

Talking Booklet

TALKING BOOK LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

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NLS/BPH DIGITAL TALKING BOOK TRANSITION



Digital Talking Book Player & Mailing Case

Many Talking Book Library patrons have inquired about the National Library Service (NLS) plan to change from audio cassette format and cassette playback equipment to new formats. The transition, which will take about four years to complete based on federal government funding to NLS, is expected to begin in late 2008, with preference given to veterans and patrons who are over one hundred years old. Moreover, since there will not be enough players in the first year to distribute to everyone, cassette players and audiocassette books will continue to circulate for several years. Patrons will not need to make the move immediately to the new technology if they choose not to.

If the budget request for the Library of Congress is not approved as submitted, the replacement of old cassette players with new digital players will be spread out over a longer period of time. Repairs will continue for cassette players during the transition period even though no new cassette players are being manufactured. Requests for new equipment, however, will not be accepted until the library actually has equipment to distribute.

Because analog audio cassette books and players are rapidly becoming obsolete, NLS is moving to digital audio books, which are based on USB flash drive technology. The new audio book will be a hard plastic cartridge about the same size as a cassette with a USB plug at one end. A single flash memory cartridge, slightly larger than a credit card, will contain the entire content of a 12-hour book. Most books will fit onto just one cartridge, thereby eliminating the need to deal with multiple cartridges, to turn anything over or to change a side selector switch. Digital talking book production is already in progress and more than 20,000 titles should be available by the time the players are ready for use.

The new player, basic and advanced, will be somewhat smaller than the current cassette machine, measuring about 6" x 9" x 2" and will weigh just over two pounds, compared to the present cassette book machine which is 9" x 11" x 3" and weighs seven pounds. The basic player will be very simple to use: plug in the cartridge and the machine will announce the title, the author, the location in the book and will start playing. The advanced machine will allow for navigation within the book by chapters and pages. If you are reading more than one book the player will remember where you left off.

The player chassis is dark charcoal gray in color to create maximum visual contrast between the colors of the control buttons, which announce their function when pressed, and will have a battery run time of more than 15 hours with the capacity to recharge in 2 hours. In addition to a sleep timer that will shut the player off in 30 minutes, the player's power will also shut off automatically after 30 minutes of non-playing. The audio quality of the digital player will be significantly better than that of the current C1 machine.

Further digital book developments will be announced as the actual transition dates are set by the National Library Service. Meanwhile, additional information about the NLS digital book program and download pilot project can be found at the "Flash" newsletter link under "What's New at NLS" at: www.loc.gov/nls . Individuals interested in purchasing a personal digital audio book player can find helpful information at: www.loc.gov/nls/reference/factsheets/audiobkplayers.html#audiobook

LARGE TYPE BOOK SERVICE

If you like to read books in print but find standard print too small you will be pleased to know that the Talking Book Library at the Worcester Public Library has a collection of over 7,500 large type books with over 300 young adult titles and more than 450 children's titles. The collection includes bestsellers, romances, mysteries, westerns, travel, biographies, humor and classics which are sent through the mail in zippered pouches as "Free Matter for the Blind" to individuals who have vision loss or a physical disability. Up to two titles at a time can be borrowed for a four-week loan period. When these are returned more books will be sent from your request list or chosen automatically based on your reading interests. To enroll for large print services, or for more information, please contact the Talking Book Library at 1-800-762-0085.

The printed version of the new annual 2007 Large Print Books Catalog and the latest fall 2007 supplement can be requested by calling the Talking Book Library or viewed and downloaded at www.worcpubliclib.org/talkingbook .

Some new large print books recently added to the TBL collection are: **High Noon** by Nora Roberts, **You've Been Warned** by James Patterson, **Someone To Love** by Jude Deveraux, **The Choice** by Nicholas Sparks, **The Gift** by Richard Paul Evans, **Her Way: the hopes and ambitions of Hilary Rodham Clinton** by Jeff Gerth, **Playing for Pizza** by John Grisham, **Shoot Him If He Runs** by Stuart Woods, **Blaze** by Richard Bachman(Stephen King), **Become a Better You** by Joel Osteen and **Bungalow 2** by Danielle Steel.

IN MEMORIAM

It is with sadness that we report the death of Cornelia (Connie) Dillon, who served enthusiastically as a member of the Talking Book Library Advisory Council for 14 years. She was a colleague, a friend, a mentor, an advocate and tireless supporter of the Talking Book Library. We are honored that Connie chose to give so generously of herself to the Worcester Talking Book Library and we will deeply miss her cheerful presence.

HOW TO GET THE BOOKS YOU WANT – WHEN YOU WANT THEM

Nightly Request List Selection – The computer selects a book from your request list whenever you return a book. Selection is made only from that list, so it is important that your list has at least 30 books on file at all times. Even with that many, if you read primarily romances, mysteries, westerns or popular authors, the computer may have trouble finding available titles. If the computer finds no titles available, it will not make substitutions.

Automatic – The computer will automatically send out a book as one is returned. These books are selected primarily from author, series or subject categories that you chose when you completed your application. If you call or mail in a list of books, they will be added to your list and the computer will send those books when they are available.

Weekly – Books are sent out each week on the day of your choice. You may call to increase or decrease the number of books you receive or temporarily stop service if you have too many on hand. When you call or mail in a list of books, they will be added to your list and the computer will send those books when they are available.

Monthly – Books are sent out once a month on the first day of the month you choose. The computer selects automatically from your title list, author, series and subject preferences. When you call or mail in a list of books, they will be added to your list and the computer will send those books when they are available.

Call In – Books are sent only when you call and request them.

TBL ADVISORY COUNCIL SEEKS NEW MEMBERS

The Talking Book Library Consumer Advisory Council is seeking new members to fill vacancies. Council members serve two-year terms and may be re-elected for a second term. Council members include TBL consumers, caregivers of TBL patrons, individuals having a direct interest in library services to people who are vision impaired or physically disabled, as well as representatives from agencies such as the Mass. Commission for the Blind, Center for Living and Working, Massachusetts

Association for the Blind, Elder Services of Worcester Area, Inc. and the VNA Care Network, Inc.

If you are interested (or know someone who might be interested) in serving on the council, please contact the Talking Book Library toll-free at 1-800-762-0085.

READER'S DIGEST and NEWSWEEK

The Talking Book Library provides patrons with subscriptions for both **Reader's Digest** and **Newsweek** by notifying the American Printing House for the Blind that a subscription is wanted by a patron. We also notify them when we get a change of address for a subscriber and when a subscriber is no longer receiving service.

Once a year, the American Printing House sends a letter to each subscriber asking for a donation and also asking if the subscriber wishes to continue the subscription. It is not necessary to send a donation for the subscription in order to continue receiving the magazine. But you must send the letter back indicating that you want the subscription to continue or your name will be removed from their mailing list.

DONATIONS

Monetary gifts may be made directly to the Talking Book Library in honor or in memory of a person, to celebrate a family event or to mark a special occasion like a birthday or anniversary.

Commemorative books establish a lasting tribute to a special person by having a large print book added to the Talking Book Library's collection. A book will be selected on a topic of your choice with a permanent bookplate placed in the book.

Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

