



Texas Talking Book News

Texas State Library and Archives Commission Summer 2010

Director's Report

Greetings! Here is the latest news:

Update on renovations at the State Library Building: The renovation work on the Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library Building is complete, and the Talking Book Program's (TBP's) administrative offices and the Reader Services call center are moved back and settled in on the fourth floor. The Audio Production Services department, including the recording studio, is located on the ground floor. The staff is glad to be back home!

Upcoming budget cuts: If you've been paying attention to the news lately, you've heard that all state agencies must cut their budgets. The State Library must cut its overall budget by 5% this fiscal year (FY2010) and 5% in the next budget year (FY2011). Cuts to TBP's budget have been minimal this time around, with TBP losing \$7,500 per year. These cuts will mean belt-tightening but no loss of staff or hours in the near future. The 82nd Texas Legislature comes into session in January 2011. At that time, they will be considering state agency budgets for FY2012 and FY2013. The state is facing a deficit of approximately \$18-20 billion, and more budget cuts are likely if the gap is to be closed. As we know more information on what additional cuts TBP may be facing in FY2012 and FY2013, we will put this information in the newsletters.

Putting notes to us in your returned books: Some of you write notes to us and put them in the mailing containers/bags when you return your books. Please do not do this. Because thousands of books are returned to us every day, loose papers inside the mailing containers/bags may get lost while the books are being checked in. Also, the United States Postal Service guidelines prohibit any handwritten notes in our free matter containers. If a postal inspector finds a handwritten note, the note may either be removed, or the postal service may refuse to forward your book back to us. If you do need to communicate with us, the best way is to call the Reader Services Department at 1-800-252-9605 and speak with a reader consultant. You may also send us an email at tbp.services@tsl.state.tx.us.

Production of cassette books coming to an end: NLS will soon be placing its last orders for new books on cassette. Once that happens, all new recorded books will only be available on digital cartridge or for download from BARD. If you are still using a cassette player to read your books, you will not be able to read any of the newest recorded books that become available. Also, we've learned from NLS staff that the lifespan of the cassette player is not expected to last much beyond the next three years. As many of you know, the actual production of new cassette players stopped in early 2007, so the only cassette players now available are refurbished machines. NLS has stockpiled spare parts to last for three years; we will continue to repair cassette players for as long as we are able to get the parts. Right now, we have a good supply of

refurbished machines and are able to send a cassette player to any patron who wants one. We would urge everyone, however, to sign up for a new digital talking book machine (DTBM), if you have not already done so. We have these new players in stock, and patrons who are using the new DTBM have nothing but praise for their ease of use and the excellent sound quality. If you are interested in signing up for a DTBM, please contact a reader consultant at 1-800-252-9605 or send an email to tbp.services@tsl.state.tx.us.

New Reader's Advisory Librarians: Please check out the brief article elsewhere in this newsletter about our two newest librarians.

Newsletter by email: Do you want to receive our newsletter by email instead of on paper? If so, please call a reader consultant at 1-800-252-9605 or send an email to tbp.services@tsl.state.tx.us. Tell us that you want to change your newsletter preference to email and give us your email address. The newsletter also is available on our web page at www.texastalkingbooks.org and on the toll-free information line at 1-866-388-6397.

Until next time,

Ava Smith, Director, Talking Book Program

The Talking Book Program will be closed for Labor Day on Monday, September 6, 2010. Of course, you can leave a message or send e-mail on a holiday.

Featured Authors: Douglas J. Preston (born 1956) and Lincoln Child (born 1957)

Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child are two "fifty-somethings" who have written ten books together. Their books are translated widely and sell very well worldwide. These popular books are thrillers based in scientific discovery and advanced technology. Preston also writes for The New Yorker, Smithsonian, National Geographic, and Harper's magazines. Lincoln worked for many years as an editor at St. Martin's Press where he edited hundreds of books before turning to full-time writing. These two collaborators also write separately. ("Douglas Preston," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_Preston and "Lincoln Child," http://en.wikipedia.org/Lincoln_Child Retrieved February 5, 2010).

TBP has 20 titles by Preston. Ten of those are co-authored with Lincoln Child. TBP also has three books by Lincoln Child.

One of the most read of their books is **Relic RC 42361**. Carole Jordan Stewart narrates this book on three cassettes. The story begins in September 1987 when all members of an Amazon expedition were killed. A box of relics survived and has finally arrived at the New York Museum of Natural History, where the contents will be part of a new exhibit. First, the staff must deal with the brutal murders of two young boys in the museum's basement. Graduate student Margo Green thinks all the deaths are connected. This book has violence and strong language.

To order this book, please call 1-800-252-9605 and ask for **RC 42361**.

Braille Revival League of Texas

The Braille Revival League of Texas (BRLT) is a membership organization whose purpose is to promote the teaching, production and the broader acceptance and use of Braille as the primary tool of literacy for people who are blind. Its membership is comprised of Braille users, teachers, transcribers, Braille producers, and other individuals who are proponents and supporters of Braille.

BRLT strives to foster a sense of pride among people who are blind that Braille is a method of reading and writing that can make them as knowledgeable, educated, and literate as people who are sighted.

The League encourages all people who are blind to read and write Braille by emphasizing the practical uses and importance of Braille in their daily lives.

BRLT strongly supports the maximum availability of information in Braille for consumers by all businesses, agencies, government entities, and any other providers of goods and services.

The League advocates for a substantial increase in the output and availability of Braille materials, with the highest degree of excellence and accuracy, from printing houses, libraries, and all producers of Braille.

BRLT believes that Braille instruction should become mandatory in all schools and other educational facilities for students who are blind.

BRLT believes that the mastering of Braille should become a required and integral part of the curriculum for the training of prospective teachers of students who are blind.

Memorandum

BRLT members receive the Braille Revival League's national publication, with articles about the innovative uses of Braille as well as personal views and opinions about the teaching, transcribing, and future code modifications of Braille.

Annual Meeting

BRLT members attend and participate in the American Council of the Blind, Texas annual state conference as well as in BRL's national program and activities held during the ACB national convention. Highlights include election of officers, guest speakers, socialization, and information on the latest developments in Braille technology and proposed changes to the Braille code.

Membership

BRLT welcomes any person, blind or sighted, who believes in and is willing to work for the furtherance of Braille as the primary medium of literacy for blind people to become a member of this exciting state affiliate in Texas.

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

Email Address _____

Send application information and a check for dues (\$15.00) to:

BRLT Treasurer
Margarine G. Beaman
1406 Wilshire Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78722

For more information, please contact:

BRLT Membership Committee Chair
Berniece Klepac
713-960-0503

Call the Disability Information and Referral Center toll-free at 1-800-252-9605 for information about disabilities and health conditions.

Here are three books that many of our readers have enjoyed. You may also like to read them. To order one of these books as, call 1-800-252-9605 and ask for its number.

Painted Ponies by Alan LeMay **RC 59043** or **DB 59043** Narrated by Jim Zeiger
This book has two cassettes. In 1878, Slide Morgan learns that Abner Cade, brother of the man he killed in self-defense, has placed a price on his head. Morgan hides out among the Cheyenne Indians until their rebellion against the whites ends. He then resumes his feud with the Cades.

Off Season by Anne Rivers Siddons **BR 17861, RC 67528, DB 67528, or LB 06028**
Narrated by Mary Kane. This medium length book has three Braille volumes and two cassettes. After her beloved husband Cam dies, Lilly takes his ashes to her family's beach cottage in Maine. Comforted by conversations with ghosts, Lilly thinks back over her marriage, her relationship with her parents, and long-ago tragedies – and learns about something that Cam kept from her. This book has some strong language.

Cadillac Jukebox: A Dave Robicheaux Novel by James Lee Burke **RC 44093, DB 44093, or LB 04792**
Narrated by Bruce Huntley. This book has two cassettes. Cajun cop Dave Robicheaux gets a call for help from redneck Aaron Crown, who after twenty-eight years is convicted of killing a prominent civil rights activist. Though he is warned off the case, Robicheaux decides to buck the power structure and take some personal risks to prove Crown's innocence. This book has some descriptions of sex, strong language, and violence.

Contact TBP at 1-800-252-9605 or send E-mail to: tbp.services@tsl.state.tx.us

The Talking Book Program Now Has Two Reader's Advisory Librarians.

Please join us in welcoming TBP's new Reader's Advisory Librarians, Shannon and Sandra. They are taking on newly created positions designed to assist in finding good books to read. You may know Shannon already – she has been here for two years as a Reader Consultant. Sandra came to this position from TBP's Circulation Center. They both look forward to working with you to discuss your preferences and suggest ways to tailor your requests or automatic computer selections. You may call and ask for Shannon or Sandra at the usual toll-free number, 1-800-252-9605.

Mention of a product or service in this news bulletin does not constitute endorsement by this library. Our intention is to increase an awareness of programs and items that may be helpful to our patrons.

Comments or complaints regarding programs and services of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission may be made to: Director and Librarian, P.O. Box 12927 Austin, Texas 78711-2927 Telephone: 512-463-5460 Fax: 512-936-0685

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Austin, Texas 78711-2927

Free Matter for the
Blind or Physically Handicapped



These Two Free Sources of Information May Interest You.

Fred's Head from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) is an online way to access scads of information about many topics. This web log (commonly called a blog) has tips, tutorials, in-depth articles, and resources for and by blind or visually impaired people. The blog is named after the legendary Fred Gissoni of APH's Customer Relations Department. You can use this site to subscribe to really simple syndication (RSS) sites, read newsletters, articles, and learn about topics as varied as computer games, knitting, preschool or social security. To learn more, click <http://www.fredshead.info/>

Good50.com is a search engine designed for easy operation, especially for people who are 50 or more years old. Google operates this free service. It has several advantages: (1) offers a low vision version with high contrast; (2) allows the user to increase font size; (3) has fewer ads than some others; and (4) donates cash to your favorite charity for every 50 visits. To learn more, click <http://www.good50.com/main.html>