As CFB finishes its second year of publication, those of us here in Vancouver look at the past two years with a mixture of pride and uncertainty. Pride because, as we look back at early issues, we see a lot of progress, both in the way the magazine looks and in the content. Uncertainty because our financial footing is still pretty shaky. It costs a lot of money to print and mail out a 40-page magazine every 2 months—and it’s getting more expensive—but our sources of revenue are fairly limited.

Single copy sales and individual subscriptions: we sell CFB at stores and clubs across the country. We have subscribers across the country, the States, Europe, and even some in Japan and the Middle East. Money from subscriptions is the foundation of our income, but at $5 a year, we need a heck of a lot of subscribers to have a secure foundation. With each issue, numerous subscriptions expire, some of which do not get renewed. The number of new subscriptions sometimes exceeds and sometimes doesn’t make up for those that have expired. Right now we seem to have reached a plateau which, when faced with rising costs, makes us very uneasy. It costs approximately 93¢ per copy to produce and mail the Bulletin (this does not include salaries since we’re all volunteers). At $5 a year, our subscribers pay about 83¢ a copy. To make up for this shortfall we have other sources of income.

Institutional subscriptions: we charge institutions (libraries, universities, schools, etc.) $10 a year per subscription. There are two very nice characteristics of institutional subs, the first being that we make a profit with every sub, and the second being that, once an institution subscribes, it almost automatically renews every year. Hence, the more institutional subs we have, the more predictable and secure our income.

Advertising: we advertise music stores, instrument makers/repairpersons, records and record companies, coffeehouses/folk clubs, festivals, magazines, books, or anything else that is even remotely related to folk music. Our advertising income has fluctuated from a high of over $650 per issue to sometimes less than $150. Needless to say, if we had a regular $650 coming in every 2 months we’d be in great shape. Unfortunately we don’t. One of the problems is that hustling to sell ads is hard work and when you’re not paying someone to do it, you don’t exactly have people lining up, begging for the job. Every now and then, when we get really frightened by the red ink in our books, we all go on a mad ad-selling spree; but the fruits of these campaigns eventually dwindles as the income from once-only ads is spent and the one-year ads expire.

Donations/benefits: we occasionally receive donations from subscribers or supportive folk clubs who have either pooled money from among
members, or put on a benefit performance at their club, the proceeds of which come to CFB.

**Grants:** It is with a certain degree of sardonic humour that the word "grants" appears on this page—we have, as yet, received not a penny from any grant of any kind. We approached the Publications branch of the Canada Council who we figured would be the logical source. One of the kinds of publications that they fund are those dealing with the performing arts. Perfect, we thought. CFB covers the performance of folk music in Canada; but when we enquired whether or not we were eligible for funding, we were told that Canada Council Publications has no category for folk music.

The reason we are hanging out our financial underwear for all to see is that we feel it's important for you to understand all the work and worry that keep the CFB going; otherwise it becomes just another nice little item that you can buy, rather than being something that really belongs to you. Its survival depends on you, and, after painting what may appear to be a bleak financial picture, we'd like to brighten it by inviting you to participate.

Many of your subscriptions will expire with this issue—renew now! Get your friends and anyone else you can think of to subscribe (or give them a sub for Christmas). The more subscribers we have, the more magazines we print (which decreases our unit cost) and the more secure our financial base. If your local library doesn't have a copy, phone them and ask if they carry it; get your friends to do the same. These calls are all recorded and, after a certain number of requests, the library will subscribe (and those $10 subs mean a lot to us).

If there is a music store, instrument builder, magazine or whatever in your area that you know of, send us their name and address so that we send them advertising information. Visit them yourselves and show them a copy of CFB, telling them it has (international) readership and suggesting that they place an ad. If there is a music/book/record store that doesn't sell CFB, send us their address.

If you attend or are involved in a local folk club, you are especially well-suited to help out. Is CFB publicised and single copies sold on club nights? Organize a CFB benefit night at the club. Put a CFB subscription form with a little blurb (all of which we'd be happy to send you) in your club newsletter. Get your club to buy an ad and an institutional sub.

Or... if you have some multi-coloured banknotes burning a hole in your pocket, we'd be happy to put them to good use before they devalue too much. MERRY CHRISTMAS!