

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Welcome everyone. Here in Washington, it's an overcast day I guess, and we're all excited because our Nationals are in the final game of the World Series with Houston down there in Texas. That will be our first one. I think Houston won a few years ago, so that's what's happening here in Washington. At NLS we're excited because we've got a lot of programs. We have a nice group here. I'll go around the table to introduce everyone here in Washington – and to my left is...

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Hi. David Perrotta, Network Program Specialist; Hi, this is Jason Yasner, Deputy Director; Don Olson, Network Services; Judy Dixon, Consumer Relations; Chris Walker, Quality Assurance; Juliette Appold, Music Section; Shana Osborne, Equipment Control Officer; Kristen Fernekes, Communications and Outreach; Zaneta Watson, Production Control Section; Paula Bahmani, Education and Training Specialist; David Spett, Data Analyst; Hien Nguyen, Bibliographic Control Section.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

We have a nice group here and, we had 30 people on the line and probably a few more have joined since we started the call. So, welcome to the call. We had a few agenda items I sent out earlier and basically, Meredith told me to report on two of those items. She said to thank everyone in the Network for submitting Readership, Circulation and Book Machine Repair surveys. It was a unique year with different logins, and everyone did an excellent job accessing the new system, so she's very pleased that so many got through submitting the statistics for us. And then, there were a few libraries with firewalls still blocking our single sign-on system with emails. If that continues, please call David Grant – to obtain access. His email is dgran@loc.gov. Again, that's if you're having trouble with the single sign-on system with firewalls, call David Grant... Meredith also mentioned that we have a few libraries with access to the system. Once we get those up and running, we'll be sending out the remaining username and password to all Network staff that need access to the single sign-on – so, we'll hopefully get everyone on board with that within the next few weeks. The next thing on the agenda – I think we have David Spett. We appreciate it. We have NLS' Disability Certification Authority Pilot...

Comment: (David Spett - NLS)

Thank you, Richard. Good afternoon everyone. As many of you know, at the start of the Fiscal Year on October 1st, NLS began a yearlong pilot program in two states – Pennsylvania and Texas – to ease access (for) patrons with reading disabilities by expanding the list of certifying authorities. The list expanded to the certifying authority list for the rest of NLS' disabilities – plus, other professions as well, were eligible for providing certification to NLS patrons. We are currently gathering data from that pilot program. The first several dozen pilot applicants have joined our program and we're very excited about that – using new certifying authorities. We look forward to sharing findings with you at the National Conference of Librarians in May of 2020.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Thank you. That will be in Nebraska. Next on the agenda, I have "Physical Inventory for Network Libraries Machine Lending Agency" and that would be Shana Osborne.

Comment: (Shana Osborne - NLS)

Good afternoon everyone. As many of you know, we've been updating our physical inventory for the DTBMs – and so recently, we have contracted with Zimmerman and Associates, to conduct a physical inventory. This inventory will be taken at ten different libraries – and those libraries will be New York Public Library, New Jersey State Library, Connecticut State Library, Free Library of Philadelphia, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Illinois State Library, Georgia Library for Accessible Statewide Services – also known as GLASS, Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library, Iowa Department for the Blind, Texas State Library and Archives Commission. All of those libraries have been contacted. They are aware of their inventory dates. After these physical inventories are conducted, we will then review the data from the inventories, and then make a further determination (as to whether) other libraries will receive a physical inventory. Please feel free to contact me. An Operations Alert went out today, so you can just respond to that and contact me with any questions you may have regarding this physical inventory.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Thank you. Last but not least on the agenda, we have a new program coming up and Juliette will mention that – an exciting program...

Comment: (Juliette Appold - NLS)

Yes. So, we are very excited to present the **José André Trio** concert for next Thursday, November 7th at 8 pm. This is a concert that will take place at the Jefferson Building Coolidge Auditorium at the Library of Congress. However, if you cannot make it, it's going to be livestreamed too. Let me tell you a little bit about Jose Andre. He is one of our registered patrons – and jazz fans most likely know him already. He's a 14-year-old acclaimed jazz musician, pianist and organ player who was born in Bolivia and who lives in Washington, DC. He has toured internationally, with concerts in Italy, Bolivia, Brazil, Finland, Malaysia, Peru and here within the United States. His music combines Jazz, Rock, Blues, Bossa Nova, Latin American and World music. He has already shared the stage with various notable artists, including Grammy Award winners Marcus Miller and Renee Fleming... If you can come in person, go to Eventbrite and look for the Andre Trio – or easier, you can go back to your email you received on the Operations Alert and click on the link that we provided in that email. If you can't come in person, go the YouTube livestream. The link was provided in the email. (If you don't have it) you can feel free to email me and I will email it to you again. My email is japp@loc.gov.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Thank you. I'm looking around the room to see (about) any other announcements. Did I miss anyone? With that, I'll ask the operator to open the lines for questions...

Question: (Gabe Kramer - NE)

Ops Alert 19-72 – which was sent out on October 23rd about the new voice-activated digital device. Is this going to be part of the new NLS player or a standalone device – like an Alexa?

Answer: (Kristen Fernekes - NLS)

That Ops Alert was actually referring to a contract that we put in place to get some devices that we would be testing. So, essentially...it's not necessarily part of something upcoming. It's not necessarily something that stands alone. It's more (about) the potential of a voice-activated device although we're not certain at all where that's going to lead. We just wanted to make sure that you guys were aware of what's coming up but we're not 100% sure what that will turn into. This is part of the reason that we've got the contract in place to test it.

Answer: (Jason Yasner - NLS)

Everything Kristen said is correct. Basically, what we have is, we're doing a "proof of concept" to see whether a locked down smartphone device is a viable candidate for the next-generation Talking Book player. We're also testing voice user interface along with this proof-of-concept, so we're going to spend the next nine months to a year testing this concept to see whether this becomes a viable product in the future. At our conference in Lincoln in May next year, we'll be able to present at least some results from our research. I hope that helps!

Question: (Gabe Kramer - NE)

I have a follow up to that. Are you taking volunteers (and) can Nebraska be part of that?

Answer: (Jason Yasner - NLS)

We don't know yet. We just got the contract awarded. We will be doing some focus groups and so if you're interested, just let us know if you'd like to be on the list of potential testers – but we're not that far down the road yet – to make any determinations.

Question: (Jane Glasby – CA9)

Hello. Good still-morning from temporarily smoke-free San Francisco... When we heard about the voice-activation, we were particularly concerned about the people who have difficulty speaking – and people who speak English as a second language – so, I'm sure you'll be thinking about testing it with those people. My first reason for phoning was about the stock for the clear overlay brailleable sticky labels to stick onto cartridges. Are you no longer supplying that? Or are we just not seeing it?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

No, we've been out of stock on that Jane for quite some time. We're not supplying that anymore.

Question: (Jane Glasby – CA9)

Okay. I think you put out a list of possible sources for that. Is that true?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

I'll double-check. I think Meredith has those. We'll get those to you if you need them... I'll make sure you get those.

Question: (Angela Fisher Hall - AL)

I am calling today with just some information to share with everyone, and then I have a question. First of all, I'd like to share the news that from Tuesday through Thursday - May 4, 2021 through May 6, 2021, the Northern and Southern Conferences will be having their biannual meeting in Daytona Beach, Florida – and so we just want to get that on everybody's schedule. We've got our contract in hand and we need to go ahead and get that signed off on, but we did want to share that information so that everyone could get that put on their calendars.

Now, the other matter – and I do apologize because I joined the call just as Shana was giving her report or her update. Regarding the single sign-on for our database – for NLS, I've had a great deal of trouble getting into that – however everybody at NLS has been very helpful. I still have some more information to add, but my question is: When it comes time for our staff to login to this, should we anticipate issues for them? Or am I the only one that had trouble?

Answer: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Well, we're working on people that have troubles and, Meredith reported that it was very successful except for a couple of bumps here and there so, that may be pertaining to you, but we hope to straighten those out and later on, when we send out to the rest of the staff, it's as easy as that. She was satisfied and happy at how few problems occurred. So, we'll do that work with you Angela.

Comment: (Angela Fisher Hall - AL)

Thank you so much for that, and I'm very sorry if I got behind schedule and didn't read up on things as I needed to but it was just a little overwhelming at one point – but thanks for your willingness to help.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

No problem. I was down in Alabama two weeks ago for vacation. I should have stopped in.

Comment: (Angela Fisher Hall - AL)

Oh, well next time don't forget to stop by and say hello.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

I do want to mention (to) everyone on the phone call – we'll do an Ops Alert – next month's phone call (Thanksgiving Eve) we'll postpone until...December 4th – we'll probably have a combined November and December phone call on December 4th.

Question: (Jill Rothstein – NY8)

Hi everyone. I'm calling to ask if there's any update about Gutenberg? Either how it is working with KLAS? Or also passing on a question from my fellow northerners about if we can get any more clarity on what the time periods (are) about rolling out Gutenberg to different libraries.

Answer: (David Perrotta - NLS)

Hi Jill. We – as most of the people on the call are probably aware – are still in the midst of beta testing KLAS plus Gutenberg at GA1A in Atlanta and CO1A in Denver – and I would say both of those projects are going well. There have been small technical issues that have had to be ironed out at both locations and, they are at a point at which both of them are poised to really start ramping up the number of patrons that they're serving. So, up until now, they've been working with a small pilot group of volunteer patrons and I think each of them has added to that group a bit by enrolling new patron signups in duplication service. But as of next week, both of them are planning to start ambitious ramp-ups where they're adding on the order of four or five hundred patrons for duplication service each week. So our expectation is that by the time we get to the middle or end of November, we're going to have a lot of good information about how this is going – and at that point our intention is to have a conference call with Keystone and the leadership of the KLAS Users Group – and also with the two pilot libraries – to hear any concerns that might be outstanding, and talk about next steps, and obviously the big next step will be figuring what kind of schedule we can roll this out on. I would say as of right now, we're doing well and it looks like we're on target to begin further deployments possibly late in this calendar year but more likely the beginning of 2020.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

I think Pennsylvania has gone zero-copy-allotment – so that's one of our larger libraries now (that) has successfully implemented Duplication-on-Demand.

Comment: (David Perrotta - NLS)

Absolutely. And we continue to rollout to some of the smaller WebREADS libraries. We're hoping to get most of those out of the way by the end of this calendar year. I don't know if we have Georgia or Colorado on the line but maybe they'd want to give us some up-to-the-minute updates on their project.

Comment: (Leslie Bowman - MO)

This is news from Wolfner Library. One of our own Reader Advisors who has been serving with us for 40-plus years is retiring today – Ginny Ryan – who many of you may know through interlibrary loan. So, we're wishing her very well.

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

40 years – and Carol Mathews of 50 years is still there too. I didn't chase them all away when I was the Director.

Comment: (Leslie Bowman - MO)

Archie also has had 40 years with us and he's still here too!

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Shana, you might have more to say...

Comment: (Shana Osborne - NLS)

Before we wrap up, I just wanted to mention. I've received a few inquiries lately regarding headsets and, basically we issued an Operations Alert about two months ago stating that we were no longer purchasing AC023 – the silver headsets – and we were now issuing only the black ones (AC027). If any of the libraries still currently have supplies of AC023 headsets, please ensure that you are issuing those to your patrons. They are viable. As long as they are in working condition, they should be utilized – and then you can start utilizing the black headsets – the AC027. Feel free to email me if you have additional questions but I just wanted to mention...

Comment: (Richard Smith - NLS)

Well, with that, I think this concludes our Phone Forum this month. We'll talk to you December 4th for our combined November-December (Open Telephone) Forum. Thank you.

Comment: (Library Staff - NLS)

Happy Halloween!