

Mid-America Chapter News

AMERICAN MEDICAL WRITERS ASSOCIATION
MID-AMERICA CHAPTER

SEPTEMBER 2008

Welcome

By Donna Coffman, MD

This issue covers a lot of information, so I have added a Table of Contents to help you navigate. We are trying out a couple new features in this issue. First is the Wacky WORD Tricks and Wacky WORD Questions. This is a forum to let members share time-saving tricks in WORD as well as ask questions about how to solve problems WORD might be posing. The next new feature is an 'In the News' feature in which I have made very short summaries of some of the items I have seen in the recent news that might be of interest to members. I started scanning the news in August for this feature and if the feature is useful to chapter members, I will continue to watch the news and write brief quarterly summaries. Each brief summary will have an internet link to the full original article.

We welcome David Gattermeir as the new Chapter Secretary. Thank you David!

Table of Contents

President's Letter	Page 1
AMWA Chapter Dinner	Page 2
Member News	Pages 3-5
Wacky Word Tricks	Page 6
News Summaries from the FDA	Pages 6-7

President's Letter

by Joanne McAndrews, PhD

I look forward to seeing many of you at the AMWA annual conference in Louisville next month. Please see the article in this issue about our chapter dinner on Thursday, October 23rd. These get-togethers are always fun. Hope you can join us!

Our next chapter conference is in the planning stages. It will be held in St. Louis. Please let me know what workshops or other programs you would like to see at our conference. Maybe there is a workshop that you need to finish your Core or Advanced certificate, but you were unable to take it at the Louisville conference. Perhaps your job duties have changed, and a certain workshop might bring you up to speed on a topic. Descriptions of AMWA Core and Advanced workshops are on the main AMWA web site. If you would like to present a breakfast roundtable or lead a panel discussion at our chapter conference, please let me know. Thank you for your input.

Finally, I would like to know what our chapter could do for you. What activities would you like to see our chapter sponsor? Local luncheons or dinners with guest speakers? Potluck dinners or other social gatherings? How do you think our chapter members can become more connected? Please contact me at jmmcandrews@earthlink.net with your ideas. Thank you.

2008-2009 Mid-America Chapter Contacts

PRESIDENT

JOANNE McANDREWS, PhD
JMMCANDREWS@EARTHLINK.NET

TREASURER

CAROL SONDERMAN, MA, ELS
EEDITING@YAHOO.COM

SECRETARY

DAVID J. GATTERMEIR
DGATTERMEIR@KVPH.COM

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

RONA CLAIRE GRUNSPAN, MD
RONA.GRUNSPAN@QUINTILES.COM

WEBMASTER

CAROL SONDERMAN, MA, ELS
EEDITING@YAHOO.COM

NEWSLETTER CHAIR

DONNA COFFMAN, MD
DONRCOFFMAN@EARTHLINK.NET

[HTTP://AMWA-MIDAMERICA.ORG](http://AMWA-MIDAMERICA.ORG)

St. Louis Area AMWA-STC Freelancers Luncheon

St. Louis area AMWA and Society for Technical Communication (STC) freelancers continue to meet six times a year for lunch and interesting discussion topics. This group is coordinated by Lisa Balbes, an STC member, and Joanne McAndrews.

The September luncheon was on September 18th and the topic of discussion was the survey results seeking input on the future of joint STC CIC/AMWA freelancers meetings.

Anyone interested in joining these lunch meetings should contact Joanne McAndrews.

AMWA Chapter Dinner in Louisville KY

By Joanne McAndrews, PhD.

As in years past, chapter members will gather for an informal dinner at the AMWA annual conference in Louisville. At previous AMWA annual conferences, we have sampled Cambodian food (in Pittsburgh), Brazilian cuisine (in Albuquerque) and Asian fusion (in Atlanta).

On Thursday October 23, 2008 at 6 PM, we will dine at Saffron's, a local Persian restaurant within walking distance of the Galt House Hotel in Louisville. Participants are responsible for paying for their own food and drink.

Visit Saffron's web site to view their menu.
<http://www.saffronsrestaurant.com/index.html>

Kathi Whitman and I are organizing this event, and Kathi is collecting RSVPs. Please send your RSVP to Kathi at kwhitman@incredibleenglish.com by Monday October 13th so that we can reserve enough seating for our group. Thank you.

Hope to see you there!

AMWA Board of Directors Meeting News

Here is a summary of our representation at the upcoming AMWA Board of Directors meetings in October in Louisville:

Meeting 1: Carol Sonderman will be our representative and David Gattermeir will be the official observer.

Meeting 2: This is the Chapter Delegate session and Carol Sonderman will be our representative and David Gattermeir will be the observer.

Meeting 3: Joanne McAndrews will be our representative and Rona Grunspan will be the alternate if Joanne is unable to attend.

Member Profile: David Gattermeir

Dave currently works as the lone Medical Writer at KV Pharmaceutical Company in Maryland Heights, Missouri, where he specializes in writing clinical documents for regulatory submission and manuscripts for peer-reviewed medical journals.

Dave grew up in Kansas City, Missouri and received a B.A. in microbiology from the University of Missouri. He has done laboratory research (specializing in microbial physiology) at Washington University in St. Louis and at Merck & Co. He began editing clinical documents while working at Merck and became a full-time medical writer at Centocor (Johnson & Johnson) in 2001. He returned to Missouri to work for KV in 2004.

Dave has been a member of AMWA since 2004, and will serve as MAC-AMWA secretary for 2008-2009. He plans to complete work on his core curriculum certificate (Editing/Writing) in Louisville.

Dave currently lives with his wife and 2 children in Wildwood, Missouri where he pursues his passions for baseball and classic cars (he currently has a 1923 Ford T-bucket).

Picture Caption: Dave and his son Zack, who represented the United States in the 12-and-under Nanyu International Baseball Championship in Tokyo in July.

DAVE ADVISES US THAT IT IS FEROCIOUSLY HOT IN TOKYO IN JULY, SO IT MIGHT BE WISE TO VISIT JAPAN IN COOLER MONTHS!



Member News: Magdalena's Notebook

This fall, I'm teaching, for the first time, ENG 570: Writing for the Health Professions. I had a lot of questions about the class before I started, and I'm going to have a lot more as the semester progresses. In this brief article, and a few more to come, I'll describe how the course was developed and what's happening in the classroom. There are bound to be surprises, and, I hope, some insights about the work we do as communicators.

I have an MA in Technical Writing, and for the past seven years have been teaching a heavy load of basic tech writing classes to non-English majors. This is pretty much pick and shovel work, as far as academia goes. So, when offered the opportunity to develop a course in medical writing, I jumped at the chance, even though I didn't know much (anything, really) about it.

It's taken me a few years to conceptualize and design ENG 570, and it will take me many more to get up to speed – to be confident that I can provide the depth and breadth of content I'd like to. But sometimes you have to start before you're ready. I've got 19 seniors and grad students, most of them technical writing majors, and we're going to get through this semester together, and if all goes well, enrich each other in the process.

The official course description is fairly ambitious: Students undertake the rhetorical analysis and production of a broad range of document genres used across medicine and related professions, including public health campaigns, grant proposals, medical reports, and patient-information materials. Emphasis on audience analysis, ethical considerations, and document design as these relate to consumers of health services. Students research and present their findings on current issues in the field.

I plan to accomplish this by asking my students to analyze health related-websites, design a piece of patient information on a topic of their choosing, and

write a short paper on some aspect of the field that interests them. They're going to read Groopman's *How Doctors Think*, and talk to an MD friend of mine about... how he thinks. My students need some exposure to the subject matter experts they'll be working with in healthcare.

And, we're going to break into teams and design a health marketing campaign for the Health and Wellness Program at Missouri State. This is the major class project. Missouri State wants to cut its health-care costs for faculty and staff, and thus the program. The "staff" is charged with keeping over 1,000 people healthy and well is one over-worked RN, who is not a communications specialist, judging by the long, multi-colored e-mails she's been sending to inform us of the opportunities available on campus for joining Weight Watchers and taking Pilates classes and classes that will REDUCE STRESS! We don't read them, naturally. So, ENG 570 will come to the rescue.

I'm not a scientist; neither are my students (more about them later). So we'll focus on our strengths – clear, concise, and accurate documents, well designed, and appropriate for the target audience. We'll learn where to get the information we need, and how health information is disseminated (health literacy is a particular interest of mine). We'll also learn about the health care industry. In a recent survey, when technical writers were asked where they worked, health care ranked first on a list of fifteen industries (right up there next to banking and finance- a surprising result).

If you've got any questions (or, of course, suggestions) I'd love to hear from you. I've already told my class about AMWA, and I'm hoping to be able to wrangle a guest speaker from our ranks. If you're ever in Springfield, MO on a Monday night...

MAGDALENA IS AN INSTRUCTOR IN TECHNICAL WRITING IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY.

Member News: Rona Claire Grunspan, MD

Rona shares the news that she was accepted into the General Medical Council of Great Britain in July. She spent a week in London while she received her credentials. Congratulations Rona!

RONA IS A MEDICAL WRITER WITH QUINTILES GLOBAL CRO.



Member News: Christine Frank,

Book packagers Christine Frank & Associates provided editorial and indexing services for the following books with September 2008 publication dates:

Conquer Prostate Cancer: How Medicine, Faith, Love and Sex Can Renew Your Life, by Rabbi Ed Weinsberg, with Dr. Robert Carey, a physical, emotional and spiritual guide for prostate cancer patients and survivors, and their families, friends, and physicians. ISBN: 9780982012109.

Timeless Women Speak Of Feeling Youthful At Any Age, by Nancy O'Reilly, PsD and Margaret U. Castrey. Between 1999 and 2006, more than 1000 women from every U. S. state and several foreign countries completed The O'Reilly Women's Aging Inventory, the O'Reilly Fear Survey, or participated in focus groups. This book reports on the findings. ISBN: 978-0-9820788-0-8.

CHRISTINE PROVIDES EDITORIAL AND INDEXING SERVICES AND CAN BE REACHED AT BOOKS@CHRISTINEFRANK.COM. HER WEBSITE IS WWW.CHRISTINEFRANK.COM.

Christine Frank

CHRISTINE FRANK
& ASSOCIATES

Wacky WORD Tricks

Our inaugural Wacky WORD Trick is provided by Lynne Roney, a Freelance Editor in St. Louis.

Sorting lists

Here's a quick way to sort a list in Word 2003. I use it to check a reference list for duplicates, or you could use it to alphabetize. Select the list by highlighting with the mouse and copy (Control-C). Open a new Word document. Create a table by selecting Table, Insert, and give it 1 row and 1 column. Paste the copied list into the table (Control-V). On the Menu bar, go to Table, Sort. Depending on the list you have, you may need to experiment with how to sort. If it's a numbered list such as references, under Sort by, choose Word 2 and "Ascending." This sorts by the author's last name in alphabetical order so it's easy to see which names are duplicates. The default choices in the "Sort by" box may vary, so experiment a little. If you're using it to alphabetize a list, copy the new list back into your original document.

In the News

August 15: FDA Approves First Drug for Treatment of Chorea in Huntington's Disease

The FDA has approved Xenazine (tetrabenazine) for the treatment of chorea in patients with Huntington's Disease. Xenazine decreases dopamine levels in the brain, reducing the neural signals that cause the involuntary movements of chorea. The most common side effects reported were insomnia, depression, drowsiness, restlessness and nausea. There is also concern about the possibility of increased risk of suicidal thoughts and actions in patients taking this medication. <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2008/NEW01863.html>

August 27: FDA Clears Test to Help Doctors Manage Heart Transplant Patients

The FDA has announced that AlloMap is cleared for marketing. AlloMap is a non-invasive test using molecular expression techniques to detect potential organ rejection in transplant patients. Currently, tissue biopsies are used to detect rejection and the new testing may allow clinicians to avoid invasive biopsies. <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2008/NEW01877.html>

September 4: FDA Approves DNA Test to Measure Hepatitis B Virus Levels

The FDA has approved the first nucleic acid test for hepatitis B virus (HBV). The test measures the viral load in

Wacky WORD Questions

We also have an inaugural Wacky WORD question from Lynne:

When I use the Comments feature I frequently get the error message "This modification is not allowed because the document is locked," and I can't key anything into the Comment pane. However, there is no protection or password enabled in the document, and I can make all other kinds of changes. After a few seconds the message goes away and I can continue keying in the Comment, but then it will return. Does anyone know how to get rid of this message? (MS Word Help only mentions to activate the Office/Word program, but it is already activated.) Does anyone have a favorite way to work with Comments in a document with multiple contributors?

IF YOU KNOW A TIME-SAVING TRICK WITH WORD TO SHARE OR KNOW THE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION, PLEASE EMAIL THE NEWSLETTER CHAIR, DONNA COFFMAN, AT DONRCOFFMAN@EARTHLINK.NET. WATCH THE NEXT ISSUE FOR A NEW TRICK, AN NEW QUESTION, AND AN ANSWER TO THE CURRENT QUESTION!

In the News Cont.

the bloodstream, offering a sensitive measure of the effects of antiviral therapy in patients with chronic HBV infection. <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2008/NEW01880.html>

September 4: Manufacturers of TNF-Blocker Drugs Must Highlight Risk of Fungal Infections

Tumor necrosis factor alpha blocking drugs (TNF-alpha blockers) suppress the immune system and are used for treatment of diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and Crohn's disease. These drugs can increase the risk of fungal infections (histoplasmosis, coccidioidomycosis, blastomycosis) and the FDA now requires strengthened warnings about this risk in the Warnings and Precaution sections of the drugs' prescribing information. <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2008/NEW01880.html>

Pfizer is in the news:

Pfizer is adopting a different approach for support for CME programs to address concerns about industry's involvement in supporting CME organized by commercial entities. As of July 2, 2008, Pfizer will no longer be offering grants to support CME programs that are developed by commercial medical education groups. They will continue to support programs offered through accredited non-commercial education institutions. For more information, see: https://www.pfizermededgrants.com/pfizercme/help/FAQs_7_1_08.pdf

WE HOPE TO SEE EVERYONE IN LOUISVILLE!

2008 AMWA CONFERENCE, OCTOBER 23-25, 2008, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY.

**SEE THE AMWA WEBSITE AT WWW.AMWA.ORG, FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE CONFERENCE.
SEE WWW.GOTOLOUISVILLE.COM FOR VISITOR INFORMATION FOR LOUISVILLE.**

Next Issue: News from the AMWA National Conference in Louisville
Member Profiles
Update on Chapter plans for future MAC chapter meetings
Member News
Wacky Word Tricks and Questions