

Kentucky Talking Book Library Newsletter April 2023



Talking Book Service Explained

Whether you are a new patron or have been using Talking Books for decades, we want you to understand how our service operates behind the scenes so we can work together to meet your reading needs. We rely on an integrated library system, called WebReads, to automatically manage our patron accounts, collection, machine inventory, and circulation. Below is an explanation how this relates to you. Call, email, or write us if you wish to update your account after reading this.

Reading Interests-- Each patron's account lists the general categories of books they are interested in. Some popular examples are Biographies, Christian Fiction, Mysteries, Romance, US History, or Westerns. Some categories have subcategories. For example, some of the subcategories under Romance are Historical Romances, Paranormal Romances, Regency Romances, Romantic Suspense, and Western Romances. As new books are entered into our system, they are assigned appropriate categories.

Autoselect-- 85% of our patrons have elected for the library to pick books for them if they run out of their own requests. That is way too many for our librarians to personally select. Instead, we rely on a computer program called Autoselect. Here is how it works: When it is time to send books to you, the computer will pick them from your request list. If your request list runs low, that signals us to run our Autoselect program to find books that match your general reading interests. For example, if you have indicated you like Mysteries/Suspense, you will get any books that are tagged as such. Will you like them all? Of course not! Autoselect does have its limits—it can only find books you might like. It works best for those who have a variety of interests and who like to discover new books and authors. Patrons who are very particular are better suited to select all their own books. Patrons who choose this option are called Request Only patrons and we do not select books for them.

Favorite Authors--The Autoselect feature also allows us to select books by author. If you have favorite authors (or even least favorite authors) let us know and we can indicate it on your account. New books by favorite authors will automatically be added to your request list.

Content Exclusions—some people do not want to receive books with cursing, sex, or violence. Others may be okay with some mild or occasional instances, but do not want explicit content. Still others don't mind at all—they don't want to miss a good book regardless of its content. Books recorded by NLS indicate whether they contain any of these “ratings”, but more and more books are commercial recordings that are “unrated”. These books may or may not include cursing, sex, or violence. You may have us exclude unrated books from your selections, but keep in mind that could filter out perfectly clean books as well as those with exclusionary content. Anytime you request a specific title or author, we will add it to your list regardless of content.

Circulation Patterns—You do not have to call the library when you need books; they are automatically sent according to a circulation pattern tailored to you. Your circulation pattern refers to how many books we send at a time and how often we send them. There are 2 basic types. Calendar Service means WebReads will send you books on a regular basis; it can be every week, every other week, or every month. Turnaround Service means you will have a set number of cartridges on loan to you at any time. This includes those that are in transit, as well as those you have on hand. Whenever a cartridge returns to the library, another will automatically be sent to you. Whether you choose Calendar or Turnaround Service, all book cartridges are on loan for 30 days and all patrons have a limit of 3 cartridges at a time. We rely on returned cartridges so we have enough on hand to send out each day's books. If you consistently get too many or too few books, contact us to adjust your circulation pattern.

How Can I Select Books?

Last year the NLS (National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled) had to stop producing the large print version of its *Talking Book Topics* catalog. Below are several other options for those of you who want to see what is available and choose your own books. Contact us if you wish to start a subscription to the audio or braille catalog. Book requests may be mailed, emailed, or phoned in to us.

- *Talking Book Topics*—This audio catalog contains descriptions of new books and is released every other month. You may request a subscription to receive it on cartridge and may even elect to have an optional order form mailed to you separately. A print version is available online at <https://www.loc.gov/nls/>. Click on Braille and Audio Reading Materials, then Latest Books in Braille and Audio.
- *Braille Book Review*—This catalog is in braille and lists both new braille and audio books. Braille books have a brief description, while audio books list only title and author. You may subscribe to have it mailed to you or you can find it online in print or braille format at <https://www.loc.gov/nls/>—Braille and Audio Reading Materials, then Latest Books in Braille and Audio.

- NLS online catalog—if you are looking for a particular title, author, series, or subject, this new searchable, comprehensive catalog is the best place to look. Find it at <https://nlscatalog.loc.gov>. Don't have a computer? Maybe a friend or family member can help you or search for you. Basic search instructions appear later in this newsletter.
- BARD—both *Talking Book Topics* and *Braille Book Review* are available for download on the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) website. You may also search the site or browse Recently Added Books or Most Popular Books.
- Recommendations—you may receive book recommendations from family, friends, TV, radio, social media, and other sources. We may or may not have what you are looking for, but you are always welcome to call, email, or mail your requests to us.

Longer Book Descriptions

NLS has been using book descriptions provided by the publisher for most new titles since May 2022. These are longer and may provide a more complete description of a book than the shorter annotations that NLS produced for decades. We hope they will make it easier to choose titles of interest to you. A few things to be aware of: NLS uses the descriptions as provided, with no changes. They may have a different tone than traditional NLS annotations and may refer to books or supplementary materials that are not available from NLS or contained in the NLS edition. And they do not represent the position of the Library of Congress. NLS will continue to flag strong language or descriptions of sex and violence in the books it produces, but it does not provide ratings for commercial audiobooks recorded by other companies.

New NLS Online Catalog

The National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) has a new comprehensive online catalog you may use to find books. You can even use it to send a list of the books you want to your librarian to add to your request list.

Find the NLS Online Catalog at: <https://nlscatalog.loc.gov/>

- Basic search: At the top of the page is a search box called NLS Catalog Quick Search. This is the easiest way to search.
- Search by title—Omit “A”, “An”, or “The” if they are the first word of the title. You may enter a complete book title, or just the most important words. Example: enter *To Kill a Mockingbird* or enter Kill Mockingbird.
- Search by author—you may enter the author's name as first and last, or as last name, first name. Example: Jane Smith or Smith, Jane.

- Search by series—type the name of the series. To get a list of the series books in order, select one of the titles in the series, then scroll down until you see the series information and click on it.
- Search by subject—type in your topic; you may need to experiment with broader or more concise terms. Example: Kentucky History, Kentucky Civil War History, or Kentucky Civil War Battles.

Manage search results:

- Sort results—Above the first title to appear in your search results is a Sort drop-down menu. Results are sorted by relevance by default, but you may also sort by author, title, or date.
- Refine your search—click the Refine Your Search button and you can set limits to narrow your search by language or format. Example: to find only talking books in English, select English as the language, Talking Book as the type of material, and Electronic to find digital books (as opposed to older cassette books no longer in use).
- Save, print, or email selections—once you find books you want to read, check the boxes to the left of the titles. Then scroll back up to the top to choose Print, Save, or Email.
- Send selections to your librarian to add them to your request list—
Last names starting with C-I: susan.mcginnis@ky.gov
Last names starting with B, J-Q: janet.chisman@ky.gov
Last names starting with A, R-Z: tracey.mania@ky.gov
General email: KTBL.mail@ky.gov
KTBL phone: 800-372-2968 or 502-564-5791
KTBL mailing address: KTBL, PO Box 537, Frankfort KY 40602

These are just some general search instructions; please feel free to experiment using the Search Options at the top right of the screen for more advanced searching. You can also click the menu icon (three lines stacked) for much more information.

NLS Production Delays

NLS continues to experience book and magazine production delays that impact the timely upload of materials to BARD and the physical distribution of some materials to patrons. The delays have been caused by ongoing problems with the new production and inventory control system that NLS began using last year. Producers are diligently working through the resulting backlog, with priority being given to new books added to the collection and bestsellers. We apologize for the impact these production delays are having on patrons, and assure you that we are working with all parties to reduce the backlog as quickly as possible.

2023 Kentucky Talking Book Library Patron Survey

Please take a few moments to complete our annual survey. Your feedback helps us make decisions about materials, services, and procedures to help us better serve you. It also helps us justify our funding. When finished, fold the survey so our address shows, and tape it closed. No postage is necessary.

You may take the survey over the phone by calling 1-800-372-2968 or 1-502-564-5791. This survey is anonymous; however, we will need your name if you include requests or issues regarding your account.

1. Approximately how long have you received service from the Kentucky Talking Book Library?
 - a. One year or less
 - b. 2-5 years
 - c. 6-10 years
 - d. 11-20 years
 - e. More than 20 years

2. How did you learn about the Kentucky Talking Book Library? (Choose one.)
 - a. Friend or family member
 - b. Doctor's office
 - c. Government agency, such as Blind Services or Veterans Administration
 - d. Social worker or therapist
 - e. Public library
 - f. School
 - g. Internet, TV, or radio ad
 - h. Other (please describe) _____

3. On average, how much time do you spend reading braille or talking books?
 - a. Less than 1 hour per week
 - b. Between 1 and 2 hours per week
 - c. Between 3 and 6 hours per week
 - d. Between 1 and 2 hours per day
 - e. Between 3 and 6 hours per day
 - f. More than 6 hours per day

4. Would you have access to braille or audio books if you did not get them from the Kentucky Talking Book Library and/or BARD?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I'm not sure

5. Do you or anyone in your household have internet access? Select the answer that best describes your situation.
- No, no internet access
 - Yes, I have internet access and I use it myself.
 - Yes, we have internet access, and someone helps me use it.
 - Yes, we have internet access, but I do not use it.
 - I am not sure
6. If you used to receive the *Talking Book Topics* catalog in large print, how has its discontinuation affected you? Select the answer the best describes you.
- I did not receive it.
 - I am no longer able to select my own books and rely on library selections.
 - I now use the online version.
 - I now use the audio version.
 - Other (Describe.) _____
7. How do you like the new longer book descriptions found in catalogs and in the opening announcements of a book?
- I have not noticed them.
 - I like them—they give me a better understanding of what the book is about.
 - I do not like them—they are too long and/or do not necessarily give a good description of the book.
 - I don't have strong feelings one way or another.
8. Currently audio magazines are shipped from the producer, while books come from our library. They each must be returned in the proper container so they go to the correct address. Would you find it more convenient for magazines to be added to the same cartridges as your books?
- I am not interested in magazines.
 - No, I like keeping my magazines on separate cartridges from my books.
 - Yes, it would be more convenient to have them on the same cartridge.
 - I am not sure.
9. Do you or anyone in your household have an Amazon Alexa or Google Nest smart speaker?
- No
 - Yes, and I use it.
 - Yes, but I do not use it.
 - I am not sure.

10. In what areas do you benefit from using Talking Book Library service? (Select all that apply.)
- a. Pleasure reading or entertainment
 - b. Companionship
 - c. Education
 - d. Work
 - e. Religion
 - f. Health
 - g. Staying informed and connected with others
 - h. Other (please describe) _____
11. Do you feel that braille or talking books are important to your mental health?
- a. Yes, very important
 - b. Yes, somewhat important
 - c. No, not important
 - d. I don't know
12. In what areas has using braille or talking books benefitted your mental health? (Select all that apply.)
- a. Provides mental stimulation
 - b. Improves concentration or memory
 - c. Eases loneliness or boredom
 - d. Lessens depression or anxiety
 - e. Distracts from problems or pain
 - f. Increases confidence or independence
 - g. Helps me come to terms with vision loss or physical disability
 - h. Other _____
13. Please rate the overall quality of service you have received from KTBL.
- a. Excellent
 - b. Very good
 - c. Fair
 - d. Poor

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey. Call KTBL at 800-372-2968 or 502-564-5791, or email KTBL.Mail@ky.gov if you have specific issues about your service.

Free Matter for the Blind/
Physically Handicapped
DMM 703.5

KENTUCKY TALKING BOOK LIBRARY
PO BOX 537
FRANKFORT, KY 40602

KTBL Book Club

Join our monthly book club meetings to discuss how you liked (or did not like) our selections. We meet at 3:30 Eastern Time on the third Tuesday of each month. You do not have to talk—you can simply listen to the discussion. You may even prefer to read the books and skip the meetings altogether. Let us know if you wish to be added to our list for email reminders announcing the next month's book.

May 16

DB 39313

North Star Conspiracy by Miriam Grace Monfredo

Seneca Falls, New York, 1854. Six years have gone by for librarian Glynis Tryon (Seneca Falls Inheritance [DB 39265]). Glynis is still active in the women's rights movement with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and she has become involved with the new town theater and the Underground Railroad. Perhaps because of these efforts, she turns down Cullen Stuart's marriage proposal. And by staying in town she is able to help investigate several slave murders.

June 20

DB 51202

Wish You Well by David Baldacci

In 1940 a happy family outing turns to tragedy when their car overturns, killing the father and leaving the mother incapacitated. The two children, Lou and Oz, take her to great-grandmother Louisa's rural Virginia home, where the New York City kids face difficult adjustments. Some strong language. Bestseller. 2000.

July 18

DB 107924, BR 24204

Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt

After Tova Sullivan's husband died, she began working the night shift cleaning at the Sowell Bay Aquarium. Tova becomes acquainted with curmudgeonly Marcellus, a giant Pacific octopus living at the aquarium. Marcellus knows more than anyone can imagine but wouldn't dream of lifting one of his eight arms for his human captors--until he forms a remarkable friendship with Tova. Some strong language. Commercial audiobook. 2022.

August 15

DB 1000088, BR 23343

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson

The Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Warmth of Other Suns* (DB 71929) examines the unofficial castes and hierarchies she has observed as inherent in American society. She also discusses the eight pillars of all caste systems and offers ways for America to move forward. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. Bestseller. 2020.

Thank You for Your Support

On behalf of all our Talking Book patrons, we want to thank everyone who made donations to our program in 2022. We cannot list them all individually but wish to extend a public **THANK YOU!**

We also wish to thank those who sent in personal notes and letters of support. Our staff really enjoy reading them and they motivate us in our daily work. We share them anonymously in our federal reports as examples of the positive impact our program has had on its users. Please keep them coming!

If you would like to send a donation or thank you note, please make the check out to Kentucky Talking Book Library and mail it to the address below. We will send a thank you letter you can use for tax purposes.

KTBL
PO Box 537
Frankfort KY 40602

New Kentucky Books

DBC 08454 Fair is the Rose: Lowlands of Scotland, Book 2 by Liz Curis Higgs
A retelling of the Biblical story of Rachel and Leah, set in 1789 Scotland. Even though he loves high-spirited Rose, Jamie McKie was tricked into marrying her gentle sister, Leana. Now that Leana has given birth to his son, Jamie vows to do the right thing and be a good husband to her. Heartbroken Rose is sent to boarding school, but she still loves Jamie and will resort to anything to get him back. 2004.

DBC 15946 Trampoline by Robert Gipe
Fifteen-year-old Dawn Jewell drifts aimlessly through her Eastern KY community drinking, fighting, skipping school, and stealing. She is angry that she has nothing going for her except more of the same in her chaotic, lawless, drug-addicted family. She longs for a "normal" life, but makes self-destructive choices. When she unwittingly becomes a mountaintop removal activist and falls for a voice on the radio, she might have a chance at something more. Contains strong language and some violence. 2015.

DBC 15976 Batter Off Dead: A Southern Cake Baker Mystery, Book 2
by Maymee Bell

Pastry chef Sophia Cummings has recently opened a bakery, For Goodness Cakes, in her hometown of Rumford, KY and has been hired to cater the local library's charity fundraiser. The evening begins successfully, until Sophia trips and falls on the dead body of local businessman Ray Peel. Because a good friend is the chief suspect,

Sophia can't stop asking questions while delivering tasty desserts to those with motives for icing Ray. Contains recipes. 2018.

DBC 15986 What Blooms from Dust by James Markert

It is 1935 and Nowhere, Oklahoma is suffering from the Depression, drought, and daily dust storms. Jeremiah Goodbye, known as the Coin Flip Killer, returns to town after escaping from prison. He is joined by Peter, a strange young boy with a typewriter. They find the dust has taken a toll as relationships break down and the town collectively loses the will to go on. Peter becomes a catalyst to renew hope and start a process of forgiveness and redemption--especially for Jeremiah, his twin brother, and the woman they have both loved. Some violence. 2018.

DBC 15991 Missing: Secrets of Crittenden County, Book 1

by Shelley Shepard Gray

The body of Perry Borntreger, a young Amish man, is found in an abandoned well, and Sheriff Mose Kramer brings in a detective from Cincinnati to help investigate. Perry's death brings together his former friend, Walker, and his former sweetheart Lydia. Both had broken off with Perry as he descended into trouble, and both are reluctant to tell all they know about him. Now they turn to each other, especially once Lydia learns a secret about her family. Walker and Lydia spend more and more time together, despite the fact that he is Englisch and she is Amish. 2012.

DBC 17555 Talking Appalachian: Voice, Identity, and Community

By Amy D. Clark and Nancy D. Hayward

People from Appalachia have long been labeled as ignorant "hillbillies" because of the way they speak. The editors have collected works that examine this speech and show that it is a reflection of a rich heritage that should be preserved instead of replaced with standard English. It includes academic studies, personal essays by Appalachian writers, and examples of Appalachian dialect used in literature. Featured authors include George Ella Lyon, Silas House, Lee Smith, Jane Hicks, Denise Giardina, Ron Rash, Rita Quillen, Crystal Wilkinson, and Anne Shelby. 2013.

DBC 24524 A Celebration of Family: Stories of Parents with Disabilities

Collected by the Louisville Center for Accessible Living, these 30 short narratives are personal accounts of the triumphs and challenges of parenthood by people who happen to have a disability, whether sensory, physical, or cognitive. Some chapters include comments from spouses or children. Introduction by Jason Jones. 2021



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Free Matter for the Blind
and Physically Handicapped
DMM 703.5