

SEPTEMBER 19: DINNER MEETING IN CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Writing for the Pharmaceutical Industry

The New England Chapter will launch the 2001-02 year on Wednesday, September 19, with a dinner meeting at the popular Ristorante Marino in Cambridge, Mass. Join your colleagues for socializing, networking, Marino's delicious food, and a presentation that will focus on one of the major areas of employment for medical writers: the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry. Learn what it's all about and how to break in.

Our speaker, Linda Burke, will give an overview of the drug development process, and she will provide insight into the qualifications required to participate in this process at the various stages of development.

In the local emerging biotechnology industry, Linda Burke is one of medical writing's most salient assets. She has 12 years of experience writing technical documents for the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical device industries and has been a leader in the struggle to gain recognition for medical writing as a unique entity. She has been an AMWA member since 1992.

She is currently the Associate Director of Medical Writing for Experimental Medicine at Genetics Institute, a division of Wyeth Ayerst based in Cambridge. Her experience includes writing documentation for all stages of product development, from animal studies to human studies, both before and after product marketing. The breadth of her experience allows her to speak with authority on the role of the medical writer in contributing to drug development, on the required qualifications, and on the paths available to people interested in becoming part of this fascinating process.

On a separate note, some of you may want to take advantage of a new, more systematic networking option that will be offered for the first time at this meeting. For details, see Heather Miniman's report on page 2.

WRITING FOR THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

DATE: Wednesday, September 19

TIME: Social Hour 6:00-7:00 PM (cash bar) • Dinner 7:00-8:00 PM • Program 8:00-9:00 PM

PLACE: Ristorante Marino, 2465 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Mass. DIRECTIONS ON BACK PAGE.

MENU: Marino Lookout Farm Mesclun Salad • Homemade Breads and Focaccia • CHOICE OF ENTRÉE: Baked Scrod with Seasoned Bread Crumbs, Rotisserie Roasted All-Natural Half Chicken Seasoned with Spices and Herbs, or Vegetarian Lasagna • Potatoes and Fresh Sautéed Vegetables • Assorted Italian Cookies and Pastries • Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee, or Tea

REGISTRATION: Please use the enclosed form to register. Cost is \$25.00 for members, \$28.00 for guests and prospective members.

DEADLINE: To guarantee dinner reservations, we must receive your payment by mail no later than Thursday, September 13. (Sorry, no refunds for cancellation after 2:00 PM that day.)

As always, prospective members and guests are welcome.

— Linda F. Wood
President-Elect/Program Director

OCTOBER 10: CONNECTICUT MEETING

The chapter will meet Wednesday, October 10, in New Haven. (More information on page 7.)

INDEX	2 Networking Plan	4 June Meeting Report	7 Connecticut Meeting	8 Directions to Meeting
	2 Membership Awards	5 Door Prizes	7 Sturbridge Conference	8 AMWA Conference
	3 May Meeting Report	6 New Members	7 Writing Awards	8 Executive Council
	3 Connecticut Committee	6 Personal Notes	7 Book Review	

Networking Committee initiates plans

Starting with the September 19 meeting, we will begin implementing a new way to increase the networking value of every chapter meeting—regardless of the evening's program. The basic concept involves identifying members with particular interests and areas of expertise so that others can find them easily. We hope that a few simple options will create a friendlier, more informative atmosphere for new members and prospective members, while at the same time providing a networking benefit for everyone.

The initial option involves adding a color-coded sticker to your name tag. When you get to the meeting, you will be offered the opportunity to identify yourself, by color, with a particular area of interest. If you choose to wear a sticker (or stickers), you will be recognized as someone who is willing to discuss a particular area with other attendees.

Some people may ask questions that you can't answer—and that's okay. The color-coded stickers are meant only to facilitate contacts among those with similar interests. If you can't answer a question, perhaps you know someone who can.

The system relies on member participation for its success, so we hope you'll give it a try at the next meeting. Additional networking options will be introduced throughout the year. See you at the meeting!

— Heather Miniman
for the Networking Committee

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER NEWS is published 5 to 6 times a year for the New England members of the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA).

The newsletter welcomes letters to the editor; reports about members' professional activities and special achievements; notices of local meetings, conferences, and courses; and other items of specific interest to medical, biomedical, and health communicators in New England.

As a service to chapter members who may be seeking new employment, job openings and freelance assignments are listed free of charge (100 words maximum, subject to editing), providing they are not also appearing in the AMWA Job Sheet.

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER
AMERICAN MEDICAL WRITERS ASSOCIATION
37 FORTY ACRES DRIVE
WAYLAND MASSACHUSETTS 01778

Judy Linn, Editor
Phone/Fax (508) 358-7071

Chapter to give annual Judith Linn Membership Awards

When we were planning for the New England Chapter's 25th Anniversary Celebration, Bob Dunbar, one of the founding members of the chapter, proposed that we inaugurate an annual award as a lasting tribute to the person most responsible for the chapter's successes since the very beginning: Judy Linn. Recognizing that membership has always been a passion with Judy, the Executive Council decided to follow up on Rob Kinslow's suggestion of an annual membership award.

The requirements and procedures for the Judith Linn Membership Award are as follows:

- Any chapter member may nominate an outstanding new medical communicator who resides in New England and who has been in the field for at least one year but no more than three years.
- The member making the nomination will provide a statement on the nominee's behalf.
- The nominee will provide a resume, a sample of his or her work, and a statement about his or her interest in and personal ambitions regarding the medical communications field.
- The Membership Awards Committee will select up to three recipients in any given period.
- Each recipient will be invited to a chapter meeting as our guest. During the meeting, the recipient will be recognized and awarded a one-year membership in AMWA.

The purpose of this award is to provide support and encouragement to new medical communicators. A call will be made for volunteers to serve as mentors for recipients during their period of free membership.

The committee welcomes your nomination of worthy candidates. Every candidate will be given serious consideration by the committee and, if selected, will be notified within two months of receipt of the nomination. To make a nomination, you must use the form inserted in this newsletter.

If you have questions, call me at (802) 254-3899 or send e-mail to dolle@sover.net.

— David Olle, Director
Judith Linn Membership Award Committee

May Meeting Report

Connecticut spring meeting is all about pricing jobs

You know what you write, but do you know what to charge for it? Setting the right fees for writers and consultants was the topic of the Chapter's spring Connecticut meeting, held May 17 in North Haven. New York AMWA member Laurie Lewis, author of *What to Charge: Pricing Strategies for Freelancers and Consultants*, spoke on "10 Tips for Pricing Success."

Laurie's interesting and useful presentation was a distillation of her book and of her popular workshop, given at several AMWA conferences. A freelance medical writer since 1985, Laurie has written everything from patient education materials to medical journal articles.

Her 10-Tips for Pricing Success are:

- Get to know people in your field with whom you can discuss going rates.
- Try different methods of pricing, such as by the hour, by the word, or by the project.
- Log your time on the job according to the tasks you perform. This helps you manage your workload and also helps you set good rates. For example, how much time do you spend on the phone setting up interviews, or on the Internet doing research, before beginning to write?
- Learn all you can about the job, then take time to calculate the best fee. When asked by a client what you would charge, don't answer right away — say you'll call back. This gives you time to think about it.

- Before quoting your fee, determine the price you want to charge, the lowest fee you'll take, and the concessions you want if you have to go that low. For example, you can negotiate the variables of the project, such as payment of expenses, deadline, future work, and rounds of editing.

- Put your agreement in writing, either in a formal contract or a letter that both parties sign.

- At the end of a job, reexamine your pricing decision. Do this right away, so you remember the details. Ask yourself if you would have made more if you had charged differently.

- Once a year, analyze all of your clients side by side. Calculate the hourly rate equivalent for each client, then compare clients.

- Periodically raise your rates.

- Learn from your mistakes, and repeat your successes.

Laurie's book contains much more information designed to help writers prosper. It may be ordered by phoning the publisher, Aletheia Publications, at (845) 526-2873.

The Connecticut-based members of the New England Chapter meet twice a year, in the spring and fall, to network and hear presentations on topics of interest to medical writers. All AMWA New England members and prospective members are welcome at these meetings.

— Lisa Catanese

Connecticut Program Committee changes for 2001-02 year

The Connecticut planning committee has had a few changes for 2001-02. Michael Conway, formerly communications manager for the Fairfield County Medical Association, has retired, resigning from the committee at the same time. He had served since 1993-94, often presenting the physician's view, and was instrumental in putting together the popular meeting at the Institute of Living two years ago.

Amy Plofker has joined the planners. A scientific editor with Bayer Pharmaceutical's Scientific Communication Department, she writes and edits reports of clinical trials as well as other publications on both pre-launch and

marketed pharmaceutical products. She has been involved with AMWA since 1997, when she slogged through an early Boston snowstorm to attend the national conference there. Since then, she has attended many regional meetings and workshops and will bring a much-needed pharmaceutical perspective to meeting plans.

Lisa Catanese, a freelance writer, will continue to serve on the committee, as will Mary Page Gallagher, also a freelancer and Vice President for Connecticut in 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

— J. Lynne Dodson
Vice President for Connecticut
Chair, Connecticut Program Committee

June Meeting Report

New England Chapter turns 25!

AMWA's New England Chapter celebrated its 25th anniversary in grand style on June 14 at a festive event at Waltham's Doubletree Guest Suites. The evening was highlighted by a number of very special tributes to founding member Judy Linn, including a proclamation from Acting Governor Jane Swift declaring June 14, 2001 "Judy Linn Day" in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. (And you thought it was reserved for Flag Day!) Later in the evening, the meeting's panel discussion, "Medical Writing: Where Have We Come From? Where Are We Going? How Do We Get There?" not only provided attendees with insights into our profession, but gave us all the chance to reminisce about Selectric typewriters, pre-Internet card catalog searches, carbon paper, Wite-Out, and daisy wheel printers—remember those?

Door Prizes

Following the social hour (with free drinks for members!) and dinner, the celebration kicked off with a drawing for some 40 door prizes, ranging from both medical and writing reference books to Museum of Science passes and numerous restaurant gift certificates, to a clever tongue-in-cheek "survival basket" for the hardworking medical writer. Thanks to the many donors of these prizes. (See acknowledgments on page 5.)

New Officers for 2001-02

The evening also included the introduction of our chapter's officers for 2001-02: President, **Nancy Knoblock Hunton**; Immediate Past President, **Siobhan E. Gallagher**; President-Elect, **Linda F. Wood**; Vice President for Connecticut, **J. Lynne Dodson**; Secretary, **Victoria A. Reder**; and Treasurer, **Joni Koogler**.

Recognition of Judy Linn

The fun really began when master of ceremonies Neil Duane, Jill Shuman, David Olle, Bob Dunbar, Siobhan Gallagher, and Joni Koogler gathered at the podium, together with a reluctant Judy Linn. As many of you know, Judy was not only a major force behind the creation of the New England Chapter in 1976, but also served as chapter president in 1977-78 and, since then, has faithfully edited our newsletter, organized the Sturbridge conferences, overseen

the chapter's tremendous growth, and held the hand of many a new president and program director. As the evening's many tributes further attested, she has also been a generous mentor to countless AMWA members over the years.

In recognition of these contributions and more, Jill Shuman announced the creation of the Judith Linn Membership Award, which will be presented to new members of the medical writing profession and will consist of a year-long AMWA membership. (See David Olle's report on page 2.) Then, despite Judy's protestations, Siobhan Gallagher and Neil Duane kept her at the podium and unveiled the official "Judy Linn Day" proclamation, signed and sealed at the State House earlier that day; and Joni Koogler presented Judy with a gift from the chapter: life membership in AMWA.

Panel Discussion

The evening's panel discussion, moderated by Neil Duane, a 25-year member and president in 1978-79, featured five long-time AMWA members offering their memories of medical writing days gone by and some predictions as to what lies ahead for the field.

Education: Jill Shuman (president in 1995-96), an instructor at Tufts University School of Medicine and School of Nutrition Science and Policy and editorial director of Healthgate.com, discussed the wealth of options that students have today in terms of health communications curriculums, foreseeing many opportunities for students and audiences alike with this heightened degree of scientific specialization—despite their diminishing researching skills, created by the Internet!

Freelancing: Health writer and lecturer Tom O'Connell (president in 1984-85) next addressed the changing world of freelancing. Confessing that many of his career endeavors—as well as his AMWA endeavors—were assumed "with reluctance," Tom described his numerous projects and work experiences, from health association public relations to editing a medical journal, writing a newspaper column, authoring books, and creating a Web site. Needless to say, he then advised freelancers to take advantage of diverse opportunities as they can both give you credibility and lead to more opportunities.

June Meeting Report, continued next page

June Meeting Report, from page 4

Writing and Editing: Sally Edwards (president in 1981-82) is director of publications for the Health Effects Institute. Besides cheering the loss of Wite-Out and carbon paper and the advent of personal computers, Sally noted that "today's writers and editors are expected to be experts at many things besides writing and editing, including, for example, desktop publishing and Web publishing." But even as things have changed, she concluded that editors "still have a great sense of power when you let your red pen go."

Public Relations and Marketing: Rob Kinslow (president in 1998-99), senior director of communications for Seidler Bernstein Inc., admitted that 25 years ago he was a high school sophomore "trying to get that feathered, blow-dried look." Since then, his career has taken him from newspaper reporting to ad sales to hospital PR and on to advertising and marketing. And while not missing the daisy wheel printers, Rob

pointed out the pitfalls of today's instantaneous communication, which "has made our audiences more cynical." He went on to describe how today's PR agencies are looking for writers who have a niche and "must wear two hats as both generalist and specialist." He recommended the merits of "added value," whether it be writing for Web sites, CDs, or posters.

Pharmaceutical: President-Elect Linda Wood, who is president of MedWrite Inc., discussed the pharmaceutical arena, describing the field's extraordinary growth, in the Boston area in particular where biotechnology companies are flourishing. Discussing the impact of managed care, new regulations, and international markets, among other rapid changes, Linda concluded that as our comfort with these new technologies grows, "We need to continue to evaluate and determine what qualifies as good pharmaceutical writing."

— Bonnie Prescott

Chapter thanks contributors for door prizes

Door prizes added to the fun at our 25th Anniversary Celebration in June. On behalf of the New England Chapter, Siobhan Gallagher and those who served with her on the 2000-01 Executive Council extend thanks to the chapter members, businesses, and institutions that generously donated gift certificates and merchandise:

Anonymous Donors

- Book bag, *Why I Write*, bookmark, Post-it Flags
- Basket of Health Care Products

Boston Documentation Design (Hanover, Mass.)

- *Physician's Book of Days* (4 copies)

Francesca Coltrera

- *Unbending Gender*
- *Athena Unbound*
- *The Trotula*

Crimson Printing Company (Cambridge, Mass.)

- \$50 gift certificate for The Capital Grille, Boston

Nell M. Davis Associates (Huntington Valley, Pa.)

- *Medical Abbreviations: 15,000 Conveniences at the Expense of Communications and Safety* (2 copies)

Doubletree Guest Suites (Waltham, Mass.)

- Dinner for two at The Grille at Hobbs Brook

Fairhaven Associates (Pembroke, NH)

- \$25 gift certificate for Levenger Catalog: Tools for Serious Readers

Morris Ferrari and Tod Forman

- *A-Z of Medical Writing*
- *A Piece of My Mind*
- *Crossing Over: Narratives in Palliative Health Care*
- *Protecting Study Volunteers in Research*

Mary Page Gallagher

- *Rules for Aging*

Harvard Book Store (Cambridge, Mass.)

- \$25 gift certificate

Harvard Cooperative Society (Cambridge, Mass.)

- \$25 gift certificate

Joie de Vivre (Cambridge, Mass.)

- Box of toys and spoofs

Anthony Komaroff

- *The Harvard Medical School Family Health Guide* (2 copies)

Joni Koogler

- Doctor figurine

Marine Biological Laboratory (Woods Hole, Mass.)

- Ceramic trivet

Merck & Co.,

- *The Merck Manual* (3 copies)
- *The Merck Manual of Medical Information* (Home Ed.)

Heather Miniman

- *Gray's Anatomy*
- \$25 gift certificate for Barnes & Noble

Museum of Science (Boston)

- Free admission for two

New England AMWA Chapter

- Free registration for Chapter meeting (3 coupons)

New England Aquarium (Boston)

- Free admission for two

Quantum Books (Cambridge, Mass.)

- *A Quick Reference to the DSM-IV*

Ristorante Marino (Cambridge, Mass.)

- \$50 gift certificate

Water Street Bookstore (Newburyport, Mass.)

- *The Best American Science Writing 2000*

New Members

New England cordially welcomes those from the six-state area who have recently joined AMWA, reestablished their affiliation with the association, or moved here from other chapter areas:

Patrice Al-Saden
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Boston, Massachusetts
[from Greater Chicago Area Chapter]

Cynthia Arons, PhD
Kendle International Inc.
Old Lyme, Connecticut

Jill Beimdiek
New Haven, Connecticut
[from Carolinas Chapter]

William G. Berghoff
Pfizer Global R & D
Groton, Connecticut
[from Michigan State Chapter]

Shelby Bohl
Boston, Massachusetts
[from Pacific Southwest Chapter]

Jane Bolvin
Cranston, Rhode Island
Upwardly Mobile

Myra Carpenter
North Andover, Massachusetts
[from Delaware Valley Chapter]

Connie S. Chow, PhD
Brookline, Massachusetts
Harvard University

Lonnie K. Christiansen
Newburyport, Massachusetts

Nicole R. Cooper
Greenwich, Connecticut
QED Communications

Dennis J. Devonshuk
Bayer Corporation
Pharmaceutical Division
West Haven, Connecticut

Peter M. Forbes
West Roxbury, Massachusetts

Sandra J. Gordon
Weston, Connecticut

Juman C. Hijab, MD
CMR
Franklin, Massachusetts

Mary H. Hohenhaus, MD
Providence, Rhode Island
[from Ohio Valley Chapter]

Jenna L. Hollenstein
Boston, Massachusetts
Nutrition Reviews/ILSI

Barbara Jauch
Sepracor Inc.
Marlborough, Massachusetts
[from Delaware Valley Chapter]

Annie B. Kay
Nantucket, Massachusetts

Jeanne S. Kelley
Ipswich, Massachusetts

Betty R. Kinder
Jamestown, Rhode Island

Jean M. Maatta
Hamden, Connecticut
[from Metro New York Chapter]

John G. Maguire
Lowell, Massachusetts
White Pines College

Lori A. Martell, PhD
Guilford, Connecticut

Elizabeth Molle
East Haddam, Connecticut

John Redue
Medford, Massachusetts
Genzyme Corporation

Faith E. Reidenbach
Stratford, Connecticut
Reuters Health

Cindy Wilkinson Seip
Wethersfield, Connecticut
[from Mid-America Chapter]

Susan Sheridan
Westport, Connecticut

Sandra L. Smith
Somerville, Massachusetts
Partners Healthcare System

Nancy Tam
Sepracor Inc.
Marlborough, Massachusetts
[from Greater Chicago Area Chapter]

Anna Viadero
Montague, Massachusetts

Jian Wang, MD
Kendle International Inc.
Old Lyme, Connecticut

Susan J. Watson, PhD
Fusion MD
Medical Science Network
Cheshire, Connecticut

Rachel J. West
Lebanon, New Hampshire
*Dartmouth College
Department of Biology*

Ardath A. White
Brighton, Massachusetts
Boston Environmental Department

James B. Winslow
Brent Publications LLC
Canaan, Connecticut

Personal Notes

Erica Jacobson, MD, is now a medical content developer at PKC Corporation, a medical software company in Burlington, Vt.

Susan Kent has joined Information Services at Fletcher Allen Health Care, Burlington, Vt. She was formerly with the University of Vermont, Department of Pathology.

Edward Berkhoff is now with Biogen Inc., Cambridge, Mass. He was formerly with Genetics Institute.

Jean Callahan has joined *Ambulatory Pediatrics*, a new journal based at Massachusetts General Hospital. She was previously with Harvard Pilgrim Health Care.

CHAPTER CHANGES: **Rebecca Bryant, PhD**, now Rebecca Roberts, to Delaware Valley Chapter (Biology Department, Ursinus College, Collegeville PA 19426); **Diane Hendrickson** to Pacific Southwest Chapter (PO Box 270639, San Diego CA 92128); **Donald Santo** to Pacific Southwest Chapter (22310 North Dusty Trail Boulevard, Sun City West AZ 85375); **Jean Sheridan** to Mid-Atlantic Chapter (604 Conway Drive, Williamsburg VA 23185).