"Resource Sharing in Changing Times"
11th Annual MINITEX Interlibrary Loan Conference
April 16, 2002

Participants in the 11th Annual MINITEX Interlibrary Loan Conference had the opportunity to learn more about change and apply it to their work situations, to learn about plans for new statewide automated systems in Minnesota and the Dakotas, and to hear an update about MINITEX programs and plans for the future. More than 150 staff from libraries in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota attended the session at Earle Brown Conference Center, St. Paul Campus, University of Minnesota.

Maureen Sullivan, an organizational consultant with more than 20 years of experience working with academic and public libraries, provided the morning's keynote presentation. In the afternoon, Philip Herold, MnLINK; Tony Stukel, ODIN; and Steve Marquardt, SDLN, provided updates on their automated systems, and Bill DeJohn presented a MINITEX update.

(Handouts and overheads from Sullivan's and DeJohn's presentations are available on the MINITEX website at: http://www.minitex.umn.edu/train-conf/highlights/041602/)

Maureen Sullivan, "Resource Sharing in Changing Time"

Sullivan began the program saying that she hoped the morning would be an opportunity for participants to learn about change and how to deal with it effectively. She noted that library staff often do not have that opportunity: "We tend to be human doers in libraries, not human beings in libraries." Her goal was to spur reflective conversation and thought and to provide references and resources that her audience could use on their own.

Sullivan noted that change is an unavoidable constant. For libraries and their interlibrary loan (ILL) staffs, forces for change range from budget questions to different ILL software, growth in the need for ILL to meet the institution's programmatic changes, electronic journals, patron empowerment and changing patron expectations, and on and on. She challenged her listeners to question whether ILL will some day become unnecessary. Pointing to changes in banking resulting from widespread use of automated teller machines, she questioned whether the Internet, document delivery options, and other developments will create a situation in which patrons will not need to seek items through ILL to meet their information needs. While she doesn't foresee this as a realistic possibility, she argued that library staff must consider options and be ready to change to meet new situations.

Discussing the mechanics of change, Sullivan referred to the work of various authors who have divided the change process into three segments variously called unfreezing, making the change, and refreezing; endings, the neutral zone, and new beginnings; and present state, transition state, and new or desired state. Each model, regardless of terminology, notes the need for a movement from the known, through a period of transition, to a future (hopefully, desirable) state.

Speaking of leaders who can help change succeed, she said, "We need leaders who recognize that individuals are self-directing and allow for making individual choices." Leaders must be comfortable working through other people and not feel that they need to know each step in a work process themselves. They need to be able to bring people together and to ask them to consider what changes will impact the future. Leaders must recognize that, for many, change is not a comfortable process, and staff will need to learn to move beyond their comfort zones to be able to embrace change.

A library or other organization must "focus on what changes are occurring, but expand their view to look at what the future may be." There must be consideration of what factors will impact the future as well as what possibilities exist for collaboration and cooperation.

Speaking of personal perceptions of change, Sullivan said change brings physiological and neurological responses as well as emotional ones. She identified three personal styles for dealing with change:

Conservers, who prefer to think in terms of incremental change. "What do we want to keep? What will change mean at each stage" of the transition. "We don't want to throw the baby out with the bath water."

Originators, who are always looking for opportunities for change. For conservers, originators "may be TOO OUT THERE."

Pragmatists, who can help conservers and originators to communicate. Typically, they can understand both views and be mediators between the two perspectives.

Individuals involved in change must focus on the "importance of keeping a sense of perspective and humor. . . . Be clear about what's in your control and what's not. . . .Risk allows opportunity for learning." Hopefully, working together through what Sullivan called "appreciative inquiry" and considering opinions of library users, library staff with all three personal styles can successfully determine what is "the baby" and what is "the bath water" for ILL and resource sharing.

To meet the challenges of the changing information world, library organizations and their staffs, as individuals, need to:

- understand learning as a process
- track changes in technology and telecommunications
- learn about neuroscience and how it relates to learning
- study how people are getting and using information
- give attention to interpersonal relationships with colleagues and with library patrons.

Philip Herold, Project Implementation Manager, MnLINK (Minnesota Library Information Network)

Herold reviewed the history of Minnesota's virtual catalog (MnLINK, the Minnesota Library Information Network), noting that the first legislative appropriation was approved in 1996 to explore the issues of automation and resource sharing in a statewide context. The Legislature provided a $12 million appropriation to fund the project in 1997.

Outlining MnLINK's current status and planned future developments, Herold said:

Fall 2002 is the expected timeframe for initial implementation of Fretwell-Downing's VDX software, which will support ILL through the MnLINK Gateway. A number of libraries will serve as will serve as pilot test libraries.

Fretwell-Downing's ZPortal will be used to replace OCLC SiteSearch as the basis for the Gateway beginning during the summer. ZPortal and SiteSearch may run in tandem for a time until ZPortal is well established.

The University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, is scheduled to migrate to the new MnLINK Integrated Library System (ILS) as of July 1. The coordinate campuses will migrate later.

The beta libraries for the Mankato MnLINK server are expected to migrate to the ILS in December.

Herold noted that more information about MnLINK is available at the webpage:

http://www.mnlink.org

Tony Stukel, Director, ODIN (Online Dakota Information Network)

Stukel traced ODIN's history, noting that it has been in operation since 1989. While ODIN is operated by the North Dakota University System (NDUS), it is funded by NDUS and the individual participating libraries. It is used currently by 56 libraries of all types in North Dakota.

Speaking of electronic resources, Stukel noted that six NDUS libraries are using Docutek onCampus' ERes ereserves system on a single server managed by ODIN. Gale Group and Proquest databases are available through support from ODIN, individual libraries, and North Dakota library consortia. Also, the North Dakota Legislature provided funding for new electronic resources during the 2001 session and Electric Library was chosen to provide resources for all North Dakota libraries.

Stukel outlined the steps underway to identify a replacement for ODIN's current operating system, which is based on World Wide PALS. An RFP was issued to 13 vendors in January 2002, and six valid responses were received. It was decided that Endeavor, Ex Libris, and Innovative Interfaces should be invited to give vendor presentations in late May. Four evaluation teams of 7-12 members each will review the proposals and vendor presentations and make a recommendation to the eight-member steering committee during the summer. The goal is to begin implementation of the new system next year.

Steve Marquardt, Executive Committee, SDLN (South Dakota Library Network

Marquardt, who is Dean of Libraries, South Dakota State University, explained that SDLN (South Dakota Library Network) was the first multi-type, multi-function automated library system in the country. The system is funded totally by user fees from participating libraries, which include 35 full member libraries; 20 associate members (which don't use all SDLN's modules); and 151 remote access libraries. System statistics show that web access to SDLN has more than doubled this year from the same period last year.

He described the process that planners have used to select a new operating system to replace SDLN's current World Wide PALS-based software. The RFP was issued last October and open evaluation meetings to discuss vendor proposals were held in January. The following vendors were asked to provide demonstrations: epixtech (Horizon), Endeavor (Voyager), Ex Libris (Aleph), and VTLS (Virtua). Demonstrations are scheduled to end in June, and a preferred system will be selected after evaluations are complete.

Current plans are to seek funding for the new system from the South Dakota Legislature during the 2003 legislative session. As is the case in North Dakota, SDLN planners want to begin implementation of their new system next year.

Bill DeJohn, Director, MINITEX, "Resource Sharing in Changing Times"

DeJohn provided an overview of the current status of MINITEX's interlibrary loan, document delivery, delivery system, and MULS programs and developments over the past year. He discussed usage levels for the Gale and Proquest databases that make up the Electronic Library for Minnesota as well as increased use of e-learning technologies and sponsorship of video-conferences.

DeJohn also discussed MINITEX's budget session in view of Minnesota's budget shortfall and noted that an announcement would be made soon on how the budget reduction would impact MINITEX's statewide electronic resource licensing initiatives.

For more complete information about DeJohn's presentation, see:

http://www.minitex.umn.edu/train-conf/highlights/041602/