Mn/DOT NEWSLINE
The Mn/DOT library has created a special online request form for employees to borrow videotapes, audiotapes and keynote speakers' books from the 2001 Transportation Conference.

There are a limited number of copies of each of the items, so library staff asks that employees only request one item at a time.
Question of the Week

**Question:** “Mn/DOT does a lot of research. Many kinds of research. What are the differences in technical and non-technical; traffic forecasting and market research, and research services, etc., etc., etc.? And how much of this actually determines what happens? When the public gives its opinions, does Mn/DOT really do anything with that information? How does the average citizen find out what Mn/DOT knows?”

**Answer:** Last week, Mn/DOT’s Market Research Office explained how Mn/DOT uses market research and showcased some specific benefits that we and the public receive from actions that result from our research. This week, Adeel Lari, director, Office of Research Services, and Dave Johnson, ORS assistant director, give us some highlights of benefits that we and the public receive from recent Mn/DOT research and how employees and the public can find our research reports.

To recap the differences and similarities between market research and technical (transportation) research, last week we learned the following:

**Market research**

- Researches areas such as customer opinions, expectations, satisfaction measures, etc.
- Helps Mn/DOT to set our future direction in order to best serve our customers and monitor our progress.

**Transportation (technical) research**

- Researches topics such as materials, traffic patterns, vehicle miles traveled, etc.
- Helps Mn/DOT to develop new tools and knowledge so that employees can more effectively move in our future direction.
- “We have over 100 research projects going on at any one time,” said Johnson.
- “We manage some projects directly; Coordinate and advise on other projects whose offices have their own funding sources; and
- Serve as staff to the Local Road Research Board.

“This board receives legislative funding and serves cities and counties.”

Johnson and Lari listed several projects that have delivered tax savings along with other
benefits. Employees and customers (members of the public) can learn more about these projects—and many others—by reading their biennial publication, *Realizing the benefits of knowledge: Mn/DOT 1999-2000 Transportation Research Biennial Report*. The report is available through the Mn/DOT library and on the Office of Research Services Web site.
New on the Web: Library provides links to additional resources

The Mn/DOT Library has two new links on its Web site that allow you to search for information. Those links are the Health & Wellness Resource Center and the Business and Company Resource Center.

These and other links provided by the library allow Mn/DOT staff and others to access information they find both personally and professionally of interest. Topics are grouped in the categories of transportation; management and business; computers; finance; and general information. Check these out under the "In Databases and Subscription Services" section of the Mn/DOT Library web site.

Question of the Week

**Question:** Why can't I find some Mn/DOT reports I know have been completed when I search the library catalog?

**Answer:** Mn/DOT Library tries to catalog, preserve and provide access to all Mn/DOT publications, especially those no longer available from the office or unit that originally published them. Since we don't have sufficient staff to monitor all publishing activity, we often don't know what's being published. As a result, many reports won't show up in our catalog.

Keeping track of department publications is made difficult by the decentralized structure of Mn/DOT and the diversity of standard practices from office to office. There are dozens of districts, offices and units within the department that publish reports, brochures, CDs, maps and other information products. The relatively new practice of publishing directly to the Internet has made it even more difficult to keep track of what's out there.

Library staff rely on individual units and employees to let us know when something has been published so we can add it to our catalog. The best way to do this is to make it standard practice to send two copies of any new publication to the library. If an item is published only in electronic format by placing it on the Internet, we would like to be notified via a GroupWise note to "library" with the Web page address of the publication.

One advantage of providing us with copies of the publication or the Web page address is that when we add it to our catalog, we create metadata that is included in WorldCat, the world's largest database of information resources. WorldCat currently contains data on more than 800 million items in 8,000 libraries. If the item is in electronic format,
WorldCat can provide a direct link to the document. Any item in WorldCat can be identified by researchers accessing it from more than 40,000 libraries or via the Internet.

If you're interested in seeing an example of this, click on the link to the Mn/DOT Library online catalog, type in "internet resource" (without the quotation marks), and click on the "go" button. All items on the resulting list are either in electronic format only or are available both in print and electronically. You can see the full document by clicking on the Web address provided in the catalog record.

If you'd like more information on this or any other library services, please give us a call or drop us a note.

--Jerry Baldwin, director, Mn/DOT Library
Islam discussion draws 125 employees

Approximately 125 Mn/DOT employees attended "The Myths and Truths about Islam" program in the Transportation Building cafeteria on Nov. 14. Diversity committees from the Program Support and Management Operations Groups, Modal Operations Division and the Central Office Wellness Committee sponsored the program to promote a better understanding of Islam.

Islam comes from the same tradition as Judaism and Christianity, according to Esam M. Aal, Islamic Center of Minnesota communications director, who provided an overview of the religion. The five pillars of Islam require practitioners to believe in one God, pray daily at five prescribed times, give to charity, fast in the month of Ramadan and, if possible, make a pilgrimage to Mecca. The word "Islam" means submission and is related to the Arabic word for peace, "Salam."

There are close to six million Muslims in America, according to the Center; Minnesota is home to an estimated 40,000 Muslims.

Also speaking at the event was Dr. Fatma Reda, a Muslim psychiatrist and associate professor at the University of Minnesota Medical School. Dr. Reda talked about gender roles and about her experience in Minnesota as a Muslim woman.

Another speaker, Assistant Metro Division Traffic Engineer Amr Jabr, noted: "Islam is a religion of tolerance, understanding and giving. If you are confused about what Islam stands for, instead of listening to someone’s interpretation of it, buy a copy of the Koran or borrow it from the library and read some of it; find out for yourself what it stands for."

Chief of Staff Margo LaBau introduced the session with a caution to avoid snap judgments of people. Commissioner Elwyn Tinklenberg closed the program by thanking the speakers for taking the time to educate the audience and answer questions about Islam.

Videotaped copies of the event are available for checkout in the Mn/DOT library. District diversity committee chairs also will have copies of the tapes for employee viewing. Photo by John Tompkins

By Sue Stein
Mn/DOT’s library is serving as the model for a Midwest network of transportation libraries. Representatives from eight state transportation departments, Northwestern University, the University of Michigan and the National Transportation Library met on Dec. 5 and 6 to discuss plans to have a better exchange of resources and services.

The meeting, sponsored by National Transportation Library and held at the University of Minnesota’s Center for Transportation Studies, focused on the increasing demand for transportation information and the need to develop networks of libraries that share resources and services.

"Mn/DOT is unique in that we provide services to the entire transportation community, not only our own staff," said Jerry Baldwin, Mn/DOT library director. "Other states recognize the need to emulate our services and create a regional and national network for access to transportation resources."

Baldwin says that "the Minnesota model" is a phrase that has come to be used to refer to the unique agreement behind the Minnesota Transportation Libraries program and the services it provides. The primary goal of MTL—which is co-sponsored by CTS, Mn/DOT and the Minnesota Local Road Research Board—is to improve access to transportation-related information resources and services for the state's entire transportation community.

The group will reconvene in March or April to continue discussions toward building the network. In the interim, librarians from Minnesota and Northwestern University will draft an agreement for exchange and sharing of information resources. For more information, contact Jerry Baldwin at 651/297-4532 or jerry.baldwin@dot.state.mn.us.

By Gail Gendler
Mn/DOT Library marks 45 years of service

Moving Minnesota's transportation information is the foundation of Mn/DOT Library, which celebrates its 45th anniversary this year. Begun in 1957 by the Department of Highways as a place to store reading materials, Mn/DOT Library is now recognized as the leading state transportation agency library in the country.

According to Jerry Baldwin, Mn/DOT library director, the creation of the interstate highway system also created a need for a central location of materials on the federal standards for designing and constructing the interstate system.

During the first years of the library, much of the information related to public safety, which was then part of the Highway Department's responsibilities. After the creation of the Department of Public Safety, the library focused heavily on pavement and bridge information. In 1972, when Baldwin came on board as a library technician, the transformation began to a technical library, pioneering the use of online databases and electronic communications to fill requests for information on all aspects of highways for department employees.

With the creation of the Department of Transportation in 1976, the library broadened its scope to cover today's multi-modal field of transportation.

"Now we serve the state's entire transportation community and are a core resource for other regional, national and international library networks," said Baldwin. "The library's 45th anniversary, including 25 years of service to Mn/DOT, is a real milestone. We think the future will bring an even greater need for cutting-edge information in order to stay abreast of the ever-changing world of transportation technology."

In fact, Mn/DOT Library currently is collaborating with the recently created National Transportation Library and other libraries in developing networks that will be better able to provide Mn/DOT access to the latest information on transportation technologies and techniques from around the country and the world.

For more information, see the Mn/DOT Library Web site.

By Gail Gendler
Miss the Transportation Conference this year? "No worries," as Australian keynote speaker Amanda Gore would say. You can now check out videotapes and other conference materials from the Mn/DOT Library. To see what's available and request materials, visit the Mn/DOT Library Web site.
Mn/DOT Library celebrates 45 years of service April 18

On Thursday, April 18, Mn/DOT Library staff will take a deep breath, celebrate past accomplishments, and prepare for further expansion of global knowledge frontiers.

They will also use the day to say thank you to their customers and the department for 45 years of support with an all-day open house that will include tours, demonstrations and refreshments, according to Jerry Baldwin, Mn/DOT Library Director.

"Mn/DOT Library has a staff that has been described by one of our customers as the 'most professional' of any library in the Twin Cities and we offer a wider array of services than any other DOT library in the U.S.," Baldwin said.

The April 1957 issue of *Minnesota Highways*, the department’s employee magazine, announced that Joan Peterson, "a qualified full-time librarian," had been hired "to organize and operate the new library." According to the article, the purpose of establishing the library was "so that more profitable use may be made of the available literature."

Forty-five years later, making more profitable use of the available literature remains the library's purpose. However, it's unlikely anyone involved in founding the library in 1957 envisioned "available literature" as including information from anywhere in the world. Nor could they have imagined the array of formats "literature" now takes—pdf files, Web sites, CD-ROMs, microfilm, videocassettes, spreadsheets, databases, PowerPoint presentations, in addition to books, magazines and newspapers in both print and electronic formats.

Likewise, they could never have foreseen the many technologies now used to identify available literature on a global basis and speed its delivery to the customer or the role Mn/DOT Library would come to play in this effort.

The Mn/DOT Library is located on the first floor of the Transportation Building in St. Paul. The library’s Web site is [http://www.dot.state.mn.us/library/index.html](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/library/index.html).

*By Sonia Pitt*
The words of Maya Angelou, Stephen Crane, Black Elk and Langston Hughes echoed in the halls of the Transportation Building in St. Paul on April 17 during a lunch hour program celebrating National Poetry Month.

Mixed in with the poems from world-renowned writers were original poems from a number of Mn/DOT employees, including Elizabeth Kay Brzoska, Metro Division MIS; Justina Dansky, Human Resources; Leo Holm, Environmental Services; Ron McLane, Information Resource Management; Qin Tang, Mn/DOT Library; Andy Terry, Electronic Communications, and Aurora Walls, Information Resource Management.

The diversity committees for Program Support/Modal Operations and the Management Operations Group sponsored the event, which included a colorful buffet of desserts, fruits, cheeses and beverages.

Other poetry reciters were Maya Beecham, Bruce Biser, Eric Davis, Rebecca Fabunmi, Linda Gremillion (emcee), Barb Hogan, Tanaya Holmes, Liz Pawlak and John Tompkins. Bev Kelley and Margaret Walsh, both from the Office of Human Resources, provided sign language services for the program.

Poems ran thematically from the patriotic to the sorrowful to the inspirational, such as Dansky's poem, "That Day," about the tragic events of Sept. 11; Holm's poem, "Ramona," about the loss of his sister, and Walls' poem, "Life Like Basketball," about the rhythms of life.

Not all of the poems were products of recent artistic endeavors. Terry recited a poem that he wrote in high school—"before I suppressed that side of me and became an engineer," he told a laughing audience.

Some of the poems are available for viewing in the display case outside the cafeteria on ground floor.
Staff moves from Kelly Inn to cut lease costs, improve communication

Several offices will move from the Kelly Inn in St. Paul to the Transportation Building to achieve optimal use of state-owned facilities and reduce building lease costs. Mn/DOT will terminate the lease and vacate the Kelly Inn by Aug. 15.

Other changes include converting Conference Room G-13 into office space. In addition to cutting costs, the moves will also improve communication among various offices by grouping similar functions in their new locations.

The moves will affect 36 employees currently located on the ninth floor of the Kelly Inn and save about $351,000 in costs for the lease that was to run until June 2004.

Office moves that become effective Aug. 15 include:

- Office of Electronic Communications, currently at the Kelly Inn, will be relocated to the first floor of the Central Office building
- Office of Environmental Services, currently located on the 6th floor of the Central Office building, will be relocated to the 7th floor
- Office of Technical Support, currently located on the 7th floor of the Central Office building, will be relocated to the 6th floor
- Office of Freight, Rail and Waterways, currently at the Kelly Inn, will be relocated to the 7th floor, and a small group to the 6th floor, of the Central Office building
- Office of Passenger Rail will remain on the 7th floor of the Central Office building
- Part of the Office of Research on the first floor of the Central Office building will be relocated to the Mn/DOT Library area on the same floor
- Conference Room G-13 will be converted to include five workstations. This space will be available for use by employees assigned to special projects, temporary or emergency employees and those employees who may require shared space. The latter group includes Seeds employees, employees on rotation assignments and employees reporting only once or twice a week to the Central Office building.

"Significant savings will be realized by terminating the lease with the Kelly Inn," said Doug Weiszhaar, deputy commissioner. "However, I recognize that this decision will cause some inconvenience in order to accomplish the resulting office moves, especially within the limited time available. Some supervisors and managers affected by the Kelly Inn moves may be required to move into non-private office spaces until the completion of the second phase of change management."

Weiszhaar said every effort will be made throughout this project to minimize the effects of moves and disruptions, employ existing standards for office space requirements and consolidate the offices by location where possible.

Mail stops will remain the same for employees moving into the Transportation Building and phone numbers will stay the same for most employees affected by the moves.

"Because we are working within a very limited timeframe, I encourage you to be as
cooperative as possible with the Facility Management staff in order to ensure the successful implementation of this relocation effort," said Weiszhaar.
Office of Research Services joins Program Delivery Group

In order to improve service delivery, the Office of Research Services joined the Program Support Group effective Nov. 12. Previously, the office reported directly to Mn/DOT’s chief of staff.

Doug Weiszhaar, acting commissioner, said the change results from Mn/DOT’s efforts to identify the most effective way to deliver the department’s products and services. Weiszhaar added that Research Services staff will continue to shape the state’s transportation system by acquiring, creating and sharing transportation research and knowledge.

As an expert office within the Program Support Group, the staff will identify research needs and manage state and national research. The Mn/DOT Library will continue to provide reference assistance, document delivery and interlibrary loans.

Dave Johnson continues serving as acting director of Research Services.

By Craig Wilkins