

NLS Telephone Forum – 06-26-2013
(paraphrased)

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Good afternoon. This is the National Library Service. Welcome to the Open Forum call. Before we start taking questions this afternoon, our director has a few things she would like to say. So I'll turn it over to Karen...

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Thank you Steve. This is Karen Keninger and before I start on that I'd like to have the NLS staff go around the room so that you know who's all here.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Karen Keninger, Alice O'Reilly, Margie Goergen-Rood, Vickie Collins, Steve Prine, MaryBeth Wise, John Bryant, Ingrid Davitt, Neal Bernstein, Pamela Davenport, Jane Caulton, Judy Dixon, Paula Bahmani, John Brown.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

And we will try to remember to announce ourselves again as we speak because we know that some of you are not familiar with our voices. This is Karen Keninger again and I have a list of things that I'm going to provide some updates on, or I'm going to ask someone else to do that...and after we get done with this, you are free to ask all kinds of questions. So, the first item I have on my list is the app for the iPhone and the Android system – Neal

Comment: (Neal Bernstein - NLS)

Okay I can do that – we're several weeks into our pre-beta testing and it's going very well. We're down to a very small number of bugs, there's a little bit of BARD implementation left to go, so that they can fully talk to BARD. We are hoping to show the beta test before the end of July. The test will involve another 40 or so people, testing the application. We don't anticipate a whole lot of problems from beta testing, but then again, you never know, that's why we do it. Looking pretty good. I guess the app will be on display at the upcoming consumer convention. Several people at the convention will have the app, and I'm sure there will be demo's done.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Okay, that's the IOS app, and the Android app is coming along, a little bit behind it, is that correct? So we're expecting that one to be a little bit later, but it is definitely on its way.

The next topic that I have is electronic signatures. I had been asked whether or not we could accept electronic signatures, by which we mean, something that is fast, in a PDF document. We're not talking about (those) really complicated electronic signatures, as used for a bank or something. The answer as you know, from my Operations Alert, is yes. The next question that came in is can we accept if it's stamped or printed, or that sort of thing, and again the answer is yes. It doesn't actually have to be a hand written signature on that fax, it can be stamped or printed. The key is something that indicates that the individual whose name is on the signature line, intended to be providing that information. So, that's the answer to that.

Magazines on Cartridge tools present libraries with difficulties because it's such a long list. Mike Martys, do you want to respond to that?

Comment: (Mike Martys - NLS)

If I understand the issue correctly, the concern is there are patrons who are delinquent, and when the libraries research those patrons, or whatever, the solution is, is that they drop out of the program, or their subscriptions are terminated. But the magazine on cartridge system still has them marked as delinquent and they show up on all subsequent reports. And I understand that the request was: Is there a way to hide those individuals who are never going to become un-delinquent. At the present time, the system does not have that capability. The request makes sense, and we're going to have to add some capability that will let the libraries indicate which one of these patrons are basically out of this system, and that the MOC system should basically disregard them, as far as delinquency reports and displays – again that's based on my understanding of what the issue is, and if I don't have that right, someone let me know. And that'll be a change that we'll be implementing soon, it will be the next thing on our list of things to do. So, that's all I have for that item.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

There has been a request for machine repair workshops, to have them available as videos, workshops, or other remote access sorts of venues. We are going to be developing some YouTube videos that deal with machine repair stuff John Brown has anything else to say about that?

Comment: (John Brown - NLS)

We're supporting that right now, we're thinking it won't take too much time to get something up and get usable – but we're working with the folks downtown that have an actual AV studio – so we think we should be able to get something up of reasonable quality and in a reasonable time frame. So, once those are available, we'll put out an Ops Alert or Machines and Accessories Report, something like that, letting everyone know where they're located, how to use them and the information that you're going to need to sign up.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Alright – thank you John. Your next topic John is batteries.

Comment: (John Brown - NLS)

Yes – there is an M&A going around, well it should be going out to you, if it's not mailed out today, it should be going out this week – it'll describe a procedure for testing batteries, using the digital machine. If you follow this procedure, you'll be able to assess the state of health of a given battery pack and then determine whether it should be replaced, or if it's good enough for service. So that's again a Machines and Accessories report and that will be going out this week.

Question: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

And to follow up on that what about battery chargers...?

Answer: (John Brown - NLS)

We're still working with the vendor on producing for the existing IQ5 battery analyzers – the first prototype they gave us had some bugs in it, so we had to go back and fix things, so it's taking a little bit longer than we originally anticipated, but we're on the right track now, and again, once we have some firm dates for when we can expect these to be available... we will notify all MLA's and repair groups.

Question: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Okay, the next topic is – near to all of us: Cartridges: Alice? Why don't you give us an update on that. The question is where are they, how much are they going to cost, and when do we get them?

Answer: (Alice O'Reilly - NLS)

The cartridges have been through the testing phase... The cartridges have been approved, the production line has been approved and they're ready to get their massive, 100k a month order, delivery going. Now you can imagine, we've been without delivery for a number of months, so they're going to be working on (NLS first) but that doesn't mean that they don't want to hear from libraries who are interested in purchasing cartridges. We can contact Susan Weatheron - I can give you her name, we have (an Operations Alert) that has all this information, and Susan will, (take your order)... I'm not sure how she's going to handle the money – like if you have to get rid of some money now, like before the end of the fiscal year, but you can't facilitate until later – there are unique participants, basically she knows the ropes to do with the library, she knows that some people like large orders, some people like small orders, some people have fixed prices, some people can't, so. So go ahead and call Susan and give her your situation, other than that we have posted a solicitation and it closes the middle of July...and we'll see who bids on that – then there's the evaluation process, then there's the award...the point is, it's a long-term, 5-year contract that's designed to get us back to where we were before it started to default. So, hopefully, with the recycling program, and with our little stock pile that we had...

Question: (Library Staff – NLS)

When can we expect that operations will respond with that information?

Answer: (Alice O'Reilly – NLS)

I think by the end of the week. The thing that we learned from North Star, is that some libraries, or organizations, are not set up to take that flexible pricing model so where we could say – you could order that, or how many you could order, or what the cost would be, the dollar amount would be depending on the time of production – so that requirement, that flexibility didn't work for a lot of libraries. So what Susan found is, taking that information, and agreed to hold a certain quantity at a fixed price. I think she was thinking, like 9000, so libraries who are required to buy at a fixed price, so libraries that want to buy in smaller quantities will have that capacity. If you want to buy 100k, you'll have to take a risk (on price flexibility) because they don't want to take that risk for you. But, if you want to purchase, 1k, 2k cartridges, and you need it to be a fixed price, ALCOR is willing basically to make that happen for you. So that's the way Susan carried off with this next company, and is really trying to modify their business model, to accommodate what (the) requirements are. And then third parties...are going to be repurchasing cartridges and replenishing their stock.

Comment: (Karen Keninger – NLS)

The next topic on my list is PIMS – Michael you want to talk about that?

Comment: (Mike Martys – NLS)

The week before last we had a Status Meeting – workshop – with all the circulation vendors who are responsible for interfacing with PIMS. The meeting went very well. The topics that were discussed primarily how does each CIRC system interface with PIMS and how the actual machine inventory will be handled for those special cases where the machine lending agency and the library circulation system are kind of separated by distance. The long and short of it is that I thought everything went well, there were no major issues. All the vendors seemingly were on board in terms of interfacing with PIMS and right now they're working on estimating the level of effort it will take to modify their systems to implement the necessary interface components. In terms of the schedule, the overall project is still on schedule, but the major milestone for right now was this meeting, this workshop and getting everybody on board and that was accomplished. That's pretty much the update for PIMS, and we'll probably be - as soon as we get the feedback back from the individual vendors, we'll be starting to discuss what the implementation schedule will be for all of those systems and then we'll probably distribute that information when we know it.

Question: (Karen Keninger – NLS)

Thank you, Michael. What is the status of the Cartridge Magazine Announcement the revisions? They have been approved and they are being sent to the studio for recording. They should be seen in the magazines in a month?

Answer: (John Bryant – NLS)

I would say between 2 weeks and a month (no promise).

Question: (Library Staff – NLS)

Legal changes to eligibility – there have been – we've had some discussion about the eligibility – there were issues about a year ago. The news on that is that there is no news. I have not heard anything and neither has anyone at the library. So, I don't have any answers to that one.

The demographic surveys (were) closed – the final report is due on Friday. We have seen a draft report, and we will get the final report Friday and be able to do some various analyses of that – but we don't have it yet. In general terms, I think we'll get some good information out of it, but it's going to take some deep analysis I think.

Somebody wanted to know – What is the future of NLS and its network? We plan to stay in business for a long time. Initiatives and priorities actually is what they were asking about – and here (are) a couple of things that we're working on. This is not news but part of it might be. One thing that happened today, and we haven't been working directly on this because of our position ...has to do with the international treaty, that would allow cross-border exchange of accessible material among trusted entities who would then provide it to our patrons. They got all the issues ironed out as of last night, so this was very good news. It had gotten a bit uncertain, but this is very good news, it has gotten to that point. They now have it for technical review and cleaning up the language and will translate it into six different languages and make sure they all say the same thing. They expect to have the done by Friday, and then they expect to have the vote and for it to pass. Once that treaty is passed by this organization it will have to be ratified by countries, one by one. What impact that's going to have on the United States and particularly on our program, is yet to be determined, partly because it would have to be ratified by the Senate, before we would become a major player in this treaty. I don't anticipate that that's going to open up our international interlibrary loan any time soon, but it does hold promise for that in the future.

Another thing that has happened, is that we have signed an agreement with Hachette, a major audio publisher. They will be providing to us their audio files, I think is what we're getting. That is very exciting in itself, however it doesn't mean that immediately we're going to have all the Hachette books, in talking books format. There's a bunch of them and there's a lot of other publishers to follow suit. But still, we're working out the issues that we've talked about, of how to handle them and, frankly this might be an embarrassment of riches in the fact that we will have more titles than we may be able to actually convert, certainly more titles than we will be able to put onto cartridges. So, we're going to have to be looking at ways of utilizing these to get the most benefit from them. And, still remember that we must serve everybody in our system, and that we have to find ways for everybody to have access, to things, even if we only put them up on BARD. So, we're working on that, it's very exciting. The first book that's coming out is: David Sedaris – "Let's Explore Owls with Diabetes". So, that's a number of things that we're working on, the goal there is to expand the number of titles that are available to our people. We're looking at all different ways of doing it.

We've sent out a survey recently to all of you recently, with regard to your recording studios and your capabilities there. We hope to hear from those of you who didn't finish the survey, by Friday. Because this is the first step we're taking in getting our locally produced materials up on BARD. So if you haven't had time to fill that out, please get it done by Friday, because we're going to be using that information in the next step for that project.

The last thing I wanted to talk about is the Braille Summit. Some of you attended, some of you may have watched it streaming. What I have to say about the Braille Summit is that because of all of the hard work of the NLS and the Perkins team that worked on getting that pulled together, it went off really well. I do apologize, for those of you who were streaming it on Wednesday, and were having trouble hearing it. Overall, I believe that we came out of it with some really good information and direction. And, we will be synthesizing that - we'll be putting together a formal report on the summit, that will incorporate the information that came out of the breakout sessions and the panelists. And we will be using that as the basis for a strategic plan that will guide our braille program going forward. That being said, there's one other tangential thing and that is that we will very soon be posting a position for a braille specialist here at NLS. If you know of anybody who is well suited to that kind of a position, and who is interested in participating in some real renovations I'll say, of the NLS/Braille program, looking at what we came out of the summit with, do encourage people to apply. We're looking for one really good person, and you probably know them. Those are the things that I have on my list topics. At this point, does anyone else have anything else that I missed that we should report on? (Silence.) Hearing nothing then we'll open the floor to questions.

Question: (Carl Keehn - NC)

We're having a hard time hearing you all. Just a comment about the MOC tool and I'm pleased to see that they're up and running, and we're happy to see that one of our concerns, which was the ability to resend an item if somebody never received it, and we had to declare it lost, I'm glad to see that was implemented. However, we do have a concern about the limit for claims return materials and resending materials. We would like to word (?) the capability to the local level to have some kind of local control on that. The specific instance we had the person who has an excellent borrowing record, had two cartridges disappear in the mail, and we were able to get them declared lost, but he's basically at his max now. And, that makes him punished, because of a failure somewhere else in the system.

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

I think Carl, that we will continue to tweak this system until we have it right. I don't know at this moment whether we can do that in a general way. The reason is that we have frankly got a very limited number of cartridges and a pretty big delinquency rate and that's going to really impact our ability to keep the program running. So, if you have a special, special case, give your consultant a call and make the case to your consultant and we can see what we can do. But, for only in really very special cases because of the limitations we have with funding and cartridges, that are impacting this program.

Question: (Jennifer R. - TX)

I have a few different questions. One question that I have and I'm not sure if there's an announcement about it, but I couldn't find anything. What is happening with the APH magazines, from cassette to digital, for Newsweek and Reader's Digest?

Answer: (John Bryant - NLS)

I have talked to APH and they are beginning to test sending out their magazines on cartridge. They said they are actually watching out program to see how well we do at getting them back. So, if know anyone who does receive them, be sure they send them back!

Question: (Jennifer R. - TX)

Thank you. The next question I have, I just wanted are Piano Technician Journal and Economist being sent on cartridge, in addition to being available through BARD?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

The Piano Technician Journal, no. It will not go out on cartridge, because it's such a limited group.

Comment: (Jennifer R. - TX)

Okay. Well, the information in the May/June Talking Books Topics conflicts with that, so there needs to be a correction. It said, "As part of the ongoing NLS magazine program transition from cassette to cartridge, "The Economist" and "Piano Technicians Journal", are now available on cartridge. Please contact your local network library, to update your magazine subscription.

Comment: (John Bryant - NLS)

I stand corrected. I did not believe we were putting that journal - The Economist is definitely out, we included that with... Subscribers to "The Week" magazine, received The Economist also, along with a message that said: "We thought you might be interested in this, if you do, let your library know, if you don't let your library know, it will discontinue after 2 months.

Question: (Jennifer R. - TX)

Okay, and so with the Piano Technician Journal, should we allow patrons to subscribe to the cartridge, or was that just a misprint in the Talking Books Topics.

Answer: (John Bryant - NLS)

Well, if it's on cartridge, they can subscribe. I will have to check on that, I'm sorry, I didn't realize that it had been put on cartridge.

Comment: (Jennifer R. - TX)

Yeah, I don't know if it has been, or if there's just a mistake in the announcement by TBT.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

We will check on that, and be sure to let you know.

Question: (Jennifer R. - TX)

My other question is about the change in the local in the local automation systems for the cassette to digital format for the magazines. Because we were told that we should leave old subscribers to the cassette version as still subscribed to the cassette version, but that the end of this month, we could make the change in our system to reflect that they're actually subscribed to the digital version. And, what we need to know, and we can make that change in our system, but, and Linda didn't know the answer either; do we actually send that transaction information to CMLS, or do we just make the change here and not notify CMLS?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe that any changes you make in your system will automatically go to CMLS.

Comment: (Jennifer R. - TX)

We can suppress it here, where we don't send the transaction information, and Linda had said that she can just make a change, in her program there, so she might not need us to send the transaction. And, I just don't want burden her with basically hundreds and hundreds of transactions, if she doesn't need to see them.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Well if you can do a universal change in your system, then that will just change the CMLS transactions that Data Management gets. We don't want Data Management making any changes, because it then puts them out of their CMLS out of sync with network libraries.

Question: (Jennifer R. - TX)

So should we just make the change showing that they're getting the digital magazine, but just not send the transaction to CMLS?

Question: (Library Staff - NLS)

Are you leaving them in as cassette also then?

Answer: (Jennifer R. - TX)

No. What we want to do is to inactivate the cassette magazines, since it's no longer going to be sent. So we already have both a cassette magazine active in our system, and we have digital flash active in our system. What we were told during this transition was that any new subscriber who only wanted digital, could go ahead and be registered for digital. But, patrons who were already registered for cassette, keep them set up for the cassette version, even though they were going to be both cassette and digital, during the transition period.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

But after this month, they're only going to get digital.

Comment: (Jennifer R. - TX)

Right, so we're going to go ahead and we're going to inactivate the cassette version, but what I want to know is when we cancel the cassette version for these patrons and assign them to the digital version; do we need to send that transaction record to CMLS?

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

No, if you invalidate them as in CMLS, then they're not going to get the digital version, because it won't be in your files.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Wait, let me just say one thing. The system is set up so that if a person is registered as a three or four they get the magazine. So, if you leave them in there as cassette, they're going to continue to get magazines from the computer system.

Question: (Jennifer R. - TX)

Right, but if we put them on the four, for the digital cassettes, what the suffix is for digital, is that fine from our end? Cause we could do that, but just not send anything to CMLS.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

If you don't suppress it, it seems it would generate quite an extensive weekly exception report that probably isn't needed.

Question: (Jennifer R. - TX)

Okay, so don't send the transaction? I mean I've talked with Linda, and she said she hasn't heard either way what we should do. Because, in our system we want to be able to actually inactivate that cassette media. We have two distinct media on the magazine record, for the audio format. So we have a cassette version which is a three, and we also have the digital version which is a four. I understand that they're seeing cassettes as being the same as digital. But, now that cassettes are no longer a thing, we want to be able to inactivate that media and put those patrons on the digital.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Since the problem is unique to your library, we should probably have this conversation off-line.

Question: (Jennifer R. - TX)

Well, I've been asking and I haven't received any responses, and I know it's happening probably toward the end of this month. So we have two days left, and I hadn't received a response, so that's why I'm asking now, so we know what we need to do locally. So, who should I talk with or call after the phone call?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Your network consultant.

Comment: (Jennifer R. - TX)

Okay, well we have an email already to her but she wasn't certain about what we needed to do either.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Jennifer, you can update me after this call, and tell me where that email is, because I didn't get anything this week.

Comment: (Jennifer R. - TX)

Okay. It should have been today. Alright, thanks.

Question: (Andrew Egan - RI)

Hello everybody – the Braille Summit was great, enjoyed it a lot. We noticed in Rhode Island, getting a lot calls from our members, that the mail is slowing down - whatever we send them, is not getting there on a regular basis. It's almost like two weeks now, in terms of slowness. We've checked with Perkins, and it's not an isolated RI / MA slowdown, and I'm just going to want to confirm that you and on the national level, we're seeing some kind of slowdown in terms cassettes, cartridges being mailed.

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Not uniformly across the country, it is happening here and there, but the post office is going through their own economic problems. As you remember, the USPS was going to stop Saturday mailing, and congress told them no they weren't. They were going to continue to do it, but they didn't put any money with that. So, the USPS, there are problems.

Question: (Andrew Egan - RI)

Knowing that, should our approach be local? Call the local post office? Somebody from our state that heads the post office? Or should we do it as kind of a group effort if we're starting to notice that... because we know the economic conditions are causing lots of problems, what do we do?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

I would guess you need to pursue it locally, because the post office is kind of like the weather, we talk about it, but we can't necessarily impact it because they deliver billions and billions of pieces of mail a year. Twenty six million seems like a high number, but it's probably less than 2-3% of their total deliveries, so...

Comment: (Andrew Egan - RI)

The reason why my concern is high – is, it's a process where our patrons are becoming unhappy with the service that we provide. And, it appears to them that it's our fault, basically saying "Well you're not sending this stuff quickly enough to us." As far as I can tell, it's the fault of the USPS. So, we're getting the blame for the slowness of the mail, and that's what I want to stop, is basically, not being the recipient of the being blamed for poor mail delivery. So, I'm trying to get a much wider spectrum of your support. I'm just wondering if any other state or any other people also have that issue.

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Part of this other issue is that it's in places that are not uniform.

Comment: (Andrew Egan - RI)

Okay, so we'll pursue if from our and we'll let you know how we progress.

Question: (Ruth Hemphill - TN)

I just wanted a little bit of clarification about the books from Hachette; you mentioned that there might be such a high volume that you might not be able to put them all on cartridge. I was wondering, do you plan to add all of them to the collection, or do you plan to use collection development guidelines, and maybe not even add some of them?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Initially, we will be using collection development guidelines and I'm pretty sure we will not be able to add everything.

Comment: (Ruth Hemphill - TN)

So, you won't be able to add everything, I assume it's due to economic issues and access, but some of them might not be good enough to be considered for the collection. I don't know maybe Hachette is all high quality, I don't know.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Well, we'll look at them carefully, and we will be collection development criteria.

Question: (Kate Summer -)

We have a question – in the magazine on cartridge processing tools that have been added: When a cartridge is lost from a dropdown menu, you need to select the option for the situation. One of them is "Not delivered". My question is: does that mean not delivered to the patron, or not delivered back to the processing center? I'm just asking because we feel like there maybe needed to be a distinction. We weren't quite sure what to enter.

Answer: (Mike Martys - NLS)

The "Not delivered" designation - we intended that for a patron who reports that they never received the cartridge. There is a separate item in there that they stated they returned it, but obviously we never received it. We might be tweaking that list of items as we get feedback from the libraries in terms of things we can put in there. It's primarily there to save you time, so if there's like something that you think should be in the list, just shoot us a note and we'll put it in there.

Question: (Beth Hirst - IA)

I have a quick question about The Economist, what is the CMLS code for that?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

It's "ECL"

Comment: (Beth Hirst - IA)

And, I also had a comment about the post office issue. I don't know if our mail is being delivered late around here, but our experience has been that with everything: Patrons call and have problems with and think they should blame the library or the department. I think it's a good idea to have the postal information at your fingertips so that you can tell complaining patrons to call the post office number whether it's a local or state person, or whatever. Direct them to call the post office with their complaints, and if there are a lot of patrons, then maybe the USPS will recognize the problem, thank you.

Comment: (Hal S. -)

I do have a comment, I've been very pleased with the digital talking book machines that were developed, I see a lot of positive good features in them. I do have one suggestion though: When power is applied to the machine, it will say "Player on" and read the book title. And, for some patrons who may have lost power in a storm or something, power may have resumed in the middle of the night, or something, and they may not appreciate a voice talking them next to their bed or in another part of their home. So I wondered if there would be the possibility of disabling this player on and book title feature.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

John [Bryant] will take that under advisement, thank you for the suggestion.

Comment: (Christy Briggs - MT)

Hi folks, it's not really a question, it's a comment for Andy as well as for Beth and others. In Montana, we have had a great amount of success contacting postmaster general Patrick Donahoe, through the 1-800-275-8777 number. Or, going to USPS.com and emailing the postmaster general asking for our district manager's (DM) contact information for our state. I am in close contact with the DM for MT, which is actually for the Dakota's and they have had a great record of quick turn around on investigating issues in Montana. The other note I want to make regarding Beth's comment: is that in MT anyway most of the local post office numbers have either been discontinued or have been changed from an actual person picking up the phone, to just a message (outgoing greeting) without voicemail ability. So I do recommend that you do find out who your district manager is for your state. Thank you,

Question: (Serena McGuire - DC)

I'm also responding to the concerns with the post office. We were having a dreadful time in DC, back last winter and spring. We were down to receiving about a quarter of our normal mail, day after day and no idea where the rest of it was piling up. We did meet with the post office and the situation has improved in terms of the daily deliveries, but I still can't help but suspect there's a lot of mail piled up somewhere, just in terms of the number of overdues we have and the amount coming in does not anywhere nearly approach balancing out the shortages we had for a while. We did increase our peoples maximums, I know that doesn't really address the issue, but it at least did get books out to people. So, I don't know if that's at all helpful to anyone, but just know that DC is another place that has been having a lot of problems. We were actually almost to the point of just driving to the post office every day and picking up the mail ourselves. In hopes that that would ease the problem some, but then the situation improved, so we haven't instituted that.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Well thank you Serena, I know there's a lot of information and concern about the post office and we will do what we can – but as Steve said, it's a little bit like the weather. But, I think coming from you at the local level would probably be another helpful thing to do. Thank you.

Question: (Marilyn Stevenson - NH)

First of all I really enjoyed the Braille Summit, I'm so glad that I was able to go, that was very well presented and I'm so glad I did that. I look forward to seeing that report. I did have a question about that electronic report, you said stamps are also okay? Is that also for the MDs and the DOs for the reading disabled?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Yes.

Question: (Ann Piascik - RI)

I just wanted to add a little more information about the postal problem. Just today, I was talking to a...vendor about another issue from Oklahoma. I don't know if Oklahoma is listening, but I thought it interesting that the free matter for the blind, that this vendor also uses, was able to get it delivered as first class, because the postmaster in Oklahoma, she told me, had decided it would be first class. So, I share that, with hopes that maybe other states would be able to follow that example at some time. I think that might help the situation. I'm very concerned about our patrons because when books are lost somewhere between the library and the patron, because those books are considered maybe lost. Um, they haven't even tried to return it, so we get it from both ends, of them being lost in the system somewhere, so I'm just sharing that.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Thank you.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

I would point out that the postal regulations in the domestic mail manual basically states that free matter is no specific class of mail, but for purposes of delivery that it should be treated as first class. So the post master in Oklahoma is doing it correctly.

Question: (Stacy Hathaway-Bell - TX)

My question is, is there any plan or process that has been put into place for retrieving or recovering books that our patrons mess up and send back to the magazine producers in their magazine boxes?

Answer: (John Bryant - NLS)

If the producer can tell where it came from, they will. That's not always possible if the cartridge is not marked. But, if it is marked or there's some other way they can tell from which library it was launched, they will send it back to them.

Question: (Stacy Hathaway-Bell - TX)

Okay, so that's something that is a definite plan, that has been put into place, it's not just at their discretion?

Answer: (John Bryant - NLS)

Well, it's somewhat at their discretion right now, they're not contracted to do that, however, they said they will certainly do that if they can.

Question: (Stacy Hathaway-Bell - TX)

Okay, the second part of this question is: We got a call from the music section yesterday. Apparently, a book from the music section may have been sent back to the producer because the music section received a magazine back in their book box. So the music section called us, and the question that got to me was: who sends the magazines? So, I said well, they're an NLS contractor so I think that NLS probably knows. We contacted the patron of course, but is there any plan for retrieving items such as that?

Answer: (John Bryant - NLS)

Hopefully, that's an isolated incident. But, if we can, once a cartridge arrives, the bar code on that cartridge tells us where that cartridge is from and where it's supposed to go. So, we know who sent it to them and who they are. So, the cartridge has the information and we can check that here, or I'll double check with the music section to make sure that they know that.

Question: (Richard Smith - MO)

I mentioned, I think at the selection development meeting, they talked about the BARD Search that was displayed at Newport - that Michael Katzman displayed. An enhancement to the BARD system with BARD Search. Is that still being developed?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

We have got so many things going on that are funneling through a fairly narrow portal right now, that I have put the Solar Search, much to the dismay of a couple people, on the back burner. That will be in the next iteration of BARD, but I had to put that on the back burner in order to get the app done, and make sure that we have all of the MOC tools and all of those kind of things. So, it's coming, but it's not coming soon.

Question: (Richard Smith - MO)

Oh, I'm in tears. On the commercial books: I know that the commercial books now are in the talking books topics, they do have ratings of violence and strong language. I think that somewhere down the road, they said, they may not be in future talking book topics.

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

There is a difference between the commercial books that we're doing now, and what we're looking at. And that is that, the ones that we're going now, we have hard copy copies of, and we are treating them basically, the same way that we do other books, in terms of collection development and notation development, that sort of thing. With the new books, we are going to get audio copies, but we're not going to necessarily have enough other information besides the metadata that is provided by the publisher in order to be able to do that. Because the way that we do that now - correct me if I'm wrong guys - is that we go through the book and they look at the dirty words and stuff, and if we don't have the book, we won't be able to go through the book and do that. That's why we're looking at the unrated category for the new commercial books that would be coming up.

Question: (Diane Simms - GA)

Recently I received the magazine from a patron, and it was supposed to go back to wherever it goes back to, but we received it in a blue container as a book. I want to know where do I send this magazine back to?

Answer: (John Bryant - NLS)

That goes back to National Audio Company in Missouri.

Comment: (Ruth Hemphill - TN)

I just thought I'd mention that we have received a couple of book cartridges from NAC in Springfield, because our patrons returned a book and a magazine container, which they're denying. The cartons as far as I can see don't belong to us because they don't have one of our TN-LBPH stickers on them and we have no record of the patron having that book, although they admit to reading it. So, I checked the [?] to see if we had an inter-library loan, and didn't have a record for it somehow, which is not likely, but possible – multi-state center said they didn't have it. I'm thinking of just adding them to our collection, because they're books we'd like to have. It goes both ways, someone asked if we get the books back and we are, from National Audio.

Question: (Terry Soave – MI9)

I have questions regarding the WIKI. Recently we've been working on a space for magazines on cartridge and all information relating to magazines, and I posted a couple of links to the practice BARD site, the Magazine on Cartridge administration introduction and also the FAQs pages. There were some question as to whether or not it was okay for me to post these links, so I just wanted to confirm based on our phone call last month, that it is okay to direct people to links that exist on the NLS site when it's relevant.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Yeah, I think Terry, probably the issue was that a lot of those links are in process, and that when we actually have finalized things, we will be doing Operations Alerts to let everybody know exactly what the current links are. So, it's not a problem to post them, but it just means that when people go to the WIKI they need to know that maybe that might not be the most current information. You'd have to double check an Operations Alert, which would be an official, as opposed to just some preliminary link.

Comment: (Terry Soave – MI9)

I guess I'm a little confused by that, because I'm actually linking to the information on your site. So, as you update the information, that link will remain updated.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

I guess that's good news.

Comment: (Terry Soave – MI9)

So, my understanding is, when I last checked those pages, you have a last updated date on those pages, at the bottom of each page.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

We try to do that – yes.

Question: (Terry Soave – MI9)

Okay, so I guess I just want to confirm that it is okay for us to direct – basically – I can give you example: We've created a space for magazines, and we've created different categories of where to go for information. Some of which we're providing based on what libraries have available. The other is what NLS has, and I notice that there's some information available on Practice BARD where there's some other information available on PICS – such as the NLS magazine release schedule and lists of of magazines available – that information is available through NLS, but it's located in other places and it's not always easy find. So what we're trying to do is create a single space where you can go to one place and find all the information related to magazines.

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

I think the answer to your question is, dear, yes – you can link to our stuff. You can update it.

Question: (Terry Soave – MI9)

Thank you. I also have a question I think this would be for Michael Martys – with regard to the NLS magazine release schedule – I'm sort of new to that list, - if you could provide a little bit of information of what that is, and what it's used for – and I've noticed that it seems to be current in terms of the date – but it's still listing recorded cassette in terms of the format.

Answer: (Mike Martys - NLS)

The relief schedule that you're talking about is actually from PICS – unfortunately that is the old one that existed when the system was primarily cassette-driven. The new list, the more up to date one for the cartridge system, is actually in with the MOC tools – and it's actually updated as the magazines come in. So, when you look at the particular list you can see the past history of any particular magazine and also the upcoming delivery schedule. The magazine cartridge system is actually extremely dependent on that delivery schedule.

All the patrons who (get) magazines on cartridge have what is called a trigger publication – which is based on the items that they subscribe to – the MOC system picks one magazine to drive their delivery schedule. If you go into the MOC tools and look up information about a particular patron, it will tell you which trigger publication that patron has, and that publication drives their schedule. So, in other words, the delivery schedule of that magazine pretty much dictates when they receive cartridges. Now the system has intelligence built in - in that when a particular magazine is late, the system won't wait forever for that magazine to come in. It usually will wait up to two days – and then if the magazine still has not shown up, it will ship the cartridge with whatever the patron has on it. The whole purpose there is to prevent a patron from being penalized from one particular issue being tardy. So the whole system is driven by that schedule, and if someone makes a change to that schedule – within a few minutes the entire system recalculates and adjusts the patron delivery scheduled as a result.

Again, looking up information about a particular patron – you'll see that all the magazines that a patron subscribes to are listed – and each one of those magazines is a hyperlink into the schedule – you can actually select that link and be taken right to the delivery schedule for that particular magazine – and then at the very bottom of that delivery schedule tool, there's another link that tells you from a global standpoint what magazines are tardy – so basically you get up to the minute information about any magazine delivery schedule. So, I hope that gives you some of the background. We'll probably be removing the tool from PICS when the entire cassette system is shut down.

Question: (Terry Soave – MI9)

Okay – I have another follow-up question to that. So, the MOC tools that's only accessible to libraries that have BARD administration, that are acting as BARD administrators?

Answer: (Mike Martys - NLS)

Right, anybody who's a library administrator has access to the tools and one of the items in our to-do list, is to add a capability in BARD where you can designate any other library staff members to have access to the MOC tools, but I can't give you an estimated date when that would be completed, but it is on our to-do list. But right now, any library administrator has access to the tools.

Comment: (Terry Soave – MI9)

So, as a sub-regional, we have had our regional acting as our BARD Administrator, so we have not had access to MOC tools at all.

Comment: (Mike Martys - NLS)

I believe that is the motivation for this one particular change that is on our to do list. The current arrangement is not optimal.

Question: (Terry Soave – MI9)

Okay – but not sure when that is going to happen?

Answer: (Mike Martys - NLS)

I hesitate to make a prediction because there's so many things going on – I can say that it's one of our high priority items, and I hope it'll be very soon.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

This has been a good forum – thank you everybody for joining us. We look forward to talking to you in July. Thank you also to the chairs who gave me most of the lists of the things they wanted to hear about. If you have things you want to talk about on this next forum, contact your regional chair and tell them to put it on the list. Thank you very much.

No more questions or comments.