September 24: Dinner Meeting in Lexington, Mass.  
**Brain Health and Prevention of Dementia**

The New England Chapter’s first meeting of the 2015-16 year—on Thursday, September 24, at Yangtze River Restaurant in Lexington, Mass.—will feature a presentation on “Brain Health and Prevention of Dementia” by fellow New England AMWA member Janet Jankowiak, MD.

Now retired, Janet was director of brain injury rehabilitation at Radius Specialty Hospital in Boston. A graduate of L’Université Louis Pasteur de Strasbourg, Faculté de Médecine in France, she is a board-certified neurologist, specializing in geriatric and behavioral neurology, and a certified member of the American Society of Neurorehabilitation. In 2001, she attained an AMWA certificate in editing/writing.

A frequent lecturer and widely published author, Janet has been a patient advocate for many years, particularly promoting the concept of “preventive” neurology, successful aging, and dealing with chronic neurologic diseases. In 2002 she co-founded the American Academy of Neurology’s online Neurology Patient Page, and she served as its co-editor until 2006. She also served for 10 years on the editorial board of the academy’s lay magazine, Neurology Now. Sponsored by the Massachusetts Medical Society, she was a delegate to the 2005 White House Conference on Aging, which is held every 10 years and makes recommendations to the President and Congress regarding development of policies on aging.

In her presentation, Janet will explain the difference between minor forgetfulness and the more serious symptoms of cognitive decline. She will outline risk factors for developing Alzheimer’s or other types of dementia and will discuss the effects of leisure time activities, social engagement, diet, and exercise on the risk of cognitive decline. Finally, she’ll talk about ways to manage these risk factors so as to keep mentally sharp as you grow older.

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CHAPTER CALENDAR

The New England Chapter’s year begins in mid-June, when a new slate of officers takes over. The chapter’s Executive Council meets during the summer, but there are no general activities during July and August.

The chapter holds six regular meetings from September through June. Four of these meetings are in the Greater Boston area, and two are in Connecticut. Typically, these meetings start with a social hour, followed by dinner (except for a Sunday brunch in midwinter), then a program with a speaker, a panel presentation, or roundtable discussions.

In addition to the regular meetings, the chapter occasionally schedules other events, ranging from informal networking lunches or evening meetups to workshop programs.

Every fall, at the national meeting, attendees from New England get together for an informal dinner at a restaurant near the conference site.

October 1
New England Chapter Dinner
AMWA Annual Conference
San Antonio, Tex.

If you’re attending the AMWA Annual Conference in San Antonio, plan to spend the evening of Thursday, October 1, with other New England members. Note that the traditional chapter get-togethers are the only activities scheduled for this conference time slot.

Everyone will meet in the hotel lobby at 6:00 p.m. and then head out as a group for a private dinner at Acenar Modern Texmex (http://acenar.com/mexican/). The restaurant is on the River Walk, about a 15-minute walk from the Grand Hyatt.

You don’t have to pay in advance, but you do need to make a reservation to be sure of a seat at the dinner table. Please RSVP to Debbie Ferguson (deborah.ferguson@yahoo.com) no later than September 27.

October 22
Informal Networking Lunch
Cambridge, Mass.

Everyone is invited to lunch at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 22, at Changsho, 1712 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, Mass. (between Harvard Square and Porter Square). Meet colleagues, raise work-related questions, and share tips on medical writing. Take the Red Line to Harvard Square and walk to the restaurant, or park across the street in the Changsho lot. Cost is the price of buffet lunch, plus your drink and tip. Please RSVP by Wednesday, October 21, to Francesca Coltrera at coltrera@comcast.net or 781-641-9872.

November 4
Informal Evening Meetup
Cambridge, Mass.

Mark your calendar! The chapter will hold an informal get-together in Cambridge, Mass., on Wednesday, November 4, starting at 6:00 p.m. Karisha Manzur and Shawn Watson are planning this event. Once the venue is set, they will notify everyone via the AMWA New England E-News.

TBA
Fall Dinner Meeting
New Haven, Conn.

Jill Max, chapter vice president for Connecticut, is planning a dinner program there for October or early November. The AMWA New England E-News will give details as soon as they become available.

Other Upcoming Events in New England

September 16
Society for Technical Communication
Burlington, Mass.

On Wednesday, September 16, the New England Chapter of STC is holding a dinner program at the Burlington (Mass.) Hilton Garden Inn featuring a presentation on “Frenemies? Tech Comm, Tech Support, and Working Together.” For information, go to http://stcnewengland.org/event-2028054.

October 9-13
ScienceWriters2015
Cambridge, Mass.

This year’s annual meeting of the National Association of Science Writers and the Council for the Advancement of Science Writing will take place in Cambridge, Mass., and is being hosted by the Knight Science Journalism program at MIT. For information: http://www.nasw.org/article/sciencewriters2015-registration-open#sthash.PTdR24up.dpuf.
June Meeting Report
Writing Books About Rare Diseases

The chapter’s June meeting in Newton, Mass., featured a presentation by fellow New England AMWA member Joanne Zeis on how to “get it together” to write and publish books about rare diseases. Joanne is the author of three books on Behçet’s, a chronic autoimmune disorder which she herself has. Although she focused her talk on rare diseases such as Behçet’s, her advice could apply to any topic.

She began her presentation by asking how many of us had published books (three). She then asked how many would like to write a book, and—unsurprisingly in a room full of writers—many hands went up. While assuring us we could all do it, Joanne tempered this encouragement with reality. If your motivation for writing a book is to make a lot of money, she said, you are likely to be disappointed, especially in a niche market. According to one source, a book that sells 10,000 copies over four years will yield only about $17,500 in royalties, hardly a living wage. Better reasons for writing about rare diseases include helping patients and making a name for yourself so that you can expand your influence.

For Joanne the motivation is obviously personal. She first experienced symptoms of Behçet’s in 1979, but the diagnosis did not come until 1996, 17 years later. The long delay in her diagnosis also delayed treatment, placing her in jeopardy of long-term complications. She wanted to share what she learned—the results of considerable research—with other patients and with clinicians as well, so in 1997 she self-published a book on Behçet’s. Another self-published book followed in 2003, and last year her third book was published by Mercury Learning.

From her experience, she offered a series of practical considerations for novice book authors, among them:

- **Who is your audience?** Do you want to educate patients or clinicians? Patients appreciate plain language, and both audiences will insist on evidence-based research. Do you want to provide support to patients? Then you should consider narratives in patients’ voices. Similarly, if you are writing for caregivers, consider narratives in caregivers’ voices.

- **What about credibility?** If you don’t have the disease, then you should work closely with subject-matter experts (SMEs). If you do not have medical credentials, a foreword by an expert can be helpful, and full review by an SME is essential.

- **What books could compete with yours?** In Joanne’s case, she found good books on Behçet’s, but they were geared toward clinicians and medical libraries, and they were expensive. She also found books that were merely dumps of online information. There was clearly a market for books on Behçet’s that were written in plain language yet cited rigorous evidence-based research.

- **Should you self-publish or work with a publisher?** Authors who self-publish have control over content and do not have to share profits. On the other hand, they are responsible for all expenses, and can find getting into libraries or international markets difficult. A publisher covers design and printing costs and can help with distribution. However, authors working with publishers have less control over content, format, marketing, and future editions.

- **How long will writing your book take?** Joanne stressed the importance of having (and sticking with) a timeline. Without one, she said, “You’re cooked.” To illustrate her point, she dissected a 40-week timeline, working with a publisher. Subtracting time for various editing tasks (including “miscellaneous horror”), an author is left with 18 weeks to write the manuscript, which in her case was about a chapter per week.

Do you have a book in you? If you do, then do your homework, make a timeline, and get cracking!

—Debbie von Rechenberg
Secretary

Personal Notes

Some 40 New England Chapter members are attending the AMWA Annual Conference in San Antonio, and several are contributing to the educational program:

- **Andrea Gwosdow, PhD**, president of Gwosdow Associates Science Consultants in Arlington, Mass., is co-leading the workshop on “Ethical Standards in Medical Publication.” She is also leading a roundtable on “Dos and Don’ts of Manuscript Writing.”

- **Shirley Teng, PhD**, of Envision Pharma Group in Southport, Conn., is co-leading the workshop on “Pharmacokinetics in Clinical Practice and Drug Development.”

- **Jane Stephenson, PhD, MBA**, director of medical writing at Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals in Ridgefield, Conn., is leading the workshop on “Writing the Investigator Brochure.”

- **Thomas Gegeny, MS, ELS**, stakeholder engagement leader at Clear Pharma, Westport, Conn., and **Rebecca Jarvais, PhD**, senior medical writer at Envision Pharma Group, Southport, Conn., are co-leading the workshop on “Introduction to Basic Bacteriology.” Tom is also leading the workshop on “Effectively Searching Online Databases.”

- **Lyn Raghai, MEd**, principal medical writer at Takeda Pharmaceuticals Inc. in Cambridge, Mass., is a panelist in an open session on “No Weak Links: Mentoring and Coaching in Medical Writing.”
New student member Heather Kolpa, a PhD candidate in biomedical science at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, will be attending the Annual Conference as the 2015 recipient of AMWA’s Student Scholarship Award. Heather is a graduate of Connecticut College and was a research technician at Massachusetts General Hospital for two years before starting graduate school.

Seth Mnookin, BA, is the recipient of AMWA’s 2015 Eric W. Martin Award in the Public or Health Care Consumer Audience category for an article in the July 21, 2014 issue of The New Yorker: “One of a Kind: What do you do if your child has a condition that is new to science?” Seth is co-director of the MIT Graduate Program in Science Writing. His last book, The Panic Virus: The True Story Behind the Vaccine-Autism Controversy (Simon & Schuster, 2011), won a 2012 Will Solimene Award for Excellence from the New England Chapter.

Kim Norris, BA, of Billerica, Mass., has joined LFB USA as director, medical writing. She was previously with Synta Pharmaceuticals.

Helen Osborne, MEd, OTR/L, was appointed to a two-year term on the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute’s Advisory Panel on Communication and Dissemination Research. Helen is president of Health Literacy Consulting, Natick, Mass., and the author of Health Literacy from A to Z: Practical Ways to Communicate Your Health Message (2nd ed.) (Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2011), which won a Neil Duane Award of Distinction from the New England Chapter in 2012.

Stephanie English, medical writing operations associate at Vertex Pharmaceuticals in Boston, has attained board certification as an editor in the life sciences (ELS).

Anna Estrella, MS, has joined MediVector Inc., Boston, as director of medical writing. She was previously head of medical writing at ARIAD Pharmaceuticals.

After many years as senior science editor at the nonprofit Health Effects Institute in Boston, Virgi Hepner, MFA, ELS, of Brookline, Mass., is now a freelance editor. Virgi has extensive experience in scientific publication, with special expertise in air pollution science.

Barbara Gale, of Gloucester, Mass., former director of publications at the Health Effects Institute, Boston, is now freelancing, covering all aspects of publication including scientific, medical, and scholarly editing and publications project management.

LinkedIn Subgroup

Focus is on New England Members, Local Concerns

LinkedIn provides an easy way for AMWA members to connect online. If you haven’t yet signed up for our New England Chapter subgroup, go to www.linkedin.com and join the conversation. Find out what’s going on, ask questions, share tips, express your opinions. Prospective members are welcome to participate in this open forum.

‘AMWA New England E-News’
Watch for Occasional Email Blast to Members

A few times a month, chapter president Marisa Greenfield sends an email to New England Chapter members to announce a full-time or freelance job opening, an upcoming chapter meeting, or some other local event. The messages come from “President@amwa-ne.org,” and the subject line always begins with “AMWA New England E-News.” Be sure to take a quick glance so you don’t miss something of possible interest to you.

Membership Awards

New England Chapter Pays AMWA Dues

The New England Chapter’s competitive Linn Membership Awards provide support for up to three new medical writers at a time. For each recipient, the chapter covers the cost of a year’s membership in AMWA. The chapter also waives registration fees for regular chapter meetings during the award year.

There is no application fee, and an application may be submitted for consideration at any time. If you know someone who may be qualified for this award, or if you would like to apply yourself, go to http://www.amwa-ne.org/awards.html for more details.
New Members

The New England Chapter cordially welcomes those from our six-state region who have recently joined AMWA, reestablished their affiliation with the association, or moved here from another chapter area. We are also happy to welcome AMWA members from outside of New England who are planning to move here in the near future or have personal or professional ties here.

Sayura Aoyagi, PhD
Salem, Massachusetts

Neha Arora, PhD
Marlborough, Massachusetts
Veristat

Shari S. Bassuk, PhD
Westborough, Massachusetts
Brigham and Women’s Hospital

Susan Carr, BA
North Canton, Connecticut

Rhoda Chang, PhD
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Jennifer Colby, PharmD
Prospect, Connecticut
Xcenda

Nicole Cotroneo, BS
Westford, Massachusetts

Kelly Crowley
UpToDate/Wolters Kluwer Health
Waltham, Massachusetts

Patricia Devine, MD
Stoneham, Massachusetts

Kristen Marie DeYoung, BA
Envision Pharma Group
Southport, Connecticut

Margaret Donohoe
Woburn, Massachusetts

Mariame Doumbia
Providence, Rhode Island

Megan Driscoll
Quincy, Massachusetts

April Ferreira, BA, BS
Westborough, Massachusetts
Vertex Pharmaceuticals

Heidi H. Hirsch, MPH, ELS
Redding, Connecticut
Practicing Clinicians Exchange
[from Empire State-Metro NY Chapter]

Kathy Katella
Yale University Medical School
New Haven, Connecticut

Sharon Kessler, PhD
Westborough, Massachusetts

Alexis Khalil, MPH, ELS
Evidera
Lexington, Massachusetts

Heather Kolpa, BA
North Grafton, Massachusetts

Jenny Lamont, MS, ELS
Somerville, Massachusetts
Millennium Pharmaceuticals

Amanda LaVoie, BS
Swampscott, Massachusetts
Vertex Pharmaceuticals

Brenda Lawrence, MD
Bedford, New Hampshire

Kathleen Lawton, RN, CDE
Sudbury, Massachusetts

Margaret Lee, PharmD
Genzyme
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Michael J. Lee, BS
Sudbury, Massachusetts
Foundation Medicine Inc.

Charron Long, PharmD
Lakeville, Massachusetts
Humana Inc.

Jennifer Malinowski, PhD
Hebron, Connecticut

Michele Mannion
Camden, Maine

Jennifer George Maybin, MA, ELS
Branchburg, New Jersey
[from Delaware Valley Chapter]

Malek Ouagued
Watertown, Massachusetts

Tira Pandolf, PhD
Northampton, Massachusetts
Hayes Inc.
[from Delaware Valley Chapter]

Viveka R. Prakash, MD
Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates
Waltham, Massachusetts

Megan S. Provencher
Merrimack, New Hampshire
University of New Hampshire

Caroline M. Ritchie, PhD
Woburn, Massachusetts
ARIAD Pharmaceuticals
[from Mid-Atlantic Chapter]

Rajamani Selvam
Newington, Connecticut
UConn Health Center

Deepa Srinivasan, RN, MS, ADN
Andover, Massachusetts
Physicians Interactive

Dunja Stankovic, PharmD
Genzyme
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Alexis Tavano, MPH
Shire
Lexington, Massachusetts

Jeffrey Toyn, PhD
Belmont, Massachusetts

Sharanya Vemula, PhD
Tewksbury, Massachusetts

Irene M. Zajac, MS
Terryville, Connecticut
How to Register for September 24 Meeting

You can register for this event either online or by mail, depending on how you wish to pay.

- **To pay by credit card**, use the electronic registration form on the chapter website (www.amwa-ne.org). Fill it out and continue to the PayPal form, where you can enter your credit card information. (You don’t need a PayPal account, and you will not be charged a fee for the transaction.)
- **To pay by check**, download the printable registration form from the chapter website (www.amwa-ne.org), print a copy, fill it out, and mail it with your check to the address on the form.

AMWA Member Directory

Are you putting the online AMWA Member Directory to use? Accessible only to members, the directory enables you to locate other AMWA members in New England and elsewhere. Log in to www.amwa.org, and you can search the listings by first name, last name, city or state, place of employment, and other variables.

And don’t forget that the directory is also a way for other members to find you. Be sure your listing is up to date and that you have presented yourself as you wish to be seen—literally, if you choose to include a photo. To make corrections or changes, go to the AMWA website. When your information comes up (“My Profile”) you can make revisions. Then click on “My Directory Options” in the menu on the left and decide what to include in your listing.

Directions to September 24 Meeting

Yangtze River Restaurant
21 Depot Square (off Mass. Ave.)
Lexington, Massachusetts
781-861-6030

Depot Square is a three-sided block directly off Mass. Ave., which is the main street in Lexington Center. The Depot Square roadway begins and ends on Mass. Ave.

There is some on-street parking as well as parking in municipal lots in back of Depot Square.

**From Route 128/I-95:** Take Exit 31A East to Routes 4/225, which is Bedford Street. Follow the signs into Lexington Center past the Minute Man statue, where Bedford Street joins Mass. Ave. Go straight ahead and take the third left into Depot Square.

**From Route 2:** Take Exit 54 to Waltham St/Waltham. Follow the signs for Lexington Center to the traffic lights at the end of Waltham Street. Turn left onto Mass. Ave. and stay in the right lane. Depot Square is on the right, about 100 yards beyond the traffic lights.

**From Cambridge/Arlington:** Follow Mass. Ave. north to Lexington Center. Depot Square is on the right, about 100 yards beyond the traffic lights.

For detailed driving directions from your location, go to: www.citysearch.com/profile/4788404/lexington_ma/yangtze_river_restaurant.html.

Need a ride to the meeting?

If you don’t have a car, ask Judy Linn (judyhlinn@aol.com) whether there is someone from your area who might be able to give you a lift.