



# BTBL News

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

New Series no. 12 (Winter 2014-2015)

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## A Message from Mike Marlin, Director

Wintry salutations from the State Library Annex in Sacramento, home of the *BTBL News* think tank! I hope you have been enjoying a relaxed holiday season filled with good reads.

I was very fortunate to travel in August to Lyon, France to represent both California and the American Library Association at the 2014 Congress of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). I helped plan a program presentation entitled "How Special Are We Anyway? Bringing accessible reading to mainstream libraries and markets; Progress and Challenges Ahead." The presentation featured librarians from Finland, France, The Netherlands, Sweden, and the U.S. discussing innovative accessible technology and service models in their respective countries geared toward blind or otherwise print disabled users. Immediately following the IFLA Congress I made the journey north to Paris for a satellite conference dubbed "eBooks for everyone! An opportunity for more inclusive libraries." As the

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title suggests, I listened to talks and demonstrations in French and English on the current and potential accessibility of electronic content and how it can revolutionize reading and access to information for those of us with print disabilities. And in case you were wondering, I did manage to eat a few delicious crepes and my guide dog, Vivaldi, enjoyed a few French kibbles!

If you are reading this newsletter in large print you will find a Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) patron survey in the center with several questions about our service. We sincerely hope you will take the time to fill it out, detach it and mail it back to us or call us and request your Reader Advisor to assist you in completing it by phone. You may also choose to fill out the survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/K7TZWS8>. Newsletter readers using other formats (audio, braille, email) should contact us or use the SurveyMonkey website. Thanks for helping us with your feedback so that we may make improvements in our service.

The inauguration of *BTBL News* in Newsletter on Cartridge (NOC) audio format this past August/September was quite successful. However, there are still some BTBL patrons who have not yet returned their Summer 2014 issue cartridges. We need to re-use those newsletter cartridges for the next circulating edition of *BTBL News*, so we are unable to send you additional audio newsletters if your last issue is overdue. Please return past newsletters on cartridge to us as soon as possible to remain in good standing to receive the next NOC. Just as with any circulating book, flip over the mailing card and return it to BTBL. As always, if you would rather receive *BTBL News* via email, or not at all because you read it online, please let us know.

In an exciting new development, we have instituted a browsable digital book collection in our Sacramento public reading room. For those who visit us in person, you can now browse for mysteries, romances, westerns, historical fiction, and other popular genres in DB format on our shelves. We are adding more DB titles every day and hope travelers to our stacks will avail themselves of books on cartridge in person.

For our DVD collection of movies and television shows with descriptive narration, we have made the decision to increase the maximum borrowing limit from one DVD to two. If you are interested in increasing DVD checkouts,

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please contact your Reader Advisor. We will purchase more available titles this coming spring to add to the collection.

BTBL's newly formed User Advisory Council held two meetings in 2014 and the meeting agendas and minutes are now available online at [www.library.ca.gov/services/council.html](http://www.library.ca.gov/services/council.html). The Council will be expanding its numbers in 2015 with its first meeting planned in early February.

On September 2, 2014, the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) launched its pilot program to distribute free currency readers to blind or visually impaired citizens. Qualified patrons of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) were the target of the pilot. By now some of BTBL's patrons will have received or will soon receive their currency readers in the mail. When you receive your iBill Talking Banknote Identifier and have questions or need to report any problems, you may contact the BEP toll free at (844) 815-9388 or via email: [meaningful.access@bep.gov](mailto:meaningful.access@bep.gov). As of January 2, 2015, the BEP free currency reader program is open for all blind and visually impaired U.S. citizens. If you are eligible and still wish to obtain a reader, please contact the BEP Call Center (see above) to be mailed a print application form, or download the form from the BEP web site: [www.moneyfactory.gov/uscurrencyreaderform.html](http://www.moneyfactory.gov/uscurrencyreaderform.html).

Finally, if you live in an assisted living or skilled nursing facility, or visit someone who does, please talk to the activity director or social worker about BTBL. A significant percentage of our patrons are registered with the help of these professionals, but there are undoubtedly some who are not familiar with what we can offer. They are always welcome to call us for more information or application materials and, in many cases, our staff may be available to give a presentation in your community.

## **Reading Room Has New Artwork**

When we reoccupied our BTBL reading room last spring, some thought our walls looked a bit bare. We decided to try adding some art by visually impaired artists and began contacting a few of our artistic patrons. The first contributions have arrived and were mounted in time for the California State

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Library (CSL) holiday party. State Library staff comments have been very positive. We would like to thank Danute Nitecki, Timothy Taubold, Sonja Frommerova-Fox and Valerie Ries-Lerman for their wonderful donations. If you are in the Sacramento area, visit us and enjoy their work.

## **New BTBL Webpage: Ravenous Readers' Corner**

Looking for that next great read? Head over to our Ravenous Readers' Corner at [www.library.ca.gov/services/rrcorner.html](http://www.library.ca.gov/services/rrcorner.html). Explore topical book lists, "read-alikes," staff suggestions, best seller lists, and more! The webpage contains lots of resources to help you get started. If you are unable to access the web, we can print a large-print version of a particular list for you, or, you can simply contact your Reader Advisor for assistance. Your Reader Advisor is here to help you select books, offer book ideas, or adjust the type of books you are receiving.

## **Phone Menu Changes**

You may have noticed some changes in the Reader Advisor phone menu in November. Due to some changes in personnel the letter options in the menu have shifted somewhat. Here is an up-to-date guide to help you reach your Reader Advisor.

- Press 1 for English
- Press 1 for Reader Advisors
- If the patron's last name begins with the letters:
  - A through B, Press 2
  - C through F, Press 3
  - G through L, Press 4
  - M through R, Press 5
  - S or T, Press 6
  - U through Z, Press 7
  - For Institutions, Press 1

If you do not press any buttons at all or if you are having difficulty, you may just stay on the line or press 0 (zero) to connect with our receptionist.

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## A Bible Of Your Own

Adapted from Oregon *Talking Book and Braille News* Summer 2014

If you're interested in getting a copy of the Bible you can keep, there are several options available to you, depending on the format you want.

Our NLS BARD users can download either an audio or electronic braille copy of the King James Bible. Book numbers for the Bible are DB 68777 for the audio format and BR 14943 for the braille. These files are quite large, so be sure you have a flash drive or cartridge with at least 1 GB of storage.

For those users who don't have BARD access or want a different audio version of the Bible, Aurora Ministries is an organization devoted to providing Bibles to people with print disabilities. They have four English translations: the King James, the New King James, the New English Standard, and the World English Bible. Both Old and New Testaments come on a single NLS-style cartridge just like the ones we send out. They do require a \$15 donation to cover the cost of the cartridge, or you can send them a flash drive or cartridge you've purchased. You can contact Aurora Ministries at 941-748-3031, or visit their website at [www.audiobiblesfortheblind.org](http://www.audiobiblesfortheblind.org).

Bibles in braille are available for free from Braille Bibles International. They also offer large print copies at low prices. If you are interested, contact Braille Bibles International at 800-522-4253 or [info@BrailleBibles.org](mailto:info@BrailleBibles.org).

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) produces an NLS-style audio cartridge with English translations of four scriptures, including the LDS Edition of the King James Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. The cartridge costs \$10, and can be found on their website: [www.store.lds.org](http://www.store.lds.org) or call 800-537-5971.

Finally, NLS has put together a comprehensive *Reference Circular* entitled "Bibles and Other Sacred Writings in Special Media," last updated in 2014, which covers available materials from many religions. You may access it at: [www.loc.gov/nls/reference/circulars/bibles.html](http://www.loc.gov/nls/reference/circulars/bibles.html) or contact us to provide you with a large print paper copy.

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## Do You Have A Cassette Machine You Are Not Using?

Do you find you're primarily using our digital machine and books these days? Do you have one of our yellow cassette machines lying around gathering dust? If you find you are no longer using your cassette player, consider sending it back to us and switching your service to digital books only.

To send your cassette machine back to us, box it up and address it to: BTBL, 900 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Write "Free Matter for the Blind" in place of postage to ship free through the United States Postal Service. You will have to take it to the Post Office. Either include a note in the box or give your Reader Advisor a call to indicate that you are returning the player because you no longer want the cassette service.

If you are still using the older cassette machine and find it useful - that's no problem. You may continue to use both the digital and cassette machines. We still have cassette tapes and will continue to provide cassette service as long as we can. **Please do not feel you have to return a cassette machine that you are still using!**

## BTBL on Facebook!

Don't forget that BTBL is now on Facebook (and you don't even need a Facebook account to be able to view our page). Just visit [www.btbl.ca.gov](http://www.btbl.ca.gov) and select the link "BTBL 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. Check us out!

## What We're Reading: BTBL Staff Picks

*Sophie's World: a Novel About the History of Philosophy* by Jostein Gaarder  
DB/RC 42143

"If you've ever wanted an introduction to philosophy, but don't want to fall asleep, this book is for you. The author introduces the main players in philosophy while painting a mysterious storyline around a young girl named Sophie." - Sarah, Reader Advisor

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*Say When, The Art of Mending, and, The Year of Pleasures* by Elizabeth Berg  
DB 70097

"I love this book as you get 3 different stories in one. My favorite was *The Art of Mending* because Berg seems to have great knowledge about family dynamics." - Johanna, Circulation

\*Contains strong language and some descriptions of sex.

*How to Train Your Dragon* by Cressida Cowell DB 72291

"My daughter is reading and enjoying this book. This is on the Accelerated Reader list, I believe, for grade 5-6. The television show and the movies are based on this set of books. This cartridge contains books 1-6 in the series."

- Donna, Reader Advisor Supervisor

\*For grades 3-6 and older readers.

*The Bat* by Jo Nesbø BR 20166/ DB 77081

"*The Bat*, translated from Norwegian, is the first in line of the detective Harry Hole mystery series. I like the foreign settings and Harry's psychological approach to finding serial killers." - Mary Jane, Librarian

\* Contains violence and strong language

*Ladies' Night* by Mary Kay Andrews. DB 76932

"A modern day romance with twists and turns to keep you entertained."

- Valerie, Reader Advisor

\*Contains strong language, descriptions of sex, and some violence.

*Winter's Bone* by Daniel Woodrell DB 72910

"A chilling, short mystery in which a 16-year old hunts for her missing father whose bail-jumping has endangered the family home. Set in the stark Ozarks where being with family doesn't mean you're any safer, this tenacious protagonist's story will continue to haunt you on cold winter nights."

- Melissa, Reader Advisor

\*Contains violence and strong language



**Remember to take the survey! Contact us to assist you with it if you are listening to this newsletter on cartridge or reading it in braille, by email or on our website.**

Braille and Talking Book Library  
California State Library  
P.O. Box 942837  
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Free Matter for the Blind and  
Physically Handicapped

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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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 email, 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 February 16 (Presidents' Day), March 31 (Cesar Chavez Day), May 25 (Memorial Day), July 4 (Independence Day), and September 7 (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.