

# Directors Report

## Northern Lights Library Network

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October 18, 2014 Governing Board Meeting for Fiscal Year 2015

**Northern Lights Library Network (NLLN) is a cooperative network of members in academic, public, school, and special libraries in 23 counties of North-central, North-west and West-central Minnesota. We work at the grassroots level to bring together all types of libraries and collections in the region to discover, enhance, and share resources through administrative, technological, and educational support from Northern Lights Library Network.**

*Northern Lights Library Network is funded by the Minnesota State Legislature through the Minnesota Department of Education*

**Traveled to libraries throughout the NLLN region**, attended local, regional, and statewide meetings and conferences, served on professional library committees, and attended MLA legislative initiatives. Served on ITEM conference planning committee; served on book award committees; attended quarterly meetings with multi-type, multi-county library directors; attended ITEM and MLA conferences; attended MLA Legislative Days and distributed information between and among constituents, librarians, and legislators; presented at conferences; met with librarians locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally.

*The following are meetings Executive Director Kathy B. Enger held or attended throughout the state, from August 15 to October 18, 2014:*

August 15: St. Cloud, ITEM fall conference meeting.

August 16: Moorhead, NLLN Governing Board meeting.

August 18 & 19: Minneapolis, Upper Midwest Digital Collections conference.

August 21: Meeting with Glenn Heinecke at NLLN office to continue research.

August 25: Perham meeting with Lina Belar to plan presentation for AASLH conference.

August 26: Worked with Jill Kessler on 990 form.

September 3: MLA Legislative Committee meeting.

September 4-5: Mayo clinic visit.

September 8-9: Bloomington, communicating with tact and professionalism workshop.

September 9: Golden Valley, Perpich Center for the Arts ITEM planning meeting.

September 16: Moorhead meeting with Charlie and Adell to plan Train-the-Trainers. Valerie Horton, Minitex visit.

September 17: Meeting with Terri Darco to discuss the Maamagin Achigaade.

September 18: St. Paul American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) national conference.

September 19: St. Paul AASLH conference presentation with Lina Belar: *And then a Miracle Happened: Connecting Local History to National Initiatives*, an oral history on the beginning of the In Their Own Words Veterans Museum in Perham, Minnesota.

September 20: Alexandria, meeting with Glenn Heinecke to plan ITEM presentation.

September 22: Meeting with Jennifer Hootman, Minitex, conference call.

September 23: MSUM, meeting with Kevin Zepper to plan NLLN poster at Lake Region Writers Conference, October 4<sup>th</sup>.

September 24: St. Paul, Common Good Books, Lin Enger reading from *The High Divide*.

September 25-26: Iowa City, Prairie Lights Bookstore, Lin Enger reading from *The High Divide*.

October 2-3: St. Cloud, ITEM fall conference, two presentations: 1. *Twenty-three Things you don't know about Minnesota's Multitype Library Systems!* 2. *The Skills and Knowledge Students Acquire from Media Specialists: A Systematic Review*.

October 4: Fergus Falls, Professor/Poet Zepper, MSUM, presents NLLN poster at the Lake Region Writer's Network Conference.

October 15: Meeting with Liz Lynch and Jenna Kahly to plan how to get library cards to students in the region for access to eBooks on Overdrive at LARL.

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October 16: Minneapolis, Lin Enger reading from *The High Divide*, University of Minnesota Bookstore.

October 18: NLLN Governing Board meeting.

**Developing activities that bring all libraries together.** Provide ongoing internships for graduates and undergraduates interested in careers in Library and Information Science and undergraduates interested in careers in Advertising, Communication, Film, Graphic Design, Journalism, or Media through the learning opportunities engaged in by NLLN. Jordan Schroer, a student in his senior was hired as a Communication Specialist Intern to work 10 hours a week for ten weeks at \$10/hr, Fall 2014. Jordan is expected to complete his Bachelor of Science in Mass Communications with an emphasis in Broadcast Journalism May, 2015, from MSUM, 4.0 GPA. Jordan completed a Communications Internship at the United States Senate Office of Senator Al Franken, Washington, D.C. Jordan came to NLLN with experience in writing and monitoring news stories and created NLLN's first Facebook page, wrote press releases, and promoted NLLN. Media advisories have been written and submitted to newspapers and media outlets.

**Ongoing public relations efforts based** through public service announcements and publicity in newspapers, radio and television stations. Develop and continue to maintain electronic and social media methods for communicating with members.

### **Northern Lights Library Network**

#### **Media Advisory: Little Free Libraries Promoting Literacy in White Earth**

Leaders and community members on the White Earth Reservation are working to promote literacy, culture and the love of reading in White Earth, Minnesota by dotting the community with little free libraries.

A grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services is looking to bring books to the small reservation town. The grant helps pay for community members to build their own unique little free libraries. Businesses will then have the opportunity to sponsor the libraries and pay for the books housed inside.

Little free libraries are small bird house like structures placed in yards and by businesses where people can take a book for free and are urged to replace it with a book another person may enjoy. Residents of White Earth, Minnesota do not have the luxury of a community library many Minnesotans across the state take for granted. If people in the city of White Earth want to have free access to the goods and services a public library has to offer, they must travel more than 30 miles.

The White Earth Child Care and Early Child Care Program will be hosting a picnic where the multiple individuals who built little free libraries will be judged on their creations. The community is welcome to join in and celebrate the expansion of literary horizons.

**DATE: Tuesday, September 23**

**TIME: 6:30 p.m.**

**PLACE: White Earth Reservation Tribal Council Building Common Area in White Earth, Minn.**

For more information, contact event coordinator Terri Darco at 218-255-2940 or [terrida@whiteearth.com](mailto:terrida@whiteearth.com) You can also contact Northern Lights Library Network Executive Director Kathy Enger at 218-477-1750 or [kathy.enger@nlln.org](mailto:kathy.enger@nlln.org)

**Northern Lights Library Network  
Media Advisory**

Perham Focus, KARE, KSTP, KMSP, WCCO, and Twin Cities PBS

The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) is holding its annual meeting in Minnesota's historic capital city. The "Greater than the Sum of our Parts" conference is where those committed to telling stories of our past will gather from coast-to-coast to listen and understand our country's short, yet deep, beautiful and sometimes painful history.

When telling people historical facts, sometimes their eyes glaze over and they nod slowly, but in telling people a good story, they are transformed to a different time in our nation's experience. That has been the mission of the In Their Own Words Veteran's Museum (ITOW) in Perham, Minnesota since its inception. Former ITOW museum director Lina Belar will present an oral history of the ITOW museum to attendees from around the nation at a meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Lina will talk about how the museum came to be, and her vision to create a sense of safety, permanence and respect by actively searching for the unique and heart-felt stories of our veterans from greater Minnesota. This homegrown museum is a national leader in listening to the extraordinary stories of otherwise "ordinary" veterans.

**DATE: Friday, September 19**

**TIME: 2:00 p.m.**

**PLACE: Crowne Plaza Hotel, St. Paul, Minn.**

For more information, contact former ITOW museum director Lina Belar at 218.346.6262 or [lbelar@eot.com](mailto:lbelar@eot.com) You can also contact Northern Lights Library Network Executive Director Kathy Enger at 218.477.1750 or [kathy.enger@nlln.org](mailto:kathy.enger@nlln.org)

**Northern Lights Library Network**

**Media Advisory: Authors Gather to Discuss the Writing Process with Educators**

Continued education is imperative for those in schools and libraries to keep up-to-date on the latest technology trends and breakthroughs in education. Media specialists from around the state will gather October 3<sup>rd</sup> and discuss those important aspects of their jobs at the Information and Technology Educators of Minnesota (ITEM) Conference in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

The ITEM conference will feature 15 renowned authors from around the state who will present why they write and the processes they go through to perfect their work. Attendees at the conference will be able to hear from the authors and have them sign their books. Media specialists can also discuss the possibilities of authors presenting at schools throughout the state on the writing process and their love for literature.

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**DATE: Friday, October 3**  
**TIME: 9:00 a.m. Book signing**  
**1:00 p.m. Luncheon where 15 authors will present**  
**2:45 p.m. Book signing**  
**PLACE: River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, Minnesota**

The conference will also include a keynote presentation from the award-winning young adult author Jonathan Friesen on **Saturday, October 4 at 12:15 p.m.**

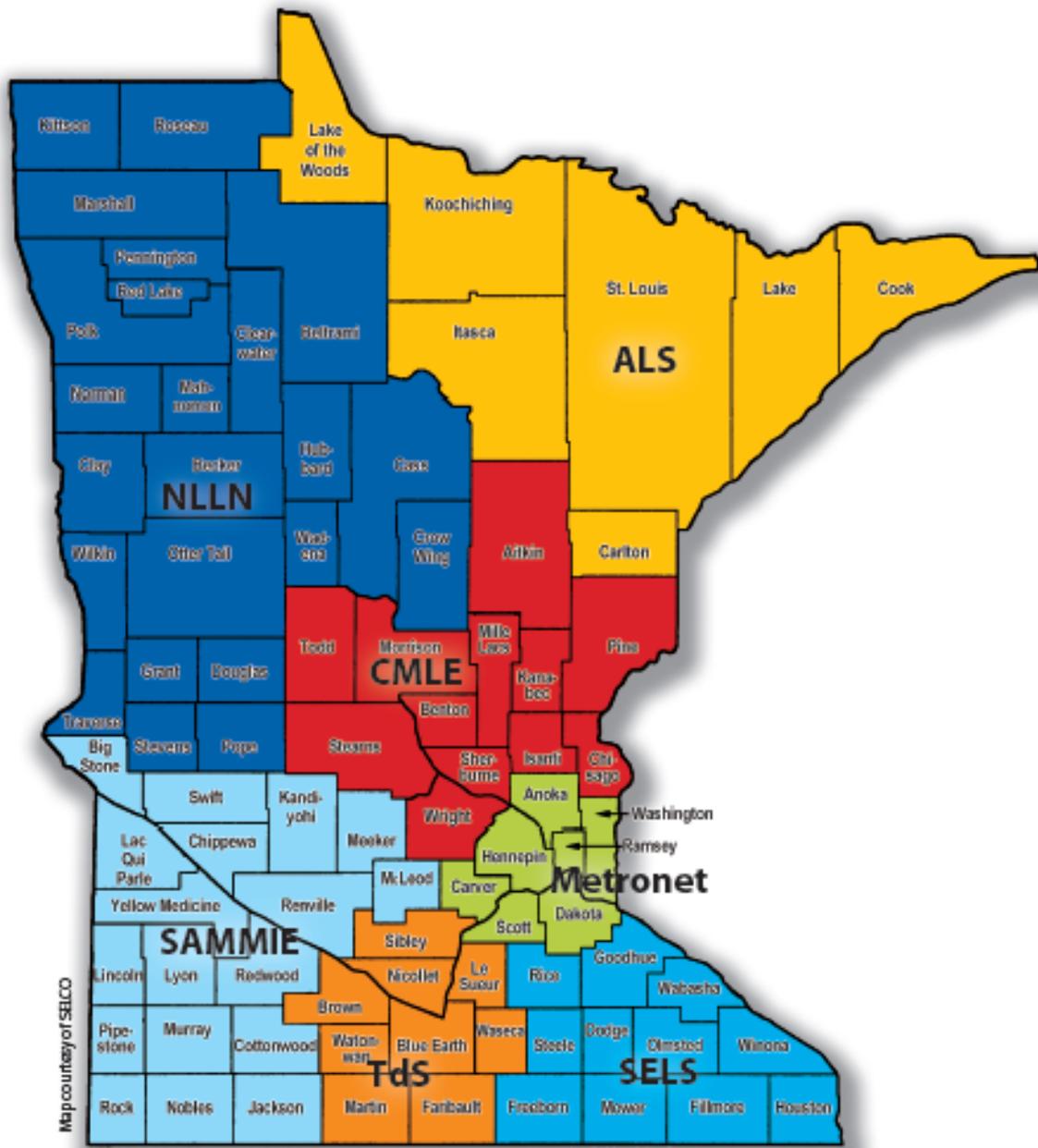
For more information, contact Northern Lights Library Network Executive Director Kathy Enger at 218-477-1750 or [kathy.enger@nlln.org](mailto:kathy.enger@nlln.org)

**Conducting research on the value of libraries.** Kathy is conducting qualitative, grounded theory research to determine what multitype library systems do.

### *23 Things You Didn't Know about Multitype Libraries*



MINNESOTA MULTITYPE  
LIBRARY SYSTEMS



Map courtesy of SELCO

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### **134.351 MULTICOUNTY, MULTITYPE LIBRARY SYSTEMS.**

Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** The commissioner of education, upon the advice of the Advisory Council to the Division of State Library Services, may approve the establishment of multicounty, multitype library systems and the geographic boundaries of those systems.

Subd. 2. **Services.** Each multicounty, multitype library system is encouraged to develop services including, but not limited to the following: referral of users, intrasystem reciprocal borrowing, cooperative collection development, cooperative reference services, staff development, research and development, cooperative storage facilities, publicity and community relations.

Subd. 3. **Agreement.** In order for a multicounty, multitype library system to qualify for planning, development, or operating aid pursuant to sections 134.353 and 134.354, each participating library in the system

**23 Things, newsletters, scholarships, sponsors of ITEM and MLA conferences, interlibrary loan, eBooks, North Star Library Consortium, Camp Read-A-Lot, Brainfuse Homework Help, Annual Reports and Meetings, Continuing Education, Advocate for all libraries. Kathy is analyzing Multitype Minitex reports for 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, using a qualitative grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014) and preliminary findings show multitype libraries do the following:**

- *Write and receive grants that support libraries*
- *Administer continuing education grants for professional development*
  - *Develop librarians professionally*
    - *Support union catalogs*
  - *Improve local library collections*
    - *Lead and administer agency*
    - *Champion for libraries*
  - *Provide leadership in library organizations and associations*
- *Sponsor literacy initiatives through programs, conferences, and workshops*
  - *Publically promote libraries*
- *Creat, develop, and sustain programs that enrich the lives of Minnesotans*
  - *Support interlibrary loan services*
    - *Teach new technologies*
    - *Manage human resources*
  - *Find cost effective eBook solutions*
  - *Design and implement strategic plans*
- *Communicate between and among libraries through electronic communication systems*
  - *Meet with legislators on behalf of libraries*
    - *Collect and analyze library data*
    - *Meet with library stakeholders*
  - *Visit local libraries and sustain relationships with librarians*
- *Present at conferences and publish articles in the library literature*
  - *Facilitate improved library services*
  - *Raise funds for libraries*

**Joining together Historical and Cultural Organizations and Museums and approach the organizations to become NLLN members.** Kathy presented with Lina Belar at the American Association for State and Local History at the national meeting in Minneapolis September 17-20, 2014:

**AND THEN A MIRACLE HAPPENED:  
Connecting Local History to National Initiatives  
Oral History of the *In Their Own Words* Veterans Museum  
Perham, Minnesota  
By Lina Belar**

**American Association for State and Local History  
Annual Meeting Presentation  
Friday, September 19, 2014  
2 p.m.**

*For small museums, the key to success is collaboration and a willingness to study the experts. Learn how alliances with state, local, and national agencies made the exhibits of the In Their Own Words (ITOW) Veterans Museum possible and how that model could be utilized in other places with other content.*

**CONTRIBUTORS**

- Lina Belar, founder and retired director of the Friends of the Museum – *In Their Own Words* Veteran’s Museum
- Kathy B. Enger, Executive Director of Northern Lights Library Network
- Syd MacLean, Vietnam War Veteran, Purple Heart Recipient, member Military Order of the Purple Heart, former VFW Commander

***Background of the ITOW (In Their Own Words) Veteran’s Museum***

The *In Their Own Words* (ITOW) Veteran’s Museum is located in Perham, Minnesota, a town of about 2500 people, 70 miles southeast of Fargo, North Dakota. The museum was designed to be entirely based on the oral histories of area veterans. As people walked through the museum they listened to excerpts of interviews with veterans and followed in their footsteps as they left home for the first time, their first six weeks, their preparation for battle, their experiences in war and finally, coming home. The stories are all from oral histories of local veterans who served on several fronts like Europe and the Pacific, and multiple eras from WWI and II through Korea, Vietnam, to the Middle East today.

The idea of the exhibits was to create a sense of motion, as though you were traveling with them and following their lives. To intensify that experience, the rest of the gallery was created to be free of distractions with photos and text panels that built on the oral histories. As a break in the intensity, two exhibit sections were devoted to the homefront. The first featured stories from the WWII era where a large percentage of the population was actively involved in the war effort. To

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demonstrate this, we used audio and visual files of local newspaper clippings pertaining to WWII, everything from home canning, to rationing of gas and tires, to the collection of aluminum and other metals for the war effort. The other homefront exhibit focused on the oral histories of people on both sides of the protest lines during the Vietnam era.

Most of the video excerpts in the exhibits are deliberately short, giving the viewer time to reflect on the material before moving to the next one. There are two exhibits that are in greater depth. One is a 20 minute excerpt of an interview with a survivor of the Bataan death march and the sinking of the Arisan Maru, a Japanese prison ship. The other was based on the reading of a diary from a soldier who had gone to France in 1918, describing the aftermath of WWI.

For even great immersion, it was possible to actually choose an identity to follow through the exhibits by picking up a computer card at the front desk that could be used in the independent computer kiosks situated throughout the exhibit gallery. Choices included a WWII veteran who had served in the Battle of the Bulge, a Vietnam Pilot who had been shot down over the Bay of Tonkin and a Chaplain who served in the Gulf War. At each kiosk, you listened to a different segment of their interview so that when you were finished you felt like you actually knew the person.

In addition to the exhibits, there was a short documentary in the lobby before beginning the tour through the exhibit section to give you a sense of what to expect and a longer documentary at the end that helped to wrap it up.

We understood that the story of a veteran, particularly one who has experienced war, is bound to be a moving, emotional experience. It can also be intensely personal. Just as Shakespeare took stories of ordinary men and women and made them unforgettable, so, I believe, did the exhibits of the ITOW Veterans Museum.

This is a good point for me to bring up what the conference organizers told us to remind people about. Because here is one of the “Takeaways” of this session.

*10 million is a statistic.*

*10 people is a story.*

*10 minutes in one person's mind is a life-changing experience.*

In other words, tell people some facts and they nod sagely while their eyes glaze over. Tell people a good story and they might be interested or amused. But take people deep into an intimate part of someone's life, and they could be changed forever. That is the power of oral history exhibits. And that was the power we sought to harness in creating the ITOW Veterans Museum.

### ***History behind the History***

Since 1998, I had been the director of the Friends of the History Museum of East Otter Tail County which managed a small museum in Perham. In 2001, several members of the VFW, along with Sherman Mandt, a World War II Veteran, approached me with a new idea. Sherman shared his thoughts, “We want a way to preserve our stories, but we don’t just want to see a

bunch of guns and uniforms.” And with that heartfelt statement, the vision for a new museum was created. For some time, VFW and American Legion members had been visiting other communities to see what had been done to honor veterans. The country has a wealth of county and local museums, almost all of which have an area filled with uniforms, and sometimes guns, from people who served in the military. In Minnesota, the museum at Camp Ripley is the best example of a museum devoted to the military. It contains an outstanding collection of artifacts that are well displayed. It also features some oral histories in its exhibits.

Many communities also have memorials, outdoor places to reflect and remember the sacrifices of those who served. Most people are familiar with memorials, some of the best examples being in Washington, D.C.

Both memorials and museums serve as important ways to honor veterans. But I understood what Sherman meant. He wanted people to know him as a person, not only as a symbol. He wanted us to know his story because he wanted us to know what it cost him to live it.

At the time we began these conversations, oral histories were recognized as an important way to preserve certain kinds of history. As fate would have it, I began to meet a number of people who would eventually become the core group behind the exhibits of the ITOW Veterans Museum. One of those people was Kirk D. Van Dorn. He had recently established a business to record family histories and when we met he confessed that his great passion had always been to record the stories of veterans. Over the years, I have worked with and viewed the work of dozens of interviewers and it is clear that Kirk has a unique quality, perhaps it's empathy, that is only found in the best of them. At the time, I didn't know very much about collecting oral histories but fortunately, the Minnesota Historical Society was able to provide the guidance we needed to get started.

After several months of training and practice we began interviews. Sherman Mandt was the first. He was followed by a few other intrepid souls, and then, when it became obvious that what we were doing was neither frightening nor painful, the floodgates opened and we could barely keep up. At first, the VFW generously supplied money from their gambling funds to get started. And, as time went on, we applied for grants from the Minnesota Historical Society. The first one we received was titled, ‘Women and War’, and it allowed us to branch out and interview not only women who served but those who had worked in defense industries or in capacities on the homefront.

David Rector, a young videographer who had amazing skills as an editor, was another member of our interview team. Within a few years, we had collected more than 125 interviews and were ready to launch the next phase of the project, that of creating series of exhibits based on the interviews.

By 2004, discussions were increasingly focused on where to display them. The History Museum was a very small building. We discussed expanding it, if possible, but it was clear that many people in the community, especially veterans, wanted to see a separate museum. After much

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deliberation, the VFW decided that they would like to have their VFW building become a museum.

That's when Syd MacLean and I started talking in earnest. At the time, Syd was commander of the Perham VFW and as he can tell you, those were tough times for VFWs.

### ***VFWs and Veterans Involvement in the ITOW Veterans Museum***

The Perham VFW had decided to get out of the gaming business. Gambling revenues were suffering and expenses were skyrocketing and membership was dwindling. VFWs throughout the nation were facing similar problems but the one in Perham decided to do something unique. They decided that rather than sell the building to just anybody, they would turn it over to the Friends of the Museum as a place to create exhibits about veterans. A covenant would give them and other local veterans' organizations the right to meet there in perpetuity. So for little more than the assumption of the VFWs existing mortgage, the museum had a building.

Ownership of a building gave the Friends of the Museum the resources to leverage a loan from the bank. The City of Perham made a \$90,000 donation to the cause and everything was set to begin. We hired a marketing team to develop the brand for the museum and to lay out the public relation goals for the next several years. We also began working intensively with a team to develop a plan for the building and the exhibits.

And once again, we were fortunate to have talent in the area that was willing to take on the project. My son, Rama Calabria, had recently returned to the area and it was on his shoulders that fell the task of making these ideas work. A tech wizard, he came up with a technology plan that made the exhibits of ITOW look like the ones that I'd been studying in major museums, but at a fraction of the cost.

As for funding, our financial advisors had recommended hiring a consultant for this part and after interviewing several we hired an experienced fundraiser from nearby Detroit Lakes, Cyndi Anderson. One of the components of the fundraising plan was to seek state and federal funding for the project. At that time, one of the board members of the Friends of the Museum was a former state representative and his guidance was invaluable. Together with bi-partisan support from local representatives we submitted a request to the state for \$100,000. At the same time we asked U.S. Representative Collin Peterson to support a federal earmark for the project. The third component, fundraising from local donors, was led by Sherman Mandt, whose initial request had started this in motion. Unfortunately, Sherman became terminally ill with cancer and died before it could be finished. Fortunately, he had asked Kenny Nelson, owner of KLN Industries in Perham (makers Barrel O'Fun potato chips and Tuffy's dog food) to help with the fundraising and in that manner, the the ITOW Veterans Museum formed an unlikely alliance with a company who normally sponsored things like the Minnesota Twins or WeFest.

### ***Minnesota Historical Society's Role in the Success of the Museums in Perham***

I began my first museum almost by accident. I had been working with the Perham Area Public Library on plans for a new library building and one of the questions I kept getting asked was, 'what will happen to the old building?' Well one discussion led to another and eventually the

East Otter Tail Historical Society asked me if I would put together a proposal for the City who owned the building, outlining a plan to turn it into a history museum. At the time I knew very little about museums except that I liked to go to them, but I did know how to write business plans so I put some words together and took them to the city and they said, "Yes". Then the Historical Society thought that since I'd been successful at that, perhaps I should stick around and actually develop those plans for the museum. Again, I didn't know how to create a museum but I did know how to manage projects, so I said, "Yes". And at that point I did one of the smartest things I've ever done. I went to the Minnesota Historical Society and said, "Help." And they said, "Yes".

In 1996, when I first became involved with the creation of the History Museum, the field representative for the Minnesota Historical Society was a man named David Nystuen. It was he who showed me how to 'tell the story'. A particular artifact may have a story to tell, but unless it is placed in context, it is just a thing. It may be a thing that some people feel nostalgic about. But in designing an exhibit for the general public you want to make sure that everyone will be able to understand the story.

David gave me two pieces of advice that affected everything I did from then on. First of all, he continually impressed upon me the importance of the stories behind the artifacts. A row of hats, he'd said, is of interest to a hat lover but the stories of the people who wore those hats is of interest to everyone. Imagine you're doing an exhibit of your fire department and you mention it's entirely run by volunteers. That's a fact. Okay, so one of those volunteers is a dentist, what happened to the dentist's patient when the fire bell rang. That's a story.

And here's the second important lesson that David Nystuen taught me. He continually advised me to study other museums and see what I could learn from them. I would do that, and then I'd come back and talk to him about what I'd seen. For example, one time I'd gone to see this maritime museum in North Carolina where they had stories of sailors and sailing ships, told through photographs and interpretive displays that were really exciting to see. I could see how exhibits like that might be adapted to tell our stories but the only problem was, they had several hundred thousand dollar budget. I had \$20,000 to spend on that first museum.

"Not a problem," he'd say. "The reason it costs places like that so much is that they probably have 40-50 designers on staff. You find local people with the skills you need and you'll be amazed at how inexpensively you can do it."

So, even though I'd had no formal training in designing museums, I spent many years studying some of the best and Dave's advice was always my guide. He, and all the staff of the Minnesota Historical Society, have always been unstinting in giving their time and expertise where it was needed whether it was for training or just advice on what to do for specific problems. And they were always a great role model that I was not afraid to follow.

### ***Connecting Libraries with the Perham Museums***

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In 1998, the Friends of the History Museum of East Otter Tail County, began a multi-year collaboration with libraries, first at the regional level with Viking Library System and then with Northern Lights Library Network, a multi-type library system of northwest Minnesota. The History Museum was small. In order to expand its reach we wanted to digitize our important historic records and create online access to them for anyone in the world. Our was to provide access to local history to markets to and beyond the immediate geographic borders of East Otter Tail County as well as providing access to diverse age groups, particularly students. The connection with libraries made that possible.

In 1998, the year that the East Otter Tail History Museum opened, libraries in our region were in the process of automation projects to make their collections available on the internet, and a local telephone company had just provided internet access to local subscribers. Telecommunications councils were established. Our local one was NW Links. One of the goals of the councils was to figure out how to bring internet access to all schools equitably even though the direct costs of providing internet access to individual students varied greatly across the state. Collaborating with Viking Regional Library system we applied for a grant from LSTA, received it, submitted RFPs to likely providers across the country and settled down to work with Inetium in Minneapolis, who had already had a proven track record of hosting indexes to newspapers. We were excited about the opportunity to develop a truly unique search tool for the collections of museums and historical societies. In 2001, our website was launched, and while I have to admit that my own enthusiasm for the project far outstripped the media response, it was a start in the right direction. Since that time, hundreds of places across the country have found ways to make their records available online. But I think we were one of the first small local museums to do what we did.

### ***A Little History of Libraries***

One hundred years ago, the small rural library of Perham, Minnesota consisted of a shelf in the city hall where each Wednesday afternoon, townsfolk who were so inclined, could gather to select a book they could borrow for the week. For the next fifty years, rural libraries like Perham worked hard to meet the growing needs of their patrons but many were understaffed, undertrained and underfunded.

The establishment of a Regional Library System changed all that. It took years to accomplish and many accommodations had to be made to make sure that everyone could be served. But in the end there was a framework established that assured that consistently high quality libraries could be maintained across the state.

In many respects the special libraries of rural historical societies and museums are in the same position as rural public libraries were 50 years ago. There aren't exact parallels, of course, rural museums didn't have an Andrew Carnegie to provide them with buildings. But what they have had is a strong State Historical Society and excellent National Museums to provide guidance and good examples.

### ***How the Community of Perham Contributed to the Creation of the ITOW Veterans Museum.***

To understand how a project like the ITOW Veterans Museum could happen in a small community like Perham, I'd like to tell you a little bit about the town. Like a lot of rural communities, Perham was founded because of the railroad. Josiah Perham, after whom the town was named, was a man who had a vision of building a railroad that would travel the northern states, connecting the west with the east. Although at first people said that was a good idea, later he was scoffed at for his dedication to his mission. In the end, he lost all his money and eventually his ownership in the railroad, trying to make it happen. But guess what? It did. And guess what? That route is now the busiest railroad route in the country. Even before the Bakken oil fields there were 50 trains a day. Now the rail traffic is phenomenal. The reason it happened is that it was a good idea in the first place. Good ideas do happen eventually, even if they take generations to germinate. History is filled with examples like that.

One of the things that I have always admired about the people of Perham, and in fact, most Minnesotans and most Americans, is their 'can do' attitude. It is reflected in the farmers, the industry, the schools, the hospitals, and the arts. In many ways, Minnesota is still a land of pioneers and those characteristics that make for successful pioneers dominate rural civic life: Self-reliance, independence, new ideas, and strong leaders who aren't afraid to take chances. So it shouldn't come as a surprise to find a non-profit history museum exhibiting some of the same characteristics.

### ***Keys to Success***

I think the key to making ITOW happen was collaboration and a willingness to study the experts. Without the kind of expertise offered by the Minnesota Historical it would not have been possible. I also received a great deal of guidance and advice from National Museums, including the Newseum and the Women's Memorial at Arlington. And organizations like AASLH and IMLS provided a way to connect local history with national initiatives.

I believe that the success in creating the ITOW Veterans Museum was based on three things: a determined dedication to mission, a deliberate approach to marketing, and a successful fundraising campaign.

Number one is and should always be, a dedication to mission. Everyone has probably heard the phrase, mission creep. So how do you prevent it? Probably the easiest way is to have one stubborn, pig-headed person in charge. But that's not always the most pleasant. The best way is when you have a team of people who all agree on an end goal, each of whom has a specific role to play in getting there. Good analogies for that are military missions, or theatrical productions.

Number Two is a deliberate approach to marketing: What that means is that you have your marketing plans in place before you even have your product. My father, who was an engineer, hated it when the designers would give him a shape and he had to re-arrange the components to fit in it. But what he didn't realize, and I didn't either until much later, was that it wasn't the designers who had created the shape, it was the market analysts, who had determined that to sell the product to a particular demographic, it had to look and behave a certain way.

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Okay, so that's the way RCA did it. But many of us are small organizations where the person in charge of marketing, design and engineering of the final plan are one and the same, or at least a small group of people. That's where it's important that everyone understand the mission.

Number Three is money. Available time, money and skill will all dictate, to some extent, the scope of the exhibit. Of these three, available skills will be the one most likely to shape the direction that the exhibit will take.

Throughout the development of the ITOW Veterans Museum I was able to work with teams of people whose skill and expertise made all the difference. For the design of the building we engaged the local architectural firm of Baker Hogan Houx. Tony Stoll, its owner, is a local boy who has a strong sense community. I had worked with him previously on the designs for the History Museum and that had turned out very well. By the time the veterans museum was in the planning stages, his firm had grown. He had several employees working for him and had acquired an excellent reputation for design of both private and public spaces.

The fact that we were going to utilize an existing building gave us some parameters to work with. But we also had a vision of what impression that building should convey. A museum, we thought, should give a sense of permanence, of security. And a veteran's museum, in particular, should convey a sense of respect. In the end, the ITOW design elements embodied all those. The entrance to the museum was designed to be high and square, with slit-like windows near the top. Instead of straight, the lobby wall bowed out, creating a sense of space. From the very first, we wanted the impression to be a good one.

In my six years at the Museum, from 2006 to 2012, the most common reaction I heard from people the first time they stepped inside the ITOW Veterans Museum was "Wow!" And that's the way it should be.

Our grand opening in 2006 was attended by 300 people, including state and national representatives. And, as we'd promised, it was like nothing anyone had seen before. Based entirely on the oral histories of area veterans, it told their stories in a way that made them accessible to everyone, not just the people who knew them.

MN State Representative Dean Simpson was there. We'd interviewed his father, Reuben Simpson. I'd used an excerpt of his oral history in one of the displays. Later Dean said to me, "I've known my father all my life, but I never knew that part of him."

Another visitor confided that her father had died without ever talking of his experiences. "But now," she said, "I know what he went through."

In conclusion: Here's another takeaway from this session: Design your exhibits using oral histories so that when your visitors leave they say, "Now, I understand."

**Conducting research of the skills media specialists impart to students through a comprehensive review and analysis of the literature, interviews of library media personnel in the region, and a correlation between high test scores and schools with media specialists**

**in the region.** Presented preliminary findings of the ‘skills and knowledge students acquire from media specialists’ along with Glenn Heinecke at the ITEM 2014 fall conference. Kathy attended the Upper Midwest Digital Collection Conference on August 18 and 19 in Minneapolis and a CareerTrack Seminar named, *How to Communicate with Tact and Professionalism* in Bloomington September 8 and 9.

***Skills and Knowledge Students Acquire from Media Specialists:  
An Ecological systems Theory Model***

**STUDENT**

Information Literacy  
Technology  
Library & Information Science  
Copyright

**MEDIA SPECIALIST**

Competencies  
Requirements  
Licensing

**TEACHER**

Interdisciplinary Learning  
Project-based Learning  
Integrating Technology into the curriculum

**EDUCATION**

Critical Thinking  
Love of Reading  
Cultural Diversity  
Cyber-bullying  
Intellectual Freedom

**KNOWLEDGE**

Creating New Knowledge  
Sharing Knowledge  
Personal Growth

**Career development, professional engagement scholarships, and library service funding** for staff and library board member participation in continuing education programs, events, and participation at national and international conferences for library professionals in the region who may not be able to attend without the support of Northern Lights Library Network (NLLN). Continuing education scholarships are awarded as incentive for individual growth and development in order to enhance library services throughout the NLLN region and professional engagement and support is provided for individual library professionals in the region who devote their time and service to the ongoing work of the profession above and beyond their daily job with the goal of bringing professional library expertise into the region. Scholarships are available to all employees of NLLN member libraries. Scholarships may be used for the following purposes: Registration or tuition; Lodging; Meals; Transportation (mileage is for the

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use of a personal vehicle – only one person in a vehicle may request mileage); Parking; Required books or educational materials; Cost of a substitute to cover while applicant is at an event (applicant must have paid the cost of a substitute before requesting reimbursement). Reports summarizing the benefits of receiving the scholarships are required upon completion of continuing education opportunity and disseminated through published reports, blogs, and website postings when scholarship recipients return from continuing education activities. Library staff attendance at local, regional, national, and international conferences generates new ideas and best library practices among colleagues and library constituents.

Approximately 8 scholarships have been awarded so far this year to attend the MLA and ITEM conferences.

**NLLN sponsored many activities at the ITEM 2014 fall conference, *Made in Minnesota: Information & Technology Educators of Minnesota*, October 2-4:** Thursday night QR code social whereby participants submit a URL and received a wristband with the code and title, then participants used their mobile devices to scan the codes worn by other participants so they could talk about their code's content -- 30 people attended; books written and signed by the 15 authors at the conference sold at the silent auction for \$120; two presentations 1. *Twenty-three Things you don't know about Minnesota's Multitype Library Systems!* 2. *The Skills and Knowledge Students Acquire from Media Specialists: A Systematic Review*; NLLN sponsored the conference evaluation.

**Ongoing library administrative and technical support** for the White Earth Child Care/Early Childhood Program (WECC/ECP) as they prepare a new community library. Assist with a physical space for a community library, computers and desks for circulation of books and public use of the space, and books and library materials for the community library space. White Earth Early Childhood Development is building Little Free Libraries for communities throughout White Earth. A picnic displaying the Little Free Libraries took place on September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the White Earth Reservation Tribal Council Building Common Area in White Earth, Minnesota. NLLN is storing furniture in the basement at Townsite from the MSUM Library renovation for the Maamagin Achigaade.

**“Poets Across Minnesota”:** Encourages the love of reading, literature, and the spoken word by sponsoring poetry readings and events for regional poets in and through libraries in the region. Sponsoring poetry in and through libraries promotes the value of libraries. Poetry will become accessible to high school students and others who may not always think of themselves as potential poets, allowing them to move beyond observing and reading to actually engaging in the writing process and speaking what is written. Poetry in and through libraries extends literacy because it is linguistically rich and as a genre that is read aloud, makes literature a public event. While it is understood that poetry is currently taught, poetry holds the promise for exciting students and others about the richness of language. Improved reading scores on standardized test in the region will be the result. The backbone of “Poets Across Minnesota” is its close partnership with libraries. The act of writing creates empowered readers and writers and promotes the value of libraries in civic life. “Poets Across Minnesota” places the value of libraries in front of citizens by teaching students to learn, write, and speak poetry through libraries. Literacy promotes democracy and dignifies, and libraries are at the core of it.

“Poets Across Minnesota” is a program initiated by Northern Lights Library Network during FY13.

Kevin Zepper presented an NLLN poster at the annual Lake Region Writer’s Network conference on October 4<sup>th</sup> in Fergus Falls.

**Poetry and Jazz in the Park:** Annual meeting scheduled for June 16, 2015 in the Pavillion at D.L.’s City Park with *Just Friends* performance: 4 - 5 p.m. NLLN's Governing Board meeting in the Pavilion at D.L.'s City Park; 5 - 6 p.m. Picnic lunch, Habitat for Humanity; 7 p.m. "Poetry and Jazz in the Park" by Vinz, Ferreira, and Law.

**Technology training for librarians in the region through Train-the-Trainers** to assist librarians in keeping up with rapidly changing technology. Following the pilot test of the program throughout academic year 2013/2014 with seven trainers and 11 trainees, it was determined that five areas of training needed to be addressed. Trainers individually guide each librarian/paraprofessional in the areas of: 1. The Electronic library of Minnesota (ELM). 2. Electronic devices. 3. Apps. for libraries and schools. 4. The library catalog. 5. Access to public library cards for students.

**eBook access** for middle and high school students throughout the NLLN region.

Many students living within the counties served by Lake Agassiz Regional Library (LARL) and Northwest Regional Library (NWRL) have been issued iPads or tablets by their schools. LARL and NWRL have seen a steady increase in the use of eBook and eAudiobook collections. Teachers and media specialists from across the region have contacted LARL and NWRL, asking how their students can obtain access to eBooks and eAudiobooks. LARL and NWRL will encourage schools, teachers, and students to register for LARL and NWRL library cards to access the eBook services provided to them through their public library.

**Supported cataloging fees** for membership to the OCLC CatExpress group subscription for Northwest Regional Library, Lincoln High School Thief River Falls, Kittson School Media Center, Warren/Alvarado/Oslo High School, Breckenridge High School District, Clearbrook Gonvick High School, ADA-Borup Public School, Independent School District 435, Audubon High School Media Center, Perham Dent Public School, Holy Rosary School, BUG-O-NA-GE Shig School, Grygla School Media Center, Bemidji Public School, Park Rapids High School, Northland Community Schools ISD #118, Circle of Life School, St. Josephs School, Lancaster public School, Tri-County School, Mahnomen Public School, Frazee-Vergas School, Pine River Backus Public School, Badger School, Blackduck Public School, White Earth Tribal & Community College Library.

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