

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT** **March 2006**

Automation Project – We went live on Friday, February 24. There were a few matrix issues; when staff tried to check out some of the media formats they had not been linked to the patron type but we had WIN and VALNet staff on hand and they were able to quickly remedy the problems. The scanners all read the barcodes, and the receipt printers printed albeit the printouts were extraordinarily long. Overall what we are encountering is the steep learning curve that comes with a project of this magnitude. Many staff noted that the training on the test database could only take them so far – until they could use the live database they would not feel any real confidence in their ability to use the system. Therefore, what you read below indicates that they are in there with their sleeves rolled up and making the best of the new system.

We are receiving comments from the public indicating that they love or dislike the new system but overall patrons are adapting well. Change does not come easy for many people and this project represents a huge change.

All items returned through March will be checked in on both Sirsi (the old system) and Endeavor (the new system). This is necessary because there is no way to tell which system the item was checked out on so to ensure it is checked in we are doing it twice. Anne has a check-in site in the Board Room so that staff can focus on what the screens are saying since using two systems is challenging, even in a quiet and controlled room!

VALNet Board of Directors – We had an all-day retreat on Thursday, March 9. Issues still pending are whether Latah courier costs will be built into the VALNet budget. This was an issue that I brought up early in the process and have mentioned it regularly since then. We are developing next year's budget (fiscal year begins July 1) now and I hope to be able to report, that it was included. It will represent a significant sum (about \$10,000) in the VALNet budget which lies at the core of their concerns. However, with Latah County Library District coming on and sharing the existing expenses I think even with an increase for courier costs the VALNet libraries should see a lower or at least static amount from this years numbers.

Accounting Software Project – Carol is now printing checks using our new Quick Books software! However, she still must go back and input all AP's since October 1 so we can run accurate reports. This is her top priority, except when it is time to do payroll it drops to #2 priority.

Moscow Library Lower Level Project –Other than converting the supply room into an office for Carol the lower level work is finished. The sorting shelves for the donated materials are proving to be a wonderful change. Mary Hughes, Moscow Friend and volunteer extraordinaire has already spent considerable time sorting the materials. She labeled the shelves according to the way the books are sorted at the sale so she can box materials and they will only have to be unpacked and placed on the tables! That will make the setup process go much smoother.

Annual Spring Book Sale – According to Susan Lundquist, the Friends brought in \$6,600, which includes annual membership fees that were paid. Many comments were received on how nice the space looked this year. Because the "junk" was recycled rather than stored most everything was on a table rather than having boxes under the tables awaiting space on the table. And for the first time in recent history there was enough food on Friday night! It took me three misfires but this time I think I got it right.

### **Branch Information**

Bovill – February has gone by fast with all the preparations for the move to VALNet. After a few trips to Moscow for training and lots of conversations about the process I think I am prepared to learn how the new system will work. I had a great crew of volunteers to help me with the pick and scan and it went

quickly and we had Bovill done in two days. It was a good way for everyone involved to see all of the great books that we have here. More than once I heard my volunteers comment on the materials we had and they were even caught taking a break and doing some reading. I am glad to have that chore behind me though and look forward to being a part of the VALNet system.

My friends group met on February 8 and came up with some great ideas for fundraising and ways to draw more attention to the library. Once a month we will have a book and coffee hour where folks can come in and enjoy socializing, browsing and sharing books they have read. They also have asked that people bring used books possibly for trade with others or to purchase with the funds going into the friends group. The next book and coffee hour will be on March 27 at 10:00 a.m.

This last month the library has had times of being very busy and right down to being very quiet. The kids continue to come in after school and fill up the computers and I have seen a bit of an increase in adults coming in for computer use as well.

Deary –

Genesee – It's been quite a month.

The Friends met, the videos were rotated, every item in the library with a barcode was scanned in preparation for Valnet. I had a list of volunteers to help with this, however when it came time to show up I only had 3 people helping on Friday, the first day of scanning. We got about half of the collection done. Monday and Tuesday I finished it off and the library was open for business on Wed. despite the disorder. Now it's just a matter of getting comfortable with our new system.

Julietta – February has been hectic to say the least. We started the month out working to get ready for the "pick and scan" at the end of the month. We discarded some magazines and paperbacks and also put some spine labels on some paperbacks to prepare to move them to a shelf so that we can discard at least two more wire racks.

At the same time we had busy story times with from 13 to 20 participants each week. All class visits except for Kindergarten made it in for books. The kids are all anxious to receive their new library cards. The "pick and scan" went quite smoothly with only two crates of "problems" which doesn't seem bad with all the materials we scanned. The volunteers were great and we finished in two days. Having two scanners made it go much faster. Cynthia is coming in to help with issuing cards and shelving for the next two weeks which will be a great relief. The first open day after the "p & s" was pretty busy so I expect things will be that way for a while.

It will be good to get things cleared off of Sirsi and into Endeavor so that we can finally lay Sirsi to rest. Onward and upward!

Moscow –

Access Services –

Adult Services – I met with Mary Neuman from the Asotin County Library, Mary Ann Funk from the Lewiston High School library, and Connie Pentzer from Prairie River Library District about VALNet group purchases of electronic titles. We are investigating discounts that might be available for online databases such as the Auto Repair Reference Center, World Book, and HeritageQuest genealogical database. We are also checking into CD audiobook discounts, as well as downloadable audiobooks.

I also met with a librarian from the UI who is interested in beginning an adult book club at the Moscow Library. This will begin in April, probably with Jared Diamond's latest book "Collapse" (he is a speaker at this year's Borah Symposium).

A couple of years we had a book club, with the help of some Friends board members and Friends' book purchases; over time interest dwindled, but I hope that some new strategies will keep a book club going this time.

Along with the rest of the public services staff, I'm learning how to use Endeavor for reference and circulation; there are some useful Sirsi capabilities, especially for reference, that I will miss in Endeavor, but I hope we old dogs can learn some new tricks!

Business Office –  
Outreach -  
Tech Services –  
Youth Services

*Potlatch* – Well, I won't go into details about Valnet, I'll just say it has been hectic. Now that we have been up and running a few days, the Pick and Scan was a piece of cake! A big thank you to the pick and scan volunteers, Anita Walsler, Salie Anderson and Dee Ross! Carol and Jim Haddock very generously purchased beautiful custom blinds for the east facing windows in the library and the west facing window in the conference room. This will help keep the library cooler in the summer. They also purchased parking stops for the parking lot so the cars won't hit the brick that supports the timbers in the front of the library. We already have some chunks out of them from cars pulling to far forward. Back to piles of books!

*Troy* – Latah Libraries are now officially a member of the ValNet consortium. February has been a very busy month. Staff has been busy training, entering patron's applications and getting last minute updates on ValNet. The branches have spent many hours pick and scanning the books in their libraries. I don't know what I would have done with out my wonderful Friends of the Troy Library. My husband had to have unexpected gallbladder surgery, so I was unable to be at the Library the first day of the pick and scan. The Troy Friends were at the Library to get the job done. They were there every day until the pick and scan was completed. Thanks so much to George and Betty Leslie, Sandy Taylor, Angela Rich, Jean Knierim, Nancy Young, Gina Pitman, and Sheila Guernsey for all of your hard work! The first day open ,on the new system was not as bad as I had anticipated. The After School Program came down that evening, so I was kept bust making new cards. Patrons are pleased they are able to choose the card they want. Onward and upward!