1995 State of the Association

Eileen McGrath, JD, CAE, AMWA Executive Director

The 80th anniversary year of the American Medical Women’s Association has been characterized by challenges, opportunities and achievements.

Membership
AMWA’s Member-Get-A-Member Campaign recruited 660 new members from October 1994 to August 1995. One new physician branch was chartered and four student branches were re-activated. As expected, the 1995 dues increase resulted in a five percent decrease in members; combined with about a four percent decrease in 1994.

Communications
Theme issues of the Journal of the American Medical Women’s Association (JAMWA) included women in cohort studies, women and HIV, prenatal care and women’s health, and violence against women.

Retreat Highlights AMWA Priorities

The President’s Retreat focused on the importance of enhancing AMWA’s electronic communications capabilities and branch development. The weekend event, held at the Lansdowne Conference Resort outside Washington, DC, used the strategic planning process, under the leadership of AMWA President, Jean Fourcroy, MD, PhD, and facilitated by Charlene Morris, management consultant, to establish 1996 priorities which included:

- Enhancing online capabilities, including a World Wide Web site, and encourage members to use it
- Expanding career development activities
- Researching and implementing innovative marketing strategies to attract new members
- Developing member networks on gender equity, branch development communication, and mentoring.

Angelo Tiberio, MD, who chairs AMWA’s Electronic Media Pathways Task Force, led a session on how to get online which provided instruction on how to navigate the Internet.

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Finance
AMWA ended 1995 with a balanced budget re-affirming AMWA’s solid financial footing.

Women’s Health Consumer Education
The Complete Women’s Healthbook was selected by five national book clubs and publicized by AMWA through book signings and workshops.

A brochure on urinary tract infections was disseminated to hundreds of physicians through an unrestricted educational grant from Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc.

The association continued its menopause education project with the Federation of Business and Professional Women and the Wellness Coalition.

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Leadership, Mentoring, Coping and Professional Integrity

Jean L. Fourcroy, MD, PhD, AMWA President

I am often reminded of a book that was written about a friend when she was a surgery resident entitled, You’re the Only One Here Who Doesn’t Look Like a Doctor.

How we are perceived can often lead us astray. What is it that makes us look like a doctor? What gives us that credibility aura that sets us in the leadership path? Leadership has been defined as the perfect marriage of credibility and professionalism. To be perceived as credible, one must master communication, dress for success, and cope with rocky pathways. This path is easier with mentors and this is where AMWA enters the picture.

Our mission is to support the advancement of women in medicine; and we use every opportunity to share skills and knowledge to mentor our future leaders. Our mentors have been our leaders and I thank them for their hard work during the years; particularly our past Vice President of Career Development, Sharyn A. Lenhart, MD.

The recent Fifth Report from the Council on Graduate Medical Education: Women in Medicine states that we need to promote equality in the status of women physicians. Some women physicians lack leadership and negotiating skills. One of the report’s recommendations is that professional societies for physicians develop leadership development programs for women physicians and include a mentoring process for students, residents, fellows and junior faculty members.

Although AMWA is a pioneer in these endeavors, now is the time to enrich and share these skills. As we share our knowledge, we must share the capability to use that knowledge to move up the leadership ladder. Every Board and Committee member has been directed to incorporate leadership skills and mentoring in all projects. I encourage your suggestions.

Mentoring is a team sport that cannot be played alone; we need different mentors at different points of life to cross the impenetrable barriers be they gauze, glass or plexiglass. Partaking in a variety of activities has provided me with the opportunity to discover mentors in unexpected places and times. Information shared while bird-watching is one example. A breadth of knowledge prepares you for the unexpected.

Finally, we must identify the coping skills that help us with the stress of the rocky pathways. Be clear about your rights and goals; avoid angry confrontation; and use humor to deflate tense situations. Check on your style of communication. Participate in a relaxing activity (for me it involves either music or water) where you can conduct a “reality check.” Think about conflict resolution skills.*

Do not forget your professional integrity; what are the needs of your patients or your community in your quest for leadership? Integrity is a characteristic that must be renewed and reshaped over time. It demands considerable self-awareness and self command.**

*Adapted from the Federation of Business and Professional Women.


Also consult the audiotape from AMWA’s 1995 Annual Meeting On Gender Equity in Medicine. (To purchase the tape call 1-800-488-5455.)

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Jacqueline Corrigan, JD and medical student, and Susan Ivey, MD, co-chairs of the Managed Care Issues Subcommittee, presented sessions on managed care and Medicare/Medicaid which included discussions on contracts, liability, gag rules and implications for the future. These topics will be addressed during AMWA’s Interim Meeting in June.

The invigorating weekend of brainstorming, and revising and reviewing the strategic plan, also provided members with the opportunity to network and enjoy the amenities of the conference resort.

Call for Nominations

It is not too early to begin thinking about yourself or a colleague for election to AMWA national office in 1996. To qualify, candidates must have been AMWA members in good standing for five years and in a national leadership position for two years. The following offices will be filled in 1996:

President-Elect
Vice President of Membership
Vice President of Finance
Director of Residents
Resident Representative
National Student Coordinators
Speaker of the House of Delegates
Vice-Speaker of the House of Delegates

Candidates will be asked by the Nominating Committee to submit a curriculum vitae and to complete a questionnaire. Nomination forms are available from and should be returned to Deona Minor at AMWA. The deadline for submissions is April 1, 1996.
GRANT PROJECT UPDATE

Education Project on Coronary Heart Disease in Women

More than 115 CME-accredited workshops have been presented by the Master Faculty for AMWA’s Education Project on Coronary Heart Disease in Women, now in its third year.

If you are seeking a cutting-edge workshop to generate interest and increase attendance at meetings of your AMWA branch, hospital medical staff, medical society, or specialty professional organization, the program can be tailored to meet your time constraints.

The full program consists of three modules — risk factors and prevention, symptomatology and treatment, and diagnostic evaluation. AMWA will provide the speaker, slide lecture, participant materials, and CME credit for your program, and you will be helping AMWA fulfill its grant requirements by hosting this workshop.

This project is chaired by AMWA’s President-Elect, Debra R. Judelson, MD, who is also Chair of AMWA’s Cardiovascular Disease Subcommittee, of the Women’s Health Committee. It is made possible by an unrestricted educational grant from DuPont Merck Pharmaceutical Company.

To host a workshop, contact Susan Eisendrath, MPH, Project Manager; or Janie Darby, Project Assistant, at AMWA.

Breast and Cervical Cancer Education Project for Primary Care Physicians

AMWA concluded its three-year cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to train physicians nationwide in breast and cervical cancer screening, detection, and diagnosis at the end of February 1996.

A very ambitious workshop schedule was planned for January and February to complete the 38 programs required by the agreement. Workshops were scheduled to be held in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Texas, Wyoming and Virginia, as well as a teleconference to seven locations in Montana. Workshop hosts include state medical societies, state and county health departments, and hospitals.

AMWA is appreciative of the support of CDC and the contribution of time and expertise made by the members of the Master Faculty which made this project possible.

AMWA thanks the physicians who developed the curriculum: Janet Rose Osuch, MD, FACS; Diana Dell, MD, FACOG; and Sterling Sightler, MD.

Thanks also to Linda Thomas, Project Manager, and Jannine Jordan, Project Assistant, for their tireless efforts to staff this project.

The curriculum was developed under Cooperative Agreement #U50/CCU308871, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Public Health Service.

Healthy Physicians

The Physician’s Health and Well-Being Subcommittee is expanding its activities and seeking new members. Chair, Erica Frank, MD, is principal investigator of the Women’s Physicians’ Health Study, a national study of the characteristics of 10,000 women physicians. The AMWA subcommittee plans to sponsor a seminar on healthy lifestyles at the 1996 annual meeting, and participate in international conferences.

Contact Dr. Frank at 404/616-5603 for more information.

Tobacco Control and Prevention

During AMWA’s 80th Annual Meeting in Seattle, the Tobacco Control and Prevention Project leaders presented training to 50 AMWA members.

The one-day symposium featured nationally recognized experts in media/policy advocacy and coalition building. These experts shared current trends on women and girls and smoking. The seminar structure enabled participants to practice policy and media advocacy strategies through case studies.

During the morning session, Corrine Husten, MD, MPH, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), presented an overview of tobacco control issues, including trends in smoking prevalence among women and girls.

The luncheon featured a lively and entertaining presentation led by Robert Jaffe, MD, Executive Director of Washington State Doctors Ought to Care (DOC). He discussed DOC’s activities and told participants how health care providers can “take on” the tobacco industry.

The afternoon session was devoted to policy and media advocacy, and

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included topics such as how to build coalitions and work at local levels.

Faculty for those presentations included Michele Bloch, MD, PhD, Chair of AMWA’s Tobacco Control and Prevention Subcommittee; Julia Carol, Executive Director of Americans for Nonsmokers’ Rights (ANR); Kim Dalthorp, MPH, Project Manager for Washington State American Stop Smoking Intervention Study for Cancer Prevention (ASSIST); and Willa Fisher, MD, MPH, AMWA member and Director of Health for the Bremerton-Kitsap County (Washington) Health District. Dr. Fisher shared her experiences as a local health officer and described how physicians can become involved in tobacco control and prevention.

One goal of the training was to help AMWA members raise the public profile of women and tobacco issues through increased media attention and public policy advocacy.

In addition, AMWA members who participated in the Annual Meeting tobacco control and prevention workshop now possess the skills and resources to serve as community spokespersons on the issue. They are qualified to deliver presentations during grand rounds, at schools, for women’s organizations and before other local civic and community groups.

Since the training, several AMWA members have become active in their communities giving speeches and mobilizing state and local policy efforts.

Workshop training materials, including slides and prepared speeches on women and girls and smoking, are available for AMWA members interested in becoming involved in tobacco control and prevention issues.

For a copy of these materials, or to join AMWA’s physician coalition on tobacco control and prevention, contact Felicia Bloom, MPH, Project Manager; or Liz Pejeau, Project Assistant at AMWA.

Osteoporosis Symposia Project Draws to Completion

A one-year grant to present CME workshops on osteoporosis has concluded with five workshops held in Pittsburgh, Ft. Worth, Chicago, Los Angeles, and during AMWA’s Annual Meeting in Seattle.

During the course of the project, AMWA also created an exhibit that was displayed during AMWA’s Annual Meeting (November 1995, Seattle) and at the AMWA cosponsored Third Annual Congress on Women’s Health (June 1995, Washington, DC).

A 250-slide/lecture workbook on osteoporosis was developed by the project leaders: Sydney Bonnick, MD; Margery Gass, MD; Maria Greenwald, MD; and Michelle Roberts, MD.

AMWA thanks the project development team members for the extensive time and energy they contributed to the project. AMWA also thanks the project staff: Paula Burk Uhler, Project Manager; and Liz Pejeau, Project Assistant.

This project was made possible by an educational grant from Merck Human Health Division. Additional questions pertaining to the project can be directed to Liz Pejeau or Eileen McGrath at AMWA.

With a number of women’s health projects under way and several winding to conclusion, the AMWA Foundation is evaluating recent activities and looking strategically at the next two to five years.

A Strategic Planning Subcommittee, Co-Chaired by Susan Cobb Stewart, MD, and Diana L. Dell, MD, is leading the Foundation through a comprehensive, thought-provoking process.

This process includes examining topics such as needs assessment, mission review, establishment of objectives, etc.

The subcommittee is formulating a preliminary paper for review and discussion by the full Foundation Board at the President’s Retreat at the end of January.

After receiving Foundation consensus, the AMWA Board will review the recommendations for short- and long-range priorities.

Among the many items under discussion are ways to make AWHS more cost-effective and how to cultivate beneficial relationships with health-related companies and women consumer-oriented businesses.

In addition to Drs. Stewart and Dell, members of the subcommittee include Marilyn North Arnold, Roberta Rubin, MD; and Eileen McGrath, JD, CAE.

As the Foundation looks at past performance and future goals, we are pleased to report that responses to the Fall 1995 appeal were the best in recent history of the Foundation.

The solicitation signed by Constance Battle, MD, Chair of AMWA’s Council of Presidents, returned $20,000...more than double any recent appeal for unrestricted support. Many, many thanks to all who were generous in 1995!

The 1995 Foundation donors can look forward to periodic written reports on our activities, programs and progress.
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Governmental Affairs

AMWA signed five amicus briefs regarding family medical leave and reproductive rights. The association testified before FDA on osteoporosis (Eileen McGrath, JD, CAE) and hormone replacement therapy (Michele Bloch, MD, PhD).

AMWA produced and distributed a governmental affairs handbook, made possible through a grant from the Upjohn Company.

Coalitions

AMWA continued its tobacco control project which created a coalition of women's and girls' organizations to prevent and control smoking among women and girls.

AMWA also cosponsored National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, National Primary Care Day, and the Rally for Women’s Lives.

The association participated in efforts with the Council of Presidents, the Campaign for Women’s Health, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the National Campaign to Prevent Unintended Pregnancies, Handgun Control, and the Centers for Disease Control Coalition.

Media Efforts

The association mobilized the medical community by organizing a press conference in opposition to violence against abortion providers and participated in two press conferences to support the nomination of Henry Foster, Jr., MD, as U.S. Surgeon General.

To publicize the need to incorporate abortion in mainstream medicine, AMWA joined forces with Planned Parenthood of New York City to hold a press conference.

AMWA and AHA cosponsored a press conference releasing the survey results of physician/consumer knowledge of women and heart disease featuring Debra R. Judelson, MD.

AMWA’s 1995 Annual Meeting attracted 15 reporters on-site and another 10 reporters were briefed via telephone. AMWA's press room and teleconference were sponsored by Wyeth Ayerst Laboratories.

Continuing Medical Education

AMWA’s Women’s Health Curriculum was developed into an enduring CME project through a grant from Bristol Myers Squibb.

The reproductive health curriculum and elective were presented at Columbia University and the University of Iowa.

AMWA presented 26 CME workshops on breast and cervical cancer screening through a grant funded by the CDC.

More than 115 CME workshops were presented on heart disease in women made possible by a grant from DuPont Radiopharmaceuticals.

Osteoporosis CME workshops were presented in Chicago, Ft. Worth, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh and Seattle through a grant from Merck Human Health Division.

Eli Lilly sponsored a CME workshop on depression and women at the Annual Meeting.

AMWA continued to cosponsor the Third Annual Congress on Women’s Health.

The association was granted re-accreditation for four years by the ACCME.

Gender Equity

Gender Equity Awards were once again made possible to faculty members through a grant from the Upjohn Company. AMWA continued its Gender Equity Information Line.

Meetings

The Annual Meeting drew 600 participants in Seattle. The President’s Retreat focused on the future of the organization. The Interim Meeting featured the CME workshop on heart disease and women.

Foundation

Fundraising resulted in $90,000 in current and future year grants, approximately $57,000 in restricted contributions, and $14,000 in unrestricted contributions.

Through AHWS, AMWA provided more than $23,000 in funding for medical care in underserved areas; and more than $4,000 in grants to medical students and residents who provided care in Third-World countries.

AMWA granted $80,000 in medical educational loans.

We applaud this year’s successes and look forward to meeting the challenges of 1996 with enthusiasm and creativity.

AMWA President, Jean Fournecoy, MD, PhD, takes a moment during the President's Retreat to talk with Dr. Atkinson, the new President of the Medical College of Pennsylvania, Hahnemann University.
For the New Year

Lynn C. Epstein, MD, Associate Dean of Medicine, Brown University

"Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring happy bells, across the snow;
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true."
Tennyson

And a very Happy New Year to you all...

I sit snowbound at home at my PowerBook as another, near-foot of snow blankets Providence, Rhode Island. Brown has closed the university for the second time -- and its only the beginning of January. All of which has brought me an unorthodox day to catch up and has left me feeling, perhaps understandably, post-holiday "nostalgic."

As I write this, the AMWA President's Retreat is a month away. So it is time to share news, brainstorm, and plan ahead. First, our National Student Coordinators, Elizabeth Skirm and Melissa Merideth, have assembled a list of the Regional Student Coordinators. (See the December 1995 newsletter.)

You can assist them in arranging programs that are meaningful to you in several ways: let them know what it is you need; volunteer to help with plans and arrangements; and participate actively in programs.

Be a leader and pitch in -- do not wait for someone else to say or do what is obvious to you. Call, write, or e-mail them. Get involved.

Physicians, help the students when you can and suggest others to help when you cannot respond.

Regional conferences are in the planning stage. Speakers are needed for an April 1996 Regional Conference at Stoneybrook (Long Island, New York). To volunteer, contact Ellen Lee at 516/331-2054.

Thinking ahead to the Interim (Washington, DC, June 1996) and the Annual Meetings (Boston, November 1996), it is time to plan student programs. Here are some possible options. Please share your preferences with me:

- Balancing Personal and Professional Development
- Career Choices: Choosing a Specialty in Changing Times
- Financial Planning for Your Future
- Managed Care: Implications for Future Practice
- Developing Leadership Skills
- Communication Skills for Dealing with Episodes of Gender Inequities

In addition, AMWA is putting together committee lists and we would welcome volunteers for the Student Committee.

Finally, Carolyn Webber, MD, (immediate past Director of Students) is putting together a student advisory group of past Directors of Students. And AMWA member Nancy Binder, MD, is helping to create a network of AMWA physicians across the country who have agreed to serve as resources to students: as mentors, speakers and colleagues.

Feel free to contact us; we look forward to hearing from you. Cheers.

Lynn C. Epstein, MD, Associate Dean of Medicine Brown University, Box G-A207 Providence, RI 02906 401/863-1140; Lynn_Epstein@Brown.edu

Nancy Binder, MD Oregon Health Science Univ. 3181 SW Sam Jackson Park Rd. Portland, OR 97201 503/494-3126; bindern@ohsu.edu

Carolyn A. Webber, MD Kings County Hospital Dept. of Pathology, Code 20 Brooklyn, NY 11203 719/245-5401

WANTED: Graduating Resident, Low Mileage

Frieda Hulka, MD, Resident Rep.

With approximately six months left before the end of the academic year, many of you are in the process of finding a job.

Finally, after many years of training, you are ready to embark on your career. I would like to take this opportunity to review a few pertinent points.

Practice Opportunities

In the 1990s, less than 20 percent of new physicians are entering solo practice. This option balances independence and autonomy with isolation and increased responsibility.

Partnerships can include two to more than 100 physicians. While providing easy access to colleagues for consultation, call coverage and comraderie, it is imperative that you are compatible with your partner's practice methods and business philosophy.

Another option is joining a medical group where you are an employe. Advantages include a less demanding work schedule, but there may be less autonomy. It is important to have your role defined before you start work.

Where to Practice

Important issues to evaluate include cost of living, population, climate and recreation access.

Once you decide on an area, ways to determine practice opportunities are to contact local practicing physicians in the same specialty, the local or state medical society and the local hospital administrator.

Recruiting firms are another option. Issues to be concerned about include success of the firm in placing physicians in your specialty and area of choice.

Also, consider how the firm is paid. If paid on a contingency,
chances are the position will be “an offer you cannot refuse.” Be sure to look into this before signing up.

The Contract

Once you have found the practice you want to join, you will need to sign a contract. Lawyers do not perform brain surgery...physicians should not sign contracts without proper evaluation. This is a legally binding document -- have it reviewed by a qualified attorney with experience in employment contracts before you sign.

Some of the issues you want to consider include income, duties, fringe benefits, malpractice, termination and restrictive covenants.

Income often is straight forward. However, if based on productivity, be sure it is described in the contract.

Malpractice insurance should include not only coverage during employment, but also in the event of departure from the practice (also known as “tail coverage”).

Provisions for termination should be outlined in the contract.

Lastly, restrictive covenants are agreements not to compete in the same area if you leave the practice. Carefully consider whether you want this in a contract -- it may make a big difference if you leave and want to remain in the same geographic area.

I hope this brief discussion helps to outline issues to keep in mind. Be sure to practice safe employment!

BULLETIN BOARD

Electronic Media Pathways Task Force Update

Angela R.C. Tiberio, MD, Chair, Electronic Media Pathways Task Force

I am thrilled to chair this task force which intends to propel AMWA into cyberspace and the computer revo- lution. It is our goal to bring AMWA members into the computer age so that we may enhance our ability to communicate, educate and lead the way for others. To this end, here are some of the plans we have:

• Develop educational materials and workshops to help AMWA members become computer literate
• Facilitate AMWA members getting on-line, i.e.: obtaining e-mail addresses and accessing the Internet
• Develop an electronic Legislative Action Hotline to keep members informed of important issues that require immediate member action
• Establish AMWA on the Internet and World Wide Web as an international resource for women’s health
• Inform you of Internet and Web sites that are important, interesting or just plain fun
• Respond to any needs that you may have regarding computer use.

You will be receiving a survey with the April 1996 newsletter requesting information about your computer skills and input on how we can best help you so please fill it out and return it to AMWA.

In the meantime, feel free to contact me any time and let’s get wired! My e-mail address is atiberio@aol.com. My snail mail address is 2730 Cascade SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506; Fax: 616/774-5290.

I look forward to hearing from you.

STUDENT SENATE

Raising Funds

Melissa Merideth and Elizabeth Skirm, National Student Coordinators

Happy leap month to everyone! Now that the new year is a reality, you may be thinking, “What Now?”

February is a great chance to break the winter blues by getting revved up about AMWA, put to use some of the energy we saw and admired at the Annual Meeting. Some suggestions include:

Contact your RSC (see December 1995 newsletter, p. 6, for names and addresses) and tell them about the interesting happenings at your school. Better yet, submit an article to AMWAtch, the student newsletter.

Arrange for a speaker to discuss issues in women’s health.

Plan a regional conference like the ambitious women in Region II (April 27, 1996). We have a guide sheet to help you get started.

Get psyched about attending the Interim Meeting in Washington, DC, at the end of June; and the Annual Meeting in Boston in November.

Start fundraising right now! Many organizations begin a new budget in January and now is a good time to request money, even if you do not plan to use it until the end of the year. However, pharmaceutical firms are not the only source of revenue. Other ideas from AMWA branches include: selling T-shirts/coffee mugs with your school or the AMWA logo, selling baked goods/candy/bagels during class or finals week, encouraging your classmates to donate items for a huge garage sale, raffling gift certificates from local department stores or your school bookstore, establishing a textbook buyback/resell co-op, sending a mailer to local physicians asking them to support your branch’s “student travel fund,” either in cash or in frequent flyer miles, and finally, asking your school for a donation as many schools have money or plane tickets set aside for students to travel to conferences.

If some of these ideas seem overwhelming, then think about working with other student groups at your school and splitting the profits. If you have any questions, want more information or just want to say “Hi,” give us a buzz. We would love to hear from you.
CALENDAR

June 28-30, 1996
Interim Meeting
The Washington Court Hotel
Washington, DC

October 30-November 3, 1996
Annual Meeting
Park Plaza Hotel
Boston, MA

Watch for details on the Fourth Annual Congress on Women’s Health (June 1996) and AMWA’s Lobby Day (June 1996).

E-Mail Addresses Sought

AMWA encourages all members to provide their e-mail addresses to AMWA. Send them to amwaleg@aol.com.

1994-1995 Kathryn Sowell Recruitment Campaign

AMWA announced the results of the 1994-1995 Kathryn Sowell Recruitment Campaign at its Annual Meeting in Seattle. This program rewards AMWA members who recruit colleagues into the organizations. The program participants successfully recruited a total of 660 new AMWA members. The individuals recruitment winners were:

- Michele Scott: 22 new members
- Sarah J. Leonard: 20 new members
- Leah J. Dickstein, MD: 15 new members
- Elizabeth Skirn: 15 new members
- Lisa Christopher: 11 new members

Congratulations and special thanks to all AMWA members who participated in this program.

1995-1996 Member-Get-A-Member Campaign

Coming Soon...Watch your mail for details regarding this year’s Member-Get-A-Member Campaign. This year’s campaign promises to offer exciting rewards and challenges. All members are encouraged to participate.

Dues Reminder

Please remember to pay your 1996 membership dues. Membership dues invoices were mailed to regular members in January. Thank you for your continued support.

WHAT’S HAPPENING IN

AMWA

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