Executive Director’s Report

Steven K. Bowers
2022 May/June

**Steering Committee:** The committee is wrapping up proposed revisions for the TLN Plan of Service and hopes to have a draft to the Member Council and Board for review later this summer. They have also recommended that TLN move forward with planning for doing a work climate study with member libraries that wish to participate. TLN is working on pricing the project and will bring more information to the Board at a later date to seek approval and funding for the project. The purpose of the project will be to get an idea of how everyone, but especially marginalized groups, feel about the work environments of our libraries. The idea to do the climate study was brought forward by the TLN Vibrant Voices and LGBTQIA+ community groups.

**EAP Renewals:** Annual renewals for the Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) services from All-One-Health were processed. TLN is still servicing over 800 library employees through the partnership, and we are pleased that our libraries are able to offer this support service through us.

**Welcome to New Director at Ann Arbor:** In early May I was able to schedule a visit with the new director at Ann Arbor Public Library, Eli Neiburger, and congratulate him on his appointment. The meeting was a chance for old acquaintances to reconnect and an opportunity to welcome any future partnership the library may have with TLN.

**New MAP Software Selected:** The TLN RFP process for selecting a MAP software provider, led by Brigette Felix, has complete and a new software provider, Local Hop, has been selected. TLN is working on finalizing contracting and will move forward with project planning in July, 2022 with a launch of the new software in Spring 2023.

**ARPA Updates:** The ARPA Grant project saw the launch of the MI Library Is Now! marketing campaign and website to promote the two library ARPA grants in Michigan, run by Lakeland and TLN. As part of the campaign, TLN’s own Justin Walker was interviewed on the TV20 Showcase and I was on WDIV Live in the D. TLN was mentioned in both segments.
**Cataloging Services:** Discussions continue internally and are planned with the membership to address a backlog of cataloging for the TLN Shared System catalog. It is typical for libraries to have a backlog of materials that need records added to their system but TLN has identified several areas that will help us address our growing work. Planning includes new access for members to assist in adding “library of things” materials and discussion continues around how to address the rise in requests for cataloging of foreign language materials. Planned discussions with the membership will hopefully identify other solutions as well.

**SEEK Senior Program Pilots:** I met with Liz Carnegie, the founder of a social service organization called, SEEK (Senior Esteem Education & Knowledge), which distributes senior living information literature at various local libraries. We are working on a pilot project to expand to a few more libraries in their Oakland County region and have reached out to specific libraries. This developing partnership connects TLN libraries and their senior communities with free information materials. Current participating libraries all have positive reviews of the service.

**MLA Think Space:** The past year it was a pleasure to participate in the Michigan Library Association’s Think Space program, which focused on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion work this year. Several TLN member library directors also participated and we will continue to work on integrating EDI principles into TLN services and initiatives.

**Michigan Cooperative Library Directors:** The directors continue to meet monthly to work on joint projects and to keep pace with each other. We were excited to have our first in-person meeting since the pandemic began. We met in Lansing in May and had a luncheon after the meeting to wish Tammy Turgeon farewell as she moves on from work at Suburban Library Cooperative. While we will miss Tammy, I am happy to report that Mallorie DeVilbiss, former director at TLN member Hartland Cromaine Library, is the new director for SLC. The cooperative directors also have group meetings to continue EDI initiatives among our joint ventures.

**Ecorse Public Library Work:** I was able to visit the Board of Trustees at EPL with Clare Membiela, from the library of Michigan, and present to them on their legal library establishment and how their Board relationship with their city should work. A follow up meeting will be schedule with their Board to provide information on Board roles and working with their Director.

**Save the Date:** The Jim Pletz Annual TLN Member Picnic, is scheduled for July 22, at the Novi Lakeshore Park. Members are invited to also wish Angie Michelini a fond farewell on her retirement, as she will be attending the picnic. Angie’s last day of work is July 20, 2022, on which the office will have a luncheon for her. Board members are invited to attend either or both events. Angie’s position is currently posted in the TLN Jobs Board.
Email Domain Name: The TLN Technology department completed the switchover of the TLN email domain name to @TLN.org on June 9. Thanks to Mike Vela, Andrea Polsgrove, Angie Michelini, Damon Dye, and the rest of the team for completing this switchover! All TLN email addresses now use the new domain name. The old email addresses will continue to work until the end of the year so that contacts can be notified and make note of the change. Board members that need assistance with their TLN email account may contact Steve at sbowers@tln.org

Library Toolkit Resource: At the request of the Board in April to create a new Michigan Library Manual for libraries and municipalities TLN is developing new library toolkit resource with webpages and links to relevant laws, documents, and more on the TLN website. More info to come.

Personal Note: I am thrilled to report that my last doctoral class completed in June. Work on my dissertation will progress over the coming years for my Education Doctorate in leadership studies. Planned dissertation work will include a “Critical Friends Group” with a small number of TLN library directors to explore the application of EDI principles in library administrative work. I am happy, however, to take a break this summer from my formal educational studies.