



# BTBL News

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

New Series no. 10 (Winter 2013/2014)

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## A Message from Mike Marlin, Director

A wintry welcome to the latest installment of *BTBL News*! I hope you are staying warm and safe during the darker and colder half of the year. I would like to extend a hearty thank you to all who donated to BTBL in 2013. Your generosity helps us continue to support our volunteers and provide special services such as descriptive videos. We are grateful for your continued support. Information on how to donate is included on the last page of this newsletter and on our website, or you may call the library.

In our Summer 2013 issue we mentioned the transition from audio cassette to audio digital cartridge formats for those of you who read the talking version of *BTBL News*. Alas, we are not yet fully set up to begin newsletter-on-cartridge (NOC) circulation, so for this issue we are sending large print format copies to all audio subscribers. We hope to begin NOC circulation with the next *BTBL News* edition. As always, if you would rather receive *BTBL News* via email, or not at all because you read it online, please let us know.

The past several months have been rife with real innovation. In September, BTBL took the social media plunge and launched a Facebook page. Social media is a great way to communicate with BTBL users and other National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) network libraries and their patrons. We usually post on Mondays and Fridays and welcome your comments and suggestions. Our timeline goes back all the way to our birthday of December 25, 1904, 109 years ago! Please "Like" our page, which you can find by searching for BTBL Sacramento on [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) or the more accessible [m.facebook.com](https://m.facebook.com). We encourage BTBL patrons, affiliates and stakeholders to email relevant news items and time sensitive announcements our way for potential inclusion on the page.

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Late in September 2013 the NLS BARD Mobile app for iOS debuted. Now eligible NLS patrons can search and download braille and audio books directly to their iPhones, iPads, and iPods. Many patrons are ecstatic about being able to carry around digital books on iPhones in their pockets! Please read the article in this issue of *BTBL News* to learn more about BARD Mobile. The mobile app for Android devices is expected in the latter half of 2014.

Speaking of further technological innovations, BTBL's website has been revised and will be expanded over the next several months to include more important and relevant information. We hope the site will be much easier to navigate. You will soon also note a new look and feel for our online BTBL catalog, the place where you can search by author, title, and subject to find braille and talking books and descriptive videos, and also order them directly. Technical changes are necessitating this transition to a new online catalog format which will allow users to narrow down their search results and more accurately pinpoint desired book titles. The old and new systems will run in parallel for a time to ease the transition. We hope you will find the newer format useful and we welcome your feedback.

I want to thank those of you who have sent in applications for our 2014 BTBL User Advisory Council. We have extended the application deadline to February 28, 2014 and encourage any of you to apply for this opportunity to advise BTBL on various library related topics. For more information, including the Council bylaws and to download an application, please visit [library.ca.gov/services/council.html](http://library.ca.gov/services/council.html).

We are developing a new patron survey which we are planning to mail separately in the Spring. The survey will be available online or via telephone in addition to large print mailing, and – by request – in braille. We depend on your feedback so that we can make continual improvements to BTBL service and hope you will complete the survey when it is available.

Finally, we say farewell and congratulations to former BTBL reader advisor Laura Mikelbank, who went on to a new job in October at a nearby public library. All of us here miss Laura's warmth and enthusiasm, not to mention Tami, the black lab puppy she was raising for Canine Companions for Independence.

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## **BARD Mobile is Here!**

After much anticipation, BARD Mobile is now available for iOS devices! Now you can read your downloaded books on your iPhone, iPad or iPod touch devices that have iOS version 4.3 or later. To access BARD Mobile, you must first have a BARD account. Also, if you need to reset your password for BARD, this must be done in BARD on your browser, not through the BARD Mobile app. Then head for the Apple App store and search for BARD Mobile to begin.

If you need help with BARD Mobile (or just want an introduction to it), there is a User Guide available. You can find it at [nlsbard.loc.gov/apidocs/BARDMobile.userguide.iOS.current.html](http://nlsbard.loc.gov/apidocs/BARDMobile.userguide.iOS.current.html) or on the BARD Mobile app on the Bookshelf tab, then under Help.

Please contact your Reader Advisor if you need help signing up for BARD or need assistance using BARD Mobile. If you are an institution interested in BARD Mobile, please contact Donna Scales, our Institutional Account Liaison.

## **New Category of Audio Books to Begin Soon**

The National Library Service has begun issuing some books which will be "unrated" for content containing sex, violence or strong language. These books are the result of recently formed partnerships between NLS and some commercial audiobook producers. They are expected to increase the number of books in the collection and to decrease the amount of time it takes to distribute bestsellers and other popular titles to our patrons. Many of these audiobooks have yet to be released in print at the time that NLS receives the audio file for production, so NLS cannot determine content before they are ready for distribution.

Many BTBL patrons who have their books chosen for them by our automated system have prohibitions against certain types of content (e.g. descriptions of sex, strong language, violence). If you are one of those patrons and do not want to take a chance that one of these books might have something you don't wish to hear, please contact your Reader Advisor. We will then stop all "unrated" books from being automatically distributed on your account. Remember that you will also be stopping books that may NOT have such

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content, so think carefully before you make the request. As always, these prohibitions do not apply to books that you have specifically requested.

Readers of these commercially produced books may notice other changes in their production, particularly the use of narrators not used in previous NLS books. We hope you enjoy the increased access to timely works.

## Download Only Books For Those Without BARD Access

You may have noticed while searching [btbl.library.ca.gov](http://btbl.library.ca.gov) – our online catalog – that certain digital books have a status of “Download Only” as displayed in the following example.

<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Austen, Jane.	<u>Pride and Prejudice</u>	DB050549	1995	Download Only
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This status means that the book can be downloaded from our BARD website, but the library has no physical copies of the book on hand. So if you see a book in our online catalog with a status of “Download Only,” don’t add the book to your request list because we won’t have a copy to mail to you.

What do you do if you want a “Download Only” book but using our BARD website to download the book isn’t practical for you? Just contact your Reader Advisor and let them know the book (or books) you would like and they can put in a special order for you.

Since it will be coming from another library it will probably take longer to arrive (usually 2-3 weeks) and it will be coming directly from the other library, but it will still be in the familiar plastic box and you can return it to them by flipping over the mailing label in the usual way.

## Bookmarks for Digital Books

Our digital machines will always remember your place in a particular book, but you can also add bookmarks to the books. You must have an advanced digital player to use the bookmark feature. 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.

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### Bookmarking Tips:

- When you are at a location in the book you would like to bookmark, simply press the "Mark" button. The player will announce "Bookmark Inserted." You can insert bookmarks while the player is in "Play" mode, or while the book is in "Stop" (or paused) mode.
- A quick way to get to your bookmarks is to press **\*and hold\*** the "Mark" button until the player says "Bookmark Jump." Then use the "Prev" and "Next" buttons to navigate between bookmarks.
- When you navigate to a bookmark, the player will announce the time location in the book (e.g. 1 hour 18 minutes) and then begin to play from there.
- You can only delete a bookmark when the book is in "Stop" (or paused) mode. Simply navigate to the bookmark you would like to delete. Then press the "Mark" button once and the player will say "Bookmark Removed."

(Extra tip for those using the "Sleep" key: Add a bookmark at the start of your timed session and if you fall asleep too soon you have a simple way to navigate back to the place you began.)

## **BARD Mobile Application Does Have Limits**

To listen to a book through the new BARD Mobile app on your iOS device, two things are needed: a downloaded book and a "read authorization." This read authorization gives you permission to access the encrypted book file you've downloaded so you can listen to it.

While it is possible to download as many books as your iOS device will hold, the number of read authorizations issued is limited by BARD to 100 in a 30-day period. If you receive a "you are not authorized to read this book" message on your iOS device, the most likely explanation is that you have exceeded this limit. As older downloads fall outside that 30-day window, you will be able to obtain more read authorizations.

## **2014 Braille Calendars Available**

Miniature, spiral bound braille calendars are available while supplies last. Please call, write, or email the library at [btbl@library.ca.gov](mailto:btbl@library.ca.gov) to request one.

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## Five Downloadable Book Alternatives to BARD

If you have the equipment to access and play them, you may be interested in exploring these other sources of downloadable books. Some of them will provide audio books read by narrators while others will be "text-to-speech" audio read by a synthetic voice from text files. NLS equipment will play some of the audio narration files but does not support text-to-speech.

1. Your local Public Library - (Free) Many public libraries subscribe to Overdrive, which offers MP3/WMA audio books and eBooks in various formats for loan. NLS digital players will play unprotected MP3 files, but not WMA.
2. Bookshare - (\$50 per year plus one time \$25 membership fee) Electronic braille in refreshable braille format and Daisy audio books in either text-to-speech or MP3 formats. NLS equipment will support only the MP3 format. [bookshare.org](http://bookshare.org)
3. Internet Archive - (Free) Partnership of multiple online resources resulting in an impressive collection of audio books in various formats and full-text/html books. [archive.org](http://archive.org)
4. Learning Ally - (\$129 per year, free for students) Mostly textbooks and reference materials in Daisy narrated audio. NLS players can play these books after a Learning Ally decryption key is installed. [learningally.org](http://learningally.org)
5. Gutenberg Project - (Free) Books with expired copyrights in various eBook formats including some narrated audio, but most in text. [gutenberg.org](http://gutenberg.org)

## Focus on "Coping" Books

One of the truly unique resources available to veterans with vision loss living in California - along with those from 12 other western states - is the Western Blind Rehabilitation Center run by the Veterans Administration in Palo Alto/Menlo Park. The program is a residential one lasting an average of six weeks. Veterans do not need to have lost vision as a result of their military service in order to qualify. While in residence, the veteran is carefully assessed and a program designed just for them is implemented. It can cover

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living skills from basic orientation and mobility training to learning to use technology such as computers and mobile devices and it includes family members as needed. Now there is an audiobook by a graduate of the program which gives his experience of the Center and a more in-depth idea of what to expect. The book is *Learning to Cope with Sight Loss: Six Weeks at a VA Blind Rehabilitation Center*. DB 71922

While highlighting the above book, we realized that there are other "coping" books - not just for veterans or the vision-impaired - that have come out in recent years which may be worth a second look. Here are a few of them for your consideration. Space limits permit listing only a few; contact us for more.

*Brain Injury Rewiring for Survivors a Lifeline to New Connections* DB 71152, and its companion book:

*Brain Injury Rewiring for Loved Ones a Lifeline to New Connections* DB 71153

The author - a brain injury survivor - offers in the first book a guide to rehabilitation, or "rewiring," for others recovering from similar traumas and discusses physical healing as well as cognitive, social, and emotional needs and challenges. He offers advice on assembling a health-care team. The companion book is tailored for those who are supporting loved ones through the recovery. It addresses emotional, cognitive, physical, social, and vocational concerns.

*Estate Planning for People with a Chronic Condition or Disability* DB 69499

An attorney reviews the basics of estate planning for people who are ill or disabled. The book discusses granting power of attorney and access to medical records, creating living wills and trusts, and assigning guardianship for minor children.

*Label It!: Braille & Audio Strategies for Identifying Items at Home & Work*  
DB/RC 67704

This book by NLS's very own Judy Dixon offers tips on methods, tools, and materials for creating labels to organize one's environment and make daily life more manageable.

Braille and Talking Book Library  
California State Library  
P.O. Box 942837  
Sacramento, CA 94237-0001

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, audio file, through e-mail, and in large print upon request, or through our website.

Library Service Hours: 9:30 AM - 4:00 PM, Monday-Friday  
Phone: 916-654-0640; 800-952-5666 (toll-free in CA); 916-654-1119 (fax)  
E-mail for customer requests or contact information: [btbl@library.ca.gov](mailto:btbl@library.ca.gov)  
Website: [btbl.ca.gov](http://btbl.ca.gov) ; Web Catalog: [btbl.library.ca.gov](http://btbl.library.ca.gov).

Office closures: We will be closed Feb. 17 (Presidents Day), Mar. 31 (Cesar Chavez Day), May 26 (Memorial Day), Jul. 4 (Independence Day), Sep. 1 (Labor Day)

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 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 345, Sacramento, CA, 95814-4809. Donations can also be made online at: [www.csifdn.org](http://www.csifdn.org). Follow the link to "Join/Donate Online." There is a place to designate BTBL as the recipient.