Missouri Evergreen Consortium

We have great news! Beginning October 8, 2020, the Neosho Newton County Library will officially be up and running as one of the 50+ member libraries of the Missouri Evergreen Consortium (MEC)! Several months before that date, a lot of preparation will take place to be compliant and participate within the consortium. What does this all mean?

We feel the most important advantage of participating in MEC is that all 50+ libraries share their materials with each other. Some of those participants, we already share materials with - so what's new? We will be able to view those other libraries' catalogs as if they were a virtual branch of the Neosho Newton County Library! Our patrons will be able to directly place a hold on the other libraries' materials. And thanks to the intra-state courier system developed by our State Library, those materials will be distributed to requesting patron's home library without extra cost within a 1-2 week period. It will seem as if our library collection will grow well over 50 times!! (Actually, after doing the math, it's about 42 times - see comparisons below.)

Other advantages of MEC membership include: a modern and refreshing interface for staff who look up and checkout materials for our patrons. (We are also in the que for a self checkout system (paid for by a grant) that will easily link to the MEC computer system). We will be able to add newly purchased materials to our library's collection much easier than the current workflow. We will be able to generate reports for our State Library, library board and staff from existing templates. There are several other tasks that will make many functions for the library much easier to perform such as creating book displays. All of this, thanks to a modern looking and well maintained web browser interface.

The software that MEC has chosen is an open source product currently hosted and administered by a non-profit company in Atlanta, Georgia, called Equinox Open Library Initiative. There are also several other states or consortia worldwide, who use this company and open source software for their library systems. The advantage of open source software is that it keeps costs down - for the Neosho Newton County Library, it will save about two-thirds of the

annual cost as compared to our current integrated library system! Another benefit of participating in MEC, our State Library helps pay for part of the maintenance and development costs with the help of the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).

And yes, there's an app for that! Recently, app developer Kenneth Cox introduced the Missouri Evergreen app. It is freely available via the App Store or the Play Store. This will be a welcome addition to our Android patrons who lost support for the Android app of our current system! We will offer links to these apps as we get closer for the October 8th conversion.

The transition to MEC started several months ago and through all of the conversions, changes, and trainings that our staff must go through - we are so much looking forward to providing better services to our citizens and patrons of the Neosho Newton County Library!

Stay tuned for updates as we progress toward October 8, 2020!

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Missouri Evergreen Fact Sheet – April 2020

The Missouri Evergreen consortium formed in the summer of 2012 by four Missouri libraries as a way to increase cost effective resource sharing among Missouri public libraries. Member libraries share an integrated library system (ILS) based on the open source Evergreen software. This allows patrons and staff at member libraries to request books from other member libraries as though they are two branches of the same library system. The Missouri State Library uses LSTA funding via a contract with Equinox Open Library Initiative to provide technical support for this system.

In the eight years since that time, the consortium has grown to include 52 libraries. The most recent library to migrate to Missouri Evergreen is Putnam County Library, which went live on April 30, 2020. Three additional libraries are scheduled to "go live" between now and December 2020.

Missouri Evergreen is first among all Missouri public libraries and consortia in number of registered borrowers:

Library	Borrowers	
Missouri Evergreen	776,780	(NNCL has about 19,000)
Saint Louis County Library	650,497*	
Mid-Continent Public Library	490,323*	
Kansas City Public Library	160,786*	

Missouri Evergreen is also FIRST among all public libraries and consortia in terms of physical collection size:

Library	Total Collection	
Missouri Evergreen	3,460,767	(NNCL has about 82,000 items)
Saint Louis Public Library	2,774,276*	
Mid-Continent Public Library	2,599,130*	
Saint Louis County Library	1,260,900*	

Missouri Evergreen demonstrates that patron-initiated requests via the Evergreen system can serve a larger population than traditional interlibrary loan.

*Numbers were determined using FY2018 Public Library Survey Data

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