ScienceWriters™

National Association of Science Writers, Inc.

Spring 2013

WHAT NEW EDUCATION
STANDARDS
MEAN FOR SCIENCE WRITING

THE SCIENCE WRITERS' HANDBOOK
LAUNCH
AND BACK STORY

NY TIMES SCRAPS
GREEN BLOG

NCI
ENDS EFFORT TO ENTER THE NEWS BUSINESS

TAX DEDUCTION
STRATEGIES
FOR SCIENCEWRITING2013

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Flexible metal conduit against perforated metal wall. Titan Missile Museum, Benson, Ariz. Photo by Lynne Friedmann. Keyboard © Ingram Publishing/SuperStock

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From The Editor

This year, Christmas came in March with the arrival of an advance copy of The Science Writers' Handbook: Everything You Need to Know to Pitch, Publish, and Prosper in the Digital Age.

This is a book that keeps on giving with advice on how to start/jump-start your career; find and develop compelling story pitches; handle contracts, taxes, retirement savings, and insurance; and, most important, navigate the emotional side (envy, loneliness, rejection) of writing.

With so many juicy topics from which to choose, I immediately dived into chapter 11: "Just Write the Friggin' Thing Already!," by Anne Sasso.

The Science Writers' Handbook *is the brainchild of SciLance, a tight-knit group of award-winning science writers. An Idea Grant from NASW was instrumental in making the book a reality.*

ScienceWriters *brings you the back story of how this invaluable resource for science writers went from "what if" to "why not" to "must have."*

The Science Writers' Handbook *is scheduled for release in April.*

Lynne Friedmann

FRIEDMANN COURTESY OF KEN JACQUES

In This Issue

NEWS

COLUMNS

FEATURES

Communal Writing: An Idea Grant at Work

How to publish a book with 30 of your best writer friends

by Kendall Powell

I've recently come to a disturbing realization: I am a collaborator at heart. That wouldn't be such a problem, but I'm also a freelancer. Most days, I work very much alone. I'm a social mammal, too, which is why I founded an online community of freelance science writers, called SciLance, in 2005. On our private listserv we talked about craft, complained about sources, and shared our best ideas about everything from story structures and business strategies to buying boots and raising children. I guess I shouldn't be surprised that we ended up pitching, writing, and publishing a science writing handbook together, too. Community is great. But collaboration?

In some ways, writing a book with 30 other writers was easy compared to sole authorship. Each of us had only a chapter or two to write. But in other ways, it was incredibly difficult. How do you make so many individual voices cohesive, and how do you weed out the inevitable overlaps or resolve differences of opinion? It quickly became a balancing act of delegating work and decisions, coordinating many moving parts, and layering on heavy doses of diplomacy to accommodate all the personalities and different work styles involved. More than once, I worried that this huge project might end up imploding the very community that made it possible.

So I'm thrilled to say that *The Science Writers' Handbook: Everything You Need to Know to Pitch, Publish, and Prosper in the Digital Age* will be on bookshelves in late April—and that SciLance has survived to tell this tale. The book is a resource for any science writer or communicator who cares about the craft and commerce of our field. It covers the how-to basics, but goes beyond reporting and writing and pitching to include the personal and professional struggles we've all faced and the solutions we've found. Like my Denver-area hiking trails, this project was a steep, sometimes rocky, and ultimately satisfying climb. And while the idea of the book circulated for years, it was an Idea Grant from NASW that finally launched it on the path from wishful thinking to reality.

…a resource for any science writer or communicator who cares about the craft and commerce of our field.

The Science Writers' Handbook idea first sprung out of a SciLance email conversation in January 2008, when Anne Sasso wrote: "You know, guys…we should write a SciLance book. I bet we've got enough material in the archives to get a good start. … Can you tell that I'm procrastinating again?"

We recreated the hive mind process of the listserv, asking for insights, experiences, and feedback from one another. And it's no surprise that Anne eventually became the project's business manager and wrote the chapter on procrastination, "Just Write the Friggin' Thing Already!"

The book concept sat around for more than a year until August 2009. Anne again raised the idea, and with the ScienceWriters meeting in Austin just a few short months away, the notion got rolling with scores of serious and silly contributions of possible chapter titles. Some of them made it into the final version in one form or another. Other suggestions hit the cutting-room floor, such as "I'm Thinking of Something Blue: How to Handle Editors Who Are Rather Unspecific," and "Oops, I Did It Again: Why I Said I'd Never Write for Another Women's Magazine."

Tom Hayden drafted a short book proposal and outline. In Austin, a dozen of us, over coffee in a hotel suite, dedicated a morning to brainstorm the project's goals. We would address the frustration we've all felt, such as when asking for advice on writing forums and getting 10 conflicting answers in response. And we'd share the humor in this life. We debated the format—personal essays, edited email threads, or some combination—but we agreed the book would include our voices and our collective wisdom.

Mark Schrope distilled the meeting by observing, "If we do it well, it will be something that reaches people at all phases, appealing to beginners all the way up to advanced writers."

As always after ScienceWriters meetings, we left energized and renewed. And inevitably, that enthusiasm was overtaken by our individual workloads. The project went back into hibernation.

On Feb. 17, 2011, NASW announced the Idea Grant program and solicited proposals. That same day, Amanda Mascarelli posted the spark that would finally move the project from idealistic to realistic: "Hmmm…do you think the SciLance book could be a good candidate for this funding opportunity?!"

Tom's response: "Holy crap, Amanda, that actually might be just the ticket."

Momentum snowballed from there. Michelle Nijhuis took the

Kendall Powell is a freelance science writer based near Denver, Colo.

Look Inside *The Science Writers' Handbook*

More than just a writing how-to-book, *The Science Writers' Handbook* arms readers with the tools to make science writing a way of life.

Part I primes the reader with the essential skills for quality science writing, Part II contains real-life advice for maintaining a work-life balance, and Part III breaks down how to support oneself on an unpredictable freelancer's income. In each chapter, a SciLance member uses his or her own experience to tackle a challenge the modern science writer faces. Bonus material accompanies many chapters.

PART I
The Skilled Science Writer

1. What Makes a Science Writer? *by Alison Fromme*
2. Finding Ideas *by Emily Sohn*
3. Making the Pitch *by Thomas Hayden*
   Bonus material: Classic Mistakes We Can All Avoid *by Monya Baker* • Pitching Endurance *by Douglas Fox* • A Tale of Two Query Letters by *Thomas Hayden*
4. Getting the Story, and Getting it Right *by Andreas von Bubnoff*
   Bonus material: Making a Reporting Plan • A Science Writer's Emergency Question List • On and Off the Record • "So When Can I Read Your Draft?"
5. By The Numbers: Essential Statistics for Science Writers *by Stephen Ornes*
6. Excavating the Evidence: Reporting for Narrative *by Douglas Fox*
   Bonus material: Who Pays for Travel?
7. Sculpting the Story *by Michelle Nijhuis*
   Bonus material: Story Anatomy
8. Working with Editors—and their Edits *by Monya Baker and Jessica Marshall*
9. Going Long: How to Sell a Book *by Emma Marris*
   Bonus material: Sample Query Letter • The Six Steps to Authorship
10. Multilancing *by Robert Frederick*
11. Just Write the Friggin' Thing Already! *by Anne Sasso*
    Bonus material: Thirty Books in Thirty Days *by Emily Sohn*

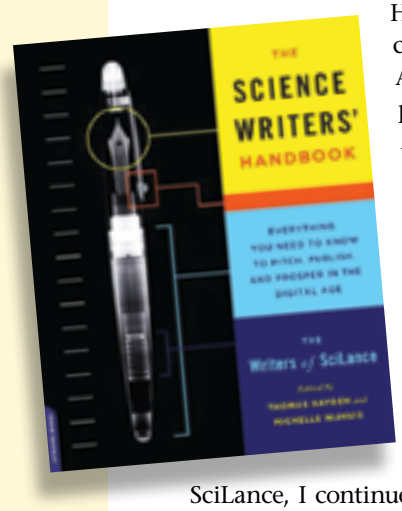
PART II
The Sane Science Writer

12. The Loneliness of the Science Writer *by Stephen Ornes*
13. Good Luck Placing This Elsewhere: How to Cope with Rejection *by Hillary Rosner*
14. Beyond Compare *by Michelle Nijhuis*
    Bonus material: Measuring Success in a World Without Performance Reviews *by Alison Fromme*
15. An Experimental Guide to Achieving Balance *by Virginia Gewin*
    Bonus material: How the &%@ Do I Take a Real Vacation? • Balance, Schmalance *by Liza Gross*
16. Creating Creative Spaces *by Hannah Hoag*
17. Avoiding Domestic Disasters *by Bryn Nelson*
18. Children and Deadlines: A Messy Rodeo *by Amanda Mascarelli*

PART III
The Solvent Science Writer

19. Minding the Business *by Anne Sasso and Emily Gertz*
20. Networking for the Nervous *by Cameron Walker*
    Bonus material: The Introvert's Survival Guide for Conference Cocktail Parties
21. Paid to Grow *by Robin Mejia*
22. Contract Literacy *by Mark Schrope*
    Bonus material: Time and Money: Can I Afford This Project? *by Stephen Ornes*
23. The Ethical Science Writer *by Brian Vastag*
    Bonus material: The Journalism-Promotion Divide *by Helen Fields*
24. Social Networks and the Reputation Economy *by Emily Gertz*
    Bonus material: Blogging: My Digital Calling Card *by Sarah Webb*
25. The Diversity of Science Writing *by Sarah Webb*
26. Sustainable Science Writing *by Jill U. Adams*

Other book contributors: *Jenny Cutraro, Adam Hinterthuer, Susan Moran, and Gisela Telis.*



lead on turning the earlier proposal into an Idea Grant proposal, with input from Cameron Walker, Tom, and me. We submitted our proposal in March and in July NASW awarded us a $43,000 grant; the larger of our requested budgets that would allow us freelancers to get a first draft done quickly.

It was a profound moment of what we call "the fear"—the realization that your audacity has paid off in an assignment, which you are now actually going to have to complete. In short order, a project team came together: Michelle Nijhuis and Tom Hayden agreed to act as co-editors for the book; Anne Sasso handled project finances and Alison Fromme took charge of administration; Sarah Webb and Emily Gertz spearheaded online marketing, and would eventually divide and conquer the website and social media presence for the book. As founder of SciLance, I continued to act as "collaborator-in-chief" of the book team as well as served as head diplomat.

By fall of 2011, all 26 chapters were assigned. Wanting each chapter to reflect multiple perspectives, each author surveyed the group in an intense email blizzard lasting several months.

From this process alone, I learned incredible new things about the writing habits of my colleagues, some of which I immediately put into practice in my own work. For example, Hillary Rosner offered this gem for writing first drafts: "I'm a big proponent of 'TK.' I use it for everything from explanations I can't be bothered to write yet, to details I need to double-check, to quotes I need to find in my notes, to bits I see are missing…"

The writing of the book came together astoundingly well, but we had yet to decide on a publishing strategy. At the end of 2011, Tom submitted a formal book proposal to a nonprofit press, a small publishing house that had already put out several science communication books. The feedback from reviewers was positive, and we were thrilled at the prospect of having a real publisher and a real book. But, as Alison Fromme recalls, "As is often the

case, we challenged ourselves as a community." If one publisher was interested, we asked each other, perhaps others would be, too? We decided the book needed an agent.

A huge advantage of writing a book as a group of 31 is that by tapping the list, we immediately had a handful of agent names to contact. In January 2012, we signed on with Andrew Paulson of Zachary Shuster Harmsworth. Before the end of February, he had interested enough publishers to hold an auction on our book proposal. Da Capo Press came in with both the best advance and the resources to help us reach a wider audience beyond science writing and academia.

The advance, along with the NASW grant, allowed us to pay our contributors, editors, and organizers more fairly. It also guaranteed our own dedicated marketing budget, key in today's publishing environment. A large chunk would support a significant online presence for the book via a website, blog, and social media accounts.

By fall of 2012, Tom and Michelle submitted a final draft to Da Capo for copyediting. After an all-too-brief celebratory moment of high-five emails, the book team turned squarely toward the marketing push.

Looking back, I'm struck by how much we've been able to do and do well because there are 31 of us continuously pulling together and pitching in. For example, under Sarah Webb's guidance, Monya Baker, Hannah Hoag, and Stephen Ornes have split up web editing duties so that we can manage three to five weekly blog posts to the book website, which we view as a tremendous resource for science writers in its own right (**pitchpublishprosper.com**).

Clearly, if revisions, proofs, and website launch were stacked on one author's plate, it would be a full-time job with pretty lousy pay. Granted, some aspects, such as collecting information from all 31 contributors for the 17-page author questionnaire, were certainly much harder to do en masse. But the project has enriched our community in ways I could have never imagined. We are all smarter about contract negotiations, wiser about the realities of publishing a book-length project, closer for getting deeper glimpses into each other's work habits and family lives, and better writers for the time we've spent thinking about how to improve our craft.

I feel a bit of maternal pride as this network created for online socializing has bloomed into a professional team of writers, working together to advance science writing as a field. Along the way, I've also felt the stars align as our many partners in this collaboration just seem to "get us." Carl Zimmer's blurb stands out as such:

> Writing about science can be exalting, enlightening, and rewarding. It can also be maddening, baffling, and terrifying. *The Science Writers' Handbook* is dense with sage advice on how to make your experience the former rather than the latter. These are lessons it takes years to learn on one's own; this book feels like a wonderful cheat sheet for the profession.

We think he's right—and we hope you will, too. I couldn't be happier with the outcome if I'd done the book all myself. In fact, I know I wouldn't be happier—my stress level would be through the roof, my income in the toilet, and the book's substance and style diminished by a factor of 30. Collaboration has its own rewards. Nor does it have to end. Stop by the website and join the conversation with your own thoughts, tips, and tricks to enrich the science writer's life. ■

If someone wants to give you $43,000 to be split among 31 writers, it's best if you already have a legal entity set up for distributing payments and handling expenses. SciLance Writing Group, a four-member LLC, was born shortly after our grant award.

Group Lessons Learned

Get an agent. Ours was worth every bit of his standard 15 percent commission. The bidding auction he arranged included four academic presses and two trade publishers. He also helped us navigate and negotiate complex, sometimes bizarre, contract issues (see next item).

Modern publishing contracts include such exotic items as "theme-park rights," should your book idea be transformed into a movie that inspires Disneyesque thrills. A peak at our "book's rides"—from our fertile imaginations—will appear on the **pitchpublishprosper.com** blog (coming soon).

Writing your own contributor contracts—and asking your colleagues to sign them—reveals how challenging things can be from the other side of the editorial fence.

Sometimes you must break your own rules: When quoting friends and colleagues on their most vulnerable thoughts and feelings about their careers, it's best to run copy back by your sources.

Hire a web designer who is as much a science geek and word-nerd as you are. We knew we had chosen wisely when Ron Doyle of Waterday Media included a swirl based on the Fibonacci sequence on our homepage.

Delegate tasks to those who have built-in skills and enthusiasm, especially for marketing that falls largely to authors these days and includes outreach via social media and conferences and other in-person events to promote the book to students, scientists, journalists, professors, and communicators. For example, Rob Frederick, a multitalented multimedia guru, produced our fantastic video trailers from footage shot at ScienceWriters2011 and 2012.

Set up as many separate email lists as it takes to keep organized.

Book project-related emails to date: 2,393 and counting. ■

New Educational Standards To Shake Up Science Writing for Kids

BY ANDY BOYLES

For many who write about science for kids, the ground is about to shift, or is already trembling. When the tremors stop, the altered landscape may hold new opportunities for science writers.

The movements come in the form of nationwide initiatives to rewrite the standards for literacy, science, and mathematics. Designed for use in the classroom, the new standards are nevertheless likely to touch nearly every type of science publication for young readers, both in and out of school. In addition to tests, curricula, "institutional" (school-library) books, and school magazines, author-driven trade books for kids also rely for at least some of their success on sales to teachers and librarians.

Even my employer—Highlights for Children, Inc., where sales in the home and commercial trade-book outlets are paramount—has an eye on the coming changes. Leadership expects to see little impact on our magazines since the overwhelming majority of subscriptions are bought for home delivery. But the new standards may create opportunities for Boyds Mills Press, the trade-book division of Highlights.

The standards are aimed, in part, at restoring science to the place it held before the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind). As a result, they offer hope for the future children's science books.

The plan at Boyds Mills Press is to use various means, such as educator guides, to show teachers how they can use Boyds Mills books to teach to the standards. "Our books naturally connect to the standards, so we just need to make people aware of that," says Editorial Director Liz Van Doren.

The changes with the broadest sweep across the curriculum are the CCSS—the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (**corestandards.org**). These standards call for much more reading, writing, and class discussion in all subject areas, especially the sciences, and for language-arts teachers to give up much of the fiction and poetry they currently use and increase the amount of nonfiction to at least 50 percent. The CCSS were finalized in June 2010, and the states and territories that have adopted them are now implementing them, each at its own pace. (Those that have not adopted the standards include Texas, Alaska, Nebraska, Minnesota, Virginia, Puerto Rico, and the Northern Mariana Islands.)

Coming later, the NGSS—the Next Generation Science Standards—are narrower in scope. These standards are designed to raise engineering to the same level as science and to reduce the number of science subjects being taught to make time for deeper exploration of the science process, in particular through reading, writing, and class discussion. As of this writing, these standards had been delayed twice and were scheduled, amid some skepticism, to be released in spring 2013.

HERE NOW: THE CCSS

The CCSS Initiative is led by an organization of state-level school officials and the National Governors Association. The plan is to solve the stubborn problem of too many new high school graduates who are not ready for college-level work.

For writers and publishers, a key component of the CCSS is a call for more language-arts instruction in nonfiction, which translates to reading and writing

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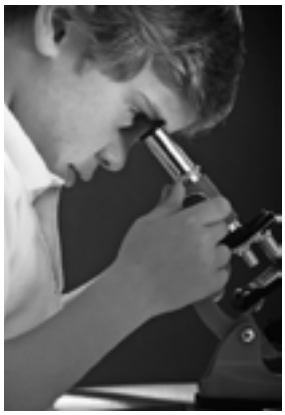
nonfiction not only in "reading" class but also in the physical sciences, life sciences, earth sciences…in short, nearly every subject area.

Melissa Stewart, a science writer and educator with more than 150 children's science books to her name, closely watches both the progress of the standards and educators' responses to them. She thinks the changes will increase the demand for longer, more in-depth treatments of fairly narrow subjects—that is, books. In that scenario, trade publishers are likely to benefit more than curriculum publishers.



"The curriculum companies just don't have the ability to create what CCSS demands, but trade publishers have been producing it all along," Stewart says. "I've seen a lot of [out-of-print] nonfiction books coming back into print, so that's good, too. Of course, for science books that can be tricky because some of the information in older books may be out of date."

She also thinks CCSS may motivate schools to re-hire school librarians, many of whom have lost their jobs due to budget cuts. "And that will lead to even better book purchasing decisions," she says. "Certified school librarians are more adept at recognizing high-quality books than most teachers or parents."

Many language-arts teachers are already grieving the impending loss of half the literature they love to teach. No one can predict whether they will grow to love the large, growing, and underappreciated collection of literary nonfiction for young readers.

THE NGSS…COMING SOON?

The NGSS began with the National Research Council (NRC) report *A Framework for K-12 Education* (bit.ly/Wb5YOH). A team assembled by the NRC, the National Science Teachers Association, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science is writing and revising a draft of the standards, which is now in a second round of public comment (**nextgenscience.org**).

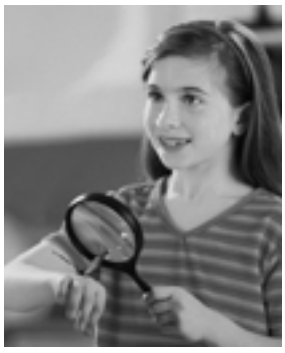
The potential impact of the NGSS is less predictable. One reason for uncertainty is that the final standards were delayed when the first draft drew more comments, and more substantial comments, than anticipated. Perhaps a more important reason is that few insiders foresee a smooth meshing of gears between the NGSS and the statewide testing required for school districts to receive federal funding.

"I don't see where this is going," says Steve Miller, a freelance writer who spends many of his working hours developing science textbooks and tests for curriculum publishers.

One hurdle he sees is the apparent need to develop statewide, multiple-choice tests for hands-on standards such as "Design, build, and evaluate devices that convert one form of energy into another form of energy."

Miller also thinks many teachers will simply not understand some of the standards. As an example, he cites: "Construct models to represent and explain that all forms of energy can be viewed as either the movement of particles or energy stored in fields."

Maybe the document makes some standards sound more difficult than they really are. Even if that's the case, few publishers are taking bets on how the standards will be implemented or tested. After all, the states that have signed on as "leaders" have so far agreed only to "give serious consideration to adopting" the NGSS as written.



So far, only one of Miller's clients has approached him to write materials that align with the current NGSS draft. "Most publishers aren't going to do that," he says. "It's too big an investment. Unless the states adopt this as their approach, nobody will write the curricula."

At least one key player in the NGSS effort has also noticed a gap between good intentions and good tests. Rodger W. Bybee was a leader in writing both the Frameworks report and the life-sciences section of the NGSS. He has been keeping teachers up to date on the progress of the standards.

…the altered landscape may hold new opportunities for science writers.

"There are several initiatives relative to assessment or NGSS, but few discussions of new instructional materials," he writes in the February issue of *Science & Children*, NSTA's journal for elementary-level teachers. "The absence of a curriculum based on the new standards will be a major failure in this era of standards-based reform and assessment-dominated results. When science teachers at all levels K-12 ask 'Where are the materials that help me teach to the standards?', the educational system must have a concrete answer."

While Bybee calls for action, Stewart suggests that despite the many positive aspects of the NGSS, these standards may simply be losing steam. The NGSS have not enjoyed the endorsement (or funding) of the Department of Education's Race-to-the-Top program, which the CCSS received. In addition, the delays in delivery may have eroded teachers' confidence in the effort, making them a harder sell to schools.

"As far as NGSS is concerned, I think it's too soon to tell," Stewart says. "What I am really happy to see in NGSS is a much stronger commitment to elementary science. There seems to be a growing backlash to the recent all-out focus on math and literacy in the elementary grades, and I'm very glad to see it." ■

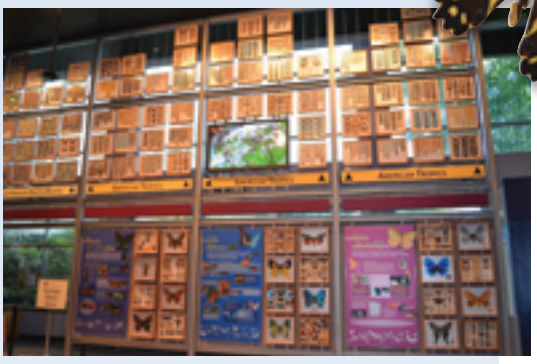
ScienceWriters2013 Planning Sneak Peek

Planning for ScienceWriters2013 at the University of Florida is well under way. November is the perfect time of year in Gainesville, with daytime highs in the mid 70s and low humidity. The conference center hotel is right on the edge of campus with plenty of parking and free WiFi.

The welcoming reception takes place at the Florida Museum of Natural History, home to one of the world's largest butterfly collections and a beautiful butterfly vivarium. Also in the works, a dine-around Gainesville and another special surprise.

The list of half-day tours being considered includes a trip to one of the richest vertebrate fossil sites in North America, an opportunity to experience the human brain in all its majesty, a chance to feel a category 5 hurricane, and a visit to the greenhouses where colorful new plants are born.

Post-meeting, day-long tours will allow attendees to experience historic St. Augustine, which the University of Florida now manages, and an introduction to Florida's water issues through its magnificent springs, led by one of the nation's leading voices on water. Pack your bathing suit and swim mask. ■



ScienceWriters2013 welcome reception takes place at the Florida Museum of Natural History, home to one of the world's largest butterfly collections.

The following is a story about National Cancer Institute (NCI) spending public funds to create a publication that claimed to cover the enterprise of cancer research. The NCI newsletter appears to have been created in order to blunt the coverage of the institute by* The Cancer Letter *(cancerletter.com) which chronicles the development and growth of cancer research. Ideally, this story—based on over 1,600 pages of documents spanning nearly a decade—would have been written by another publication. To manage the author's conflict of interest, Amos Gelb, associate professor at Northwestern University Medill Journalism School and president of Washington Media Institute, edited the story. The following is an excerpt.

NCI Ends Brash Foray Into the News Business

BY PAUL GOLDBERG

In December 2003, after an explosion of feverish work, NCI stood on the threshold of launching a weekly newsletter that would cover the entire field of cancer research.

Other NIH institutes publish house publications, but none cover their entire areas of research.

The NCI newsletter promised to serve as the gateway for information about its publisher—and to provide coverage of NIH, Congress, FDA, CDC, the pharmaceutical industry, advocacy groups, and cancer centers. In short, it would serve as the definitive publication of record.

A trail of emails and memoranda obtained by *The Cancer Letter* reveals that over preceding months, the institute's employees and contractors had been learning about news judgment, writing, and editing.

Features to be published, including "Meet a Researcher" and "Featured Clinical Trial," were defined. Standard operating procedures for submissions were developed, and individuals who provide clearance were designated.

NCI staff members are not reporters, but they rose to the challenge. They held meetings, created diagrams and memoranda—and, of course, hired outside consultants.

The publication they designed—ultimately named the *NCI Cancer Bulletin*—was neither the largest nor the most controversial of projects launched by then-director Andrew von Eschenbach. The history of the *Bulletin*—which died with a whimper after nine years of operation—describes an idea gone amok.

The documents made public here cut a peephole into one of NCI's most opaque operations—its $44.9 million communications unit—enabling outsiders to observe the institute in the act of trying to blur one of the most important separations of power in American democracy: The line between the government and the press.

The *Bulletin*'s nine-year run also makes it possible to re-examine the hazards of unrealistic promises. The promise von Eschenbach made to the world in 2003 was as ambitious as it gets: He would reduce cancer to a chronic disease within 12 years, by 2015. Trapped by his own goal, von Eschenbach launched gigantic projects intended to make miracles possible. No scientific advisory board was asked whether a venture into the news business would advance NCI's communications agenda.

THE MORE IT LOOKS LIKE A NEWSPAPER…

NCI spends more on communications than any NIH institute. This may be changing, as the NCI Office of Communications and Education, which spent $44.9 million last year, is getting scrutinized by the National Cancer Advisory Board (*The Cancer Letter*, **cancerletter.com/articles/20121207**).

PAUL GOLDBERG IS THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER OF *THE CANCER LETTER*, A WEEKLY PUBLICATION FOCUSED ON DRUG DEVELOPMENT AND THE POLITICS OF CANCER.

By way of comparison, FDA's Office of External Affairs, which supports the entire agency, has an annual budget of less than $12 million. Its Center for Drug Evaluation and Research's Office of Communications has a budget just over $13 million. These figures include both salaries and operations.

These two FDA offices are responsible for covering a wide range of activities, including consumer education, consumer and health care professional outreach, website and social media services, internal communications, and drug safety announcements, as well as PR for all therapeutic areas—including food and tobacco, not just cancer. Von Eschenbach couldn't be precluded from launching any project he wanted, and the *Bulletin* was one of them.

An email exchange dated Dec. 30, 2003, provides insight into his thinking about the venture.

A week before the *Bulletin*'s launch, the committees that had been designing the newsletter over the preceding three months had to confront a thorny question that, alas, also exposed their lack of understanding of the fundamentals of their new craft, journalism, trying to determine how much of the front page should be devoted to von Eschenbach himself.

Somebody had to ask von Eschenbach whether he intended to keep the entire front page to himself. In other words, would he be willing to share the cover with news? In an earlier mock-up, von Eschenbach's Director's Update column (ghost-written with input from a 16-member "Director's Corner Editorial Board") took up the entire front page.

"In addition to featuring the Director's Update on the front page of the *Bulletin*, we also would like to propose including a 'News' feature," Mary Anne Bright, then-director of the Cancer Information Service program, suggested to von Eschenbach in an email. "I think that our readership will be interested in news from the Institute and placement on the first page would likely spur their interest."

It appears that von Eschenbach was unaware of a key element of the culture of journalism. With the possible exception of obituaries, no credible newspaper would run a photo of its editor or publisher on the front page. A front-page column and a photo would be unthinkable. The *Bulletin*'s battle for credibility would be lost from get-go.

Yet, the publication went on, burning through millions of dollars while caught in a permanent identity crisis, and seeking to foster the illusion of credibility.

A tally of emails and memoranda shows that in the run-up to the *Bulletin*'s launch, 77 people—employees and contractors—had some degree of involvement in the project. The cost measured in their wages and distraction from other work can never be properly tabulated.

As recently as last December, the *Bulletin* held editorial meetings, which occupied at least a dozen government employees for at least an hour-and-a-half.

Had the *Bulletin* been launched outside the government, it would have been regarded as financially mismanaged, overstaffed, laden with high costs, and lacking any prospect of generating revenues.

At the time of its demise, the *Bulletin* employed at least four full-time equivalent (FTE) employees, who, altogether, drew the salaries of $468,080 annually. By way of comparison, the NCI media relations office, which actually interacts with the press, also has four FTE positions.

The *Bulletin* also used the services of contract writers who, together, were paid $110,000 in 2012. The bills for website development services came up to $31,440. Total cost: $609,520.

NCI was in the unique and ethically questionable position to give itself scoops.

The *Bulletin* had other costs.

The Spanish edition cost about $24,000 a year, NCI officials say. Some additional staff members—including two videographers—were involved part-time. "Their specific support in the area of video production constituted only a small part of their overall assigned duties at NCI," institute officials said.

Assuming this level of spending over nine years—a conservative assumption—had the money spent on the *Bulletin* been redirected, it could have provided direct support for 18 years' worth of R01 (Research Project) grants. It's unclear whether this money can be redirected. NCI officials said *Bulletin* staff members have been reassigned to other jobs.

PROSPECTIVE CLEARANCES

Had NCI chosen to spend the $45 million on something other than PR, it could have provided direct support for more than 110 additional R01 grants, increasing the total number of grants by about 10 percent (*The Cancer Letter*, **cancerletter.com/articles/20121207**).

Another option would be to reverse the cut the NCI cancer centers program sustained in 2011, or boost the clinical trials cooperative groups program by about 15 percent, or double Harold Varmus's Provocative Questions initiative.

Usually, NIH reviews press releases and printed materials—such as newsletters—published by institutes and centers. However, instead of reviewing the *Bulletin*, every year, NIH issued "prospective clearances," allowing the institute to continue to blur the line between journalism and PR.

"The *NCI Cancer Bulletin* has requested and received from the Department initial and continued publication/clearance agreement each year since the newsletter's first issue in 2004 to its final issue on Jan. 8, 2013," said John Burklow, NIH associate director for communications and public liaison. "NCI assured me that

Story Links and Resources

Amos Gelb and Paul Goldberg talk about the *NCI Cancer Bulletin* story in a video interview
vimeo.com/58735043

"NCI Ends Brash Foray Into the News Business"
The Cancer Letter, Feb. 1, 2013
cancerletter.com/articles/20130201

"Is $45 Million Too Much to Spend on PR? NCAB Panel Weighs NCI Communications Budget"
The Cancer Letter, Dec. 7, 2012
cancerletter.com/articles/20121207

"Cancer Costs: Educating Patients is Key, But the US National Cancer Institute Must Keep Spending in Check"
Nature editorial, March 13, 2013
nature.com/news/cancer-costs-1.12581

all content published in the newsletter first obtained thorough subject matter expert review and clearance from NCI divisions, offices and centers and other NCI approving officials, in accordance with the Department's directives and clearance agreement. Any and all content that covered issues related to programs, policies and announcements of DHHS (Department of Health and Human Services) or other OpDivs (operational divisions) were also cleared through the subject matter experts or approving officials of those agencies or offices."

NIH had no politically feasible way to deal with the *Bulletin*.

The NCI perspective wasn't fundamentally concordant with that of NIH. Von Eschenbach was in the midst of a life-and-death struggle to "eliminate suffering and death due to cancer" by 2015. Meanwhile, NIH had no overarching goal to end suffering and death from all disease by any particular date.

Yet, since the NCI director was a presidential appointee and a Bush family friend, the NIH director was in no position to control him. Papering over the problem with a prospective clearance was a prudent way to go.

The *Bulletin*'s development process took less than four months—lightning-fast by government standards…

The motivation for starting the *Bulletin* was obvious, even at NCI's lower rungs.

"It was very much an act of spite," said a contributor, who spoke on condition of not being identified by name. "It certainly wasn't the result of a communications plan, and here are all the things we want to do… In the government those things can take a year or two.

"To have this done on such short notice was quite contrary to typical government processes."

THE PERIL OF SELF-COVERING

By being both a publisher and a public health organization, NCI was in the unique and ethically questionable position to give itself scoops.

For example, on April 6, 2004, the *Bulletin* reported that the members of the data and safety monitoring board of a major NCI-sponsored trial—the National Lung Screening Trial—had resigned.

The board members walked off, citing the government's failure to give them protection from lawsuits that may arise in connection with the trial.

The *Bulletin* got the scoop because it was part of NCI and because—for some reason—the institute wanted to make the disclosure. This was a questionable decision, because responsible news organizations don't report on proceedings of DSMBs (Data Safety Monitoring Boards). This is done out of respect for patients who enroll in such trials.

More importantly, institutions that sponsor clinical trials avoid discussion of events stemming from operations of the DSMBs, fearing—correctly—that the public would perceive controversies on these boards as signs of problems with the data or safety.

By the time von Eschenbach departed from NCI (in 2006), the *Bulletin* was an established program. It had staying power.

Von Eschenbach's successor, John Niederhuber, didn't require the services of an editorial board, and he had no particular use for the *Bulletin*. Chipping away at the institute's communications budget, he cut back the *Bulletin* to a two-week schedule.

Yet, the *Bulletin* continued for at least another six years.

It's not clear whether the *Bulletin* will be missed. ■

New York Times Cancels Green Blog

No explanation from editors following surprise announcement

BY CURTIS BRAINARD

At 5 p.m. (on March 1), *The New York Times* posted the following announcement:

> The *Times* is discontinuing the Green blog, which was created to track environmental and energy news and to foster lively discussion of developments in both areas. This change will allow us to direct production resources to other online projects. But we will forge ahead with our aggressive reporting on environmental and energy topics, including climate change, land use, threatened ecosystems, government policy, the fossil fuel industries, the growing renewables sector and consumer choices.

This is terrible news, to say the least. When the *Times* announced in January that it was dismantling its three-year-old environment pod and reassigning its editors and reporters to other desks, Managing Editor Dean Baquet insisted that the outlet remained as committed as ever to covering the environment. Obviously, that was an outright lie.

The Green blog was a crucial platform for stories that didn't fit into the print edition's already shrunken news hole—which is a lot on the energy and environment beat—and it was a place where reporters could add valuable to context and information to pieces that did make the paper.

An addendum to the discontinuation announcement encouraged readers, "Please watch for environmental policy news on the Caucus blog and energy technology news on the Bits blog," but without the Green blog, there's no way that these topics are going to get as much attention as they once did.

In an act of total cowardice, the *Times* clearly timed its announcement to avoid (for the weekend, at least) having to deal with what is sure to be widespread criticism. When I called the paper shortly after 5 p.m. on Friday, I was informed that Executive Editor Jill Abramson, Managing Editor Dean Baquet, and corporate spokeswoman Eileen Murphy were all out of the office for the day.

Sandy Keenan, the former editor of the environment pod, and Nancy Kenney, the deputy editor who was responsible for the Green blog, didn't answer their phones, either, but I can hardly blame them. An email that Kenney sent to colleagues at 5:02 p.m. on Friday suggests that the decision to ax the blog was made from up on high and came as a surprise. According to a copy obtained by *CJR*, she wrote:

> Dear Friends and Contributors,
>
> Masthead editors at the *Times* informed me around noon today that they plan to discontinue the Green blog and devote resources elsewhere.
>
> Sandy Keenan and I are deeply grateful to you for your engrossing contributions and support over the last three years. Our deepest thanks to all of you. I will be following up with individual emails as best I can; I apologize for the abruptness here.
>
> On Monday, I will begin a new editing assignment on the *Times* culture desk and will be reachable at the same email address.
>
> Fond regards,
> Nancy Kenney

Those masthead editors should be ashamed of themselves. They've made a horrible decision that ensures the deterioration of the *Times*'s environmental coverage at a time when debates about climate change, energy, natural resources, and sustainability have never been more important to public welfare, and they've done so while keeping their staff in the dark. Readers deserve an explanation, but I can't think of a single one that would justify this folly.

■ ■ ■

All Thumbs, None Green

Environment coverage is down at the* Times*, even if it wasn't supposed to be

BY CURTIS BRAINARD

Two weeks ago, I excoriated *The New York Times* for canceling its Green blog a month after it had dismantled its environment desk and reassigned its editors and reporters to other desks—some, to other beats.

My post got a lot attention, and many commentators noted that my criticism was "harsh," which it was. Among other things, I called the decision to eliminate the blog a "terrible idea," and I stand by that. But two of my barbs went too far.

The *Times* announced the blog's demise at 5 p.m. on a Friday afternoon with no explanation, and I immediately tried to call Executive Editor Jill Abramson, Managing Editor Dean Baquet, and corporate spokeswoman Eileen Murphy to find out what was going on, only to be told that none of them were in the office.

Their absence, and the timing of the announcement, looked like an obvious effort to break some bad news when no one was looking, and I found it all the more infuriating because government press offices use the same maneuver to avoid coverage by papers like the *Times*. So, I called it an "act of total cowardice," which was rash. Clumsiness is more like it.

I've talked to a variety of people at the *Times* since then, all on background, and I don't think there was any conscious effort to dodge notice or criticism. Nancy Kenney, who edited the blog, had been reassigned to the culture desk after the environment desk was dissolved, and that Friday was the last day in her old role, so managers pulled the plug on the blog.

"We could have handled the situation better," Baquet, who won't speak to me,

GREEN BLOG continued on page 25

CURTIS BRAINARD IS THE EDITOR OF THE OBSERVATORY, *COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW*. THESE *CJR* COLUMNS APPEARED ON MARCH 1 AND MARCH 19, 2013 (RESPECTIVELY). REPUBLISHED WITH PERMISSION.

Featured Column

Scholarly Pursuits

Academic research relevant to the workaday world of science writing

by Ben Carollo and Rick Borchelt

Do You Trust Me?

We (that is, the authors of this article) often find ourselves discussing the role of trust in our work environment. Whether we are trying to figure out how to avoid participating in a "trust fall" activity at an office team-building event or debating how much our key stakeholders trust the scientific information that they see in the media, trust is a recurring theme in our professional lives. We think that trust is on your minds as well. Members of the NASW community regularly express the notion that one reason that journalistic integrity is so critical is in order to maintain trust with the publics who rely on us for information about science. With all of the time our community spends focusing on trust, we thought it would be worth exploring some recent research that can provide some insight into how issues of trust play out in science communication.

■ ■ ■

Gauchat, Gordon. Politicization of Science in the Public Sphere: A Study of Public Trust in the United States, 1974 to 2010. *American Sociological Review* 77(2) (2012) 167-187.

In this article, Gauchat uses data from the 1974 to 2010 General Social Survey to study how trust in science changed over time for groups of people with common characteristics. He focuses primarily on whether there was evidence that political ideological leanings influenced trust in science and science institutions. He specifically investigated responses to the question about trust in the scientific community and respondents' demographic responses. Gauchat observed that group differences in trust in science generally stay stable over time, except for the group of people who identified themselves as conservatives. For this period, conservatives began with the highest level of trust in science and science institutions but ended with the lowest levels when compared to liberals and moderates. Of note, the patterns that emerged related to science were unique as compared to other secular institutions.

Gauchat explains the anomaly by noting that, in the political arena, scientific credibility is tied to perceptions of the scientific information's objectivity. He discusses how public trust in science stems from acknowledging that some third party has specialized knowledge about something beyond general comprehension, and that this is indeed required in a differentiated society that promotes specialization. Accordingly, maintaining social credibility of science requires that there is both continued trust in scientific independence as well as the notion that a specialized society where scientists are encouraged to challenge old assumptions and generate new ideas. When looking at the social values end of the spectrum, it appears that as the conservative political movement more closely aligned with the religious right, the scientific emphasis on independent inquiry put science at odds with a political philosophy that places an emphasis on traditionalism. This, Gauchat posits, begins the breakdown in trust.

…public trust in science stems from acknowledging that some third party has specialized knowledge…

Equally important to note, he says, is how science has changed over time. As science became more entrenched in political debates, regulatory science organizations became increasingly important to the debate. Regulatory science cannot be separated from policy management, and therefore science has been dragged into inherently ideological discourse. The increased profile of regulatory science additionally changes the narrative

Scholarly Pursuits features articles from the social science research community in the United States and abroad. If you read an article you think would make a good candidate for this column, send it along to rickb@nasw.org.

Ben Carollo leads the issues analysis and response team at the National Cancer Institute at NIH. Rick Borchelt is special assistant for public affairs to the director at the National Cancer Institute at NIH.

about the value of science from one about promoting innovation and progress to one about reducing risk and intrusive government. This changing narrative could contribute to the erosion of perceptions of scientific independence, with trust as collateral damage. This, of course, would have a greater impact on the political party most closely aligned with regulated industries. There is a hint of irony in this situation, in that it appears that science may be suffering due to its own success.

The author suggests that this evolution may result in a reorganization of how science is integrated into the policymaking sphere. In the meantime, those of us who tell the story of science face additional obstacles in telling that story to certain audiences. Perhaps reaching some people is more effort that it is worth, but there are a lot of people out there who do still trust science, and they are the field's best ambassadors, so it is more imperative now than ever that they are able and motivated to share our stories.

■ ■ ■

Brewer, Paul R. and Barbara L. Ley. Whose Science Do You Believe? Explaining Trust in Sources of Scientific Information About the Environment. Science Communication 35 (2013) 115-137.

The authors of this paper investigate why individuals trust some sources of information over others, specifically in relation to information about the environment. The general assumption in the paper is that most individuals do not have the ability to absorb all of the basic facts of a scientific situation and thus rely on others to digest the information for them. There is a set of heuristics that drives which sources of information are trusted, which suggests that these heuristic factors ultimately drive individuals to a set of information that they accept as facts. In the environmental debate, minority opinions often persist as legitimate arguments, so insight into this could prove useful.

The researchers sought to answer seven research questions that focused on the extent to which political ideology, support for environmental regulation, attendance at religious services, trust in people, trust in government, trust in scientists, and demographics predict trust in an individual's "sources of interest." The data used to answer these questions was collected during a survey conducted in Milwaukee, Wis., between November 2009 and March 2010. This, of course, does introduce some limits to the extent to which findings from this study can be generalized to apply to a larger population.

In the environmental debate, minority opinions often persist as legitimate arguments…

The study first identifies which sources of science information were deemed to be the most trusted. The most trusted source for science information (by a statistically significant amount of 46 percent of respondents) was science television programming, such as Nova or programming on the Discovery Channel. University scientists were rated as the next most trusted source, followed by science magazines. Next in line were science websites and blogs associated with environmental organizations. Tied on the list for last place were television news and local daily newspapers, with only 14 percent of people reporting trust in these sources.

Brewer and Ley also analyze how the aforementioned factors affect trust in these various sources. They found that political ideology and religiosity predicted levels of trust in scientists, with conservatives and the most religious respondents indicating less trust. Political ideology also predicted level of trust in environmental organizations, with conservatives indicating lower levels of trust. Moreover, general support for environmental regulation predicted increased trust in all sources except science media. These findings indicate that there is potential for information about science to get lost in ideological societal debates. The authors' analysis also indicates that there may be a "spillover" effect between trust in scientists and trust in information sources as indicated by a positive association between these variables.

■ ■ ■

Smith, Nicholas and Helene Joffe. How the public engages with global warming: A social representations approach. *Public Understanding of Science* 22 (2013) 16-32.

This final study looks at subconscious factors that indicate how people make sense of global warming. Underlying the study is the social representation theory, which suggests that rather than relying on heuristics that we rationally calculate, people use socially available symbols, metaphors, and iconic images to help make sense of unfamiliar issues. In the study, 56 Londoners were asked to draw or write their "first thoughts or feelings" about global warming when prompted. They were asked to fill four boxes, each with a distinct thought. Participants were then interviewed to explore what they wrote or drew.

…people use socially available symbols, metaphors, and iconic images to help make sense of unfamiliar issues.

Some 93 percent of all first free associations and 76 percent of all other free associations fell into 13 categories. The participants' first thoughts often reflected images used by the British press in their coverage of global warming. The majority of all free associations could be grouped into two categories: *causes* or *impacts* of global warming. Impacts accounted for

PURSUITS continued on page 25

***Editor's note**: With this issue we bid farewell to co-author Ben Carollo, who is leaving the National Institutes of Health for the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. Many thanks to Ben for his valuable contributions to this column. He will be missed.*

Deductions for NASW Conferences

BY JULIAN BLOCK

Question: *I'm a freelance writer who will be traveling to Gainesville for the ScienceWriters 2013 conference. I'm pretty sure that I'm entitled to claim some deductions on Schedule C of Form 1040, but what sorts of expenses can I write off, and can I deduct them totally?*

Answer: The law allows you to deduct 100 percent of the conference registration fee. Also entirely deductible are travel between your home and Gainesville and hotel charges.

There's a limitation, though, for meals not covered by the fee, including both what you eat en route and while you're in Gainesville: Deduct only 50 percent of those expenditures.

For travel using your car, deduct actual expenses or a standard mileage rate. For 2013, the rate is 56.5 cents per mile. Whether you claim actual expenses or the standard rate or the cost of a rental car, also deduct parking fees, as well as bridge, tunnel, and turnpike tolls.

Stay within the speed limit. IRS regulations and rulings draw the line at deductions for traffic tickets.

Some often overlooked tax relief remains available for lodging costs even when your spouse, significant other, or someone else tags along only for fun. You're entitled to a lodging deduction based on the single-rate cost of similar accommodations for you—not half the double rate you actually paid for the two of you.

Another plus is that deductions for NASW conferences don't just reduce the amount you show as profit on Schedule C, thereby reducing the amount of your business income subject to income taxes. They also reduce the amount of your business income subject to self-employment taxes, as calculated on Schedule SE. Many freelancers get nicked more for self-employment taxes than for income taxes.

Question: *I'll be paid for my talk at a writers' conference. Is a charitable-contribution deduction available to a speaker who declines an honorarium and asks that the money be donated to a charity he or she picks?*

Answer: Yes. But the speaker still has to declare the honorarium as income. Note that you derive no benefit from a donation deduction if you pass up itemizing on Schedule A of Form 1040 for contributions, state income taxes, and the like because it's more advantageous to use the standard deduction.

The no-questions-asked standard deduction is a flat amount based mostly on filing status and age that's adjusted annually to reflect inflation. For 2013, the basic standard deductions are $12,200 for joint filers, $8,950 for heads of household, and $6,100 for married persons filing separately and singles. The deductions for individuals age 65 or older or blind increase by $1,200 for married persons and $1,500 when filing status is single or head of household.

If you anticipate that you're going to claim the standard deduction, decline the honorarium before you become entitled to it and required to declare it. Assign the payment to your favorite philanthropy. ■

JULIAN BLOCK IS AN ATTORNEY AND AUTHOR BASED IN LARCHMONT, N.Y. HE HAS BEEN CITED AS: "A LEADING TAX PROFESSIONAL" (*NEW YORK TIMES*); "AN ACCOMPLISHED WRITER ON TAXES" (*WALL STREET JOURNAL*); AND "AN AUTHORITY ON TAX PLANNING" (*FINANCIAL PLANNING MAGAZINE*). FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HIS BOOKS, VISIT JULIANBLOCKTAXEXPERT.COM.

CONFERENCE TRAVEL BY CAROL KERR GRAPHIC DESIGN USING SUITCASE © EXACTOSTOCK / SUPERSTOCK

Farewell to Ruth Winter

ScienceWriters extends profound thanks to Ruth Winter as she steps down as *SW* book columnist; a volunteer position she has held for 33 years. In recognition of Ruth's volunteer efforts extraordinaire, in 2006, the NASW board honored her with the Diane McGurgan Service Award. Ruth is truly passionate about books, both those written by NASW members and her own—she is the author of 37 popular health books. Over the years, our conversations about books have in several cases led to *SW* articles by Ruth offering valuable advice. Another of Ruth's endearing traits: turning in her columns ahead of deadline. ■

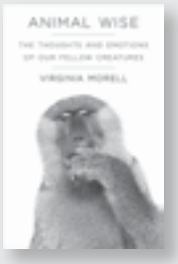
BOOKS
BY AND FOR MEMBERS

Ruth Winter
ruthwrite@aol.com

Send material about new books

New—Starting next issue, Lynne Lamberg takes on the book column assignment. Send book and publicity materials to her at llamberg@nasw.org. Microsoft Word files only.

Animal Wise: The Thoughts and Emotions of Our Fellow Creatures **by Virginia Morell (NASW), published by Crown**



Virginia Morell explores the frontiers of research on animal cognition and emotion, offering a surprising and moving exploration into the hearts and minds of wild and domesticated animals. Did you know that ants teach, earthworms make decisions, rats love to be tickled, and chimps grieve? Did you know that some dogs have thousand-word vocabularies and that birds practice songs in their sleep? That crows improvise tools, blue jays plan ahead, and moths remember living as caterpillars? With 30 years of experience covering the sciences, Morell uses her formidable gifts as a storyteller to transport readers to field sites and laboratories around the world, introducing pioneering animal cognition researchers and their surprisingly intelligent and sensitive subjects. She explores how this rapidly evolving, controversial field has only recently overturned old notions about why animals behave as they do. She probes the moral and ethical dilemmas of recognizing that even "lesser animals" have cognitive abilities such as memory, feelings, personality, and self-awareness—traits that many in the 20th century felt were unique to human beings. ■ *Reach Morell at vmorell49@gmail.com. The book's publicist is Rachel Rokicki at rrokicki@randomhouse.com.*

Save Our Science: How to Inspire a New Generation of Scientists (TED Books) **by Ainissa Ramirez, Ph.D. (NASW), Kindle Edition**

In *Save Our Science*, self-described science evangelist Ainissa Ramirez makes an impassioned call for a recommitment to improve science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education in our schools and throughout our society. She describes what habits need to change to make STEM fun again, as well as a plan for how to increase every child's participation in these disciplines. The 21st century requires a new kind of learner—not someone who can simply churn out answers by rote, as has been done in the past, but a student who can think expansively and solve problems resourcefully. In order to solve the complex problems of tomorrow, traditional academic skills must be replaced with creativity, curiosity, critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration skills—skills inherent in scientific research. Prior to taking on the call to improve science understanding, Ramirez was an associate professor of mechanical engineering and materials science at Yale, where she founded the award-winning science lecture series for children called Science Saturdays. She has served as a science advisor to WGBH/NOVA, *National Geographic*, *TIME Magazine*, and the American Film Institute. ■ *Contact Ramirez at ainissa@gmail.com.*

For God, Country and Coca-Cola: The Definitive History of the Great American Soft Drink and the Company That Makes It **by Mark Pendergrast (NASW), Basic Books**

Author Mark Pendergrast looks at America's cultural, social, and economic history through the bottom of a green glass Coke bottle and tells the captivating story of the world's most recognizable consumer product. The tale begins with John Pemberton, a morphine-addicted Atlanta pharmacist who, in 1886, invented Coca-Cola as a hangover cure and treatment for "neurasthenia" and ends with a company unchallenged in its global dominance. Originally published in 2000, this thoroughly updated edition contains four new chapters and covers the many challenges the company has faced in the 21st century, including everything from questions over soda's role in the obesity crisis to accusations that the company had union employees murdered in South America. Pendergrast also explores how America's love of the soda has also evolved into a kind of consumer religion, as evidenced by the Holy of Holies-like "Vault" at the World of Coca-Cola Museum, in Atlanta, where for a $16 ticket tourists can have their photo taken in front of the safe that holds the sacred and mysterious original formula for Coke. ■ *Reach Pendergrast at markp508@gmail.com. Book's publicist is Rachel Kieffer at Rachel.Kieffer@perseusbooks.com.*

NASW President
Ron Winslow
Wall Street Journal
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President's Letter

IT WAS FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE AAAS ANNUAL MEETING IN BOSTON AND WE WERE AT FENWAY PARK FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE AAAS KAVLI SCIENCE JOURNALISM AWARDS. BEFORE THE WINNERS WERE HONORED, JOEL ACHENBACH, *WASHINGTON POST* SCIENCE WRITER AND EMCEE FOR THE EVENT, DECLARED THAT SCIENCE IS SIMPLY THE BEST BEAT IN JOURNALISM.

For proof, he said, just pick at random any day in history. "For instance, how about today?" It was Feb. 15. The night before, the world had gone to sleep assured that the next day a large asteroid approaching planet Earth would pass safely by. "It won't disturb a single mote of dust meandering in a sunbeam," Joel had told his readers.

Alas, dust was disturbed. The world awoke to news that a meteor had exploded over Siberia, shattering windows and showering space-rock fragments over the landscape.

It turned out that the meteor came from a different asteroid. That made for a two-asteroid day, unique in the annals of science. Or, as Joel and his colleagues informed their readers: "It was a day when the Earth was caught in a cosmic crossfire."

With stories like that, Joel asked the Fenway audience: "Who'd want to cover politics?"

Joel's riff was a clever reminder of what inspires us all to cover this sometimes weird and always rewarding beat. This, plus the chance to see Fenway Park in winter, with the infield etched in snow-covered relief, meant my AAAS trip was already in bonus territory.

Aside from gathering story ideas and meeting scientists, I also did some on-the-ground reporting on NASW's AAAS-based activities to fill a gap in my knowledge about the programs NASW offers science writers and science writing.

My first stop was the NASW Mentorship Program orientation. I joined a conversation with education committee chairs Rob Irion and Jeff Grabmeier and our 10 undergraduate travel fellows. The fellows had competed for an expense-paid trip to AAAS and pairing with a senior mentor from NASW.

As the students—from schools from California to Florida, and Idaho to New York—introduced themselves, they left no doubt about their commitment to science journalism. For example, Nicholas St. Fleur from Cornell University is editor of the science section of his school newspaper; an intriguing revelation given the demise of such sections in U.S. metro papers.

I left the table with a sense of relief that I won't have to compete with them for a job in today's market. I also came away with heightened confidence that the future of our profession is in good hands. Don't take my word for it—meet the fellows and check out their session reports **nasw.org/meet-2013-nasw-undergraduate-travel-fellows-aaas**.

They were joined in the mentoring program by 33 other graduate and undergraduate science journalists. The total of 43 mentees and the more than 40 NASW members and several members of the New England Science Writers who served as mentors are a record numbers for the program.

NASW members Czerne Reid and Ashley Yeager, incoming chairs of the education committee, were mentees of a different sort: learning the ropes so they can take over the program next year. Rob and Jeff are stepping down after several extraordinary years in which they established it as one of NASW's most valuable programs.

The next day, I stopped by the Internship Fair, another education committee project, which is organized by Jenny Cutraro. The speed-dating event enables aspiring science writers to introduce themselves to recruiters, a first step toward an internship slot in the coming year.

As each of the 24 recruiters (another record) described opportunities across the physical and life sciences, I heard several that would be attractive to established journalists. Indeed, it was a rich menu for the 69 graduate and undergraduate students who participated. Reports are that everyone's dance cards were full.

Many thanks to the NASW members who volunteered for the mentor program and to those who supported the internship fair. By any measure, you made an extraordinary contribution on behalf of the future of science journalism.

In other NASW business at AAAS:

- A terrific Saturday night gala thrown by New England Science Writers at the top of the Prudential Center. OK, not exactly business, but NASW provided modest support for the party and, hey, somebody had to check it out.
- Four board members in attendance—Laura Helmuth, Jeff Grabmeier, Mitch Waldrop, and I—met informally along with Executive Director Tinsley Davis. Among topics discussed was how NASW might expand its AAAS presence to offer a program to members who regularly attend that meeting but can't make it to our ScienceWriters workshops in the fall. Stay tuned.
- Tinsley and I had a productive conversation with Satu Lipponen and Vesa Niinikangas, lead organizers of the World Conference of Science Journalists coming up this summer in Helsinki. It helped lay the groundwork for NASW's contributions to that meeting.

All told, I'd say NASW disturbed a little dust at AAAS. Call it the equivalent of a two-asteroid day. ■

WINSLOW BY JOHN DE DIOS; DAVIS COURTESY OF MARK D. COHEN

Cybrarian
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Cyberbeat

A FEW RANDOM NOTES ON THE SCIENCEWRITERS (**NASW.ORG**) WEBSITE AND ASSOCIATED UNDERTAKINGS.

Two new projects have recently gotten underway and both, when finished, will add valuable new content to the site:

- The first is a Contracts Database, modeled on the Words' Worth database of freelance markets, but featuring anonymized copies of recent book and article contracts. It will be usable only by NASW members and is being built by a freelance committee team led by Jennie Dusheck.
- The second coming attraction is being created by our second guest editor, the multitalented (freelancer, PIO, conference party organizer) Carol Cruzan Morton. Carol is compiling resources on "entrepreneurial science journalism," including case studies, pointers to valuable resources, and conversations with real entrepreneurial science journalists.

NASW's social media presence continues to expand. Over the winter, we began cross-posting our daily "NASW Today" items to Google Plus (just search for "sciencewriters," all one word, to find our page). We've previously been posting to Facebook, where we have 2,313 "likes" at this writing, and Twitter, where we have 10,031 followers. All three are key parts of our efforts to reach potential new members and promote science writing to the broader public.

Speaking of Twitter, you may have seen the scrolling list of member tweets on the ScienceWriters front page, but did you know you can also subscribe to the list directly or read it via Tweetdeck and similar applications? Just visit the URL **twitter.com/ScienceWriters/swtwitter**, or enter it into your favorite Twitter-related application.

Now, stand by for some highlights from the discussion lists.

NASW-TALK

"Here's a thing that just drives me

Dispatches FROM THE Director

Tinsley Davis
Executive Director
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Global Connections

In a few short months, the international science writing community will converge in Helsinki for the 8th World Conference of Science Journalists. Since its beginnings in 1992, the conference has grown tremendously in scope and attendance.

In 2007, I had just begun working for NASW and there wasn't funding to send me to Melbourne for the world conference that spring. So, I rustled up my frequent flier miles and found a cheap B&B just outside of downtown. I couldn't be more grateful for the experience.

I met writers from all parts of the world and learned much about what we have in common and how our jobs may differ. Government transparency is an issue for everyone it seemed, but while U.S. writers wade through bureaucratic roadblocks, in some countries threats of bodily harm are not unexpected. Writers across the globe care deeply about reaching their audiences, and it was fascinating to hear how these audiences differ when it comes to popular or controversial stories, and what medium is most used.

Gain knowledge and experience diversity through the WCSJ.

In 2009, the conference was in London, drawing more U.S.-based science writers due to its proximity. Watching new attendees experience the diversity of their peers was mesmerizing. And, though it meant much work in the coming years, I cheered when the Arab Science Journalists Association was awarded the 2011 bid, with NASW as a content partner to help develop the meeting program. Revolution came to Cairo a mere six months before the scheduled date, and the meeting was moved to Doha with the hard work and dedication of a truly international team of volunteers working night and day made it happen that summer.

Now, two years later, NASW is supporting WCSJ2013 with a $14,000 donation to help U.S.-based speakers and awarding over $5,000 in travel monies to several Laura van Dam travel fellows so that more members will be able to experience the tangible and intangible learning opportunities afforded by WCSJ. ■

NASW Budget Report

	Fiscal Year 2010-11 Proposed	Fiscal Year 2010-11 Audited Actual	Fiscal Year 2011-12 July-June Proposed	Fiscal Year 2011-12 July-June Audited Actual	Fiscal Year 2012-13 July-June Proposed
Revenue					
Dues	$ 160,000	$ 181,240	$ 175,000	$ 191,487	$ 175,000
Workshops	69,000	83,389	55,000	56,695	63,000
Mailing List	15,000	14,400	12,000	11,100	10,000
Ads/Online & Magazine	30,000	30,758	27,500	37,945	27,500
Authors Coalition (AC)	50,000	447,757	7,500	211,136	0 [1]
CASW Grant	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Dividends Interest	5,000	1,994	2,000	1,553	1,800
Unrealized Gains (Loss)	1,000	10,216	5,000	(645)	5,000
Miscellaneous Income	0	80	0	6,016	0
SW Field Guide	1,200	1,936	1,200	1,690	1,000
AC Admin Allowance				28,285	24,230 [2]
TOTAL REVENUES	**$ 332,700**	**$ 773,270**	**$ 286,700**	**$ 546,762**	**$ 309,030**
AC Funds Released From Restriction (less admin allowance)			$ 324,800	$ 282,850	$ 242,300 [3]
Operating Reserves Used					11,000 [4]
TOTAL INCOME			**$ 611,500**	**$ 829,612**	**$ 562,330**
Expenses					
Salaries	$ 77,500	$ 77,500	$ 80,000	$ 80,000	$ 82,400
Payroll Taxes and Benefits	23,000	16,967	17,400	15,274	17,680
Website Support and Maintenance	26,000	34,638	30,000	37,804	27,500
Website Editor and Content	13,140	8,260	21,800	15,123	22,000
Magazine Publication	50,000	46,981	60,000	49,470	60,000
Magazine Editor and Content	29,000	27,312	26,000	25,543	26,000
Awards	15,000	10,350	16,350	18,318	18,500 [5]
Directory/Membership Data Prep	5,000	2,259	3,500	72	2,000 [6]
Local Groups/Meetings	1,500	4,178	0	0	0 [7]
SW Field Guide	0	0	0	0	0
Fellowships and Grants	102,500	113,238	182,500	147,394	102,500 [8]
Annual Workshops	100,000	125,932	70,000	90,875	81,500 [9]
Elections	1,500	2,154	0	0	0
Outreach and Education	55,000	29,046	7,000	9,126	17,000 [10]
Special Projects	123,500	86,835	12,000	2,014	35,300 [11]
Supplies and Expenses	3,000	2,668	3,450	1,812	3,450
Internet and Telephone Service	2,500	2,085	2,000	1,986	2,000
Postage	5,000	3,875	4,500	5,237	4,500
Printing	4,500	808	1,500	1,590	2,000
Dues and Subscriptions	350	1,142	1,000	426	1,000
Insurance	6,000	3,766	3,000	4,042	3,000
Bad Debt	500	(876)	500	621	500
Bank Charges (merchant service fees)	6,500	8,538	8,000	10,648	8,000
Accounting Fees	15,000	27,932	20,000	16,005	15,000
Legal Fees	20,000	23,951	10,000	1,316	5,000
Check and Payroll Services	2,100	1,281	1,500	1,273	1,500
Board Expenses	17,500	10,662	17,500	11,195	12,000
Staff Travel	10,500	2,260	3,500	3,753	3,500
Corporate Taxes	8,500	7,767	8,500	8,600	8,500
Amortization Expense	0	8,771	0	13,156	0 [12]
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$ 724,590**	**$ 666,280**	**$ 611,500**	**$ 572,673**	**$ 562,330**
NET			**0**	**$ 256,939**	**0**
Authors Coalition Breakdown (Estimate)					
Workshops		$ 128,053	$ 70,000	$ 90,875	$ 74,000
Fellowships and Grants		124,227	182,500	147,394	102,500
Content and Design		56,639	21,800	17,637	43,800
Outreach and Education		76,670	20,500	26,944	22,000
Administration Allowance (10% of Annual Disbursement)		54,302	30,000	28,285	24,230
Total AC Funds Released From Restriction		**$ 439,891**	**$ 324,800**	**$ 311,135**	**$ 266,530**

Footnotes:

1. Move to AC income line (Due to unpredictable funding, AC budgeted as "zero" each year
2. Overhead; Distributed on 6/30/13 as 10% of total AC funds used during FY
3. AC funds received in prior FY restricted until budgeted/ expended for current FY programs (less 10% admin/ overhead allowance)
4. Non-AC funds, subsidize 50% of website/and database upgrades
5. Science in Society and Diane McGurgan volunteer awards
6. Annual data analysis of member surveys
7. Now in Outreach and Education
8. AC funds for travel fellowships and Idea Grants
9. Now included in Special Projects
10. AC funds for Int'l Outreach, AAAS education activities, local group support, etc.
11. Elections $ 2,500
    Website/database upgrades $ 22,000
    Contracts database $ 10,800
12. Depreciation of website/database overhaul in 2009-10

nuts," John Gever, senior editor for MedPage Today, wrote in late November, throwing a grenade in the direction of NASW's sizeable audience of public information officers.

"I get a press release about a new, nonembargoed study that says 'Full text of the article is available to journalists upon request; contact XXXXX at (phone number) (email address) to obtain copies,'" wrote Gever, "Exactly 10 minutes after receiving it, I reply to said email address asking for a copy. Right away I receive an autobot 'out of office' reply that says XXXXX is away and that I should contact two other people for assistance. Arrghh. Why couldn't the press release have put them as contacts instead of XXXXX? And then, while I'm composing the follow-up email to the two substitute contacts, I get a reply from XXXXX saying the article is actually open access and can be downloaded in full from the journal at (URL). OK, why couldn't THAT have been in the press release? Arrrgggghhhh!"

Other list members soon chimed in with their own grievances.

"I had a press release with the PIO's phone number and not email. I called and no return message. No surprise. When I met her at the symposium, she said that she definitely prefers email. She was surprised that her email address wasn't on the release, which showed that someone else wrote it (of course)," wrote Caroline Leopold, a Philadelphia freelancer.

From Bob Finn, assignment editor, Medscape Medical News: "My biggest press release pet peeve: When you have to read down to paragraph 10 before you find out that the study was done in mice, not humans. That should have been in the headline or the lede. Another: When you respond to a press release with a request for a pdf of the paper, and the PIO directs you to the journal's website, where you find the paper is behind a paywall."

The discussion carried on for several days, with a handful of PIOs speaking up to offer explanations and the occasional mea culpa, such as this from James Hathaway, of the University of North Carolina-Charlotte:

"Needless to say, all of these are pretty much rookie mistakes, though I'm pretty sure I've done a lot of them sometime in the past myself. I know we've done NASW sessions on this stuff, but I think it would be useful to have a page out there somewhere (it may already exist and I just don't know about it) where you guys candidly list the things that bug you most," Hathaway wrote. "Many of us in PIOdom not only have to worry about our own practices, but about those of some of our colleagues who don't cover science (or any research) regularly but who, occasionally get assigned research stories by the powers that be. I find myself in the position of trying to warn people not to do some of the things you mention only to be ignored because people think I'm being too fastidious. Having a page to point to where science reporters gripe would help make it clear that I'm not making stuff up."

For more, search the NASW-Talk archives at **nasw.org/discussions** for the thread titled "Why do PIOs do this?"

NASW-FREELANCE

Sharon, Mass., writer Carol Cruzan Morton sought advice in late February when she needed to interview a group by phone.

"Can anyone refer me to a reliable conference call service? I have a deadline interview with three scientists. Skype is an obvious choice, but two of the researchers are adverse to that and suggested finding a dial-in number. A Google search pulls up many options, but I'd prefer a tried-and-tested service."

In short order, Morton received the following suggestions:

- GlobalMeet (**globalmeet.com**), from Silver Spring, Md. writer Julie Corliss: "Got a call-in number and access code, worked fine. Free 30-day trial."
- Audio Acrobat (**audioacrobat.com**), from Boulder, Colo. writer Terri Cook: "It costs $20/month but have found it to be a reliable way to record conference calls and access them from anywhere you have Internet."
- FreeConferenceCall.com (**freeconferencecall.com**), from Silver Spring, Md. writer Liz Scherer: "You can also record through the site and they provide a dedicated number."
- FreeConferencePro (**freeconferencepro.com**), from MIT science writer David Chandler: "They're completely free, and provide free recording."

Postscript from Morton: "I also consulted one of my editors, who…offered to set up the call from their office…So the office administrator set it up for me and sent us all a toll-free number and code."

For more, including recommendations for recording from a smartphone, search the NASW-Freelance archives at **nasw.org/discussions** for the thread titled "reliable conference call?" ■

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NASW Budget: Beyond the Numbers

As NASW's treasurer, I have the pleasure of working with our extremely capable and devoted Finance Committee, which consists of continuing members Rick Bogren and Mari Jensen, enthusiastic new member Robert Frederick, and NASW's former treasurer and current president Ron Winslow.

Each month the committee meets for an hour by telephone, and members also spend considerable additional time researching issues and materials relevant to these discussions. In addition to carrying out the regular duties of reviewing quarterly budget numbers, preparing the annual budget, overseeing the audit and tax preparation, and addressing compensation issues, the committee has in recent years also made very significant progress in establishing and strengthening policies and procedures for planning, monitoring, and managing NASW's finances.

In October, Ron reported to the NASW board on the committee's work during the preceding year (2011-12). Accomplishments he mentioned include:

- Updating our policies and procedures guide and establishing an annual timeline of finance committee activities to guide new committee members and assist in transparency.
- Refining the committee budget proposal process for the 2012

year and standardizing dates for future years.

■ Refining the budgeting process by asking the board to rate priorities of Authors Coalition-funded projects and programs.

These and other achievements, he emphasized, augment the invaluable work done since the 2010 NASW annual meeting, which, among other things, improved and strengthened the system for developing NASW's annual budget, clarified procedures for handling the Authors Coalition funds, and established a procedure to monitor and control expenditures in excess of budgeted amounts.

In the four months since Ron's term as treasurer ended, the committee has:

■ Begun to examine creating a reserve or "rainy day" fund, including possible methods and policies for establishing and administering it.

■ Developed a comprehensive leave policy for NASW employees, which has received board approval.

■ Begun examining creation of a contingency fund to deal with situations unanticipated in the budget that require expeditious attention. The board has also discussed this issue.

As your new treasurer, I am very grateful for the previous and ongoing work of this exemplary committee. It not only makes this and future treasurers' lives easier, but assures NASW members that the funds from their dues and other payments entrusted to NASW are managed and spent with prudence, transparency, and integrity. Thanks also to Ron Winslow for contributions to this report. ■

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News From Afar

Science Journalism's Great Divide Study finds pessimism in the West, optimism in the Global South

SCIENCE JOURNALISTS IN THE WEST HAVE A BLEAKER OUTLOOK ON THE FUTURE OF THEIR PROFESSION THAN THEIR COLLEAGUES IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH, ACCORDING TO A SURVEY OF THE FIELD RELEASED (IN JANUARY).

"If there is a sense of crisis in science journalism, this is mainly perceived in USA, Canada, and Europe, but less so in Latin American, Asia, and North and Southern Africa," says the report from researchers at the London School of Economics, Museu da Vida (a science museum in Fiocruz, Brazil), and **SciDev.net** (a news website that covers science in the developing word), which queried 953 reporters and editors.

Worldwide, 72 percent of science journalists are happy in their jobs, the researchers found, but that belies a hemispherical divide in their level of content and optimism:

In Europe, USA, and Canada, more people doubt that they will be working as science journalists in five years' time, and fewer [would] recommend the career to a youngster. By contrast, across Asia, North and South Africa, the future of science journalism is exciting: The profession is seen to be moving on the right track. Here, as well as in Latin America, there is little doubt about the future, and people happily recommend the career to younger generations.

Are science journalists in the West just a bunch of bellyachers? Perhaps.

Despite the fact that they feel safer and are more satisfied with access to information and people, "they are less happy in their jobs overall," according to the report. "In the rest of the world, the opposite is the case: There is happiness on the job, but dissatisfaction with the specifics of the operation."

The report is full of caveats and uncertainties, however. "The distribution of our survey is biased towards the global 'South' and it is likely to under-represent the science journalists in Europe, USA, and Canada," it says.

The report is actually an amalgam of four separate surveys that the researchers conducted between 2009 and 2012 covering journalists from six different regions, listed here in descending order by the number of responses: Latin American (353), Europe/Russia (163), Asia/Pacific (147), Sub-Saharan and Southern Africa (142), Northern Africa and Middle East (115), and USA and Canada (31). With such a strong geographic imbalance, it's hard to generalize about the respondents.

The report contains the usual stats on age, gender, training, employment status, workload, and primary sources for information for instance (the "typical science journalist" is male, between 21 and 44 years old, and works on nine items over a two-week period), but the authors stress that their conclusions are tentative.

The final sample is unlikely to be representative of the world's science journalists, as we have little information about this group except that it exists. To a large extent, our sample is haphazard and opportunistic; but some information is better than none at

NEWS FROM AFAR continued on page 25

Upcoming Meetings

June 6-8, 2013 • ***Ecsite Annual Conference on Science Communication,*** Gothenburg, Sweden. ecsite.eu

June 24-28, 2013 • ***8th World Conference of Science Journalists,*** Helsinki, Finland. wcsj2013.org

September 7-12, 2013 • ***British Science Festival,*** Newcastle, UK. Press registration and information: britishscienceassociation.org/british-science-festival/press

May 5-8, 2014 • ***13th Public Communication of Science and Technology (PCST) Conference,*** Salvador, Brazil. Theme: Science Communication for Social Inclusion and Political Engagement. pcst2014.org

June 21-26, 2014 • ***7th ESOF (EuroScience Open Forum),*** Copenhagen, Denmark. esof.eu

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Lynne Lederman was among the guests at the SWINY holiday party. Board secretary Alan Brown hands out door prizes. Eye-catching produce all part of Friend of a Farmer restaurant decor, in historic Gramercy Park.

Regional Groups

CHICAGO

Chicago Science Writers went to the Adler Planetarium in February for a truly stellar program. After being greeted by the new president of the planetarium, Michelle Larson, Ph.D., members listened to a program on light pollution and what can be done about it. They were the first outside audience to view "Losing the Dark," a PSA developed for planetaria to explore the problem of light pollution worldwide. Light pollution wastes energy and disrupts sleep cycles for people as well as animals. In remarks by Audrey Fischer, director of the Chicago Astronomical Society and founder of OneStar at a Time/Global StarPark Network, the group learned that Chicago is one of the world's most light-polluted cities. Simple shields on the top of outdoor lighting—the primary cause of light pollution—would keep the city safe and cut the pollution drastically by focusing light where it is needed. Drew Carhart, director of the Illinois Coalition for Responsible Outdoor Lighting, shared published papers on the problem. The group also heard from Adler astronomer Larry Ciupick about comets about to make their appearance in the area. Jose Francisco Saldago, Adler astronomer and visualize, showed a video of observatories around the world. Afterwards, the group joined about 1,000 people who came to the planetarium for the monthly Adler after Dark gatherings, to view the skyline, enjoy refreshments, and celebrate Chinese New Year with performances by artists from the local Chinese community.

NEW YORK

Science Writers of New York (SWINY) had a busy several months. In November, SWINY and the New York Chapter of the Association of Health Care Journalists presented "*Scientific Studies:* All You Need to Know—About What You're *Really* Reading" to prevent writers from falling into the black-hole hype of dubious studies, reports, and press releases. The event was moderated by CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, Adjunct Professor Melinda Wenner Moyer, Ph.D., who is also an active blogger (BodyPolitic) and freelance writer. Panelists were Bonnie D. Kerker, Ph.D., assistant commissioner and senior epidemiologist, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC DOHMH); Carolyn (Cari) Olsen, M.P.H., director, Community Epidemiology Unit, NYC DOHMH; and Ivan Oransky, M.D., executive editor, Reuters Health and a clinical assistant professor of medicine, NYU School of Medicine.

In January, SWINY and the Rockefeller University Science and Media Lecture Series presented a free screening and discussion of "Escape Fire: The Fight to Rescue American Healthcare" (**imdb.com/title/tt2093109/**). Matthew Heineman, one of the directors of this award-winning documentary, was present.

In February, SWINY's annual holiday party took place at Friend of a Farmer, in Gramercy Park. The event celebrated February-born innovator Alessandro Volta. Approximately 40 attendees gathered for good vibes, good networking, great nibbles, and cool door prizes.

NEW ENGLAND

In December, more than 50 New England science writers and guests gathered for the group's annual holiday dinner at Johnny D's Restaurant, in Somerville.

On Saturday, Feb. 16, more than 800 science journos, students, PIOs, and guests partied and networked at the New England Science Writers reception for communicators covering the 2013 annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Fresh from a day of presentations on everything from brain plasticity to sparse phenomena, science writers were treated to panoramic nighttime views of a bejeweled Boston from

the 50th floor of the Prudential Tower, a well-windowed space that normally serves as the building's observatory. The feast for the eyes was matched by the one for the palate. Kobe beef-Vermont cheddar sliders went fast, and servings of lobster salad on brioche rolls weren't far behind. The mashed-potato martini bar lured many into carbo-loaded decadence. Dancing was slow getting started. But by the party's end, the dance floor was jammed and jumping and the nearby windows steamed up. Meanwhile, a group from CEMI Electronic Media Institute (**cemi.org/**), based in nearby Somerville, was serving up science-themed video art spliced together with logos of the sponsoring institutions. No doubt: the gala was possible only through the generous contributions of our sponsors (**neswonline.com/2013-gala**).

Richard Saltus chaired the NESW Gala committee, assisted notably by Carol Morton, Neil Savage, Susan Spitz, Peter Spotts, Noelle Swan, Thomas Ulrich, and Peter Wehrwein. Richard, Carol, Tom, and Noelle deserve a special shout-out for making the party such a great success.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

At a holiday dinner meeting, Northern California science writers saw the curtain pulled back on some savvy strategies and unnerving vulnerabilities of today's Wall Street investing. David Leinwebber, author of *Nerds on Wall Street: Math, Machines and Wired Markets*, and an expert in the use of applied mathematics in investment analysis, swiftly moved through an amusing and distressing history of institutional investment practices. In the process, he shared some of the shaky Internet- and electronics-driven underpinnings of modern-day scientific investing. Per tradition, media attendees of the annual American Geophysical Union meeting, in San Francisco, were welcome guests at the dinner, which also included the traditional science-trivia challenge, with novel gifts to the winners, including a kit that generates electricity from a potato.

Thirty NCSWANS tweaked data sets and watched unsuspected patterns unfold in a hands-on-the-computer Saturday workshop on using the new tools of data journalism. Peter Aldhous, San Francisco bureau chief of *New Scientist*, led the fearless to the store of unsuspected data that can strengthen and also help uncover stories from clinical trials and climate trends to endangered species distributions. He encouraged a "data frame of mind," and the use of powerful visual displays of data, whether institutional spreadsheets or global climate patterns—all in the service of telling more compelling stories.

NORTH CAROLINA

In September, the Science Communicators of North Carolina and Sigma Xi partnered a popular lunch-time science talk series. Topics included Sukanta Basu of NC State University on wind power, Ilse Ipsen from NCSU on big data, Davide Lazzati from NCSU on cosmic dust, Ron Alterovitz from UNC-Chapel Hill on robot learning, and Jim Fuller from LabCorp on DNA identification.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

DCSWA celebrated the end of 2012 with a holiday bash at the Heurich House Museum, known locally as the Brewmaster's Castle. In addition to catching up with colleagues and making new friends, DCSWA members explored the Victorian mansion built by Christian Heurich, one of D.C.'s finest beer makers. In February, DCSWA's popular D.C. Science Café series resumed after a short winter break. Historian of science W. Patrick McCray of the University of California, Santa Barbara, led a discussion about the technological visionaries of the last half-century, sharing insights from his new book, *The Visioneers: How an Elite Group of Scientists Pursued Space Colonies, Nanotechnologies, and a Limitless Future*. DCSWAns bid adieu to winter with a February trip to the Library of Congress, where members received a guided orientation to the library's science collection and reading room. ■

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Our Gang

Trudy Bell's new blog, *Our National Calamity*, is proving to be anything but. The blog chronicles the United States' most widespread—and nearly forgotten—natural disaster: The Great Easter 1913 Flood. This deadly storm dwarfed both Sandy and Katrina in geographical extent and created institutions that evolved into today's United Way, Red Cross, and others. The blog has caught the attention of scientists, including those at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and led to speaking engagements throughout spring 2013. Her ultimate goal is to write the definitive book on the subject. Visit Bell's blog on blogspot.com (**bit.ly/WUZMtL**), and visit good wishes upon her at trudy_e_bell@sbcglobal.net.

Marla Vacek Broadfoot helped to launch the inaugural issue of *Quest*, a magazine covering research from North Carolina Central University, a public historically black university in Durham. The project gives her the opportunity to talk with a number of minority researchers and highlight work investigating issues and illnesses that disproportionately affect African Americans. The first issue can be found at **bit.ly/XLbNiA**, and Broadfoot can be found at marla.broadfoot@gmail.com.

As *SW* went to press, **Peter Byrne** was concluding his tenure as Writer-In-Residence at the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics (KITP) at the University of California, Santa Barbara. His public talks included an explication of the Many Worlds Interpretation of quantum mechanics and a short history of scientific activities in Death Valley during the mid-20th century. He also presented "Hype, Censorship, and the Paranoid Style in Science Writing" to a gathering of physicists and evolutionary biologists at KITP. Say hello at pbyrne@sonic.net.

More science writers have found success on the crowd-funding website Kickstarter. Freelancer **Rose Eveleth**, blogs editor **Bora Zivkovic** of *Scientific American*, and **Ben Lillie** (co-founder of *The Story Collider* and Contributing Editor for **TED.com**), earned a grant from NASW to partially fund their project, *The Science Studio*. They then turned to Kickstarter to make up the rest. The result: more than $8,000 to support **thesciencestudio.org**. "Did you know that there are over 1,500 science podcasts in iTunes? That's a lot! So, where do you start?" asks Eveleth.

GORDER COURTESY OF JO McCULTY

"Written work has all sorts of 'best of' books, but there's nothing for podcasts. Which is why we're trying to launch *The Science Studio*—a compilation about the best science podcasts—and, in the future, all multimedia." Write to them at rose.eveleth@gmail.com and coturnix@gmail.com, and nominate your favorite audio stories at **thesciencestudio.org/nomination**.

At the 28th general assembly of the International Astronomical Union (IAU), in Beijing, in August, **Richard Tresch Fienberg** was elected Secretary of IAU Commission 55, Communicating Astronomy with the Public. He suggests that NASW members may be interested in attending C55's upcoming conference, "Challenges in Communication of Astronomy and Space Exploration." It takes place Oct. 14 to 18, in Warsaw, Poland. Check out the conference here at bit.ly/12PNozz, and congratulate Fienberg at rick.fienberg@aas.org.

By day, **Mara Grunbaum** is a mild-mannered associate editor at Scholastic's *Science World* magazine. But by night, she pens a blog that asks, "WTF, Evolution?" (**wtfevolution.tumblr.com**). Her irreverent look at some of the craziest fauna to ever swim, slither, and walk the planet Earth carries the tagline: "Honoring natural selection's most baffling creations. Go home, evolution, you are drunk." In just two months, she's taken the blogosphere by storm, and even been written up in the digital culture news site Mashable. Send greetings to mara.grunbaum@gmail.com.

Doug Levy has been promoted to chief communications officer at Columbia University Medical Center, in New York. His expanded duties include marketing for the ColumbiaDoctors faculty medical practice, which just opened a 125,000-square foot outpatient office adjacent to Rockefeller Center. His team is running the practice's first-ever ad campaign. "'There are now more ColumbiaDoctors in this area than Rockettes' is one of the lines our agency came up with," he says. Levy is also putting together a workshop on social media for health care practitioners in conjunction with the Columbia Journalism School, and he still occasionally blogs about food, wine, and travel at **wineandfoodworld.com**. Send congratulations and ad taglines to dlevy@nasw.org.

Jessica Orwig is building some solid experience, first through internships at the American Geophysical Union and Fermilab, and now at **UndertheMicroscope.com**, a website dedicated to recognizing issues concerning women in science both locally and internationally. She continues to freelance for *EARTH Magazine*. Rumor has it that she started out at a small, unassuming Midwestern university whose initials are OSU, and that folks there are proud of her. Drop her a line at orwigrows2@gmail.com.

Paul Raeburn has signed a contract with Amanda Moon of Scientific American/Farrar, Straus, & Giroux to publish his new book, *Do Fathers Matter: The New Science of Fatherhood*. The book, slated for publication by Father's Day 2014, draws on research in psychology, genetics, neuroscience, medicine, and sociology to show the many ways fathers contribute to their children's health, intelligence, and wellbeing. See more at **paulraeburn.com** and @dofathersmatter, and write to Raeburn at paulraeburn@nyc.rr.com.

After working as a contractor for the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI), **Steve Benowitz** took a position in January as associate director in the Communications and Public Liaison Branch. He'll cover extramural research programs ranging from The Cancer Genome Atlas program to the 1000 Genomes project to most everything else that the institute funds. "In addition to working with program managers at NHGRI, I've also begun reaching out to public relations friends at various institutions where these projects are going on," he said. "And I'm looking forward to hearing from more friends." Drop him a line at steven.benowitz@nih.gov.

After 20+ years on the environment beat for daily newspapers and two years as a writer-editor and social media manager at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, **Heather Dewar** has made the leap to academia—the University of Maryland, College Park. In February, she joined the College of Computer, Mathematics and Natural Sciences in a newly created position: science writer/communications coordinator. "I love a challenge!" she says. "And this gig offers new subjects to learn, about 300-odd research faculty members to meet, and communications best practices to establish." She hopes that NASW members who've blazed similar trails will share tips at hdewar@umd.edu.

In January, **Lila Guterman** became news editor at *Science News*, where, she says, "My new office is a full 2.5 blocks away from my old one at *Chemical & Engineering News*." No matter how far away, she can still always be reached at guterman@nasw.org.

From San Francisco, **Mary Miller** reports that the hands-on science museum Exploratorium will open its new location on the waterfront on April 17. With the move, she'll be working on a new set of exhibits and visualizations around the environment of San Francisco Bay, complete with sensors that will collect and display live data on water and air quality, climate, oceanography, and weather. Miller is happy to host any visiting or local science writer for a tour of the new digs. Make your reservations early at mmiller@exploratorium.edu.

Freelance writer **Meera Subramanian** has received a Fulbright Award to go to India. There, she'll work on her first book, *Elemental India: In Search of a Sustainable Future* (HarperCollins India), which follows five nonfiction stories based on the five elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether). Wish her well at meerasub@gmail.com.

Fabio Turone has had a busy 2013 so far. He became managing editor of the quarterly journal *Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Public Health*; was named course director of the Erice International School of Science Journalism, in Sicily; was invited to be part of the program committee and the International Advisory Network of the World Conference of Science Journalism, in Helsinki; and became the web editor of **eusja.org**, the website of the European Union of Science Journalists' associations. He continues freelancing for many outlets—including the *British Medical Journal*—as director of the Agency Zoe of science journalism based in Milan. Say "ciao" at turone@sciencewriters.it.

Freelancer **Jim Kling** has started a blog about science, medical, and environmental news from his home "under the oft-gray skies of the Pacific Northwest, somewhere between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C., and near an active volcano." Check out his unique perspective at **jimkling.wordpress.com**, and write to him at jkling@gmail.com. ■

ScienceWriters Welcomes Letters to the Editor

A letter must include a daytime telephone number and email address. Letters submitted may be used in print or digital form by NASW, and may be edited. **Mail to:** Editor, *ScienceWriters,* P.O. Box 1725, Solana Beach, CA 92075, **or email:** editor@nasw.org.

In Memoriam

Barbara K. Trevett
Media Relations Professional,
CASW Advisor

Barbara Kent Trevett, 68, died on March 12. A NASW member since 1992, she was a founder member of the Council for the Advancement of Science Writing's National Advisors panel.

Trevett's career as a medical/science writer and media relations professional spanned more than three decades. She is perhaps best remembered as head of public affairs at The Jackson Laboratory, the famous "mouse house," in Bar Harbor, Maine. Her dedication to reporters was most in evidence when she organized and managed Press Week, held annually in conjunction with the lab's renowned Genetics Short Course. Press Week provides science writers and journalists with first-hand knowledge from some of the world's leading researchers and clinicians about the latest discoveries in the fields of molecular biology and medical genetics.

Trevett subsequently went on to manage public affairs at the Boston Medical Center. In 1995, she became a founding member of the Boston-based firm, Medical Science Associates, where among other responsibilities she orchestrated press seminars for several academic institutions, including Harvard Medical School.

A staunch advocate on behalf of all science writers, she envisioned and helped recruit a National Advisors panel to help raise awareness of CASW, particularly among key decision makers in the science, health and technology sectors, and to translate that increased awareness into support for the CASW mission. Trevett's passion for CASW was shared by her husband, Kenneth P. Trevett, president and CEO of the Texas Biomedical Research Institute, in San Antonio, who serves as the panel's chair.

In 2012, in recognition of her devotion to the science-writing community, CASW established the Barbara K. Trevett Fund for the Future. The fund supports CASW educational programs for journalists, with special emphasis on new web-based initiatives.

"Barbara was a remarkable person—a woman of ferocious integrity, spirited, exceptionally intelligent, open-hearted, and empathetic as all get-out, with an uncanny ability to anticipate the needs of others, which she went out of her way to satisfy, always," said Ben Patrusky, executive director of CASW.

Trevett was born in Providence, R.I. in 1944. She spent her formative years in Rumford, Maine, before receiving her undergraduate degree from American University in Washington, D.C., and her master's degree in Urban Planning from Boston University.

Trevett's death came after living with ovarian cancer for eight years. A passionate believer in the power of research, Trevett participated in 12 clinical trials in four years.

Memorial contributions to the Barbara K. Trevett Fund for the Future can be made online (**bit.ly/Yv3hnK**) or by mail to CASW, P.O. Box 910, Hedgesville, W.V. 25427. ■

(source: CASW)

TREVETT COURTESY OF THE TREVETT FAMILY

A Tribute to Karen Klinger

BY JOEL SHURKIN

Go hug a friend. You may find yourself writing their obituary one day. ■ Karen Klinger, former science writer for the *San Jose Mercury News* from 1978 to 1987 and NASW member, died Dec. 16 of cancer. She was 66.

Klinger grew up in New Jersey. She was very bright, with an undergraduate degree from Penn and a master's from Stanford. Fluent in French, she once served on the copy desk at Agence France Presse.

She was tall and trim. Her Irish genes were expressed in dark hair she wore over her shoulder, a fair complexion, and light blue eyes.

She was adventurous and courageous, traveling the world usually alone. One year she camped in the Serengeti and climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro. She came back with an amazingly efficient parasite that made her the queen of several departments at the Stanford Medical Center for weeks.

She went sky diving. When I asked her why she would jump out of an airplane at 6,000 feet, I got the same stupid answer you get from mountain climbers.

Most of all, she was a superb science writer. She always did her homework and you could see subjects relax early in the interview when it was obvious she knew what the hell she was doing. The scientists at Stanford—not an easy crowd—trusted her and fed her stories.

It was in the editing that things often fell apart. Sometime during the process the Jersey Girl in Klinger came out. She was pathologically incapable of walking quietly into compromise. As one editor kindly put it, editing Klinger was "trying." But in the end the stories were first class.

She was one of the first to report on the AIDs epidemic in San Francisco, even before it had a name.

She was indefatigable. She covered the eruption of Mt. St. Helen's in 1980 after knee surgery (she slid into third base in a softball game), convincing her editors that the crutches were a mere inconvenience. Her stories were extraordinary.

Read the stories. Feel the heat.

When major stories broke, the *Merc* editors were wise enough to turn her loose. They sometimes teamed her with Elias Castillo, a three-time Pulitzer Prize nominee with 13 journalism awards to his credit. Castillo was a preternatural reporter; Klinger a splendid writer. Since they also had something of a love-hate relationship, they were a perfect team on breaking non-science news.

TRIBUTE continued on page 25

Mentoring, Mingling, and Merriment at the AAAS Meeting


Noelle Swan and Peter Spotts


Karen Weintraub and Claudia Dreifus


Andrew Moseman


The dancers had a great time!

Mentoring Program orientation featured speaker Ivan Oransky. This year's mentoring program produced a record 43 pairs of mentors and students.

AAAS Midday Respite Julie Miller, Lynne Friedmann, and Dennis Meredith take a break between sessions.

A Doubleheader at Fenway Park Phil Downey and Christina Roache flank Hall of Fame slugger Ted Williams in 2008 (left) and again in 2013 (below). It's also a repeat for photographer Neil Savage who captured both shots.

Undergraduate Travel Fellows

Ten talented juniors and seniors from across the country gathered in Boston, Feb. 14-18, to report on the AAAS meeting as NASW's undergraduate travel fellows for 2013.

John Arnst, University of Florida
Brendan Bane, University of California, Santa Cruz
Jessica Brodsky, Brown University
Anthony Cave, Florida International University
Chelsey Coombs, University of Illinois
Sarah Farmer, University of North Carolina, Asheville;
Laura Kross, University of Idaho
Nicholas St. Fleur, Cornell University
JoAnna Wendel, University of Oregon
Sarah Witman, University of Wisconsin

The students were chosen by the NASW education committee from a competitive group of applicants for the fellowship, which covered all expenses to attend the meeting. The committee organized an orientation for the travel fellows and assigned them senior mentors from NASW's membership. Each student chose a scientific session at AAAS to cover for the NASW website. Reads their stories at **nasw.org/events/past**. For most of the students, this represents their first national clip. ■


Front row (l to r): Sarah Witman, JoAnna Wendel, Jessica Brodsky, Laura Kross, Anthony Cave. Back row (l to r): Sarah Farmer, John Arnst, Brendan Bane, Nicholas St. Fleur, Chelsey Coombs.

AAAS CANDIDS BY PETER WEHRWEIN; MENTORING AND AAAS FELLOWS BY JEFF GRABMEIER; MIDDAY RESPITE BY PAUL HORWITZ, ATLANTIC PHOTOGRAPHY; FENWAY PARK BY NEIL SAVAGE

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State Univ. **RHODE ISLAND**: Jessica Brodsky*, Brown Univ.; Emily Gould*, Brown Univ.; Emily Greenhalgh, *Providence Business News*, Cranston; Chanelle Adams*, Brown Univ.; Dani Grodsky*, Brown Univ. **TENNESSEE**: Jennifer Barnes*, Univ. College Dublin, Nashville; Sandra McLean, Univ. of Tennessee, Knoxville; Jessica Mazerik*, Vanderbilt Univ. Medical Center, Nashville. **TEXAS**: Jennifer Herricks*, Univ. of Texas Health Science Center at Houston; Jessica Orwig, Texas A&M Univ., College Station; Jessica Scarfuto*, Texas A&M Univ., College Station; Christina Wilcox*, Texas A&M Univ.-San Antonio. **VIRGINIA**: Cecilia Elpi, Fralin Life Science Inst. & Virginia Tech Transportation Inst., Blacksburg; Lindsay Key, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; Phat Nguyen*, AERA, Falls Church; Helen Thompson, freelance, Great Falls; Rebecca Lazeration*, James Madison Univ., Harrisonburg. **VERMONT**: Warren

Cornwall, freelance, Burlington; Nora Doyle-Burr, *The Hardwick Gazette*, Hardwick. **WASHINGTON**: Deirdre Lockwood, Univ. of Washington, Seattle; Conor Myhrvold, freelance, Medina. **WISCONSIN**: Robert Coolman*, UW-Madison; Emily Eggleston*, UW-Madison; Timothy Oleson, *EARTH* magazine, Madison; Caroline Schneider, The Alliance of Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science Societies, Madison; Sarah Witman*, UW-Madison. **WEST VIRGINIA**: Amy Mathews-Amos, freelance, Shepherdstown; Kasha Patel*, Fairmont. **WYOMING**: Jordan Calmes, freelance, Laramie; Shannon Hall*, Univ. of Wyoming, Laramie. **CANADA**: Genna Buck*, Carleton Univ., Ottawa; Caitlin Mouri*, McGill Univ., Montreal; Shannon Palus*, McGill Univ.; Nicolas Pollock*, Carleton Univ., Ottawa; Martin Macouzet, Scientific Advisor, Quebec. **GERMANY**: Gretchen Vogel, freelance, Berlin. **SWITZERLAND**: Giselle Weiss, freelance, Allschwil.
**student member*

GREEN BLOG

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admitted to Public Editor Margaret Sullivan a few days later, but that concession only helps so much.

I think the fact that the editors didn't foresee the need for more grace itself says something about their level of regard for environmental coverage, but in my post about the Green blog's closing, I accused Baquet of telling "an outright lie" when he said in a January interview with InsideClimate News that the *Times* was as committed as ever to the beat. That, too, was insulting and impetuous.

I don't believe that Baquet set out to deceive anyone. He's an admirable journalist who was forced out of his job as editor of the *Los Angeles Times* because he refused to dole out any more layoffs there. And I agree with Sullivan's opinion that his "intentions are good" in New York. Baquet's strategy, as he outlined it to her, is to spread what was once on the blog more widely throughout the paper and website.

"I think our environmental coverage has suffered from the segregation—it needs to be more integrated into all of the different areas," like science, politics, and foreign news, he told Sullivan, and it's a fine idea. The problem is, very few people think it will work.

"Here's my take:" Sullivan wrote, "I'm not convinced that The *Times*'s environmental coverage will be as strong without the team and the blog. Something real has been lost on a topic of huge and growing importance."

An examination of the *Times*'s recent environmental coverage suggests that she's right.

When the Green blog closed, a farewell post encouraged readers, "Please watch for environmental policy news on the Caucus blog and energy technology news on the Bits blog." As of Monday afternoon, however, the Caucus had posted four pieces about the environment out of 60 total since the Green blog folded, and Bits had posted four out of 81 total. By comparison, in the last couple weeks of its life, the Green blog (which didn't get a lot of traffic, according to my sources) was averaging three to four posts per day.

Has the missing content been "integrated" into the paper itself? It's hard to tell, but it doesn't look like it. There are two main places where environment news is aggregated on the *Times*'s website: the Science desk's Environment page and the Business desk's Energy & Environment page (there's a lot of overlap, but each one has some content that the other doesn't).

According to what's listed on those two pages, since March 7—the Thursday following the Green blog's closure—the *Times*'s print edition has run just over three environment stories per day, on average. There have been 21 articles in the A section, including three front-pagers; 14 in the Business section; and two in the weekly Science section.

That's pretty good—way better than most newspapers, at least—but it doesn't seem markedly different from the rate at which the *Times* has been publishing environmental coverage all along. Unfortunately, there's no easy way to check that since neither the Science desk's Environment page nor the Business desk's Energy & Environment page goes back more than a week and a half, and you can't scroll back to older stories (yet another shortcoming of the current setup).

Regardless, it's fairly clear that without the Green blog, the *Times* is already publishing less environmental content than it once did. That doesn't necessarily diminish Baquet's sense of commitment, however. He's had to make some hard choices about where to cut back in the newsroom, and I accept that in January he felt like he was trying to do right by coverage of the environment, even if it hasn't worked out that way.

I probably should've written this mea culpa sooner, but I wanted to talk to as many people as I could, at the *Times* and elsewhere. A lot of them—the majority, actually—were happy that I struck so hard, even though they realized the force was excessive. Someone had to do it, the thinking went, and I, too, worry that if I hadn't been so caustic, the criticism wouldn't even have registered with the *Times*'s editors.

But, for better or worse, it did, and now I feel a responsibility to try to restore some civility to the discussion about the paper's future, however ungreen it may be. ■

PURSUITS

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67 percent of first responses and 53 percent of all subsequent responses. The majority of these images reflected images that the British press used in their coverage of global warming, indicating that imagery they saw in the media inform the perceptions most people hold about global warming.

Moreover, the interviews identified series of dyads by which individuals process global warming. First was the "self/other" (or us versus them) dyad, which is reflected in people thinking about smoke stacks, melting glaciers, and recycling bins. There was also a "natural/unnatural" dyad associated with romanticized ideas of what people view as an ideal pre-global warming state. Finally, there was the "certainty/uncertainty" dyad that was related to images of the ozone hole and associations with sunburn and skin cancer. These dyads are especially important, because this suggests that people are processing the images presented in the media with other sources of context in their everyday life to make sense of the information. This structure in turn influences how individuals engage other people in conversations about the issue, and a dyadic structure of "this or that" provides an ideal construct to build an opinion for engaging in such debates.

Though not explored by the authors of this paper, we find the implications of their findings to be particularly interesting when compared to the insights offered in the previous two papers. Smith and Joffe's work underscores how factors well beyond rational thought influence perceptions of science information. If there is any overlap in the characteristics of the populations of London and Milwaukee, we both found it startling to see the extent to which the primary influence in people's perceptions of global warming comes from media images that are said to be the least trustworthy sources. Whether it is a political view or a bad experience in middle school biology class, all of these cultural cues have an impact on how our audiences perceive—and share with others—the stories we tell about science. ■

NEWS FROM AFAR

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all, and we are comparing results with previous studies (e.g. *Nature*, 2009) to get a sense of concurrent validity on some terms. For what it's worth, the current survey and the one from *Nature* agree on some demographic points (just over half of science journalists are full-time staffers, and most of the rest are freelancers), but not on others (average age).

Regardless, the latest results track with articles published by *CJR* in 2009, 2010, and 2011 that also found more pessimism about science journalism in the West, and more optimism in the Global South. Science journalists in the U.S. and Canada are particularly worried about the decline of print media and the pressures of the 24-hour news cycle. Concerns about the quality of journalism are everywhere, though, from sloppy work, to the influence of PR, to a lack of attention to complex issues.

Overall, 53.5 percent of the survey's respondents "agreed" or "totally agreed" that there is a crisis in journalism, but only 22.3 percent went so far as to concur that it is "a dying profession."

In fact, it's likely that if a more thorough survey of North America and Europe were conducted, the results might be brighter. Not only are journalists there under-represented in this report, but the data it does have, collected in 2009, is the oldest among the four surveys used.

While cutbacks in science reporting at traditional news outlets continue to be a problem, the growth of science coverage online in the last three years might buoy the spirits of science journalists here and in Europe. The mood is undoubtedly still better in Latin American, Africa, and Asia, but not all hope is lost in the West. ■
"Science Journalism's Great Divide," The Observatory, Columbia Journalism Review*, January 21, 2013.*

TRIBUTE

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Outside the office Castillo, his wife, Cathy, and Klinger became seemingly inseparable friends. I eventually made it a quartet. We spent many evenings in the Castillo's hot tub, Chardonnay in hand, lamenting the decline of American journalism (we were ahead of our time) and the editors we thought were idiots, who to Klinger, was most of those she knew.

Once, when my two young sons were visiting from Philadelphia, the four of us took them camping in Yosemite, at a lake in Tuolomne Meadows. The two, now grown men, still talk about the trip.

There was a dark side: An alcohol problem not then properly addressed, and a capability for predictably disastrous love affairs.

She won a Vaneevar Bush fellowship to MIT in 1985, and when it was over, stayed in Massachusetts, no doubt to the relief of her editors in San Jose.

She freelanced for several years and became a community organizer and a volunteer at the Cambridge Community Television Network, winning several awards.

One day, about 10 years after she left California, she walked into the press room at an AAAS meeting in Boston. I had not seen her in all that time. She had filled out some, the angles of her face softened and rounded. She seemed happy. She had become a beautiful middle-aged woman.

I never saw her again. None of her friends from her California days knew she was sick, and we only found out about her death months afterward when I stumbled on a brief obit on the Internet.

I feel bad about that. Go hug a friend. ■
Contributed by Joel Shurkin

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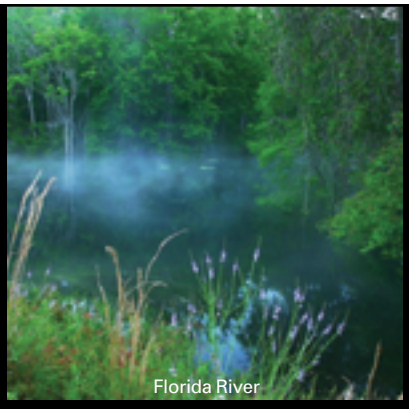
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