



KENTUCKY TALKING BOOK LIBRARY

NEWSLETTER

Spring-Summer 2026

KTBL.KY.GOV • 800-372-2968 • 502-564-5791 • KTBL.MAIL@KY.GOV



WELCOME TO SUMMER READING!

A message from Kentucky Talking Book Library Branch Manager Jenny Smith:

We are thrilled to invite every KTBL patron to take part in something truly special this year — our very first Summer Reading Program! Whether you're a lifelong reader or just getting back into the habit, this summer is the perfect time to explore new stories, revisit old favorites, and connect with the joy of reading.

This summer's theme, Unearth a Story, is an invitation to dig deep into the world of books. Explore fascinating topics like archaeology, dinosaurs, hidden histories, and gardening — or uncover your next favorite author or genre with a librarian-recommended read. There's something waiting to be discovered for every reader.



Photo caption: KTBL Branch Manager Jenny Smith

For our younger patrons, summer reading keeps young minds active and engaged between school years. Research shows that students who read over the summer return to class more confident and better prepared to learn.

For adults, this program is a chance to revisit treasured favorites, branch out into new genres, and simply enjoy the pleasure of a great story. Whether you prefer audiobooks or braille, KTBL is here to support your reading adventures all summer long.

Participating is easy! Simply follow the instructions on the included Bingo card to track your reading throughout the summer. Once you complete your Bingo card, return it to KTBL and you'll receive a **free KTBL tote bag** as a thank-you for reading.

This newsletter has a list of recommended reads to help you get started. You can also reach out to your librarian directly by calling 800-372-2968 or emailing ktbl.mail@ky.gov.

For even more titles, the National Library Service has a wealth of audio and braille suggestions on their summer reading webpage at loc.gov/nls.

SUMMER READING ACTIVITIES FROM NLS

Need a break from reading? The National Library Service is offering a wonderful lineup of free virtual programs for youth and adults from June through August. Highlights include narrated soundscape walks through beloved national parks, conversations with bestselling authors, and much more — all available online or by phone.

For more information, visit www.loc.gov/nls/services-and-resources/summer-reading.

Mon., June 15 | NLS Summer Reading Kickoff Event

Information is forthcoming! Be sure to check out the KTBL Facebook page for more details as we get closer!

Tue., June 16, 4pm ET | Author Talk

Best-selling author **Peter Heller** discusses his novel **The Dog Stars** (DB 75493) with public radio journalist Maeve Conran.

Starting Mon., June 22 | Narrated Walkthrough

Narrated Soundscape walkthrough of Badlands National Park by Kathleen Slocum, Accessible Library Services Manager at South Dakota Accessible Library Services.

Tue., June 30, 4pm ET | National Parks Discussion

National Parks as Living Archives: Multidisciplinary conversation with National Park Service employees about the stories of science, history, and culture living inside New Mexico's National Park Designated sites.

Starting Mon., July 6 | Narrated Walkthrough

National Parks as Living Archives: Multidisciplinary conversation with National Park Service employees about the stories of science, history, and culture living inside New Mexico's National Park Designated sites.

Tue., July 14, 4pm ET | Author Talk

Blind authors **Leona Godin** (There Plant Eyes, DB104014, BR23825) and **Georgina Kleege** (More Than Meets the Eye, DB93533, BR22550) explore nonfiction as excavation - how the personal and the scholarly intertwine to bring buried narratives to the surface.

Starting Mon., July 20 | Narrated Walkthrough

Narrated Soundscape walkthrough of Everglades National Park by Felicia Brown, Talking Book Librarian, Special Services at Miami-Dade Public Library System.

Tue., July 28, 4pm ET | Author Talk

Pulitzer Prize winning biographer **Megan Marshall** will be in conversation with author Heather Clark about her memoir (After Lives, DBC11807).

Starting Mon., Aug. 3 | Narrated Walkthrough

Narrated Soundscape walkthrough of Cape Cod National Seashore by Kim Charlson, Executive Director at Perkins Library.

Tue., Aug. 11, 4pm ET | Panel Discussion

Fact Meets Fiction Historical Panel: Author-led exploration of the research, craft, and creative rewards of historical fiction.



KTBL SUMMER READING BINGO!

MUSIC or MUSICIANS	SOLVE A MYSTERY!	SCIENCE or SCIENCE FICTION	PAGE to SCREEN	FRIEND or FAMILY SELECTION
RECORDED in FRANKFORT	CHILDHOOD FAVORITE	BOOK in a SERIES	BIOGRAPHY or MEMOIR	FALL IN LOVE WITH A ROMANCE!
AWARD WINNER	SET OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES	YOUR CHOICE!	ALL THINGS KENTUCKY!	ESCAPE into FANTASY
DINOSAURS!	SHORT STORY COLLECTION or ANTHOLOGY	HISTORICAL FIGURES	CLASSIC	LIBRARIAN PICK FOR ME
OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE	MAGAZINE	CELEBRATE AMERICA 	ANIMALS or NATURE	TOP OF THE CHARTS / BEST-SELLERS

NAME

Once you've made a bingo, write down the titles, remove this page and fold it so that the return address on the back of this page is facing outward. Write your name above so we can send you your summer reading prize! See more details on this bingo card on page 5 of this newsletter.

**Free Matter for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
DMM 703.5**

**Kentucky Talking Book Library
PO Box 537
Frankfort, KY 40602**

BINGO!

KTBL is excited to announce our Summer Reading Bingo Card! Read a book in braille or audio for each square. Five squares in any direction make a bingo. All KTBL patrons are welcome to participate. Children, teens, and adults can all receive a prize.

Each square can be interpreted in a wide variety of ways so if you love nonfiction then the “Solve a Mystery!” square could be a True Crime book, but if you love cozy mysteries that’s perfect too! Feel free to take the broadest possible interpretation, we just want you to have fun reading.

We’ve included a few book recommendations for the “Dinosaurs!” And “America 250” squares just to get you started, but if you have any questions or would like to get recommendations from one of our librarians please reach out to us via email or phone.

Once you get a bingo, write down the titles and send the card back to us by removing the page and folding it so that the return address on the back of the bingo card is facing outward. Or if you would rather call in and tell us the titles that’s fine too! We can even keep track of your card for you so you can call in one title at a time.

If you would like to receive a list of the squares in braille or via email give us a call us at 800-372-2968, or email us at KTBL.Mail@ky.gov.

Here are all prompts for easier reading, please pick five:

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5
Music or Musicians	Solve a Mystery	Science or Sci-Fi	Page to Screen	Friend/Family Selection
Recorded in Frankfort	Childhood Favorite	Book in a Series	Biography or Memoir	Fall in Love with Romance
Award Winner	Set Outside the USA	YOUR CHOICE!	All Things Kentucky!	Escape into Fantasy
Dinosaurs!	Short Stories/Anthology	Historical Figures	Classic	Librarian Pick for Me
Outside Your Comfort Zone	Magazine	Celebrate America 250	Animals or Nature	Bestsellers

UNEARTH A STORY



Photo caption: An open book, copper digging tools and a fossil

This year’s theme for summer reading is **Unearth a Story!** Read books about dinosaurs, paleontology, and archeology. Or, just unearth a good book that’s new to you! To get you started, we’ve included a few paleontology recommendations below.

This summer also marks the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America! We’ve selected a few titles to honor our country’s history.

DB 133835 | *The Monster's Bones: The Discovery of T. Rex and How it Shook Our World* by David K. Randall

In the wake of the Gilded Age, socialite Henry Fairfield Osborn and fossil hunter Barnum Brown saved the struggling American Museum of Natural History by discovering the Tyrannosaurus rex. Their partnership turned the prehistoric giant into a public sensation, cementing dinosaurs as a permanent fixture of modern culture. For grades 5-8 and up. Narrated by Stephen Van Doren. Approximate Reading Time: 5 hours, 11 minutes

DB 130559 | *Otherlands: A Journey Through Earth's Extinct Worlds* by Thomas Halliday

Paleobiologist Thomas Halliday uses cutting-edge science and evocative prose to breathe life into sixteen fossil sites, spanning from the Ice Age to the dawn of microbial life. By reconstructing extinct ecosystems—from tropical Antarctic forests to the flooding Mediterranean—he illustrates the historical patterns of migration, adaptation, and extinction. Ultimately, the book offers a profound perspective on our current environmental crisis by highlighting the fragility of ecosystems and the inevitability of wholesale change throughout Earth's history. Narrated by Adetomiwa Edun. Approximate Reading Time: 11 hours, 10 minutes

DB 123653, BR 26477 (in process) | *Dinosaurs at the Dinner Party: How an Eccentric Group of Victorians Discovered Prehistoric Creatures and Accidentally Upended the World* by Edward Dolnick

Chronicles how the accidental discovery of massive fossils in the 19th century shattered the Victorian worldview and introduced the unnerving concept of extinction. Through the stories of eccentric pioneers like Mary Anning and William Buckland, Edward Dolnick explores how these early paleontologists pieced together the prehistoric record to revolutionize our understanding of Earth's history. Unrated. Narrated by Cassandra Campbell. Approximate Reading Time: 8 hours, 55 minutes

DB 134040 | *The American Revolution: An Intimate History* by Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns

Explores the global and domestic impact of the war, reframing the conflict as an international struggle and a complex civil war. By highlighting the perspectives of marginalized groups alongside the Founding Fathers, the book examines the persistent questions of liberty and equality that continue to shape the American identity today. Unrated. Narrated by Ken Burns, Beth Hicks, Robert Petkoff, and Fred Sanders. Approx. Reading Time: 22 hours, 51 minutes

DB 134040, BR 23497 | *We the People: The United States Constitution Explored and Explained* by Aura Lewis

An introduction to the US Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the rest of the amendments. The authors combine the history of each section with accessible examples, case studies, and profiles of relevant politicians and activists. For grades 5-8. Narrated by Deborah Desmone. Approximate Reading Time: 3 hours, 40 minutes.

DB 110077 | *O Say Can You Hear?: A Cultural Biography of The Star-Spangled Banner* by Mark Clague

Explores the evolution of the "Star-Spangled Banner" from an 1814 broadside ballad to a powerful and often controversial national anthem. By examining its musical origins, iconic performances, and role in political protest, Clague reveals how the song's shifting meaning reflects America's ongoing struggle to define its identity and values. Narrated by Reuben J. Tapp. Approximate Reading Time: 9 hours, 41 minutes.



Photo Caption: The KTBL Book Club logo

KTBL hosts a monthly virtual book club on the third Tuesday of each month at 3:30pm Eastern Time. Books are selected by KTBL staff members and we take suggestions from regular book club attendees!

May 19, 2026

DB 48924 | *Crimes of the Century: From Leopold & Loeb to O.J. Simpson* By Gilbert Geis and Leigh B. Bienen | Narrated by Bill Wallace

Discusses five of the most publicized trials of the twentieth century: Leopold and Loeb, the Scottsboro affair, the Lindbergh baby kidnapping, the Alger Hiss spy case, and the O.J. Simpson murder trial. Examines sensational legal dramas within the social and political climate of the times. Approximate Reading Time: 10 hours, 13 minutes.

June 16, 2026

DB 129483, BR 26313 | *My Friends* By Fredrik Backman | Narrated by Marin Ireland

Driven by her curiosity about three mysterious figures in a famous painting, an aspiring artist named Louisa embarks on a journey to uncover the artwork's origins in a distant seaside town. Her search reveals a poignant history of teenage friendship and refuge, ultimately demonstrating the enduring power of art to transform lives across generations. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. Approximate Reading Time: 13 hours, 9 minutes.

July 21, 2026

DB 123822 | *Girl, Serpent, Thorn* By Melissa Brashardoust | Narrated by Nikki Massoud

"Soraya, a princess cursed to be poisonous to the touch, has lived eighteen years in the shadows but as her twin brother's wedding approaches, she faces choices with unimaginable consequences."-- From publisher. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. For senior high and older readers. Approximate Reading Time: 10 hours, 8 minutes.

August 18, 2026

DB 122023, BR 25583 | *Vision: A Memoir of Blindness and Justice* By David S. Tatel | Narrated by John Lescault

In this inspiring memoir, long-serving federal judge David Tatel reflects on his thirty-year career championing equal justice while privately navigating his transition into blindness. After decades of hiding and working around his visual impairment, Tatel shares his journey toward finally embracing his disability as a core part of his identity and a defining element of his professional life. —Unrated. Commercial audiobook. Approx Reading Time: 10 hr, 22 min.

Book Selections All of the books in this newsletter are available for download on BARD. If you would like to request any of these titles on cartridge, please contact us at 800-372-2968 or 502-564-5791. You can also email us at KTBL.Mail@ky.gov.

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PO Box 537
Frankfort, KY 40602

Free Matter for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
DMM 703.5



Kentucky Department
for Libraries
and Archives



INSTITUTE of
Museum and Library
SERVICES

Our *New*
Kentucky
Home

This project was made possible in
part by the Institute of Museum
and Library Services.

