



Louisiana Hotlines

A Newsletter of the State Library of Louisiana, Office of Lt. Governor, Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism

**Services for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped**
701 North Fourth Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Telephone Numbers

Toll Free: 800-543-4702

Phone: 225-342-0035

Fax: 225-342-6817

Braille Service:

800-453-4293

E-mail

sbph@state.lib.la.us

sbphkids@state.lib.la.us

Hours:

Monday - Friday

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Library Services

Recorded Books &
Magazines

Braille Books & Magazines

Large Print Books

Descriptive Videos

Online Catalog

Eligibility

Any Louisiana resident who is unable to read or use standard print materials as a result of a temporary or permanent visual or physical limitation is eligible to receive free library services.

Dear Readers,

In early May, three of the librarians from SBPH were able to attend the National Library Service for the Blind (NLS) conference in San Antonio, Texas. We have up-to-date news about the change to digital talking books (DTBs). This is a transition that has been discussed and planned for so long that we are all eager for it to become reality. There is a mixture of good and not-so-good news. SBPH is part of a national network of libraries, and almost all of our materials come from NLS. Braille books, books on cassette, magazines, and playback machines are all provided to libraries like SBPH. That means that we are dependent on Uncle Sam for our digital books and our new digital machines.

The digital machines are coming along, more slowly than we hoped, but the first factory run will be completed by the end of 2008. We will have the new digital machines to start sending to users in 2009. Veterans of the United States Armed Forces, by law, will have the first chance to get a digital machine. If you are a veteran, send a copy of your DD214 to your reader advisor. We will be sending out digital machines over a period of several years. Most people will keep a cassette book machine (CBM) for several years, even after they receive their digital machine. There are two reasons for this:

1. The recorded magazines will stay on cassette for a number of years, due to cost factors.
2. SBPH will soon start building a collection of DTBs, but we will still have access to our large

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collection of cassette books. Keeping a cassette machine means that you will still be able to read over 45,000 books on cassette. All patrons who are heavy readers will want to keep both machines and use both types of books.

NLS promises that we will have a supply of CBMs, and repair parts, to last for the duration of the transition and beyond. This is a great time for everybody to look around the house for any old CBMs that you have been meaning to get back to the library. Please call the library if you need labels to return CBMs – we can't send you boxes, but we can send labels to make it easier for you to mail the machines back.

The new digital machines were on display in Texas. It is made of sturdy plastic, and is a pretty blue color. It has a built-in rechargeable battery and it weighs about half as much as the cassette machine. The standard machine has regular features: stop, play, fast forward, backup, and the machine tells you what it is doing. It has a place to plug in earphones and a place to attach a strap to make it portable. The machine is smart – when you turn it on, it announces the title of the book and tells you where you are in the book.

The advanced machine has more buttons and it allows the user to skip around, set bookmarks, and set a sleep button so the machine will play for 15 minutes and then quit. Since the digital machines do not have moving

parts, they will not break down as easily as the older cassette machines.

The digital books are recorded on a tiny computer memory chip, imbedded in a rectangle of plastic called a cartridge. The memory chip is like the ones found in other flash drives, jump drives, or SD cards.

The cartridge has a Braille label on top, a finger hole, and a USB port at one end. To put the digital book into the machine, you hold it with the Braille label on top, put a finger through the hole, and push the UCB port into the machine. It won't fit any other way. Just think, no more switching sides and selector switches! Almost every book will fit onto one cartridge. The machine holds one book in its memory at a time.

In about 6 months we will start taking names for a waiting list for digital machines. We will announce that we are starting a waiting list in Hotlines and on our web site. It will take 4 to 5 years to get digital machines to everyone who wants one.

NLS is facing rising costs and budget troubles, so they are already reducing the number of copies of cassette books sent to us. We will have a limited inventory of digital books. The digital books will be very precious, and we will have to limit the number of books that each person can borrow. You will have to return the digital books before you get more. So now is the time to get into good habits by returning your materials to the library on time!

Thank you,
Margaret Harrison

LSVI Graduation Celebration

This past May, the Louisiana School for the Visually Impaired's graduating class of 2008 included 7 seniors. They were: Britt Landry (Valedictorian), Shandy Warran (Salutatorian), Brittany Scallan, Ricky Ralser, David Hatten, Lee Hall and Shay Dunn. The graduation ceremony filled the school's auditorium with parents, family, teachers and fellow students. SBPH congratulates all of the graduates and wishes them the best of luck.



Valedictorian, Britt Landry

NLS offers Texas-Style Hospitality

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) 2008 biannual conference was held in historic San Antonio Texas, May 3-9. Three of our SBPH librarians joined an enthusiastic group of talking book staffers from every region in the network, including the Virgin Islands!

An unprecedented number of people attended the preconference on digital recording and discussed the digital talking book standards. Louisiana Voices will upgrade its current digital recordings according to these standards. We will also insert tones throughout the books to make it easier to move around the contents.

NLS Administration elaborated on the status of the deferred release of digital books and players. There were digital machines available for attendees to try out. Both the standard and advance digital players offer comfort, technical ease, and enhanced navigational ability that display improved features not offered with the traditional cassette machine.

The Texas Talking Book Library arranged some fun for the group with a well shaded private afternoon tour of the Alamo, as well as side trips to the Texas State Library and Archives in Austin, and a ranch style BBQ in Boerne.

2008 Red Carpet Awards For Volunteers

SBPH and Louisiana Voices' Annual Volunteer Recognition Event on April 24 honored 30 committed volunteers including the Capitol Club Telecomm Pioneers and those who mail the SBPH quarterly newsletter. The theme was "Red Carpet Service" and each volunteer received a gift and certificate presented by guest speaker and former Louisiana Voices narrator, Sylvia Weatherspoon. A lively description highlighting the unique talents of each Louisiana Voices volunteer accompanied the Hollywood themed awards. The celebration was generously sponsored by the Mrs. W. Carruth Jones Foundation.



L-R: Sylvia Weatherspoon, Angela Cinquemano, Margaret Harrison, Philip Jones, Rebecca Hamilton, and Jennifer Anjier.



L-R: Sylvia Weatherspoon, volunteer Ralph Sims, and Angela Cinquemano.

And the Winners are...

- Best Sports Consultant Kevin Williams
- Best Male Newcomer Donnie Adkins
- Best Female Reviewer..... Debbie Steil
- Best Male ReviewerMichael Wascom
- SBPH Patron Service Charlene Moore
- Excellence in Storytelling ... Catherine Heitman
- Most Vivacious Narrator Diana Wilson
- Best Accent Phil Chenevert
- Most Knowledgeable Narrator Ralph Sims
- Most Prolific Narrator..... Scotty Drake
- Best Dialog Bruce Morgan
- Most Flawless Narrating Sheryl Sherlock
- Most Loyal Narrator..... Pat Thompson
- The Velvet Vocals..... Shauna Sanford

Adventure awaits you this summer!

The Collected Short Stories of Louis L'Amour by Louis L'Amour. Forty-five adventure stories set in dangerous locales around the world. Some violence. RC 64324

Crashing Through: a story of risk, adventure, and the man who dared to see by Robert Kurson. The author profiles Michael May, blinded at age three, who later became a champion skier, CIA analyst, and entrepreneur. RC 63747

Deception Point by Dan Brown. Just as NASA is targeted by a presidential candidate's budget investigations, the agency makes an astonishing discovery in the arctic ice. Some violence and some strong language. Bestseller. RC 57939

Shadrach's Crossing by Avi. Shadrach stands up to smugglers who have blackmailed all the adults on the tiny island where his family lives. For grades 5-8. RC 22900

Stormbreaker by Anthony Horowitz. Fourteen-year-old Alex Rider is blackmailed into completing his uncles dangerous undercover work for Britain's intelligence agency. For grades 6-9. BR 14675, RC 63401

Wilderness Trek by Zane Grey. American cowboys Sterling Hazelton and Red Krehl sail to Australia, where they join a three-thousand-mile cattle drive across the outback. RC 64235

Lights! Camera! Action!



It is Showtime at the Library this summer as kids and teens are invited to send out a casting call for some books and let the games begin during the 2008 Louisiana summer reading clubs, "Be a Star" and "Get REEL". Kids and teens will each get their own club with special reading logs and bookmarks.

Important: We invite you to set your own reading goal that can include any required summer reading books you may have to read over the summer! You may also read magazines and newspapers.

These two eight-week summer reading clubs will run from June 24 to August 18, 2008. There will be lots of dazzling prizes and premier books to read! Everyone is a winner!

Kids and teens are welcome to join the summer reading club of their choice up until July 31, 2008.

For more information, call Emma K. Schroth, the Children and Teen Services Librarian, at 1-800-543-4702, (225) 342-9563 or email SBPHKIDS@SLOL.LIB.LA.US

Emergency-Response Assistance To Deaf-Blind Citizens

In making ready for hurricane season, the Department of Social Services' (DSS) Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) is partnering with a local nonprofit organization to provide emergency-response assistance to an estimated 400 deaf-blind citizens. To aid with evacuations, the Louisiana Commission for the Deaf has partnered with the St. Francis de Sales Catholic Deaf Center in Baton Rouge to establish and maintain a registry of citizens with deaf-blindness. The registry will enable deaf-blind citizens to receive evacuation assistance in the form of an evacuation plan. The plans will be made available to DSS and to parish emergency operations centers for emergency shelter planning. Individuals will receive assistance in preparing a backpack with a change of clothing, medical information, insurance cards, medicine and other necessary items. A designated contact person will notify the deaf-blind individual of a pending evacuation and recommend activation of their plan. Once an evacuation is called, DSS will identify a shelter in north Louisiana for deaf-blind individuals. At the designated shelter, the St. Francis de Sales Center will provide interpreting services and Support Service Providers (SSP) to each deaf-blind individual. Interpreters will use the American Sign Language, as tactile interpreting is the most common form of communication for deaf-blind individuals. For information or to be listed on the registry call 225-219-2996.

Orleans Parish Residents Evacuation Assistance

Are you a resident of Orleans Parish? Do you think there's even a chance you will need emergency evacuation transportation assistance? Estimates show that as many as 32,000 will need assistance, but only about 6,000 have registered! Call today and register, even if you aren't sure you need transportation.

The 311 Call Center serves as the information center during emergencies or disasters affecting the City of New Orleans. Residents who require evacuation assistance must register with the 311 Call Center. The specially trained 311 representatives are available from 7AM to 11PM Monday - Friday, and 8AM to 5PM on Saturday. Outside these hours, leave a message and a representative will return your call within 48 hours.

Simply dial 311 from a phone with a 504 area code. Outside New Orleans, dial 658-2299 or 1-877-286-6431. The hearing impaired can dial 504-658-2059 or 1-800-981-6652. Spanish and Vietnamese language assistance available.

WebAnywhere: A Screen Reader on the Go

WebAnywhere is a web-based screen reader for the web. It requires no special software to be installed and, therefore, enables blind people to access the web from any computer they happen to have access to that has a sound card. WebAnywhere runs on any machine regardless of what operating system it is running and regardless of what browsers are installed. Visit www.webinsight.cs.washington.edu/projects/webanywhere/ To gain access or to receive announcements related to the system, please send email to: jbigam@ca.washington.edu

Assistive Technology Fund

The Association of Blind Citizens operates the Assistive Technology Fund. The Assistive Technology Fund (ATF) will provide funds to cover 50% of the retail price of adaptive devices or software. Applicants must be legally blind and a resident of the United States to qualify for this program.

Applications must be submitted by June 30th and December 31st for each grant period (two per year). For information visit: www.blindcitizens.org/assistive_tech.htm

Find Restaurants, Movies, Weather and More for Free!

Jewel Ardoin, Technology Instructor at the Louisiana Center for the Blind, recommended the following two free telephone services that are available to anyone. The two services are "411" and "Tell Me." They are both free to use and Ms. Ardoin mentioned that they are very useful if you have a cell phone and need some information when you are away from home, driving around, or just simply out and about. For both of these services, after you call, you speak your answers to navigate through the automated system.

"411" is available at 1-800-CALL-411 (1-800-225-5411). 411 can help you find information on businesses; give you the traffic report, movie times, weather, driving directions, and access to travel resources.

"Tell ME" is available at 1-800-555-TELL. Tell Me gives callers the top news headlines as well as business, travel, and entertainment information. For example, you can get information on stock quotes, sports scores, weather, driving directions, movie times, horoscopes, the lottery, soap operas, and the time.

The announcement of products and services in this newsletter should not be considered an endorsement or recommendation by SBPH. The library cannot be held responsible for the reliability of products or services mentioned.

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Services for the Blind & Physically Handicapped
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BLIND OR HANDICAPPED**

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State Library of Louisiana
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

Supported in part by funding from the
Institute of Museum and Library Services

