



Southwest
Chapter

Newsletter of AMWA Southwest Chapter

Special Edition, April 2006

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Austin Weekend with Literary Appeal for Medical Communicators

2006 AMWA Southwest Medical Communications Conference

Date: May 19, 2006 (Friday)
Time: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Place: St. Edward's University
3001 South Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas

Thinking of attending this conference?

If so, AMWA Southwest and our conference coordinators, Anita Frijhoff and Jude Richard, invite you to turn your visit to Austin into a long weekend of education, relaxation, and literary adventure.

Learn new skills in any of the morning workshops, *Grant Writing: NIH and Non-NIH Resource Options and Strategies* (EW/FL) [206], *Journal Submissions Other Than Research Articles* (EW) [209], or *Giving Effective Presentations* (NC). If you want to ensure your place in these workshops, do not wait any longer, but fill out and mail your [registration form](#).

Enjoy the entertaining plenary session, "Writing and Health," in which James Pennebaker, PhD, Chair of the Department of Psychology at the University of Texas at Austin, will discuss some of the links he has discovered between traumatic experiences, expressive writing, natural language use, physical and mental health. For more information on Dr. Pennebaker and his research, please visit [his homepage](http://homepage.psy.utexas.edu/homepage/Faculty/Pennebaker/Home2000/JWP_home.htm) at http://homepage.psy.utexas.edu/homepage/Faculty/Pennebaker/Home2000/JWP_home.htm.

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Network with fellow biomedical communicators over brown-bag lunch on the beautiful campus of St. Edward's University.

Increase your writing efficiency in the afternoon credit classes *Bibliographic Resources for Medical Communicators [editorial approach]* (G) [102] and *Advanced Writing (ADV)* [706]. Be sure to **register** soon as these classes are filling fast.

Get informed about the cellular and molecular background of cancer, the number two killer in the United States, in afternoon workshop *DNA, Cell Cycle, and Cancer: An Introduction* (NC).

Relax after the busy conference at the Philosopher's Rock at **Barton Springs**. In the 1950s, the rock was the regular meeting place of three "philosophers"—naturalist Roy Bedichek, humorist-folklorist J. Frank Dobie, and historian Walter Prescott Webb. Their gatherings are now memorialized in a bronze statue depicting three relaxed, potbellied old men in bathing trunks, caught mid-colloquy on a warm summer day beneath the pecan trees lining Barton Springs Pool. Bring a book, swimsuit, and towel to take a break on the banks of the pool.

Satisfy your curiosity at the Harry Ransom Center's exhibit, "**Technologies of Writing**." The **Harry Ransom Center** is home to 36 million literary manuscripts, one million rare books, five million photographs, and over 100,000 works of art. Highlights include the Gutenberg Bible (c. 1455), the First Photograph (c. 1826), important paintings by Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, and major manuscript collections of James Joyce, Ernest

Plenary Session on "Writing and Health"

James Pennebaker, PhD
Chair, Department of Psychology
The University of Texas at Austin

Friday, May 19, 2006
Noon – 1:00 p.m.

Registration Deadline:
April 28, 2006

**For more information on the
conference, please visit**
<http://www.amwasouthwest.org/Events/2006-austin/2006-austin.htm>.

Hemingway, T.S. Eliot, D.H. Lawrence, Isaac Bashevis Singer, and Tennessee Williams.

Explore the **O. Henry Museum**. From 1893 to 1895, this National Register Property and National Literary Landmark of the City of Austin was home to William Sidney Porter, better known as O. Henry, "master of the short story." Now it exhibits artifacts and memorabilia from Porter's time in Austin.

Browse at **BookPeople**, since 1970, "...a refuge for the contemplative, a place where it's still possible to find a good book and someone irreverent with whom to discuss it." Public readings are held almost daily.

Take advantage of the discounted hotel rate (\$55 for one night including breakfast), valid before and after the conference, at Woodward Hotel and Conference Center. This hotel is within walking distance of St. Edward's University and offers shuttle service to and from Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. To get the discounted rate, call 1.800.966.3927 and mention "AMWA Southwest." We hope your visit to Austin will be a memorable one. Contact Anita (512.323.5171 or frijhoff@sbcglobal.net) with any questions about the chapter conference or Austin.

Great Offer: Students, postdoctoral and clinical fellows are offered a special \$30 registration fee for the AMWA Southwest Medical Communications Conference in Austin, Texas, on Friday, May 19, 2006. In addition to conference registration (including plenary session and lunch), the \$30 will also get you enrolled in the interactive *Giving Effective Presentations* workshop. This great offer will end soon because seats are limited, so please fill out and mail your **registration form** today.

SCIREX Offers Student Scholarships for Attending the Austin Conference

The AMWA Southwest Chapter gratefully acknowledges SCIREX Corporation for the generous offer of five student scholarships at \$60 each. Each student scholarship will cover conference registration (including the plenary session and lunch), enrollment in the noncredit *Giving Effective Presentations* workshop, and a small travel stipend. The scholarships will be awarded, on a first-come, first-served basis, to students who register for the AMWA Southwest Medical Communications Conference in Austin by May 5, 2006, and are enrolled in health sciences, writing, or journalism programs at institutions outside the greater Austin area in the AMWA Southwest region. Non-members are also welcome to apply for these scholarships. SCIREX Corporation (www.scirex.com) is a global, full-service drug development company with offices and clinical research centers at many locations in Europe and the United States, including Austin.

Featured Morning Workshops (9:00 a.m. – noon)

Grant Writing: NIH and Non-NIH Resource Options and Strategies (EW/FL) [206] (\$85)

The recto and verso of the elements, styles, and formats of effective proposal writing will be presented. Joan N. Nilson will discuss the highly structured format of NIH grant applications as well as the varied formats of grant applications for private sector funding.

Journal Submissions Other Than Research Articles (EW) [206] (\$85)

In a workshop intended mainly for novice and moderately experienced editors, Barbara Gastel, MD, MPH, will combine lecture and group discussion to explore the basics of writing and editing case reports, review articles, editorials, and book reviews. Issues surrounding content and organization will receive special emphasis.

Giving Effective Presentations (NC) (\$55)

Through lecture and discussion, Marianne Mallia, ELS, will teach participants the importance of audience, content focus, appropriate media and instructional materials, voice and gesture, and skills for overcoming the fear of presenting. Willing participants will give one-minute presentations that will be critiqued by the workshop leader and peers in a supportive manner.

Featured Afternoon Workshops (2:00 – 5:00 p.m.)

Bibliographic Resources for Medical Communicators (G) [102] (\$85)

This introduction to bibliographic resources in the health sciences will enable participants to become “information literate.” Joan N. Nilson will primarily focus on types of bibliographic literature and ways to find and access this information, including online technologies.

Advanced Writing (ADV) [706] (\$110)

Biomedical writers with a minimum of five years’ experience in editing or writing will explore ways in which they can become even better. Under the guidance of Marianne Mallia, ELS, participants will discuss the cognitive processes used by advanced writers along with a few finer points of style, and they will learn some successful strategies for approaching (and completing) a writing project. For the pre-course assignment, participants will begin to analyze the process used in their writing and the effect of writer’s block on that process.

Sponsorship Opportunities

AMWA Southwest is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (federal tax ID: 76-005-2588). Please contact Anita Frijhoff (512.323.5171 or afrijhoff@amwasouthwest.org) about tax-deductible sponsorships, starting at \$50.

DNA, Cell Cycle, and Cancer: An Introduction (NC) (\$55)

This workshop by Robin Fuchs-Young, PhD, is aimed at writers and editors without a scientific background. She will explain the basics of DNA and the cell cycle and discuss how normal cellular and molecular processes can be derailed, giving rise to cancer.

Leadership Opportunities Available

Come May, a new set of officers will be installed for the AMWA Southwest Chapter. This change of the guard brings with it several leadership opportunities for those of you in our chapter who are interested in taking a more active role in AMWA. Below is a list of vacancies that need to be filled by the May meeting, which will be held at Baba Yega Restaurant on May 27, 2006. Anyone interested in finding out more about any of these positions should contact the current chapter president, Chris Wogan, at 713.792.3160 or cwogan@amwasouthwest.org or any of the current officers listed on the Officers webpage at www.amwasouthwest.org.

You only need to have a desire to get more involved in the chapter to volunteer for any of these positions! No required skill set or special in-depth knowledge about AMWA or the chapter is needed to serve as an officer of the chapter. As long as you are a member of AMWA, be it for the past two weeks, two months, two years, or more, you are qualified to serve on the chapter board. Therefore, please consider lending some of your time and talents to this wonderful organization, and you will soon see the ample benefits the experience will give back to you in terms of personal and professional development opportunities!

The elected and appointed positions listed below can be held by any of our members in the five-state chapter region. Those positions followed by an asterisk (*) can be more easily held by members living outside of the Houston, Texas, area.

Elected Positions

Assistant Program Chair

The assistant program chair is a position that typically requires a three-year commitment to the chapter because this person usually progresses to the position of program chair/president-elect and then to president of the chapter. The assistant program chair assists the program chair in all of the

chapter meeting programming, including planning programs, arranging logistics for meetings (such as locations and refreshments), accepting and tracking meeting reservations, and publicizing programs.

Directors-at-Large*

This position is great for someone new to AMWA as the required duties are typically minimal, yet this position provides great exposure to the inner workings of the chapter. Primarily, the directors-at-large attend the chapter's two board meetings per year (one in August and one in March) and help guide the direction of the chapter. Directors-at-large are sometimes asked to take on other duties as assigned by the chapter president, such as serving on a committee. Our chapter has five directors-at-large and each person serves a two-year term. Three positions and two positions rotate for election every other year. This year, three positions will be vacant.

Appointed Positions

Professional Liaison*

The person in this position acts as liaison between the chapter and other local professional groups that may be of interest to chapter members (e.g., the Society for Technical Communication, American Women in Science, International Association of Business Communicators, or National Science Writers). The professional liaison informs contacts from these groups about AMWA activities and informs chapter members of the activities of these groups.

Regional Directors*

Our chapter currently has six regional directors, who are responsible for encouraging active membership within the AMWA Southwest region by facilitating local activities such as networking lunches, presentations by local speakers, or video screenings of presentations from within our region or another region. Regional directors act as liaisons between other chapter officers and local members and inform potential local members about the

AMWA organization, membership benefits, and local, chapter, and national activities. The current regions with directors are Central Texas, North Texas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. In areas without adequate chapter representation, we can always add more directors!

Development Chair*

This is a relatively new position on our chapter board that was created after our chapter received its 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. The development chair is responsible for seeking out businesses and organizations that may be interested in sponsoring some aspect of our chapter events. For example, the McGovern Foundation underwrites our annual McGovern award and banquet. The chapter would also like to find someone to help underwrite our annual student scholarship contest as well as plenary speakers or meals for the chapter conferences and meetings.

Currently Filled Positions

President

The president presides over chapter board and business meetings as well as general meetings, serves as chapter liaison with national headquarters, and monitors the progress of all chapter activities. This person also receives and handles notices from the national office, including inquiries about the chapter, notification of new and dropped members, dues notices, etc.

President-Elect/Program Chair

The program chair develops and prepares programs for the chapter calendar year (July to May), including contacting speakers, arranging program details, and writing a release about each program for inclusion in the newsletter. This person is also responsible for recruiting new volunteers to serve on the chapter board each year.

Secretary

The secretary attends all chapter meetings and writes a brief account of them for the newsletter (a delegate can be appointed if the secretary cannot attend a meeting) and records minutes of board meetings for review, approval, and distribution to

board members. This person also receives and counts voting ballots sent by mail for chapter elections and then notifies national headquarters of new officers and the dates they were elected.

Treasurer

The treasurer checks in registrants at general meetings and provides receipts for meeting fees as needed. This person also receives income, pays bills and reimbursements for meetings and other chapter activities, maintains chapter financial records and bank accounts, reports the financial status to the chapter board as requested, and submits an end-of-year report and budget for the next year to national headquarters.

Newsletter Editor*

The editor requests and receives materials for the newsletter from chapter members. This person also performs layout, editing, and production duties for each newsletter. [Note: This person can, with the approval of the chapter board, appoint an assistant (a non-elected position) to help with newsletter production and mailing activities if needed.]

McGovern Award Chair*

The award chair identifies and researches candidates for the award, presents them to the board for voting, contacts the proposed recipient to confirm acceptance of award, and arranges for his or her attendance at the banquet. This person also prepares a short article for the newsletter about the recipient, helps the assistant program chair to arrange for the banquet, acts as host for the recipient, and introduces him or her at the banquet.

Membership Chair/E-group Moderator*

The membership chair fosters new membership with people in the chapter area who have inquired about AMWA, including making personal invitations and sending newsletters; acts as or arranges for a greeter at each meeting, especially to welcome visitors and non-members; and makes available information about AMWA for all local and satellite meetings. This person also moderates the e-group, posts meeting and special announcements, monitors electronic postings, and periodically informs chapter members about e-group features and instructions for use.

Publicity Chair*

The person in this position publicizes all chapter activities and establishes public relations with the Texas Medical Center and outside media sources to introduce guest speakers, conferences, contests, and events to the public.

Student Scholarship Chair*

The scholarship chair is responsible for sending out information regarding the annual student scholarship competition, selecting a chapter committee to be responsible for judging the entries, collecting the entries, and sending the de-identified

entries to the judging committee for review. This person is also responsible for contacting the winner and inviting them to the May meeting, at which time the chapter president presents the winner with a check, a student membership in AMWA, and a certificate of recognition. The scholarship chair also helps with the publicity for the annual contest.

Website Chair*

The website chair maintains the chapter website, updating the calendar of events, current officers, relevant links, and online resources.

Southwest Chapter Member Honored by Psychohistorians

Pamela Paradis Tice, BA, ELS(D), and her co-presenter, Donna Rochon, PhD, were recently awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Outstanding Work in Psychohistory for their presentation entitled "Abstinence-Only Sex Education: A Group Fantasy About Human Sexual Behavior" at the 28th Annual Convention of the International Psychohistorical Association, New York, New York, June 8–10, 2005.

Pamela Tice, Chair of the McGovern Award Committee of the AMWA Southwest Chapter, currently works as a research associate in the Center for Collaborative and Interactive Technologies, Baylor College of Medicine. The co-presenter of the talk, Donna Rochon, is her colleague and a primary care researcher in the Department of Family and Community Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine.

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