

**Comment: (Steve Prine - NLS)**

Welcome to the call. It's a sunny day here in Washington – the temperature in the 80s, and, we have connectivity problems, which you probably know if you've tried to look at our website or get an email message from us – but we're still plugging along and, we're delighted that you're here. At this point, I'll turn it over to Mark Santangelo, Chief of the Network & Engagement Division.

**Comment: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)**

Thank you very much, Steve. Hello everyone. Welcome again to this Wednesday, April the 28<sup>th</sup> Open Forum call. As we are speaking about these issues we're having with slow connectivity, I thought I would ask Kristen Fernekes to give us a little update about what's happening.

**Comment: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)**

Hey everybody. As Steve and Mark have both mentioned, there's a Library of Congress-wide issue. I don't have a lot of insight into what's going on, but it's been happening since sort of late morning Eastern time. The library is very well aware of the problem that we're having. It seems like some things actually (may be) being restored as we speak. We're hopeful that our websites will be back online but, we're hopeful that our websites will be back online. For those of you who have been posting on the listserv in particular – that our websites are down – for many of us, it's somewhat difficult for us to respond to you (as) our computers are not working terribly well. Nonetheless, we appreciate you letting us know and we apologize for the inconvenience and we hope that it's going to be fixed soon.

**Comment: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)**

Thank you, Kristen. And to piggyback off that, one of the important announcements we have for this call, is to let you know that, in May, our plan is to move this Open Forum call to the Zoom platform – provided all connectivity issues are solved on the day of the call. What we will do is send out an Ops Alert that will have detailed information and instructions – so, please be on the lookout for that. We also intend to have a backup plan in the event we experience a day like today. So again, the Open Forum call will transition to (the) Zoom platform and we look forward to having you there.

Another announcement (concerns) NLS staff transitions: I want to mention that, David Spett – the Data Analytics Officer – will be leaving the Library of Congress in May, and Michael Katzmann – as you may have heard – will be retiring this summer. So, for both of those roles, there is a transition plan in place, and we hope to have someone fill those positions as soon as we can. Also – as you know – our Director, Karen Keninger, will retire at the end of May. The Search Committee is actively seeking her replacement, and at the moment, we are in the process of conducting interviews. NLS has benefited from the leadership of Karen, Michael, and David, and we wish them much success in their future endeavors.

The "Library of the Year" 2020-2021 Awards will be presented during the Midlands and Western Conference on May 11, 2021. NLS has been asked to present topics on DoD transition..., the eReader pilot, the NLS projects that will be unfolded during the next year – and then we will also present the "Library of the Year" awards. That will be between 2 and 5 pm Eastern time on May 11, during the Western-Midlands Conference – so look forward to that. By way of announcements, I would like to call on Dominick Spinelli, the Collection Development section head, for an announcement on prefixes. Dominick...

**Comment: (Dominick Spinelli - NLS)**

Thank you, Mark. So, the question recently surfaced on the lbph listserv, about the relationship between prefixes and languages. I want to thank you for the attention and interest in the area. It's really great to see the idea surfacing about how to best serve patrons – and I just want to clarify – if you hadn't seen our message – that the prefixes don't necessarily represent the languages contained in that collection. I think there was some confusion about DBF versus DBG versus DB. A DB can include English and non-English languages. That is, about how we acquire the materials. A DBF can include English and non-English languages, as can a DBG. The DBF and the DBG prefixes represent material that we've acquired from an international organization – either through Marrakesh for the DBG, or prior to Marrakesh – for DBF. I think that Mike was going to talk about a bit more of how you can find specific languages in BARD going forward though.

**Comment: (Michael Martys - NLS)**

What we're working on right now are a couple of improvements to the BARD webpage. We're hoping to implement the first one – which is to include the BRGs and the Music Collection – within a couple of weeks. Right after that, we're going to work on an improvement to the Foreign Language page, that will allow people to select the books by language as opposed to by prefix. We hope that those two short-term fixes will improve the situation...and eliminate this problem for the short term. The longer-term fix will come in when we implement our "Solr" search engine as part of BARD. We're near the tail-end of the development of that. The development Solr search engine is working and appears to be working very well – and it has all the capabilities of properly handling foreign engines. When the Solr search engine is completed, it will be then integrated into BARD, so that the BARD searches will actually use the Solr engine and will be able to make use of all the capabilities of Solr. We'll probably roll that out in a step-by-step fashion, with what I'll call a "phase one improvement" to the search page – which basically replaces the existing functionality but doesn't add a lot of the extra features...(in phase two) we can start adding some of the extra features such as faceting and things of that sort. That's just a quick update of what we're doing with BARD.

**Comment: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)**

And now I would like to introduce Zaneta Watson, the Head of the Audio & Braille Production section – for an announcement on braille containers. Zaneta...

**Comment: (Zaneta Watson - NLS)**

Happy Wednesday everybody! I feel like that parent – when your kid says, "Are we there yet?" and I keep saying "Almost." That's how I feel about braille containers, and I apologize. As you know...we had started our order for braille mailing containers. Production started in March of 2020. However, due to COVID restrictions, the warehouse and facilities of our producer, shut down completely. They have just passed...inspection of test articles, which occurred about two weeks ago. We had a conference call with them this past Friday, and we have agreed to split up the lot. Instead of doing one huge lot and it taking forever, we have 10,000 total ordered, and they intend to send us about 3,000 or so within the next six weeks. As soon as those are delivered to us and we're ready for distribution, I will make sure I put out an Ops Alert so that you all know – and once again, I apologize. It is no fault of the producer. They've made (product) but we are almost to the point where we can get you some of those articles out.

**Comment: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)**

Great. Thank you, Zaneta. Neal Graham, Head of Logistics & Facilities Management, can you give us an update on WOW2?

**Comment: (Neal Graham - NLS)**

Yes. As the Ops Alert that we sent out regarding the delay of bringing WOW2 online, The data migration from the previous system into our new platform, was corrupted, and we needed to go back to the vendor to get the data cleaned up. We hope to have that data uploaded today and have the system back online by Friday or Monday at the latest. Again, sorry for the delay.

**Comment: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)**

I have one other thing really quickly. I hate to be the person who's telling the whole group here when things aren't working but, I have something else to tell you that's not working. Right now, our digital advertising campaign is down. It's been down for about a week and a half. We had hoped that it would be something that would be a quick fix. It is due to data analytics on the Library of Congress side, so...we watch all the analytics to make sure that everything is working properly. When the analytics aren't working, we...take our ads down. I want to bring it up (to) this group because it means that you will not be seeing as many requests for information and involvement coming through. We saw a dip – with no advertisements running, we get about 70 requests through from our Information Request form, in a week. So, some libraries may be saying that there's a bit of a dip and I just wanted to let everybody know, we do believe we'll have this back up in the next couple of days.

**Question: (Leslie Bowman – MO)**

Good afternoon. This is a question about the book reader pilot. We were going to be having weekly phone calls on Mondays for the eight states that are participating, but we haven't seen an invitation and it's been a couple weeks. Do we know if those are going to happen?

**Answer: (Michael Katzmann - NLS)**

Yes, in fact I'm about to send a message out for a call on this coming Monday. We didn't have one this Monday but next Monday there will be a call – so we can get more feedback.

**Question: (Leslie Bowman – MO)**

Fantastic. I look forward to that call – and that will be fun. My second question is for Neal on the WOW2: On Wednesday, MO1A found out that quite a few of their staff couldn't log in to the WOW2 part of the website – because of a space in the email address – and wondered when we should expect to be able to get in?

**Answer: (Neal Graham - NLS)**

We hope to have the WOW2 Inventory Management System up and running hopefully Friday or Monday at the latest. The day of the system coming back online, Meredith Beckhardt is working on an Ops Alert that will be going out with the URL of the site that each user will need to log into.

**Question: (Leslie Bowman – MO)**

Ok. This was actually a username challenge. Not necessarily a challenge with your WOW2 site.

**Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)**

I can work with you separately on that. I thought that it was already resolved, although because of our connectivity issues, we also can't get into the Single Sign-on system today so, it's going to be tricky for me to work with it today – but I'll continue working with you on that.

**Comment: (Leslie Bowman – MO)**

Ok. The people who cannot get in, can get into the Single Sign-on and get into the NLS site when it's working, but they couldn't get to the WOW2 part of the site – it logs you out immediately. So, yes, I look forward to working with you on that. Thank you.

**Comment: (Neal Graham - NLS)**

We were having a temporary challenge with that, but of course right now, the system is down, and you should not have any issues getting in once we come back online.

**Question: (Babak Zarin - VA)**

Hi everyone. I hope your Wednesday is going well. I actually have three separate questions. Hopefully not too time-consuming. The first one is: if I could ask for an update on the status of NLS' PDF application? We are in the process (of updating) the applications at our library and, we're looking at NLS' language...from the Word document – but the Word document has some formatting things that (don't) look right when we attempt to download it – and we're wondering if the PDF is still being made and, what's going on with that?

**Answer: (Meredith Beckhardt - NLS)**

I can answer some of that. I wanted to let you know that, as of now, the fillable form for the application is on the public website – and we will have our print copies available soon too.

**Question: (Babak Zarin - VA)**

Thank you so much. That's actually very helpful. My second question – again, hopefully a small one: We as a library are just starting to look at getting some braille into our sub-regionals collection. We normally work with our regional library to hold more, but there's been an increase in interest in our area. I know the web XESS platform is slowly lingering in outer space, given many things. I was just wondering if NLS has made any plans or discussion about what would follow that program when it eventually goes "poof" if only because it only works on Internet Explorer, and support for that system is going away.

**Answer: (Meredith Beckhardt - NLS)**

We are currently in development of a replacement program. It will look and feel very similar to NLDB, if you're used to that. It's being done by the same contractor. It is currently in progress. We have not completed the programming, but, it will be soon. And the same...for ILLs also. Both of those systems will be available to the Single Sign-on system when they are available.

**Comment: (Kevin Treese – OK)**

Good afternoon everyone. I have a reannouncement if you will. As Midlands Chair, and on behalf of my peer in the west, John Mugford, and the Conference Host Sarah Willeford in Iowa, we wish to personally invite the North and South regions to our Regional...Conference coming up here in May (May 11-13). So, know that that invite is out there and I'll follow this up with a written invite to both Jill and Angela in their respective regions to pass along. Hope to see you all there.

**Question: (James Mabe – CA9)**

Hi. So, a question from my staff about...we have a redundant backup...brick, that has not been functioning terribly well – and it feels like the function of the brick is duplicated by the Gutenberg appliance. And so, we're curious if that means, can we decommission the brick?

**Answer: (David Perrotta - NLS)**

I would say the answer is "yes." Your Gutenberg functionality really completely replaces any standalone R-sync arrangement that you had – and I think you folks are fully up and running with DoD, and serving all of your patrons through DoD so I don't think you have any need for that separate system – and we have you backed up when it comes to the Gutenberg functionality, so, it's really not necessary to have it – even as a backup.

**Question: (Angela Hall - AL)**

Hi everybody. I'm calling because I've got a question for Kevin Treese – and maybe everybody at NLS as well. Regarding the Midlands and Western Conference, on May 11, for the Library of the Year Awards program. Can you tell me if our people in the North and South – if they want to attend that, do they have to go through the full conference registration? Or is there another or shorter method for getting to that?

**Question: (Mark Santangelo - NLS)**

Kevin, can you address that? We know that a link was sent to register through the listserv – and I'm not sure if that's the link that you would request the North and South to use as well?

**Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)**

If we're not getting it now, we will follow up with Kevin and John and, get the information out also – to the North and South.

**Comment: (Angela Hall - AL)**

Well, that will be great – and Steve, while I also have the line if you can all still hear me, I would like to say that the Southern region – we are working on a short business meeting and also a program on Tuesday, May 25. So, that will be our conference for the year. We have just recently updated our bylaws, and so, everyone in the Southern region is now a member, or can be a member – without having to worry about paying any type of membership dues. And so, our bylaws were updated to cover that – and so, on Tuesday, May 25, 2021 will be our business meeting and a short program – and we will be electing officers for the year. So, we do hope everyone in the Southern region will look forward to that and sign in with us. We'll get more information out either today or tomorrow regarding that. So, thank you for the opportunity to share.

**Question: (Babak Zarin - VA)**

Hi everyone. Thank you for answering my earlier questions. There's one last question: Now that there are constantly new COVID quarantining updates going on generally, does NLS have any guidance for talking book libraries that we should be aware of as we start to readjust our own procedures?

**Answer: (Steve Prine - NLS)**

I don't think any of the information that we're seeing has caused us to change any of our stance on any of the information we sent out earlier. When we're getting new information, we do share it but, we do recommend that you check with both your state and local government agencies to see what requirements are in place for where you live.

**Answer: (Kevin Treese – OK)**

I just wanted to answer that question earlier: Yes, you simply register for the conference and, you sign on when you want to sign on. So, as for the agenda or any other topic – as well as Library of the Year – just find what you want and click on at that time and you'll be in.

**Question: (Maureen Dorosinski – FL)**

Hey, it's Maureen from Florida, hoping everyone is having a great day. It sounds like it. So, with the introduction of the braille containers, are the backorders kind of moot at this point? We will be placing fresh orders? Or will you be filling the backorders?

**Question: (Zaneta Watson – NLS)**

Are you saying you submitted a backorder...in the WOW system – when you say "backorder"? How did you submit a request for (braille) container(s)?

**Answer: (Maureen Dorosinski – FL)**

Yes, from last year, the year before, I placed an order for braille containers and then it would come up as being backordered. So, (will the backorders be filled) or are we going to start fresh?

**Answer: (Zaneta Watson – NLS)**

The most intelligent response I have for you is that we're probably going to start fresh when I send out that Ops Alert. Because it's been quite some time since those backorder requests went in – and so the Ops Alert will detail how and when you can start putting those requests back in.

**Comment: (Neal Graham – NLS)**

Zaneta, this is Neal. I can work with you. I believe we do have all of the backorder requests, but I think I agree with you that starting fresh might be best because they may no longer need the containers

**Comment: (Zaneta Watson – NLS)**

Right. Or requests may have increased, so, we might want to get people as many as they want to get. So, thanks Neal. Everyone, we'll get you new instructions out as soon as I get the first batch of containers in.

**Comment: (Steve Prine – NLS)**

Thank you everybody for calling in today and for the questions. If we didn't answer it on the phone, we will get back to you. We look forward to talking to you next month – at the end of May. Thank you very much. Goodbye.