

Region 8 Meeting Notes – Sunday October 13

**Region 8 Vacation Package for the 2014 Brussels Around the World in 80 Bids Live Auction.**

Ann and Shannon will coordinate the package.

There was a lot of enthusiasm for this project and many ideas were suggested including:

Rome B&B for up to 12 people

Casa Wallace

Something from Florence

Culinary Tour from Wendy

A trip from Rome to Pompeii (although it was also noted that that would be a long day trip and should only be included if the stay in Rome is long enough to allow for a day-trip).

Noted: the more restrictive the offer the fewer bids will be received. It was suggested that the package could be offered as to be taken all at once or in pieces.

If a club isn't offering a stay, they can provide transportation tickets, theater tickets, dinners, tours, etc. You can also offer to "fill in the blanks" – let Ann and Shannon suggest items that are still need to complete the package.

**Everyone will get their offers to Ann and Shannon by the end of December.** Please note what you are offering, the terms and any blackout dates.

**Fundraising Ideas/Best Practices**

Balloon Pop as used in Dublin. Put raffle ticket in balloon. When person pops balloon they discover their ticket and prize. Could include a multi-level option – 5Euro balloons, 10Euro balloons, 15Euro Balloons with corresponding gift items.

Gourmet Bingo – with gourmet food items as prizes

Buraco Tournaments

Horse Racing – Cut out horses and put on sticks using names of members for horse names. Create course with 6 lanes with squares going for as long as you have space. Roll die – the # on the die is how many squares your horse moves forward. Betting is made on the horses. Prizes are offered for the winners. Contact Lesleigh for more details.

Second Hand Fashion Show/Auctions

Themed dinners – Indian, Greek, etc.

Carnival or Costume Party – people love to dress up in costumes

Themed Dinner/Dance

Robin Goldsby – Steinway piano concert and reading. Charge for entrance and food/drinks. Contact My-Linh for contact details.

Gala and invite non-members - Suggestion to query members on What they want, When they want it AND How much they are willing to spend.

Invite US Tax Services – use an outreach to community, PR for Club, service to Club and fundraising.

Casino Night

Direct Ask – “we are trying to raise X Euro for Y project. Please donate....

Progressive lunch or dinner. Invite people to your house then everyone who comes to your house has to host their own party. 10 – 30 Euros per person (depending on lunch or dinner and what is being served). Hostess can deduct costs if needed – remainder is donation.

Cocktail party

Themed FAWCO lunches – for example after FAWCO conference host a lunch themed on the conference location – i.e., Irish after Dublin, Swiss after Bern, Belgium after Brussels.

Offer cooking classes

Embassies of the World – only works where there are Embassies. Get US Embassy on board then “sell” to other embassies. Each embassy offers a dinner for 10-20 people with the ambassador or consul. Tickets are very expensive.

### **Membership Issues**

Form better relationship with American School

Offer interesting activities and cultural events

In Torino – the president and membership person are very active. Good relationship with relocation agencies. They offer summer programs and get experienced members involved with the new members. SOS summer program.

Create a buddy or mentor program

Hold a weekly coffee – open to anyone

Make sure you are reaching out to new members. Provide information they need. Follow up after first contact. Communicate. Offer orientation meeting or class.

Offer weekend activity – you don't have to reserve. Very casual but something working people can participate in.

Berlin offers 1 morning and 1 evening meeting.

Select a date rather than day for activity so it will fall on all days of the week. That way if someone works full or part-time they will be able to attend on occasion (activity will fall on weekends or on a weekday when a person may not be working).

Brussels offers a 3 week orientation class. Offers hints on how to live in Brussels but also brings in doctors and other professionals to help new members learn how the system works. This is a lot of work and they charge a lot for the class.

Living in Luxembourg – chats on living in Luxembourg

Rome offers a Resource Line – you can send a message such as “I need a doctor for...” or “I need a house sitter” and you get replies. There is a company that manages the system. Entries become searchable so other people can find the answers at a future date.

Rome also has “sustaining members”. These are supporters who donate once a year to the club's expenses. The sustaining members get exposure based on their level of support.

Interest was voiced for “yellow pages” – a directory of members and their skills/services. Would be nice to know if someone in the club is a therapist, doctor, tax specialist, teacher, etc.

### **Club Challenges – greatest challenge**

#### **Genoa**

Small club – only 70 members

Need to grow membership – lack of club support – decline in American citizens in area

Getting donations/fundraising - Annual gala that supports one charity and has done so for many years - need to find ways to continue to raise funds for that charity

#### **Florence**

Aging membership

Same 25 people do everything

No new American companies

#### **Rome**

Finances- hired part-time office manager which is a great help but additional overhead. Pay for office in a hotel.

Would like an endowment fund for AWOR

Need younger people

Would like information on Affordable Care Act

#### **Milano**

Drop in membership from 800 to 250.

Aging membership 80% over 50

Economy – used to be 8 year assignments now 1 year assignments and fewer Americans  
Italian members contribute the most. Permanent members are the backbone.

### **Torino**

Growing club – interviews potential members to make sure they speak English

Challenges are from competing organizations – for example Internations which is more professional and provides networking opportunities.

### **Naples**

30-40 members – very small club

Economic situation

People come to Genoa to work not holiday

Young people don't want to attend because activities on weekends interfere with their lives.

Older members are stingy and set in their ways. They think the club should be there for them but don't want to pay for it.

### **Final thoughts:**

**Best practice:** Genoa had declining participation. They never knew how many would turn up for a meeting but had set costs to rent room. They increased dues to 90 euro per year but that includes the monthly meeting with a lunch and cocktails at the Christmas party. Members now show up to meeting – “they've already paid”.

**Please update your Best Practices on the FAWCO Website.**

**There are many club resources on the FAWCO and Foundation websites.**