



A Program of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education and the University of Minnesota

# MESSENGER

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## MINITEX Schedules Public Library Node Meeting for Aug. 17

Please join us for the MINITEX Public Library Node Meeting on Thursday, Aug. 17. This meeting involves Minnesota public libraries authorized by the Minnesota State Library to send interlibrary loan requests directly to the MINITEX Office. It’s been a few years since we had a Node meeting — place-a-holds were discussed at the last one. With the MnLINK Gateway operational, it is time for front line staff to come together to review how best to work with MINITEX staff and discuss other interlibrary loan operational processes. This is a good time to bring questions you may have about MINITEX operations as well as interlibrary loan operations.

The meeting will be held at the Hennepin County Library (Brookdale), located at 6125 Shingle Creek Pkwy, Brooklyn Center. The day will start with a continental breakfast from 9-9:30 a.m. The meeting will start at 9:30am and end no later than 3:30pm. Lunch will be provided.

There will be presentations on interlibrary loan topics, such as overdue and lost books, courier delivery issues, and VDX. Front-line interlibrary loan staff involved in processing requests are especially encouraged to attend.

Registration information will be distributed in the next few weeks.

If you have any questions about the meeting, please contact Carol Nelson ([c-nels@umn.edu](mailto:c-nels@umn.edu), 612-624-7879, 800-462-5348)

## Annual MnLINK Conference Set for Sept. 11

Mark your calendar for Monday, Sept. 11, for the Annual MnLINK Conference. Still in the planning stages, this conference is expected to include both individual sessions and a keynote speaker to enable library staff to explore new technologies across all library types. With academic and public libraries now communicating through the MnLINK Gateway and the Ex Libris Aleph systems and materials increasingly flowing throughout the state, this conference can serve as a chance to share technological innovations.

## MINITEX/OCLC Users Group Will Meet this Fall

The long-dormant MINITEX/OCLC Users Group meeting will be revived this fall! We are excited to announce that our keynote speaker will be Lorcan Dempsey, OCLC's Vice President of Research and Chief Strategist, and author of a thought-provoking blog on libraries, services, and networks. The agenda will also include a panel examining the future of technical services and cataloging, user group discussions for CONTENTdm and ILLiad subscribers, and much more.

The Users Group meeting will be held on Monday, Oct. 16, 2006 at the Sheraton Minneapolis West, near Ridgedale. More details will be forthcoming.

## Minnesota Digital Library – New Directions

*By Bill DeJohn*

The Minnesota Digital Library Coalition (MDLC) Steering Committee decided this spring to make MINITEX the administrative home of the Minnesota Digital Library (MDL). MINITEX will administer a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant, awarded by the Minnesota State Library Services (a unit of the Minnesota Department of Education), to continue development of the MDL as a statewide resource. Members of the MDLC represent academic and public libraries; state, county, and special historical societies; K-12 education; and state and educational agencies.

There will be changes in the administration of the Minnesota Digital Library. The \$221,000 grant, with an additional \$30,000 from MINITEX reserves, will fund continued collection development for the MDL, which includes digitized images, maps, and documents. It will also support MDL outreach efforts to work with libraries, historical societies, municipalities, and other interested organizations to identify statewide needs that MDL can help meet. Additional project goals include assessing the status of existing digital projects currently unavailable to the general

public and preparing a five-year plan for MDL's development.

After two successful years of gathering digitized images to develop the database of MDL's signature project, "Minnesota Reflections," the MDL will use the upcoming LSTA grant to move into a new phase in the future of digitization and preservation projects in Minnesota. Changes in personnel will occur at the end of the current Fiscal Year (June 30).

The MDLC gives its thanks to Jim Dildine who has served as Project Manager for "Minnesota Reflections" since its inception two years ago; Jim, who completed his work at the end of June, has worked to bring more than 8,000 images into the collection. We appreciate Jim's contributions and dedication to developing "Minnesota Reflections" and putting in place several of the processes and procedures that will assist us in working with local historical societies, museums, libraries, and other institutions. Jim's work has helped MDL to build a strong foundation and has provided experience we will use to work closely with other Minnesota organizations.

As we start this new phase for MDL, MINITEX will contract with St. Cloud State University for the services of Marian Rengel, who will become the Minnesota Digital Library Outreach Coordinator. To this point, Marian has overseen day-to-day administration of MDL grants as part of her responsibilities as Grant Projects Developer/Communication Coordinator, Library Resources and Technology Services, at St. Cloud State. We are happy (and fortunate) that she will continue with MDL in her new full-time role. Keith Ewing, Professor of Information Media and Coordinator of Library Systems and Collection Management at St. Cloud State, will continue as MDL Project Director.

We will continue to bring digitization projects into the "Minnesota Reflections" database. But, we also will carry out additional objectives during the project year, and Marian and Keith, along with MINITEX staff, will be instrumental in completing the following activities during FY07 (July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007):

- Maintain and upgrade the technical infrastructure, including servers, applications, databases, storage back-up and recovery, and data that support the MDL;
- Create additional content for users of the Minnesota Digital Library;
- Create new products, such as curriculum materials for teachers and students in grades 4-12 who use the Minnesota Digital Library to support history and social studies instruction to meet state and national teaching standards;
- Expand established projects and develop new projects to broaden the scope of the MDL;
- Work with current and potential institutional and individual users of Minnesota Digital Library to better understand their needs and to plan the future of the MDL more precisely.

Our signature project, “Minnesota Reflections,” has met a tangible public need, which was anticipated by the MDLC Steering Committee. Now, our development and planning must be responsive to the needs of and directly informed by the public and participants in MDL projects. We will work closely with the Minnesota Historical Society in further development of “Minnesota Reflections” as they work closely with cultural heritage institutions.

We will carry out assessment activities along with more visits with MDL participants and working closely with staff at the Minnesota Historical Society and the University of Minnesota, the two current scanning sites for MDL.

For more information on the Minnesota Digital Library, visit [www.mndigital.org](http://www.mndigital.org) or contact Bill DeJohn ([w-dejo@umn.edu](mailto:w-dejo@umn.edu)), Keith Ewing ([kewing@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:kewing@stcloudstate.edu)), or Marian Rengel ([mrregel@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:mrregel@stcloudstate.edu)).

## New Recommendations for Overdue, Damaged, & Lost Materials Approved

The MnLINK Gateway Operations Committee and the MINITEX Policy Advisory Committee have approved new recommendations for overdue, damaged, and lost materials drawn up by the MINITEX/MnLINK Interlibrary Loan Committee. The Recommendations’ goal is to “clarify procedures and policies and to offer guidance in the handling of . . . [these materials] for both the borrower and the lender.”

As the Recommendations’ Introduction explains:

*The guiding principle behind handling of all overdue, damaged, and lost materials is that the borrowing library is responsible for the items until their return and receipt by the lending library. Although the advent of MnLINK resulted in an increase in the direct requesting of materials between libraries, including unmediated patron initiated requests, this does not change the responsibility of the borrowing library for materials their patrons have requested.*

The Committee’s primary recommendations include:

- *The Committee strongly recommends that all libraries implement a means of automatically generating overdue notices for their patrons who have borrowed interlibrary loan materials. The borrowing library retains responsibility for all communication with their patrons.*
- *The committee strongly recommends that lending libraries send an invoice not later than six months after the due date. The borrowing library may request an invoice from the lending library at any point that they determine the item is lost (or damaged). If the lending library does not provide an invoice within six months of the due date (or within*

*six months after being requested by the borrowing library), the borrowing library may assume there will be no charge for the item.*

- *The committee strongly recommends that once a request has been updated to “checked in” on the interlibrary loan system of the lending library, the borrowing library is no longer responsible for the item.*
- *The committee strongly recommends that the lending library inform the borrowing library as soon as they have determined an item has been damaged. It is also important that the borrowing library contact the lending library immediately if an item received through interlibrary loan is damaged. The lending library is responsible for determining the appropriate charge to assess on damaged materials. It is critical that both the borrowing and lending libraries package ILL materials properly to prevent damage that may occur in shipping.*

To read the Committee’s rationale and the full set of Recommendations, see the new MINITEX/MnLINK Interlibrary Loan Committee webpage in the Committees (<http://www.minitex.umn.edu/committees/>) section of the MINITEX website.

## **MnLINK Gateway Brings New Functionality to Libraries & Users**

Thanks to a successful upgrade to Version 3.0 of Fretwell-Downing’s VDX/ZPORTAL software in early June, staff members and users of MnLINK Gateway libraries now enjoy new functionality. The upgrade means that users can refine their searching capabilities by limiting results sets to a specific year, by a specific range of years, and by limiting journal articles retrieved to those that are peer reviewed. In addition, users can view article information, such as the table of contents, author information, and more.

With the new enhancements, authenticated users can now also search many of the ELM databases in their native interface and can, finally, search NetLibrary

through the MnLINK search box. Users can also enjoy the new capability to sort their results by relevancy and by the presence of full-text. Finally, functionality has been added to handle ease-of-use issues providing users with multiple ways to link the details of any item as well as the ability to terminate requests in VDX, which shortens the cancellation procedures. These features combine to speed processing time for the libraries.

While these interface changes make it easier to search the Gateway, background changes are providing librarians with more control over the number of requests that patron’s can place in the system. Real time request limits are in place to limit patrons to a specified number of outstanding requests by server site. With this enhancement has come added responsibility for library staff members who complete requests and finish the ISO protocol. MnLINK is closely monitoring the effects of the request limits to determine if adjustments will be needed in the future.

While each of these enhancements is helping libraries manage requests, an additional change to the MnLINK rota also seems to be providing greater lending load equalization across the state. These changes, put into place early in the spring, allow MnLINK to take advantage of the randomization feature built into the system and, as a result, spread the lending responsibilities more broadly. Initial reactions to the rota changes have been positive.

## **New Sites on the MnLINK Gateway**

MnLINK welcomes the libraries, staffs, and users of Pioneerland Library System, Kitchigami Regional Library, and Rochester Public Library to the MnLINK Gateway. Pioneerland joined earlier this spring, and this summer brings Kitchigami and Rochester Public onto to the Gateway. With the addition of these systems, we have again broadened the number and types of materials easily accessible to Minnesota library users statewide.

Each of the new library systems received training from Nick Banitt of MnLINK, technical support from Michael Berkowski of MINITEX’s Information Technology unit, and set-up by Fretwell-Downing

staff to bring their systems on board smoothly. With a new streamlined training and set-up process in place, adding libraries is becoming easier for each new site. MnLINK will continue to work with the established list of interested libraries to make the available collections more robust.

Unfortunately, MnLINK has had to delay bringing the important collections of Carleton College and St. Olaf College to the system due to delays in the automation needed to allow full communication between the OCLC ILLiad product and the Fretwell-Downing VDX product. We are awaiting a new release from ILLiad that should allow us to move forward with this effort.

## News from ELUNA – Changes Coming from Ex Libris

*By Joyce Hommel*

We'd like to share some of the announcements from the ELUNA (Ex Libris Users of North America) meeting held in early June that will have an impact for libraries using the Ex Libris products in the MINITEX region. This meeting, which is geared toward technical development of the Ex Libris product line, is held yearly and only recently expanded from a strict ALEPH focus to include Ex Libris' other products: SFX, MetaLIB, Verde, DIGITOOLS and the newly announced PRIMO products. During the meeting, Ex Libris and the ELUNA Steering Committee made several announcements of importance to the region:

- Ex Libris formally announced their plans to continue forward with PRIMO, a front-end interface for cross-platform searching that separates back room functional areas (such as circulation, acquisitions, technical services, etc.) from the public interface. This platform focuses on integrating library catalog information with web materials, recommender services, and other user-focused functions. The University of Minnesota Libraries, Twin Cities was noted as one of Ex Libris' PRIMO development partners with specific activities planned for usability studies and interface design discussions. (The University Libraries will be announcing more information on the partnership in the next few

weeks.) At this time, PRIMO is early in its development.

- The Question/Answer session (always one of the most interesting of the sessions) focused on Ex Libris' interest in lowering the total cost of ownership of their product. Ex Libris committed to writing a usability report for increased processing usability and to provide this report by ELUNA 2007.
- A second focus for the company in the coming year is to work toward closer integration across their product line.
- Lengthy discussions were held on the traditional Aleph enhancement process. The new process for ELUNA will shift from endorsing individual enhancements tied to one functional module to an annual vote for a "big area" for focused development. The example given during the discussion was the area of printing, which plays a role in all modules and is important for users of several.

Once the decision of the "big area" is made, Ex Libris says:

- A team will be appointed to work on developing a list of needed processes. There was no information on how members of the team will be selected or how libraries can become actively involved.
- Fixes suggested by the team will be developed by Ex Libris in 18 months, regardless of the available version.

The ELUNA steering committee and Ex Libris have not yet determined if the voting for the "big area" will be a weighted vote or will be one institution/one vote.

It was announced that the "smaller" detail issues will be handled by Ex Libris' international user organization, IGeLU. It will remain important that functional specialists gain involvement in this group.

- Ex Libris officially announced that they are moving to providing support for only two versions back from the current version of the Aleph software – this change will come into play by the release of Version 19. At that time, they will only support versions 17, 18, and 19. They are working to bring their sites up to at least Version 17 to begin enforcement of this policy. They noted that the bigger problem with sites staying with older versions of Aleph is with their European customers.
- After the conference ended, results of voting for the ELUNA steering committee were announced. We are very pleased to have Christina Meyer, University of Minnesota Libraries, Twin Cities, continue with the Steering Committee. She will serve as the Vice Chair of the group. Gary Johnson, formerly Executive Director, South Dakota Library Network (SDLN), will not continue as a Committee member. With changes in other representative seats, we should keep a close eye on consortial concerns and determine the best ways to address them through the new steering organization.

Becky Ringwelski also attended the ELUNA meeting, and she and Linda Albee of SDLN provided the introduction for the ILL Version 18 demonstration provided by Ex Libris. Becky and Linda were recognized for their important contribution to the development of ILL improvements in this version and for their participation on the IGeLU ILL Group.

## On My Mind, Too Many & Too Few

By Bill DeJohn

I'd like to discuss two additional concerns to add to the ones I mentioned in my last two "On My Mind" articles. (See the April and December issues at: <http://www.minitex.umn.edu/publications/messenger/archives.asp?pubYear=2006>)

### *Request Limits & Customer Service*

The first is the result of enhancements we have underway in the MnLINK Gateway. In the last 18 months,

we have provided our end users with access to nearly all the online library catalogs in the state and have given them the "Get It" button to generate interlibrary loans. Yes, we all thought MnLINK would bring a HUGE increase in interlibrary loan traffic, but we didn't plan adequately for it at local levels where more staffing appears to be needed. Now, we have a cadre of end users who are making heavy use of the Gateway – they are requesting things they discover and want to read, listen to, watch, or whatever they want to do.

To quote just three end users who filled out the MnLINK feedback form:

- "WOW, I am in heaven!! I have access to almost every book in print!! I am in heaven!!"
- "Books I cannot find at [my local library], I find on MnLINK. I love it! I use it several times a week!"
- "Now that is one tax dollar usage I can totally get behind."

On page 4 of this issue, there is an article that identifies MnLINK enhancements now in place to help end users, and there are many. A background change sought by Gateway server sites was more control over the number of requests that patrons can place in the system. The request limits that Gateway server sites have chosen range from 5-25. That is, an end user can have up to the number of active requests specified by his/her server site. We asked for that enhancement from the vendor and we received it, but are these limits too 'limiting'?

Some library staff argue that the limits are more than generous because interlibrary loan is a privilege that should not be abused, and some end users have placed hundreds of requests. I suspect this isn't the majority of users, however, but we don't have studies at this point. And, library staff worry because the process is labor intensive and costly — even though we have automated the end user's process of making the request. I am not sure whether there should be limits, or what those limits should be. What do you think? The more functionality we provide for Gateway server sites and local libraries, the more I worry that many will impose more limitations, which may cause inequities across the resource sharing system. It may

be the case that limitations are being placed on the number of patron-initiated unmediated requests, but not on staff-generated interlibrary loan requests for patrons — which probably brings up a different set of issues.

I don't believe many Minnesota academic libraries would want to impose limits, but I may be mistaken. If a faculty member writing a book wants to borrow many items, then that would happen. Or, if a student working on a research paper requests a number of items, that probably will occur.

The MnLINK Gateway provides opportunities for end users to request things easily regardless of whether they are in their library, home, office, school, college, etc. And, they are — in some cases, they prefer to use the MnLINK Gateway before their own local ILS. I'm sure some local library staff want to 'drive' the user to their OPAC before they go to the Gateway. There isn't the time or space to bring up studies that show some people prefer the broader access that the Gateway, or WorldCat, or Google over local OPACs. The Gateway software does catch most owned items before requests are transmitted to other libraries, although there can always be some missed for various reasons.

Most of the items requested are returnables — that is, they are loans for items that will be pulled from shelves, sent to a requesting library and, then, returned to the owning library. Even though the Gateway software transmits a request directly to a library where the item is available, someone still has to take that item from the shelf and process it through various 'hand-offs' before it reaches the requester. Then, when the material is returned, there are various hand-offs until it reaches the owning library where someone has to shelve it in the proper location so it can be found again.

The volume of Gateway requests is causing issues at the local level. One issue is that local library staff must complete the request and finish the ISO process; if this isn't done correctly, the end user's record will continue to count the request against the allowed request limit, even though the user has returned the material. Several libraries are having problems with that record-clearing process, and non-processed returns cause a customer service problem that isn't necessarily clear to the end user — or to local public service staff whom the user may consult.

I don't know what the answer is, but there are questions we have to ask ourselves. For many local public libraries, reallocation of staff and/or adding staff for interlibrary loan does not seem to be a possibility. On the other hand, we need to discuss in a broader policy setting how we offer what end users want to borrow in a resource sharing network, or do we want to make sure they follow the 'rules'? These rules, such as limitations on requests, may not exist in other parts of the Internet. Yes, we are part of the Internet, and if we want our end users to make more use of our libraries, we need to ensure that they feel welcome and that we meet them on their terms, not on ours. These are really hairy issues we need to tackle, and they won't be resolved easily.

### ***Educational Technology in K12 Schools***

The other concern I have is raised by recent articles in the Minneapolis *StarTribune* about the lack of adequate educational technology in our K12 schools. What I don't understand is why there isn't more of an uproar from public and academic librarians about this issue. At least, I haven't detected any serious vocal concern, except among ourselves. I am not sure how it would even be expressed. Maybe it relates to Minnesota-nice. The relevant articles in the *StarTribune* were:

- May 4, 2006: "State's education tech grade dips to a D." (p.1.B) A report published by *Education Week*, a national education periodical, ranked Minnesota second to last in technology in schools. In 1999, the state was at the top of a similar list. The *StarTribune* article spoke of the report, [Technology Counts 2006](#):

*The report. . . gave Minnesota a D for the access teachers and students have to educational technology. It's an almost total reversal from 1999, when an earlier Education Week report on technology showed Minnesota outpacing much of the country in wiring its schools... Minnesota lags behind much of the country when it comes to student access to computers and high-speed Internet, infusing technology into graduation standards and requiring that teachers and administrators be trained in how best to use technology in the classroom.*

- June 13, 2006: “Keeping the high in high-tech learning.” (p.1B) This article contained quotes from MN Department of Education officials and staff at the Minnesota Connections Academy, an online school on Lake Street in Minneapolis. In answer to the question “why do Minnesota schools need to beef up their technology,” the lead teacher at the Academy responded:

*iPods, digital cameras, personal digital assistants, blogs, video conferencing data crunching, distance learning, virtual science labs, computer-aided design. These are just a trickle of the technology today’s students will be expected to use, master and expand upon once they graduate. And those kids, she said, can’t afford to be left behind.*

The actual grades given by *Education Week* were:

	Minnesota	Average States Score
Access to technology	D+	C+
Use of technology	D+	C+
Capacity to use technology	F	C
Overall Grade	D	C+

We have heard over the last few years of some comparisons of Minnesota with Wisconsin. In this report, the same areas in Wisconsin were graded B-, D+, B- and overall grade of C. (You can access [Technology Counts](http://www.edweek.org/tc06) online at [www.edweek.org/tc06](http://www.edweek.org/tc06).)

The Minnesota Legislature did pass legislation in the just completed legislative session that requires the Commissioner of Education to embed technology and information literacy standards into the state’s academic standards and graduation requirements. This is a start but if the equipment is not readily available in classrooms, then it may just frustrate teachers and students.

Compare the remarks in the [Technology Counts](http://www.edweek.org/tc06) report with a Minnesota Digital Library report on a survey

of 70 Minnesota social studies teachers, *Making History: The Minnesota Digital Library and the K-12 Teaching and Learning Community*. (You can find this report at [www.mndigital.org/](http://www.mndigital.org/)) On page 7, it states:

*Almost all teachers completing the Minnesota Digital Library survey (67 out of 70) said that they had at least one computer connected to the Internet in each classroom at their school. Some teachers pointed out that while there might be a computer in every classroom, that didn’t mean that students had access to computers. If a teacher has one computer in his or her classroom dedicated to administrative tasks such as grading, the teacher may be reluctant to allow students access to that computer. The majority of the teachers surveyed reported having three or more computer labs available for student use in their school building, but 47% of teachers surveyed said they rarely use a computer lab for teaching. . . .Some teachers can’t use labs because they aren’t available, while others don’t want to use the labs because they feel that technical support isn’t adequate.*

I am sure there are many schools where the opposite is true, and students and teachers have adequate access to computers and the Internet. However, it probably is hit and miss, as was indicated in the June 13 article.

I think we need to make a bigger issue out of this, and I am as guilty as anyone else. I am not sure how to do it, but students coming out of the K12 system are either going into college and will be students there who need to know how to use technology and make critical decisions about information found on the Internet and elsewhere, or they are going into the workforce and need to know those same skills to be successful in their community. Either outcome affects academic and public libraries since the young people are either paying tuition to help support an academic library or they paying taxes to support their public library.



## *In Summary, Two Points*

1) The recent report *LONG OVERDUE: A Fresh Look at Public and Leadership Attitudes About LIBRARIES in the 21st Century* (available at [PUBLICAGENDA.ORG](http://PUBLICAGENDA.ORG)) indicated:

*But libraries cannot survive on accolades alone. If they are to compete successfully for dwindling public dollars, if they are to develop the community connections and visibility that they require to thrive, public libraries will need to look carefully at opportunities to strengthen their role in addressing the serious problems in their own communities. Then they need to start speaking up and reaching out to the community soldiers who can help buttress this vital community institution. (p. 13)*

2) And, a report, *An Accountability System for Higher Education in Minnesota*, submitted to the MN Office of Higher Education on June 2 suggested a number of policy discussions that need to take place. One of them is: “What should higher education institutions be doing to assist K-12 education in improving completion rates and preparation of secondary school students?” (p. 44)

I would suggest that the issue of growing lack of educational technology is one that all librarians could get behind and begin to raise awareness about across the state. I would be interested in hearing from those of you who are also concerned about this issue. I am not sure that we should just leave it for school media specialists to continue to try and make this point. Local funding officials should be aware of this growing problem and how it affects everyone else in their communities and is not just a K12 issue.

## **Merger of OCLC & RLG Approved by RLG Membership**

Research Libraries Group (RLG) member institutions have approved a proposal to combine operations with OCLC, clearing the way for two of the world’s largest membership-based information organizations to merge beginning July 1. RLG’s online products and services will be integrated with OCLC’s, and RLG’s program initiatives will be continued as RLG-Programs, a membership-based organization that operates as a new division of OCLC Programs and Research to support architecture, standards development, and best practices.

In the three-state MINITEX region, more than 400 libraries participate in OCLC and all libraries in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota have access to OCLC’s WorldCat bibliographic database through statewide licensing agreements. Minnesota Historical Society and the University of Minnesota Libraries, Twin Cities, are members of RLG.

“With the addition of RLG, we have gained a wealth of knowledge, experience and talent,” said Jay Jordan, OCLC President and CEO. “Our combined organization leverages our individual program strengths, services and innovative research initiatives to deliver more value to a greater number of libraries, museums, archives and other research organizations worldwide.”

“We intend to combine the practices of RLG and OCLC in a very powerful way—by putting together the traditions of RLG and OCLC, we’ll create a robust new venue for research institutions and new capacity that will provide unique and beneficial outcomes to the whole community,” said James Michalko, former RLG President and now Vice President, RLG-Programs Development.

The RLG Board of Directors and the OCLC Board of Trustees announced the proposal to combine organizations on May 3. The agreement was approved by the required two-thirds of voting RLG member institutions that concluded in early June.

Staff from the two organizations have been meeting since the proposal was announced in May to plan for integration of systems, products, and services. RLG's online products and services will be integrated with OCLC's as appropriate. For example, RLIN, the RLG Union Catalog, will be integrated into WorldCat, delivering economies of scale and reach that will benefit members of both RLG and OCLC.

An FAQ that includes information on the combined organization as well as updates on some specific products and services is available at:

<http://www.oclc.org/news/releases/oclcrlgfaq.htm>.

The FAQ will be updated as new information becomes available.

## Minneapolis Public's Central Library Opens

Minneapolis Public Library's new Central Library opened with a full day of festivities on May 20. Construction of the five-story structure took three years and required that much of the library's collection be put into storage for the period. With the new library's opening, the majority of the library's regular collection are now available on open shelves.

For more information about the new library, see: <http://www.mplib.org/newcentrallib.asp>

MINITEX staff have resumed their daily visits to the Central Library, which, together with the University of Minnesota Twin Cities Libraries collections, provide the majority of materials needed to fill interlibrary loan requests that come into the MINITEX office.

## MINITEX Interlibrary Loan Conference - "Interlibrary Loan: It's About the User"

This year's MINITEX Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Conference, entitled "Interlibrary Loan: It's About the User," was attended by more than 150 staff members from MINITEX participating libraries who had the opportunity and to hear presentations and network with their colleagues.

Nancy John, University of Illinois, Chicago, started the May 1 event with a keynote address entitled, "Not Quite at Your Fingertips." She discussed technologies and resources that could be adapted for library use to assist current patrons and attract new users. Suzanne Ward and Corinne Hill presented "Buy, Don't Borrow: Interlibrary Loan Meets Collection Development," describing the experiences of Purdue University and Denton (TX) Public Library in implementing "buy versus borrow" programs as complements to traditional ILL systems.

The afternoon provided a chance for conference attendees to meet in small groups to discuss:

- ideas for improvement of ILL suggested in the morning presentations that they would like to implement in their own libraries and
- what they see as major trends for ILL in the future. They were asked to identify ways in which MINITEX might be able to help libraries deal with these trends.

Bill DeJohn provided a MINITEX update to conclude the day's session.

PowerPoint presentations and notes from the afternoon breakout sessions are available on the MINITEX website:

<http://www.minitex.umn.edu/train-conf/highlights/2006-05-01/>

### State Plan for Minnesota Libraries Survey

As the Minnesota State Plan for Libraries begins to take shape, the priorities and values of the Minnesota library community are important, and the State Planning Task Force seeks input by Minnesota's library staff and library users. Please complete a brief survey on how libraries affect you and your community. All responses will be considered in the planning process. The survey will be active until July 7.

The survey is available at:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB225BF6V4DMX>

### MLA/MEMO Legislative Forum Set for July 11

The 2006 Minnesota Library Association/Minnesota Educational Media Organization Legislative Forum will be held at the new Como Park Zoo Visitor's Center, St. Paul, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on July 11. The session will give attendees a chance to hear State Librarian Suzanne Miller, state legislators including State Senator Steve Kelley (chair of the Senate Education Committee), the MLA/MEMO lobbyists, and others. Sessions will discuss the 2006 Legislative session and the outlook for 2007.

For more information, see:

<http://www.mnlibraryassociation.org/Leg%20Forum/2006%20Forum.htm>

### Gary Johnson Leaves SDLN

Gary Johnson has resigned his position as Executive Director of the South Dakota Library Network to become Associate Director, College Center for Library Automation (CCLA), in Tallahassee, which uses an Ex Libris platform to provide automated library and information services to Florida's community colleges. We join with Gary's colleagues throughout the region in thanking him for his work for South Dakota and MINITEX-region libraries and library users.

A search is underway for Gary's successor in Spearfish.

Until Gary's successor is found, Randy Parks and Linda Allbee will be interim co-directors of SDLN, for technical operations and for Aleph functions and user groups, respectively.

For information about the SDLN Executive Director's position, see:

<http://yourfuture.sdbor.edu>

For more information about CCLA, see:

<http://www.cclafloida.org/>

## MINITEX's Electronic Communications

In addition to our print publications, MINITEX maintains a number of electronic communications vehicles to provide information about our programs.

The MINITEX electronic discussion group, MINITEX NEWS, will allow MINITEX users to exchange questions and answers about new technologies, MINITEX policies and procedures, and other issues. To subscribe, follow these steps:

1. Point your web browser to: <http://lists.minitex.umn.edu>
2. Click on **minitex-news** in the list
3. Provide the information requested on the information page

The MINITEX World Wide Web homepage (<http://www.minitex.umn.edu>) provides information about MINITEX services and programs and access to MINITEX publications. It also allows searchers to link to other Internet homepages.

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This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Please call Elly Gustafson Held at (612) 624-1081 or (800) 462-5348 or by e-mail ([ellygh@tc.umn.edu](mailto:ellygh@tc.umn.edu)).

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