



Texas Talking Book News

Texas State Library and Archives Commission

FALL 2019

Director's Report

Greetings! Here is the latest news:

Customer satisfaction survey: On a separate insert in this newsletter is the customer satisfaction survey. We do this type of survey every two years, as required by the Legislature Budget Board (LBB). Results will be reported back to the LBB when the Texas State Library and Archives Commission files its Agency Strategic Plan in early 2020. The survey is short—only four questions—and answers are on a scale of one to five, with “1” being “very dissatisfied” and “5” being “very satisfied.” You can mail in the printed survey in this newsletter. If we have your email address, we will send the survey to you electronically. You also have the option of calling our Reader Services department at 1-800-252-9605 and answering the survey over the phone.

Please take a few minutes to answer the survey questions by December 31, 2019. Your answers are very important to us. The more responses we have to the survey, the more accurate the survey will be.

NLS is making a change to its name: The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) recently made an alteration to its name. It is now The National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled. Over the years, many of you have expressed concern over the use of the term, “handicapped,” and NLS has heard and understood that concern. “Print disabled” also provides a more inclusive description of those persons eligible for services, including those with learning disabilities. NLS has stressed that printed materials with the former name do not have to be destroyed immediately but can be replaced as needed, so you may continue to see the old version of the name for a while. We already have changed the name on electronic resources, such as our web page.

A pilot project looks at NLS certification requirements for persons with learning disabilities: During the recent session of the Texas Legislature, Senate Bill 2075 was passed, which will be very helpful to potential TBP patrons. The bill directs the Texas Education Agency to require school districts to inform parents and guardians of students with a learning disability

about TBP's free services. Approximately 175,000 students in Texas may have a learning disability, and many of those will be eligible for TBP enrollment. NLS rules for certifying learning disability applications, however, have not changed since the mid-1970s, when learning disabilities were first eligible for NLS services. Because of the need to formally change the certification rules, NLS has launched a year-long pilot project to study how broadening the certification rules for learning disability applications affects enrollment in Texas and Pennsylvania. These two large NLS network libraries will be gathering information on the use of a variety of certifying agents and the service requests of new patrons with learning disabilities. The information will be analyzed for likely impacts on libraries, staffing and services offered throughout the NLS network. Changing federal regulations often is a lengthy process, so lessons learned during the pilot project will be helpful in preparing for and steering future changes.

Congratulations on 45 years of service: Two TBP staff in the Reader Services call center have reached a major milestone. Linda and Doris have been working for TBP for 45 years, and in all that time, they have been answering your calls as reader consultants. When they both started in September 1974, there was only one telephone for four reader consultants, no computers, and book orders were written by hand and then taken to the Circulation staff so the books could be pulled and mailed out to patrons. When the first computer became available, it was what was known as a "dumb terminal." This allowed the reader consultants to use the computer only to look things up. No one could put information into the computer, so book orders still had to be created manually. Now, Linda and Doris marvel at how much change they have witnessed in TBP during their 45 years, knowing that more change is always coming down the road.

This is my last director's column to you: After 18 years as the director of the Talking Book Program and the Texas regional librarian for the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled, Library of Congress, I will be retiring at the end of December 2019. I have been working in libraries for 42 years, and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission has been by far the best of places to work. The work itself has been rewarding, and I have been blessed with a staff who are the most dedicated and hard-working. Each one of us has a deep sense of personal satisfaction knowing that what we do really makes a difference in the lives of the people we serve. I have been honored to be your director for all these years and to lead

the program through so many changes. Now, I will be handing everything off to a new director, Sarah Jacobson. Sarah has worked for TSLAC in the State and Local Records Management division since 2009, so she already has some familiarity with TBP and what we do. Sarah will begin “shadowing” me on November 1 and then take over the reins after my last working day on December 19. Having worked with Sarah for many years, I know that she will be an excellent director and will be here for you as TBP continues to make its mark as an exemplary library in the NLS network of cooperating libraries.

Wishing all of you the very best,
Ava Smith, Director, Talking Book Program

The Talking Book Program will be closed on the below listed holidays.

Monday, November 11 ~ Veterans Day
Thursday and Friday, November 28-29 ~ Thanksgiving
Monday – Friday, December 23-26 ~ Winter Holiday
Tuesday and Wednesday, December 31 and January 1 ~ New Years

Of course, you can leave a voicemail message or send email on a holiday.

Helpful contact information for the Talking Book Program:

- To order books or report a problem with your machine: 1-800-252-9605
- To request an application or ask about enrollment: 1-800-252-9605
- To access the toll-free information line: 1-866-388-6397
- To contact the Disability Information and Referral Center:
1-800-252-9605
- To contact the Public Awareness Office: 512-463-5452 or
1-800-252-9605
- To send email to anyone in the Talking Book Program:
tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov
- To ask for assistance using BARD or to make changes to your account:
1-800-252-9605 or **tbp.bard@tsl.texas.gov**
- To ask a librarian for reading advice or reference assistance:
1-800-252-9605 or **tbp.ral@tsl.texas.gov**
- To access the TBP blog:
<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/texastalkingbooks/>
- To see the TBP book club schedule:
<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/tbpbookclub/index.html>

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Free Matter for the
Blind or Physically
Handicapped



Disability News

Next year's Braille calendars will be mailed from the American Action Fund, but you can still order the calendars from the Talking Book Program. Give us a call or send us an e-mail, and we'll get the calendars on the way to you. If you have already requested a Braille calendar you don't need to contact us again. Each person is now allowed up to three Braille calendars. If you need a large print calendar, give us a call and we will send you a list of organizations that sell or provide large print calendars.

Comments or complaints regarding programs and services of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission may be made to:
Director and Librarian, PO Box 12927, Austin, TX 78711-2927

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