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ACRL dues

Why ACRL members should vote to increase their dues

By Linda J. Piele

Chair, ACRL Budget and Finance Committee

5

ACRL membership dues and benefits.

Members of ACRL will be asked on the April ballot to approve a proposal to increase their annual dues from \$25 to \$35, effective with the 1990 membership year. Acting upon a recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee, the ACRL Board of Directors unanimously passed a resolution at its Midwinter meeting in January putting the dues increase on the Spring 1989 ballot. If the increase is approved, it will bring ACRL dues in line with those of other ALA divisions, which, with the exception of RASD, have either already raised their dues to \$35 or \$40 or have also put a proposal

to do so on the April ballot.

The Budget and Finance Committee decided to recommend a dues increase with great reluctance and only after carefully studying current and projected budgets and considering a variety of alternatives. Some of these alternatives were suggested by ACRL members who attended the open hearing on ACRL's Financial Plan that was held at the Midwinter Meeting. Unfortunately, while cost control measures and revenue enhancements will help, they will not by themselves solve the problem. A dues increase is necessary to avoid cutting services

that members have said are important to them.

The purpose of this article is to review the activities funded by the projected 1990 budget, in particular those activities funded by dues, in order to ensure that ACRL members fully understand the issues involved in the dues proposal.

Finding out about ACRL finances

A great deal of information is readily available to ACRL members about ACRL finances. In this issue of *C&RL News*, Executive Director JoAn Segal's year-end report on last year's performance and a projection for the current year appears. In the December 1988 issue, a draft of ACRL's newly developed Financial Plan was published. It offered detailed information about ACRL's financial status, potential problems, business goals, and strategic options. (After an open hearing on the Financial Plan at the Midwinter meeting, it is now being revised and will be brought before the ACRL Board at the annual conference in June.) An updated version of the three-year budget projection that appeared in the December draft is included in this article (Table 1). And finally, Pat Wand, immediate past chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, published an article in the December issue of *C&RL News* ("The Budget Process and ACRL Financial Issues") that clarifies many of the questions members often ask about ACRL finances.

The really good news

Each year, the Budget and Finance Committee goes over each line of the proposed ACRL budget with JoAn Segal, the Executive Director, and she supplies much additional analysis and information to the Committee concerning ACRL's financial status and management. The Committee finds that ACRL is very well managed fiscally. All activities carried out by the ACRL office are carefully monitored in terms of how well they support the Strategic Plan, how much staff time they consume, overhead, and related expenses. As a result, we know the real cost of each activity—something few of us can say for the activities carried out in our libraries.

Many of ACRL's activities are intended to be self-supporting, including most of its publications and its education programs (conferences, continuing education courses, etc.). The Budget and Finance Committee can attest to the fact that these programs are carefully monitored, marketed energetically and creatively, realistically priced, that prices are routinely adjusted for inflation, and so on.

In fact a review of ACRL finances since 1982, when dues were last increased, should properly be viewed as a remarkable success story. ACRL has done what it set out to do: increase membership services and greatly expand the number and variety of its other activities important to members, while keeping the Association on a sound financial

base. Through its success in raising revenues to support these additional activities, membership dues have been effectively leveraged to support more and more activities: activities that members said during the strategic planning process are a high priority. For example, in 1982, 29% of ACRL's revenues came from dues; but only 22% of expenses were for basic membership services. In the projected 1990 budget, 29% of revenue is from dues; 38% of expenses will be for basic membership services (see graphs on p. 300).

What ACRL does with your dues

ACRL activities fall into four general categories: 1) basic membership activities, 2) publications, 3) continuing education, and 4) funded projects such as grants. In general, dues are expected to fund membership activities and at least part of those publications that are prerequisites of membership, while other publications, continuing education activities, and funded projects will be self-supporting.

Up until the current year (the 1989 fiscal year), the following list of basic membership activities was funded by your dues. Starting with the 1990 fiscal year, dues revenues no longer will cover expenses in these areas. The shortfall in 1990 will be significant. The amount budgeted for each activity includes staff time devoted to that activity, related expenses, and a proportionate share of overhead and administrative costs.

Membership services (\$29,480). ACRL conducts recruitment campaigns and retention activities such as letter writing. In 1989, ACRL staff have inaugurated the practice of reaching out to new members with "New Member" packets, informing them of the benefits of membership and encouraging their involvement.

Executive Committee and ACRL Board (\$60,050). Expenses are incurred in the extensive communication between officers and the Executive Director, and in the preparation of meeting agendas and minutes. The budget includes travel expenses for the fall and spring Executive Committee meetings. The ACRL President's Program at annual conferences is another major expense.

Statistics (\$2,750). Every other year ACRL compiles statistics of non-ARL university libraries.

Advisory (\$29,880). ACRL staff answer many telephone reference calls relating to professional practices. Also included in this category is research carried out for members and others, the writing of papers on librarianship and ACRL by ACRL staff, and the public presentation of such material. ALA's 800 number has facilitated these activities.

Standards distribution (\$9,020). ACRL headquarters distributes one copy of ACRL standards free of charge upon request; guidelines are distributed at a charge of \$1 each. During 1988, 4,152 copies of standards and guidelines were distributed.

Discussion groups (\$2,300). Fifteen discussion groups are active within ACRL. Most limit their activities to discussions at annual and midwinter conferences, although some publish newsletters and sponsor conference programs. These groups require a small amount of support from ACRL headquarters but are not provided with a budget for expenses their members incur in carrying out activities.

Awards (\$14,780). ACRL administers eight different awards. Donations and endowments cover the cost of the awards themselves, but only a small

portion of the administrative costs.

Chapters (\$59,120). ACRL provides a small amount of support to each of ACRL's 40 state or regional chapter affiliates, based on membership. Chapters use this funding for a variety of activities, including programming and newsletters. ACRL headquarters publishes *Chapter Topics* and distributes it to chapters. Headquarters also provides brochures and other general chapter information. The amount budgeted includes \$3,660 for *Chapter Topics*.

Committees (\$70,930). Forty ACRL committees

REVENUE

Sources of Revenue	FY 1988 Actual	FY 1989 Budgeted	FY 1990 Budget Estimate	FY 1991 Budget Estimate	FY 1992 Budget Estimate
Membership dues ¹	\$257,626	\$252,030	\$263,800	\$260,000	\$260,000
Other	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$500	\$500
Advisory	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$600	\$600
Awards	\$1,337	\$6,120	\$2,070	\$2,100	\$2,100
Jobline	\$3,675	\$3,000	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$4,000
Subtotal	\$262,638	\$261,150	\$270,370	\$266,700	\$267,200
Publications					
<i>Choice</i>	\$1,362,040	\$1,373,270	\$1,385,000	\$1,395,000	\$1,405,000
<i>CirRL</i>	\$98,438	\$101,950	\$112,980	\$113,000	\$114,000
<i>CbRL News</i>	\$216,273	\$198,045	\$218,210	\$220,000	\$222,000
<i>Rare Books in Mss. Libshp.</i>	\$12,372	\$17,420	\$18,520	\$19,000	\$20,000
<i>Fast Job Listing Service</i>	\$3,965	\$3,780	\$3,900	\$3,900	\$4,000
Section Newsletters	\$196	\$180	\$180	\$200	\$0
Nonperiodical Pubs.	\$61,710	\$50,230	\$65,200	\$67,000	\$68,000
<i>Books for Coll. Libs.</i> , 3rd ed. ²	\$400	\$30,380	\$17,750	\$5,000	\$0
<i>Chapter Topics</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal	\$1,755,394	\$1,775,255	\$1,821,740	\$1,823,100	\$1,833,000
Conferences & Workshops					
Continuing Education ³	\$33,875	\$54,270	\$27,680	\$28,000	\$55,000
National (86, 89) ⁴	\$0	\$283,740	\$2,000	\$0	\$310,000
Pre- & Postconferences	\$51,809	\$17,760	\$32,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
WESS Conference	\$27,065	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Teleconferences ⁵	\$0	\$0	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000
RBMS Cambridge Conference	\$0	\$0	\$36,860	\$0	\$0
Planning Workshops ⁶	\$0	\$30,590	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Subtotal	\$112,749	\$386,360	\$125,540	\$81,000	\$419,000
Funded Projects					
NEH Project ⁷	\$53,129	\$22,960	\$0	\$80,000	\$80,000
HBCU Project ⁸	\$13,145	\$36,980	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Output Measures ⁹	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$0
Subtotal	\$66,274	\$59,940	\$65,000	\$130,000	\$130,000
Total Revenue	\$2,197,055	\$2,482,705	\$2,282,650	\$2,300,800	\$2,649,200
<i>Choice</i> Revenue	\$1,362,040	\$1,373,270	\$1,385,000	\$1,395,000	\$1,405,000
Total without <i>Choice</i>	\$835,015	\$1,109,435	\$897,650	\$905,800	\$1,244,200

¹Assumes increase in conference year, flat afterwards.

²apes in 1990, book royalties in 1991.

³Flat revenue, except in conference year.

⁴Revenue recognized conference year only.

⁵Assumes more activity here.

⁶Grant in 1989; self-supporting afterward.

⁷Assumes funding of new proposal, 1991.

⁸Assumes accreditation project funded, 1990.

⁹Assumes partial funding, 1990.

EXPENSE

Object of Expense	FY 1988 Actual	FY 1989 Budgeted	FY 1990 Budget Estimate	FY 1991 Budget Estimate	FY 1992 Budget Estimate
Membership Activities¹					
Membership Services	\$19,438	\$22,090	\$29,480	\$31,000	\$34,100
Executive Committee	\$60,264	\$44,080	\$60,050	\$63,000	\$69,300
Statistics	\$2,011	\$16,270	\$2,750	\$17,000	\$3,000
Advisory	\$13,712	\$27,330	\$29,880	\$31,400	\$34,540
Standards Distribution	\$5,433	\$7,070	\$9,020	\$9,500	\$10,450
Discussion Groups	\$1,411	\$1,870	\$2,300	\$2,500	\$2,750
Awards	\$10,165	\$11,150	\$14,780	\$15,000	\$16,500
Chapters	\$33,243	\$50,030	\$55,460	\$58,200	\$64,020
Committees	\$56,069	\$54,810	\$70,930	\$74,500	\$81,950
Sections	\$34,567	\$45,650	\$55,870	\$59,000	\$64,900
Jobline	\$2,020	\$1,510	\$1,850	\$2,000	\$2,200
Special Grants ²	\$0	\$19,500	\$0	\$0	\$0
Output Measures	\$17,454	\$24,790	\$26,260	\$0	\$0
Subtotal	\$255,787	\$326,150	\$358,630	\$363,100	\$383,710
Publications³					
<i>Choice</i>	\$1,187,288	\$1,353,560	\$1,365,000	\$1,375,000	\$1,663,750
<i>C&RL</i>	\$97,042	\$107,790	\$103,030	\$105,000	\$127,050
<i>C&RL News</i>	\$208,691	\$205,070	\$237,760	\$240,000	\$290,400
<i>Rare Books & Mss. Libnshp.</i>	\$17,870	\$18,370	\$20,500	\$21,000	\$25,410
<i>Fast Job Listing Service</i>	\$4,779	\$4,140	\$4,810	\$5,000	\$6,050
Section Newsletters	\$27,404	\$25,990	\$26,220	\$28,000	\$33,880
Nonperiodical Pubs.	\$38,949	\$28,100	\$60,070	\$61,000	\$73,810
<i>Books for Coll. Libs.</i> , 3d ed.	\$16,056	\$5,280	\$1,130	\$1,000	\$1,210
<i>Chapter Topics</i>	\$1,096	\$3,170	\$3,660	\$2,000	\$2,000
Subtotal	\$1,599,175	\$1,751,470	\$1,822,180	\$1,838,000	\$2,223,560
Conferences & Workshops					
Continuing Education	\$42,134	\$50,770	\$47,010	\$48,000	\$58,080
National (86, 89) ⁴	\$57,292	\$207,070	\$8,430	\$50,000	\$251,220
Pre- & Postconferences	\$37,081	\$21,900	\$32,750	\$25,000	\$30,250
WESS Conference ⁵	\$32,100	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Teleconferences	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000	\$2,420
RBMS Cambridge Conference	\$0	\$19,040	\$18,070	\$0	\$0
Planning Workshops ⁶	\$0	\$30,590	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$30,250
Subtotal	\$168,607	\$329,370	\$131,260	\$150,000	\$372,220
Funded Projects					
NEH Project	\$55,079	\$22,960	\$0	\$80,000	\$80,000
HBCU Project	\$18,158	\$36,980	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
PLA Project	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Output Measures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal	\$73,237	\$59,940	\$50,000	\$130,000	\$130,000
<i>Choice/ACRL allocation⁷</i>	(\$232)	(\$2,000)	(\$2,000)	(\$2,500)	(\$3,000)
Total Expenses	\$2,096,574	\$2,464,930	\$2,360,070	\$2,478,600	\$3,106,490
<i>Choice Expenses</i>	\$1,187,288	\$1,353,560	\$1,365,000	\$1,375,000	\$1,663,750
Total without Choice	\$909,286	\$1,111,370	\$995,070	\$1,103,600	\$1,442,740
Net	(\$74,271)	(\$1,935)	(\$97,420)	(\$197,800)	(\$198,540)
Fund Balance	\$423,426	\$421,491	\$324,071	\$126,271	(\$72,269)
Mandated Reserve	\$410,638	\$420,709	\$462,888	\$502,621	\$535,007

¹Projects involving staff time estimated at 5% annual increase.

²Partially grant-funded.

³Possible Operating Agreement impact in 1991.

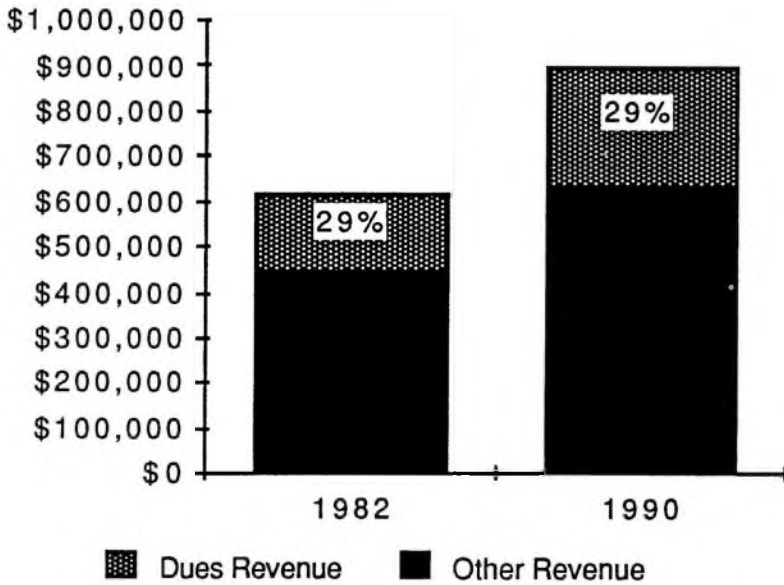
⁴1992 expense recognized when incurred.

⁵Next one in 1993.

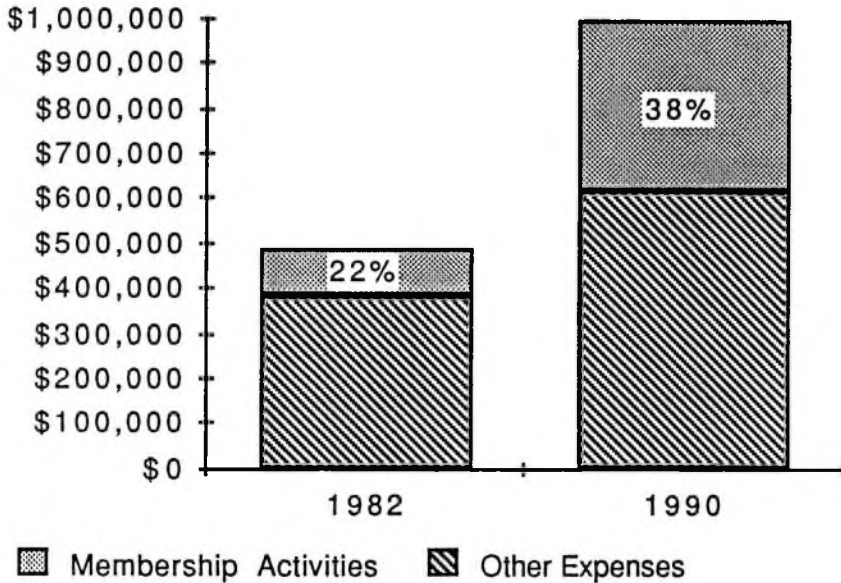
⁶Self-supporting after grant year.

⁷ACRL staff time charged to *Choice*.

DUES REVENUE AS % OF TOTAL REVENUE



MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES AS % OF TOTAL EXPENSES



and task forces are active. Some committees serve such housekeeping functions as nominating, budgeting, membership, planning, and conference programming. Others are charged with addressing broad issues of academic librarianship, such as legislation, copyright, and standards and accreditation. Task forces and ad hoc committees are appointed by the president to carry out a specific charge. Major committee activities for 1990 will include work on the output measures for academic libraries, the Historically Black College and University Library project, liaison efforts, recruitment to academic librarianship (especially of underrepresented minorities), and the role of the paraprofessional in academic libraries.

Sections (\$82,090). There are currently three type-of-library sections and eleven type-of-activity sections. Section activities are carried out by 155 section committees. Budgeted amounts support section newsletters, procedures manuals, audiovisual materials for conferences, and staff time needed to provide service to these active groups. Amount budgeted includes \$26,220 for 12 section newsletters.

Publications that are prerequisites of membership (\$19,550). Although *College & Research Libraries* and *College & Research Libraries News* have in recent years been completely subsidized by advertising and subscription revenue, revenues are now flattening out while costs continue to rise. The cost of publishing *C&RL News* is projected to exceed revenues by \$19,550 in 1990.

TOTAL (less offsetting revenue of \$3,070 for awards, honoraria, photocopying charges) = \$376,880.

Estimated ACRL membership in 1990 = 10,071.

Thus, based on the estimated membership, each ACRL member would need to pay \$37 to support membership activities in the 1990 fiscal year, or \$12 more than their current dues of \$25. (In 1982 the total cost for the same activities was \$105,135, or \$12 for each of our 8,789 members.)

What else ACRL does

Publications. In addition to those publications that are prerequisites of membership, ACRL's very active publication program includes *Choice*, *Rare Books and Manuscripts Librarianship*, and the *Fast Job Listing Service*, as well as a variety of non-periodical publications, including the *Publications in Librarianship* series and *Books for College Libraries*, 3rd ed. In addition, ACRL offers the Jobline, a telephone service marketed to employers, who pay a fee to have information about positions they are recruiting included in a recording available to job-hunting librarians.

Education. ACRL's education efforts include not only the Continuing Education courses given before ALA Annual Conferences and those which are offered in conjunction with its own National

Conferences, but also its local presentations—as well as Conference programs at ALA Annual Conferences, pre- and postconferences, teleconferences, special conferences (such as the WESS Florence Conference and the RBMS Cambridge Conference), and ACRL's NEH Workshops. Taken as a whole, the education program is extremely successful in delivering professional development activities to members and others and breaks even financially.

Funded projects. These projects are funded by grants and contracts and are, by definition, self-supporting. Over the years, ACRL has been able to accomplish a remarkable number of activities by obtaining grant funding. In 1990, ACRL anticipates funding from four outside sources to help it carry out activities that fall under the Strategic Plan. It will apply for a new NEH project and will seek outside funding for a College Library Planning Project and for the Output Measures Manual. In addition, it will seek funds for a Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) accreditation project, designed to help these institutions with the accreditation process.

The big picture

It's always good to put things in perspective. Relative to librarians' salaries, how does the projected \$35 dues compare to the \$25 dues we paid in 1982? To do this accurately, we would need to have good estimates of average salaries for 1990, when the dues increase would take affect. We'll make do with 1982 and 1988 averages compiled and published by ARL (in their *Annual Salary Survey*) and ALA (*ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries*), but the story they tell is clear enough.

1982. Based on an average librarian salary of \$21,089 and a forty-hour work week (no vacation), it took our average librarian 2.5 hours to earn dues of \$25, or 7.4 hours to earn total ALA and ACRL dues of \$75.

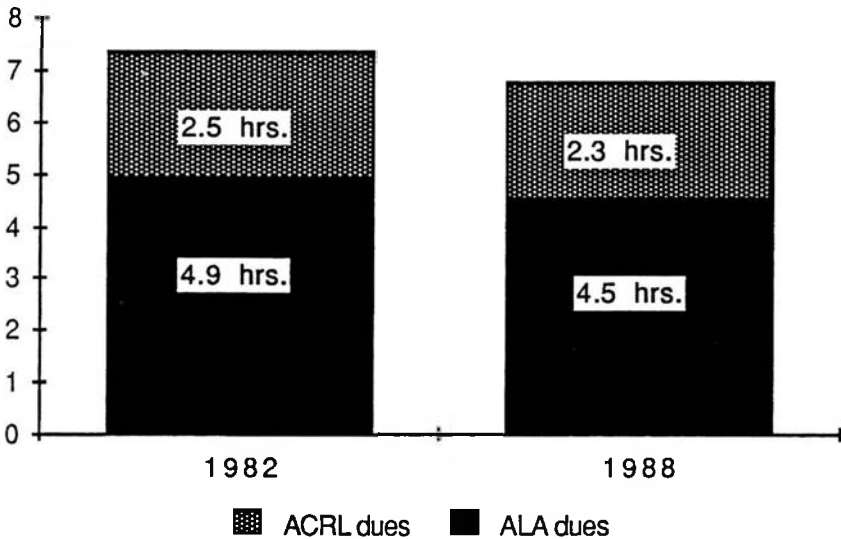
1988. Based on an average librarian salary of \$32,135 and a forty-hour work week (still no vacation), our average librarian earned dues of \$35 in only 2.3 hours. It will take only 6.8 hours to earn total ALA (\$70) and ACRL (\$35) dues.

What else is being done?

In addition to the cost control methods already being used and which we all employ (a little here, a little there), a number of alternatives have been suggested by ACRL officers, staff, and members. The Financial Plan includes discussion and analysis of a number of strategies. Since no one alternative is likely to solve the problem, a combination will no doubt be necessary. Among those being considered:

- Find new sources of revenue. At ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans last July, the Budget

HOURS REQUIRED TO EARN DUES



ALA dues: \$50
ACRL dues: \$25

ALA dues: \$70
ACRL dues: \$35 (projected)

and Finance Committee recommended, and the ACRL Board approved, the appointment of a Task Force on Financial Development, whose charge includes identifying new sources of revenue. The Task Force will submit its recommendations by the 1990 annual conference.

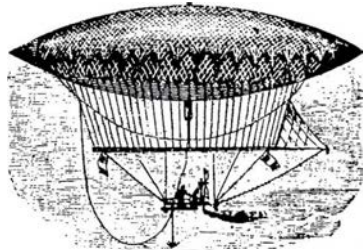
- Develop new membership markets, such as paraprofessionals.
- Increase prices on nonperiodical publications by a sizable amount in order to subsidize the cost of other publications (such as *C&RL News*).
- Limit the number of pages in *C&RL News*.
- Build an ACRL endowment.
- Lower the mandated reserve fund (if allowed by ALA).
- Limit section newsletters; or combine them with *C&RL News*.
- Substantially increase advertising and subscription rates for periodicals (how much will the market bear?).
- Restructure section dues; base ACRL dues on salary.

An unavoidable conclusion

After a period of several years during which revenues (from sources other than dues) increased nicely each year, ACRL is entering a period of tougher financial times. Increases in revenues have flattened out, while costs continue to increase at a

fixed rate, just as they do in our libraries. Unless some action is taken, the budget will be seriously out of balance by the end of the 1990 fiscal year, and we will have to start drawing down the reserve fund below the level mandated by the ACRL Board in 1986. In fact, the reserve at that point will be only slightly greater than would be required to offset the loss of a single national conference (an amount ALA is considering requiring divisions to retain in order to receive permission to hold such conferences). In order to be strong, ACRL needs to operate on a sound financial basis.

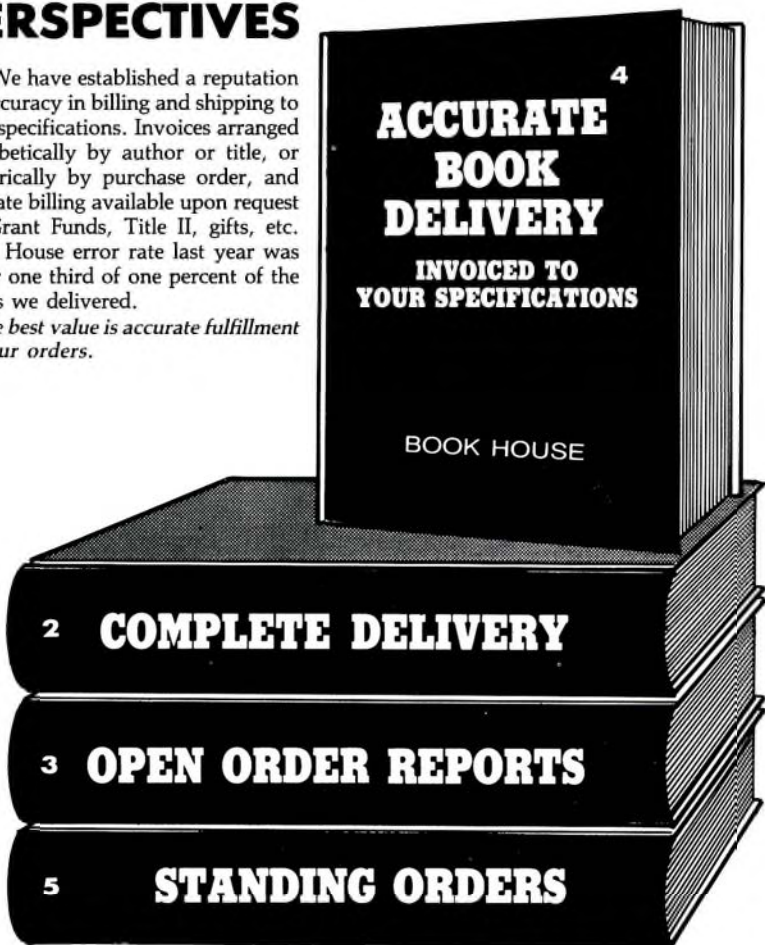
The Budget and Finance Committee urges you to vote to maintain the services ACRL currently provides. If you agree that the issues and opportunities which academic and research librarians face require a strong ACRL, you will join us in voting for a dues increase. ■■



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