



BTBL News

Braille and Talking Book Library
California State Library, Sacramento, CA

New Series no. 7 (Summer 2012)

A Message from Mike Marlin, Director

Midsummer greetings from the library here in Sacramento, home of great farmers' markets and exciting rallies every day across the street on the California Capitol grounds. Speaking of exciting and capital activity, I am pleased to report ground-breaking news from our nation's capital at the headquarters of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS).

The Library of Congress (LOC) has appointed Karen Keninger as the new Director of NLS. She began her tenure on March 26, 2012. LOC made a fantastic choice and we are lucky to have such a talent to lead NLS and all its network libraries. Karen most recently was the director of the Iowa Department for the Blind, and before that she was director of the Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. She is a daily user of the full range of information technologies for the blind and visually impaired, including Web-Braille, digital talking book machines and books, and online download services. As a result, she will be a great advocate for the program. If you would like to know more about Karen's distinguished career, you can read the NLS press release online at www.loc.gov/nls/newsreleases/archive/2012-02-15.html.

BTBL's Descriptive Video Service (DVS) launched in mid-February 2012 and after some initial hiccups is going strong. Many of you have asked that we add even newer titles to the collection, and we are planning to do that for the circulating DVD collection as soon as possible. We are still evaluating the popularity of VHS videocassette movies and whether to add more VHS items to circulate. I'm encouraged by the excitement the new service has

generated. Please go to the DVS web page for information and complete catalogs in a variety of formats:

www.library.ca.gov/services/btbl-dvd/descriptivevideos.html.

Please remember that the descriptive video loan period is only 14 days. We appreciate your diligence in returning the DVDs and videocassettes promptly so others can check them out.

Welcome and a special thanks also to Nancy Miller, our newest volunteer and newsletter editor, for producing this issue. In addition to Nancy, we've had several new volunteers join us recently in our recording studio and book inspection departments. If you are interested in volunteering, give us a call or check out www.btbl.ca.gov routinely for new volunteer opportunities as they arise. Here's to a relaxing summer of reading wherever you reside.

Summer at the Movies

Heard of the recent blockbuster hits *The Hunger Games* or *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*? BTBL has the books these movies are based on, and more!

The Hunger Games

In a futuristic North America, a teenage couple is forced into a fight-to-the-death competition in which only the winner is allowed to survive.

Book 1 DB/RC 68384, BR 18488; Book 2 DB/RC 69689, BR 18554; Book 3 DB 71734, BR 19134

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo

A young, socially inept female computer hacker and a disgraced male journalist team up to solve a forty-year-old murder.

Book 1 DB/RC 67759, Book 2 DB 69599, Book 3 DB 71400 (also available in Spanish: Book 1 DB 70983; Book 2 DB 72992)

War Horse

A journey through World War I seen through the eyes of a farm horse pressed into cavalry service. DB 72156

One for the Money

This is the first book in Janet Evanovich's wildly popular and comedic Stephanie Plum series. DB/RC 40224

The Lucky One

A modern day love story about an Iraq soldier and a single mom by popular romance author Nicholas Sparks. DB/RC 67541, BR 18058

Audiocassette Books (RCs) Being Slowly Phased Out

The National Library Service (NLS) announced last December that "2012 marks the beginning of the withdrawal of RC collections" from the Regional Libraries and that "this withdrawal is scheduled over four years." BTBL - your Regional Library - has begun lowering the number of copies per title that we maintain in RC (cassette tape) format, and we are focusing first on older titles. What this means for you, the reader, is that wait times for the declining number of RC copies will increase. *Talking Book Topics* - the bimonthly list of newly available titles from NLS - has very few new books in RC format and will soon have none since no new books are being produced in RC format.

If you haven't already begun to orient your book selection in the direction of the digital books (DBs), you may wish to start soon. If you don't have a digital player to play the DBs, give us a call so we can send you a machine and get you set up for this format. You can still keep your cassette player in addition to the digital player. DB cartridges are much easier to use than the RCs because entire books fit on just a single cartridge.

"Recently Added Books" Now Posted Daily in BARD

The NLS BARD service has announced that they have moved to a system of daily postings for recently added DB titles. NLS had previously added them as they had time to do so, and as a result new titles were posted approximately once a week. The new strategy lists them by date posted and will keep new listings for a 30-day period. To view the newest added DB titles, on the BARD main webpage select the link for "Recently Added Books."

Contact Your Reader Advisor by Telephone - Update!

In our last newsletter we included an article with tips on how to reach your reader advisor through our series of phone menus. In that article we noted that there would be some changes to this process on the way and here is the first of those changes!

Reader advisors are assigned based on the first letter of the patron's last name. In the past these letters have been distributed randomly among the reader advisors which led to a confusing mix of letters to listen to when trying to identify the path to your reader advisor. The revision reorders this list to make it much simpler. Here is a step-by-step guide to help you when you call in:

- Press 1 for English
- Press 2 for BTBL Staff Members
- Press 1 for Reader Advisors
- If the patron's last name begins with the letters:
 - A through D, Press 2
 - E through K, Press 3
 - L through Q, Press 4
 - R or S, Press 5
 - T through Z, Press 6
 - For Institutions, Press 1

This new and simpler distribution of letters took effect on June 1st. Many of our patrons will find themselves working with a new reader advisor, but all of our reader advisors are happy to assist with your reading needs so even if your advisor changes, you can still count on great service. There are more changes planned to make working through our phone menus even easier, so stay tuned!

Interested in Receiving the BTBL Newsletter in Email?

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter via email, please contact us at: btbl@library.ca.gov.

Include your full name or other identifying information.

Digital Talking Book Machine (DTBM) Battery Behavior

(adapted from Oregon TBBS Spring 2012 newsletter)

1. If you are not going to be using your digital machine for an extended length of time (more than 3 months), it is best to leave it plugged into an electrical outlet so that the battery is not completely drained and irreparably damaged. Your digital machine will lose its charge by just sitting when not plugged in or being used. We recommend that you keep your digital machine plugged in as often as possible (even when you are not using it) to avoid a dead battery.
2. You may have noticed that your digital machine will not always charge up to its original 29 hours. Over time, as the battery ages, it will start to hold fewer and fewer hours when you charge it. If, after charging the battery for 2-3 hours, the time remaining on the battery will not charge past 12 hours, please contact us to initiate a machine replacement.
3. When your digital machine announces the time remaining on the battery, this time is an estimate only. You may notice that the battery charge does not always drop in hourly increments. It may take a couple of hours of playing time for a drop in charge to be recognized.
4. While listening to books on a USB thumb drive, the digital machine may lose up to 10 hours of estimated battery charge. To avoid having such a large drain on the battery, you can purchase blank digital book cartridges (like the ones you receive in the mail from the library) from an outside source. Please contact us for more information on purchasing blank cartridges.

Talking Book Topics to (Temporarily) Change Format

Talking Book Topics (TBT), the bimonthly magazine that tells you what is newly available from NLS, is going to change its format with the July-August 2012 issue. A backlog of new titles has developed, and NLS is going to try to get more books listed - up to 500 per issue - by decreasing the size of the annotation (the description of the book's contents). Current annotations are approximately 50 words long. The new annotations will be only a single sentence. NLS will continue this new practice until it has eliminated the backlog. NLS "hopes that readers will enjoy the larger selection of titles."

Navigating the Bible Using an "Advanced" Digital Player

(adapted from Oregon TBBS Winter 2011 newsletter)

An audio version of the Bible can be difficult to use effectively. Most people do not read it from cover to cover but want to look up specific sections.

There are several levels of content (testaments, books, chapters, and verses). One of the best features of the new digital format for NLS audio books is its ability to be "navigated." The best digital player to use when navigating through the Bible is the **advanced** digital player model, which has an extra row of white buttons just for navigation.

When using the advanced digital player, insert the cartridge or flash drive with the Bible (DB 68777) on it. Then push the **Menu** button to select the level by which you want to navigate (testament, book, etc.). Keep pressing the **Menu** button until you hear the navigation level you want. You will hear the machine announce a navigation level, followed by the word "jump":

- Testament (jump): Takes you between the Old Testament and the New Testament
- Book (jump): Navigate in order through the books of the testaments
- Chapter (jump): Navigate through the chapters of the book you are in
- Phrase (jump): Move through the chapter by phrases (verses)
- Bookmark (jump): Place bookmarks at your favorite verses by pushing the **Mark** button, then jump from one bookmark to another.

When you've found the desired navigation level, use the **Next** and **Prev** buttons to jump ahead or go back.

Navigation levels work for other books as well, not just for the Bible. If you are using books that are not primarily meant to be read cover-to-cover navigation is very useful (e.g. cookbooks, poetry, craft instructions).

If you do not have an advanced digital player and would like one, contact us and we'll be happy to send one to you.

What to Do If You Get a Damaged Book

You may occasionally receive a damaged or defective book from us. This can include books with content missing, inaudible books, the wrong book in a container, or braille books with missing or loose pages. If you have a damaged book:

1. Notify your Reader Advisor if you would like to receive a replacement copy of the book.
2. Prepare the book to be returned as usual by inserting the mailing card so that the punched hole is on the bottom left side and BTBL's address is visible.
3. Mark an "X" in the box located in the top left corner of the mailing card above the circular-punched hole and place the container in the mail.

Because thousands of books are returned to the library each day, it is not possible for every book to be inspected (opened) before it is mailed to the next reader. Thus it is not a good idea to put notes to the library inside of book containers. Call or write to us separately if you have a message for us.

Talking Book Topics Available in New Audio Format

We are pleased to announce the availability of *Talking Book Topics* (TBT) in an audio version from NFB-NEWSLINE, which is accessible through your touch-tone telephone. Since the only mailed audio version of TBT is on cassette, this is especially helpful to those who do not use our cassette players.

BTBL already offers access to NFB-NEWSLINE, a free touch-tone telephone service for patrons who cannot read a printed newspaper. The NFB-NEWSLINE text-to-speech computer voice reads aloud the text from many newspapers and selected magazines and now includes TBT.

Contact us today to sign up for NFB-NEWSLINE or for instructions on accessing TBT via telephone. This is an experiment for us, and we welcome your feedback on this delivery format - pro or con. If you prefer this method of reading TBT, please let us know so we can cancel your mailed subscription.

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Free Matter for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped

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BTBL News is written and edited by staff of the Braille and Talking Book Library at the California State Library. It is available in braille, on cassette, through e-mail, and in large print upon request, or through our website.

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E-mail for customer requests or contact information: btbl@library.ca.gov
Website: btbl.ca.gov; Web Catalog: btbl.library.ca.gov

State holiday closures: We will be closed July 4 (Independence Day), Sept. 3 (Labor Day), Nov. 12 (Veterans' Day), Nov. 22-23 (Thanksgiving).

Donations to BTBL are accepted at any time and are used to enhance and improve library services. In the case of memorials or donations in honor of a particular person or event, please include the name(s) and address(es) of those to be notified. Checks should be made payable to the California State Library Foundation and should include a note that the donation is for the Braille and Talking Book Library.

Donations should be sent to: California State Library Foundation, 1225 8th Street, Suite 345, Sacramento, CA, 95814-4809. Donations can also be made online at: www.cslibfdn.org. Follow the link to "Join/Donate Online." There is a place to designate BTBL as the recipient.