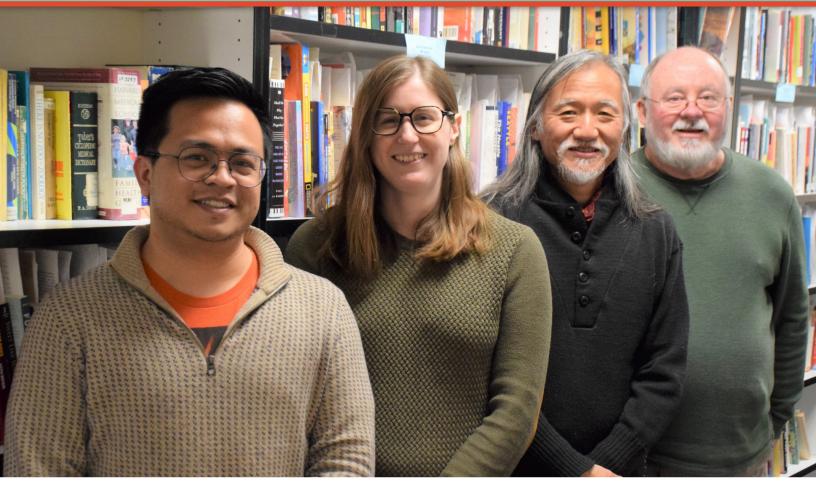
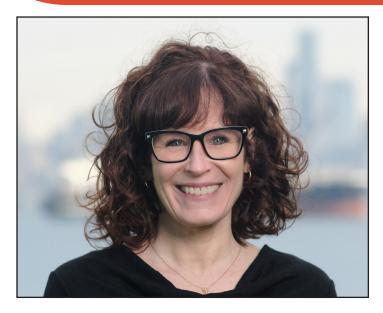
# READING MATTERS 2023



WASHINGTON TALKING BOOK & BRAILLE LIBRARY 2021 9th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98121-2783 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday Phone: 206-615-0400 • Toll free: 800-542-0866 wtbbl@sos.wa.gov • www.wtbbl.org

**That All May Read** 

### FROM THE DIRECTOR BY DANIELLE MILLER



It is hard to believe 2023 marks my 15th year as the WTBBL director. The Washington Talking Book & Braille Library is the most remarkable and rewarding place I have ever had the honor of working at, and I learn something new every day. The WTBBL staff, the volunteers, and you – our patrons and community – are incredible and make the library and our services exceptional. Thank you.

I always want to hear from you about how we are doing and the ways we can improve, services you would like to see the library offer, and what is working well for you. One way to connect with the library is by joining our Patron Advisory Council (PAC). The PAC meets at least three times a year and supports outreach efforts, participates in programming activities, and provides feedback on library initiatives, services, and planning. PAC members represent all the print disabilities that qualify people for WTBBL services. This year we were unable to fill two of our positions: someone who uses WTBBL services primarily due to a reading disability; and someone who has a physical disability that makes holding a book or turning a page difficult.

WTBBL assists with and reimburses travel expenses to attend PAC meetings in Seattle at the library. PAC members are expected to be able to participate in meetings and communicate with the council by email. If you are eligible for one of the open patron positions on the PAC and are interested in applying, you can find the application at https://tinyurl.com/ wtbbl-pac-2023. Other patron position vacancies on the PAC are advertised on the WTBBL email list every November. For more information, visit the PAC webpage at https://www.wtbbl.org/council.aspx.

If the PAC isn't for you, you can still get involved with WTBBL by participating in our virtual Patron Book Club or youth programming, attending other library events, taking a tour of our library, or just giving us a call to make sure you are getting the books you want. We love to hear from you. Happy Reading!

> On the Cover: WTBBL Audio Production Staff Nathan, Alicia, John and Steve



## LIBRARIES MATTER BY SARA JONES AND THE WASHINGTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



Librarians, library workers, and supporters from across Washington visited with state legislators Feb. 9 to advocate for libraries of all types. Speakers included Secretary of State Steve Hobbs, Washington Library Association President Johanna Jacobsen Kiciman, and myself. The event had been held virtually for the last three years.

Attendees met with state legislators and their staffs to discuss the value of libraries and the laws that affect them. Also, attendees learned how to track and search for bills, give effective testimony, and advocate for libraries and their important roles in a democratic society.

Libraries are more critical than ever to cultivate an educated and informed society. Public support for policies and funding is critical to their success.

### Talking Book Topics in the Online Catalog!

Exciting news! You can now explore and order the most recently added books through our online catalog. Find books from the current Talking Book Topics (TBT) in one browsable list and use the filter to narrow down by genre or topic. You can then add the books directly to your account and the titles will be added to your next cartridge. Find the list under the "Browse" feature in the Catalog or contact your Integrative Services Librarian at ryan.gelskey@sos.wa.gov or call 206-386-1254 for in-depth instructions.

Talking Book Topics continues to be accessible on the NLS website in PDF or HTML formats. You can also subscribe to TBT to be delivered to you in audio format with order forms. If you would like up to sign to receive TBT on cartridge, please let us know by calling 800-842-0866 or emailing wtbbl@sos.wa.gov.



### YOUTH SERVICES ABOUND BY ERIN GROTH

The Braille Challenge is finished, and our Pen-Pals keep writing! The annual regional Braille Challenge hosted 13 students virtually in February, and we had such a great time showing off our braille skills. Some amazing prizes included a Chameleon 20, donated by The American Printing House for the Blind (APH), and an Orbit 20, donated by the Washington Council of the Blind (WCB) Families Committee. These refreshable braille displays are invaluable tools for our braille readers and writers, and we are so thankful to our generous sponsors. Congratulations to the winners! Stay tuned to see if any of these WTBBL contestants make it to the Finals this summer and compete for cash prizes and national recognition.

Speaking of far-reaching friends, the WTBBL Pen-Pal Program had a great run last fall, and students continue to send letters in braille or large print to their friends in Washington and Oregon. We love to put those literacy skills in action!

Storytime is BACK! We hope you've enjoyed the many virtual Multisensory Storytime videos available on WTBBL's YouTube page, but we are so excited to host this program in person again. Every Friday at 11 a.m. we read, sing, play, talk, and dance our hearts out at the library! Children 0-5 and their caregivers are invited for 30 minutes of Storytime followed by 30 minutes of Playtime. Children of all abilities are welcome. If you'd like Storytime to come to you (instead of you coming to Seattle), please reach out! We'd love to bring Multisensory Storytime to a playgroup or classroom near you.

Summer Reading is just around the corner, and this year's theme will be All Together Now, celebrating community and the spirit of working together. Check wtbbl.org soon for information on how to register for programs geared toward early learners, children, and teens. Weekly activity packets full of goodies to keep and books to read are mailed directly to your home, and all Summer Readers are eligible to win some amazing prizes. Be on the lookout for announcements on exciting events happening as well, including in-person experiences around the state and virtual author events for children, teens, and adults hosted by the National Library Service.

There's so much happening in the Youth Services Department. Stay up to date by subscribing to our e-newsletter, *DOTS: WTBBL's Youth Patron Newsletter*. Contact me at erin.groth@sos.wa.gov or 206-615-1253 to be added to the list!



### PATRON SERVICES & TECH CORNER BY RYAN GELSKEY

Want to get the latest news and updates from the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS)? NLS's Patron Engagement Section now hosts an announce-only email listserv that will include notices about NLS programs, services, and products that might be of interest to patrons. To subscribe to this listserv, send your name and email address to the Patron Engagement Section at NLSPES@loc.gov.

NLS has been hard at work developing a new online catalog interface, which went live in December. It boasts a new design and advanced search functionality and direct links to BARD from the book records for swift download. Plus, for the first time, patrons can directly suggest books to be added to the collection! Start exploring the catalog at nlscatalog. loc.gov.

You can, of course, still use the BARD website directly to browse and download. Please continue contacting us or using the WTBBL online catalog at wtbbl.klas. com to submit requests for books on your mail-delivered book cartridges.

You're also welcome to recommend books for production at WTBBL. Submissions are reviewed by librarians, guided by our collection development policy, to ensure quality content of interest for our patrons and the broader NLS network. Contact a librarian if you have questions.

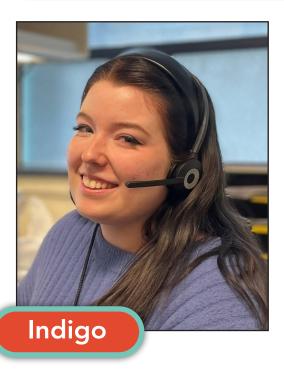
Whether you are a new BARD user or an old hand, join us and NLS for its new "Many Faces of BARD" virtual informational sessions. Every second Thursday of the month at 4 p.m. PT, join via Zoom for a presentation by the BARD Tech Support Team, with time afterward for questions and answers. Previous topics have included: "How You Can Help Us Help You – Working with the BARD Support Team"; "Searching BARD"; and "New Features in BARD Mobile iOS 2.0." For more information, including past session recordings and the Zoom link to participate, search "NLS Many Faces of BARD" online or visit loc.gov/nls/about/ services/many-faces-of-bard/.





**Reading Matters — First Quarter 2023** 

# **MEET WTBBL'S NEW STAFFERS!**



**Hi! My name is Indigo Michalik.** I'm WTBBL's new patron services specialist. I recently graduated from the University of Denver with a master's degree in Library and Information Science. While I loved the fresh mountain air, I'm thrilled to be back in my rainy grey hometown. Maybe a girl who sunburns easily shouldn't have moved to the high desert! Ouch!

While in Denver I had the pleasure of working for the Dance Archives, Golden Public Library, and DU's Zine Collection. Most of my time was spent cataloging and shelving, so I'm happy to have a change of pace and get to talk to patrons. Drop me a line and say hi! I love attending community theatre, running Dungeons & Dragons games, crocheting, and baking. On the weekends, you can find me feeding the local ducks or hanging out with my family. It's no big shock that I'm always reading something. I adore romance, fantasy, and positive psychology, but I'll read almost anything that comes with a glowing review from a friend. I even got my first recommendation from a patron the other day! My welcome to WTBBL has been such a warm one, from both staff and patrons alike. I look forward to getting to know the library system and the people we serve.

#### Thursday, April 6th at 7:00 p.m.

Local author and Washington State Book Award winner, Elsa Sjunneson, will be speaking about her book "Being Seen: One Deafblind Woman's Fight to End Ableism." Watch WTBBL email and social media for more information.





#### Washington Talking Book & Braille Library



#### Hi, everybody! My name is Nathan

**Ureta.** I'm the new lead media technician at WTBBL. A lot of my work involves helping move audiobooks along the production pipeline. I do a lot of the work between the steps our volunteers take to record and review audio files. I also help volunteers prepare for their recording sessions and troubleshoot problems with their workstations.

While it's been a pleasure contributing to audiobook production, what I'm really excited about is helping to get our podcasting and multimedia program off the ground. Right now we're in the early planning stages, but my goal is to add another source of engaging, informative programming to WTBBL's offerings. I've lived in the Puget Sound area most of my life and absolutely love it here. I grew up in Tacoma, graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in journalism, and ended up settling in north Seattle. After a brief stint at a marketing firm, I spent quite a few years working at a preschool where I taught music and led an afterschool/summer camp program for elementary school students. I also worked with an organization that teaches kids to code through the creation of their own videogames.

When I'm not at work, I enjoy exploring the city, playing tabletop games, and creating and listening to music. I love cooking and have found it to be a great way to get in touch with my Filipino heritage. I've also recently discovered the joy of acting and have spent the past few years performing in outdoor plays during the summer. I'm currently reading "The Summer Prince" by Ayla Dawn Johnson, a sci-fi YA novel set in a futuristic Brazil, and "Uzumaki" by Junji Ito, a graphic novel about a cursed Japanese town.

I'm so excited to join the team at WTBBL and contribute to such an amazing resource for our community!



## YOUR WTBBL BOOK CLUB IN 2023 BY RYAN GELSKEY



The patron book club is up and running! Books have been selected through June, with exciting candidates lined up for the second half of the year. **We will meet the last Monday of the month at 1 p.m. throughout the year.** If you are interested in joining us, contact me at ryan.gelskey@ sos.wa.gov or 206-386-1254.

#### March Book Club: Monday, March 27

"The Cold Millions" by Jess Walter (DBC19115)

Spokane, Washington, 1909. An intimate story of brotherhood, love, sacrifice, and betrayal set against the panoramic backdrop of an early 20th-century America that eerily echoes our own time. This WTBBL-produced, award-winning book offers a kaleidoscopic portrait of a nation grappling with the chasm between rich and poor, and harsh realities and simple dreams.

#### April Book Club: Monday, April 24

"The Map of Salt and Stars" by Zeyn Joukhadar (DB093099) This rich, moving, and lyrical debut novel – told in two storylines 800 years apart – has been described as being to Syria what "The Kite Runner" was to Afghanistan. Rawiya disguises herself as a boy to accompany master cartographer al-Idrisi on a journey to create a map of the world, and Nour journeys with her family back to a 2011 war-torn Syria that is not the homeland her mother once knew.

#### May Book Club: Tuesday, May 30

"The Scent Keeper" by Erica Bauermeister (DB098710 and BR023876) Twelve-year-old Emmeline must unravel the mysteries of her family after being taken from her childhood home, an isolated, uninhabited island in the Pacific Northwest. Her only clues are her father's strange machine and bottles of collected scents. "The Scent Keeper" explores the provocative beauty of scent, the way it can reveal hidden truths, and finding our way back home.

#### June Book Club: Monday, June 26

"Summer of '69" by Elin Hilderbrand (DB095859)

Welcome to the most tumultuous summer of the 20th century! 1969. Man lands on the Moon. Vietnam War. Civil Rights Protests. And caught in the middle: the Levin family. Jessie Levin, the youngest of four siblings torn apart by these events, now feels like an only child as she spends the summer with her mother at her grandmother's house in Nantucket, where family secrets raise to a head, and dramatic personal upheavals juxtapose bittersweet nostalgia and history-altering events.



### WTBBL'S NEW BRAILLE BY ED GODFREY

WTBBL's Braille Department and its volunteers have recently made these titles available to our braille-reading patrons:

BRC01940 "After the Blast: The Ecological Recovery of Mount St. Helens" by Eric Wagner.

Mount St. Helens erupted on May 18, 1980, leaving behind a 234-square-mile wasteland in the blast zone – yet a few weeks later plants were sprouting in the ash. The natural restoration of the area over the decades since is clearly described. 2020. Transcribed by Joan Moritz.

BRW08740 "The Apocalypse Factory: Plutonium and the Making of the Atomic Age" by Steve Olson. The author of "Eruption" (BRC01788) presents a chronicle of the development of mass production and weaponization of plutonium at the Hanford nuclear facility in Washington state during World War II, and the bombing of Nagasaki. He discusses prominent scientists including Enrico Fermi and the impact on the surrounding town. 2020. Transcribed by Gail Viscione.

BRW08728 "Sophie's World: A Novel About the History of Philosophy" by Jostein Gaarder. Fifteen-year-old Sophie receives a peculiar letter asking basic questions about life and the world. As she ventures through the history of western philosophy, she solves the mystery of the letter and uncovers a startling truth about herself. Bestseller. 2007. Transcribed by Gail Viscione.



Reading Matters — First Quarter 2023

### RECRUITING AUTHENTIC VOICES BY TRACI TIMMONS

If you receive audiobooks on cartridges or download audiobooks from BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download), you may be listening to works that were produced locally by a network library, like WTBBL. Although many titles offered to our patrons are created commercially by book publishers or through the NLS studios, there are a number of books whose audio versions are created inhouse by volunteer narrators and reviewers, and by library staff at NLS Network Libraries throughout the United States. WTBBL has an accomplished Audiobook Production Department that adds up to 200 audiobooks a year to BARD. You can read about a selection of these locally produced works in the article "New Audiobooks from WTBBL" by Audiobook Production Supervisor John Pai on pg. 10.

WTBBL is recruiting volunteers for several positions, including our very popular Audiobook Narrator position. Narrators must pass an audition and go through training before official narrating begins. They may be asked to give a voice to fiction or nonfiction works; prose or poetry; works written by a man, woman, or nonbinary person; or books whose storyteller may be young or old, or come from a particular socioeconomic background or culture. "Finding the right first-person voice of the author is critical in bringing the spirit of our books to life," said Pai. "Pairing a book with the right narrator is a nuanced task."

WTBBL has books looking for narrators written by authors identifying as: Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC); Asian, Asian-American, or Pacific Islander (AAPI); Latina/Latino (LatinX); and LGBTQIA+. While we continue to accept volunteer applications from everyone, we are focused on recruiting narrators who have a unique connection to the material and can offer the most authentic voices. to these works, and further diversifying our volunteer narrator pool to match the right books with the right voices. If you, or someone you know, are interested, we encourage you to check out WTBBL's Volunteering page at https://www.wtbbl. org/volunteer.aspx. You can follow the links to the Audiobook Narrator volunteer description and read through the list of books for which we are recruiting narrators.

If you have any questions about volunteering, contact Volunteer Services Manager David Junius at 206-615-0417 or david.junius@sos.wa.gov.





### Washington Talking Book & Braille Library

# NEW AUDIOBOOKS FROM WTBBL BY JOHN PAI

The legacy of the Pacific Northwest is reflected in these recently produced and uploaded titles at WTBBL.

DBC15760 "1968: The Year That Rocked Washington" by John C. Hughes, Lori Larson, and Legacy Washington. A spotlight on 19 Washingtonians whose lives reflected the unsettling problems and soaring ideals of the 1960s. 2018. Narrated by Michael Memmo.

DBC15869 "Alice in Chains: The Untold Story" by David De Sola.

Alice in Chains was one of the first Seattle bands to hit it big in the early 1990s. This account of its rise, fall, and resurrection gets into the band's influences along with a detailed history of the birth of grunge. 2018. Narrated by Mary Schlosser.

DBC15759 "The Spokane River" edited by Paul Lindholdt.

The Spokane River runs from Lake Coeur d'Alene to the Columbia River, shaping the land and its history. This collection of essays covers the river's history, geology, and the effects it has had on the people living on its banks. 2018. Narrated by Debra Godfrey.

DBC19104 "After the Blast: The Ecological Recovery of Mount St. Helens" by Eric Wagner.

Mount St. Helens erupted on May 18, 1980, leaving a 234-square-mile wasteland in the blast zone; yet a few weeks later plants were sprouting in the ash. The natural restoration of the area over the decades since is clearly described. 2020. Narrated by Gregg Porter.

DBC15770 "Waterway: The Story of Seattle's Locks and Ship Canal" by David Williams and Jennifer Ott. Seattle is bordered by the Salish Sea to the west and Lake Washington to the east, with Lake Union in the middle. As Seattle grew, ambitious plans for commercial development led to digging canals and building locks to connect the three bodies of water. 2017. Narrated by Debra Godfrey.

DBC19107 "The River That Made Seattle: A Human and Natural History of the Duwamish" by BJ Cummings. The Duwamish River was a source of food for the Duwamish tribe and part of its identity. Its lower reaches became an industrial river, straightened and polluted, after the settlers arrived. Cleaning it up involves conservationists, Native Americans, industries, and government agencies. 2020. Narrated by Ros Wilkes.

BJ Cummings will present at WTBBL the morning of April 19th in partnership with Humanities Washington. This event is open to the public. Please call 800-842-0866 for more information.



**Reading Matters — First Quarter 2023** 

# Thank You to Our Donors from **Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 2022**

Thank you to all our donors, patrons, and champions who supported WTBBL in 2022. Our Annual Campaign was the best yet, and with recurring donations, bequests, and the spring GiveBig online event, we owe each of you a debt of gratitude. Every donation is appreciated, big or small, as each gift helps us better serve you. You can give by sending a check to WTBBL or donating online by credit card at www.wtbbl.org. Thank you for helping us make your library the best it can be! Questions about donating? Contact laura.mott@sos.wa.gov or call 360-902-4171.

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### WTBBL Book Club Picks for 2023! (see pg. 7)

