

FROM THE EDITOR

VICTORIA J. WHITE, MA, ELS



The View From the Editor's Desk

This is it—my last issue as editor of the *AMWA Journal*. A moment ago—or perhaps it was 4 years ago—I was writing my introductory column, and now I am ready to sail off into the sunset.

Well, not exactly. I'm not really into sailing, and, as a long-time member of AMWA, I doubt that I will disappear over the horizon. AMWA has been too big a part of my professional development. From my first Florida Chapter lunch at the edge of the now-not-quite-so-new millennium, I have relied upon AMWA as a guiding light in matters of medical communication knowledge, skills, ethics, business advice, and inspiration. AMWA's greatest strength is in its members, who generously pass along their wisdom in workshops, panel discussions, roundtables, online forums, chapter events, and webinars—and in journal articles.

My sincere hope is that you have found the journal to be valuable, a lasting resource that you can return to in the coming years. By temperament, I am drawn to collecting strands of information and viewpoints that I try to shape into a coherent whole. That's been my approach as journal editor as well. No one article will ever provide all that you need, nor will one publication, but I hope that each article has something to offer someone. It could be a tip that makes you more efficient, a review that alerts you to the existence of a book you had never heard of, an update on regulatory requirements that helps you stay at the top of your game, or a research study that—even if preliminary—sets you on a path to greater understanding. The articles in these pages are strands for your consideration. Read and ponder them; then, if you have found the ideas and information useful, build upon them—or reject and build anew.

My perspective as editor has been shaped by my background as newspaper reporter, university communication office writer, peer-reviewed journal managing editor, freelance writer, and owner of a small business. It is important to note, however, that AMWA has a diverse array of members, who define their professional lives in different ways, who communicate to different audiences. By stepping aside, I will be able to free up some space in my life for other medical writing and editing activities; simultaneously, I will free up space for other perspectives within the journal. I can't wait to see what's to come.

This was a good moment for me to step down from the editor's perch, but it's not a step away from AMWA.

Joy and Thanks

It was nearing midnight one evening in August, and I was reviewing the corrections from the proofreaders who had scoured the text of the upcoming issue. It may have been the lateness of the hour that loosened up a buried emotion, but I had a startling response to a correction from volunteer Diana Mathis, who had written, not for the first time: "Delete the comma before *and* (single subject, compound predicate)."

My sudden thought? *What an exquisite joy this has been!*

Now, to be sure, it hasn't all been exquisite joy, but I have learned so much from everyone I have encountered. I have had the opportunity to work with, and learn from, some of the best in the business. The journal benefits from professionals who care about every aspect of communication—commas, clarity, content. I am grateful for the care that so many people have put into the journal as they strived to make it all even just a little bit better. I have collected years of moments beyond the *Exquisite Incident of the Compound Predicate, Single Subject in the Nighttime*.

I have not thanked my colleagues nearly enough. I am indebted to the members of the journal's Editorial Board, who have been indispensable in generating article ideas, finding authors, reviewing manuscripts, and writing articles themselves. Graphic designer Amy Boches continues to do beautiful work issue after issue. AMWA staff, in particular Executive Director Susan Krug, Deputy Director Shari Rager, and Manager of Communications Rachel Spassiani, have been key supporters and collaborators. Year in, year out, members of the AMWA Executive Committee have stepped up with timely news about the organization, and they have always been a pleasure to work with. On the Executive Committee, a special thanks to the individuals who have served as publications chairs these past few years—Anne Weber-Main, Deb Whippen, and Ann Winter-Vann—and to Lori Alexander, current president and my predecessor as editor.

Many AMWA members have provided anonymous peer reviews, and many authors have contributed articles to the journal. Tom Lang continues to be both an important

continued on page 192

Writers Write!

So why not write for the *AMWA Journal*?

Contact the Editorial Office
(ManagingEditor@amwa.org)
to discuss your article ideas.

Instructions for authors available at:
www.amwa.org/volunteer_amwajournal

From the Editor continued from page 147

author for the journal and a fervent reader whose critiques I always find worth considering. Meanwhile, the members of the Freelance Forum panel selflessly offer advice, and I am certain countless readers have benefited. Katelyn Le and Lori De Milto were especially helpful with this issue of the journal; they helped train the conference reporters, and Katelyn also helped with editing. In addition to Diana Mathis of "single subject, compound predicate" fame, I must thank the other proofreaders who have been essential in 2016: Stephanie Harvard, Nadine Odo, Amy Stephenson, and Andrea Volz.

A final thank you goes to Kirby Snell, the journal's new managing editor, who in just a few short weeks has become instrumental in moving the journal forward. The next editor-in-chief will be in good hands and will be well supported by the seemingly bottomless talent pool of AMWA.

Thank you, all.