

# NAACL Treasurer's report

## June 2012



The Chapter's bank account held \$104,234.27 at the end of April 2012. But this does not yet account for the major money movements for conference surpluses and deficits that occurred recently, so a more informative current estimate of what we have is about \$70,000. This is about \$45,000 less than at the same time last year and about half of what we had two years ago (\$136,803.38). The only substantial income for the year was booking \$38,950.00 as our 50% of the surplus from ACL 2011 (Portland). Outgoings were regular moderate expenses (\$2K from the Emerging Regions fund for two conferences, \$10K for the JHU summer workshop, \$5K to support NACLO 2011), and the enormous deficit from the NAACL HLT 2010 conference that was already discussed in last year's Treasurer's report. As foreshadowed then, the loss has actually grown further due to our inability to obtain a sponsorship commitment of \$8,500.00 from AT&T Interactive. I propose at this point that it just be written off as a bad debt. The total loss from NAACL HLT 2010 was then \$68,107.93. As noted last year, this one item wipes out almost exactly half of the surplus that NAACL has accumulated in its 10+ years of existence, and which it uses to fund other activities such as those listed above.

What have we done and what should we do about this bad news? I don't think we should stop funding existing activities, but we should work harder to make our incomings more solid. That means rethinking the conference a bit. We took some small steps to do that before this year's conference: We had a phone conference to discuss the financial situation and options, and we made some moves to increase revenues by ... raising registration rates. However, I feel that we should do more. Here are a few suggestions: 1) Our agreeing to a submission deadline a week before ACL's was a huge mistake, which undermined submissions to NAACL and strained the viability of the conference. Let's not do that again. 2) We need to be clearer and stricter about the option to cancel tutorials and workshops that do not look like they can be run at a surplus. 3) The banquet has *always* run at a loss, despite the ever-higher banquet fees. We should at least consider abandoning it for NAACL and replacing it with some cheaper option (e.g., a pub night). 4) We should notice that workshops are a huge part of this NAACL, and we should consider doing things to develop that side of things more (e.g., we could have workshops over more than 2 days by one of several variant means). 5) We should notice the reversal that has occurred: previously ACLs were financially dubious, whereas NAACLs always did fine, but lately ACLs have done well, but NAACLs have been much less solid financially. Of course, the number of sample points is small, but I think we need to pay attention to that. 6) We should consider ways to get more sponsorship coming to NAACL event. It *should* be one of the most appealing language technology events to sponsor.

Christopher Manning, NAACL Treasurer; June 2, 2012, Palo Alto, CA.

