

Vice President's Column

By Benn Joseph, Northwestern University

A few weeks ago, I used something called [ParkChirp](#) for the first time. This happened because I had the day off and decided to take the kids to the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), which is just down the street from the Hyatt Centric Chicago Magnificent Mile, our hotel for the Chicago Annual Meeting. The MCA is great, and I encourage everyone to check it out while you're in town. But here's the thing: parking is \$40, and that seemed excessive to me. Anyway, the best way to describe ParkChirp (or any of the myriad other parking apps that are out there) is that it's kind of like Airbnb for parking garages. You indicate where you want to park and when you'll need the spot, and it tells you what your options are on a map, with prices. Then you use a QR code on your smartphone to scan in and out of the garage. We ended up parking in the same \$40 MCA garage, but only paid \$18. All this to say: use public transit, if at all possible, but if you are driving to MAC in Chicago, there are alternatives to the \$65/day parking rate at the hotel. I can't guarantee you'll get a substantially better rate, and it might be a longer walk, but maybe it's something?

2023 Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois

Registration is about to go live as I write this. One thing you'll probably notice is that registration rates this year are a bit higher than in the past. I was talking to someone in the MARAC region a little while back, who was surprised we are having a conference in Chicago, as MARAC had been "priced out" of all its big cities. Chicago is still affordable as big cities go, but stuff does, in fact, cost more than it used to. Please know that a great deal of discussion went into selecting this registration rate, but in the end, it was a necessary move to support MAC programming.

We're very excited to once again be able to offer a hybrid conference as we did last year in Madison. In addition to select panel presentations, virtual attendees will also be able to attend the MAC Members' Meeting as well as the plenary. I'm very excited about having Sherman "Dilla" Thomas as our plenary speaker this year—and if you're looking for me during the plenary, I'll be wearing my "Everything Dope About America Comes from Chicago" shirt!

One thing virtual attendees won't be able to join in on, however, is the opening reception happening Thursday night at the hotel. There will be some great entertainment on tap at this time as well. And to provide an answer to

the most common question I have received so far regarding the reception: no, it is *not* an open bar! I am told this is to cut down on the number of wedding guests and high school prom attendees from other parts of the building masquerading as archivists.

We have fantastic workshops on offer, as well as the DEI Unconference being held at the Newberry Library and the Business Archives meeting in the hotel on Wednesday. Don't forget, there's also a two-day SAA workshop, "Arrangement and Description of Digital Records," being held in conjunction with MAC at DePaul University on Tuesday and Wednesday (April 11–12). In fact, this is one of the more jam-packed preconference sessions we've had in recent years (at least that I remember, but what do I know?). There are also a TON of tours being offered, which will allow you to go as far afield as the Far North Side of the city (Loyola University's Women and Leadership Archives), or just to a higher floor in the building we're already in (American College of Surgeons).

It's also important to mention that MAC Council has just approved an upgrade to the honorarium for workshop instructors, to help keep pace with inflation. That seems like a losing proposition these days, but we do what we can. This is in addition to other honorariums, scholarships, and awards that Council voted to increase over the past year, which we hope will provide additional support for potential new MAC members to attend the conference, as well as for our MAC region experts who teach our workshops.

2023 Fall Symposium, Louisville, Kentucky

Symposium cochairs Danielle Spalenka and Rusty Heckaman are continuing to plan a disaster recovery theme for the Symposium this year, which will be held November 3–4, 2023, at the Filson Historical Society. I should mention here that the Filson Historical Society is in Louisville, Kentucky (my favorite place in Kentucky), and not Lexington (my other favorite place in Kentucky), as I mistakenly put in my VP report to Council last fall.

2024 Annual Meeting, Des Moines, Iowa

Planning for MAC 2024 in Des Moines is chugging along nicely. Program Committee cochairs Jaycie Vos and Scott Brouwer are working on a program to go along with the host activities coordinated by LAC cochairs Rosalie

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Megan Badgley-Malone, Assistant Editor

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Gartner and Hope Bibens. I'm anxious to see what the swag is going to be—seed packets were proposed at one point, which would be perfect timing for spring planting.

Future Meetings

We have Annual Meeting sites picked out for 2025 and 2026, which certainly takes the pressure off (of me, anyway)—although since Council has not yet voted on these at the time of writing, I don't want to put them into print just yet. But what we *don't* have is a meeting site for the 2024 Fall Symposium. If you'd like to help put together a one-and-a-half-day workshop for a bunch of MAC folks to attend at your organization, please get in touch with me. It might sound daunting, but I promise it's great fun.

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