

NLS Telephone Forum – 9-30-2020  
(paraphrased)

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

Good afternoon and welcome to the monthly NLS Open Forum call. It's a beautiful fall day here in Washington, DC. Partially sunny. Light breeze. Intermittent rumors of a shutdown. So, at this point, I think we will turn it over to Karen Keninger, who is the Director of NLS. Karen...

**Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)**

Thank you, Steve. It's a pleasure, as always, to speak with everybody out there in the real world. As Steve says, we are hearing rumors of budget issues and I'll just start with that issue. We do not yet have a Continuing Resolution, but we are actually expecting one. What we will have then, with our budget, is a flat budget with no increase but no decrease – going on until December 11, I think (that's) when they promised us – according to the current bill, that we will get another C.R. (continuing resolution) of our budget. We hope to be open tomorrow and doing business as usual. We have a few questions from the Chairs' call that we wanted to address. The first one has to do with our Music program – and to handle that, I would like to introduce Juliette Appold...

**Comment: (Juliette Appold - NLS)**

Greetings everyone, from the Music Section. My name is Juliette Appold and the question that I received was about music magazines – how patrons can subscribe to the music magazines – and I wanted to confirm that, you as their Reader Advisors, can subscribe them, so, music magazines can be subscribed to through the Regional Libraries, and patrons do not have to be registered with the Music Section in order to receive the music magazines that we produce. However, of course we are very happy to subscribe them as well. There's just an additional step if they're not specific Music patrons. If they come to us – the NLS Music Section – we would create a patron record in our Music Section database for them, and then subscribe them. So, the easiest way is that you, as their Reader Advisor, subscribe them... Music magazines available include contemporary soundtracks, musical mainstream, quarterly music magazines, Sound & Vision... and currently only back issues from the popular music lead sheets, so you can't subscribe to them right now. This has been stopped for the time being. If you want to find out more about these magazines, you can (go to the magazines) from the NLS website. A very easy way to get to that quickly is if you go into the URL bar of your browser such as Google and just type in "NLS magazines." It should bring up the direct link: [loc.gov/nls](http://loc.gov/nls)... and you'll find all the music magazines available from NLS on that page – and other magazines as well.

If you have questions about the Music Appreciation catalog, we're very happy to provide that as well as a music section - and that is actually material that you can also find on the website. Again, you can click through the links on all the music materials website from NLS or you can go to your URL bar on your browser...and put in "NLS music catalog" or [loc.gov/nls/music](http://loc.gov/nls/music) and then (you can) browse through the music catalog and you'll see there is a link to "Music Appreciation" catalog. We're happy to provide that in Large Print, on cartridge and you can download it from BARD as well as audio recordings. For any more research on that, and for researching music materials, please give us a call at 1-800-424-8567 ext. 2. We pick up the voicemail in this current time and respond to you that way, or, email us at [nlsm@loc.gov](mailto:nlsm@loc.gov). Please let me know if you have any other questions. You can email me directly at [japp@loc.gov](mailto:japp@loc.gov). Thank you.

**Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)**

We have a very robust Music Section and we love to see people using it so, thank you. We have over 130,000 titles on BARD. Some of that is due to NLS work. Some of that is due to you guys' work out there in your studios. As you know, we number our books, starting...in the 600s or something. Anyway, we are about to hit the six-digit book numbers. I just wanted to let you know that we've actually got several six-digit book numbers in the wings, or they're about to come. We really don't anticipate any problem but if you see a number with six digits, don't be alarmed. It's just that we're making lots of books. Another question that we got from the Chairs was to get some clarification on something that we chose to do fairly recently – and that was to take a few of our books down and replace them. The reason that they were taken down was due partly to a major complaint that we got about the narration of them. What we have determined to do is that we will put up more culturally-sensitive and appropriately-cast books, because we think that that will significantly enhance the reading experience of these classic books. These are African-American classics that we're looking at. We will be

adding new versions of these books very soon that are appropriately cast, and we will also plan to expand the diversity in our pool of narrators – and also encourage our contract narrators to expand their pools of diversity as well, so that we might be able to cast diverse titles in a more culturally-sensitive way. So, that's the reasoning behind that, and we should have these other titles up very soon. We are making every effort to become more and more data-driven and, we have – as you know – hired David Spett as our Data Officer, and David wants to talk about some survey issues. David...

**Comment: (David Spett - NLS)**

Thank you, Karen. Hello everyone. As you may recall from last month's Open Forum call, NLS is undertaking a number of survey initiatives. You may have seen those in your email box as well. First, I want to thank libraries for completing their Operations Survey. The data you provided in that survey has been extremely valuable to us in understanding the operating statuses of the libraries in our network. Please remember to save the email you received from us with your survey link. If your operating status changes, you can use that same link to go back and change your responses. If you need to update us on your operating status if you lost that link or you lost that email, just send me a note, [dasp@loc.gov](mailto:dasp@loc.gov).

Second, as many of you saw in Operations Alert 20-63, NLS is serving all institutional patrons – also known as organizational patrons – with the email address on file. We have received about 650 survey responses so far, in less than a day. That's great. I've also received over 100 email responses. Some of them are requests for help. Others request that the contact information for patrons be updated. I will be forwarding this information to library directors via your Network Consultant, as I'm able. Some libraries have also requested a roster of all email addresses that bounced. Some have requested the survey results from the organizations in their libraries. I will be sending that along as soon as it's available which I anticipate will be later in October. If you would like to receive that information, please email me. Again [dasp@loc.gov](mailto:dasp@loc.gov) and I'll be happy to send that to you.

Third, as we mentioned on last month's Open Forum call, NLS is proceeding with Gallup to survey both current and former patrons, as a follow up to last year's current and potential patron survey. We anticipate that survey invitations will be disseminated in late October or early November, and we will keep you posted on these efforts. Finally, as you may have seen in Operations Alert 20-62, this year we are conducting the annual Readership and Circulation surveys – using Survey Monkey instead of the NLDB. Tomorrow – Thursday at 9am Eastern time, 6am Pacific, library directors will be receiving Survey Monkey emails. One inviting you to complete your FY 2020 Readership Survey, and one inviting you to complete your 2020 Circulation Survey. By the way, Happy Fiscal New Year everyone. So, reports will be due on October 23. However, please remember to run your circulation reports from your local circulation system on October 1<sup>st</sup>. The readership and circulation data should cover the full year – that is, the full fiscal year, from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020. Meredith Beckhardt and I will be available to answer any questions during the Q&A period and also over email. Feel free to reach out to us anytime. Thank you and back to you, Karen...

**Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)**

Thank you, David. Here's a quick reminder: There will be no large-print Braille Book Review for September and October. Kristen spoke about that last time. We just wanted to remind you that there will not be that one this time. Another topic that is always of interest is the conference. What will it be like and when? I'm going to sound a bit like a broken record here but, we don't know yet. We're working on a contract to do a completely virtual (conference). We're still hoping for early December, but the day has not yet been set – and we don't have a contract either. So, we do know that it's going to be a fully online virtual conference. We are expecting to have three days of conference and...those days will be much shorter than the days that we usually have when we're onsite, so hopefully we'll be able to cover everything in those three days and hopefully, you will be able to stick with us. It's always a little bit challenging when you're at your computer and things pull you away from it – so that's the reason we're shortening it.

We will not be having all the features of the full conference either. For example, some of the training that we normally do onsite, we won't be doing and, we will not be asking the Regional Conferences to do presentations at this particular one. The question that did come up was – based on the situation that we're all in – is it okay if the Regional Conferences skip 2021? And the answer is “of course, yes. it is.” Everybody is going virtual. I just learned yesterday that the Library of Congress isn't doing any onsite for the entire year of 2021. We know that

the situation is going to continue, so, certainly if that's the best thing to do, we have no objection at all. The other thing I just wanted to touch base on is electronic signatures. We introduced that last month. We got a lot of good questions from you all – for clarification and definitions. We put together an FAQ, which we think answers the questions that were asked. It's going to be posted in a minute. I'll ask Vickie where. But the other thing I wanted to say first is that, we expect this to probably be a living document, in that if there are other questions that come up, we will continue to add to it so that we can make sure that everybody is clear on what's going on. And Vickie, where are we posting those?

**Comment: (Vickie Collins - NLS)**

Well, according to Paula Bahmani – thanks so much, Paula – the FAQs are under the “Training” tab on the Network Services website, and on the “Forms” page under the “Application Forms.” Eventually, they will be posted on the Network Library Manual in a section that will be “10.10.” The other thing I would just mention Karen, is that even though it's so tempting for everybody to jump in and redo their local applications, we do have more changes coming, so now may not be the best time to make changes in local applications.

**Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)**

That is true, and by the end of the year we anticipate having changes to the Certifying Authority list and requirements for people with reading disabilities. That will be reflected on our application which we are working on, and we would encourage you to wait if you're looking at redoing your own applications, until we can get that exact language, which we won't have until it's published in the Federal Register. We're hoping for that publication to happen by the end of the year. It is contingent on getting BARD into the cloud and able to handle a significant increase in patron usage. So, as Vickie says, it's a good idea to wait on that and to think about the processes you'll be going through as well.

**Comment: (Vickie Collins - NLS)**

If you do have questions, be sure to send them to your Network Consultant.

**Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)**

Absolutely. Thank you, Vickie. If you have questions about anything, but particularly if you have questions about the FAQ, contact MaryBeth or Pam. Speaking of Pam, I hear that today is the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the South Carolina Art Gallery so, congratulations to South Carolina for that. Steve, that's all I have.

**Question: (Sue Greene – MI9)**

I had a question: If the battery recycle program is up and available for us to send batteries back for recycling.

**Answer: (Shana Osborne - NLS)**

Hi Sue. I'm pretty sure they are, but I'll double-check with Kevin Watson just to make sure, and I'll send you an email.

**Question: (Jane Glasby – CA9)**

I had two questions: One of them is that I'm so pleased to hear that the conference is coming together. And I did ask this question before but I'd like to urge you to have enough seats so that we can have a lot of people attending because with the removal of the requirements to actually travel, I think a lot more people should be able to attend virtually. I'd like to see an opportunity for many more of the staff here who wouldn't normally be able to go – to be able to attend. If not, then I would expect it all to be recorded and we would be able to listen later. So, that was just a comment. The other thing was (about) the six-figure numbers. One of the librarians here noticed that when he tried to place an ILL in the PICS system, it would only take five-figure numbers. We did draw attention to that and I was just wondering where that process of making that possible (was at).

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

Jane, that is still in process. They've made a change and it's been tested I think, but I'm waiting to hear what the timeline is to deploy it, since this is a contractor. Hopefully it'll be in the fairly near future.

**Comment: (Karen Keninger - NLS)**

And with regard to the conference, we agree that we want a big crowd, so we will keep that in mind.

**Question: (Freya Anderson - AK)**

I had a question about the new applications. I've actually been working already – I haven't quite finished – on getting a web form to let folks place their applications that way since the signature is no longer required. That's also really easy to modify when there are additional changes. So, I was wondering if there is any reason to hold off as long as it's easily modifiable or would it be okay to go ahead with that?

**Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)**

We certainly would want you to run the application past the Network Consultants as a standard procedure. It's actually up to you but right now you obviously need to use the current language. If you want to do it both ways, you can. We do recommend that people wait, but you are welcome to work on it if you like.

**Question: (Catherine Durivage - MN)**

I have some questions relating to BARD and BARD Mobile, so, those can always be answered offline, but I have three separate questions: One, what is the status of BARD Mobile and the web loading of the BARD search page. I understand that at some point an overhaul would happen so that people could search for books in BARD without having to be taken directly to the website – so that's one question. And the other question relates to what's the status of synchronization of playback across devices so that people who listen on their phone and then listen on their tablet can synchronize their playback. And third, passwords. We have gotten so many calls related to changing passwords, and we spend a lot of time explaining to people how to do that – and that they can't do it in BARD Mobile. Is that something that's being talked about or discussed – the option of changing passwords in BARD Mobile? Those are my three questions. Thank you.

**Answer: (Don Olson - NLS)**

I can quickly address all three things. Unfortunately, it's not the best of answers in the world, as far as when we would like them to happen. In other words, they're all on the table. They're all being configured. They're all being discussed and designed, I guess you would say. Everything – just to give you any kind of comfort – is in full consideration and, these are definitely topics that are being addressed, so, we just ask for a little more patience and all of those things will be addressed eventually. One topic that you brought up is the synchronization. That will take a little longer. We have to develop further infrastructure in order for that to happen. The first thing – as somebody said – is to put BARD in the cloud. That's happening. We're testing it. It's going to take a little while for patrons to get on that cloud, but that is the first step. The cloud infrastructure needs to be in place before that could ever happen so, unfortunately, we don't expect synchronization to happen for quite some months yet.

**Comment: (Catherine Durivage - MN)**

Okay. We know (this has) been talked about off and on over quite a while, and I guess if I had to say anything that was most critical from where I stand, it's the passwords. I swear that I talked to multiple people today about changing their password – and that seems to be not very intuitive for folks to know that they have to go to the web to do that...

**Comment: (Don Olson - NLS)**

I cannot disagree with you. Absolutely. Myself and my tech support staff – we're right there with you. Those of us on the tech support side, we can't wait until that topic gets resolved.

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

I just want to add a few extra comments: If you could send us your concerns about the passwords in writing – you can email them directly to Don Olson – we're required to follow certain library policies and procedures and in order for us to request deviations or modifications to those procedures, we have to make a business case as to why. If you could send us your concerns in writing, to Don Olson, I'm not saying we can do it but, we can take these forward and perhaps request a temporary modification of our policy. Having things written will greatly help our case. The second thing – regarding the synchronization server – as Don said, that will take a little time to do. The reason why is that we have to build the synchronization engine that sits in the cloud, and then all the clients have to work with it. The contract that was just signed this month in order to bring out a development team who will work on those things and one of their tasks is the synchronization engine and (another) is the updating of the "search" feature so that the search capabilities are much better in BARD Mobile. We'll definitely see work occurring in the next year... Everything that we have in writing helps our case.

**Question: (Sarah Jacobson - TX)**

My collections team wanted to clarify about the 7 books that were removed from BARD in the Ops Alert 20-56. Should we weed the titles listed? Because we noticed they were still in Voyager.

**Answer: (Karen Keninger - NLS)**

I would say it's not necessary to weed them.

**Question: (Joshua Berkov - NC)**

I don't know if Dominick from CDS is on the line or not but, I was just going to ask for any update on getting NLS' responses to TDAC's recommendations from last year because we're still waiting on those.

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

Sorry. I know you guys are still waiting on those. The responses are still in draft format. With all the changes that we've made in recent months, there's still some changes to the responses to be made to be completely up to date and, I have not put in the time to do that. I apologize. They're still on our list and I'll send them to you when we are able.

**Question: (Kim Charlson - MA)**

Good afternoon everyone. I wanted to ask a magazine-related question: My staff have noticed that Ebony Magazine is not appearing on BARD – and we were informed by a patron that the print magazine has ceased publication, and we wondered if there was any confirmation from NLS that that has ceased publication? And what the action of NLS was going to be as far as notification on that.

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

Yes, you are correct. Ebony is out of print and based on our statutes we have to produce materials that are actually in print. Because it's digital, we have to find a comparable magazine to swap out and we're going over that process with our Collection Development team now. As we start the next magazine cycle... hopefully you guys will be getting a notice that speaks to the new magazines you'll be seeing and the magazines that will be dropped off.

**Question: (John Mugford - NM)**

A couple of questions here – somewhat related: The use of Survey Monkey for the upcoming Readership and Circulation survey – is this a one-time thing? Or is this the new normal? And why is it being used in this instance? Related to those questions, I think I recall Michael Martys suggesting or hinting back at the Nashville conference, that consolidation through the Network Library Database...might eventually yield a potential for gleaned more information about circulation on particular titles. Information could then be used to assist in Development, Reader Services, etc.

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

The use of Survey Monkey is temporary. There is a minor issue with NLDB that is causing us to need to use a "Plan B" this year. Once you submit your data through Survey Monkey, we'll move it over to NLDB so in the future, when you complete your NLDB surveys you'll see your responses from the Survey Monkey form this year – and we'll be reviewing your responses. If there are any issues, we'll follow up about those responses. As for circulation data, as you and others know, we don't calculate or gather any circulation data at the title level, from the Network Libraries. We have discussed it internally. It is on our agenda for further discussion. I'm hoping that sometime in the next fiscal year, we'll have more information for you on that but, we certainly agree that it would be very useful to us and to all of you, to do so in a way that respects patron privacy – but to gather that information and disseminate it appropriately. So, thank you for that feedback.

**Question: (Alicia Waters - RI)**

I have two questions: One of the questions is about the application. I know you said not to revise the applications right now because there will be some more changes coming – but I wanted to ask about the "Reading Disability" designation. I'm wondering if there would ever be a chance to have a specific designation for dyslexia, because a lot of times, there are school psychologists, special education teachers, that do the testing with students at the schools, who can vouch for the dyslexia disability. I know right now, for reading disability it says from organic dysfunction, it has to be a medical doctor. It's been my experience with Special

Ed., that the school teachers and school psychologists are the ones who do a lot of the testing that's done at the school – and they know the students and have the ability to make the determination...that that person has the disability. I'm just wondering if that might ever be a consideration – to have a designation for dyslexia. I know they said you wouldn't need a doctor's signature anymore. How is that going to work with dyslexia?

**Answer:** (Karen Keninger - NLS)

Dyslexia is probably the primary reading disability. The terminology that we are switching to is "Print Disability." There may be a little bit of education needed to explain that that includes dyslexia. And there are some other things that might (warrant inclusion) as well. With regard to changes we are looking at, we are specifically looking at changing the "Certifying Authority" requirement, so that you do not need to have a doctor sign off on it if you have a reading disability. That you would be able to have a school psychologist or a reading teacher or other educator, etc. certify the disability. So, that's one of the main things we're doing is making that change. The language about organic dysfunction is also going away. Nobody quite knows what that means. So, those are the changes that are coming this fall.

**Question:** (Alicia Waters - RI)

And, I had a question about the digital signature. I was a little bit confused about that, because there are a number of ways that people use or understand digital signatures and what that means. In some places, when you say "digital signature" you check a box off and you vouch that you are the person who has signed, and then that's it. You just type your name in... and then there's another digital signature where people can actually sign the actual signature and have a JPEG file of their signature and they apply it. And then there's the digital signature like DocuSign, where you have to have a password and your digital signature is time-stamped and it's verifying that you are who you are. What type of digital signature are we going to use?

**Answer:** (Karen Keninger - NLS)

We are – for one thing – using the term "Electronic Signature" which is a term that is in the legislation that allows this. So, we're going to be using "E-Signature" or "Electronic Signature" because the "Digital Signature" terminology tends to lean toward the DocuSign kind of (solution) and we're not going to require that. What we would like to see on online applications when we get to that point, is the checkbox it says that "I certify that this person has this disability" and then it has the full...information of the certifying authority so that if anybody needs to check with them, it's there. That's what we will be accepting as an electronic signature. The FAQs cover that. Take a look at those and then if they're not clear then we certainly want to hear back from you about that but, that's I think, the answer to your question. We're not asking for DocuSign or a JPEG of your actual signature. We're just asking as an electronic signature, that it has the checkbox and the full contact information.

**Question:** (Alicia Waters - RI)

Okay, and Karen I have just one more question – I'm sorry I have so many questions today. I was reading NLS' "On the Move" and in there you were talking about the number of libraries who are now DoD, and I think it said 42 out of 79 or something like that. I'm wondering or could you tell me – I know all of the libraries are not DoD yet. Out of the 79, how many are KLAS and how many are WebREADS? Does anyone know that or have that information? I'm just curious.

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

Out of that 79 minus 42 which is 37, most of those are KLAS libraries, so, about 35 or so.

**Question:** (Michael Lang - KS)

Hello everybody. I was just wondering if there is a way to find – either on a weekly or a monthly basis – the patron accounts in BARD that have been moved from "Active" to "Inactive." Looking at a way to reach out to those people right when their account gets rolled over, to see if we can get them back to using again.

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

I would be glad to run that report for you if you send me an email...but in the future – in the next couple months actually – there will be reports sent out to you with all of that information on a daily basis...if indeed you have patrons who are scheduled to be (suspended)...

**No more questions/comments**