# LUA LEDGER

## LIBRARY USERS OF AMERICA, INC.

### Winter, 2023

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## Editor's Page by Deborah Armstrong

As colors of Autumn foliage change, our Ledger turns over a new leaf with me as your new editor.

When I was a child, I visited my local public library weekly with my dad, who helped me select a book while he read to me from various candidates in whispers. Those were the days when the library, even the children's section, was tomb-quiet with a stern spinster librarian shushing any child who dared read out loud. Thousands of times my poor dad was disgraced for reading to me and had to pass an actual note to the librarian explaining his little daughter was blind. But we persisted, and at home, I could curl in his lap on his lazy boy recliner while he read to me each day. We finished the book, though it was my organized mom, who had to remind us to return it the following week.

And it was my mom who, after paying too many overdue fines, discovered the Braille and Talking book regional library and in 1964 I became a proud patron. With each new issue of Talking Book Topics and Braille Book review, mom or dad at first selected for me. Later, once I was literate in braille, I began to make choices for myself. It was then my turn to read out loud to my dad, something I was able to do by the end of second grade. And when my four-year-old sister clamored for my dad to tell her a story, I was able to read her bedtime stories too, something which made me feel very grown-up indeed.

Since this space is not for me to craft an entire memoir, I'll jump ahead to the present to let you know I recently resigned as editor of the newsletter for NorCal Golden Retriever Rescue. I've edited a multiplicity of newsletters for many decades, but as a blind person, sorting through dozens of photos of adopters' favorite retrievers was just getting to be a real chore. Now that newsletter has a sighted editor with an artistic bent and is visually attractive as well as continuing to host my articles about our dedicated rescue volunteers and our favorite breed.

You'll notice my byline on several articles in this issue. This is a clear indication that you, yes you, LUA members, need to send me more articles. And if you have a story to tell, but hate to write, I am happy to do the word-smithing; just call or email and we'll chat.

Articles can be sent to the special email address I created for this newsletter:

lua-editor@sonic.net

## When to Hold ‘Em and When to Fold ‘Em

### By Judy Wilkinson, LUA President

This gambler’s credo applies equally to picking which battles we choose to leave alone and which to fight for. In no particular order, or order of importance, I’ve noted a few comments from our Board, LUA-members and LUA-talk lists. Of course these are my opinions and LUA will always follow the dictates of our members. And remember! Any and all of these issues can be raised by anyone during public comment time on the various NLS member calls.

1. The board has decided to hold its meetings on the second Monday of even-numbered months, the time we have used for years, despite its conflict with some NLS Patrons Corner calls which currently occur on second Mondays. NLS chose their dates without consulting major membership organizations to ascertain any conflicting dates. Braille Revival League has chosen to keep its dates, second Mondays of odd-numbered months, as well.
2. A member complained about NLS’s use of Publishers’ blurbs, which often exceed the current word limitation, hence being cut off mid-sentence if not mid word! These are replacing the shorter write-ups written by who knows presumably in the Collection Development sphere.

I suggest this is a “When to Fold ‘em” battle. My hunch is that in fact, these blurbs save someone’s time at NLS and don’t seem to me overly promotional.

1. The recurring cry by a number of members hoping for obtaining precious older recordings by beloved narrators. When this issue is raised, NLS staff maintains that all recordings which can be retrieved have been. The quality of many older books is such that they can not be digitized with anything like good quality. I think we really must believe them. I know personally when I’ve checked some recordings by Alexander Scourby, perhaps the most requested narrator, some are of shockingly poor quality.
2. With increasing use of commercial audio book producers, some deplore the loss of NLS vetted and hired in-house narrators. Any time jobs are lost due to other developing avenues (think robots replacing humans) there is an outcry. Here too, I think we must believe NLS staff when they tell us they are making the best use of your tax dollars.

One could argue that NLS narrators don’t dare complain, but it seems to me, our resourceful narrators have found other channels for their skills.

1. The ongoing debate, even through ACB resolutions about replacing large print issues of Talking Book Topics and Braille Book Review. Here too, I think we must believe NLS Director Jason Broughton who told us that because of pipeline problems, not only couldn’t we have these magazines printed under current NLS contract obligations with the Government Printing Office, but re-enabling it now would double current costs! Obviously we must be careful not to restrict anyone’s access, and compelling arguments have been made about folks for whom the large print is the most convenient medium, but given the relatively small numbers, can future increased costs be justified? If these costs come down of course, we would want to revisit this matter. In the meantime, NLS has deployed these funds into other areas such as Braille On Demand.
2. By far the most comments have come from members’ concerns about what is, (and isn’t) in the collection.

This discussion can be broken into several sub issues. Folks like our editor Debee Armstrong complain that all too many books are woefully out-of-date! These are battles we must continue to monitor and fight! At one end of the spectrum, out-of-date information could be downright dangerous! At the other end of the spectrum is the outright laughable: I recently downloaded a Bread Machine cookbook which laboriously listed the same few bread machine recipes for a dozen (many out of date) bread machines!

Gillie Presley seeks more books on social justice and the environment. She is only one of many who have requested specific areas or even titles they’d like to see included. Remember, if you have a specific title, start with your network library!

Debee also mentions the imbalance created by so many books obtained from producers of audible books. How many Vampire, zombie, robot, witch, (insert any other categories) extravaganzas do we need? Of course, when it’s your ox being gored there can never be too many vampire, zombie, robot, witch (insert your own categories). The point is, with the scarcity of books NLS can produce, we must strive for a balance among interests, age groups, ethnicities and special interest organizations.

In recent years, ACB presidents have not consulted Library Users of America when appointing ACB representatives to various NLS consumer committees, including the Collection Development appointees. Having said that, I hasten to add that our former Collection Development appointee, Susan Glass, and the current appointee, Cheryl Cumings, are ones no one would have objected to.

Keep the drumbeat going about collection development issues on the array of consumer calls with NLS! Elsewhere in this issue, you’ll find the current guidelines for collection development.

I will ask the board to consider possible resolutions on these matters for next year’s convention. We look for thoughtful draft resolutions on collection issues.

And definitely let Cheryl know your concerns. She can be reached at email: cscumings@comcast.net or phone: 617-731-5998.

Let me reiterate! Library Users of America is governed by the wishes of its members.

## Learning Ally: It's not just for little kids

### By Deborah Armstrong

If you went to college as a blind person, you might remember getting books on cassette, or in my case reel-to-reel tapes from Recording for the Blind.

Volunteers in fifty studios, each corresponding to one of our United States, record textbooks for blind students in higher education. In those days, the service was free.

After many changes, the same organization has morphed into Learning Ally at <http://www.learningally.org>

If you look through their site, you'll quickly see their focus is now on K-12 students with learning disabilities, and the service requires a rather costly yearly subscription fee for most users.

However, not all is lost for the blind adult reader. Learning Ally still offers an impressive catalog of higher education titles. If you want to learn about everything from Microsoft Office to Spanish, it's a great place to find resources. For example, you can locate books on cultivating strawberries, mastering the guitar, growing leadership skills, And baking scones. Plus, the quantity of visual aids: charts, maps, photos and diagrams all residing in the modern textbook are still described by Learning Ally’s volunteers. Neither NLS nor your local braille transcriber will provide such detailed picture descriptions.

There are also a great many literature titles and bestsellers in their catalog. If you are seeking a particular author or subject, it's a great place to search.

As for the cost, you might want to try reaching out to your local community college. Many fund the yearly subscription for students, and these colleges are always looking for adult learners. You can take a simple P.E. class and still qualify in many cases for free access to Learning Ally. You can also approach your employer, your agency for the blind, your department of rehab or your local Lions or Rotary Club to see if any of these organizations will fully or partly fund your subscription.

In addition, many of us who attended college back in the day and were approved subscribers to Recording for the Blind are grandfathered in – i.e., because we were approved subscribers long ago, we can still take advantage of Learning Ally’s services. I am old enough – and lucky enough – to be able to do this. I have a lifetime free subscription because I became a member when that membership cost nothing.

Books are offered in audio DAISY and can be played on most modern players including the NLS Talking Book machine. Learning Ally also has apps for Windows, Android, iOS and the Chromebook.

A takeaway tip from my students with learning disabilities is to use two reading modes to master a subject or deepen your enjoyment of a book. If you read with braille or large print, finding an audio version to listen along with can be a great help. I've been working on mastering Python, a computer language, and being able to listen to a book while reading it in braille at the same time has increased my retention significantly.

## The Series Sleuth is on the Job

### By Jane Carona

For most of my life, I've been an extremely detail-oriented rule follower, and very happy to be so. One of the most enjoyable aspects of having this type of compulsive personality is my obsession with book series: tracking them, reading book series always in order (no exceptions!), and making sure that NLS has all the books in a given series available to us on BARD. I can definitely empathize with the frustration of finding a series with books 1, 2, 3, and 7 available!

For years now, I've maintained a books data base, containing not only the books I've read or that I have in my voluminous electronic collection, but also books that I've yet to download, whether they be from BARD, Audible, Kindle, Bookshare, or even print books that I haven't yet scanned.

One of the most important columns in that 31,000-record spreadsheet is "series", and I'm always researching to update that column to contain as many complete series as I can.

To that end, I've made it my mission to alert NLS to holes in book series as I find them, or as I'm alerted to them by other bibliophiles. Of course it probably helps that I worked at NLS for ten years, and hopefully have some credibility with them.

This is where you come in, to help me with my ongoing series project. If you encounter a series available on BARD, either in audio or braille format, that has books missing, I need to hear from you! I will research the series to the best of my ability, and notify NLs of the omission. I can't guarantee that all of our messages to NLS will bear fruit, but with all of us working together, we can ensure that fewer series are incomplete on BARD.

You can contact me at 301-598-2131 or via e-mail at jane.e.carona@gmail.com.

Thanks for participating in this important project, and happy reading!

## The Wacky World of Flexible Records

### From the Blog Of The American Printing House For The Blind

If you're old enough to remember begging your mom to buy breakfast cereal so that you could get the phonograph record printed on the back of the box, then you're old enough to remember the wacky world of flexible records. I remember cutting a Bobby Sherman 45 off a box of Sugar Crisps and thinking how cool it was. The song was "In Seattle."

For a time during their heyday in the 1960s and 70s, flexible records were seemingly everywhere and yet nowhere, and by that I mean for most people they remained a novelty. The Beatles put out a Christmas record every year for their fan clubs. McDonald's issued a record with their latest jingle mis recorded. One version would win a big prize. They were basically tricking you into listening to their advertising. Computer magazines even tucked audio into their issues in the form of something called "audio software." I have no idea how that worked.

And in the midst of all this craziness, the American Printing House for the Blind got into the business too. The company had started recording and pressing rigid vinyl audio books in the 1930s. The process was complicated and expensive. For publications that consumers typically read once and discarded, like magazines, it was not very efficient. Flexible records offered a great alternative: easy to mail, cheap to manufacture. The manufacturing line was installed in 1972 and was quickly adapted to make issues of popular Talking Book magazines like Newsweek, Reader's Digest, Ebony, and Sports Illustrated. We took on contract jobs for corporations like Sears & Roebuck to produce their annual reports on flexible records.

Flexible records were played on a phonograph. They weren't meant to last very long, but we still have dozens and dozens in our museum collection which play just fine, but the sound quality isn't the best. Hey, you get what you pay for. I'm told that sometimes you had to put a quarter or a steel washer on them to get them to play right. Eva-Tone was the big national company that specialized in the format, and we have a few Talking Book titles—anyone remember Stephen King's Firestarter?—produced for the Library of Congress by Eva-Tone. At APH, however, it was only used for magazines and the like.

At the same time, APH was introducing flexible records, however, we were also experimenting with audio cassettes. And gradually, cassettes increased in popularity and all phonograph records went into decline. APH produced its last rigid vinyl record in 1987 and discontinued flexible records in the 1990s. Eva-Tone went bankrupt in 2000, and the day of flexible records was over. Do you have a flexible record memory?

## Cookbooks Are My Muse

By Brian Charlson

As I write this, I am sitting in my easy chair in my home office/man cave. There you will find my computer desk, filing cabinets, and bookcases. On the walls you will find baseball memorabilia, ukuleles, and rock ‘n roll posters.

Next to me are the first volumes of two braille cookbooks. On the bookshelves are the thirty volumes of “The Joy of Cooking” BR17462, and on my NLS Zoomax braille book reader I can access over 200 eBraille cookbooks, just for reference. I guess you can tell, I love cookbooks!

“The Complete Cookbook for Young Scientists” BR23975 in 4 volumes, has my current attention. You see, I do not just read cookbooks for the recipes, while they can provide me with ideas for what to cook for dinner. It is really the text between the recipes I love. In this book I learned why some cheeses melt well while others do not. I also learned how the “Maillard reaction” (when proteins, breads, and veggies brown) add flavor to our food.

In the other cookbook I am currently reading “Cook for Your Gut Health, Quiet Your Gut, Boost Fiber, and Reduce Inflammation” BR23914 in five volumes, I am learning how to cook and eat better. Who knows, I might even give kale a try.

You see, for me, cooking and books about cooking keep me engaged in life-long learning. Cookbooks are not only informative, but they also invoke memories and give me a glimpse into how others think and create beautiful food.

When I read about German cooking, I am reminded of my great-grandmother who taught me how to make dumplings and to love sauerkraut. When I read about the “Local Movement” where you try to cook and eat locally grown food, a smile came to my face because my father was a produce-man and taught me how to tell a good melon from a bad one and how to cut up a pineapple. Cooking and cookbooks bring back fond memories.

I know many of you reading this do not read braille and therefore you listen to books. I too listen to books including cookbooks. I must say that I prefer braille cookbooks, but some titles are not available in that format. I will listen to food related books such as “The Flavor Equation” DB101664 and “The Best American Food Writing 2020” DB101819 but I just do not get much out of a cookbook that lists ingredients, their amounts, temperatures, and times.

I do not care much for biographies of any kind, but I really dislike those about television chefs. While I may be impressed by what and how they cook, I have no interest in how they grew up or how successful their restaurant chain has become. You may want to read “Eat a Peach: a Memoir” DB100830 or “The Man Who Ate Too Much: The Life of James Beard” DB101173 if you disagree with me.

As I read the cookbooks I own and those I have borrowed, I frequently think about writing one of my own. What would it contain? How much of it would be composed of recipes and how much about the technique? What theme should it have, baking bread, cooking soups or all of the above but with a blindness twist. If I do write such a book, I will be sure to let you, my kind readers and fellow book lovers, know where to get it and a bit about what cookbooks influenced its content and style.

For now, I encourage all of you to pick up a cookbook and read it like I do, with an eye not only to the recipes, but to the artistry of the prose and the effort made to both organize the content and to leave the reader wanting more. The time has come for me to put down my latest cookbook and put on my apron and start cooking dinner. Bon Appetit!

## Become A Reading Buddy

### By Deborah Armstrong

Lori is eight and one half and just started the fourth grade. Ever since she learned the alphabet at age 4, she's crazy about reading words. She's in the children's section of the library every week with her mom or dad, borrowing books about everything from dragons to Disneyland. Even hard books like The Hobbit are a ton of fun, especially when she gets to read out loud to dogs. She likes to act all the parts out, dramatically voicing the different characters and taking on their personalities as she reads.

Across the country, more and more libraries are discovering how giving children the chance to read to pets increases their confidence and love of books. And here is where a guide dog, who is used to lying quietly beside its person, is an especially good fit for this volunteer job.

On the second Monday of each month, the children's section at the Cupertino Public Library is buzzing with excitement. "The pets are coming" kids exclaim as they search for the best book to read to their favorite pet while smiling parents perch uncomfortably on the tiny library chairs and attempt to get lost in their smartphones.

We pet therapy volunteers file in, Memphis, my guide dog and me in the lead. We are followed by two cats in strollers, Bob, my sighted husband with Maxwell, my retired guide and a few other tiny dogs clasped in their owners' arms. We take our seats in the big fishbowl of a conference room, some of us in proper adult sized chairs, others on the pillow-strewn carpet. We spread out blankets for our dogs -- mine is red and fuzzy, covered with a black and white paw print design. We then tell our dogs to “go to bed” and the cats are lifted out of their strollers and set on their blankets as well.

The children file in with their books, each one choosing a pet. Some like the big retrievers, while others prefer tiny Hannah, a Shitsu who is only four pounds.

Outside, kids who are on the waiting list press their noses to the windows to watch along with parents, who can see their children reading but are not allowed to listen or enter the room. Parents, we discovered, interfere. They shame a child with comments like “You should know that word” or they help with pronunciation instead of giving the kid a proper chance to sound the word out. Worse even are the parents who pick up the book and start reading it to the pets while the child sits passively by.

"The doggy wants to hear the story" I say to Lori's little brother, who is idly flipping through his book, head lowered in shyness. The little boy continues to flip pages. "Why don't you tell him about the pictures," I suggest attempting to engage him. "I got a big red truck like that," the little boy volunteers. "Memphis's big floppy ears are open," I say "and you can pet him while you read about the truck." Memphis stretches, sighs, wags briefly. The little boy begins to read slowly, reaching out a tentative hand to pet.

Across the room, Lori is lost in "The Cat In The Hat" falling gracefully in to the rhythm of the poem while a live therapy cat purrs in her lap. Lori has made it a goal to read to every therapy pet, one each month and she has a bookmark collection to prove it. Bob's bookmark has a picture of my retired guide, his big golden face smiling at the camera and the words "I read to Maxwell". Lori points at Bob and Maxwell across the room, while showing her bookmark to the cat. When she's done reading today, she'll get a bookmark with the cat's picture as well. The librarian will also snap a picture of Lori together with the cat and email it to her parents.

Twenty minutes later, the librarian shoos the kids out of the room and escorts a new batch in. The kids who have finished reading must now write a thank-you note to their pet. Once that's done, they can hang out in the children's section or leave with their parents.

When we complete our visit, the librarian hands out the thank you notes. Lori's brother has written: “Dear Memphis, thank you for being furry”.

## The New Search Option on BARD Mobile For iOS

### By Paul Edwards

This will not be a huge article and does not purport to be an exhaustive analysis of what I think is a pretty cool new feature available with BARD's new version.

With the new version, there are some other features and bug fixes that I will not discuss here but the biggest change that has occurred is the roll out of a new search feature. First, let's talk about what went away. It used to be that searches were done by going to the web site and entering a search term. If you found a book you wanted, you could add it to your Wish list. You would then need to go to the wish list and download that book from there.

That whole element and that whole approach has now gone away. Now, when you go to "get books", at the very top, is a new element called "search". Once you select it, a whole new screen emerges. At the top there is a search box. You can type in your search term or you can use dictate to say what you are looking for. I have actually found that dictation works quite well so feel free to use it. The next element on the screen is the Go button but don't press it yet. Below are some options that can make your search much more fruitful. There are two selections that you can and should make before you actually start your search. There are four elements. The first is key word and it is selected by default. I think this is because it is likely to produce the largest number of results. It looks at Author, Title and Annotation and returns all the results that can be found in all three. Below key word is Title. If you know the name of the book you are looking for, you can select this item by double tapping on it. Your next option is Author. Your last element in this section is Annotation which will just tell you those items that come up within the book descriptions for library items.

Below these four elements are two more. These choose which format will be search. Audio is always selected so if you're looking for a book to listen to, you need not change it. However, if you are looking for a braille book, choose the Braille option by clicking on it. Now that you have defined what you are looking for you can go back up to Go and you will be presented with your results. Sometimes you get no results and this is usually because you are spelling something wrong or what you are looking for isn't there.

The search results you get look essentially like the listing for books in the recently added to BARD section and, what is really cool, you can treat them the same way you would books in that section. You no longer have to save to your Wish List though you can if you want to. Instead you can download directly. Your results stay there so you can very quickly and very easily download two or three of the books on your list and save the others to Wish List if you choose. I am assuming for the purposes of this article that folks know how to download books.

One more point and then I will be done. If you double tap on the More Info button, one of the choices you can make is More Actions. This will take you to a place where you can look at all the books by that author and it will also allow you to see books in the same category as the book you are looking at. So you might see all books in Romance or all books in Fantasy. Below that is an available list of books in the series that this book is one element. I don't think the Series component is perfect yet but it's cool that it's there.

Your network librarian should be able to help you if any of this article does not make sense. You can play with Search and I think you will get the hang of it quickly. I love it. It makes getting books much easier and much faster!

## NLS Honors Kim Charlson

### From NLS "In the Know"

Get to Know....Kim Charlson, Executive Director – Perkins Braille & Talking Book Library

Kim Charlson is the executive director of the Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library in Watertown, Massachusetts. Kim earned a BS in Political Science from Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, and an MLIS from the University of North Texas. After graduate school, Kim worked as a textbook production specialist at the Oregon State Library Talking Book and Braille Service. In 1985, she moved to Massachusetts to work as the Service Management Librarian/Assistant Director for the Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) at the Perkins School for the Blind. She became the director in 2001.

Recognized nationally and internationally, Kim is an expert on accessible library and information services for people with disabilities, braille literacy, assistive technology in libraries, and online information access. From 2013 to 2019, Kim was the first woman president of the American Council of the Blind. Kim is currently president of the North American-Caribbean region of the World Blind Union. As the co-chair of the American Council of the Blind Audio Description Project, Kim advocates for audio description for live theater, museum exhibits, television, and streaming services. She has worked directly with Netflix, Hulu, HBO Max, and all major network broadcasters to expand the availability of audio description.

In Massachusetts, Kim is active in a wide range of civil rights and consumer advocacy arenas, including the Attorney General's Disability Rights Advisory Committee. She is a member of the Massachusetts Braille Literacy Advisory Council and serves as the chair of the Watertown Commission on Disability. In addition to her many other responsibilities, she has published "Establishing a Braille Literacy Program in Your Community" and has contributed to numerous other publications, including a chapter on braille library services in the book Braille: Into the Next Millennium (BR13188, DB50969), which was published by the Library of Congress. She is a contributing author to the book Making Theatre Accessible: A Guide to Audio Description in the Performing Arts, published by Northeastern University Press. Most recently, she has published Drawing with Your Perkins Brailler, an instructional book for using braille to create tactile pictures that blind children and adults can share with sighted people.

In 2004, she was inducted into the Massachusetts Library Association Hall of Fame. In 2005, she was named a Library Journal Mover and Shaker, and in 2006, she was honored as the Alumni of the Year by the University of North Texas, School of Library & Information Science in Denton, Texas. In 2008, she was honored with a Special Recognition Award for outstanding community service by the Watertown-Belmont Chamber of Commerce. In 2011, she was honored by the Council for Exceptional Children-Division for the Visually Impaired with their Exemplary Advocate Award. In 2013, she was named a Hero Among Us by the Boston Celtics and the Shamrock Foundation. In 2019, Kim received the Francis Joseph Campbell Award from the American Library Association's Association of Specialized, Government, and Cooperative Library Agencies.

In the Know asked Kim a few questions about her time working in network libraries:

What advice would you give an employee starting at a network library today?

"I believe in mentorship and in providing opportunities for staff to grow and excel. I would advise anyone starting out in the field to embrace the principles of inclusion, diversity, and disability equity. Also, the technology is changing so fast, and is so amazing and empowering. Those beginning in the field should learn as much as you can about assistive technology, understand it, and become an advocate for how it can help access information from books to magazines, to signs and directions for getting around the environment. There are many opportunities in our work in the assistive technology area and all will benefit our borrowers."

Tell us about one patron that particularly stuck in your mind over the years.

"Every patron is special, and they all have compelling stories. From the police officer that lost his vision in the line of duty to the young, battered wife who was shot in the face by her abuser, they all have incredibly powerful stories of resilience and determination. Ironically, the patron that has impacted me in the long term the most is an inmate in the Massachusetts prison system. I first became involved with his case because of an issue of equity. The prison administration would only allow him to read in the library two to three hours per day, but other inmates could have reading materials in their cells 24/7. They didn't want to allow the [talking-book] player to be in the cell. I advocated on his behalf to get him access to reading materials for the same amount of time every day in his cell to which others had access. His issues have covered nearly twenty years of advocacy, and today, I am working with him to get some type of accessible technology and training because recently, all inmates were provided with personal tablets for reading, games, and writing — no Internet access though. There needs to be an equivalent access component for my patron as well. I have never liked injustice, and I will fight to make sure everyone has an equal chance to reach their potential." Congratulations to the Perkins Braille & Talking Book Library for being named a finalist for 2022 IMLS National Medal for Museum and Library Service!

## Updates From NLS

### Compiled by Sharon Strzalkowski

#### New Magazines Available on BARD

Over one hundred braille and audio magazines are available to download from BARD. The latest titles added to the collection are Dogster, Interweave Knits, Dell Sunday Crosswords, and Popular Science.

Dogster offers ideas for interacting with dogs, lifestyle stories, new products, and advice on caring for dogs.

Interweave Knits replaces Knitscene, which is no longer published. Interweave Knits is similar in scope, covering articles and patterns on knitting.

Dell Sunday Crosswords is an excellent way to hone your solving skills while matching wits with today’s top puzzle constructors.

Popular Science. Published quarterly, Popular Science is the world's largest science and technology magazine, reporting on the intersection of science and everyday life and delivering a look at the future now.

Dogster, Interweave Knits, and Dell Sunday Crosswords are available in hard copy braille, and can be downloaded in formatted braille. Popular Science has been available in hard copy braille and on BARD for some time, and now it is available in audio as well.

Each of these magazines are available to download from BARD. Subscribe to any or all of these titles and find the latest edition on your Wish List when the next issue becomes available on BARD.

If you have any questions or would like assistance subscribing to these magazines, contact your regional library.

#### NLS honors Washington State and Florida libraries

Congratulations to the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library in Seattle, Washington, recipient of the 2022 NLS Regional Library of the Year Award, and the Pinellas Talking Book Library in Clearwater, Florida, recipient of the Subregional Library/Advisory and Outreach Center of the Year Award!

The two libraries were honored on May 18, 2022, at the NLS Biennial Conference, which was held virtually.

“The programs and services the Washington and Florida libraries offer are outstanding examples of the innovation and commitment seen throughout our network—not just during another year of unique challenges, but every year since our founding in 1931,” NLS Director Jason Broughton said. “We recognize these libraries for their support for the NLS mission, creativity, community spirit, and the satisfaction they bring to their patrons. They give users, friends, and families experiences and resources they may not have known they wanted!”

The Washington Talking Book & Braille Library serves more than 7,200 patrons, including 1,118 new patrons it enrolled last year. The library completely transitioned to a duplication-on-demand service model, creating customized digital cartridges containing books requested by individual patrons and eliminating the need to stock copies of books on cartridge or anticipate demand.

WTBBL used donor funds to hire an outreach librarian who gave numerous presentations to public libraries, service organizations, and retirement homes and care facilities. The library mailed letters to 1,500 optometrists and ophthalmologists directing them to a web page where they could request a visit or a call from WTBBL and could find a menu of collateral materials to be sent to their office. The library also produced four promotional videos that highlighted various aspects of its operations.

WTBBL partnered with the Washington State Department of Services for the Blind to deliver closed-circuit television video magnifiers to patrons with low vision. In addition, it was the first network library to participate in the pilot test for the Zoomax eReader, loaning and providing technical support for 130 devices.

“We are very committed to spreading the word about WTBBL and NLS services, improving access to reading materials and connecting as many people as possible with the service—and, once they are patrons, ensuring their service is prompt and they have all the support they need from day one,” Director and Regional Librarian Danielle Miller said.

The Pinellas Talking Book Library signed up 347 new patrons last year, bringing their total to more than 4,800. The library continued regular phone and mail service the entire year and re-opened its doors last May. When other NLS-affiliated libraries in Florida had to close or reduce services, PTBL picked up much of the slack—meeting the needs of not only its own patrons but of blind and print-disabled readers across the state.

The library created a new partnership with Preserve Vision Florida. It advertises Preserve Vision Florida's vision screenings on its social media outlets; in return, Preserve Vision Florida gives NLS applications to its patients who qualify.

PTBL served its patrons with more than books. From March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns started, through 2021, the library gave out masks to patrons who had no other method of acquiring them. It mailed fleece pet blankets to patrons who called and said they had a pet in need. And it created a large-print calendar that was mailed to patrons for free.

It also helped its volunteers—who gave 783 hours of service last year—by starting a program to reimburse them for their transportation costs to and from the library.

"Everyone has a right to accessible library services," PTBL Manager Meagan Magee said. “The staff of the Pinellas Talking Book Library will continue to find innovative and resourceful ways to provide those services and have a positive impact on our community.”

In a message to the NLS biennial conference, Librarian of Congress Dr. Carla Hayden congratulated the two winning libraries and thanked them for their commitment to ensuring That All May Read. “The Washington Talking Book & Braille Library and the Pinellas Talking Book Library couldn't be farther apart geographically, but they share the spotlight today for the many innovative ways they identify and meet the needs of their patrons and contribute to their communities,” Dr. Hayden states. “I admire these libraries for broadening their reach and increasing their usage through inventive programs.”

Each prize comes with a $1,000 award and a commemorative plaque. NLS looks forward to a time when we can resume the tradition of hosting the winning libraries at an awards luncheon at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.

## Collection Building Policy

### (revised by NLS, 9/15/2020)

#### Purpose and scope

This document states the NLS policy for selection of reading materials. It is intended to guide the staff in selecting material; to provide a standard for the ongoing evaluation of the collections; to provide guidance to network libraries developing supplementary collections so that needless duplication of effort may be avoided; and to provide readers and librarians with information on the nature of the collections.

This policy identifies what materials should be included in the NLS collections to support and realize the mission of the Library of Congress, and outlines in general terms the priorities for building and maintaining the collections to implement NLS's goals and objectives.

The scope of the collection is meant to satisfy general informational and recreational reading needs, with most selection areas collected at a basic level. This level provides an essential understanding of the subject, including important works, general surveys, and noteworthy biographies, but is not usually sufficient to support independent, in-depth research. Areas of particular interest to our patron base, such as books about blindness or physical disabilities, may be collected in greater depth.

#### Legal responsibility

Under Public Law 89‑522, the Library of Congress is responsible for providing library materials for blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print-disabled residents of the United States and U.S. citizens living abroad. NLS is responsible for carrying out this mandate and seeks to cooperate and coordinate with other agencies and groups so that readers may have access to the widest possible number of titles.

The NLS mission includes two goals: to develop and maintain an inventory of braille and recorded materials that will meet the reading preferences and information needs of a highly diverse clientele, and to develop coordinated library service for all persons eligible for this service.

#### Program policy

NLS patrons should have access to the same types of books and information available to the general public through public libraries.

The recreation and information needs of all ages, languages, and backgrounds should be reflected proportionally in the collections in relation to the overall readership served.

The collections should offer standard classic and informational titles, along with works of popular and recreational interest.

Selection of any given book is not to be interpreted as an endorsement of the views expressed therein.

Books are reproduced in their entirety and remain available even if they are offensive or unacceptable to some readers. NLS supports intellectual freedom and subscribes to the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement.

ALA Library Bill of Rights:

[www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/index.cfm](file:///C:\Users\Kim%20Charlson\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\3ZS4EX0M\www.ala.org\ala\issuesadvocacy\intfreedom\librarybill\index.cfm)

ALA Freedom to Read Statement:

[www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/freedomreadstatement](file:///C:\Users\Kim%20Charlson\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\3ZS4EX0M\www.ala.org\advocacy\intfreedom\statementspols\freedomreadstatement)

NLS is the central node in a national network of regional and subregional libraries offering direct public library service to eligible patrons. It uses the production capabilities of commercial, nonprofit, and volunteer organizations to produce quantities of books ranging from a few copies to more than a thousand copies. The quantity of any title produced is dependent on the pertinence of the work to the network libraries' collections and to expected reader demand.

Network libraries provide an additional source of materials by producing books of local and regional interest and books of recreational or informational interest not provided for in the NLS collections. Network libraries make these titles accessible nationwide by sending bibliographic data to NLS for inclusion in the NLS Union Catalog, offering copies on request through interlibrary loan, and uploading books to the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) website following procedures established by the Network Division.

Textbooks are not generally part of the NLS collections but are available through volunteer individuals and groups and nonprofit organizations such as Learning Ally (formerly Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic) and the American Printing House for the Blind.

#### Access to NLS collections by network librarians and patrons

Network librarians and patrons have access to the NLS collections records through the International Union Catalog, available online at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls>

Information about the most recently distributed books is published in the bimonthly publications Talking Book Topics and Braille Book Review. These are available in large print, on digital cartridge, in braille, and/or online. Short subject-matter bibliographies are occasionally produced by the Network Division and posted on the NLS website.

#### The role of patrons and network libraries in building the collection

NLS is committed to meeting patrons' recreational and informational reading needs. To that end NLS has instituted the following methods to ensure patron participation in the selection process:

The Collection Development Advisory Group is designed to bring patrons' concerns to NLS. The group meets in person at NLS for three days every two years. It is made up of four network librarians (one from each of the four conferences, appointed by the conference chair), one youth librarian, four readers‑at‑large (one from each of the four conferences, appointed by the conference chair), and one representative from each of three consumer organizations (the American Council of the Blind, the Blinded Veterans Association, and the National Federation of the Blind). After an introductory workshop to acquaint the group with current issues in book selection and production, the group members discuss among themselves the various concerns they have brought from their constituents. At the final meeting the group presents a list of recommendations to guide NLS in the development of the collections. Participants are reimbursed for their expenses.

Patrons are encouraged to bring their reading needs to the attention of NLS by contacting their regional or subregional library. Library staff will then query NLS and report back to the patrons.

In building the NLS collections, consideration is given to resources and information available from other organizations, including network libraries. NLS is committed to considering patrons' needs, publishing trends, its own resources, and network library activities in open forums such as those provided by advisory groups.

#### General policies

The NLS catalog consists of braille and recorded reproductions of published printed and digital works. The goal of including information in all subject areas in both braille and recorded formats is approached within the overall context of technological and cost considerations. The NLS collection primarily contains English-language materials, but it has a growing number of reproductions in languages other than English, especially Spanish. NLS adds non-English materials using the same selection parameters as are in place for English materials.

In accordance with the Marrakesh Treaty, Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act, and Library of Congress Technical Corrections Act of 2019, NLS may add materials to its collection which are made available by other Authorized Entities. These reproductions, in a variety of languages from around the world, are considered according to the same selection standards as other NLS reproductions.

Commercial audiobooks made available to NLS by arrangement with publishers are included in the program when they meet the same standards that guide the selection of print books.

Unpublished manuscripts will not be considered for inclusion in the NLS collection. Self-published works occasionally may be considered, subject to the same selection criteria and standard of high interest to NLS patrons.

Published books are considered for selection only when print or digital copies are available for examination, when the titles are well reviewed in widely distributed national publications (two positive reviews in the mainstream press are a standard requirement; exceptions are made when special relevance to NLS patrons is apparent), when they appear in authoritative bibliographies, or when they are recognized by librarians as basic works appropriate to a public library's collection. These qualifiers do not guarantee selection for the NLS collection, however.

Priority is given to works of perceived long‑lasting value, with a smaller number of selections from widely discussed but perhaps more ephemeral works.

Generally excluded from the collection, except where specifically noted, are textbooks or other curriculum‑related materials, unless such materials are appropriate to a public library collection; information that is likely to become dated before the production process can be completed; and titles that serve only to further a political or social cause, except where important documents by prominent individuals are included and are not otherwise available.

NLS does not generally include government publications in its collection, but provides assistance and consultation to agencies as they seek to provide their circulars, documents, and explanatory pamphlets in alternative media.

Books in the collection that are in poor condition or whose contents have been determined by NLS to be dated are withdrawn. Network libraries are notified of the decision to withdraw specific titles. The libraries have the option of retaining such material if they so desire. Circulating copies of withdrawn titles are available to readers on request through interlibrary loan through network libraries. Withdrawn titles of lasting interest may be considered for rerecording.

Encyclopedias and dictionaries, which are not suited for loaning, and annuals, which have information that may become dated quickly, are not generally selected for inclusion in the national collections. For most reference questions, patrons are referred to their regional library or nearest public library.

No attempt is made to acquire more than a single imprint of a specific title. Variant imprints may appear in the collection when special significance or value may be identified.

Music scores and technical music books are circulated by the NLS Music Section. Books on music and musicians that are of general interest are part of the NLS general collection, and are available through network libraries.

Self‑help instructional materials that are found in public libraries and that can be converted to a special format may be added to the collection when identified as appropriate for meeting patron needs.

Gifts and materials obtained through cooperative international exchange agreements that meet NLS quality-assurance standards may be accepted in accordance with this policy. Exceptions may be made in regard to materials of foreign origin when the need to acquire materials expeditiously is paramount.

Large‑print books are not included in the NLS collection except in the special music collection. Patrons who need large‑print scores and music instruction materials are directed to the NLS Music Section. Fiction and nonfiction books in large print are available in most public libraries and are included in the collections of many network libraries.

Duplication of titles in more than one special format is based on, and reflects NLS response to, known reader needs or anticipated popularity.

NLS provides a limited number of periodicals in braille or recorded formats. Generally, periodicals published by specific interest groups that contain information of interest solely to members of those groups are not included in the collection. The Magazine of the Month program provides patrons with sample magazines that are not available by subscription.

Standard works relating to the world's major religions, including scriptures, are provided in proportion to demand. A reference guide, Bibles and Other Sacred Writings in Special Media, available online and through the NLS Reference Section, provides information about organizations that make copies of sacred texts available at little or no cost to persons who wish to have a personal copy.

NLS provides a special collection in languages other than English. The collection is based upon the relative number of individuals using a language in the overall readership, and upon the availability of works in that language.

Both original works and translations are included in the collection. No attempt is made to acquire any specific title in all available languages. Individual titles may appear in multiple languages as appropriate to the collection. Materials and reproductions, in a variety of languages, are acquired by purchase, by special arrangement with sister agencies abroad, or as a participating Authorized Entity in the Marrakesh Treaty. Children's titles, including bilingual editions, and titles that may be used by adults for self-education are included.

The young adult collection is presented as part of the adult collection. Young adult material is generally geared to students in high school but is often read and enjoyed by younger readers as well as adults. Selection of materials is governed by the same criteria used to develop the collections in general.

The children's collection is developed to meet the needs of children from preschool (age four) through grade eight. Selection criteria are similar to those used to develop the adult collection.

#### Criteria for selection

Selection of books for the collections involves consideration of what has already been selected in the subject area, the media previously used, the audiences to which the titles will appeal, the titles' potential popularity, the format of the print book, and the media to which the titles best lend themselves.

#### Nonfiction

The collection offers representative coverage in all major subject areas, with selective coverage in subareas and attention to the following:

Broad trends in public interests, developing theories and practices in the various subject areas, and availability of appropriate titles; materials in areas of particular interest to readers, classic and standard materials, contemporary works, specialized works that support lifelong learning, and works of informational reading.

#### Fiction

The selection goal is to meet the recreational and informational reading needs of a large readership with vastly different tastes, interests, purposes, and reading levels. The collection contains literary classics as well as popular and experimental works.

#### Periodicals

Criteria used for the selection of periodicals include the above, plus consideration of whether the periodicals reflect current thinking in the various fields represented, are of high interest and in demand, are representative in their points of view, and meet recreational and informational needs.

#### Collection dynamics

Patrons' needs, publishing trends, and changing resources require that the policies that describe and direct the collection be constantly monitored. This policy may serve as a basis for discussion at ad hoc group meetings. Recommendations from patrons' groups or network libraries may be considered as the basis for amending or changing this document.

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