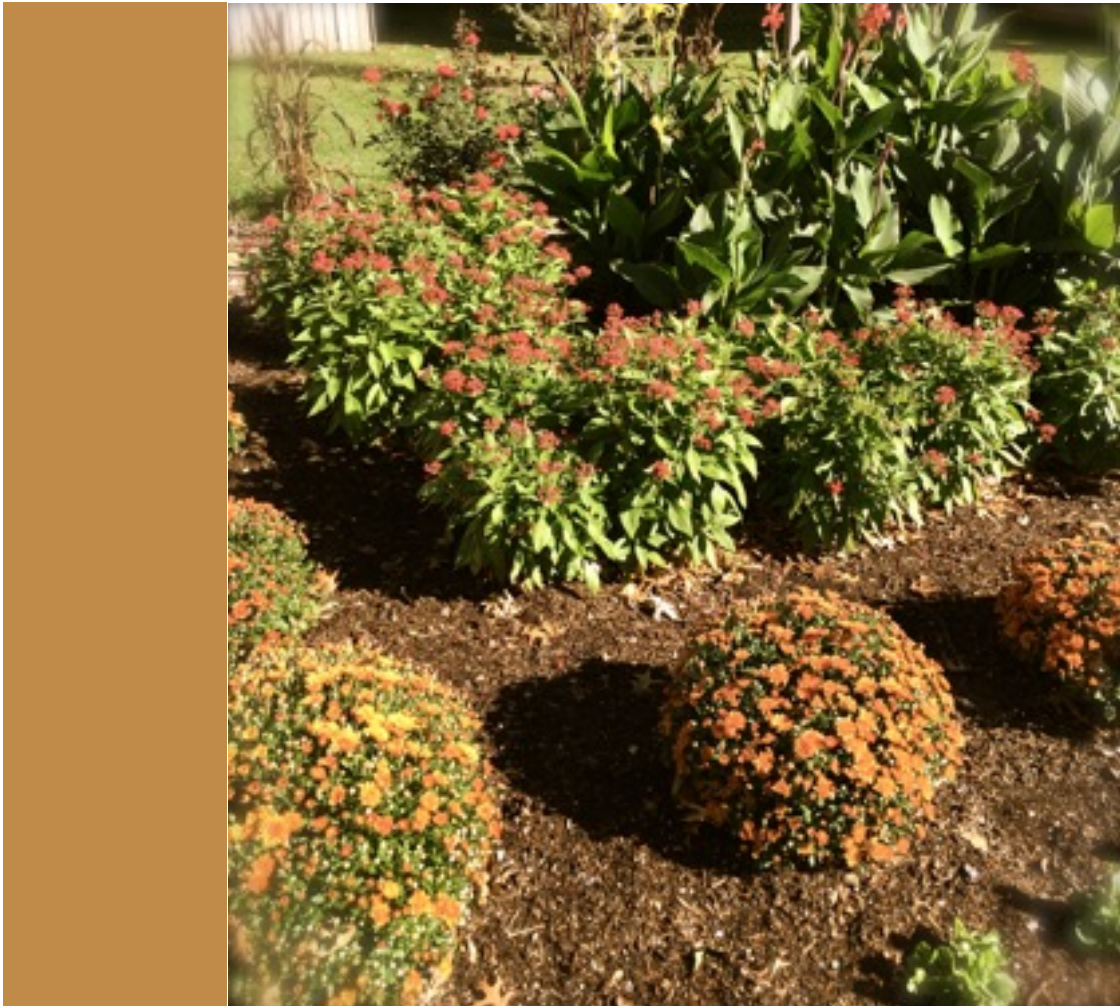


AMWA MID-AMERICA

Fall 2014



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A Note from the Editor

Magdalena Berry, MA

Dear Chapter Members,

Greetings from the Ozarks!

Here are a few notes and reminders:

- The deadline for the next newsletter is Dec. 27, 2014. Newsletters are generally issued quarterly, in March, June, September, and December.
- We have a new membership chair: Nicholas Russell, B.S., from O'Fallon, MO.
- Our treasurer and long-time chapter board member Joanne McAndrews has been honored as an AMWA Fellow. See the announcement from the *AMWA Journal* included here.
- Several of our Mid-America chapter members presented at the recent AMWA Conference: Leslie Neistadt, Lyn Gattis, Linda Landon and Joanne McAndrews.
- The chapter dinner at the Conference was well-attended (and, I hear, delicious). Make plans to come next year!
- and finally, a brief editorial. Atul Gawande, likely familiar to you as a popular author on medical topics, has been all over the media lately talking about his new book, *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Happens in the End*. I'm glad he's in the public eye talking about issues we all need to be familiar with. While much of the material has already been presented elsewhere, Gawande gets a great deal of (well-deserved, I think) attention, and so this latest book may have a significant influence on the movement towards more humane end-of-life care.

Chapter Officers

President: Rona Clair Grunspan, MD

Treasurer: Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD

Secretary: VACANT

Membership chair: Nicholas Russell

Newsletter chair: Magdalena Berry, MA

Webmaster: Lisa M. Balbes, PhD

St. Louis Freelance Luncheon Coordinators:

Lisa M. Balbes, PhD, Joanne M. McAndrews,
PhD

Chapter Business

Magdalena Berry, MA

Chapter officers hold regular meetings, usually via conference call, to report on and plan events and to discuss any issues or needs. Our activities in the past year included updating and streamlining our financial operations, initiating member activities in the Kansas City area, clarifying officer responsibilities and recruiting new officers, among other things.

We look for ways to benefit chapter members and always welcome suggestions that you might have for events or educational opportunities.

Below, for your information, is this year's budget.

Annual Budget for AMWA Mid-America Chapter 14

August 1, 2014 to July 31, 2015

INCOME

AMWA membership dues rebates (estimated)	\$1700
Interest income from US Bank money market (estimated)	\$6
Interest income from Boone County National Bank CDs (estimated)	\$20
TOTAL INCOME	\$1726

EXPENSES

Chapter event in Kansas City	\$200
Chapter event in St. Louis	\$200
Chapter officer board meetings	\$0
Chapter delegate travel to the AMWA Board of Directors meeting (Fall 2014)	\$0
Chapter delegate travel to the AMWA Board of Directors meeting (Spring 2015)	\$800
Chapter Web site	\$44.55
Bank fees—Boone County National Bank (estimated)	\$120
Accountant (estimated)	\$200
Postage/FedEx (estimated)	\$12
Taxes—Federal (2014) (estimated)	\$50
Taxes—Missouri (2014) (estimated)	\$20
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1646.55

St. Louis-area Freelance Luncheon Series: TechWrite STL

Joanne McAndrews, PhD
Lisa Balbes, PhD



The TechWrite STL group continues to hold its bi-monthly

lunch meetings. At each meeting, a topic of interest to freelance medical and technical writers is presented by a member and discussed by the group, usually over lunch at a local restaurant.

In July 2014, Vivienne McKenzie discussed details to be considered when “Writing for the Web”. Considering one’s audience, writing content for small screens (such as mobile phones and tablets), and the future of writing for this type of platform were discussed. Following Vivienne’s presentation, participants shared their own tips and experiences in a lively discussion.

Alice Fugate moderated a thoughtful discussion regarding “Choosing a Great Business Avatar” at the September 2014 luncheon. Specific tips with respect to the

quality, content, and professional attributes of “headshot” photos were given. Examples of unprofessional LinkedIn profile pictures were presented and discussed by attendees. Participants shared examples of current avatars used in their professional lives, and other members of the group provided constructive criticism.

Upcoming meetings include “Preparing for Tax Season” in November 2014, “Breaking into Regulatory Writing” in January 2015, and “What to Charge: Pros and Cons of Hourly Rates and Flat Fees” in March 2015.

Lisa Balbes and Joanne McAndrews have been co-organizing the group since 2006.

All interested parties are invited to attend – membership is not required. For details or to RSVP, see the chapter website (<http://www.amwa-midamerica.org/>

AMWA Board of Directors Meeting

Summary prepared by Leslie E. Neistadt, ELS and Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD

The AMWA Board of Directors meeting was held on October 8, 2014, in Memphis, TN. Highlights include the following:

- The next salary survey will be in 2015. The last survey was in 2011.
- The next medical writing practices survey will also take place in 2015. This will focus on writers' contributions.
- The organization's finances are in good shape overall, although some expenses were greater than expected because 2013 annual conference attendance was down. Also, in 2013, AMWA began offering workshop leaders the choice of an honorarium instead of reimbursement of travel expenses.
- The revision of *Guidelines for Document Designers* was completed recently. (This is an update of the 1991 text by the American Institutes for Research.) The original text will be freely available on the AMWA Web site; the revised text will be available to members only.
- A call for volunteers is underway. The form is available on the Web site and is due by the end of October.
- The Learning Management System Exploration Project is ongoing, with the goal of determining the best technology for creating robust online educational programming. Ideally, the system will deliver multiple types of content and track user participation. The staff at headquarters is developing a business plan for the project and viewing vendors' demonstrations. The 4 key areas for strategic decisions are content development, business rules, integration, and resources. Costs are expected to be in the range of \$35,000 for the technology and \$20,000 for content.
- The certification examination will be given for the first time at the 2015 conference in San Antonio. The applicant and candidate handbook is in progress and should be posted online in January.
- The creation of a "retired member" membership category is being considered and will be discussed at the next meeting.
- A new Chapter Handbook has been prepared and includes a new Chapter Leader Toolkit. These resources will be available soon on the AMWA website.

Congratulations to Our New AMWA Fellow!

Joanne was profiled in the most recent issue of the *AMWA Journal*, excerpted below.

A well-deserved award!

Joanne McAndrews, PhD

Joanne has been an active member since joining AMWA in 2004. In the Mid-America Chapter, she has served in numerous leadership roles, including treasurer, president, immediate past president, and membership officer, and for several years as the co-chair of the St. Louis Area freelance luncheon. Since 2006, she has contributed each year to the AMWA annual conference in roles that include workshop developer, workshop leader, roundtable leader, session moderator and speaker, and member of the Annual Conference Committee. She has been contributing articles to the *AMWA Journal* since 2009. Joanne has been a freelance medical writer since 2000, preparing manuscripts, medical textbook chapters, literature reviews, white papers, web cast scripts, protocols and reports for clinical studies, and General Recognition of Safety regulatory dossiers submitted to the FDA. She has a BS in biology from Union College, an MS in physiology from Penn State, and a PhD in neurobiology and physiology from Northwestern University.

