November 3: Dinner Meeting in Cambridge, Mass.
The Art of Science Writing: Tales from a Reporter’s Notebook

Have you ever wanted to pick the brains of a veteran science journalist? Find out what kinds of medical stories get published? Or learn new ways to grab the reader’s attention? Well, now is your chance. Join your colleagues on Thursday, November 3, for a dinner meeting at the Ristorante Marino in Cambridge, Mass. with former Boston Globe science and medical writer Richard Saltus.

During his early career in the 1970s as a general assignment reporter for the Associated Press, Saltus covered everything from trials to earthquakes (he was based in Los Angeles). As a science and medical writer for the San Francisco Examiner, his assignments included genetic engineering, HIV/AIDS, fetal surgery, space missions, and . . . more earthquakes.

When he was chosen for what is now the MIT Knight Science Writing Fellowship, he began writing freelance articles for the science section of the Globe, which he joined as a staff writer in 1985. You’ve probably read many of his stories about the Human Genome Project, the ethical and social issues surrounding genetic information, or research on neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and Huntington's.

In 1991, he received a Will Solimene Award for Excellence in Medical Communication from the New England Chapter for articles that appeared in the Globe.

Saltus shifted gears into institutional journalism in 2001, when he took a position at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, where he now contributes to several publications including Paths of Progress. He has also been a prolific freelancer for several years, with his work appearing in the New York Times, Science, Science Digest, Health, American Health, Paradigm, and the PBS documentary series “Evolution.”

The New England Chapter of AMWA is delighted to welcome Richard Saltus for an evening of anecdotes, lessons learned, and insight into the art of medical science writing. Don’t forget your reporter’s notebook!

As always, the New England Chapter welcomes guests and prospective members.

—Lonnie K. Christiansen
President-Elect/Program Director

Note: You can earn 5 points toward an AMWA Professional Development Certificate (see p. 6) by attending this meeting.
Chapter Calendar

The New England Chapter schedules seven regular meetings a year, from September through June. Five of these meetings are held in the Greater Boston area, and two are held in Connecticut. Every meeting begins with a social hour, followed by dinner (except for a Sunday brunch in midwinter), then a program with a speaker, panel presentation, or roundtable discussions. A writing competition that culminates in the Will Solimene Awards is held every other year, alternating with the New England Conference, an all-day program of workshops. Often, informal networking meetings or tours are scheduled.

New Haven, Conn.
October 27: Dinner Meeting
You have advanced degrees in medicine or science, you’ve worked benchside or bedside, but now you’d like to work with words. How do you get started?

That’s the subject of the chapter’s fall meeting in Connecticut. Lynne Lederman will provide practical insights and tips on “Making the Transition from Bench Scientist to Writer.” Lynne has an MS in parasitology and a PhD in molecular biology and virology and worked for several years in biotechnology before turning to medical writing full time in 1990. She now develops training materials for pharmaceutical and biotechnology sales professionals and writes scientific papers for journals, meeting posters, medical/legal book chapters, and much more.

Whether you want to move into writing at your current employer, transition to a medical communications firm, or head out as a freelance, Lederman will give you a jump start with practical advice you can apply immediately. Her suggestions will also be useful to nutritionists, osteopaths, medical laboratory technicians, dental assistants, and others with professional degrees and experience, so invite your colleagues.

The meeting will start with networking at 5:45 p.m. and a buffet Italian dinner at 6:30 p.m. at Brazi’s Restaurant in New Haven. Detailed information and a registration form have been sent to Connecticut members; others can e-mail their mailing address to ldodson@snet.net for information and a form. (Attendees will earn 5 points toward an AMWA Professional Development Certificate.)

Greater Boston Area
October 21 & December 2:
Networking Lunch in Cambridge, Mass.
Informal networking lunches (Dutch treat) are scheduled for 12:00 noon on Friday, October 21 and on Friday, December 2. Meet at Changsho, 1712 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge (between Harvard Square and Porter Square). Take the Red Line to Harvard Square and walk to the restaurant, or park in the restaurant’s lot across the street.

There is no registration fee, but reservations are a must. At least a few days ahead, contact Francesca Coltrera at 781-641-9872 or coltrera@comcast.net.

Worcester/MetroWest Area
November 30: Discussion & Dinner
Join colleagues for a Dutch-treat dinner and informal discussion at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 30, at Chumlees, 50 Boston Turnpike Road (Route 9), in White City Shopping Plaza, Shrewsbury.

John Trimbur, professor of English and co-director of the Technical, Scientific, and Professional Communication Program at Worcester Polytechnic Institute will talk about his class on “Writing About Disease and Public Health.”

For more information or to make a reservation, contact Laura Ruth at 508-755-8490 or lrsline@yahoo.com no later than 5:00 p.m. the day before.

Meeting Postponement
On the unlikely chance that severe winter weather requires postponement of a chapter meeting, we’ll notify everyone by e-mail. If the weather looks bad and you are unable to access your e-mail on the day of a meeting, call Judy Linn at 508-358-7071 before you go just to be sure.

Other Meeting of Interest
Hartford, Connecticut
October 25-26: Medical Device Conference

To request media credentials, contact Jeff Blumenfeld at blumassoc@aol.com or 203-655-1600.
Writing Awards Competition

CALL FOR ENTRIES NOW AVAILABLE!

The Call for Entries for the New England Chapter’s 2006 Will Solimene Awards for Excellence in Medical Communication is now available. This biennial writing awards program recognizes outstanding work in medical, biomedical, and health communication by New England Chapter members.

Any chapter member may submit work published in 2004 or 2005. (For collaborative work, only one of the writers need be a member.)

Entries may be publications for a professional, general, or patient audience in any of the following categories:

- **Print publications**
  (books; book chapters; articles in professional journals or trade publications; articles in newspapers, magazines, or newsletters; training or explanatory manuals; substantive public relations or marketing materials)
- **CD-ROM, DVD, and online publications**
- **Audiovisual production scripts**
  (for television programs, radio programs, video publications, audio publications, slide presentations)

Awards will be presented to the authors of the winning entries at the chapter’s 12th Awards Banquet, which will be held in June 2006.

The completed entry form and the associated materials must be postmarked no later than February 1, 2006.

Please note that this year the entry form will not be distributed with the chapter newsletter. It is available as a PDF and will be sent on request as an e-mail attachment. (By eliminating printing and extra postage costs, we were able to lower the entry fee to only $25.00.)

To receive the 2006 Call for Entries, which includes detailed information about the writing competition along with the entry form, contact Jill Shuman, Awards Director, at jill@jillshuman.com.

Don’t miss out on this opportunity to have your very best work recognized by your peers.

Chapter Membership Awards

The New England Chapter’s Judy Linn Membership Awards provide professional development and networking support to medical and health communicators who are fairly new to the field.

The chapter will accept applications from candidates who live and work in New England. There is no application fee. As many as three awards may be given in any period.

The award, a one-year membership in AMWA (which automatically includes chapter membership), will be presented at a chapter dinner meeting.

Candidates may apply on their own, or may be nominated by a chapter member. Applications may be submitted at any time.

For more information or to request an application form, contact David Olle, Membership Awards Director, at eastshire@direcway.com or 802-254-3899.

E-Mail Messages from the Chapter

The chapter’s e-mail list service allows us to remind you of an upcoming meeting or let you know quickly when we hear of a job opening, freelance assignment, event, or anything else that may be of interest to chapter members.

Messages are brief, giving only as much information as is necessary for you to follow up if you want to.

Only the president can post information. If you have something to share, send it to Andrea Gwosdow at editor@gwosdow.com for consideration. (But please do not submit queries. This is not a bulletin board.)

If you don’t want to receive the occasional messages, you may unsubscribe. You can do this online when you receive a message, or you can ask Judy Linn, chapter membership director, to do it for you. If you unsubscribe, then change your mind, Judy can also resubscribe you; you can’t do it yourself. Contact her at judyhlinn@aol.com.
September Meeting Report
Helpful Advice from Professional Organizers

At the first meeting of the year, at the Yangtze River restaurant in Lexington, Allison Schnipper of Professional Organizing Services in Sharon, Mass. and Patty Bareford of Wide Open Spaces in Concord, Mass. offered a wealth of information on how we can organize our personal space and make the best use of our day. Both shared humorous situations, like believing that the broken monitor on our office floor will come back to life.

Bareford talked about procrastination, emphasizing how it can impact our professional work and affect our financial life (inability to pay bills on time) and health (putting off important visits to the doctor). But like any habit, it can be broken, she suggested. If you find you’re losing focus, Bareford said, “Stop and listen to the little voice that says, ‘I’ll just read until the end of the chapter’”—the one that enables us to put off work until later.

Both offered some practical tips:
• Build two hour-and-a-half periods of uninterrupted time into your day.
• Develop “big picture” goals, and choose activities that reinforce those goals.
• Visualize your day in a linear fashion with chunks of time (PDA or day planner can help).
• Print out the month in advance so you can plan ahead.

When you have finally decided that organizing your papers in horizontal layers—like geological strata—doesn’t work, try the following:
Sort items by category
Purge (throw out)
Assign a home to remaining items
Containerize (but don’t overstuff file cabinets)
Equalize (daily maintenance)

Then pick zones within a single room. Keep items used more often than others closer to you. For example, in the kitchen that turkey roasting pan can be stored on top of a cabinet. But items used daily should be within easy reach.

Schnipper suggested triaging papers according to frequency of use. “In an ideal world,” she said, “papers reside in only three places: your hot files (used everyday), file cabinet (used every week or month); and your trash/recycling bin.” And while you’re at it, she suggested, “create a file index of everything that’s in your file cabinet. Everyone will use different key words, but keep it simple.” Use subject headings consistently that are meaningful to you. And don’t be afraid to throw papers away. Finally, when it comes to filing e-mails, create electronic folders that parallel your paper folders.

The speakers recommended these reference books:
It’s About Time: 6 Styles of Procrastination by Dr. Linda Sapadin; The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Overcoming Procrastination by Michelle Tuller, PhD; Time Management Matrix by Stephen Covey; and Organizing from Inside Out by Julie Morganstern.

—Adriane Bishko
Secretary

Personal Notes

The current issue of the AMWA Journal (2005, Vol. 20, No. 3) carries a glowing review by Nancy Knoblock of Mountains Beyond Mountains, Tracy Kidder’s profile of the humanitarian physician Paul Farmer, co-founder of Partners in Health.

Nancy is a freelance writer in Acton, Mass. She is a past president of the chapter and is serving as honors award director this year.

Nancy’s review appears on page 147 of the journal—where, unfortunately, her last name was misspelled.

Lonnie K. Christiansen, ELS won AMWA’s 2005 Eric W. Martin Award for Excellence in Medical Writing in the lay audience category. Her winning article, “Capturing the Potential: What Stem Cell Science Offers Diabetes,” was published in the Fall 2004 issue of Joslin Magazine. The award was presented to her at the recent annual conference in Pittsburgh.

Lonnie, a freelance writer in Newburyport, Mass. is chapter president-elect and program director.
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:

Michelle Badash, MS
Wakefield, Massachusetts

Laurie Beckelman
Children’s Hospital Trust
Boston, Massachusetts

Sarah Crawford, PhD
Milford, Connecticut
Southern Connecticut State University

Amanda Everett
Boston, Massachusetts

Michael Gyulay
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company
Wallingford, Connecticut

Laurie A. Harriman
Arlington, Massachusetts

Deirdre Morro James
Bridgeport, Connecticut
Euro RSCG Life LM&P

Thomas Juergens, BS
Hamilton, Massachusetts

Regina Ellen Julia, BS, MS
Boston, Massachusetts

Lakshmi Kamath, PhD
Chelmsford, Massachusetts

Anita P. Kuan, PhD
Bridgeport, Connecticut
Envision Pharma

Valerie Libert
Simpson Healthcare Executives
Old Lyme, Connecticut

Lauren MacCarthy
BMS Medical Imaging
North Billerica, Massachusetts

Cynthia L. Mamay, PhD
Salem, Massachusetts
Fusion Medical Education
AXIS Healthcare Communications
[from Carolinas Chapter]

Michael L. Mangiapane, PhD
Mystic, Connecticut
Pfizer

Phyllis Moir, MA, ELS
Natick, Massachusetts
[from Southeast Chapter]

Mary Nalin Omstead, MS, AB
Acton, Massachusetts
Millennium Pharmaceuticals

Annie Plumer
Ophthahalmic Research Associates
North Andover, Massachusetts

Anne Fletcher Price
Westerly, Rhode Island

Mary E. Stuart
East Greenwich, Rhode Island
Windhover Information

Lisa Underhill, MA
Brookline, Massachusetts
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

Jelena Veljkovic, PhD
Brookline, Massachusetts
Millennium Pharmaceuticals

Jennifer H. Wright
Averion Inc.
Framingham, Massachusetts

Correction

The name of a new member, Debra Estrella, was misspelled in the September 2005 New England Chapter News. Debra is a writer, editor, and proofreader doing business as DEL Editorial Services in Cranston, R.I. (www.deledit.com). We apologize for the error and welcome her to AMWA and our chapter.
Directions to November 3 Meeting

Ristorante Marino
2465 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Mass.
(617) 868-5454

By Car

From Points South
Take Route 128/I-95 North to Exit 29 (Route 2 East to Cambridge/Arlington). Continue on Route 2 and head East on Route 16 (towards Medford) for 1/2 mile until the next traffic light. Turn right at light onto Massachusetts Avenue and proceed about 300 yards. Marino’s is on the left.

From Points North
Take Route I-93 South to Route 60 (Medford) and proceed through Medford Square, bearing left. Take next right onto Route 16 West (Mystic Valley Parkway). Proceed 3 miles and take a left onto Massachusetts Avenue and proceed about 300 yards. Marino’s is on the left.

From Points West
Take the Mass Pike to Route 128/I-95 North. Then follow directions from Points South.

By Public Transportation

Red Line to Davis Square T-Station
Take street-level exit on left to paved footpath. Follow path through small park, across street, back onto path. Go through gates, across street, through sitting area to Massachusetts Avenue, and turn right. Proceed two blocks on Massachusetts Avenue to Marino’s.

Bus Line
Take the #77 bus from Harvard Square, Porter Square, or Arlington Center. From Harvard and Porter, the bus stops in front of the Restaurant.

Professional Development Certificate
AMWA’s new Professional Development Certificate allows you to validate “your continued commitment to professional development beyond the scope of your regular job.” For details, go to the AMWA Web site (www.amwa.org). (Note that the PDC is entirely different from the certificate earned by taking Core or Advanced Curriculum workshops.)

Because attendance at a regular chapter meeting earns points toward a PDC, we will have vouchers available at the meetings, whether in the Greater Boston area or in Connecticut.

If you need verification of your participation in one of the noncredit workshops at the 2005 New England Conference in Framingham, Mass. or your attendance at any of the regular chapter meetings that took place between January 2004 and June 2005, contact Judy Linn at judyhlinn@aol.com or 508-358-7071.

Need a ride to the meeting?
If you don’t have a car, contact Judy Linn (508-358-7071 or judyhlinn@aol.com) to find out if anyone from your area is driving to the meeting. Or call Joann Merriman (781-891-0028) to see if she can pick you up at a T station or another, mutually convenient location.