

# **OLBPD DIMENSIONS NEWSLETTER**

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## **The Year in Review, and Moving Forward to 2018**

As 2017 comes to an end, the Ohio Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled (OLBPD) has enjoyed another busy and productive year. OLBPD circulated approximately 583,611 items to 13,756 active readers. The collection has more than 63,000 titles, including new Playaway books as well as described Blu-Ray and DVD titles. Patrons using BARD downloaded 144,149 books and magazines and OLBPD answered over 2,400 BARD service and tech support requests. OLBPD inspected over 500,000 returned books, and less than one-percent were damaged or missing media. OLBPD repaired 100 cassette and digital talking books and added over 7,000 copies of high-demand digital talking books to meet patron reading needs. OLBPD answered over 21,000 patron phone calls requesting service and over 7,400 mail and email requests.

Over the past year, OLBPD has explored offering custom produced talking book cartridges individualized for patrons that could be loaded with multiple books as an alternative to sending one title per cartridge mailings. While other libraries in the National Library Service (NLS) network offer these types of customized cartridges to their readers, Ohio will continue for now to send one title per cartridge for a few reasons. First, NLS continues to produce talking books in this format, and readers are accustomed to it. Second, as NLS continues to research and develop the next generation talking book player, customized cartridges may not be as widely necessary for the majority of readers if these new players offer wireless delivery and storage of library materials. Essentially, customized cartridges would only be necessary for a limited number of readers living in an area where there is no cellular or wireless connectivity available to receive their materials that would have to be sent through the mail. Basically, the next generation talking book player will have a significant impact on how books are delivered, as well as the need and use for customized cartridges in the future.

In 2018, OLBPD will strive to continue providing readers with the best service possible, and continue to build upon and improve services in the future. OLBPD will continue to keep readers informed on the progress of the next generation talking book player as well as other future service enhancements as they are announced by NLS. Thank you for a great 2017 and for all of your continued support, and we will all be working hard for an even better 2018.

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# Clarification Regarding Cassette Service, New Players

OLBPD received patron feedback in response to the fall newsletter articles on the end of life for the C-1 cassette talking book player, and the development of the next generation talking book player. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions and answers.

**Q: Why is OLBPD stopping talking book service?**

**A: Some patrons were quite concerned that OLBPD was ending talking book service, and this certainly is not the case or the message we intended to send. Talking books should be available for many years to come. OLBPD is withdrawing its collection of books on four-track cassette tape, and will no longer be circulating them directly from Cleveland.**

**Q: What happens when there are no more cassette players?**

**A: Cassette players are at the end of their life, and inventories of cassette players will be kept as long as the parts needed to repair damaged players remain available. OLBPD recommends patrons should use the DB (digital book) service. DB machines are easy to use and less prone to breakdown, while the DB books sound better and newer titles are available for loan along with many books that were previously available on recorded cassettes (RC).**

**Q: What is the difference between talking books on cartridges and cassettes?**

**A: When we refer to talking books on cassette, it means the long-standing RC four-track magnetic tape cassettes that played on the larger, heavier C-1 tape player. Likewise, talking books on cartridges are DB books stored on USB flash memory played with the digital talking book machine. The first four-track RC talking book was first made available by NLS in 1977, while the newer DB talking book cartridge and players were first made available in 2009.**

**Q: When can I get or reserve my next generation talking book player?**

**A: Not yet. The next generation talking book player is still in development, as NLS continues to research the kinds of functionality they wish to incorporate with the new player – heavily based on consumer feedback. Some of these potential functions were described in the last newsletter. OLBPD will update readers on any progress, including when they will be made available to patrons.**

**Q: Do I need to return my cassette player and cassette books?**

**A: As long as patrons are using their cassette player, and are reading books on tape, patrons can hold on to their books and player. Patrons who are no longer using their tape player or books on tape should return them to the library.**

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# **NLS Testing Wireless Delivery of Talking Books**

NLS has developed a Mobile Cartridge (MOCA) device to test the wireless delivery of talking books. The MOCA device being tested by NLS is not necessarily the final end user device for wireless book delivery. In fact, these devices are not designed for long term use beyond the pilot tests. The MOCA pilots will help provide NLS with data of cellular and Wi-Fi connectivity coverage areas throughout the network. The test is also intended to evaluate a wireless delivery method for patrons who are not tech savvy, not BARD users, yet live in an area with cellular or Wi-Fi hot spot connectivity.

When a user inserts a blank cartridge into the device, a preselected book from their wish list is automatically downloaded to MOCA, and then moved to a blank cartridge which can then be removed and played on a digital talking-book machine. NLS recently completed MOCA trials among their own staff and network libraries including OLBDP. In the next trial phase, NLS will test MOCA with select patrons throughout the network.

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## **2018 Braille Regional Challenge**

Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, in collaboration with the Braille Institute of America, will be hosting the Ohio Regional Braille Challenge on Friday, March 2, 2018. The Braille Challenge, now in its 17th year, is open to students of all abilities to test their braille skills in five categories: reading, comprehension, braille spelling, chart and graph reading, proofreading and braille speed and accuracy. Student contests are organized by grade level, and all test formats are UEB. The theme for the Ohio State Braille Challenge will be "Braille Masters," and will include fun activities for the entire family and teachers. For further information, including registration and to request a permission form, email Jackie Conner at [jconner@clovernook.org](mailto:jconner@clovernook.org) or direct Ohio Braille Challenge inquiries by email to [braillechallenge@clovernook.org](mailto:braillechallenge@clovernook.org) or by phoning 1-800-866-6723 or 513-522-3860. Students and teachers are also encouraged to visit [www.braillechallenge.org](http://www.braillechallenge.org) and [www.clovernook.org](http://www.clovernook.org) for more information and practice tests.

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## **Winter Library Closings**

OLBDP will be closed this winter season on Christmas Day, Monday, December 25th; New Year's Day, Monday January 1st; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Monday, January 15th; and Presidents' Day, Monday, February 19th. Please remember to place requests early to ensure enough books through the holiday season. Patrons can also arrange to have their items sent to another address if they reside in a different state through the winter. OLBDP may close due to inclement weather. With emergency closings and when possible, OLBDP will alert patrons on our voice mail greeting when the library is closed.

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# OLBPD Winter Holiday Reading List

The OLBPD winter holiday reading list features holiday and seasonal titles to help readers weather the chilly months ahead. Patrons ordering books from the list should remember that these titles may contain descriptions of sex, strong language, or violence.

“Christmas Caramel Murder” by Joanne Fluke – DB 87797; Mystery

“The Mistletoe Secret” by Richard Paul Evans – DB 86630; Romance

“A Lowcountry Christmas” by Mary Alice Monroe – DB 87018; Family

“Wishes for Christmas” by Fern Michaels – DB 83937; Short Stories

“Blue” by Danielle Steel – DB 83728; Inspiration

“The Twelve Dogs of Christmas” by David Rosenfelt – DB 85822; Detective

“A Baxter Family Christmas” by Karen Kingsbury – DB 86525; Family

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## Season's Greetings

In keeping with the traditional season's greeting, the staff of OLBPD wishes our readers a happy holiday season, and peace, good health and good reading in the New Year.

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