MEMO

TO: Montana State Library Network Advisory Council

 FROM: Ken Adams, Montana Shared Catalog Director

DATE: February 25, 2011

RE: Montana Shared Catalog Update

New Libraries: All 27 of the Phase 12 libraries and branches have been added to the system and all but the non-automated libraries (Absarokee Schools, Darby Schools, Sun River Valley Schools and Summit Prep School) are either live or in the test phase to go live (Libby Schools and Noxon School – live in early April). The last Phase 11 library – Ashland School is still manually adding their records and will probably be able to go live at the start of the next school year. We're on the verge of Phase 13 with 6 applicants currently being considered for acceptance into the MSC.

System Upgrades:
- Software: The SirsiDynix "Symphony" integrated library system was upgraded to version 3.3.1 (previous version was 3.2.1) on December 4, 2010. This upgrade included many enhancements and bug fixes to the software, including a completely re-worked, more modern online catalog now called "eLibrary". Until recently, these improvements have been overshadowed by 2 problems that have plagued the system since the upgrade. The first and by far, most significant was the removal of all holds that were in the system as of Dec 14. An unexpected change in background processing methods used by version 3.3.1 "reports" that manage holds, caused the deletion of these holds on the morning of Dec 14. Most of the holds were restored from system backup several days later. Steps have been taken to ensure that this never happens again, including a complete revamping and rescheduling of nearly 300 reports that are in place to process holds for the individual libraries. The other problem is random and has been very difficult to isolate. Each night the system must be "halted, initialized and restarted (HIR)" at midnight for refreshing the database and system backups. On occasion, the halt portion of that process has not shutdown the database correctly and staff has had to manually halt the database and re-start the system. The first few times it happened, the system wasn't brought back up until around 8 or 9 a.m. Because of the extreme inconvenience this caused the libraries, MSC support staff has been monitoring the system each night at 12:15 a.m. to ensure a proper shutdown and if not, to manually do the shutdown. The manual shutdown-restart has occurred on an average of about once a week since the 3.3.1 upgrade. SirsiDynix has been working with us to try to determine the cause of the problem and a potential fix was put in place on Feb 24.
- Hardware: The new IBM server purchased by the membership last summer was installed in the server room last fall. Because of scheduling difficulties we

weren't able to actually migrate the Symphony system to the new server until Feb 23. That migration was performed over night to mitigate the impact on the libraries. The migration went very well and by 8:30 a.m. the system was completely back up and running on the new production server.   The increased speed of system operation is very noticeable, especially with the online catalog.

<u>MSC Support Staff:</u> In late August 2010, the MSC Systems Tech Assistant, Mary Fouts, resigned her position leaving the remaining MSC support staff shorthanded at the beginning of the busiest time of the year (schools re-opening and the start of new library profiling and data migration). This has had a detrimental impact on the high level of support that the staff normally provides member libraries. The frequent turnover in this position caused the MSC Executive Committee in conjunction with MSL staff to re-work the Systems Tech Assistant job profile with the goal of upgrading the position to a higher pay band. The MSC Membership voted to approve the cost increase necessary to fund a higher salary range for this position and, having received approval via the required state personnel review process, this position is now assigned a higher salary range. We are currently in the applicant screening phase and hope to have a candidate in place as soon as possible. It is hoped that the higher salary range will not only assist in attracting qualified applicants but also reduce the turnover this position has historically experienced.

We are currently pursuing a similar path with the other MSC Tech assistant/trainer position. That position was initially approved as a one year temporary hire, expiring in April 2011. The MSC Membership voted to make the position permanent and fund an appropriate salary range for it as well.

<u>Meeting:</u>
The next MSC Membership meeting is scheduled to take place in Missoula on Friday, May 6, 2011 and you are all welcome to attend.