



CHICAGO READER
**Century
Circle**

*Help us guarantee
another 50 years
of groundbreaking,
award-winning,
culture-defining
journalism*

.....

Maxwell Street

Smoke, grime, and awprice seem not to dampen the spirits of the regulars. Story starts on page 8.



bargains, blues, and bribes on Maxwell: see page 8

the Beauty and the beast | **Combating the sick call**

By Joan

The phone rings while I'm fixing dinner for a friend (male, course. Do you fix dinner for male friends?) "Hi, I'm a friend of Joan Shultz, and she said if I'm in Chicago . . ." Since I'm the voice in the room, I called three

innocuous of undesired phone calls, but I have found this "husband technique" is an effective protector of privacy in any number of circumstances.

Sure, the excitement of a city is its people—in the streets, at work, at whatever. But I sometimes reach what I call "people saturation"—that point in most any day when the social gather-

people, via The Breather, have once again invaded my privacy.

The Breather is but one common type of annoying phone call I have received. You see, being a woman, I will react to the caller in some exciting manner. Thus functions the mind of your average crank caller. This type of call is annoying, but seldom dangerous since it is usually pretty easy

Joan. Every year when the new phone books come out I envision this ecstatic crank caller greedily devouring each page of the book searching for new people to call. And yet sometimes I feel a definite adoration over the woman who used her initial. The name is listed in the phone book.

“The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them.”

—Journalist and publisher
Ida B. Wells-Barnett

“It is the stories we don’t get, the ones we miss, pass over, fail to recognize, don’t pick up on, that will send us to hell.”

— Columnist Molly Ivins

“Journalism is the first rough draft of history.”

— Washington Post co-owner
Philip L. Graham

“People are hungry for stories. It’s part of our very being. Storytelling is a form of history, of immortality too. It goes from one generation to another.”

— Journalist Studs Terkel

.....

The *Chicago Reader* has been covering the stories behind the headlines for nearly 50 years.



This includes features on the people, businesses, nonprofits, and places that make Chicago tick.

From the original founders in 1971, to the journalists of this century, the *Reader* has been writing about up-and-coming cultural creatives and fighting corruption by those in power.



Providing free journalism from day one, the *Reader* is here for the people, by the people. We speak Chicago.

The 1979 photo shows Reader founders (from left) Tom Rehwald, Bob Roth, Tom Yoder and Bob McCamant. Photo courtesy of the Daily Herald



Rate the Records

Each candidate has served one term. Which one deserves another?



By Gary Rivlin and Ted Cox

Jane Byrne runs well as an outgoing mayor. That's a rare trait comfortable with. She knows where, when, and how to tell an opponent. Why, to hear Byrne tell it, you'd think she had been elected mayor long ago, had retired to the country after a single tumultuous term, and now was back to return to the city to the glorious days of her administration. Sometimes she speaks as if she has forgotten she ever sat on the left floor of City Hall.

Well, Jane Byrne has run for mayor before. This is her third campaign. She was mayor for four years, and she has a record to run on. That record is being played back at high speed near daily. In a 45-minute single played of 78 for laughs. "God, remember those Byrne years, moving into Cabrini-Green, her husband the press secretary, and when she told that woman reporter that she liked her dyed hair? Man, it just is cancer!" When someone tries to decipher that record, more often than not it comes down to a point as simple as whether she left the city with a \$500 million deficit or one closer to \$1.05 billion, it's empty about the media influence in her administration, or the shady dealings of those high in her government.

The details of the Byrne administration, however, reflect how the

continued on page 8



By David Moberg

In nearly four years in office, what has Harold Washington done? If you follow the headlines, the 30-second take on radio or TV news, and the catchwords of campaign signs and slogans, you may have the impression that he's not been a bad mayor but, then again, it's not exactly clear who he's accomplished. Indeed, one thing Washington has not done especially well is to tell people what has been going on, but that's not entirely his fault.

"Paradigm shifts" are what historians of science call major periodic changes in outlook—not just gradual refinements of previous ideas or accumulation of more facts but a whole new way of looking at the world. Chicago government and politics have been undergoing a paradigm shift—a fundamental change in pattern—in recent years. Yet most people's perceptions, including those of many reporters and interpreters upon whom the average citizen relies, have not shifted to register those changes.

The late Milton Rakove, a general professor at the University of Illinois who was an insider and minor participant in Democratic Machine politics for many years, argued in his engaging book *Don't Make No Waves, Don't Back No Losers* that the Chicago-Machine model of politics was more like that of eastern-city Communist countries, a single dominant party, head politics and government in a way that made party government and suppressed any dissenting voice. Technicians could range from trying to control all organizations, such as Mayor Richard Daley did when he spent his efforts to take over the NAACP chapter in Chicago in the 1950s, to the

continued on page 8

.....

History

For more than five decades, the *Chicago Reader* has been the go-to guidebook for the best—and worst—our fair city has to offer. From the best bars, restaurants, cultural events, music, arts, apartments, and even romantic partners, to the worst behavior by our elected officials and institutions, the *Reader* has covered it all with a signature swagger and voice.

As we face unprecedented times for our industry—and our world—the *Reader* has transitioned to a full 501(c)(3) nonprofit. The Reader Institute for Community Journalism wants to ensure another 50 years of groundbreaking, award-winning, culture defining journalism and reporting.

As the nation's first free weekly, the *Reader* has produced award-winning journalism covering the wide spectrum of human experience in Chicago, from culture and the arts, to politics and corruption.

We have not shied away from the truth. Since its founders initially sold the *Reader* a few years ago, the paper has passed through many owners and organizational structures. Not too long ago, the *Reader* faced the real possibility of closing its doors forever. Luckily for the paper, its staff, and the city of Chicago, new leadership took the reins.

We have now launched the *Chicago Reader* Century Circle to sustain this legacy institution. Building a fund now ensures future generations of *Reader* leadership and staff will be better prepared to weather whatever comes our way while providing a seamless reading experience for the audiences that count on us.

.....

.....

What's Next?



The *Chicago Reader* is still making news—the current team continues to win awards for groundbreaking coverage on evictions, criminal justice, immigration, arts reporting, and more.

Cultural coverage is at the heart of the *Reader*. Finding the now and next in music, theater, dance, visual arts, literature, architecture, comedy, film, television, and beyond is what we do. Our team has its finger on the pulse of this city, living in it, covering it, and proudly uncovering the stories often overlooked in mainstream media. We plan to produce more investigative reports in 2022, and have added a social justice reporter and a Racial Justice Reporting Hub and Writers Room.

Our reach is large across multiple platforms, all free and accessible. The print paper, with a biweekly circulation of 60,000 to 1,200 locations, continues to attract a loyal following. Our digital and social growth has not slowed since we rebranded, and we launched a new website in 2021.

We have also greatly diversified our team, so that it more broadly represents the city we serve. This includes staff, freelancers, vendors, distribution, and more. Our staff is 40 percent people of color, more than 50 percent female identifying, and more than 30 percent LGBTQ.


Our strategy for our first full year as a 501(c)3 nonprofit is to continue the trend toward more individual donors and members, with less reliance on advertising. We are further diversifying our revenue streams in new areas. When COVID-19 decimated our ad revenues, we quickly pivoted to merchandise and creative projects including best-of books by our writers, a new *Chicago Reader* Book Club, and additional new revenue events.

What follows on the next page are income and expense numbers. The mission for the coming years is to grow the journalism work by increasing staff and freelancers. Most importantly, we want to do this through conservative growth, and creating an endowment for this work.

This Issue in Three Sections

READER
CHICAGO'S FREE WEEKLY

House of Screams



*Torture by Electroschock:
Could it happen in a Chicago police station?
Did it happen at Area 2?*

Illustration by [unreadable]

In 1982, a record of a cold and menacing 14 about two weeks after the arrest, Gang Chief officers William Fisher, 44, and Richard O'Brien, 33, were in uniform, cutting inside on Michigan, where they came in a brown, two-door Chevrolet Impala. When they stopped their car at a street, Officer Fisher's witness recalls that he has had had a week's notice for opening cars in which the police might have an interest, or that he was not sure, he had the habit of pointing to vehicles and saying, "That car is dirty. Or that could do it (finger), he has been had a feeling that the "1982 Impala was dirty. He would have been right."

The occupants of the car, the brothers Andrew and Jackie Wilson, had committed a "bribe" less than an hour before. The take had not been spectacular: some clothes, a television set, a video camera, a boom, and a set of glasses. Jackie, 21, also known as Robert and Bobby, was driving.

He was wanted for parole violation. Jackie, 20, also known as Joseph, Tony, and Gino, had a criminal record. 30 miles to the front seat, he was wanted on two warrants, one for parole violation, the other for bond forfeiture in an armed robbery case.

The take was by officers and participants diverge at this point, but it seems likely that Jackie was the driver, driving away the police car and pulled the Impala to the curb at 40th & Michigan. Officer O'Brien left the driver's seat of the police car and reported that the Impala, Jackie got out of the car, and O'Brien suggested that driver one of the men threw a beer bottle out the window for about Jackie to hit it, and when Jackie said he didn't have a chance to throw it, O'Brien told him not to check out the car.

As about that point Andrew Wilson got out of the passenger car, and the next 30 seconds a tragic sequence was played out. Officer Fisher, having come to the passenger side of the Impala, reached up Jackie's

Jackie from the front seat. He was later found the bullet from the Impala, on a porch. While he was holding the gun, Andrew moved on behind him and stopped him at the car. The two men were struggling for the weapon and slipped to the street. Andrew Wilson pulled the trigger, perhaps accidentally, probably not, and a bullet went through the head of William Fisher.

Meanwhile, on the driver's side, Officer O'Brien had leaped from the Impala and moved Jackie, 19, to the front seat. He was not alone. He was joined by his partner, Officer William Fisher, and Officer "Fisher" Jackie from O'Brien, probably unable to see his partner, with a very small amount of the car. Andrew Wilson had been once on the street with Fisher's gun.

Andrew then walked to the Impala, willing him to disarm O'Brien. Jackie reached back that the Impala and running. The old Wilson climbed onto the back of the Chevy, propped from more before, and

.....

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1990, the Chicago Reader broke the Jon Burge Police Torture story

.....

.....

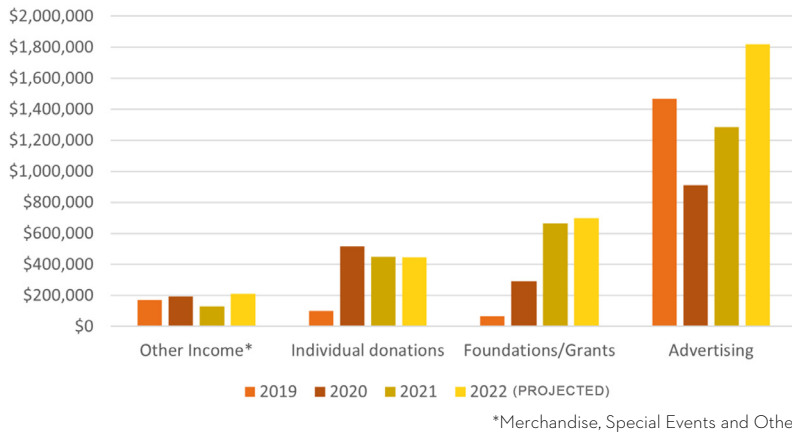
The Numbers

INCOME & ADVERTISING

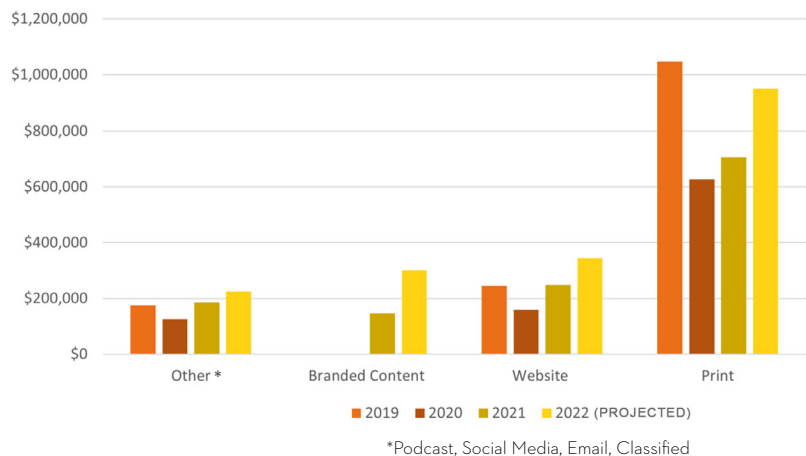
When the *Reader* was separated from the *Chicago Sun-Times* in October 2018, it was losing more than \$1 million a year, and was 100 percent dependent on advertising—95 percent of that being print ads, the rest digital. When Publisher Tracy Baim took over, her mission was to not just diversify revenue within advertising, but to also bring in new forms of revenue. Once the path to nonprofit status was authorized by the owners, in the summer of 2019, that diversification began in full force. The timing was important, because when COVID-19 hit in March 2020, the *Reader* lost nearly 2/3rd or 63 percent of its advertising and it has only slowly built back.

On the revenue side, the *Reader* is now less than 65 percent dependent on advertising as a whole, and within that advertising category, print is less than 44 percent of that total. Which means we have gone from 95 percent dependent on print ads to under one-third or 30 percent in three years. In addition, other revenue categories are now responsible for about one-third or 38 percent of our income. This includes foundation grants, memberships, large donors, events, merchandise, and other income.

Chicago Reader Income Categories 2019 - 2022

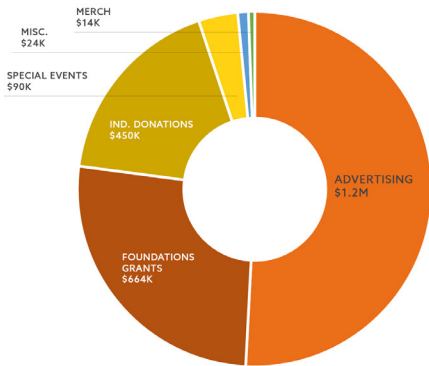


Chicago Reader Advertising Categories 2019 - 2022



.....

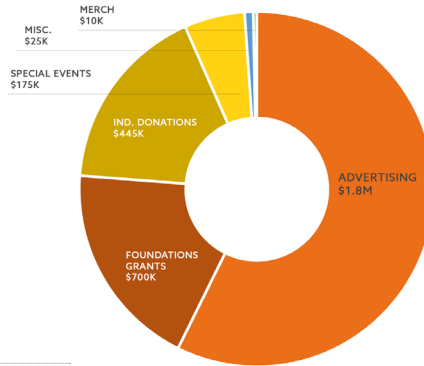
INCOME 2021



TOTAL 2021 = \$2,531,176

- ADVERTISING
\$1,286,337
- FOUNDATIONS/GRANTS
\$664,689
- INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS
\$450,467
- SPECIAL EVENTS
\$90,663
- MISCELLANEOUS
\$24,463
- MERCHANDISE SALES
\$14,557

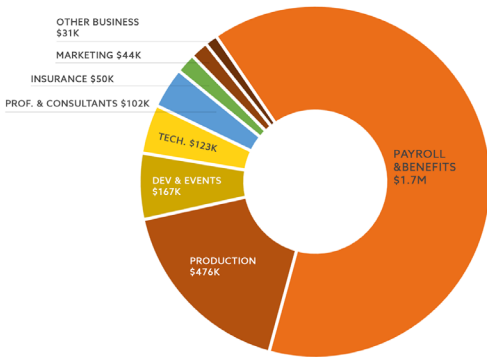
PROJECTED INCOME 2022



TOTAL 2022 = \$3,175,000

- ADVERTISING
\$1,820,000
- FOUNDATIONS/GRANTS
\$700,000
- INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS
\$445,000
- SPECIAL EVENTS
\$175,000
- MISCELLANEOUS
\$25,000
- MERCHANDISE SALES
\$10,000

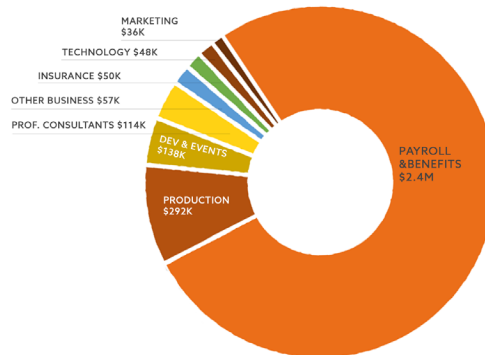
EXPENSES 2021



TOTAL = \$2,754,443

- PAYROLL & BENEFITS
\$1,756,496
- PRODUCTION
\$476,963
- DEVELOPMENT & EVENTS
\$167,200
- TECHNOLOGY
\$123,964
- PROFESSIONAL & CONSULTANTS
\$102,844
- INSURANCE
\$50,168
- MARKETING
\$44,949
- OTHER BUSINESS
\$31,859

PROJECTED EXPENSES 2022



TOTAL = \$3,168,300

- PAYROLL & BENEFITS
\$2,432,000
- PRODUCTION
\$292,000
- DEVELOPMENT & EVENTS
\$138,000
- PROFESSIONAL & CONSULTANTS
\$114,000
- OTHER BUSINESS
\$57,900
- INSURANCE
\$50,000
- TECHNOLOGY
\$48,000
- MARKETING
\$36,400

.....

Partnerships

Beyond our individual accomplishments, we know collaboration makes us all stronger. So we are fortunate to have great partnerships with City Bureau, ProPublica Illinois, Borderless Magazine, The Triibe, Better Government Association, Invisible Institute, and many more. We are also part of the Solving for Chicago collaboration launched by the Local Media Association.

The *Reader* knows that the media ecosystem in Chicago is vibrant and diverse, but it needs uplifting—and more resources. In 2019, we piloted a new project to bring together community and ethnic media to advocate for more resources (foundation and government), and to work on joint editorial collaborations.



This work of the Chicago Independent Media Alliance (CIMA) is funded in part by partnership with the City University of New York Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism Center for Community Media, the Democracy Fund, and the Field Foundation.



These are just a few of our *Reader* partners so far:

- The Builders Initiative
- Chicago Community Trust
- Carol Oppenheim & Jerome Lamet Charitable Fund
- City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events
- CUNY Center for Community Media
- Democracy Fund
- The Donnelley Foundation
- Driehaus Foundation
- Facebook Accelerator Program—Local Media Association
- The Joseph and Bessie Feinberg Foundation
- The Field Foundation
- Fund for Investigative Journalism
- James P. and Brenda S. Grusecki Family Foundation
- Illinois Humanities
- Institute for Nonprofit News
- Joyce Foundation
- Local Media Foundation
- MacArthur Foundation
- The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust
- Nathan Cummings Foundation
- Craig Newmark Philanthropies
- Polk Bros Foundation
- Solutions Journalism Network
- Square One Foundation
- The Darrell R Windle Charitable Fund



.....

Mission: Possible

We launched the *Chicago Reader* Century Circle to shore up the annual budget and build a bridge to the future. The fund seeks to raise donations over the next three years, from individuals and foundations giving either one-time or multi-year pledges.

We are looking for one- to three-year pledges as part of our *Chicago Reader* Century Circle. It is aggressive, aspirational—and attainable. But of course it is also flexible, and any amount will help our mission.

This resilience fund will make sure the *Chicago Reader* survives the current multi-threats of a pandemic and economic downturn, and other obstacles that surely will confront the media ecosystem.

What We Can Do Together

.....

The accomplishments listed in this brochure have been achieved prior to pivoting to a nonprofit newsroom. Imagine what we can do now—with your support.

- Now operating as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit
- Diversifying revenue
- Growth of small and larger individual donors
- Growth of grants
- Keeping costs streamlined
- Adding investigative journalism funding
- Growing the strength of community media overall through the Chicago Independent Media Alliance, a project of RICJ
- Continuing to diversify the staff, readers, vendors, and supporter base

.....

Local News Climate

In the context of a national decline in local news, there is a profound need for free, quality journalism in the Chicago region. In 2019, the *Chicago Defender*, which was founded in 1905, had to stop its print editions, while the Latinx newspaper *Hoy* closed its doors entirely. COVID-19 had an additional profound effect, forcing the *Reader* to go biweekly, and other media to make significant changes. We are adapting, and our online presence continues to grow, but we need additional support to navigate this new media landscape now and into the future.

This need for access to community-focused, locally produced journalism is even more severe in under-resourced neighborhoods on the south and west sides of Chicago, areas not well covered by large news outlets. The University of Texas at Austin's Center for Media Engagement's report "Chicago News Landscape" demonstrates the stark difference in quality reporting for the south and west sides of Chicago compared to downtown and the north side.

As we move into our second half century, we want to ensure the entire city of Chicago has access to free alternative reporting for another 50 years—and beyond. With your help in launching the *Chicago Reader* Century Circle we will give Chicago 100 years of the *Reader*. All contributions to the Century Circle are tax deductible under the Reader Institute for Community Journalism, Inc.



CHICAGO READER Century Circle

We are seeking members of the Century Circle who are the city's civic, cultural, business, and philanthropic leaders. You will work together with the Reader Institute for Community Journalism leadership and board to raise funds and help create a stable future for community journalism.

Century Circle members will help raise funds through the levels here:

All the levels also come with the following perks:

- Name listed by level on the *Chicago Reader* website
- Name listed by level in *Chicago Reader* newspaper annually

First Amendment Society

- \$50,000 per year

Editorial Board

- \$25,000 per year

Headliners

- \$10,000 per year

Editors

- \$5,000 per year

Reporters

- \$2,500 per year

Correspondents

- \$1,000 per year

Columnists

- \$500 per year

More details available at
chicagoreader.com/century
or contact:

President and Publisher
Tracy Baim
773-387-2394
tbaim@chicagoreader.com

Reader Institute for Community Journalism, Inc.
2930 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 102
Chicago, Illinois 60616