



NEWSLETTER - December 17, 2020

“One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas day. Don't clean it up too quickly.” - [Andy Rooney](#) (1919-2011), American radio and television writer

**Ho ho ho and happy holidays to you, dear members!
Have a safe and healthy holiday season and we look forward to your
friendship and support in 2021!**



The end of the year is upon us. In our family, **we celebrate Christmas** and, for the last two years, we've gone to the US to be with my large, extended family and friends. This year will be *different* for obvious reasons, but we are ready. We put up stockings and a beautiful tree (if I do say so myself!), and my 7-year-old son has helped with decorating the house. The decorations really light up the place on these cold, dark winter days. On Christmas day, I will finally cook Thanksgiving dinner and we plan to sing Christmas carols around the piano. All different, but good. My husband's family is Jewish, and for the first time this year, we are lighting the candles of Hanukkah. This gives us another happy thing to focus on and learn about at this time of year. Again, different, but good.

Since March, our club has managed, sometimes successfully, sometimes less so, to **host online events** for our members and others. When we could, we managed to sneak in some in-person activities. Even those were different with our masks and distancing, but, wow, was it good to see each other then!

For our **most recent member meeting** (16 December), we invited Celeste Brown, a longtime member and previous president of the AWC-The Hague and FAWCO, for a session of Laugh Yoga. After a rather rough year, we needed something light and fun, and Celeste did not disappoint. We had 10 ladies onscreen giggling and laughing as Celeste led us through several laughing exercises. It seems a bit strange at first to force laughter, but it was a great start to our meeting. I know I felt more relaxed, though my smile muscles were a bit sore! Thank you to Celeste for joining us.

As long as we have to, our Board is committed to **offering you opportunities to connect online or outside**, and we are looking to partner with other clubs to provide even more opportunities. We are not planning any in-person activities inside at the moment, but we will be grateful for the day when we can see you again in person. That will be in a different location, for which we will need to get creative.

Yes, a different location! After a nearly two-month delay, **we finally signed the *compromis de vente*** for the Clubhouse. The official countdown has begun and we now have less than three months to vacate before the final paperwork is signed.

Many of you participated in our **successful auction** (see below!). That would not have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of board members Jan Allen, Jennifer Constantino, Lorraine De Bock and Cate Napier, along with help from many, many others. Though our most treasured items will be stored until we decide our long-term future, we are now working with some of the charities we sponsor to donate items that will help others through their difficult times. As the Clubhouse empties, it looks very different. This leaves me feeling sad, rather than good, but I know it is the right decision for our Club.

2021 will be a new year and a new beginning for our Club. We hope to build on our history, on our shared past, to create new experiences. We don't yet know what the future holds. When we can meet again in person, we will take the time to share ideas and plans for what our club will look like post-COVID and post-Clubhouse. As your membership comes up for renewal, I hope you will stay with us and be a part of that future.

We are really rolling out the Christmas spirit this year – we still have **three online events** planned before year-end, not to mention a New Year's Day drink! So check out the info below and [our events calendar](#) and join us for at least one if you can.

I take this final opportunity to send you my best wishes for the holidays and I look forward to seeing you in the new year.

Sincerely,
Kelly



AWCB Virtual Holiday Party
Friday, December 18 - 10:30-11:30 AM via Zoom

Fa la la la la la let's get together and celebrate the most wonderful time of the year! If you are "needing a little Christmas" right now, then jingle on over to your screen, pour a glass of eggnog and join for a **virtual holiday fiesta** together.

Let's celebrate the season as we reminisce about Christmas with questions, games and of course lots and lots of holiday cheer!

The only must is a lively Christmas spirit and jolly mood! We're looking forward to it, so [register now](#) - and the Zoom Meeting ID will be emailed to you later.



Cocktail Hour and Holiday Cheer with the AWCB Board
Saturday, December 19 - 5:30-6:15 PM via Zoom

Break out the bubbly, keep the holiday fun going and join the AWCB Board and your fellow Club members for a toast and some holiday cheer at a **[Christmas Cocktail Hour!](#)** It's the perfect way to wind down a Saturday afternoon and/or get your evening Christmas celebrations kick started. Make sure your camera is set up to capture your Christmas tree/holiday decorations and let's get festive!!

You'll find the Zoom Meeting ID in your email a day before the event.



AWCB Chit Chat Sessions via Zoom!

[Wednesday, December 23](#) - 8:00 - 9:00 PM

[Tuesday, December 29](#) - 10:30 - 11:30 AM

How about a chat about your holiday preparations - and a recap after the fact? You can join other Club members and hostess and Board member Lorraine De Bock at the AWCB Chit Chat sessions to gab about the holidays or anything else on your radar. These **fun and informal virtual catch up sessions are meant to let you** stay connected with fellow AWCB members and friends. Stay for the whole hour or just make a quick appearance - the goal is to reconnect and enjoy each other's company - and share some holiday fun all together!

Make sure you RSVP via the links above to get the Zoom link!



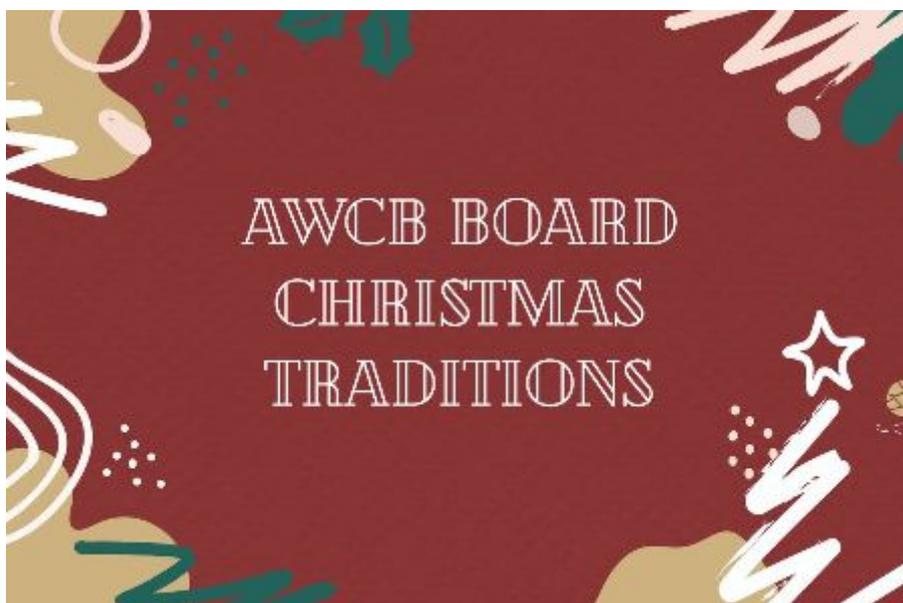
Toast to 2021 Drink with the AWCB Board

Wednesday, January 1 - 5:00-5:45 PM

What better way to bring on Baby New Year and celebrate what we all hope is a joyous 2021. Grab a favorite tippie and join the AWCB Board and members to **ring, ring, ring in the New Year** and proclaim a toast for a happy, healthy and prosperous 2021!!

There's no dress code - T-Shirts to tiaras are all welcome! - but why not don some sparkles or a fun hat for the festivities? We can't wait to see you in any style!

[Register now](#) - and the Zoom Meeting ID will be emailed to you later.



One of the best things about the holiday season is continuing **family traditions**. Here's a few favorites from some of the **AWCB Board members**. These may inspire to you to incorporate them into your own activities, (bake up some goodies) and start some new traditions. Enjoy!

Jennifer Constantino (Director at Large): *"One of our more unusual traditions is, at the end of the evening, after dinner and presents and games, the cooking and cleaning up, we make a fire in the wood stove and bundle under blankets on the couch and watch a horror film. There's something about it that makes us all enjoy being together. Odd, I know, but I look forward to it every Christmas...My favorite holiday treat that my mother made was her Cottage Cheese Crescent Rolls. They are amazing! Here's the recipe!":*

Cottage Cheese Crescent Rolls

1 cup butter (softened)

1 cup whole-wheat flour

1 cup white flour

2 cups cottage cheese

1/4 teaspoon salt^[L]_[SEP]

3/4 cup sugar, mixed with 1 and 1/2 Tbs cinnamon and 1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts^[L]_[SEP]

1 tsp apricot jam per each crescent roll

^[L]_[SEP]Mix all ingredients (except the sugar/cinnamon/walnut mixture and the jam) together well and divide into 3 balls. Refrigerate overnight or for at least 8 hours.^[L]_[SEP] On a well floured surface, roll out the balls of dough like for a pie crust. Sprinkle out 1/3 of the sugar/cinnamon/walnut mixture over the entire surface of each rolled out ball of dough and slice into pie-shaped pieces (3-4 inches wide at the edge). Add a teaspoon of apricot jam about an inch away from the edge and roll into a crescent shape from the wide end.

^[L]_[SEP]

Bake at 270 C / 350 F for approximately 30 minutes or until golden.

Kara Kogler (Secretary): *"This year aside, we always go back and spend the holidays in my hometown of Milwaukee. Growing up, we had a huge tree full of ornaments and I have carried on that tradition here in Brussels. Many of our ornaments are souvenirs from various trips around Europe or visiting family in the US, so decorating the tree always brings many happy memories. Another Xmas tradition is the Peppermint Fudge that my daughter and I make to give as gifts to the kids' teachers, my colleagues and our friends. This year's candy making will be downsized, but it wouldn't be Xmas without it!"*

Peppermint Fudge

2 lbs/ 1 kg white chocolate, broken up into small pieces

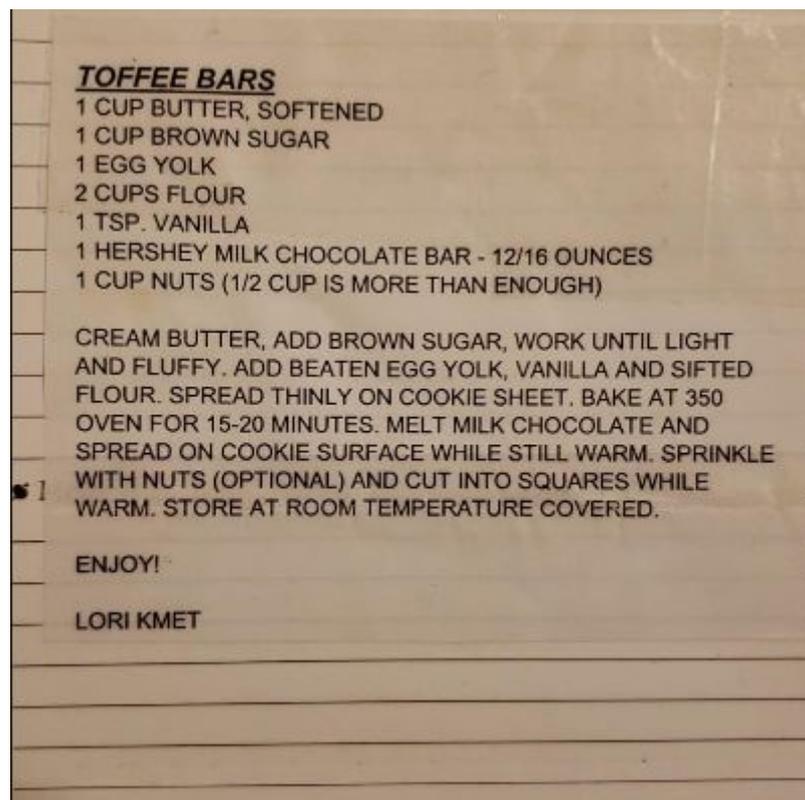
12 large candy canes (200 g), crushed/broken up into small pieces (I use my food processor for this)

1/2 t peppermint oil

1/2 t vanilla extract

Melt chocolate until it becomes creamy and smooth. Add the crushed candy canes, peppermint oil and vanilla and mix well. Spread mix on baking trays/cookie sheets lined with baking paper until at a uniform thickness. Refrigerate (or put outside) overnight and break up into bite size pieces.

Julie Kmet (Director at Large): *"Each year I make toffee bar cookies with my mom and sister. Whether we are together or apart, we get out our Kitchen-aid mixers and make a batch. They are great to give as a gift or enjoy with your family. Here is my mom's recipe for you all!"*





Lorraine De Bock (Director at Large): *"As a child my family always gathered at my grandmother's house to celebrate Christmas and she always made her infamous eggnog, as well as a special batch of non-alcoholic eggnog for her grandchildren. The family would sit around the tree at midnight and do Secret Santa with everyone sipping away on grandma's eggnog merrily. Oh, how I miss those days! Sometimes tasting a specific food instantly brings you back into a different time. For me, eggnog brings about that special moment."*

Low Sugar Eggnog

Some members of my family are diabetic and so I make an eggnog that is low in sugar.

2 cups milk of choice (I use unsweetened coconut milk)

1 cup heavy cream

1 cup granulated sweetener of choice

6 egg yolks

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 tsp nutmeg

1 tsp cinnamon

1/2 cup of dark rum (optional)

In a small saucepan, add the milk and heavy cream and on medium heat, bring to a simmer. Once it begins to simmer, reduce to low. Add the sweetener and stir into it, until it dissolves. While the liquids are simmering, whisk the egg yolks. Once the sugar has dissolved, stir through the yolks. Add the vanilla extract and nutmeg, and simmer until desired thickness. Remove from the heat and pour into 4 mugs, or allow it to cool completely, before refrigerating.

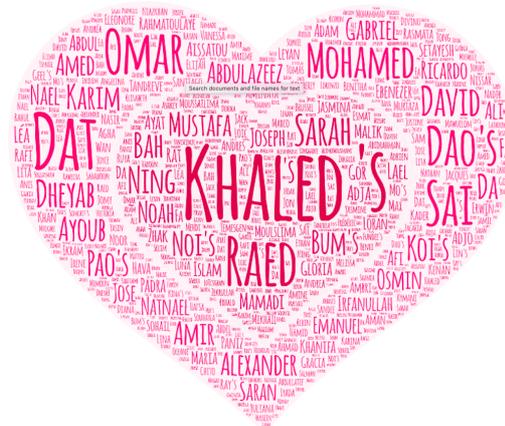
Notes: TO STORE: As the eggnog contains dairy, you must always leave it chilled. Keep it stored in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. TO SERVE WARM: Add eggnog to a small saucepan and on low heat, bring to a simmer. Once it begins to simmer, stir slowly. If needed, add extra milk or cream to your desired texture. Remove from the heat, pour into mugs, and add whipped cream and extra nutmeg. TO SERVE CHILLED: Remove from the refrigerator and stir thoroughly, as it will have thickened up. Add extra milk or cream if you prefer a thinner texture. Pour into glasses and top with whipped cream.

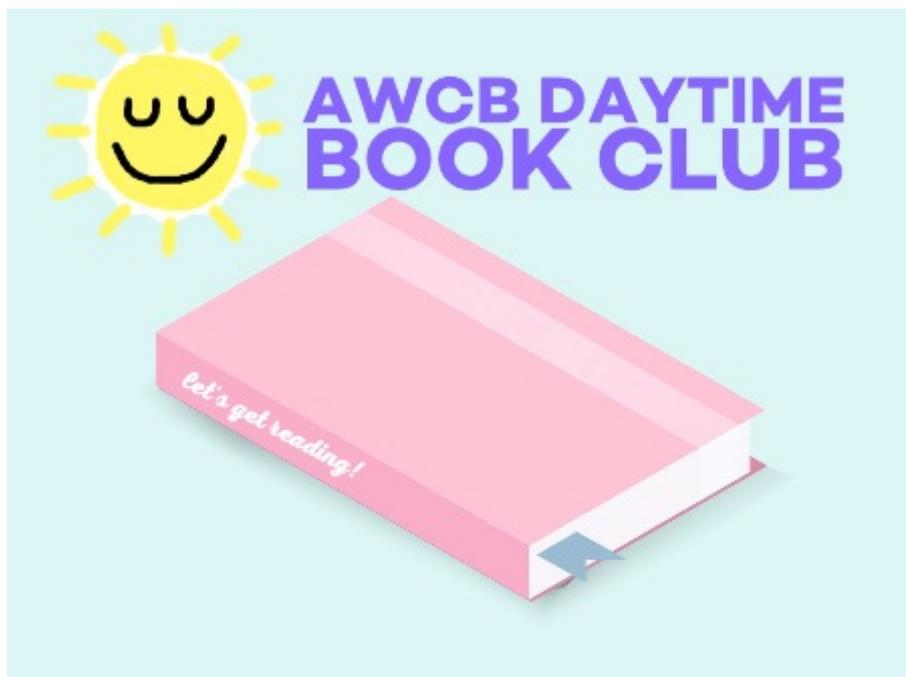


Angel Tree update!

As the newsletter goes to press, the **Angel Tree is still being delivered** to those charities for distribution. A beautiful collection of gifts were gathered from the Clubhouse and our charities have been distributing them. As we know the normal timing has been changed, so we are unable to share any photos of children, but we did fit quite a few gifts in car loads to be delivered. Our heartfelt thanks to all of you who have contributed with kindness and generosity!

For any further questions, contact HOPE@awcb.org



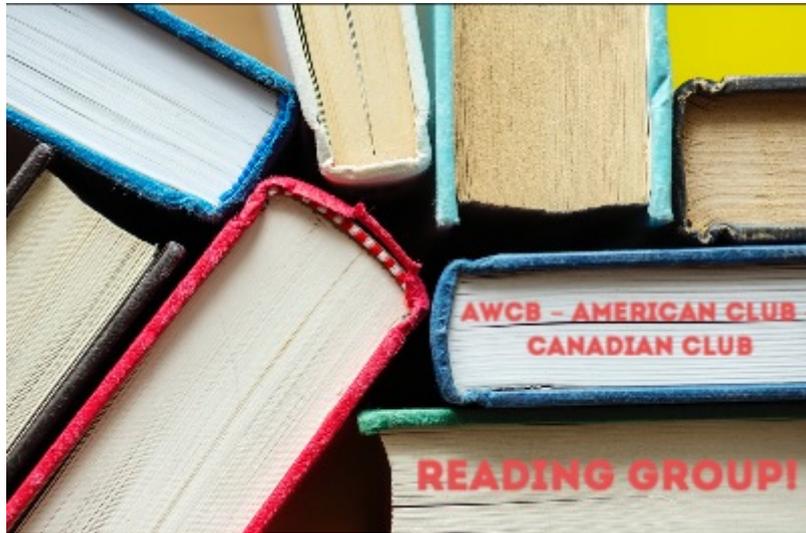


AWCB Daytime Book Club

Get a head start on your reading: meeting on Tuesday, February 2

Readers, what better way to spend some Xmas downtime and wintry nights/weekends than with a great book! Why not join your fellow bibliophiles in the **AWCB Daytime Book Club** and tuck into *The Enchanted April*, a 1922 novel by British writer Elizabeth von Arnim which follows four dissimilar women in 1920s England who leave their rainy, grey environments to go on holiday in Italy. The four women experience interpersonal tensions but eventually come together at a castle and find rejuvenation in the tranquil beauty of their surroundings, rediscovering hope and love. (And who doesn't appreciate hope and love, especially in these times?!)

It's a Zoom meeting planned at the moment, but subject to change (and possible meeting spot at Woluwe Cook and Book). More info will be available closer to the date, but Board Member [Cate Napier](#) can fill you in on any details in the meantime!



**AWCB - American Club - Canadian Club Book Club
Meeting in February!**

The Reading Group has continued to meet every month either in person or online. We've adapted, but miss our monthly dinners! In 2021, the Group will take January off but starting in February, it will continue to have its meetings every 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. and we hope to include new members who would enjoy discussing selected titles with other avid readers. Remember, anyone who is an active member of the AWCB, the Canadian Club or the American Club of Brussels is welcome to join. Curious? Please contact [Genevieve Bergiers](#) or Board Member [Ana Rojas](#). Check the AWCB online [calendar](#) for future scheduled titles and to sign up every month.



**FAWCO Foundation Educational Awards - don't forget about that
January 27 deadline!**

Interested in enhancing your skills? Do you have a child or grandchild that is going to university and/or has a passion to pursue?

Check out the [available grants](#) offered by FAWCO Foundation, and be sure to get started on your application(s) today as that January 27 deadline is about a month away now. Don't miss out on this exceptional opportunity!

More info about FAWCO activities can be provided by our fabulous FAWCO rep [Heather Bloemperk](#)



Hey everybody! Got something to share with your fellow members? Just [let us know!](#) We hope you find this section interesting and a great way to stay even more connected, informed and part of the AWCB Community!



Joyce Mostinckx, a long-time AWCB member and former Treasurer of the Board, shares the following good news: *"Very happy to announce that I became a grandmother on November 17th (!), five weeks ahead of schedule. My son Bronson and his wife Nele*

are the proud parents of Mathis Mostinckx, born weighing 2.440 kg. Mathis needed some extra support in the early days (he was in the NICU for 11 days, and then discharged). He's now doing well at home, and has grown to more than 3 kg. I'm one happy and proud Grammie!"

Congrats to you Joyce and your entire family!



Our sincere gratitude and thanks goes to our **outgoing Board member Pat Raymond** who served as 2nd Vice President during this extraordinary year. Pat has been a loyal member of the AWCBC for 17 years and a regular bridge player. Board service is one of the most challenging volunteer roles of all, and she performed with dedication and resourcefulness. Add a global pandemic and the sale of the beloved clubhouse to the task, and we got some additional twists and turns.

Pat, we truly benefited from your expertise and goodwill. Thank you for all your help and support!

- your sister Board Members



Clubhouse Auction: THANK YOU!!!

As hopefully many of you already know, in November we held both a **Members Only and a public online auction** in which we raised **2300 Euros** for the Club! Hip hip hooray! It was a win-win event for all: many people got some great bargains on things we

had to clear out of the Clubhouse before the upcoming move and this money has been earmarked for a Members Only event in 2021 post-COVID-19. We are now having charities come through the Clubhouse to see what they can use before we need to move out at the beginning of March. **Many thanks to everyone who participated and made the auction a genuine success!**



21 for 21 Membership offer continues!

Just a reminder to tell you that the **"21 for 21" deal on your membership, i.e. your renewal membership fee for 2021 for €21 is running strong!**

All existing members can take advantage of this "21 for 21" offer during your regular renewal month. By the way, we are also extending this offer to **new members**, so please feel free to share this good news with any of your friends and contacts who would be interesting in joining the AWCB community. Now would be an extra special time to welcome them on board, so encourage them to find out more via awcb.org/register.

As you've already heard, we're hoping to celebrate the Club in big ways next year (e.g. a **Members Bash next autumn**) using the Auction proceeds as well as other new activities so it's a super time to stay with us.

[Let us know](#) if you have any questions or would like any further information!
Thanks for your continued support!

Thank you as always for your involvement!

Have something to include in the newsletter? We love your news so just **e-mail us** with the details.