



BTBL News

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

New Series no. 11 (Summer 2014)

In This Issue:

- Director's Message
- Free Currency Reader
- BTBL Advisory Council Breaks Out of the Gate
- Try A Different Outlet!
- NFB-NEWSLINE® Service Sign-Up
- Descriptive Videos Available
- *Talking Book Topics* Changes Order Form Order
- What We're Reading: BTBL Staff Picks

A Message from Mike Marlin, Director

Greetings from headquarters here at the Braille and Talking Book Library in Sacramento, home of *BTBL News*. I hope you are enjoying the California late summer warm weather and reading lots of good books and magazines.

Significant shifts are afoot here at BTBL and the California State Library (CSL). In February, CSL's beautifully restored 1928 Stanley Mosk Library and Courts building was officially re-opened to the public after a 5-year renovation period during which its staff and collections were moved across the street into the CSL Annex building (where BTBL resides) and a rented warehouse in West Sacramento. BTBL's braille collection, which had been moved to the warehouse, is now fully returned to the Annex. BTBL's Reading Room had been sharing space with sister sections Law, Government Publications, and General Reference services since March of 2009. In June the BTBL Reading Room was returned to primary occupation by Braille and Talking Book Library staff, patrons, and volunteers. We hope you will come visit us to utilize one of our assistive technology work stations, check out or

exchange books and machines, browse new braille and digital book titles, meet BTBL staff, or even arrange a tour in advance. In the coming few years we hope to greatly expand the types of outreach activities, events and programs, and technology available to eligible patrons at our downtown location.

In our Winter 2014 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*, which we are calling "Newsletter on Cartridge" or NOC. The experiment of circulated audio newsletters begins with this issue, and it is very important that you return your audio newsletter cartridge once you have finished reading it, or in five weeks (whichever comes first). Just as with any circulating book, please flip over the mailing card and return it to BTBL so we can re-use newsletter cartridges for the next circulating edition of *BTBL News*. As always, if you would rather receive *BTBL News* via email, or not at all because you read it online, please let us know. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

In September BTBL will celebrate its one year anniversary on Facebook. If you are a Facebook regular, or just a neophyte, we highly encourage you to check out and "like" our Facebook page, which can be found by searching for "BTBL Sacramento" on Facebook. BTBL staff members have been doing their utmost to post educational, as well as fun stories and facts related to the interests of BTBL patrons and affiliates. We hope you will follow us on Facebook and provide appropriate commentary.

In May, BTBL's newly formed User Advisory Council held its inaugural meeting. The Council's plans and direction can be found in an article elsewhere in this newsletter.

Another exciting development for NLS patrons and blind/low vision U.S. residents is the free currency reader distribution program being launched by the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Details are presented in a separate article.

BTBL welcomed newest reader advisor Melissa and student project assistant Lisa in February. We are delighted to have two talented and dedicated staff members contributing to BTBL.

Finally, for those numerophiles out there, I leave you with some impressive statistics. Over the 2013-2014 state fiscal year that ended on June 30, BTBL circulated 592,735 braille, cassette, digital books, and descriptive videos, to approximately 10,000 patrons and institutions in 48 northern California counties. Over the same 12-month period, nearly 2,400 BTBL patrons downloaded over 141,000 digital books and magazines from the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) site to their talking book machines, third party portable players, and iOS devices. BTBL's librarians and reader advisors were busy too, involved in over 62,000 phone calls to and from all of you, not to mention a large amount of email correspondence! We look forward to another year of tremendous activity. The power of the narrated and embossed word is alive and well!

Free Currency Reader

The U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) is providing currency readers, free of charge, to eligible blind and visually impaired individuals as an interim measure in advance of issuing tactile-enhanced Federal Reserve notes. The currency readers will not be distributed until early next year, but if you are currently a member of our library, you can contact BTBL anytime to be put on the pre-order list for early distribution. Full details of the program can be found on the BEP website at:

<http://www.moneyfactory.gov/uscurrencyreaderpgm.html>

BTBL Advisory Council Breaks Out of the Gate

On May 19, the newly created BTBL User Advisory Council (BUAC) held its inaugural meeting at the California State Library. Eight of ten Council members and several guide dogs attended what turned out to be a very productive first meeting. BTBL patrons with diverse backgrounds and talents met each other and shared their skill sets, passion for reading, and excitement to help steer the Braille and Talking Book service forward. Many important print disability library-related issues were brought to the table and earmarked for future exploration.

The Council discussed its role as advisors to the BTBL management and staff, and to the State Library, as well as individual desires to be outreach ambassadors throughout BTBL's 43-county direct service area. Officers were elected, including President Alan B. Smith from Concord, Vice-President Margie Donovan from Folsom, and Secretary Deborah Armstrong from Milpitas. To check out the full roster of Council members and read their statements of interest, go to the BUAC web page at <http://www.library.ca.gov/services/council.html>.

The Council's next meeting will be held in September and meeting minutes will be posted to the BUAC web page. We encourage applicants interested in joining the User Advisory Council in 2015 to fill out an application (on the web page) any time between now and November 15.

Try A Different Outlet!

About 90% of the calls we receive about malfunctioning cassette or digital machines can be solved by plugging the machine into a different outlet in a different room of the house. Even if you think the outlet you are using is a good one (for example a lamp or other appliance is working there) our machines can be surprisingly sensitive to power outlets. We recommend trying an outlet in the kitchen, as these outlets are usually a good power source and are often located on a separate electrical circuit from the rest of the house.

It's a good idea to try plugging the machine directly into the wall outlet — not into a power strip or extension cord. Be sure that the outlet you are using is not controlled by a wall switch (or at least make sure that the wall switch is turned on). If a new outlet does not fix the problem overnight, please contact your Reader Advisor.

NFB-NEWSLINE® Service Sign-Up

Would you like to read a newspaper or magazine with your morning cup of coffee? NFB-NEWSLINE® now offers more choices than ever and is completely free! You can access over 300 publications 24 hours a day via

telephone, through email, over the internet, or through download to an MP3 player or a digital talking book player. There is even an iPhone app! Over 40 magazines are available such as *The New Yorker*, *Time* and *Science News*, national newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, and *USA Today*, television listings, and local shopping circulars.

Local California publications such as *The Sacramento Bee*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and many others are also available. Please contact your Reader Advisor at 1-800-952-5666 to learn more about NFB-NEWSLINE® or to sign up for this service.

Descriptive Videos Available

Did you know that you can borrow movies with an added narrative that describes the action and actors when there is no dialogue? All you need is an ordinary DVD or VHS player and a television! To sign up to receive videos, either visit us online at <http://www.library.ca.gov/services/btbl-dvd/descriptivevideos.html> or ask your Reader Advisor for a Descriptive Video Service (DVS) Registration Packet.

Most of our DVDs do require menu navigation to activate the DVS track, usually found under Languages or Set-up Menus. Some patrons have found that for some DVDs, once the film has begun playing, pressing the "Audio" button repeatedly on their DVD player's remote control will help select the DVS track.

If you already use DVS, we recently added 50 new DVDs to our collection, so be sure to ask your reader advisor for the newest DVD catalog or visit us online!

Talking Book Topics Changes Order Form Order

The new arrangement of *Talking Book Topics* (TBT) that began with the issue for January-February 2014 has the book announcements divided into smaller, more specific categories than the old format had. At the same time, the order form at the back of the January-February issue was arranged to

correspond with those smaller categories, and was not in the usual broad categories (Adult Fiction, Adult Nonfiction, Children's Fiction, and Children's Nonfiction, Foreign Language) with book numbers in numerical order.

We had a large number of complaints from people, particularly those who listen to their TBT on cartridge, that they would jot down a DB number and then not be able to find it on the order form. Amid similar complaints from other libraries, NLS decided to return to the old five-category numeric order system with the May-June 2014 issue. Then we began receiving complaints from people who like or need to find their books in the smaller topic-specific sections. We passed those comments along to NLS and they have decided that with the September-October 2014 issue, they will go back to listing books in the same order as the titles appear in the publication and will also include the smaller topic-specific headings to assist with navigation.

What you should know, however, is that you aren't **required** to use the order forms. They are there as a convenience. If you are already jotting down numbers, include your contact information on that piece of paper and mail it to us; or phone us 24/7 and leave a voicemail with your request; or contact us via email or fax (see back page of this newsletter).

And this just in: the July-August 2014 print issue of TBT has a clerical error on its order form which states that it is the May-June order form. The numbers listed are the correct ones for the July-August issue. NLS regrets the confusion.

What We're Reading: BTBL Staff Picks

The End of Your Life Book Club by Will Schwalbe DB 75762

"I found the characters' life stories kept this book interesting, but I mostly liked how the book introduced so many other book titles. My 'to-read' list grew tenfold after reading this book." - Sarah, Reader Advisor

*Ripper** by Stefan Petrucha DB 75490

"It's exciting, adventurous, has romance and mystery, and is very humorous. This book has a little bit of everything!" - Peggy, Reader Advisor

*Violence

The Light Between Oceans by M. L. Stedman DB 75192

"I love this book. It's Australian and I love the personalities of the characters. It shows how a lie can come back to haunt you." - Joan, Circulation

*The Lacuna** by Barbara Kingsolver DB 70208

"I enjoyed the story of Harrison's life during the 30's in Mexico and the United States. It has a good blend of history, nature and human interest."

- Lisa, Student Assistant

*Some Strong Language

*The Chase** by Janet Evanovich DB 78272

"It's a quick and fun action/adventure book. If you're looking for something other than the Stephanie Plum series, try this one."- Donna, Reader Advisor Supervisor

*Contains some violence and some strong language

*The Lathe of Heaven** by Ursula Le Guin DB/RC 53261, BR 01816

"This is a powerful and unsettling book with many ideas, dreams, and consequences crammed into such a short work. It's a light science fiction work that deals with dreams becoming reality, dystopian and utopian visions, and psychiatry." - Melissa, Reader Advisor

*Some strong language

The Longest Ride by Nicholas Sparks DB 77603, BR 20330

"Sweet with a little suspense that tugs at the heartstrings." - Valerie, Reader Advisor

Nation by Terry Pratchett DB 67846, BR 18200

"I found the interplay between indigenous Mau and misplaced-Brit Daphne and their unexpected rites of passage as hilariously bizarre as they were endearing. This is a thought-provoking tale with a supporting cast of the expected Pratchettian bizarre characters." - Mike, BTBL Director

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

Free Matter for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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
Website: btbl.ca.gov; Web Catalog: btbl.library.ca.gov.

Office closures: We will be closed Sep. 1 (Labor Day), Nov. 11 (Veteran's Day), Nov. 27-28 (Thanksgiving), Dec. 25 (Christmas Day), Jan. 1 (New Year's 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 8th Street, Suite 345, Sacramento, CA, 95814-4809. Donations can also be made online at: www.csifdn.org. Follow the link to "Join/Donate Online." There is a place to designate BTBL as the recipient.