

READING MATTERS  
Winter 2017  
David Junius, Editor

Washington Talking Book & Braille Library  
2021 9th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98121-2783  
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday  
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THAT ALL MAY READ...

**From the Director by Danielle Miller**

Greetings friends. I hope everyone enjoyed a happy and safe holiday season and had time to curl up with a good book or two.

One of the highlights of my year is attending the two consumer conventions and being able to see so many patrons, colleagues, and friends learning, sharing information, and working together. The 2016 National Federation of the Blind of Washington and the Washington Council of the Blind conventions were excellent, as always. I enjoy visiting chapter meetings and keeping connected throughout the year because you are truly our best advocates and I can stay current with what's important in the community. We will be continuing our outreach efforts throughout the state, including outreach to the Hispanic community, so please contact us if you have ideas for places for us to visit or present.

At WTBBL, we constantly try to offer you the best library service possible. We try to be creative, resourceful, effective, and thoughtful in all we do. Of course things aren't always perfect: There is more to be done, things to be done differently, and new opportunities to explore. Your feedback is invaluable in helping us move forward and shape the future of the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library. Our 2017 Patron Satisfaction Survey is enclosed in this issue of *Reading Matters*. If you need any assistance with the survey or have questions, please contact David Junius at (800) 542-0866 or david.junius@sos.wa.gov.

We are looking forward to a productive year and I wish you all the best for a bright 2017.

### **Greetings from the State Librarian! by Cindy Aden**

I have now passed the four-month mark in my tenure here, and I am happy to say that I have had the great privilege of getting to know the WTBBL staff. We have shared in an exercise to identify our guiding principles, and together with the State Library staff, we will address a strategic plan and goals for the next two to three years.

Of course WTBBL has a strategic plan and knows its purpose and next steps. I am so proud to be able to say that Washington State has one of the most innovative and forward-looking libraries for the blind and physically handicapped in the country with a competent and dedicated staff. But, I want to bring the disparate parts of my organization together under a shared vision, so I will be including the WTBBL staff in our library-wide discussions.

Besides serving our population of people unable to read standard print, our library is the only state library in the country that contracts with the Department of Corrections to provide prison library services. Our main library in Tumwater has a rich collection of Pacific Northwest, state and federal materials to support researchers in history, genealogy and government. We aim to support the Legislature as well as fellow agencies to make sure our expertise is available to all who make laws and policies in Washington State. Finally, the State Library distributes about \$3M in federal money every year to support programs around the state – including WTBBL – ranging from early learning and virtual, 24/7 reference, to digital literacy and library trustee training.

I want to make sure everyone on my 60-person staff has a shared vision and purpose. Therefore my management and outreach team at the main library will have braille printed on their business cards. It sends an important message that ALL of us serve those who cannot read standard print across the state. The Secretary of State, Kim Wyman, already has braille printed on her business cards, and she, too, is planning on having others on her staff do the same. It may look like a small gesture, but it

speaks volumes about our commitment to this important group of library users.

I write this on the Winter Solstice, and I am reminded that the solstice is a time for a pause, and it is also the beginning of a transition. The days will get longer, and all of the work we have done—to come together as one, integrated, focused library-- will come to fruition with the growing light.

## **BARD Just Got Better! by Tyler Kaye**

Transferring talking books from BARD to a flash drive just got a whole lot easier.

BARD Express, a free Windows application, is now available. In one easy-to-use program you can search for, download, and transfer talking books to a flash drive or blank digital cartridge. If you have wanted to download books but the process of unzipping files and moving them to a flash drive has been confusing, give BARD Express a try.

No longer will you need to navigate from the BARD web page to file folders on your computer. With BARD Express, the process is streamlined. Search for and select the books you wish to download, and they are put onto a “bookshelf” on your hard drive. The program will detect if you have a flash drive or blank cartridge connected to one of your computer’s USB ports and transfer them there when you are ready.

To get BARD Express, log on to the BARD website at <http://nlsbard.loc.gov>. Find the “Additional Links” section toward the bottom of the main page. Just below that heading you will see a link to BARD Express. From the next page you can download the software, as well as find links to frequently asked questions and the complete BARD Express User Guide.

If you haven’t accessed BARD in over a year, your login may be inactive. Please call us at (800) 542-0866 or email [downloadsupport@sos.wa.gov](mailto:downloadsupport@sos.wa.gov) to have your BARD account reinstated or if you have any other questions about downloading or using BARD Express.

## **Donating Made Easy Through Monthly Giving by Laura Mott**

Happy New Year! And a very big thank you to the many patrons, family members, and members of the WTBBL community who contributed to our most recent fundraising campaign. We are on our way to meeting the fundraising goal for our current campaign and are excited to report that several hundred new donors have participated for the first time.

We've heard from many donors that one of the easiest ways to donate is by giving monthly with their credit card. Donors can sign up once and never have to think about it again! The first Monday of every month your credit card will be processed for the amount you choose without you having to do anything. It's hassle free, secure, and a great way to support WTBBL year-round. Signing up is easy through the Donate button at [www.wtbbbl.org](http://www.wtbbbl.org).

If you have any questions about donating monthly or supporting WTBBL in general, don't hesitate to contact Laura Mott, Director of Development, at (360) 902-4171 or [laura.mott@sos.wa.gov](mailto:laura.mott@sos.wa.gov).

## **Youth Services Update by Marian Mays**

The WTBBL Youth Services Department is continuing to grow and each new day is full of possibilities. We recently finished our fall pen pal program, matching students across the state in braille or large print formats. Over the course of the program, students are required to compose at least three letters to their pen pal. More than 80 letters were mailed this fall between 28 students, ages 7-17. Our next pen pal program begins in March, with registration letters going out by February 1.

Many new and recurring Youth Services events are coming up at WTBBL! Multisensory Storytimes for children ages 0-5 continue every Friday at WTBBL. Families and their young children who are blind or

visually impaired also are invited to attend our new “PIP,” or Parent-Infant Playgroups every second Monday at 11 a.m.

Students in grades 1-12 are invited to the 2017 Washington Braille Challenge, hosted by the Washington Council of the Blind and WTBBL. This year’s challenge will be February 18 at WTBBL. I’ll also be assisting at the Washington State School for the Blind’s Braille Challenge in Vancouver on February 2.

In January, I’ll be attending the American Library Association’s Midwinter Conference to represent WTBBL for my final term as a Youth Stonewall Award Committee Member. Our committee has been reading many exciting selections this year, and I’m excited to share with you the results of our deliberations. In the next few months, I’ll also be presenting at many conferences and reaching out to schools across the state of Washington.

For any questions about programming, outreach, or WTBBL Youth Services, please don’t hesitate to contact me at [marian.mays@sos.wa.gov](mailto:marian.mays@sos.wa.gov) or (206) 615-1253. Happy New Year from WTBBL Youth Services!

## **Volunteer Spotlight on Aarron Kemp**

Stories, my great love. Transported to other worlds through the senses of other bodies and the languages of other minds, stories have inspired and informed my entire life. How do we describe ourselves? How do we describe others? How do we make sense of the world around us? Those are the specific stories that led me on my winding journey from a Seattle childhood to The Evergreen State College and even to volunteering in Ireland for a year.

I happened to be at a liquid-nitrogen ice cream party where someone told me they were taking a storytelling class through the University of Washington's library program. A lifelong fan of libraries, I honestly hadn't considered that intersection and probably should have been slapped with a fish. However, the fire was lit and I applied to the UW iSchool's Master of Library and Information Science program that autumn and was accepted into the 2005 cohort.

The great irony of my studies was that I never actually wound up taking the storytelling class. However, two great questions crystallized during my time there. The first, "How big is your tribe?" Ask me about how identity behaviors influence the world and I have a very shiny and well-worn soapbox that I can bring out. The second — "What story do you want to tell with your data?" — dovetailed to my earlier career in tech and seemed the best shot at a job. In fact, after graduating in 2007, I had a couple of great contracts at Microsoft and Amazon. Yet the most intense work came when my parents passed away after taking care of them for four years, and I found myself at another crossroads.

This taught me a great deal about myself, including a deep-seated need to work with people directly as part of a dedicated team in an effort to improve the world. I needed to work in libraries. I reached out to volunteer services manager David Junius to see if WTBBL could use my skills. As it turns out, they could...and did I happen to have any taxonomy experience? I am now creating an organizational system for WTBBL's photo archive.

I deeply enjoy volunteering at WTBBL and making their work a little easier. My graduate advisor once told me that he expected a very unusual but very interesting career from me. I look forward to continuing the tale with WTBBL.

## Rick's Picks by Rick Slama

Days after being asked to make a submission to this newsletter, I was at a loss for a topic to write about. Then, while attending our recent meet-and-greet for new State Librarian Cindy Aden, I heard one of the guest speakers suggest that the snow in the weather forecast would provide a good excuse to stay home with an engrossing book. I can't recall many winter days passed snowed in and reading, but I certainly remember the snowy end of 2008 when I was entranced by the first two novels by mystery writer Tana French.

Having managed to win both *In the Woods* (DB 66071) and *The Likeness* (DB 67436) in a silent auction that winter, I took them home to my wife and continued reading whichever long-forgotten book I had been slogging through. Soon, my wife had torn through *In the Woods*, raving the whole way, and passed it on to me. Could it live up to my wife's hype? I was not to be disappointed.

Tana French's vibrant and lyrical prose took me to a carefree Irish summer day with children playing in the woods that shifts to tragedy when protagonist Adam Ryan endures the unexplained event that results in the disappearance of his best friends and haunts him into adulthood. The novel jumps some 20 years to find Dublin homicide detective Adam, known now as Rob, drawn back into his trauma after being assigned to the investigation of a girl found dead in the middle of an archaeological dig in the woods where his innocence ended.

The eerie world created by French's deft blend of police procedural and psychological thriller burrowed deep into my imagination, and I was glad to jump back in with her follow up, *The Likeness*. In it, Cassie Maddox from *In the Woods* gets top billing after her old boss Frank Mackey discovers a Jane Doe, who looks uncannily like Cassie. The tension is high as Cassie feigns amnesia about her doppelganger's recent past to infiltrate a house of grad student friends to uncover how she met a bad end. Will the lure of her undercover identity cloud her goal of exposing a killer? Could she lose herself in the role so completely that she is blinded to the danger of her mission? I certainly got lost in the blending of characters, but it made

the threat and intrigue so present that the difference between her friends and foes was obscured until the last minute, making for a gripping read.

If you get a hankering for some well-written, mind-bending mysteries this winter, I hope you'll try Tana French's first two novels. Or if thrillers aren't your taste, get in touch with our readers advisors to get your next great read.

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### **WTBBL Patron Satisfaction Survey 2017**

We want to make sure that we are providing the best resources we can to all our WTBBL patrons and stakeholders. We would like to get your feedback regarding our services, how well we do them, and what could be better.

This survey is 15 questions long, including an area where you can further share your thoughts with written feedback. All questions are important, as are the opinions and ideas you share with us.

All answers are confidential and anonymous.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact David at (206) 615-0417 or (800) 542-0866 or by email at [david.junius@sos.wa.gov](mailto:david.junius@sos.wa.gov).

1. Have you contacted WTBBL in the past year?      Yes      No
  
2. If so, what method(s) did you use? Please circle all that apply.
  - a. Phone call
  - b. Email
  - c. In-person visit

- d. Written correspondence
  - e. Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. How did you find out about WTBBL? Please circle all that apply.
- a. Friend/Family
  - b. Support group
  - c. School
  - d. Speaker/Event
  - e. Referred by professional
  - f. Other \_\_\_\_\_
4. How do WTBBL services benefit you? Please circle all that apply.
- a. Entertainment
  - b. Knowledge
  - c. Quality of life
  - d. Education/Research
  - e. Other \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you use the Internet? Please circle one.      Yes   No
6. If you answered “yes” above, how/where do you access the Internet? Please circle all that apply.
- a. At home
  - b. At the library
  - c. At school
  - d. At work
  - e. On a mobile device/smart phone
  - f. Someone uses it for me
  - g. Other \_\_\_\_\_
7. For the WTBBL services you use, please circle a rating on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “poor” and 5 being “excellent.” If you do not use a listed service, please do not circle a rating number.

a.	Digital audio books on cartridge	1	2	3	4	5
b.	BARD	1	2	3	4	5
c.	BARD mobile app	1	2	3	4	5
d.	Braille books	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Large print books	1	2	3	4	5
f.	Magazines on cartridge from NLS	1	2	3	4	5
g.	WTBBL online catalog	1	2	3	4	5
h.	WTBBL facebook page	1	2	3	4	5
i.	Other _____	1	2	3	4	5

8. Which services below do you use? Please circle all that apply.

- a. Audible.com
- b. Bookshare
- c. Foreign language books
- d. Learning Ally
- e. NFB Newslines
- f. Public library audio books
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_

9. Are you aware that WTBBL has special services and programs for youth patrons and schools?

Yes            No

10. Are you aware that WTBBL produces talking books and braille for its patrons and to share with the rest of the U.S.?

Yes            No

11. Overall, please circle the rating you would give WTBBL, with 1 being "poor" and 5 being "excellent."

1      2      3      4      5

For these statements, please circle "Agree," "Somewhat Agree," "Somewhat Disagree" or "Disagree."

12. WTBBL is responsive to my needs as a patron.  
Agree      Somewhat Agree      Somewhat Disagree      Disagree

13. WTBBL's book collection meets my expectations.  
Agree      Somewhat Agree      Somewhat Disagree      Disagree

14. WTBBL is innovative and continues to offer relevant services.  
Agree      Somewhat Agree      Somewhat Disagree      Disagree

15. Do you have any feedback for WTBBL?

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#### OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a military veteran? Please circle one.    Yes                  No

What is your ZIP code? \_\_\_\_\_

Which disability best describes why you use WTBBL? Please circle one.

- a.    Blind
- b.    Visually impaired
- c.    Deaf-blind
- d.    Reading disabled
- e.    Physically disabled
- f.    Other \_\_\_\_\_