

THE
NETWORK
News



*Connecting
cultures
through
friendship*

AMERICAN WOMEN'S NETWORK OF ABU DHABI

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HOME
STAY
SAFE**

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**AWN - American Women's
Network of Abu Dhabi**



@awnabudhabi



WELCOME FROM AWN CO-PRESIDENTS

"April showers bring May flowers"...or so the saying goes for many parts of our wonderful world. However, at this point, our spring motto might read, "Social Distancing brings creative ways to stay in touch!" We have heard of a lot of fun ways to gather from a distance, especially with group chats! Many of our wonderful AWN friends have also been keeping us grounded and humored with updates and fun videos. And then there are the heart-warming videos of our amazing medical and front line workers, who are heroes without capes. God bless them all.

We hope you are also enjoying some of the unique ways to chat, visit museums, watch films, and generally stay in touch with your family, friends, and community. During this crisis, we are particularly aware of some people struggling to make ends meet and put food on the table. Our wonderful Community Outreach Chair, Maya, has a few fantastic ways we can offer support during this Ramadan, season of giving.

We are also pleased this month to feature our incredible Explorers team. They are headed by the amazing Cristina Guzman, and together they have brought us enriching and fun opportunities to explore Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and beyond. In lieu of an outing this month, the team has included access to a very interesting presentation by Izabella Sluzek.

We look forward to the time when we can meet again in person. In the meantime, stay safe and well, and for those celebrating, Ramadan Kareem!

*- Sara Healey and Mimi Prendergast
AWN Co-Presidents*

COFFEE & SPEAKER SERIES - CANCELLED

In line with the circular received from the Department of Culture and Tourism who regulate our meetings at the Radisson Blu, we have had to cancel our events for May. We are working with our speakers to re-schedule for when the time comes that we can once again meet at the Radisson Blu.

In the meantime, we are working on alternative ways to "virtually" engage in conversation and intellectually entertain and support our members. Any progress on this will be shared with you through our social media channels.

MEMBERSHIP

With members representing many nationalities and a broad range of ages, interests and backgrounds, all women in Abu Dhabi are welcome to join AWN! Whether this is your first expat assignment, your long-term home, or the grand finale of a decades-long expat life, you will soon discover the extraordinary benefits of becoming involved in AWN. There truly is something for everyone.

The membership team wants you to know that during the difficult times of COVID-19 we are here for our members. It can get lonely staying at home and social distancing especially if you are newcomer to Abu Dhabi. Even though we cannot meet in person if you would like to talk to someone please send us an email at membershipawn@gmail.com. We will be more than happy to arrange a chat with you.

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

Most of our activities have been suspended until further notice. For our newcomers, here is a list of what we normally have each week: Art Club, Book Club, Social Bridge, Golf, Knitting Group, Mahjong, Tennis and Yoga.

BOOK CLUB

The AWN Book Club met Monday, April 27 via Zoom. We discussed *American Marriage* by Tayari Jones. We had members join in from the US, Canada, the UK and of course Abu Dhabi. bookclubawn@gmail.com



BRIDGE

It is expected that in the month of May, the Abu Dhabi government will slowly start opening up malls, restaurants and other establishments. As and when we hear from The Club about resuming events and activities, we will inform you about the date for resumption of our Bridge Club. Meanwhile, stay safe.

KNITTING

AWN would like to thank **Fusun Tuzcu** and **Tina Outterside** for successfully organizing and running the Knitting group these past few years. They have accomplished a lot such as knitting the world's biggest blanket and knitting hundreds of items for charity. Both of them have enjoyed their weekly meetings, teaching new members how to knit and helping experienced knitters improve their skills. However they have both decided to stand down as coordinators. If anyone is interested in stepping in to coordinate this group, please contact me, **Tari Carlson**, at activitiesawn@gmail.com. Again thank you Fusun and Tina for putting in so much time and effort for this group, you will be missed.

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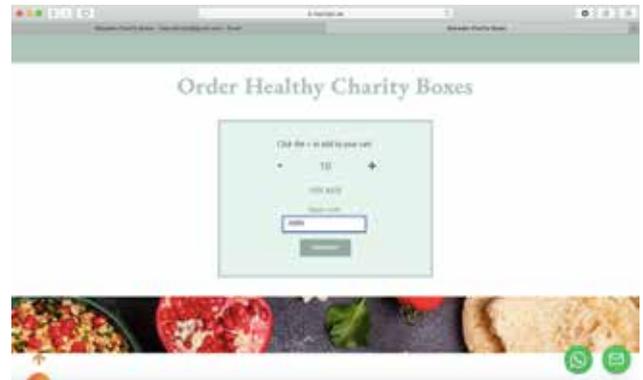
RAMADAN DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Ramadan is a time of spirituality, fasting, charitable giving, and sharing iftar with friends and family and with those in need. This year Ramadan comes at a particularly difficult time for many people around the world and in the UAE. Many of you have sent AWN outreach emails asking about how you can help people who are struggling to make ends meet at this time. Thank you! Here are two ways we have found to help:

1) The Emirates Red Crescent is delivering groceries and necessities to families in need across the country. If you want to sponsor a food box, click here https://www.rcuae.ae/en/donate.aspx?don_id=85. You can make a donation for any amount.

2) Sponsor Ramadan boxes for workers with Basiligo.ae. Basiligo.ae is delivering healthy, homemade and fresh food for Ramadan to workers in Musaffah. AWN members can sponsor boxes through the Basiligo website <https://basiligo.ae/ramadan/ramadan-charity-boxes>. If you use the code "AWN" where it says "Apply Code:", all the boxes ordered by AWN members will be delivered together.

Another thing you can do from home is become an informed 'ambassador' who can help educate your family, friends and community about the facts about the COVID-19 pandemic. There is so much misinformation being spread about this virus, so Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences (MBRU: <https://www.mbru.ac.ae/>) has developed an hour-long certificate program to educate people about the virus and how to manage the spread of it. The course is available in English, Arabic and French.



When you register for the Ramadan boxes, type AWN where it says "Apply Code"

EXPLORERS' TEAM MEMBERS – BIOGRAPHIES

It is my pleasure to introduce a wonderful group of clever, curious, hardworking, dedicated, and adventure-seeker women whom I have the honor of working with on the Explorers' Team. Each of these ladies brings a unique perspective and set of talents to the table, resulting in an eclectic and efficient team. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with them, and hope that you will get to know them better on future outings.

– M. Cristina Guzman, Explorers Chair



Izabella Sluzek - Culture Club Coordinator

Izabella was born and raised in Poland, but has lived abroad for most of her adult life. She followed her husband to Bangalore (India) and Birmingham (UK) in 1987 and 1991, respectively. She almost became a Singaporean due to the fact that she lived with her family in Singapore for nearly 20 years, where she joined the Friends of the Museums and became a docent in Singapore's three oldest museums. Izabella came to Abu Dhabi with her husband in 2011. She founded the AWN Culture Club because she wanted to share her knowledge of Islamic art that she had fallen in love with while guiding in West Asia galleries. Last but not least, Izabella has a daughter and two adorable grandchildren.



Karen Magill – Explorers' Team Member

Karen is a dual citizen of the UK and New Zealand, a happy traveler and is relishing living in another culture, here in the UAE. She is an enthusiast of anything interesting to see or do and likes to use her organizational skills to help arrange trips through the Explorers' Team for like-minded souls. She trained to be a museum guide during her time in Singapore and very much enjoys the challenge of learning.

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Holly Buckley - Explorers' Team Member

Holly was born in Canada and lived near Toronto until her mid-20s when she moved to Southern California where she met her future husband, Rob, also Canadian. Holly and Rob married and now have a son and daughter, Graeme and Alexis. They moved to Rochester, NY about 30 years ago to be closer to family in Canada, for Rob's work and to get away from the Southern California earthquakes.

Holly worked in the travel industry all of her career. She worked as a travel counselor and manager with American Express Travel Company in Toronto and in Southern California. After moving to Rochester, Holly continued part-time in the travel industry and focused on raising her two children.

Holly moved to Abu Dhabi in 2014 to join her husband who is working for The National Archives. Holly continues her work in travel by planning excursions and outings for the Explorer's group.



Luminita Carmen Aldea - Explorers' Team Member

Carmen is from Ancaster, Ontario, Canada and has lived in Abu Dhabi since September 2015. Since she arrived to join her husband she wanted to understand the new culture and country. She reached out to AWN and started to volunteer with the Explorers' Team.

Born to Romanian-German parents, raised by a very German grandmother, educated by German and Romanian schools, holding a Master in Mechanical Engineering, she decided after graduation to take a job opportunity in Ontario, Canada and never looked back. She is trilingual and loves challenges, volunteering, sports, travel, discovering cultural / community sites, being part of a diverse background of women.

She brings a practical, realistic and matter of fact energy to Explorers' Team, and is happy to be involved with the AWN's dynamic group of volunteers.



Lama Katabi Ascha - Explorers' Team Member

Lama was born and raised in Syria, where she completed her education as a civil engineer. She moved to California in 1990 with her husband. She raised two sons and daughter, and earned degrees in health management and medical billing. Lama joined AWN since moving to Abu Dhabi in 2011. She appreciates the support and energy of this lovely group. Happy to be part of the Explorers' Team, wonderful women, full of ideas that make every trip an outing to remember!



Laurie De Mayo - Explorers' Team Member

A fifth generation native of Colorado, Laurie went to the Big Apple for graduate school and met her husband. They raised their four adult children (three boys and one girl) in New York, Connecticut and primarily Pennsylvania. Laurie is a Physical Therapist and Bill an MD. They are first time expats loving life in the UAE.

AWN and the Explorers team are a wonderful part of living a full and adventurous life in Abu Dhabi.

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CULTURE CLUB

The Culture Club is pleased to offer our members a series of two virtual presentations a month, created and recorded by our own Izabella Sluzek. Izabella will share the knowledge she acquired over many years as a docent in three of Singapore's oldest museums. These presentations will cover a range of topics related to history and culture, and will often be based on artefacts found in the Louvre Abu Dhabi.

VIRTUAL CULTURE CLUB PRESENTATIONS

The following PowerPoint presentations are only for AWN members educational purposes.

Fylfot, Gammadion, Wan: An Ancient Cross Symbol That We Love to Hate

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/dqzcg30d1mdidag/swastika%20powerpoint.ppsx?dl=0>

Discover more about the long and complex history of a symbol that, today, is associated with the Second World War. Whereas in many places today the hooked cross is considered a taboo, this prehistoric symbol was found on almost all continents likely as an emblem of spirituality and divinity. The presentation will explore the multiplicity of meanings of this cross, whose true nature has been auspicious up until it was hijacked and re-imaged in the 20th century.

Early Scripts and Arabic Calligraphy

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/4j0yvjikv1j3m9v/Arabic%20Calligraphy.ppsx?dl=0>

Some of the most ancient writings humans ever invented are found on artefacts in Louvre AD's Gallery 2. This presentation will guide us through the development of writing systems in the region, beginning with Sumerian bullae and the cuneiform script on clay tablets, followed by hieroglyphs of Ancient Egypt on the statue of Ramesses the Great, and culminating with the evolution of the efficient and beautiful Arabic calligraphic styles found all over the Islamic world. Finally, we will discuss some recent examples of calligraphy in modern Arabic art.

EXPLORERS

*You are the sum total of everything you've ever seen, heard, eaten, smelled, been told, forgot - it's all there.
Everything influences each of us. – Maya Angelou (American Poet)*

The Explorers Team has updated the virtual outings and included new online resources for you to enjoy, which you can find further on under Exploring From Home. We hope you are staying safe and healthy!

If you find any amazing online resource that you would like to share, please email us at explorersawn@gmail.com and we will add it to the June newsletter. Thank you so much!

Thank you to everyone who contributed with wonderful resources for this month's home-based explorations!

Exploring from Home

CULTURAL EXPLORATIONS

History of the Emirates - Narrated by Jeremy Irons, the fascinating 3-part series reveals how new archaeological discoveries are only now revealing the true extent of this land's ancient wonders and its 125,000-year heritage from the earliest human presence in the region to the national union in 1971.

<https://historyoftheemirates.com/en/the-series-2/>

Wonders of India – Discover ancient monuments, spiritual healing, regional arts and crafts, myths and folklore.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/project/wonders-of-india>

Google Arts and Culture - Explore famous historic and cultural heritages sites and iconic locations in 3D (Sites in Syria; Bagan, Myanmar; Neolithic Orkney, Scotland, etc.)

<https://artsandculture.google.com/project/openheritage>

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ART HISTORY EXPLORATION

Smarthistory - What exactly do we mean by art, and what kind of history (or histories) should we explore? Smarthistory's mission is to open museums and cultural sites, creating world-class resources on art and cultural objects for learners from around the globe — for free. "At Smarthistory we believe art has the power to transform lives and to build understanding across cultures. We believe that the brilliant histories of art belong to everyone, no matter their background."

<https://smarthistory.org/introductory-guides-overview/>

Understanding Museums - Millions visit museums every year. Why do we do it? <https://smarthistory.org/tools-for-understanding-museums/>

Arches (At-risk Cultural Heritage Education Series) funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities – This mini-course on endangered cultural heritage around the globe explores sites in the Pacific Islands, Southeast Asia, West Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. "Cultural heritage implies a shared bond, our belonging to a community. It represents our history and our identity, our bond to the past, to our present, and the future. It often brings to mind artifacts, historical monuments and buildings and archaeological sites but it also includes evidence of human creativity and expression: books, instruments, photographs."

<https://smarthistory.org/overview/arches-at-risk-cultural-heritage-education-series/>

MUSEUM EXPLORATIONS

Louvre Abu Dhabi - New Online Resources

Furusiyya: The Art of Chivalry between East and West - A 360-degree Virtual Tour of the Museum latest exhibition

<https://www.louvreabudhabi.ae/en/art/exhibitions/furusiyya-the-art-of-chivalry-between-east-and-west>

Discover the ancient roots of chivalry as well as the role of a knight in combat and the different chivalric codes that developed around the world, from Iraq and Syria in the East, to France and Spain in the West. Learn how some of these practices and the knightly spirit became popular pastimes, and how some of them continue around the world to this day.

Art from Home: Stories of Cultural Connections

In this online resource, Louvre AD brings its collection to the public through a multi-sensory experience available on the museum's website. Masterpieces from the collection are brought to life through a visual demonstration offering a closer look at the features of the artwork, an audio recording sharing an in-depth story of the piece, and easy-to-use activities, including colouring pages, that parents can download for their children.

<https://www.louvreabudhabi.ae/en/art/online-content>

Virtual Tour inside of Egyptian Archaeological Sites, Monuments and Museums by the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities - The United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) called on the people of the world to discover the wonderful Egyptian civilization through the e-initiative launched by the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities early April, entitled "Explore Egypt From Home".

<https://egy monuments.gov.eg/>

British Museum, London, UK - Museum of the World Project: an interactive experience through time, continents and cultures. Jump back in time to explore objects from across diverse cultures and listen to British Museum curators share their insight.

<https://britishmuseum.withgoogle.com/>

Salvador Dalí Theatre Museum, Girona, Spain - If you are a fan of the surrealist Salvador Dalí, you will enjoy taking a virtual tour around the museum's rooms and watching past exhibitions.

<https://www.salvador-dali.org/en/>

Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA - Check the multiple courses through Coursera

<https://www.coursera.org/moma>

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"Faces of Frida" - Virtual exhibition of 800 works by the famous Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. Google Arts and Culture brought together 33 museums and art centres from around the world to share their Frida Kahlo works and archives.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/project/frida-kahlo>

Women's History Museum, Virginia, USA - Free daily virtual programming based on weekly themes characteristic of notable women or women's activism in history designed specifically for learning and educating from home.

<https://www.womenshistory.org/news/nwhmathome>

Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece - Take a virtual wander through ancient Greece with the Benaki Museum's 360-degree tour. It's easy to get lost in their unrivalled collection of artefacts – from ancient fertility statues to gilded Byzantine paintings – with some dating back as far as 6500BC.

<https://www.benaki.org/index.php?lang=en>

Cultural Digital: Streams - Performances, events, classes and tours from artists and institutions straight to your screens

<https://www.culturaldigital.com/streams>

MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

Dubai Opera, UAE - The Dubai Opera is bringing the music home with a series of performances from famous artists that would be live streamed on social media. They will be streamed on Dubai Opera's Facebook and YouTube accounts <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZ2Q9p98XcarKGnjxXGLONQ>

Sydney Opera House, Australia - A weekly program of full-length performances, live recordings and never-before-seen footage from the Opera House archives.

<https://www.sydneyoperahouse.com/digital/season.html#watchagain>

The Arts Center at New York University Abu Dhabi, UAE - Reconnect series showcases several of the amazing performances from the Arts Center's first five years. Every week they will stream a show from their archives via their Facebook page.

https://www.nyuad-artscenter.org/en_US/events/festivals/reconnect-an-online-series/

"Cirque Connect" - Exclusive online past performances by Cirque du Soleil

<https://www.cirquedusoleil.com/cirqueconnect#hubcontent>

Cirque de Soleil "O"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g1loWoRFMEA>

ENVIRONMENTAL EXPLORATIONS

Environmental documentaries: A Plastic Ocean, Mission Blue, Chasing Coral, Tales by Light (Series), Jane Goodall, and Our Planet (Series). Azraq (Arabic for Blue) is a non-profit marine conservation organisation registered with the Community Development Authority in the UAE. Their mission is to end the destruction of habitat and slaughter of wildlife in the world's oceans in order to conserve and protect ecosystems and species.

<https://azraqme.org/latest-news/2020/3/30/six-environmental-documentaries-to-watch>

David Attenborough's Great Barrier Reef, Australia - Join Sir David Attenborough on an interactive journey around Australia's Great Barrier Reef and discover the marine life that call it home. Comprised of an interactive map, video footage and fascinating information, this website will bring you up to speed with one of the most biodiverse and complex ecosystems on the planet.

<http://attenboroughsreef.com/map.php?prompt=0>

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Yellowstone National Park, USA – Virtual Tour of the first national park in the US. Established in 1872 and located primarily in Wyoming, Yellowstone spans almost 3,500 miles, and extends into parts of Montana and Idaho, making it one of the largest national parks in the US. The park sits on top of a dormant volcano and is home to more geysers and hot springs than any other place on earth. Wonders abound, from sites like the Yellowstone Grand Canyon to wildlife like America's largest buffalo herd, grizzly bears, and wolves. Approximately 50 percent of the world's hydrothermal features are at Yellowstone National Park, creating an effect that makes the ground appear to be on fire.

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/index.htm>

EXERCISE

FMBA Virtual Ladies Run - You can choose from either a 1Km, 3Km, 5Km or 10Km run. Register FREE online and once registered we will send you a confirmation of your registration. This virtual run allows you to run at any time and on any route as long as it is in your home - on a treadmill, in the garden or around and around your lounge - your choice. After you have completed your run they will email you a Link to upload your run finish time as verification of your result and then you are able to download your Participation Certificate.

<https://www.fbma.ae/en/events/events-list/2nd-fbma-virtual-ladies-run-stayathome/>

FOR FAMILIES

Make and Play - Explore Louvre Abu Dhabi art works at home. Make and Play are short, fun videos for all the family to make art inspired by the collection using simple materials. <https://www.louvreabudhabi.ae/en/learn/Online-activities>

Smithsonian's National Zoo, Washington DC, USA - Webcams: cheetah cub cam, lion cam, giant panda cam, naked mole-rat cam, and elephant cam.

<https://nationalzoo.si.edu/webcams>

Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden, Ohio, USA

<http://cincinnati-zoo.org/home-safari-resources/>

Monterey Bay Aquarium, California, USA - Jelly Cam

<https://www.montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams/jelly-cam>

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