

# MID-AMERICA CHAPTER NEWS

## American Medical Writers Association

Spring 2021



“On the right, Edward Jenner, accompanied by two colleagues, dismisses three variolators, who depart on the left with curses.” (British Museum, Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires). Coloured etching by Isaac Cruikshank, 1808. (Wellcome Collection).

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## President's Letter

**Rebecca Bigelow, PhD**

Hello Spring! It was quite a winter here in Nebraska and I am definitely glad to be seeing the early signs of warmer weather from my office window.

I read a great post on the Engage platform the other week about loving what you do for a living. The post got me thinking of all the reasons I love medical writing, from learning something new in each project I take on, to being able to engage with some of the most highly respected key opinion leaders in their field. So, I'd like to ask each of you, do you love what you do? If so, what are some of the things you love about it?

I'd like to invite you to share some of these thoughts on our new LinkedIn Group for the Mid-America AMWA chapter. We are pleased to announce that we have begun our own chapter LinkedIn page and we would like to invite you to join! This page will be a great resource for our chapter to discuss medical writing, post chapter announcements, and network. We hope you will join us and help us create an engaging platform. When you join, please take a moment and introduce yourself to the LinkedIn group and share what you love about your job. We would like to get to know you!

You can request to join at this link: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12517224/>

If you have any questions, please reach out to me at: [rebecca@epionmedcom.com](mailto:rebecca@epionmedcom.com)

## 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 a no-host lunch at a local restaurant. The group has been meeting virtually on Zoom since March 2020.*

Our first event of 2021 was “The Science of Being Happy” moderated by Dana Delbovi and Alice Fugate on January 5th via Zoom. Their well-researched presentation discussed what exactly is this emotion called happiness, and are there scientifically proven ways to enhance subjective well-being? Twenty-one people (14 AMWA members) joined this informal discussion of positive psychology, which can be defined as the scientific study of what makes life worth living.

On March 3rd, Ginger Peschke led a discussion on “Members’ Favorite Tools” for 14 attendees, 10 of whom were AMWA members. Printers, monitors, keyboards, software, cloud-based solutions, style guides, and more were discussed. Almost everything had advantages and disadvantages, and discussion turned to which tools were preferred for which situations. For almost every tool, there was at least one expert and one novice in the group, so each attendee was able to both share and learn.

Upcoming events in 2021 include a presentation by Veronika Redmann on May 11th about contract writing and negotiations; a how-to session in July regarding book publishing; best practices for public speaking in September; and a summary in November of the best and worst books read by our members this year.

*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.html>). A complete list of past topics, as well as handouts, is available on the History tab on that website.*

## *Chapter Webinar*

### *My Journey From Freelancing to Medical Writing in Pharma*

**Please join us for a webinar and Q&A session with Elizabeth Leight, PhD**

**Thursday, April 22, 2:00 PM–3:00 PM CT**

Liz will be describing her career path from freelance medical writing to working as a medical writer in pharma.

Please register for the webinar at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYpd-2tpzksGtE1X9DQpUs4nfZmguqbC39j>



## ***AMWA Notes***

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### ***Webinar: Creating a Strategic Plan for a Medical Writing Department***

**Wednesday, April 14, 12:00 PM–1:00 PM ET**

**After participating in this webinar, participants should be able to:**

- **Articulate the vision and goals of your team by development of a mission statement**
- **Assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of your team**
- **Build the value proposition of medical writing through goal tracking and metrics**

Presented by Jeanette Towles, president and owner of Synterex, Inc, a woman-owned, disability-owned business that provides clinical solutions, including publishing, clinical science, project management, medical and regulatory writing services, and IT collaboration services. She has also held in-house consulting and FTE medical writing and clinical science positions at both small- and large-size companies, with cumulative industry experience of over 15 years.

Register online: <https://www.amwa.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1499553&group=>

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### ***A Path to Success in Regulatory Writing***

Regulatory writing is a highly specialized career path that requires a strong foundation in three areas: core knowledge and skills, soft skills, and regulatory documents. This report is based on the recommendations of regulatory writing directors and hiring managers, outlining the training topics to master and highlighting how each topic builds on the preceding ones:

- Independent reading recommendations
- Descriptions of the proficiencies and skills that add value to regulatory writers
- Training topics categorized according to levels
- Customizable checklist to track training

Available for free download at: <https://info.amwa.org/regulatory-writer-training-ebook>

# AMA Update

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## Update to Abbreviations COVID-19 and SARS-CoV-2

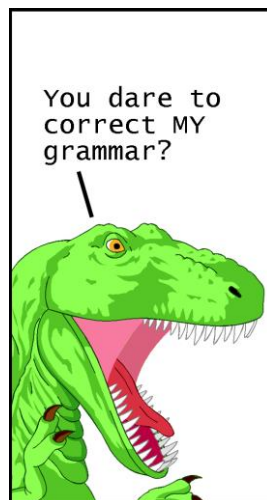
In March 2020, the *AMA Manual of Style* was updated to include the newly identified severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). These entries were added in chapter 14.14 (Viruses of Humans in the Nomenclature chapter).

In line with the committee's decision to not require expansion of the ubiquitous abbreviations AIDS and HIV, we now allow use of COVID-19 and SARS-CoV-2 without expansion in all elements of a paper: title, abstract, text, figures, tables, and boxes.

The online style manual will be updated to add these entries to the list of clinical abbreviations in chapter 13.11, with an indication that they may be used without expansion.

February 19, 2021

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