



# Women's Dermatologic Society

## NEWSLETTER

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## President's Message

It is with great respect and humility that I enter the office of President of the Women's Dermatologic Society. Former presidents have led our organization over 25 years of progress. These women were brave, dedicated, and focused in order to "help all women in dermatology achieve their greatest personal and professional potential." This is the primary focus of our Mission Statement, and still remains our main goal.



Lenore S. Kakita, MD

I am in awe of the women who initially organized and started the Women's Dermatologic Society. They worked hard to become a part of the greater dermatologic community. They helped women succeed in becoming speakers, writers, researchers, members of committees, and officers of various dermatologic organizations. Success and excellence bred greater involvement of women in all areas of dermatology. Women were recognized on their own merits and not on their gender. We are proud of the WDS. Great strides in the advancement of professional women were achieved over the past decades due to the work of our Society.

Although the Society got started with a handful of academicians, the majority of the members now are clinical dermatologists. As a full-time private practitioner, I was initially uncertain about the benefits of being a member of the WDS. However, I was encouraged to join by the noted academician Dr. Frances Storrs who came to UCLA to speak. She requested a dinner of the local

women dermatologists in Los Angeles. With her spirit and friendliness, she encouraged me and a few others to join the WDS. Since becoming a member, it has been a rich and rewarding experience.

Some of my best memories are the WDS Retreats. The Retreats provide an opportunity for members to get to know each other on a one-to-one basis. The warmth and camaraderie among the members is contagious. A number of us had not had many experiences in "women's groups". We definitely did not have time for 'tea and crumpets.' I missed all the meetings of 'mothers of twins.' We were working women, after all. Thus, I was surprised at how enjoyable and meaningful the Retreats were. I am so glad that I have taken the time to develop the personal interactions and friendships with the women at the Retreats. I now feel that I can

call on any member that participated. The value of friendship is the subject of this "Life Beyond Medicine" article.

Dr. Anne Burdick made a poignant comment while speaking to the AAD Past-President, Dr. Ronald Wheeland. She told Ron that the AAD Leadership meeting in January was fabulous. "It was like a Women's Dermatology Society Retreat!" Ron was not sure what she meant, since he had never attended a WDS Retreat. Anne explained that it was the sense of openness among participants and willingness to share personal experiences and motivations that was unique. Next year the 2003 WDS Retreat weekend will be held on June 20-22 in Toronto. We hope to see you there.

We are excited about the WDS's participation internationally. The first recipient of the International Pioneer Award

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## New Style for WDS Luncheon a Big Success

Kathryn Schwarzenberger, MD

Balloons, New Orleans jazz, and flaming Baked Alaska set the tone for the 2002 Women's Dermatologic Society's Annual Luncheon Meeting. Over 500 members and guests met in the New Orleans Hilton Riverside Grand Ballroom for what was later described as a "fast-paced and innovative" meeting. Several changes were made in the luncheon in an attempt to increase member interaction and allow people to become better acquainted with each other. First, seating was assigned on a random basis with each attendee drawing a table number from a hat. A few "reunion" tables were offered for those who wanted to sit with old friends.

In a more dramatic departure from WDS tradition, the speaker was replaced by a facilitator, Carole Robin, Ph.D., a professional organizational consultant and senior partner of the Avista Consulting Group. Lisa Garner, MD, Chair of the Annual Luncheon Committee explained the thought behind the change: "We (Drs. Susan Weinkle and Garner) wanted to target the WDS goals of networking and mentoring and felt that if we could provide a situation that would allow members to meet and interact with each other, we would be working toward those goals."

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