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Editor: Carrie Gors



SOUTH DAKOTA STATE LIBRARY
BRAILLE AND TALKING BOOK LIBRARY

PRAIRIE TRAILS MEMORANDUM

Notes from the Director, Dan Boyd

The Future of the Talking Book Program

With all the changes in technology, it is only natural that the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) began thinking about the next generation of talking books and playback equipment.

More than fifteen years ago NLS, the Library of Congress along with other talking book programs worldwide faced the realization that analog cassette books would become an outdated and ineffective technology for reading materials in the near future. Talks began in 1990 to formulate an action plan to guide the development of future talking book technology.

After 10 years of research, NLS chose flash memory as the framework for its new talking books.

NLS will use digital technology to enhance the listening experience. As a user you will be able to easily navigate through a book. Sound quality will improve. Less handling of the book will be required. If we move ahead a few years each user will have access to a flash-based playback machine and will be able to download digital books and magazines from the internet.

The new talking book will be stored on a flash memory computer

chip. This chip will be about one inch square and will be mounted on a carrier about the same size as the cassettes you are now using. The majority of the books will only take one chip. This means put the book in the new player, push play and you never need to touch the book again until you take it out of the machine. Depending on the content of the book it will have build in search features. These are features you can choose to use or not use. For most novels you will be able to search by chapter. For other books such as textbooks you will be able to search by chapter, by unit, and depending on the subject some books by page. The container that the book is shipped in will be about the same size as a cassette book box except that it will only be about ½" high. The size of the container should improve the speed of mail service for talking books.

The new playback machine will have almost no moving parts and it is projected that a player will last ten years before repair is needed. The player will be much smaller and lighter than the cassette player you are now using. The most exciting feature of digital talking books is the reader's ability to easily navigate through the book. All books will include a basic level of navigation that allows the reader to jump to various chapters and sections of a book. The navigation capabilities will vary with the type of book, for example, fiction and non-fiction.

NLS had begun the digital audio book production and conversion process. By 2008, the program will start providing digital players and have a collection of 20,000 digital titles.

Libraries also have compelling reasons to embrace the digital transformation. Flash memory will require less storage space for collections; memory cards can be reused many times without loss of quality; playback devices will be compact, lightweight and durable, and require fewer repairs; and the playback devices are expected to be less expensive.

PAWS, CLAWS, SCALES AND TALES

The 2006 Governors Summer Reading Program culminated with an awards program for the six first place winners on August 5, 2006. The program was held in Aberdeen at the SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The winners and their families were provided a pizza luncheon followed by the presentation of awards.

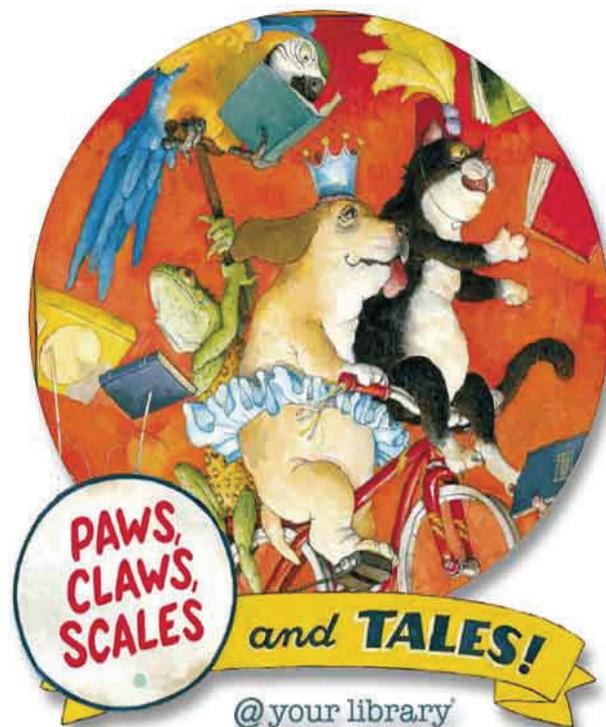
The Zoo man from Adrian Minnesota presented a very educational and fun hands-on reptile program. The day concluded with a trip to Storybook Land.

The theme of the program was "Paws, Claws, Scales and Tales. There were fifty-two students participating with 398 books circulating. The program ran from June 12 to July 21, 2006.

Winners in their age division include: Division 7, 8 and 9 Recorded Books; Jordan Harkless, first place, second place went to Emily Busch and Wyatt Buntrock took third. The braille division first place went to Rachel Johnson.

Sarah Dolney was first place winner in the Division 10, 11 and 12, followed by Rachael Jorgensen, second place and Mackenzie Yordy took third. Michael McMillen won first place in the braille division.

Division 13, 14 and 15 recorded first place went to Stephanie Moran, Shawn Hauck took second and third went to Callie Palmquist. Analis Dannen took first place in the braille division.



A \$50 Savings Bond was presented to the top readers overall in the recorded and braille format. These winners were Stephanie Moran for the 55 recorded books read and the braille winner was Analis Dannen for 48 braille books.

All participants are registered with the S.D. Braille and Talking Book Library and are required to read braille or recorded books only.

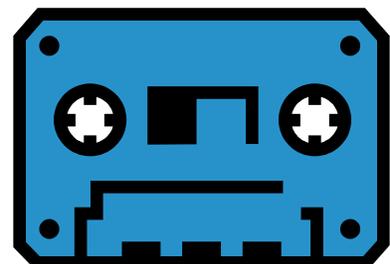


Why Rewind?

Each cassette book is opened and examined when it is returned to the library. The books are checked for completeness, damage and to make sure all tapes have been rewound. The Tape Inspector must rewind each cassette that is not rewound completely. You can play an important role in maintaining good quality service by rewinding every cassette when you finish reading it.

Placing the tapes in the proper order will also save staff time and will speed up the time that it takes for a book to go out to the next patron. Rewinding and correct placement can also prevent damage to the tapes while in transit. Your help in caring for the cassettes is a valuable asset and is greatly appreciated by the staff at the Braille and Talking Book Library.

Please return each talking book as soon as you are finished reading it. This allows other patrons who are waiting for these titles a chance to receive them as quickly as possible. Returning books as you read them is courteous to other readers and it also helps your mail carrier so they only have to handle a few books at a time.



If you like the Mitford Years by Jan Karon for the small town atmosphere, eccentric characters, humor and spirituality try:

Richard Paul Evans-His books have a small town feel, gentle characters and are sentimental with a religious element.

Philip Gulley-His Harmony series is a Quaker minister's tales of his Indiana hometown. Small town feel, eccentric characters, more humor than Karon, and a definite religious feel.

Miss Read-Her books are about small village life in England, with eccentric characters, humor and without a religious element.

Ann B. Ross-Her books are set in a small southern town, with eccentric characters and humor.

If you like books by W.E.B. Griffin for their combination of strong moral men, fast-paced stories, and large cast of recurring characters try:

Tom Clancy-His books are fast-paced, well researched, detail filled military adventures with trained military men.

Jack Higgins-His books are fast-paced and action filled, often with military settings featuring assassins or commandos.

John Jakes-His books are historical sagas with details of battles and military action, mostly dealing with the American Revolution and Civil War.

Alaistair MacLean- His books are fast-paced thrillers featuring men of courage, usually working in teams, sometimes military and sometimes espionage agents. World War II and Cold War settings.





What Can I Do To Make This Book Play?



Frequently, you'll be playing a book and the tape will stop, or when you turn the tape over, the reader is suddenly talking like a chipmunk. There are steps you can take at home to fix these problems so that you're able to finish the book:

Take the tape out of the player, put it flat in the palm of your hand and rap the flat side sharply on a table. If the tape is crooked inside the cassette, this will cause it to even out, and you can continue to play it. This is also one solution to the tape playing too fast when you turn it over.

Another action you can take to stop the tape from playing too fast is to put the player in front of you on a table, pull the handle out, and use the handle to raise the front of the player about 1 to 1.5 inches. Then let go of the handle so the player drops to the table. Don't be afraid to try this procedure; even though it sounds damaging, this abrupt action often solves the problem!

If you try to play a tape you've just taken out of the box and find it won't play, please try your Rewind button. If the book has not recently gone through the book inspection process, it might need to be rewound to the beginning.

What Can I Do With A Damaged Book?

Over the years the instructions for damaged books have changed. We would like you to return all the tapes to the cassette box with the damaged tape turned upside down.

When you turn the card over to return the book to us, please mark the "Defective" box on the return side of the label. If you cannot see the little box, a check mark anywhere in the upper left hand corner will suffice. We will retrieve the box before it goes out to another patron, and send it through a repair process.

Please Don't Tie Strings or Other Objects on the Closing Tabs of the Box

This procedure was recommended for years, but these days it interferes with the equipment used by the Postal Service. If you need to talk to someone about the problem you're having with a book, please call us at 1-800-423-6665. If you have the same problem with more than one book, quite frequently the player is at fault. Call us to determine if we need to send you a replacement player; please do not return a cassette machine without notifying us first.



Why Isn't That Book Available?

Have you called the library to request a title, only to be told it is not available through any source? While we do a thorough search of the Internet to see if your requested title might be available through Interlibrary Loan, sometimes the results are disappointing.

Many of you may wonder what process is used in the selection of the NLS collection. The Collection Development committee doesn't recommend specific titles, but they do advise on areas of the collection that need strengthening by the addition of material.

Each year NLS produces around 1400 titles for the general network collection. If a title exhibits broad appeal, and is of national interest, it has a reasonable chance of being selected. If the title is of an academic nature, or is relatively obscure, it will have little chance of being selected. NLS's guideline is that a title have two good journal reviews in order to be selected.



Shared Masters Program

Have you noticed that you are receiving books with multiple narrators or with music in the background? These books are part of the National Library Service (NLS) Shared Masters Program and are commercially produced. They are then converted to the NLS cassette format, but not necessarily at NLS standards. The good news is that NLS can convert these books much more quickly than recording them from scratch, so we are able to get them to you faster than before, sometimes even simultaneously with the print edition. NLS adds approximately 125 of these titles each year to the collection.

Examples include "Laura Bush: An Intimate Portrait of the First Lady" by Ronald Kessler (RC 61603), "S Is for Silence" by Sue Grafton (RC 60925), "Miracle" by Danielle Steel (RC 60644), and "The Journey: How to Live By Faith in an Uncertain World" by Billy Graham (RC 61602). We hope you are enjoying these popular additions to our collection!



2005 Cassette Books Catalog

This catalog lists adult cassette books produced by NLS during 2005 and replaces six of the bimonthly Talking Book Topics issues for that year. Books are listed alphabetically within subject categories under nonfiction and fiction headings. Some books may appear in more than one subject category. For instance, a book of science fiction short stories would be found in both "science fiction" and "short stories."

If you would like a copy of the 2005 catalog or any for the previous five years, please contact your Reader Advisor. You can also access this catalog and those for previous years online at www.loc.gov/nls/catalogs/index.html.



New DVS Additions

Descriptive Video Service (DVS) carefully describes the visual elements of a movie such as the action, characters, locations, costumes and sets, without interfering with the dialogue or sound effects. Our collection consists of over 450 videos that are available for loan. We have recently added many new videos to our collection, if you would like a complete listing of all the videos in our collection, contact your Reader Advisor.



New Descriptive Videos

DVS 00469 King Kong

In 1933 New York, an overly ambitious movie producer coerces his cast and hired ship crew to travel to mysterious Skull Island, where they encounter Kong, a giant ape who is immediately smitten with leading lady Ann Darrow. Rated "R"

DVS 00470 The Producers

New York, 1959. After putting together another Broadway flop, down-on-his-luck producer Max Bialystock teams up with timid accountant Leo Bloom in a get-rich-quick scheme to put on the world's worst show. Rated "PG-13"

DVS 00471 Cheaper By The Dozen 2

Steve Martin and Bonnie Hunt return as heads of the Baker family who, while on vacation, find themselves in competition with a rival family of eight children, headed by Eugene Levy. Rated "PG"

DVS 00473 Date Movie

Julia Jones has found the perfect guy, but before they can have their Big Fat Greek Wedding, they must Meet the Parents, hook up with The Wedding Planner, and contend with Grant's friend Andy

who wants to put an end to her Best Friend's Wedding. Rated "PG-13"

DVS 00474 Jarhead

Based on former Marine Anthony Swofford's best-selling 2003 book about his pre-Desert Storm experiences in Saudi Arabia and about his experiences fighting in Kuwait. Swoff and his fellow Marines sustain themselves with sardonic humanity and wicked comedy on blazing desert fields in a country they don't understand against an enemy they can't see for a cause they don't fully fathom. Rated "R"

DVS 00477 Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

What wonders await you in Willy Wonka's factory? This dazzling film adapted from Roald Dahl's classic children's novel, directed by Tim Burton and starring Johnny Depp and Freddie Highmore, is your Golden Ticket to a world so inventive, so imaginative, you won't want to miss a delicious moment! Rated "PG"

DVS 00478 Batman Begins

Acclaimed director Christopher Nolan explores the origins of the legendary Dark Knight. In the wake of his parent's murders, disillusioned heir Bruce Wayne travels the world seeking the means to fight injustice and turn fear against those who prey on the fearful. Rated "PG-13"

DVS 00479 The Polar Express

Get up, get on and get ready for the ride of your life! It's Christmas Eve, and you're about to roller-coaster up and down mountains, slip-slide over ice fields, teeter across mile-high bridges and be served hot chocolate by singing waiters more astonishing than any you can imagine. You're on The Polar Express!
Rated "G"

DVS 00480 Cinderella Man

The story of James Braddock, a supposedly washed up



boxer who came back to become a champion and an inspiration in the 1930s. Driven by love, honor and an incredible dose of grit, he willed an impossible dream to come true. Rated "PG-13"

DVS 00481 The 40 Year Old Virgin

Andy Stitzer has a nice life complete with an action figure collection and a cushy job at an electronics store. Goaded by his buddies, a nerdy guy who's never "done the deed" only finds the pressure mounting when he meets a single mother. Rated "R"

DVS 00482 Fever Pitch

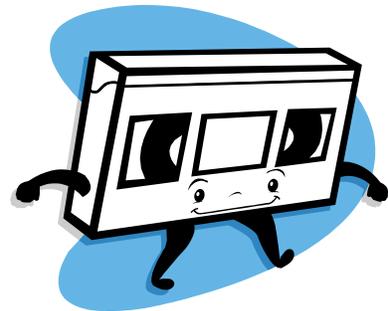
When relaxed and charming Ben (Jimmy Fallon) meets workaholic Lindsey (Drew Barrymore) she finds him sweet and charming, they hit it off and when it is winter Ben can spend every waking hour with Lindsey, but when summer comes around the corner Lindsey discovers Ben's obsession with the Boston Red Sox. Rated "PG-13"

DVS 00483 Fantastic 4

After exposure to cosmic radiation, four astronauts become the most remarkable super heroes of all time. Packed with nonstop action, awesome special effects and irreverent humor, Fantastic Four is exhilarating fun from start to finish! Starring Jessica Alba, Michael Chiklis and Chris Evans. Rated "PG-13"

DVS 00484 Mr. & Mrs. Smith

A married couple (Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie) are getting bored with their quiet domestic life. What they don't know, however, is that they're both assassins, secretly hopping the world and killing for hire. But their separate lives are about to collide when each finds out their next target is their own spouse. Rated "PG-13"



DVS 00485 Herbie Fully Loaded

Start your engines! Lindsay Lohan does the driving when Herbie, the fun-loving, freewheeling '63 VW Beetle with a mind of its own returns better than ever in Disney's all new, revved-up comedy adventure. Rated "G"

All descriptive videos are on loan to patrons for one week. Please be kind and return the videos within that time frame so that others have a chance to receive them. Remember, you are responsible for videos that are on loan to you. If you experience any problems with the video or have questions about descriptive videos, please contact Carrie at 1-800-423-6665.

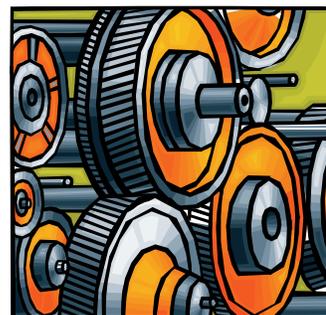
----- EQUIPMENT CLINIC

Help your cassette player have a long and useful life by following these tips:

- Here is a quick tip for recharging your machine
 - Plug-in and charge battery for 8 to 12 hours
 - Play unplugged for 8 to 12 hours
 - Plug-in and charge battery for 8 to 12 hours
 - Keep repeating!

- Keep food, beverages, pets and heat away from your machine

- If you have any problems with your machine call the staff at the Braille and Talking Book Library, many problems can be solved over the phone



- If you are returning equipment, always call the library so we know whether or not you need a replacement

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: THE DIGITAL TALKING BOOK OF THE FUTURE

1. I've heard that the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) is planning to change talking books to a "digital" format. What does this mean?

For nearly thirty years, the primary format for talking books has been cassette. Before that, they were recorded on phonograph records. Both of these formats are "analog," meaning that the records and tapes physically store a replica of the sound of the narrator's voice. Specifically, when the narrator's voice got a bit louder, the groove of the record actually moved farther from side to side, and, on a cassette, more magnetic particles lined up in the same direction. In a digital format, measurements of the narrator's unique sound waves are stored as digits-ones and zeros-the way computers operate. The Internet, CDs, DVDs and memory cards for digital cameras all process and store information in digital form. Advantages to storing audio recordings as numbers include the ability to improve audio quality, the ability to use the same recording in a greater variety of ways, and the ability to integrate recorded information into a wide range of systems.

2. Will there be any advantages for the user with this new format?

Yes, there will be many advantages for users. Besides the potential for improved sound quality, a digital format will offer convenience to users, who will no longer need to turn over cassettes or change side-selector switches. Users will be able to jump forward or back by chapter, set bookmarks, and vary playback speed without affecting the pitch of the reader's voice. In some books, users will be able to jump by paragraph, turn on or off selected parts of the book (e.g., footnotes), do keyword searches, or hear selected words spelled.

3. Will there be a new playback machine?

Yes. Because digital talking books will be recorded on a new medium, and playback will involve many new features, NLS may develop two new playback machines. Both machines are expected to be smaller and lighter than the current C-1. One will have only a few controls and be easy to operate; the other will have more controls, offering the user more features.

4. On what kind of medium will the digital books be recorded?

Many factors will determine the physical medium for the digital talking book. Copyright law requires that the materials circulated be in a "specialized format" not usable by the general public. The medium must be resistant to damage both in the mail and in the hands of users. The medium must be low in cost, and able to accommodate a print/braille label. NLS staff envisions that some type of flash memory cartridge would best meet these needs. Although somewhat larger, it will be like those used in digital cameras. The final decision about medium will depend on the durability, cost and availability of appropriate technology at the time it is needed.

5. Has NLS considered putting digital talking books on compact disc?

Yes. However, extensive research revealed many reasons why compact discs (CDs) would not be the ideal choice for NLS talking books. Contrary to popular belief, CDs are not durable. They can be easily damaged. People with limited dexterity find them difficult to handle. In addition, because the playback mechanism for compact discs is fragile, CD players would be prone to damage in transit and would require frequent repair or replacement.



6. What can I do to help?

There will be many opportunities over the next few years for talking-book users to participate in field trials evaluating various features and user interfaces of prototype playback equipment. As field trial dates are established, talking-book users will be recruited for participation.

The above answers to frequently asked questions reflect current NLS understanding and planning for digital talking-book technology. Wording of answers does not represent a technical explanation. Such details are found in documents listed on the NLS web site <www.loc.gov/nls>.

The preceding information is directly from the NLS web site.



CHANGES!?

If you happen to find that your reading preferences are changing or that you wish to increase/decrease the number of books that you are currently receiving, contact your reader advisor so that they may assist you.

If your last name starts with A through I, ask for Mary
If your last name starts with J through R, ask for Carrie
If your last name starts with S through Z, ask for Brian



The South Dakota Braille and Talking Book Library has recently added more titles by Lauraine Snelling. This author's contemporary writing style explores real life issues such as loss, forgiveness, domestic violence and illness.

The library categorizes these books as a pioneering family story. If you would like to order any of these books call your Reader Advisor.

Red River of the North Series

Leaving Norway in the 1880's Roald and Ingeborg Bjorklund and their son Torliff start a new life in American. This series tells of their hardships and triumphs in the Dakota Territory.

SD003265	An Untamed Land
SD003229	A New Day Rising
SD003264	A Land Called Home
SD003267	The Reapers Song
SD003941	Blessings in Disguise

Return to Red River Series

The story of the Bjorklund family continues as Torliff starts college to follow his dreams of becoming a writer. The stories include his hardships, decisions between family and his dreams and his romances.

SD004018	A Dream to Follow
SD004032	Believing the Dream
SD004017	More than a Dream

The Secret Refuge Series

Jesselyn Highwood faces the Civil War. The series tells of her struggles to protect her little brother and save their thoroughbred horses after leaving their plantation.



SD004014 Daughter of Twin Oaks
SD003939 Sisters of the Confederacy
SD003940 The Long Way Home

The Dakota Treasure Series

This series intertwines the lives of four women as they search for family inheritance, face the struggles of Dakota Territory and contemplate marriage.

SD003953 Ruby
SD003954 Pearl
SD004019 Opal
SD004020 Amethyst

Other titles we have in the collection that are not part of a series are:

SD004016 Dakota December
SD004015 Dakota: Four Inspirational Stories
SD003879 The Healing Quilt
SD003938 The Way of Women



Remember to Borrow Cassette Books

The National Library Service requires that patrons who have borrowed a cassette book machine borrow at least one cassette book or receive one cassette magazine each year. If you do not wish for us to choose for you, please contact us with your requests. The more titles you request, the easier it will be for us to find something available to send in order for you to meet this service requirement. If you do not request at least one book, we may choose one for you to keep you eligible for service.



The Braille & Talking Book Library will be closed on the following holidays. Please place your book orders in advance so that you will have plenty on hand.

Columbus Day	October 9th
Veteran's Day	November 11th
Thanksgiving	November 23rd & 24th



The Prairie Trails Memorandum, published quarterly, is our means of communication with our patrons. The Prairie Trails Memorandum is available in braille, cassette or a computer diskette upon request and is also posted on our website.

If you wish to request this newsletter in an alternative format, please contact the Braille and Talking Book Library at 1-800-423-6665.

If you have any questions or comments that you would like to share with us about the library program, please contact us.

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Call: 1-800-423-6665



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