

LoT Co-lab Session 2 Transcript: How to get Things

Shareable+3de36570@scribie.com

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[music]

0:00:15.5 Tom Llewellyn: Alright. You wanna cut the music Page and we'll...

0:00:22.4 Page: Yes.

0:00:23.5 Tom Llewellyn: Get going, alright. Well, so nice to see so many of your faces. One thing that I realize we have not done yet is grab any group screenshots of people that are participating in the collab. So in a moment, right before I hand it over to Jason, who's gonna be our presenter today, was just gonna invite people if you're comfortable. If you are interested in having your face shown in such a thing, you'd be willing to go ahead and come off of, or come onto camera, I should say. Definitely appreciate seeing all those faces. So nice to see you. Alright, we're gonna give one more minute as a couple more people are coming in. So today's session, I'm gonna let Jason give the real introduction to what he's gonna be covering. But if you are joining us for the first time, or if you missed last week's session, we're gonna be doing these 12 trainings.

0:01:27.8 Tom Llewellyn: There's gonna be other opportunities for engagement as well throughout it, and some kind of breakout sessions that we'll do kind of some office hours that we are yet to announce, but we'll announce the dates and times for those soon. So folks can ask additional questions and get to know each other as well. So those are upcoming. And if you have any questions coming out of these sessions, we encourage everyone to please do post those questions onto Canvas. We're gonna be doing a better job this week and moving forward of jumping in and helping to answer some of those questions and also calling in the various practitioners that have the expertise in those fields to be able to answer some of those further questions as well. And coming out of these sessions we'll also have ongoing discussion questions related to the subject matter. If anybody has any trouble with getting into Canvas, I know there's one, we've got at least somebody who's having some trouble we're trying to work through, but if anybody else has any technical issues with Canvas, please do let Candice at Shareable know.

0:02:35.8 Tom Llewellyn: Candice, if you want to maybe jump in and just add your email address or, so it's easy for people to contact you, not on Canvas, if they're having trouble getting in there, but you can also tag us in Canvas as well. So without further ado, before we hand it over, one, as I was mentioning earlier, a couple more people have jumped on. We're gonna do a quick group photo before I hand it off to Jason. So if you are interested in having your face seen as part of this collab, we'll do a couple of these throughout. So if you missed your chance this time, you have another chance later, but if you want to come on, turn on your camera, I'm going to take it in 10 seconds before I then go ahead and hand it off to Jason. All right, last chance to get on that camera. Also got to make sure you're actually looking at the camera. My camera's over to the side, so we'll take that real quick. Let Leanna get in here. All right, Leanna, we're just about to take a group photo if you want to come on to video, if you're in a position to do such things. All right, here we go. One, two, three, look at the camera. All right, thank you all for joining us for that. And without further ado, I'm going to pass it over to Jason.

0:04:00.1 Jason Naumann: All right, let's get this slideshow going. Hey, everybody. Thanks for taking the time. Love the chance to connect with the community for sure. I'm a big fan of tool libraries and lending things, so I'm happy to be able to provide some of my insight. I'm by no means a subject matter expert, and so I think these opportunities to connect as a community are super,

super, super helpful. We're going to be covering selection, acquisition, management, and maintenance in terms of your inventory, so prioritizing, figuring out what are the right things for your community, establishing a policy to make sure that those things stay consistent, then getting them, managing them, keeping them, and then eventually getting rid of them. Eventually, sadly, all of our tools will continue on into the great beyond, so making sure we're being responsible with those things as much as possible. A little bit about me real quick. My name is Jason Naumann.

0:05:01.1 Jason Naumann: I live in Portland, Oregon. I've been involved with tool libraries for about nine years as a volunteer, taken on a little bit more active role in the last several years in Southeast Portland at Green Lents and starting a new library out here as well in Rockwood, which is just outside of Portland. First and foremost, setting priorities. We talked a little bit about this in the last session, but trying to really balance these three pillars. Your community's needs starts with figuring out what is available. You can scan the web or do whatever, driving around, trying to figure out exactly what your community already has. There's not enough resources really to have a lot of redundancy in terms of funding. If you have other organizations, you don't want to be drawing out their capacity funding-wise or volunteer-wise, and we really can be more effective if we're elevating each other.

0:06:10.3 Jason Naumann: Keeping that available, knowing what's available, and then knowing what's not available really figuring that out, starting with community needs surveys or just reaching out, talking to your neighbors, getting a general idea. You probably, hopefully, have been in your neighborhood for a while, and you have a feel for some of those things yourself. Finding out what's cost restrictive. If there are some things that are available that are just not accessible to a significant portion or any portion of your community, really trying to make sure things are more equitably distributed. Then looking at what your community desires. The general guiding rule that I have, I think it's good to ask big questions. Let people dream a little bit. Dream a little bit yourself. Maybe dream a lot. Try to avoid making big promises because that can get you into deep water, but it's okay to make big plans. If people have big ideas with you, it's a great opportunity to bring them in as volunteers.

0:07:16.0 Jason Naumann: Figuring out what people are interested in. Maybe your community is really interested in clothing repair, and setting up a mending circle is a great way to bring people in, and that's certainly going to affect what your inventory develops as. Maybe you think that everybody should pull out their lawns and put in pollinator habitats, but maybe your community isn't interested in that. Definitely getting some kind of an assessment of sort of where other people are at. And then thinking about cultural values too. One example I have is in Lents, we have been doing a lot of pollinator habitat development, trying to support the food ecosystem, get a lot of native plants that are better for building soil and water retention, that sort of thing. One of our sister neighborhoods in Cully really has a very, very strong food production gardening community. They've got bigger lots, and just a lot of people produce their own food. Being aware where you end up placing your location and how big of an area you're serving, different interests, different values.

0:08:28.5 Jason Naumann: There may be, maybe your community really likes decorative flowers. I know I'm talking a lot about gardening here, but obviously there's lots of different overlap, different things there. Considering all of those things, and again making sure you're reaching out and connecting with all the parts of your community to get an accurate assessment there. Then finally balancing those things with your organizational goals. Maybe community access is really top priority for you. Maybe you're trying to establish more community sovereignty. Maybe you really

want to have workforce development. Maybe you want to have leather working and try and get more people connecting and coming together to do craft projects. Maybe your community needs a lot of restoration work. That's going to shape the tools or the things that you're bringing into your library. Really balancing all of those things together. I think the other really important thing here is to think about how it's benefiting yourself. Most active tool librarians start out as active tool borrowers. Thinking about you and what you would like to borrow is a great place to start.

0:09:48.1 Jason Naumann: And importantly, as you're doing this process, bringing in other members of your community, making sure that you're representing with a diverse board and operations team so that the you that you're trying to serve really is going to be reflective of your whole community. You as an organization can come to hold some levers of power and shape the way things are advancing in the community and bringing in other partners to make those things happen. It's really important to just be reflective of everyone in your community. Looking at practical considerations. Liability is going to be a big one. Dangerous, complicated tools. I'm not saying don't have a table saw, but be aware the table saws are dangerous things. Just being aware of all those things. Some tools can translate to specific cost in terms of your insurance and that's a conversation for another day but being aware of that and I would also say complicated is a big thing. Tools that are maybe going to be used near power lines or gas lines or anything like that.

0:11:09.1 Jason Naumann: Just be aware of those things. If a tool involves reading a manual in order to use it successfully without hurting yourself or damaging the tool, maybe not the tool for a library of things in my personal experience. That leads right into longevity. Keeping in mind that every tool that comes in is going to be used more than you ever would expect. Most manufacturers test their tools pretty extensively, but most tools are going to be used if not every week for a good portion of the year, sometimes multiple times a week. They're going to see a lot of use. Whichever method you use to acquire your tools, keep in mind that it's going to be used repeatedly and occasionally misused. Things like safety features, if those aren't going to withstand repeated impact, maybe consider getting a different type of tool. Cost is going to be a factor and not just the initial cost of your tool or your thing rather, but the replacement cost. Once you've set an expectation that you have these things available, you want to keep in mind that you might have to replace that thing.

0:12:29.1 Jason Naumann: Then if there are significant consumable parts, whether that's saw blades or sanding pads or other things like that. I know some libraries, our library specifically, we tell people the consumables are part of your use. You need to buy those and replace those yourself. That's not always the case, not with every tool. I think if you're going to rent out, for example, a table saw without a blade on it or a dull blade on it, that's going to be a real problem. Just keeping that in mind. Portability. Portability, the rule we have here is, and the rule I like to repeat is if it fits in the back of a hatchback, that's going to be specific to your community. So some communities, it's going to be the back of a pickup truck. Some communities, it's going to be the back of a bicycle. Maybe you got to be able to take it on the bus or the train. Really dialing that in to be specific to what your community's needs are and how your community is going to transport those things. Storage is a really big factor. Space can be at a premium especially in urban areas like Portland.

0:13:40.4 Jason Naumann: You want to be thinking about not just length, width and height, but then also odor and environment, how that's going to affect the environment of your library, how that's going to affect the lending environment, the storage environment. Some places, I know our lease, we're not allowed to have any gas tools because we're only open two days a week. Find that out if you have a space or you don't have a space yet. Find out what you're allowed to have. There's

other things beyond just gas, like chainsaws, for example, are going to have chain and bar oil. They're going to leak no matter what you do, especially if it's getting heavy use. That's going to affect your space. Might be a problem if you're renting commercial space. Just thinking about long-term storage and how that's going to work out. And then human impact. The cost of production and disposal can be measured in a lot of different ways. One of those ways we want to think about is, are there conflict minerals? Are there other things that are not being ethically sourced and brought in?

0:15:05.0 Jason Naumann: If there are ways to build out your inventory in a more socially responsible way so that we're supporting circular economies, supporting different things that are really in line with organizational ethics and personal ethics as well, it's important to keep that in mind. So a lot to balance. Once you get through that first bit and all that thinking and really planning things out, it's important to establish policy. I had a really great conversation last week with Steve Bade down in Eugene. He works with a toolbox project. He advises, and I think this is a spectacular idea, getting together an inventory development policy, making sure you have that, posting it online, posting it in your handbook, making sure it's part of training, posting it in your library so people know. So there's a lot of benefits to that. It's going to simplify your selection process for taking in new tools, especially if you have someone who's pulling up with a truckload of things for donations or something like that. It's going to simplify things a lot.

0:16:24.7 Jason Naumann: It's going to make it easier for your librarians or whoever's receiving those things to answer any questions people have or respond to someone who may feel like you're not making the right decision and not taking their stuff. And then also planning for growth, right-sizing your inventory so that it's, again, in line with what you're trying to accomplish. And I think one thing that the toolbox project in Eugene does really, really well is creating context for collaboration and resource sharing. So knowing that, for example, if you have a really good bike share program or bike repair program or something like that, that an inventory policy gives you a context and keeps it front of mind so that you can have a space in your library and a space on your website and your handbook to point people to other resources, really building up the economy, being supportive of each other, and getting things moving in the direction we're all trying to get things to. So there are some resources that are linked here.

0:17:38.8 Jason Naumann: They'll be available on the LMS as well. And then this presentation will be available. Steve has written this this nice, concise white paper on development strategy, why it's important, and also shared his policy for you to take a look at and maybe use as a draft to get started. All right, so now you got your plan. Now we're going to get things. We've all seen this report from Shareable, the State Library of Things 2024. Over about 60% or so of donations is how we're getting our items. I'm going to include waste diversion in donations. Even though you're doing a little bit more work, it's still coming from somewhere else. And then new and purchased things. But there's a lot of ways to think about institutional donations. Maybe they're coming from a thrift store. Maybe they're coming from a partner organization. At Lents, we have a Portland Youth Builders Program. We have community fruit harvesting. And so we get tools that are gently used from them. Or we have an OK repair program. And so we'll get things from them and we can get them back into working order and back into circulation.

0:19:08.0 Jason Naumann: When you're accepting donations, there is a couple, I mean there's a lot of things to keep in mind, but kind of the big points that I would encourage you to think about is knowing your things. This is where that policy really has its greatest benefit. Whichever staff

person or volunteers are going to be assessing donations, make sure they know what they're looking at, make sure they're doing a thorough quality inspection, checking for safety features. Once you take a donation, it's yours, you are responsible for it. Until its end of life and its disposal. So really thinking about that and being thorough. It's great to have resources where you can refer people to for donations that you don't want to accept. Habitat for Humanity is pretty common throughout the US at least, thrift stores will take a fair number of things. Still, if you recognize that something is non-functional, it's good to let that person know right away. Don't donate this to someone else.

0:20:20.6 Jason Naumann: For the same reason, because you don't want to be expending limited resources, having to dispose of unusable items. Secondly, plug it in. If it's electric, plug it in. There are some pretty affordable options out there for portable power stations. So you can get one for like 75 bucks to 200 bucks that's going to do the job well enough. Just something you can plug in a tool, switch it on. And that's obviously, if you're on-site, you can plug right into your extension cord. But if you happen to be doing donations at dumpster disposal days or sometimes members or neighbors will call up and say, hey, can you come by my place? I got to empty out my dad's garage or something like that. It's good to have an option to plug things in. Just see if they're making any funny sounds. Make sure they function the way that you're expecting them to. And then consumables. So, do you want to accept consumables? A couple of considerations there. One, obviously, is quality control.

0:21:32.1 Jason Naumann: If you are accepting, let's say, paint brushes, for example, 'cause they're right here on the screen your paint brushes are not going to be a long term inventory item. They're just going to probably, I mean, I know how to take care of a paint brush and my paint brushes don't usually get used more three or four times. It's a lot of work, especially if you're using stains or lacquers or anything like that. Quality control. Make sure what you're accepting is actually going to be useful. It's going to work with the tools that you already have in your inventory. And then, do you have the storage space? Can you house those things? Can you house them in a convenient way? We recently in Lents started accepting more like saw blades and things in a little bit bigger bulk. We built out some resources to really point people to selecting which blades you're using for your sawzall, for your reciprocating saw.

0:22:34.5 Jason Naumann: That sort of thing. Having those knowledge resources is a fun way to kind of build that in. But then also ask yourself, are you setting expectations for your membership, for your community? If they come in and you don't have any more, those Velcro sanding discs that go on your orbital sander, is that going to be, is it going to cause an uproar in the library because you're not satisfying them, especially if you're charging membership fees. Or they're used, they just get comfortable having those things. So once you bring those things in the library, you are kind of setting expectations. So just determining if that's something that you want to commit to long term. Just a quick word. I'm not going to take too much time talking about this. You can reach out to Asheville, or better yet, reach out to Craftsman so that you're not drawing too much capacity from Asheville, but they were able to get a really generous donation from Craftsman.

0:23:45.4 Jason Naumann: There are ways to acquire new tools with little work and no money. They are out there. What was really great to hear about this opportunity was that Craftsman did not have a really big ask from the library. And so that really kind of sets a precedent that I think is really important for nonprofits to not be doing a lot of extra additional work in order to earn those things. It's a very clear value. And I think producers like Craftsman or RYOBI or DEWALT, they realize that brand loyalty is a very, very strong selling point for tools. Tool users get familiar with a brand

and they trust that brand. And so if you decide you're going to reach out to one of these companies to try and get some things, just maybe have that in your back pocket. If you do in fact decide purchasing is the best way for you to get the tools that you really would like to have. I want to call out two specific things here.

0:25:05.1 Jason Naumann: Longevity is a really important one. Do plan to spend more on durable products. If your electric lawnmower is half the price of a different electric lawnmower, probably a reason for that. Probably not going to last through a season. Low grade consumer products are designed for rare use. And the level of use that they're going to see in a lending library is very, very high. So just keep that in mind. And then again, the human impact. If you're able to budget for things like ethical manufacturing, circular economics, if refurbished is a possibility, that's a great direction to go in. I think that there are a lot of online resources for refurbished, but you can also reach out to some of your big box stores and they can have refurbished things available as well.

0:26:12.0 Jason Naumann: All right, so managing things. Managing things in terms of designing out your library space, and we'll get into that in a different session. I think that there's really some important considerations to have up front. I like to think about safety first. Having things like extension cords, lamps, clamps, ladders close to your checkout station. The last thing you want is for someone to say, okay, well, I really should grab an extra clamp or an extra extension cord. But I don't want to move to the back of the line. It's already 11.45 on a Saturday, and I got to get this project going, so I'm just going to skip it. I'll make it work 'cause that's really a dangerous, can be a dangerous situation. Move those things forward. Having signage, large clear signage available, helping people to get oriented in that space. I know I walk into a Home Depot or Lowe's or even an Ace Hardware, and it takes me a couple minutes to get oriented and to just kind of like take some deep breaths and not be overwhelmed by just everything that's there.

0:27:30.0 Jason Naumann: And I'm pretty familiar with those spaces, so just remember that a tool library can be an overwhelming experience if you're not really deeply embedded and involved in it, so having things like that, using color to kind of break up space can be helpful to develop kind of a spatial awareness. The self sufficiency here is that if you're not grabbing things off of shelves for people, then they're going to be getting it themselves. You want to make that easy for them to find it going out and coming back in. You want them to be able to put their tools back where they belong so that they end up where they need to be, otherwise it's a major time commitment annually, quarterly, daily maybe, to put things back where they belong. I like maps. I'm never going to tell anybody not to make maps. I've done whole taught art classes on map making, so maps are helpful. Just a bit of fun advice. At Lents, we have been working on a specific project to develop a language free navigation system.

0:28:38.8 Jason Naumann: We have over 70 languages that are spoken within our community, and we really wanted to make our space open and accessible to everyone. And so we've developed a system that uses images in order to differentiate where tools should be. It also kind of helps to have these placards and these cards in those spaces in case we're out of a tool, so you're not searching endlessly through what can seem like a somewhat disorganized at times library to try and find the thing that you know should be somewhere. So we have those things. There's also some other elements of that system, and if anybody's interested in using a system like that or developing a system like that, feel free to reach out. All of these assets were designed with a Creative Commons license, so they are available, but I'm also happy to have a conversation and discuss it a little bit more.

0:29:31.3 Jason Naumann: And then hopefully nobody decided to come to the session 'cause they wanted to learn about software, 'cause I'm not going to talk a lot about software, and this is why, because in Portland, we have a tool called toollibrary.net that was developed by a community member, and it's a great system. It's as robust as we need it to be, but it's kind of a closed loop system, and it's not available. It's going to be discontinued in 2038, so I'm just not the person to talk about that. I encourage you to reach out to your peers and reach out to some of these companies. There's great out-of-the-box options with myTurn, Lend Engine, some other ones. I know both the Chicago Tool Library and PVD Things down in Providence have developed their own systems, and my understanding is that they're both open to helping people kind of get onboarded on maybe using those systems or developing something similar.

0:30:36.6 Jason Naumann: So software is important. You're going to be using it. You're going to be using it frequently. No software that I've ever experienced in any of my professional capacities has all the solutions, but definitely do some research. If you've done some research, please share it. If you have opinions, strong opinions or improvements, please do share those with me and with everyone else in the community. It's important, but it's not everything. And then once you have these things and you've been working with them, you want to be able to keep them. You want to be able to keep them operational. So this is the biggest question that people get the first time I say a tool library. What's a tool library? They just assume everybody's going to walk off with all your tools. It's really very pretty rare. In my experience, it's almost entirely by accident if tools disappeared. I think the statistic that I have heard librarians say is that it's less than 10%, and even that feels high to me in my experience.

0:31:50.5 Jason Naumann: I do think tool loss recovery is something you want to plan for, and specifically because it's usually not malicious. There's lots of things that can happen in people's lives. Maybe they have some kind of a life crisis. It could be a transportation issue. Maybe they just can't come in on days that you're open anymore. Maybe it's been six weeks or six months since their schedule changed, and they are afraid of bringing it back 'cause they now owe you a \$45 fine on a hammer. So there is also occasionally people will say they kind of misunderstood their responsibilities. That is a real possibility. Tool libraries are kind of a new thing. I think even book libraries, people don't always return things very promptly, and it's not very helpful to have a very heavily fine-based punitive system. What works really well for us in terms of trying to get those tools back as quickly as possible for the community is to practice, restorative practices.

0:33:04.7 Jason Naumann: As soon as you recognize that a tool has not come back, you want to communicate. Communicate early, politely, be forgiving of fines, and forgiving of the mistake. Understanding again, people's lives are complicated, and so just trying to be patient and respectful. Try to pick up alternative hours for a drop-off if that's possible, and again emphasize tool recovery is the priority, not payment or punitive action. Repair is definitely going to be part, especially if we're talking about a tool library. Libraries of things also, I'm sure, many in the broader sense are going to have things that need to be repaired. Find your partners. Many libraries are kind of the hub for fix-it fairs and repair cafes within the community. Consider being that hub, but if one already exists, elevate those programs, share those opportunities, be a partner, be an ally. If you have local repair shops that are doing that work, we also want to, well, I would suggest, I don't want to speak for anybody else, but I would suggest elevating that work.

0:34:37.8 Jason Naumann: It is important work. It's beneficial work. Not trying to take away their

market share by providing those things. Find a way to work with them to maybe get a discounted rate for the library, maybe get a discounted rate for members or volunteers. Finding ways that you can be supportive of each other. And then something else that has been really successful with Lents is to let volunteers remotely repair things rather than having to repair them on-site. So if a tool has a dull blade, they want to take it home and borrow it, bring it back with a fixed blade, maybe do some electrical repairs, things like that. When space is at a premium, repair space also can be at a premium. And also, sometimes you're only open for two hours or an hour or three hours, and sometimes repairs take a lot longer. So giving people the opportunity to borrow tools maybe above their tool limit or maybe for free if you happen to be charging some rate for a more expensive tool.

0:35:52.6 Jason Naumann: Giving them the opportunity to take those tools home and do that work, because ultimately if the tool is broken, it's not serving anyone. If it's damaged or dull, it can be dangerous. So leveraging those opportunities for the benefit of the whole inventory and for the community. Scavenging is a big, big benefit of a robust repair system. If you have things like power cords, switches on your lawnmowers, leaf blowers, whatever they happen to be, and wheels, think about small things that you can easily take off, reuse, and store. And then consider developing capacity. So we've had a little bit of success in Lents with funding to do some workshop, but if you don't have a robust repair system, try and establish one. Find someone that can lead an instruction on sharpening, replacing blades, replacing electrical cords. Really kind of develop that capacity so that you can be a partner in that effort to try and just generally reduce the waste.

0:37:04.2 Jason Naumann: I know I'm going really fast. I'm gonna take a deep breath. Okay. Finding a balance that fits for your community is important in all these steps. Repair is no different. So you want to think about the budget for trying to repair things that have discontinued parts or components or may need to be shipped quite a ways. It's definitely something to keep in mind. The amount of time that goes into repair, the amount of space that goes into storing things while you wait for those parts to arrive. These are all inputs.

0:37:51.0 Jason Naumann: If it aligns with your goals and your mission to reduce your impact and maintain your inventory 100%, those are... It's a pretty low input in my experience but having a plan and knowing that it's part of your development strategy, making space for it, making time for it, making budget for it broken tools can add up quickly especially if you don't have a plan and you don't have your space clearly laid out. So do take that planning part seriously. If you're trying to use, take in broken tools to repair in order to grow your inventory that might be ambitious. Have an inventory, be operational before you take that approach would be my advice. Repairing tools, again, can take a lot longer than you think it's going to. So it's a good way to kind of boost things. For big, expensive items or items that are hard to find it's a really great way to kind of do that. If you have a cider press or you want to have a cider press and you can find a broken cider press, I mean, that's repairable, that's functional, that's a great strategy for doing that.

0:39:12.6 Jason Naumann: If you get a giant box of broken electrical power drills, you're probably not going to have a lot of success repairing enough of those to really make a dent in your inventory. Briefly, I just wanted to take a look at this repair workflow and mainly because, like I said, there is time in between every one of these steps. And so you have to have storage capacity for all of these things and really design a space that's going to consider all of it. When you get your tool, you need to have time for your repair person or someone who's competent in that to make their assessment, figure out what parts they need. You then administratively need to have budget approved to order those parts, find them online, get them delivered, and then reconnect that repair person with that

tool to get it installed and then hopefully it works. So, again, 100% worth the effort in almost every case, but space. Do be considerate of space and make sure you have an organizational plan for that because if you lose a screw or you lose a couple of little parts, then you've got a negative and especially if you just spent money on those parts, you can really be in a rough spot.

0:40:44.0 Jason Naumann: All right. And then, sadly, not every tool can be repaired. Where do our tools go into the tool afterlife? Planning for salvaging your parts, right? You want to be able to recover things. Small things are easy to recover. Maybe you're really feeling ambitious or maybe you've built out a fleet of, let's say, wheelbarrows or lawn mowers. That can be, parts can be moved between broken ones and stored for long-term use. Those things can be big, so have a plan for that. Have a plan to keep them out of the weather so that they don't degrade and start to rust and fall apart or rot in the meantime. Have a plan for storing disposal things so that you can, again, keep them out of the weather and get them. Big tools make big waste piles. Hopefully, I think I'm not trying to scare anybody here. We don't have a lot of tools that we get rid of. We've got over 3,000 tools in our inventory at Green Lents.

0:42:00.9 Jason Naumann: Lawn mowers can kind of go, but most of our other tools, they do last a long time. We don't have a ton of disposal needs, but you do want to plan for it. You don't want to be stuck with a pile or unfortunately, you really don't want to be stuck having to set a busted lawnmower out in the rain for six weeks and let it get snowed on. That becomes just a whole issue. And then material recovery. So a waiting area for things to sit, specifically big things that are going to sit on the ground and take up a lot of floor space. Have a spot where you can store those things. If you're going to be breaking things down for their metal components, whether you're trying to collect scrap in order to actually make some money and recover some funds. Or if you just want to be doing the responsible part of being part of the waste material recovery recycling program where you're separating parts as much as you can. Make sure you have space for that heavyweight floor storage if you're storing big pieces of metal.

0:43:14.3 Jason Naumann: If you have a plastic recovery program, a robust recycling program near you. That's amazing. Please tell me about it. Let me know how that's working out. I don't think it's news to anyone that plastic recycling is a challenge. So if we can avoid things getting into the trash and getting into landfills, it's fantastic. So if we can avoid things getting into the trash and getting into landfills, it's fantastic. My only experience on it is that Portland has been pretty good about plastic recycling and giving people alternative ways. But a lot of times those products end up just being more consumer products that maybe aren't really actually necessary or needed. So yes, it's a second life. But it's still kind of feeding into that consumer overconsumption habit.

0:44:16.7 Jason Naumann: So better than ending up in a landfill. And if you've got solutions and you've got companies that you've been able to connect with, please, please share it with everybody. But yeah, so that's kind of everything. And the kitchen sink. So I'll open it up for questions. Again, this will be available. I do have some links to some of those resources and feel free to reach out to me and we can get you connected with some of those other links. But I guess we'll open up for questions. Thanks.

0:45:02.1 Tom Llewellyn: Yeah, thank you, Jason, for giving such a detailed step-by-step presentation going through all the full lifecycle of the things. There's been some good questions in the chat already. And also we have such an accomplished, knowledgeable group that many of those questions are being answered as we've gone along. One question just came in. What is the size of

the building for your library of things?

0:45:35.4 Jason Naumann: I can answer that for Green Lents. We have a 1,700 square foot space. We have about a sixth of that is committed to our repair and material recovery section. And probably I would say half of it is actually tool storage. And then we have a checkout area and some space we use for community stuff. We were fortunate to get our space working with the neighborhood redevelopment program through the city. And yeah, it's pretty sizable for an urban tool library.

0:46:18.5 Tom Llewellyn: And another question in here is wondering how do you handle tools that are in especially high demand? So do you have waiting lists? Do you use that as an indication to get more of the same thing? What does that process look like?

0:46:37.0 Jason Naumann: Yeah, so this is where software is really helpful. I think most of the software options that are out there will kind of give you some information on your inventory and when that inventory is inadequate. One of our biggest things is lawnmowers. Lawnmowers are always going to go in and go out. There's different strategies to kind of encourage lawnmowers and tools that are of high need to come back quicker. You can have higher fines. Some folks do that that way. I just encourage people to try and get the tool back as soon as possible. Let them know that, yes, they have it for a week, but they can bring it back. On our next open shift and somebody would be very glad to have it. In terms of tools that, yeah, we just try to keep a lot of everything. It's kind of the best strategy within reason. I mean, if we had a rush on power washers or something that goes out a lot, but you do have to kind of cut your losses sometimes and just accept that you can't store enough of everything to keep everybody happy all the time.

0:47:54.0 Tom Llewellyn: I remember when I was doing some research before co-founding the Asheville Tool Library, talking to the Tool Library for the City of Oakland, which is tied into their public library system. They had 25 weed whackers and something like 16 hedge trimmers and there was a two week waiting list for both of those items and but they couldn't store any more in the size of space that they had and they shifted space around to be able to meet that demand.

0:48:25.1 Jason Naumann: Yeah. I think something else that that's really useful for tools that continually come back broken or damaged or worn out is putting together kind of a instruction sheet or a checkout process that's specific to that tool. The Northeast Portland Tool Library was having an issue with power washers coming back not functional so they really dug into the issue. And it turns out, if you, when you start using a power washer you want to plug it in and get the water running through it before you switch on the motor and if you don't do that you're going to burn your motor out really fast. And people don't know that they don't own this thing they don't read through the manual it doesn't come up. So, really giving people the tools to use the tools and to make sure that they last, and that they're being good stewards of those collective resources.

0:49:33.0 Tom Llewellyn: Hey Jason, a couple of questions have kind of come in, sort of asking from different directions about acquiring tools, specifically that craftsman donation is amazing someone else mentioned the DEWALT donation but kind of using leveraging the buying power or, in some cases, the nonprofit status of the tool library to get better deals when you're acquiring inventory. So could you talk a little bit more about some strategies for acquiring inventory?

0:50:12.1 Jason Naumann: Yeah. No. I can't talk about specifically taking that route with any real

experience or confidence. The Green Lents Tool Library had a really good, robust inventory coming in, and I've helped to manage that and I'm working on developing one, but I think there's probably better people out there. Is there anybody else with some input that would like to jump in and maybe answer that question?

0:50:57.2 Tom Llewellyn: Leanna, do you want to jump in and say since you just were part of the facilitation of the craftsman donation to Asheville?

0:51:05.2 Leanna Frick: Yeah, so it's a little bit of a balance, right? I think that the great thing about the craftsman donation was that they didn't have a big ask of us, part of it was that we negotiated that down. And that relationship was through somebody who was on the board of another maker space nearby, so often these companies want to have some kind of control over your organization, whether that's naming rights or a board seat often. But it really works just to find your network. We're lucky that Stanley Black & Decker is located in Baltimore, they're a sister brand of Craftsman. I know someone who works at Stanley, we have a relationship. When Craftsman approached Stanley, she thought of me and then I thought of these other tool library, so it's really just worth keeping an eye out for people in your network who work for companies. Home Depot is another one that directs a lot of donations through their employees, and they often will donate returned items, things that might end up in the waste room anyway. And so if you don't want to necessarily give them your money, that's another good way to kind of get product for free. Home Depot and Lowe's both do return stock donations.

0:52:15.6 Leanna Frick: Yeah, I mean, it's just like any other kind of fundraising, you need to know who you know. And don't be afraid to say like, no, we won't name it after you or like, no, we're not going to put your name on stuff 'cause that's what we did with Craftsman, and we were able to get them down pretty reasonable return.

0:52:33.8 Tom Llewellyn: That's a great case study. Thank you for sharing a little bit more insights into that. I've got another question here for you, Jason, which is, do you have any minimum training requirements for more hazardous or sensitive and/or expensive to repair items?

0:52:53.5 Jason Naumann: We do not at our library. I know that other libraries do. We have erred kind of on the side of not giving too much training, because it can be a concern for liability. There's some very strong opinions on that in the Portland tool lending community specifically. So part of that tool resource that was put together with that online resource that's connected to our navigation system, we're developing some of those resources, putting together some short videos and trying to add some repair resources to that. But disassociating that from the organization itself so that it's more of a general tool that can be accessed by other places, so that that liability is not carried by the tool library because once someone signs that waiver. You're not necessarily liable for any damages. Obviously we don't want to put people at unnecessary risk. But if you're telling them how to use it and then they go and misuse it. And that's kind of a different story.

0:54:05.9 Jason Naumann: And I have heard cases of insurance companies just dropping to libraries completely because of a conversation about what would it cost us to do workshops or do instruction. Yeah.

0:54:25.4 Tom Llewellyn: It's a follow up in lieu of instruction of how to use tools. What roles do you find that tool librarians have in assessing whether or not somebody is choosing the right tool or

tools for the job and bring up an example from city of Berkeley when I was talking to them. At one point in time, they had somebody that came in and wanted to check out a sledgehammer and they asked them what they wanted to do with it. And they were like, oh, we've got this four inch piece of concrete in our backyard we want to break up. And they're like, all right, we're not going to lend you this sledgehammer because it was not the right tool for the job. It was going to injure them and potentially break the tool before it broke that concrete. So with that as an example, what is your experience as a tool librarian and/or training tool librarians to be that kind of informational assessors of members as they're checking out their items?

0:55:20.9 Jason Naumann: Personally, I try to kind of develop as much relationship as I can and make it feel like it's a natural question. I don't want to put anyone in a situation where they feel like I'm about to mansplain to them about how they're supposed to do their project. I'm also not an expert on every tool. I don't think it's reasonable to assume that your volunteers are going to be experts on every tool. I try to help as much as possible and I recommend that everyone be open to saying, well, let's look it up together. Let's see what we can figure out. I don't think that this tool is the best tool for this job. Let's see what we can figure out together. For me, In terms of keeping a reliable pool of volunteers, I try to lower the bar as much as possible and expectations. If I say you have to be comfortable confronting people about fines, you have to be comfortable telling people what tool is the right tool, it's really going to limit your pool of volunteers. So just trying to create a community and environment where people are comfortable asking questions and figuring things out together to me seems like the best approach.

0:56:39.0 Tom Llewellyn: And we've got one more question here I just had sent to me and I do want to say just two things before we ask the last question. One is that both myself and Candice have posted a short assessment for this session. If you do have a chance right after the session to just take a couple minutes, it really should take you no more than five minutes to fill out. It will provide valuable information for both us as we're coordinating this collab and also for Jason as a presenter. So if you would just take a couple of moments, maybe Candice you can drop that in the chat one more time. The other thing I was going to say is this entire session, it has been being recorded. We will have it up on Canvas, most likely this video recording tomorrow, the transcript by the end of the week, and then we will be translating the transcript into Spanish as well. Putting up the slide deck from this presentation and other resources coming out of the session will be available too. So, just the final question I've got here with that said was wondering if you could kind of touch back on again about the software and if there is open source software available. What the or what it looks like to get a kind of out of the box model.

0:58:02.5 Jason Naumann: So I've done a little bit of research and again I'm not an expert on this. I work in communications professionally so for me the idea of finding a piece of software exploring its options and really plugging it in to test it out is not overwhelming. So hopefully you can find community members and partners and volunteers that are open to doing some of that exploration. I think myTurn definitely has some nice features I know that they are, they do a nice job of letting you test out their software for a while until it becomes financially viable for you, which is nice. I've looked at Lend Engine and they've got some nice features that include scheduling and integrated payment systems and stuff like that. Again, I don't know if myTurn has or doesn't have that. I'm just not a subject matter expert on that.

0:59:03.2 Jason Naumann: I would say building your own stack can be complicated. It can be hard to hand off when eventually you do need to transition out. So if you're thinking of doing

something like that, definitely talk to the people that have already done that and are actively doing that. Find out what's working for them, find out where the pain points are. And don't be afraid to explore.

0:59:33.2 Tom Llewellyn: That's a great note to wrap up on. So again, please, as you have more questions that may or may not have been answered during this session, if you want to post those questions in the discussion form this Module 2 on Canvas, please do that. And we'll jump in as a shareable staff, but also Jason, I think we can ping you if we see questions we need extra support. And also, like I mentioned earlier, we have so many wonderful practitioners who have been running libraries of things, tool libraries for many years that are joining us for this as well. So that's another way that we definitely would invite those of you who have been doing this for a little while to jump in and help answer some questions for people that may be just getting started and also sharing some of this best practices. I know I learned a lot from what you presented and got some ideas that I would want to share with other libraries of things that I'm talking to that I hadn't thought about previously. So it seems like there's some nice little nuggets for everybody.

1:00:31.5 Tom Llewellyn: So with that, we're going to close, and we will see you again next week at this same time, and we'll be focusing in on operations. So please come bring your questions and feel free to reach out to us throughout the week. My email is Tom@shareable.net. Candice is also a great point of contact, Candice@shareable.net, and we look forward to seeing you again.

1:01:08.2 Jason Naumann: Thanks, everyone. And if anyone saw anything in this presentation that maybe you would have recommendations for adjusting or expanding on, again, feel free to reach out. That way we can make sure in the spirit of collaboration, make sure that we're giving the best resources out as possible. Tom, are you going to be able to save the...

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