



Texas Talking Book News

Texas State Library and Archives Commission

Winter/Spring 2015

Director's Report

Greetings! Here is the latest news:

U.S. Postal Service delays: Recently, the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) has gone through more changes, called "network rationalizations." Several mail processing centers have been closed, including ones in Beaumont and Houston. Centers in Abilene and Corpus Christi are scheduled to close later this year. These closings will affect how quickly the mail moves around the state. You may experience delays in receiving mail, and you will need to be aware that anything you put into the mail may take longer to reach its destination. This includes the books and machines that TBP mails to you and that you return to us.

On top of the closings, the horrible winter weather--especially in the northeastern part of the country--is making the movement of mail around the country even more difficult. Those of you who receive magazines directly from a National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) distributor may experience delays in receiving those magazines because mail coming into Texas is moving very slowly right now. Likewise, when you return them, those magazines may take a while to get back to the distributor. Some of the newest digital books are coming from producers in the eastern part of the country, so the weather may affect when TBP will receive its copies.

Our Circulation facility has had a few days when there has been no mail delivery or the delivery was smaller than usual. On days when we receive no mail at all, we also cannot send out mail until the next USPS truck shows up. If you have not received mail from us, you can call us at 1-800-252-9605 and ask if anything has been shipped to you. Reader consultants can check your account and tell you what has been shipped and what has checked in. Once items are shipped, we have no control over when they will reach their destinations.

Meanwhile, Circulation is undergoing construction: The Circulation facility, which was opened in the late 1980s, is undergoing much-needed maintenance work. Much of the work concerns the heating and cooling systems in the facility, and some parts of the facility are being torn out and rebuilt. Work started in December and is slated to run through March, with an extension into May, if necessary. The facility has had some shutdowns due to lack of heat, water, and electricity. Staff has tried to keep the shutdowns to a minimum, while managing to get all books and machines into the mail promptly. All incoming books and machines are being checked in within one workday to

maintain patron service. During this period of construction, no volunteers have been assisting staff with inspection and shelving tasks, so these areas are moving more slowly than usual. Everyone will be very happy to see spring at last!

More books recorded by TBP are now available on BARD: We continue to upload more Texas recordings to the Braille and Audio Reading Download site (BARD). Look for the BARD section of this newsletter to see the latest available books, or check the TBP blog for announcements. If you have a BARD account, you may go to BARD and download these titles immediately. If you are interested in reading one of these titles in digital cartridge or another available format, please call 1-800-252-9605 or send an email to **tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov**, and make a request.

Update on the free currency readers now available: The Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) has been working with NLS to make available free currency readers to those with qualifying visual disabilities. At this point, BEP is distributing the readers to any eligible individual interested in having one. To receive one of the currency readers, you must contact BEP directly and request an application. TBP does not have any currency readers to distribute, nor can TBP staff put you onto BEP's waiting list. You may contact the BEP call center at 1-844-815-9388 and request an application. You also may print an application from either BEP's web site at **www.moneyfactory.gov/uscurrencyreaderform.html** or from NLS' web site at **loc.gov/nls/other/currencyreader/index.html**.

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: 1-512-463-5452 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: 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>

Until next time,

Ava Smith, Director,

Talking Book Program

Celebrate Reading

There is a lot to celebrate in spring: warmer weather, daylight savings time kicks in, and we celebrate authors' birthdays and reading days to help you find good books to read or re-read!

March

March 2 is "Read across America Day" and celebrates the birthday of authors John Irving and Dr. Seuss. Here are a few selections from these fantastic writers:

John Irving: *The Cider House Rules* DB 21531

Dr. Seuss: *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* DB 30795

April

April 2 is International Children's book Day and the birthday of Hans Christian Anderson: *Fairy Tales of Hans Christian Andersen* DB 44585

April is also the birth month of popular authors:

April 21 Charlotte Bronte: *Jane Eyre* DB 47868

April 23 William Shakespeare: *As You Like It* DB 26344

May

May is "Get Caught Reading" month, and we hope you get caught reading these authors celebrating birthdays in May:

May 1 Joseph Heller: *Catch-22* DB 48063

May 22 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: *Sherlock Holmes* DB 72858

The Talking Book Program will be closed on the following holidays.

Monday, May 25 for Memorial Day

Of course, you can leave a voicemail message or send e-mail on a holiday.

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.

Most Prolific Narrator Retires

Widely acclaimed narrator Mitzi Friedlander is retiring. During her extraordinary career, which spans over a half century, she has recorded more books than any other Talking Book narrator in the nation. Her fans, locally and nationally, celebrated her accomplishments at a retirement ceremony on February 5, 2015.

To hear a sample of Mitzi Friedlander's work, visit www.aph.org/museum/Narrator-Jukebox/Mitzi-Friedlander.html or download www.aph.org/museum/Narrator-Jukebox/Mitzi-Friedlander.mp3

Call the Disability Information and Referral Center toll-free at 1-800-252-9605 for information about disabilities and health conditions.

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Free Matter for the
Blind or Physically
Handicapped



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Upcoming Book Club Meeting

All you need to participate in Book Club is a telephone. Please call 1-800-252-9605 or email tbp.ral@tsl.texas.gov to RSVP. Dates are subject to change.

Book: Light Between Oceans by M. L. Stedman

Date: May 19, 2015

Time: 7:00 p.m. Central

Western Australia, 1926. On an island one hundred miles from the mainland, lighthouse keepers Isabel and Tom Sherbourne discover a boat carrying a dead man and a crying baby. The decisions they make that day come back to haunt them several years later. Bestseller. 2012. DB 75192; LB 07236

Talking Book Program Texas State Library and Archives Commission
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(in Austin) 512-936-0685 (fax) You can contact TBP by email tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov. Also, visit
our new blog at www.tsl.texas.gov/texastalkingbooks/ for up-to-date information.