



Southwest
Chapter

Newsletter of AMWA Southwest Chapter

September 2005

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October Meeting

Speaker: Maria L. Jibaja-Weiss, EdD

Date: October 11, 2005 (Tuesday)

Time: 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Place: The Spaghetti Warehouse
Houston, Texas

Come dine with us at AMWA Southwest's October meeting, which will feature a presentation by Dr. Maria Jibaja-Weiss, Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine at the Baylor College of Medicine. She will discuss her work designing computer-based resources that use text, audio, graphics, and other media (i.e., *telenovelas*) to communicate health information to low-literacy people, and she will demonstrate some of the interactive materials she has developed.

Dr. Jibaja-Weiss has received grants from the National Cancer Institute and the Department of Defense to develop tools for educating low-literacy women about breast cancer. These include an interactive "soap opera" on CD-ROM designed to educate Spanish-speaking women about breast cancer screening, and another interactive computerized program created to help breast cancer patients make informed treatment decisions. Dr. Jibaja-Weiss has published several journal articles about her work in health communication, and she has been named to the National Hispanic/Latina Advisory Council of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. In 2002, she received a Recognition Award from the Center for Research on Minority Health at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center.

We will meet for dinner at 6:00 p.m., which will start with salad and bread, followed by your choice of fifteen-layer baked lasagna, chicken tetrazzini, fettucini alfredo, grilled chicken marinara, or spaghetti and meatballs. Coffee and dessert will follow.

Continued on Page 2

To register for this event, RSVP by Friday, October 7, to Steve Palmer at spalmer@heart.thi.tmc.edu. Please include your first and last name, your address, and your phone number. Also, indicate whether you are a member or nonmember. Please be prepared to pay (\$22 for members, \$25 for nonmembers) by cash or check (payable to AMWA Southwest) at the door on the day of the event, or mail your check to Steve Palmer at 6615 Meadowlawn Street,

Houston, TX 77023. Payment will be required for each email registration received.

The Spaghetti Warehouse is located at 901 Commerce Street (between Main and Travis) in downtown Houston. There is parking on the premises. For those taking MetroRail, the restaurant is less than two blocks from the UH-Downtown Station stop. For more detailed directions, call The Spaghetti Warehouse at 713.229.9715.

Texas Monthly's Mimi Swartz Speaks at Villa Capri Meeting

On Saturday, July 16, in Seabrook, TX, *Texas Monthly* executive editor Mimi Swartz spoke at AMWA Southwest's summer meeting about her recently published account of the breakup of Baylor College of Medicine and Methodist Hospital. The article about these two founding members of the Texas Medical Center and longtime clinical partners, entitled "Till Death Do Us Part," appeared in the magazine's March 2005 issue.

Ms. Swartz provided the 32 assembled chapter members and guests with useful and often humorous insights into her entire writing process: the informal chats with friends that piqued her interest in the breakup, her attempts to identify and understand the motives of the principal players, her self-admittedly quaint but effective insistence on taking only handwritten notes during interviews, and her later uncomfortable run-ins with some of the interviewees during the fact-checking and editing stages.

"I wasn't looking for this story, but it kept popping up in totally different conversations,

begging to be told," said Ms. Swartz. "And even after I'd gone to my editors with the idea, I didn't know exactly how I would get a handle on this big ungainly thing."

"My sense of direction, who was to blame, and who was hurt the most by it all shifted as I dug deeper and deeper into the misunderstandings and competing interests that were involved," she noted. "After looking long and hard for some thread to tie the whole story together, I finally found it in Dr. Michael DeBaKey, who probably did the most to bring Baylor and Methodist together and then watched in bewilderment as his creation fell apart."

Besides writing for *Texas Monthly*, Ms. Swartz has been a staff writer for *The New Yorker* and *Talk Magazine* and has published articles nationally in *The New York Times*, *Slate*, and *Vanity Fair*. In 1996, she won a National Magazine Award for her article "Not What the Doctor Ordered," about the influence of insurance companies on medical decision making.

The luncheon presentation was held in an upstairs dining room of the Villa Capri restaurant overlooking Clear Lake, south of Houston. Before Ms. Swartz took the floor,

current president Chris Wogan presented outgoing president Natasha Calder with a special Service Award for leading the chapter last year.

News from the Webmaster

Resources Update

I am updating and organizing the list of links on the Resources page of the AMWA Southwest web site.

If you have a site you would like me to add, please email me. Sites can be on any topic relevant to our lives as medical communicators.

- Educational programs
- Grammar guides
- Grant resources
- Job listings
- Medical news
- Online dictionaries
- Online stores (books, software, or supplies)
- Related professional organizations
- Scientific methods
- Style guides
- Writing humor
- Writing message boards

The current list of links can be found at <http://www.amwasouthwest.org/Resources/resources.htm>. A work-in-progress version is linked there.

Officer Profile Updates

If you are an officer in the Southwest chapter and would like to add your profile to the site or update your existing profile, please let me know.

Profiles generally include, where relevant,

- Name
- Chapter title
- Professional title and affiliation
- Brief professional background
- Other offices held or other affiliations
- Education
- Training and certifications
- Presentations and publications
- Photo and favorite quote

If you would like a photo taken of yourself or need one scanned, I may be able to help. If you would like your phone number listed, please let me know. Otherwise, I'll just list your amwasouthwest.org email address.

Thank you!

Have any suggestions or possible additions for our site?
Technical problems? Please let me know!

Ann Sutton
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713.745.2205

Update on the 2006 AMWA Southwest Chapter Conference

by Anita Frijhoff and Pamela McAlpin, Conference Coordinators



Friday, May 19, 2006
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Registration at 7:45 a.m.
St. Edward's University
Austin, Texas

The Austin Conference will be held at St. Edward's University, a private college located on a beautiful campus in South Austin (<http://www.stedwards.edu>). Within walking distance of St. Edward's University is the Woodward Hotel and Conference Center, which offers conference attendees an affordable room rate of \$55/night plus taxes, including breakfast. To get this rate, please call 800.966.3927 and mention AMWA Southwest. (Note: if you make online reservations, you will be charged \$89/night.)

The conference registration brochure and form will be available online at <http://www.amwasouthwest.org> for downloading. Please mail the completed form with a check to the address indicated on the form.

In addition to the workshops and a plenary seminar by an expert in medical communications, the conference offers great networking opportunities.

The AMWA Southwest Chapter Conference, organized entirely by volunteers, is held every two years. As members from the Austin area, we took the initiative to begin planning the 2006 AMWA Southwest Chapter Conference in Austin, Texas, and we are off to a running start.

The results of a survey recently conducted among the members who subscribe to the AMWA Southwest Chapter's Yahoo! mailing list helped us decide on Friday, May 19, 2006, as the date for the conference and on the workshop selections. (The complete survey results will be published in our next newsletter.)

The majority of survey respondents voted to have the core curriculum workshop *Grant Writing: NIH and Non-NIH Resource Options and Strategies* (EW/FL) [206] and the advanced curriculum workshop *Advanced Writing* (ADV) [706]. We are happy to report that leaders of both workshops agreed to teach at the conference. The conference further offers the core curriculum workshops *Journal Submissions Other Than Research Articles* (EW) [209] and *Bibliographic Resources for Medical Communicators (editorial approach)* (G) [102]. Finally, two noncredit workshops are also on the conference program: *Giving Effective Presentations* (NC) is an interactive workshop about being an effective speaker, while *DNA, Cell Cycle, and Cancer: An Introduction* (NC) teaches the basics of DNA, cell cycle, and carcinogenesis.

And remember—Austin is the official “Live Music Capital of the World.” We shall keep you posted on concerts and other activities scheduled for the weekend of May 19–21. Meanwhile, you can check out events at <http://www.austin360.com/event/events/etc/usersearchform>.

We look forward to hearing from you! Talk to us in person at the upcoming AMWA Annual Conference at Pittsburgh—we will be wearing distinctively Austin badges and have registration forms at the “Chapter Meet and Greet” from 6:30–7:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 29. If you have questions or comments, please contact Anita Frijhoff by email (frijhoff@sbcglobal.net) or phone (512.323.5171). We need volunteers for several tasks, suggestions for potential sponsors, and ideas for a plenary speaker from the Austin area.

New Professional Development Certificate

by Jane Krauhs

Would you like to have something to show your employer or clients that indicates your commitment to professional development, something in addition to or instead of a core curriculum certificate, or to use until you receive a core or advanced certificate? Members have been asking AMWA for a way to provide such documentation, and this year AMWA has begun to offer the Professional Development Certificate (PDC). You should have received information about this certificate in a mailing from AMWA headquarters, but in case it's at the bottom of a stack of paper on your desk, you can find the application form and directions for completing it in the *AMWA Journal*, vol. 20, no. 2, page 85, or at <http://www.amwa.org> (click on the Education/Development button along the left-hand side, and then on Professional Development Certificate).

You can earn a PDC as often as every two years by accruing points for professional development activities such as attending an AMWA annual conference or chapter meeting, completing a university-level course relevant to biomedical communication, publishing an article in the *AMWA Journal* or another peer-reviewed journal, leading or co-leading an AMWA workshop, or attending a noncredit workshop at AMWA annual or chapter conferences or even a non-AMWA meeting in scientific communication. (See the application for the complete list of qualifying activities.) You must submit documentation of your participation and pay an application fee (\$45 for AMWA members, \$150 for nonmembers). The first certificate period is for activities in which you participated after January 1, 2004. You may start your 2-year period then or at the beginning of any subsequent year. All points for a given application must have been accrued within two years of your start date (by December 31 of the second year).

To document your attendance at a chapter meeting, go to the above-mentioned location on the AMWA Web site, click on "voucher," and print the voucher form. Fill it in except for the signature, and ask chapter treasurer Alison Woo to sign it. If it is for a past meeting, she can check attendance records.

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