# OLBPD DIMENSIONS NEWSLETTER

**Ohio Library for the Blind & Print Disabled at Cleveland Public Library**

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# The Year in Review, and Moving Forward to 2023

**As 2022 ends, the Ohio Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (OLBPD) enjoyed another busy and productive year. OLBPD circulated approximately 810,905 items to 10,801 active readers. Among 1,368 patrons using BARD – that included 173 new BARD users this year – they downloaded 157,315 books and magazines. Combining both direct and BARD circulation, OLBPD circulated 968,233 items to patrons. OLBPD answered over 21,000 patron phone calls requesting service and over 4,200 mail and email requests.**

**This year was a milestone year for OLBPD as it celebrated its 125th anniversary founded by Cleveland Public Library (CPL) Director Linda Eastman. As part of that celebration, OLBPD revised its name to the “Ohio Library for the Blind and Print Disabled” in 2022.**

**OLBPD also implemented circulating bundled books on single cartridges to patrons. The response from patrons to bundling talking books has been overwhelmingly positive. Patrons shared how they genuinely enjoy not having to manage so many cartridges now with bundled books or remembering which cartridge came in which container. Patrons also expressed how happy they were to be able to receive the right amount of reading materials to satisfy their needs, without having to wait on more books to arrive with nothing to read.**

**For patrons receiving braille, distribution of the National Library Service (NLS) Braille e-Reader by Humanware began this year, affording patrons the opportunity to access NLS’ electronic braille collection using a refreshable braille display. NLS also implemented its braille on-demand pilot project allowing patrons to request and receive one hard-copy braille title per month to keep for their personal use. OLBPD also purchased a one-year organization subscription to Bookshare to supplement its collection by providing non-student patrons access to academic and educational reading materials and textbooks.**

**Next year should be an exciting year as NLS continues its testing of the next generation talking book player christened the ‘DA2.’ NLS will also continue testing and refining their new app for Amazon Alexa- and Google Assistant-enabled smart speakers named ‘My Talking Books,’ that allows users via voice commands to connect with BARD, access their Wish List, search the collection, and stream books. Thank you for a great 2022 and for all your continued support, and we will all be working hard for an even better 2023.**

# Spotlighting 125 Years: Extending Services

**In celebration and recognition of the 125th anniversary of the Ohio Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (OLBPD), here is the conclusion to our four-part series acquainting readers with the history of OLBPD. The early history of OLBPD is from “Open Shelves and Open Minds” by C.H. Cramer, 1972.**

**The decade of the sixties witnessed a major alteration in financing, thanks to grants from the State of Ohio for the provision of books and equipment by the federal government through the Library of Congress. Beginning in 1960, monies granted in support of patrons served by the regional libraries at Cleveland Public Library and the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library amounted to an annual subsidy of $13.00 per reader. As a result, Cleveland Public Library was relieved of a substantial budgetary burden. Likewise in 1961, the State Library of Ohio took a direct interest in library services to the blind in Ohio when Cleveland and Cincinnati libraries began receiving funds to assist with the cost of serving blind readers.**

**In 1967, Congress passed a major amendment to the basic act of 1931 which provided reading materials only for people who were blind. The amendment extended library services to include people with physical and visual disabilities. At that time, an estimated 600,000 people had visual disabilities preventing them from reading standard print. For people with physical disabilities, eligibility extended to include people who were unable to hold a book or found it physically impossible to turn pages or extremely difficult to read standard print materials due to limited eye movement.**

**By 1969 with all these developments, the braille and talking book service of the Cleveland Public Library circulated more than 232,000 books and magazines to almost 5,000 readers ranging in ages from 3 to 109 years old. It had more than 60,000 individual items; 28,000 in braille; and 25,000 talking books on records plus 7,000 on tape. Long since, this valuable service had outgrown the once-adequate Room 47 in the Main Library. The Library for the Blind had grown to such proportions that it moved talking books to shelves inside a boiler room where intrepid library staff climbed high ladders to reach books. Fortunately, when CPL acquired the adjacent Plain Dealer newspaper building in 1959, its entire fourth floor was allocated to Library for the Blind and homebound patrons. This new space offered an extensive area for braille and talking books, along with an attractive reading room with a portrait in bronze base-relief of Helen Keller which still hangs today at the Library for the Blind. In braille, are her significant words: "All sight is of the soul.”**

**In March 1901, Florence and Georgia Trader started the Cincinnati Library for the Blind, with one hundred embossed books housed on shelves in the Cincinnati Public Library. It served Ohio’s 33 southern counties while Cleveland served Ohio’s fifty-five northern counties. The Cincinnati Library for the Blind closed in 2009, and Cleveland Public Library adopted their patrons and began statewide service as the Ohio Library for the Blind and Print Disabled.**

## In Memoriam

## OLBPD lost one of its own with the passing of Mr. Fran Collins in October. Fran answered phones helping patrons and spent much of his time examining bibliographic records to improve the accuracy of books selected for readers. His career spanned 53 years at Cleveland Public Library, starting as a Page in 1968, working his way up to librarian and onto becoming a branch manager when he retired in 2005. He returned to work in 2006 as a part-time employee at OLBPD and spent the last 16 years here as an incredibly valuable part of our team. It is with our deepest appreciation of his dedication, loyalty, and years of excellent service which are truly remarkable but second only to the fun and irreplaceable laughter he shared with us that are sorely missed but not forgotten.

## Receive Email Updates From NLS

**The NLS Patron Engagement Section is launching an email list (listserv) as a platform where they can share information on NLS programs and services, such as Zoom links for online events, reminders about the release of the latest Talking Book Topics, or BARD updates and new features. NLS will post new announcements to the list a few times a week. Patrons subscribed will not be able to post to the list, only receive announcements sent from NLS. To sign up for the listserv, patrons should send their name and email address to****NLSPES@loc.gov****. Patrons will be able to remove themselves from the list at any time. NLS also encourages others from the NLS community to sign up for the listserv; being an NLS patron is not a requirement for signing up.**

## Bookshare for Non-student Patrons

## Bookshare is an e-book (electronic book) library with an extensive collection of school, career, and recreational reading. OLBPD purchased a subscription to supplement our collection, providing non-student patrons access to harder-to-find academic related books and textbooks. Patrons interested in using Bookshare as part of our account should contact OLBPD.

**Winter Library Closings**

**OLBPD will close this winter season for Christmas Day observed on December 26th; New Year’s Day observed on January 2nd; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 16th; and Presidents’ Day on February 20th. Remember to place requests early to ensure enough books through the holidays. Patrons leaving Ohio for winter can have their items sent to another address. OLBPD may need to close due to inclement weather and will post alerts on our web page and in our voice mail greeting.**

# OLBPD Holiday Reading List

**Here are some holiday and seasonal titles for readers to enjoy during the chilly months ahead. Please remember that these titles may contain descriptions of sex, strong language, or violence.**

**“The Christmas List” by Richard Paul Evans – DB 70292 – Inspirational Fiction
“The Christmas Table” by Donna VanLiere – DB 101018 – Family Fiction**

**“Hercule Poirot's Christmas” by Agatha Christie – DB 44355 – Mystery**

**“The Secrets They Left Behind” by Lissa M. Redmond – DB 109037 – Suspense**

**“Mr. Dickens and His Carol” by Samantha Silva – DB 87973 – Historical Fiction**

**“The Snow Killer” by Ross Greenwood – DB 108751 – Mystery**

**Upcoming Format Changes to the Newsletter**

 **Beginning in 2023, OLBPD will send the audio version of our newsletter on cartridge to patrons. The large print copy, along with braille and electronic braille versions will remain available upon request. Electronic versions are also available on our website in audio, braille, and large print. Patrons can join our email list to receive notice when a new edition is available.**

**Season's Greetings**

Wishing all our readers a happy holiday season, and peace, good health, and delightful reading in the New Year.

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FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND OR HANDICAPPED

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