

# SOUTHWEST CHAPTER NEWS

November 2001

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## December Meeting: Discussion and Holiday Gala

Wednesday, December 5, Houston, Texas

Building on the success of last December's event, the Southwest Chapter of the American Medical Writers Association will once again host a holiday gala! We will gather at Major's Book Store. After an opportunity to mingle with guests and other AMWA members, the evening's program will begin. This year's program will be a panel discussion on "Building Successful Relationships with Clients." Panel members and a moderator will explore this topic through 3 short presentations followed by a question-and-answer session with the audience. Issues covered will include:

*Freelance work* – getting started, retaining clients, tackling financial issues

*The client-editor agreement* – establishing first contact with a client, agreeing on the scope of editing, setting realistic deadlines, using guidelines

*Difficult issues* – using technology efficiently, dealing with difficult clients and expectations, handling unanticipated changes in money or time involved in a job

**Mariann Crapanzano** (Moderator) earned a B.A. from The University of Notre Dame, with a double major in Mass Communications and English. She also earned a J.D. from Louisiana State University Law Center. After practicing law for 13 years, Ms. Crapanzano moved to Houston and joined the Department of Scientific Publications at The University of

Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, where she has worked as an Associate Scientific Editor since 1999. In this capacity, she serves as a staff editor and as Assistant Managing Editor for the *Journal of Clinical Ultrasound* and contributes as a writer to *Oncology*, a physician newsletter published by the Department of Scientific Publications.

**Jude Richard**, M.F.A., (Panelist) has worked as a medical editor and writer for 11 years. He began his medical editing career at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, where he worked first as an editor and eventually as a manager in the Department of Scientific Publications. For the past year, he has been working as a senior medical editor/writer at the Texas Heart Institute. He also freelances for clients in the clinical and basic sciences in the U.S. and Austria.

**Laurel Prokop** (Panelist) is the founder of the TechStyle Group originally in Colorado, then moved to Washington, now in Houston. Techstyle offers communication and consultation to corporate, medical, legal, publishing, and academic organizations. She is certified by the Board of Editors in the Life Sciences, holds a B.S. degree (double major in chemistry and biology), and is a Registered Medical Technologist through the American Society of Clinical Pathologists. Ms. Prokop also has graduate training in biomedical and materials science engineering.

**Beth W. Allen**, M.A., (Panelist) has worked as a medical editor and writer for more than



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**Discussion and Gala** (continued from p.1)

two decades. A former newspaper reporter and editor, Allen began her medical editing career as an editor for the *American Journal of Medical Technology*. In 1978 she began a long association with M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, where she worked first as an editor and eventually as assistant director in the Department of Scientific Publications. A freelancer since 1980, she helps produce Web pages, grants, articles, books, periodicals, reports, brochures, and other documents. She has been a science and medical book editor for The University of Texas Press; Little, Brown; Texas A&M Press; and other publishers. In addition to M. D. Anderson, clients have included Baylor College of Medicine; the VA Medical Center; the Texas Heart Institute; local and national nonprofit health associations; and physicians, surgeons, nurses, and health administrators.

Please mark your calendar to attend this festive yet informative event. Better yet, bring a guest! Champagne and sparkling cider (nonalcoholic) will be served, as well as a wonderful selection of delicious hors d'oeuvres. Make your reservation today!

**Directions for Majors Scientific Books:** From Holcombe Boulevard, go south on Fannin. From the 610 south loop, go north on Fannin. The bookstore is located between Old Spanish Trail and South Braeswood on the east side of Fannin.

**What:** AMWA Holiday celebration & panel discussion

**When:** Wednesday, December 5, 2001; 5:30–7:30 p.m.

**Where:** Major's Scientific Books, Houston, Texas

**Cost:** Members \$15; Guests \$17

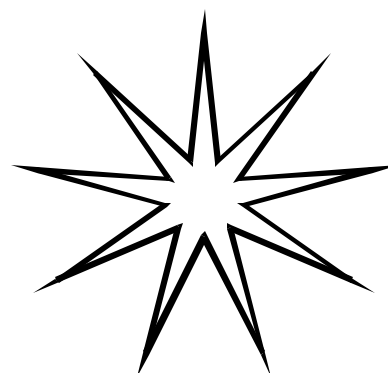
**RSVP** using the registration form on the back page or in upcoming e-mail reminders. **Please respond by December 1, 2001.** For more information, contact Kate O Suilleabhain (713-792-3165; [kosuilleabhain@mdanderson.org](mailto:kosuilleabhain@mdanderson.org)) or Tom Gegeny (713-527-8219; [tom@centerforaids.org](mailto:tom@centerforaids.org)).

## Recent Lecture and Field Trip

Two recent AMWA Southwest Chapter activities in the Houston area gave members a chance to attend a chapter event during the day. On September 14, Leonard Zwelling, M.D., M.B.A., gave a lecture on controversies in clinical cancer research, and on October 17, a group toured the Harris County Medical Examiner's office.

Dr. Leonard Zwelling, Vice President for Research Administration at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, was an invited speaker in the chapter's Distinguished Lecture series. His talk, titled "Controversies in Clinical Cancer Research: Gene Therapy, Genomics, and Conflicts of Interest," addressed ethical issues related to clinical trials, conflicts of interest, and patients' rights. Dr. Zwelling also discussed some of the measures taken at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center to prevent and address these types of problems. The talk prompted a lot of discussion and questions that Dr. Zwelling addressed after his lecture. Chapter members interested in borrowing the videotape of this lecture should contact Tom Gegeny.

At the Harris County Medical Examiner's office, located in the Texas Medical Center, tour guide Carolyn Gates gave an extensive tour of the facilities to a group of 19 people that included AMWA chapter members and members of American Women in Science. The group had a chance to view several autopsies in progress and to speak with the forensic pathologists performing them. Ms. Gates explained the processes used to preserve the chain of evidence when bodies are brought to the ME's office. The tour participants also saw the coolers where bodies are kept before and after autopsies and visited several laboratories housed in the ME's office, including those for trace evidence, ballistics, controlled substances, serology, and DNA.



# Important Chapter Developments at Fall Board Meeting

The fall board meeting of the Southwest Chapter of the American Medical Writers Association was held in an electronic meeting room using America Online Instant Messenger technology on September 15, 2001. The board members discussed developing an electronic newsletter for the Southwest Chapter, the chapter budget, plans for a 2002 chapter conference, and various other points of business.

**Developing an electronic newsletter for the Southwest Chapter:** During the last fiscal year, the chapter spent over \$1000 on the publication of a paper newsletter mailed out to all members. By moving towards an electronic newsletter, significant funds could be released for distribution to our regional directors and for development of future programs in the central division. In addition, the newsletter could be expanded in size and scope, include color pictures, contain links to individuals/organizations of interest, etc. It could also be made available to students and potential members at no additional cost. Concern was expressed that some members may not receive e-mail or may simply prefer to receive a hard copy. It was decided that the next two issues of the newsletter would be published in both formats (hard-copy and electronic), to introduce the concept to the general membership and provide an opportunity for feedback. Members will receive notification via email that the newsletter is available on the web, along with a link to the appropriate site. During the interim period before the February newsletter, which will be ALL electronic (*i.e., no hard copies will be sent*), Tom Gegeny and Noelle Heinze will work toward updating our e-mail list so that it can be as inclusive as possible. **The final newsletter of the chapter year will again be published in both formats, allowing time for discussion and a decision about the future disposition of the newsletter. A limited number of hard copies of each newsletter will always be available.**

*The board members welcome your comments on this proposed change. Please send e-mail to Secretary Leigh Fink (lfink@mdanderson.org) or letters to Newsletter Editor Chris Yeager's home address (return address on this newsletter).*

**Chapter finances:** A top priority for the chapter this year is to provide increased financial support for our regional members. The board decided, via email discussion regarding

this year's budget finalization, that \$200 would be allotted to each regional chapter to use at the chapter director's discretion for program development or travel to a chapter board meeting in Spring. The McGovern stipend has been increased this year from \$3000 to \$5000.

**Tax-exempt status:** The Southwest Chapter is moving toward becoming a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization. This status means that individual donations to the chapter would be tax deductible for the donor, which should make it easier to court sponsors of chapter activities. The North Carolina Chapter has gained 501(c)3 status and is providing advice to us.

**Fall educational meeting:** Program Chair Tom Gegeny and Assistant Program Chair Kate O Suilleabhain are developing plans for a Southwest Chapter educational conference to be held next fall. The conference will run for one-half day, with a selection of courses. If you have suggestions or would be willing to work on developing or implementing the conference, please contact Tom or Kate.

**Other business:** The chapter is considering the purchase of a video camera to tape all Houston events for distribution to the regional directors. Initial notices for the 2<sup>d</sup> Annual AMWA Southwest Medical Writing Scholarship Competition will be sent out before the end of the year.

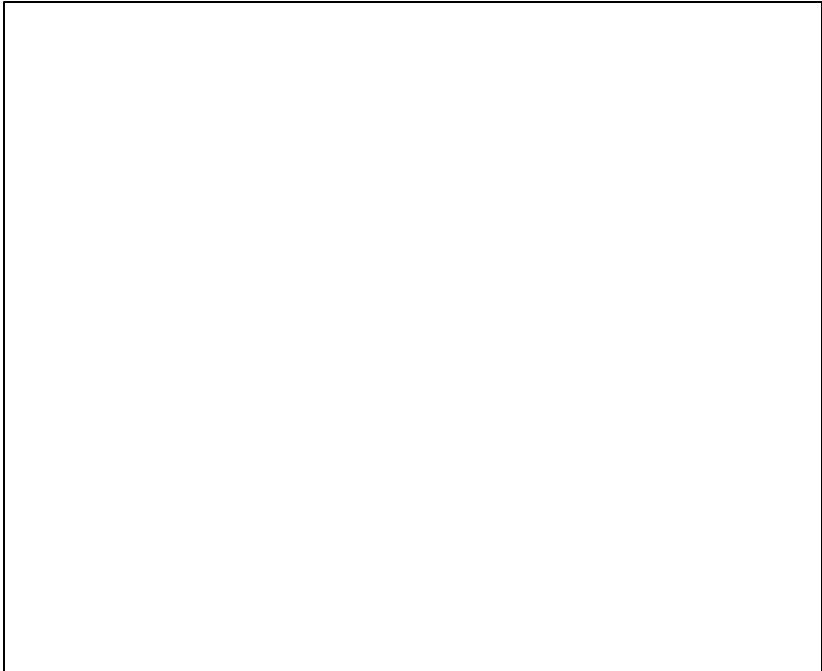
## 3 Ways to Get the Most Out of Chapter Membership!

1. Join the chapter e-mail list. Do you get meeting announcements and other important information by e-mail? No? Then contact Noelle Heinze to join the list! [nheinze@mdanderson.org](mailto:nheinze@mdanderson.org)
2. Subscribe to the *amwasouthwest* discussion group. Find out what members are saying about medical writing and editing!  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/amwasouthwest>
3. Visit the chapter website!  
<http://www.amwasouthwest.org>

**AMWA Southwest Chapter News**

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**Meeting Registration Form**

AMWA Holiday Celebration & Panel Discussion  
Wednesday, December 5, 2001, at Majors Scientific Books  
7205 Fannin, Houston, Texas  
Members \$15; Guests \$17

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please send your reservation form and check, payable to AMWA Southwest, to:  
Kate O Suilleabhain  
506 West Cottage, Apt. 2  
Houston, TX 77009

RSVP by December 1, 2001.