

Annual Report - AWA Board Activities 2015/2016

President's Report

Transition

I took on the position of President after Stephanie Bourque (2014-2015), and after serving 2 years as the 1st Vice President of Fundraising, which was very helpful for me in understanding what the President position would entail. With Stephanie's help and partnership, I had a very positive transition to President. She and I had purposely worked together closely throughout her time as President with the thought that I might be her successor. I have agreed to serve a 2nd term as President (2016-2017) and am actively searching for an appropriate candidate for President even as we begin the new fiscal year. I hope to be able to work closely with said candidate (if they are currently sitting on the Board), so that the next President will also have a positive transition, increasing their likelihood for success from the very start.

Year in Review

Membership

For the past several years, the decline in membership has been the primary concern for the organization. For me, as well as for the previous President, Stephanie Bourque, much energy and effort was put forth in making the organization truly feel welcoming, fun and positive. The hope was that new members would pull in friends, and old/continuing members would become more engaged in events and activities. From the standpoint of the overall sentiment of the organization, it is very positive and warm overall and by all accounts. We have received feedback from both new and old members that everyone at the AWA is friendly, warm and welcoming.

In 2015/2016, New Member Receptions were initiated approximately once per month. They have been well attended. CHAT and Foon Ying continue to be big hits with new members. And OWL is a standing room only crowd every Tuesday for both new and old members. And Sharon Mason/VP Membership has done an excellent job of attending as many event as she could between CHAT, Foon Ying, OWL and many other activities. Her presence and enthusiasm for the AWA definitely brings our warm, friendly and welcoming side to the fore.

Last year, a Membership Survey was undertaken and one of the clear feedback points from it was that members were interested in more free and drop in-type events, like the above. In addition to the New Member Receptions, a small group of members created the Women's Forum Discussion Group Lunch N Learn sessions, where members or outside speakers come in and talk about issues of interest to women in particular, and/or our members specifically. These have also been fairly well attended, and could be a good recruiting tool for new members, since there is no cost. There is some concern that these free events could impact our paid local tours negatively, but it does not seem to be the case.

Membership continued to decline even though new members were consistently joining the organization, some months in significant numbers. And yet, we cannot seem to keep up with the attrition rate of people leaving Hong Kong. This year again, we have a huge out flux of members, many of whom are long standing, active members. It hurts us. I believe we may be getting to a point of relative stasis, and expect that number to settle between 550-600 regular members, plus over 50 honorary members. I will be watching the progress over this coming fiscal year closely.

Revenue Streams

Membership Dues . Membership dues used to sustain the organization financially. However, this has not been the case for at least the past four years, and possibly longer. Membership dues were at \$800 for a long time, were raised to \$980 for one year and then to \$1200 last year. Rolling membership was instituted. And this coming fiscal year starting in March 2017 auto-renewal will take place with two notices in writing going to members to allow them to opt out/not auto renew if they choose. Raising membership dues again is not viewed as a positive proposition for 2-3 more years, as dues were raised substantially within a 2 year period. This may be viewed differently by subsequent Boards.

Local Tours . LT has done amazingly well with a wider range of activities reflecting several new LT coordinators. The revenue from LT has put us over the top financially this year, which was not expected. We are in discussions about raising the LT administrative fee, which covers the time of office staff and goes toward our financial sustenance. LT members feel strongly that a \$20 increase (from \$60 to \$80 HKD) would be a mistake that would hurt LT sign ups. Most of the Board disagrees with this sentiment. The President and Treasurer will meet with the LT team in Aug/Sept 2016 to discuss further and possibly to create a formulaic approach to LT admin fees.

Asian Tours - Asian Tours had a new coordinator this year, in veteran AT team member Kate Mahjoubian. Asian Tours did well after a slow start and some cancelled trips. The upcoming roster of trips are already selling out and garnering much interest. For FY 2016-2017, admin fees for AT will be \$100/day of the trip, thereby adjusting naturally per the length of the trip. This was accepted fairly easily by the AT team.

Office Space Leasing . We continue to work with a few trusted partners to lease out our office space. It does not net much money, but it makes sense and is working well. See Office Manger End of Year report for details.

Fundraising . in 2015/2016, we raised over HK\$1 million in funds for our Education Scholarships and charities. We had held over HK\$79K from last fiscal year (2014-2015) and used in this current fiscal year (2015-2016). We will hold over approximately HK\$80k going into this next fiscal year, since there is no reliable forecasting for fundraising year on year and the economy is down.

As per the 2015/2016 budget which was approved in June of 2015, HK\$200k was allocated to go to AWA operating expenses if the AWA experienced a significant shortfall in funds, leaving us at a financial deficit. This was not necessary, as we performed financially better than expected. Going forward, we will continue to reserve the right to use a limited and pre-approved amount of funds raised for AWA operations if a financial shortfall in our end of year accounts is in evidence. For the coming fiscal year (2016/2017), we have procured a generous sponsor and thus do not anticipate a need for any amount of event raised funds to be allocated to operations at the close of the 2016/2017 fiscal year. We are hopeful that this will continue to be the case.

Fundraising/Charitable Donations/ Education & Scholarship

With two charitable partners in the American Chamber of Commerce of HK and the Celtic Connections Choir, we were able to give out over HK \$1.2 to 28 education scholarships and 24 charitable grants. It was a great fundraising year, with the move of the Charity Bazaar to the centralized and outdoor location of PMQ in Central; a second very successful Art on the Line; and the long anticipated return of the Home & Garden Tour. All coordinators were passionate and enthusiastic and put on amazing events. Smaller events such as LOL for Education and Pub Quiz for Charity also brought in a small amount of funds. The AWA Make a Difference (MAD) letter drive brought in a substantial amount as well, and will continue to be done annually (recommended).

Special Programs

Student Interns - For the second year, we worked with the City U English and Communications department who gave us 4 student interns. Susan Trebach and Rachel Bourke led the students, whose assignment was around our Art on the Line event. A review on each student was submitted to the school advisor after the event and all student work had been completed. This is a good program and it was much improved this year over last year's inaugural program. We will continue to use City U interns, and have proceeded with initial communication to get that in the works for the next school/fiscal year. Rachel Bourke has agreed to be their supervisor/mentor for the 2016/2017 year.

The Board

The Board of Directors was fully staffed during most of the fiscal year, with 12 full members. We had a changover in Recording Secretary from Kay Suzuki to Jennifer Kindel, and the appointed position of Corporate Sponsorship Chair from Lorraine Yam to Nikola Andersson. 1st Vice President of Fundraising, Amanda Foster went out on maternity leave in mid-December and resigned her position a few months later. The Fundraising position was not replaced during the fiscal year. The new position of Strategic Development was added to the Board. That position undertook the modification and update of the AWA Articles of Association, which is now complete and will go out to membership for review and vote in Early-Mid August. The AWAre editor was in flux on and off all year. The AWAre editor opted not to be a sitting board member, and work through appointed Communications/PR Chair, Rachel Bourke and Angela Bellas. All 9 issues were completed and published, and the editorial content was high quality. Brooke Richter is the new editor who has joined for the end of this year and for next year. She is already excellent and I expect great things from the AWAre team going forward into this next year. Barbora Mayer, Office Manager, will continue in her position after procuring her working visa. Her position title will change to Director of Operations.

Summary

It was a good year, with a really engaged and passionate board. All areas with the exception of Education and Scholarship, were highly engaged with the teams working under them and received positive remarks from those members working with them. Volunteerism remains a challenge. I am committed to increased emphasis on PR/+getting the word out+for all volunteer opportunities as we get into the next fiscal year. All board members were amazing examples and ambassadors for the AWA, which most definitely made the hoped for positive impression on membership. All in all, the %buzz+around the AWA is very positive, and our visibility in the community seems to have increased as well. Going into our 60th year and leading up to our 60th Anniversary Gala in October 2016, I have high hopes for another great year in 2016/2017.

Fundraising

| As off 30 June 2016 | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|---|----------------------|
| Campaign/event | Income | Expense | Profit |
| <i>Received</i> | | | |
| FUN01-Bazaar 2015 | 646,966.00 | 234,745.00 | 412,221.00 |
| FUN02- MAD 2015/16 | 216,134.00 | 1,891.00 | 214,243.00 |
| FUN03 - Pub Quiz 2016 | 51,863.00 | 27,164.00 | 24,699.00 |
| FUN04- Comedy Night 2015 | 47,200.00 | 17,316.00 | 29,884.00 |
| FUN05- Pink Walk 2015 | 19,300.00 | 19,267.00 | 33.00 |
| FUN06- Art On the Line 2016 | 331,509.00 | 73,988.00 | 257,521.00 |
| FUN07- Domestic Helper panel 2015 | | 1,000.00 | -1,000.00 |
| FUN08- I'm a Girl screening 2015 | 12,400.00 | 1,000.00 | 11,400.00 |
| FUN09 - Wine Fundraiser | 44,150.00 | 35,150.00 | 9,000.00 |
| FUN11 - St Johns Card Fair | 1,020.00 | 0.00 | 1,020.00 |
| FUN12 - Home and Garden | 127,944.00 | 53,354.00 | 74,590.00 |
| 17FUN01 - Gala | | \$88.00 | -88.00 |
| | | <i>total</i> | <i>1,033,523.00</i> |
| <i>Miscellaneous</i> | | | |
| Other - unspend donation refund | | | 1,400.00 |
| | | <i>total</i> | <i>1,400.00</i> |
| | | AWA | HKD 1,034,923.00 |
| | | to E&S | HKD 155,000.00 |
| | | to CD | HKD 870,266.00 |
| | | carried over from FY 2015/16 | HKD 9,344.00 |
| | | carried over from FY 2014/15 | 62,273.00 |
| | | total carried over to FY 2016/17 | HKD 71,617.00 |

Lisa Strunin and Kay Suzuki served as co-chairs of the AWA Charity Bazaar held on November 13, 2015 at PMQ Marketplace and Courtyard in Central. The change in venue from the Jockey Club necessitated several changes in the format of the event. Due to space limitations, there was only room for 80 vendors; however, event costs were also lower, so that vendor revenue covered all event costs and generated a profit of HK\$198,000. Marybeth Coffey did an outstanding job soliciting donations for the Silent Auction and Lucky Lai See tables which generated over HK\$200,000 for Charitable Donations. Crown Relocations sponsored a new addition to the bazaar, the AWA Giving Tree. Charitable Donations identified several specific charities with easily monetized needs, so that visitors could choose their donation's recipient and buy a star to hang on the Giving Tree as a symbol of their gift. The Giving Tree received over HK\$72,000 which was given to those charities. Due to venue regulations and licensing issues, no food was sold during the event, but, because of PMQ's Soho location, there were many dining options available in the

neighborhood. Overall, the response from members, guests and vendors alike was very positive, and would recommend using the venue again.

Lisa Strunin and Regine Pocsatko served as co-chairs for AWA's Art On The Line held on March 10, 2016 at The Space. Sante Fe Relocation was the main event sponsor. Bowerbird Home provided venue furniture and donated blue and white porcelain from their inventory for sale at the event with proceeds to AWA. In addition to the Hanging Art, donated for display and purchase, the Silent Auction was expanded and upgraded from the inaugural event in 2015. There was also a live painting demonstration by street artist, Bao Ho on the venue's ground floor during the event; the painting was donated by the artist for Silent Auction. Gross revenue from the event was HK\$342,000; after expenses, over HK\$250,000 net was designated for Charitable Donations. It is the committee's recommendation to only stage this event every other year because of the time commitment necessary to prepare and also to not fatigue the artists' generosity by soliciting donations every year.

Membership Report

Membership Event & Activities

Welcome Back Coffee - Venue: The American Club in Tai Tam

Date: 24 September, 2015.

Sponsor: Asian Tigers \$25,000.

Lucky Draw: Charlotte Travel donated a stay at the 5 Elements in Bali, won by Diane Lamboley.

Board members were identified by brightly colored lanyards. Signup lists were cross checked with the lists of new members from the past four months and new members were identified by gold stars on the nametags. A representative of Membership greeted new members as they entered. There is a more detailed document in Membership files on Google Drive. Fans with a flag motif were fanned out at each place setting as favors and table décor as there is no room on the tables for centerpieces. These were purchased from Oriental Trading in the U.S. The date for this year's Welcome Back Coffee has been set and the American Club reserved. Florence Wong from Asian Tigers has confirmed their repeated sponsorship. Charlotte Harris of Charlotte Travel will provide a trip for a door prize.

Holiday Party - The holiday party for members and their spouses/partners was held at at Oolaa, on Dec. 8. VP Membership was unable to attend so Susie Edrington stepped in to help. There was no attendance fee, (registration required), \$10,000 was budgeted for hors d'oeuvres and there was a cash bar.

The event was successful, although this year some members reported that it was very crowded and noisy. This venue was chosen because of the management's support of AWA, members' familiarity with the location, and low cost. *Recommendation would be to seek a larger venue and have guests pay a portion of the cost.*

Annual General Meeting - Held at the AWA Office on April 13. Refreshments were pizza, wine, soft drinks. Notice of the meeting was provided through AWA's email, monthly newsletter and the forum. The event was well attended.

Membership Drive - President and Office Manager attended the HKIS new parent coffee. We have strong contacts within this group. VP Membership maintained ongoing contact with representatives of all major relocation companies and addressed staff at Brookfield to let them know what AWA offers their clients. Meeting with Florence Wong of Asian Tigers was very

productive in providing insight about incoming expats and how to appeal to them. Several Human Resources managers were consulted regarding same. Contact information for relo companies is in the Membership files. A list of suggestions for membership incentives was presented to the board. These included offering a free local tour voucher to anyone who brings a friend who joins AWA and incentives for signing up for more than one year at a time or for renewing early. Perhaps there is a way to implement these ideas without too much work for the office staff. AWAre Magazines were left at coffee shops, hair salons and doctors' offices. Several serviced apartments were approached but they were not open to the idea of distributing magazines. *If we had better contacts in management of these properties, they might be more amenable.* With fewer expats coming in, member retention became a major focus. VP Membership welcomed new members via email addresses from monthly membership reports.

CHAT - Chat Coordinator Diane Lamboley found a new venue, Café 8 above the Maritime Museum at Central Pier 8. This venue is particularly attractive because they train and employ mentally challenged staff which fits with our organization's mission to help the community. CHAT numbers rose, topping out at 18 but have fluctuated seasonally. This venue is easy to access by ferry so we get a lot of attendees from the islands, especially Discovery Bay. Coordinator Diane Lamboley is leaving Hong Kong. Sally Kooser will assume the role of coordinator.

Foon Ying - Kate Mahjoubian and Chrissie Govier currently share Foon Ying responsibilities. A third coordinator may be added for the coming year.

OWL - OWL at Oolaa continues to be well attended. Coordinator Susie Edrington initiated the presence of an OWL shaped piggy bank in which to collect change to be donated to Ronald McDonald House. Southside OWL was initiated the first and third Tuesdays with a good response. An invitation was sent via the Southside Coffee email list and posted on the forum. *We are currently seeking a coordinator and will suspend Southside OWL until fall at which time it may be moved to another night as the new membership chair sees fit.*

Neighborhood Coffees - We have strong coordinators in Central, Southside, Kowloon and now Pokfulam/West Side coffees have resumed.

New Member Receptions - A series of new member receptions was held at the office. New members from the prior 6 months were invited via email and announcements were posted on the website, forum and daily announcements. Wine and snacks were provided. Receptions included wine, juice, soft drinks and light snacks. One reception was held later in the day (5-7) to accommodate working women. Not as many people attended, but it is still something to be considered once a year.

WOW - While this technically falls under membership, they operate very much on their own. Coordinator Mary Barbara Hanna is leaving Hong Kong and has found a successor. *We need improved communication and interaction with this group going forward.*

Other Items

Advertising - Office Manager Barbora Mayer was able to negotiate a number of charity rates and trade out agreements with local publications. VP Membership created an ad to run in these publications highlighting the diversity of nationalities and interests of the AWA membership.

Avenues for Consideration

AWA Junk Boat for Dragon Boat races - When approached in the fall Junk Boat companies were either full or very expensive for Dragon Boat races in Stanley. In March/April, some of the

companies sent notice that they had availability but there was insufficient time to fill a boat and break even financially due to high cost.

Member discounts - VP Membership approached a number of restaurants and restaurant groups but was not successful in reaching the final decision makers. We have companies approach us offering discounts but their offers are often unremarkable. Discounts at popular restaurants would be much more attractive. *We need contacts in the major restaurant groups to make this work.*

St. John's Card and Gift Fair - We attended this event for two days with the assumption that there would be an opportunity to talk to potential new members. The fair was poorly advertised and poorly attended. *We should not do this next year.*

Activities Report

Lisa Strunin served as VP of Activities for FY 2015-2016. Tracy Lee Hayes assumed the leadership role from Jane Buck and served as chair of the Local Tours and Activities committee. Kate Mahjoubian served as chair of the Asian Tours committee.

Revenue from Local and Asian Tours was conservatively budgeted for this fiscal year compared to the previous year due to concerns over declining memberships and the generally lackluster state of the Hong Kong business environment. While Asian Tours struggled to reach these lower revenue numbers, Local Tours exceeded their revenue goals so that budget was met; however, overall revenue was lower than the previous year.

Asian Tours had scheduled nine trips during this fiscal year. Of those, four trips (Thailand Elephant Sanctuary, Bangkok Shopping, Corregidor and Taiwan) were cancelled due to lack of interest. The trips to Mongolia, Yunnan, Sri Lanka and Danxia were well received and booked to capacity. The trip to northern Japan, while not completely full, ran as scheduled and received excellent reviews for an interesting itinerary. It is the committee's consensus that destinations which are difficult for an individual traveler to access due to remote location or language, and that these are the types of trips they will strive to plan for the coming year. The committee has revised the liability waiver each trip participant is required to sign and has included a behavior clause which is consistent with other group's travel documents.

Local Tours has done an outstanding job planning new and interesting activities to appeal to a broader group of members. Due to fluctuating membership numbers, the key metric to evaluate their success is once again the participation rate as a percentage of total membership. The average monthly participation rate as a percentage of total membership for FY 2015-2016 is 21.3% compared to a rate of 19.6% for FY 2014-2015. While we expect new members to populate more of our local tours as they acclimate to living in Hong Kong, our core existing membership is more selective about enrolling in activities and is more likely to be enticed by the unusual or one-of-a kind experience. The guided Heritage Tours continue to be well attended. Shopping trips to Da Fen Village, Sum Ngai Brass Factory, Kwah Tung Porcelain and furniture shopping in Zhuhai fill to capacity. Behind the Scenes Tours to Asian Tigers and the Container Port Terminal book to capacity with waiting lists. A tour to the newly opened Tse Shan Monastery filled to capacity of 60 participants with another 24 on a wait list. The new Neighborhood Tours have been a popular addition, as have the biking, dragonboating and kayaking events.

Ongoing activity groups continued with strong interest and participation in most groups, however there have been several deletions and new additions to the roster of groups. The Spiritual Literacy, Moms & Tots, Evening Book Club and International Cooking Club have been withdrawn due to lack of interest. Beginners Tennis started up again this year after several years on hiatus. The new Women's Forum, led by Sally Koosman, began planning a series of monthly presentations and/or open discussions on issues pertinent to women, held in the AWA

conference room over a brown bag lunch, and has been enthusiastically attended. The Art Lovers Group continues with the largest membership and organizes 1 to 2 events per month at local galleries and shows. Sharon Mason has done an excellent job leading the Photography Group and will be sorely missed as she returns to the US. The Needle Arts group and the Afternoon Book Club have a loyal and regular following. Social Bridge at AWA has lost members due to repatriation but is still running 2 to 3 tables each week during the year. Mahjong on Tuesdays at the American Club continues in popularity and Games galore on Fridays at the American Club is regularly hosting 16 to 20 members. The Italian Conversation Group is small but regular. Lunch Bunch continued with a new coordinator and remained active throughout the year. The AWA Golf Society continues with regular clinics, play and tournaments. The Dragon Boat Globe Paddlers continues to train and practice enthusiastically in preparation for another winning race season.

Treasurer Report

During the year, the month-end closing of our books and the preparation of the monthly financial reports were handled by the outside accountant, Wallace Lee, once a month, and from October 2015, were reviewed by Anne Fifer, our Treasurer. Anne then presented the Income statement, Statement of Financial Position and cash position analysis to the AWA board. The financial information was prepared in accordance with the AWA accounting policy. In the Spring of 2016, the budget for the FY ending June 30, 2017, was prepared with input from the various coordinators of Local and Asian tours, Membership, Corporate Sponsorships specifically and all of the board generally opined.

The 2014/2015 annual financial statements have been audited and approved by the auditor, Mr. Lau Pui Wing, Certified Public Accountant. They were presented to the membership at the April GM and approved by the membership at that meeting.

FY 2015-16 Report

Results as of April 30, 2016

YTD results before net fundraising income was deficit of HK\$300,891 compared to FY 2014-15 net results before net fundraising income of deficit of HK\$449,451

YTD total net results to date exceeded our budget primarily due to increased income from local activities and Asian Tours and decreased operating expenses.

YTD operating expenses were HK\$1.14 million, HK\$49k below budget, primarily due to reduced depreciation and salaries compared to budget.

Financial Position

As of April 30, 2016, we have cash of HK\$490,136 generally available as compared to cash generally available of \$443,436 at June 30, 2015. Increase in cash balance was primarily due to increased income from local activities and Asian Tours.

Approximately \$4.5 million have been designated for the operating reserve and the property maintenance and technology reserve.

Communications/ AWAre Magazine Report

This year, our focus was to enhance the ways we communicate to members through visual content combined with thoughtful, positive messaging.

AWA Digital / Social Media focus:

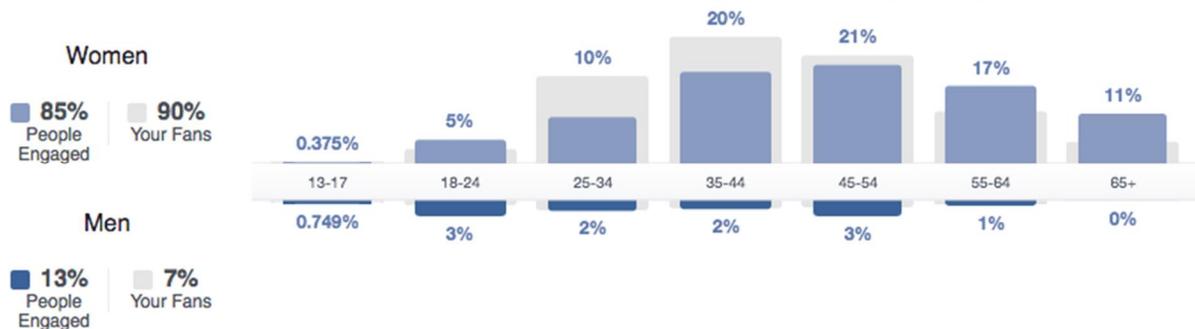
- promote signature events;
- raise awareness for our fundraising;
- raise the profile of the organization to **both** members and non-members;
- reinforce the positive, inviting, and active identity of AWA.

The AWA Facebook - This platform has grown steadily since its inception over 5 years ago. While the growth has not been rapid, it has demonstrated a true following and become a more engaging space for members to communicate both in Hong Kong and from abroad.



When compared to our competition of local, active FB pages . we are don't have as many Likes but our engagement is strong. This means we are connecting to those who we are trying to speak to:

The people who have liked, commented on or shared your posts, or engaged with your Page, in the past 28 days.



Not surprisingly, by a small margin, our fans use their home computers for FB, and check out our FB page from home before they set off for the day and when they return home at the end of it:

Total people who viewed

By section

By age and gender

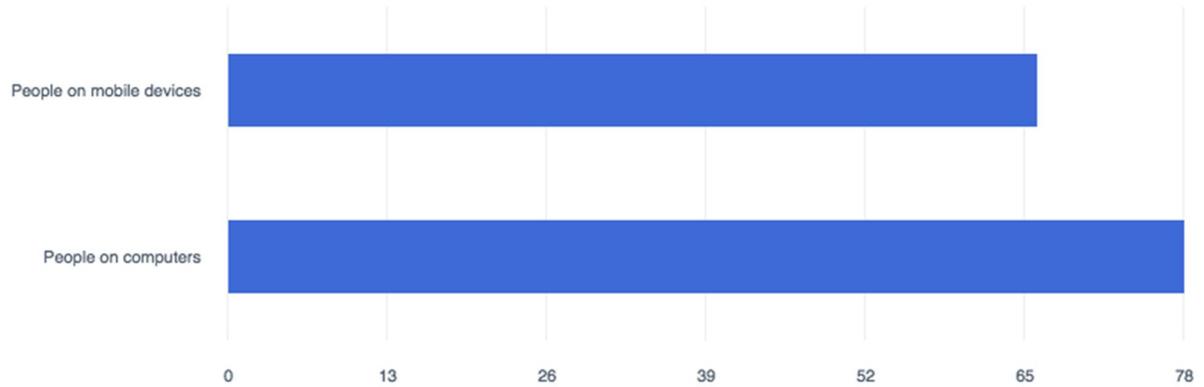
By country

By city

By device



People



The FB page performs a dual function: providing information to our members, about events, activities and volunteering opportunities available, as well as local and women-focused news resource for members. We will continue to build upon previous years success to communicate effectively with members, as well as continued outreach to the broader public.

 **Joanie Clarke** reviewed AWA Hong Kong – 5★
7 hrs · 

Just found the FB page and what a trip down memory lane! We lived in HK from 1975 to 1982 and during that time the AWA was still a fledgling organization. How it's grown! So nice to see so many more activities. Our daughter was born at Canossa Hospital....so many sweet memories. Would love to connect with any ladies who lived in HK at that time or anyone who would like to share life in Hong Kong as it is today.

 Love  Comment  Share 

 **AWA Hong Kong** Hi Joanie thanks for your fantastic post and great review! AWA is celebrating 60 years this year and we would love to hear about your adventures in HK and with AWA if you have time? Thanks so much again and hope you're well wherever you are in the world!

Charitable Donations Report

Donations in kind

The CDC organized an octopus card drive for the Welcome Back Coffee in September. Members were asked to donate spare or new octopus cards for refugees. They should help cover transportation cost when refugees attend therapeutic or social activities organized by Christian Action. Response was meager. We donated 18 octopus cards to Christian Action. We decided at the board meeting in May 2016 to not do another drive for donations in kind at the Welcome Back Coffee 2016.

Applications for funding

Applications forms for funding were mailed in mid-August via WiseGiving and to contacts in our database. The deadline for submitting funding applications was Sept 18. Most applications were submitted during the last 2 days. The time frame seemed to work well. We received 45 grant requests, asking for a total of more than HK\$ 2.8 M. Among the applications were a couple of charities/ non-profits that hadn't applied before.

Vetting

The criteria list for vetting was adapted by introducing a numeric evaluation system with the purpose to make vetting more comparable. An average score would give an indication about the quality of the application and the fit with our funding guidelines. However, it was not the only factor that would decide on the ranking of the application.

Each team organized site visits to 8 to 10 charities. The team leaders provided their feedback on the applications by end of November. The CD committee met on Dec 2 to discuss and rank the applications. We identified 10 charities with A+ priority, 10 charities with A, 4 charities with A-, 8 with B, 1 with C and 11 with D priority (= no funding recommendation).

Charities, which were rated as C and D priority, were informed in early February that they wouldn't receive funding. All A+, A and A- charities received confirmation of funding in early May and were invited to the Awards Tea. B priority charities received a rejection letter May 22.

Reports on received funding

All charities, which had received funding in 2014, were asked in May 2015 to submit a written project report and financial report. It was the first time at least within the past few years that they were required to submit a written report, thus there was obviously an educative process involved. Not all charities responded but most of them delivered a detailed, and convincing project report. One charity intended to spend the money for purposes that were not covered by our funding commitment. After lengthy discussions and a site visit it was decided that they didn't need to reimburse the fund to the AWA but that we granted permission to use it for the new purpose (renovation of a therapy room) but that they wouldn't receive new funding in 2015/16. All charities that had received funding in 2015 were asked in May 2016 to submit a written project report and financial report until August 2016. At the Awards Tea in June, the charities, which receive funding for 2016/17, will receive guidelines for the project report together with the cheque so that they already know that we expect a report.

Cooperation with AmCham

In January Marcy and I met with Ming-Lai from AmCham. We gave them a list with all A+, A and A- ranked charities as recommendations for funding. They decided at their Board of Trustee meeting in May to allocate a total of HK\$230,000 to 5 charities.

We celebrate 10 years of partnership with AmCham this year. We therefore met with Richard Vuylsteke, AmCham President and Peter Levesque, AmCham Charitable Foundation Chairman, in May to conduct an interview for an article about this partnership, which will be featured in the September AWARe. They value the cooperation with AWA and alignment of values.

CD committee

We started with 38 members into the year. The members were assigned to 5 teams, two teams were led by two co-team leaders, thus we had 7 team leaders in total (Beth Hall, Stephanie Harris, Chris Tight, Yasmin Lowry, Jill Baran Scott, Melissa Strecker, Seema Shah). Sadly, both Stephanie and Yasmin relocated in December but were fully committed during the vetting period and until the CDC meeting in early December. While the level of commitment varies among members due to several reasons, I could rely on a core of very dedicated, reliable and enthusiastic ladies.

Articles in AWARe

CD featured articles about charities in AWARe issues of September, October, November, December, February, March and May.

Support of fundraising

After an early vetting of a few applications, we decided for 5 charitable causes for the Giving Tree at the bazaar. The fundraising concept was successful, however the early vetting poses difficulties as the charities have to be selected without having received the vetting results from all applications and without the opportunity to discuss the decision with the committee due to the tight scheduling.

The Celtic Connection Choir dedicated the proceeds (37,641HKD) from their Christmas concert to Watchdog and Ebenezer School. Thanks to Celine O'Connor for again having arranged the cooperation on fundraising.

CD procedures and policies

In September 2015, Cynthia Danjou-Brown, Head of Philanthropy Advisory at HSBC, shared her knowledge and expertise about how to be an effective grantmaker with the CD committee. It was a very instructive talk, which offered different perspectives on how to do charitable giving. In March 2016, Kay McArdle, CEO of PathFinders, discussed with CDC why funding for salaries is important from the perspective of an NGO. The CD team decided to adapt a funding policy that would allow funding of project related salary costs as of September 2016. We also discussed whether a more strategic, active approach of charitable giving would make sense for us. It would be characterized by funding a few selected charities, a longer term support of 3 to 5 years, the selection of charities based on alignment with our core mission and impact goals, and developing a partnership on several levels, not only providing financial support. It would imply major changes and might have implications for our partnership with AmCham. A thorough discussion and development of a concept is needed before we can take any decisions (for or against the new concept). My successor Gabriela will facilitate the discussion process in her term.

Awards Tea June 3

We held the Awards Tea at the American Club this year in order to accommodate more members, as space is restricted at the US Consul General's residence. Tom Cooney, Deputy Consul General, represented the Consul General. Peter Levesque, Charitable Foundation Board of Trustee, spoke for AmCham.

We donated 1,100,266HKD to 24 local charities. Out of these 5 were sponsored by AmCham. They donated 230,000HKD in total.

Education & Scholarship Report

An important focus for Education and Scholarship this year was to review the organization of the activities within Education & Scholarship, the individual programs and the Scholarship fund.

A major change in the organization was setting up a committee of the 8 coordinators of the education programs. The major purpose of the committee was to enhance communication between the different program, share ideas and to develop activities offered by Education & Scholarship. The first meeting was held on 2nd September attended by 5 of the 8 coordinators. Although it was agreed to hold meetings two monthly only 3 meetings were held due to difficulties in finding times convenient to coordinators schedules. A major outcome of the meetings, however, was some restructuring of the programs such as renaming Chatterbox to English Conversation. In addition, following observations from last year's chair and the coordinator of Phone Pals it was decided to discontinue the program due to lack of interest amongst students and difficulties in finding volunteers.

The English Conversation programs continued very successfully in 4 schools due the commitment of the coordinators and volunteers. Following a visit to the school in Ap Lei Chau it was hoped to restart the program, however it was not possible to recruit a coordinator for this academic year. It was agreed to target members living in the south side of Hong Kong to see if they could help with this school. Recruiting volunteers for the programs remains a difficulty in running the English Conversation programs and is suggested as an area for increased focus next year.

The Mock Interview program, coordinated by Katherine Payne, was offered in 4 schools this year with approximately 200 students attending the program. The program remains very popular with the participating schools. Volunteers continue to be a challenge in supporting the program although a good response was obtained by targeting members through the AWA Forum.

The Western Dining Etiquette program, run by Bernice Lee, was undertaken in four schools with one previous school not responding to the invitation to participate. Although less schools participated this year the program continues to be popular with approximately 150 students participating.

The Cheung Chau Reading program, now coordinated by Jill Baran Scott, underwent some major changes this year with the program relocating to CCC Kei Chun Primary School in Mei Foo. This was a result of the librarian, who had responsibility for the program in Cheung Chau, moving to the new school in Mei Foo. The program continues to be successful although there have been some issues about the liaison between the librarian and Jill. It is now known as the Kei Chung Reading Program. In addition, the sessions are quite short which makes it difficult for volunteers. Jill is trying to resolve these issues. In addition, the school in Cheung Chau had requested that the phonics-class held on a Friday afternoon with young primary school children continued and a volunteer was found for this session. However, the class continued to be difficult to run, with children unresponsive so it has been decided to discontinue the Cheung Chau connection. The Story teller program in Ko Ho Ning Memorial School in Lai King continues to run with 2 volunteers but no coordinator. The librarian who runs the program is very keen for it to continue and is something for next year's Chair to consider.

The Scholarship component has taken considerable work this year. The scholarship structure for Lingnan University had to be reconsidered after it was found that the nominated students were already receiving a full grant for their tuition fees. In order to resolve the situation for the current year it was agreed by the Board that the scholarship money already awarded to Lingnan would be reallocated to students meeting the selection criteria who were only receiving a partial grant towards their tuition funds. This resulted in 12 students being selected who were awarded scholarships ranging between \$5000-\$30,000. As a consequence of this situation the scholarship

scheme was reconsidered and it was agreed by the Board that 3 female students in financial hardship, with a GPA of 2.5 or more be awarded \$25,000 each as financial assistance towards an overseas internship placement approved by the University. The scheme would commence in the academic year 2016-2017. The funding of \$80,000 awarded to the Vocational Training Council (VTC) remains unchanged with 25 students receiving scholarships from the AWA ranging from \$2000 to \$4000. No additional monies were granted to any schools or Universities this year, however, the Universities (CUHK, HKU and HKUST) continue to operate their loan schemes from the money allocated by AWA in 2013-2014.

Community Service Report

My goal for this year was to provide more opportunities and to promote them and those we had in the past. We have added five groups.

Volunteer Opportunities

Ark Eden - continues to provide volunteers with an opportunity to learn about permaculture, harvesting and composting. Volunteers can do a number of things including caring for animals, clearing weeds and building trails. Participation is low, but I will keep it on as I am hoping to work with them to make it more appealing by writing about it and spreading the word.

China Coast Community - The AWA provides volunteers to call Bingo on Friday afternoons. This is new in May and we already have three women interested.

Feeding Hong Kong - has about 12 volunteers but feedback has been that the opportunities to sign up have been the same every week and mostly require a car and Cantonese. I am working with them to change the format so that members can sign up for different opportunities.

Fenwick Pier - which provides volunteers for the help desk when ships come in has changed leadership from Carol Lampard to Kate Mahjoubian. The program runs very well and participation is high. I would like Hong Kong Hosts (formerly MITH) to work closer with her to enhance communication.

Helping Hand - is an elderly center in which they ask AWA members to play Rummikub once in a while. It is almost a one-off as it is infrequent and we will continue to offer it when it comes up.

Home of Love Soup Kitchen - continues to be very popular. Members help prepare a meal and serve once a week. Linda Van Noy is at the helm and is doing an excellent job to balance the number of volunteers as few are needed at certain times (ie, beginning of the month).

Hong Kong Hosts - "Adopt a Sailor", "Adopt a Marine" is a long term program for the AWA. Members sign up to do different activities with servicemen/women. The former coordinator has moved back to the US and has been terminated because she is no longer in Hong Kong. We are seeking a new coordinator. We are starting from scratch to develop a better way to communicate with the Ship Support Office (SSO). Their feedback stated that the enthusiasm for the program has declined on all fronts.

Hong Kong Society for the Blind - is headed by Kate Mahjoubian and is a popular volunteering opportunity. Members sign up for two-week increments at a time to cut out newspaper articles and voice record them so that the blind can listen to them.

Red Cross Cookie Drive - We provided 1300 cookies to them for Christmastime distribution to the children who are inpatient at Red Cross Hospitals. Even though the number is lower than usual,

they were very grateful and let me know the children loved them. We will continue to provide this easy opportunity.

Riding for the Disabled - is being coordinated by Liz McGrath. She does an excellent job of making volunteers feel needed. The women lead horses around for the physically and mentally challenged as they ride. The feedback from the women who participate is very positive.

Ronald McDonald House Charities Bi-monthly Birthday Parties - continue to be led by Renee Chung and Tricia Cliff. The money raised at Out With the Ladies (OWL) has been funding the birthday party bags that are handed out to the sick children and their siblings. We have excellent participation.

Ronald McDonald House Charities Arts and Crafts/Reading - is a once-a-month opportunity and is not as popular for volunteering, but we will continue to offer it. We have an excellent partnership with RMHC.

Sunshine Action - We have had five one-off opportunities with excellent participation. Each had to do with providing food for those less fortunate. We will continue to work with them. It is a great feel good+group and feedback has been very, very positive.

General Progress

The monthly membership report shows many members who are interested in volunteering. I send an email to each of them individually.

We discontinued promoting volunteers for ACS Partnering and Helpers for Domestic Helpers and we did not participate in a beach clean-up.

I vetted and passed on working with HK Housing Authority and Kids4Kids.

Director of Operations

The office team continued to consist of 2 members of staff only. The office staff were busy this year due to many additional events/activities held at the office.

Barbora Mayer continued to work on improvements to the functionality of the website . unfortunately most of the original team who worked on the design of the website have now left Digital Butter.

Office staff were closely involved with the organization of all fundraising events.

We have continued our partnership for regular hiring out of the office (outside use of AWA office space) with Charlotte Travel, Project Asia and The Etiquette Institute . all are AWA member connections.

The AWA applied for a work visa extension for Barbora Mayer. The application was successful.

Barbora Mayer's job title changed from Office and Website Manager to Director of Operations.

Both office staff received salary increases for the 2016/2017 AWA fiscal year.

Recording Secretary

HSBC

Our relationship with HSBC has been a bit challenging over the last 6 months as communication with them regarding the paperwork that needs to be submitted is not consistent. The account was closed briefly despite all efforts to provide the information requested. A member's husband, who works for HSBC, was able to help reopen the account. We are meeting with Citibank to see if it may be a better fit.