

In the *News*

• In the last 25 years, federal funding for libraries came to less than the cost of one aircraft carrier (est. \$3.5 billion).

• Academic libraries receive two cents of every dollar spent on higher education—down from three cents in 1980 with the purchasing power deflated to that of a penny.

• Annual federal spending on libraries totals only 57 cents per person—about the cost of a pack of gum.

These are just a few facts showing where libraries stand in the federal budget breakdown. For more details on how libraries may fare with the new Congress, see this month's "Washington Hotline." Lynne Bradley reminds us that the House Republican "Contract with America" has many library programs on its list of possible cuts.

As National Library Week, set for April 9–15, approaches, it is a good time to take stock of the current state of affairs and take the initiative.

Librarians must become advocates for libraries if we want to build support at the local, state, and national levels.

In this issue Linda Wallace, director of ALA's Public Information Office, explains two new ALA initiatives designed to improve visibility and funding for libraries. First, Library Advocacy Now! aims to build a nationwide network of library advocates, and focuses on helping those who care about libraries become effective advocates using contacts with the media, legislators, and other forums to build support for libraries.

The other initiative is the "Pass a Buck for Libraries" campaign urging Congress to increase that 57 cents of tax dollars per person to one dollar per person. Details about these programs are provided on pages 76–79.

I hope that you will take time to consider how you can use National Library Week to promote libraries and information in your library this year. As Wallace reminds us, if we don't take the time to celebrate National Library Week, and if we don't make the time to be advocates for libraries, who will?

—Mary Ellen K. Davis
Editor & Publisher



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