



# BTBL News

Braille and Talking Book Library  
California State Library, Sacramento, CA

New Series no. 22 (Fall 2019)

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## A Message from Mike Marlin, Director

Fabulous and festive fall greetings from your National Library Service for the Blind & Print Disabled (NLS) Regional Library headquarters here in Sacramento at the California State Library (CSL). As always, there is much to report since our last issue in May 2019.

I want to give a warm welcome to BTBL's newest staff member, Library Technical Assistant Heather Hamm who started in July 2019. Heather will be joining our team of reader advisors and providing support to the BTBL outreach team. You may have spoken with Heather already as she trains and learns on the job about our unique library service! Once Heather is fully on board we will be reexamining patron alphabetical allocations. At that time, striving to maintain consistency whenever possible, we will roll out new last

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name letter assignments. This is just a fair warning that last name letter distribution for reader advisors may change in the near future.

BTBL's third annual Summer Reading Program concluded on August 31. Our participants read almost 500 books this year. Readers who reported their books to the library were sent either a Baskin-Robbins ice cream or Starbucks gift card. We hope to read even more books next summer!

Free access to the Bookshare download service (electronic braille or text-to-speech synthetic voice books only) will continue for a third year as part of an Institute of Museum and Library Services grant. If you did not participate in year one or two and would like to sign up for year three which runs through August 31, 2020, please contact your reader advisor. If you signed up for Bookshare with us previously and no longer need your Bookshare license, please be sure to contact us so that we may give your seat to another user.

Have you always wanted to be a library advice columnist but didn't know where to start? Ready to launch in 2020? If you are interested in giving back to the library with your own unique perspectives, please consider applying for a term on the BTBL User Advisory Council (BUAC). The BUAC meets quarterly in Sacramento and all expenses are reimbursed. We are especially seeking a U.S. Veteran as well as patrons of color, youths or their parents, and persons with physical or organic reading disabilities. We encourage anyone who is interested to visit [www.library.ca.gov/btbl/advisory-council](http://www.library.ca.gov/btbl/advisory-council) or contact Director Mike Marlin with any questions.

Now that the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for the Blind, Visually Impaired, and Otherwise Print Disabled is the law of the land (as of May 2019), BTBL is researching implementation for our patrons. CSL has signed an agreement with the World Intellectual Property Organization and its Accessible Books Consortium project. The agreement will allow us to share our Californiana Studio-produced books with other Marrakesh Treaty countries. In turn, we will soon be able to borrow accessible books from participating countries in both English and many other foreign languages. It will take us some time to work out the logistics so stay tuned to all BTBL media channels for news of the Marrakesh rollout!

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## **NLS Is Changing Its Name**

The Library of Congress's National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, which provides braille and audio materials to BTBL, will be changing its name as of October 1. Its new name, National Library Service for the Blind and **Print Disabled**, addresses the use of outdated language and more clearly communicates the breadth of those served. NLS sought input on this name change implementation from stake-holder groups and gathered data through various public channels, including its users.

The good news for this name change is it won't affect the acronym we currently utilize so NLS will still be NLS.

## **Annual Resource and Technology Fair**

BTBL is once again partnering with Society for the Blind and NorthState Assistive Technology to sponsor a Resource and Technology Fair at Society's 1238 S Street midtown Sacramento location on Saturday, November 2, 10AM to 2PM. Multiple vendors will be present with special presentations of "Wearable Technology" and "Reading into the Future: A Non-fortune Teller Suggests Forthcoming Innovations for NLS Patrons." There will also be a drawing with prizes and refreshments available.

Event details can be found at [facebook.com/events/542718939890318](https://www.facebook.com/events/542718939890318). Please RSVP at 916-889-7513 or [rrueda@societyfortheblind.org](mailto:rrueda@societyfortheblind.org).

Come on out to see what's new in the field of accessible technology and resources for persons with print disabilities!

## **Do You Have More Than One Digital Book Machine?**

Is your unused machine taking up too much space?

We can help you get that extra machine to someone who needs it!

Please contact us at 800-952-5666 and we will send a postage-paid mailing label for you to mail back your unused machine.

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## New Way to Move between Multiple Titles on a Cartridge

In an effort to deliver all the books our patrons want with as little delay as possible, we have begun a program that allows us to load more than one book on a single cartridge. We are expecting to use multi-title cartridges even more as time goes on, so it's important to know how to move between the different books on a cartridge.

The new method for changing between books allows you to easily move in sequential order from one book to the next on a cartridge. When you come to the end of the first book on the multi-title cartridge and you hear the "End of Book" announcement, simply press the Play/Stop button to start playing the next book on the cartridge. That's all there is to it!

The original method, the Bookshelf function, allows you to select the order you would like to read the books. If you want to read the third book on the cartridge first, you can enter the Bookshelf mode and select the third book to listen to. Here is a brief summary of how the Bookshelf function works:

1. **Enter "Bookshelf" mode.** With the cartridge in the machine, press and hold the Play/Stop button until the machine says "Bookshelf" and announces the number of books found on the cartridge. You can then release the Play/Stop button.
2. **Navigate to title.** Single tap (don't hold down) the FF button on the machine to navigate through the available titles. After each tap of the FF button you will hear the machine announce a title (e.g. "Book 3 *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*"). You may tap the RW button to navigate backwards to a previous book title.
3. **Select title.** When you hear the book title you want to listen to announced, tap the Play/Stop button to begin listening to that book. When your book has begun playing, you have exited the "Bookshelf" mode.

You can return to Step 1 at any time if you wish to switch book titles again. The machine will remember your reading position in each title.

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## Superfest to Dazzle Sac Audiences with Fabulous Films

Since its origins in Los Angeles in 1970, Superfest International Disability Film Festival is the longest running disability film festival in the world. In its Sacramento debut, BTBL and Sacramento Public Library will partner with Superfest to present two of the best films, one feature and one short film, from the October 2019 Bay Area Superfest. A brief panel discussion with directors, producers, and/or actors will follow each screening.

Superfest is one of the few festivals worldwide that is accessible to disabled filmgoers of all kinds. Films are captioned, audio described, and ASL interpreters will be provided. Audience-integrated wheelchair seating and spots close to interpreters or the screen are held to meet the needs of attendees. Requests for additional event accommodations are welcome by contacting Susan Benson: 916-264-2710 or [sbenson@saclibrary.org](mailto:sbenson@saclibrary.org) For more information about Superfest, visit [superfestfilm.com](http://superfestfilm.com).

Join us at the Sacramento Public Library, Galleria Room, 828 I Street in Sacramento on Sunday, January 12, 2020 1:30-4PM. For more details as we get closer to January 12, sign up for emailed BTBL Updates at [www.library.ca.gov/mailling-lists](http://www.library.ca.gov/mailling-lists), or follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/BTBLSacramento](https://facebook.com/BTBLSacramento). We look forward to making Sacramento Superfest Disability Film Festival an annual free event for our community.

## New Braille Magazines

The braille magazine *Catster* is now available for subscription as a physical copy through the mail. The first issue available is May/June 2019. There will be six issues per year. *Catster* is a purrfect pet magazine that guides cat lovers in better understanding, caring for, and enjoying cats by offering breed information, product reviews, health reports, and trusted advice.

In more braille magazine news, the braille magazine *Cooking Light* has been replaced by *Eating Well*. Existing subscribers to *Cooking Light* were automatically converted over to the new magazine.

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Please contact your reader advisor if you'd like to be signed up to receive a hardcopy of these braille magazines through the mail. Neither of these magazines are available in audio.

## **Enhanced Security for Your BARD Account**

If you haven't used your Braille & Audio Reading Download (BARD) account in six months or more, NLS will automatically mark your BARD account as "Inactive" and will prevent you from logging into BARD. If you find you are locked out of your BARD login, please contact us on a day when you are ready to log into BARD before midnight, and we can quickly and easily reactivate your BARD account. To prevent this from happening to your account, simply log into BARD (or open the BARD Mobile app) at least once every 6 months.

## **BARD Express Update**

NLS has released a new version of BARD Express, version 1.2.4.72. This update contains no new user features but uses enhanced technology to keep the national collection secure.

To update BARD Express, simply run the program. BARD Express will automatically detect the update and ask if you would like to download and install the new version or wait until later. When you choose to download the new software, BARD Express will guide you through the upgrade process.

BARD Express is Windows-based software with a menu-driven interface that simplifies searching for, downloading, managing, and transferring BARD audio materials to cartridges. Use BARD Express to browse tens of thousands of audio books and magazines, download them to your Windows-based computer, and transfer them to an NLS cartridge for playback in your library-loaned Digital Talking Book Machine. To install BARD Express on your Windows computer, log into the BARD website and from the BARD Main Page, select the link "BARD Express" which can be found under the heading "Additional Links."

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## **Free News and Entertainment Just a Phone Call Away**

ACB Radio, a project of the American Council of the Blind, streams up-to-date and relevant information worldwide for persons who are blind or who have low vision, provides programming produced by blind programmers, and supplies a platform on which blind musicians and artists express their talents. You can listen to ACB Radio with an ordinary telephone by calling 712-775-4808. Once you connect you can choose which stream you wish to listen to. If there isn't a talk program currently scheduled, you will hear a wide variety of music—sometimes performed by blind musicians or composers.

NFB-NEWSLINE®, a project of the National Federation of the Blind, is a free audio news service for anyone who is blind, low-vision, or otherwise print-disabled that offers access to more than 500 publications, emergency weather alerts, job listings, and more. You must sign up as a subscriber to get an ID number, security code, and local number to call for accessing NFB-NEWSLINE®. You can contact BTBL to get signed up, or call 866-504-7300 to request an application.

Similar to NFB-NEWSLINE®, Society for the Blind provides a free Telephone Reader Service called Sacramento Access News for individuals who are blind or low vision, as well as those who have dyslexia or other difficulties reading conventional print materials. Sacramento Access News offers audio recordings of local newspapers, magazines, newsletters and other print media such as local sales ads at grocery, drug, discount, and other department stores. You must sign up to be a listener by contacting Access News at [accessnews@societyfortheblind.org](mailto:accessnews@societyfortheblind.org) or 916-889-7519.

## **Newest Californiana Studio Books**

Volunteers and staff of our Californiana Studio have been hard at work recording local books — California authors and subjects not covered by the national NLS talking book collection. Here are the recently completed talking books:

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*Ecotopia: the Notebooks and Reports of William Weston* by Ernest Callenbach

DBC 16462

Science fiction work about a utopian society composed of residents of northern California, Oregon and Washington who have seceded from the United States to form a new nation, Ecotopia. Reporter Will Weston's investigative dispatches describe the society twenty years after it formed. Some descriptions of sex, some strong language, and some violence. 2014. 8 hours, 10 minutes. Narrated by: Linda Goman.

*To a God Unknown* by John Steinbeck

DBC 16466

While fulfilling his dead father's dream of creating a prosperous farm in California, Joseph Wayne comes to believe that a magnificent tree on the farm embodies his father's spirit. His brothers and their families share in Joseph's prosperity, and the farm flourishes—until one brother, frightened by Joseph's pagan belief, kills the tree, allowing disease and famine to descend on the farm. Introduction and notes by Robert DeMott. Descriptions of sex. 1933.

9 hours, 11 minutes. Narrated by: Walter Phelps.

*Youth in Revolt: the Journals of Nick Twisp* by C.D. Payne

DBC 16155

The story covers six hectic months in the life of 14-year-old Oakland native and precocious diarist Nick Twisp - who struggles to make sense out of high school, deal with his divorced parents, and lose his virginity. In a series of bizarre adventures, he is transformed from a computer-hacking, book-reading teen into a rebel with a libidinous cause. Nick relies increasingly on his tough alter ego, Francois Dillinger, creating an active fantasy life. For high school and adult readers. Descriptions of sex, strong language, and violence. 1995. 22 hours, 25 minutes. Narrated by: Walter Phelps.

*At What Cost: a Detective Penley mystery* by James L'Etoile

DBC 16158

West Sacramento Police Department Detective John Penley, and his partner, Paula Newberry, lead an investigation of a local serial killer who has killed three people in six weeks and discarded the bodies minus their internal organs. Then the killer tempts Penley whose own son needs a kidney transplant. Some strong language and violence. 2016.

9 hours, 26 minutes. Narrated by: Phil Torres.



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*Burro Bill and Me: Death Valley to Grand Canyon by Burro via the Arizona Strip* by Edna Calkins Price DBC 16154

A memoir by Williamsburg, Virginia native and nurse Edna, wife of Burro Bill recounting the hardest experiences as the happiest times during their life roaming the deserts of Arizona and California in the 1930s. She reminisces about their wandering on foot across deserts, plains, and badlands, sleeping under the stars, hobnobbing with miners, Indians, shepherders, and bindlestiffs. 1993.

6 hours, 36 minutes. Narrated by: Michael Strange.

*The Lawman* by Lyle Brandt DBC 16723

Roving gambler Jack Slade discovers that his identical twin brother, a western territory Oklahoma rancher whom he had not seen for several years, has died or been killed. Jack sets off to discover the parties responsible and along the way becomes acquainted with his brother's fiancée who now runs the ranch. Explicit descriptions of sex and some violence. 2007.

8 hours, 12 minutes. Narrated by: Phil Torres.

## **BTBL Staff Picks**

*Crisis: a Dick Francis novel* by Felix Francis DB 95693

"Dick's son Felix continues the tradition of setting the scene in the horse-racing world with a plot twist that gets the protagonist into a tight jam from which he extricates himself with his special knowledge. A commercial audiobook format means it is officially unrated, but you can always expect violence of some sort from these authors, and this book is no different."

-Mary Jane, Librarian

\*Unrated commercial audiobook

*Born with Teeth a Memoir* by Katie Mulgrew DB 81485

"I really enjoyed this book. She talks about her early life, when she gave her baby up for adoption, and the many years spent looking for her. Mulgrew is the narrator which is pleasing to listen to as well."

-Johanna, Circulation

\*Unrated commercial audiobook

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*Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* by Matthew Desmond

DB 83870

This gripping and insightful non-fiction book intimately follows several poor Americans' lives as they struggle to keep a roof over their heads in late-2000s Milwaukee. Desmond is brilliant at incorporating dialogue and narrative with facts and statistics, so that most of the time I felt like I was reading a novel. The economic exploitation of those below the federal poverty line by property owners was at times shocking to read about. The research-driven, impartial prose made clear the effects of eviction in creating and perpetuating poverty. Although the proposed solutions offered in the conclusion fell short of my expectations, my perspective on poverty in America has been forever changed."

-Sarah, Reader Advisor

\*contains some violence and some strong language

*Gwendy's Button Box* by Stephen King and Richard Chizmar

DB 88221 / BR 21903

"To say that this book kept me up at night, had me on the edge of my seat in anticipation, and yell out in excitement would be an understatement. Stephen King, the man of horror and suspense does it again with this novella about a young, insecure girl who is given a mysterious 'box' by a very suspicious stranger who promises great things to sweet Gwendy, but at what cost? Gwendy has no idea the pure terror she unleashed by receiving the mysterious 'button box', but Stephen King and Richard Chizmar have a fantastical way of keeping you hooked and wanting to find out what happens to poor Gwendy and her mysterious button box. I highly recommend this read if you are a suspense/thriller or horror fan."

-Heather, Reader Advisor

\*contains some violence and some strong language

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*Children of God* by Mary Doria Russell

DB 49683

"This book was on my to-read shelf for far too long, but all the hype from two decades ago is still well-deserved. This is not a religious book and it does not contain an ounce of proselytization, but it focuses on Jesuit priests who have undertaken an intergalactic mission to be the first to make contact with an alien species. Throw out everything you think you know about 'first contact' novels and prepare to be shocked, appalled, and awed. There is a sequel, *The Sparrow* DB 43892, if you need closure!"

-Melissa, Reader Advisor

\*contains violence, strong language, and some descriptions of sex

*The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead DB 85212 / BR 21819

"This is a moving, suspenseful, poignant, and disturbingly beautiful historical fiction exploration of race consciousness by a celebrated author/MacArthur Genius. The journey from Georgia by escaped slave Cora throughout various southern and midwestern states via the underground railroad, which turns out to be real and more than just a figure of speech, is intimately recounted in all its harrowing and evocative struggles, sowed with both terrifying and exuberant twists and turns and accompanied by believable abolitionist characters and slave trade personalities. With Toni Morrison's passing on my mind, Whitehead's treatment of the slave narrative was equally moving and unique in its depiction of such an important and foundational subject for all North American inhabitants. An Oprah's Book Club Pick, 2016 National Book Award, and Pulitzer Prize winner."

- Mike, Director

\*Unrated commercial audiobook

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Free Matter for the Blind and  
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*BTBL News* is written and edited by staff of the Braille and Talking Book Library at the California State Library. It is available in braille, audio file, through email, and in large print upon request, or through our website.

**916-654-0640** or **800-952-5666** (toll-free in CA)

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Library Service Hours: 9:30 AM - 4:00 PM, Monday-Friday

Office closures: We will be closed November 11 (Veteran's Day), November 28-29

(Thanksgiving), December 25 (Christmas), January 1 (New Year's), January 20 (MLK Jr.).

Donations to BTBL are accepted at any time and are used to enhance and improve library services. In the case of memorials or donations in honor of a particular person or event, please include the name(s) and address(es) of those to be notified. Checks should be made payable to the California State Library Foundation and should include a note that the donation is for the Braille and Talking Book Library.

Donations should be sent to: California State Library Foundation, 1225 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 345, Sacramento, CA, 95814-4809. Donations can also be made online at: [cslnfdn.org](http://cslnfdn.org). Follow the link to "Join/Donate Online." There is a place to designate BTBL as the recipient.