

## Northern Lights Library Network

### Director's Report April 18, 2009

Feb 21	NLLN Governing Board Meeting – Detroit Lakes
Feb 24	Meeting with local people regarding creating
Feb 25	Becker Co Early Childhood Initiative planning meeting
[Feb 26-27	Multitype Director's meeting/ meeting with Ann Treacy in St Paul – both cancelled due to storms]
March 2	Meeting with Rep Ann Swails regarding the work of multitype library Systems; NSLC, St Paul
Mar 3	23 Things Online Summit Conference (presented with Ann Walker Smalley in an online conference), St Paul
Mar 3	Multitype library directors planning meeting, St Paul
Mar 4	MLA/MEMO Legislative Committee, webconferencing, Detroit Lakes
Mar 6	Minitex Policy Advisory Council meeting, U of M, Minneapolis
Mar 11	Meeting with Jamie Marks Erickson regarding MMCDC web presence
Mar 16	Meeting with Lori Thompson on E2T2 grant evaluation process
Mar 18	Meeting with Brenda Hough, MaintainIT, regarding training, etc
Mar 31	Received/set up 10 laptop computers for mobile training lab
Mar	Blizzards, flooding, flood relief work, evacuees, doing what we can to help those in the Red River Valley cope with mother nature.
April 3-4	Spotlight on Books Conference, Sugar Lake Lodge
Apr 9	Facilitated "Reference in a Digital Age" with Bobbi Newman, presenter Detroit Lakes
Apr 16	Soaring to Excellence teleconference
Apr 18	NLLN Governing Board Meeting

#### Continuing Education events/activities

1. Continue to monitor, mentor, and encourage participants in the "More Things on a Stick" program. We have 42 participants in this version of the program and it is fun to see how much people have "learned about learning". This program ends May 20, 2009.
2. Ann Walker Smalley and myself represented the Minnesota program in a "23 Things Online Summit" hosted by the state Library of Kansas, Maintain IT, and the Topeka-Shawnee Co Public library. It was a great success – and a multiformat, live webconference event – attended by over 300 people from all over the world. Several different successful programs talked about how they implemented large, state-wide 23 Things projects.
3. We hosted several teleconferences from the College of DuPage. Generally we have an in-person site at MSUMoorhead Livingston Lord Library as well as the opportunity for people to view it from their desktop computers live or from an

archived version. Due to flooding we were limited to the webcasts for the past 2 teleconferences.

4. The Spotlight on Books Conference was a great success though attendance was slightly lower than last year. 74 people attended. We did a Friday afternoon workshop with John Coy on the topic of “keeping them reading” (especially boys), followed by a delightful Readers Theater production featuring the works of John Coy, Marsha Chall, Lynne Jonell, and David LaRochelle. Saturday was focused on these 4 authors, each of whom gave a presentation, signed books, and participated in a panel discussion. In addition, we had several book displays, a great deal of networking among participants, and wonderful food. Sugar Lake Lodge is a wonderful place for this event – we just wish it were in the NLLN region! Pictures are available on the NLLN flickr site at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/nlln> in a set called Spotlight 2009.
5. We continue to see good use of scholarships with 27 of them granted this year. Also, we have provided 2 Professional Engagement Funds awards. Reports from both groups are found on the NLLN webpage at: <http://nlln.org/CEreports09/index.html>
6. I have purchased the 10 laptop computers (HP) to begin creating a mobile laptop training lab. These will be available at our meeting and we’ll explore possible uses. They will be a rich resource for us in the coming year and allow us to provide training opportunities in a variety of locations.
7. At the last minute, we became the de facto host for the “Reference in a Digital Age” workshop presented by Bobbi Newman. This LSTA funded certification program was good. Approximate 35 people attended.

## ADVOCACY

1. Legislative engagement: the legislative session continues to be an on-going event full of drama and twists and turns. At the moment, things are looking fairly positive for NLLN and the multitype systems, the regional public library systems, Minitex and telecommunications aid for public libraries. But – it’s not over til its over, so we have more waiting, lobbying, educating, and monitoring to do during the final weeks of the session.
2. I have been participating in the MN Broadband coalition, Minnesota Voices Online, e-democracy community forums and Minnesota Rural Partnership. I feel it is important to keep libraries at the table in these venues, plus we have a lot of online experience with community building and social networking to share. Unfortunately I was unable to participate in the recent “Unconference” held in Duluth, but I followed it quite closely online and anticipate I will be able to participate in future events.
3. Early Childhood Education: Ready 4 K, in collaboration with a wide range of early childhood advocates and agencies, has produced a legislative policy agenda surrounding early childhood care and education issues. This is an issue supported by the MLA/MEMO platform and one on which I have been actively

working. Again, it is a very difficult situation in the legislature and one which has strong support on both sides of the issue. The biggest hope is to maintain the gains made in the past few years of recovery from massive cuts 4 years ago. So far, things have been holding steady, but we'll need to wait until the end of the session to know for sure.

4. Becker County Early Childhood Initiative exploratory work: Becker County is interested in joining the 80+ other communities in Minnesota who have become an Early Childhood Initiative community under the auspices of one of the Minnesota Initiative Funds. In this case, Becker Co will be working with the West Central Initiative Fund in Fergus Falls. I have worked with this (as well as the other early childhood communities in the NLLN region) to represent libraries and the services of libraries to children, parents, and care-providers.
5. Stimulus funds are complex and changing, but I have been trying to follow this and to track opportunities for libraries as they become available. It is very complex and no one seems to know exactly what all is available, or what purposes qualify. Clearly, however, there are funds for libraries, schools, higher education, communities, and for building infrastructure in the state – I'll continue to watch this and to share information as it becomes available.

Communication: All the channels continue to be used: electronic, print, telephonic, and face-to-face. Social networking tools are increasingly important to the way we connect – and they are all getting a good workout! New tools are always becoming available. Finding which are useful to us and which are not is always challenging (and always kind of fun!). The recent attention that the growth of Twitter has received and the brouhaha over Facebook's Terms of Service agreement have made for lots of activity in the cybersphere recently. Wiki's have been useful in planning events and coordinating work among many individuals. I hope we will be able to explore more of these things at our meeting.

Other: Both Deb and I have participated in flood relief activities over the past few weeks as evacuees were brought to Detroit Lakes, housing for relief workers was needed, and sandbaggers were sent to the F-M area. We hope that the worst is past and individuals, as well as whole communities, can begin to recover from this massive, slow-moving event.

Ruth Solie - April 18, 2009