



THE AMERICAN WOMEN'S ORGANISATION OF MOSCOW

newsletter

December
2018

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

This year, the AWO of Moscow became a quarter century old!

We have had 25 years of togetherness, 25 years of helping other women get settled in their new environment, 25 years of new and continued friendships, and 25 years of helping others and leaving our footprints on many hearts that we have touched and many paths that we have crossed. How proud and how wonderful it is to be a member of this organization at a time when we are able to look back and reflect on 25 years of history!

Join us on a time capsule journey with reflections and letters from our past and current long-standing members. This is the first of our double feature newsletter. Read on and let's take a walk down memory lane!

Happy 25 AWO!

Michele

List of Contents

3 Save the date

4 Notes from the Editor

5 Events of the month

6 Celebrating 25 Years of Friendship

10 Around FAWCO's World in 62 Images

11 FAWCO Edinburgh Biennial Conference Invitation

12 Spread Sunshine

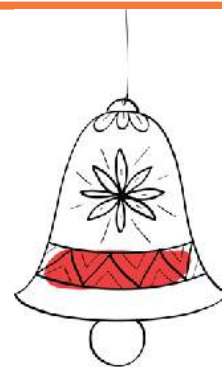
14 News from the AWO Board

15 Updated List of Interest Groups

17 Special Discounts for AWO Members

20 Your 2018-2019 AWO Board





NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Probably many of you will be travelling for the holidays. It is a great time to spend with family and friends, and it's always fun to give a break to the wonderful Moscow weather in December! However, the ones who'll be staying around, I promise Moscow will keep you so busy that you won't have much time to feel homesick.

Christmas trees and twinkle lights are already going up, and the Mayor's website is packed with posts on upcoming events. You may learn the traditional Russian way of making Christmas ornaments, for example, or improve your Chinese...

If you can't get tickets for the Russian Christmas classic "Nutcracker" Ballet this year,

don't worry. You can watch it in Chinese! Instead of Russian ballet dancers, you can enjoy Chinese acrobats. Now that sounds fun, doesn't it? Especially if you have kids who are slightly less sophisticated to enjoy an amazing ballet show...

If you're travelling, we have some great reading material for you on the following pages. Make sure you have the AWO Newsletter with you on the way home and read the letters from our past members.

Remember to show up for the final AWO event of the year before you travel though!

Irem



Events of the Month



Christmas Fair Art Weekend - December 7-9, 2018 // ArtPlay Design Centre

Looking for scarves, mittens, cozy stoles, unusual bags, toys, stylish interior items or edible souvenirs? Check out the Art Weekend organised at the ArtPlay Design Centre. When you get tired of shopping or the crowd, you can always join a fun master class and make your own carnival masks or Christmas candles! For more information: <http://www.art-weekend.ru/>

"Christmas Tree Decoration" Excursions - until January 13th, 2019 // The Factory of Christmas Toys

The Factory of Christmas Toys is providing unique opportunities for its visitors in terms of learning about how New Year's Eve is celebrated in different countries, watch the production process of glass Christmas tree toys, and even give a try yourself! The Factory also provides master classes that you may join with your children where you can decorate Christmas balls with a Russian style!

For more information: <http://31-12.xn--p1ai/>

"Journey into Christmas" Festival - December 14, 2018 - January 13, 2019 // Various Locations

The annual Christmas festival "Journey into Christmas" will start at Red Square and continue in 74 venues this year. The festival will include ballets on ice, performances by Russian and European theatres, as well as workshops and interactive games. For more information: <https://www.mos.ru/en/news/item/48158073/>

"The Nutcracker Chinese Ballet and Acrobatic Show" - December 31, 2018 - January 7, 2019 // Congress Center

If you are interested to see a slightly different version of the Russian Christmas classic, you might want to book tickets for this show. Chinese directors will turn the famous tale into a vibrant show bringing together circus art, modern ballet and breathtaking acrobatic stunts. To book your tickets please visit: <http://congress-hall-rea.ru/shownews29.html>

"VIVA LA VIDA . FRIDA KALO AND DIEGO RIVERA. Painting and graphics from museum and private collections » Exhibition - December 21, 2018 - February 22, 2019 // Central Manege

For the first time in Moscow, the masterpieces created by Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera will be presented in a large-scale exhibition. For more information: <http://moscowmanege.ru/vystavka-viva-la-vida-frida-kalo-i-diego-rivera/>

"A Different Beauty" Exhibition - until January 20th, 2019 // The State Museum of Oriental Art

The State Museum of Oriental Art will hold a major exhibition entitled "The Orient. A Different Beauty." timed to coincide with the museum's 100th anniversary. During the exhibition, visitors will be able to enjoy over 400 exhibits, including costumes, decorations and household items as well as paintings and graphics. For more information, please visit: <http://www.orientmuseum.ru/exhibitions/archive/-item=634.aspx>

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS of FRIENDSHIP

This month we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of AWO.

In recognition of this special quarter century milestone, we present to you our new logo, which was unveiled at our Holiday Party at Spaso House. The event was dedicated to 25 years of friendship, support, and togetherness. To continue this dedication, we have reached out to a few of our past members and our current longest member, to share with us memories of the first years of the organization.



We have been fortunate to capture information pertaining to our history and to hear from some of the wonderful women who started our charity. A collection of memories from the past based on their time here in Moscow.

Please read below the letters from Janet Misamore, Valentina Markusova, and Mary Deathe.



Janet Misamore,
Past President of AWO

Nastenka: How it all started

I lived as an expat in Moscow from 2001 to the end of 2004; during that period, I was very involved in the AWO and from that group I found myself emerged in many Russian activities.

Gwen Rieber and I came to Moscow about the same time. We both actively took Russian language lessons from Jamila Aleyeva and it was she who introduced us to Moscow Children's Cancer Hospital; and that is where it all started.

We visited this hospital on numerous occasions and saw for ourselves the many needs the staff and mothers of the children needed. In Russia, government funds were scarce for this facility. With the support we received from our fellow AWO members, we managed to collect travel soaps, shampoos, toothbrush/toothpaste kits, and shower caps. The nurses used canvas 'sack' over their shoes to keep sanitary and those of us who visited local gyms brought back our used paper shoe covers to wash and give to the nurses. The toiletry kits were for the mothers of the children, as they had to leave their homes, their families, and jobs to come live at the hospital and take care of their child. It was a small start.

In 2002, Gwen and I found ourselves the chairmen of AWO Christmas Craft Bazaar and this is where we managed to make a greater impact to the hospital.

In the past, the money collected from the Craft Bazaar was distributed to an orphanage in Moscow. While a noble charity, the orphanage received funds from other organizations and we felt our money could make a greater impact at the cancer hospital; and that is what started the AWOs association with the hospital. We convinced the Board that the children's hospital should be the beneficiary of our profits from this annual event. Our support enabled the hospital to purchase much needed equipment for these precious children and AWO should be very proud of their achievements.

At that time, Jamila Aleyeva, also tutored an American businessman and she brought up the needs of the hospital to him. It was this gentleman who started Nastenka Foundation. He set up a 501-c3 in New York where tax deductible donations could be made to the Foundation enabling Americans living in Russia or the U.S. to donate to this worthy cause. It has made all the difference in the world. We are very proud of the steps that have been taken to care for these very special patients and owe our deepest thanks and gratitude to Jamila for her foresight in presenting this problem to the women of the AWO.

Nastenka Foundation still holds a very special place in my heart. I wish all of you well and continued success with the Moscow group. AWO Moscow enriched my life and I hope it is doing the same for the many women living in Moscow.



December 2018 // 7

Valentina Markusova

Nastenka: Two decades of Friendship and Support

I became a member of AWO in 2002. The idea about “Nastenka” was founded and financed by my friend Gwen Riber in 2001. Jamila Aleyeva, the current head of Nastenka, was Gwen’s Russian teacher at the time. Once after her session, Gwen started asking Jamila about her life. Jamila got very emotional and told her about the death of her young son of Leukemia. Gwen offered her to establish a foundation to commemorate her son and gave her \$3,000 to get started. from Leukemia. They named the foundation Nastenka, which was the name of her son’s friend in the hospital who also passed away from cancer. When Gwen’s husband Frank passed away in 2008, Gwen asked friends instead of flowers to donate money to “Nastenka”.

Since 2003, I became very much involved in organizing the annual Craft Fair. We had a huge crowd of visitors there and about 120 vendors each year. I remember times when AWO collected \$60,000 for Nastenka. After the Craft Fair in 2005 I went with Julie Morrow to order a plaque to mark AWO donation for paying and installation of the special air purification system in the unit where kids have to stay after a bone marrow transplant.

Since 2007 AWO membership started shrinking. The political climate made its impact on the foreign population in Moscow. The last seven or five years according to my observation, the members of AWO are much younger (or I became much older) and it is lovely to see newborn kids at our coffee meeting.

The AWO Craft Fairs and Christmas receptions at the Ambassador Spaso House were very special events in my life. I am sorry that I will miss the opportunity to celebrate AWO’s 25th Anniversary.

I am using this chance to express my deepest gratitude to my American AWO friends who were so kind and generous to my family and me during the last sixteen years. I would also like to thank all previous and recent AWO members for their contribution to keep “Nastenka Foundation” going.

More than just a social club during hard times

One day in November 2006, after a very successful Craft Fair, I stumbled in the cafe and had a fall. I was lying on the floor and could not say a word. Debbie

Leturno, who was the AWO President at the time, gave me her car and driver to take me to the emergency and then home. I had a broken collar bone on my right arm and returned home with a full body cast. At this very time my husband was also at home with broken pelvic bones. Can you imagine?

Next morning Debbie, Gwen and Nan Tomasko came to my house with huge amounts of food. We were swarmed with home cooked food! My husband and I were overwhelmed by friendship and care by my friends from AWO. We all are still in touch.



December 2018 / 78

Mary Deathe

I joined AWO in 2006 until I moved in 2010. My favourite event was the Craft Fair. It was always hard work but we had so much fun!

During those four years in AWO, I had met some really wonderful women! I had been in Moscow just a few weeks and was desperately needing to return home! I had no one to take care of my dog as I hadn't hired a housekeeper yet. An AWO member whom I'd just been introduced to offered to take my dog. I cried!

AWO helped a lot in the transition. Vickie Blessin has a great "class" that helped navigate grocery stores, restaurants, etc. The language was always the biggest challenge! Didn't really ever overcome it, but I had friends who did. AWO was a huge and important part of life there. I did the newsletter for a while.

And then I started loving Moscow more and more. Looking back, I realize that I miss the camaraderie, the culture, and the social life. I loved the Red Square, Izmailova and all the museums. I learned that once Russians became your friends, they were friends for life.

Thanks for the opportunity to let us relive a wonderful time in our lives. We loved living in Moscow. As a friend says,

**"It's a place where you cry
when you find out you're going
and you cry
when you have to leave!"**



December 2018 // 9

Around FAWCO's World in 62 Images

"FAWCO 62" - Please Share your Photos!



Will Your Club Be Counted?

You can make it count by sending us a photo that expresses your Club's world!

The team at Inspiring Women, FAWCO's online magazine, is creating a special collection of photographic images of the cities or areas where our 62 FAWCO member clubs are based. These images might be of a place, a landscape, a person, a cultural highlight, a culinary speciality, but most importantly they represent the place your club calls your home away from home. The collection will be used in the magazine and, we hope, exhibited in Edinburgh during our next FAWCO Biennial Conference.

Ask your club members to share their photos with us. We encourage them to feel free to add their own artistic and personal touch. Images can be color or black & white and we need them no later than December 31st, 2018. Send to Marie-Bénédicte Luxem at **inspiringwomen.cover@fawco.org**.



FAWCO invites you to Edinburgh Biennial Conference!

by Sallie Chaballier
AAWE Paris / FAWCO President

"Bonnie, Brave and Beneficent" - isn't that a wonderfully apt theme for FAWCO?!

This is the first of several monthly newsletters designed to answer your questions about the 44th FAWCO Biennial Conference in Edinburgh next March and to encourage you to attend if you haven't already registered!



From now until March, with the help of the AWC Central Scotland organizing team, I'll be sending you monthly updates with logistical information, previews of what's in store at the Conference and in Scotland, as well as some "fun facts" and Scottish lore.

If you haven't done so already, I encourage you to join the [Edinburgh Biennial Conference group](#) on Facebook.

Deadlines: January 31: Last day for special hotel conference rate
February 22 - Conference registration closes

Practical Information:

There are already a few first-time participants who have not requested a Buddy, and I urge you to change your mind. Buddies are there to answer questions before you leave home and to help you navigate the Conference when you arrive. Many long-time friendships have sprung up between Conference buddies, and you will always have a friendly face to look for in the crowd. If you would like to request a Buddy or to volunteer to serve as one, please contact VP Member Clubs Hope Moore.

Please plan to arrive at the Conference venue no later than the evening of Wednesday, March 20, as the Conference will begin promptly on the morning of Thursday, March 21. The Conference is scheduled to run until approximately 5:00 pm on Sunday, March 24, so please do not plan to depart before then. You can [consult a draft agenda here](#).

Spread Sunshine

by Danielle Kuznetsov



It is in the spirit of thanksgiving that I write this quick note to you all. This year marks the 25th year of AWO and for almost twenty of those years, AWO has been making a difference in the lives of children suffering from cancer. What a

legacy our women have passed along!

Recently, I was able to connect with Janet Misamore, an AWO member and previous president from 2001-2004. We chatted about her experiences with AWO and in Russia. Janet and I spoke of how time has changed life in Moscow for expats, but not the spirit in which our women serve.

She told me about how they started the charity activities that we now run as the 'Spread Sunshine Program'. With the help of AWO members, they managed to collect everything they thought the mothers whose children were treated at the cancer hospital would need. From shampoos and toothbrush to shoe covers they had collected from local gyms, they provided as much as they could, with the hope of

making these mothers' lives a little easier. It was a small start, but a needed one." As many of you know, the toiletry items continue to be on the top of our list of items we purchase each month.

Janet spoke lovingly of her time in Russia as well as her involvement in AWO. AWO afforded her many opportunities to connect with Russian people and culture and most importantly, to be a part of a community that worked together to benefit others. "We are very proud of the steps that have been taken to care for these very special patients and owe our deepest thanks and gratitude to Jamila for her foresight in presenting this problem to the women of the AWO."

It was such a pleasure for me to speak with Janet, realizing that our paths missed each other by a few months on both sides of her stay. She recounted so many memories and events, but her most memorable experiences were those working collaboratively in AWO, giving at the hospitals and schools and making new friends. Janet said "I wish all of you well and continued success with the Moscow group. The Moscow AWO enriched my life and I hope it is doing the same for the many women living in Moscow."

Please meet **Arina Shapolvalova:**

Arina is three years old. She is full of life and talent. She loves to draw, mold figures from clay and recite poetry. She is always busy doing something and brings great joy to her family. Unfortunately, in May 2017, Arina became ill and thus started a journey that has replaced the days of carefree playing with doctor visits and medical treatments.

Little Arina has long forgotten what it means to breathe freely. Formations in the nasopharynx block the access of air. Arina was at first treated for rhinitis, ARVI, polyposis, prescribed medications for rhinitis, washed her nose, performed allergy tests, CT, endoscopy with a biopsy, repeated tomography. For a child of three, this is a very difficult burden.

She was first examined in her native Kazakhstan, then, on the recommendation of family friends, the Shapovalovs turned to paid clinics in Chelyabinsk. But even there they could not help them: the resources and qualifications of local doctors were not enough for not only effective treatment, but even for the correct diagnosis of the disease.

Then in January 2018 the Shapovalov family urgently flew to Moscow at the Blokhin NMITS on Kashirskoye Highway. Her preliminary diagnosis was disseminated neuroblastoma. Additional tests we completed



to confirm the diagnosis. Arina began a course of chemotherapy immediately to stop the spread of the disease. As can be expected, this has put a great strain on the family emotionally and financially. In April 2018, came the diagnosis of Alveolar Rhabdomyosarcoma. A new course of chemotherapy began immediately. Supported by both parents throughout her time in Moscow, Arina's Mom went home in May to see the other children while her Dad stayed by her side.

Throughout this time, Nastenka was instrumental in raising the funds for Arina's care. The first time 200,000 rubles was needed, then 600,000 rubles, and finally another 250,000 was raised through the generosity of Nastenka donors.

Arina turned 4 on November 19, 2018. On her birthday, the whole room was filled with balloons - this was her birthday wish! We hope for her speedy recovery so Arina can return home to her brother and sister who have been waiting a long time to see her again!

News from the AWO Board

Meet our new Secretary:
Salma Nurmohamed

Hi, I'm Salma Nurmohamed. My family and I have been in Moscow for over a year now. We've got two children at the Anglo American School, in grades 3 and 5. We're from Vancouver, Canada. When I first arrived the members of the AWO were warm and friendly, and made me feel instantly welcome. It made my transition to Moscow easier, and I look forward to meeting new members and passing on the good karma!

Call for AGM Participation:

Dear Members,

In the early spring of 2019, we will be holding our Annual General Meeting (AGM). During the AGM we are required to vote in the Executive Board for the 2019 year. At this time, it is our responsibility to let our current membership know we have vacancies both on the Executive Board and the Board. Executive Board members must hold a North American Passport, whereas the rest of the Board is made up of both full and associate members. At this time we are seeking dedicated women to fill the Vice President (executive role), as well as Membership and Newsletter Team Member positions. Please submit your candidacy at your earliest convenience for these positions.



Updated List of Interest Groups

AWO Interest Groups (AWO members only)						
Club	Description	When	Cost	Location (s)	Leader	
Neighborhood Walks	Explore Moscow's favorite neighborhoods	Tuesdays 10:00am - 11:00am	Free	Various locations in Moscow	Tina	070-80-04
Photography	Learn, inspire, create photography together					
Spread Sunshine	Help with activities for Nastenka children's hospital					
Wine Lovers	Wine tasting and fun with other couples					
Lunch Bunch	Visit new restaurants with AWO members					
Book Club	Read books and share with friends					
Cooking Club	Share cooking and recipes and enjoy lunch together					
Movie Buffs	Watch English Movies in theaters enjoy lunch afterward					
What's in My Market	Tour the markets of Moscow and share your favorite with the group					
Preschool Playdate group	Enjoy a coffee with friends while children play in a kid friendly venue					
Kickboxing	Active exercise combining cardio, aerobics, strength & endurance w private trainer					
Tennis	Learn / Play tennis together					

Friends of AWO (Open to AWO and nonmembers)

Golf	Play golf at City Golf, lessons available	
NEW: For the Sake of Traveling	Explore Russia and other bordering countries	
History-Art-Design	See the best Moscow sights in the context of Russian history (Excursions, lectures and workshops)	
Russian Textile doll making	Learn to make traditional Russian dolls, no sewing	
International Women's Bible Study	Join women to study the Bible, book of Mark	



Special Discounts for AWO Members



US Dental Care is happy to offer a special discount for the members of AWO – 15% on the first visit and 5% thereafter.

www.usdentalcare.com



The Expat salon is happy to offer Special 25% discount on Beauty products to all the members until the end of December 2018.

www.en.expatsalon.ru



NEW YEAR 2019 IN THE RITZ-CARLTON, MOSCOW

Special offers to celebrate the New Year's Eve

Chime in the New Year just a few steps away from the Kremlin and Red Square, a fabulous winter fairy tale awaits guests at The Ritz-Carlton, Moscow.

This New Year's Eve highlights luxury in a uniquely Russian style at the Café Russe restaurant, the ideal choice for discerning travelers preferring family style celebrations. Pamper yourself with a marvelous holiday spirit inspired by beloved and timeless classics such as lush Christmas trees with colorful toys, bright garlands, pine and tangerine flavors as well as a rich variety of dishes and finest beverages. Great traditions and an incredible sense of comfort would be not enough without Ded Moroz – the main holiday character for little guests in Russia.

Celebrating New Year's Eve with a Burlesque show at the O2 Lounge restaurant, which is famous for its breathtaking views of Red Square and the Kremlin, is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Chef Dmitry Sergeev delights with a gastronomic 5-course dinner complemented with an exclusive beverage selection by talented masters of the craft. Ringing of glasses filled with Moët & Chandon champagne, music from a live band and DJ sets with the festive lights of Moscow's iconic landmarks in the background, create an uplifting holiday spirit for the next 12 months. For those who are seeking for a more private atmosphere in the heart of the city,

The Ritz-Carlton, Moscow is delighted to offer New Year's Eve embraced by light jazz at the absolutely new and unique venue - The Winter Bar on the hotel rooftop with outstanding historic city center vistas. An exquisite dinner surrounded by the sparkling lights of the Kremlin holiday fireworks creates an outstanding experience for a great start to the New Year.

Pricing policy for special New Year offers at The Ritz-Carlton, Moscow:

Café Russe: adults - 35 000 rubles per person, children from 7 to 14 years old – 10 000 rubles per person, children 6 years old or less – free of charge;

O2 Lounge: first row table with Red Square views – 70 000 rubles per person, other tables – 60 000 rubles per person.

The Winter Bar – 95 000 rubles per person.



THE RITZ-CARLTON SPA

Enhanced spa area offers guests new experiences

Spa at The Ritz-Carlton, Moscow welcomes guests after renovation. Innovative technical solutions make an integral part of fashionably elegant interiors, turning a customary spa visit into a real journey to the world of authentic comfort and aesthetics.

In the main relaxation area, installed are new automatically adjustable sunbeds for increased comfort to have a deep rest between spa procedures. The enhanced interiors are completed not only with the state-of-the-art and cozy facilities, but also with stunning visual effects. Shades of light imitate the night sky while the falling stars can make your wishes come true.

In the relaxation area for ladies, the overall ambience is elevated with images projected on the ceiling and a stylish stucco in the form of palm branches on the walls. Translucent tulle separates the sunbeds equipped with an individual light that creates an incremental sense of privacy.


Impression shower with aromatherapy, hot tropical or re-freshening mint breezes become the ideal completion of any spa treatments. Sauna with Himalayan salt rich in healing properties will bring your body and mind into a state of pleasant relaxation and tranquility.

Healthy lifestyle and spa lovers will benefit from membership cards at The Ritz-Carlton Spa, which offer a wide range of privileges including special conditions on hotel accommodation. Cardholders enjoy unlimited access to a lapping pool, Jacuzzi, saunas and steam rooms, as well as to a fitness studio with state-of-the-art Technogym equipment and individual training sessions by certified Complete Body coaches. On top of that, The Ritz-Carlton Spa members take advantage of exclusive prices on the fitness menu in the Spa café and on food and beverage services in other restaurants at The Ritz-Carlton, Moscow.

Pricing policy for The Ritz-Carlton Spa membership:

- **12 months – 180 000 rubles;**
- **6 months – 105 000 rubles;**
- **3 months – 60 000 rubles.**

Your 2018-2019 AVO Board



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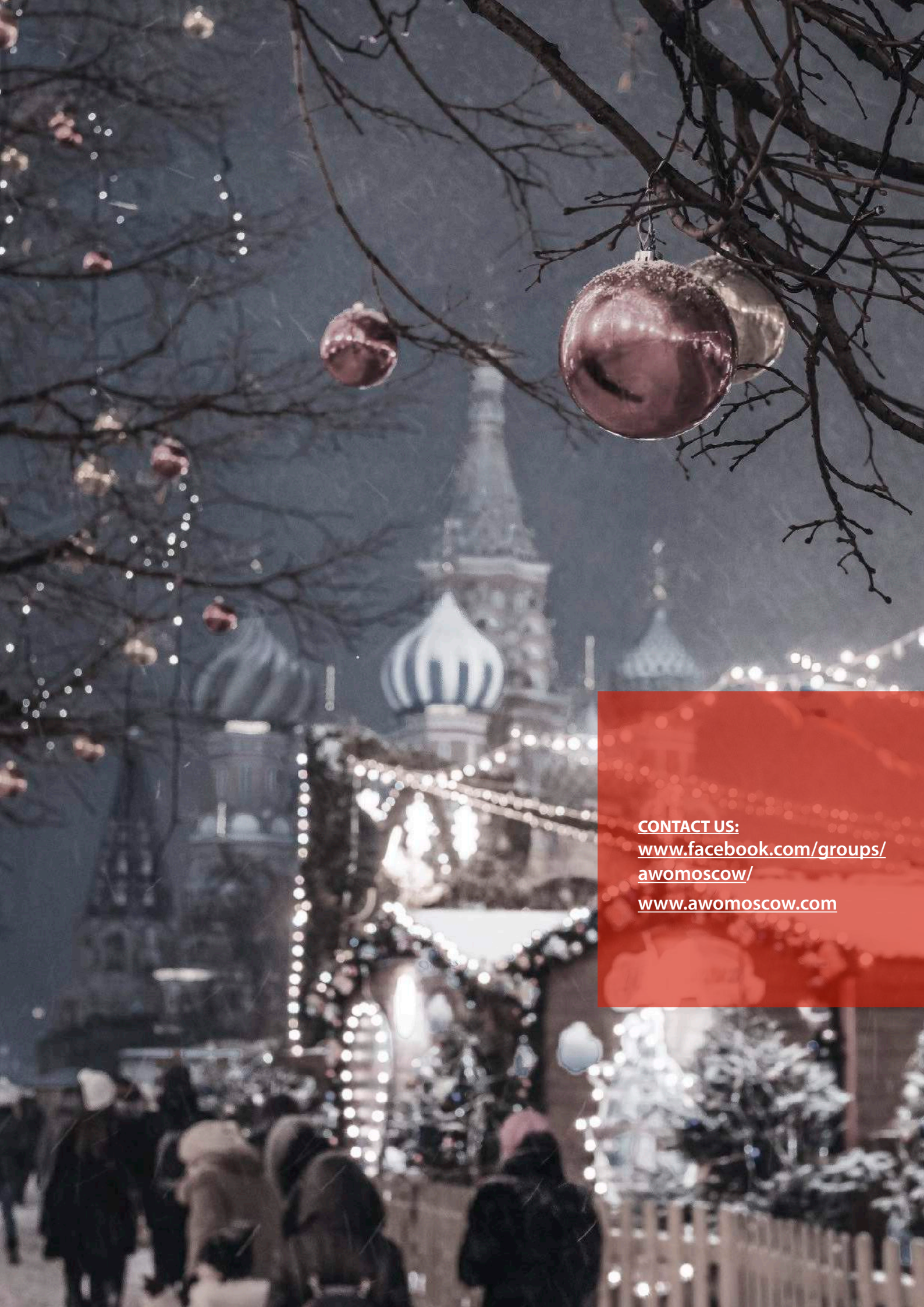
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