

Northern Lights Library Network Governing Board

Director's Report

Oct 20, 2007

Meetings/Activities

August

- 8/23 OPAL webconferencing training (Talking Communities), online
- 8/23 Multitype Directors used OPAL Conferencing software for discussion of the North Star Library Consortium
- 8/23 Bob Wheeler (Region 1), Patricia Post (CMLE multitype), Gay Galles (Moorhead Schools) and I met to discuss expansion of the North Star Library Consortium.
- 8/28 Ready4K Board meeting, St Paul – attended by telephone conference
- 8/29-31 Out of office on family business related to my parents

September

- 9/5 Met with Ann Brummel, White Earth Tribal College Development Officer, and Mary Otto, Consultant, regarding future of WETC, accreditation, early childhood, etc
- 9/7 MINITEX/MnLINK Policy Advisory Council, UofM, Minneapolis
- 9/12 Meeting with Lina Belar, History Museum of East Ottertail, to explore new technologies, cooperative projects with schools, and electronic communication
- 9/13 Met with Doreen Mikelson, Bremer Bank, to update NLLN banking with Bremer, eliminated fees, updated authorized access to NLLN e-Biz accounts.
- 9/14 Conference call with Eide Bailly, NLLN, and Mosaic Consulting regarding NLLN accounting procedures/audit needs
- 9/18 Four representatives from Follett software met with Bob Wheeler, Russ Matter, Gay Galles, Patricia Post and myself to explore alternatives for the North Star Library Consortium, the new Follett Consortium model, and licensing costs.
- 9/19 E-Newsletter workshop presented by IdealWare, attended via webconferencing.
- 9/20 Destiny training workshop for new staff members, Moorhead
- 9/25 Library Renovation Planning workshop (streaming video), MSU-M
- 9/27 Submitted letter of support from NLLN for the White Earth Child Care grant application for Family, Friend and Neighbor school readiness grant(Dept of Human Services)
- 9/27 Met with Lori Velde, Multiple Technologies, regarding photocopier options
- 9/28 Attended White Earth Early Childhood Initiative meeting; Readmobile program
- 9/28 Chris McArthur and I met with Crystall Tibbetts at the Naytahwaush Charter School to help get them on track with using Destiny and updating records

October

- 10/4 Multitype Directors Quarterly meeting, Pequot Lakes
- 10/5-6 MEMO Fall Conference, Cragun's resort
- 10/5 Meeting with Shelly Jilek, Follett Sales, regarding North Star Library Consortium
- 10/9-12 Vacation – Maine
- 10/15 Minnesota Book Award Planning Committee, St Paul – unable to attend the meeting but submitted a report on the traveling book display.
- 10/16 Review of NLLN Audit report with Travis Solberg
- 10/17 Work with Brandon Schools regarding joining the North Star Library Consortium
- 10/20 NLLN Governing Board Meeting, Detroit Lakes

Continuing Education

- **OPAL training:** We have used this webconferencing software for several planning meetings, are exploring the possibilities of using it for delivery of training sessions, and have attended a number of events being presented by OPAL member libraries. It is working very well, is easy to use, provides great format for interactive sessions as well as presentation sessions. The multitype directors will be using it to plan for the MEMO Midwinter Conference where we will be launching a “23 Things” program.
- **Teleconferences from the College of DuPage:** The first teleconference will be Oct 26 on the topic of “Finding Trends that Matter: Get your Environmental Scan on”. We will once again be partnering with MSU-M as a satellite downlink site for these teleconferences, as well as making them available via webstreaming to individual desktop computers. NLLN provides the online registration (<http://nlln.org/teleconf10-26-07L.html>), linking information, and archive site. We will be presenting teleconferences in both the “Soaring to Excellence” and the “Challenges and Opportunities” series.
- **NLLN Scholarship program:** We have awarded 11 scholarships so far this year. Five were to attend the MEMO Fall Conference; 3 requests for MLA or NDLA Conferences; and several requests to attend the national Public Library Association Conference in Minneapolis, March 2008. Other requests, to date, have included attending ALA Midwinter Conference, ALA Annual, and specialized events. I expect that this program will again be a success and will enable individual staff development that would not otherwise be possible.
- **Destiny training for new staff (Sept 20):** Chris McArthur and I conducted a full day workshop for new staff in existing Destiny sites. We had 12 participants – some new, others needing a refresher course. It was well-received.
- **Spotlight on Books 2008:** Planning is well under way for the 20th Annual Spotlight on Books Conference. It will be great! Featured on Friday afternoon will be Jim Trelease of “Read Aloud” fame; Saturday will feature DJ McHale, Mary Casanova, and Debra Frasier, as well as displays, “showcases”, and authors from past years’ conferences. The NLLN webpage for Spotlight has been updated and the promotional materials are being created for early distribution.
- **NW Service Coop Media Workshop (TRF):** On Oct 29, NLLN will partner with Alice Hofstad/NWSC to present a Fall workshop for media center staff on a variety of interesting topics, including web safety, podcasting, and the new MN Media Center Annual Report. The workshop will be followed by a NW Memo Regional meeting. I will be presenting at both sessions.
- **23 Things:** The MN Multitype Directors have agreed to jointly sponsor a program in our regions called “23 Things” – to be initiated at the MEMO Midwinter Conference. This program will be available in NLLN for all types of librarians and should be an interesting adventure for anyone who would like to explore new skills. The “23 Things” program will allow participants to learn new Web2.0 tools and skills in a somewhat self-paced, structured way that will lead to competence and confidence in the world of social networking, audio, video, blogging, podcasting, etc. Board members may be interested in trying this out.
- **MLA, MEMO, NDLA, etc Fall Conferences:** NLLN is promoting attendance at the Fall Conferences for the various library associations. See the NLLN Calendar of Events for more information.

Advocacy

- **MLA/MEMO Legislative Platform:** The MLA and MEMO legislative committees continue to develop the platform for the upcoming legislative bonding session. Platform development is an on-going process and several new approaches have been used. The Webjunction discussion forum is one. The multitype directors suggested exploring meetings via webconferencing for the MLA legislative committee in order to expand participation (this has been used by MnLINK and Rural Sustainability effectively and might be useful here).
- **Ready4K:** The Ready4K Board has been doing strategic planning the past few months with particular attention to more effectively reaching Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers. Libraries are seen as a key community agency for access to resources. There has been discussion about initiating a statewide program involving libraries as community resource centers. I have been involved in this, along with Gretchen Wronka (Hennepin Co Library) and other library community representatives. Also, I have worked with these same people in the development/implementation of the FFN grants that were authorized by the 07 legislature.
- **Mn Book Award Program 2008:** I have written a report for the Planning Committee regarding the traveling display of 2007 MBA books and offering to expand that program in 2008. This is an opportunity to link libraries and communities in greater MN to the nominated authors and to give greater visibility to the Mn Book Award Program.
- **New NLLN Members:** Although the total number of NLLN members has decreased because of school closings and consolidations, new NLLN members continue to be added. We continue to work on a membership directory and interactive map for the NLLN webpage.

Communication

- **Webpage enhancements:** The webpage continues to be upgraded, tweaked, and expanded. It currently has 216 pages within the website (up from 167). The banner photographs were changed to reflect a more seasonal look of the region; we have not attempted to identify the banner with libraries – a topic we can discuss. In the works is an attempt to create an interactive map of the region with each library identified and linked to their site. This is proving more challenging than anticipated. The Search box also needs modification. The calendar of events, online registration, Continuing Education page, and Spotlight on Books continue to be the most heavily used areas and require the most maintenance. The NLLN webpage is an ongoing process.
- **Listservs:** The NLLN listserv has 135 subscribers; it is a low volume list that is used primarily to share time-sensitive information to the NLLN membership. The North Star Library Consortium electronic mailing list has 102 subscribers. This is a more active email discussion and is open only to staff in the North Star Library Consortium and to Follett sales, training, and tech staff. Members use it to ask questions, share tips, and support one another in the use of Destiny and in media center management.
- **Newsletter:** The electronic Newsletter is yet to be launched. I participated in an IdealWare workshop on selection and use of email Newsletter software, have been exploring the functionality of our software (Constant Contact), and worked with Ann Treacy on ways to post these to the webpage as HTML documents. I have some unanswered questions about this approach.
- **Blog:** The NLLN blog, *Northern Lights Insights*, has been active: 86 posts were made in September with 2195 “views” (people looking at the blog). It is possible to subscribe by email to the blog so that once a day you receive an email if any new posts have been made. The blog also has an RSS feed for those using aggregators. Blog postings are “tagged” into 16 groups and it is possible to view only the postings related to areas of individual interest (e.g., library trends, public libraries, North Star Library Consortium, etc).

- **Photogallery:** The NLLN photogallery on the NLLN webpage (a Flickr account) has new pictures posted all the time. People seem to enjoy that and look at them. More publicity could be given to these photos.
- **Spotlight and North Star Library Consortium webpages:** We have added new content to both of these webpages within the NLLN website and are getting good responses from them.
- **Photocopier:** I have been working with Multiple Technologies, our local Xerox agent, over the past few months to determine the best machine for our purposes. In the end, I selected a photocopier with several critical enhancements: a networked scanner that allows full color scanning into email, computer files, and photocopier; and optional color printing. Under the state contract we are able to reduce our per page printing costs, reduce the overall cost of the machine, provide increased functionality that will support our increasing use of electronic communication, and give us low-cost color printing options. We are not able to make a down payment, as in the past, so our monthly charges for a 60 month lease will be higher than we currently have, but the over all cost is considerably lower. I believe the choice will serve us well. Delivery, installation, and training will take place in the next few weeks.

Resource Sharing

- **CatExpress:** We are expanding our current CatExpress group subscription and assisting users in obtaining records. We have online "How to" instructions and Chris McArthur has provided direct assistance to numerous schools. This is a supplemental source of records for libraries. In FY 2007, 4596 records were added to regional catalogs from this CatExpress group subscription.
- **North Star Library Consortium:** We have added several new members to the Consortium and are in the process of adding them to the Destiny program. We may drop 2 or more sites that have been unable to move forward with conversion. This would free up additional licenses for several of the member libraries that have lately expressed interest in joining the Consortium. We have also explored with Follett the possibility of converting our current consortium to the new Follett Consortium model; to creating a new consortium for school and special libraries; how Region 1 might move ahead as a Destiny host site for other areas of MN that are interested, as well as for schools in North and South Dakota.
- **Chris McArthur's summer work:** Chris wrapped up her summer work with 2 workshops for *Destiny* users, providing retrospective conversion assistance to Browns Valley School, NayTahWaush Charter School, Clearbrook-Gonvick School, and is preparing to help Calvary Lutheran in Alexandria.

Other:

- **Audit FY2007:** We have completed the FY2007 audit as of Oct 16, and it will working with Eide Bailly and Mosaic Consulting (our bookkeeping agent) to prepare our QuickBook files and financial processes to ensure an easier audit in the years ahead. This has been a time consuming effort, but well worth it. The Board will be able to decide the level of reporting they would like to receive concerning our monthly financial transactions.

Ruth Solie
October 16, 2007