



# Texas Talking Book News

Texas State Library and Archives Commission WINTER 2018

## Director's Report

Greetings! Here is the latest news:

**New automation system coming soon:** The Talking Book Program (TBP) will have a new circulation system in the coming months. We're moving to the WebREADS system, which is a system provided by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) and is in use by several talking book libraries around the country. Right now, the target date for the switch-over to this new system is April 2018.

This new system is very different from our current system, so there will be a period of adjustment and a learning curve for all involved. At the time of the switch-over, we will be closed for up to a week while we bring up the system on our computers, start retraining staff, and start rewriting procedures. With any migration from one system to another, there will be glitches and various problems that will have to be worked through. We ask that you be patient while we put our new environment into order.

There will be many changes. A few will be regrettable because we will lose some functionality that we really like, but most changes will be for the better. We hope to fine-tune your accounts so that you may receive books more closely aligned with your reading preferences. Down the line will be a public catalog on our web site through which you may order your own books.

As we have more information about this change-over, we will put it here in the newsletter, send out emails (to those who have email addresses), and put it on the blog and the toll-free information line.

**Death of a Texas narrator:** Former studio volunteer Lionel Jacobs recently passed away after a brief battle with cancer. Lionel volunteered in the studio from 2007 to 2016, putting in over 2,000 hours and doing everything from reviewing recordings to narrating books. Originally from South Africa, Lionel had a lilting accent that made him a wonderful narrator for westerns, mysteries, and historical fiction, especially those with strong British characters and plots. If you would like to listen to some of Lionel's work, please call 1-800-252-9605 and ask a reader

consultant to send you one of Lionel's books on digital cartridge. Some of the titles he narrated are also available as BARD downloads.

Until next time,  
Ava Smith  
Director, Talking Book Program

**The Talking Book Program will be closed on the below listed days.**

Monday, February 19 ~ Presidents' Day  
Friday, March 9 ~ TSLAC Staff Development Day

### **2017 TBP Poetry Contest Winners**

We are pleased to announce the winners of the 2017 TBP Poetry contest. Thank you to all that participated in the first TBP poetry contest. We received a range of poems--some were happy, some were sad, and some were touching.

Choosing the winners was not an easy task. In the end, the judgement came down to the poets' originality, style, structure and impact. The judges were blown away by the talent and creativity they received from you, our patrons.

The winners are:

- Category 1 (Ages 0- 10):** Xiomara Gilliam with "A Cat Who Could Jump"
- Category 3 (Ages 19 and Up):** Barbary Wright with "Now We Are Ninety"
- Category 3 (Ages 19 and Up):** Tiffany Chartier with "One Cowboy's End"

You can find a copy of their poems online under TBP News, on the TBP blog at [www.tsl.texas.gov/texastalkingbooks](http://www.tsl.texas.gov/texastalkingbooks) and on the Texas State Library and Archives Commission Facebook page.

Job well done!

#### **A Cat Who Could Jump by Xiomara Grace Gilliam**

There once was a cat who could jump.  
He could jump high over a bump.  
He fell on his head  
And thought he was dead  
But all that was there was a lump.



## Books Worth Revisiting: Newbery Medal Books

The oldest and most prestigious award for children's literature is the John Newbery Medal, which is presented every year by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association. This award is given for an original work published in the preceding year by an author who either is an American citizen or has an established residence in the United States or its territories. The purpose is to honor the "most distinguished contribution to American literature for children." The award is named for the 18<sup>th</sup> century English publisher and bookseller John Newbery (1713-1767), who was the first to successfully promote children's literature as an important part of the literary market. The medal was first awarded in 1922 to Hendrik Willem van Loon for *The Story of Mankind* (updated version available for download on BARD, **DB 17628, BR 01626**). Here are some of the great books awarded the medal, including the most recent recipient. (And these books are not just for children, so give them a try!) All are available for BARD download.

### **The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhill**

**DB 85739:** Xan does not understand why nearby villagers leave a baby in the forest every year. She always rescues the baby and carries it to the other side of the forest where other villagers are waiting to adopt children. One year, however, Xan is particularly taken with a baby girl and decides she will raise the baby as her own. Renamed "Luna," the girl has a special affinity for the moon and grows up to have a power of her own. Luna's "family" also includes Glerk, a swamp monster with a penchant for poetry, and Fyrian, a very tiny dragon who thinks he is especially enormous. Selected for the 2017 John Newbery Medal. Suitable for all audiences.

### **Sarah, Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan**

**DB 23524, BR 09531, and LB 06059; LB 03825; and LB 04764:** In the late 1800s, Sarah Wheaton leaves her home in Maine to answer a newspaper advertisement for a mail-order bride. Jacob Wittig, a widow with two young children, lives on a small farm in the Midwest and has decided the time is right for a new wife and a new mother for Anna and Caleb. This brief and moving story, told by Anna, shows how four lonely people become a family—with plenty of help from a menagerie of animals. Selected for the 1986 John Newbery Medal. Suitable for all audiences.



### **The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin**

**DB 12787, DB 15600, BR 06285, BR 58350, and LB 04016:** Samuel Westing is an eccentric businessman with a reputation for playing elaborate games. One day, he is found dead in his mansion. His will claims that he was murdered. Sixteen “heirs” are summoned to play one last game; the winner must name the murderer to claim the \$200 million inheritance. The “heirs” are paired off and given a set of clues to help them solve the murder. As they puzzle over their clues, they wonder about each other. Could one of them actually be a murderer? Selected for the 1979 John Newbery Medal. Suitable for young adult and adult audiences.

### **A Single Shard by Linda Sue Park**

**DB 53670 and BR 14214:** An orphan named Tree-ear has ambitions of becoming a potter in 12<sup>th</sup>-century Korea. Tree-ear lives under a bridge with a homeless man called Crane-man, so named because he only has one good leg to stand on. The village they live in is renowned for its elegant and much-in-demand celadon pottery, and Tree-ear thinks the elderly potter Min is the best potter around. Through an accident, Tree-ear comes to work for Min and dreams of one day being able to create a prunus vase, one of the most beautiful of Min’s many creations. Tree-ear does not realize right away that he has embarked on a long and difficult journey toward his dream, but Crane-man’s shared wisdom and the kindnesses of Min’s wife help him along the way. Selected for the 2002 John Newbery Medal. Suitable for all audiences.

### **It’s Like This, Cat by Emily Neville**

**DB 22850; BR 09722; and LB 00633:** In 1950s Brooklyn, a teenage boy recounts his adventures growing up and life with the stray cat he adopts. Davey has frequent disagreements with his father, usually ending with the boy fleeing the house; it’s on one of these outings that he visits the crazy cat lady down the street where he first meets Cat. Davey has a lot to learn about cats, starting with Cat’s urges to roam and the trouble he gets into because of his curiosity. Meanwhile, Davey also is learning about relationships, with different friends and especially with girls. Davey is most surprised by the relationship between Cat and his father. Selected for the 1964 John Newbery Medal. Suitable for young adult and adult audiences.



**NOW WE ARE NINETY by Barbara M. Wright**

God brought us together, by His hand from above,  
From the moment we met, we were in love.  
Loneliness gone, a new life together,  
His hand in mine, we learned from each other.

We are seventy-two and ripe for adventure,  
He made me smile as we sang, and we danced,  
He was the builder, with saw and a hammer,  
I was his helper, standing by with the measure.

Day by day, year by year, our love grew stronger,  
Until the day came when he could remember no longer.  
Each time I am with him, he asks again and again,  
“Why can’t I go home, oh please tell me when.”

Now, our bodies are frail, our sight growing dim,  
Yet my love is no less than when I married him.  
“What’s the matter with me?” words that tear at my heart.  
“You love me no more, or we would not be apart”.

Most of his past and the people he knew,  
Like a fog rolling in, seem to have vanished from view.  
Oh God, if it you hear me, please call my love home,  
I don’t want to die first and leave him alone.

**One Cowboy’s End by Tiffany K. Chartier**

Tree stumps circle around the old stone fire pit;  
Tall grass rides up the boots of those who sit.  
Stories are shared with an air of pride,  
as the fire swells and the night hides.  
Critters on the outskirts stop to listen,  
but the cowboys see their eyes a ‘glisten.  
The shrouded unknown is haunting;  
yes, to all creatures – fear is the most daunting.

That is what, after all, boosts the tales,  
around all old stone fire pits around the trails.  
So long as the faithful fires keep a ‘swellin’;  
the sins of the cowboys will remain engulfed with their hellin’.

No one will notice the fear in their eyes;  
except, perhaps, for that one fearless critter...right before one cowboy dies.

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Free Matter for the  
Blind or Physically  
Handicapped



### Disability News

Transportation for people with disabilities in Texas can be difficult to find. The Disability Information & Referral Center is compiling a list of para-transit, rural / specialized, partnership, and free transportation options, as well as information on ride-sharing and delivery services. Urban areas have more options than rural parts of the state. For more information, call 800-252-9605 / 512-463-5458, or e-mail [tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov)

Comments or complaints regarding programs and services of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission may be made to:  
Director and Librarian. PO Box 12927, Austin, TX 78711-2927

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