



Director's Message

Economic recession.....library boom!

Well it's almost like jumping from the frying pan into the fire for us in NLLS. We have just gone through an extraordinary year. From signing the contract to go live with Polaris in just nine months. What a feat! Normally this kind of migration with this number of partners, some 153 libraries would take up to two years to complete. Yes there are some creases we are in the process of ironing out, but by and large the migration went very well. We take our hats off to the many teams from each of the four headquarters and partner library staff from the four systems. You all did a wonderful job.



We haven't quite got used to Polaris at headquarters and we are moving right into a renovation project which will see every wall of the interior space and some of the exterior completely changed. The headquarters staff have been busy in getting more familiar with Polaris and at the same time working with plans and architects and different engineers. The staff keeps reminding me that there is not much time for a dull moment.

One of the results of the downturn in the world economy is the slowdown in the demand for construction and labour. This is good for us because construction costs have declined substantially.

Another result of this down turn is the use of the library. In an article in the Edmonton Journal on February 25th. by Richard Warnica and Bill Mah we see that "Alberta may have a reputation as a rough and tumble place. But if new figures are any indication, when times get tough in this province, the tough aren't going to the bars or the boxing rings; they're heading to the library". "As Alberta's economy slowed last year, demand for books in Edmonton and Calgary soared". The same article states that Edmonton Public Library's patrons borrowed 18 percent more materials between June 2007 and January 2008. This is compared to "about three to four percent" in previous years.

We have been receiving comments from our partner library managers, that use in rural public libraries is also up over the year before. Provincial Budget is coming down sometime in April and no matter what, I still see good things happening for libraries in the province. We have been advocating to provincial and municipal politicians and we are being heard. We must continue let them know that the library card is good for much more than just borrowing books from the library.



*Polaris Celebration!
Library Managers' Council - Feb. 18, 2009*

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Upcoming Dates to Remember in 2009:

- Alberta Library Conference —April 23-26, 2009 Jasper, AB
- Library Managers' Council - May 27, 2009
- NLLS Conference—September 17 - 19, 2009, Elk Point, AB
- Netspeed Conference—October 21-23, 2009, Calgary, AB

Alice Melnyk Public Library Celebrates Grand Re-Opening!



Well, we have finally finished our renovations and are so delighted with the end results. (although it's always a work in progress, haha!).

After having: FIVE different kinds of paneling, now painted a unison color and our trim a shade darker, no more floor curling circles only new tile plus a different floor plan, it's like being in a totally different building. We are also excited about our new computer program through Northern Lights Library System & Polaris, which is much faster and easier to navigate through.

On March 11, we celebrated our Grand Re-opening. It was a huge success with well over 60 people in attendance (for our little Library, that's a lot!). Elaine Sorochan (our Town Council Rep and NLLS executive member) was our M.C. and spoke very well. We had a few guest speakers and presentations made from NLLS, the Town of Two Hills and Larry Tiedemann, which was all greatly appreciated. I spoke about the history of our Library (and became a little emotional, LOL) and our Board Treasurer, Pat Ewanishan gave a brief outlook on how the Reno's went and thanked many who volunteered or helped out in the process. With the help of our Mayor, Mark Kussman, Elaine Sorochan, Our president Suzanne Musgrave and Board member, Carrie Fox, we cut the ribbon and enjoyed some snacks, cake and coffee/juice. It was all quite lovely.

So many changes in such a short time can be overwhelming for most but I've found it to be extremely rewarding. There are so many people to thank that, well, I just don't think there is enough room or that you all would have enough time to read them. So if you happen to be passing through Two Hills, please feel free to stop in and check us out.

**Perhaps no place in any community is so totally democratic as the town library. The only entrance requirement is interest. ~Lady Bird Johnson*

Yours in reading,

Cheryl Paulichuk

Library Manager @ ATHI



(L-R) Suzanne Musgrave, Mayor Mark Kussman, Cheryl Paulichuk, Elaine Sorochan, & Carrie Fox



Natalia Toroshenko, Alberta Library Trustee Association President.



Cheryl Paulichuk, Library Manager,
Mircea Panciuk, NLLS Director



The New Alice Melnyk Public Library!





Library managers respond to the annual report programming statistics with “*We do all of that!*” The eighteen Public Library Service Responses promoted by the Public Library Association help libraries develop and deliver programs to address specific community needs. Many of the service responses are provided one-on-one with the user. A program is delivered to a larger group of people at a specific date and time.

Keep Library Service Responses in mind when reviewing the Plan of Service and developing library activities. The Responses can help broaden the library’s interaction with the entire community, not just the current library users. One way to integrate different responses into the library is to ask someone requesting information if this might be an area that more people would be interested in learning about. Many programs can be organized quickly to respond to a particular need or interest in the community.

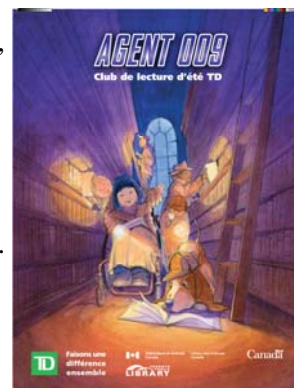
For more detailed information about Public Library Service Responses, please see Part Two of “Strategic Planning for Results”, by Sandra Nelson, published by the American Library Association in 2008. It is in the Northern Lights Professional Collection at Headquarters.

Service Responses are important and future editions of *The Aurora* will focus on them.

Summer Reading Program 2009 ~ Agent 009

It’s that time again! As the summer approaches many are already beginning their plans for this year’s Summer Reading Program. This year’s theme is Agent 009 and is focused on detectives, secret agents and investigators! Northern Lights Library System is also pleased to welcome back Comedy Magician Brian Lehr, with his Inspector Iwannano show, as this year’s Summer Reading Program performer.

Summer Reading Program materials are slowly arriving at headquarters and will be sent to all libraries shortly. The staff manual is partially up on the TD Summer Reading Program website. Be sure to check it out at www.td-club-td.ca. We would also like to remind you that the May 27, 2009 Library Managers’ Council meeting is also the SRP workshop, so make sure you bring your Summer Reading Program staff member with you. See you there!



Board Briefs ~ Larry Tiedemann



We have started a busy year; an interesting year to say the least. Already, we have gone live with Polaris. The reason migration has gone so well is the people looking after it. I want say to everyone involved, job well done!

It looks like we will get past the dreaming, and finally start renovating our building! This has been a long time coming. We will be going for tenders shortly, and construction would likely start early this spring.

One of the effects of the downturn in our economy is increased activity at the library. I know our library partners will be using this opportunity to convert the new users to long term patrons. As trustees, we need to make sure our political partners understand this effect.

While nobody knows what will be in the upcoming provincial budget, I remain very optimistic libraries won’t be left behind this time. No matter what is in the budget our challenge remains the same – how to get the best value for the money we have to work with. As trustees, we need to make sure our political partners know what we spend their money on, and the results we achieve.



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NLLS Staff Contacts

Looking for a way to contact the staff at NLLS? You can call us on the toll free line (1-800-561-0387), leave us a voice mail, or send us an email.

Check us out!

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Upcoming NLLS Board Meeting Dates for 2009

May 2, September 12

& November 14 (Regular & Annual General Meeting)

All Board Meetings are held at Northern Lights Headquarters in Elk Point

NLLS Executive Board Members: Larry Tiedemann—Chair (Town of To-field), Mary Ann Mochulski—Vice Chair (County of Smoky Lake), Elaine Sorochan—Vice Chair (Town of Two Hills), Joseph Trapani (Town of Morinville), Ray Huot (Village of Waskatenau), Mark Oberg (County of Sturgeon), Randy Boyd (Town of Bon Accord), Cecilia Quist (Lac La Biche County), Parrish Tung (Town of Elk Point), and Natalia Toroshenko (Town of Vegreville)



**Northern Lights Library System
Annual Conference**