

# **AUTOMATED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**December 14, 2004**

## **MINUTES**

### **PRESENT**

(Voting): Tim Burke (APLM), Deb Canzano (COHS), Richard Naylor (COLN), D. Hobert (EGRN), Barbara Nichols Randall (GUIL), Daryl McCarthy (NGRN), Joe Thornton (UHLS), Gail Sacco (VOOR)

(Non-voting): Mary Fellows

9:05 AM Meeting called to order by Philip Ritter, Chair

### **I. MINUTES**

Minutes of the November 16, 2004 meeting accepted as presented.

### **II. KIDSEARCH**

M. Fellows was reporting back to the ASC, as requested, on the following:

1. The alphabet graphics on the KidSearch page have been changed as per the ASC
2. The Browse Search custom programming request to Dynix is still awaiting action. J. Thornton finally received a call from a Dynix programmer and it sounds like the custom work will take place very soon
3. The KidSearch page was created as an individual link that libraries can add to their homepages
4. Marcia Middleton (APLM) has created a graphic to be used in publicity about KidSearch and has agreed to share it with the other libraries. M. Fellows will email it to Directors and Children's Department staff.

R. Naylor suggested that clickable/typed letters of the alphabet should be placed across the top of the KidSearch page since the alphabet graphics take up two pages.

*NOTE: for a more complete description of the following items,  
see the Automation Services Report beginning on page 4.*

### **III. MONTHLY REPORTS**

The Reports Subcommittee is still working on the creation of several reports.

Some monthly reports were inaccurate due to a problem with DayEnd processing. J. Thornton noted that the Automation Department staff will try to oversee these reports more carefully.

R. Naylor noted that sometimes items may have the wrong I-Type and that is what makes

the circulation reports incorrect. For example, a COLN book may have an APLM collection code and so it would not be reported properly in the monthly report.

#### **IV. REQUESTS CANNOT BE FILLED**

As per the ASC request, the pop-up screen on the HIP selection screen has been eliminated.

The "Request Cannot Be filled" notice is configurable for individual libraries and J. Thornton has polled the libraries to find out who would like to continue with the notice.

#### **V. TRANSIT SLIPS**

The white Transit Slips that are currently printed by the Horizon system won't work for the new couriers since the slips are inconsistent and sometimes contain the library's 4-letter code and sometimes the full name. J. Thornton reported that R. Cheng (UHLS) and M. Sweeney (GUIL) are working on a change in the program. This situation must be resolved by January 1<sup>st</sup> when the new couriers begin.

D. Canzano noted that some of the Transit slips printed by the libraries are so small that they easily slip out of the books and are lost. J. Thornton noted that one of the program changes will include a series of line feeds at the end that will force printers to print longer slips.

Jo-Ann Benedetti will send out a list of the 140 codes for all of the libraries/agencies involved in the new delivery routes. The list is not yet available; CDLC still has to create new codes for all of their libraries.

#### **VI. CALENDAR EXCEPTIONS**

J. Thornton demonstrated the new web interface for making real-time changes in a library's calendar. This can be used for annual calendar changes as well as snow days or unscheduled closures. The changes are immediately effective in the circulation system. To access the calendar exceptions page, log-in on the intranet, go to Reports, log-in and then go to the calendar interface. There are several password prompts for security purposes.

#### **VII. DATABASE**

J. Thornton discussed a clarification of the roles of the member libraries' database maintenance personnel and UHLS. He noted that UHLS produced the Cataloging Manual, corrects any cataloging problems sent to us, and trains the member library staff on cataloging procedures. He also noted that Rob Carle is not in charge of maintaining the integrity of the database. How does the Database Maintenance Advisory Council fit into this?

R. Naylor noted that the ASC is the group with the power and responsibility for Automation.

The people on the Database Maintenance Advisory Council don't have the power to give directives to the Directors, but the ASC does.

G. Sacco noted that there is a whole group of Committees whose functions and responsibilities in reference to the ASC are not entirely clear. She felt that UHLS should establish a procedure for spot checking the records entered into the Database. Discussion regarding the authority of the ASC and how the quality control procedures should function.

B. Nichols Randall suggested that it would be possible to locate someone with the expertise to discuss the most common types of cataloging errors and establish a way to find and correct them either individually or globally. She noted that any corrections made by group edit would require a re-indexing of the database. This might require making the database unavailable for two days.

An overall strategy needs to be developed: What does it take to keep the database in reasonable shape? Who should take the lead in making sure that everyone is following the correct process? Should there be some group training sessions in cataloging as well as the individual sessions? What types of tools and programs are available in helping to identify the problems?

Discussion regarding the possibility of contracting with a database cleanup company. P. Ritter noted the existence of the automation account which could be used to pay for such a service.

**MOTION:** G. Sacco moved that the ASC should delegate B. Nichols Randall and J. Thornton to address the database quality issues and develop strategies for maintaining the database. They should report back to the ASC at the February meeting with some ideas. R. Naylor seconded. Unanimous.

Discussion regarding the number of records in the database for certain items and various media. Oceans 11 (Oceans Eleven) was used as an example and compared to similar records (with more display information) in Amazon.com. B. Nichols Randall noted that it is not possible, within this automation system, to display more information for each item. It is important to make sure that the MARC fields are filled in correctly in order to show the proper information when a patron searches the database.

## **VIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

Discussion regarding the In-Transit requests. J. Thornton reported that several libraries have cleaned up large amounts of their in-transit items by performing shelf checks, and finding not only their own materials, but materials that belonged to other libraries. Consensus that J.

Thornton should send out one more reminder to the libraries before the end of the year and then run another In-Transit report.

Discussion regarding the current delivery company and the missing items. R. Naylor noted that in July/August/September, the number of items lost in transit increased substantially. In addition, several valuable interlibrary loan items were lost. B. Nichols Randall suggested that the delivery company should be given a list of the items that were lost, with the date on which they were sent in transit, and should be asked for a financial settlement.

P. Ritter reported that the new delivery company has suggested changing to locked bins for transporting materials, since the Forward Sort will probably not happen on most routes. The sorting will be done in a central location. As the canvas bags deteriorate, bins will be purchased as replacements.

10:50 AM meeting adjourned.

## **NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM at UHLS**

Heidi A. Fuge

12/14/04

---

### **Automation Services Report December 8, 2004**

#### **Monthly Reports**

For various, unpredictable, and sometimes undetected reasons, the monthly statistical reports that we run and make available on the intranet are occasionally slightly incorrect. An example occurred last month, when a failure of DayEnd Processing during the last night of the month caused a problem (see [reports\\_problem.rtf](#) (attached) for a fuller description). We will try harder to anticipate and avoid this type of problem, correct it if possible, and notify you more quickly when we've detected an inaccuracy in a report.

#### **Request Cannot be Filled (update)**

From the minutes of the November 16, 2004 ASC meeting:

- The Council recommended that the "Request Cannot be Filled" notices, which were not used by any libraries represented at the Council meeting, were not necessary and should be discontinued. Discussion. R. Naylor suggested that this needed further investigation to determine if these notices are used by any of the member libraries. Can this feature be available to just a few libraries or is it an "all or nothing" feature?

We determined that this setting can be changed for individual libraries, rather than for the system as a whole. We asked directors by email if they wanted to continue to receive these notices. Most have replied (most said “No, thanks), and we will make these changes within the next week.

### **Transit Slips**

The imminent (January 1) switch to a new courier service necessitates the use of one and only one code per library, since the new courier is a much bigger operation and doesn't have time to interpret that, for instance, Upper Hudson Library System is identical to UHLS. This is only a problem for us because of “white transit slips,” the extremely efficient method of automatically printing transit slips when a requested item is checked in. This method was developed at BETH and is now used by several libraries. The problem is that the slips display the contents of a specific field in the library's record, which is not necessarily the four letter code. The libraries who are using this automated method will be extremely reluctant to return to hand writing of transit slips, so we need to devise a way to print the four letter code on the slip.

### **Calendar Exceptions**

At the last ASC meeting we discussed a new method by which the libraries can view and maintain their own calendar exceptions. That method is now available and has been used by most libraries without too much difficulty. The function is available at: [https://horizon.uhls.lib.ny.us/reports/cal\\_exc.html](https://horizon.uhls.lib.ny.us/reports/cal_exc.html)

### **Cataloging, Acquisitions, Serials, Database Cleanup, Authority Control, You Name It**

At the last ASC meeting we began a discussion of the quality of the database, the origins of the problem, plans for dealing with it, persons responsible, and complications we can expect from the implementation of Acquisitions and Serials. I've attached a document (problems.doc) that includes some email exchanges that illustrate (desultorily) some of the problems we have, some that we anticipate, and what we plan to do about them. We (ASC) can discuss the specifics or not, among the full group or a subset, but I'd really like to clarify the following issues at least:

1. UHLS Role: Since UHLS no longer does all the cataloging for the entire system, I don't think we can accept sole responsibility for the quality of records that are imported, or the management of them after they're in the database. Of course we play a major part:
  - a. Import bibliographic records from OCLC every Monday – Friday (and we identified, recommended, trained, and arranged payment for CatExpress, the cataloging tool that simplifies the importing of very high quality records).
  - b. Train catalogers on the “UHLS Standard” for cataloging, as specified in the Cataloging Manual that was produced by the Database Subcommittee (headed by Rob Carle) of the Database Maintenance Advisory Council (headed by Joe Thornton).
  - c. Fix all problems that are sent to us.
  - d. Retrain catalogers whom we identify as frequent sources of errors.
  - e. Plan and eventually manage a major authority cleanup of the database.

- f. Work continually to merge authority records, remove NEWCATS, etc. (Mary Ellen Bena)
2. Everyone Else's Role: Since UHLS no longer does all the cataloging for the entire system, I think some responsibilities have to fall elsewhere:
- a. Database Maintenance Advisory Council. Although UHLS is heavily represented on this council, I think its strength lies in the shared expertise of the participating catalogers. This is the place where I would like to see decisions made about cataloging practices, and I think that enforcement of system guidelines would be done more effectively by this group than by UHLS on its own.
  - b. Libraries. UHLS does not have the time or the staff to verify the quality of every new and old record in the database. In fact, it's likely that we use the catalog less than the libraries, and therefore are less likely to encounter problems first. The libraries should be responsible for informing the Database Maintenance Advisory Council of any problems they find, and also of any patterns they see that might indicate a particular library as the source of the problems.
  - b. Patrons. Although we can't ask them explicitly, patrons can help by sending problems that they see to UHLS through the HIP's "us" email account. This occurs now at a rate of several a week.
  - c. Dynix, Baker & Taylor, OCLC, etc. – although our influence is minimal, we can work with vendors to help to improve our database.

#### **Agenda from December 1 meeting of the Database Maintenance Advisory Council:**

1. clean up the database
2. keep it clean. I'm not sure what this entails, but I think we need to discuss the effects of multiple cataloging policies, the Acquisitions module (Baker & Taylor records), etc.
3. identify our current methods of cataloging serials
4. recommend methods (new or old) of cataloging serials and encourage libraries to use them

#### **NEWCAT problem:**

The last couple of days, I have been going through the old NEWCAT records to clean up any [of our] problems. I deleted a lot of NEWCAT bib records that had no holdings. I also deleted the subject heading "NEWCAT" in good records that overlaid a NEWCAT record. Quite a few of our NEWCAT records were from when we first came up on Horizon and just wanted to get items circulating. We were assuming that the records would be upgraded, but I guess they weren't! I put notes on all items currently circulating that the bib record needs to be fixed, so these will gradually get cleaned up.

I noticed a lot of other libraries are in the same situation, so maybe everyone could clean up their own records (do a subject search on "NEWCAT"). I am still working on this project.

#### **Acquisitions, VIP, duplicates:**

Also, we have not yet tried to implement the VIP (Vendor Integration Protocol) part of ACQ, but this will let us choose whether to copy a bib record in from Baker & Taylor or use an existing one in Horizon. This should eventually cut down on the duplicates created during the ACQ process. Also, if APLM starts using ACQ, they won't need to create duplicates either.

Does UHLS have a schedule for purging the database of bib records that have no holdings? Also, it might be worth contacting SELCO and/or SALS to find out what kind of cleanup reports they run on a regular basis.

### **Sample problem (vis-à-vis Amazon.com):**

[My director] ... looked up the movie Oceans 11. There are 8 entries in the staffpac. She couldn't tell from looking at them which was the old version, which was the new. "Why are there 3 DVD entries? Why does the one entry give you no information about what it is? Which one do I place the request on?" She challenged me to look it up in Amazon and see if I couldn't find what I was looking for more easily. So I did. There are 4 entries for Oceans 11. One way it's easier is that it doesn't matter how you spell "11" you get the same records. The entries are: the first is the new version, widescreen DVD-probably the most commonly sought after version. The next is the old version, DVD. The third is the new version, full-screen, DVD. And the fourth is the vhs. Under every entry is a link "See all 4 titles." If you follow this link from a DVD entry it shows you all the DVD versions of the title. If you follow the link from the VHS entry it shows you all the VHS versions of the title. Once you've gone this one step farther you can see exactly what is different about each entry. This is indeed very nice. So, "Why can't our system be like Amazon?" She would like to be able to search Oceans 11 (or Oceans eleven) and have 2 entries appear: one DVD, one VHS. The Full-screen vs. widescreen, new vs. old version would appear at the next level. Is there such a system that works this way?

### **Reply to previous problem description:**

... If you've seen Roy Tennant speak in the past few years, you've seen him demonstrate that Amazon and Google get it right, and library catalogs don't! The question "Why can't our system be like Amazon?" is an excellent one, but it would be hard technically and politically (are you ready to abandon MARC?), and it's largely out of our control (this is vendor territory). Which is not to say that we shouldn't try.

### **More problem samples, plus UHLS role:**

Once again I have been asked about the quality of the new records in our catalog. I would like to bring these questions to your attention since it is my understanding that this area is your responsibility.

1. SUSPECT by Michael Robotham. When searched by title, the LPB came up and the CD, but not the ordinary print copy. The librarian searched by the ISBN and it came up. She asked [our cataloger] about it and [she] fixed the filing indicator which corrected the problem.
2. PEARL by Mary Gordon. There are 2 records with 2 different horizon bib numbers. When searched by title in the staffpac, the 2 records are separated by a book of the same title, but a different author. So, there is another mistake that someone made.

I want to be really clear about this. I understand that the past is the past and that it is difficult to correct old mistakes. However, it is my expectation that 99.9% of the new records going into the database will be entered correctly. I hold UHLS responsible for establishing the standards for records and FOR ENSURING THAT THESE STANDARDS ARE MET. Tech people who are entering incorrect data need to be identified, held accountable, and corrected. Our goal, as I understand it, is to improve upon the database. That is not happening in a reliable manner and consequently our public is not being well served. Why should they look to us when they may be getting better and easier information elsewhere?

Do we have any authority control yet? Perhaps that would be helpful. And can you identify who entered a new record? Perhaps these should be spotchecked.

Maybe an isolated problem, maybe operator error:

I discovered a strange problem this morning, and Mary and I are not quite sure what to do about it.

Yesterday I added a paperback copy of Thoreau's WALDEN to the catalog. Today I found a second copy, and used the barcode on the one I added yesterday to relocate the record. When I scanned it in, it brought up the record for THE GOOD HOUSEKEEPING ILLUSTRATED BOOK OF PREGNANCY & BABY CARE. I assumed I made a mistake yesterday and deleted the copy of WALDEN and then re-added it to the correct record. Then I came across the GOOD HOUSEKEEPING book, that I downloaded the record from OCLC for yesterday. When I opened the copy screen to add my book, I noticed that several other libraries' copies of WALDEN were attached to this book as well. I can only assume that when the record came down from OCLC it write over the WALDEN record. This is very odd, as the ISBN's are absolutely nothing alike.

The Bib # for WALDEN is 380351, and the # for GOOD HOUSEKEEPING is 227389. If there is something we can do to help fix this, please let us know. We are more than willing to help, but we didn't want to move other libraries' record around without permission. Plus, there is obviously something wrong here, and thought you should be aware of it.

### **Sample problems:**

Horizon #513824 Savin' the honky tonk

This is a CD record copied from OCLC by [a library] where the 245 \$h field should have been changed to [sound recording (CD)]. Otherwise, it would look like a cassette record to someone searching the catalog.

The captain's mermaid

Paperback record not brought up to core standards by [a library]:  
fixed fields not completely filled in  
title capitalized, period after title  
pub. date in 300 field \$c-should be 17 cm.

### **Problem with Intranet Circ Reports**

VOOR brought to my attention that our circ reports on intranet report incorrect figures. Apparently, it missed one day of circ figures. I looked into it and realize we had dayend problem on Nov 30th night. I think we ran it manually on the 1st. All our circ reports on intranet is running from the clone database which is cloned on 5am on the first day of the month. Normally, it will give the correct statistics but since dayend did not finish on 11-30, it missed one day of stat. Although dayend will catch up the stat later but clone will not because we do not run dayend on clone. That is why the reports miss one day of stat. I ran dayend last night against the clone and re-run the circ reports and posted it on the intranet. Those figures are correct now.