

Quill

Winter 2002

AMERICAN
MEDICAL WRITERS
ASSOCIATION
Mid-Atlantic Chapter

Volume 8, Issue 1



Calendar of Events

Saturday, February 23, 2002

Mid-Atlantic Chapter Meeting
University of Maryland Shady Grove
Center, Rockville, MD, 10:00 a.m.
(details on this page)

April 2002

Mid-Atlantic Chapter
annual meeting and dinner
(time and place to be determined)

Saturday, June 1, 2002

Mid-Atlantic Chapter Conference
Cadmus Professional
Communications, Linthicum, MD
(see p. 3)

October 30–November 2, 2002

AMWA Annual Conference,
San Diego, CA

AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter Needs You!

Have you been thinking that it's time to get more involved with AMWA locally? If so, here's your opportunity. The Nominating Committee is now seeking candidates for chapter Board and committee positions starting in the spring. For more information, please contact chapter president Donna Savage

Mysteries of Genomics- Part 2

First Chapter Meeting of 2002

Happy New Year! Please join us for the Mid-Atlantic Chapter's first event of the new year on Saturday, February 23. Chapter member Jessie Wolfe, PhD, will shed some light for us on where things are going in the field of functional proteomics and drug discovery with her talk, "Genomics, Functional Proteomics, and Related Mysteries: What Does It All Mean?"

It's been about a year since Dr. Eric Green of the National Institutes of Health spoke to our chapter about the Human Genome Project. Jessie's talk will enlighten us further on recent developments in this cutting-edge area of bioscience.

Jessie heads the medical writing group at Human Genome Sciences, Inc. (HGS), a biopharmaceutical company. She will discuss the HGS approach to the discovery of protein therapeutics and the challenges and benefits of being a medical writer in the biotechnology world.

Previously, Jessie was a medical writer at Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Inc. She earned a PhD in pharmacology from the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City.

The meeting will be held at the University of Maryland Shady Grove Center in Rockville, MD. The program will begin at 10:00 am and will conclude with lunch. To register, please fill out the registration form on p. 7 and send it with your check to the address on the form. Directions to the meeting location will be sent when you register and will also be posted on our Web site, www.amwa-midatlantic.org.

Registration for this event is limited to 40 people. Don't miss out—register today!



President's Message



“Book raffles and workshops and dockside dinners, oh my!” AMWA’s 2001 annual conference in Norfolk, VA, was a huge success for AMWA nationally as well as for the Mid-Atlantic Chapter.

We were concerned that the events of September 11 would keep people away but, although there were some cancellations, the conference was well attended by AMWA members from near and far. (I for one found it comforting to be able to drive to the conference in only a few hours.)

A hearty thank-you to all our chapter members—especially those in the Norfolk/Hampton Roads area—who worked so hard on the local conference arrangements. Three people deserve specific mention for their hard work and dedication to making the annual conference “click” as it did: Cindy Hamilton, the Local Arrangements Chair; Gayle Scott, who organized the door prizes and book raffle; and Linda Kesselring, who chaired the Hospitality Committee.

Upcoming events. So you didn’t attend the annual conference in Norfolk but you still want to participate in Mid-Atlantic AMWA gatherings? Coming up in February will be an informative presentation from one of our members who works at Human Genome Sciences.

In April we will gather for our annual dinner meeting; watch for email notices about this fun event. On June 1, 2002, we will offer two core

curriculum workshops at Cadmus Professional Communications in Linthicum, MD (see article on p. 3).

www.amwa-midatlantic.org. We are considering ways to make our chapter Web site more dynamic and useful to members. If you have some thoughts along those lines, please contact Tamia Karpeles (tamia@toad.net), who has taken the lead in figuring how to freshen and enliven our site. We welcome your input!

2002 Chapter Elections. It’s hard to believe, but it’s time to begin recruiting for the chapter Board of Directors elections this spring. Serving on our Chapter’s Board is not only fun and educational, but you get to know other dedicated AMWA members and to be at the hub of Mid-Atlantic AMWA information and activities! If you’re interested in serving on the Board or on a chapter committee, please contact me (IntFingers@aol.com; 301-942-2447).

I look forward to meeting and talking with all of you as our Chapter year progresses. As always, please feel free to contact me or any other Board member with ideas or questions about our Chapter.

— Donna R. Savage, M.Ed, ELS
Mid-Atlantic Chapter President

Mid-Atlantic Chapter Board Members

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President-elect

Susan Atlas 410/740-0086 sja25@cornell.edu

Secretary

Nancy Wachter 410/528-4315 nwachter@lww.com

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Tamia Karpeles 410/544-0216 tamia@toad.net

Immediate Past President

Eleanor Mayfield 301/681-8977 elmayfield@radix.net

Chapter Again Offers Core Curriculum Workshops

The AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter will offer the following two Core Curriculum workshops on Saturday, June 1, 2002:

- Statistics for Medical Writers and Editors - taught by Jessica Ancker
- Essentials of Copyediting - taught by Maryalice Ditzler

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.

Statistics for Medical Writers and Editors is a required course for the AMWA Core Curriculum certificate. Essentials of Copyediting is an elective course in the editing/writing area of concentration.

The workshops will be given at Cadmus Professional Communications in Linthicum, Maryland, 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 email and in a printed brochure in March.

The chapter is most grateful to Jennifer Sizemore for again 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 Web Site:
www.amwa-midatlantic.org**

Invite AMWA to Visit *Your* Workplace!

Would you like other Mid-Atlantic Chapter members to know more about the organization you work for? Consider an on-site chapter meeting!

Several successful recent chapter meetings have involved visits to a member's workplace: the U.S. Pharmacopeia in Rockville, Maryland in January 1998; the Cadmus Journal Services printing plant in Easton, Maryland, in spring 1998; and the U.S. Red Cross Holland Laboratory, also in Rockville, in April 1999.

It's a great way to meet other chapter members, spread the word about the work your organization does, and show your support for the Mid-Atlantic chapter! To learn more, call chapter program chair Susan Atlas at 410-740-0086 or email her at <sja25@cornell.edu>.

Book Raffle A Success!

The first-ever book raffle at the AMWA annual conference—conceived and organized by Mid-Atlantic Chapter members in the Norfolk area—was a voluminous success!

Proceeds from the sale of raffle tickets netted nearly \$500 for chapter funds. In nonfinancial terms, the raffle was a fun activity for AMWA members, based on ticket sales and enthusiasm. Mid-Atlantic members who volunteered to staff the hospitality table and sell tickets had the opportunity to get acquainted with one another. Our success would not have been possible without the volunteers who made AMWA members feel welcome in Norfolk.

Another key ingredient in the success of the book raffle was the generosity of our book donors, many of whom are AMWA members (indicated by an *): American Medical Association, American Society of

Health-System Pharmacists, Appleton & Lange, Bob Day*, Peter A. Ensminger*, Barbara Gastel*, Cindy Hamilton*, Bob Iles*, Michelle Kienholz*, Tom Lang*, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, McGraw-Hill, Pharmacist's/Prescriber's Letter, Edie Schwager*, and Roxane K. Young*. We had hoped for 10 books and got 30!

Our goals in planning the book raffle were to raise money for the Mid-Atlantic Chapter and to host an enjoyable activity through which members could network and visit our booth sponsors. To our book donors and hospitality table volunteers, thank you for making these goals a reality!

— Gayle N. Scott, PharmD

Cinderella Makes a Big Splash!

The Mid-Atlantic Chapter held a special event at the annual conference in Norfolk this year. For those of you who did not attend this extra-special add-on, BE JEALOUS because we had a great time!

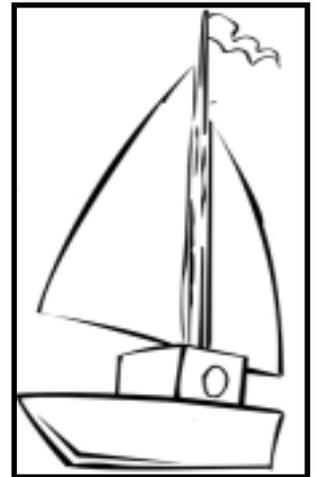
Thanks to chapter (and Board) member Cindy Hamilton, the Local Arrangements Committee chair, we held a post-chapter-social dinner on and around the Hamiltons' private sailboat, *Cinderella*, moored two blocks from the conference site. For a small fee that partially offset the food expenses, Mid-Atlantic Chapter members gathered on the dock and dined on gourmet sandwiches, salads, and desserts; beverages were also provided.

Cindy presided over tours of the *Cinderella*. I was amazed by how much usable space there was below deck, including a great kitchen area, sleeping space for six people, and plenty of seating capacity. As we munched on desserts and sipped beverages, we settled on deck or below and talked about all kinds of topics with other chapter members, making for an intimate and memorable experience.

Thanks to Cindy, her husband Raleigh, and Gayle Scott (a member of the Local Arrangements Committee and the Membership Committee) for making the docking and catering arrangements and for ensuring the starry sky, mild temperatures, and barely detectable breezes.

Now if we could only entice the Hamiltons to sail their boat through the Panama Canal to San Diego for the 2002 AMWA annual conference...!

— Donna R. Savage, M.Ed., ELS
Mid-Atlantic Chapter President



AMWA's Annual Conference in Norfolk: A Dream Come True

Have you ever wished that major conferences were more convenient to attend? That you could drive your car to the conference? That the location would offer many interesting attractions? That you would feel safe walking to events at night?

Have you ever been warned, "Be careful what you wish for"?

No one was more surprised than I when AMWA announced that its annual conference would be held in Norfolk, VA, in 2001. AMWA members in southeast Virginia began planning for the event in 1999.

Brian Bass, who had been local arrangements chair for the AMWA annual conference in Philadelphia in 1999, graciously offered tips based on his experience. He encouraged me to delegate, delegate, delegate. His long list of committees made it obvious that a collaborative effort was required by AMWA members throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.

We began by identifying the following goals:

- To provide excellent service as the host chapter
- To use our resources, especially volunteers, efficiently
- To have fun

The rest is history. Beth Henry, Julie Basco, and I launched a publicity campaign that ultimately drew 714 registrants. Unfortunately, there were 101 cancellations after September 11.

Many Mid-Atlantic Chapter members contributed to the conference's success:

- Marilyn Mendelson organized the new how-to

forums.

- Christina Israel led a forum on the stigma of disease.
- Eleanor Mayfield organized the freelance plenary session.
- Beth Leshner helped identify speakers for other sessions.
- Gayle Scott collected gift certificates for the door prizes and books for the raffle (see article on p. 4). Gayle also assembled a list of local restaurants and their menus.
- Linda Kesselring recruited volunteers for the hospitality table.

Reflecting on our goals, I realize it is impossible to use them to measure the success of the annual conference. Nonetheless, comments overheard at the hospitality table suggest that conference attendees were pleasantly surprised by the annual conference and impressed by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter's "southern hospitality."

I hope that everyone reading this article will join me in thanking the Mid-Atlantic Chapter members who worked as volunteers at the annual conference, AMWA members who registered for the annual conference—especially those who traveled long distances—and everyone else who helped make this dream come true.

— Cindy W. Hamilton, PharmD
Local Arrangements Chair, Norfolk 2001

Thanks to Hospitality Volunteers

The Mid-Atlantic Chapter thanks the following members for volunteering their time at the hospitality table during the 2001 AMWA conference in Norfolk:

Lori Alexander

Michael Altus
Deborah Anderson
Sandra Bryant
Susan Causey
Janice Deal
Maryalice Ditzler
Lisa Dwyer
Daniel Eckstein
Elizabeth Freeman
Margot Fromer
Barbara Joan Goldman
Cindy Hamilton

Elena Haveles
John Herrmann
Diane Howard
Christina Israel
Tamia Karpeles
Linda Kesselring
Beth Leshner
Lynn Limon
Jennifer Macke
Doris Margolis
Eleanor Mayfield
Gail McMenamin

Marilyn Mendelson
Sue Murray
Deborah Patton
Donna Savage
Gayle Scott
Carol Thomas
Eve Wilson
William Voige
Pilar Wyman
Jun Yan
Donna Zarzuela

The Mid-Atlantic's Best-Kept Cyber Secret

So...What do you think of our chapter's Web site? Having volunteered to spearhead an effort to develop the site, I asked this question repeatedly at the AMWA annual conference in Norfolk. The answer I got, almost universally, was, "Huh? We have a Web site?"

It falls into the category of little known facts, but yes—we do. Go to www.amwa-midatlantic.org and take a look at it, then let me know what you think. I'll wait for you here.

Are you back? Not a whole lot happening yet, is there? (Although we owe special thanks to Alex Politis, former Web site editor, and John Wachter, our volunteer Webmaster, for the start we've made.) But we're about to change that. And you're about to help.

Every AMWA chapter is allotted space to develop a regional Web presence through the national organization's site, www.amwa.org. Some chapters have established impressive sites. To look at a few of them, go to the Chapter Information page at amwa.org and click on "Chapter Information (with regional map)." Just to start you out, try Greater Chicago (click 10), Northwest (click 18), and Great Lakes (click 08). In each case, click on the link to the Web site to see what the chapter has assembled.

Now for the pop quiz. Of the four sites you just visited (you *have* toured the sites, haven't you?), which one posts regional job openings and other medical writing opportunities? Which one maintains an online column where freelance members can share their views on the independent writing life? Which one includes a calendar listing forthcoming programs and events? Links to online resources for medical writers? Information on chapter awards? A listserv to promote

communication among chapter members?

Just in case you didn't study for the quiz, I'll let you know that "amwa-midatlantic.org" is *not* the answer to any of these questions. We've got our work cut out for us.

But we're not alone, by any means. At an informal meeting of chapter delegates that took place in Norfolk, Web site development was a recurring theme. Many chapters have made it a primary goal this year to determine how they can use the Web to galvanize chapter activity and promote a greater sense of community among a far-flung membership. We are all looking for ways to use cyber-communication for the benefit of our chapters and our individual members.

During the coming weeks, you'll receive an e-mail survey asking for your help in guiding content development for the Mid-Atlantic Chapter's Web site. I urge you to contribute your thoughts, insights, and wild ideas to help us map out a dynamic site plan. We'll get practical later on, but to start with, I just want to brainstorm with you. It's tricky to create a Web site that works—a site that members will bookmark and return to regularly, knowing that they'll find information, contacts, networking opportunities, and resources that contribute to their professional advancement. I think we can do it, with your help.

What are the elements that make a Web site great? What elements would keep *you* coming back? Please give me your take on the answer. And don't feel obliged to wait for the survey. Drop a note anytime to tamia@toad.net and share your thoughts. I look forward to hearing from you.

— Tamia Karpeles, *ELS*

Opportunity Available:

New Production Editor Sought for *Quill*

Do you have graphic design skills? Would you like to put *your* stamp on the design of this newsletter? If so, you could be the *Quill's* new production editor!

The production editor (a paid position) is responsible for the design, layout, coordination of printing, and distribution of this newsletter. The *Quill* is published three times a year (in January, May, and September) and mailed to our chapter's more than 300 members, as well as to prospective members and other AMWA chapters.

If you are interested in this position or would like more information, please contact interim editor Eleanor Mayfield (301-681-8977; elmayfield@radix.net).

Cindy Hamilton Joins AMWA Executive Committee

Congratulations to Mid-Atlantic Chapter member Cindy W. Hamilton, PharmD, who has joined the Executive Committee of National AMWA as administrator of chapters. In this capacity, she will serve as liaison between AMWA chapters and the Executive Committee, assist chapter officers in developing protocols and procedures where needed, and help develop chapter officers' leadership skills.

Cindy, who lives in Virginia Beach, VA, also is a member of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter Board of Directors and coordinated local members' involvement in organizing the 2001 AMWA annual conference in Norfolk, VA.

Our chapter is fortunate to now have two of its members serving on AMWA's Executive Committee. Long-time chapter member Norman Grossblatt is serving his second year as AMWA's administrator of publications. Thank you to both Cindy and Norman for your dedication to AMWA!

New AMWA Executive Director Takes the Helm

AMWA has a new executive director, Donna Munari, CAE, who began work on October 15, 2001. Ms. Munari has more than 20 years of experience in association management, including meeting planning, educational program development, assessment of members' needs, and implementation of programs and services to meet those needs.

Lillian Sablack, who had been AMWA's executive director for 28 years, retired following the Norfolk conference. Among the many tributes Ms. Sablack received in honor of her tremendous contributions to AMWA, the National Board of Directors voted to name the membership dinner at the annual conference the "Lillian Sablack Membership Dinner" beginning in 2001. Ms. Sablack was also named an honorary AMWA fellow.

Registration Form

AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter

Genomics, Functional Proteomics and Related Mysteries: What Does It All Mean?

Saturday, February 23, 2002

University of Maryland Shady Grove Center, Rockville, MD

9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

Daytime phone: _____ E-mail address: _____

_____ AMWA member, \$18

_____ Nonmember, \$23

Deadline for registration:

Make check payable to:

Send form and check to:

February 18, 2002

AMWA Mid-Atlantic Chapter

Susan Farrer, 9012 Sudbury Road,

Hampton Roads Subchapter to Meet

“Herbal Drugs and Food Supplements: Underappreciated Cures or Overadvertised Cure-Alls?” will be the topic when the Mid-Atlantic Chapter’s Hampton Roads subchapter holds its first meeting of 2002 in February in Williamsburg, VA.

The speaker will be local member Gayle Scott, PharmD, FASCP, BCPS, who will discuss common herbal and supplemental products and describe the differences between the regulation of drug and food supplements. Gayle lectures about alternative medicine at Eastern Virginia Medical School and writes for the Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database, published by *Pharmacist’s/Prescriber’s Letter*. A lively discussion is sure to follow her talk!

The Hampton Roads subchapter was formed more than two years ago to provide an opportunity for AMWA members to network in southeastern Virginia. The subchapter holds quarterly lunch meetings in Williamsburg, which was selected because of its location midway between Richmond and Norfolk. Attendance at meetings ranges from 4 to 10 people.

As the *Quill* went to press, a date had not been set for the subchapter’s February meeting. For further information about the meeting, or to be added to the group’s mailing list, please contact Gail McMenamin at <pisinc@home.com>.

Eleanor Mayfield, Interim Editor
10227 Green Holly Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20902

Wanted: Writers

- The *Quill* needs writers to submit articles or volunteer to write assigned articles. This is a great opportunity to get your byline in the chapter newsletter, get your name “out there” to the chapter membership, and make a valuable contribution to the chapter. If you’re interested, contact interim newsletter editor Eleanor Mayfield (301/681-8977; elmayfield@radix.net)
- 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 (410/659-6397; rjacoby@jhucpp.org) to discuss an

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215/884-8501, Lferro11@home.com

