

President's Goodbye

Catherine Magill, PhD



We recently closed a successful campaign to fill the open spots on our chapter's Board of Directors and to approve several amendments to our chapter's bylaws. Thanks to all who participated and voted in this election.

It is important for us to maintain this organization in such a way that its members feel it is worth participating in, and we hope to get input that will allow us to provide services in which our members have an interest.

I am proud to announce that our new President, who served as President-elect last year, is Elizabeth Matovinovic. You will find a welcome message from her on the next page of this issue of *The Pacemaker*.

The amendments to the bylaws, which were also approved, ensure that the chapter takes ownership of the annual Pacific Coast Conference at Asilomar in alternating years with the Pacific Southwest chapter, as we have historically done. We added our responsibility to host this conference in even years to the bylaws and established a new member of the Board of Directors, the PCC Director.

The conference director serves two years, beginning approximately 18 months before the conference, and ending 6 months after the conference closes. This ensures continuity in the development and wrap-up of the conference, with no potentially risky hand-offs mid-stream. A key role of the conference director is to establish strong lines of communication with the Pacific Southwest chapter regarding conference matters. The conference director is also responsible for creating a conference

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committee to help with all the myriad details that go into putting this event on successfully. The conference director is also responsible for communicating directly with the Board regarding the status of the conference and all related details.

Our election of Kristen Mayo is the first step in the creation of a successful 2010 Asilomar conference; be sure to keep your ears open for ways that you can help in putting this conference on. As a participant on last year's conference committee I can say that it was well worth the effort.

Other changes to the bylaws included language that specifies that the conference and chapter funds are kept separate and used only for their intended purposes. We also changed the chair of the nominating committee for new board members from the President to the President-elect. This ensures that the incoming President has a key role in selecting the leadership team for the coming year.

Finally, I would like to say that I have truly enjoyed my two years on the Board of Directors, first as President-elect, working with President Laura Singer, and subsequently as President. I have met a lot of wonderful people and have participated in some very interesting events.

I am also looking forward to continuing on the Board as Events Chair and am excited about getting some new activities on the calendar. I hope members feel comfortable contacting me with ideas about possible events/activities that we could put on in the coming year. We would like to continue with our alternating sequence of skills, science and social events, moving around the Bay Area to encourage as many chapter members as we can to become active in chapter events and in participating in the Board of Directors in the future.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve these past couple of years, and do, please let me know how I can serve you better.

President's Hello

Elizabeth Matovinovic, MSc

I am happy to greet you as the 2009-10 AMWA Northern California chapter President. I currently work at a pharmaceutical company in the North Bay managing scientific publications.

Consequently, my AMWA related interests focus on contributing to increased transparency in the publication process within industry.

AMWA is an ideal vehicle for helping shape the future of the medical writing profession which is continuously being impacted by rapidly changing regulations governing the pharmaceutical industry. I plan to strengthen relationships with organizations such as the International Society for Medical Publication Professionals to increase pro-activity regarding current issues involving the medical writing profession.

Catherine Magill has been extremely supportive and generous sharing her experience as President. I am delighted that she continues to be within reach in her new position as the chapter Events Chair. The institutional AMWA memory comprised by other continuing Board members will be key to my success as President and I thank you in advance for your guidance. Welcome to new Board members, too, and President-elect Forrest Blocker. I can't wait to attend the 2009 Pacific Coast conference, see you then!

The 2009-2010 Northern California Chapter Board of Directors

Our new Board members are as follows:

- Elizabeth Matovinovic — President
- Forrest Blocker — President-elect
- Joan Brodovsky — Secretary
- Monique La Fleur — Membership Liaison
- Kristen Mayo — 2010 PCC Director

We are happy to join our continuing Board members:

- Sunny Bishop — Treasurer
- Fred Gebhart — Newsletter Editor
- Mimi Wessling — Webmistress
- Catherine Magill — Immediate Past-President, Events Chair

Create a Winning Project Proposal

Kevin Kehres

Ever wonder what it takes to create a winning bid on a new project? Long-time AMWA member Kevin Kehres recently offered four rules on an AMWA listserve that have helped steer him through the shoals of freelance medical writing.

First rule: Never spend more time on the proposal than it would take you to do the project.

Second rule: Focus on your expertise, not on the price.

Third rule: Don't lowball. You're likely to get the bid and you'll be unhappy.

Fourth rule: Never give a "set" 100% iron-clad guarantee on price. Make sure to include all the appropriate caveats and limits on rounds of review, revisions, etc.

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UC DAVIS EXTENSION OFFERS NONFICTION AND CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

Beginning to advanced writers are encouraged to explore UC Davis Extension's continuing education courses in nonfiction and creative writing.

The following courses will take place January-March 2009 at the Sutter Square Galleria in Sacramento. Some classes are offered online. Certificate programs are also available for writers who want to pursue a more in-depth and full spectrum of coursework.

Nonfiction Writing Workshop

Make the leap from classroom writer to successful author in this results-oriented workshop where you prepare two pieces for publication. New York Times bestselling author Jennifer Baye Sander teaches this course which takes place Mondays, Jan. 5-March 9, 6:30-9 p.m. (no meeting Jan. 19 or Feb. 16).

Advanced Fiction

Writer's Craft Workshop: Hone and finesse your writing skills by exploring point of view and sense of place, crafting a scene, using narration techniques and creating compelling dialogue. Pushcart Prize winning author Naomi Williams teaches this course which takes place Thursdays, Jan. 15-March 5, 6-9 p.m.

Reading Contemporary Fiction as a Writer

Discover how reading stimulates thought, generates ideas, invites discussion and inspires your own writing. Award-winning poet and creative writer Kate Asche teaches the course which takes place Thursdays, Jan. 15-March 5, 6-9 p.m.

Point of View

Learn techniques to create effective, believable voices for your point-of-view characters. Short assignments, discussed

in a workshop forum, provide opportunities for you to put theory into practice. Writer and college English instructor Robert D. Stanley teaches this course which takes place Wednesdays, Jan. 14-Feb. 4, 6:30-9 p.m.

Enhancing Writing Skills for Nonfiction Writers

Hone your skills and improve the credibility of your work by improving your grammar, punctuation, sentence structure and language. Walk away from this course with the tools and techniques to produce marketable pieces suitable for publication. Newspaper journalist and author James Raia teaches this course which takes place Wednesdays, Jan. 21-March 11, 6:30-9 p.m.

Research and Interviewing Techniques for Nonfiction Writers

Discover how to conduct research and interviews using techniques you will practice in class and then use in the field. Explore the many forms and specializations of nonfiction writing and learn how to tailor your work for each market. Journalist and former newspaper columnist Elisabeth Sherwin teaches the course which takes place Wednesdays, Jan. 21-March 11, 6-8:30 p.m.

Oral History Methods

Learn to conduct and record an oral history project following the complete process of historical documentation. Discover methods to elicit personal memories during interviews and establish historically relevant details. Explore legal issues, transcribing and editing procedures, printing and publishing options, archive placement and more. This online course allows you to work when and where it's convenient for you. Access to email is necessary. Enroll by Feb. 4 and complete by March 25.

Move Your Writing from Dream to Story

Learn how to honor and release the creative spirit, explore obsessions and themes, make time by making choices and move from a desire to write to the process of writing. This online course incorporates weekly lectures and assignments that can be completed at your own pace, in your own home. Access to email is necessary. Enroll by Jan. 13 and complete by March 3.

To request more information or to enroll, call (800) 752-0881, visit www.extension.ucdavis.edu/ah or email extension@unexmail.ucdavis.edu.

Register Now For Asilomar!

Registration for the 2009 Pacific Southwest Chapter Conference opens the week of December 14th. The 2009 Pacific Coast Conference will be held on April 26 - 29, 2009 in Asilomar, Pacific Grove, California.

With the theme "Defining Professionalism in Medical Communications," the 2009 Asilomar meeting promises something for everyone! We are thrilled that our keynote speaker, Oscar Salvatierra, MD, of Stanford University, will share with us his experiences as a medical professional and communicator, breaking down the barriers to organ transplantation. Credit workshops include the following:

- * Basics of Epidemiology for Medical Communicators (EW/PH/SG): Jane Neff Rollins
- * Reporting Correlation and Regression Analysis (G/SG): Jane Neff Rollins
- * Ethical Standards in Medical Publication (EW): Nancy Taylor
- * The IND in eCTD Format (ADV): Peggy Boe

We also have intriguing and varied noncredit workshops to help you become the consummate professional--ranging from marketing your career, finding your niche in different types of medical writing, writing for the web, explorations in regulatory writing, the medical writer as project manager, and workstation wellness--an interactive activity complete with exercises you can start using right away.

For information and registration, please visit <http://www.amwa-pacsw.org/contacts.html>. Register early--our space is limited!

The Job Hunt: Business Networking Sites



Susan E Caldwell, PhD

Our article series, The Job Hunt, continues with ideas on how to use business networking web sites. There are many such web sites, and they can be used in numerous ways to market yourself and your enterprise. For the purpose of this discussion, we are using LinkedIn (LI) as a model of a premier business networking internet tool. This article outlines several ways LI can support your job search and marketing efforts.

Your LI profile should have all or most of the elements that are part of your stand-alone resume. This profile can be

posted for the entire world to see, or you can make it visible for a limited audience—you decide and control who sees it.

But here are some useful extras that the LI web site offers:

Recommendations. Ask your coworkers, bosses, or other colleagues to write a recommendation for you. You can post (or not, your choice) their comments on your public LI profile. Having great recommendations posted on your profile could be just the edge you need to get that phone call from a hiring manager or recruiter. You can elect to post recommendations from your colleagues and friends on your profile, or not.

Groups. The LI web site offers access to many professional and social groups. Group membership requests may or may not require the group moderator's approval. If you become a member, you can display the name and logo of the group in your LI profile. You can use these memberships to show you're active with respect to writing, medical devices, eCTD publishing, and many other pursuits. If you want to branch out into another career or field, consider joining LI groups in the new area. By implication, this can show you're already interested or involved in those new career activities.

Referrals. The LI network includes a built-in referral system. How can recruiter S. Jones use the system, if she needs to locate medical editors for an open staff position? Jones can contact other recruiters and/or medical editors through the LI network, asking for their referrals to qualified candidates. These referral requests often work even if the involved parties don't know each other. The LI network listings are classified by geography, job title, and other parameters, so it's easy to connect with candidates or recruiters using the search function.

Introduction Requests. Another great LI feature is the network's ability to send requests for introductions to new contacts. This feature is one of the functions in the free basic account. It allows you to connect with professionals, locally or worldwide, who may be complementary to your work or job-hunting needs.

Profile Changes and Network Updates. LI will notify you (if you wish) of updates to the profiles of people in your LI network. Even better, you can use this feature to keep your own name and profile in front of those in your network. In turn, this can make marketing your services easier. What kind of updates trigger notifications to your LI colleagues? Change your

photo, revise your profile text, participate in Q & A exchanges, join a group, add a job listing, or add a connection— all of these changes trigger network updates.

Directory of Service Providers. If you seek contract opportunities, rather than staff positions, you know how important it is for your prospective clients to be able to find you. The Service Provider Directory is yet another way that LI makes it easier for clients to find the right consultant or contractor. When someone on LI recommends you as a service provider, you are listed in the LI Service Provider Directory.

Remember to use these strategies with other business networking web sites, if the functionalities are available. For those of us who are marketing on a budget, using networking web sites costs nothing (except your time). It's also a very effective way to promote your online professional profile.

Susan Caldwell is a medical writer, consultant, and president of Biotech Ink, LLC. She develops clinical, preclinical, and manufacturing documents for drug and medical device regulatory submissions.

Biotech Ink publishes the Biotech Ink Insider, a free, weekly career newsletter for medical writers and editors.

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Coming Events

BioBasics Briefing

Two days of biotechnology information for non-science professionals.

Learn the science, techniques, applications and issues driving the biotechnology industry today. Lecture and discussion combined with hands-on activities ensures a productive learning environment.

Topics covered: Industry Sectors, DNA, Proteins, Gene Expression, Transgenic Technology, Disease and Therapeutic Strategies, Pharmacogenomics, Drug Discovery and Development, and Stem Cells. Technologies: Recombinant DNA, Gel Electrophoresis, PCR, DNA Fingerprinting and MicroArrays.

Date: January 29 - 30, 2009. 8:30am - 4:30pm (breakfast begins at 8:00)
Location: Latham & Watkins LLP, 140 Scott Dr., Menlo Park, CA 94025-1008
Parking: Ample free parking in the employee lot
Info: Call 650-871-7101 x205 or e-mail: events@baybio.org.

BayBio 2009: Life Sciences - Branching Out

BayBio2009 is a one-day conference focusing on Northern California's strength in life sciences product development and commercialization.

The conference focuses on emerging technologies positioned to address critical healthcare, manufacturing and environmental concerns such as skyrocketing health care costs, worldwide food and fuel shortages, escalating manufacturing costs and global competitiveness. It focuses on new organizational partnerships that allow life sciences to flourish in an environment of increasing financial and regulatory demands and examines practical application of new ideas and tools that increase efficiencies and shorten bench to bedside cycles.

Date: Thursday, April 16, 2009. 8:30am - 5:30pm
Location: South San Francisco Conference Center, 255 South Airport Blvd., South San Francisco, CA
Info: Call 650-871-7101 x205 or e-mail: events@baybio.org.

The Word Witch: Modify Style Dialog Box

Maggie Norris

In Word, the **Modify Style** dialog box and the highly similar **New Style** dialog box are used to modify the specifications of a paragraph "style." That is, changes you make to the "style sheet" in the **Modify Style** dialog box will be applied to all text formatted in that style.

The term "style sheet," like much of the terminology we use to discuss the technicalities of documentation, comes from the days of moveable type. The typesetter received, along with a "manuscript," sheets of paper with the specifications for the type for each kind of paragraph (title, heading, caption, body text et cetera) and special character (page number, symbols, et cetera) the manuscript contained.

Their purpose was more or less the same as that of "styles" in an electronic template, to specify the look of each element in the final product. In Word, the specs are typed into the dialog boxes opened through the tools in the **New Style** and **Modify Style** dialog boxes.

Let's look at customizing a paragraph style.

Working in Windows, open a Word document, then choose **Format | Styles and Formatting** to display the **Styles and Formatting** task pane at the right side of the screen.

Working in Mac OSX, open a Word document, then choose **View | Formatting Palette** to display the **Formatting Palette**. Move it to a convenient place on your screen. If necessary, click the down-arrow to the left of **Styles** to open the styles list.

Click in a paragraph, then click **Heading 1** in the task pane or **Styles** list to apply the **Heading 1** style to the paragraph. Do the same for a second paragraph.

These paragraphs both now have all the characteristics that have been assigned, one way or another, to the **Heading 1** paragraph style (font, space above and below, spacing between lines, tabs, automatic numbering, et cetera).

Click in one of the paragraphs, then move the cursor, without clicking, over **Heading 1** in the task pane or **Styles** list.

Click the down-arrow to the right of **Heading 1** and choose **Modify** or **Modify Style** from the drop-down list to call up the **Modify Style** dialog box. The screenshot at the end of this article shows the Mac OSX version with **Modify Style** on the left and the **Modify Style** on the right.

This dialog box is a busy one, and the best way to understand the function of all those tools is to experiment. [Hint: the safest choice for **Style based on** is to use the **(no style)** option.]

For even finer control of the style sheet, click on the down-arrow next to the **Format** button at the bottom left.

Choose any of the items in the drop-down list to call up the corresponding dialog box. When you have made some changes, click **OK** in the **Modify Style** dialog box to save the changes and exit.

You have now customized the **Heading 1** style.

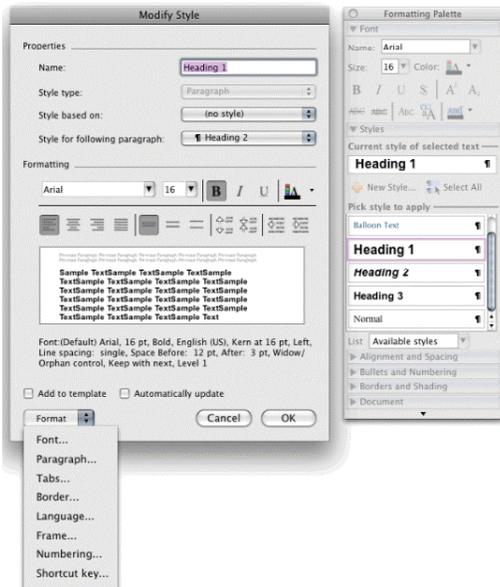
Notice that the changes have been applied to both **Heading 1** paragraphs in your file. Going forward, any paragraph to which you apply the **Heading 1** style will be formatted to the same specs. If you repeat the exercise, the changes you specify will be applied to all existing **Heading 1** paragraphs. The same

changes that you specified will also be applied to any paragraphs to which you subsequently apply the same **Heading 1** style in this document.

To change the **Heading 1** specs in the electronic template the file is built on, check **Add to template** in the **Modify Style** dialog box. We advise taking the time to experiment before saving changes to the template; however, if you do save the changed style sheet in the template and later regret it, just open any document based on the template, make the necessary changes, and check **Add to template**.

The **New Style** dialog box works very much like the **Modify Style** dialog box. The difference between them is this: **New Style** allows the user to give an original name to a style rather than using one of Word's many built-in style names; the **Modify Style** dialog box allows the user to customize the characteristics of one of Word's built-in styles, retaining its built-in style name.

In a corporate setting, it is usually not possible or desirable to add new style names either to the document or to the electronic template that documents are based on. For personal templates, like the one we built for the *Word Witch* columns, an original descriptive style name can be useful. For example, we generated a new character style to format dialog box titles, field labels, et cetera, and named it **screen text**.



Like What You See?

Want to Make it Better?

The Pacemaker, our Northern California chapter newsletter, needs your help!

Please send your suggestions and submissions to *Pacemaker* editor Fred Gebhart, pacemaker@amwancal.org. The deadline for submissions to the next bimonthly issue is Jan. 26, 2009.

Our newsletter depends on your help, your input, and your great ideas for the future.

2009 Northern California Board of Directors

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Vice President	Forrest Blocker	vicepresident @ amwancal.org
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