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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Inspiration exists, but it must find you working." Although this proclamation made by Pablo Picasso is about the creative artistic process, it surely applies to the Women's Dermatologic Society (WDS). It seems one exciting thing leads to another! In this edition of the newsletter, you will read about the many activities in which our members have been involved and made so successful. Many thanks to all!



By SUZANNE CONNOLLY, MD

This reminds me of a story I recently read about a farmer who grew blue-ribbon corn year after year. When interviewed about the possible secret of his success, he rapidly replied that his success was based on sharing his corn seed with neighboring farmers. Incredulous, the interviewer asked why this could possibly be the source of success. Cross-pollination, of course, smiled the farmer; superior corn only comes by having pollen from adjacent fields growing good corn. Thus, it is with our organization. We learn from one another and are strengthened — personally, professionally and as an organization.

The community outreach program, "Families Play Safe in the Sun" conducted over the last three years and sponsored by a generous 3M Foundation grant to WDS

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Sweet Transitions, Satisfying Experiences

By Jenny Murase, MD

This year's member renewal retreat, The Sweet Transitions of Life, took place in the beautiful Charleston Place Hotel in Charleston, SC. As we explored the traditions of the South through fabulous activities organized by **Dr. Marie-France Demierre** and her committee, there were several pearls we all brought back home to our families, practices, and friendships.

The South has a wonderful tradition of cultivating excellent novelists so we were all sent one of 30 novels prior to the retreat. Our first task was to find our "novel partner" during the opening reception. The novels, all written by Southern female writers, mostly described strong women relying on their network of friends to overcome difficulties — similar to the networking and friendships cultivated during the retreat.

The next morning, Southern novelist **Mary Kay Andrews** spoke about the importance of maintaining courage and a support network during transitions out of one's "comfort zone." She appreciatively looked back at her life's mentors as well as those who stood in her way,



thereby strengthening her resolve and reinforcing her determination. She did not like the analogy of sticky glue when describing the importance of her friends and family at that time, so she fondly spoke of them as "frosting" on the layers of her cake.

Our morning yoga trainer Jeffrey also spoke of layers, but in his case we learned about the layers of the soul in Jivamakti Yoga: physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and bliss (the closest to our soul and directly connected to our breath). Jivamakti means to free the soul, and he not only challenged us with difficult yoga poses, he also challenged us to know ourselves and to be reflective of the moment. He, too, reminded us that it is good to be shaken out of our comfort zone, as he jokingly asked us to hold our hips and bellies to shake and embrace our "old

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