

**Mid-Atlantic Chapter/MLA
Annual Meeting Task Force
Report
September 2002**

In March 2001 the Annual Meeting Task Force was created with the following members:

Pat Hammond, Chair
Donna Flake
Brenda Seago
Julia Shaw-Kokot
Debra Warner (resigned)

Lynne Turman replaced Debra Warner.

In May 2001, the Task Force received its charge. Areas to investigate include:

- Making the annual meeting a fully cost recovery operation, while keeping costs affordable to most members
- Alternate formats/events to traditional structure, including current 5 area rotation and location
- Use of a professional meeting planner
- Ways to increase participation from outside vendors and sponsorships
- Recommendations for honoraria guidelines
- Feasibility of joint meetings with other Library groups

Resources:

Financial Planning Task Force Report (2000)

Needs Assessment Report (2001)

Email correspondence with other Chapter Chairs

Chapter Sharing Financial Roundtable at 2001 MLA Annual Meeting

Observations of MAC annual meeting activities and practices

MAC Policy and Procedures Manual

Local Arrangements Committee Policy and Procedures Manual

MLA Chapters - Financial Issues

Discussion with other chapters yielded a shared concern from almost all chapters about their annual meetings. Many chapters are struggling with planning and conducting chapter meetings. Some chapters have seen a drop in attendance. Each chapter is unique and uses a different model for financing and conducting its meeting. All chapters seem to agree that the annual meeting is an important member service and that effort to produce the annual meeting is very high. Here are some practices mentioned:

- Conference Planning Chair, a 3-year term, in addition to Chair-Elect. (Upstate NY & Ontario)
- Partnering with other local professional organizations [SLA & MLA chapters] (UNYOC)
- Luncheon, business meeting and guest speaker format (Hawaii-Pacific)
- Annual business meeting and dinner in the Spring with several programs during year (Philadelphia)
- Hired a meeting planner (Southern)
- Host state health sciences library group donates money to chapter for AM (NAHSL)

MAC Needs Assessment - 2001 Member Survey Results

Several questions about MAC annual meetings were included on the Member Survey. Here are the results:

1. The second most important reason why people join a professional organization is for **continuing education opportunities**.
2. Since 1997, employer-subsidized education/travel funds have **stayed the same or decreased** for 76% of the survey participants.
3. 63% of participants rated **CE courses** as the most useful annual meeting element.
4. 87% of participants said that holding the meeting at **another time of the year** is acceptable to save money.
5. If the annual meeting is held during a different month, participants prefer **September or October**.
6. To reduce costs, members indicated eliminating the **banquet** from the program would be their first choice.

Observations

1. Many professional organizations are seeing attendance drop at meetings.
2. State funding for travel has been frozen or cut back in Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia.
3. The current five-area rotation seems to be a struggle for MAC members in Washington, DC and West Virginia.
4. MAC meeting expenses may rise more rapidly than meeting income over the next few years.
5. MAC practices for setting fees and honoraria, and for categorizing some expenditures, are not as clear and complete as desired.
6. Length and format of the traditional MAC meeting may be changed to be more cost effective and better meet the needs of chapter members.
7. The written guidelines that appear in the MAC Policy and Procedures Manual are not consistently followed.

Proposed Recommendations

1. Consider an alternating four-year rotation for the location of MAC meetings - North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, DC. The next four-year rotation should be North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia. When the meeting is in DC, West Virginia MAC members should volunteer to help with local arrangements. When the meeting is in West Virginia, DC MAC members should volunteer to help with local arrangements.
2. Consider eliminating the banquet as a program event at the annual meeting.
3. Hold joint meetings, when possible. Consider other chapters, state library associations and SLA. Joint meetings would present a larger audience to vendors.
4. Consider setting a total amount for all program expenses (including speaker honoraria and per diem expenses) and allow Program Committee to set spending priorities.
5. Use a program planner when needed and figure cost into meeting expenses.
6. Schedule the MAC annual meeting at a time when the majority of MAC members can attend. (Task Force members suggest sticking with an October date.)
7. Allow the Local Arrangements Committee latitude in trying various formats for the meeting:
 - One day - Welcome Reception night before, Speaker, Business Meeting lunch, two or three half-day CE (no vendors)
 - One day - Welcome Reception (or not) night before, Contributed Papers, Poster Session, Business Meeting lunch, CE classes (no vendors)
 - Two day - Welcome Reception (or not), CE day, second day for Program and Business Meeting. OR - First day for Program and Business Meeting and second day for CE.
8. Strive for better coordination between the LAC, Program Committee and Professional Development Committee. The three committees should hold a joint meeting in October at the annual meeting, or as soon after as possible to begin coordinated planning for the following year's annual meeting.
9. The MAC Chair should designate a group (possibly the Publications Committee) to review the LAC P & P Manual with the goal of streamlining it and assuring agreement with the MAC Policy and Procedures Manual. After the review, this document should be posted on the MAC web site. Changes could be made annually by each new LAC.

MAC Policies and Procedures

Meeting and Honoraria Expenses

- I. *Policy - MAC meetings should be a fully cost recovery operation, while keeping costs affordable to most members. Exceptions to this policy are made by a majority vote of the MAC Executive Board.*
 - A. The *Local Arrangements, Program and Professional Development* Committees should present a proposed budget for *meeting expenses and income* for approval by the MAC Executive Board at its Winter meeting or shortly thereafter.
 - B. Travel and one day's meal and lodging expenses will be paid for invited speakers, with exceptions noted below. *Invited speakers will be allotted \$35 per diem for meals.****
 - C. Honoraria for MAC members
 1. MAC members who are invited speakers will **NOT** receive honoraria or have their registration *fee* waived.
 2. MAC members who are asked to lead a Demonstration Sharing Session or a Special Interest Group will **NOT** receive honoraria or have their registration *fee* waived.
 3. MLA members who reside in or work in the MAC area boundaries, but are **NOT** members will **NOT** have their registration fee waived or receive honoraria.
 - D. Honoraria and expenses for CE instructors
 1. The meeting registration fee for CE instructors will **NOT** be waived.
 2. In addition to honoraria, CE instructors will be paid travel expenses and one day's meals and lodging expenses, whether they are not MAC members or not. *CE instructors will be allotted \$35 per diem for meals.****
 - E. Exceptions
 1. *Deviation from the practices mentioned above may be made by a majority vote of the Executive Board.*
 2. The Program or Professional Development Chair may make deviation from other limits without the approval of the Executive Board when it results in keeping costs down. For example, the Program or Professional Development Chair may decide to pay more than one night's lodging and meal expenses when the speaker/CE instructor stays over Saturday night to get a reduced airfare.

II. Procedures

- A. Hotel reservations for invited speakers and invited CE instructors will be made by the LAC.
- B. The Program Committee will notify speakers directly regarding honoraria. *The Professional Development Committee will notify CE instructors directly regarding honoraria.* A MAC/MLA Personal Reimbursement Voucher should be sent to these speakers/*CE instructors* by the Program *or Professional Development Committee Chair* (see Travel Assistance). *Both the Program and Professional Development Committee Chair should send the MAC Treasurer a list of anticipated expenses for each invited speaker/CE instructor at least one month prior to the Annual Meeting.*
- C. Participants not eligible for honoraria will be notified by the Program Committee in writing before they are confirmed.

*** On September 12, 1997, the MAC Executive Board approved a \$35 per diem meal limit. This was not added to the MAC P & P Manual. See *MAC Messages*, #65, page 1.

Changes to the existing policy are indicated by italics.