

---

# NEWSLETTER

---



Chapter of the American Medical Writers Association

---

Summer/1995

In this issue:

<b>News from the AMWA International Task Force</b> <i>John Aitken</i> .....	page 1
<b>Are you going?</b> .....	page 1
<b>Bels Examination</b> <i>Ben Young</i> .....	page 2
<b>Why certification for editors?</b> <i>Karen Philips</i> .....	page 2
<b>EMWA CONFERENCE IN BERLIN</b> <i>Ben Young</i>	
<b>Workshops</b> .....	page 3
<b>General Session</b> .....	page 4
<b>Business Meeting</b> .....	page 4
<b>Social Programme</b> .....	page 4
<b>Trip to Prague, anyone?</b> .....	page 5
<b>Registration</b> .....	page 5
<b>EMWA Members and AMWA Committees</b> <i>John Aitken</i> .....	page 5
<b>A sideline view</b> <i>Ceara Roche</i> .....	page 7
<b>Au revoir to a good friend</b> .....	page 8
<b>Classifieds</b> .....	page 9
<b>Names and Numbers</b> .....	page 10

---

**News from the AMWA  
International Task Force**  
**John Aitken**  
**EMWA President**

The AMWA International Task Force has now had two teleconferences (July 28 and August 11) to discuss issues originally raised by EMWA. One clear message coming through from the members of the Task Force is that the problems outlined in our last Newsletter, and presented to the AMWA Board in March, are not unique to EMWA. Other chapters have similar gripes, and are very pleased to have a vehicle through which to instigate improvements in the way AMWA works.

The EMWA vice-president, Ben Young, is in the process of formulating a position paper containing recommendations on the main issues of finances, name and affiliation. This will be submitted to the next AMWA Board Meeting at the annual conference in Baltimore in October. The Task Force has already unanimously approved AMWA's scheme for approval of workshop leaders at chapter meetings, and the new guidelines should hopefully be in place in time for our Berlin conference.

In addition to discussing EMWA proposals, the Task Force meetings have become an open forum for debating any other matters about AMWA that annoy its members. Those of you planning to attend the AMWA Conference in Baltimore may already have benefited from the early mailing of conference registration forms to non-US-based

AMWA members. This came about in reaction to comments that the first-come-first-served allocation of conference workshops discriminates against overseas members due to longer mailing times.

There will be more news on this initiative in the Newsletter following the AMWA Conference. However, based on the advances made at the Task Force's first meetings, I am confident that we can agree on a list of proposals acceptable to the AMWA Board of Directors, resulting in an enhanced recognition by AMWA of its international membership.



**Are you going?**

The 55th annual conference of the American Medical Writers Association will be held in Baltimore, Maryland, October 25-28, 1995. If you haven't begun lobbying your manager yet for this opportunity, it's time to get started. The agenda offers a variety of sessions that will provide a unique learning experience. The meeting will also allow ample time to network with fellow writers and share talk of the trade. The Registration program for this Annual Conference was be mailed in early August. Nonmembers of AMWA may request a copy from the AMWA office:  
American Medical Writers Association  
9650 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, Maryland 20814-3998  
Tel+301-493-0003  
Fax+301-493-6384  
e-mail: [amwa@amwa.org](mailto:amwa@amwa.org)

**BELS Examination**

The Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) examination is rapidly gaining approval among professionals in the US, and is always offered at the AMWA conference. Thanks to Valerie Moore, the BELS examination can be given at an EMWA conference for the first time. This will be provided at the conference scheduled for Berlin in the spring of 1996 contingent upon a sufficient number of candidates. Read more about BELS in the following article from Karen Philips, reprinted from an earlier issue of the Newsletter.

**Why certification for editors?**

**Karen Philips**  
**Chair, BELS Subcommittee on Public and Member Relations**

Until recently, potential employers and clients of manuscript editors have had no way to assess the proficiency of the editors. Both employers and editors have often resorted to personal references or ad hoc tests, not always with satisfactory results; BELS has therefore developed a process for testing proficiency in editing in the life sciences according to internationally recognised standards to meet the need for an objective test of editorial skill. The examination provides science editors a way to demonstrate their editorial proficiency, to provide employers and clients a way to identify proficient editors and to establish a standard of proficiency for editing in the life sciences.

The certification examination is a 3-hour multiple-choice test of scientific editing in English. It resembles the standard tests used in many professions to certify practitioners. It tests such skills as:

- ensuring clarity and internal consistency in form, logic, usage and organization;
- editing tables and illustrations;
- using units of measure and scientific terms;
- detecting and correcting errors in punctuation, grammar, word choice, syntax, stylistic consistency, numeric content and data;
- adhering to publisher's instructions;
- understanding the principles and ethics of scientific inquiry, writing and publishing in the life sciences.

For the purposes of the program, a manuscript editor is defined as an editor who is concerned not only with the form but also with the intellectual content of a manuscript. A manuscript editor's responsibilities include not only such matters as grammar, punctuation and syntax but also logic, organization, consistency and persuasiveness of the message.

For further information, fax to:  
Ben Young at +49 30 4691 6613



## EMWA CONFERENCE IN BERLIN MARCH 6-8, 1996

### Ben Young

Our next conference will incorporate a number of exciting innovations. For starters, it will be the first 3-day EMWA Conference; the programme is so comprehensive that we'll need an extra day to fit it all in. Six workshops are scheduled, four of which will be for AMWA Core Curriculum credit, one pending approval.

---

### Workshops

---

Valerie Moore and a very welcome guest will be conducting the lively workshop on the Author-Editor Relationship. The course is underpinned by over 250 (!) case reports to show that yours is not the only headache. This is a highly interactive workshop that is not only good fun but you get AMWA Core credit, too.

A major innovation is an all-day (6 hours) seminar, the first for EMWA and AMWA. Arthur Gertel's Core course *Project Management* was a rousing success at the 1995 Conference, and many participants felt that three hours were not enough to cover this huge area. Dr. Gertel has kindly consented to come back to Europe next year to lead this experiment. Who knows? This might establish a precedent for both EMWA and AMWA.

Thomas A. Lang, the man who literally wrote the book, will be coming over from the US to conduct *Biostatistics for Editors*. This course is recommended not only for those with a weak background in statistics (like me), but also for writers and editors with a background in natural science who want to get better at conveying results. After all, understanding statistics and *communicating* statistics are horses of a very different colour.

Barry Drees is going to present a new workshop entitled *Data Presentation*, which will be based on the Core course *Tables and Graphs*. Dr. Drees is an experienced medical writer at a major multi-national, and has taught several courses for commercial organisations. I expect this course to receive Core credit, and should have it settled by the next newsletter.

Do you hate writing? I for one surely do. But what I hate even worse is NOT writing - writer's block! Well, Tim Albert's *Process of Writing* is back by popular demand. This is the definitive course on strategies for unblocking and improving your writing performance. There's also a treat for the freelancers among us. Geoff Hall is going to present his brand new course, *The Art of Freelancing*, at the 1996 Conference. This course not only touches the basics, but will include an update on the fast-breaking developments in the freelance market.

So there is something here for everyone. Special attention has been given to keep a broad scope, and to provide courses that help lead toward Core certification. Colm Benson, the Programme Manager, and I hope that you will take full advantage of these opportunities.

---

---

### **General Session**

---

---

The keynote speaker of the 1996 Conference will be Dr. David Jeffreys, who will speak on *The Enhanced Role of the Medical Writer in the New European Drug Registration Process*. Dr. Jeffreys is the Head of New Drugs and European Licensing at the Medicines Control Agency within the Department of Health, UK, and is responsible for the assessment and licensing of all new active substance license applications made in the UK. Dr. Jeffreys is also responsible for all CPMP/EMEA licensing work and for the initial assessment and supervision of all Clinical Trial Applications and Exemptions made within the UK. We should all be aware that Dr. Jeffreys' kind agreement to attend the 1996 Conference is conditional upon his ability to make time, given his obligations with the CPMP.

The next Newsletter will give details on the rest of the general session. As a quick preview, the lectures planned to follow Dr. Jeffrey's talk will focus first on the Clinical Expert Report, Integrated Clinical Summaries, and Translation in the Regulatory Framework. After the block of regulatory issues, Thomas Lang will give a presentation on *Managing Communication in the 21st Century*, and we await confirmation from another

experienced speaker to round off the morning session.

Joel Tau, currently President-Elect of AMWA, will be kicking off the afternoon session, followed by a talk from EMWA President John Aitken. As you can see in John Aitken's article in this Newsletter, there is a lot going on in both of our organisations, so we can hope that the beans are spilled at the session. We'll just have to live in suspense until then.

---

---

### **Business Meeting**

---

---

There are good reasons to incorporate the business meeting into the general session in the 1996 Conference. Once the routine issues are covered, we will present the results of the International Task Force's review of the EMWA/AMWA relationship. The issues now on the table might even be resolved at this meeting -- your representation is needed to decide on the future of EMWA.

Your vote also counts in the election of a new Vice President. Nominations have to be in by the end of the year, so please give this some thought.

---

---

### **Social Programme**

---

---

You don't need a social programme in Berlin because Berlin IS a social programme. Sightseeing, shopping, museums, galleries, exhibits, concert halls, opera, jazz, rock, post-mortem punk, you name it. I like Berlin. Notwithstanding this, there is going to be a social programme. There'll be a dinner in class joint (it rates an "Excellent cuisine" in the guide you'll be getting). And we'll get there by boat, too, gliding gently along the mellow-lit canals

through Historic Berlin, and generally living it up.

Thursday evening is still open. Some options are cited in the preliminary programme, but I'd like to have feedback from you before settling it. So please cast your vote when you send me the sheet re: BELS and Prague.

---

---

### **Trip to Prague, anyone?**

---

---

You've made it all the way to Central Europe, why not make the most of it? Spend the weekend in Prague after the conference. Prague is so beautiful it boggles the mind. March is low-season, too, so you can have the place practically to yourself.

So please let me know whether you would be interested in spending the weekend in Prague after the conference. A quick response would be appreciated. If the response is good enough, I'll book transportation, hotels, and a tour guide for a weekend trip to Prague.

---

---

### **Registration**

---

---

The next Newsletter will contain the finalised programme and registration form. Please note enclosed Fax sheet and forward your response to Ben.



## **EMWA Members and AMWA Committees**

John Aitken

Did you know that AMWA has standing committees that make decisions on a wide range of AMWA business, and that EMWA has no representation on any of these committees?

AMWA tells us that it would welcome the participation of EMWA members in the AMWA committee system, but how do we go about this?

For those of you interested, following is a list of the different AMWA committees. You can find more info on the individual committee members in the AMWA membership directory.

So if there's part of AMWA you're unhappy with, don't just sit there and moan, get in touch with the committee administrators. They'd love to hear from you.

### **DEPARTMENT OF CHAPTERS AND MEMBERSHIP**

Administrator - Joan N. Nilson  
412-647-0992

### **DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT**

Administrator - John B. Ferguson  
312-337-2169

### **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Administrator - Barbara C. Good  
412-359-5131

West Point Conference, Michael L. Jones  
908-298-5793

**DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLICATIONS**

Administrator - Helen E. Hodgson  
801-518-0707

Editor, AMWA Journal

- Pamel P. Powell 713-798-5483

Associate Editor

- E. Roseland Klein 713-798-7050

Book Review Editor

- Jerry D. Eastman 713-794-6626

Chapter News Editor

- Ann Bolstor 613-731-8610

Editor, Freelance Directory

- Norman Grossblatt 202-334-2230

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC  
RELATIONS**

Administrator - Cathryn D. Evans  
415-321-5400

**OTHER COMMITTEES**

**BUDGET AND FINANCE  
COMMITTEE**

- Jackie Turner  
408-239-2192

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS  
COMMITTEE**

- Michele Vivirito  
714-752-4629

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

- Joel H. Tau  
302-886-7858

**LONG RANGE PLANNING**

- Thomas A. Lang  
216-444-1260

**DEPARTMENT OF ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE**

Administrator - Michael James Yuen  
415-494-5551

**WORKSHOP COORDINATOR**

- Karon Schindler 404-717-5680

**GENERAL SESSION COORDINATOR**

- Tod F. Forman 617-826-3838

**SECTIONS COORDINATOR**

- Arthur Gertel 908-298-7964

Audiovisual - Marc Kusnitz  
410-955-8665

Editors - Eleanor Paulson  
613-957-1788

Educators - Patricia L. Cornett  
810-258-9217

Freelance - Joseph H. Bloom  
215-542-2960

Pharmaceutical - J. Seam Callan  
708-405-6787

Public Relations, Advertising, Marketing  
- Ronald S. Rogers 312-280-2186

**NETWORKING BREAKFAST**

\_ Cunthis M. Kahn 404-350-9692

**NETWORKING LUNCHEON**

- Mary G. Royer 607-539-7681

**NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION**

- Joan M. Nilson 412-647-0992

**FORUMS COORDINATORS**

- Tod F. Forman 617-826-3838

- Linda R. Benson 313-761-5006

**PAPER PRESENTATIONS**

- Karen L. McKeown 203-673-8727

**DOWN THE ALIMENTARY CANAL**  
- Tod F. Forman 617-826-3838

**PUBLICITY**  
- Mary K. Stein 602-296-6400

**LOCAL PUBLICITY**  
- Louis G. Buttell 301-530-6410

**LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS**  
- John M. Blamphin 202-682-6138

**DEPARTMENT OF AWARDS**

Administrator - MaryAnn Foote  
805-447-4925

**FELLOWSHIPS**

- Daniel Liberthson 415-334-2312  
Walter C. Alvarez Award  
- MaryAnn Foote 805-447-4925  
Harold Swanberg Award  
- Gerald McKee 818-956-5404  
Eric W. Martin Award  
- Leo R. Maestriperi 609-987-5966  
John P. McGovern Award  
- Phyllis Minick 619-459-5939  
Rose Kushner Award  
- Elizabeth L. Smith 703-943-7252  
President's Award  
- Phyllis Minick 619-459-5939

**MEDICAL BOOK AWARDS**

**Trade Category**

- Donna Curtis 314-874-6711  
- Catherine Judge Allen 219-987-3090  
- Carl David Emerson 816-454-1112

**Allied Health Category**

- Patricia D. Wolf 301-694-9203  
- Sandra L. Lunsford 301-417-7500  
- Ronald W. Wolf 301-694-9203

**Physicians Category**

- Harold Laufman 212-737-4343

- David Baltimore 617- 253-2135  
- Edward J. Huth 610-525-9494

*Take note! This is an opportunity to become involved. AMWA desires European representation on its committees. Check the list, identify your area of interest and make that call!*



**A sideline view**  
Ceara Roche

The European Medical Writers Association has come a long way since my first exposure to the idea in London almost five years ago. Jane Wynen, Anne Hepburn and I were on a writing course in London, where Art Gertel was also a participant. We got talking, and talking led to discoveries of common interests and the mention of the first meeting in Loughborough of what was to become EMWA. Art told us about AMWA at that point and the links thus became established, with friendship coming later.

I didn't participate in the first meeting, but I soon met the other enthusiasts who made up the first steering committee of EMWA - Mike Mathews (then with ICI), Alexis Harper (Fisons), Brenda Moore



(Glaxo), Jane Mitchell (then with ICI) along with Jane, Anne and I (all of SB Bio). For me, the roots are there, with these people, who shared a goal to establish a professional identity for medical writers and to develop an association which would link all medical writers in Europe, provide training and give a platform to share ideas. If we eventually linked with our American colleagues, so much the better, but the main benefit at the time was meeting other people doing similar jobs and suddenly discovering that their problems were similar, their career structures were similar. Far from thinking ourselves unique, there were kindred spirits just waiting to be encountered.

I suppose it is always the way that when an association grows it loses the intimacy of the original group. It seems strange to me that only five years after the initial meeting, the current and incoming presidents don't know who those people are who struggled so hard to get the association to where it is now.

At that first meeting, Mike Mathews introduced the possibility of forming a European chapter of AMWA and let the idea germinate. At the first AGM, in February 1992, the idea had taken root and we voted to follow this course. The rest is history, if somewhat turbulent. The debate continues though, and I am now part of an International Task Force as a 'historical' member of EMWA. This group hopes to resolve some of the issues which conflict with the philosophy of AMWA and develop a more harmonious relationship in the future.

Where will it lead? I don't know. All I can say is, I hope we can maintain the same spirit of cooperation and generosity of spirit that built the association in the first place.

### **Au revoir to a good friend**

In the mobile society that we live in, faces in our environment are constantly changing. It is never easy to lose experience and talent when a colleague leaves an organisation. SmithKline Beecham is facing such a loss. Debbie Taylor who is an experienced medical writer and who has been active and energetic in her support of and work in EMWA is leaving SmithKline Beecham. She and her husband, Mike, are returning to the United States. Debbie has served EMWA as programme manager and as membership chairman. She is respected by her friends and co-workers as an earnest yet fun-loving individual whose work is highly regarded. Debbie will continue to lend her support to the profession by pursuing her career in scientific writing as a freelancer. Please join the staff at SB in wishing Debbie continued success in her new home in Boulder, Colorado.





**President**

John Aitken  
F. Hoffman-La Roche  
CH-4002 Basel  
Switzerland

Tel+41-61-688-2594  
Fax+41-61-688-8018  
e-mail:  
john\_w.aitken@roche.com@pmdf@rbac01

**Vice President**

Ben Young  
Schering Ag  
Müllerstrasse 178A  
13342 Berlin  
Germany

Tel+49- 30-468-4358  
Fax+49-30-469-1-6613  
e-mail:  
100573.2247@compuserve.com

**Past President**

Mrs. Leen Ashton-Vanherle  
Janssen Research Foundation  
B-2340 Beerse  
Belgium

Tel+32-14-60-3734  
Fax+32-14-60-2841  
e-mail:ashton@binfc1.jrf.be

**Treasurer**

Dr. Philip H. Cooper  
F. Hoffman-La Roche  
CH4002 Basel  
Switzerland

Tel+41-6-688-3703  
Fax+41-61-688-8018  
e-mail:  
philip\_cooper@roche.com@pmdf@rbac01

**Programme Manager**

Colm Benson  
Schering AG  
Müllerstrasse 178a  
13342 Berlin  
Germany

Tel+49-30-468-7647  
Fax+49-30-469-4-8033

**Secretary**

Roderick Hasemer  
Wasenring 165  
CH-4055 Basel  
Switzerland  
Tel+41-61-302-0621

**Freelance directory**

Barbara M. Grossman  
Corning Besselaar Limited  
7 Roxborough Way  
Maidenhead  
Berkshire SL6 3UD  
United Kingdom

Tel+(0628) 548182  
Fax+(0628) 826706

**Newsletter**

Ms Janice Beck  
SmithKline Beecham Biologicals sa  
Rue de l'Institut 89  
B-1330 Rixensart  
Belgium

Tel+32-2-656-9408  
Fax+32-2-656-8330

\* For information on membership or application for membership in EMWA please contact the secretary at the above address.