

READING MATTERS

Fall 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

Phone: 206-615-0400 • Statewide toll free: 1-800-542-0866

wtbbl@sos.wa.gov • www.wtbbl.org

THAT ALL MAY READ...

From the Director by Danielle Miller

On August 9, WTBBL said goodbye to an incredible leader, a visionary librarian, and most of all, a friend. Jan Ames passed away peacefully in her home from lung cancer. She began her career at the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library in 1969 as a librarian, then led the reader services department, and in 1979, she became the director and served in that role until her retirement in 2002.

During her 33 years at the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library, Jan made many significant contributions and supported staff and patrons in both tangible and intangible ways. Thanks to Jan's advocacy and forward thinking, WTBBL may have had the first blind readers' advisor in the national network. She revitalized the local braille production program, and as perhaps her most visible legacy, she orchestrated the purchase of the facility at Ninth and Lenora that houses WTBBL.

I met Jan within weeks of starting at the library in 2008. She quietly offered herself as a resource, but I could tell she wanted to give me the space to make WTBBL my own. The Talking Book & Braille Library is like a family, and I knew I wanted Jan to continue to be a part of it. Over the years I could count on Jan for advice, her knowledge and experience with

the Legislature, as someone I could call to talk through ideas or problems, and as a wonderful lunch or dinner companion.

Jan also served as a board member on the Heritage Center Trust, which oversees WTBBL gift funds. Our requests to the board have created and funded the youth services program, outreach programs, funded assistive technology and more. Jan was instrumental in supporting my requests and these initiatives, making possible so many of the innovative things that WTBBL does.

WTBBL is what it is today because of Jan's contributions, and I am so thankful to have had her as a friend and mentor. I can't think of anyone who better personifies the vision "That all may read" than Jan Ames.

The State Library Connects by Cindy Aden

In my last message to you, I shared the State Library's new mission statement and the fact that we completed our first strategic plan in a number of years. On August 30, we had another first. We brought together all staff from every part of the State Library — the nine prison libraries, the two state hospital libraries, WTBBL, and the Central Library in Tumwater. All the libraries were closed for the day, so I apologize for the inconvenience it may have caused, but I am so thankful we had this opportunity.

We had 62 people gathered, from our newest employee, new WTBBL Assistant Manager Alycia Ensminger, to our longest-serving staff member, Glenn Parsons in Technical Services at the Central Library, who has served for 40 years. It is amazing and humbling to see how many people have stayed with the State Library over the years and have found its mission and serving its patrons meaningful enough to make a lifetime commitment. At WTBBL there are three employees who have served for over 30 years!

Now that the library staff knows a bit more about each other and what we all do, we are turning our attention to making the action items from our strategic plan a reality. Increasing outreach is one of WTBBL's key goals, and the library is already engaged. WTBBL participated once again in the Fiestas Patrias community event which gives the library a chance to reach out to Latino and Hispanic users. The State Library had a presence at the Washington State Fair in September, and information about WTBBL services was, as always, a popular feature of our booth. And that is not all — I know Danielle and her staff have a busy fall of other outreach activities planned.

WTBBL lost one of its most important supporters late this summer when former director Jan Ames passed away. Jan had been an ardent supporter of the library, through over 20 years of service as director and all through her retirement. She was sure to visit for every important event and we all just saw her at the celebration for the Network Library of the Year award in July. We are deeply saddened to lose Jan and forever grateful for the legacy she established with her long and loyal tenure. Our hearts go out to her family. How lucky we all were to have someone like Jan on our side for all of these years!

Enjoy fall! It is here already. You can feel it in the air and in the sunlight — those bright, hot days seem to be behind us. Thank you all for all you do to support WTBBL!

Meet Our New Assistant Manager, Aly Ensminger!

Greetings! I've worked in libraries and archives of many types, and I've never been so excited to support a community quite like WTBBL. I'm tremendously excited to be part of this organization! I will be working with our audio, volunteer, and braille departments, and encourage you to stop by and introduce yourself.

I'm originally from Philadelphia, and came to Seattle in 2013. I miss the cannoli, but none of the snow! My favorite books include *Alice in Wonderland*, *Great Expectations* and all things Neil Gaiman. In my spare time I enjoy painting and cooking for friends.

Meet WTBBL 's New Youth Services Librarian, Erin Groth!

I've worked with children and teens in both library and school settings, and am passionate about delivering meaningful information services to local families. I am so excited to join the WTBBL team, to work with its diverse group of patrons, and to share my love of children's literature and storytelling!

I moved from Tallahassee, Florida, to Seattle in 2015, and have enjoyed getting to know the unique neighborhoods that make up this amazing community. I have truly fallen for the Pacific Northwest! When I'm not at home in Greenwood, I enjoy hiking with my two dogs, illustrating, and reading all sorts of books. Some favorites are *Strega Nona* by Tomie dePaola, *Extra Yarn* by Mac Barnett, and *Binti* by Nnedi Okorafor.

Audio Books at WTBBL: Constantly in Flux by John Pai

At any given moment, WTBBL has about 230 to 240 titles in the process of audio production. Books could be in the recording stage, or perhaps, the review or prep-for-recording phase. They could be in mark-up for correction. New recordings with corrections from the narrators may be being made via our audio editors. Some books could be in the final stages prior to uploading to BARD.

The bottom line is that we always have new titles available as a constant stream of production. With over 70 volunteer narrators, 15 to 20 volunteer reviewers and four audio editors, we've been able to achieve a greater efficiency in the processing and completion of new material. Some of our newly completed and uploaded titles include:

DBC 597 *The Barefoot Bandit: The True Tale of Colton Harris-Moore, New American Outlaw* by Bob Friel.

Story of a boy born into a poor family marked by alcohol abuse, who had the local sheriff after him by the time he was ten. Eventually he graduated from robbing homes and cabins to stealing cars and airplanes. Written by a reporter who lives on Orcas Island. Some strong language. 2012. Narrated by Gregg Porter.

DBC 389 *The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War* by David Laskin.

Twelve immigrants to the U.S. were transformed by their brief but intense experiences as soldiers in WWI. They included Italians, Poles, Scandinavians, Slovaks, Jews, and Irishmen. Most of them did not relish military service, and some of them fled their homelands to avoid conscription. As they went through boot camp and on to combat in France, they gradually merged with their fellow soldiers into a true American army. Some violence. 2010. Narrated by Florrie Munat.

DBC 312 *Saks & Violins: A Bed-and-Breakfast Mystery* by Mary Daheim.

World-famous musician Dolph Kluger drops dead of rhubarb poisoning during a reception at Seattle's Hillside Manor B&B. In order to save her business, proprietor Judith McMonigle Flynn launches her own investigation to uncover a killer. 2006. Narrated by Elizabeth Lopic.

DBC 417 *My Fluorescent God: A Psychotherapist Confronts His Most Challenging Case – His Own* by Joe Guppy.

Joe Guppy's life derailed in 1979. The 23-year-old was dealing with a bad breakup and existential angst, but it was a few stomach pills he took in Mexico that pushed him straight into the mental ward of Seattle's Providence Hospital or, as he perceived it, Hell. In the ensuing six months, he battled his real-life demons, jumped out a second-story window, and encountered God in a fluorescent light fixture. Recreated from journal

entries and the notes of mental health professionals, the story of the author's struggle to rebuild his sanity is a spiritual and psychological adventure. Some strong language. 2014. Narrated by Tony Soper.

And for young adult readers we have:

DBC 6727 *Seeing Red: The True Story of Blood* by Tanya Lloyd Kyi.

Gory and fascinating, blood is at the heart of human life. Explore this vital fluid through a mixture of science, history, pop culture, and even food. For grades 4-7. 2012. Narrated by Shay Troupe.

DBC 6843 *Survival Strategies of the Almost Brave* by Jen White.

Liberty, aged 12, is abandoned with her 8-year-old sister at a gas station. Not willing to trust any strangers, Liberty begins an odyssey to a friend's house. She knows a lot about animals and has recorded their behavior in a treasured notebook, now her resource of survival strategies. She makes bad decisions, encounters scary people, and faces many challenges before finding some adults can be trusted. For grades 4-7. 2015. Narrated by Nadine Haglin.

DBC 6715 *The Story of Buildings: From the Pyramids to the Sydney Opera House and Beyond* by Patrick Dillon.

From the pyramid erected so that an Egyptian pharaoh would last forever to the dramatic, machine-like Pompidou Center designed by two young architects, Patrick Dillon's stories of remarkable buildings — and the remarkable people who made them — celebrate the ingenuity of human creation. For grades 5-8. 2014. Narrated by Gregg Porter.

DBC 194 *Stealing Bases* by Anne Key.

All Charley Lemain wants in the world is to play softball well enough to get into UT and to hang with her bestie Kaylee. That's why it's so disappointing when she tears her rotator cuff and has to spend most of her senior year not playing and not practicing, in fact, not doing much of

anything but watching Kaylee cheer and flirt with her quarterback boyfriend. Charley needs to figure out what's going on in her body, in her life, and most importantly, in her heart. For high school and older readers. 2015. Narrated by Barb Scamman.

New Local Books in Braille by Ed Godfrey

Our 2017-18 braille transcribing class began on October 18. Twenty students are enrolled, and we look forward to a great learning experience!

Many new braille titles are currently in process, and here are some newly completed ones to enjoy.

BRW 1329 *Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest* by Ella E. Clark.

A highly readable collection of over one hundred myths gathered from interviews with contemporary Indians and from published material. 1953. Transcribed by Gail Viscione.

BRW 1347 *The Car That Brought You Here Still Runs: Revisiting the Northwest Towns of Richard Hugo* by Frances McCue.

Richard Hugo visited places and wrote about them. Often his knowledge of the towns was confined to what he heard in bars and diners in an afternoon. From these snippets, he crafted poems. Returning 40 years after Hugo visited these places, McCue maps Hugo's poems back to the places that triggered them. 2010. Transcribed by Joan Moritz.

BRW 1441 *Higher: 100 Years of Boeing* by Russ Banham.

Over the course of a century, the Boeing Company has grown from a small outfit operating out of a converted boathouse — producing a single pontoon plane made from canvas and wood — into the world's largest aerospace company. This book tells the story of the industrial competition and technological advances behind Boeing's airplanes and aerospace products. 2015. Transcribed by Gail Viscione.

BRW 1457 *Too High & Too Steep: Reshaping Seattle's Topography* by David B. Williams.

The early settlers of Seattle would not recognize today's landscape. Ambitious engineering projects leveled hills, filled in shorelines, moved rivers, and created an island in the 19th and early 20th centuries. This is the story of how ambition, shovels, and hydraulic power shaped the face of a major city. 2015. Transcribed by Mary Forster.

Volunteers Jim and Elke Make their Mark!

Braille proofreading team Jim Owens and Elke Boettcher have worked together for more than 10 years. Like many great teams, they come from different backgrounds and a certain serendipity brought them together. Jim is from Minnesota. He grew up in Tacoma and graduated from the University of Washington with a law degree. Elke is from Germany, came to Seattle in the 1960s as part of a U.S. State Department professional exchange program, and worked for the Seattle Public Library for 30 years.

Jim has been volunteering at WTBBL since 1994, and was working in our shipping department inspecting returned talking books when a braille proofreader was needed in our braille department. After a Seattle Public Library colleague recommended us to Elke in 2001, she was partnered with the braille department manager in a proofreading team. Jim's braille skills were just what we needed to complement Elke's eye to detail on the printed page. Tasks and schedules were rearranged, and a new team was born!

Among the dozens of Northwest-themed books they have worked on at WTBBL include *Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics* by Dan Brown

(BRC 1640); *Too High & Too Steep: Reshaping Seattle's Topography* by David B. Williams (BRW 1457); and *Wolves in the Land of Salmon* by David Moskowitz (BRW 1445).

Jim:

If it weren't for WTBBL, I wouldn't have all those braille books that made me a better speller and generally broadened my horizons and increased my understanding of things. It has made my life enormously richer than it would have been otherwise.

Elke:

American libraries are unique and a tremendous community center and resource. Users of the library cover all classes and access to information for all makes it a democratic institution in the best sense.

WTBBL Thanks Its Donors from June 1, 2017 – September 30, 2017

Your gifts come to us in many forms, from bequests to matching gifts, annual campaign donors to donors who support GiveBig. Some folks gave in memory of a loved one, others gave through their workplace, while some chose to give \$10 a month through our recurring donor program. No one way is better than another. We accept gifts of all kinds, through all different formats, and we are extremely grateful for each and every one! Thank you to all the donors who contributed to WTBBL from June 1 to September 30, 2017!

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Questions? Please contact Laura Mott at (360) 902-4171 or laura.mott@sos.wa.gov.