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a letter describing the decision in some detail (including a detailed editor's critique if revision is invited) is prepared. The third phase involves what happens when a revision is returned: Does the revision satisfy all the points raised by the reviewers and the editor, does the manuscript need to go back to any of the reviewers, and is there a need for further revision? If everything seems satisfactory, the intern prepares the manuscript for presentation in the editors' conference call and then learns how to copyedit a manuscript.

Miller and Monastersky: We have 3 interns each year, and the internships run for 3 months. Working in a cramped office off the back staircase, interns write 1 news story each week and 2 or 3 feature stories during the 3 months. We assign a writer to be responsible for guiding the interns. The interns usually select topics from among several recommended by the staff writers. In reporting the stories they do telephone interviews, read scientific articles, and occasionally attend meetings and press conferences. During the editing process they respond to questions from 3 editors and work with the editors to make their copy lively and accurate. They also find art to illustrate their stories and respond to any reader inquiries that the stories generate.

Q: What kind of payment and other benefits do interns receive?

Mallia: Our interns are paid $6/hour. They are given a Texas Heart Institute badge, which entitles them to discounts at the cafeteria and pharmacy and to other amenities, such as low-priced movie tickets. We pay for their parking.

Pitkin: Interns receive a stipend of $4000 plus reimbursement for transportation expenses to Los Angeles and home. We have determined that $4000 is adequate for housing, meals, and other expenses. No other benefits are provided; it is assumed that an intern's regular employment will provide health insurance and other benefits.

Miller and Monastersky: Interns receive $1650/month. They also get to know the other science writers and see how a weekly publication functions.

Q: How have some of your interns gone on to use their experience?

Mallia: Some of our interns have become physicians (we hope they will be better writers), lawyers (we hope they will write with clarity), journalists, and scientific editors.

Pitkin: The program was initiated last year, so it is too soon to know the results. We announced the availability of 2 positions, but we took 3 last year because of the close ranking of applicants, and we have appointed 3 for this year (1998-1999). I can say from my experience with the 3 last year that I was surprised by how quickly they caught on. For example, in the case of the initial disposition letter, the intern and I would discuss the paper in fairly general terms, and he or she would then draft the letter; by the end of the internship, I would usually not make a single change in the letter. One of last year's interns was so good that we appointed her to our Editorial Board, and she has taken on the responsibility for our journal Web site.

Miller and Monastersky: Most interns go on to a staff writing job at a publication or to a freelance career. Former interns write for publications ranging from university magazines to The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. Some do television journalism, teach science writing, or are in scientific and medical public relations. Their experience at Science News and their clips from the magazine help them to land writing assignments and jobs.

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BY SALLY EDWARDS

CyberTreasures and Mirrors

Fight the Fog

Karen Shashok wrote from Granada, Spain, about the European Commission Translation Service's campaign to encourage EC translators to use plain English (1). The effort, called Fight the Fog, includes a Web site with its own “Fog Song” sung to the tune of “Yesterday” and a booklet with hints on how to write English without fog and a collection of fog humor. The introduction explains, “This light-hearted campaign draws attention to the dangers of FOG—that vague grey pall that descends on EU documents, obscuring meanings and messages, causing delays and irritation.”

Well, I can only say that the EC does not have a corner on the market when it comes to fog, and we can all enjoy its attempts to minimize its existence. It also has a Web site that includes a style guide (2). Kudos to Emma Wagner and Francis Flaherty.

PS: The Howler of the Day when I last visited was this: “The flattening of underwear with pleasure is the job of the chambermaid.” My favorite: a doctors’ office sign, “Specialists in women and other diseases.”

Editors’ Forums

Sometimes a little shop talk is good for the soul: What do other people consider copyediting responsibilities to be? Is information design an editorial function? What is the editor's role in a Web site? How do readers...
respond to sweeping changes in logos, banners, mastheads?

Grace Darling advised me of a site just for those moments: Bay Area Editors’ Forum (3). It’s fun. It’s informative. And it addresses that occasional nagging thought, “Does anyone else care about this issue?”

**Mirror Sites — Reliable?**
The world is a big place, and it does take time (sometimes a seemingly long time) for Web content to travel from its server to a user halfway around the world. That is what is happening when the computer seems to be doing nothing after you have entered a URL.

Mirror sites provide a local server for a site created thousands of miles away. In intent, the mirror site is like a booster station that makes the content, exactly as it appears on the original Web site, available at a more local site.

To many people, having someone request to mirror a site is an honor. It implies that your site is considered worthwhile by your peers. Or at least that is the up side.

The down side, we recently learned at BrighamRad, is that mirror sites do not always stay current and are able to alter the original site (even though neither is considered good etiquette).

So, what can the Webmaster do? Because we didn’t want to eliminate our mirror sites, we decided to add a few lines at the end of our own screens. They explain what our official mirror sites are and also note our home URL. Users are thus reminded that if the information is somehow questionable (out of date, for example), they can compare the URL on the site with our home URL and know whether they are on a mirror site. Furthermore, our URL in the footnote is a link to the original site.

In general, a user can check whether a site is a mirror site by scrutinizing the URL. It does not always work, but it is a good test for institutional and commercial sites. In both instances, the URL usually indicates in some way the source of the site. For example, our home page says “Harvard Medical School”, and our URL contains the word “harvard”. If it were a mirror site, the URL would have the name of the entity mirroring the site.

Reliable? Yes, most mirror sites reflect the original site just as the term “mirror” implies. So if you have a reason to doubt, check the URL.

Let’s chat: sedwards@ulna.bwh.harvard .edu

Sally Edwards manages the Publications Group in the Department of Radiology at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston.

**References**

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**The Lighter View**

**Editors at the Pearly Gates**

The Editor

The editor stood ’fore the heavenly gate,
his features pinched and cold.
He bowed before the Man of Fate,
seeking admission to the fold.
“What have you done?”
St. Peter asked,
“To gain admission here?”
“I was the journal’s editor, sir,
for many a weary year.”
The pearly gates swung open wide

as Peter pressed the bell.
“Come in and choose your harp,”
he cried:
“You’ve had your share of hell!”

— Anonymous

Editor’s Note: It’s nice to know there’s a future reward!

The Lighter View consists of short articles, cartoons, quotations, or any other type of humorous material about the editing life. We invite your contributions. Send ideas to Barbara Cox, MedEdit Associates, 5429 SW 80 Street, Gainesville FL 32608. Phone 352-376-3071; fax 352-336-8377; e-mail barbccox@aol.com.