

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Welcome everyone. I think we have 42 callers on the line. It's a rainy, cloudy day here in Washington, so we're happy to be here at work, rather than out there in the cold and rain. I'm going to go around the table – if everyone could introduce themselves...

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Andrew Skinner, Head of Production Control; Karen Keninger, Director; Steve Prine, Assistant Chief of the Network Division; Vickie Collins, Network Services Section; Meredith Beckhardt, Reference Section; Paula Bahmani, Education and Training Specialist; Pamela Davenport, Network Consultant; Robert Axtell, Bibliographic Control Section; Margie Goergen-Rood, Quality Assurance Section; Neil Bernstein, R&D; Shana Osborne, Equipment Control Officer; Michelle Spezzacatena, Management Analyst.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

And did I say, Richard Smith, Chief of the Network Division. We've got a nice crew here and 42 callers on the line. We'll open it up for questions, but we just wanted to give a couple of 'heads ups' coming out the door, and the first one will be – Michelle...

Comment: (Michelle Spezzacatena - NLS)

Okay, so I'm here to remind you that the annual statistics are coming up. We're going to open them up on October 1st, and the Operations Alert will come out on Monday because we know October 1st is a Saturday. They will run through Friday, October 14 so you will have two weeks to gather your annual readership and circulation statistics and – just a reminder – this information is reported to Congress, so please try to get it in on time. Always feel free to email me. My email address is mspe@loc.gov if you have any questions. Thank you.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Okay, that was nice. The other announcement...the next TBT will be shipped with the Order Form – the audio TBT, right? That will be coming up. That's a change. They were separated but now it's going back to the order form with the TBT shipment. Yesterday, I think we had a staff meeting...because it's the end of the federal Fiscal Year this week, and we were all finishing up with our contracts and wrapping up what we did this year with the federal budget. We tried to get everyone into the staff meeting but some of them were on the road. Still I'll bet you we had 100 people in the room. Karen went over a nice highlight of what we did all year. I thought I'd mention some of the highlights from those highlights. We did a lot in the past year. For example, Jane and her crew...did the NLS Toolkits for Libraries - Testimonial PSAs and new information sheets to help spread the word...about our services. Judy Dixon and Tamara really helped to implement the Unified English Braille (UEB) for all our books and magazines this year. In addition, we had a very successful conference in San Francisco. We're already planning for Nashville, Tennessee in two years. We're already working on that. We're really proud that Paula has trained in the last year (and in the future) many regional staff on the use of Hindenburg for the production of local books – and that's always a pleasant chore, right? Bob Axtell is here and Q&A is here and they just had a flood of A to D conversions in the last year. As a matter of fact I think Karen quoted that we added 7,000 books in BARD this year. They're all...ready to get that over with in the coming year.

Of course, we had new versions of BARD Mobile – the iOS and the Android version. That's kind of interesting to be in Washington – when those private companies upgrade their apps we have to double-check and triple-check everything - and Neil and Judy do an excellent job at making sure we follow along and everything works with our mobile apps. And the other thing is, we don't frequently add magazines, but we added 14 magazines. 11 of those were locally-produced magazines. More or less, we doubled the amount of local books - that you guys produced out in the field - onto BARD. Paula and also Chris from Multi State Center East, helped with the quality assurance to get your local books, which really makes our collection a diverse one. The DBCs now (number) 2, 656. Then we had all kinds of things we did in-house too, but you don't want to hear about contracts and renovations and things like that. That was more or less the Network side of it.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

I think you've covered it very well from the Network side, Richard. I just want to say that it's been a great year. I have a great staff and it's been great to work with (them) and your staff is out there to do the service that we all are here to do so, thank you everyone for all your hard work.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

With that, I think we'll open it up for questions...

Question: (Leslie Bowman - MD)

Yes. My question is: we have the ability to add storage to our service. We're trying to set up so that we can R-sync and I'm trying to find out what we think we need other than the 12 terabytes – how big will the wonderful BARD database get?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

At this point, a minimum of 12 terabytes.

Question: (Leslie Bowman - MD)

Okay but I need to know not minimum...

Answer: (Neil Bernstein - NLS)

I'm not sure what the projections are for numbers of books, but you can take 110 megabytes as a reasonable size for an average audiobook. So, you can do the math from there. I think we added six or seven thousand books this year.

Comment: (Leslie Bowman - MD)

I do know that you're trying to digitize the RCs, so we're trying to make sure we have enough space.

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

And we have about 6,000 of them left to do, or something like that. 6 to 8 thousand to finish up during the coming year, plus we expect to be adding probably another 3,000 audio titles and those will be ours and then there's the Network stuff that goes on BARD but that may not count.

Comment: (Neil Bernstein - NLS)

That's a little over a terabyte.

Question: (Catherine Durivage - MN)

I noticed that the BARD Express video is on the YouTube web page. Is there any word on when the BARD Express software will be available?

Answer: (Paula Bahmani - NLS)

We are still working out a few issues that we have before we release it to the Network. We are planning on releasing the software to the Network Libraries first. And we're going to have some training opportunities so that you guys can support it in the field. I'm looking at probably late October – early November for when we're going to have it out to you guys.

Question: (Linda Vincent - WI)

Hi. I have a less-savory comment, and that is: Our library is in a public library building and, there are starting to be some bedbug issues in libraries. We are wondering, if we get back something that has bedbugs in it, we will discard the case because we know we can do that – but what about the white cartridges. We have a concern about them laying eggs in there or something. We haven't in the past ever gotten rid of cartridges.

Answer: (Margie Goergen-Rood - NLS)

I'm with QA. We just had this question come in on our QA line. We checked back into the specs on the machine and the cartridges and they can go up to at least 140 degrees. I wouldn't suggest you put them in your oven, but I think Maine has an actual heating unit and it (goes) up to that temperature. I wouldn't go much over 140 but you can cook them out of there.

Question: (Linda Vincent - WI)

Both the cartridges and the machines?

Answer: (Margie Goergen-Rood - NLS)

Yes. The machine is going to be a little more tricky because there are working parts in there, but definitely the cartridges and the containers unless you just want to throw those out.

Question: (Linda Vincent - WI)

I know our public library system has some sort of steaming unit and maybe that's what you're talking about. I was just a little concerned about the metal parts in there.

Answer: (Margie Goergen-Rood - NLS)

I got the feeling that this was not steam, but dry heat.

Question: (Linda Vincent - WI)

Okay, and if we don't have access to something like that, this can be discussed and there could be some procedure?

Question: (Margie Goergen-Rood - NLS)

How many are we talking here?

Answer: (Linda Vincent - WI)

At the moment we have two – but, it is on the rise. We're having to deal with it more often than we used to. We've never discarded white cartridges before. That was our concern.

Answer: (Margie Goergen-Rood - NLS)

I do think that we'll be discussing it. If you wanted to send that in on the QA line, I can get you a more definitive answer. It may be that you're going to toss them. The cartridges, not the machine.

Question: (Bernie Margolis – NY9)

I have a couple of questions and a comment: Question one – Is the government going to shut down on Friday? Will we get instruction from you on whatever interim service or communication we'll need to know about?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

At this point, we do not believe that the government will shut down, but you read the news and we read the news and, who knows? If we are shut down, we will notify you through an Operations Alert that we're shut down.

Question: (Bernie Margolis – NY9)

Okay. And you'll give us whatever instructions you have in terms of how we communicate if we need to during any interim time?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Yes.

Question: (Bernie Margolis – NY9)

Second question: What is the procedure or process if we identify supplies that we think we need, but are not normally available through your supply channels? How do we get additional items on your supply list?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Ask your consultant. Go to your consultant and they'll send it up the chain to see if we can supply them to you.

Comment: (Bernie Margolis – NY9)

Okay. And lastly...we are still in the search process for the director of our Talking Book and Braille Library. So I just wanted to make that known to the community again. We're looking for someone who will bring excitement and skills and leadership and innovation to our Talking Book library. We're excited about the prospect. If you know people who might have an interest, please feel free to have them apply – or give me a call. I'll be happy to talk about the position and, I'll look forward to your referrals. Thanks.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Excellent. And, Bernie, your consultant would be MaryBeth Wise.

Question: (Ava Smith - TX)

We were wondering if you had any thoughts about recall numbers for (2017).

Answer: (Andrew Skinner - NLS)

There's still no resolution on the recall for reuse contract with ForSight. So we are still awaiting that answer from our legal department. So right now, we have no forecast for that.

Comment: (Ava Smith - TX)

And this is for Linda: We got a dead snake in the mail yesterday (laughter).

Question: (Timothy Emmons - AL)

I've got a comment and a question: Everybody in Alabama is absolutely loving BARD Mobile. I'm getting rave reviews from myself being a user and a librarian with BARD Mobile – especially with the new improvements and everything – just about every day. One of the things – and I may be jumping the gun here – I've been pondering about: I've heard something about the Orbit Reader and NLS. Can anybody elaborate on that? Is there a possibility of NLS passing out braille displays or braille readers at some point? What's going on with that?

Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

We have just recently acquired the ability to consider providing anything other than Talking Book Machines, and a braille e-reader would be on the list of things that we would consider. Because we are the government, we do everything very slowly and we have to budget years out in order to make anything like that happen so, although we are going to be doing some pilot testing in the next couple of years, it will be some time before we're able to do anything on any kind of a scale – assuming that the pilots go well. So, we would not want to say what kind of a device it would be per se at this point but it will be some years before we're able to do that on a big scale.

Comment: (Timothy Emmons - AL)

Right. That makes sense. It's been something that has been the hot topic for a while and being Reader Advisor and someone who works with the technology pretty closely as well, I've always been curious – not only for myself but for my patrons – so that helps me answer questions down the line.

Comment: (Jennifer Hart - VT)

Hi. I just wanted to add to the bedbug discussion. We did have bedbugs here that came in from a patron in a digital book. Once we figured out which patron the bedbugs came from, we traced every book that he had ever had and pulled them off the shelves. We found that we had several on the shelf that had bedbugs in them. So you've got to be really vigilant in tracing where they came from and then going through everything that patron may have had. We were able to buy a heat tent that we got on Amazon, so if you just Google "bedbug heat tent" you can find a few different models of those. If you heat at 120 degrees for an hour – we tested one machine and one digital book before we ran them all through – and it worked fine. It did no damage to anything. I can't remember who called in about it but if she wants to email me here in Vermont, I can give her all the information that we have on that. I'll also tell you that there are bedbug-sniffing dogs that we've done three follow ups with. And they did alert (us) to some materials that we had not picked up on.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

That's good to know. It was Linda from Milwaukee Public Library and it's probably a library problem in general.

Comment: (Jennifer Hart - VT)

I think it is. We actually purchased two, so that we could lend them out to public libraries as well.

Comment: (Linda Vincent - WI)

Thank you so much for all the advice. We also have been putting the items in quarantine where we wrap them in multiple layers of plastic and put them in a plastic container just to see if more bedbugs are developing out of those items – and we have a whole protocol with rubbing alcohol – you spray with rubbing alcohol. We know quite a bit but the heat tent was totally new to me. So thank you so much and we don't want any snakes here. Thank you Ava anyway.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

We're winding up. Everyone must have stayed up late to watch the debate – so I think with that, there are no more questions – I think it was an informative session. Everyone have a good day (and) evening. Take care everyone.

No more questions or comments.