



Southwest
Chapter

Newsletter of AMWA Southwest Chapter

January 2007

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Annual John P. McGovern Award Banquet Honoring Steve Sternberg of *USA Today*

Date: February 6, 2006 (Tuesday)

Time: 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn Astrodome at Reliant Park
8111 Kirby Drive
Houston, Texas

The AMWA Southwest Chapter is pleased to present the 2007 John P. McGovern Award to Steve Sternberg, a medical reporter for *USA Today* since 1988. Mr. Sternberg has reported on medicine for more than two decades. His beat now includes global public health, heart disease, AIDS, bioterrorism, the human genome project, and many other biomedical issues.

Mr. Sternberg, with a B.A. in English literature from Ithaca College and M.A. from the Johns Hopkins University Writing Seminars' program in science writing, started out as the lead medical reporter for the *Miami Herald*. From 1981 to 1985, he covered, among other stories, the emergence of the nation's third largest AIDS outbreak, health policy, and emergency/trauma care. His career as a health journalist has led him into investigations of such controversial subjects as abortion, sexually transmitted diseases, and drug addiction.

From 1985 to 1994, Mr. Sternberg worked at the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* as an investigative reporter and a member of its science/medicine team, covering public health, emerging infectious diseases, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with a special focus on AIDS. From 1993 to 1994, he worked as a Washington correspondent covering the Clinton administration's health reform effort.

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From 1994 to 1998, Mr. Sternberg was a freelance journalist and wrote articles for a number of publications, including *The Washington Post*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Mother Jones*, *Medical Economics*, *Science*, *The Scientist*, and *Science News*.

Mr. Sternberg won numerous awards for his work, including The National Headliner, the Penney-Missouri award for the best health story of 1989, The Society for Professional Journalist's Green Eyeshade award, and the 1991 Dag Hammarskjold Award from what was then the National Association of Physicians in AIDS Care. In 1992, he was selected for a John S. Knight Professional Journalism Fellowship at Stanford University, where he studied genetics, health policy, medical ethics, and African history. In 1995, he was granted a Kaiser Family Foundation media fellowship in public health.

Please join us for the annual John P. McGovern Award Banquet at the Holiday Inn Astrodome at Reliant Park to honor Mr. Sternberg, who will give a lecture entitled, "Covering the Plague: AIDS, the Press, and a Personal Journey."

The banquet will begin with a reception at 6:30 p.m., replete with complementary *hors d'oeuvres* and a cash bar. Dinner will begin at 7:15 p.m. and will consist of a garden salad, followed by a choice of entrée: pasta primavera with alfredo or marinara sauce, grilled chicken breast with marsala wine or basil cream sauce, or teriyaki BBQ glazed pork chop. Chicken and pork will be served with fresh vegetables and starches. The lecture will begin at about 8:00 p.m. while attendees enjoy dessert and coffee or tea.

The registration fee for the banquet is \$30 for members and \$35 for nonmembers. A dessert-and-coffee-only option is available for those who are unable to attend the dinner but would like to arrive later at 8:00 p.m. for the lecture only. The cost of dessert and coffee only is \$8 for members and \$10 for nonmembers.

RSVP for the banquet by Friday, February 2, to Anita Frijhoff at frijhoff@sbcglobal.net. Payment will be required for each email registration received. Please send your check (payable to AMWA Southwest) to Anita Frijhoff at 2905 Dover Place, Austin, TX 78757-4351. Those registering after Tuesday, January 30, may pay at the door on the evening of the event. When you register, please include the following information:

- Your name
- Your email address (or your daytime phone number if you do not prefer email)
- Whether or not you are an AMWA member
- Whether you are coming for dinner or just for dessert

Your choice of entrée (if you are coming for the dinner):

- Pasta primavera
- Grilled chicken breast
- Teriyaki BBQ glazed pork chop

The Holiday Inn Astrodome at Reliant Park (713.790.1900) is located at 8111 Kirby Drive in Houston, Texas, just off IH-610 northwest of Reliant Park and the Astrodome. The hotel is two blocks west of the Reliant Park rail stop of METRO Light Rail. Parking at the hotel is free. Detailed directions will be sent to all registrants before the banquet date.

For more information, contact Anita Frijhoff (512.323.5171 or frijhoff@sbcglobal.net).

Management Specialist Speaks to Chapter Members at 2006 Holiday Gala in Houston

On Tuesday evening, December 5, 2006, members of the AMWA Southwest Chapter convened in downtown Houston for the chapter's holiday gala meeting and a presentation by organizational development specialist Linda Trekell, PHR, of St. Luke's Episcopal Health System.

The 16 assembled members mingled over wine and dinner for about an hour and a half before settling in for Ms. Trekell's presentation on management education.

"The theory behind management education is very simple," said Ms. Trekell. "Because managers are the leaders responsible for the performance of those they supervise and the day-to-day operations of their departments, managers need to be trained in the things they have to do, figure out which skills or 'competencies' they need to do their jobs, and then receive the appropriate training."

"Our training department assesses the educational needs of our managers once or twice a year, in person or by email," she said. "Generally, we ask the managers to rate themselves against a standing list of competencies, but we also ask them to list any other competencies that they or their staff need to gain."

According to Ms. Trekell, this information tells her just how useful and effective the current skills curriculum is and helps identify any holes that may need to be filled in order to address real experiences in the workplace.

"Interestingly, the skills most often lacking or most in need of sharpening in our managers are those of conflict resolution, communication, and finance," said Ms. Trekell.

Identifying managerial needs is just the start, however. Workshops must be designed and presented, and managers must attend. "Unfortunately," said Ms. Trekell, "many workshops and courses at St. Luke's must be presented as short modules within the flow of a hospital's never-ending, 24-hour business day."

"If we can get in front of those who need the training, we can at least leave an impression," said Ms. Trekell. "I've shown up at midnight to deliver 15 minutes of training to a night shift of nurses."

This compression of time and opportunity underscores the current trend toward providing more diverse on-the-job training opportunities for St. Luke's managers. This has included developing a supervisor's curriculum that mixes live presentations with self-paced web-based workshops and more traditional books, videos, and CD-ROMs.

"As a human resources professional, my job is to ensure that managers function at their best," said Ms. Trekell. "And it's understood that managers, being people, need to know themselves if they are to understand those who work under them. If they don't, they'll find it hard to manage effectively and well."

Ms. Trekell ended her presentation with a brief synopsis of a program she designed for St. Luke's that blends live and online resources to

groom new, experienced, or ambitious managers into competent, effective leaders on the job.

The goals are to establish expectations about what a manager should be and do, to provide managers with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet those expectations, to promote St. Luke's goal of serving the patient, and to prepare those managers to handle bigger and more demanding jobs down the road.

One important component of the program is a specialized assessment of skills called the Berkman Method® assessment tool. This assessment tool is an alternative to the well-

known Myers-Briggs personality test, which classifies those who take it as having one of several personality types. The Berkman Method® helps identify one's management type by analyzing the respondent's work-related interests, usual behaviors, stress behavior, and needs.

Although most of her talk focused on her work in the hospital setting, Ms. Trezell emphasized at several junctures that many of the same principles that she applies in training managers at St. Luke's may also be put to effective use by those medical writers or editors who by virtue of being freelancers must be their own managers.

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