

# **Midwest Chapter of the Medical Library Association**

## **Annual Meeting Guide**

Prepared in 1971-73 by Jean V. Hawkins and Joanne Crispen

Revised in 1978-79 by Ad Hoc Committee to Update the Program Guide

Revised in 1980 by the Executive Committee Subcommittee on Program Planning

Revised in 1986 by Judy Madson and the Executive Board

Revised in 1993 by Program Committee

Revised in 2003 by Phyllis Nathan, Annual Meetings Chair

Revised in 2005 by Donna Barbour-Talley, Annual Meetings Chair

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. PURPOSE STATEMENT AND INTRODUCTION
- II. HOSTING AN ANNUAL MEETING
- III. PLANNING THE MEETING — GENERAL INFORMATION
- IV. CONFERENCE COORDINATOR'S DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES
- V. COMMITTEES
- VI. FINANCE & BUDGET
  - A. Mission Statement
  - B. Policy
  - C. Accounts and Authority
  - D. Cash Grant
  - E. Tax Exemption/FEIN
  - F. Budget
  - G. Overages/Losses and Profits
- VII. EXHIBITS
  - A. General Information
  - B. Suggestions
- VIII. REGISTRATION
- IX. PROGRAM
  - A. General Information
  - B. Speakers
  - C. Honoraria
  - D. Contributed Papers/Poster Sessions
  - E. At the Conference
- X. CE
- XI. PUBLICITY
  - A. General Information
  - B. Mailings
  - C. Timelines
  - D. Website
- XII. HOTEL ARRANGEMENTS
- XIII. HOSPITALITY
- XIV. FINAL REPORT
- XV. REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES
- XVI. ARCHIVAL CHECKLIST/ TYPES OF MATERIAL TO BE ARCHIVED
- XVII. TIMELINE

*The purpose of Midwest Chapter/Medical Library Association shall be to stimulate and foster interest in health science libraries and librarianship; to increase the knowledge of the membership by sponsoring education programs and courses; to acquaint persons interested in health science libraries and librarianship with the Medical Library Association (hereafter abbreviated MLA); to encourage development of and cooperation among health science libraries; and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and the discussion of mutual problems and concerns.*

(From the By-Laws of the Midwest Chapter/MLA)

## I. INTRODUCTION

The ANNUAL MEETING GUIDE\* (name change-2003) has been the work of many people for several years. The Midwest/Chapter/MLA (hereafter called the Chapter) programs are becoming more and more sophisticated and require correspondingly more and more planning. Consequently, the guide is arranged so the future revisions can be easily done to insure its maximum use.

Jean Hawkins, MRG/MLA President for 1971, and Joanne Crispen, the 1972-73 Chapter President, were responsible for the beginnings of the Program Guide, and their work and spirit undergird it. Acknowledgement of the program planning problems that were not answered by the guide prompted the establishment in 1977 of an Ad Hoc Committee to update the Program Guide. This Committee tried to make the guide more responsive to the need of program chairpersons, and to build into it the means for constant improvement to meet the changing needs of the organization.

Copies of the First Edition (1973), as well as the Second Edition (1978-79) are available at the Chapter Archives. In 1980, a Subcommittee was appointed within the Executive Committee to revise the guide further, and to present plans to 1) maintain an accurate and useful program guide, and 2) facilitate better communication between the Executive Committee and the program planners. The Third Edition (1980) of the Program Guide consisted of two parts: Part 1 (this portion) and Part 2 (samples from past meetings). The Fifth Edition (1993) of the Program Guide includes revisions approved by the Executive Board in an attempt to make the guide appropriate for current users.

The Sixth Edition (2003), now called THE ANNUAL MEETING GUIDE, was revised by the Chapter's Annual Meeting Chair, (new name of Chapter's Program Committee) Phyllis Nathan, who is the liaison between the Chapter and the conference planners. The 2003 edition includes revisions and additions in the following sections 1) Conference Coordinator Duties (known in earlier editions as Program Coordinator), and 2) Committees. Additional sections have been added 1) guidelines to reimbursement issues and 2) samples of forms from the 2001 meeting in Milwaukee.

The Seventh Edition (2005) incorporated the Chapter's Meeting Finance Policy and Archives guidelines. Additional detail was added regarding new electronic options in committee communication and registration.

## II. HOSTING AN ANNUAL MEETING

The Midwest Chapter's annual meeting is held for 3 to 4 days in September or October. It consists of two days of programming, plus an MLA update, vendor exhibits, and continuing education courses. Cooperative sessions with the Greater Midwest Regional (GMR), state meetings, and other activities (such as the HealthWeb meeting) may be held in conjunction with the annual meeting. Headquarters and most program sessions are based in one hotel or conference center, providing social opportunities for the Chapter members to renew friendship as well as to attend program sessions.

The Annual Meeting will be held in various locations throughout the nine state Midwest Region. A rotation list of states for the annual meeting was approved at the March 2003 Executive Board Meeting based on the schedule in existence at the time:

- 2005 North Dakota
- 2006 Kentucky
- 2007 Iowa
- 2008 Michigan
- 2009 Ohio
- 2010 Wisconsin
- 2011 Minnesota
- 2012 Indiana
- 2013 Illinois

Any local group or organization of the hosting state who can provide adequate accommodations and program resources may offer to host the meeting. An invitation should be sent to the Chapter President, who will seek approval at the next Executive Board Meeting.

If the hosting city has a Convention Bureau or a Chamber of Commerce, they should be contacted early. Often they can give help with an RFP for hotel selection, welcome from local officials, and promotional materials. Some offer online registration and other conference support services as well.

### III. PLANNING THE MEETING - GENERAL INFORMATION

The Conference Coordinator(s) along with her/his/their Committee Chairs should begin preliminary meeting planning 1½ to 2 years prior to the expected date of the meeting. Hotels and convention facilities are often booked this far in advance, so securing your preferred dates of even a particular month could require a lead time of two years.

The planning process should begin with development of a timeline that identifies tasks to be accomplished, who will accomplish them, and by what date they should be completed all this is essential in keeping the process flowing smoothly.

While it is the responsibility of the sponsoring/hosting group to select meeting dates based on the availability of local facilities, every effort should be made to select dates that do not conflict with religious holidays or with previously-scheduled activities/meetings of other national, regional, state or local library professional organizations.

If a Sponsoring/Hosting Group needs assistance in planning and carrying out the meeting, it is acceptable to invite any regional, state, or local health science librarians' group to participate. However, overlapping responsibilities, scheduling difficulties and financial arrangements could become problems. The Sponsoring/Hosting Group's primary responsibility is to the Chapter membership; scheduling, programming, and financial arrangements should reflect this responsibility. Joint meetings with other chapters should be undertaken only with clear communication of the responsibilities and financial arrangements of each group.

The planning committee should review past programs, assess current trends and problems, as well as the interests of the group to determine a program theme. Often evaluations of the previous meeting indicate possible program choices. Remember that many librarians must submit request for funds a year in advance, and knowing subject content aids in receiving administrative approval for attending a meeting.

The Chapter Archives Committee maintains complete records of our annual meetings. The planning committee should review the Archival Checklist in this guide for the items recommended to be saved for the Chapter Archives. When in doubt, keep EVERYTHING! At the conclusion of the meeting, send all materials to the Chapter Archives.

#### IV. CONFERENCE COORDINATOR'S DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The group offering to sponsor/host an annual meeting should designate an individual or individuals as the Conference Coordinator(s) to be responsible for all arrangements for the meeting. The Conference Coordinator(s) will in turn appoint various committee heads who will handle details of various aspects of the meeting.

The Conference Coordinator will serve on the Midwest's Executive Board, as a nonvoting member, for approximately a three-year term, beginning immediately upon confirmation of their selection but no later than the Spring Executive Board meeting two years prior to their Annual Meeting and continuing until the final report is received/approved by the Board at the Spring Board meeting following the conference.

At each Board meetings, the Conference Coordinator(s) will report plans, progress and receive input from the Board on their expectations. Coordinators need not make them in person, unless requested to do so by the President. Throughout the planning period, the Conference Coordinator is asked to keep the Chapter's Annual Meetings Chair informed. Minutes of planning meetings, preliminary budget plans and progress reports are essential for this purpose. The Annual Meetings Chair will act as the sponsoring/hosting group's liaison with the Chapter. The Chair has funds available to travel to at least one planning meeting and is always available throughout the planning process for consultation and assistance.

The Conference Coordinator(s) sends an invitation to the Chapter President which is brought before the Executive Board to host the annual meeting in their state. The Conference Coordinator and the local planning committee, with guidance from the Annual Meetings Chair, will establish a budget for the conference. After approval of the budget, the Treasurer will establish an account for the conference finances with an initial deposit of \$1500 from the Chapter. Either the Conference Coordinator or the Finance and Budget Chair will be authorized by the Treasurer as the Chapter's representative to the hotel or meeting facility, within the limits of the line of credit extended in the hotel or meeting facility contract.

The Conference Coordinator(s), the Hotel Arrangement Chair and possibly the Finance and Budget Chair are usually involved with the initial negotiations with the hotel. A contract is usually required by the hotel to hold space and can be signed by the authorized representative with written approval from the Treasurer. Some of the things that the contract should include are the cost of the sleeping rooms, cost and number of meeting rooms (question if rooms that are being used for food functions have a charge — some hotels will not charge for ANY meeting rooms, if all food functions and breaks are held at the hotel), etc. The contract should also have some provision for complimentary rooms for every \_\_\_ number of revenue-producing nights occupied by the group, perhaps calculated on a cumulative basis (complimentary units may be used for speakers or MLA guests).

The Conference Coordinator(s) must extend an invitation to the MLA Board and the MLA Executive Director to attend the annual meeting. (see section XV on reimbursement). Registration and ticketed events should be waived for MLA officers and/or Board members not residing in the Chapter's region, but those MLA officers and/or Board Members residing within the Chapter boundaries may not have fees waived, as they should be attending their own Chapter's annual meeting.

At the end of the meeting, the Conference Coordinator(s) should send thank you notes to Committee Chairs and in turn the Chairs should send notes of thanks to their committee members.

## V. COMMITTEES

The following items are the areas of planning that must be considered. One individual or a committee can be responsible for each area, and reports should be made to the Conference Coordinator regularly. The Chair or members on each committee will determine how work assignments will be accomplished.

The following committees will be needed:

1. Finance & Budget
2. Exhibits
3. Registration
4. Program
5. CE
6. Publicity/Promotion
7. Hotel Arrangements
8. Hospitality

The chairs of these committees are considered the Conference Coordinating Committee. Several states have shared information between committees quite successfully by conference calls, e-mail, or a blog, rather than meetings.

Past committees have suggested that it would be helpful to have a secretary appointed for the Conference Coordinating Committee to handle meeting minutes, to-do lists and invitations.

## **VI. FINANCE & BUDGET**

### **A. Mission Statement**

The Midwest Chapter / Medical Library Association (the Chapter) rotates its annual meeting among the nine states in the Chapter in order to bring a high quality regional conference and continuing education opportunities within geographic reach of all Chapter members. The hosting state or local organization (the Host) should make a good faith effort to meet all the expenses of the conference with revenue from registration, vendor fees and contributions. The goal is to make the conference affordable to as many members as possible.

### **B. Policy**

Under the guidance of the Annual Meetings Chair, the Conference Coordinating Committee will create a conference budget and submit it to the Chapter Treasurer (the Treasurer) for approval. Upon acceptance of the budget, the Treasurer will open books for the conference, which will be available to the Committee at any time. The Committee will submit all contracts, invoices, and receipts to the Treasurer for signature, deposit or payment. The Treasurer will deposit all funds and make all payments in a timely manner using Chapter bank accounts. Payment requests do not require the signature of the Chapter President. However, expenses in excess of 125% of any single budget line must be approved by the Chapter Board prior to payment.

Chapter expenses, such as the Board Meeting and President's hotel room, will be paid by the Treasurer from Chapter accounts and will not be credited or debited to the conference, though they may be included in the contract or line of credit with the hotel or meeting facility. At the conclusion of the conference, the Treasurer will close the books, present a detailed report and full copy of the books to the Committee, and pay 50% of net profits, if any, to the Hosting Group. The Host will not be liable for losses. All conference books and finances are subject to audit under existing Chapter policies and procedures.

It is expected that the Hosting Group will make timely reports and handle finances responsibly. The Board reserves the right to assess a portion of any loss to the Hosting Group if the procedures for approval of expenditures have not been followed.

### **C. Accounts and Authority**

The Chapter Treasurer will control all bank accounts and retain all signature authority for contracts and other documents obligating the Chapter financially. The Host will have no authority to commit the Chapter legally or financially without authorization from the Treasurer. A representative of the Host should be authorized by the Treasurer as the Chapter's representative to the hotel or meeting facility, within the limits of the line of credit extended in the hotel or meeting facility contract. The authorized representative of the Host will normally sign the hotel or meeting facility contract, with written approval from the Treasurer.

### **D. Cash Grant**

The Chapter will provide a cash grant of \$1500 to be used as seed money for the conference committee's expenses. In the larger budget, the grant should be used to enhance the program: i.e., to obtain speakers and/or develop a program for the meeting.

### **E. Tax Exemption/FEIN**

The Midwest Chapter is a 501c3 organization through the Medical Library Association; however, we do not have exemption from sales tax in all states. Check with the Treasurer for the specifics for your state. The Chapter also has a FEIN (Federal Employer Identification Number) which should appear on any paperwork for payments made to the Chapter such as the registration form, exhibitor contract, sponsorship agreement, etc.

## **F. Budget**

The Annual Meetings Chair maintains budget information from each conference and can assist in the developing the general outline. In estimating costs, anticipate a 5% to 20% increase in costs between original planning and the actual meeting.

Items of income will include registration fees, fees from social events, exhibitor donations and rental space, CE course fees, and the cash grant from the Chapter.

Items considered expenses of presenting the meeting may include costs of printing, publicity, mailing, meeting rooms, food, entertainment, speakers' travel and fees, exhibit facilities, utilities, shipping conference-related documents to the archives, table center pieces or decorator items, signage, group transportation, AV rental, and the usual "miscellaneous."

Chapter officers and members of the Executive Committee pay their own way and the Conference Coordinator(s) does not assume any financial responsibility for them.

Each Sponsoring/Hosting Group's situation and local arrangements will be different; each will find different needs to be included in the budget. However, all sponsoring/hosting groups will find preparation of a workable budget to be a challenging task that cannot be taken lightly.

## **G. Overages/Losses and Profits**

The Chapter does not encourage either financial overages or losses, so the Sponsoring/Hosting Group is expected to balance income and expenses as closely as possible. If there is an overage, this will be equally divided between the Chapter and one Sponsoring/Hosting Group. If two or more local groups jointly host the meeting, they will constitute one Sponsoring/Hosting Group. The Sponsoring/Hosting Group will receive 50% of the overage and the Chapter will receive 50% of the overage. The two or more local groups constituting the Sponsoring/Hosting Group will divide the 50% of the overage at their own discretion.

The Executive Board recognizes the fact that the potential for a financial loss could discourage groups from assuming the responsibility of sponsoring/hosting an annual meeting. Therefore, in the event of a loss, the Chapter will be liable. The established budget controls, which require Board approval for expenditures in excess of 125% of the budgeted amount, should limit this liability in most instances.

## **VII. EXHIBITS**

### **A. General Information**

Exhibitors make significant contributions to the meeting through rental fees, displays and sponsorships. There are no standard exhibitor fees set by the Chapter. Monetary and gift contributions as well as sponsorships of breaks, keynote sessions, etc. may be solicited from any company. Early contacts are essential for securing commitments from exhibitors or contributions. An introductory letter to each vendor is appropriate with a contract included. The vendor should sign the contract and return it to the Exhibits Chair with the full understanding that the exhibit fee must be paid in full prior to the meeting. If possible, a deposit should be requested with the returned contract to hold a place for the vendor. A reminder letter always seems necessary.

\*The exhibit fee should at least include the one-day registration (including meals) for \_\_\_ people (number decided by the committee). If the vendor is a speaker, they still only have one-day of free registration--- either speaker day or exhibit day. (\*It is really up to the committee if they wish to extend full registration to exhibitors---be sure to check if this will be workable in the budget).

Recently, the exhibits have been on only one day of the meeting, but not on the last day.

Exhibitors and contributors are, however, guests of the Chapter and their promotional activities still must be acceptable to the Sponsoring/Hosting Group.

Vendors wishing "Sunrise" sessions are charged an additional fee.

If the Conference Committee elects to provide an attendee list to requesting vendors before the meeting, the registration form must provide an "opt-out" box for attendees not wanting their name given. Vendors must be told that they are allowed to use the list only for meeting promotional purposes and only up to the meeting date. (Executive Board approval Sept. 2003).

Exhibits by MLA, GMR, and other local groups should be included, although fees for these groups may be waived.

### **B. Suggestions**

- 1) Avoid programming during the time the exhibits first open.
- 2) Give vendors time to address the attendees concerning their new products (not more than 5 minutes a piece if they are speaking at the end of a program)
- 3) Raffles in the exhibit area bring attendees into to browse (raffled items would be donations from the vendors)
- 4) Check and double-check vendor placement so competitors are not located near each other.
- 5) Thank you notes in vendor program packets. Small host gifts (e.g. local candy) are optional.
- 6) In calculating fees for "Sunrise" sessions be sure to take into consideration 1) cost of room, 2) cost of breakfast and 3) the profit you wish to make.
- 7) Check with the hotel about arrangements for shipping materials for the exhibits; the name of the meeting should appear on the shipping label. Some hotels have restrictions about how long they will hold materials so the timing of shipments is important.

