

Talking Book Times – Winter 2009

Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center

600 High Point Lane, East Peoria, IL 61611

1-800-426-0709

To receive this newsletter in Braille, on cassette, or by e-mail; Give us a call at 1-800-426-0709. This newsletter can also be heard on our website: www.mitbc.org. The cassette and online recordings are done courtesy of WCBU public radio in Peoria.

Thank you for your support! MITBC appreciates the contributions of our donors and volunteers. As a non-profit organization, we highly value such gifts. Your donations allow us to expand and maintain our collection and equipment; helping us to better provide a quality experience to our patrons. Reaching out to expanding hearts and minds has never been so easy! Checks are payable to Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center. All donations are tax deductible. Thank you and have a happy holiday season! (pictured) Bill, a sight impaired Welsh Terrier.

Digital Service Begins. From records to flexible discs to cassettes, many changes have occurred in the past 75 years that talking books have been available. The newest innovation of the Library of Congress National Library Service (NLS) is finally here: the digital age has arrived!

The Illinois Talking Book Centers are excited about the transition from cassette to digital format. The new digital players are similar to cassette players, but much smaller and easier to use. Two models are available: the standard player which is suitable for most users, and the advanced player which has more navigation options. The advanced player may be a better choice for non-fiction readers who need bookmarking capabilities. Both players feature better sound quality, a sleep button that will stop playing after a specified time and a place to insert a thumb drive to download books from the internet if you wish.

Transitions take time. It will take a few years for the National Library Service (NLS) to produce enough digital players for every talking book user. Until then, digital

players will be distributed for loan according to NLS and local guidelines. Anyone interested in digital service should contact their Talking Book Center to be added to the digital machine waiting list, or complete the enclosed form.

There are two ways to receive digital books: by mail or by internet download.

Books by Mail: The new digital books are much easier to use. Each digital book (DB) comes on a single cartridge instead of multiple cassettes. It requires no flipping or changing of side selector switches. The digital book cartridge is comparable in size to a cassette. The dark blue mailing container has the same snap latches and mailing card slot.

The loan period for digital books is two weeks. Patrons will be allowed to check out two books at a time by mail and these must be returned before more are sent. We've been fairly lenient with overdue titles in the past, but we will have a very limited number of digital books for some time. It is important that you return books promptly because others will be waiting to read them.

Books by Download: More than 15,000 books and 40 magazines are available immediately on the Braille and Audio Recording Download (BARD) site:
<http://nlsbard.loc.gov>

To use BARD to download books for use in the digital player you will need:

- A high-speed internet connection (Dial-up service will not work)
- An e-mail address
- A standard 1G flash drive, also known as a thumb or travel drive

Knowledge of navigating the web, filling out online forms, downloading large items and unzipping the files. A friend or relative could also do this for you.

Keep your cassette player — don't send it back. Direct mail magazines will only be available on cassette. You will also need your cassette player to read books from the current collection that won't be provided in digital format. New titles will be offered in both digital and cassette formats until NLS stops producing cassette books in late 2010. Due to high demand and the limited number of digital copies

we receive, it may be faster to get a new book on cassette instead of waiting for the digital book.

Machine distribution: When supplies are adequate, all talking book users will automatically be issued a digital player. Until then, Illinois will manage the waiting list for digital players through a tiered system. Machines from NLS will be distributed in the following order until every patron in that tier has been served:

1. Veterans - By law, all patrons who are veterans of the US Armed Forces will be given first priority. This includes both new and current patrons.
2. Centenarians (people who are 100 years old or older) - As requested by the Library of Congress National Library Service. This includes both new and current patrons.
3. E-1 users (patrons who cannot use a standard cassette player) – Because E-1 players are in short supply, a digital player may be the only option for someone unable to operate a standard cassette player due to a physical or cognitive disability. This includes both new and current patrons.
4. People who requested service prior to October 2009 - Veterans, centenarians and E-1 patrons will be added to the top three tiers. All other patrons who requested service prior to October 2009 will be placed in the fourth tier according to request date.
5. Patrons who request service after October 2009 - Veterans, centenarians and E-1 patrons in this group will be added to the top three tiers. All other patrons who requested digital service after October 2009 will be placed in the fifth tier according to request date.
6. Institutions - Nursing homes, schools and other institutional accounts will be served when all interested individual patrons have received a digital player. Students and nursing home residents can request individual service.

Please call your Talking Book Center if you want to be added to the waiting list for digital service or if you have any questions. Or, fill out the enclosed form and return it to the Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service.

RFB&D Free Service Offer. In celebration of its 60th anniversary, Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) is offering free membership with qualifying

disabilities. The offer is good through January 25, 2010. As a member you will gain access to one of the largest online libraries, with over 50,000 textbook and non-fiction titles. To register for an individual membership, visit www.rfbd.org or call 1-800-221-4792.

We're on the Web! www.mitbc.org

Reader Advisors' E-mails Nancy Boucher: nboucher@alliancelibrarysystem.com

Jan Plemons: jplemons@alliancelibrarysystem.com

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Holiday Closings

Wed. Nov. 11 — Veteran's Day

Thurs. - Fri. Nov. 26/27 — Thanksgiving

Thurs. - Fri. Dec. 24/ 25 — Christmas

Thurs. - Fri Dec. 31/Jan 1 — New Year's Eve/Day

Mon. Jan. 18 — Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Mon. Feb. 15 — President's Day

Request Our All New Catalogue Of Holiday Titles Today

Digital Service Request Form

MITBC is creating a waiting list of registered patrons who want to receive a digital player. To be on this list, please contact the Mid-Illinois Talking book Center or complete this form, re-fold so that the address is showing, tape it closed and mail it to Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service at:

Illinois State Library
Talking Book and Braille Service Request
attn: digital Service Request
401 E. Washington Street
Springfield, IL 62701

Put an X in front of the statement that best describes your interest in digital service. You may indicate your preference for a standard or an advanced player, but since supplies are limited you might not receive your first choice.

I want to receive a standard digital player as soon as possible.

I want to receive an advanced digital player as soon as possible. (supplies are limited and wait may be longer)

I'm downloading books from the National Library Service and do not need a digital player at this time.

Don't send me a digital player. I prefer to continue using the cassette player and cassette books.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____