



Vice President's Column MAC Meetings and Symposia Update

By Joshua Ranger, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

It's a common saw, but one of the great things about MAC, I find, is that its meetings can take you to communities you may never visit in the course of your normal vacation or family routine. For me, Fargo was definitely one of those towns. It was delightful to spend a few days enjoying the impressive NDSU campus and the energetic (and delicious . . . and walkable . . .) downtown. And to do it in the company of other small-shop archivists made it even better. Our meeting, an experiment in programming for a single "type" of archivist, was a great success, and I hope this approach becomes part of our rotation in the future.

One brisk (it was Fargo, after all) evening found us at Rhombus Guys pizzeria, a North Dakota institution. It's one of those places that features paper table coverings and crayons to keep children and 40-somethings busy while they wait for their food. Several archivists (some of us better artists than others) started sketching out a map of the MAC region, allowing me to market test with my tablemates future and potential meeting locations. It was an amusing exercise that reinforced how important

geographic diversity is in selecting MAC's meeting locations: if we zig east, we should then zag west and if north, then south. That is the ideal, of course, and for the most part, I think we maintain this pattern pretty well regardless of how poorly drawn our map is.

To wit, after an Annual Meeting in Detroit, we are heading westward to Des Moines this May. After a Symposium in the northwest part of the region, we are heading southeast to Indianapolis next autumn. We are especially excited about visiting Indy during the city's bicentennial year with an apropos meeting focused on planning and implementing anniversaries, celebrations, and other public outreach programming. Plus, MAC is organizing this Symposium in conjunction with the Society of Indiana Archivists, whose members are all welcome to attend. Then in 2021, while Wisconsin's capital isn't that far east of the Iowa's, it's hard to argue with Madison as a MAC destination. Who knows? It might just be one of those cities that you've wanted to visit but never had the chance.

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Vice President's Column

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When you visit Des Moines or Indy or Madison, MAC wants you to feel comfortable bringing your family if desired and/or needed. A special task force has been working diligently to investigate and develop recommendations to ensure MAC meetings are friendly to parents and other caregivers. We know that, often, members must delicately balance responsibilities at home and at work and that meeting attendance can be difficult to add to the mix. To the extent that we can, MAC will do more to take the caregiving needs of professionals into account as we plan and host meetings. Look soon for special information in the 2020 Annual Meeting program and blog about our first steps toward more family-friendly meetings.

Finally, if you would like your community's whereabouts location added to our sketchy pizzeria map of future meeting spots, let's talk. I have more crayons.

MAC Meetings Overview

MAC's annual calendar features two important opportunities for professional development and networking. The Annual Meeting, held in the spring, features 400+ archivists and allied professionals in a traditional conference format in large midwestern cities. The 2.5-day meetings include workshops, concurrent sessions, a vendor fair, tours, and opportunities for students and new professionals. In addition, the meetings feature social activities to grow our community connections.

In the autumn, MAC organizes a 1.5-day Symposium focused on a specific aspect of archival work. These meetings draw 40 to 60 attendees and are often held in smaller communities.

MAC is committed to promoting diverse, sustainable, harassment-free, and family-friendly meetings and relies on members to volunteer in the successful implementation of all aspects of meeting planning. These individuals work with a professional membership services firm that assists MAC with core meeting activities.

The following meetings are upcoming:

2020 Annual Meeting: Des Moines, Iowa
May 6–9, 2020

Des Moines Marriott Downtown

2020 Symposium: Indianapolis, Indiana
October 9–10

Indiana State Library

2021 Annual Meeting: Madison, Wisconsin
April 13–April 18

Concourse Hotel

You can view a list of MAC's past meetings since the beginning of the organization in 1972 at <https://www.midwestarchives.org/past-meetings>. Recent meetings are listed with their conference programs. Links to documents required by committees for planning and reporting can be found at <https://midwestarc.memberclicks.net/meeting-planning--reports>.

Between-Meeting Council Actions

On October 21, 2019, Council unanimously approved the appropriation of \$1,800 for the public information officer to design and purchase stickers and buttons, pencils, jotters with pens, erasers, rack cards, and postcards.

MAC Des Moines: "Decision 2020"

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The Program Committee received many proposals and is finalizing the program. In keeping with the experiment started in Detroit, the committee plans to offer a mix of traditional-length and shorter-length sessions to include the greatest number of proposals possible. The committee will be sending out a call for pop-up sessions—a first for MAC, but one that fits perfectly with the "Decision 2020" theme!

The Education Committee has two preconference workshops planned, "Approaches to Workplace Conflict" and "Introduction to Digital Preservation." Stay tuned for more details about tours and service projects. And feel free to reach out to your Local Arrangements Committee with any questions.