

DIRECTOR'S REPORT
Northern Lights Library Network (NLLN)
Kathy B. Enger
September 19, 2026

NLLN Governing Board Members

A warm welcome to LeAnn Dean representing the Viking Library System (VLS) and to Linda Schell, who has moved from Alternate to full board member representing the Lake Agassiz Regional Library (LARL) system.

Audit

NLLN's FY2026 audit has been completed by Marc Colin, CPA, from Carpenter, Evert, and Associates. The following policies will be reviewed and approved by the NLLN Governing Board: Conflict of Interest, Document Retention and Destruction, Fund Balance, and Whistleblower. The audit will be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education State Library Services on October 1 and by July 1, 2027, at the end of the next fiscal year.

Minnesota Department of Education *Report of Results*

NLLN's Report of Results is completed and ready to be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) State Library Services due October 1.

Annual Report

Thank you to Tim Nelson, graphic designer and artist with Total Integrated Media for designing NLLN's Annual Report. Copies of the report will be on NLLN's website nlln.org and paper copies will be sent to NLLN stakeholders.

Executive Director Job Description and NLLN Policies

The executive director's job description has been reviewed by an attorney at LegalCORPS and ready for NLLN Governing Board approval. LegalCORPS is also reviewing all of NLLN's policies and bylaws.

Executive Search Firm

The NLLN Governing Board will be deciding on an executive search firm for hiring a new executive director on Kathy Enger's retirement June 30, 2028. The search process will begin January 2028, and Kathy Enger will stay on for a month or two during the transition.

Business Liability Insurance

NLLN's liability insurance has been renewed with Auto Owners Bell Bank.

The Loop and Moorhead Public Library

FY2027 funds to support the new Moorhead Public Library and "The Loop" Community Center were committed and voted on at the September 2025 NLLN Governing Board meeting. Funding will be committed again this year.

50th Annual Family History Workshop

The 50th Annual Family History Workshop on September 19th in the Comstock Memorial Union on the Campus of Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM). Northern Lights Library Network (NLLN) is a sponsor, so all NLLN members are welcome to attend. See: heritaged.com

Red Cards

In an effort to assist librarians in the region with addressing Border Agents and ICE agents in their communities, NLLN has distributed 750 Red Cards that are pocket-sized cards listing a person's rights, such as the right to remain silent, the right to a lawyer, the right to leave calmly if accosted outside one's home.

Libraries Respond: Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers

The *Washington Post* reported the following on August 28:

"--- In all, federal authorities detained more than 49,000 migrants in July 2026. More than half of those detained last month did not have a criminal record."

"--- DHS's enforcement capabilities were made possible after Congress last year approved more than \$170 billion in additional funding allowing for thousands of additional ICE and Border Patrol officers, the purchase of new surveillance technology and adding more immigrant detention facilities. See: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2025/07/03/trump-tax-bill-house/>"

The American Library Association (ALA) has somewhat addressed the issue for librarians on their website, *Libraries Respond: Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers*: <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/advocacy/diversity/libraries-respond-immigrants-refugees-and-asylum-seekers>

Resources

Deportation Data Project: <https://deportationdata.org/>

Immigrations Customs and Enforcement website: <https://www.ice.gov/>

As organizations that serve all, libraries are caught between serving their public and the policies federal ICE agents enforce. From the ALA Code of Ethics:

"We affirm the inherent dignity and rights of every person. We work to recognize and dismantle systemic and individual biases; to confront inequity and oppression; to enhance diversity and inclusion; and to advance racial and social justice in our libraries, communities, profession, and associations through awareness, advocacy, education, collaboration, services, and allocation of resources and spaces."

See the ALA Code of Ethics: <https://www.ala.org/tools/ethics>

Many agencies have provided the public with Red Cards, wallet-sized cards that carefully and concisely list a person's rights. NLLN has red cards for libraries.

Pine River Public Library

Carol Christiansen, Director of the Pine River Public Library is completing their strategic plan after completing a survey and qualitative “library conversations” with library stakeholders. Executive Director, Kathy Enger, consulted with Carol on the plan which is nearly complete.

AI Spark: Education in the Age of AI

NLLN sponsored educators, administrators, innovators, and community leaders from PK-12 and higher education at the Institute of Applied AI for AI Spark: Education in the Age of AI on Thursday, August 6, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the MSUM Christianson Alumni Center.

This summit explored how artificial intelligence is transforming teaching, learning, and workforce preparation across K-12 and higher education. With hands-on practical training and breakout sessions focused on AI literacy, ethical AI integration, AI agents, and agentic AI architecture, participants will gain concrete strategies for understanding, evaluating, and teaching with AI.

Historical and Cultural Organizations and Museums Directory

The directory was updated by Justin McDowell and uploaded onto the NLLN website by Andy Mickel from Factor-of-4. Thank you Justin and Andy! See:

<https://nlln.org/pdfs/Historical&CulturalOrganizations&MuseumsDirectory-NLLN-2026.pdf>

LSTA Partnership with MSUM AI Discovery Nights: Building Family and Educator AI Literacy through the Academic Innovation Hub

NLLN is providing in-kind service for regional outreach for providing information access and community literacy across all library types for disseminating AI Discovery Nights in collaboration with Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM).

The August 11 ELM Expo Recorded

These resources are free to all Minnesotans. See: <https://elibrarymn.org/>

30 NLLN members attended. Thank you to Beth Staats, Carla Pfahl, and Ann Kaste at Minitex for making this available to us! <https://minitex.umn.edu/>

See below for session details and links to recordings:

Introduction

Explore the ELM Portal and its resources (Recording

link:https://umn.zoom.us/rec/share/hkRiL80mnGbRNBbXFv58Ss2y2zllmDrNq3vkee08_zjKwMtsgturJuXSDY9slhU8.qh1iWzyzRRAfGf4q?startTime=1786543605000 Learn what’s included, how to find key resources, and how ELM supports Minnesota library users of all ages. The audio on this may be muted. All the other sessions are audible.

Session 1

Elementary Resources: Britannica Kids and PebbleGo (Recording link: <https://umn.zoom.us/rec/share/CwzlCcnUWN3caNMjtRLi6oWAT7ZpFM8DHXY-uNrXDgkt5V3bQ4nypPYQyCrDgyRd.RWfKxHKLkhVs8ltn?startTime=1786458621000>)

This session highlights Britannica School Elementary and PebbleGo and offers practical lesson plans and activities to help students build research and information literacy skills. (Ann Kaste)

Inspire creativity with Craft & Hobby (New to ELM!)

Recording

link: https://umn.zoom.us/rec/share/FRrMLxdldHsQ4W2xGL89thTOBkv5W99Nem5pTtCLoQoT8rj-dUuQpV2Vj_ARGF6M.OEeEHm9YIDvqDP-t?startTime=1786458349000

This session highlights the platform's extensive collection of video-based instruction for makers, artists, and lifelong learners. (Beth Staats)

Session 2

Secondary Resources: Points of View and Gale In Context

(Recording link: <https://umn.zoom.us/rec/share/W-inBD6teDxKD2idmnlNvCR-I98qsdPI6zg1Xdy68Uitz96rn56tSaT8V47pHa6H.dyDVM3gsQpokwEIm?startTime=1786464389000>)

Learn how these resources provide credible information, multiple perspectives, and curriculum-aligned content for secondary learners. (Ann Kaste)

Finding Academic, Magazine and News Articles

Recording

link: https://umn.zoom.us/rec/share/V2tb32De26kmN3BLsZ88jY7G11jEHaCONNc0W_l3Ux4j5R_HglRYWYvifGI6shSr.ZtOHoaWQOU4lOeI9?startTime=1786460636000

Learn how to find academic, magazine, and news articles using eLibrary Minnesota resources. Explore search strategies, filtering tools, and techniques for locating credible sources for research, coursework, and lifelong learning. (Carla Pfahl)

Session 3

Exploring Data with Social Explorer (New to ELM!)

Recording

link: https://umn.zoom.us/rec/share/r8KRB0tdfSyPzgb5iwXqQKwovbTklYS3OZflcbumCnfObNcl5maGJekww8E5yoOc.AY0L_y-WuvwwXdVq?startTime=1786463206000

Learn how Social Explorer supports research, teaching, and storytelling through powerful data visualization tools. (Carla Pfahl)

Prepare for tests and careers with LearningExpress Library

(Recording

link: https://umn.zoom.us/rec/share/OPontSW2LdWi_teFRb5A9WcKvjqClrj9eJkdH2eLCkqUK4M2y4jWLD9_2aQQK-fc.jCPU0xZVY8Jz4YRe?startTime=1786463509000

This session highlights LearningExpress Library's practice tests, tutorials, and career resources to support students and lifelong learning. (Beth Staats)

Session 4

Exploring Ebooks Minnesota and Minnesota Digital Library

Recording

link: https://umn.zoom.us/rec/share/T3hBBhrb_qbafOOhlv2D7XJjUMhYbXk3CCtOKNpJJ56W1XsBAeU1f3vR4SE8UpvD.kCY-srtA2jyIIRpd?startTime=1786465516000

Discover two free statewide resources that provide access to thousands of ebooks and Minnesota's rich cultural heritage. Learn how Ebooks Minnesota offers instant access to ebooks for all ages, while the Minnesota Digital Library connects users with historical photographs, documents, maps, and other unique primary sources from collections across the state. Perfect for librarians, educators, and anyone looking to promote these valuable Minnesota resources. (Beth Staats).