Tech Advisory Council
October 14, 2004
Meeting Notes

Present: Rawdon Cheng (UHLS), Jonathan Koppel (UHLS), Rob Carle (UHLS), Marcia Middleton (APL), John Love (BETH), Laurie Louis(APL), Michael Sweeney (GUIL), Jason Russell (GUIL), Barbara Kubli (STEP), Mike Whitney (EGRN), Carol Reppard (TROY)

1. **Horizon upgrade** scheduled for 10/28-29.   Rawdon plans to come in at 5 a.m. and have upgrade done no later than 10 if all goes well. Might be up by 9, if possible. Suggests doing upgrades either after closing on Wednesday or prior to 10 a.m. on Thursday. Suggestion was made to make sure the "411" message is updated as appropriate to let libraries know current status. Question was raised about availability of HIP – not accessible during upgrade. Message will be posted in advance on catalog splash screen and UHLS web site. Suggestion was made to have UHLS plan to have staff available over the weekend if libraries are still experiencing upgrade problems. Most libraries have returned the installation CDs for update info addition and return.

2. **Emergency Broadcast System** – Rawdon has been exploring a possible VPN solution but has run into some problems with that. Suggestion was made after much discussion to try iMail messaging system installed on a server at UHLS. Cost for unlimited users and one year of maintenance is $864 and $230/yr maintenance in following years. Jonathan will install on or after November 3 and will make sure a group of representative users is selected to test. Tech Advisory Council will also serve in test group. Primary purpose is for Horizon communications, not disaster situations. Jonathan will also work on username conventions.

3. **Recommended software for libraries** – Discussion of DeepFreeze (recovery), Fortres (prevention), Centurion Guard (hardware based recovery), and Public Web Browser (stripped down version of Internet Explorer that is more configurable by library staff).

   DeepFreeze (http://www.faronics.com/html/deepfreeze.asp) allows users to do whatever they want to on a hard drive and restores the original saved image every time the PC is rebooted. Allows users to install software, etc. Bethlehem is using it this way. Guilderland is using DeepFreeze and Fortres as complimentary tools to prevent abuse and make recovery less painful. Mike will look into how much hard drive space some of these tools require to work.

   Fortres (http://www.fortres.com/products/fortres_101.htm) takes time to configure properly but keeps users from doing damage to PCs for the most part. Some spyware/adware/malware sometimes gets past Fortres, but no one tool is the perfect solution.

   Centurion Guard (http://www.centuriontech.com/centurion-about.htm) is a hardware based solution that allows users to make changes to the hard drive (save/delete files, install software, etc.) but when the computer is rebooted the original saved image is restored and the changes are gone. Some of the group expressed reservations about allowing users to see networking information or possibly to spread viruses, Trojans or spyware/malware before the system is restored. Carol Reppard has some contact information for Centurion if anyone is interested.

Public Web Browser (http://teamsoftware.bizland.com/) has helped BETH and APL to cut down significantly on system crashes and reboots and also to require print preview for all printing.

Mike Sweeney will write up a brief description of what each tool does with suggestions for level of technology comfort required to set it up and maintain it. Mike suggests that each library should provide UHLS with a description of the computer services they want to offer.

Also discussed tools for control and removal of spyware/adware/malware. Some are meant for cleaning up systems, others for finding what launches when a PC is rebooted or logged into Windows. Programs discussed included:

SpyBot Search and Destroy
(http://www.safer-networking.org/en/index.html) Intermediate to Advanced users
Ad-Aware Personal SE (http://www.lavasoftusa.com/software/adaware/) Basic to Intermediate users (if you install various plug-ins)
HijackThis (http://www.tomcoyote.org/hjt/) Intermediate to Advanced users
SpySweeper (http://www.spysweeper.com/) Intermediate to Advanced usres
and **SpywareBlaster 3.2** (http://allsecpros.com/sb.html) Basic, easy to use, must check for updates every few weeks, public libraries may use it for free.

Rawdon will put up a page on the intranet with links to discussed programs and a brief description of purpose/technological comfort level required for use**.**

Also discussed alternative browsers, but since IE cannot be removed, computers are still susceptible to IE related problems when using an alternative browser, so what's the point? Users all know how to us IE, so why create more support needs with another program? Other browsers mentioned included **FireFox** (was Mozilla) (http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/) and **Opera** (http://www.opera.com/)

4. **Imaging software** – discussed how larger libraries are imaging PCs. APL uses Ghost Corporate Edition (http://sea.symantec.com/content/product.cfm?productid=9) through the Command prompt and using an IP Boot disk (Advanced users). Discussed making this a topic for a future meeting. John Love has had some experience with Drive Image (bought by Symantec, so now replaced by Ghost).

5. **3M Self-Checkout station** – Mike Sweeney gave us 'techie's tour' of Guilderland's new 3M self-checkout station and pointed out positives and some pitfalls. Basically, it's a PC with a limited version of the checkout software on it and some security system components combined with a built-in receipt printer.

Notes by Marcia Middleton