

Share Your Approach

A Session at the PNW Fall meeting
presented by Sherry Smith

Reviewed by Tracy Wilson-Burns

During the September 26th conference of the Pacific Northwest chapter of ASI, Sherry Smith led participants through a stimulating discussion during her workshop “Indexing Problems: Share Your Approach”.

The purpose of the workshop was for attendees to talk about specific indexing issues and share their approaches to solving them. Topics ranged from how to motivate oneself through the indexing doldrums (group suggestions included setting a daily goal, going for a walk, rewarding with chocolate!); to formatting/style issues; to challenges with the meta-topic.

Workshop participants had a variety of indexing experience, both in terms of the kinds of content they indexed and the number of years in the business. This diversity contributed to a good conversation as participants shared their experiences and suggestions. The discussion highlighted how there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution for many indexing issues, and often the biggest challenge is how to explain and justify one’s approach to one’s editor. Being able to explore these topics in a supportive small-group format made for a very worthwhile workshop.



About the author: Tracy is new to indexing, enjoying the change from her previous career as a software engineer. She is also a fiction writer; and teaches English and web

design as an adjunct instructor. In her free time (what’s that?), she enjoys biking, canoeing, kayaking, rafting, and camping. Tracy lives in Spokane, Washington with her husband and three cats. Learn more about Tracy at www.CascadeIndexing.com.



Planes, Trains, or Automobiles?

Getting to ASI’s 2010 annual conference in Minneapolis

by Paul Sweum

May 13–15, 2010

Marriott City Center Hotel

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Following up on last year’s conference in Portland, indexers in the Pacific Northwest have some adventurous options to enjoy travel to ASI’s annual conference in Minneapolis, MN at the Marriott City Center Hotel from May 13-15, 2010.

If you’ve never attended the annual conference of the American Society for Indexing, it is a great place to immerse yourself in the field by learning new skills, improving on old ones, learning new technologies, meeting fellow indexers, reenergizing, and having lots of fun. The theme of this year’s ASI conference in Minnesota is “Indexing Central,” which points to the location of the event being at a central location within the 48 states. This should allow for the attendance of indexers from all over the country, including members from the Pacific Northwest chapter of ASI.

Minneapolis is closer to indexers in our corner of the country than some may think...and I will use Seattle as the starting point for travel in following examples. Airline flights are plentiful and reasonably priced if you make a reservation in advance, however I won’t spend time reviewing airfares since pricing is constantly in flux, and as it serves as today’s popular distance travel option most everyone is familiar with...until cross-continental high speed rail comes along (which will be many years from now—if not decades—but that’s a whole different discussion).

For those who don’t wish to fly, Amtrak’s Empire Builder route provides a viable travel alternative. It’s an approximate 36 hour train ride from Seattle to Minneapolis/St. Paul, with a round trip fare costing \$270 (10% off the \$300 fare with a AAA discount) or \$255 (15% off for seniors 62+, students and military with proper identification). Sleeping quarters are extra...I calculated \$450 (w/10% off base fare) and \$435 (w/15% off base fare) per person when splitting the cost of the Superliner Roomette with another passenger in a round trip scenario. While I also noticed the purchase of a sleeper car included meals, the details of that should be explored further if that interests you (and an indexer travel buddy). See the Amtrak website <http://tickets.amtrak.com/itd/amtrak> for details, trip planning, sleeper car packages, and the full menu of fare discounts. ****

A third option involves driving, and from Seattle or Portland I figured it can be accomplished in two days over the course of approximately 10-12 hours each day—definitely an ambitious itinerary—however I suggest only doing that with a colleague or partner. If two or three individuals carpool, costs and time may be split in half (or thirds), and the physical toll of driving may be minimized with a rotation of driving shifts—making the trip much easier. In addition, the route