

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Well thank you Richard (operator). We have a nice group here in Washington. I think we have 38 callers on the phone – and hopefully, regional libraries have signed in. I'm going to go around the table for introductions. My name is Richard Smith, Chief of the Network Division. Next to me is...

Comment: (Library Staff – NLS)

Steve Prine, Assistant Chief of the Network Division; Karen Keninger, Director, NLS; Michael Katzmann, Chief of the Materials Development Division; Judy Dixon, Consumer Relations Officer; Paula Bahmani, Education and Training Specialist; Shana Osborne, Equipment Control Officer; Neil Bernstein, R&D Officer; Michael Martys, Automation; Margie Goergen-Rood, Head of Quality Assurance; John Brown, Engineering;

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Way in the back. So, we have a nice group here. We're going to give a short presentation to begin with, and then we'll open it up for questions. Basically, the Chairs sent us a few questions. In addition, we have some people here that are going to participate. One of the questions that came in, was about CMLS - that it was "read-only" and we're not able to use it – and that has – I think - connections with PIMMS, which they asked about and, Steve is going to mention progress with PIMMS and why CMLS won't work.

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

As the library migrates to PIMMS, the CMLS information is still there, but the information that Data Management is tracking is coming directly from your circulation system. Before – on a weekly basis – libraries sent transactions to Data Management. They incorporated them into CMLS, and then that information was stable until the next week when (there was) the next batch update. But for libraries that have migrated to PIMMS, when they make a change, it is instantly reflected in PIMMS at Data Management. You can go...and look at the CMLS data obviously, but it's important not to make any changes there. Only make it in your circulation system. And on the other side – for PIMMS – as libraries migrate, they basically continue to do what they've done all along, with the exception of actually having to extract the information on a weekly basis, and send it to Data Management or on a monthly basis for BPHICS information. A little over 50% of the Network has actually migrated to PIMMS to date, and if anyone who is listening has converted – if you'd like to say something about it – something nice anyway – please share it with the rest of the Network.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Thanks for the update. Next on the list is Paula. You have exciting news...

Comment: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

That's right. NLS is going to be hosting two DTB-making workshops this fall. One is going to be a basic training session that will be held from October 25th to 26th with an optional A to D workshop to be held on Thursday the 27th. The advanced training session will be November 15th and 16th with the optional A to D workshop to be held on November 17th. I'm going to send out an Operations Alert with all the details and agendas and, that's it!

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Thank you. The other thing I promised in my Alert on LBPH – XESSing those dwindling cassette collections. Even though...about seven regional libraries have zero RC collections. I don't think any sub-regionals have any. There are still – from last count – 7,700,000 cassettes out there in the Network – although Steve – I think – has gotten it down to six million. We have about three million cards here. As you dwindle the collection down, one of the things we're going to help with is that we won't use the XESS anymore to recycle cassettes. So basically, if you need cards to send to the recycler, if you just contact Steve Prine by phone or email, we will send you as many cards as you need – to dispose of the cassette collection. So, we hope that that helps you out and helps you change your collection. And I hope that's good news for everyone. In addition to that, we also had a question from the Chairs about libraries were asking about replacement braille volumes? I know you can replace them through the XESS, which will continue for braille. I think Michael Katzmann can help with how to replace those braille volumes.

Comment: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

Richard asked me this morning about this and we're reaching out to the contractors to see if we can accommodate the embossing of single volumes to replace those books that are still in demand but have missing volumes. We'll get back to you on what we find. I understand that some years ago there was a program to do this but I guess it sort of withered and died because there wasn't much call for it, but there seems to be – at least anecdotally – demand for it now. We're exploring options to fill in those blanks but, until we get some positive news there, it will be the XESS program to plug in those holes.

Comment: (Michael Martys - NLS)

What I wanted to talk about was an incident that happened two weeks ago and it basically involved a report we received from one of the libraries (who) shared with us some dialog between people on a listserv, which was discussing BARD being hacked. The email exchanges were a couple of people interacting with each other where one person was saying that BARD was hacked and another person was responding to it. And as part of that response, someone had concluded that BARD Mobile was at fault and that it should have been deleted from people's computers. Now this was a discussion that wasn't actually coming from NLS. This was coming from a couple of individuals. I think it's a good discussion to talk about the Network's role in security. The Library of Congress underwent something called a "denial of service" attack. A Denial of Service attack isn't like a "hack." Some rogue actors on the internet were basically trying to bombard the Library of Congress' network with data packets and prevent the Library of Congress from interacting with systems on the internet. It would appear as if the Library of Congress' data systems were down. One of the data systems at the LoC is BARD. So people who were trying to use BARD were experiencing what appeared to be a BARD outage. In the beginning, when these sorts of things are happening, people don't know exactly what's going on – and the Library as a general rule, tends not to hypothesize. It tends to say very little until it actually knows what's going on. And so at the beginning there was not very much information coming out of the library. But after a period of time, there were actually public notices put out by the CIO on his personal blog, where he actually mentioned the fact that the library was undergoing a Denial of Service attack – and it was picked up by some of the news wires as well.

It began to show up in newspapers and things. BARD was humming along just fine. This disturbance was happening at the boundary of the Library of Congress, not deep inside – and as far as I know, there were no compromised data systems at the Library of Congress. We put out a notice and we responded to some inquiries about that and I think we actually shared the blog entry from the Library CIO where he actually discussed the attack. So when we saw this email exchange a couple weeks ago, we thought that that was what these individuals were talking about. Somehow there was a miscommunication and then they actually extrapolated that BARD itself was attacked. The thing that troubled us most was that there was a statement in the message where somebody said that the problem had to do with BARD Mobile and that it had to be deleted from someone's phone. The thing I want to ask all the libraries to do is to assist us in controlling these kinds of rumors – or rogue messages. Basically, in today's times – with hacking the way it is and, there's always some 'hacking' story on the news – people are very prone to jump at a hacking story and to think the worst. When people start making incorrect recommendations like, "delete BARD Mobile from your phone" that is actually going beyond just discussion and news. It's actually going into something where you can cause harm to the patron.

So, we would encourage all libraries – if they see these conversations go by – or if they become aware of them either directly or indirectly, we would ask that you A.) notify us and B.) try to act as a calming influence...don't make conjectures, don't make guesses, but basically try to keep things under control until you can find out what's going on. We will respond as soon as possible and get as much information to you as we can. It's very easy for these things to snowball into something much bigger and I can just imagine if a number of patrons started deleting BARD Mobile from their phones. There would be a lot of trouble calls that the libraries would be receiving. There would be a lot of upset patrons and...all based on a rumor. And so, the thing is that we need the libraries to be partners with us in terms of trying to control the message and make sure that it's accurate and timely – and to act as a calming influence and not letting these things snowball out of control. That's all I wanted to say Richard.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Okay. We had several libraries ask for additional peach cartridges from the first group that went out and, we will make more available, and they will be available through the WOW system. I think we have a stipulation of 400 minimum and 3200 maximum. If you need additional peach cartridges, they are available. I guess its good and bad news. The problem is, we still have a shortage of clear mailing containers. We did get the mailing containers from the last batch. There was a backlog and if we haven't filled it, it will be filled – and we'll have about 50,000 left over but we won't have enough for the 200,000 cartridges... We won't have the mailing containers probably until next calendar year. Send your orders in and we'll see what we can do... With that, Richard will open up for questions.

Question: (Jill Rothstein – NY8)

Is there a document someplace that has a very remedial step-by-step for how to get braille volumes through XESS to replace ones that we're missing? Or is that something that should be a conversation?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Well, when we had the braille replacement...contractor in place on the Network Library Services web page, there was a form you could go fill out and identify it. I think the form is still there although it (hasn't) lead to anything at the moment. So as part of this conversation as we determine if we can resume production of replacement braille volumes, that would probably be the method by which libraries would order.

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Why don't you call us, Jill, and we'll go through the procedure.

Question: (Kim Charlson - MA)

I have what I hope is an easy question regarding recycling of cassettes or sending them back. I seem to have cards from multiple contractors and, I guess it would be helpful to me if I knew which one was the current one for cassettes so that I can get rid of older cards that my guys have been hoarding, waiting to use them on a rainy day, so can anybody help me out with that?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Kim, I'll send you an email with the name and address of the current contractor. The only cards that can be used now are tan-colored. I'll send you all the information.

Question: (Kim Robertson - VA)

(I'm) asking a quick question about recall. We got the notice that there was some contractual problem and I have one box of books that need sending back... and I'm wondering, where do we stand on getting the contract problems sorted out so that I can get rid of this one box left for this year's recall.

Answer: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

Well, you and I would both like an answer to that. Because we do this under a program called Ability One, it's in dispute, and it's being adjudicated by the board of Ability One and, we had presented our case more than two months ago now, and we've been waiting for a result and we have not heard back from them so, we don't know. At the earliest, we couldn't get a new contract in place until the end of October – before it would start up again. We are finishing off the current contract, but the libraries have already sent enough cartridges to fill that quota so, we'll give you as much information as we can when we get it but, at the moment we really don't know.

Question: (Jane Glasby – CA9)

I wanted to ask if anybody would like to give feedback on the pre-conference for IFLA – and any kind of perspective you have on where we're going with the Marrakesh Treaty.

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

The pre-conference for IFLA was held in Louisville in conjunction with APH, and we had close to 100 participants. We had a variety of papers presented and those are going to be listed and shared on the website for the Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities section of IFLA. We're starting to get them put up now – IFLA.org/lpd – and we'll be getting them up as soon as we can so that we can share them with everyone. With regard to the direction that Marrakesh is going, obviously we've got 20 countries that have ratified - so as of September 30th it will come into force for those 20 countries. The WIPO Accessible Books Consortium is going to be playing a leading role in terms of cross-border exchange for the countries that are involved – and more countries are starting to sign up for it. They are going to be able to do the cross-border exchange with participating countries, without having to get copyright permission, and they will continue - at some level, I believe - to do the copyright clearance on a one-by-one basis for requests that come through the ABC consortium. As far as Marrakesh in the United States – at this moment it is under discussion. The three interested parties are the libraries, the publishers and the blindness community. They are working on a deadline that the judiciary committee and the foreign relations committee gave that group to come up with a consensus that everyone could live with. So they said they'd pass it if there was no controversy. Unfortunately, it does appear that the controversy has ramped up a little bit around issues of record-keeping, so, they may or may not come to agreement. When I spoke with people last weekend...there was hope that the groups would come to consensus by the end of the week so that they would be ready for congress after Labor Day. That's anybody's guess at this point but we're still hopeful.

Question: (Jane Glasby – CA9)

Where might we direct any messages if we wanted to support this effort?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

You could certainly always direct them to the senators who ratified the treaty. Along with the ratification will be implementation of language around Chafee – and that’s where they’re actually working things out.

Question: (Kim Charlson - MA)

I had another question relating to BPHICS and PIMMS. Being a library that’s going to roll over this weekend, I’m not real clear on the process of the Monthly Machine Reports. Once we become a part of PIMMS, will those go away and everything will happen automatically through PIMMS so there won’t be any more Monthly Machine Reports?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

That’s correct. Yes. ... A little over 50% of the Network has migrated and, to date, not one fatality.

Question: (Jane Glasby – CA9)

We rolled over to PIMMS a little while ago, and we’re a KLAS library – but we’re a sub-regional so we don’t control our machines but there was some difficulty because Sacramento, which is our parent regional library, hasn’t rolled over yet. I had a question about the CMLS reports. We’re still getting CMLS reports although it’s been several months since we moved over. So I was just wondering whether we should just ignore those or use them as information and not worry too much about them?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

You can ignore them now that you’re on PIMMS. We expect the reports to stop at the end of September – with libraries that have rolled over.

Comment: (Michael Martys - NLS)

I thought I would take this moment of “dead air” to let everybody hear the status of our new website project. I don’t know if you’re all aware of it but, NLS has been engaged in a year-long effort to upgrade to our public-facing website and, we’re actually nearing the completion of that. We’re hoping to have the acceptance-testing phase completed by the end of September. There is an expectation that we will have a private viewing – if you will – for the libraries so that you will be able to see our new website. Basically kick the tires before we make it public and we’ll get some feedback from everybody. And then maybe around the October time-frame is when we’re envisioning making the migration to the new website and, at that time you’ll see the new look and feel and the old website will be squirreled away in a corner. It’ll still be there but it will be off on the side until we permanently delete it. It’s a modern website. It’s based on Wordpress, and it has the kind of look and feel that people would expect...and we’ve been doing some accessibility testing and we feel that it will be accessible and useable by our patrons and we look forward to hearing what you think of it.

Question: (Susan Hammer-Schneider - ND)

I have a question that’s been brought up by our Machine Lending gal. We’ve been having trouble with our machines – with the batteries. She’ll charge the machine and it says “29 hours” and she’ll send it out and, it will last for a little bit and then when the patron wants to recharge it, it only charges up to, let’s say, 14 hours and then shortly after that it will say just 3 hours and then just quit. This is the second machine he’s had in a year and a half and the (other) one did the same thing. So I’m just wondering if...it’s the full moon or what is it?

Answer: (John Brown - NLS)

It’s a bit technical – what’s happening. The machine has to calibrate itself to the battery to get an accurate report when it does that announcement – and that takes a number of cycles. The more charges and discharges, the better that reporting gets. Your machine person needs to get in contact with our Equipment Repair Officer Kevin Watson. He’ll (provide) some guidelines and procedures as far as testing your batteries and how to check the machine before it goes out to the patron. If you want to send me an email, my email address is jobr@loc.gov. I’ll get your people in contact with our people.

Question: (Angela Fisher Hall – AL)

Well good afternoon everyone. I am new to the Network and to the library here in Montgomery, Alabama. However, I’ve recently seen an email that deals with the public service ads - so I’m not sure if this is the right group that I’m speaking with – and some of the stations that have agreed to run them. Are you open to taking suggestions for other stations that might be interested in running the ads?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

At this particular time, the contractor that is managing that contract - and placing the ads - is handling all of that, so they've got a plan and we probably will not be deviating from that plan through the next six months. Once that plan has been completed, those will be available for people, and can be sent to the stations where you think they will be useful.

Question: (Angela Fisher Hall – AL)

Alright, and one additional question: Are there any new posters for our services for the blind? Are there any new posters that can be mounted in some of our service areas?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Our Publications person isn't here. I have to check. I think we're in production for posters. I'll have someone from the Publications and Media section get back to you.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

We'll make sure she's here next month for the telephone call.

Question: (Jill Rothstein – NY8)

I'm another person who's having a lot of machine problems. ,, Just to clarify one thing on our end, it will say "29 Hour" charge and it will play for 10 minutes and then suddenly say "low battery" and then shut itself off and then will not take a charge again – or, will take a charge and play for 10 minutes and shut itself off so, thank you for adjusting that and I was wondering if – in addition to getting our Machine Manager to call someone - would it be possible to have an explanation written up in an Ops Alert or another email saying what's happening and what steps need to be taken so that I can not only share it with him but have it very clear to share with his backups as well?

Answer: (John Brown - NLS)

Yes. We can put something together. There's lots of information out there and, I can give you some various Machines and Accessories reports (from our website) so, let's start there and if it's not clear at all then we can put out some more detailed information.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

I think the last thing on my list was a large and definite quantity of additional valuable information. I think we did that. I'll check that off and next time I'll just put lots more. And with that, have a good day and we'll talk to you next month.

No more questions or comments.