'T
WANT TO MISS IT. ENTRY TICKETS
ARE ONLY RO 1. GIFTS FROM
MUSCAT PHARMACY FOR 1ST 300
VISITORS



OMANI NIGHT

NOV 7, 2010
AL BUSTAN HOTEL

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER!

CONTACT LESLIE BOSCH FOR
RESERVATIONS AT
AWG1STVP2010@GMAIL.COM



CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12

US AMBASSADOR'S HOME

MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE
SOON!

A Letter from The AWG Founder

October 20, 2000

Greetings and congratulations to all of you on the 25th anniversary of the founding of the American Women's Group of Oman!

My name is Mimmi Wolle. In 1974, my husband was assigned as the first resident U.S. ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman. We spent four wonderful years in this fascinating country. I arrived to find that our charming Beit Mugub residence was on the top floor of the Embassy, a 200 year old building up against a small mountain in the shadow of Fort Jalali. The place came complete with stained glass windows, cedar termite infested ceiling beams, and a walled-in yard containing date trees, periwinkles, two Arabian Oryx gazelles and bougainvilleas spilling over the wall.



Many things changed during our four years in Oman. I have many fond memories of early Oman. We enjoyed all of our postings in the Middle East, but in Oman, the gracious people and the rugged natural beauty of the country particularly stood out. We made it a point to see as much of this spectacular country as we could. We hosted many house guests who were visiting, as when we first arrived there was only one hotel, the Ruwi Hotel in Mutrah (the capital) and just one in Salalah.

However, the reason I am writing to you is to reminisce about why, along with a handful of other women, I helped start the American Women's Group and what it was like in the beginning.

One day, Orville Lape, manager of the airport at Seeb, who worked for Pan American, the biggest American company in Oman at the time, came to visit my husband. He also asked to see me and told me that there were a number of wives of Americans working at the airport who had little to do and were getting bored. Did I have any suggestions for activities that could help pull them and their families closer together?

A few years earlier, I had helped start an American Women's Group in Kuwait. So, I thought it might be a good idea to start a forum where women could gather and discuss their concerns and ideas.

The first meeting took place at the Residence. Because the trip from the airport took nearly an hour and the approach into the old town of Muscat was somewhat treacherous in those days with a narrow, winding path that hugged the solid rock mountains on one side, dropped into the water on the other and contained several hairpin turns, the women were brought in a group on the airline shuttle bus. There were about a dozen of us at first. We shared cucumber sandwiches, chocolate chip cookies, coffee and tea in our third floor home.

Using the constitution that had been used in Kuwait, we formed our "group". We called it a "group" because in Kuwait, the Foreign Minister had objected to having a women's "club". He did not think it was appropriate, so we called ourselves a "group" and thus was our beginning.

We began having regular meetings and often invited speakers, including Dr. Donald Bosch, a longtime resident of Oman and renowned expert on seashells. Our members became involved with various projects in the community, including helping to run a popular thrift shop.

However, the most rewarding benefit of our organization was that it nurtured an environment for women who might be far from home, yet realized they had many friends in a foreign land.

I was invited to send a greeting to you at the time of your 10th anniversary celebration and I remember that your theme that year was "The Roaring Twenties". I understand that was a great success and am pleased to hear how your organization has grown. I congratulate you on your progress and wish I could be there to help celebrate. I will be there with in spirit and am glad for the opportunity to send a message.

My thanks also go to Eloise Bosch for her efforts in spurring me to write this note and delivering it to you. I hope you find a suitable place in your archives for the two photographs that I have enclosed: one showing my husband, William D. Wolle, and I greeting Donald and Eloise at a July 4th reception at the American Embassy and the other showing me at home at the Residence.

Best of luck in your future endeavors!

With fond regards, Mimi Wolle

WHAT WE ARE UP TO!



Meet the Chef

The AWG "Meet the Chef" held at the Thai Basil Restaurant on 29th September 2010 was a great success. 24 ladies attended the function and a good time was had by all. We appreciate the support of all the members of the AWG who were there and hope that the AWG "Meet the Chef" will continue to be a success in the future. Our thanks go to the Midan Hotel who provided such professional service and quality of food



Our October General Meeting, at Bait Zubair Museum, was sponsored by National Bank of Oman. Mr. Abdulrauf Wood presented a Dialogue of Letters. He spoke about historic Oman using personal letters, especially from expatriate women who lived in Oman, sharing their personal experiences stretching back to 1929. Thank you to Bait al Zubair and Mr. Wood for an amazing event.



Stay Tuned!

Upcoming AWG Speakers!

For the AWG 2010- 2011 season, we have lined up speakers on various topics we believe will be of interest to the membership, focusing on Oman's history and culture. Our October meeting at Bait Zubair Museum was sponsored by National Bank of Oman. Mr. Abdulrauf Wood spoke about historic Oman using personal letters, especially from expatriate women who lived in Oman, sharing their personal experiences stretching back to 1929.

Our November meeting will be an Omani evening event at the Al Bustan Palace Hotel's Seblat program and is open to spouses. We will dine under the stars in a traditional Bedouin setting and will enjoy the flavors of Omani and Arab cuisine complemented by traditional music, dance performances, a henna lady and examples of Omani handicrafts.

Our January meeting will focus on Oman's early coastal archeology, indicating that Oman's coasts have been occupied since at least 6,000 BC. During changing periods, human beings exploited the resources by Oman's different ecosystems, including fish, terrestrial mammals and shells from ancient lagoons. As shown by archaeological excavations, the period from the 5th to the 3rd millennium BC (5,000BC – 3,000BC) is characterized by great changes in settlement patterns, burials as well as social life. It was the formative period of society. Our speaker, archeologist Ms. Lorena Giorgio will reconstruct a picture of human life in those times.

Our speaker for March is Ms. Julia Al Zadjali , the Director for the Centre for Omani Dress. In Julia's words "Oman is on a very unique and important threshold in its history for numerous reasons. For centuries and centuries, the landscape of this country saw little change. We believe the same holds true for Omani dress. With the arrival of His Majesty, the Sultan, in 1970, Oman would become forever changed and those changes are still occurring now as it leaves behind its ancient history and embarks on becoming a modern nation, mindful of its rich and historical past. With this comes the need to preserve Oman's dress identity for it, too, has felt the impact of change. The Centre for Omani Dress makes this preservation of Oman's dress identity its sole mission. "

April's meeting will center on the native plants of Oman, their traditional uses and also how to grow some of these indigenous plants in our gardens. The speaker will be Mr. Clive Winbow, who has authored the book [The Native Plants of Oman; An Introduction](#), about native plants and how to put them in private gardens. Clive will be leading walks under the auspices of the Horticultural Association of Oman over the next few months while the weather is cooler.

[Women's Letter to His Majesty Sutan Qaboos Bin Said](#)

The Ministry of Social Development has composed a letter of support and congratulations to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said on the occasion of his 40th Anniversary of the Omani Renaissance. This letter is traveling the country to be signed by every woman in Oman who has the opportunity to add her name.

The Omani Women's Association will display this letter at its headquarters in Shatti Al Qurum from October 27-31 for any woman who wishes to stop by and add her signature. **AWG is happy to announce that this letter will be available for signature during our AWG Holiday Bazaar, October 29th.**

Please plan to stop by and sign this historic letter. If you wish, please indicate that you are a member of AWG.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION



AWG Membership Registration

By the time you read this newsletter we will have our last registration opportunity on Oct. 29th at the AWG Holiday Bazaar, 1-6 p.m. at the Omani Women's Association headquarters in Shatti Al Qurum. After November 1, we will only be communicating with active members, so please submit your renewal membership before November 1 to continue receiving our weekly emails. After November 1 online member applications are available through our website, www.awgoman.com. We will always have registration at our monthly General Meetings if you wish to bring a friend for new membership.

Come Join Us as our AWG Activities Director

The AWG Board of Directors is comprised of 12 dedicated volunteers who are providing the organization skills necessary to provide a year of activities, discounts, events and outings for our Members. We have 11 of these board positions filled and need a 12th to complete our board as the Activities Director. This position organizes one activity a month for members. Past activities have included children pizza-making during school holidays, Cafe Ceramique mornings, a dhow cruise, facilitating the AWG interest groups, etc. There are bountiful activities that can be planned and many businesses who are waiting to host AWG mornings. We have many requests at the ready, we just need a person who can fulfill their wishes!

If you are a woman of moderate free time who would like to plan outings, come join us! We have all the information you need to start and will offer you our guidance. None of us operates in a vacuum and you will be a welcome member of our team. Please contact Margaret Haas Hurtado at awgmuscat@gmail.com to discuss.

AWG VOLUNTEERS

Thank You

The AWG Board extends a sincere thanks to Member volunteers who helped with registrations at the Grand Hyatt hotel and Essence Spa. We truly appreciated the help from AWG members:

Callie Akalanou
 Charlynn Alderman
 Tashi Bhutia
 Leslie Bosch
 Janette Gill
 Kelly Gilreath
 Liz Hawley
 Margaret Hurtado
 Payal Khazanchi
 Flora Kiss
 Shailja Kuthiala
 Michelle LaVigne
 Cindy Lundberg
 Katie McManus
 Summer Mingo
 Carol Moss
 Jacqui Parker
 Sunita Rajvansh
 Rani Rosario
 Revati Sanzagiri
 Sandy Schmierer
 Nancy Sim
 Adriana Vargas
 Elizabeth Zahl

AWG INTEREST GROUPS

Arts	Sunita sunita.rajvanshi@gmail.com
Book Lovers	TBA
Cooking	Sakina framboise79@gmail.com
Meet the Chef	Various Organizers See Weekly e-mail for updates
Photography	Full





AWG

The American Women's Group Oman Presents

Annual Holiday Bazaar 2010



Date: 29th October 2010

Day : Friday

Time: 1pm to 6pm

Omani Women's Association,
Shatti Al Qurum

Entrance Fee : RO 1

Under 12's : Free

First 300 entry ticket
holders will get a gift
from Muscat Pharmacy !!

All proceeds will be donated to the Oman Association for the Disabled

Exhibitors include –

- ❖ Jewellery
- ❖ Hand Made Gift Items
- ❖ Omani crafts
- ❖ Artwork, Cards
- ❖ Paintings
- ❖ Kurties
- ❖ Bags And Purses
- ❖ Cakes And Cookies

Our Sponsors:

- Oman Exhibition Center
- OIG
- Muscat Pharmacy
- Qatar Airways
- Marriott Salalah
- Al Qurum Complex
- Al Bisat Al Hariri

Come and Enjoy your Eid / Christmas / Diwali shopping at the Holiday Bazaar !!