

Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library Spring 2014 Newsletter

Director's Report

It has been a long time since our last newsletter. Newsletters are one of our main ways to communicate information about this program so it is my hope to increase the frequency of these publications.

Since many of you have email accounts, you may prefer to receive our newsletter or other information by email. If you would like to make changes in how you receive our newsletter, please contact us at mn.btbl@state.mn.us or 1-800-722-0550. The newsletter is also available in braille and audio formats.

The library now has a new web address! We have added a number of FAQs on digital books, equipment and descriptive videos to our website. Additional topics will be added. The website is still a work in progress, but we hope you will visit www.mnbtbl.org to check it out!

Happy Reading!
Catherine A. Durivage

NLS BARD Mobile App



The National Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) recently released a mobile app for MN BARD users with Apple devices running iOS version 4.3 or later. The app allows MN BARD patrons to download and play audio books and magazines and read braille books, magazines and music scores. NLS Director Karen Keninger describes BARD Mobile as "a library in your pocket."

If you are not a MN BARD user, please complete the [online application](#). More information on MN BARD appears in the following article.

To download titles from the BARD Mobile app, you must first add each desired title to your wish list, or select a title from the "Get Books" tab. Braille readers need a Bluetooth-enabled, refreshable braille display

compatible with their iOS device in order to read electronic braille titles.

Each MN BARD patron can register up to five iOS devices on their account. Although you can download the same titles on all your devices, the app is unable to synchronize reading positions across multiple devices. iOS devices do not need to be registered like other NLS players.

[Visit the iTunes App store to download the BARD Mobile app.](#)

For help using the app, [read the NLS's BARD Mobile Application User Guide.](#)

[View an introductory video to the BARD Mobile app.](#)

The NLS is also working on an app for Android devices. It is expected to be released sometime in 2014.

Minnesota Braille and Reading Download (MN BARD)

MN BARD is an optional service that allows individuals and institutions with a fast Internet connection the ability to download braille and talking books, magazines, music scores and foreign language titles directly from the Internet 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For audio materials, you must purchase a blank cartridge or USB flash drive. For more information on MN BARD including a list of vendors selling blank cartridges, [visit our Minnesota Braille and Reading Download webpage.](#)

Recent upgrades to MN BARD make it possible for users to maintain a wish list of books and magazine issues to download, view past downloads and change screen settings.

If you were a Web-Braille user, you must register for a MN BARD account to access the electronic braille collection. [complete the online application.](#) You must have an email address, a high-speed Internet connection and a braille-aware device.

Magazines Are Now Digital



The NLS has completed the switch from distributing magazines on cassette tapes to digital cartridges. One very important change as a

result of this move from cassette to cartridges is that you MUST return magazine cartridges. Magazine cartridges are neither personal copies nor disposable. If you do not return magazine cartridges, your subscription(s) will stop until the cartridges are returned.



Digital magazines are shipped in red containers and cartridges are light blue. If you subscribe to more than one magazine, they may be all contained on a single cartridge. Each cartridge contains instructions on how to navigate multiple magazines, plus a reminder to return the cartridge. A digital talking book player, preferably the advanced talking book player, is needed to listen to magazines on cartridges. If you need a digital player, please contact the library.

The audio version of *Talking Book Topics* will be distributed on cartridges, but the print order form is mailed separately. *Talking Book Topics* cartridges must be returned. To request a list of available

magazines, please contact the library or [visit our Magazines webpage](#). The list of available magazines is included in both the large print and audio versions of *Talking Books Topics*.

Contact the library to add or cancel a magazine. Please allow four to six weeks to completely process your subscription request.

Digital Talking Book Players and Battery Life



The NLS has indicated that a digital talking book player with a battery reading of 12 hours or more is acceptable and the player does not need to be sent back. If after a full re-charging the battery life is 11 hours or less, contact the library or the Communication Center to request a replacement player.

Digital talking book players can also remain plugged in indefinitely without ill effects to the battery life.

The digital talking book player does not have the battery “memory” issues that were common with the cassette book player batteries.

“End of Book” Message

If the message “End of book” is announced after inserting a cartridge into the digital talking book player, simply press the Play/Stop button a couple of times to return to the beginning. Pressing and continually holding down the Rewind button has the same effect.

Bookshelf Feature

To access multiple book titles or magazine issues on a cartridge, press and hold the Play/Stop button until you hear the word Bookshelf. Use the Fast Forward (FF) and Rewind (RW) keys to move forward and backward between titles. When you reach the book title or magazine issue you want, press the Play/Stop button again.

Book Club Members



Many of you are active book club members. Library staff wants you to have enough time to read and to prepare for discussions. If you request book club titles, mention they are for a book club and the date of the discussion. If a title is part of the collection, staff will choose a priority reserve or add the title to our weekly duplication list.

If your book club compiles a reading list of potential selections in advance, library staff can check this list for availability. Knowing which titles are available, unavailable or in-process may help your club decide what to read and when.

If several MBTBL patrons belong to one book club, the library could use its Book Club program to send each member a copy of the book at the

same time about one month before the meeting. Each member would no longer have to contact the library to request the book. If this service might be helpful to your book club, please contact the library for more information.

Magazine Changes

The braille magazines *Parenting Early Years* and *Parenting School Years* have ceased publication. If you received either publication you will now receive *Parents* magazine.

The magazine *Smart Computing* has ceased publication. *Wired* has been selected as a replacement. *Wired* is a monthly magazine that presents wide-ranging news and opinion concerning technology industries and the digital environment. Current subscribers to *Smart Computing* will automatically receive *Wired* magazine beginning January 2014.

The *Young Adult Magazine of the Month* program has been suspended effective January 1, 2014. The regular *Magazine of the Month* program will continue.

New Large Print Catalogs

The library recently received the following large print catalogs. To request copies, contact the library.

For Younger Readers 2010-2011

A catalog of audio and braille books produced during 2010 and 2011 for young readers aged preschool through high school.

Westerns 2011

A catalog of selected western titles produced in audio and braille.

Mysteries for Younger Readers 2012

A collection of mystery books written primarily for children in elementary through middle school.

Digital Talking Books Plus 2012

An annual catalog listing digital books for adult and young adult readers produced in 2012.

Accessories for the Digital Talking Book Player



The following accessories are available for the digital talking book player. Please contact the library or the Communication Center at 1-800-652-9000 to request any of these accessories.

Headphones:

Issued to individuals who require them for reading talking books where speakers are not permitted, such as in nursing homes and hospitals.

Pillow Speakers:

Available to individuals who are confined to a bed. This speaker is placed under a pillow and is normally heard only by that individual.

Amplifiers:

For individuals with significant hearing loss. Amplifiers require a separate application with medical certification because the sound is boosted to a level that can cause permanent hearing loss to persons with normal hearing.

Breath Switch Adapters:

Available to persons with little or no use of their extremities. These adapters enable the user to control the Play/Stop function of the digital player.

Talking Books: Important Things to Remember

Each talking book you receive has three important parts: a mailing container, a mailing label and the cartridge. Please keep these three parts together.

Mailing labels have a round punch-hole along the edge of the narrow side of the label. The label is white on one side, yellow on the other. Your address is printed on the white side. The library's address is on the yellow side. There are also two check boxes on the return address side. One box is to let us know if the book is defective. The other box is to let us know if you would like us to resend the book.

To return an item, turn the label so its yellow side is facing out. The punch hole will be found on the left hand edge of the label's narrow side.

To keep the container and its cartridge together, we suggest that you:

- Open and listen to one book at a time. Place the cartridge in its container so that the braille or title is visible. Turn the mailing label over and return the complete book.
- If you open more than one container, place a rubber band around the container and cartridge. Keep the container and cartridge bound together until you are ready to listen to the book. Remove the rubber band before you return the container to the library.

Please check each container before mailing it. Does the container include the correct cartridge? Is the container empty? If so, check for the missing cartridge in your player.

Returning an empty mailing container or one with the incorrect book delays your library service. If you find a talking book but not its container, contact the library.

NFB-Newsline®

NFB-Newsline® is a free electronic newspaper and magazine reading service that eligible users can access via the telephone, the Internet, email or with an iPhone, iPod or iPad. More than 300 publications including TV listings are available. Minnesota papers include the *Duluth News Tribune*, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *Rochester Post-Bulletin*, *Saint Cloud Times* and *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*. Contact the library for more information or [visit the NFB-Newsline® webpage](#).

To register for NFB-Newsline®, contact the library or the Communication Center at 1-800-652-9000.

Dial-In News

Dial-In News, a service of State Services for the Blind, provides telephone access to the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, the *Pioneer Press* and *City Pages*, an alternative weekly.

To register for this service, contact the Communication Center at 1-800-652-9000.

Upcoming Holiday Closings

- Memorial Day, May 26
- Fourth of July, July 4
- Labor Day, September 1
- Veteran's Day, November 11
- Thanksgiving, November 27-28
- Christmas Day, December 25

Please request books ahead so you have enough books to enjoy while the library is closed.

Contact Information

[Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library](#)

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Faribault, MN 55021-6340

Toll-Free: 1-800-722-0550

Fax: 507-333-4832

Email: mn.btbl@state.mn.us