Hello everyone --

PLEASE SHARE THIS WITH EVERYONE ON YOUR STAFF WHO PERFORMS CATALOGING DUTIES.

At the most recent council meeting, it was decided that more work must be done to improve our library catalog. I have been working on a project to overlay bad records in the system (which will hopefully be finished in the final quarter of 2011), but I need you and your staff's help in preventing bad records from being entered in the first place.

It was decided that unless at least one person from each branch of each library attends a cataloging class here at the Co-Op, that library WILL NO LONGER BE PERMITTED to enter brief records into the system. Classes are offered every other month or can be scheduled more frequently if needed. The class is brief (generally around two hours), but if nobody from a branch is able to attend due to scheduling difficulties, Amy Shaughnessy and I can go to your library and teach the class from there.

One of the most crucial elements in improving our catalog is preventing the entry of duplicate records. Your staff MUST check the system before creating a brief record to make sure that a record for the item does not already exist. ACCURACY is also extremely important. If a record features a misentered ISBN or inaccurately spelled title, it is as good as lost in the system.

When brief records are entered correctly, they are captured by the system each day and a report is generated that tells me which ones I need to overlay. If you spot duplicate records, brief records -- particularly older ones -- that have not been overlaid, or if you do not feel comfortable cataloging, please email me a list of these items including the following details:

1) TITLE
2) ISBN (if the item does not have an ISBN, please include the its TITLE CONTROL NUMBER)
3) ITEM TYPE IF NOT A BOOK
4) ANY OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION (e.g., CD is an edited version, DVD is 2-disc special edition, etc.)

You may also wish to include the SKY NUMBER, if you can find it. In August, I sent an email concerning setting up a search-only version of SkyRiver for every library to use. Although I included a note for it to be shown to anybody who does cataloging, I do not believe it was as I am still receiving emails from staff requesting information about it. This feature allows you to search the SkyRiver database in much the same way you did with WorldCat. SkyRiver is a fairly intuitive program with Google-like searching abilities -- you can search by title, author, ISBN/ISSN, UPC number, keyword, or publisher, among others. You can limit your results by format, language, and publication date, and sort by relevance, title, or date. There is a tag cloud with additional related search terms on the right side of the page.

Previously, many of you would send me lists of items to download with their OCLC accession numbers, which you found in WorldCat. You can do the same thing now with SkyRiver, except instead of an OCLC number, you will use a Sky number. This number (sky + [item ID number]) is available in large, easy-to-find type at the top of the page for each record.

Here is the link to download the SkyRiver Search Client: http://www.libcoop.net/ken/installskyriver.exe
User name: slibc_search
Password: skyriver
I work every Monday-Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and I am always very prompt about returning emails and phone calls. If you send me a list of items to be cataloged before 3:00 on a weekday, I can almost guarantee that the records will be entered and available before the end of the workday. I welcome any cataloging questions you or your staff might have; my email address is boggsi@libcoop.net and my telephone number is 586-685-5762. I look forward to working with you to improve our catalog and make it easier to use for both patrons and staff.