



Volunteer Recording Studio News

Talking Book Program

February 2018

Studio Hours

Mon. - Thurs: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Fri.: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sat.: 9:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.

Studio Statistics

July hours: 336.25
July active volunteers: 58
August hours: 335
August active volunteers: 62
September hours: 338.5
September active volunteers: 58
October hours: 330.5
October active volunteers: 54
November hours: 254.5
November active volunteers: 49
December hours: 222.5
December active volunteers: 49

Passing of a Devoted Volunteer Narrator



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of longtime volunteer Lionel Jacobs. Lionel passed away after a brief battle with cancer. He volunteered in the studio from 2007 to 2016, putting in over 2,000 hours and doing everything from reviewing recordings to narrating books. Originally from South Africa, Lionel had a lilting accent that made him a wonderful narrator for westerns, mysteries, and historical fiction, especially those with strong British characters and plots.

The studio will be closed on:

February 19: President's Day
March 9: Agency Staff Training Day
May 26-28: Memorial Day Weekend



Milestone

Congratulations to longtime volunteer, Ev Lunning, for reaching over 2000 hours!



DON'T FORGET



Volunteers are required to wear badges at all times, if you are in the building. The badges must be visible. If you are entering through the lobby you are expected to have your badge visible for the person at the welcome desk to see.

If you forget your badge, you will need to sign in and get a visitor's badge for the day. You must turn in the visitor's badge at the end of the day. If

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Talking Book Program
Texas State Library & Archives Commission
P.O. Box 12927
Austin, TX 78711-2927



Texas State Talking Book Program studio blazes trail for local talking book recording

By Paula Bahmani (edited)

Since its inception almost 40 years ago, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission recording program has produced around 6,500 talking books, nearly 400 of which are circulating nationally on the NLS Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) website. So it was no surprise that BARD's 4,000th network-produced talking book came from the Texas program. Nor was the book's subject: a biography of William B. Travis, the garrison commander at the Alamo.



Volunteer narrator Ric Furley (left), audio production administrator Miles Lewis (right), and author Terry Shames pose in the Texas recording studio with Shames's novel *A Killing at Cotton Hill: A Samuel Craddock Mystery* (DBC04802).

"Anything about the Alamo is always of interest to our patrons and anyone interested in Texas history," said Ava Smith, regional librarian at the Texas State Library and Archives Commission Talking Book Program. "There is a lot of discussion about the Alamo as the Texas General Land Office moves forward with turning the Alamo and the surrounding grounds into a major world historical site, and the Travis biography [originally published in 1976] is still considered the definitive account of his life."

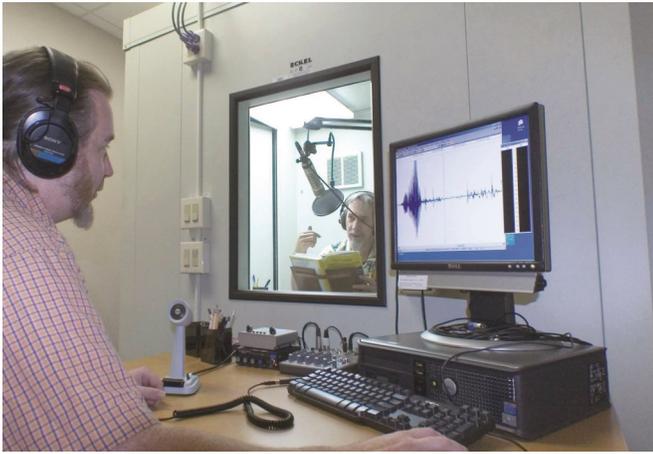
Notable titles that Texas has contributed to the national collection on BARD are *Same Kind of Different as Me* (DBC00008) by Ron Hall and Denver Moore, narrated by volunteer Staci Thompson; *Getting Life: An Innocent Man's 25-Year Journey from Prison to Peace* (DBC11932) by Michael Morton, also narrated by Thompson; and 31 of the 70 titles in the Hank the Cowdog series of children's books by John Erickson.

Like the NLS collection, many of the audiobooks in the Texas collection were originally recorded on open-reel tape. In 2003, Texas audio production administrator Miles Lewis began working with then-NLS audiobook production specialist Bill West to test the Low Complexity Mastering system (LCM) for digital recording on one workstation.

"We transitioned to digital because of the added flexibility in the recording process, the increased audio quality, and because digital audio was already the mainstay within the commercial audio production industry," Lewis said.

After the initial year of testing, Texas transitioned its other workstations, as well as those in its partner studio in Midland, Texas, to digital. By 2005, all books recorded for the program were produced digitally. Meanwhile, Lewis has been diligently converting many of the old analog titles to digital books for circulation on BARD.

Studio cont.



Lead audio technician and narrator Craig York reads *The Yard Dog* (DBC00042), available on BARD courtesy of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission Talking Book Program, as audio production administrator Miles Lewis monitors the recording process.

"We are ramping up our conversion of those 7,000-plus audiobooks to the digital format and uploading them as quickly as possible to BARD," Lewis said. "Every new book we record is posted to BARD as quickly as the process can happen."

Last year, Texas uploaded 90 books to BARD, 18 of which were analog-to-digital conversions. So

far this year, Lewis has uploaded 163, with 88 of them being analog- to-digital conversions. In addition, Texas has increased the number of born-digital audiobooks it produces from 59 last year to 69 this year. During the first year of operation, in 1978, Texas recorded just 10 titles.

After 20 years in the Texas talking-book program, Lewis continues to play an active role in the ever-changing environment of digital books. "Programs are adapting to change rapidly to keep up with the shifting technological landscape," he said. "I'm proud to be a part of this program and to have been a part of these huge changes, even as I struggle with a wide array of emotions triggered by the effects of this digital revolution."



This newsletter is a publication of the Texas Talking Book Program for recording studio volunteers and staff. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact Jaclyn Owusu, TBP Public Awareness Coordinator at jowusu@tsl.texas.gov.



Reminder cont.

you plan to leave after 5:15 p.m., please let the front desk know that you will leave the badge at the desk before you leave so that the badge can be marked as returned the following day.

If you have lost or misplaced your badge, report it immediately to Miles or Tom. This is a security issue.



Did you Know...

- 85% of plant life is found in the ocean
- dreamt is the only word that ends in mt
- Pearls melt in vinegar
- the word typewriter is the longest word that can be typed using only the top row of a keyboard
- the longest possible eclipse of the sun is 7.31 minutes
- the drinking straw was invented in 1886
- before 1863 the postal service in the US was free
- you can't tickle yourself
- the average person consumes over a ton of food and drink each year
- dry ice transforms directly from being a solid to a gas
- people in Iceland read more books per capita than any other country
- it takes 17 muscles to smile and 43 to frown
- the moon is 27% the size of the Earth



The Talking Book Program held the first TBP Poetry contest this past fall. Here are the winners.

CATEGORY 1 (ages 0-10) A Cat Who Could Jump by Xiomara Grace Gilliam

There once was a cat who could jump.
 He could jump high over a bump.
 He fell on his head
 And thought he was dead
 But all that was there was a lump.

CATEGORY 3 (ages 19+) NOW WE ARE NINETY by Barbara M. Wright

God brought us together, by His hand from above,
 From the moment we met, we were in love.
 Loneliness gone, a new life together,
 His hand in mine, we learned from each other.

We are seventy-two and ripe for adventure,
 He made me smile as we sang, and we danced,
 He was the builder, with saw and a hammer,
 I was his helper, standing by with the measure.

Day by day, year by year, our love grew stronger,
 Until the day came when he could remember no longer.
 Each time I am with him, he asks again and again,
 "Why can't I go home, oh please tell me when."

Now, our bodies are frail, our sight growing dim,
 Yet my love is no less than when I married him.
 "What's the matter with me?" words that tear at my heart.
 "You love me no more, or we would not be apart".

Most of his past and the people he knew,
 Like a fog rolling in, seem to have vanished from view.
 Oh God, if it you hear me, please call my love home,
 I don't want to die first and leave him alone.

CATEGORY 3 (ages 19+) One Cowboy's End by Tiffany K. Chartier

Tree stumps circle around the old stone fire pit;
 Tall grass rides up the boots of those who sit.
 Stories are shared with an air of pride,
 as the fire swells and the night hides.
 Critters on the outskirts stop to listen,
 but the cowboys see their eyes a 'glisten.
 The shrouded unknown is haunting;
 yes, to all creatures – fear is the most daunting.
 That is what, after all, boosts the tales,
 around all old stone fire pits around the trails.
 So long as the faithful fires keep a 'swellin';
 the sins of the cowboys will remain engulfed with their hellin'.
 No one will notice the fear in their eyes;
 except, perhaps, for that one fearless critter...right before one cowboy dies.