

NLS Telephone Forum – 2-26-2014
(paraphrased)

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Welcome to the February Open Forum call with the National Library Service. First, we'll go around the room and introduce the people here. Karen?

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Karen Keninger; Michael Katzmann; John Brown; Margie Goergen-Rood; Ed O'Reilly; Bob Axtell; Pamela Davenport; Mary Dell Jenkins; Neil Bernstein; Michael Martys; Paula Bahmani; Steve Prine; Joel Phillips; Vickie Collins.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

And, that is our group. I've got a couple of things. First, I would remind everyone that February is the month for the Annual Survey, and you have a couple more days - for those libraries that haven't yet submitted your budget, staffing, collection and space size. We still need that. The second thing is that, the Multi State Centers have received more boxes for recall so, please feel free to ask. We've received about a hundred thousand digital books back, so far. So thank you for that. There are more boxes available so please feel free to order them and send the books in. Before we go any further, I'll turn it over to John Brown for a moment to talk about the cartridge cable.

Comment: (John Brown - NLS)

We recently introduced the cartridge cable adapter. There was an M&A a few weeks ago describing it. We received a question about it at the last Conference Chair's call, so I wanted to address a couple of things. The cable is available. It's at the Multi State Center East. We are, right now limiting quantities to 50 until everyone gets (a supply). We want to (assess) demand before we make another order but, at this point, hold your orders to 50 and we'll get them out to you. They're available.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Anything else from here? In that case, we're ready to take questions from the Network...

Question: (Letitia Gittens - VI)

I have one major question: When I have been trying to replace DBs – you know, we can't reproduce them - our library is too small – how are we going to be able to replace DBs (for copies that have disappeared)?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

You can request a permanent copy from the Multi State Center East. You have a quota of (500 – a hundred and twenty-five per quarter). Use the electronic Interlibrary Loan form – just be sure and say "permanent copy" in the notes field.

Question: (Letitia Gittens - VI)

Okay, maybe that's why I'm not getting anything because I put in one just to test it. I put in some a few weeks ago and I didn't get anything back, but I got the other stuff that I ordered. So basically you will get a permanent copy?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Yes. It will come to your library.

Question: (Letitia Gittens - VI)

Okay. So we're not dealing with an XESS on DBs anytime soon?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

No. We are not.

Question: (Letitia Gittens - VI)

Alright. And my next question... I just ordered a batch of batteries for machines, because it seems the only thing I have to send them back for usually is for the batteries, but I'm still having some issues. Even (with) the new batteries, getting the system back up again – we left a message for someone who would help: Nina Garcia when she was visiting. If they could help us a little bit with that because, if we don't have to ship them out, and I do have the batch of batteries – I got them – I am happy to switch them out, but it seems that there's something I'm missing, in terms of clearing the system and making sure the machine is cleared for the new person.

Answer: (John Brown - NLS)

Yes there is a step – you have to tell the player that you've replaced the battery. That basically wipes out statistics for the old battery. There are a couple of M&As and a training video that we have. I can send that information to you. I'll send you an email directly and you can get back with me if you have more questions. We'll get you pointed in the right direction.

Question: (Linda Montgomery - AZ)

I was very pleased to hear that there will be a demonstration at the conference in Oklahoma, of the Hindenburg software. Is there any chance that that demonstration could be filmed, so that we could bring that back to our people who are not able to attend?

Answer: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

I just want to let you know that we are planning on doing a training video with the Hindenburg software, so, it is on our books to do.

Question: (Catherine Durivage - MN)

I have two BARD-related questions. One is, is there any update on the Android app? Two: any update on the current version of the BARD Mobile app?

Answer: (John Brown - NLS)

With Android, there are a few things happening with it. We're doing some work internally with the app – some optimizations. We're also working with Google to make some improvements on the braille side of things. We need some work from Google's accessibility people to get braille working properly, so we've been in contact with them. With the iOS app, we've drafted some requirements that we've been negotiating with the contractor to get this work done. We've got a couple more items on our list to work out with them. We should be initiating a task order to get the new version done. That's going to happen within the next couple of months, probably.

Question: (Scott Adams - FL)

I had a question on the survey. I'm having trouble with the budget. Is there a way that I can look at previous years' budget?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Unfortunately not, because you can actually go in and set it for 2012 or 2011...(but) the last time you put in the numbers, it overwrote all the previous numbers. So, you should be able to look at last year's.

Question: (Scott Adams - FL)

So just enter "2011" in the actual survey?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

...You need to just do the year. It would be a full year for the year – say, 2012. (It will) actually give you the last year's information.

Answer: (Susan Roberts - FL)

Hi. I can answer Scott's question because I'm at FL1A and he's at FL1B. Scott, your library never entered budgetary information in the past, so that's the reason there's none in there.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

So that would be why he isn't seeing anything. We're always happy to have it, so there's always a first time.

Question: (Ruth Hemphill - TN)

This question has been asked before but I'm going to ask it again. The survey has been brought up. Is there any point in time when another issue of Library Resources directory that has everybody's budgets and staffing levels and such – is that going to be published online or anywhere?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

I would like to say "yes." That is going to be one of the first projects of the new Head of Reference – as soon as that person is hired, which I'm hoping will be within the next couple of months. So, we do want to get the information out and we do want to put it online. That's been one of our goals.

Question: (Library Staff - NLS)

Bob? Would you like to talk about the bibliographic data and the time-frame?

Answer: (Bob Axtell - NLS)

Do I have the floor? Okay, my understanding is that at the last session, someone asked the question "how long would it take for the bibliographic information to make it into BARD?" I gave a very conservative estimate because there were still some variables. I'd say we would certainly hope in a week. What are those variables you ask? Well there are two things to consider. We have the data they are sending us to create the record, and they have the process of getting that data, locally, into a MARC record. Currently – owing to the looseness of the wording in our completion notices – there is a lot of variability in how things are entered, and it's therefore hard to get consistent information or well-formed information into the MARC records. So we are revising all the forms for putting information about Network books into Voyager...With more guidance on the punctuation and, fussy little catalogue-ly things... It's a little more work for you but it should be easy enough to select, we hope and because those are necessary to have subject access within BARD, it should also help speed the record on its way. Of course the internal processing – I'm tightening up the scripts used to transfer that information into a MARC record. It will all come together of course, when the information comes in, and then we'll have a better idea of just how long it will take us to get these forms up and available – and I hope that helps satisfy any lingering questions...

Question: (Linda Montgomery - AZ)

I did have one more question that came from a patron who was wondering: If a commercial copy of a book is added, and it becomes a very popular book, would NLS also record that? This came from a person who really doesn't care for the commercial recordings and prefers NLS recordings.

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

I'm delighted that our recordings are preferred! This is Karen. I don't think so.

Question: (Mary Jane Kayes – CA9)

There were two braille versions of a book, "The Butler" that popped up, and at first I thought they were in error, and then it was pointed out that one of them is in uncontracted braille. I wondered if this was part of an effort to get more adult reading-level material for people who are adults and learning braille or (was it a fluke?). If there are more like this, could we get some kind of a flag or a warning? Or a list...so that we can tell our people who are learning?

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Well, it is in the annotation.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

It was not a fluke (laughter). It was deliberate, believe it or not. We are constantly in search of uncontracted braille books that will be able to reach, particularly, adult learners – that are easy enough to get around in, but will not create the sense of being patronized. That is to say, children’s or young-persons-level reading. In the past, uncontracted braille listings would appear in Braille Book Review in a separate section of the publication. I expect that will be the case going forward.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

It is in the annotation and it is part of our effort to provide that type of material because it has been requested by people who are adult learners.

Comment: (Richard Smith - MO)

Here in Missouri and in Colorado actually, we’re both having Adult Winter Reading programs. We’re using locally-produced books. I think in Missouri we have 50 people signed up, and I think Colorado has about 25. Basically in Missouri we have a hundred titles and they’re Missouri predominant and also (from) other local recording booths around the country and we were thinking that maybe we should survey those 75 people primarily to ask if they like the Adult Winter Reading program. If they like the format – we have ten books per cartridge – if they had any trouble dealing with that, and also we want to ask about the quality of local recordings – the sound, the narrators and anything else. Basically no one has complained about the local recordings and no one has bragged about them either, so we’re thinking about surveying the people in these programs (to) see what they think. The reason I’m mentioning this is if NLS has any suggestions on what we should ask the patrons – or any local-recording libraries listening in. Just send me an email on what we might want to ask our readers what they think about local recordings. If we get any feedback we’ll share it with NLS and everyone else, probably through the LBPH list. So if you have any thoughts on that, give me a call or an email.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

We’ll be interested to see what you find out.

Question: (Richard Smith - MO)

When local books are on BARD are they going to be added to the “most recently added” book list? Or will there be a separate “most recently added local” list?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

I think they’ll come in the stream with everything else. Yes, they won’t be separated. If you want to see what they all are, you can do a search for DBCs. There are five of them up there. We just put two more up today.

Question: (Richard Smith - MO)

Can we mention this to our patrons? Or is it still in a “pilot” state?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

You can mention it to your patrons and yes, it is still in a pilot state.

Comment: (Michael Martys - NLS)

Actually, in the pilot state, Richard is the process of moving the books, but the website itself is capable of handling the books, so they *are* there. It’s just that we’re still refining the business process of putting them there. And then this will be a good time for me to remind folks that when you do have local books, the circulation statistics do show up in your monthly stat reports. You’ll see the local materials separately accounted for.

Question: (Richard Smith - MO)

I thought there was supposed to be an evaluation or a review of the books on the BARD site. Where is that going to be located?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

There is not a review on the BARD site at this point. We have no plans to implement that in the very near future. It's a request for later – some other day.

Comment: (Gordon Reddick - CT)

I'm talking about magazines right now. It's been a thorn in our sides for a long while. Our advisory committee is in the process of trying to draft a letter to Karen, making their opinions known – and the biggest one they have is they really would like to extend the period to more than one week. That's been a very strong complaint from our Advisory Committee is that a week is just way too short for them to go through the magazines. I just wanted to pass that along. We consistently run into about 50% delinquency. I have a volunteer, who calls everybody, and she's done well over 300 calls and even so, the delinquency rate is not declining. With the number of books coming back from the recall program, there might be more consideration perhaps, of changing the magazine program. It's just a very difficult program to run. We've had a number of people who are dropping out. I just wanted to pass that (along). It's not so much a question; it's just more of a commentary.

Comment: (S. Miles Lewis - TX)

Hi folks. It's not so much a question. I just wanted to fill folks in regarding whetting people's appetite for the Hindenburg Audio Book Creator software. They can get a taste by going to the NLS YouTube channel and seeing a really nice video demonstrating the use of the Hindenburg software and, on the Hindenburg.com website, there is a downloadable PDF for the Hindenburg Audio Book Creator, as well as some step-by-step guides that include functions relevant to the creation of NLS books. That's Hindenburg.com and the NLS YouTube channel, which I think is username 'NLS MDD' and – fun stuff. Check it out.

Question: (Sheila Coleman - LA)

My question is: Is there a deadline set to offer the cassette books to XESS?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

There is not a deadline. We had projected that most libraries have XESSed the majority of their collections by the beginning or the middle of 2015. Libraries are certainly able and encouraged to keep copies of cassettes for which there is a demand, but we can't guarantee how much longer past 2015 that there will be parts available to repair cassette machines. So at some point, we're just not going to be able to support that cassette machine repair, so you can move as quickly or as slowly as your reader-interest in cassettes dictate.

Comment: (Sheila Coleman - LA)

Our demand has gone down so I think we will diminish our supply soon.

Question: (Ruth Hemphill - TN)

This is a follow-up to the question about the uncontracted braille. I'm really thrilled that...you're doing more of them. My concern is – and I'm not sure that anything can be done about this – is that when Reader Advisors – we use the READS circulation system – when someone asks for "The Butler" I'm (concerned) that they'll not realize that there are two different ones. It would be nice if they could be a BRC or something like that (or a BRU for uncontracted. I don't know, but I doubt if that's possible. I'm afraid we'll send an uncontracted braille out to someone who really wants the contracted, and vice-versa. I know it's in the annotation but when someone asks for the title and we're just looking at the book number, we might just put the wrong one in.

This is another follow-up: About the DBCs – the locally produced titles from BARD – they all have DBC numbers? Did I understand that correctly?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

They will. Yes.

Question: (Susan Roberts - FL)

My question is: Is there any movement on shipment location for XESS braille?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Not yet. We're still working on it.

Question: (Susan Roberts - FL)

Any ETA on that, Steve? I've got a couple hundred pallets of it.

Question: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Hundred?

Answer: (Susan Roberts - FL)

Yes. We have multiple copies of everything and we're paring it down because they weren't being used.

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Okay. We're hoping to have something within the next couple weeks but we will have a conversation with you offline regarding this.

Comment: (Bob Axtell - NLS)

I don't know if this will help, but the full MARC records also do contain the subject codes, and there is one for uncontracted braille. And of course that's going to rely on your local systems - on how they translate or if they do translate. You can keep that in mind in your discussions with your vendor.

Question: (Mike Marlin - CA9)

This is just a quick follow-up on the XESS process for cassettes. I'm just wondering: Will the ability to XESS continue only through 2015 or beyond? I know that we tried to get some more green cards recently and we're waiting to hear back about that but, we were going slower than some libraries and now, we're starting to pick up speed on our XESS of cassettes so, that's why I'm asking.

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

We would expect to have the XESS capability for cassettes going beyond 2015. We expect the demand to go down, obviously.

Question: (Mike Marlin - CA9)

Alright but we would still need to continue to follow those protocols rather than just receive cards and send them out willy-nilly.

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Yes.

Question: (Christie Briggs - MT)

I just had a quick question for Susan Roberts on her braille books. Are any of those Twin Vision? Or are they all embossed?

Answer: (Susan Roberts - FL)

All embossed books. There are no Twin Vision, Christie.

Question: (Andrea Clarkson - OR)

The question has to do with the daily delinquent report for the magazines. Is there any way that that can be restructured so that the people (who) are showing up for the first time, come at the top of the list so that we don't have to wade through the list every single day - for the people who are showing up over and over again?

Answer: (Mike Martys - NLS)

I'll take a stab at it. This is Mike Martys. We're probably going to do a major overhaul of that report to greatly improve its usefulness. One of the things will be a reordering of the way the information is presented. I can't say that we're going to do it right away but, we're actually probably going to meet and talk about that tomorrow,

and basically we're going to make the report a little more robust, with more information displayed, so that it does a better job of achieving the goals that we're hoping to achieve.

Comment: (Andrea Clarkson - OR)

Okay. The way I've been looking at it is, I'm looking for the people who have been on there for the first day and then I send another notice at thirty days and so, if they were broken up into different timelines it would be a lot easier for me to look at that report.

Comment: (Mike Martys - NLS)

What I'd like to suggest is that if you have any particular suggestion for the report, that you send it to your Network Consultant so that we can make sure that we get your feedback into the process.

Question: (Sharon Ruda - IL)

I have a question regarding NLS' expectation of mail delivery of our books. I assume that I should be able to expect a daily Monday through Friday delivery on a consistent basis but we are not getting that, nor are a few of the other libraries I called when this started to happen. I just wondered if you had heard of that situation occurring in other states.

Answer: (Vickie Collins - NLS)

No. I can't say that we have, unless maybe the consultants have heard of some (instances). We know that there have been uneven deliveries. Sometimes people don't get very much, and then suddenly they get a large quantity of materials. We have been hearing about that from time to time intermittently. How long has this been going on?

Answer: (Sharon Ruda - IL)

I think that for us, just recently. I talked to a bunch of people. This has been going on in other states on a regular basis for quite a while. When I heard that, I suggested that they contact you. I thought that I would just bring it to everyone's attention because I obviously didn't call all fifty states and there may be other libraries that are experiencing the same sort of situation.

Comment: (Serena McGuire - DC)

We had very, very serious problems with that for probably six months. We seem to be past it but, if your experience is anything like ours, it is not your imagination. I know that people will laugh at this but our normal delivery is four of those white boxes – I can hear some of the states going, "four?" but anyway, there were times last spring where we would get one, or even a half a box and, the post office assured us that everything was being delivered every day. It was pretty obvious it wasn't. As a consequence, we circulated about 70% of what we circulated the year before. I don't know if that contributes anything to the discussion, but it's very real.

Question: (Juliet Relyea - FL)

We've had mail issues here. Our bulk-mail department in St. Petersburg closed. Essentially, we don't have a bulk-mail department in Pinellas anymore. Our mail goes to Tampa and it gets distributed from there so, we generally receive two or three hampers a day. We still get mail every day but it's not as much as (before) because of the bulk-mail department being closed in St. Pete.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Well with no further questions appearing, we appreciate your participation in the February Open Forum call and look forward to talking to you again in March. Thank you!

No more questions or comments.