



**International Science Writers  
Association**  
**News.ISWA**

Volume 2 Issue 4

# History Made!

**FAREWELL!**

**WELCOME BACK!**

**HELLO!**



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## **President's Letter — Part One Is Done, Now On to Part Two**



*Dr. Larry Krumenaker*

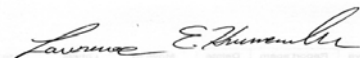
I was ISWA's first, and longest serving, webmaster, and I had wanted to retire from it for years. I was able to hand it off to the much better Sedeer el-Showk and 'retired' to the ISWA Secretariat. I was grabbed back, kicking and screaming to the Interim Board. Why? Because we were apparently the last six standing and we all wanted to raise ISWA up from the near-dead. That required two steps—fix the house and infrastructure, and then do things that increase our numbers. In the past 18 months we did the first thing, but little of the second. So I then wanted to retire from the Board, or at least downgrade to Member-at-Large. Alas, something inside me said, "Nope. You still have to at least give Part Two a shot." And that meant fighting for the top spot.

So, here I am. Not exactly the way to retire from the Board.

Yet, despite my reluctance for the position as ISWA's President, I'm quite excited because the incoming New Board is filled with younger, eager-to-do-work people. If I'm lucky, they will make me look good.....

So what's my agenda? There are five things I want to try to do:

- 1) Raise the number of ISWA members, of course. We once were at least 100 science writers. Small but influential. Now we are too small though still influential. I want to get us back up to small, or better. How?....
- 2) ....By providing services that newer members would want. We need to DO things so that people will hear about us and want to join us. We should be more than the catchall for people in countries without a national science journalism association, and a place to get a Press Card cheap. What? Not sure yet.
- 3) But whatever we do, I want it to be done globally. We're NOT a national association, we are international. I want us to be some kind of science writers without borders.
- 4) There hasn't been a meeting of members since some time in the early 2000's. Our constitution mandates annual meetings, real or virtual. We need to meet...
- 5) Last, this is our 50th year. I want to do something special for it. Got ideas? Write me! And not only should you wish me luck, but also the new Board, and don't sit on the sidelines. TAKE PART. MAKE ME LOOK GOOD <grin>.



*Dr. Larry Krumenaker is a US expatriate, alternating between Cologne, Germany and Atlanta, USA. Trained as an astronomer, he writes about science and history, occasionally teaches at universities and in workshops. He can be reached at [president@internationalsciencewriters.org](mailto:president@internationalsciencewriters.org).*

## **ISWA Announcements**

### **Actual Vote Tallies for the Board Election of December 2016, Certified for the Record**

In December 2016, ISWA held its first board election in 49 years. There were 26 Full Members eligible to cast a vote, 17 of whom returned their ballot. The results of the vote, as certified by the Interim Board, were as follows:

<b>For President</b>	<b>For Treasurer</b>
Larry Krumenaker (Germany/USA) 12 votes	Bianca Nogrady (Australia) 15 votes
Pallava Bagla (India) 4 votes	
<b>For Vice-President</b>	<b>For Members-at-Large</b>
Sedeer el-Showk (Finland/Morocco) 15 votes	Jim Cornell (USA) 14 votes
	Vasiliki Michopoulou (Greece) 10 votes
<b>For Secretary</b>	Manoj Patairiya (India) 1 vote
Elisabetta Curzel (Italy) 16 votes	

While geographic diversity has lessened, for the first time there is gender equality on the ISWA Board.

### **Bursaries for Journalists from Developing Countries to Honor Nigel Hey**

On Friday, January 13, during a Skype meeting, the Executive Board of the International Science Writers Association (ISWA) agreed to establish four bursaries (two for each of the next two years) supporting the membership of four science journalists from developing countries in memory of Nigel Hey.

An announcement of the award was made to his friends and family gathered at a memorial service in Albuquerque January 14. As a dedicated internationalist, Nigel would have been pleased by the plan to help his foreign compatriots—and to know that the Skype meeting setting it up spanned eight time zones and four continents and involved journalists from the USA, Germany, Colombia, Guatemala.

The incoming Board will decide how the bursaries are to be awarded.

### **New Members Since the Last Newsletter**

**Kevin J. Jenson (Associate):** My company, doTERRA International in Pleasant Grove, UT USA, has a large global customer base. I write for a corporate science blog that is translated for international use. The writing I do is focused on educating our millions of customers on the science of essential oils and other wellness-related topics. Make contact via LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kevin-j-jenson> or email kevinjjenson@gmail.com.

**Dr. Laura Vargas-Parada (Full):** Freelance science writer and teacher at the Science School, Biology, National University of Mexico (UNAM), Ms. Vargas-Parada is trained in Biomedicine and Science Communication. She has three books, all in Spanish, and can be reached via Twitter: @lavapa and on Facebook Laura Vargas-Parada, and email lavapa@unam.mx.



## **How We Ran An Election Without Precedents: Two Articles**

*Judith Rauch, Election Committee Chair*

On November 16, 2016, Jim Cornell asked me in an email whether I would be willing to serve on ISWA's election committee. The task: help suggest possible candidates for the new board. I had plenty of things to do, so I was not too eager to say yes. "The task shouldn't really be too arduous, mainly an exchange of emails," Jim wrote. So I agreed.

Some 150 emails later (counting only the received ones) I am now trying to remember what we did. Our committee consisted of Elisabetta Curzel (Italy), Harem Kakil (Iraq); Nigel Hey (USA) and me (Germany). We did not know each other, and although Sedeer el-Showk, ISWA's secretary, gave us some brief instructions, we did not really know how to start the process and when. I finally suggested a round of introductions among us, and this broke the ice. Nigel's introduction sounded "greetings to all" and was sent on November 28, 2016 – it was the first and the last email I ever received from him, since he fell ill and passed away on December 21.

The rest of us started with the duties ahead: First we corresponded with the acting board members and asked everyone whether he/she would be willing to run again. We received some yes, some no, and some maybe. We asked the naysayers for suggestions who could replace them and received some interesting-sounding suggestions. Among the suggestions was Elisabetta's name – and the question arose whether election committee members could be candidates. This was discussed among board members and ourselves, the committee, and ended with the pragmatic decision that ISWA is too small to be fuzzy about such a minor conflict of interest.

While the nominees made up their minds, we started an open call for nominations to all members. Sedeer el-Showk sent it out on December 1 on behalf of the election committee, creating another minor conflict of interest since he was among the possible candidates. The open call did not result in any new nominations, although former ones were confirmed.

So after some more emails back and forth we had our slate on December 13: It consisted of two presidential candidates, Pallava Bagla (India) and Larry Krumenaker (US-expat in Germany), Sedeer el-Showk (Morocco and Finland) available for vice president, Elisabetta for secretary, Bianca Nogrady (Australia) for treasurer, and Vassiliki Michopolou (Greece) as well as former president Jim Cornell (USA) for members-at-large. (By the way: As a German I would not have minded to have a Greek treasurer on ISWA's board, but Vasiliki did not want the job, so everybody was happy when Bianca stepped in.)

Christmas approached and so did my long-planned holidays. However, Sedeer (secretary, election manager, and candidate at the same time) and Larry (treasurer and presidential candidate) kept sending emails with "next step" and "ahem ..." as subjects, so the meanwhile not-so-motivated-any-more election committee kept going on. We collected election statements from all the willing candidates, and though we had suggested a maximum length, the statements grew the longer the later they arrived. Only Pallava did not make it in time, so our election manager Sedeer provided a provisional statement for him. Finally, on December 23, the word went out: "Cast your votes", and every member received a link that led to our online election platform on SurveyMonkey.

By December 28, a fine 17 of 26 full members of ISWA had already voted. As a neutral member of the election committee, I had the privilege to peek into the results and inform Sedeer about the participation (not the results, of course!) – three days before the board had planned to close the ballot. More than 50 percent voter turnout – that seemed sufficient.

On the next day, I had to stop my commitment to the committee because of a bereavement in my own family. Lucy Calderon, vice president of ISWA (and neutral enough because she was not present on the new ballot), stepped in and read out the results to the board on January 1, 2017. (See elsewhere in this Issue).

On January 4, 2017, Sedeer-el-Showk finally announced it to the whole ISWA community: Among his statements was this one directed to the Election Committee: "Many thanks are also due to the Election Committee: Judith Rauch, Elisabetta Curzel, Harem Kakil, and Nigel Hey. The election would not have been possible without their help and input. Thanks for the hard work!"

*(Continued on page 5)*

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I agree with every word, especially with the last sentence.

Lessons learned:

1. Be transparent about how small ISWA is. Keep informing all members about the size of the membership and why there are members not eligible to vote.
2. Don't be too strict about conflicts of interest as long as the membership is too small to allow perfect separation of powers.
3. When a new election committee is formed, the board should oblige one of the members to start the process in order to save time.
4. SurveyMonkey is a great platform not only for polls but also for online elections.
5. Elections are sometimes full of surprises, and political talents can be found everywhere.

 **NI**

*Judith Rauch is a long-time ISWA member and freelancer based out of Tübingen, Germany.*

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### *Sedeer el-Showk*

Following the Board's meeting at the end of September, a call for volunteers to serve on the election committee was put out at the beginning of October. Harem Kakil and Elisabetta Curzel volunteered immediately. The Board had an email discussion about other potential committee members and approached several; Judith Rauch and Nigel Hey agreed to sign on. The Board designated me as the liaison with the EC in my capacity as Secretary. [Ed. Note: The time it took to get Election Committee members, and eventually Board candidates, took a much-longer-than expected time. An issue because of the small pool of members, some conflicts, a desire by some not to have, what one Board member called a Putin-esque election, a slate with no other choices, something not usually found in science journalism groups, and in some cases, a lack of active members.]

The Election Committee first asked whether any Board members wanted to stand as a candidate. The EC then canvassed all ISWA members for nominations. Eventually, in December, the list of nominees was sent to me so I could prepare the ballot.

It was not immediately recognized that the election could not take place without the Board preparing an actual procedure. Because no election had been done in recent memory, there were no precedents to call upon. The Board held an emergency virtual meeting in email to rectify the problem. As part of that, with the holiday season approaching and a constitutional obligation to hold the election in December (note the three months' lapsed time since the process started!), the following crises erupted —

- I sent the Board a proposed procedure for the election, together with a summary of the Election Committee's progress. The Board had to decide on the ballot's design (e.g., whether to include a "none of the above" option), how to handle a tied vote, whether to request statements from the

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### **The ISWA Board**

President: Dr. Larry Krumenaker [president@internationalsciencewriters.org](mailto:president@internationalsciencewriters.org)  
Vice-President: Dr. Sedeer el-Showk [vice-president@internationalsciencewriters.org](mailto:vice-president@internationalsciencewriters.org)  
Treasurer: Bianca Nogrady [treasurer@internationalsciencewriters.org](mailto:treasurer@internationalsciencewriters.org)  
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Webmaster: Dr. Sedeer el-Showk [webmaster@internationalsciencewriters.org](mailto:webmaster@internationalsciencewriters.org)  
Past President/Member-at-Large: Jim Cornell [j.cornell@internationalsciencewriters.org](mailto:j.cornell@internationalsciencewriters.org)  
Member-at-Large: Vasiliki Michopoulou [v.michopoulou@internationalsciencewriters.org](mailto:v.michopoulou@internationalsciencewriters.org)

candidates, and what the election timetable should be, given Constitutional requirements. I sent a sample survey so the board could test SurveyMonkey and evaluate its suitability for the election. No problems were noted or objections raised.

- However, there was an objection raised to the proposed timetable, which one person considered unnecessarily rushed. I had proposed setting a deadline of 2359 GMT on December 21 for the candidates' statements in order to start the election on December 22 so it could conclude by December 31. The member was concerned that the holiday season would reduce turn out and he saw no reason why the election couldn't be extended until January 31, despite the constitutional requirement to hold an election in December 2016. The remainder of the Board agreed with me, 5-1, though we were not able to collect the statements and open the vote until December 23.
- Additionally, there was a request that, upon presentation of a ballot, that candidates have time to withdraw. Such was granted but was never taken advantage of.
- There was also discussion about a potential conflict of interest. I was running for vice president while also serving as the liaison with the Election Committee and, in my capacity as Secretary, I would announce and run the election. Unfortunately, ISWA's small size and the lack of volunteers made it difficult to divide these tasks in a way that might avoid such a situation. The board needed to find an election monitor to manage the election. I suggested that I could give the SurveyMonkey password to Judith so she could serve as Election Monitor. There was still concern that this would not be enough to reduce the potential conflict of interest and that the election might therefore be tarnished by the perception of being undemocratic. [Additionally, the conflict of interest issue raised itself again in that one candidate came out of the Election Committee itself.] Larry Krumenaker suggested that the best we could do would be for Sedeer, as Secretary, to announce the election's start, but then Judith would immediately change the SurveyMonkey password so she, as Election Monitor, would be the only person to have access to the results. This procedure satisfied the concerns and met with the Board's approval.

On other electoral matters, the Board decided that a majority of the votes cast was required for a candidate to win. If needed, a second round of voting will be held for positions if there was a tied vote or no candidate receives a majority. The lowest ranked candidate will be dropped in the second round, provided that at least two candidates remain on the ballot. This procedure will be repeated until there is a winning candidate. However, there was no "None of the Above" in the case of the Presidential ballot line so these points are really for future elections.

On the morning of December 23, the deadline for statements from the candidates had passed and the election was supposed to start. However, we hadn't yet received a statement from the incumbent president, Pallava Bagla. In the interest of fairness and consistent appearances among candidates, Judith proposed that I might write a statement for Pallava based on some comments he had emailed. To avoid a conflict of interest, I suggested that Wolfgang Goede write the statement, since he wasn't a candidate. Unfortunately, I couldn't reach Wolfgang – not surprising two days before Christmas! Pressed to get the election underway in time, I contacted Judith on Skype and asked her to review the statement I had drafted in Pallava's name. With Judith's approval of the statement, I felt any potential conflicts of interest had been addressed. The election was underway! 

*Dr. Sedeer el-Showk is the ISWA Webmaster, Interim Board Secretary and now its Vice-President. To celebrate this, el-Showk decided to move from warm and sunny Morocco to cold and cloudy Finland in mid-January.*

### **WANTED! STORIES!**

**SOMETHING YOU DID? SOMETHING YOU LEARNED?  
SEND TO [EDITOR@INTERNATIONALSCIENCEWRITERS.ORG](mailto:EDITOR@INTERNATIONALSCIENCEWRITERS.ORG)!**

**NEXT ISSUE: ARTICLES ON SCIENCE JOURNALISM'S SITUATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES.**

## **Summary of ISWA's Board Meetings—January 13 and 25, 2017**

*Dr. Sedeer el-Showk  
and Elisabetta Curzel*

Five members out of six of the outgoing ISWA board met on **January 13th** to wrap up its final business and certify the election results (reported elsewhere in this newsletter). The Board wishes to publicly thank the Election Committee for their efforts in finding candidates and managing ISWA's first election in over four decades. A hand-over meeting was scheduled for January 25, 2017, at which the newly elected Board will begin their two-year tenure. ISWA's new Board is formally noted in the record on Page 3 of this Issue.

The Board voted to purchase commemorative plaques for outgoing board members Pallava Bagla, Lucy Calderon, and Wolfgang Goede to acknowledge their service to ISWA.

With 2017 underway, it's time for ISWA members to pay their dues and renew their membership. The treasurer reported that only 15 of the 29 members had paid the membership. To encourage prompt payment, the Board voted to impose a \$15 renewal fee for membership renewals after January 31.

Unfortunately, the contest for a new ISWA logo and press card announced in the last newsletter didn't produce any usable results. ISWA will therefore continue using the current design and logo for the moment. Since a new design was expected, membership cards have not yet been sent to renewing members; incoming president Larry Krumenaker will begin sending out cards following the Board handover.

Finally, the Board voted to establish four bursaries in honor of Election Committee member Nigel Hey, a longtime ISWAn who passed away in December. The bursaries will support the membership of two journalists from developing countries for the next two years. Nigel was a valued member of our organization, and a good friend and colleague to many of ISWA members. We hope that he would have been pleased with this gesture of remembrance.

— Sedeer el-Showk

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On Wednesday, **January 25, 2017**, ISWA held two back-to-back Board meetings. The first one convened at 20:22 GMT after some technical difficulties getting all connected on Skype. In attendance: Lucy Calderon, Sedeer el-Showk, Larry Krumenaker, Wolfgang Goede, Jim Cornell, Elisabetta Curzel, Bianca Nogrady, Vasiliki Michopoulou. Absent was Pallava Bagla. The purpose of this first meeting was to handover control of ISWA from the Interim Board to the newly-elected Board. Vice-President Lucy Calderon presided and offered some opening comments about ISWA, its benefits to her, and her enjoyment and thanks for being allowed to be a member of ISWA and the Board. She then led the handover, which was accomplished by introducing the outgoing Board members one by one and allowing them to speak and vocally cede their positions to their successors, who then introduced themselves. Both outgoing and incoming members talked about themselves, where they lived, what they did, and what they wished about ISWA.

The process went from Jim Cornell, who is the only person to be on both Boards in the same office, member-at-large, and then Wolfgang Goede who handed off to Vasiliki Michopoulou. Next up was Larry Krumenaker who handed off the Treasurer's position to Bianca Nogrady, then Sedeer el-Showk giving up the Board Secretary position to Elisabetta Curzel. As both Lucy and Sedeer had already given their views, the Vice-President handover took only moments. Then Jim Cornell, in the role of Past President, as the current ISWA President did not attend, gave some comments about when he was ISWA's President and the actions of the past 18 months, and handed over the role to Larry Krumenaker who gave some remarks on how he wanted to not retire from ISWA until one final

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attempt was made to move the Association forward, after spending the past 18 months fixing the infrastructure. He offered a toast to the retiring Board members, and to the incoming new Board colleagues.

A final round of general comments from several attendees was permitted and then Lucy adjourned the meeting at GMT 21:21. She and Wolfgang signed off the connection, leaving the (new, and now empowered) Board to begin its first meeting.

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The first meeting of the 2017-2018 Board began at 21:30 GMT, in attendance being all the Board's members, President Larry Krumenaker, Vice-President Sedeer el-Showk, Secretary Elisabetta Curzel, Treasurer Bianca Nogrady, and Members-at-Large Jim Cornell and Vasiliki Michopoulou. The agenda was in three sections: Housekeeping Matters, Old Business (leftovers from the previous Board), and New Business.

In **Housekeeping** were logistical matters, such as the transfers of files, passwords and other material from prior officers to new ones, official ISWA emails, the needed creation of a new Board mailing list for internal discussions and eventual discontinuation of the old list, explanations of existing Board procedures to the new members, particularly about applications for membership to ISWA, some changes of duties such as Larry taking on the agenda creation role from the Secretary, and discussion of our legal association status and where are we 'based'. For the last, we are always based where the President is, so we have now 'moved' from India to Germany. There are a number of website updates needed to be done, including new Board members' bios and photos and listings, and updating the dues and renewal pages to reflect the late fee the prior Board instituted.

Social media were discussed. The Facebook page is not yet under the new Board's control and a deadline of mid-February was set before Facebook was contacted about this. Bianca suggested a Twitter account and offered to create a brief on social media uses based on work she had done in Australia. Both Vasiliki and Elisabetta offered to help with information they had, with Elisabetta also suggesting a strategic plan is needed.

As for other communications, Jim and Sedeer will work on revising our handout flyer. Larry asked that anyone who goes to a meeting and represents themselves as a Board officer of ISWA inform him to prevent conflicts, suggest meetings with people and so on. He also said if there were any questions, comments, or other needs, to use his various media contacts to talk with him.

In **Old Business**, the latest figures on the financial and membership status' were stated. Larry has passed along Treasurer files on memberships and ledgers, but will keep access to Paypal to pay some authorized holdover expenses. After some discussion about accepting checks, and Euros, Jim will handle any US checks sent to ISWA, but we will discourage it. We will keep accepting dues in Euros. Additionally, Bianca will pay our annual expenses for webhosting and domain before the month ends.

The logo contest was a failure. Jim began designing new logos and Sedeer and his DTP skills will work on others. Discussion about the bursaries in honor of the late Nigel Hey concluded that for this year, Parviz Tarikhi and Harem Kakil, both of whom had contributed articles (and Kakil, time on the election committee), will receive the free membership. A general criterion of contributing to ISWA in some way was accepted as an interim for the next year and for two other new recipients. The Board will take this up again later.

**New Business** began with discussions about Board appointed positions, and first with re-appointing Sedeer as Webmaster and all-around IT guy, with unanimous approval. A communications director was proposed but tabled until after our Social Media needs were assessed. Larry wishes to hand over the News.ISWA Editorship after this issue. Bianca will pass around a membership list, and names will be suggested. Volunteers can write to editor@internationalsciencewriters.org.

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A small Constitutional crisis has come about due to conflicting clauses in the Constitution concerning an immediate past president. It was all agreed that a non-voting advisory position for an IPP would be valuable but will table action on this until after the Constitution is revised, made by a vote of 6-0.

The final bit of New Business was the stating by the new President of his views of what tasks and goals he sees needing to be done by this Board and ISWA. These include 1) increasing membership, with a goal of 60 qualified members in one year and near 100 after two; 2) finding services and activities we can initiate to be attractive to new members as well as of service to the community—and surveys of other persons and groups might be one thing for us to do to gather more information; 3) to do so on an international scale, to be a “science writers without borders” kind of association; 4) we are required to do an annual Assembly and we should look into being able to hold virtual and real meetings this year; and 5) to find something special we can do for our 50th anniversary. All Board members were tasked to brainstorm individually and to send ideas, preferably lists of them, to the President in time to be collated into a master list for the next meeting, which he requests to be within 2-4 weeks.

The meeting adjourned at 23:27 GMT.

—Elisabetta Curzel

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*ISWA's new Secretary Elisabetta Curzel lives in Trento in northeast Italy. She freelances in Italian newspapers, television, and does PR work also for corporate clients. Her full background can be read on page 10. She can be reached by email to [secretary@internationalsciencewriters.org](mailto:secretary@internationalsciencewriters.org).*

### ISWA's Fiftieth Anniversary Ain't the Only One This Year

Although there is some dispute about when and where ISWA was first conceived, the record shows that the first official meeting of our organization was held in Montreal, Canada, May 5, 1967, in conjunction with Expo 67. At that meeting, a draft constitution, which apparently had been written and circulated by mail previously, was amended and approved and officers were elected: President, John Maddox, editor of *Nature*; Vice-president, Gordon Rattray Taylor of the BBC; Secretary, W.A. (Tony) Osman, then president of the Association of British Science Writers; Treasurer, J. A. Redeker, a Dutch journalist; and Editor of the (then yet-to-be published) ISWA Newsletter, Howard Lewis. (Remarkably, one attendee of that first meeting was Victor McElheney, who is still an ISWA member today.)

For ISWA, 1967 marked its memorable beginning, but there were a few other notable events 50 years ago:

- UK, USA, and USSR signed the Outer Space Treaty
- First human heart transplant was performed
- Israel decisively won the Six-Day War
- Che Guevara was killed in Bolivia
- The Beatles released their “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band”
- And a young, impressionable writer for the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory visited its satellite tracking station in Cadiz, Spain, thus beginning a half-century of commitment to international science...

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– Jim Cornell

## ISWA Newest Board Members

New Member-at-Large **Vasiliki Michopoulou** is a journalist-science writer in Greece, formerly a Greek television reporter. A new Ph.D. in International Relations, Ms. Michopoulou comes



out of both biology and political science. On top of everything, she is working on her doctorate, and recently had published a book on forty top Greek and foreign scientists. Reach her via email at [vmihop@gmail.com](mailto:vmihop@gmail.com), Website: <https://vmihop.wordpress.com/>, LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/vasiliki-michopoulou/56/3b8/102>, Twitter: @vmihop, and Facebook: Vasiliki Michopoulou. “ISWA's main goal, as reported in the website, aims at spreading the scientific culture, fostering a network and assisting colleagues, I'll do my best to achieve that as a Board member.”

New Secretary of the Board and freelance journalist **Elisabetta Curzel** lives in Trento, Italy. She has written for, among others, *Corriere della Sera*, *IlSole24Ore*, and Italian public televi-

sion. Reach her via Email: [elisabetta@gmail.com](mailto:elisabetta@gmail.com), LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/elisabettacurzel>, and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/elisabetta.curzel>. “As a ISWA board member, I would be pleased to serve in order to develop two points: to broad our association’s membership, especially among young science journalists; and to foster its network spirit. I consider it strategically important in order to give ISWA a global status. Moreover, to help colleagues from all over the world doing their job is to help our job itself surviving – and I really think science journalism needs support.”



**Bianca Nogrady** is ISWA’s new Treasurer, a freelance science journalist, broadcaster and author, who has yet to meet a piece of research she don’t find fascinating. In more than a decade of freelance reporting, she has written for *Scientific American*, *The Guardian*, *Ensi*, *Nature*, *Australian Geographic*, and many others. Her books include: *The End: The Human Experience Of Death* as author, editor of *The Best Australian Science Writing 2015* anthology, and co-author of *The Sixth Wave: How To Succeed In A Resource-Limited World*. An experienced public speaker, facilitator and panel chair, she has performed these roles at events the Sydney Writers’ Festival, the Festival of Dangerous Ideas, and the Brisbane Writers’ Festival. Reach her at [Bianca@biancanogrady.com](mailto:Bianca@biancanogrady.com). I believe organisations like ISWA play an essential role in uniting and supporting science journalists, strengthening networks, sharing skills and learnings, and representing the interests of science journalism and science journalists.”



✍️ NI

## Nigel Hey, ISWA Election Committee Member, Dies at 80



Nigel Hey, 80, science journalist, author, former public information officer for Sandia National Laboratories, and longtime member of ISWA died December 21, 2016, in an Albuquerque, NM hospital of a severe respiratory infection. He had been an ISWA member for nearly four decades, and most recently served on the Election Committee, helping the organization transition to a new structure and governance. He was also a member of the US national association (NASW) and a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

Nigel was born June 23, 1936, in Morecambe, England, to parents from Yorkshire who later emigrated to the United States, eventually settling in Utah. (He later attributed his mother Margery with convincing “a small boy that he could become a writer.”) He went to the University of Utah, then joined the UPI bureau in Salt Lake City on a temporary basis his senior year, where he quickly learned he had to, and could, write about just about everything. He later worked for other newspapers in and around Albuquerque before

being recruited to Sandia Labs in 1966.

At Sandia, Nigel worked as a science writer, handling news of the Labs’ most advanced developments in science and engineering, including advanced materials such as electro-optical ceramics and a new basic mechanism called rolamite. He later became supervisor of Sandia’s Public Information Division, overseeing its broad media relations activities and assembling and mentoring what he called “a fine group of professional communicators.” Later in his Sandia career he was in charge of national media outreach, a job that took him on frequent visits (often with top Sandia scientists and executives) to news outlets in Washington, New York, California, and even Europe.

His knowledge and lively interests in science and culture, his affable nature, and charming English accent made Hey a welcome and capable ambassador of Sandia Labs to the national and international science writing community. His interest in international science communication naturally led to his active participation in ISWA.

He wrote several books early in his career, on the Sun, planetary exploration, and feeding the world’s billions. After retiring from Sandia, he returned to book writing, penning *Solar System* (2002), which also included short essays by many noted planetary scientists, and then *The Star Wars Enigma* (2006), a history of the Strategic Defense Initiative subtitled “Behind the Scenes of the Cold War Race for Missile Defense.” Research for that took him round the world, including Moscow. One review said it was “terrific” and “utterly riveting” and “neatly balances politics and technology.” In 2012 Hey published *Wonderment*, an aptly titled personal memoir of travel, writing, philosophy, and family life that he subtitled “A Love Affair with Adventure.” It is engaging and at times lyrical in his descriptions of a life and cultural and intellectual interests that spanned the world.

Nigel leaves his wife Dee; his son Brian Hey and his wife Melanie of Hythe, Kent, England; daughter Jocelyn Armitage, her husband David, and two grandchildren, Elizabeth and Edward, of London, England; son Jonathan of Albuquerque; and countless friends and colleagues worldwide who cherished his worldly outlook and engaging mind.

[The obituary above appeared in slightly different form in “The Albuquerque Journal” and was written by Kendrick Frazier, editor of “The Skeptical Inquirer” magazine, a mutual friend of Nigel and myself. For me, Nigel was not only a vital and valued member of ISWA but a boon companion at scores of meetings over many years, where we shared tips in the newsroom and laughs at the receptions. Indeed, Nigel and I were often at the nucleus of a lively pod of ISWA regulars who gathered at least once a year to renew friendships, usually at the AAAS party for foreign journalists. When I called him in November last year to ask if he would serve on the ISWA Election Committee, a position that fittingly would be his last contributions to international science journalism, we made plans to meet in February at the upcoming AAAS meeting in Boston. Sadly, that would be our last conversation. I’ll sorely miss him at our next gathering of ISWA veterans. Jim Cornell]

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## **Upcoming Meetings**

**February 2017**, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Massachusetts, USA

The 2017 Annual Meeting of the AAAS, built around the theme of how national and international policies should be based on the best scientific evidence, will be held in Boston, February 16-20. This gathering of both US and foreign scientists is arguably the world's largest general science meeting and, while it is sometimes short on breaking news, it offers a broad overview of current science and technology. This makes it a very popular destination for international journalists who want to see, hear, and meet major movers and shakers of American science and, as the 2017 theme suggests, science policy. In the aftermath of a bitter election that almost totally ignored science and technology issues, it will be interesting to see if the national focus can be changed back to progressive and positive visions of the future.

General AAAS queries can be directed to +1 (202) 326-6440 or [media@aaas.org](mailto:media@aaas.org). For specific information about the meeting, especially events for foreign journalists, contact Ginger Pinholster, Chief Communications Officer, +1 (202) 326-6421, [gpinhols@aaas.org](mailto:gpinhols@aaas.org), [gingpin@gmail.com](mailto:gingpin@gmail.com).

**April 2017**, American Chemical Society (ACS) California, USA

April 2-6, The American Chemical Society's 253<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting and exposition, subtitled "Advanced Materials, Technologies, Systems & Processes," will be held in San Francisco, California. Registration and Housing is already open. More information will be available at: <https://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/meetings/spring-2017.html>. Or you can contact Michael Bernstein in the ACS Press Office, at 1-202-872-6042, or [m\\_bernstein@acs.org](mailto:m_bernstein@acs.org).

**May 2017**, JpGU-AGU Joint Meeting 2017, Chiba City (Tokyo), Japan.

May 20-25, Joint Meeting of the Japan Geoscience Union and the American Geophysical Union, Makuhai Messe International Conference Hall, [http://jpgu.org/meeting\\_e2017/to\\_press.html](http://jpgu.org/meeting_e2017/to_press.html).

**June 2017**, American Astronomical Society (AAS), Austin, Texas, USA

June 4-8, The 230<sup>th</sup> (Summer) meeting of the AAS will be held at the JW Marriott Hotel, Austin, Texas.

**June 2017**, 67<sup>th</sup> Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting, Lindau, Germany.

June 25-30, <http://www.lindau-nobel.org/meeting/>.

**July 2017**, PCST, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

July 23-29. ISWA was one of the early players in a concept called PCST. A symposium on the history of that organization, "Public Communication of Science and Technology and its History: Between Global and Local," organized by Luisa Massarani (Museum of Life, Brazil) and ISWA member Bruce V. Lewenstein (Cornell University, US) will be held as part of the 25th International Congress of History of Science and Technology, Rio de Janeiro. For more information on the congress, see: <http://www.ichst2017.sbhc.org.br/>.

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*- Jim Cornell*