

Annual Report Fiscal Year 2021

Northern Lights Library Network

Funded by the Minnesota Legislature through the Minnesota Department of Education, Northern Lights Library Network (NLLN) is one of seven Minnesota multicounty, multitype library cooperative systems. NLLN is comprised of two hundred eighty academic, public, school, and special libraries in twenty-three counties in North-Central, Northwest, and West-Central Minnesota. NLLN works at the grassroots level to bring together all types of libraries and collections in the region to discover, enhance, and share resources through administrative, technological, and educational support.

Northern Lights Library Network covers a geographic region of 26,950 square miles (Minnesota is comprised of 86,939 square miles), including the following twenty-three counties: Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clay, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Kittson, Mahnomon, Marshall, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Polk, Pope, Red Lake, Roseau, Stevens, Traverse, Wadena, and Wilkin.

The Northern Lights Library Network system consists of four regional public library systems; academic libraries on two campuses of the University of Minnesota at Crookston and Morris; Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System institutions including Minnesota State University Moorhead, Bemidji State University, Northland Community College, Minnesota State Community and Technical College on four campuses (Moorhead, Thief River Falls, Wadena, and Fergus Falls); three tribal colleges, including Leech Lake, Red Lake, and White Earth; Maamigin Achigaazo Community Library at White Earth numerous private colleges; one hundred eighty five school libraries (including public and charter schools, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, and private schools) in seventy-nine school districts; and a rich variety of special libraries in museums, county law libraries, hospitals, churches, and early childhood programs.

Northern Lights Library Network reduces duplication of services by enhancing coordination among libraries. As resources are shared among libraries, services are expanded, and efficiency is improved. As a result, libraries can offer services or programs they may not otherwise be able to afford.

All of the work performed by Northern Lights Library Network affects the direct service of its members, and has an exponential effect on its client base. Northern Lights Library Network exists to recognize the kinds of library services people need at the local level and to determine what supporting structures are required for local library systems to function successfully, taking into account the unique needs of people at the local level and the different types of libraries served.

A primary goal of Northern Lights Library Network is to bring resources from the state and national level to the local level. Another goal is to discover resources within the region and share them universally.

Northern Lights Library Network is one of seven multi-county, multi-type library systems in Minnesota mandated by Minnesota Statute 134.351 to develop and maintain services including, but not limited to, “referral of users, intra-system reciprocal borrowing, cooperative collection development, cooperative reference services, staff development, research and development, cooperative storage facilities, and publicity and community relations.”

The five goals outlined in Minnesota Statute 134.351 for multi-county, multi-type systems include:

- *Sharing Resources Among all Participating Libraries*
- *Providing Long-range Planning for Cooperative Programs*
- *Developing a Delivery System for Services and Programs*
- *Developing a Bibliographic Database*
- *Maintaining a Communications System Among all Cooperating Libraries*

The seven multi-county, multi-type systems perform the following functions: Develop library staffs professionally; improve local library collections; sponsor and support funding for libraries; champion libraries; create, develop, and maintain library programs that enrich the lives of Minnesotans; move the discipline of Library and Information Science forward; and lead and administer their own nonprofit agencies. The seven systems are governed by regional boards.

There are twelve regional public library systems in Minnesota that serve public libraries, while the seven multi-type systems serve all types of libraries.

Vision Statement: Libraries are attractive, welcoming places that are friendly, open, inclusive, accessible, innovative, and a source of community pride where people can go to learn what they need to know in order to thrive and grow in their communities. When libraries work together, communities grow stronger, and the lives of Minnesotans are enriched.

Mission Statement: Northern Lights Library Network strengthens libraries in the region by discovering, enhancing, and sharing resources through administrative, technological, and educational support.

The main purpose of Northern Lights Library Network is to make all libraries in the region stronger.

Core Values: In principle and practice, libraries are at the core of a democratic society, defending the freedom of all citizens to:

- Access information to make informed decision
- Read material that interests them

- Use technology successfully to learn about recent developments and to access resources
- Engage in learning throughout the life cycle.

Libraries are inclusive environments that are accessible to all persons.

All who use our libraries and collections feel welcome.

Libraries and collections are well organized and easy to use.

Library user needs and interests are determined and once they are determined, we assist library users in learning how to use library resources to meet their needs and interests.

Libraries are bridges between physical and electronic access to information, bridges between people and technology, and bridges between the resources available and the community using those resources.

The purpose and benefits of libraries are communicated to citizens in the region. The inherent value of books is understood.

On-going, sustainable, and continuous library funding at the local, state, and national levels is defended and supported.

Northern Lights Library Network exists to determine the kinds of library services people need at the local level and to determine what supporting structures are required for local library systems, taking into account the unique needs of different types of libraries.

NLLN reduces duplication of services by enhancing coordination among libraries. As resources are shared, services are expanded, and efficiency is improved as libraries can offer services or programs libraries may not otherwise be able to afford. All of the work performed by Northern Lights Library Network effects the direct service of its members, and has an exponential effect on its client base.

The following goals and objectives are accomplished to utilize state resources efficiently and execute library programs effectively.

Goal I: Share Resources Among All Participating Libraries IA. Objective: Deliver library materials to patrons in a timely manner.

Inputs and Activities: Interlibrary loan support for Viking Library System (VLS) and bookmobile service to Campbell, Minnesota.

Output:

Interlibrary Loan for Viking Library System. With financial support from Northern Lights Library Network, Viking Library System's interlibrary loan service is enhanced for delivering books to libraries throughout the VLS region. Viking Library System also brings bookmobile

service to Campbell, which resides in the Lake Agassiz Regional Library System. Since the bookmobile crosses from the Viking System into the Lake Agassiz Region, Campbell would not receive bookmobile service, without contracting with NLLN, which includes both Viking and Lake Agassiz boundaries. Several years ago, NLLN donated \$25,000 from NLLN reserves to the Viking Library System for a new bookmobile. The new bookmobile is now up and running through the Viking Library region!

Impact: Timely access to library materials in the NLLN region results in improved literacy rates and a better quality of life for citizens in the region.

IB. Objective: Exchange resources among libraries.

Inputs and Activities: NLLN Resource Exchange. Libraries in the Northern Lights Library Network (NLLN) region undergo on-going collection management procedures that result in the deselection of books and other library resources. Many private collections in the region are also in need of library homes. Other libraries in the region may need these materials. NLLN facilitates the exchange of materials among libraries by listing the items on NLLN's listerv and shipping through the Minitex Delivery System. There is no remuneration for the materials offered. The exchange includes academic, school, and special libraries in the region.

Output:

Resource Exchange. Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) donated about one thousand CDs and DVDs to NLLN for a library or libraries in the region. Before the pandemic, Clearbrook Gonvick School district requested them, so they were sent from MSUM to the library at Bemidji State University, where they were held for pick-up from Clearbrook Gonvick. The media was not picked-up before the shutdown. Once libraries partially opened up, Clearbrook Gonvick School no longer needed them (the teacher who requested them left), so Bemidji State returned the media to MSUM, where the tapes are waiting in the NLLN office until they could be sent out, again, once the pandemic is over. Now that the pandemic is over, the CDs and DVDs went to the Circle of Life Academy at White Earth to begin a media collection there.

Impact: Libraries in the region receive resources they need.

Goal II: Long-range Planning for Cooperative Programs

IIA. Objective: Facilitate collaboration, cooperation, and resource sharing among libraries throughout the NLLN region and the State of Minnesota.

Inputs and Activities: Travel to libraries and meet with librarians throughout the NLLN region and Minnesota to attend local, regional, and statewide meetings and conferences and serve on committees.

Output:

Funders Database. Northern Lights Library Network contracted with Access Philanthropy to provide a full list of library, regional, and Minnesota relevant funders to all NLLN's members. NLLN members will have 24/7 online access to a list of 100+ relevant library funders, 200+ general operating funders, and 50+ non-traditional funders, all of whom fund in Minnesota, such as general library funders, literacy and community reading programs, library equipment, eBook funders, homework supports, limited vision supports, technical equipment, and specialty interests, such as children's authors, art collections, and collections that represent diversity.

The lists will be resident on the Access Philanthropy server and website, maintained by Access Philanthropy's research crew. A link to the database will be on NLLN's website. Profiles will be updated biannually.

Broadsides. The Livingston Lord Library at Minnesota State University Moorhead is in the process of displaying the broadsides NLLN donated to them throughout the library. The signed and numbered broadsides were created by Patrick Vincent, former professor of visual arts at MSUM and are for sale for \$25 each to raise funds for NLLN's scholarship fund. The following are NLLN's broadsides:

At the Library by Lina Belar

Carnegie Libraries by Dr. Kenneth Bennett

The Longest Hour by Professor Travis Dolence

Birch Bark Biting by Dr. Denise Lajimodiere

North of North by Professor Emeritus Mark Vinz

Used Poetry by Professor Kevin Zepper

Moving Words: Writers Across Minnesota. Northern Lights Library Network renewed its support for the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library to underwrite their literary arts program as it goes forward into 2021 (\$500). *Moving Words: Writers Across Minnesota* brings Minnesota Book Awards authors to rural Minnesota locations to share their work. In 2020, virtual author events took place in public libraries the NLLN region in Park Rapids, Roseau, Crookston, and Perham. In the fall of 2021, the events will take place in person in the locations where they took place virtually in 2020, with the exception of a presentation in Alexandria instead of Perham. The program reached approximately 300 people statewide, including students in k-12 education settings.

“The mission of *Moving Words* is to bring experiences of deep engagement with Minnesota literature to readers across the state. We aim to deliver thought-provoking programming that enables audience members to explore the impact of literature in their lives, their connection as fellow Minnesotans, and the lenses through which we each read.

Program goals:

- Increase awareness of work written by Minnesota authors
- Increase access to award-winning writers
- Increase engagement between readers and writers.” (The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library, 2021.)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Strategies for Shifting Our Library Cultures. The Tri-College University continuing education program for librarians invited members in the Northern Lights Library Network region to its spring training on diversity, equity, and inclusion, February 9 and 10. NLLN was a workshop sponsor (\$500). There was no workshop charge for attendees and they received 5 continuing education credits. About 160 librarians from Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Canada participated. Dr. Anne Phibbs, founder and president of *Strategic Diversity Initiatives* led the workshop. From her website: “We create equitable and inclusive spaces, workplaces, and organizations whereby every person is understood, valued, and given the opportunity to thrive” (<https://strategicdi.com/>).

Impact: Strong support of libraries throughout the region and the State of Minnesota maintains and builds a strong library infrastructure in the state, communicates the purpose and benefits of libraries to citizens of the region, and possibly results in continued funding.

IIB. Objective: Provide civic support for citizen engagement activities in member libraries to activate the constituent base, increase library support, and elect public officials who care about libraries. As valued and trusted civic resources, libraries are in key positions to empower citizens to become actively engaged in the democratic process. Community engagement programming leads to optimism, individual well-being, and overall civic health. Libraries bring people together in nonpartisan ways and provide them with unbiased facts in impartial environments. As publicly supported entities, libraries are uniquely positioned to address the information needs of the people they serve through the use of physical space, technology, books, and skilled staff.

Inputs and Activities:

Legislative Directory. NLLN keeps a directory of legislators in the region. A special thank you to Debra Keena, NLLN’s Office Manager, for keeping it up-to-date.

Library Luncheon with Legislators

Conversations with legislators, such as NLLN’s “Library Luncheon with Legislators”, forms positive relationships between legislators and librarians, ensuring ongoing library support for constituents in our region. Librarians in our region actively seek ongoing support for libraries in order to improve service delivery and continue to serve citizens in the state of Minnesota adequately.

Output: Opportunities for citizen support of libraries and active engagement in the political process.

Impact: An informed, voting citizenry.

IIC. Objective: Develop activities that bring all libraries together. Inputs and Activities:

The Life Achievement Award from Northern Lights Library Network (NLLN) signifies a contribution to the NLLN region from a citizen who has given extraordinary service to libraries throughout a career. The award is given once a year upon the recommendation of the executive director or a governing board member.

John Wallace Ingersoll Memorial Fund and The Joan Ballard Larson Memorial Fund

The John Wallace Ingersoll Memorial Fund was established December, 2016, in memory of NLLN President Wayne Ingersoll's brother, John Wallace Ingersoll, in order to honor current and past NLLN Governing Board members and to honor current and past NLLN members. Funds will be used to support the programming of Northern Lights Library Network. Joan Ballard Larson was added to the fund in February, 2019.

Funds will be used to support the programming of Northern Lights Library Network. Donations will recognize those honored with a memorial biography in a memorial directory and special recognition when the funds are dispersed in support of programming at Northern Lights Library Network.

John Wallace Ingersoll was born December 27, 1942 in Fargo ND to John and Ada (Holmes) Ingersoll. He grew up in Moorhead, MN with 2 younger brothers, Wayne (Moorhead, MN) and Bruce (deceased). He graduated from Moorhead HS in 1961 and to college at the Moorhead Teachers College and graduated in 1965. He went to college to study German and part of the study course was going to Germany to study. During one of his study trips to Germany he met his future wife, Gretel Kleiner. They met in a Youth Hostel in Munich in the early 60's and fell in love. He brought her back to Moorhead with him a few years later and they got married in 1966. They moved to the Grand Rapids area where he got a job teaching German at the Grand Rapids High School in 1966. There he established himself as a huge part of the community, always being active in after school activities from detention to volleyball announcer to ticket taker at hockey games. You would always find him actively involved with the school, students, and the community. Later in years he joined the Grand Rapids Police Reserve and worked with them as a volunteer for traffic and crowd control as well as going on police patrols. After he retired from teaching German in Grand Rapids he went to China and taught English there for 5 years. He thoroughly enjoyed meeting people and making friends for life there and made friends for life. When he wasn't involved with these activities you would always find him reading a book. He read 2-4 books a week, sometimes more. His passion for reading led him to volunteer at his grand-daughters elementary school library assisting in putting books away and showing children the importance of reading. Even after his grand-daughter graduated from elementary school, he continued to volunteer at the library for many more years. Every week he would be at the city library returning and checking out books. Even on trips he would visit the libraries in those cities to see what they were like and purchase a book to read. His thirst for knowledge was never quenched. During summer breaks he would either be taking a group of his students to Germany on a school to school student exchange program or he would be taking a summer course program to better educate himself. During his travels of education he went to Duke

University, University of California, Davis and the University of Oregon to name a few. Every opportunity he had to learn something he would. He would plan trips and see as many historical sites and museums that he could squeeze in before getting to his destination. Everywhere he went he spoke with people, asked questions, made jokes and always left more knowledgeable than when he arrived. His legacy continues within his 4 sons: John Waldemar Ingersoll (49) and 3 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild in Saint Roberts, MO. Mark Thomas Ingersoll (48) and 3 grandchildren in Phoenix, AZ. Michael Frank Ingersoll (45) and 1 grandchild in Richmond, TX. Timothy David Ingersoll (43) and 2 grandchildren in Luxembourg.

Joan Ballard Larson graduated from Alexandria High School in 1947. Later, when Joan's family lived in Montana, Joan worked as the Branch Librarian in Browning, MT. Joan earned a bachelor's degree and eventually a master's degree in library science at the University of Maine, where she served in an assistant librarian position at the university. In 1983, Joan accepted the position of director of the Northern Lights Library Network. Joan loved her job and retired at the age of 72. As valued and trusted civic resources, libraries are in key positions to empower citizens to become actively engaged in the democratic process. Community engagement programming leads to optimism, individual well-being, and overall civic health. Libraries bring people together in nonpartisan ways and provide them with un-biased facts in impartial environments. Joan served on the board of the Douglas County Friends of the Library, past-president of the Minnesota Library Association, American Library Association, Minnesota Educational Media Organization, board of directors for the Minnesota Association for Library Friends for 10 years, and a local branch of the American Association of University Women. Joan was recognized for her dedication and many accomplishments with the President's Award and the Distinguished Achievement Award from the Minnesota Library Association, Distinguished Service Award from the Minnesota Educational Media Organization, and the Library Friend of the Year from the Minnesota Association of Library Friends.

Output: Support of existing libraries, librarians, and programs in the region.

Impact: The ability of libraries of all types in the region to communicate freely with each other and collaborate on projects that enhance the services of libraries in the region strengthens rural libraries and communities.

IID. Objective: Join together Historical and Cultural Organizations and Museums in the region in order to strengthen and preserve their collections, support professionals managing their collections, and make the collections more easily accessible to citizens of the region. Develop strong ties with the Minnesota Historical Society in order to consistently disseminate information throughout the region. Create a system in Minnesota for the Historical and Cultural Organizations and Museums that is similar to the Regional Public Library System in Minnesota.

Inputs and Activities: Historical and Cultural Organizations and Museums with collections in the region become members of NLLN. Maintain the Directory of Cultural and Historical Organizations and Museums in the region, available in paper and on the NLLN website.

Output: Activities that encourage the growth and support of Historical and Cultural Organizations and Museums ensures ongoing financial and structural stability.

Impact: Citizens throughout the region and beyond will increase their understanding of Minnesota rural history through access to and awareness of rural, historical, cultural, and museum collections.

III. Objective: Conduct research.

Inputs and Activities: Conduct qualitative or quantitative research on topics related to library-related needs in the Northern Lights Library Network region.

Output: Presentation of research at conferences and in publications.

College & Research Libraries. NLLN Executive Director, Kathy Enger, continues to review for *College & Research Libraries (C&RL)*. C&RL is the official, bi-month, online-only scholarly research journal of the Association of College & Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association (<https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl>).

Impact: With a foundation of research, librarians can show the value of their work.

IIIF. Objective: Advocate for libraries.

Inputs and Activities: Attendance at library legislative meetings and testimony before the Minnesota Legislature in support of libraries.

Output: *Elimination of the Minnesota Multicounty, Multitype Library Systems*

This section contains information regarding the elimination of the Minnesota Multicounty, Multitype Library Systems, provided to the best of my knowledge.

Legislation was drafted seeking to eliminate Minnesota’s Multicounty, Multitype Library Systems (the “MCMT systems”). In HF 1065, page 61, lines 12, 13, 17, and 18, the bill initially mentioned “the elimination of the multicounty, multitype library aid,” in HF 1065, page 61, lines 12–13, but the bill was amended to, apparently, lessen the obviousness of what has become a very apparent plan in Amendment to HF 1065, A21.

The legislation re-establishes a long-time inactive Library Advisory Committee (the “Library Advisory Committee”) to advise the Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner on reorganizing public library systems in Minnesota, including, specifically, the MCMT systems. Under Minn. Stat. § 134.351, the establishment of this committee is a prerequisite for defining the boundaries of the MCMT systems, and presumably, for eliminating them. *See* Minn. Stat. § 134.351 (“Subdivision 1. Establishment. The commissioner of education, upon the advice of the Advisory Council to the Division of State Library Services, may approve the establishment of multicounty, multitype library systems and the geographic boundaries of those systems.”).

Unfortunately, in the proposed statute, the Library Advisory Committee does not have any express MCMT systems representation, HF 1065, page 61, lines 23-31, and page 62, lines 1-11. Moreover, the proposed statute states that “in making recommendations the advisory group must consider the *2010 Office of the Legislative Auditor Evaluation Report on Public Libraries*.” HF 1065, page 61, lines 17–18. Over ten years old and no longer relevant due to substantial changes that have happened, that report recommended that the MCMT systems be eliminated. Thus, as written, the proposed statute provides no representation for the MCMT systems on the Library Advisory Committee, and expressly mandates that the Library Advisory Committee consider the 2010 Legislative Auditor Report that recommended that the MCMT systems be eliminated.

Further, the Library Advisory Committee “must submit a report to the commissioner [of education] by December 31, 2022,” HF 1065, page 62, line 9, and the Library Advisory Committee “expires the day following the last day of the 2023 legislative session.” HF 1065, page 62, lines 10–11.

From this overwhelming evidence, it appears likely that the report of the Library Advisory Committee submitted to the Commissioner of Education will recommend either the elimination of, or the substantial alteration of, the MCMT systems. This is potential future event that we must be cognizant of and plan for. The seven Minnesota Multicounty, Multitype Library Systems receive \$1.2 million dollars a year from the Minnesota legislature to operate. NLLN’s yearly budget is approximately \$218,000.

Impact: Great libraries create community optimism, individual well-being, and overall civic health. People who read experience a fine quality of life.

Goal III: Development of a Delivery System for Services and Programs

III.A. Objective: Support literacy initiatives among all types of libraries in the Northern Lights Library Network (NLLN) region in North-central, North-west, and West-central Minnesota through the *Minnesota Literacy Initiative*. From early reading activities to advanced literary discussions, library literacy initiatives bring people together to get to know books in enjoyable and satisfying situations. Literacy promotes personal improvement and enlightenment, ensures equity, dignifies, and creates prosperity.

Inputs and Activities for the *Minnesota Literacy Initiative*: Career development, professional engagement, scholarships, and library service funding for staff and library board member participation in continuing education programs, events, and participation at national and international conferences for library professionals in the region who may not be able to attend without the support of Northern Lights Library Network (NLLN). Continuing education scholarships are awarded as incentive for individual growth and development in order to enhance library services throughout the NLLN region. Scholarships are available to all employees of NLLN member libraries. Scholarships may be used for the following purposes: Registration or tuition; Lodging; Meals; Transportation (mileage is for the use of a personal vehicle – only one person in a vehicle may request mileage); Parking; Required books or educational materials; Cost of a substitute to cover while applicant is at an event (applicant must have paid the cost of a

substitute before requesting reimbursement). Reports summarizing the benefits of receiving the scholarships are required upon completion of continuing education opportunity.

Output: Several scholarships have been awarded for online learning opportunities.

Impact: Library staff attendance at local, regional, national, and international conferences generates new ideas and best library practices among colleagues and library constituents.

Inputs and Activities for the *Minnesota Literacy Initiative*: Ongoing library administrative and technical support for the Maamagin Achigaazo Community Library at White Earth and the White Earth Child Care/Early Childhood Program (WECC/ECP) and support for the Tribal College Libraries.

Output:

White Earth Tribal and Community College

Jane Berg, the librarian at White Earth Tribal and Community College reached out to NLLN for advice on making more space in the library for a student success center. David Crutchfield, a Professor of Architecture at North Dakota State University, volunteered to advise on the project and is actively examining drawings to determine if movable shelving is an option, or if the collection could be housed in another location at the college.

Tribal College Library Directors Meetings

Tribal College library directors are meeting on the fourth Wednesday of every month, coordinated by Hannah Buckland from State Library Services.

Circle of Life Academy (COLA) at White Earth

NLLN is purchasing some books to support the COLA and sent boxes of books, along with the CDs and DVDs from MSUM home with them mid-May. The books were from Dr. Shari Scapple's collection and the Wanda Gag Read Aloud award.

Sharon Stalboerger and Deborah Thornton from the Circle of Life Academy (COLA) at White Earth came to the NLLN office in the Faculty Development Center and picked-up boxes of books, CDs, and DVDs, all from MSUM connections.

- The children's books Sharon and Deborah received were from the Wanda Gag award selection committee, chaired by Pam Werre, who requested that selected children's books from the Wanda Gag selection to go to White Earth.
- The young adult books received were from Professor Emerita Dr. Shari Scapple's collection, which she received from reviewing young adult books. Shari would be pleased to know that her books went to COLA.
- The boxes of CDs and DVDs came to NLLN, then to COLA, from the MSUM library (materials no longer needed at MSUM, some now available online).

Impact: A community library at White Earth and support of the Tribal College Libraries provides access to literacy-rich materials for people in the region, including books and access to electronic resources, along with increased use of information sources throughout Ojibwe communities prepares children to begin school and provides people of all ages with access to reading material. As a result, literacy rates will improve.

Inputs and Activities for the *Minnesota Literacy Initiative*: Training and onsite assistance for librarians in the region to assist them in keeping up with changes in the library environment using practical adult learning principles linked to skill-building, whereby:

- Learning is self-directed
- Learning fills an immediate need and is highly participatory
- Learning will be helpful and applicable in the work setting
- Learning is experiential whereby participants and trainers learn from one another
- Training encompasses time for reflection and feedback
- A mutually respectful environment is created between trainers and learners.

Output: The learning opportunities provided.

Mini – “Better at a Distance” Workshop August 10

Lynette Schwagerl from Campbell School and Glenn Heinecke hosted a mini – “Better at a Distance Workshop”. For the first hour, librarians from the region talked about what is going on in their libraries. There are many valuable resources in our region of Minnesota, including the knowledgeable, friendly, and dedicated people working in our libraries. Many of us are navigating similar challenges in our libraries during this unusual time, finding new ways to safely provide services and connect with patrons. We will use this time to connect with each other, discuss our successes and challenges from recent months, and provide ideas and support for each other as we prepare for the future. Linda Mork from Minitex presented online resources from Electronic Library of Minnesota (ELM) the second hour. Here are notes from the workshop:

Notes from August 10, 2020, “Better at a Distance” Mini-workshop

Conversation:

Students don’t like to use eBooks.

EBooks are ok, but we need to find other means to use.

What do we do if there are families who are not using hot spots?

Correlation between who is using and who isn’t, so they can’t blame teachers and librarians when students are not engaged.

Any kind of assessments when students return to the classroom necessary.

I was surprised as to how many of the students that I worried about did really well on their own. It was a pleasant surprise. I used the lunch bus to deliver books to my students.

Many students did well, especially those students who had trouble in a classroom. Are classroom teachers doing assessments when classes begin?

Students at St. Joes performed well online, according to assessments there.

My kiddos have trouble finding books they want to read on the ELM books ... I am looking forward to learning today how to help them search more efficiently to find the great books there! I have taught several how to find the Jake Maddox books but want more.

Hardest part is getting out information, due to various languages. We have so many students that are so far behind. As a media specialist, our kids need books. They are not reading ebooks, I have to get books into their hands.

May not limit # of books a student can check out and not fine for overdues.

We need those stories. Send Sally your stories at: techlms@gmail.com

“Book Return” tubs or book carts placed outside the school. Books rest 4 days before cleaning and recirculating. Gloves, masks, sanitizers essential while cleaning. Plastic bins for returning books outside the building.

Working with public librarian to hold in a box for 3 days. Should be 4 days. See:

<https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/test2-results.html>

Realm Project IMLS study:

<https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/COVID-19-research-project.html>

<https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/test2-results.html>

4 days for board books, magazines, and books with glossy pages.

We did not give out hotspots but Internet suppliers offered free service. But communication of that was hard because students were not at school.

Is there a school library reopening plan we can share with principals? See what the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) says:

<http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic>

Book browsing. What do we do?

TitlePeek with Destiny so students can virtually browse more easily. Students take a screenshot of the book they want and email that screenshot to media specialist could pull the books for them.

Search the catalog first and pick-up the book; return to a bin where books rest 4 days.

1200 children; \$130/yr. for Follett *TitlePeek*.

Instructions for using *TitlePeek* – one checkbox, and they will all show-up.

Hoopla. Borrow digital movies, music, eBooks 24/7 with library card:

<https://www.hoopladigital.com/>

Online book fair – Scholastic?

Drive-by book fair with Scholastic.

Monthly Zoom. After school, early evening. 7-8 p.m.

Minitex presentation for the meeting is on Googledocs:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1TYvRJY5e4FfluKxUrxLzwzx5sECjMLoEU-q_VTXykjl/edit?usp=sharing

Electronic Library Minnesota ELM portal added to everyone's iPads:

<https://elibrarymn.org>

Reminder: We will be meeting once a month on the third Wednesday of the month at 4 p.m. via Zoom to continue to share our resources, expertise, and to support one another. Our next meeting will be September 23 at 4 p.m. with Zoom connection information to follow.

Monthly Online Conversations with Librarians in the Region

Lynette and Glenn are leading conversations among librarians in our region on the third Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m. The meetings take place on Zoom.

Lynette Schwagerl is librarian and English teacher at Campbell School and Glenn Heinecke is librarian and teacher at Roseau School. Both lead NLLN's yearly, "Better Together" workshop.

We use this time to connect with each other, discuss our successes and challenges from recent months, and provide ideas and support for each other as we prepare for the future.

Lynette says this about November's conversation: There was some good discussion at the library Zoom meeting yesterday! We had 8 people in attendance. Main topics were quarantining books (people shared what they were doing at this time) and various Destiny questions (placing holds, rating books, using Destiny Discover, etc.). People shared ideas and experiences to help others in the group.

Becoming An Author Writing Seminar -- July 25, 2020

By Gina Drellack

Through the Northern Lights Library Network, a writing seminar was offered to anyone with an interest in or passion for writing. This day was designed for writing enthusiasts to learn more about a personalized publishing process with attention to the Minnesota Libraries Publishing Project. This day-long workshop consisted of four, one-hour virtual meetings interspersed with individual writing time.

From Gina Drellack: “36 people registered for this free seminar! From the onset it was specifically made clear that recordings would be available to *all* registrants. Anyone with *any* inquiry about the seminar was encouraged to register. For example, many hesitated because they knew they would not be able to attend live on that day. Others expressed that they themselves were not writers, but that they wanted to be able to share the MLPP information with their library patrons. And a few indicated that they were only mildly interested in writing and publishing, but were very intrigued by this seminar. Again, *all* people who reached out were encouraged to register.

10 people attended live! Attendees hailed from Newfolden, Park Rapids, Mahanomen, Fisher, Waubun, New York Mills, Barnesville, Lakeville, St. Paul, and British Columbia. Of these ten, *all* participated fully in the day-long seminar! The live group sessions discussed topics including: embracing being a writer; choosing a project to begin; strategies to continue through to completion; traditional and self-publishing pathways; the Minnesota Libraries Publishing Project; and writer's groups. For individual breakout personal writing times, participants were provided writing prompts, encouraged to follow their own writing explorations, and/or to add to any personal writing projects that they might be currently working on. Opportunities to share their writing were offered, and most indeed read their writing aloud to the group at each opportunity. *Note: these aspects of the live meetings were **not** recorded. A safe container was purposefully created with intention so that participants could be vulnerable, take risks, and remain private to this group in attendance.* Response to this was phenomenal. Finally, the option of a personal follow-up coaching session was gifted to all registrants. Three people who attended live did indeed respond to this opportunity. One person is now creating a writer's group. Another person has now taken specific steps with publishing her near-complete project. And a third person began and finished the first full draft of a children's book that she was inspired to write because of this seminar, and is concurrently pursuing editing, illustrative, and publishing options.

Indicators are encouraging for future offerings! An email was even received that very evening from a friend of a live participant, asking when the next event is to be scheduled. A feedback form was shared at the end of the seminar, for all registrants regardless of attending live or viewing the recordings. Every person who participated live, responded. Responses overwhelmingly show that participants found high value in this seminar, from both the live meetings and the personal writing times. Responses also specify that this seminar would be beneficial as another future online event, an in-person retreat, and a pre-conference workshop. Additionally, a standalone session or workshop solely on the Minnesota Library Publishing Project would be valuable, based on initial inquiries received about this event.

I am very grateful to Kathy Enger and the Northern Lights Library Network for making this event possible. It has made an incredible, positive difference for people in the region -- and beyond! I look forward to future event offerings as well!"

April 17 Becoming an Author Writing Series. The "Becoming an Author" writing seminar was held online on April 17th, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., conducted by Gina Drellack from Northwest Service Cooperative. Eighty people are registered. The writing seminar is offered to anyone with an interest in or passion for writing and designed for writing enthusiasts to learn more about a personalized publishing process with attention to the Minnesota Libraries Publishing Project.

Youth Voice and Choice Summer Training.

Presented by Leah Larson from State Library Services and Andrea Egbert, Anoka County Library

Youth Voice & Choice: YALSA's Transforming Teen Services training on Connected Learning online was a five-week course running from the week of June 22 through July 30, with weekly Zoom meetings at a time of participants choosing, and roughly two hours of out-of-class work between each session. A new model of teen services was presented, based on interest, relationships and real-world application.

The trainings modules introduced a new framework for working with teens and older school-aged students and presented elements that librarians already use: relationships, student interest and real-world application. These workshops were designed by YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association) and are being delivered nationwide. A "refresher course" on teen development was also presented, as many of us have only had that in college and with a focus on younger kids. It is an interactive workshop with a focus on application.

In order to work effectively with youth, we need a basic understanding of how they develop, their needs and assets. This workshop summarized key research into child and youth development with a focus on how to create programs that are appropriate for the young people you work with. Connected Learning Workshop Outcomes:

- Identify the various ages and stages of youth development.
- Design developmentally appropriate activities and learning environments.
- Understand the philosophy of Connected Learning as it relates to Educational and Career opportunities.
- Explore the Six Principles of Connected Learning.
- Think about how to translate Connected Learning theory into practice.
- Learn about how a library has incorporated Connected Learning into a production-centered site.

About 15 professionals attended from the NLLN region.

Youth Voice & Choice: YALSA's Transforming Teen Services training on Connected Learning ran online for librarians in the NLLN region the Week of June 22 through July 30, 2020. It was sponsored by State Library Services and conducted by Leah Larson from State Library Services and Andrea Egbert from Anoka County Library. This year, it will take place on September 30 at Northwest Service Cooperative (NWSC) in Thief River Falls, and hosted by Gina Drellack of NWSC. The training modules introduce a new framework for working with

teens and older school-aged students, bringing together elements that librarians already use: relationships, student interest and real-world application. The workshop is interactive with a focus on application. In order to work effectively with youth, we need a basic understanding of how they develop, their needs and assets. This workshop summarizes key research into child and youth development with a focus on how to create programs that are appropriate for young people.

Media Landscapes: 23 Things Minnesota's Multicounty, Multitype Library Systems Address Misinformation <https://levelupmn.org/23things/>

Online course modules assist library staff in Minnesota understand how to manage misinformation and how to disseminate factual information. Each module takes 45-60 minutes to complete, and participants can select to engage with as many modules as they would like.

The seven Minnesota Multicounty Multitype Library Systems (Multitypes) created a new *23 Things on a Stick* concept in collaboration with Minitex, *Media Landscapes: 23 Things*. Designed to pair with Minitex's *Media Landscapes* campaign, this new series of mini-courses meets the educational needs of Minnesota library staff by helping them and their users navigate the present media and information landscape and understand how forces within that landscape influence their navigation. *Our work as librarians is centered around the democratic approach to accurate information dissemination.*

Media Landscapes is designed engage library staff more deeply around the issues and concepts addressed in the *Media Landscapes* campaign, such as understanding disinformation, information and digital literacy, and how to address these issues in various ways and in various library settings. Each of the *23 Things* in *Media Landscapes* features readings or videos focusing on key concepts associated with propaganda and fake news, including activities that encourage deeper thinking on these topics. Participants will employ tools that assist them in addressing misinformation.

The Minnesota Multicounty, Multitype Library Systems respond to the needs of librarians by providing them with library support services and connect library staff in all types of libraries to professional and staff development opportunities.

Minnesota Libraries Publishing Project

<https://nwsc-learning.teachable.com/p/self-publish-books-for-free-with-the-mlpp>

Gina Drellack, from Northwest Service Cooperative, created an online tool to teach people how to use the Minnesota Libraries Publishing Project. The Minnesota Library Publishing Project (MLPP) provides online publishing tools and training information to support independent authors and small publishers. The MLPP is a pilot project coordinated by [Minitex](#) and Minnesota's academic and public libraries. See: <https://mlpp.pressbooks.pub/>

Impact: People in the NLLN region will know how to access the information they need to improve their lives.

Inputs and Activities for the *Minnesota Literacy Initiative*: Increase access to books for citizens in the NLLN region:

eBook access for middle and high school students throughout the NLLN region.

Output:

Many students living within the counties served by **Lake Agassiz Regional Library (LARL)** and **Northwest Regional Library (NWRL)** have been issued iPads or tablets by their schools. LARL and NWRL have seen a steady increase in the use of eBook and eAudiobook collections. Teachers and media specialists from across the region have contacted LARL and NWRL, asking how their students can obtain access to eBooks and eAudiobooks. LARL and NWRL are encouraging schools, teachers, and students to register for LARL and NWRL library cards to access the eBook services provided to them through their public library. Along with Overdrive, the *Tumblebook Library* is provided for the Northwest Regional Library System. eBook and eAudiobook access for students enhance efforts schools make to provide content rich materials to students.

eAudio book access for citizens in the Kitchigami Regional Library System (KRLS).

As eAudio technology has increased, Kitchimigami Regional Library System has seen a dramatic increase in the use of eAudio books by young adults, adults, and seniors, yet, there is frustration among constituents because there are limited eAudio materials available in the KRLS region. The demand for eAudio books is outstripping Kitchi's ability to provide them. The youth audience in particular has expanded for these items while the older adult audience is growing at a faster rate than anticipated. While students throughout the Kitchigami region have ready access to eBooks, access to eAudio books is limited. KRLS would like to encourage teachers and students to register for KRLS borrower cards and use the eAudio services provided to them through their public library. Rather than schools spending additional funding to purchase their own eAudio book collections and duplicating efforts across the region, KRLS can be the eAudio book access point for the students. Since adults and seniors also have limited access to affordable eAudio books, KRLS can significantly improve their access by the purchase of simultaneous multi-user eAudio titles. With funding from NLLN, KRLS can increase significantly its holdings of juvenile and YA eAudio titles and explore multiple simultaneous user licenses for some titles meant for an older audience.

Checks for \$5,000/each have been sent to Northwest Regional Library System, Lake Agassiz Region Library System, and Kitchigami Regional Library System to support the purchase of eBooks.

NLLN is supporting the Wheaton Public Library for access to Hoopla, again, this year. Hoopla is a digital media service offered by public libraries with access to movies, music, audiobooks, eBooks, comics and TV shows.

Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School donated boxes of books to libraries throughout the region. Some of the libraries include schools in Brainerd, Clear Brook Gonvick, Wadena, Warroad, Cass Lake,

Breckenridge, Underwood, Fertile, the Fergus Falls Public Library, and the University of Minnesota Crookston. Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School received donations through contacts with Senator Al Franken, who was responsible for finding funds to build a new high school library at Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig. The donations resulted in duplicate copies of books and Laurie Villwock, the librarian at Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig, made sure to distribute them to school and public libraries in our region, fifty-seven books in all. Thank you, Laurie!

New Rivers Press is donating 100 book to libraries in the NLLN region through a grant with Lake Region Arts Council (LRAC) of the title, “You May Have the Suitcase, Now” by Beudelaine Pierre.

Adell Bridgefurd donated stuffed animals, posters, and other material related to children’s books that will be donated to libraries in the region. Adell also donated book club books that are going to the Community library in Akeley.

Impact: Reading increases understanding and improves lives. Reading newspapers, magazines, journals, and books gives readers information they can use to improve their health, well-being, and to build behaviors that lead to satisfying lifestyles. Reading expands possibilities and promises experiences beyond the scope of every-day life.

Goal IV: Development of a Bibliographic Database

IVA. Objective: Support the NorthStar Union Destiny Library Catalog.

Inputs and Activities: Bring libraries without online catalogs into the online Destiny system, support the 112 libraries in the NorthStar Library Destiny Catalog union catalog, provide ongoing training for the 112 libraries using Destiny in the NorthStar network.

Output: The number of transactions occurring through the NorthStar Library Consortium.

Bemidji School system libraries are considering a move to the NorthStar Union catalog.

Impact: Improved access to library materials by students and teachers using the Destiny Catalog.

IVB. Objective: Access to online bibliographic materials using the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) Union Catalog.

Inputs and Activities: Support cataloging fees for membership to the OCLC CatExpress group subscription for Northwest Regional Library, Lincoln High School Thief River Falls, Kittson School Media Center, Warren/Alvarado/Oslo High School, Breckenridge High School District, Clearbrook Gonvick High School, ADA-Borup Public School, Independent School District 435, Audubon High School Media Center, Perham/Dent Public School, Holy Rosary School, BUG-O-NA-GE Shig School, Grygla School Media Center, Bemidji Public School, Park Rapids High School, Northland Community Schools ISD #118, Circle of Life School, St. Joseph’s School, Lancaster public School, Tri-County School, Mahnomen Public School, Frazee-Vergas School,

Pine River Backus Public School, Badger School, Blackduck Public School, White Earth Tribal & Community College Library.

Output: Cataloging of 1,600 records.

Impact: Patron access to online cataloged materials.

Goal V: Communications System among all Cooperating Libraries VA. Objective:

Facilitate communication among all NLLN members.

Inputs and Activities: Develop and maintain membership lists and electronic methods of communication among NLLN members.

Output: email, Listbox, Facebook, and Twitter communication between and among members.

Archiving NLLN's Records

The Northwest Minnesota Historical Center at Minnesota State University Moorhead has archived NLLN's permanent records. The Northwest Minnesota Historical Center is on the fourth floor of the Livingston Library at Minnesota State University Moorhead and is affiliated with the Minnesota Historical Society. Information on the records retained will be on the Minnesota Historical Society's website and the MSUM online catalog.

NLLN Office Lease with Minnesota State University Moorhead at the Faculty Development Center is up June 30, 2021. NLLN's Office moved to Weld 206

NLLN's office space lease with Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) is up on June 30, 2021. Directors of the Faculty Development Center and Online Learning at MSUM are planning to move into the space where NLLN's offices currently reside. NLLN is moving to Weld Hall 206 and NLLN's Office Manager, Deb Keena, moved her office to her home in Detroit Lakes. NLLN operated successfully from the respective residential virtual offices for over a year. The smaller office space will save NLLN \$1,045/mo.

Minnesota Pay Equity Report Completed and Passed

Northern Lights Library Network successfully met the requirements of the Local Government Pay Equity Act M.S. 471.991 - 471.999 and Minnesota rules Chapter 3920, as a result of an official review of NLLN's 2020 pay equity report by Minnesota Management & Budget. NLLN's cooperation in complying with the local government pay equity requirements is greatly appreciated.

Impact: Ongoing communication among members supports existing networks that communicate the purpose and benefits of libraries to citizens in the region.

The Strategic Plan for Northern Lights Library Network for **Fiscal Years 2019 – 2023** circulated among members during the Spring of 2018, and the changes and suggestions from members was incorporated into the existing plan. Prior to the 2018 circulation, an electronic survey system was

used to gather qualitative data from twenty-three representative NLLN members and a quantitative Lickert scale survey was designed, based on the qualitative material. Forty percent of members completed the survey. The survey was tested for reliability and found to be highly reliable.

From the survey results, the vision statement, a mission statement, identification of core values, and the development of goals and objectives of the organization were developed. To determine program development and implementation that arise from goals and objectives, a logic model was developed for each for planned work and intended results, including: activities, outputs, and impact.

With the scientifically valid strategic plan, the programs and services delineated in this strategic plan were designed and written. The 2018 membership review provides the groundwork for the 2018 – 2023 strategic plan. The programs and services outlined in the strategic plan were written over five years leading up to and including the 2018-2023 plan.