



Connecting Physician Families
for Healthier Communities.

the Link

The LINK is the electronic resource and newsletter for all members of the medical family. Share The LINK with everyone in your Alliance! As editors for 2025-2026, we welcome your input. Please contact us with questions, comments and articles. Lisa St. Charles & Gillian Waltman link@amaalliance.org.

DECEMBER 2025

A Christmas Reflection on Love



By Ron Jagers
AMA Alliance president
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As we step into this holiday season with twinkling lights, crowded calendars, and enough cookies to put Santa himself into sugar shock, I find myself reflecting on one theme above all others: love. Not the kind wrapped in shiny paper, but the kind God shows to us daily: steady, undeserved, unconditional, and sometimes delivered through people who don't even realize they are His messengers.

This past month has given me a brand-new perspective on that love. As some of you know, my doctors and I have been watching a little "mystery spot" in the right upper lobe of my lung for over a year. It was too small to fuss over, so the plan was simply to watch and wait. Fast-forward to mid-October, and that little spot apparently decided it was tired of low-budget living and tried to grow into something with its own zip code.

A biopsy confirmed it was cancer. Suddenly, I was launched onto the world's wildest roller coaster, complete with labs, CTs, MRIs, consults, and the distinct feeling that I was not the one driving the ride. On November 4th, the decision was made to remove the right upper lobe and nearby lymph nodes. Yes, this was all happening the very week I was supposed to be at the AMA Interim Meeting. Instead, on November 12th, I was starring in my own four-and-a-half-hour surgical spectacular.



A few days in the hospital, and I was sent home, miracle of miracles, without a chest tube. Let me tell you, if I never meet another chest tube again, it will be too soon. No sad goodbyes were said to that contraption! But here's the real Christmas blessing: of the 27 lymph nodes tested, not a single one showed cancer. That tiny adenocarcinoma was a solo act—and it has now exited stage right. Recovery, I'll admit, has been more challenging than I expected.

Remember, I think I am Superman, and that came as some surprise. I'm back at meetings, but if you look closely, you'll see me wobbling a bit, sometimes from pain, sometimes from fatigue, and occasionally from trying to look graceful while the universe insists otherwise. And yet...through all of this, I have felt God's love more clearly than ever, mostly through you. Through prayers, messages, meals, quiet acts of kindness, and yes, through the watchful and wonderfully bossy care of Dinah, who stepped in at interim with grace, strength, and just enough good humor to remind me that love can be both sacred and a little sassy. Dinah, thank you for being the best President-Elect and friend anyone could ask for.

This year, I am reminded that we are called to be instruments of God's love. Not perfect instruments, some of us are more kazoo than cathedral bell, but instruments, nonetheless. Let's show one another the same generous, patient, joyful love that God shows to us.

Five Small Ways to Share a Little Love This Joyous Season

1. **Send a handwritten note** to someone who's been on your mind; it may be the encouragement they didn't know they needed.
2. **Offer a simple act of service**—hold a door, carry a bag, or give someone your place in line.
3. **Give a sincere compliment** to a stranger or friend. Kind words have a way of lingering long after the moment passes.
4. **Checking in on someone** quietly struggling—a call, a text, or a quick visit can remind them they're not alone.
5. **Practice patience and grace**, especially when holiday stress peaks; often love looks like taking a deep breath and responding gently.

May we all shine a little of God's love into the world, one small act at a time!

May your Holiday Season be filled with warmth, laughter, and a renewed sense of just how deeply you are loved.

Merry Christmas, friends.

Time for AMA Alliance Award Applications

By Myra Gerlock, AMA Alliance Awards chair

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It is that time of year to be thinking about award submissions for projects that were completed between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025. Check out the AMA Alliance website for the different categories and explanations for each category. You can find all award information under the AMA Alliance Awards section at AMAAlliance.org. The winners will present their projects at the national meeting at the end of May in Charlotte, North Carolina. **There are several types of awards—so check out the link below today!**

https://amaa.memberclicks.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=150:awards&catid=20:site-content

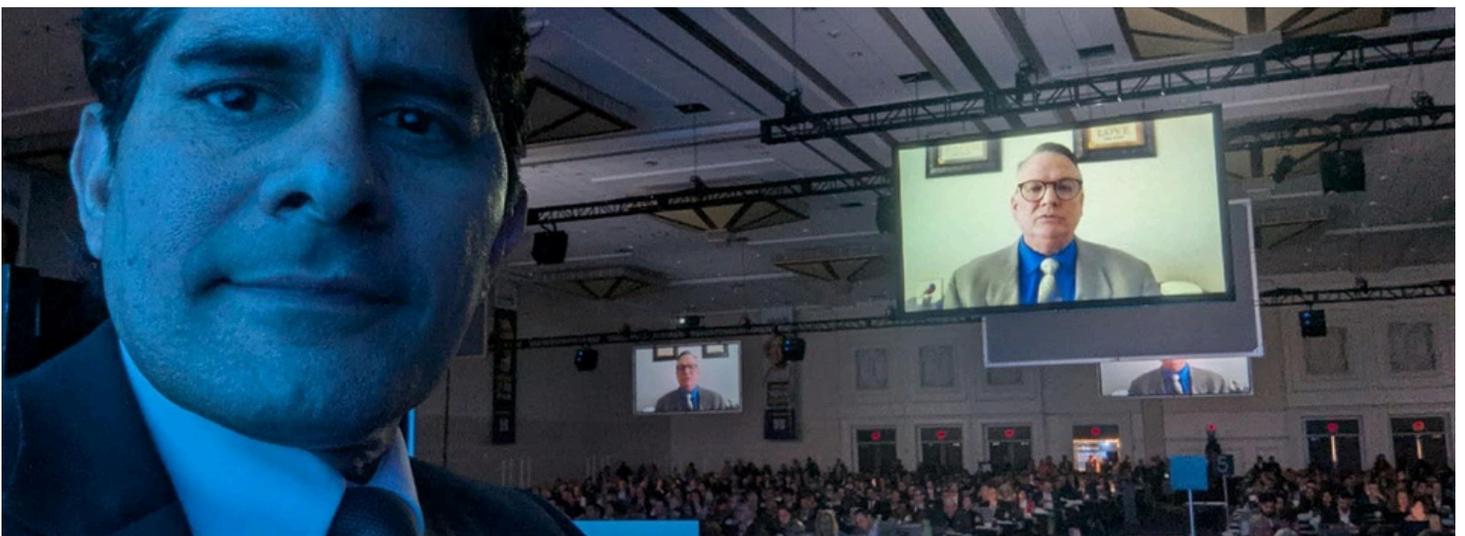
REFLECTIONS

By Dinah Goldenberg, AMA Alliance President-elect 2025-2026

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The AMA Interim Meeting was held in National Harbor, Maryland November 13-18. It was a stimulating and exhausting week. The AMA has changed its procedure, now the Alliance president, AMA Foundation chair and AMPAC chair record a video message for the opening of the house of delegates instead of a live address. Even though Ron was unable to attend in person, his presence was strongly felt. His message was very well received by the attendees, many of whom came up to me specifically to comment. You can see the video on the Alliance website.



The highlights for me at these meetings are the personal interactions with the section members and the individual conversations with attendees. I presented to the Medical Student Section, Young Physicians Section, LGBTQ+ Section, Women Physicians Section, Senior Physicians Section and the Academic Physicians Section. We are pursuing discussions about future collaborations with each group.

Thank you to Jacqueline Nguyen for inviting me to be her guest at the AMPAC luncheon. We heard guest speaker Mike Allen, co-founder of Axios News. I attended the HOD on Monday to hear Dr. Mehmet Oz, Administrator of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, address the delegates. I was introduced to Dr. John Whyte, the new AMA Executive VP, who was very receptive to working with, and supporting the Alliance. I had lengthy conversations with Dr. Chris Bundy and Linda Bresnahan (see Lisa Muehlenbein's article to find out who they are.) Several physicians with ideas for magazine articles approached me. And numerous folks joined the Alliance too!



One of the most special meetings was with Dr. Adele Lewis, (Tenn.) the granddaughter of Belle Chenault. Many of you will remember the AMPAC award named for Belle, given to a physician spouse for their significant, personal contribution of time and talent in state or federal political campaigns. Winners include Pat Hyer, Gay Bowman, Donna Rovito and Kim Moser.



I remain optimistic about the Alliance's future and our connection to the AMA and its members. I appreciate the support of the Alliance board and membership in giving me the opportunity to attend AMA meetings as your representative. I believe it is time well spent!

Wishing everyone a wonderful holiday season whatever your traditions!
Happy New Year!

See you in 2026!

Nominations Season is Here!

By Sana Saleh, North Central Regional Nominating Representative, AMA Alliance

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It is that time of year!! Nominations season! Gather up your thinking caps and identify and promote alliance leaders to be nominated for the national Alliance. Your President-Elect, Dinah Goldenberg, is relying on us and all of you in building a successful leading team for 2026-2027. Make an inventory of all those wonderful and awesome members who you think would add and enhance the future of the family of medicine.

Visit the nominations page on the AMA Alliance members only website by clicking here to read about the three areas of nominations:
<https://amaa.memberclicks.net/nominations>

Board of Directors, Governance Council, and Committees and Task Forces. Each category explains the positions, eligibility and role expectations as per the current by-laws.

To nominate, the process is as easy as 1-2-3:

To endorse an alliance member, click on this form after you log in.

https://amaa.memberclicks.net/2026-nomination_endorsement-form#/

A few key points to think about:

*There is no limit as to how many members you can nominate.

*Try to think of how you interacted with this member in the past and what skills and talents this person possesses that is a special asset to the organization and where you see them fit most appropriately in the above three categories.

*If you do not know what position is most fitting for this person or where they should be placed, do not hesitate in filling out the form nevertheless and promoting the person you think is eligible.



To watch a video prepared by the Nominating Committee on the process of nominations, click here.

<https://amaa.memberclicks.net/?servId=10547&servId=10547&servId=10547&servId=10547>

Below is a timeline of the Nomination dates, deadlines, interviews and final selections:

Deadlines 11/21/2025 – 2/7/2026: Nomination and Endorsement Period Open

11/21/2025 – 2/21/2026: Self Nomination Period Open

2/7/2026 – 3/1/2026: Declaration Period Open

3/1/2026: All Candidates for AMA Alliance Board of Directors must submit application packets by this deadline.

3/2/2026 – 3/9/2026: Candidate Interviews

3/30/2026: AMAA Board of Directors Slate submitted with subsequent announcement

4/6/2026: AMA Alliance Governance Council Candidate Names submitted and announced

5/19/2026: AMA Alliance Presentation of Slate and Nominations from the Floor. Candidate Virtual Meet and Greet

5/20/2026: AMA Alliance Elections

5/29-31/2026: AMA Alliance Annual Meeting and Board of Directors Installation

Programs Council & Health Initiatives Committee: Strengthening Support for Physicians and Their Families: A Conversation with the Physician Health Program

By Lisa Muehlenbein, PhD, NBC-HWC

Director, AMA Alliance Programs Council

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This month, I had the opportunity to meet with two leaders shaping the national landscape of physician well-being: Chris Bundy, MD, from the Washington Physicians Health Program (WPHP) and Linda Bresnahan, Executive Director of the Federation of State Physician Health Programs (FSPHP.) Dr. Bundy has been a featured presenter at the American Conference on Physician Health the past two times I've attended, and his expertise continues to shed light on an often-overlooked area of physician wellness—supporting physicians in crisis before consequences escalate.

Physician Health Programs (PHPs) operate in nearly every state with a shared mission: to identify, support, and advocate for physicians who are struggling with impairment or at risk of significant professional fallout. Their purpose is not punitive. Instead, PHPs provide confidential pathways to evaluation, treatment, and long-term recovery monitoring so physicians can heal, preserve their careers, and, most importantly, return to safe and meaningful practice. At their core, PHPs protect both the clinician and the public by addressing impairment compassionately and proactively.

During our conversation, we explored how the AMA Alliance can partner with PHPs to better support physician families—because when physicians struggle, their loved ones often carry the weight quietly and alone. Dr. Bundy and Ms. Bresnahan emphasized what many of us already know: physician impairment doesn't occur in isolation. Its impact reaches into homes, marriages, and families who may not have clear guidance on where to turn.

Several promising opportunities for collaboration emerged. Dr. Bundy expressed enthusiasm about contributing an article to Physician Family Magazine, specifically addressing how PHPs work and what families should understand if someone they love needs help. We also discussed the possibility of featuring him on an upcoming AMAA All Member Call, allowing our community to hear directly from one of the leading voices in physician health and recovery. Additionally, the AMAA Health Initiatives Committee is building a comprehensive self-care toolkit designed to equip members with practical, reliable resources. Dr. Bundy and Ms. Bresnahan welcomed the inclusion of PHP information in this toolkit and encouraged us to highlight local state PHP contacts within our broader resource library. Their organizations, in turn, are interested in listing AMA Alliance as a resource for physician families—recognizing the Alliance as a trusted, supportive network uniquely positioned at the intersection of medicine, well-being, and the lived experience of physician family life.

Our conversation underscored what many of us advocate for daily: supporting physician well-being requires a collaborative, ecosystem-wide approach. PHPs play an essential role by offering physicians a lifeline during their most vulnerable moments. The AMA Alliance complements that work by supporting the families who often bear the emotional, logistical, and relational ripple effects.

Bringing these pieces together—clinical support, family support, organizational advocacy—creates a stronger, more compassionate safety net for the people who care for all of us. This partnership represents an important step toward that goal, and I look forward to the meaningful work ahead.

AMA Foundation Update

By Racheal Kunesh, AMA Foundation board

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Check out this video shared at the AMA Interim meeting to see how the AMA Foundation has shaped 75 years of progress in medical education, health equity, and physician-led innovation. Don't miss the vintage photo of the Women's Auxiliary to the AMA at the beginning of the video!

<https://youtu.be/2S9tIhIwKwo>

As 2025 wraps up, consider making a donation to the AMA Foundation's AMA Alliance Grassroots Physicians of Tomorrow scholarship fund in honor of its 75th anniversary.

News from Regional Liaisons

Karen Schroeder, Regional Liaisons chair, AMA Alliance

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Perhaps you have seen our updated committee title: Regional Liaisons. This five-member committee accepted President Ron Jagers' proposal to find a new name. We were previously known as "Regional Representatives." The name was often confused with the regional representatives who sit on the nominating committee and are voted into those positions by you, the general membership. Our difference is that the AMA Alliance President appoints us. One national alliance member from each of our four regions and a chair are selected by the president.

We like to spread the word about **EVERYTHING** alliance from the national, state, and county/parish levels. This month, we do not have any pictures to show our members in action, but never fear, your liaisons continue to request access to newsletters, share upcoming events such as the grant writing info session, the updated method of getting your name into the nominating committee, and asking for information from the various counties and states in their respective regions. If you know of a project, please email me with a contact person, and the Regional Liaisons will share it across our nation.

Welcome to the AMA Alliance

By Kirk J. Kilgore, Membership Council Member, AMA Alliance

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We'd like to welcome the following new members to the AMA Alliance. We hope you find fellowship with other physician spouses through a local or state Alliance. We encourage you to "like" our public Facebook page and join our private group on Facebook. We have enjoyed some great reads with our book club and hope you will join us. You will find information about the book group in our publication of Physician Family Alliance in Motion magazine and on our website. We find this is a great way to connect with our members, new and renewed. Our e-newsletter, LINK, and our social media sites will provide you with current information on upcoming events. Keep a look out for our occasional All Member virtual meeting dates. We hope you find many new friends in the Alliance.

Welcome to the AMA Alliance!

Kathryn Pojman, West Virginia

Kara Anderson, West Virginia

Delores Loutzenhiser, Colorado

Alvin Leaks, MD, Georgia

Jonathan Moss, Massachusetts

Alice Fuller, Texas

Gregory Fuller, MD, Texas

Bob Anderson, North Dakota

Misti Anderson, MD, North Dakota

Joi Smith, Texas

Jane Lawrence, New York

Regina Wasserman, New Jersey

Kabuki Anyumba, Missouri

Allan Anyumba, DO, Missouri

Remembering Elaine Through Her Jewelry

By Donna Baver Rovito, Co-Editor, Physician Family Alliance in Motion

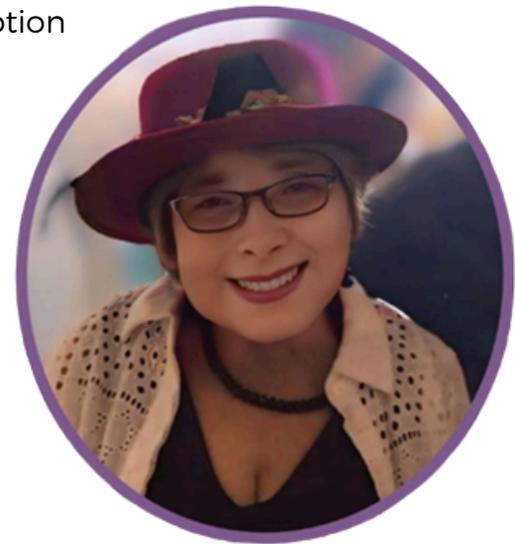
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Friends called Elaine Hale "a firecracker!" She was full of ideas, laughter, and generosity. Her humor lit up every room. Elaine's loyalty and drive lifted everyone around her. And she loved and supported AHEI.

To Elaine, jewelry was more than ornamentation. Each piece told a story—a moment, a memory, or a spark of joy. This is what makes Dr. Steve Hale's generous donation of numerous pieces from his late wife, Elaine's collection, so significant.

Past and future fundraisers featuring Elaine's exquisite jewelry not only fund AHEI's grants but give us a way to remember her and keep her spirit alive moving forward. Elaine Hale was a woman of bold spirit and boundless energy. Among other activities, Elaine was president of the Florida Medical Association Alliance and the Southern Medical Association Auxiliary and served on committees for the AMA Alliance and AHEI. Her work reached thousands.

As AHEI raffles or auctions pieces from Elaine's beloved collection over the next several months, we invite you to carry forward her legacy. Proceeds will support causes she championed so fiercely. Four pieces have already been won by lucky AHEI supporters, raising much needed funds to support grants for community-based health initiatives.





More events will follow; please watch AHEI's website, social media, and email to win your own piece of Elaine's legacy.



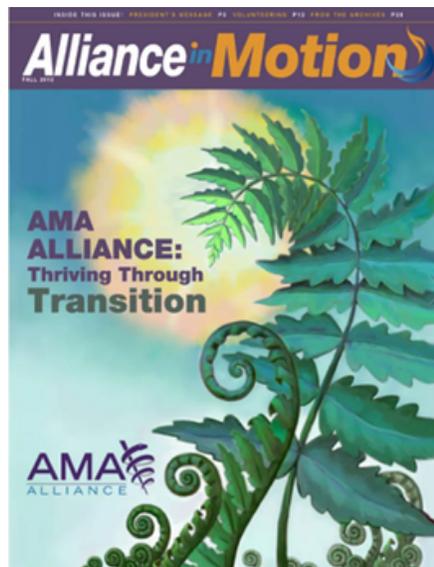
Magazine Memories—Evolution and Growth

By Donna Baver Rovito, Co-Editor, Physician Family Alliance in Motion Magazine

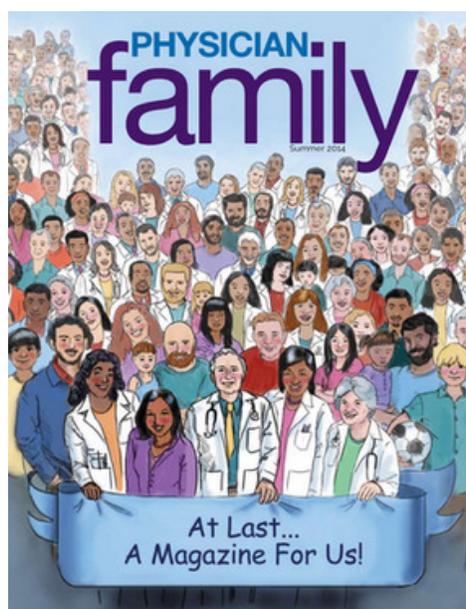
donnabaverrovito@aol.com



Do you remember the debut of Alliance in Motion Magazine in Fall 2012, under the inspired leadership of Editor Pat Klettke? AiM was a brilliant and beautiful publication which highlighted national, state and local Alliance activities.



Later, Pat would help us debut the AMA Alliance's first outward-reaching publication in Summer 2014! Physician Family Magazine premiered as a digital-only magazine; by the third issue, though, the AMA Alliance board decided to make hard copies a member benefit.



Since printing and mailing two magazines is expensive, the board decided to combine the two into a single publication in Summer 2019. Racheal Kunesh was editor of AiM at that time. Later, Sheridan Sheffield and Kris Firth, took over the AiM portion of the magazine, while I continued to edit the Physician Family portion.



As our team coalesced, we thought about integrating the publication even more, and so in Fall 2022, right after the AMA Alliance’s 100th anniversary, we made the integration formal, with a new name, logo, and format! Enter Physician Family Alliance in Motion Magazine!



Our editing team Sheridan Sheffield, Kris Firth, Gillian Waltman, and I love bringing the most interesting, informative, and inspirational articles to all physician families via our digital edition—while hard copies continue to be a member benefit!

We’d love to know what you think of our evolution! Please email editor@physicianfamilymedia.org or aim@amaalliance.org! And don’t forget to watch for the Winter 2026 issue: “Love Your Family!”

\$70,000,000 Raised and Contributed Since 1950

By Debbi Ricks, AMA Alliance Historian

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The AMA Education and Research Foundation (AMAERF) was established in 1950 by the American Medical Association (AMA) to support medical schools, assist medical students, and fund research aimed at improving the health of the nation. Over time, AMAERF evolved into what is now known as the AMA Foundation, with the name change occurring in 1992. Since its founding, national, state, and local members of the AMA Auxiliary/Alliance have raised and contributed more than \$70,000,000 to the fund. During the 1990s alone, state and county Auxiliary efforts raised \$21,384,430.

Some of the AMAA presidents from the 1990s are pictured below officially presenting the fundraising checks. AMA Auxiliary President Jean Hill presenting a check for \$2,050,350; President Colleen Adam presenting a check for \$1,434,970; President Ann Hansen presenting a check for \$1,200,000; and President Barbara Tippins presenting a check for \$1,400,000. Additionally, President Johnnie Amonette and her husband, Rex Amonette, MD, were recognized for making the largest individual cash donation in the history of the AMA Foundation.

AMA-ERF Fundraising 1990's

American Medical Association Education & Research Foundation
Some of the Funds Raised in the 1990's

\$2,050,350.25
1989-1990
AMA-ERF President Lonnie R. Bristow, MD,
AMAA President Jean Hill

\$1,434,970
1998-99
AMAF President J. Edward Hill
AMAA President Colleen Adam

\$1,200,000
1999-2000
AMAF President William H. Mahood, MD
AMAA President Ann Hansen

\$1,400,000 1994-1995
AMA-ERF President Percy Wootton with
AMAA President Barbara Tippins

Largest cash donor ever honored
Johnnie Amonette
President Johnnie Amonette and her husband Rex Amonette, MD, during the Annual Session in June for giving the largest, individual cash donation in AMA Foundation history.

In the 1990's
\$21,384,430
Raised for AMA-ERF

AMA
ALLIANCE

Join the
conversation?

First Tuesday
of the month
5pm ET

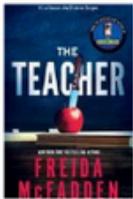
Join us for Book Club at
bookclub@amaalliance.org

January thru March

Book Club

January 6th | The Teacher

by Frieda McFadden

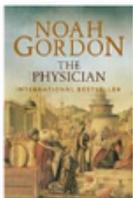


Selection by Jean

A mind-bending, psychological thriller from the New York Times bestselling author Frieda McFadden. A story of twisting secrets and long-awaited revenge.

February 3rd | The Physician

by Noah Gordon



Selection by Lucia

An orphan leaves Dark Ages London to study medicine in Persia in this "rich" and "vivid" historical novel from a New York Times–bestselling author.

March 3rd | A Woman is No Man: A Novel

by Etaf Rum



Selection by Mary Beth

The New York Times bestseller telling the story of three generations of Palestinian-American women struggling to express their individual desires within the confines of their Arab culture in the wake of shocking intimate violence in their community.



Wishing Peace, Hope and Love to each member of the AMA Alliance family this winter holiday season!

Your Link Editors—Lisa St. Charles and Gillian Waltman



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