

# BITS OF GOLD

NEWSLETTER

WHERE YOU CAN FIND A MOTHER LODE OF INFORMATION.

## The General Federation of Women's Clubs Donation

The women of the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Montana (GFWC-MT) raised and generously donated \$17,000 to MTBL's Recording Program for improvements and future plans for a second recording studio.



Photo: Adina Fuchs and Nancy Hanford present a check to Christie Briggs.

## Legislative Library Day at Montana State Library (MSL)



Photo: Rep. Zac Perry receives a demonstration of a digital talking book player by Regional Librarian Christie Briggs.

Primarily sponsored by the Montana Library Association, along with twelve additional sponsors, state legislators gathered at a reception on Jan. 15th and learned about public library services, MSL, and other programs offered to Montana residents.

### CONTENTS:

Librarian's Logbook (page 2)

Montana Digital Recording Program (page 3)

Library Holidays (page 3)

Technology Tailings (page 4)

Reader's Alley (pages 5-6)

Memorials and Donations (page 6)

Treasure State News (page 7)

Volunteer Gems (pages 8-9)



Where No Story Should Go Untold. (Photo: Stack of antique print books beside a digital player.)

## **Librarian's Logbook - Christie Briggs, Regional Librarian**

### **Employee Gems**

Erin Harris and Christie Briggs received a 2014 Service Recognition Award from Helena Industries in appreciation and recognition for outstanding service to persons with disabilities. MTBL partners with Helena Industries' Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation program within their MT Career Development Services.

Bobbi deMontigny (pronounced dee-MONT-nee) was welcomed to MTBL as a new Readers' Advisor & Machine Lending Agent. Bobbi brings with her four years of experience at Lewis and Clark Public Library in Helena.

Martin Landry, Readers' Advisor, gave BARD demonstrations in January at a Technology Fair, sponsored by OverHere Consultants in Great Falls.

I am sad to report Alberta Blanton recently passed away. She was a Readers' Advisor for 20 years, retiring in 1999. Alberta was kind to everyone and always ready to recommend a "good book" to patrons.

### **Nuggets from the National Library Service (NLS)**

#### **Currency Readers Available in 2015**

Do you have difficulty identifying your U.S. banknotes? The Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) can provide a free iBill Currency Reader, upon request, to U.S. citizens/legal residents with a visual impairment. The device has side buttons to identify bills by voice, beeps or pulses. Find the application online at [www.moneyfactory.gov](http://www.moneyfactory.gov) and open the form. Call BEP at 1-844-815-9388 or contact MTBL for assistance.



Photo: A person's hands holding an iBill Currency Reader situated at the top left-hand corner of a \$1 bill.

#### **Gentle Romances 2014 Large Print Catalog Now Available**

If you are in the mood for "gentle romances" this spring, NLS has created a 2014 annotated bibliography of lighter love stories including both Braille and audio books. Contact MTBL for a copy of the catalog.

#### **Print Error in 2015 Jan./Feb. TBT Catalog**

If your large print version of the Talking Book Topics is missing pages, contact MTBL for a replacement.

## Montana Digital Recording Program

### **Recording Studio Status**

The MTBL recording studio began training volunteer teams on January 12th to use the new audio software to record Montana titles. Once all teams are trained, we'll resume the process of uploading these to BARD, making them available to talking book library patrons nationwide.

### **BARD Books from Other State Talking Book Libraries**

The following titles, recorded by other talking book libraries, are available. BARD members: search for DBC in the BARD basic search box. Non-BARD members: contact MTBL to receive a digital cartridge copy through the mail.

The End of the Trail: Western Stories by Robert E. Howard and Rusty Burke **DBC 00015** (Western). Short stories first published in the early 1930s. Violence and some strong language. [Texas]

The Last Camel Charge: The Untold Story of America's Desert Military Experiment by F.B. Johnson **DBC 00630** (U.S. History). In the 1800s, camels were imported for transportation and territorial control. Includes history of the Mormon movement, military and settlers' conflicts with the Navajo, and the transcontinental railroad. [Nevada]

Bottom of the 33rd: Hope, Redemption, and Baseball's Longest Game by Dan Barry **DBC 00727** (Sports). In 1981 the Pawtucket Red Sox and the Rochester Red Wings made history and included future baseball stars Wade Boggs and Cal Ripken. [Massachusetts]

A Matter of Character: A Novel by Robin Lee Hatcher **DBC 00831** (Religious fiction/Western/Gentle romance). In 1918, heiress Daphne McKinley has found contentment in Bethlehem Springs, Idaho, but she has a secret. [Idaho]

Below Stairs: The Classic Kitchen Maid's Memoir that Inspired Upstairs, Downstairs and Downton Abbey by Margaret Powell **DBC 02943** (Biography). A memoir of an indomitable woman who served in the great houses of England but never stopped aiming high. [Colorado]

---

## Library Holidays

### 2015 Holiday Calendar

May 25 (Monday) - Memorial Day  
July 3 (Friday) - Independence Day (observed)  
September 7 (Monday) - Labor Day  
October 12 (Monday) - Columbus Day  
November 11 (Wednesday) - Veterans' Day  
November 26 (Thursday) - Thanksgiving Day  
December 25 (Friday) - Christmas Day



## **Technology Tailings**



### **Make the Most of Your BARD Mobile App**

The BARD Mobile App gives MTBL patrons another option to access audio and Braille books, magazines and other materials online. The following are some tips for using the BARD App on your iPhone, iPad or iPod:

Set your BARD App to play in the background - This allows you to do other internet functions while still listening to your book. Directions: open the BARD App and go to the “settings” tab. Under “audio settings” turn on the “background playback” feature.

Use your device’s timer app as a sleep function - The BARD App does not have a sleep function like the NLS digital players do. Directions: open your device’s clock app and choose the timer tab. On the timer page, set how long you want to keep reading and then choose the “when timer ends” option. Scroll to the bottom and choose “stop playing” and then hit “set.” Start your timer and when the time elapses, your book will stop.

For additional BARD Mobile App features, you can access the BARD Mobile User Guide by going to “Help” under the bookshelf tab.

### **Helpful Hints:**

#### **No Rewinding is Necessary When Using Digital Cartridges**

Digital books and magazines do not need to be rewound before returning the cartridge to us. Unlike the old cassettes, digital cartridges have no movable parts. A person with another digital machine will automatically start at the beginning of the book.

#### **Montana Phone Scams**

Be aware of phone scams, originating with area code 874, claiming that you have won a sweepstakes or asking you for money. If you feel like you are being scammed, contact the Montana Office of Consumer Protection directly. You may call 1-800-481-6896, email [contactocp@mt.gov](mailto:contactocp@mt.gov), or file a complaint online at [www.dojmt.gov/consumer](http://www.dojmt.gov/consumer). Please do not give scammers any personal information or send them money.

#### **Update Your Contact Information**

Have you moved, changed your email address or have a new phone number? Please remember to update your contact information with MTBL. Call or notify us so we are able to continue your service without interruption.

## **Reader's Alley: Recommended Reads**

### **NATIONAL RECORDINGS:**

Where'd You Go, Bernadette? By Maria Semple **DB 75351** (Mystery/Bestseller). The hilarious account of an eccentric, socially inept wife and mother who goes missing just before the family trip to Antarctica. Does the virtual assistant in India know where she is? Her heartbroken daughter Bee searches for answers.

Still Alice by Lisa Genova **DB 68429** (Bestseller/Family fiction). As she turns fifty and begins experiencing odd lapses of memory, Harvard psychology professor Alice Howland gets the life-altering diagnosis of early-onset Alzheimer's disease. Some strong language.

His Majesty's Dragon by Naomi Novik **DB 64445** (Fantasy/Adventure). An English naval captain discovers a dragon egg aboard a captured French frigate. After it hatches, the pair trains in the art of airborne combat before joining the Aerial Corps to battle Napoleon's forces.

In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex by Nathaniel Philbrick **DB 50271** (Adventure/Bestseller/Nonfiction). The author recounts the disastrous 1819 voyage of the whaling ship Essex which was attacked by a sperm whale, and the ensuing fight for survival that befell the shipwrecked sailors.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie **DB 65403** (Family and Growing up fiction). Fourteen-year-old Junior, beset with physical problems, transfers to an all-white town school off of the Spokane Indian Reservation. Junior uses humor and wit to bridge the cultural divide. Some strong language. For junior and senior high readers or older.

Washington at Valley Forge by Russell Freedman **DB 68534** (History/Nonfiction). Discusses the reasons Washington's army almost perished while encamped in Pennsylvania during the winter of 1777-78 and how Washington's leadership brought them to victory the following June. For grades 4-7 or older.

### **MONTANA DIGITAL RECORDINGS**

Grass Woman Stories by Mary Ground **MDB 682** (Essays/MT Author). A Blackfeet elder, who passed away at the age of 107 in 1990, describes her lifetime of experiences and the extreme changes of the Blackfeet tribe during her lifespan.



Who Lost? The Autobiography of a Blind Man with Great Vision by Dale Sheldon **MDB 2029** (Biography/MT Author). Blinded by an accident at age four, Sheldon's "just do it" philosophy served him well, becoming a county commissioner, a board member of the Developmentally Disabled Council, a business owner, a Russian interpreter, an artist, an outdoorsman, and a father.

The Curve of the World by Marcus Stevens **MDB 754** (Adventure fiction/MT Author). After his plane was hijacked, businessman Lewis Burk must survive the African jungles while his wife and blind son journey to find him. Strong language.

From Poplar to Papua: Montana's 163rd Infantry Regiment in the Pacific in WWII by Martin Kidston **MDB 831** (History/MT Author). The compelling stories of courage, triumph and personal sacrifices by members of the Montana National Guard's 163rd Infantry Regiment in WWII.

In Open Spaces by Russell Rowland **MDB 988** (Family fiction/MT Author). The remarkable story of the Arbuckle brothers who struggled to survive ranching on the prairies of Eastern Montana during the early 1900s while facing the Depression, two world wars, family tragedy, and sibling rivalry that turns sinister. Strong language and descriptions of sex.

---

## **Memorials and Donations**

The generosity of our donors enhances library services to patrons. Tax deductible contributions are greatly appreciated. An acknowledgement is sent to each donor. Please include the person's name for whom a memorial is made and the name and address of those to be notified of a contribution.

### **Memorials June - December 2014**

**Joyce Haley**—Larry & Dianna Riley; Ronald Vande Ven; Glenn & Noreen Kozeluh



**Shirley Pfeifer**—Sam & Jessie Mourich; Dick & Sharon Scott; Joseph & Juanita Watson; Norah McDonald & family; Tom & Maureen Lantz; Jim & Gail Terry

**Leola Van Atta**—Donald & Marion Quick; Ray & Patty Dietz and family; Kelly Selph; Roberta Markegard Howard; Jack & Claudine O'Connor; John & Mary Giordullo; Bill & Debbie Tierney; Robert & Lynette Levine; Jim & Debi Schillinger; Josh Betts; David Goodale Family; Duane & Terry Van Atta; Allan & Shirley Schillinger

**James Mockler**—Diane Gunderson      **Herb & Lea Blunn**—Diane Gunderson

**Jon Richard Beck**—Jack & Nancy Glaser      **Jean Schell**— Gary Fulton

### **Donations June - December 2014**

Thank you to Rose Leary; Al Beavis; Oliver & Edna Smith; Donna Strand; Lelia Proctor Memorial Chapter (MAB); Kay Stevens; General Federation of Women's Clubs of Montana; Nancy & Howard Hanford; Adina & Wayne Fuchs; Louise Neff; Judy Neely; Virginia D'hooge; Claire Holman; John & Erna Russell; Eva Marie Steinmasel; Beverly Loch; Veva Lee Spencer; Glenn, Jane and Braxton Todd.

## **Treasure State News**



### **Most Popular BARD Downloads by Montanans**

In 2014, patrons downloaded 17,304 books, magazines and instructional music titles from BARD. The most popular audio fiction download was Sycamore Row by John Grisham (**DB 77720**). The most popular nonfiction audio title was How Does Cell Phone Use Impact Teenagers? By Patricia D. Netzley (**DB 76593**). The top electronic Braille download was The Book Thief by Markus Zusak (**DB 62431**), and for nonfiction Braille it was Chamber Music (**DBM00258**), a music appreciation discussion piece. The top three magazine downloads were: *The Week*, *Mayo Clinic Monthly*, and the *Health Newsletter*.

### **National Federation of the Blind of Montana (NFB-MT)**

For information on meeting dates, times and events, contact Joy Breslauer, state President, at 406-454-3096; email [president@nfbofmt.org](mailto:president@nfbofmt.org); visit [www.nfbofmt.org](http://www.nfbofmt.org); or write to: Nat'l Federation of the Blind of MT; P.O. Box 1325; Great Falls, MT 59403. The 2015 NFB-MT state convention is Oct. 9, 10 & 11 in Great Falls.

### **Montana Association For the Blind (MAB)**

For information on meeting dates, times and events, contact Michael Hocking, state President, at 406-442-9411; email [mab.association@yahoo.com](mailto:mab.association@yahoo.com); visit [www.mtblind.org](http://www.mtblind.org); or write to: Montana Association for the Blind, P.O. Box 465; Helena, MT 59624. The MAB 2015 state convention is Sep. 11, 12 & 13 in Billings.

### **MAB Summer Orientation Program (SOP)—Summer 2015**

Montana Association for the Blind offers a four week training course for newly blind or low vision Montanans to learn daily living skills for independent living. Student classes begin June 15th through July 9th at Carroll College in Helena. For an application, call 406-442-9411, email: [mab.sop15@yahoo.com](mailto:mab.sop15@yahoo.com), visit [www.mtblind.org](http://www.mtblind.org).

### **Veterans Blind and Low Vision Group Meetings**

For a schedule of support and clinic meetings, contact the VIST office at 406-447-7625 or the VIST Coordinator Tracey Tillinger at [tracey.tillinger@va.gov](mailto:tracey.tillinger@va.gov).

---

### **Contacting a Readers' Advisor**

In order to provide more personalized service, we divide the alphabet between our Readers' Advisors. If your last name begins with:

A—G contact Martin, H—O contact Jackie, and P—Z contact Bobbi.

If your advisor is not available, others will be glad to assist you.



## **Volunteer Gems**

### **Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon**

The annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon was held on Oct. 9, 2014 to present volunteers with well-deserved awards for their contributions of over 9,800 volunteer hours in 2014. The theme was “Expressions of Gratitude”. Keynote speaker, etymologist Chrysti “The Wordsmith” Smith, delighted the audience with a heartfelt, in-depth origin and description of the word “Volunteer”. Longevity awards were presented to Mary Biskupiak and Frank Flynn, who have both volunteered for 20 years. The Special Appreciation Award winner, Ralph Leonard, was unable to attend. His award was presented a week later at the library. The Recording Team of the Year was presented to Colleen Mockler (narrator), Jane Weidler (monitor), and Giles Walker (reviewer). Colleen and Jane have been volunteering for 24 ½ years and have recorded 70 books for our patron’s reading pleasure. Jane retired from volunteering at the end of last year and will be greatly missed.

### **Machine Volunteers Provide Great Service to Patrons**

*By Bobbi deMontigny, Machine Lending Agent/Readers’ Advisor*

Something exceptional is happening at the Talking Book Library, a program of the Montana State Library. Specialized workers come together to volunteer time and knowledge, combining efforts to provide a window to the world for non-traditional readers.

The Talking Book Library volunteers are real-life superheroes who troubleshoot and repair talking book machines for those who are unable to read due to low vision, blindness, and physical or reading disabilities. Pioneers, formerly known as the Telephone Pioneers of America, started servicing talking book machines for the National Library Service in 1960. As the largest industry-related volunteer organization, Pioneers volunteer 15 million hours of service across the nation. In Helena, Tom Tompkins works to keep cassette book machines working as the Talking Book Library transitions to digital players. “Some of the machines can be challenging, but after working on them for so long, you get a good idea of what could be wrong,” said Tompkins.

The group in Helena is small, but their accomplishments are not. Long time volunteers Frank Flynn, Tom Tompkins, Chuck Flynn, Gloria Purcell and Jim Brown help meet the equipment demands of Talking Book Library patrons.



Their work ensures that over 8,130 machines and accessories remain in good repair to circulate to 4,000 registered Montanans in the program.

Frank Flynn, a former engineer and a Pioneer for over 20 years, started by repairing headsets in his own shop. According to Frank, his former employer – Bell Telephone Company – emphasized volunteerism. Fellow Volunteer Tom Tompkins also started volunteering with previous coworkers. “Everyone I started working with has passed away,” said Tompkins. “I like to come in and visit with former workers like Frank.”

Frank’s son, Chuck, has also joined the volunteer group and appreciates spending time with his dad. “Dad has been a fixer his whole life. Growing up, neighbors would bring their televisions over for him to fix. We work on motorcycles, take on home repair projects and repair these machines together,” said Chuck, who enjoys working with these specialists. “These guys have experience. When I am not sure how to fix something, I will call my dad and he has the answer. He is a mentor to me.” The work brings them together weekly. Chuck compares the investigative part of the machine work to being a detective, while Frank feels that he is doing something worthwhile because the Montana Talking Book Library patrons often tell him that their access to talking books significantly improves the quality of their lives.



Photos of Machine Volunteers (L to R): Frank Flynn, Bobbi deMontigny (MTBL staff), Chuck Flynn, Gloria Purcell, Tom Tompkins, and Jim Brown.

### **MTBL Volunteer Introduces Braille to Kindergarten Students**

Along with Brailleing print text to create Twin Vision children’s books, Britney Eldredge visits Helena Central Elementary to demonstrate Braille and answer student questions about what it is like to be blind. She reads a twin-vision book that has clear plastic Braille overlaid on each page in the picture book. Britney creates these with the help of other volunteers, Melanie Eldredge and Joyce Saunders. One of her favorite inquiries was, “How do you brush your teeth?”

**Montana Talking Book Library (MTBL)**

1515 East Sixth Avenue  
PO Box 201800  
Helena, MT 59620-1800

**FREE MATTER  
FOR THE BLIND**

Address Service Requested

**Contact Information**

We are on the Web!

**Website:** [tbl.msl.mt.gov](http://tbl.msl.mt.gov)



**Like us on Facebook!**

[www.facebook.com/MontanaStateLibrary.MTBL](http://www.facebook.com/MontanaStateLibrary.MTBL)



**MONTANA TALKING  
BOOK LIBRARY**  
MONTANA STATE LIBRARY

**PHONE NUMBERS:** 1-800-332-3400 (toll-free in-state); (in Helena) 406-444-2064

**LIBRARY PHONE HOURS:** Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or Voice mail 24/7

**ADDRESS:** Montana Talking Book Library

1515 East Sixth Ave.

PO Box 201800

Helena, MT 59620-1800

**E-MAIL:** [mtbl@mt.gov](mailto:mtbl@mt.gov) (for patron requests or contact information)

**DISCLAIMER:** The products and services mentioned in this newsletter are for your information only and do not imply endorsement by MTBL.