

Quill

Winter 2001

AMERICAN
MEDICAL WRITERS
ASSOCIATION
Mid-Atlantic Chapter

Volume 7, Issue 1



Mark your calendars...

...for these chapter events coming up later this year:

- Core Curriculum workshops (see page 4) - Saturday, June 2
- AMWA Annual Conference, Norfolk, Virginia - (see page 5) Wednesday, Oct. 24 to Saturday, Oct. 27

President's Message



As a member of the minority who insisted that the 21st century and the third millennium didn't begin until January 1, 2001 (*not* January 1, 2000), let me begin by offering sincere greetings for the new year, the new century, *and* the new millennium.

2001 is shaping up to be an active and exciting year for the AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter. In June, chapter members will have their first opportunity in several years to take two AMWA Core Curriculum workshops at a Mid-Atlantic regional conference (details on page 4). And in October, we will be the host chapter for the AMWA annual conference, which takes place in Norfolk, Virginia (details on page 5).

(Continued on page 2)

The Human Genome Project— Beyond the First Draft

In June 2000, two research groups—one public, one private—announced completion of a “rough draft” of the human genome. What exactly does this breakthrough mean? How will it change our lives? What happens next?

Join the AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter on Saturday, February 24 to get answers to these and other questions. Our distinguished guest speaker will be Eric D. Green, MD, PhD, who is head of the Physical Mapping Section, chief of the Genome Technology Branch, and director of the Intramural Sequencing Center at the National Human Genome Research Institute at the NIH.

Dr. Green is a graduate of the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri. His research focuses on the mapping and sequencing of mammalian genomes and the isolation and characterization of genes that cause genetic diseases. He is an excellent (and entertaining) speaker with a special ability to make the complexities of genome research understandable to nonspecialists in this field.

The meeting will be held in Conference Room 6C6, Building 31, on the NIH campus in Bethesda, Maryland. The program will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will conclude with lunch. Detailed directions appear in a brochure being mailed to all chapter members. To register, submit the form on page 8 with your check. The registration deadline is February 19.

For those interested in learning more about the Human Genome Project, three views of the human genome, together with useful browsing tools, can be found at the following Web sites, which are updated frequently.

<http://genome.ucsc.edu/>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/genome/guide/>

(Click "Map Viewer")

<http://www.ensembl.org/>

President's Message (continued from page 1)

During my 2 years as chapter president, I have received many requests from chapter members who expressed interest in taking AMWA Core Curriculum workshops offered by the chapter. But these events don't just happen—someone has to be willing to do the work involved in organizing them. A major reason why the chapter has not offered Core Curriculum workshops in recent years was a shortage of such volunteers.

I was extremely pleased, therefore, when a relatively new chapter member, Jennifer Sizemore, came forward in response to an item in last fall's *Quill* calling for volunteers to help our chapter organize Core Curriculum workshops.

Our chapter relies almost entirely on volunteers. With the exception of the production editor of this newsletter, who is paid for her work, everyone else involved in any capacity with the chapter is a volunteer. The chapter officers and board members, the newsletter editor, the members who write welcome letters to new chapter members, maintain the chapter's e-mail list and listserv, and help organize chapter events—all these people are voluntarily carving time out of their busy lives to help the chapter serve its members.

Why do they do it? Well, I can only speak for myself, but I do it because I want others to have the same opportunities for professional growth that I have had as an AMWA member.

As I write this, the chapter is in the process of identifying candidates to serve on the board and on committees for the coming year. We particularly need people willing to take on leadership roles. We also need individuals who can host a hospitality table at the Norfolk conference, write articles for this newsletter, provide content for our new chapter Web site, organize informal local meetings for chapter members, and help with the logistical tasks involved in organizing formal chapter events.

When you mark your calendars for the Core Curriculum workshops in June, the annual conference in Norfolk in October, and other forthcoming chapter events, please ask yourself what you can do to help the chapter continue to offer such a range and quality of activities for its members. And call (301/681-1877) or e-mail me (elmayfield@radix.net) with your answer!

— Eleanor Mayfield, president

www.amwa-midatlantic.org/

That's the address of the Mid-Atlantic chapter's new Web site! It's still under construction, but soon you'll be able to log on to find out about forthcoming chapter events, get contact information for chapter officers, read this newsletter in PDF format, and more.

Many thanks to John Wachter of Communication Production Services, Inc., for volunteering to design and maintain the site and to Web site editor Alex Politis. If you would like to help develop content for the Web site, please contact Alex (politisa@csr.nih.gov).

Writers needed!

- The *AMWA Journal* welcomes articles on topics of interest to medical writers. See the submission guidelines on the inside back page of the journal, or contact *Journal* editor Robert Jacoby (410/552-5065; rjacoby@jhuccp.org) to discuss an article idea.
- The *Quill* needs writers to submit articles or volunteer to write assigned articles. Contact newsletter editor Karen Harrop (410/296-1737; kharrop@erols.com)

Mid-Atlantic Chapter Board Members

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Welcome, New Members!

The Mid-Atlantic chapter extends a warm welcome to our newest members:

Katherine Bennett, PharmD, of Olney, Maryland, is a pharmacist with a love of varied experiences related to pharmacy. In her early years, she worked as a traditional and clinical pharmacist and as a consultant in long-term care, where she did a lot of writing. Gradually, she realized that she enjoyed the analyzing and writing aspect of her job, and went on to work for the USP DI (a drug information database produced by the U.S. Pharmacopeia) and for the FDA. In January 2000, Kathie decided to throw her hat (or predictable salary) over the wall and become a freelancer! She says, "It has been great! I am 'hooked' and happy!"

Lara Boeck, of Silver Spring, joined AMWA for professional development and networking opportunities as well as to gain access to the freelance job listings. She primarily does editorial work but also offers writing services involving abstracting, summarizing, or "translating" technical information into lay language. Her educational background is in biology, library and information science, and nutrition/food science. She worked for 7 years as a scientific information specialist, most recently for NCI's Physician's Data Query clinical trials database; now Lara is freelancing. Her current work includes proofreading and editing portions of major HHS publications, finding and indexing Web sites for a well-known scientific database producer, and offering Internet research/reference verification services.

Sherri Chasin Calvo of Clarksville, Maryland, is a freelance science and medical writer and the "In the Field" columnist for ChemWeb. Her previous positions have ranged from NASA scientist to newspaper reporter and editor. She enjoys the opportunity to learn about a wide range of topics. She finds medical writing especially appealing because "by getting accurate and timely information out to health care professionals and the general public, we can help save lives."

The coming new year will mark **Carolyn Jeletic's** tenth year as a scientific editor in the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition of the FDA. As the only editor of research in a center of 800 employees, she finds that her time passes quickly. Carolyn says that joining AMWA has been a life preserver. A nursing major turned English major in college, she has wanted to

expand her base of scientific knowledge since coming to the FDA. She reports that the workshops on molecular biology and immunology at this year's AMWA conference were exactly what she needed, and she is already looking forward to next year's conference.

As a writer/editor for a small contractor based in Washington, DC, **Luis Martarano** writes and edits abstracts of grant proposals and articles from various scientific, technical, and social scientific fields. His current work, on a contract with the National Institute of Justice, involves preparing abstracts of grant proposals on forensic science research, attending meetings as a note taker, preparing summary reports on the proceedings, and supervising the other writer/editors who work on the contract. He also has experience abstracting and indexing for the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's ETOH database. Luis has a master's degree in the biological sciences and 12 years of experience as a laboratory researcher in molecular biology.

Deborah Patton, of Baltimore, was still looking for her career niche after earning a liberal arts undergraduate degree and a master's degree in library science. Indexing is the answer. Among other things, she had set up a patient/family library at the University of Texas System Cancer Center at M.D. Anderson Hospital. Deborah has been indexing medical journals and books since 1996 and has studied medical indexing with other indexers. Through AMWA, she hopes to develop contacts for indexing more medical books.

Jane S. Ricciuti, RPh, MS, is the editor and program director for Medscape Pharmacists & Pharmacotherapy (www.medscape.com) in Frederick, Maryland. She was a practicing pharmacist in a variety of clinical settings and has been editing for a number of years. She joined AMWA to broaden her writing experience.

If you are a new member of our chapter and would like to introduce yourself here, but have not been invited to do so, please contact the column coordinator at lkes-selr@som.umaryland.edu.

— Compiled by Linda J. Kesselring, MS, ELS

Core Curriculum Workshops Set

The AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter will offer two Core Curriculum workshops on Saturday, June 2, 2001. Two of AMWA's most popular workshops will be taught by two of AMWA's most popular and experienced workshop leaders.

- Writing and Editing Materials for Patient Education (9:00 am to 12:00 noon - taught by Edie Stern)
- English Usage and Abusage (1:30 pm to 4:30 pm - taught by Edie Schwager)

If you haven't been able to get into these workshops at the AMWA annual conference (or haven't been able to go to the annual conference), here's your chance to take them right here in the Mid-Atlantic area.

English Usage and Abusage is a required course for the AMWA Core Curriculum certificate. Writing and Editing Materials for Patient Education is an elective course in the editing/writing specialty area.

The workshops will be given at Cadmus Professional Communications in Linthicum, Maryland, located south of Baltimore, near Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Airport. Cadmus is easily reached by car via I-95 and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. It is also possible to travel by train to BWI; pickups from the train station can be arranged on request.

Further details, including deadlines for registering and for submitting homework, will be announced by e-mail and in a printed brochure in March.

The chapter is most grateful to Jennifer Sizemore for volunteering to coordinate the workshops and to Maryalice Ditzler and Cadmus Professional Communications for offering us the space to conduct the workshops.

AMWA's Core Curriculum Program

The Core Curriculum program provides a continuing series of workshops designed to improve skills in biomedical communication. A Core Curriculum certificate may be obtained in any of five specialty areas: editing/writing, educators, freelance, pharmaceutical, and public relations/advertising/marketing.

Any AMWA member may register for the Core Curriculum workshops, whether or not you are pursuing the Core Curriculum certificate. Members who wish to take the workshops for credit toward the Core Curriculum certificate must:

- register by the deadline in the registration program,
- submit satisfactorily completed homework to the workshop leader by the deadline in the registration program, and
- attend the entire workshop (no arriving late or leaving early).

You may enroll in the Core Curriculum program when you register for the workshops or within two weeks afterward. Enrollment in the Core Curriculum program costs \$75. Payment of this one-time fee allows the participant a six-year period in which to complete the program.

Chapter Listserv

Got a question that another Mid-Atlantic Chapter member might know the answer to? Found some information that fellow chapter members might find useful? Post it on the chapter listserv!

The listserv is an easy way to communicate electronically with other chapter members. Subscribing to the listserv is easy: Send an empty e-mail message to AMWA-Mid-Atlantic-subscribe@egroups.com. To post a message, address it to AMWA-Mid-Atlantic@egroups.com.

Job vacancies should *not* be posted on the listserv. Job vacancies are circulated via the chapter's pre-existing e-mail list, which reaches more members than the listserv. (A \$25 fee is charged to the lister of a job vacancy.)

The chapter is grateful to member Sabrah n'haRaven for administering the listserv.

Harboring Plans for the Annual Conference in Norfolk



Are you looking for a worthy New Year's resolution? Even if you aren't, you'll still enjoy helping the mid-Atlantic chapter prepare for the annual AMWA conference, which will be in Norfolk from October 24-27, 2001.

As host chapter, we've identified three goals. We plan to provide excellent services, and the committees that will provide these services are described below. In addition, we plan to use our resources efficiently. This is especially important because of the limited number of AMWA members who live near Norfolk. Finally, we plan to have fun serving as the host chapter.

The first committee will identify local speakers for the plenary sessions and special forums. Ordinarily, the host chapter provides a chairman or chairwoman for each session, but we simply don't have enough members. Instead, one committee will be formed to collaborate with AMWA members from other chapters who chair the plenary sessions and special forums. Beth Leshner, who chaired the educational committee for the Virginia Society of Health-System Pharmacists, will chair the local educational committee.

The second committee is responsible for the hospitality booth, which sells conference souvenirs to raise money for the host chapter and also provides local information to conference attendees. Linda Kesselring, who chaired this committee when the annual conference was in Baltimore, will chair the hospitality committee.

The third committee will solicit prizes for a daily drawing. This popular activity attracts people into the

reception area, and the promise of traffic enables AMWA to sell booths to vendors. Gayle Scott, who has excellent connections throughout Hampton Roads including local pharmaceutical representatives, will chair this committee.

The fourth committee will raise money for the chapter, but the fundraiser has not yet been determined. If tickets can be sold for the drawing, then this raffle could be our fundraiser. Otherwise, the prizes will be given as door prizes, and the chapter can sell something else, such as T-shirts. A volunteer is needed for this committee.

The fifth committee will provide publicity for the annual conference, including pre-conference coverage and press coverage during the conference. Pre-conference coverage is especially important because of concerns that Norfolk might not be an attractive conference site. Beth Henry, who has lived in Virginia Beach long enough to appreciate the area's many attractions, will chair this committee.

There is no tour committee because the host chapter is not responsible for planning tours. Instead, tours are selected by AMWA's administrative staff. In fact, 2001 will be Lillian Sablack's last year as executive director, so many special activities are being planned.

If you would like to serve on a committee, please contact the chairperson (see table). If you have questions, please contact Cindy Hamilton at cindy@hamiltonouseva.com or Eleanor Mayfield at elmayfield@radix.net.

— *Cindy W. Hamilton, PharmD, chapter member*

Mid-Atlantic Committees for Norfolk 2001

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chairperson</u>	<u>E-mail Address*</u>
Education	Beth Leshner	bglesher@worldnet.att.net
Hospitality	Linda Kesselring	lkessel112@aol.com
Door prizes (or raffle)	Gayle Scott	gscottphar@aol.com
Fund raiser	Volunteer needed	
Publicity	Beth Henry	bethenry@mindspring.com

* To volunteer, please contact the chairperson.

Members Collaborate to Earn International & National Award

The Apex Grand Award and the National Health Information Gold Award went to AMWA members Elizabeth Hessman, senior writer/editor, American Red Cross, Washington, DC and Elizabeth Smith, researcher/writer, Smith Simon Company, Lyndhurst, VA, for the Red Cross publication "Renewing Life," a bereavement packet for tissue donor families. Both are members of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter.

The Apex Grand award is an international award given out by Communication Concepts "based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content and the suc-

cess of the entry in achieving overall communications effectiveness and excellence."

There were about 5,000 entries from all over the world. The Gold National Health Information Award was bestowed by the Health Information Resource Center for one of the nation's best consumer health information publications. The judges were a panel of health information experts who selected gold, silver, bronze, and merit winners from 1,000 entries.

Hearty congratulations to Elizabeth and Elizabeth!



In Honor of Susan Feinman

Susan Ellmann Feinman, PhD, an AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter member since 1993, died on November 2, 2000 after a 3-year battle with ovarian cancer.

Dr. Feinman was a microbiologist, a retired administrator of contract proposal reviews at the National Cancer Institute, a freelance writer, and author of three technical books. Topics she wrote about included antibiotic resistance, allergic sensitization and toxicity to chemicals, and women's careers and health.

Born in Atlanta and raised in Washington, DC, Dr. Feinman was a graduate of Wilson High School and Wellesley College. She received a master's degree in biochemistry and a doctorate in microbiology, both

from George Washington University.

Dr. Feinman was an activist on behalf of women in science and at the time of her cancer diagnosis was president-elect of Graduate Women in Science. She was also a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a past vice president of the Sigma Delta Epsilon science honorary society, and a past president of the suburban Maryland chapter of Federally Employed Women and the FDA chapter of the Sigma Xi scientific society chapter.

Survivors include her husband, David M. Feinman, of Potomac, Maryland, three daughters, and a granddaughter.

Please let us have your e-mail address!

To reduce mailing expenses, the chapter would like to communicate with members by e-mail as much as possible. If you have not given your e-mail address to AMWA, please send it to Michael Altus, Mich-BALT@aol.com. Also, if your e-mail address has changed, please send Michael your new address to avoid bounced messages. Thank you!

EVMS Library Toots its Horn and Displays Bells and Whistles For Hampton Roads Group



September 12, 2000. The Hampton Roads Subchapter of AMWA held its fall quarterly meeting at the Edward E. Brickell Medical Sciences Library at the Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS), Norfolk, Virginia. Five members and one guest met for a guided tour of the new library.

During the tour, Barbara Weedman, outreach services coordinator, discussed advances in modern technology that may be useful to medical writers. The library subscribes to 944 journals and offers a computer classroom, self-service copy machines, more than 400 study carrels, 16 small study rooms, and seven computers for public use. Each study carrel and study room has a wireless network connection, which is Internet-capable. The seven computers available to the public have access to a CD-ROM Medline database, the library's catalog system, and select other electronic resources. Furthermore, the library offers outreach programs to various groups or organizations on how to use PubMed and other research databases.

Outside of modern technology, the library boasts a very special historical collection in the Dr. and Mrs. John S. Thiemeyer, Jr. Medical History and Reading Room. The collection consists of books, journals, and medical artifacts dating back to the 1700s.

Access to some library features, such as the Internet and study rooms, is restricted to faculty, staff, and students. The historical collection is available for consultation by appointment only. The library does offer special services to Hampton Roads health professionals, including borrowing privileges, reference services, document delivery, and end-user training. More information about the library is available at www.evms.edu/evmslib.

Following the library tour, the group had a business lunch at Havana in Norfolk. Topics of discussion included volunteer work, guest speakers, and guest services for the 2001 National AMWA Conference in Norfolk. Hampton Roads Subchapter members are working toward making the national meeting a guaranteed success.

Anyone interested in attending a meeting of the Hampton Roads AMWA Subchapter or in volunteering time or suggestions for the Norfolk national conference should contact Cindy Hamilton (cindy@hamiltonhouseva.com).

— *Belinda Elmore*

AMWA Bulletin Boards

To communicate with a wider cross-section of the AMWA membership, check out the bulletin boards on AMWA National's Web site (www.amwa.org). Click on "Visit the AMWA Member Bulletin Boards."

Access is restricted to AMWA members. Type your last name, capitalizing the first letter, in the space for username, and your membership number in the space for password. (Your membership number appears in the top right-hand corner of the address label on this newsletter. Just type in the digits, not the letters "AMWA" that precede the digits.)

Get Legal Advice At A Discount

AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter members can obtain legal advice at a discount through Graybill & English, LLC, a Washington, DC law firm specializing in literary, media, and entertainment law. The firm also offers traditional legal services, such as drawing up wills and trusts, and literary agency services on a standard contingency basis.

Chapter members receive a discount off the firm's regular hourly rates. Much of the firm's work is done by phone and fax, so you do not need to be near Washington, D.C. to use this service. For more information, call Nina Graybill at 202/861-0106.

Registration for The Human Genome Project

Saturday, February 24, 2001

Registration Form

AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter
The Human Genome Project: Beyond the First Draft
Saturday, February 24, 2001

Name: _____ Company: _____

Address: _____

Daytime phone: _____ E-mail address: _____

AMWA member \$17

Nonmember \$22

I prefer a vegetarian lunch

Deadline for registration: February 19, 2001

Make check payable to: AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter

Send form and check to: Susan Farrer, 9012 Sudbury Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901-3819

Questions? Contact Eleanor Mayfield (301/681-8977; elmayfield@radix.net)

Karen Harrop
8105 Pleasant Plains Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21286

