

AMWA Mid-America Chapter Meeting of November 5, 2024 — version with balances

Call to order: 4:36 pm

Attendees (alphabetical): Alysia Drummond, Jessica Kiser, Joanne McAndrews, Heather McNeill, Diane Morton, Leslie Neistadt, Matt Sandbulte, Sunali Wahedra, Heather Widmayer

Introductions

A medical writer and AMWA member since 2018, Sunali Wahedra works primarily in continuing medical education space. She is a new volunteer to represent the Mid-America chapter on the CAC. She has been part of other AMWA chapters while living in Michigan and Mississippi, and has recently become more active in the Mid-America chapter after living in the St. Louis region for a few years.

Approval of minutes

Minutes from the September 2024 meeting were reviewed and approved by the members attending. (Joanne reported that she reviewed the minutes in a previous draft, so Matt motioned to approve the minutes and Leslie seconded.).

AREA REPORTS

Events in St. Louis

Reporting: Joanne McAndrews

- The next STL area meeting is Wednesday, November 13 at 11:30 a.m. Leslie Neistadt will present a recurring year-end favorite session for TechWrite meeting attendees; the Best and Worst Books of 2024.

Upcoming 2025 St. Louis Meeting Schedule

2025 Events

January 10 – LinkedIn Platform Tour: Tips, Tools, and Trouble-Sparing, presented by Diane Morton

March 12 – Managing Workplace Stress, presented by James RW Linsin, PsyD, Clinical Psychologist

May 14 - The Third Age: How Tech Writers Plan and Enjoy Their Golden Years, presented by Dana Delibovi

July 9 - What Do Geeks Do For Fun Around Here?, presented by Alice Fugate

September 10 – Managing Difficult Clients and Coworkers, presented by Sunali Wahedra

November 12 – Best and Worst Books of 2025, presented by Leslie Neistadt

All meetings are held at Sunny Street Cafe, 11692 Manchester Road, Des Peres, MO from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. Joanne said she has reserved the meeting space for 2025.

Events in Iowa

Reporting via email: Julia Moffitt

- Julia emailed Matt that she is managing a personal health challenge and needs to step away from event planning for the foreseeable future.
- Matt suggested that Tim Skog, a Mid-America chapter member from Mt. Vernon, IA, be notified to gauge interest in organizing events in the area.

Events in Kansas City

Reporting: Alyssia Drummond

- Alyssa has graciously accepted the opportunity to arrange events in the Kansas City area.
- Alyssia reported that about 10 people are interested in a casual group meeting. She attempted to assemble a group in early October that did not materialize. She plans to reschedule a networking opportunity for the group in the near future.

Events in Nebraska

Reporting by email: Rebecca Bigelow, Matt updated

- Matt reported that the group in Omaha had planned to meet this fall, but so far nothing has been scheduled. Rebecca plans to coordinate something soon. The region has about 5 people interested in meeting.

Events in Kansas

Reporting: Matt Sandbulte

- Matt reported no activity in the Wichita area. Matt has reached out to both of the other two AMWA members who are in the Wichita area. Joanne connected Matt with one of these individuals, a student at Wichita State University. The student said she may be more interested in meeting after the first of the year.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Reporting: Leslie Neistadt

Bank account balances as of November 3, 2024, were reported by Leslie.

MEMBERSHIP

Reporting: Heather McNeill

Since the last report:

- Current active membership in the MidAmerica AMWA chapter is 109 members, with one new member.

CAC (Chapter Advisory Council)

Reporting: Leslie Neistadt

The next CAC group meets on November 20 and Sunali will join the virtual meeting to begin involvement as the Mid-America chapter CAC representative.

COMMUNICATIONS

Reporting: Jessica Kiser

Jessica asked for any input on the next newsletter. She also reminded people to contact her at any time if any chapter content should be posted to LinkedIn.

A zoom link needs to be set up and sent for the virtual meeting on November 12. Jessica suggested sending the link to everyone in the active membership list to attend for any part of the business meeting or networking sessions, regardless of whether they respond to the survey about business meeting attendance and breakout sessions.

OLD BUSINESS

Nothing from the previous meeting except to continue discussion about meeting planning for 2025.

After the annual business meeting next week, additional work on the mini-session series for the next year will continue.

Mini-committee thoughts for event planning include:

Virtual meeting on career paths, including shifting to writing within a profession/field (Feb/March 2025)

Virtual knowledge/skills/issues training, similar to TechWrite STL meeting (summer 2025), with potential to find an expert outside of AMWA. Some of the skills workshops held by TechWrite STL could suggest good speaker candidates for a virtual event.

Julia suggested at the last meeting that breakouts follow career paths for the virtual meeting, including:

Lay writing

Regulatory writing

Grant writing

Writing for education

NEW BUSINESS

Chapter officer elections are pending for end-of-the-year business. Everyone expressed that they are willing to stay in the current position unless someone in the membership wishes to volunteer for a position change. Jessica offered for someone to take her communications chair and Heather offered to have someone manage membership. Leslie offered that someone could take over as treasurer, if interested.

Administrating the membership elections via a survey monkey link worked well last year. Matt will send out the election survey link later in November with the option of all members retaining current officer positions.

Matt will prepare the agenda for the business meeting and distribute for review.

Diane, Joanne, Leslie, Natalie, and Sunali will share gems from the annual conference to give business meeting attendees a flavor of sessions offered in 2024.

The survey asking for feedback on breakout sessions and for networking has shown 10 responses received to date.

The top 3 topics from the survey as of this meeting:

1. Freelance (Joanne offered to lead)
2. Starting a new writing and editing business
3. Writing and editing for research institutions

Matt will send a zoom link for a trial run of the breakout sessions on Monday at 4:30 pm. Heather, Joanne, Leslie, and Diane offered to meet with Matt to make sure the meeting functions work correctly. Jessica will send the link for the business meeting to the membership.

Next Chapter Meeting

Jan 7, 4:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m.