LIBRARY MANAGER'S COUNCIL REPORT
NLLS Executive Meeting – May 25, 2019

LMC Executive

- Jodi Dahlgren, Chair (Wainwright Public Library)
- Tracy Woloshyniuk, 1st Vice Chair (Newbrook Public Library)
- Donna Williams, 2nd Vice Chair (Vegreville Public Library)
- Isabelle Cramp, Secretary (Morinville Public Library)
- Maureen Penn, Past Chair (Lac La Biche County Libraries)

Innovative User Group Conference

I also had the opportunity to attend the IUC conference in Phoenix, AZ from May 5-9, 2019. The conference included sharing what the plans are for Innovative and Polaris for 2019 and beyond. The CEO, Jim Tallman stepped down to Executive Chairman due to health reasons and the new CEO was announced to be Shaheen Javadizadah. Another announcement that was made was that Innovative is developing a new ILS system. They already have developed the discovery layer (for web searching) and will follow with the ILS portion. I attended the following sessions.

Polaris Roadmap and Strategy – Polaris 2019 and Beyond

Polaris priorities are are follows: enhancements informed by idea lab, continued enhancements to Leap, transformative patron experiences with Inspire Discovery, security, privacy and accessibility requirements and 2+ major releases per year. They explained what will be happening with the two updates in 2019 and the plans for the 2020 updates.

Using Polaris Leap Web application

This session went through details on using Leap for Library staff.

Collection Analysis Tool

This is a tool that a library created to even out their collection between branches.

Polaris Reporting for Staff Accountability

The library system presenting this session created a report to see how quickly the various branches checked in the shelf ready items. They tracked how this affected the number of circulations and how quickly holds were filled for patrons. Then, they created a report to if branches are finding items on their picklists daily. They shared this information with all branches and it created a bit of informal rivalry and pushed staff to improve performance.

Full Time Supervision for the Part Time Employee

Supervising employees can have several issues and this session went through different types of issues and ways to prevent or deal with them. We went through hiring the right person, orientation, on the job training, motivating staff and volunteers and evaluations.

Polaris Prioritization – Spend your money wisely

Innovative has an Idea lab for Polaris where users can submit ideas for enhancements. We were split into groups, given 10 ideas that had been submitted to Idea Lab and takes with going through them and choosing which one we would spend our "$100" on. It was a very interesting process to go through and we were able to see how it works for the Innovative team.

Polaris Circulation Forum – Q & A Open discussion

This session was a round table type discussion sharing ideas for both using Polaris and library service in general. Some of the interesting things discussed were how there are several libraries are going fine free. Some mentioned that they do automatic renewals and one has a seven-day grace period. It was also mentioned that a large number of libraries removed the security gates. In addition to the gates being finicky, they felt that it creates a negative impression when a patron first comes into the library by telling them that we do not trust them. There was also discussion over finding items on the shelf that missed being checked in. Several libraries shared procedures that they have implemented in order to alleviate this such as checking in 10 items, checking the screen and then clearing the screen after making sure all 10 were checked in. Another method was double check in where one staff member checks in and places in a box and a second staff member check them in again to make sure.

You Should Know This by Now – Getting your staff tech skills on the same page

I thought this session was amazing!! This library system created a checklist for technology competencies that each off their staff should know. The competency checklist is different for each staff position based on what is required for them to do their jobs. The list needs to be very specific and they included everything from running Polaris to using the photocopier to setting the voice mail on the phone. Everyone in the library system completes the checklist, from the Library Director down to the pages. Their process involved developing the competencies and then distributing them to staff. The staff were given 2 months to prepare and they found during this time, there was a lot of team building going on between staff. When it came time to do the assessment, they had a supervisor go through each point on the checklist with each employee. The employee needed to demonstrate that they could do each item without prompting in a reasonable amount of time. They decided that each employee needed a 95% to pass. I thought this would be a great thing to utilize in any library or system and could also be used as a training tool for new staff or as a self-train tool for employees.

The Library as a Community Hub – A Discussion Forum

This session asked the question "Why can't Libraries be the hub of the community?" Libraries are already doing great things such as Storytime, makerspaces, hot spots, geocaching, lending sports kits, adult education, movie nights and so much more. The library system in Los Angeles has just announced that they will be doing a high school diploma program. There was some great discussion and one of the things that stood out was the partnerships with the schools. There were a few libraries that reported they use the student ID cards as their library cards instead of issuing another card for the student. There were also several libraries that were very integrated with the school divisions and all the kids get a free library card. It was an "opt out" vs. "opt in" system

so the school shared the information with the library unless the parent said no. The libraries promoted it to the school as we are saving you xx amount of money because now you can use our databases instead of subscribing yourselves. Another couple of libraries had a library work service delivery system where patrons can place holds and the items will be delivered to their workplace.

Taking Your Library to the Next Level – A Lightening Round

There were supposed to be three people presenting in this session and one had some flight issues and didn't make it. The first presenter was from Innovative and talked about what is ahead in workshops and training for Polaris. They are building some onboarding type of programs that Polaris users will be able to use when they are newly hired. They have training subscriptions that can be purchased and can do workflow analysis and consulting to identify opportunities for improvement. The second presenter talked about cataloguing and authority control. The third presenter was supposed to talk about email marketing which is what I was most excited about.

What's New in Polaris and Leap

This session discussed what has happened in the last couple of Polaris upgrades and what is in development for the next few upgrades. They did state that Innovative's plan is no longer to fully develop Leap. They will still do updates but likely Leap will never have the acquisitions and cataloguing portion. The new plan is to develop the new ILS Inspire and libraries can choose to move over to the new one if they like.

Leap Training on a Budget – Let FOSS Work for You

The last session I attended was using Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) to create training videos that staff can access.

Updates

Smoky Lake Public Library is turning 75 in 2019 and they are holding a celebration on June 12, 2019. There will be a family BBQ from 3-5pm and an adult "wine and cheese" event with presentations from 6-8pm. Congratulations Smoky Lake Public Library on 75 years of great service to your community!

LMC Meeting

We have a Library Manager's Council meeting on Wednesday, May 22, 2019 where we will be discussing another system's Interlibrary Loan procedure and how it is affecting us. We will also be asking Library Managers for feedback on Polaris reports and if we would like to see additions or tweaks to make them more useful.

Our Next LMC Meeting is on October 2, 2019 at 10am.

Respectfully Submitted
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