

July Meeting Making Hard Choices

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Saturday, July 19, 2003
Villa Capri restaurant, Clear Lake, Texas

Join us on Saturday, July 19, at the Villa Capri restaurant in Clear Lake for a participative workshop focused on how people make particularly difficult decisions, both in their professional and personal lives. Some of us have to make more of these “difficult decisions” than others, but each of us must make a few decisions in our lives that are risky and challenging. Corey Grua, a corporate trainer at Cyberonics, Inc., a Clear Lake medical device company, will lead the workshop, and will address topics specific to medical communicators. The discussion will partly focus on the subject of fear, how it immobilizes us, how to recognize it, and how to control it. In addition, Mr. Grua will discuss ways to maintain and even improve relationships when making difficult decisions. Some of the questions that will be touched upon include the following:

- What do I fear about my working experience?
- Are those fears realistic?
- Can fear be replaced with something more proactive?
- What are the rewards for striving to make better decisions?

Workshop participants should expect to be entertained and challenged and to benefit in practical ways from their 45 minutes of learning together.

Corey Grua is currently the Director of Corporate Training at Cyberonics, Inc. Mr. Grua also has served in the training departments of companies such as British Petroleum, Intermedics, and Gulfstream Aerospace. His career of 31 years has been devoted to public and corporate education with an emphasis on behavioral skills and organization development.

The AMWA Southwest July meeting has traditionally been held in Clear Lake or Galveston on a Saturday to give members a chance to gather outside of Houston. This meeting also provides an opportunity to bring a guest or family member with an interest in AMWA or medical science in general who is unable to attend the regular weekday evening venues.

Known for its outstanding food, the Villa Capri will serve your choice of either chicken marsala with the pasta of the day, grilled fish with roasted potatoes al forno, or rigatoni primavera with fresh vegetables (vegetarian). The meal also includes a green salad, garlic bread, iced tea, coffee, and your choice of either carrot cake or chocolate cake. Please arrive at 11:30; lunch will be served at noon.

Directions: From I-45, take the NASA Road 1 exit, heading east. After about 6 miles, you should see the Hilton on your right. The Villa Capri restaurant is about 2 miles past the Hilton and will also be on your right.

Thomas Gegeny Named Executive Director of The Center for AIDS

Thomas Gegeny, MS, ELS, of Houston, Texas, has been appointed executive director and senior editor at The Center for AIDS: Hope & Remembrance Project. The Center for AIDS is a community-based, nonprofit organization that specializes in HIV treatment/research information and advocacy.

Tom has been employed with The Center for AIDS since January 2000, when he was hired as editor to manage and write for the organization's publications and Web site (www.centerforaids.org). He will maintain programmatic oversight of the publications and Web site, as well as direct the agency in the areas of administration and development.

With seemingly boundless commitment and enthusiasm, Tom has served as the AMWA Southwest Chapter's publicity chair, Web site manager, professional liaison, assistant program chair, program chair/president-elect, and president. As demonstration of his effective leadership, he undertook many chapter initiatives, including leading the organization of the chapter's first regional conference in several years. He is currently the chapter's immediate past president and publicist. Nationally, he has served on AMWA's Executive Committee as administrator of membership (2001–2002) and administrator of publications (2002–2003). He has been a member of AMWA since 1998.

Congratulations, Tom!

Fourth Annual Career Roundtables Discussion and Business Meeting a Success

With approximately 35 members and guests in attendance, President Tom Gegeny, MS, ELS, began the AMWA Southwest Chapter business meeting and fourth annual career roundtables discussion at Baba Yega restaurant in Houston, Texas, on May 14, 2003, with a resounding thank you to the members for all of their contributions during his tenure as president. The chapter members in attendance then voted the new chapter board members into office. The new officers are Kate Ó Súilleabháin, MA, president; Elisabeth Wann, PhD, president-elect/program chair; Natasha Calder, assistant program chair; Chris Wogan, ELS, treasurer; Penny Logan, MS, secretary; Dawn Chalaire, newsletter editor; and Susan Madigan, RN, and Chrissy Chambers, directors-at-large. (A complete list of officers, directors, and committee leaders can be found on page 5.)

The winner of the third annual AMWA Southwest Chapter Scholarship for Biomedical Communication, Lisa Kennedy, was awarded a certificate of recognition, \$500, and a complimentary 1-year membership in AMWA. (Please see Lisa's winning essay on page 3.) She was also invited to attend the 2003 Career

Roundtables Meeting to receive her award. After the business meeting and the award presentation, members and guests dined on a buffet-style meal of chicken marsala and vegetarian pasta. The leaders of the four roundtable topics began their discussions over dinner.

Tom Gegeny, interim director and editor at The Center for AIDS: Hope and Remembrance Project (CFA) of Houston led a discussion on the principles of layout and design.

Maureen E. Goode, PhD, ELS, education coordinator for Scientific Publications and a scientific editor at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, led a discussion on editing grant proposals.

Dalal Murgai, president and principal consultant of Regulatory Outsource Consulting, Inc., led a discussion on the role of the medical writer in the drug development process.

Gayle Nesom, a scientific editor at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center led an informal discussion on working with authors who are nonnative speakers of English.

Winning Essay

2003 John P. McGovern Student Scholarship

Use of Cyclooxygenase 2 Inhibitors in the Prevention of Esophageal Carcinoma

By Lisa Kennedy, MPH

Esophageal cancer is the fourth leading cause of death in black men and the seventh leading cause of death in white men in the United States (Funkhouser & Sharp, 1995). Since there are no specific symptoms or signs associated with early stage disease and most tumors are advanced and inoperable once detected, more than 90% of those afflicted die within 5 years of diagnosis and fewer than 5% survive long term (Beers & Berkow, 1999). Due to these and other unfavorable attributes, esophageal cancer is not amenable to traditional means of cancer prevention, including population-based screening (NCI, 2003). It was not until the identification of cyclooxygenase 2 (Cox 2) inhibitors as potential cancer chemopreventive agents that studies were eagerly undertaken to examine the potential role of these agents in esophageal cancer prevention (Corley et al, 2003).

Studies have been conducted that suggest a protective effect of Cox 2 inhibitors, including the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin and ibuprofen, upon the risk of colorectal cancer (Giovannucci et al, 1994). Recent results from two randomized, controlled chemoprevention trials have shown a 19-35% reduction in the recurrence of colorectal polyps with daily aspirin ingestion over a period of several years (NCI, 2003). The association between NSAID use and the risk of esophageal, gastric, lung, breast, and other cancers has not been established, but there is growing evidence to support a beneficial effect (Farrow et al, 1998). Administration of NSAIDs in rodents has resulted in a reduction in the development of esophageal, hepatic, pancreatic, and gastric tumors (Farrow et al, 1998; Coogan et al, 2000). The majority of esophageal, colonic, and breast cancers overexpress the Cox 2 enzyme (Langman et al, 2000), resulting in an increase in prostaglandins and prostaglandin-mediated immunosuppression. Although the exact mechanism of action is unclear, inhibition of the Cox 2 enzyme by NSAIDs may lead to an increase in apoptosis and a reversal of immunosuppression, conditions unfavorable in the development of cancer (Farrow, 1997).

The use of NSAIDs has been shown to have a substantial impact on the historically high rates of esophageal cancer mortality (Thun et al, 1993). A 41% reduction in fatal esophageal cancer has been reported in frequent and long-term aspirin use of at least 16 times per month for a minimum duration of 1 year (Thun et al, 1993). The effect of these agents on cancer incidence is striking, in light of the historically poor treatment response of these tumors (Beers & Berkow, 1999). A substantial risk reduction of 90% in the incidence of esophageal cancer has been observed for occasional NSAID or aspirin use, with no cancers in regular users of either medication (Funkhouser & Sharp, 1995). Pooled results from each of the aforementioned cohorts and seven case-control studies support a strong and beneficial effect of NSAID use on esophageal cancer risk. The combined risk of esophageal cancer was 0.82 for intermittent use, 0.54 for frequent use, and 0.57 for any use of NSAIDs. The overall effect was stronger for the use of aspirin, which resulted in a 50% risk reduction compared to the use of NSAIDs, which reduced cancer risk by 25%. The use of either aspirin or NSAIDs was protective against each of the main histological types of this tumor. A 42% reduction was observed for squamous cell carcinoma, and a 33% reduction for esophageal adenocarcinoma, with the use of either substance (Corley et al, 2003). (Odds ratios are interpreted as

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Use of Cyclooxygenase 2 Inhibitors in the Prevention of Esophageal Carcinoma

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relative risks where applicable for ease of presentation). The results of an ongoing phase II randomized chemoprevention trial of the NSAID Celecoxib in Barrett's esophagus are eagerly anticipated (NCI, 2003).

Results from observational studies support a strong and beneficial role of NSAIDs on esophageal cancer risk, findings that merit experimental confirmation. Longitudinal studies of adequate size are needed to establish their effectiveness in the community and to enable important subgroup and risk-benefit analyses. Causal assessment will require larger cohorts and longer periods of follow-up. To clarify issues of temporality, endoscopic screening may be required to exclude baseline cancers and ensure the detection of all cancers that may develop undetected during the course of study.

In conclusion, the identification of NSAIDs as potential cancer prevention agents in esophageal cancer represents a major advance in translational research. Cox 2 inhibitors are among a growing number of chemopreventive agents under study to show great promise in reducing the burden of esophageal cancer in the year 2003 and beyond.

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2000 McGovern Award winner Dorothy Nelkin dies May 28

Chapter members were saddened to learn that sociologist Dorothy Nelkin, winner of the chapter's 2000 John P. McGovern Award, died on May 28, 2003, at the age of 69. A former professor of the Department of Sociology at New York University, Dr. Nelkin wrote or co-wrote 26 books, including the seminal text *Selling Science: How the Press Covers Science and Technology*. Much of her work was focused on how advances in medical genetics affect the public, and she served as an advisor on the Human Genome Project. At the John P. McGovern Award Banquet held on January 20, 2000, Dr. Nelkin presented to an audience of 50 people a lecture entitled "Bar-coded bodies: commercialization of body tissue in the biotechnology age." A complete obituary, published in the New York Times, is available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/02/obituaries/02NELK.html>.

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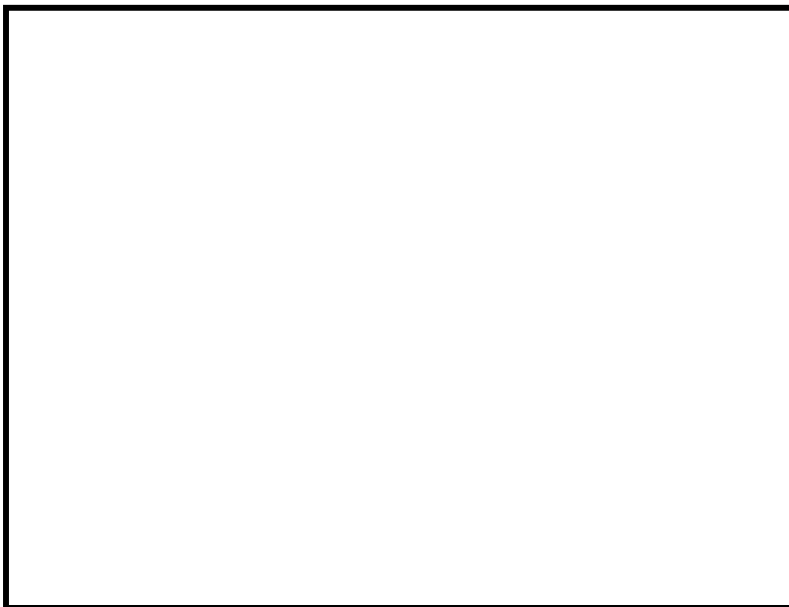
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AMWA Southwest Chapter News

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Natasha Calder Named Program Chair/President-Elect

Natasha Calder, who served last year as the Southwest Chapter's newsletter editor and was elected assistant program chair this past May, has been named the program chair for 2003–2004.

Lisa Wann, formerly the program chair/president-elect, has accepted a job at Takeda Pharmaceuticals North America in Lincolnshire, Illinois.

Because of these events, the assistant program chair position is vacant. Once a candidate is identified, a special election will be held for a new assistant program chair. This individual, who serves as a voting member of the chapter board, helps choose topics for and coordinate regular meetings.

Chapter members are encouraged to consider lending their time and talents in this important role. This type of service not only looks great on a résumé but also provides opportunities for networking, personal growth, and learning a variety of new skills. If you are interested in this position or would like to know more, contact Kate Ó Súilleabháin (Caitcinnor@aol.com or 713.851.3917).

Meeting Reservation Form

“Making Hard Choices”

Saturday, July 19, 2003, 11:30 a.m.

**Villa Capri
3713 NASA Road 1
Clear Lake, Texas
281.326.2373**

Please RSVP by July 14 to Natasha Calder
Phone: 832.512.8932
E-mail: Natasha.Calder@cyberonics.com

Name: _____
Daytime Phone: _____
Guest Name(s): _____
Entrée Preference (indicate number):
Chicken _____ Fish _____
Rigatoni _____

Members \$15 and Guests \$17

Please send your reservation form and check (payable to AMWA Southwest) to Natasha Calder, 10827 Overlea, Houston TX 77089.