

AMWA Mid-America Chapter Meeting of May 6, 2025 — version with balances

Call to order: 4:33 pm

Attendees (alphabetical): Lisa Balbes, Jessica Kiser, Joanne McAndrews, Diane Morton, Matt Sandbulte, Sunali Wadehra, Terra White, Heather Widmayer

Introductions

Matt opened the meeting

Approval of minutes

Minutes from the March 2025 meeting were reviewed and approved by the members attending. Heather motioned to approve the minutes, Jessica and others seconded, and all other attendees were in favor.

AREA REPORTS

Events in St. Louis

Reporting: Joanne McAndrews

The next STL area meeting is May 14 – The Third Age: How Tech Writers Plan and Enjoy Their Golden Years, presented by Dana Delibovi. Eleven people are registered.

Upcoming 2025 St. Louis Meeting Schedule

2025 Events

July 9 - What Do Geeks Do For Fun Around Here?, presented by Alice Fugate
September 10 – Managing Difficult Clients and Coworkers, presented by Sunali Wadehra
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. The meeting space is reserved for all 2025 meeting dates.

Events in Iowa

Reporting: Terra White

- Terra reported that members met informally on Sunday, April 27, in Iowa City. 6 members attended (8 in attendance, including spouses) who enjoyed a casual meet-and-greet gathering at a local brewery. Terra considered the gathering a success for regional interaction. She plans to schedule another event in Iowa City in the summer.

Events in Kansas City

Reporting: Alysia Drummond (absent)

- Jessica reported that Alysia has been emailing Kansas City area members to arrange for a local gathering toward the end of May.

Events in Nebraska

Reporting by email: Rebecca Bigelow (unable to attend), Matt updated

- Matt reported that he attended a networking dinner in Omaha on April 10, with 5 local members attending. One of the members is moving to a different region and chapter, so the group will meet again on May 13 before the member moves.

Events in Kansas

Reporting: Matt Sandbulte

- No events to report.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Reporting: Leslie Neistadt (absent)

Bank account balances as of May 1, 2025, were reported by email from Leslie.

COMMUNICATIONS

Reporting: Jessica Kiser

Jessica will send the next newsletter in a few weeks, to also include details for the June 4 virtual event.

MEMBERSHIP

Reporting: Heather McNeill (absent, reported by email)

Since the last report:

- Current active membership in the MidAmerica AMWA chapter is 107 members and two new members.
- Joanne noted that new members have joined in Wichita and in Kansas City.

CAC (Chapter Advisory Council)

Reporting: Sunali Wadehra

Sunali reported that the CAC group held a special edition meeting recently and have another meeting scheduled on May 21. The special edition meeting was organized with AMWA leaders to discuss reimagining chapter membership and participation, and gathering/using data that can help to evaluate chapter activities and to determine gaps. Qualitative data from chapters in 2019, AMWA membership surveys from 2016 and 2024, focus groups underway, etc will be used for the evaluation. The group is looking at geography, accessibility, and key performance indicators, such as how to measure chapter engagement, how to support chapter leaders that need additional resources or assistance, how a chapter is formatted, etc.

Heather offered to assist with sharing the Mid-America chapter survey data that was sent to membership in fall 2024. Jessica found the raw data from the google survey and is emailing to Matt and Heather to share from the chapter.

Joanne shared that many members listed in the membership directory as being part of the Mid-America chapter do not live in these 4 states that compose the Mid-America chapter. Discussion highlighted how difficult it is for people to know which chapter to select to join. Sunali will share this feedback during the CAC meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

The Q1 2025 virtual meeting was held on Wednesday, April 9, and was attended by 12 people. Heather Widmayer presented her writer's journey and experience into the academic environment at the University of Iowa where she now works, and Sunali Wadehra presented her journey to become a freelance writer in the CME space.

NEW BUSINESS

The Q2 2025 virtual chapter meeting is scheduled for June 4, 2025, from 12-1 pm CST. Registration for the meeting will be done through the link provided by Crystal Herron, PhD, which will be included in the announcement email sent from Jessica to the chapter membership. Crystal will present her topic to members in the Mid-America chapter: *Enlighten Medical Experts with the Power of Plain Language*. Diane will prepare an email for Jessica to send.

Matt asked for input on the amount of the honorarium for Crystal to share her expertise. As a group, everyone was supportive of providing a \$200 honorarium for this event.

Virtual meeting planning continues for Q3 2025/August TENTATIVE

Virtual meeting topics that have been suggested

Topics by AMWA members who present on broad topics of value to membership

Editing your own work, Hope Lafferty

Proofreading, Susan Aiello

Art of writing, Crystal Herron

Statistics, Tom Lang

Next Chapter Meeting

July 1, 4:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.