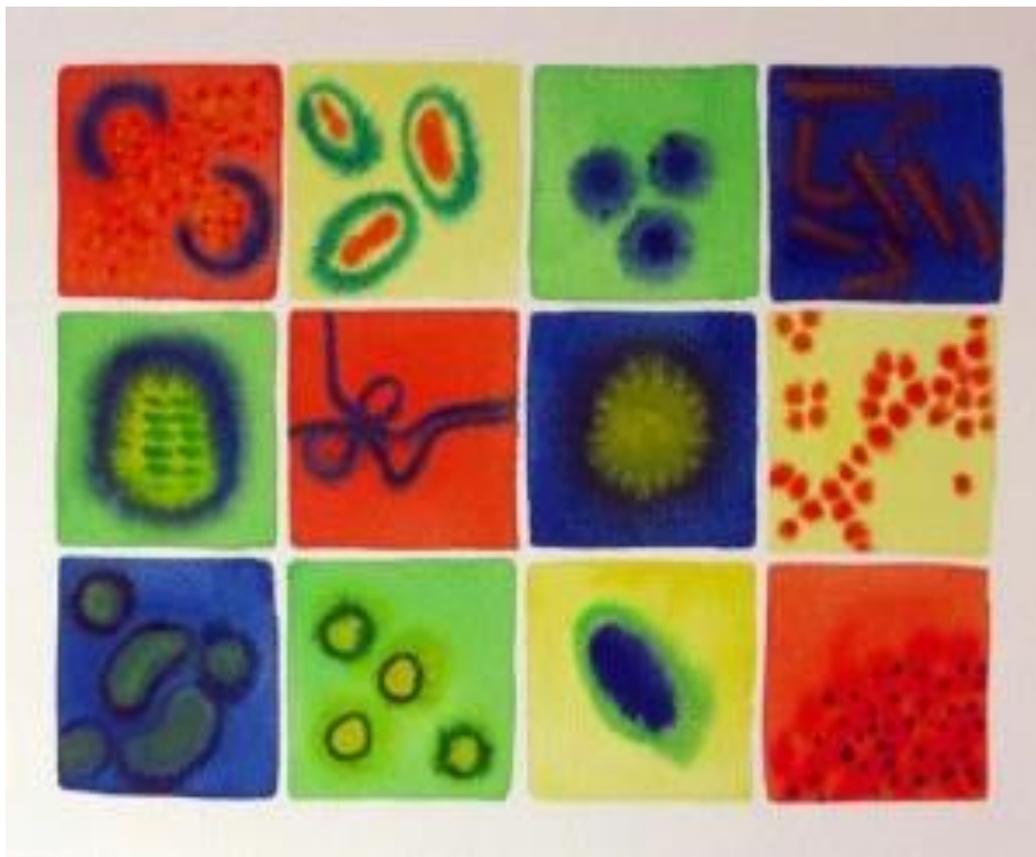


MID-AMERICA CHAPTER NEWS

American Medical Writers Association

Summer 2019



Beautiful but Deadly
Michele Banks, watercolor, 2015

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President's Letter

Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

With longer days and warmer weather, I hope that you are all able to take some time to enjoy summer, whether it's a vacation to the beach, mountains or lake, or maybe even a staycation! And on your travels, don't forget that AMWA offers some great reading material to keep you updated and informed of things in the medical writing community. The Summer 2019 AMWA *Journal* is online now and has some excellent articles, including original research, science reviews, and career development articles. Additionally, *Medical Communication News* is distributed twice a month to AMWA members to highlight noteworthy articles related to medical communications. So, don't forget to bookmark these links before you head out the door.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Raeesa Gupta to our executive board as our newest secretary. Raeesa is a freelance science writer and editor specializing in evidence-based medicine, neurological disorders, and clinical diagnostics. She "stumbled upon" her passion for communicating science while writing her PhD dissertation. Since then, she has authored scientific manuscripts, blog posts, feature articles, and textbook chapters. She hopes to use her AMWA membership to network and learn more about different kinds of medical writing. We are excited to have her join our team! And as a reminder, if anyone is interested in taking on more leadership roles in the chapter, we would love to hear from you!

Chapter Officers

President: Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

Treasurer: Leslie Neistadt, ELS

Secretary: Raeesa Gupta, PhD

Membership Chair: Heather McNeill, MA

President Elect: Natalie DeWitt, PhD

Newsletter Chair: Susan Sunderman, MLS

Webmaster: Lisa M. Balbes, PhD

St. Louis Luncheon Coordinators:

Lisa M. Balbes, PhD, Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD

Nebraska Event Coordinator:

Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

Kansas City Event Coordinator:

Swarna Mandali, PhD, RDN, CSSD, LDN

Iowa Event Coordinator: Natalie DeWitt, PhD

St. Louis-area Freelance Luncheon Series: TechWrite STL

Joanne McAndrews, PhD

Lisa Balbes, PhD



The TechWrite STL group continues to hold bi-monthly meetings. At most meetings, a topic of interest to freelance medical and technical writers is presented, usually over lunch at a local restaurant.

A Speed Networking session, coordinated by Joanne McAndrews, was held on May 7th, with 12 members in attendance. The first 30 minutes of the meeting consisted of 1:1 networking in 5-minute increments, followed by a lunch with further getting-to-know-you discussion. Many business cards were exchanged!

Future meetings are scheduled for July 15th (Desktop Publishing Software, presented by Suzanne Broussard); September 5th (our annual dinner with guest speaker, Samantha Liss, who will present “The Battle for Quality Medical Journalism”); and a discussion of the best and worst books read by our members in 2019 on November 13th, moderated by Leslie Neistadt.

Lisa Balbes and Joanne McAndrews have been co-organizing the group since September 2006, when it was formed as a merger of the local AMWA and STC-CIC groups. A schedule of upcoming luncheons can be found on our chapter website (<http://www.amwa-midamerica.org/index.htm>). A complete list of past topics, as well as handouts, is available on the History tab on that website.

- **Be a Better Freelancer Conference – October 2019**

Communication Central, a business owned by March TechWHRL luncheon attendee Ruth E. Thaler-Carter, will host its 14th annual national “Be a Better Freelancer”® in partnership with the National Association of Independent Writers and Editors (NAIWE) right here in St. Louis for the first time, Oct. 11-13, 2019, at the Chase-Park Plaza Hotel. Registration and program details will be available soon at www.communication-central.com.

Nebraska Area Events

An event will be planned for the fall. Please reach out to Rebecca Bigelow at: rebecca@epionmedcom.com for more information about this group.

Kansas City Chapter

On June 12th the Kansas City Chapter hosted a webinar on the “The Art of Podcasting” by Dr. Carol Atkinson. Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgtz6jBah80> for the recorded webinar.

Speaker’s Bio:

Carol Atkinson has a bachelor's in English, a master's in journalism, and a doctorate in journalism and First Amendment law. She's been teaching journalism and magazine design at the University of Central Missouri for 28 years, growing her breadth of knowledge through teaching more than 30 different courses. In her tenure at UCM, Carol served as the student newspaper adviser, the director of women's studies, and for the past 10 years, as the graduate coordinator for her department's graduate program. She advised an award-winning UCM student magazine for four years through her magazine design class. The students wrote, edited, designed, and sold advertising for the full-color publication. Carol taught in the Honors College for more than 10 years and was named the first Honors Fellow on the UCM campus. She has published more than 50 academic papers, directed more than 40 graduate theses, and advised nearly 100 graduate research papers. Carol's professional experience includes newspaper writing and editing (specializing in police and school news), nonprofit public relations at the University of Kansas, sports photography, a brief stint in radio, and as a copy editor for scientific journals. Carol served on the Kansas City Press Club Board of Directors for several years and as the secretary of the International Communication Association's Law Division.



AMWA Notes

- The 2019 AMWA Medical Writing & Communication Conference

Trends and Opportunities for Medical Communicators, San Diego, CA / November 6 - 9, 2019

Discover the value of the AMWA conference! In the latest post on the AMWA Blog (<http://blog.amwa.org/reinvigorate-yourself-professionally-and-personally>), 2019 AMWA Conference Chair R. Michelle Sauer asks us to consider the importance of the time spent attending the conference in reinvigorating ourselves professionally and personally. A template memo describing the conference's key selling points, a cost breakdown, and other details that demonstrate its value is included in the post to help you gain support from your employer.

Mid-America Chapter Dinner at the 2019 AMWA Conference

By Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD, and Leslie E. Neistadt, ELS

For the past fourteen years, Mid-America chapter members have gathered for dinner on Thursday evenings during the AMWA Medical Writing & Communication Conference. We always enjoy meeting each other and learning about members' different backgrounds and work environments. This year's dinner is planned for Thursday November 7th in San Diego, CA. We will dine at a restaurant near the headquarters hotel (Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina). We're investigating options; if you know the area and have a suggestion, please share it with us. Participants will pay for their own food and drink. To stay in the know about our plans, please contact Joanne at joanne@joannemcandrews.com. Hope to see you there!



If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough.

— Albert Einstein