

**Washington Talking Book & Braille Library
Administered by the Washington State Library
and Office of Secretary of State**

**Reading Matters
Spring/Summer 2012
*David Junius, Editor***

A Message from Danielle Miller, Program Manager



As is always the case at your Talking Book & Braille Library, much has been brewing. WTBBL is a regional library for the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) of the Library of Congress, and we have a new director! On March 26, Karen Keninger took over the NLS reins. Karen is the former director of the Iowa Department for the Blind and the Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. She holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University in Iowa and a master's degree in English, business, and technical writing from Iowa State University. Karen completed graduate courses in library and information science at the University of Iowa. 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.

In May I got to meet Karen at the NLS Biennial Conference in Newport, Rhode Island. I am very excited by her plans for the future, the role of NLS and the regional libraries, and how to best serve our patrons. With Karen at the helm, the future of our service is in good hands.

June 5, 2012, was declared Washington Talking Book & Braille Library Day by Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn. WTBBL Day was part of the Mayoral Award for Empowering Individuals with Disabilities. We were given a proclamation and enjoyed a lovely reception with many other wonderful organizations being recognized for their work.

Some more great news is that we've hired a Youth Services & Outreach Librarian. Her name is Mandy and you'll find her profile later in this edition. She is excited to get to know you and partner

with your chapters or groups to expand programming and activities for children and teens. We'll be having an open house at WTBBL to welcome her and we hope to have lots of families join us. She'll be starting just in time for the Summer Reading Program – please encourage any youth 18 years old or under to join in the Dream Big – Read summer fun.

Wishing you all the very best and please do stay in touch.

Danielle, (206) 615-1588 / danielle.miller@sos.wa.gov

Electronic Services and Instruction Update by Eura Szuwalski

PHOTO AT LEFT: Eura kicks off her statewide trainings at WTBBL.



A great deal has happened in the two years since I started as WTBBL's first Electronic Services and Instruction Librarian. The Digital Talking Book Machine transition is in full force, public libraries are partnering with WTBBL to spread the word about the service, and WTBBL will soon have a new design for our website.

Since March, I have been taking our digital books and downloading training on the road to introduce the service to public libraries around the state. With assistance from the Washington State Library, and funding from a Library Services and Technology Act grant, I presented the "Ally with WTBBL" training to teachers, librarians and library staff. The goal was to remind and encourage the library staff and teachers to "ally" with WTBBL and refer potential patrons to our service. The full-day training featured an overview of WTBBL services, a session on services for people with disabilities, an introduction and hands-on exercise with assistive technology software and devices, and training in downloading books.

The sessions took place in Seattle at WTBBL, in Vancouver at Fort Vancouver Regional Library, in Bellingham at Whatcom County Library, in Toppenish at the Yakama Nation Cultural Heritage Center, in Richland at the Richland Public Library, in Ritzville at the Ritzville Public Library, and in Spokane at the Spokane County Library. In total, 61 people attended the training sessions and each went home with a flash drive of WTBBL materials and a better understanding of WTBBL services. All library systems represented either updated the details of their account to receive a talking book machine or signed up for an institutional account!

I look forward to providing similar training to other groups that work with our patrons. If you know of a group that would be interested in this training, an outreach presentation on WTBBL services, or a tour of the library, please contact David Junius, WTBBL's Volunteer Services and Outreach Coordinator, at (206) 615-0417.

I am also updating the design for the WTBBL website. The website is often the first place that potential patrons, their family members, and interested parties turn to learn about WTBBL and what we provide. Over the last two years, I have performed usability studies to learn what works and doesn't work with the current site. Working with the Office of Secretary of State's web design team and WTBBL staff, we have developed a new design and a more intuitive structure for the site.

As staff members develop the content to fill the site, I will also work with patrons and staff to ensure that the site is fully accessible. If you are interested in being part of the usability group for the beta version of the site, please contact the library and ask for Eura. I am very excited to "go live" with the new site before the end of the summer and present a new online face for our wonderful service.

While the last couple of years have been packed with outreach and other opportunities, I look forward to continuing to find innovative ways and funding options to bring technology and electronic resources to WTBBL patrons.

There is still so much more that we can and will do!

New Books at WTBBL by Herrick Heitman

Call it regional pride, but it's always nice to get books from the National Library Service with a Northwest theme. See how well authors portray familiar places in the following books.

Audio: Adult Fiction

Deep Creek by Dana Hand.

Idaho Territory, June 1887. County judge Joe Vincent, westernized Chinese investigator Lee Loi, and Métis mountain guide Grace Sundown track the killers responsible for the massacre of more than thirty Chinese gold miners along the Snake River. Based on a true story. Violence and strong language. 2010. 11 hours, 38 minutes. Digital Book DB 72620. Also available as a downloadable book from BARD: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.72620>

An Engagement in Seattle by Debbie Macomber.

Two Seattle romance novellas. In “Groom Wanted,” a businesswoman reluctantly agrees to marry a Russian chemist to give him citizenship — but he wants a real marriage. In “Bride Wanted,” an Alaskan pipeline worker advertises for a bride and finds one who already has the dress. Some descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 1992. 12 hours, 50 minutes. Digital Book DB 72816. Also available as a downloadable book from BARD: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.72816>

Hold Me Closer, Necromancer by Lish McBride.

Samhain “Sam” Corvus LaCroix drops out of college and bides his time at local fast-food restaurant Plumpy’s, only to learn that his life isn’t what it seems to be — and that Seattle is teeming with paranormal creatures. Some violence and some strong language. For senior high and older readers. 2010. 11 hours, 9 minutes. Digital Book DB 72338. Also available as a downloadable book from BARD: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.72338>

Though Not Dead [#18, *Kate Shugak Mysteries*] by Dana Stabenow.

Kate is attacked while reading the diaries of her late uncle, “Old Sam.” When she discovers that Sam changed his will shortly before he died, she searches for clues to his past and finds a Russian icon and a deed to valuable property. Some violence and some strong language. 2011. 14 hours, 43 minutes. Digital Book DB 73422. Also available as a downloadable book from BARD: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.73422>

Braille: Adult Fiction

The Walk by Richard Paul Evans.

Seattle advertising executive Alan Christoffersen has everything — until his beloved wife dies, his business partner steals their clients, and his house is repossessed. Alan decides to walk across America to Key West, Florida, in search of new meaning while keeping a journal and befriending people along the way. 2010. Two volumes. Braille Book BR 19058. Also available as DB 73358 and as a downloadable braille book from Web-Braille:

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/br.19058v01>

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/br.19058v02>

Baby, It's Cold Outside by Jennifer Greene, et al.

Three short romances. In Jennifer Greene's "Blame It on the Blizzard," Emilie Bartlett retreats to her family's remote Alaskan lodge and finds love with a handsome recluse seeking shelter from the winter storm. Includes "Deep Freeze," by Merline Lovelace and "Melting Point," by Cindi Myers. Some explicit descriptions of sex. 2010. Braille Book BR 18871. Two volumes. Also available as a downloadable braille book from Web-Braille:

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/br.18871v01>

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/br.18871v02>

Braille: Adult Nonfiction

Mountain Madness: Scott Fischer, Mount Everest, and a Life Lived on High by Robert Birkby.

Biography of mountain climber Scott Fischer, who died while leading an expedition up Mount Everest in 1996. Author Birkby, an outdoorsman and friend of Fischer's, describes many of the climbs that Fischer made around the world as owner of Mountain Madness, a Washington-based guide service. 2008. Braille Book BR 18451. Three volumes. Also available as a downloadable braille book from Web-Braille:

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/br.18451v01>

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/br.18451v02>

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/br.18451v03>

Shipping News by Sally Jo Hagen

It's almost summertime and that means we will once again be participating in two programs for youth. One is the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) through the City of Seattle with participants from the Seattle area high schools.

The other program is Youth Employment Solutions (YES), with participants coming from the Washington State School for the Blind and the Washington State Department of Services for the Blind. The YES program is six weeks long and during this time the students live at a sorority house near the University of Washington. For many of the students, this will be the first time they have been away from home and have the added responsibilities of not only getting to work on time, but also learning housing and living skills.

A lot of things are happening in shipping these days, including shifting our materials to make more space for new books, weeding some of our collection to make room for new braille and digital materials, and maybe a tactile art installation with our summer students!

I hope everyone is getting their books and equipment and are enjoying a good read! If you have any questions or requests, please call WTBBL at (800) 542-0866 or (206) 615-0400.

WTBBL's New Youth Services and Outreach Librarian

Hello! My name is Mandy Gonnsen and I am the new Youth Services and Outreach Librarian. I am a recent graduate of the Library and Information Science master's program at the University of Washington and am extremely excited to join the WTBBL team. I have been working with children and teens in various capacities over the past few years, since earning my bachelors degree in psychology from the University of Maryland.



I believe that youth of all ages have a place at the library, and I'm looking forward to establishing some fun and engaging programs for youth at WTBBL. I hope you'll join us for our upcoming summer reading program — this year's theme is "Dream Big. Read." — and we'll have some great reading lists and activities throughout the summer!

I would love to get to know each and every one of you, so please don't hesitate to call or stop by with any questions or just to say hello. I'm happy to be here and I'm looking forward to serving you at WTBBL.

Volunteer Spotlight: Janell Peterson

I have been a fan of talking book and braille libraries for as long as I can remember. I've been a patron since about age five, first in Portland, Oregon, and then at our wonderful WTBBL since 1967. I have always been interested in volunteering but haven't always had the extra time. During the 1980s I volunteered at Lowell Elementary School and Meany Middle School working as an aide for teachers of visually impaired and blind students, in addition to sighted students who were working to improve their reading skills.



Around 2005, WTBBL Reader Advisor Alan Bentson offered me an opportunity to learn cataloging online books and editing many less-than-perfect book descriptions in the database. This task was really “up my alley,” since my employment for 30 years has been as a medical transcriptionist, which requires an attention to detail and the ability to troubleshoot independently.

After enjoying that role for several years, another opportunity arose to try my hand at proofreading the locally produced braille books transcribed by WTBBL volunteers. While at first I thought I'd miss the cataloging, I found to my delight the proofreading experience was enjoyable to learn, and even more enjoyable to continue because my teammate Martha is such a delight to work with.

Martha is the sighted portion of our team, reading the printed version of the book while I proof the braille. We take turns doing the reading, as we must vocalize every attribute of the text, including all punctuation marks and paragraphing. We sometimes plod through long footnotes and indices that require lots of scrutiny, so to keep fresh and alert we find that taking turns doing the reading works best for us. Since my vocation is somewhat isolating by its nature and I work from home, I now find I prefer this teamwork and look forward to our time together each week.

Outside of work and WTBBL volunteering, I enjoy being a phone friend to a homebound senior, meeting up with public transit-enthusiastic friends for some excursions around the area to see where all we can get to by bus, attending some of the performances organized by Arts for the Visually Impaired, hooking up with my workmates for idea exchanges and staying current in the field, long

walks, and much reading. My absolute favorite thing to do is to expand my personal library, and when I can get to the WTBBBL patron computer lab, or LEAP at Seattle Public Library, I always grab a few downloads.

I feel so blessed to have had the exposure to the world of volunteering at WTBBBL and elsewhere. I feel like if I could retire tomorrow there would never be enough hours in the day to try my hand at many different volunteer opportunities that I know of and likely many that haven't yet revealed themselves to me.

Staff Profile: Wes Derby



I was born in 1978, in Portland, Oregon. I moved to Arizona in third grade, but came back to the Northwest often. I moved to Washington in 1999 because, at the time, there weren't a lot of job options in Arizona.

My original dream was to be a radio DJ and talk show host. Around the time I moved here, radio stations were just beginning their switch to computers instead of old-fashioned mixing boards and CD players. Unfortunately, after applying to cohost a morning show, I learned the software being used was not yet accessible with a screen reader.

Though I always loved to read, I never thought of working for a library. However, I started as the receptionist at WTBBBL in May 2000, and quickly learned to do part-time readers advisory to help support the staff. In 2003, one of our reader advisors left, and I filled the position on a temporary basis. I was hired for the position permanently in February 2005. Within a couple months of the promotion, my daughter Alexis was born.

In 2009, in addition to my work with the library, I found a way to satisfy my passion for radio in the form of Internet broadcasting. I started out working with a station primarily focused on blind broadcasters. Then in 2010, I partnered with a well-respected music journalist and formed my own station where today, we interview everyone from independent artists to the biggest names in rock and metal music.

My time at WTBBBL will come to a close June 15, as I'll be moving to the Yakima Valley with my family. This job has been very rewarding. I've worked with some of the coolest people one could

ever hope to have as co-workers, and our patrons are an amazing group. Thanks to all who have made my time here so special.

An Update from Carleen Jackson



GiveBIG:

First of all, thanks to the patrons, friends, volunteers and staff who made gifts to WTBBL in the recent “GiveBIG” campaign on May 2nd. We are all very pleased with our results from participating for the first time. With matching funds received from the Seattle Foundation, WTBBL raised \$1,931.66 in the 24-hour event. Look for us again next year on the first Wednesday in May. We have even bigger plans to involve more people in 2013!

Parting Gifts from Good Friends:

Recently, WTBBL received wonderful bequests from patrons and friends of WTBBL. These gifts are important to us because they indicate that the givers were not only happy with the service and books they received from WTBBL, but also cared enough to make sure that the library will continue to provide great service in the future.

We invest unrestricted bequests in the WTBBL endowments held at the Seattle Foundation, and the Inland Northwest Community Foundation in Spokane. By doing this we are guaranteeing an income stream for WTBBL to provide for needs not supported by federal and state funding.

Today that income stream is dedicated to funding a new WTBBL youth services and outreach librarian position. As government budgets continue to get tighter, the annual income from our endowments is even more necessary to continue the level of service our patrons expect and to reach out to anyone who is eligible for our services.

Our latest bequest is from Elizabeth Welty by way of her sister, Mary Johnston. Elizabeth left a significant gift of stock to Mary, with the stipulation that it be given as a gift to WTBBL.

Elizabeth was devoted to the welfare of children. After several years in social work and social research projects at the University of British Columbia and the University of Washington, Elizabeth

became director of Medina Children's Services, a progressive, child-centered adoption agency in Seattle. At Medina, she created and directed the Children's Protective Services demonstration project.

Her success with Children's Protective Services was a key factor in the passage of the state's first child abuse laws, including a landmark child abuse statute that gives immunity to physicians and institutions reporting suspected child abuse. Her personal convictions also led her to projects that fostered opportunities and fairness for Native Americans, Japanese-Americans, and other marginalized groups and individuals.

In her retirement years, after experiencing macular degeneration, she made great use of WTBBL and so strongly appreciated this service that she was inspired to leave this gift. Our donors never cease to amaze with their desire to help others and support WTBBL during their lifetimes and beyond.

If you are interested in making a gift to WTBBL in your estate plan, please contact Carleen Jackson at (360) 902-4126 or carleen.jackson@sos.wa.gov.