



# NEWSLETTER

**Mission Statement:** The Association for Women in Science, Inc. (AWIS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the achievement of equity and full participation of women in all areas of science and technology.

## NEWS

### Letter from AWIS-SD President Janet White

What a year 2004 was for AWIS-SD! We have continued to grow and thrive as a chapter over the past 12 months.

At the beginning of the year, the AWIS-SD Board and Committee Chairs met for a strategic planning retreat. We set four goals for ourselves:

1. Increase seniority and diversity of AWIS-SD membership
2. Broaden accessibility to events by implementing satellites in different locations and special interest groups
3. Improve infrastructure to support AWIS activities
4. Improve Public Relations

So what progress have we made?

We have continued to welcome new members to AWIS throughout the year, and have no less than five different nationalities represented among the members of our 2005 Board! We have also celebrated significant accomplishments and external recognition of several AWIS members, including Susan Forsburg, who was elected AAAS Fellow, Sonya Summerour Clemmons, who was profiled in Metropolitan Magazine as one of San Diego's "40 under 40" young business leaders and also elected to the AWIS National Board, and Elaine Weidenhammer, who was awarded the first Gray Cary-Athena FlexMBA scholarship to attend the new UCSD Rady School of Management.

The Events Committee has broken new ground by holding events in North County and also on a Saturday to widen accessibility. Our Women in bioScience Conference next year will have a special workshop track for those pursuing academic careers. We will continue to try to meet members' needs.

We have established policies, procedures, committee binders and volunteer contact lists to support the smoother running of AWIS activities. Earlier in the year, budget constraints led us to temporarily put our plans to redesign the AWIS-SD website on hold. However, I am delighted to report that the Corporate Sponsorship Committee has raised funds sufficient for us to resume work on the website. Our Database Committee is also working on a new and simpler database that allows us to maintain our mailing lists with ease.

2004 saw the creation of the new Public Relations Committee, and they, together with the Gala Committee and Membership Committee, have done a tremendous job in raising the profile of AWIS in San Diego. I received many comments on how far AWIS has come and how professional our events have become after both the Black and White Ball in May and the Open House in November.

We still have a lot to do, and I am very much looking forward to what the next 12 months will bring!

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### Upcoming Events

By Janice Payne

**January 18.** Business Etiquette and Dress for Success. Speakers: Allison Browne, Zhu Shen, and Peggy Wallace. Location TBA.

**February 7.** Strategy Session. Create Your Five-Year Plan. Salk Institute.

**March.** Exploring Non-traditional Careers in Science. Location TBA.

**April 4.** Strategy Session. Effective Networking Strategies. Salk Institute.

**May 21.** Women in bioScience Conference. "Envision Your Possibilities at this one-day conference featuring two keynote speakers and a series of workshops focusing on career and personal development. Salk Institute.

**June 6.** Strategy Session. Manage Your Time. Don't Procrastinate. Salk Institute.

**Expanding Your Horizons – San Diego  
2005 Conference  
Call for Presenters**



About the Conference

**HANDS-ON/MINDS-ON EXPLORATIONS IN  
SCIENCE, MATH, AND TECHNOLOGY FOR 6<sup>TH</sup>-  
10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE GIRLS**

**EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS (EYH)** will offer lots of answers and opportunities for girls from all over San Diego County at an all-day program at UCSD on April 2, 2005. Workshops from Archeology to Zoology will enable hands-on/minds-on explorations in science, mathematics, and technology. Girls will have the chance to talk with others who share their interests and will have college women studying in science and technology as mentors for the entire day. A visit to the Scripps Institute of Oceanography/Birch Aquarium, San Diego Supercomputer Center, and other UCSD laboratories may be part of their conference schedule.

**Who are EYH Presenters and What Will They Do?**

- EYH Presenters are enthusiastic scientists and professionals who are willing to engage the girls in fun and interactive science activities.
- Girls will attend workshops in groups of 15-20. We'll provide a pre-conference orientation session to provide information on what to expect from the girls and tips on working with your budding scientists.
- Hands-on/minds-on, interactive science, math and technology activities are needed. Generally, workshops should provide no more than 10 minutes of background information, lecture or instructions and another 30 minutes of demonstrations and activities that illustrate scientific, mathematical or technical principles that are important in your field.
- We would like you to offer your workshop at least twice, and would be delighted if you can offer it at all three workshop sessions. Overall, we expect about 30-35 workshops to be held concurrently during each workshop session. We will provide a location on the UCSD campus for your workshop.
- Lunch will be provided for all presenters.

**Date, Time, and Place:**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 2005**

**7:45 AM—3:30 PM**

**University of California, San Diego**

**Price Center Ballroom**

**Workshop Sessions:**

9:40 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Workshop Session I
10:50 a.m. - 11:40 a.m.	Workshop Session II
1:20 p.m. - 2:10 p.m.	Workshop Session III

Visit our Web Site to Register Online:

<http://www.sdsa.org/EYH>

If you have any questions regarding the conference or the online workshop application process, please contact EYH Program Committee Co-Chairs:

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**Energy and Excitement Were in the Air at Sally  
Ride Festival**  
By Holly Heaslet

Members of the AWIS Outreach Committee participated in the annual Sally Ride Festival held at UC Irvine on Saturday, November 20, 2004. The Festival was attended by several hundred girls between the ages of 9 and 13 and included a street fair, science workshops and a keynote address by Dr. Sally Ride, the first American woman to travel into space. The AWIS Outreach Committee organized a booth at the street fair with hands-on activities designed to teach the girls about forensic science and the properties of water. The attendees were excited to have so many fun activities related to science. Other exhibits included a Mars lander robot and photographs from the Hubble Space Telescope. The keynote address, given by Dr. Ride, was highlighted by photographs taken during her missions aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger. During her address, Dr. Ride emphasized the delicate nature of the atmosphere and the awesome forces of nature. Afterwards, Dr. Ride took questions from the audience which included, "Is traveling to space dangerous?" and "Were you scared?" The Festival was a lot of fun for everyone involved and was a great opportunity for young girls to learn more about science.

## Our Award-Winning President

By Karin Lucas

Janet White, our current chapter president, was nominated for two prestigious awards this past year. On Wednesday, October 13, she was honored as a finalist for the San Diego Business Journal's 2004 "Women Who Mean Business" award. Her employer, Pfizer, sponsored a table at the gala dinner that was attended by over 1,000 of San Diego's business entrepreneurs. Anna Maria Hays, our former chapter president, and I attended the event and were thrilled to celebrate this important recognition of Janet White's many accomplishments as a business leader and volunteer activist.

More recently, White was nominated for a 2005 "San Diego Woman of the Year" award. The awards will be presented in February 2005 to women

- whose contributions to the arts, business, education, government, the humanities, philanthropy and science, have been the greatest value for the development of their county.
- who are role models for women in community leadership, business, education, government and technology.
- who, through their success and accomplishments, are paving the way for women.
- who are achieving success despite great adversity.

Please join me in congratulating Janet White on her nominations! We are very lucky to have such a talented and hard-working president.

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## AWIS-San Diego Open House 2004

By Joanne Mullen

On November 8, a stream of professionals made their way to Garren Auditorium on the UCSD School of Medicine campus and the adjacent Leichtag Lobby, which was ablaze with lights. It was the place to be for women of science - the setting for networking and learning about the AWIS-San Diego Chapter.

Janet White, AWIS-San Diego Chapter president, warmly welcomed the 130 guests (a mix of established AWIS members, which included a few, brave male colleagues, and potential members, who were on a fact-finding mission to discover what AWIS-San Diego could offer them).

"AWIS-San Diego supports the advances of women in science and science-related careers," White explained. "Our Chapter is one of the largest and most active of what is the national organization; we have almost 400 members and we're growing fast!" White said enthusiastically.

White went on to outline the upcoming Chapter events, such as the Women in bioScience (WIB) Conference 2005, and then provided a brief profile of each AWIS-San Diego committee and its individual mission, in addition to serving the Chapter and the San Diego community.

It was clear by her animated descriptions that no matter what your interests, such as writing, public relations, fund-raising, community outreach and more, there was an AWIS Chapter committee for you.

White recalled her experience in joining AWIS-San Diego over two years ago and becoming involved right away. This positive experience has led to her current leadership role. That was a perfect segue for her presentation of the AWIS Volunteer Awards. The following Chapter members were selected for contributing their time and talents to the wide range of this year's successful chapter events and activities:

- **Rookie of the Year:** Ursula Kessen (for her enthusiasm and leadership of the Membership Committee, the Open House, and other projects in 2004)
- **Leadership:** Natalie Schiller (for co-chairing the "Black and White" Gala and WIB)
- **Outreach:** Fran Putkey (for leading the Scholarship Committee in 2004)
- **Outstanding Volunteer:** Hima Joshi (for all her work on the Book and Movie Club and the AWIS-San Diego Newsletter)
- **Outstanding Volunteer:** Helen Chen (for co-chairing the "Black and White" Gala and assisting with the AWIS Strategy Sessions)
- **Lifetime Achievement:** Sharon Wampler (for her service to the Chapter and National Board and great work over the years in fund-raising for AWIS)

Then, it was time for the featured guest speakers. Jenni Prisk of Prisk Communication is well-known to the San Diego community of theater, business, journalism, and not-for-profit organizations, such as KPBS. She provided an energy-filled keynote presentation entitled "Women as Risktakers... Experiment with Your Own Life." With her unique style of drawing the audience into active participation, Prisk outlined how women can benefit from taking that bold step... and attempting to follow their passions. She pointed out that risk can often involve failure. "If we don't fail, she said, we don't know about ourselves and the limits to which we can go."

"With regard to risk in your own life, you get only one chance at this fabulous show we call life," Prisk said. "To take risks while you are able is one of the best things that you can do for yourself and your planet." She closed with a favorite quote from Gandhi, "Be the change you wish to see in the world!"

Prisk has taken her own advice to heart. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, she founded Voices of Women (VOW), an international forum for peace-minded people to foster global peace, justice and equality around the world. For more information about VOW and their upcoming events here in San Diego, visit <http://www.voicesofwomen.org>

Kathi Diamant, the second speaker of the evening, is also well-known locally, not only as the award-winning television broadcast celebrity of Sun Up San Diego, but also as the recently-named on-air KPBS anchor for fund-raising and the acclaimed recipient of the Theodor Geisel Award, "The Best of the Best" presented at the San Diego Book Awards in 2004.

Diamant's recently-published book, *Kafka's Last Love: the Mystery of Dora Diamant*, is the result of two decades of immersion research into the unknown life of Dora Diamant, Franz Kafka's confidant and companion, who kept his literary genius alive well after his death.

Diamant, who is an adjunct professor and founder/director of the Kafka Project at SDSU, captivated the audience as she described her quest to learn more about Dora Diamant and to find a lost literary treasure: the missing papers of Franz Kafka, confiscated by the Gestapo in Berlin in 1946. Kafka was known as the “Father of the Modern Novel” and although his works were often dark and despairing, his true personality defined a man of humor, courage and hope, who represented a noble ideal to Dora Diamant.

Her persistent drive and willingness to take risks led Diamant to discover the persona of Dora Diamant. Ultimately, her research was the catalyst in uniting Dora Diamant’s estranged relatives, uncovering recollections and clues from her past, finding her obscure grave site in London, as well as obtaining permission to view the private papers of Franz Kafka in the newly opened archives in the former Soviet Bloc.

“Risk can be magical and can lead to greater experiences,” Diamant said. “We all get the call to adventure...Make the commitment, believe in it, and keep climbing.”

Diamant rounded out her fascinating story and the evening by graciously signing copies of her award-winning book for new AWIS fans.

The outstanding success of the AWIS Open House 2004 event was due to the contributions of many local supporters. The AWIS-San Diego Chapter is very grateful to the law firm of Cozen O’Connor for their generous sponsorship, as well as the UCSD Division of Biological Science; the UCSD Department of Bioengineering (Chair Professor Shu Chien); Professors Katja Linderberg and Edward Dennis, UCSD Dept. of Chemistry and Biochemistry; Kathy and Frank Ogilvie; and the Veloce Caffè & Bistro.

A heartfelt thank-you from the membership of AWIS-San Diego!

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## **December Strategy Session: Building Self-Confidence**

By Siobhan Malany

Five women shared the challenges they faced, the risks they took and the strategies they used to get to be who they are today, accomplished scientists in their fields and leaders within AWIS-San Diego. Valerie Uzzell of the Strategy Sessions Committee led the interactive evening at the Salk Institute.

### **Kathy Ogilvie: Building self-confidence to play a leadership role in your company.**

If your supervisor approaches you to say he/she thinks you would be good for a position, go for it. Beware; you may wait a long time for this to happen. Ogilvie emphasizes that you need to know what you like to do and seek out the responsibility. “Ask for an honest critique of yourself.” By asking questions about leading a project to someone you trust in an influential position, you are expressing interest to be considered. Taking on a leadership role is a risk. In taking the risk, you may gain the visibility and credibility you need to be a leader. When competing with your colleagues for a promotion, Ogilvie advises, be honest about your intentions, focus on your strengths and what you have to offer.

### **Janet White: Building self-confidence to move to another country for your career.**

White traced her father’s tribulations while moving his family back and forth from Britain to the U.S. to pursue his career in physics. As an adult, White returned to the U.S. to embark on her own science career where she is now a Senior Director of Business Operations at Pfizer and president of AWIS-San Diego. “It’s important to have a back-up plan,” stresses White. Things don’t always work out in the beginning how you expect. Know how you can get back home. White has found strength in being a part of a support group of British immigrants. “Talk to people that have been there,” she urges. “Seize the opportunity. You will learn a lot.”

### **Fan-Li Chou: Building self-confidence to play a leadership role in a volunteer organization.**

After getting married, Chou struggled with the notion that her Ph.D. title often was replaced with the “Mrs.” title. Chou, co-chair of the AWIS Events Committee, shared how she has made her mark by playing a more active role in volunteer organizations. In the past, Chou sought the opportunity to be a representative within her academic department. She capitalized on an idea and helped establish a forum for scientists to showcase their research. She sees the success of her effort today. The key message is to start small and build. “Success breeds more success,” says Chou.

### **Gras Beyers: Building self-confidence to change careers.**

Beyers was a scientist in Belgium before starting her career in the U.S. She shared that she assessed where she wanted to go and planned how to get there. When considering changing careers, Beyer advises others to investigate opportunities, pick up skills that are transferable and conduct informal interviews. “Think proactive. Find mentors and follow your passions.” Beyers also points out that you should know what you value in your career and consider a lateral move but don’t be afraid to decline. She had turned down an offer once because she felt it was too many steps down; the company offered her a much higher position which she accepted.

### **Sheela Talwalker: Building self-confidence to balance career and family.**

Talwalker gave an inspirational talk about challenges she faced moving to Canada for her Ph.D. and returning to India to build her career and raise a family. “I had the passion to raise a family, says Talwalker. “I worried about having a gap in the career to have a child.” At the time, she was teaching mathematics at a university. She had a fairly long commute, an inflexible work schedule and the concept of daycare did not exist in India. She pursued other options and made herself indispensable. She landed a statistical consulting job which allowed her to stay home until her child was a year old. She emphasizes how important it is to share responsibilities with your partner. Now her children are grown, and she enjoys success at running her own statistical consulting company in San Diego. “It’s harder than raising a child and harder than getting a Ph.D.”

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**University of Arkansas Hosts Forty-Second Annual Briefing for The Council for the Advancement of Science Writing**  
By Julie Kinyoun

The cab ride from the airport to my hotel gave me my first glimpse of Arkansas. Grassy, grazing land adjoining country farmhouses sped past my window. In addition to the scenery, the slow drawl of my driver reminded me I was not traveling to the airport in San Diego anymore.

I was riding toward The University of Arkansas for The New Horizons in Science Briefing, a yearly event organized by The Council for the Advancement of Science Writing, Inc. (CASW). I was the lucky recipient of one of their travel fellowships, awarded every year to science journalists across the country.

From November 7 through 10, scientists from around the country presented their research results. Talks began at 8:30 every morning with a break for lunch and short breaks between talks. Talks concluded each evening at 5:30. Many speakers talked for two or more hours without a break. The variety of topics provided ample opportunity for journalists from all types of publications to find something relevant to their work.

Topics included: Forensic Frontiers, Genetic Reprogramming, Immunology, Revolutions in Particle Physics, Quantum Mechanics, Human Origins, Nanowonders, Cosmic Dawn and Climate Change.

Most of the talks were held at the Radisson Hotel in Fayetteville. However, usually the landscape for the talks varied during the day. On Sunday, November 7, participants journeyed to the Ozarks to learn about insects and ecology. On Monday evening, November 8, participants listened to a talk about optical illusions after the annual CASW reception and dinner at the Fayetteville Town Center. Tuesday, November 9, everybody rode a bus to The University of Arkansas for talks and a tour of part of the campus. Most notable from this campus trip was the wind tunnel, designed to study the effect of gas traveling through the air. The chamber models a situation similar to the gas leak of the Bhopal disaster in India twenty years ago. Scientists hope to learn more about aid for such a situation by studying gas in the tunnel.

The workshop ended around noon on Wednesday following two final speakers. Science journalists left feeling excited about the endless possibilities for stories revealed during the event, yet exhausted by the rigorous schedule of activities. In addition to the full schedule of speakers, the organizers planned a welcome reception, barbeque, dinner and hospitality suite for socializing late in the evening. The stamina of the mid-seventies, retired journalists truly astounded me. They played poker in the hospitality suite into the wee hours of the morning every evening while the younger generation collapsed in their rooms.

Overall, the networking, learning and socializing filled journalists' minds and notebooks with more ideas than they could ever use.

FEATURES / OPINIONS

**Member Profiles: Holly Heaslet, Susy McKay and Alicia Bicknell**  
**AWIS Outreach Committee Co-chairs**  
By Sumita Anant

"Whenever I get frustrated or upset about my work or anything in life, I have to remind myself how fortunate I am to have a job I love, a home, a wonderful husband and food on the table, which is a lot more than many people in this world have." This positive attitude has served **Holly Heaslet** well in the years since her childhood in a small farming town outside Albuquerque, New Mexico, to her current research on solving the crystal structure of the membrane protein transhydrogenase, at the Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla.

While she was growing up, her interest in science was stimulated by her high-school science teachers, particularly Mr. French, who introduced her to "this wondrous thing called DNA." As neither of her parents attended college, it is remarkable that Heaslet was the first person in her family to get a Ph.D. and in less than four years - an unusual feat for someone in the field of structural biology. "I also consider it a great achievement to have left home and moved 2000 miles to New York City alone to go to school," says Heaslet, of her undergraduate days in New York. After obtaining her B.A. in Chemistry from Hunter College, she moved to Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, to complete her M.A. and Ph.D., in chemistry. This led her to her first post-doctoral stint at Abbott Pharmaceuticals where she enjoyed working on disease-related projects. However, being part of such a large organization left her feeling "like a cog in a wheel." Therefore, after completing her research at Scripps, Heaslet will look for a job managing a department at a small biotech company, where she can have more influence on the projects she will work on.

Heaslet was introduced to AWIS soon after she joined Scripps, by labmate and former AWIS president, Anna-Maria Hays. Heaslet's primary reason for getting involved in AWIS was to provide mentorship to young women and girls who were interested in science. "I wanted to be a role model for them so they could see that women scientists were just like them," says Heaslet, currently a co-chair of the Outreach Committee.

Last year Heaslet married Nick Soutter, a writer and computer programmer, whom she met in graduate school at Clark University. They have three cats and would like to get a dog and start a family. Heaslet loves playing the piano and drums and also enjoys painting, yoga and meditation. She spends her weekends listening to Miles Davis, tending to her plants and watching movies with her husband.

**Susy McKay**, also a co-chair of the Outreach Committee, faced her greatest challenges and her greatest rewards on Tannu Island in the Republic of Vanuatu. No, not on the reality TV series "Survivor," but as a science and math teacher in the Peace Corps from 2000 to 2003. It was a long way from Friendswood, a Houston suburb, where she grew up. But as McKay says, "I like the rigor of difficult things. I thrive on having a lot to do and ticking things off my list as I get them done. I enjoy the sense of accomplishment. If that fails, I have my family to fall back on." Her family has a diverse educational background. Her father heads the group at NASA that discovered evidence of fossilized bacteria in a Martian meteorite. Her mother, who has a Ph.D. in English, works with NASA astronauts on space observations. Her older sister, Amy, is earning a Ph.D. in political science and worked for

Al Gore when he was the Vice President. Her younger sister, Jill, a senior at the University of Puget Sound, is studying psychology. McKay, now a first year graduate student at UCSD, is studying the regulation of splicing of messenger RNA and gene activation in yeast. McKay joined AWIS in 2004 to work on the Outreach Committee to continue her involvement with kids. Her next goal after completing graduate school is to have her own laboratory in a small liberal arts college. She would also like to get back into the Peace Corps with her future husband. McKay enjoys live music, dining out, cooking and gardening. She has a cat, Little Lebowski, whom she brought all the way from Vanuatu. McKay jokes, "She used to be a vicious huntress. Now with regular feedings, she's as sedentary as other American kitties."

**Alicia Bicknell**, the third co-chair of the AWIS-San Diego Outreach Committee, grew up in Fort Worth, Texas. She moved to Houston to obtain a B.A. in biochemistry from Rice University and then to San Diego, where she enrolled for graduate school in UCSD's Division of Biology. Her graduate research focuses on the unfolded protein response pathway, a cellular stress-response pathway, and its link to the cell cycle. Her research career started in high school where she spent vacations studying fish and plant life in lake ecosystems, and continued at Rice University, where she investigated the role of genes that determine the body pattern in fruit flies.

Bicknell joined AWIS in the fall of 2003 in an effort to become involved in doing science activities with kids. "I guess it was the outreach component that brought me in, but since joining I've found that AWIS has a lot more to offer than that," she says. She served on the Outreach Committee for a year, liked the Committee's activities, and decided to continue to make these activities happen by chairing the Committee with Susy McKay and Holly Heaslet.

As she starts her third year as a graduate student on an NSF graduate research fellowship, Bicknell's plans are "still up in the air" but her immediate goal is to complete graduate school. In the meantime, she is taking surfing lessons and enjoying San Diego life with husband and high-school sweetheart, Jesse, and her cat Sammy.

We wish Alicia Bicknell, Susy McKay and Holly Heaslet success in their goals and thank them for their work as chairs of the Outreach Committee.

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## San Diego Women Speak Out About the Election

By Hima Joshi

On the eve of the election, 23-year-old Dorothy Chan was in downtown San Diego amidst all the action. Chan, a third-year law student and an intern in a city-elected official's office, said that the scene was "cooler than Comicon." Local politicians and their supporters were excitedly watching election returns at the US Grant and the Westgate Hotel. Camera crews and journalists were milling about Golden Hall, the official election center.

Out on the street, however, the excitement escalated to hostility. People argued about who was the best candidate for president. They screamed insults and called each other names. "They were totally hitting heads all night," said Chan. "I thought a fight was going to break out in the elevator." "What hit me most was how divided the country is," Chan said. It seemed like a far cry from where we were just a few years ago. "We were so united after 9/11. I've never experienced nationalism like that," said Chan.

So, now that the election is over, how are AWIS-San Diego members feeling about the outcome? Sarah Smith\* is pleased. Smith, who describes herself as a pharmaceutical scientist who is "married with no children," feels that Bush is better for business than Kerry. She thinks that taxes will be lower under his leadership and that Bush is not as against drug companies as Kerry is. "Leaders that I respect and admire support Bush," she says. Some of these leaders are Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and the chief executive and chairman of the board of directors at Smith's company.

Smith says, "It wasn't ever clear what Kerry stood for." She might have felt differently if the Democrats had put forth a candidate who could "present a clear message." Bush's "simple message" impressed Smith. "You get the impression that he's telling you the way it is," she says. "We [often] think that complicated is better. I think simple is better," Smith says.

"I don't think war is ever justified, but, having gone [to Iraq] I understand why we did." "We should commit to seeing it through," Smith says. She doesn't think Kerry is the person to do the job. "I wouldn't trust Kerry," she says. Since many AWIS members and San Diegans have family in the military, this issue is particularly important to Smith.

Although she is a Bush supporter, Smith has a few problems with Bush's views and tactics. She feels that the way Bush mixes religion and politics is unconstitutional, and she, unlike Bush, supports stem-cell research. Smith is totally supportive of gay marriage, and she doesn't understand why some people are so against it.

Smith did not vote in this election because she has been in the US for only four years and does not have her citizenship. "It's so frustrating not being able to vote even though I pay taxes here," she says. It's "taxation without representation." Smith feels that "if you have permanent residence you should be able to vote."

Kate Williams\*, another AWIS member who is not a US citizen, is okay with the fact that she cannot vote for the president, but she says "I would like to be allowed to vote at the California level." Williams, who has been in the US since 1994, was upset by the outcome of the presidential election. She was particularly appalled and frustrated that some voters thought that Bush is the authority on moral values. "I have moral values," she says.

Williams objects to the war in Iraq. It "just has to end," she says. "I think the US [is moving] toward becoming more and more isolated in the world." She feels that foreigners are not as excited to come to the US as they were during the Clinton administration.

Williams is intrigued by how different our elections are from elections in Europe. "You elect a party in Europe, whereas here, you elect a person," she says. Here "you look at Kerry windsurfing or hunting." "I think the media is really bad here," she says. "They don't ask the right questions... Politicians have to answer to harder questions in Europe." Williams also observes that "you have to be a religious person" to be a presidential candidate in the US.

Holly Heaslet, an AWIS member and postdoctoral scientist at The Scripps Research Institute, began volunteering for the Democratic Party "when the president decided to support a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage." Heaslet traveled to Yuma, Arizona (a swing state) three times in the two months preceding the election. She encouraged registered Democrats to vote by mail,

registered people to vote, and informed voters about the locations of their polling places. "People in general knew where they needed to go to vote," Heaslet says. But, if she "called 300 people and only one person didn't know where to vote, it was worth it."

Heaslet didn't expect the election to turn out the way it did. "I was stunned," she says. I was really expecting it to be a landslide victory for Kerry." She feels that although "the Democratic Party represents the working people," the Republicans "painted the Democrats as these intellectual elitists who look down on the middle class." Heaslet thinks the Democrats need to "get reconnected with the working class." She feels that they "never let Kerry reveal his personality" and they "tried too much to target undecided voters" rather than focusing on "mobilizing the base of the Democratic Party."

Heaslet plans to remain active in politics. "The worst thing we can do is curl up in a ball for the next four years," she says. "It's important to start this at the local level." She feels that changes are made "from the bottom up," and she encourages us to get involved and make our voices heard.

*\*Name has been changed to preserve anonymity.*

## Go Wireless as You Fly the Not-So-Friendly Skies

By Janice Payne

It's true. WiFi hotspots, which provide wireless internet access, are popping up at airports around the country. You can stay connected to home as you travel abroad. But I don't know much about WiFi.

I do know about bras. In October 2004 a San Diego woman, Ava Kingsford, was disturbed at having her breasts examined by security officers in the Denver airport. She was told, "it's a sign of the times," in the aftermath of two Chechen women who boarded two Russian jetliners with explosives under their clothing. Kingsford chose to rent a car and drive back to San Diego. She then spoke out to the news media.

Her story prompted me to describe a similar experience I had in the Seattle airport in October 2003. As I passed through security, the alarm sounded. After removing my shoes, keys, jewelry, pager, cell phone and anything else I could remove, I was taken aside by a female officer. She proceeded to circle my body with the wand, and I was told she couldn't stop until the "issue" was resolved. As she got near my shoulder the alarm went off and I was told, "I need to go down and under." I was confused. Was she going under my clothes? "I need to pat you down," was all she said. *What? In front of hundreds of other passengers?* Before I could react, she had her hands on my breasts. "Oh, it's your bra," was her only comment. Not, "gee sorry to have embarrassed you in front of all these passengers. Have a nice flight." All I could do was grit my teeth and run for my flight. I was humiliated and angry.

I investigated the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) website with the thought of writing a nasty letter telling them to keep their hands to themselves. Then thoughts of the terrorist watch lists came to me, and I abandoned this idea. The TSA website does state that a secondary search will be done by an officer of the same sex. Somehow I should feel less violated if an unknown female touches my breasts versus an unknown male?

Don't get me wrong. I'm not here to condemn airport security. The events of September 11, 2001 were just as horrifying to me as anyone else, and I think we need to do our best to keep terrorists out of our country. My choice instead is to warn my family and friends. This could happen to you, and you can take steps before you travel to eliminate any humiliation. If you'd actually like to board your flight and get to your destination, here are your options:

- Go wireless. Wear a jogbra or a wireless alternative. This will prevent the alarm from sounding, but you still may be susceptible to searching. Secondary searches can be based on visual observation.
- Go without. This may be a more comfortable option for some of us. Maybe the TSA would appreciate a return to the "burn your bra" era of the 70's.
- Request a privacy panel for secondary searches. This was described on the TSA website in reference to jewelry in "sensitive" areas.
- Remove your bra in the security line and place it in the gray bin with the rest of your belongings. I considered this option but didn't quite have the guts to go through with it. It just might get you a reprimand.
- Don't get mad. You may have to rent a car to get to your destination.

If you do experience inappropriate touching during a secondary search, you may file a complaint with the TSA. It was reported on ABC news on November 23, 2004 that the TSA has received 260 complaints since new pat-down search guidelines went into effect on September 20, 2004. To file a complaint, visit [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov) or call the TSA Contact Center at (866) 289-9673.

## She's Here to Listen: On Roxanne Ruzic

By Alice Budai

There are several AWIS members who are thinking about the next step in their careers or schooling, and it has also been a focus of mine since I graduated from school with a bachelor's degree and started my first job. I've discovered that getting coaching is one way to help you make the right decisions and access the courage to think about your skills and interests. This is something I have learned from Roxanne Ruzic.

Roxanne and I are both AWIS members, and we met at a San Diego AWIS Book and Movie Club meeting. Later, Roxanne asked whether I would like to be coached. I had an idea about what coaching is, and Roxanne told me she likes helping young professional women who are at a point in their lives when tough decisions are made. I was already spending time asking myself the kinds of questions that loom over one's head, such as 'what do I do?' and felt such big decisions had little to do with other people. Fortunately, I liked Roxanne and decided on a whim to call her on a regular basis, even if it was just to learn more about her. As it turned out, it's not her I got to know, but the things that matter to me.

Roxanne runs her own business called Varsity Coaching, where she coaches people in college and graduate school, and people transitioning into and out of higher education. Her own experience makes her especially understanding to people like me who feel pressured by decisions up ahead but don't know exactly how to go about asking themselves to move forward. Roxanne's parents didn't have a traditional college experience, and she didn't know other people who had gone away to college. She didn't know what

to expect when she started her undergraduate education at Stanford. She also didn't have a good grasp of what was in store when she continued on for a master's at Stanford, and then another master's and finally a doctorate in educational psychology at Harvard. Because she had to learn things for herself at each stage, Roxanne has a lot of awareness of what it takes to do well in transitions to and from college and how important support is. At the same time, through her work in graduate school and through all her jobs, Roxanne has focused in different ways on helping people in higher education. Varsity Coaching allows her to use her experiences to make a concrete, practical, and immediate difference for other people.

My goals and current situation haven't changed much since I started talking to Roxanne six months ago, but my relationship to those goals has. There have been days when, because of Roxanne, I considered options I wasn't likely to consider on my own. Going through the experience of truly immersing yourself in a possibility allows you to get closer to your fears and biases. My experience with Roxanne has been emotional, but she has managed to encourage me every time I feel hopeless in the face of all the decisions that I am focusing on. Placing myself before hopes and goals has been different from passively exposing myself to various perspectives and waiting for a time when decisions will be made. I had been reading books about what other people have been doing with their lives, but this did not make me feel strong the way getting in touch with my interests has.

Roxanne also lets me know that I'm doing the work during coaching, and she is there to facilitate additional perspective. Roxanne has asked me questions that made me stop speaking in mid-sentence because her question caused me to recognize something new. Soon, I started applying this technique on my own and broadened my perspective just a little more. Realizing that I am more involved with my hopes has made me think that a person doesn't realize the power of his or her own strength until he or she uses it. Talking to Roxanne has allowed me to use the things I know are important to me and to make the kind of progress I was trying to push myself toward. This in turn, allows me to feel confident that I am capable of doing the things I put my mind to. Speaking to someone on a regular basis has for example, helped me organize my thoughts about what I am interested in achieving, and just as importantly, helped me express them. These were both things that I was concerned about when Roxanne and I met.

When describing the reasons for her focus in coaching, Roxanne said, "People typically don't get much advice or help or time to think things out while they're in school or thinking about school or transitioning from school. But those are the times when the decisions people make have such big influences on the rest of their lives. I love doing what I do, and I can see what a difference it makes for my clients to feel supported and have a place to think and be listened to and get suggestions. People tend to come to coaching with a particular issue in mind and find it helps them in ways they hadn't anticipated across different areas of their lives." I'm extremely happy to have met Roxanne through AWIS, and I'm pleased to introduce her to you.

For more information about Roxanne Ruzic and Varsity Coaching, visit [www.varsitycoaching.com](http://www.varsitycoaching.com).

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## DEPARTMENTS

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### Book Review:

#### "Rosalind Franklin: The Dark Lady of DNA"

By Ann Onton

*AWIS Book and Movie Club Rating: four out of five stars*

While most people who have heard of Rosalind Franklin are aware only of her DNA work, she actually made significant previous contributions to the structural chemistry of coal. She was very well-respected in that field and even years later, after completing her DNA work, was still being asked to give talks on coal chemistry. Indeed, her work in Paris on coal chemistry was going very well, and she loved Paris; but partly due to family pressures, she sought to return to London, and accepted a 3-year fellowship at King's College in London.

Her time at King's was actually the abyss of her career. She was extremely unhappy there. Her troubles started even before she arrived, with a change in the subject of her research from proteins in solution to "biological fibers" (DNA). She took the news in stride, with the assurance that she alone would be in charge of the experimental X-ray lab, of which fact the assistant lab director, Maurice Wilkins, under the direction of J.T. Randall, had not been informed. A power struggle ensued, and Randall negotiated a temporary truce by relegating the crystalline A form of DNA to Franklin and the stretched out hydrated B form, the form actually found in living cells, to Wilkins. As things turned out, Franklin's A form, due to its compactness and asymmetry, was not easy to interpret, and her data just didn't seem to fit. But occasionally her crystalline A form would absorb moisture during an exposure and revert to the hydrated B form. Exposures in those times took days, and once, when Franklin was away at a conference, with her camera back at the lab focused on a sample, the transition occurred, and a very sharp photo of the B form, an indisputable helix, was inadvertently taken.

As Franklin was preparing to leave King's, after only two of her three years, her graduate student at the time, Raymond Gosling, who was preparing to finish his research without her, showed the B form photo to Wilkins, who after all was the assistant lab director, possibly Gosling's future advisor after Franklin's departure, and also the researcher in charge of the B form. In a sort of DNA-gate, Wilkins showed the photo to his close friend James Watson at Cambridge, who was intent on building another DNA model, after a previous failed attempt had caused his superior to forbid him any further attempt. With renewed permission, he enlisted the help of his friend Francis Crick, and the pair presented their model. Since Franklin's "Photo 51" was not only unpublished but also viewed without her knowledge, they could give no credit to their source.

Franklin moved to Birkbeck College of The University of London in 1953 to study the structure of viruses, never knowing just how close she had come not only to making the most important discovery of the latter half of the 20th century, but also that she had unknowingly provided all the essential data for that discovery. The last five years of her life, while she was at Birkbeck, brought everything in her life together at high speed: a preponderance of papers that flew out of her lab; world travel to conventions and mountains; a serious attempt at a relationship; and death at age 37 from ovarian cancer.

Although to this day, the consensus is that Franklin remains understated and overlooked, her legacy has come a long way since her death. When we were introduced to DNA in freshman biology

in the 60's, we were told that Watson and Crick had determined the structure. We had never heard of Rosalind Franklin. But just this week, among the answers to a biochemistry exam posted outside my lab, I came across the following: "Question: Whose work initially provided evidence that DNA has a helical structure? Answer: Franklin and Wilkins [in that order]." So, Rosalind Franklin's father, Ellis Franklin, may have been correct when he used to say, "Common sense and right will triumph."

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### AWIS Movie Review: "Whale Rider"

By Amy Cullinan

*Winner, Audience Award at Sundance Film Festival 2003*

*AWIS Book and Movie Club Rating:*

*three out of five stars*

This film begins with the Maori legend which tells of a great man, Paikea, who came to a land ages ago riding on the back of a whale. The legend prophesizes that another whale rider will be born to lead the Maori people. The opening scene is of a woman giving birth to twins. The boy is stillborn, but she whispers to her husband, 'Paikea.' The girl is given that name as the mother dies. The man is devastated by the loss of his wife and leaves his daughter Paikea (Pai) to be raised by his parents Koro and Nanny. Koro is the chief of his people, and when he sees that his son has departed permanently, he trains the local boys in the ways of leadership. Pai is a strong, young girl who believes that she was born to claim the destiny that was intended for her brother. She eavesdrops on these training sessions learning the lessons, dances and ceremonies, while engendering the wrath of her stubborn and superstitious grandfather.

The climax of the film occurs during an emotion-wrenching scene where Pai has written a heartfelt work in honor of her grandfather as part of a school pageant. However, instead of attending Pai's performance, Koro wanders on the dark beach, lost in spiritual desolation because none of the boys in his traditional school had passed his leadership test. Strange noises from the waves reveal that seven whales have beached themselves on the shore. Koro takes this as a sign that the Maori culture he has carefully tended is destined to be destroyed. However, Paikea believes that she has called the whales and they have responded to her call. All through the night, the people of the village come together to help the whales return to the ocean before they die. As they finally turn away in exhaustion, Paikea, now sitting on the back of the biggest of the whales, coaxes the whales out to sea.

This film presents a touching story, and Keisha Castle-Hughes plays Paikea remarkably well. However, both the "coming of age" and "subverting the dominant male gender role" themes are misplaced. Pai's grandfather Koro is such a chronically unlikable character that the happy ending of the film feels uncomfortably contrived. His acceptance of his granddaughter rests solely on her fulfillment of a prophecy. Koro's true change of heart, and most notably his change of attitude towards women are never demonstrated. "Whale Rider" was lauded for presenting the traditions of the Maori culture with painstaking accuracy. Given these values and traditions as presented, the audience is forced to disregard this information and instead assume that acceptance of female leadership of a traditionally male-led society can just magically happen. On one hand, films such as this celebrate indigenous cultures and lament their passing; but this story also effortlessly glosses over the fact that traditional cultural standards are easily thrown out the window to satisfy our modern sensibilities of gender equality and acceptance.

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### Your Two Cents

Compiled by Hima Joshi

#### Question from last time:

What is your favorite local restaurant and why?

#### Response:

I have to admit that after moving to San Diego from Dallas in the summer of 2000, I was somewhat disappointed in many of the restaurants I visited. However, I have stumbled across a few gems, including my favorite, The Mission Hills Cafe (808 W. Washington St. San Diego, CA 92103, 619-296-8010). This little gem offers terrific continental cuisine, superb daily specials, and a terrific wine list that extends far beyond the California wines that are the typical fare at most local restaurants. For the price of an entree (~\$12-17), you get your choice of a scrumptious appetizer (I love the Greek salad), a delicious well-prepared entree, and a delectable dessert. (Most, if not all, are homemade.) It is one of the best bargains in all of San Diego, in my opinion. Whenever I have visitors come into town who enjoy a quality culinary outing, I am sure to take them to the Mission Hills Cafe. Give it a try sometime!  
- Christine Ward

#### Question for next time:

What is your favorite holiday tradition?

We would like to publish your responses to these questions in the next Newsletter! Please reply to Hima Joshi ([hjoshi@san Diego.edu](mailto:hjoshi@san Diego.edu)). **Note:** Unless you indicate that you would like to remain anonymous, your name will be included with your response.

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### AWIS-San Diego Welcomes New Members

By Emily Leong

Eugenia Ariza	BIOTA, INC.
Lisa Boulanger	UCSD
Andria Lee Del Tredici	ACADIA Pharmaceuticals
Kelly M. Featherstone	UCSD
Heather D. Flowe	UCSD
Bettina Groschel	The Salk Institute
Rebecca C. Holmberg	The Scripps Research Institute
Miwako Ishido	The Scripps Research Institute
Shauna M. McGillivray	UCSD
Helen M. McGuire	UCSD
Anu R. Sawkar	The Scripps Research Institute
Amanda M. Scheffman	UCSD
Christina KH Sing	Point Loma Nazarene University
Geetha Srikrishna	The Burnham Institute
Peggy Wallace	Making Conversation, LLC
Grace Yang	UCSD
Xiu Yu	Pfizer

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### AWIS Member News

In this section of the Newsletter, we report on the accomplishments (new jobs, promotions, awards, publications, etc.) of AWIS-SD members. If you have any news to report, send it to Hima Joshi at [hjoshi@san Diego.edu](mailto:hjoshi@san Diego.edu) and write "AWIS Member News" in the subject heading.

**Diane Jolley** is leaving Ligand Pharmaceuticals, and she has accepted a position at Neurocrine Biosciences.

**Dr. Sonya Summerour Clemmons** was elected to serve on the AWIS National Board as a Councilor. An article about the election results appears in the Autumn 2004 issue of AWIS Magazine, page 43.

AWIS-SD President **Janet White's** article "Developing a Strategic Plan for AWIS to 2010" appears on pages 38-39 of the Autumn 2004 issue of AWIS Magazine.

**Jennifer Wampler's** article "Six Degrees of AWIS Separation – It's a Small World" appears in the Chapter News section of the Autumn 2004 issue of AWIS Magazine.

Appearing in the "Honoring the Best" section of the Autumn 2004 issue of AWIS Magazine (p. 44) is past AWIS-SD president **Elaine Weidenhammer**, the first recipient of the Gray Cary – Athena Flex MBA Scholarship to the Rady School of Management at UCSD. Also highlighted in "Honoring the Best" is **Susan Forsburg**, a past AWIS-SD Board member, who was recently named an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Fellow.



**Judith A. Finlay, Ph.D.** has accepted a position as a Senior Scientist at Invitrogen. She will be a member of the corporate research laboratory in the biomarker discovery group. Finlay has extensive experience in clinical diagnostics research.

#### About the AWIS Newsletter

The AWIS Newsletter is published six times per year and provides AWIS members and supporters with information on Chapter activities, career development, and issues related to women in science. The Newsletter is free to AWIS members. The subscription rate for non-members is \$20 a year.

January/February Newsletter staff:

Janice Payne	Hima Joshi	Julie Kinyoun
Siobhan Malany	Joanne Mullen	Sumita Anant
Alice Budai		

Online version maintained by: Barbara Armstrong, Tobey Tam, and Brian Tam

Send news items and comments to Hima Joshi ([hjoshi@san-diego.edu](mailto:hjoshi@san-diego.edu)) or Janice Payne ([janice\\_payne@hotmail.com](mailto:janice_payne@hotmail.com)). If you would like your article to be included in the next issue, please submit it by February 4, 2004.

#### Moving? Address Change?

Please notify us of your new address so you won't miss our mailings! Please log onto our new membership update page <http://awis.npaci.edu/html/login.html> using your AWIS-San Diego username and password. If you have not yet received a username and password, or have misplaced them, please e-mail [sdawis@san.rr.com](mailto:sdawis@san.rr.com). If necessary, you can also mail your updated information to: AWIS - San Diego, PO Box 178096, 92177-8096.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT



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