

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER NEWS

July 2001

July Meeting: Internet Resources and Strategies for Researching Biomedical Information

Saturday, July 21, Clear Lake, Texas

At the July AMWA meeting, Thomas Gegeny will present an overview of Internet sites and helpful strategies for researching biomedical information on the Web. This live Internet demonstration will focus on the use of the Web as a research tool, including how to use search engines and meta search engines most effectively. An overview of *PubMed*, the MEDLINE database from the National Library of Medicine, will cover specialized features such as the Journal Browser, Single Citation Matcher, Clipboard, Cubby, MeSh Browser, and History Palette. Come and learn how these useful tools make online literature searching easier than ever!

Tom is editor at The Center for AIDS: Hope & Remembrance Project (CFA), an HIV treatment and research information and advocacy organization in Houston. He is responsible for editing and overseeing production of The CFA's publications, *Research Initiative/Treatment Action!* (literature review journal) and *HIV Treatment ALERTS!* (patient newsletter). He also sends out a weekly treatment newsletter by fax and e-mail to several hundred physicians, researchers, and health care professionals in the field of HIV/AIDS. Additional responsibilities include developing and maintaining The CFA's website and putting publication content online. Tom earned a Master of Science degree in Biomedical Sciences at The University of Texas Houston Health Science Center in 1997. Last year, he completed an Associate of Applied Science degree in Technical Communication at Houston Community College, where he continues to study Web and multimedia production. In 1999, he earned certification as an Editor in the Life Sciences (ELS).

For the third year in a row, the July meeting will be held at Frenchie's Villa Capri, located halfway between Houston and Galveston. The restaurant has spectacular waterside views of Clear Lake. Please arrive at 11:30 a.m. so we may begin eating at noon. We will be served a lunch of salad, chicken picatta or eggplant parmigiana, with pasta and fresh vegetables served family style. Iced tea, dessert, and coffee are also included.

Directions: From I-45, take the NASA Road 1 exit going east. Proceed approximately 6 miles. At about 4 miles, you will pass the Hilton Hotel on your right. Proceed 2 more miles; the Villa Capri restaurant (3713 NASA Rd. 1) will also be on your right. NOTE: There is another Frenchie's restaurant at NASA Road 1 and El Camino Real; this is NOT the correct restaurant.

Area Hotels:

- Holiday Inn, 1300 NASA Road 1, 281-333-2500 (\$69/night; located east of the intersection of El Camino Real and NASA Road 1).
- Super 8 Motel, 18103 Kings Row, 281-333-5385 (\$50/night; located east of the intersection of El Camino Real and NASA Road 1).
- Quality Inn, 904 NASA Road 1, 281-333-3737 (Also in the \$50/night category; just west of El Camino Real).

When: 11:30 to 1:30 p.m.	Cost: Members-\$21
Where: Frenchie's Villa Capri 3713 NASA Road 1 Clear Lake, Texas 713-326-2373	Guests-\$24 RSVP by July 14 to Kate O'Suilleabhain at (713) 792-3165 kosuilleabhain@ mdanderson.org

May Career Roundtables, An Unqualified Success

President Ellen Koch called the AMWA Southwest Chapter business meeting to order at Baba Yega restaurant in Houston, Texas on May 15, 2001, and began by thanking all the members for their contributions to the chapter throughout her term as president. She briefly reviewed some of the new services that the chapter began offering this year, such as the Southwest Chapter electronic discussion group on Yahoo!, the chapter website, and the availability of the newsletter in PDF format on the website. Ellen also mentioned plans in the works to be implemented by the next slate of officers including the broadcast/webcast of a meeting.

The slate of officers published in the May issue of *Southwest Chapter News* was voted into office by a movement initiated

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Roundtables (continued from p.1)

by Marlane Kayfes to accept all the officers presented on the ballot. The movement was seconded by Jason Moore. The new officers include: Lorraine Cherry, PhD, as president, Tom Gegeny, ELS, as program chair, Kate O'Suilleabhain as program co-chair, Chris Wogan, ELS, as treasurer, Leigh Fink as secretary, Chris Yeager as newsletter editor, Maureen Goode, PhD, as director-at-large, and Pamela Paradis Tice, ELS, as director-at-large.

The winner of the first annual AMWA Southwest Chapter Scholarship for Biomedical Communication, Adrienne Carmack, was awarded \$500, a certificate of recognition, a complimentary 1-year membership in AMWA, and an invitation to the Career Roundtables Meeting, where she received the award. (Read her winning essay on this page.)

Ellen Koch urged all the members to submit ideas for increasing chapter revenue in order to continue new programs like the Southwest Chapter scholarship and to expand our services to members.

With the annual business meeting concluded, the members and guests were invited to dine on the delicious buffet of chicken picatta and vegetarian lasagna. The participants of 4 roundtables held discussions of their topics while enjoying their meals.

Tom Gegeny, Center for AIDS in Houston, led a discussion about writing for the web, offering helpful advice to both novices and veterans of the genre. Discussing the similarities and differences between electronic and print production, participants addressed the importance of considering the audience in designing the most effective websites. Visit <http://www.sun.com/980713/webwriting/> for some helpful tips or <http://www.killersites.com/core.html> to see some "killer" examples.

Pamela Paradis Tice, Baylor College of Medicine, led a discussion on medical writing as part of a research team, in place of Caroline Simmons, Arkansas Center for Birth Defects Research and Development, who was unavoidably detained. The discussion focused on the challenges of writing in a research environment, including the authorship battle (authorship versus contributorship), the range of documents that one might encounter, and the importance of effective communication with colleagues of diverse backgrounds.

Marlane Kayfes, Baylor College of Medicine, led a discussion on patient education materials starting with a brief overview of media used for patient education (video, brochures, patient consult pieces, etc.) She explained that developing patient education materials often requires teamwork, compromise, mediators, and prioritizing. She stressed using language appropriate for the target audience. Also important is having credible resources upon which to draw. She believes the goal is to become informed enough about the topic to use your own words and to be aware of copyright issues.

Jason Moore, Aronex Pharmaceuticals, conducted an effective roundtable about conducting effective meetings. Meeting topics he covered included planning, managing, and following up. He shared many helpful tips such as circulating the meeting agenda beforehand. We discussed interpersonal skills and effective approaches for a successful meeting and how to handle counterproductive attendees.

Winning Essay

WWW: Wishy-Washy Waste or a Well-founded Wealth of Wisdom? by *Adrienne Carmack*, winner of the *AMWA Southwest Chapter Scholarship for Biomedical Communication*

One of the greatest changes affecting medicine today is information technology. Medical information is much more accessible than ever before, specifically via the World Wide Web. The most obvious result of this has been an increase in patient knowledge, and, thus, autonomy.

Empowering patients through education plays a major role in treatment success. An extensive review of research on the education of patients with diabetes mellitus by Muhlhauser and Berger showed the importance of educating patients in enabling them to facilitate their own care.¹ Traditionally, patients have received their medical educations from their physicians, but in today's world, a wealth of information is easily obtained from the World Wide Web. Unfortunately, the information that is rapidly becoming available to patients is often not the best.

Information exchange among professionals has progressed well with new technology. A search of the World Wide Web reveals that virtually every medical specialty society has a Web site dedicated to providing information to its members. In contrast, the majority of patient-oriented information on the World Wide Web comes from for-profit companies. A recent study in *The Journal of Rheumatology* found that only one-third of sites are published by nonprofit organizations or universities.² Several other studies have concluded that Web sites found with standard searches of the Internet are often irrelevant, misleading, and inaccurate.^{3,4,5}

Nevertheless, a study in *The British Medical Journal* did find that quality information on urinary incontinence is readily obtained using several search engines.⁶ Good sources of information do exist on the World Wide Web; the problem is knowing how to look. Extensive searches yield low results, but familiarity with a few reliable sites allows one to find accurate information quickly. One such site is *MEDLINEplus*, published by the National Library of Medicine. This is a medical search engine for Web sites that have been extensively evaluated and found to contain accurate medical information for health care professionals and patients.⁷ Also, specialty organizations often include sections on their Web sites designed for patients. One such organization is the American Academy of Pediatrics, whose Web site features a section titled "You and Your Family," which provides a variety of facts on children's health.⁸

Patients cannot be kept from viewing inaccurate material on the World Wide Web, but they can be educated on identifying quality Web sites. Just as patient brochures published by specialty organizations are commonly available in physicians' offices, lists of valuable Web sites should also be produced and distributed. Professional medical organizations should also be encouraged to provide "approval stamps" to Web sites after evaluating their contents and rating them on their usefulness and accuracy.

Medical treatment is far superior to what it has ever been, but the ability to enhance health through patient education is poorly recognized. Medical professionals must take the opportunity to

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Chapter Officers and Directors for 2001-2002

This year's team of officers, regional directors, and appointed chairs is committed to making 2001-2002 one of the best years yet for the AMWA Southwest Chapter. Several members have come forward to volunteer their time and effort on a wide-range of chapter projects and initiatives. If you would like to find out more information, become involved in a chapter project, or even help plan a regional meeting, contact the appropriate person below.

Elected Officers

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McGovern Award Chair

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Scholarship Chair

(coordinates annual student scholarship competition)
Grace Darling(214) 824-0154
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Professional Liaison

(announces events of other professional writing and communication groups to the chapter and vice-versa)
LeeAnn Chastain
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Membership Chair

(acts as primary contact for new members and those interested in becoming members)
Kerry Wright
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Student Liaison

(networks with regional university writing programs to inform them about AMWA and invite students to chapter meetings)
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Winning Essay (continued from p.2)

develop the World Wide Web into an educational tool and must encourage autonomy by helping patients locate quality medical information. By doing so, the knowledge of patients will become a great asset in health management.

References

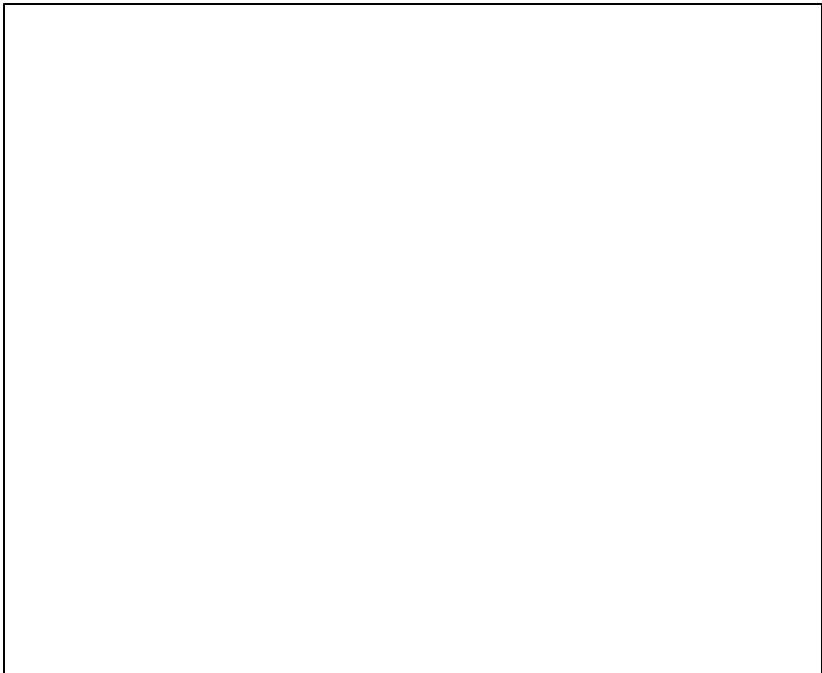
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AMWA Southwest Chapter News
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Southwest Chapter News



Recognizing Executive Director, Lillian Sablack, for a Distinguished Career

Lillian Sablack, Executive Director of AMWA for more than 25 years, is retiring and ready to transition out at this year's annual conference. The executive committee, many past and present officers, members and friends of AMWA, and other staff at headquarters would like to recognize her contributions and celebrate all she has done for our organization. Efforts are afoot to do so. First, there will be an event at the annual conference to recognize her. Second, the executive committee has decided to contribute some money-from our own pockets-as a gift of appreciation to Lillian. We also hope the chapters and individual members will contribute as well.

Contributions to the gift may be sent to :

Jane M. Krauhs
1103 Shoreacres Boulevard
La Porte, TX 77571

Checks should be made payable to "Jane M. Krauhs FBO Lillian Sablack."

We thank you ahead of time for your interest and contribution. Those of us who have worked with Lillian know the enormous value she has added to AMWA and how greatly she has enhanced our collective aims.

Meeting Reservation Form **Internet Resources and Strategies for Researching** **Biomedical Information** **presented by Tom Gegeny**

Saturday, July 21, 2001, at Frenchie's Villa Capri
3713 NASA Road 1, Clear Lake, Texas
Members \$21.00 and Guests \$24.00

Name: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Guest Name(s): _____

Please send your reservation form and check, payable to AMWA Southwest, to Kate O Suilleabhain at 1515 Holcombe Blvd, HMB09.022, Box 234, Houston TX 77030. For further information contact Kate at (713) 792-3165

Please **RSVP** by July 14