

Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Welcome. It's an overcast day here in Washington, with a little rain. Temperature is 63 but no sign of cicadas as yet. With that as a background, I'm going to turn it over to Mark Santangelo, Chief of the Patron and Network Engagement division. Mark...

Comment: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)

Great. Thank you very much, Steve. Hello everyone. I'm delighted to have you on the call today and I hope you're having a good afternoon or morning wherever you're located. We are thrilled to be talking with you and we enjoy this monthly chat. I wanted to welcome you officially to the Open Forum call but also give you two announcements that we have – and first just to let you know a bit of a status update. There's been little to no change in terms of libraries' operations during COVID. Some libraries in the Network are continuing to provide reduced or limited services, while others remain closed. Secondly, I wanted you to know that travels have been suspended for us at NLS, so that means that your consultants, Pam and MaryBeth...are continuing to meet with people virtually – and will do so throughout the year. We don't have a deadline or date in terms of when that will change. I've got a couple updates for people. I'm going to call on Michael Katzmann first, to talk about the REALM project. Michael...

Comment: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)

Okay. As many of you will note from previous calls, OCLC, the library, IMLS, are conducting research into COVID impact on libraries – transmission and materials that libraries have that may transmit the virus that causes COVID-19. They've done a series of tests. There's a website – oclc.org/realm – that summarizes the findings. The research is being done by Battelle, and the initial couple of test results reported on before, relate to material that is close to what we are handling. In fact, the second round of tests looked at transmission on braille paper. The third round are actually USB cartridges. The later rounds looked at materials in library settings – some even in the services you'd find in walk-in libraries, which doesn't pertain to a lot of what we do or what most libraries in our network (do). Tests 7 and 8 that were published in February, also looked at the effective temperature on the survivability of viruses on surfaces. Previous tests have looked at standard environments in libraries – around 68 degrees, 30 to 40% relative humidity.

Now these looked at very cold environments and very warm environments – and the results of those are interesting inasmuch as the survivability on surfaces, especially plastic surfaces – and this is not surprising – (are) much better at cold temperatures just above freezing – 34 degrees. So, that is to say, the virus, once expelled because of a sneeze or...ejection from an infected patron, would land on the surface and, if it were kept at 34 degrees, it would survive – well, the test went 10 days and most of the (virus) actually survived 10 days. At room temperature or at elevated temperatures of 80-odd degrees, it attenuated fairly quickly and, as I reported in the earlier test results, over a couple of days the virus is undetectable. So, the bottom line is, if you're concerned about fomites – which is what they call the virus on the surface – putting materials in a warehouse that's cold or close to 30 degrees, won't attenuate it. You'd need at least room temperature. The difference between elevated temperature (80 degrees) and room temperature (68 degrees) was not significant.

So, as long as you've got it at room temperature, it will attenuate after a couple of days. The results...also pointed out that there's no consensus as to how much virus a person is likely to expel when sneezing...the mode of transmission onto materials is generally considered a much less likely transmission medium. The CDC says the primary and most important mode of transmission for COVID-19 is through close contact from person to person, based on data from...studies on COVID-19 and what we know about similar respiratory diseases. It may be possible that a person could get COVID-19 by touching a surface or an object that has a virus on it, and then touching their own nose, mouth and possibly eyes, but this isn't thought to be the main way the virus spreads – so, it's possible that the virus is spread through touching, but that's not the main (mode of) transmission. I think that probably sums up the results. Mark...

Comment: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)

Great. Thank you very much Michael. As a side note, I would also like to mention that the RealSAM project is moving forward, and devices have been sent out to pilot libraries and they're about to do the story. Now I'm going to call on Neal Graham to tell us about a new inventory management system. Neal...

Comment: (Neal Graham - NLS)

NLS is retiring the current Warehouse Ordering on the Web (WOW system)...and migrating to the new web-based system called "WOW2." WOW2 is a commercially off-the-shelf product called "ServiceNow." (The) WOW2 system will be simple to use, much more intuitive and user-friendly. The menu request in the new system will provide the Network libraries a dashboard with status updates. "Your request has been submitted." "Your request was received by the warehouse." "Your request was shipped" or "Your request was backordered." Your dashboard will provide you the status of each of your individual orders. Once you receive your order, the Network libraries will acknowledge receipt, in order to close the transaction. You will also have the opportunity to put notes in the system, such as "product was damaged" or "partial delivery was received."

The new WOW2 system will be accessed via the Single Sign-on system. Each Network library is asked to submit names – an Ops Alert went out today – of individuals who will need access to the system. We will be having a training session – let me back up – once we receive all of the profiles of the individuals who will be needing access to the system through the Single Sign-on...we will be conducting training the week of April 19. We will have two sessions for the Network libraries and two sessions for the repair groups. The Ops Alert that went out today had an error in it indicating Friday, April 6 but we're asking for profiles Tuesday, April 6. I understand that quite a few have already submitted. Thank you. We hope to be able to meet that deadline. Currently we're doing a demo...with 7 Network libraries and 5...repair groups. The current timeline: Tuesday, April 6 we're asking for Single Sign-on profiles. Wednesday and Thursday the week of April 19 – so starting on Wednesday, April 21, we'll be doing training with the Network libraries as well as the parts groups – and these dates and times will be forthcoming.

On both Wednesday and Thursday, at 11:00 (EDT) the parts training will happen (Wednesday and Thursday, April 21 and 22) and on the same dates the products and materials request training will be at 1:00pm. We're tentatively looking at shutting the (current) system down on Thursday, April 22 to begin the migration to the new system. So, at 3:00pm (EDT) tentatively, that's what we're looking at. The system will not be available Friday the 23rd or Monday the 26th. On Tuesday, April 27 the system will go live 7am (EDT). Again, we're asking the Directors to send Meredith Beckhardt the names of the individuals who will need profiles for the Single Sign-on system. Within the system, if the individual's profile is for parts, when they go into the Single Sign-on system they will only (be able to access the parts ordering system). If they're requesting materials when they go into Single Sign-on, they will only see the icon for materials or products. Does anyone have any questions? We'll wait until the questions section. Thank you, that's all I have.

Comment: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)

Great. Thank you, Neal. One of our last items that we have, has to do with our new staff. We are delighted that we have two new staff members that we're really excited for you to meet, and we have one staff member who has a brand-new role and a new title. To talk about that, I'm going to ask Karen Keninger...

Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Thank you, Mark... I'm happy to announce that Alice O'Reilly has accepted the position of the Chief of the Collections Division and, she will be also be acting as the head of the Quality Assurance section. Many of you know Margie Goergen-Rood – and she retired at the end of December. Now, Alice will be the acting head of that section as well as Chief of the Collection Division – and so, congratulations to Alice. I know that she's going to be good to work with – continue to be – so, thank you. Well, Alice I think I'll hand it to you for another introduction...

Comment: (Alice O'Reilly - NLS)

I'll take this moment to introduce the Collections Division rather than myself so, it might be obvious to some of you if you've read our Reorganization document and you know what's happening exactly, but, the Collections Division was formed as recently as October. It's part of the reorganization of NLS, and the section is focused exclusively on the selection, cataloguing, production and review of braille and audio books and magazines. We're really excited about using this Collections platform as a relationship extender to the Network libraries. We really want to collaborate with the Network libraries on new and existing projects. We have a lot of enthusiasm for the collections work that's currently happening in the Network. Network libraries are such a critical element of the collections work that we do at NLS because you're so much closer to the patrons. You have such a better idea about what's happening, what's circulating, what's wanted. We have so much of a richer understanding about how the collection is being used but also because you're creating a fantastic collection of Network-produced content. So, we look forward to creating a collaborative partnership with each of the Network libraries in whatever capacity is appropriate, and we're very excited to develop focused and productive relationships, and if anyone would like to have a conversation personally about...your Network library or how we can help each other or how we can help you or anything like that. Email me and we can schedule a time to talk. It's at abak@loc.gov. It's the same email that its been for the last 15 years. But,

now you can feel free to reach out to me about Collections. The Collection section has – you know them – Dominick Spinelli, Zaneta Watson – so this is going to be the perfect segue. And our new bibliographic...section has Anita Hoffman. So, let me introduce Anita. She comes to us most recently from Tulane – oh, and Celeste Lawson, our brilliant...media lab leader down in our basement...

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

I think she might be logged in as a Network library and not (NLS staff).

Comment: (Alice O'Reilly - NLS)

Maybe she can log back in as a presenter. In the meantime – Dominick and Zaneta, you can help me out with this one. Anita is working for us. She was most recently working at Tulane University as a metadata analyst. She has a long and interesting career doing...cataloguing work in Ivy League colleges and working for a consulting organization. She speaks Russian and Polish and German. She can really help us with a lot of our foreign language cataloguing. She has a lot of enthusiasm for cataloguing... She brings a certain happiness to the organization. I'm happy she decided to join us. She was a really good choice. Dominick, do you have anything that you want to say?

Comment: (Dominick Spinelli - NLS)

She's done really good. Currently, her top priorities are the Marrakesh items, (unintelligible)...

Comment: (Alice O'Reilly - NLS)

Yes. Anything that you'd like to (unintelligible) to the Network libraries that Anita needs to be aware of...she's getting her feet wet in the NLS cataloguing and a large part of that work is Network cataloguing. It's important to us that she's recognized the role that you play in the book production side but also the role that you play in cataloguing. I think that's enough for us. We can get excited about our work and talk too long.

Comment: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)

Exciting things right there, so thank you so much, Alice. I appreciate that. We at Patron and Network Engagement also have a new hire to announce – and that's the head of our Reference Section...and she comes to us from the Preparation Section of the Manuscript Division within our own Library of Congress...

Comment: (Amanda N. - NLS)

Thank you, Mark. I just want to say that I'm so thrilled to have joined the NLS team, and to be able to support such an inspiring mission. I've seen firsthand in my life, how this program uniquely touches the lives of patrons. It's truly an energizing experience to work alongside staff who are so committed to connecting patrons with these wonderful resources. So, to share a little bit about my background – as Mark just said – prior to joining NLS..I served as...head of the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, where I was responsible for overseeing archival processing and...services for Special Collections. Before my time at the Library of Congress, I served as a faculty librarian and Head of Technical Services for Archives and Special Collections at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey – and prior to my time in academia, I held archival positions in a wide array of institutional settings throughout the cultural heritage and nonprofit and corporate sectors. I have an academic background in Medieval Studies, Library Science and Public Administration. I'm very much looking forward to working with the Network libraries and I'm certainly eager to learn more about the services offered. Overall, I'm grateful and excited for the opportunity to have a positive impact on the lives of our patrons.

Comment: (David Perrotta - NLS)

Hi everybody. I just wanted to let you know quickly that NLS will be hosting a Duplication-on-Demand instructional webinar for libraries that are using the NLS Gutenberg DoD system. This is intended for libraries that already have the Gutenberg system in use – or are in the process of setting up and starting their duplication operations. It's going to be held on Thursday, April 22nd from 2 to 4 pm Eastern time. The star of the show will be Michael Katzmann, and he will lead us through a standard demonstration of the system functionality, and also provide details on a host of basic operations and solutions to common problems. We'll also go over some productivity...tips and tricks – and there will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions. So, within the next few days we'll be putting out an Operations Alert that will have the registration details, but in the meantime, we encourage you to save that date, April 22. We will be recording the event, so it will be available for future viewing but, if you can join us live, you'll have the opportunity to ask questions of our Resident Expert on all things Gutenberg. So, once again, this will be held on Thursday, 4/22 from 2 to 4 pm Eastern. Details to follow. That's all I have.

Question: (James M. – CA9)

I'm working for the San Francisco Public Library – Talking Books and Braille Center. Almost all of us are working remotely. It's getting pretty difficult for us to hear the conference calls when it's passed over the internet to all of my coworkers who are not at the office. Is there any possibility that we might switch to...Zoom or a service that might make it so that more of my colleagues can dial in themselves – so they can all hear what's going on themselves rather than hearing an extremely muffled version that they're getting over Microsoft Teams? Thank you.

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

Well, that is certainly something that we will look into. I can't make any promises, but we will pursue that and see what we can determine.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

This is typically the momentous time of the year when we in the past have been required to provide semiannual Readership and (Circulation) stats. We know things are changing in the Readership and Circ stats area. (I'm) wondering if we can be provided an update as to how the new collection of this type of data is progressing and when we (can see) some of the results.

Answer: (Meredith Beckhardt - NLS)

Hi this is Meredith Beckhardt. I just want to address the survey part of the question. This year, we are not doing a half-year Readership and Circulation statistic. I am aware that KLAS sent out an email blast today letting people know that it's time for you to gather for that – so I wanted to let people know that we won't be collecting information on this end for that. If there's anyone else from NLS who wanted to address that question, please chime in.

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

John, we will be collecting the statistics at the end of the fiscal year – that will be in October. And that will be the same information that we requested last year.

Question: (John Mugford - NM)

So, will there be additional data as compared to the past? Obviously, some of us enjoy reviewing the data and may draw some comparisons and conclusions, so, will there be some form of update as to what we may expect, come the end of the federal fiscal year?

Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)

That's a good question. I don't have an answer for you now. We will get you an answer – and the Network.

Question: (Gabe Kramer - NE)

The question is in regard to those of us that submitted examples of a book for the NS01...guidelines. I was wondering if we were going to be receiving results anytime soon?

Answer: (Vickie Collins - NLS)

This is Vickie Collins from the Network Services section and, Paula is not here, but I wanted to assure you, Gabe, that those pilot books are being reviewed and you will be getting commentary – about the pilot books.

Question: (Gabe Kramer - NE)

Thank you. Do you happen to have an ETA?

Answer: (Vickie Collins - NLS)

I'm not quite sure about that but I can check with Paula and she can get back to you tomorrow.

Question: (Kim Charlson – MA)

Thank you...My question is about the Braille Book Review in braille. My comment is: I was a little surprised to see the order forms come back in the January/February 2021 Braille Book Review when they had disappeared because NLS had determined that the contractors were having issues with producing the order forms in November/December 2020 (which) was the last issue of Braille Book Review in braille that had order forms. So, I was surprised, and I showed one of my staff and I said "Look, the order forms are back. Did you know?" And I waived it around and I opened it and they said "What is that?" and I said "Well, it's the order forms for the Braille Book Review and they go "Well, there's nothing there." So, my big Aha! Moment – which I wanted to share with other librarians – was, these

order forms have no print in them any longer. Only on the front cover. So, when braille readers are instructed to mark the dotted line in the order form, they are doing what they're told and they are marking the line and, they put their name on the outside and they mail it to you, the lucky librarian – and how are you supposed to know what they're ordering if you don't have a braille reader on your staff? I think this is a rather odd experience that I am experiencing. And, probably Network libraries have been confused when they open up the order forms that braille readers might have sent in. What good does an order form do, without any print on it? So, I guess my question is, you know, we went through and told the patrons that there was no longer going to be an order form and then, "poof" it comes back – but how useful is this format, especially for Network library staff, getting the communication from a braille-reading patron using the order form, thinking they were doing absolutely the right thing, which they're instructed to do to order braille. So, that's the long road around...

Answer: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)

I appreciate your frustration. This is unquestionably a difficult circumstance. So, with BBR in braille, the issues that we have run into when we stopped having the order form altogether, was because the vendor had been producing that for a long period of time and there were a variety of problems with that vendor. And so, we had to quickly move to another vendor because, as you recall at that point, BBR was very far behind – and so, that was just an ongoing issue with that vendor. So, we had to go to a different vendor, and we eliminated the order form at that point altogether...so, during that period of time, there was no order form. There was a point at which we did actually ask for feedback from the Network about: If we reintroduce, say, an order form that didn't have print – because, I won't go into the grisly details about the contracting, but there are issues with that process. So, the process is the print and it's the braille. We didn't actually receive any feedback...If you think that that's creating additional problems, we can't add the form back in with the print. It was just not working...and I won't go into the details of the contractor associated with it. If there's a consensus among the libraries that receiving just the braille form is a problem, we could remove it again. That would be an option. So, I would highly recommend to those who are hearing this, if you think that that's a better option, please write your Network Consultant...

Comment: (Kim Charlson – MA)

Yes, I would encourage you to ask the Network libraries. I think, maybe just a message asking for what every library sees, as there might be some that are not here today to get the message. So, maybe a little more organized request for feedback may be helpful instead of a casual approach but, my concern certainly is not for my library, because I have an abundance of braille readers including myself so, my staff don't have to worry and in fact, I did help them with marking these – it takes two people. I was available to help them figure out a few of the order forms that did get mailed back to our library. It's more of a "heads-up" for other libraries who may not have even been aware if someone didn't send one of these forms back – that it was going to be a challenge if they opened them up and they have nobody – or with COVID, and situations where you don't have volunteers coming in – that kind of thing. It doesn't seem fair to make your braille reader wait for months because there was nobody to read it, so, those were the kinds of issues that I was concerned about, not per se, my own experience or my library's experience, so, I just want all libraries to be aware of the situation that these forms can cause for them.

Comment: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)

Thank you. We appreciate it... We can send (information) out again and see whether...people would prefer to take it out.

Comment: (Kim Charlson – MA)

And I think the ultimate question also, is: Do you ask patrons what they think, or not? So, I would just throw that out and let you talk that through and decide if you think it's helpful to have the order forms. Or is it not helpful? And explain the situation for them, so, maybe you'll find out that they (couldn't) care less, or, maybe they love them and they're passionately happy that they've returned, so...

Comment: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)

Right. Kim, thank you for that again. That was one when we were sort of running into that situation where our backs were kind of against the wall... We did reach out to a number of libraries...because we were concerned about the impact on patrons. Unfortunately, though, at the time we didn't have a lot of (time to) do a survey but,...I appreciate your feedback.

Question: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

I did not hear Mark's earliest comment about the pilot underway and I wasn't sure if he said it was for smartphones or something else and, I was wondering if you could clarify that.

Answer: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)

Yes. I mentioned the RealSAM project and that it was moving forward – and that the devices have been sent out to the libraries and that they are about to be deployed.

Question: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

And those are the smartphones that Michael Katzmann demonstrated back in December?

Answer: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)

I don't know what Michael demonstrated.

Answer: (Library Staff - NLS)

Yes, these are the smartphones that Michael demoed.

Comment: (Mike Marlin – CA9)

Perfect. Thank you very much.

Comment: (Steve Prine – NLS)

I thank everybody in the Network for participating on the call. We will follow up with the questions that we weren't able to answer on the call, and we look forward to talking to you again at the end of April. Have a good day.