Goals of Today’s Program

Present a hands on review of the services of the Minnesota Braille and Talking Library:

• Who is eligible
• How to register
• Demos of services, formats and equipment
• How we customize patron reading services
• Connecting our services to your eligible patrons
Location: Faribault, Minnesota
• The Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library is a regional library in the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) program. NLS is part of the Library of Congress.

• There are 55 regional libraries, 32 subregional libraries, and 14 advisory and outreach centers serving the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam.

• In Minnesota, MBTBL is administered by State Library Services at the Minnesota Department of Education. We are located in Faribault on the campus of the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind.
Who is eligible?

Individuals who are:

- Legally blind;
- Cannot see well enough or focus long enough to read standard print material;
- Unable to handle print books or turn pages because of a physical disability;
- Certified by a medical doctor as having a reading disability, due to an organic dysfunction, which is of sufficient severity to prevent reading in a normal manner.
How to register

• Download and print the application for the library services from the MBTBL website at education.mn.gov/btbl.

• Complete the application

• Have the application signed by a certifying authority. Refer to the application to learn who qualifies as a certifying authority.

• If the individual has a visual or physical disability, a librarian may sign the application. Only a medical doctor or a doctor of osteopathy qualifies as the certifying authority for an individuals who has a reading disability.
How to register, cont’d

• Mail, fax or scan and then email the completed and signed application form to:

  Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library
  388 SE 6th Ave
  Faribault, MN 55021-6340
  Fax: 507-333-4832
  Email: mn.btbl@state.mn.us
What Services Are Available

- Books and magazines delivered free via U.S. Postal Service
- Reference and Reader’s Advisory
- Customized audio book cartridges
- Minnesota Braille and Reading Download (MN BARD)
- WebOpac – online catalog that provides searchable access to collection and library account information
- Radio Talking Book, Dial-in News and NFB-Newsline
- Music Scores and Instructional Materials (directly from NLS)
What Materials are Available?

- Books and magazines in audio, braille and large print
- Digital Talking Book players and accessories
- Radio Talking Book radios
- Descriptive Videos, including audio described DVDs


How to Order

• Call or email us. We can pick books for your patron – they just need let us know what they like to read

• Send orders by regular mail

• Use the order forms included in Talking Book Topics, Braille Book Review catalogs

• Order online: https://webopac.klas.com/mn1aopac/

• Download books from Minnesota Braille and Reading Download (MN BARD)

We can search our catalog for specific titles and when available, borrow materials through interlibrary loan
Equipment and Accessories

- Standard player
- Advanced player
- Headphones
- USB Adaptor
- Currency Reader
- Pillow Speaker
- Blank Cartridge, Cable
MN BARD is an optional service that allows individuals and institutions with a fast Internet connection to download books and magazines 24/7 from its website (https://nlsbard.loc.gov/MN1A) and the BARD Mobile apps.

The following materials are available on MN BARD:

- Books and magazines as digital audio recordings
- Books and magazines in electronic braille.
- Some foreign language materials
- Locally-produced titles, including books recorded by MBTBL
Files that comprise an downloadable talking book

- .3GPs are a proprietary audio file format that’s approximately 1/10th the size of an MP3 file.
- .3GP is the audio file format used with cell phones.
USB Storage Devices Used with Digital Talking Book Player

- Patrons can use either a Talking Book Cartridge or a standard USB flash drive.
BARD Express is a free Windows-based application that simplifies searching for, downloading, and transferring audio materials from BARD to a cartridge or a USB flash drive for playback on a digital player. Available to download from your BARD account.
The **BARD Mobile** app allows patrons to download audio books and magazines directly to iOS or Android devices. The free app is available for download from the [iTunes store](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/bard-mobile/id560067731), [Google Play store](https://play.google.com/store/apps), and [Amazon App store](https://www.amazon.com/gp/aws/app-directory) and transforms your device into a personal, portable library.

**BARD Mobile is easy to use:**
- Compatible with Voice Over (iOS) and TalkBack (Android)
- Controls are similar to the talking book digital player.
What’s Next…

• **Duplication-on-Demand.** To reduce wait times for talking books, NLS has piloted duplication-on-demand system that allows network libraries to create digital cartridges containing the files for talking books at their own locations, based on the requests of their patrons. This approach puts the entire NLS collection at the fingertips of all NLS patrons without requiring libraries to anticipate demand or stock prepared cartridges from NLS headquarters.

• **Synthetic Speech.** Synthetic speech technologies have advanced to the point that content that was often unavailable as part of a talking book—such as bibliographies and endnotes—can now be made available in an efficient and affordable way. The technology also promises to make more “breaking news” or time-sensitive materials producible in a timely way. Synthetic speech will not replace in-person voice recording for the main body of NLS works, but it is being explored as a good way to supplement the work done by NLS’s dedicated recording artists.

• **Wireless Download.** NLS is exploring wireless transmission of talking-book files directly to patrons’ reading devices, creating a loading process that would be similar to the ease of obtaining an album from iTunes or Amazon. While only in early test stages, wireless downloading of NLS material promises significant advancement in ease of use for NLS patrons and the management of the entire NLS system.
What’s Next…

• **Braille eReader.** Braille eReaders (refreshable braille devices that can turn a digital braille file instantaneously into braille for tactile reading) have improved in ease of use and price point. NLS anticipates having devices available for more pilot testing in 2019. Currently, Massachusetts’s Perkins Talking Book and Braille Library is beta testing a braille eReader.

• **Local Recording Programs** – Network libraries will increasingly focus on producing (audio or braille) local content to supplement the NLS collection. Minnesota is resumed its recording program in July 2016 and currently has produced five new recordings and digitized nine analog (cassette) recordings.

Calls to Action

- Volunteer to help rate audio books.
- Apply for an MN BARD Institution account for your library.
- Request Promotional Kit for displaying at your library.
- Participate in the Audio Description Project (Report DVDs with described audio tracks)
  - Readers Advisory: Use our web OPAC for patrons want assistance avoiding books with sex, violence and/or profanity.
The library is funded through Minnesota state general funds and Federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant money from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services.
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