



## AMWA e-news June 2009

Greetings!

The AMWA conference committee is busy organising the 26th annual conference at the Veterinary Science Conference Centre, University of Sydney, on Friday 16 and Saturday 17 October, 2009. Ensure you put these dates in your diary, as the program is set to be filled with great sessions and educational PDP workshops. The conference dinner will be held at the Women's College at the University of Sydney on Friday 16 October. This is a great way to catch up with other medical writers. Check the AMWA website ([www.medicalwriters.org](http://www.medicalwriters.org)) for further information on the program.

### Membership renewals

It's nearly membership renewal time again. If any of your contact details have changed since this time last year, please email our membership secretary, Jacinta Miller at: [membership@medicalwriters.org](mailto:membership@medicalwriters.org). Jacinta is currently updating the membership database. If you know of anyone who should be receiving e-newsletters but is not, please let Jacinta know their email address. If you have paid your membership renewal in the past year but have not received communications from AMWA, you will be offered one year's complimentary membership.

### Events and awards

#### Melbourne nanotechnology night

On 2 June AMWA hosted a most informative discussion on nanotechnology. AMWA thanks speakers Dr Peter Binks and Dr Bob Irving of NanoVentures Australia, AMWA member Carole Goldsmith who organised the evening, and the Redback Hotel, North Melbourne, for supporting this event. See report at the end of this newsletter. This was the second AMWA Victorian event for 2009 and was well supported by members. Another AMWA networking event is planned for Melbourne towards the end of the year.

#### Reporting award

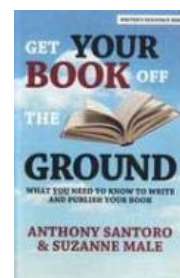
Rada Rouse, long-time member of AMWA, has won the Professor Geoff Farrell Award for 'responsible, accurate and timely reporting' on hepatitis C. Rada's article, 'The great hep C divide' published in *Medical Observer* last year, focused on the screening of pregnant women for hepatitis C, a complex and important issue for general practice. [Hepatitis Australia](http://www.hepatitisaustralia.org.au) announced the awards winners in May.

### Opportunities

- The 2009 Excellence in Health Journalism Awards are now open. The National Press Club invites applications from Australian journalists. To find out more, click here <http://www.npc.org.au>
- Nominations are open until Friday 31 July for the Luminous Award 2009. This award honours journalists who provide information on advances in cancer prevention, research, treatment and patient support. To enter or find further information, click here <http://www.cosa.org.au>

## What's new?

- *PLoS Medicine*, the online free access peer reviewed journal, has an interesting article by Richard Smith (prior Editor of the BMJ) about bias in medical evidence and how to remedy this. If you would like to read the article, [click here](#).
- The Society of Editors is hosting the fourth 2009 IPEd (Institute of Professional Editors) National Editors Conference in Adelaide on 8–10 October 09. Registration is now open ([register](#)); early-bird registration closes 14 July 2009. To view the full program [click here](#).
- The Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) will hold an accreditation exam for science editors in conjunction with the IPEd conference in Adelaide. For information, see <http://www.bels.org>, or contact [Rhana Pike](#).
- An initiative has been launched to develop new models for organising and funding journalism at a time when the future of the media industry is looking decidedly unhealthy. The Foundation for Public Interest Journalism will fund worthy journalism projects initiated by members of the public or practising journalists and is likely to incorporate approaches from similar projects overseas, such as [www.spot.us](http://www.spot.us). Projects will be assessed on their capacity to serve the public interest, with priority given to issues that are underreported by the traditional media. As well as publishing works of journalism, the foundation will make a major contribution to journalism education and research. There are also calls for nominations for people interested in being on the board of the foundation. Nominations should include a 500-word statement about the applicant's relevant experience and what they can offer the foundation. They must be received by close of business on 30 June. Please send them to: [jthomas@swin.edu.au](mailto:jthomas@swin.edu.au)
- The preliminary program and registration are now available for the Sixth International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication to be held in Vancouver on September 10–12, 2009. Early-bird registration closes on 1 July. For more information [click here](#).
- The Australasian Association of Clinical Biochemists is holding their 47th Annual Scientific Conference with the theme 'Science in the Sun' in Brisbane on 14–17 September 2009. For full details [click here](#)
- Do you need an understanding of the tax concessions available to Australian companies or affiliates of multi-national companies involved in R&D in Australia? If so, the Association of Regulatory and Clinical Scientists is holding an evening seminar on 29 June in Sydney titled 'Understanding R&D Tax Concessions-Opportunities from Budget 2009'. To find out more or register, [click here](#)
- For all those budding authors among our members, there is a new book available from book stores and the website [www.writersworld.com.au](http://www.writersworld.com.au) entitled: *Get Your Book off the Ground—What You Need to Know to Write and Publish Your Book* by Anthony Santoro and Suzanne Male. A copy was sent to our president, who says 'It has lots of useful advice for getting your book project started'.



## Getting to know one another

### Dr Dawn Barker—psychiatrist and writer



Dawn gained her medical degree in Scotland in 1999. She moved to Australia in 2001, with the original intention of having a year in the sun, but was impressed enough to stay permanently.

She completed her specialist training in psychiatry and subspecialist training in child and adolescent psychiatry in Sydney and Perth, and has been working as a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist in Western Australia.

She has recently moved (again) to Brisbane and has taken some time off clinical work as she is expecting her first child.

Dawn has always loved reading and writing, and on leaving school had wanted to study English at university before being persuaded that medicine was much more sensible! To compensate for this, she has recently completed some creative writing courses at the University of Sydney and the University of WA, and has been working towards a BA in literature through Open University.

She has written book reviews and opinion pieces, short stories, clinical guidelines, and academic research papers and posters. She has recently been commissioned to write an article for *Artlink* magazine, and is a peer reviewer for psychiatric academic journals. She hopes to do more freelance medical writing, and maybe one day to write that novel!

She joined AMWA in 2008 to help inspire her to combine her clinical expertise with her passion for writing. While she hasn't yet attended any AMWA events, she enjoys the updates from the AMWA community and hopes to become more involved in the future.

## Members

The AMWA Executive Committee meet by teleconference monthly and discuss new members for approval. We are pleased to announce the following new AMWA members.

Ordinary members: John Waddington, Vicky Vella, Sam Everingham, Philippa Harding, Samantha Kitchen, Dr Karen Dente, Rachel Stanton, Peta Marks.

Affiliate members: Julia Renaud and Koula Lee

Welcome back to AMWA: Gail Warman and Karyn Weitzner

One of our former members and president of AMWA for many years, Dr Amanda Caswell, would like to keep in touch with members. She is training in chemical pathology at the John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle and her contact details are: [amandacaswell@bigpond.com](mailto:amandacaswell@bigpond.com) and 0413 446 503.

## Websites we like

If you don't have a medical dictionary at home, the Merriam-Webster online dictionary will serve you well for all that confusing terminology. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

## Melbourne networking event, 2 June 2009

Nanotechnology is a relatively recent area of research and development, and Peter Binks outlined the history of the theory which stems from the work of Richard Feynman who, in 1959, first proposed a theory for rearranging atoms. While the theory was visited and revisited over subsequent decades in the quest to rearrange material to make something else, it wasn't until Iijima's discovery of carbon nanotubes in 1991 that the application of nanotechnology could be a reality.

Peter discussed the application of nanotechnology that we currently see in the 700 to 800 products and materials available from the recycling of materials for garments and waterproofing of workwear to applications in the paint industry, development of lightweight materials in the aerospace industry, wind turbines and power generation industry, diagnostic devices and medicine delivery devices. In Australia the main investigations are in applications for health, and there are currently 70 nanotechnology companies in Australia.

Bob Irving described the application of nanotechnology in the delivery of medicines including transdermal modes, where millions of microneedles on a patch deliver the therapeutic agent through the skin, which reduces the trauma of current injection methods and is expected to increase patient compliance, aerosol delivery via inhalers, and applications in the area of diabetes treatment. He described other applications in the area of diagnostics and medical imaging, and the current research into diagnostic applications where nanoparticles could accurately target abnormal cells in the body.

The reason nanoparticles can be so therapeutically effective is that they provide a greater surface area. Peter said that this benefit was also a concern as researchers needed to be aware of safety issues and risks of these new materials, at all levels from manufacturing, developing correct dosages, and clean-up after spills and exposures, which applies also to consumers and clinicians. He welcomed the current sunscreen debate and the work of the Friends of the Earth in raising the discussion in the community

Both Peter and Bob reassured the group that the science-fiction notion of nanotechnology as enabling robots to self-replicate and take over was unlikely to ever be a reality. However, nanotechnology is expected to have an important role in medicine in the the next 20 to 30 years.

## Contacts

To unsubscribe from this newsletter please email: [webmaster@medicalwriters.org](mailto:webmaster@medicalwriters.org)

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