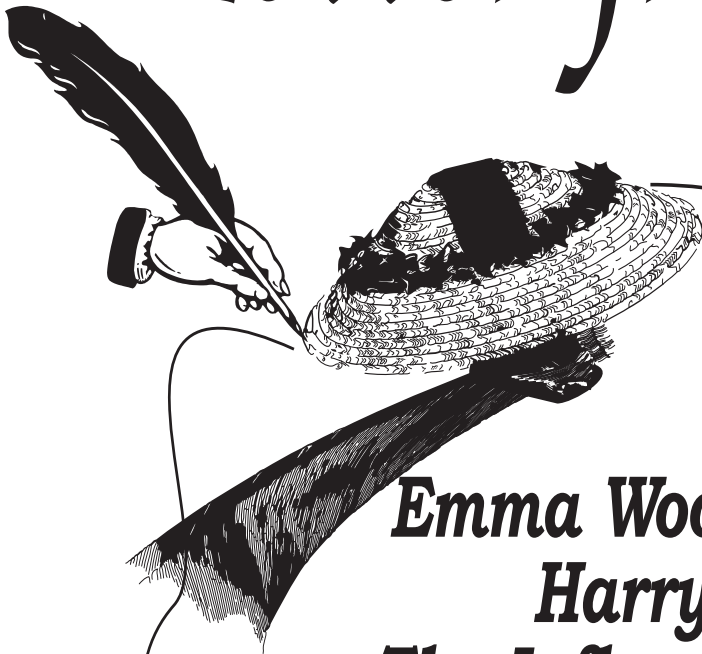


Letter from Chicago

Summer 2008



**Emma Woodhouse and
Harry Potter:
The Influence of Austen
on J.K. Rowling**
presented by Jane Davis

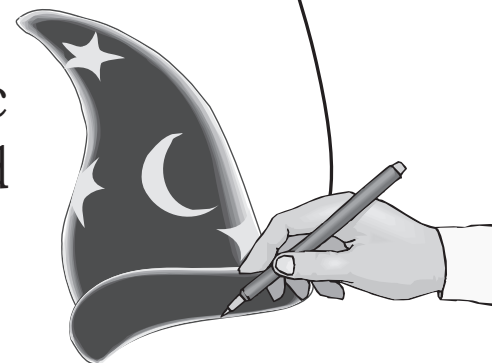
September 20, 2008

Sulzer Library
4455 N. Lincoln Avenue, Chicago, IL
1:00–3:30 pm

Free and open to the public
Refreshments will be served

My favorite

write writer of all time is Jane Austen.



Membership renewals due

Annual Regional Membership

- **One-Year JASNA-GCR Membership Dues are as follows:**
\$25.00 for an Individual
\$35.00 for a Family (Two family members at the same address)
- **Membership dues cover the present to August 31, 2009**
- **Membership includes newsletters and discounts on JASNA-GCR events**
- **Please fill out this form and return with check made out to JASNA-GCR or renew online at www.jasnachicago.org**

Important Information: This form and your payment are for Regional Dues only.

Our Charter requires you to join or renew with our parent JASNA National Organization requiring **separate dues**. The National Organization membership form is available online at www.jasna.org.

Check one: Renewing Member New Member

Name: _____

Street Address: _____ Apt. No. _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____ - _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Please indicate if any of the above information has changed, so that we may update our records. Your complete address, including apartment number and 9-digit zip code, will help ensure timely delivery of mail. If you are not receiving regular e-mails from JASNA-GCR, please provide your current e-mail address to be used for all online transactions.

DUES and CONTRIBUTIONS

AMOUNT ENCLOSED

I am enclosing \$\$ for JASNA-GCR Regional Dues 2009:

- \$25.00 for an Individual _____
- \$35.00 for a Family _____
- \$25.00 for a 2008 Gift Membership _____
- Contribution to JASNA-GCR _____

TOTAL _____

Send my Gift Membership to (please provide name and address):

Mail this form with your check to:

Treasurer, JASNA-GCR—c/o Elsie Holzwarth, 1410 E. 55th St., Chicago IL 60615-5409

If you have any questions, e-mail jasnagcr@sbcglobal.net or call Martha Jameson, Membership, at (312) 654-1346. For more information, visit our web site www.jasnachicago.org.

Natalie Goldberg

Our fall business meeting, September 20 at the Sulzer Library in Chicago, is the last event before our AGM. Our own **Jane Davis** will preview her Saturday afternoon AGM Breakout Session, *Emma Woodhouse and Harry Potter: The Influence of Austen on J.K. Rowling*. Perhaps because of my grandchildren (one was Hermione and the other was Harry for Halloween), I have become a Harry Potter fan, so I was especially intrigued by Jane's topic. I have read the Potter books, seen the movies, and reread the books! Some of the names are clues that Rowling is an Austen fan. Who could miss that nasty cat Mrs. Norris? But this connection goes to poor Fanny's plight at *Mansfield Park*. I'm curious to know how Jane will connect my favorite novel, *Emma*, to this wonderful fantasy series.

Our Jane Austen Dance Practice on June 20, a preview to the AGM Regency Ball, was delightful. Thanks to Dance Mistress **Mady Newfield** and Dance Caller **Tom Senior**, within minutes forty of us learned the figures and danced to the music of our AGM band, *Putting on Aires*. Most fun was the complicated dance, *Mr. Beveridge's Maggot*, which Elizabeth and Darcy danced at the Netherfield Ball. It is no small feat to follow the dance steps and speak lines. I can understand Mr. Collins' awkwardness and appreciate why Darcy had to be teased into conversation! We know that Jane Austen was fond of dancing, bragging to her sister about her twenty dances at a ball. As customary for Austen's day, we changed partners for each new set. It was a wonderful way to meet and make new friends and for novices to learn from the more experienced dancers.

Everywhere we look, people are celebrating Jane Austen. Check out the latest *Persuasions On-Line* (Spring 2008) for more insight into Global Austen. Several of the writers will be speaking at our AGM.

After many years of anticipation, the Chicago AGM is this October. Be sure to look at our website (<http://jasna.org/agms/chicago/>). The good news is that we are completely booked. The AGM opens with **Jeff Nigro's** "curtain raiser" on Thursday evening, *Visualizing Jane Austen*. Our keynote address is by the foremost Austen scholar today, **Claudia Johnson**. Her seminal work, *Jane Austen: Women, Politics and the Novel*, examined Austen's response to political upheavals of her time and proved her relevance to contemporary issues. Our North American Scholars' Panel starts the conversation on the range of Austen's global influence, and our third plenary session, the ever entertaining **Joan Ray**, introduces an ironic twist on introductions to Austen in *Jane Austen for Smarties!* Two general sessions focus on transforming Austen's work to musical productions, with some live music, and two panels will take up two distinctive legacies of Austen—the mystery novel and romance fiction. Breakout sessions and poster sessions are an embarrassment of riches. The most difficult part of filling out the registration form is deciding which breakout session to attend! The legacy lives on in breakouts on tourism, gardening, films, and later writers. Some of the most creative approaches to Austen's legacy are in the poster sessions, so be sure to stop by to learn about Jane Austen and global warming, food, cartoons, and perfumes.



Jane's Chicago Shuffle

Better mark down these important dates:
October two through five,
'Cause that is when we meet to keep
Jane's legacy alive.

She's been in London, Chawton, Bath,
(though the last one took some fighting.)
And once we even heard her cry—"O, Mum,
I want to go to Brighton!"*

But now we get our turn to shine,
That's why this little ditty,
For the twenty-oh-eight Austen AGM
Comes to our Windy City!

So being members of great Sensibility and
Sense,
You'll want to sign up all your friends
And volunteer and hence. . .

We'll put on one Big-Shouldered Show,
Jane and Theater, Jane and Romance,
We'll learn about Austen's Gardens,
Even view Colin Firth on some vague
Pretense.

Then we'll hit the town and see the sights,
Take a river cruise so cool,
And, if we care, we'll dance a jig,
In bonnet and reticule.

And when we're done and shown our best,
Our friends will happily concede.
They'll say, "That was well done, Chicago,
Well done, well done indeed!"

Elisabeth and John Lenckos

*We have taken artistic license here: This is Lydia Bennet's cry from the heart in the 1995 BBC version of *Pride and Prejudice*.



AGM Prelude in Oak Park

In May, beautiful Oak Park, one of the excursion destinations during the 2008 Chicago AGM, hosted a popular series of Jane Austen activities: teas, lectures, book and film discussions, which drew many new enthusiastic Austenites. On May 19 Jeanne Friedell, Director of the Dole Branch Library, located in the lovely, historic building that was once a ladies' college, hosted **Dr. Elisabeth Lenckos**, who spoke on *Jane Austen and Love* and invited newly inspired Austen fans to join JASNA and attend the AGM in October. Interest in the lecture had been so great that reservations were close to exceeding room capacity, and the fire marshal had to be called in to give a head count! The audience listened most attentively to the lecture, which focused on Austen and her philosophy of love as an important force in the personal development and social wellbeing of Austen's characters. The question-and-answer period was lively, erudite and showed that visitors were both avid readers and connoisseurs of Austen. The audience also reflected the amazing variety that makes up the readership of Jane Austen; half the room consisted of college and high school students, the other half ranged from mature students of Austen to reading octogenarians. The group also boasted many men, who were not shy in asking questions; one Oak Park Austenite even brought her husband to celebrate his birthday! Dr. Lenckos' University of Chicago Graham School students were also present. Many people expressed interest to visit and volunteer for the upcoming AGM. The positive reactions to the lecture, the many passionate testimonies to the love of Jane Austen, the cordial atmosphere, and the lively exchange of ideas made for a very special evening and gave attendees an idea of what a wonderful event the 2008 Chicago AGM promises to be!

On May 3 our Greater Chicago Region held its Annual Gala, this year called *Among the Heirs of Austen: A Celebration of Four Centuries*. With a brunch buffet and an ice cream buffet at the Allerton Hotel, GCR got a head start on the AGM we are hosting in Chicago in October. Gala arrangements were by **Beverly Roth**; the program was organized by **William Phillips**; centerpieces were handmade by **Lori Davis** and flowers arranged by **Pat Wieber**; the toast to Jane Austen was given by **Anne Hathaway Davis**. Custom-made Regency garments were brought by **Martha Capraratta**.

Celebrating the 18th century, **Professor Joseph Wiesenfarth** discussed Austen's juvenilia in which we see the "world of raw emotions her later novels brought under control." In *A Collection of Letters* Henrietta Halton wishes her uncle and aunt dead on the spot. In *A Letter from a Young Lady* Austen writes of Anna Parker "there is scarcely a crime she has not committed." Sukey Simpson, in *Jack and Alice*, poisons Lucy after failing to cut her throat. In the juvenilia "propriety is not a consideration. In her mature fiction there is a price to pay when the role of propriety is breached." Austen "judged the books she read and the people she observed" and she had "clear insight since the age of 14." The juvenilia are "quicker than the novels." *Frederic and Elfrida* contains 3 love affairs within 5 chapters in 8 pages. Austen is "a genius as a storyteller who loves an orderly structure, episode to episode, beneath disorderly events."

Celebrating the 19th century, **Kathleen (Mrs. Robert Newberry) McCreary** introduced us to **Julia Newberry** whose Diary, from June, 1869 through October, 1871, was published in 1933. She was 16 to 17-1/2 years old when she wrote it, and was described as "a saucy nix", "a trenchant social critic" with "smoldering, imperious eyes." Although the Newberrys' home was in

Chicago, Julia spent much of her life in Europe. She notes her father's admonition, "Be somebody, Julia." But she confides, "Situated as I am it is more likely I shall have a comfortable life and be forgotten." On hearing of the Chicago Fire of 1871 she laments, "One-half of Chicago is in ashes; every memory of my home is gone; not a thing was saved from our house; not a morsel left of the letters Papa wrote to me, no, not one. Oh misery, all my journals, a record of all my ideas since I first began to have any." Julia was the last surviving child of Walter Loomis Newberry who had made his fortune in shipping, banking and real estate. After her death in 1876 his estate enabled the Newberry Library, an independent research library in Chicago, to be born.

Celebrating the 20th and 21st centuries, **Vickie Hinshaw** told us about **Georgette Heyer** (1902-1974), 26 of whose 56 novels are set in the Regency period. Although technically from 1811-1820, in the arts the Regency period often starts with the 1789 French Revolution and ends with the 1837 crowning of Queen Victoria. Heyer was a "devotee of the British Library when it was in the British Museum." She was the family breadwinner and her husband helped her with research. *Regency Buck* is the first of her Regency novels. In *The Corinthian* she created a character like Mr. Darcy. The *Grand Sophy* has a main character "who is Emma on steroids; managing the lives of all her cousins." A Catherine de Bourgh-like character appears in *The Quiet Gentleman*. The period 1808-1841 is covered in *The Spanish Bride*. The 1815 Battle of Waterloo is the setting for *An Infamous Army*. Hinshaw is a Regency Romance writer and active JASNA member. "Today the Regency setting is the most popular in historical novels." Hinshaw finds an "interesting puzzle" in the question: "How can we re-create a real Regency woman and give readers someone to care about?"

Gala Photos



Speaker Victoria Hinshaw, Elinor Midlik and Cathy Feldman



Speaker Joseph Wiesenfarth



Speaker Kathleen McCreary with GCR quilt



Anne and Lori Davis



Amy and Kathleen Hoke



Emily and Ellen Murphy



Esther and Hume An



Martha Carpraratta and Stefanie Piatkiewicz



Martha Jameson and Jane Davis



Natalie Goldberg and AGM volunteer coordinator Marianne Newman



Jean Claeys and Gala Founder Maggie Hunt-Cohn

Austen's Legacy

Why *this* theme for JASNA's 2008 Annual General Meeting? It was all **Joän Pawelski's** idea. AGM themes have often been about one of Austen's novels. Our regional coordinator at the time, she put in a bid for the Greater Chicago Region to host another AGM (our previous one was in 1988). Joän says she "was looking for something different." She thought, "It was time to pause and reflect before we go into the bicentenaries of Austen's move to Chawton, the publishing of the novels, and Austen's death."

JASNA President **Marsha Huff** says, "The 2008 conference is perhaps the most ambitious ever undertaken by an AGM host committee. It is a near-comprehensive survey of 200 years of begging, borrowing, and stealing from our favorite author."

Austen's legacy is reflected in some of the toasts given at our annual Galas. In 2003 GCR member **Luanne Redmond** reminded us, "We are here to celebrate a writer who understood quite clearly the concept of balance.

She knew that handsome young men must have something to live on, as well as the plain. She enjoyed the view from a picturesque hilltop, but she also loved the peace of a well-ordered garden. She understood that 'though a lady might be a great reader, in a ballroom her head is likely to be full of something else. She appreciated the value of enjoying a good laugh, while at the same time refraining from ridiculing that which is wise or good.

In a very different time and place, we are trying to balance some of the same concerns as Jane Austen and her characters—love, money, work, family responsibilities. And we keep returning to



her works in part because she understands so well the importance of a balanced life. In her characters and in her own life, we see that it is possible to pursue this balance without losing one's grace, perspective, or sense of humor.

And so we raise a glass to love and to a comfortable home; to reading and to dancing; to passion and to restraint; to sense and sensibility—to Jane Austen."

Five years later **Anne Hathaway Davis**, who has just graduated from high school, told us at our recent Gala: "Long before I opened *Northanger Abbey* or *Emma*, I was devouring Georgette Heyer's literature because I found it was both witty and vivacious. My mother owns the book-on-tape *Arabella*, and Miss Arabella Tallant has helped me clean my room countless times. *The Talisman Ring* owns a place in my heart as my favorite book. In the last few years, the audio version has spent more time on our home library shelf than it has in the public library. We think the Wheaton Library should borrow it from us!

Miss Austen, I know that Georgette Heyer used your works as her model. If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then you should feel flattered indeed! By penning your six novels, you've inspired hundreds more! Thank you for giving us your children . . . and your children's children."

E-books! HELP!

Have you read any e-books? Do you use an Amazon Kindle or a Sony Reader, or do you download books? We want to hear from you! Please tell us your “e-reading” experiences. How does “e-reading” compare with reading a book with paper pages? And what about listening to books? Will traditional books become obsolete? Please e-mail your comments and opinions to eholzwarth@cometlink.com. We’d like to print them. Your correspondent was squeezed very tightly into a packed elevator next to a man reading a book on his Kindle. Upon disembarking, as it were, he extolled its virtues and the ease with which books can be read.

The publishing house Penguin Group reported a huge growth in sales of e-books and has developed its *Penguin Enhanced e-Book Classics*. The first title in that series is *Pride and Prejudice* “showcasing an array of features including a filmography, book reviews from the time of the original publication of the novel, a chronology of Jane Austen’s life and times, recipes, instructions on period dancing, social etiquette, and how to prepare a tea, a literary tour of famous Austen sites, black-and-white illustrations of fashion, home décor, and architecture, and much more. *Penguin E-Classic* titles will feature the same beautiful cover art and classic dress as the actual printed books. A burst on the covers will denote the ‘E’ enhanced features.” Anyone who reads it, please give us a review.

**Membership dues
are now due.**

Sold

According to BBC News, “a new world record auction price for a printed book by Austen” was recently set at the London auction house Bonhams. A 3-volume first edition of *Emma*, published in 1816, “fetched” £180,000, the equivalent of about \$353,500. The inscription is to Anne Sharp “from the Author.” Anne Sharp was the governess hired by Austen’s brother Edward and whom Austen met at Godmersham. “Jane Austen was allocated twelve presentation copies by the publisher John Murray. Of these, nine were sent to family members (including Jane herself), one to the librarian of the Prince Regent (to whom the work was dedicated), and one to Countess Morley, these last under obligation from the publisher. The present copy is the only one given to a personal friend, testament to the strength of Jane’s feelings for Anne.”



Dancing

Spotted on June 20, in the marble-floored grand ballroom of the Oak Park Arms Retirement Community, were GCR members taking lessons and practicing their country dance steps, as a warm-up to the AGM Ball, under the tutelage of **Mady Newfield** and **Tom Senior**, with music by the group *Putting on Aires*. They will also be leading the dance workshops at the AGM.

Emma

Our member **Linda Reinert** and her students at Wheaton North High School would like to thank JASNA-GCR for our grant to purchase copies of “*Pride and Prejudice*” and “*Emma*.” The students also viewed the PBS productions. Here are some of their comments.

Allison thought: “Kate Beckinsale’s portrayal of Emma really bothered me. She seemed much more manipulative than I had imagined her to be. I pictured Emma being a little more sensitive and caring but



that didn’t come across to me very much in the film. Kate Beckinsale’s Emma may have been more true to the book and similar to how Emma really would have been, but Gwyneth

Paltrow’s version was how I imagined Emma. She made Emma much more likable and funny. Another character who bothered me in the Kate Beckinsale version was Mr. Knightley. He had a very cold, harsh temper, and I didn’t imagine him being that way. I just didn’t feel like Mr. Knightley was very friendly or likable in the movie. In the book, he’s the one character whom everyone enjoys being around and to whom they all look up, but that just didn’t come across in this version of *Emma*. As delivered in the Kate Beckinsale version, I just wasn’t crazy about the characters as I was in the book or in the Gwyneth Paltrow version.”

Abby comments: “Whenever one adapts a novel to a film version, certain aspects must be left out of the film, for time purposes, and others are accentuated. After reading the novel *Emma* and watching the PBS Kate Beckinsale version, this point became even more evident. Most surprising were the characters.

When reading a text, each character becomes somewhat formed to fit the reader’s imagination. For me, this was clear of Mr. John Knightley. In the novel, Mr. and Mrs. John Knightley come to visit Mr. Woodhouse and Emma Woodhouse. Whenever John spoke to either Emma or to his father-in-law, he seemed very cruel and completely unaware of the feelings of others. However, it is clear in the movie that he is simply sarcastic in his comments and means no real harm. It is very interesting to see the difference in situations between reading them and seeing them performed.”

Betsy reports: “For many years now I have been acquainted with the BBC version of *Emma*; I always thought it was a cute story. After reading the novel in class though, I find that the BBC version is a little harsh on Emma. Though she isn’t my favorite Austen heroine, she still had more compassion than what was portrayed in the movie. In the novel I took her for a foolish girl who had an oblivious misperception of the world around her. But her character in the movie seems somewhat conniving and rude. The Box Hill moment stood out very clearly to me. In the novel, it seemed that her rude comment to Miss Bates was a matter of speaking before thinking, but the BBC adaptation showed a more a premeditated, sarcastic tone. With most Austen movies, I prefer the BBC versions because they usually follow the plot more and Hollywood versions never do the plot line credit. From reading the novel though, I have to say that the Hollywood version is better. The movie is more of a comedy and plays up the fun side of Austen’s writing. I have to say that by reading this story, I have fallen out of love with the BBC version and found a more humorous approach in the Hollywood one.”

Sense and Sensibility

The grand finale of the 3-month-long Austen celebration offers much for commentary—from the casting of the sisters, to the “casting” of Barton Cottage, to Andrew Davies’ adaptation. Davies’ longtime reputation as an adaptor of period novels rests on his ability to forge successful connections between Austen’s novel and a modern audience.

Davies starts with a shock—a seduction scene. Although central to its storyline, no such scene is described in the novel. My initial disappointment was minimized by well-paced scenes of ensuing events: Henry Dashwood’s deathbed request and demise, the deliciously evil dominance of Fanny in her acquisition of Norland Park, the sisters’ romantic dilemmas, Colonel Brandon’s past, all wrapped in beautiful cinematography. They soften the opening scene until its impact resurfaces in Colonel Brandon’s revelation that Willoughby had seduced and abandoned Eliza. The seduction would likely have been simultaneous with the death of Henry Dashwood, so the placement of these scenes side-by-side is forceful. The provocation of the opening scene underscores the poignancy of Marianne’s unchaperoned visit to Allenham and the imminent dangers of association with Willoughby—dangers otherwise likely lost on modern audiences.

Davies’ adaptation adds other ingredients for emotional credibility to a modern audience. Most obvious is his more in-depth characterization of Edward Ferrars. Left as Austen wrote him, Edward *lacks* more than he possesses: he has no profession, no good looks, as Marianne points out, “his figure is



not striking,” he can neither play a musical instrument nor sing, and cannot draw. To rectify this Davies frequently presents Edward in action: galloping on approach to Norland and empathetically treating Margaret to a horseback ride after her cousin has taken her pony. Davies lends comedy to Edward’s and Elinor’s similar tendency to restrain all emotion, while retaining it as trait to be admired, by showing them in uncharacteristic physical activity as a way of venting frustration. At their first meeting Edward arrives in time to witness Elinor, aggravated by sister-in-law Fanny’s crushing supremacy at Norland Park, beating the rugs. Seeming to understand her actions, he offers her relief in humor by asking if he can join her. In a parallel to this scene Edward fiercely chops away at firewood as his way of coping with the obstacle of his secret engagement.

Davies also spices up Colonel Brandon, creating a character worthy of Marianne’s admiration. He presents the duel between Brandon and Willoughby and its possible bloodiness. Clips of the duel are inter-cut with scenes of Marianne writing and then sealing a letter to Willoughby with drops of blood-red wax. Brandon is victorious, but resists wounding Willoughby, and he later carries Marianne from the rain into Cleveland. About to loosen her dress in haste to save her life, he resists this impulse in response to propriety. Within minutes he is galloping in retrieval of Marianne’s mother. Marianne admires him from inside her coach as he, on horseback, accompanies the family back to Barton Cottage. She admires Delaford’s library (a la Elizabeth’s changed feeling toward Darcy at Pemberley), as she plays the piano forte there. She watches Brandon free a falcon and gently stroke its feathers, a perhaps too-obvious, but still beautiful parallel to the improvements which she herself will undergo under Brandon’s guidance.

LETTER FROM CHICAGO
JASNA-GCR
Elsie G. Holzwarth
1410 East 55th Street
Chicago, IL 60615-5409

September 20, 2008 Meeting

**Annual General Meeting
October 2–5, 2008**

Calendar

- September 1, 2008** Membership Dues Renewal: Individual \$25; Family \$35
- September 20, 2008** Jane Davis, *Emma Woodhouse and Harry Potter: The Influence of Austen on J. K. Rowling* Sulzer Library, 4455 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago, IL 1:00–3:30 pm
- October 2–5, 2008** Annual General Meeting hosted by Greater Chicago Region *Austen's Legacy: Life, Love & Laughter*, Westin Michigan Avenue Hotel, 909 N. Michigan, Chicago, IL
- December 6, 2008** Birthday Tea, JASNA President Marsha Huff, The Fortnightly of Chicago, 120 E. Bellevue, 2:00–4:00 pm
- February 7, 2009** Book Discussion, The Parthenon Restaurant, Chicago, IL

Our website is www.jasnachicago.org