
In **Focus**

December 2020



***News from the BSBP Braille and
Talking Book Library (BTBL)***

702 W Kalamazoo St., P.O. Box 30007, Lansing, MI 48909

Scott Norris to Manage BTBL _____

The Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) is pleased to announce that Scott Norris has been selected as the new Manager of the Michigan Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL).

Scott has a Master's degree in Library Science from Wayne State University, a J.D. from Thomas M. Cooley Law School, a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, and a Library of Michigan Permanent Professional Certificate. Scott has been employed at BTBL for 23 years (since 1997), serving as a Lead Worker, Adaptive Technology Librarian, and, more recently, the direct supervisor of four BTBL Librarians. In 2016, he was presented a Good Government Leadership Award by the State of Michigan.

Scott has over 20 years' experience working with the standards and guidelines from the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS), and he was instrumental in the implementation of the library's new electronic circulation and data management system called WebREADS. In addition, Scott has provided training and support to staff at the 11 Michigan Advisory and Outreach Centers (AOCs).

As a person who is blind, Scott understands the challenges facing people with disabilities and accessibility issues. Since 2003, Scott has assisted the eMichigan project by evaluating the accessibility of public-facing State of Michigan websites, applications, and mobile applications. In his role as Adaptive Technology Librarian, Scott has conducted hundreds of in-person and over the phone technology trainings for patrons. Throughout his tenure, Scott has developed numerous contacts and collaborative relationships that directly benefit BTBL patrons.

Please offer Scott Norris congratulations and support for his new role as manager of the Michigan Braille and Talking Book Library.

Winter Reading BINGO

Looking to read something outside of your box? Try the BTBL Winter Reading Bingo for ALL AGES. This is just for fun—no prizes will be given this year. To participate, read books that meet the criteria on the Bingo card below by March 20th, 2021 (the last day of winter!). When you are done, call us to report your favorite book read in your Bingo. We will share as many of your selections as possible in our Spring newsletter, so others can try them too!

Read a book with a color in the title	Read a book about an animal	Read the first book in a series	Read a book with a one word title	Read a book set in Michigan
Read a book about a family	Read a historical fiction book	Read an award winning book	Read a book by a female author	Read a biography
Read a book with a number in the title	Read a nonfiction book	FREE	Read poetry	Read a romance
Read a book set in the future	Read a mystery book	Read western	Read a book that is set in another country	Read a book with a winter word in the title
Read a classic	Read a book about magic	Read a book by a Michigan author	Read a true crime book	Read a book about friendship

Favorite Bingo Book: _____

BTBL Calendar

BTBL Club Info

Clubs are currently virtual only. Computer and Book Club meet the second Saturday of the month at 10:30 and 1:30, respectively. Club dates are always subject to change, especially around the holidays.

As always, you may join our clubs by dialing 1-888-278-0296 and entering the access code 5836578. Or you can also now join meetings via Zoom by contacting the library to request the meeting invite.

BTBL Calendar of Events:

December 24-25: Lansing BTBL closed for the holiday.

December 31 - January 1: Lansing BTBL closed for the holiday.

January 9: **Technology Club – TBA**

January 9: **Book Club – *The Answer Is...: Reflections on my life***
by Alex Trebek (DB99678)

February 12: **Technology Club – TBA**

February 12: **Book Club – TBA**

December 15 - March 20th: **Winter Reading Bingo**

April 22: **Consumer Involvement Committee (CIC) Meeting –**
This call is open to all patrons. We encourage your participation! Use the dial-in information listed above, and join us from 1-2:30 p.m..

Technology Corner

Scott Norris and Bridgid Turner, Adaptive Technology Librarians
1-800-992-9012 or norriss5@michigan.gov

Are you a BARD sleuth, a searching master? Do you want to be? There are so many ways to search BARD, but how do you know what is the best way? That depends on what you are looking for.

Do you only want new stuff? If this is the case, your best option is to start at the recently added books tab. This is the first thing on the BARD main page, and it offers a list of books and magazines that have been added in the last thirty days. However, if you are more of a bestsellers sort of person, you might enjoy the most popular books tab which is the second stop on the BARD main page. It gives you a list of the most downloaded books from the previous 30 days.

Do you prefer to search for specific books or titles? Then the search the collection box is the place for you. You can type an author's name or a title right in this box, but make sure you spell it correctly as the search engine does not autocorrect like google. There are also browse by author's last name and browse by book title, but both require you to select the first letter, so they are more cumbersome and less efficient.

You also have the option to check through the foreign language collection which offers titles in Spanish, French, German, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Chinese and Arabic, as well as the music collection which offers music books and scores.

Lastly, you can peruse our magazine offerings under magazines by title. You can select a magazine and also subscribe so that the magazines latest issues are automatically added to your wish list.

Want to know what others are searching? The most popular search subject this year, by far, was Mystery and Detective Stories, followed by Western Stories, Bestsellers and Romance. (Most books on BARD are assigned multiple subject categories.) The most frequently searched-for authors were Nora Roberts, Danielle Steel, James Patterson, John Grisham and Stuart Woods.

Local Recordings

Betsie Branch, Studio Coordinator Librarian
1-800-992-9012 or branchb1@michigan.gov

These books were recorded by volunteers at the Michigan Braille and Talking Book Library and are available on digital cartridge or for download from the National Library Service's (NLS) online Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) database: <https://nlsbard.loc.gov/>

NON-FICTION

DBC11182 - *Blue Water, Red Metal & Green Gold: the Color of Michigan's Past* by Larry B. Massie, read by Michael P. Donovan - 2014. (7h 51m)

DBC16174 - *The Great Water: a Documentary History of Michigan* by Matthew R. Thick, read by Michael P. Donovan - 2018. (14h 55m)

DBC11174 - *Michigan's Crossroads to Freedom: the Underground Railroad in Jackson County* by Linda Hass, read by Lili Krezel - 2017. (5h 42m)

HISTORICAL FICTION

DBC16183 - *Unending Devotion* by Jody Hedlund, read by Caitlin Wolfe - Michigan, 1883. When Lily Young and Connell McCormick set out to save her lost sister, Lily challenges everything he thought he knew about life and love. 2012. (9h 31m)

DBC11217 - *Windigo Moon: a Novel of Native America* by Robert Downes, read by Lili Krezel - When a young native American girl's clan is savagely attacked by a rival tribe, life as she knows it is changed forever. Descriptions of sex, violence, and strong language. 2017. (11h 59m)

DBC11176 - *The Belle of Two Arbors* by Paul R. Dimond, read by Lili Krezel - Belle writes poetry as she grows up in northern Michigan and attends college in Ann Arbor. 2017. (22h 48m)

BTBL Staff Picks

Caitlin Wolfe, Librarian
1-800-992-9012 or wolfec@michigan.gov

DB83318 - *Not If I See You First* by Eric Lindstrom. While coping with her father's recent death, blind sixteen-year-old Parker Grant navigates friendships and romantic relationships, including a run-in with a boy who previously broke her heart. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. For senior high and older readers. 2015.

“This modern romance is unusual enough that it kept me guessing until the very end. Don’t shy away from this just because it’s considered Young Adult fiction. The main character will quickly steal your heart!” – Stephanie, BTBL Librarian

DB 56867 - *Lucia, Lucia* by Adriana Trigiani. Kit Zanetti visits her elderly Greenwich Village neighbor, Lucia Sartori, and learns the story of her life. In the 1950s, beautiful Lucia rejects the values of her large Italian family by working in the fashion industry, breaking off her engagement, and falling in love with a con man. Some strong language. Bestseller. 2003.

“I kept waiting for the Sharks or the Jets to jump on to the scene snapping their fingers! Though this book is set a little earlier than West Side Story, it is the story of second generation New York city. I love the descriptions of the custom dressmaking shop and the family dynamics, and the writing is beautifully compelling.” – Betsie, BTBL Librarian

DB 98326 - *Almost Just Friends* by Jill Shalvis. Piper is finally done raising her siblings. All she has to do is finish fixing up her grandparents’ lake house, sell it, and she’s free. She meets Camden and there is an undeniable attraction, but Piper’s family obligations aren’t quite over. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. 2020.

“This was a fun light read. I related to Piper’s feeling of family responsibility and the interesting way that family dynamics change over time. I have read others in this series and liked them as well. It is part of the Wildstone Series, but this series does not really need to be read in order.” – Bridgid, BTBL Librarian

DB 73463 - *The Psychopath Test: A Journey Through the Madness Industry* by Jon Ronson. Author of *The Men Who Stare at Goats* (DB 60917) explores psychiatry's efforts to recognize and treat psychopaths. Interviews include a doctor who developed a checklist of psychopathic traits, a former Haitian death-squad leader, and an ex-CEO who seemed to enjoy firing workers. Strong language and some violence. Bestseller. 2011.

“Jon Ronson’s friendly, sometimes relatably-neurotic tone makes the topic of psychopathy much more approachable and entertaining than I would have thought possible. He helps solve a mystery and skims over a few case studies, giving the reader a glimpse into the similarities in the minds of psychopaths and how differently their lives can turn out. He doesn’t shy away from differing opinions, and that makes for an interesting read.” – Caitlin, BTBL Librarian

DB 84263 – *Be Frank With Me* by Julia Johnson. Alice Whitley works for a publisher who sends her to California to help reclusive author Mimi Banning deliver her long-awaited second novel. While Mimi locks herself in her office supposedly writing every day, Alice takes care of Frank, Mimi’s ferociously intelligent but eccentric young son. 2016

“I loved the complex relationships and quirky characters in this unique story. Boiled down, the main message in this book is one of tolerance, and it was very heartwarming to read about.” – Stephanie, BTBL Librarian

DB 86608 – *Born A Crime: Stories from a South African childhood* by Trevor Noah. The host of TV’s *The Daily Show* shares his coming-of-age story as the child of a white father and black mother in South Africa. Their very union was considered a crime, and when the author was born during apartheid, his biracial status made him an outcast. Some violence, strong language, and some descriptions of sex. Commercial audiobook. 2016.

“This book is at once hilarious, horrifying and touching. He tells the amazing story of his journey from childhood to where he is now, which was clearly not an easy one. It details the horrors of Apartheid and the way race and language shaped a country. Hearing the book in Trevor Noah’s voice makes it ten times better. Be prepared for a roller coaster.” – Bridgid, BTBL Librarian

BARD Mobile Patrons: Please return machines

If you use BARD mobile to download books to a personal device, and no longer have a need for your Digital Talking Book Player, please return your machine to the library. Include a note indicating that you are BARD only, and that the machine does not need to be replaced. Let us know if you need a box and/or a return label. The machines can be returned via Free Matter for the Blind, so no postage is necessary.

More NLS patron surveys on the way

You may have received a survey call last year from Gallup polling asking questions about your NLS service. Below is a short summary of the survey issued by NLS, along with plans of more surveys to come. If you receive a survey call, please take the time to answer the questions! Your responses are important to us, and how we move forward with the service.

Last year, NLS teamed up with the Gallup polling and research company to survey current and potential patrons—more than 5,000 in all—about a variety of topics, including their access to and ability to use technology.

“A majority of our patrons have technology that would enable them to use BARD (the NLS Braille and Audio Reading Download service) - a computer or smartphone or tablet with Internet access,” said David Spett, NLS’s data analyst. “But most of those people are not using BARD. We had previously believed that lack of technology or Internet access was the problem, but that seems to not necessarily be the case. A lot of people said they don’t use BARD because they prefer mail delivery or aren’t comfortable with newer technology.”

Now NLS is planning two more surveys with Gallup to follow up on what it learned last year. “Findings from these surveys will improve our understanding of the best way to modernize and improve our operations,” he said.

By: Mark Layman, NLS Staff

Free Large Print Calendars

A free large print calendar is only a phone call away. Anyone that received a calendar from us in the past will automatically get the 2020 calendar- these should arrive by mid-December. If you have not received one before and would like to get one this year, please call 1-800-992-9012.

Around the State

The following programs may be offered only to patrons within the counties served for each library location. To find out if a program is available to you, refer to the library listings on page 14 or call the location in question to verify.

Talking Book Library @ Traverse Area District Library

610 Woodmere Ave, Traverse City, MI 49686 • 1-877-931-8558

- **Office Hours.** Currently our office is closed to the public. We are staffed and offering curbside service on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10a.m.– 4p.m. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, we conduct all regular business remotely, so feel free to call and leave a detailed message with your book orders and questions, or email tbl@tadl.org.
- **Support Groups.** The Traverse City Visually Impaired Persons group meets monthly, currently through conference call. Contact Melinda Hollands at 231-590-0986 or mhollandstc@gmail.com for more information. The Cadillac Area Low Vision group is on temporary hiatus, but usually meets the second Tuesday of each month at the Wexford County Council on Aging, 10-11a.m. Contact Connie Payne at 231-779-0149 for updates.
- **Magnifier Exchange.** Do you have a clean, working magnifying device you no longer use? We are happy to accept donations of handheld magnifiers (at least 4x), digital CCTV readers, free-standing magnifiers etc. to pass along to other patrons who can use them, free of charge. Please call 231-932-8558 with questions or to coordinate a curbside drop-off.

Macomb Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped @ CMPL

40900 Romeo Plank, Clinton Township, MI 48038 • 1-855-203-5274

- **Book Discussion Group by Phone.** We host a book discussion group once a month by phone. The library chooses the title to read and distributes the audiobook weeks prior to the discussion date. If you would like to join in on our fun and informal discussion, please call the library.

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- **Technology Questions.** Technology can be frustrating at best and downright impossible to deal with at its worst. Our Macomb Library for the Blind technology tutor, Marie, may be able to get you on the right path. If you have issues dealing with a Windows-based computer, need ideas to make your computer more adaptable, or have a question about your iPad, iPod or iPhone, we will make an appointment for you with Marie so you can talk with her over the phone.
 - **Vision Network Group by Phone.** Connecting with other people who have vision issues can be a good way to realize you are not alone with your daily challenges. In these times, when it is hard leave home, the Macomb Library for the Blind has a solution for you. Our library hosts a Vision Network Group by phone. The phone meeting is moderated by our facilitator, Marie, for 90 minutes, the group discusses issues that people with vision challenges face on a daily basis. Callers share solutions and experiences with one another in a friendly and informal environment. And the best part is, you do not need to leave home to be a part of the group. If you would like more details about the group, please call the library at (586) 286-1580.

Braille and Talking Books @ Taylor Community Library

12303 Pardee Rd, Taylor, Michigan 48180 • **1-844-307-1621**

- **Remote Programs Currently Offered.** Currently, programs are only being offered remotely due to COVID-19. Call in to our conference line at: 712-775-7031, access code: 965803. Or online at bit.ly/TCLbtbcall
 - **Brown Bag Book Discussion.** Meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 12 p.m. Please call for titles.
 - **Visually Impaired People's (VIP) Support Group.** Meets the 4th Wednesday of the month at 12 p.m.
- **Curbside Pickup is also available!** Call ahead to request digital books during our curbside hours and we'll bring them right out to you when you arrive! Current curbside hours are:
 - Monday - Thursday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Friday - Saturday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 - *Please note, we are closed from 1 p.m. - 2 p.m. daily for cleaning.

Oakland Talking Book Service @ Rochester Hills Public Library
500 Olde Towne Rd, Rochester, MI 48307 • 1-800-774-4542

- **Book Discussion Groups.** Please join us for one of our monthly book discussion groups. Book groups meet at 1 p.m. on the 1st Monday and 2nd Wednesday of the month over the phone and discussions normally run 60 to 90 minutes. To join the call, simply dial 888-916-5522. No password is needed. For details and book selections, please call 248-650-5681.
- **New! Dial-In Technology Club.** New for 2020, each quarter we will help you navigate a different kind of adaptive technology over the phone. Join us by dialing 888-916-5522.
 - Monday, January 18, 1 p.m.: What is BARD? Did you know that OTBS patrons have access to BARD, the Braille and Audio Reading Download program of the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled? Using a free app on your smartphone or tablet, you can download any of our hundreds of thousands of audiobooks to your device without waiting to receive a cartridge in the mail. Join us to learn how to sign up for and use this fantastic resource.

Library for Assistive Media and Talking Books (St. Clair County)
210 McMorran Blvd, Port Huron, MI 48060 • 1-800-272-8570

- **LAMTB develops podcast.** We will be setting up a podcast in 2021 that will explore our library services, including Talking Books. The podcast will be hosted by LAMTB librarian Mary Howard and reference librarian Carli Saffert. We hope to have this go live in the spring. We will have a format that is open ended for most of the segment and then there will be an interview for the final portion of the broadcast. The development of this service is for patrons who wish to learn more about the library but may not be able to visit our branches. As the pandemic is still an issue, we wanted to offer communication for those who are not able to travel due to health issues or other circumstances. Please either call LAMTB services at 810-987-7323 or visit our website at stclaircountylibrary.org for information on this podcast.

Muskegon Area District Library for the Visually and Physically Disabled

4845 Airline Road, Unit 5, Muskegon, MI 49444 • 1-877-569-4801

- **Bookmobile Coming Soon!** Our library system, the Muskegon Area District Library, is getting a new bookmobile in Spring 2021. Librarian Sarah will be working with the driver to come out and visit.
- **Support Groups.** Call into our local low vision support groups, which all meet monthly, at 701-801-6449.
 - o Muskegon County: 3rd Wednesday at 1:45 p.m.
 - o Ottawa County:
 - Grand Haven – 2nd Tuesday at 2:15 p.m.
 - Holland & Zeeland – 4th Monday at 2:15 p.m.

Detroit Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

3666 Grand River Ave, Detroit, MI 48208 • 1-313-481-1702

- **Staff Available to Help.** Staff is in the building, ready to answer phone calls and take orders for talking books, however, we are currently closed to the public.

Great Lakes Talking Books

1615 Presque Isle, Marquette, MI 49855 • 1-800-562-8985

- **Two Books, Two Communities. Two Books, Two Communities.** Join our virtual book club! Two Books, Two Communities is a partnership between Northern Michigan University and Marquette/Alger Counties. The books chosen for 2020 are: *To the Copper Country* (not available through BTBL) and *Women of the Copper Country* (DB 96426). You can request *To the Copper Country* if you have a public library membership, then use Libby to access the E-book (where you can enlarge the text).
- **Closed to the Public.** We are no longer open to the public for walk-in visits. Staff is once again working from home for the time being.

BSBP Updates

Dear Library Patrons,

I am proud of our library team pulling together to ensure the essential services of talking books and alternative media continue. Behind the scenes, a core group of library staff and staff from our Training Center in Kalamazoo support the day-to-day logistical operations, while other library staff support our valued patrons through remote telework.

Despite challenges, BSBP continues to provide programmatic services in the areas of Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living, Youth Low Vision, and the Business Enterprise Program. BSBP's innovation in virtual service delivery created new opportunities for our customers. While virtual services can never replace in-person services, our team has shown that virtual connections and trainings can maintain a level of current engagement and ultimately enhance in-person services.

Framed by our vision, mission, and core values, BSBP continues to:

- 1) Be fiscally responsible
- 2) Focus on modernization of processes and systems
- 3) Focus on transformational service models
- 4) Invest in our people for next generation leadership.

At the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2020, BSBP exceeded its fiscal goals and secured additional federal funding. BTBL migrated to a new library automated system. BSBP added a data analytics module to its Vocational Rehabilitation system, piloted customized employment service delivery models, created innovative procedures and program services for blind and visually impaired students, developed virtual curricula and virtual adjustment to blindness training, invested in training and development of professional staff, and promoted Juan Ortiz to Training Center Division Director. I would like to wish everyone a holiday season of peace, happiness, and fellowship with friends and family.

My very best,

Bill Robinson, BSBP Director

Michigan Talking Book Libraries

Bureau of Services for Blind Persons, Braille and Talking Book Library

1-800-992-9012 Counties served: Alcona, Allegan, Arenac, Barry, Bay, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Clare, Clinton, Eaton, Emmet, Gladwin, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Ingham, Iosco, Isabella, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Lake, Lapeer, Lenawee, Livingston, Mason, Mecosta, Midland, Monroe, Montmorency, Newaygo, Oceana, Ogemaw, Osceola, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle, Roscommon, Saginaw, Shiawassee, Saint Joseph, Van Buren

Washtenaw Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled @ AADL

1-734-327-4224 Counties served: Washtenaw

Great Lakes Talking Books

1-800-562-8985 Counties served: Alger, Alpena, Baraga, Chippewa, Crawford, Delta, Dickinson, Gogebic, Houghton, Iron, Keweenaw, Luce, Mackinac, Marquette, Menominee, Ontonagon, Schoolcraft

Oakland Talking Book Service @ RHPL

1-800-774-4542 Counties served: Oakland

Genesee District Talking Book Center

1-866-732-1120 Counties served: Genesee

Kent District Library Talking Book and Braille Center

1-616-784-2007 Counties served: Ionia, Kent, Montcalm

Traverse Area District Library & Talking Book Library

1-877-931-8558 Counties served: Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Wexford

Library for Assistive Media and Talking Books (St. Clair County)

1-800-272-8570 Counties served: Huron, Saint Clair, Sanilac, Tuscola

Muskegon Area District Library for the Visually and Physically Disabled

1-231-737-6310, 1-877-569-4801 (Ottawa) Counties served: Muskegon, Ottawa

Macomb Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped @ CMPL

1-586-286-1580 Counties served: Macomb

Braille and Talking Books @ Taylor Community Library

1-734-287-4840 Serving Wayne County

Detroit Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

1-313-481-1702 Serving cities of Detroit and Highland Park

Library of Michigan Foundation

By making a gift to the Library of Michigan Foundation, donors can help the BSBP Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) better serve thousands of Michigan residents statewide who are visually impaired or have other disabilities. Donors may also opt to provide for the Library of Michigan Foundation in their wills. By doing so, donors are able to make a larger gift than what might be possible during their lifetime, become eligible to receive tax benefits, and enjoy recognition and thanks now for their planned charitable contributions later. To make a gift of support, please send a check to the Library of Michigan Foundation, P.O. Box 11027, Lansing, MI 48901, or contact Darlene at **517-335-1488**.

The Library of Michigan Foundation is a non-profit organization which offers financial support to the BSBP Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) program.

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If you would like to receive future mailings and information from the Library of Michigan Foundation, please sign below and return to:

Library of Michigan Foundation
P.O. Box 11027
Lansing, MI 48901



Check for further information:

- Gifts and Bequests
- Named Endowed Funds
- I have included you in my will.
- Here is a gift of \$ _____ to help enhance the BSBP Braille and Talking Book Library program.

L I B R A R Y O F
M I C H I G A N
F O U N D A T I O N

Signature: _____

BSBP Braille and
Talking Book Library
702 W Kalamazoo St.
P.O. Box 30007
Lansing, MI 48909

**FREE
MATTER
FOR THE
BLIND**

How to Reach the BSBP Braille and
Talking Book Library (BTBL)

By Phone: 1-800-992-9012 (toll-free)

By Fax: 1-800-726-7323 (toll-free)

By E-Mail: btbl@michigan.gov

On the Web:

www.michigan.gov/btbl

BARD:

<https://nlsbard.loc.gov>
(to download digital books)

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in braille or via email. BTBL is
committed to providing information
in the format you prefer!*

The *In Focus* Newsletter
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The Braille and Talking Book
Library (BTBL); Bureau of
Services for Blind Persons
(BSBP).