

Louisiana Hotlines



A Newsletter of the State Library of Louisiana
Talking Books and Braille Library
Office of Lt. Governor, Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism

Vol. 25 No. 3

Summer 2025

Holiday Closings

July 4 Independence Day
Sept. 1 Labor Day

Braille American Flags

The Louisiana/Mississippi Regional Group of the Blinded Veterans Association (BVA) has partnered with other philanthropic organizations in Louisiana to provide Braille American Flags to Louisiana libraries. The State Library recently received two flag plaques now on permanent display on the first floor.

The 13" x 12" plaques feature tactile raised relief stars and stripes, as well as the text of the Pledge of Allegiance in Braille. The flag promotes reading through the use of Braille and raises public awareness of blindness and how the visually impaired can "see" and "read" through the sense of touch.

We are grateful for this valuable resource donated by the BVA. A dedication event will be scheduled for this summer.

2025 Adult Summer Reading Program Reminder

It's not too late to sign up for the 2025 Adult Summer Reading Program which

started on May 1, 2025, and will run through August 31. The theme this year is "Color Our World." If you complete the program by reading 20 books, you will receive a free set of charging cables. The cables have USB-A and USB-C input connectors and both iPhone and Android compatible output connectors. If you are not already signed up, please contact your reader advisor!

Xavier Society Releases New Large-Print Bible

The Xavier Society for the Blind has released the *New American Bible* in a 13-volume large-print edition. It also provides monthly large-print *Mass Propers* for Catholic Services. Both items are free of charge. For more information, email info@xaviersocietyfortheblind.org or call 212-473-7800 (toll-free at 800-637-9193).

New Title for BookTalks

Our BookTalks Spring Book Selection will be:

DB 102687 *West with Giraffes* by Lynda Rutledge

Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to his grave.

It's 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Behind the wheel is the young Dust Bowl rowdy Woodrow. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world's first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as spotty as the giraffes.

How to Join BookTalks

We hold our book discussions via an email discussion list. Members comment on the book by sending an email to the discussion list. All members then see the comments and have the ability to respond by email to the group. If you want to join our discussion group, go to: <http://pelican.state.lib.la.us/mailman/listinfo/tbblbooktalks> and create an account by entering your name (make sure to put your name so we can verify you), email address and make up a password or, as always, you can call your reader adviser.

BookTalks Book Club

If you join BookTalks, we will add you to our mailing list and automatically send you a digital book copy of the newest se-

lection. We hope that this will make it more convenient to read the book and participate in the discussion. Thank you, and we hope to hear from you soon!

Summer Book Recommendations 2025

By Sneha Padumane

DB 126496 *The Word for World Is Forest* by Ursula K. Le Guin

On the planet Athshe, there is no word for war, there is no concept of murder, there is no language of hate. The world is one vast, green, gentle forest full of people who live between the world-time and the dream-time, who resolve their conflicts by means of ceremonial singing. But then the Terran League discovers Athshe's existence and a pattern of "colonization"--very similar to the exploitation of "primitive" cultures on Earth--begins to destroy the planet and its people; and, eventually, one young Athshe-an named Selver learns how to hate.

DB 119924 *Conquest: Cortez, Montezuma, and the Fall of Old Mexico* by Hugh Thomas

The story of the 500 conquistadores landing near Vera Cruz, the subsequent burning of the boats, the march up to the Aztec capital, the extraordinary battles and ruses en route, the welcome by Montezuma, the later quarrels, the Spanish withdrawal, the bloody fighting, and the eventual apocalyptic victory can never fail to excite the imagination.

DB 125358 *The Small and the Mighty: Twelve Unsung Americans Who*

Changed the Course of History by Sharon McMahon

McMahon proves that the most remarkable Americans are often ordinary people who didn't make it into the textbooks. Not the presidents, but the telephone operators. Not the aristocrats, but the schoolteachers. McMahon discovers history's unsung characters and brings their rich, riveting stories to light for the first time.

DB 126326 *The Royal Librarian* by Daisy Wood

Windsor, 1940: Secretly tasked with foiling a suspected plot, Sophie Klein is placed in the Royal Library at Windsor castle, where the princesses reside. But when she learns that Windsor is compromised, Sophie must sacrifice everything she knows to save the future queen of England.

DB 125640 *The Driving Machine: A Design History of the Car* by Witold Rybczynski

In this lively and entertaining work, Witold Rybczynski tells the story of the most distinctive cars in history and the artists, engineers, dreamers, and gearheads who created them.

DB 126056 *Now or Never* by Janet Evanovich

She said yes to Morelli. She said yes to Ranger. Now Stephanie Plum has two fiancés and no idea what to do about it. But the way things are going, she might not live long enough to marry anyone. While Stephanie stalls for time, she buries herself in her work as a bounty hunter, tracking down an unusually var-

ied assortment of fugitives from justice.

DB 120370 *The History of Sketch Comedy* by Keegan-Michael Key and Elle Key

An illuminating look at all facets of comedy from the the 16th century, to the rise of vaudeville and burlesque, the golden age of television comedy, the influence of the most well-known comedy schools, and ascension of comedy films and TV specials—all the way through to a look at the future of sketch on social media platforms.

DB 125730 *The Debutantes* by Olivia Worley

For the New Orleans elite, the Les Masques Ball is sure to be the social event of the season—if they can avoid another dead Queen. When debutante Margot Landry was found dead the morning after her reign at last year's ball, it was a tragedy, but not a shocking one. Margot was a wild child with a self-destructive streak, nothing like this year's Queen, Lily LeBlanc. With a perfectly poised debutante on the throne, everything is going according to plan...until the ball is hijacked by a mysterious figure in a Jester costume.

DB 123118 *The Joy of an Uncluttered Life* by Joyce Meyer

Many of us understand how easy it is for life to become hectic, stressful, and busy. But there is good news—you don't have to live this way! Find relief from burnout and unnecessary stress with 100 ways to simplify your life.

DB 123763 *The Glaucoma Guidebook: Expert Advice on Maintaining Healthy Vision* by Constance Okeke

Dr. Okeke provides a concise guide for readers about glaucoma—an eye disorder that leads to optic nerve damage, vision loss, and blindness. She explains key terms used by doctors to talk about testing and treatment options and provides guidance for readers on how they can take care of their vision as well as their overall health.

DB 125931 *Vanishing Treasures: A Besiary of Extraordinary Endangered Creatures* by Katherine Rundell

Katherine Rundell takes us on a globe-spanning tour of the world's most awe-inspiring animals currently facing extinction. This urgent, inspiring book of essays dedicated to 23 unusual and underappreciated creatures is a clarion call insisting that we look at the world around us with new eyes—to see the magic of the animals we live among, their unknown histories and capabilities, and above all how lucky we are to tread the same ground as such vanishing treasures.

DB 126074 *Once Upon a Tome: The Misadventures of a Rare Bookseller* by Oliver Darkshire

Some years ago, Oliver Darkshire stepped into the hushed interior of Henry Sotheran Ltd. (est. 1761) to apply for a job. Allured by the smell of old books and the temptation of a management-approved afternoon nap, Darkshire was soon teetering stacks of first editions and

placating the store's resident ghost (the late Mr. Sotheran, hit by a tram). By turns unhinged and earnest, *Once Upon a Tome* is the colorful story of life in one of the world's oldest bookshops and a love letter to the benign, unruly world of antiquarian bookselling, where to be uncommon or strange is the best possible compliment.

DB 125275 *AI Snake Oil: What Artificial Intelligence Can Do, What It Can't, and How to Tell the Difference* by Arvind Narayanan and Sayash Kapoor

In this book, Arvind Narayanan and Sayash Kapoor explain the major strains of AI in use today: generative AI, predictive AI, and AI for content moderation. They show readers how to differentiate between them and, importantly, make a cogent argument for which types of AI can work well and which can never work, because of their inherent limitations. AI in this latter category, the authors argue, is AI snake oil: it does not and cannot work.

DB 124617 *Eyes of Silver, Eyes of Gold* by Ellen O'Connell

Anne Wells has embarrassed her rigidly proper family since she was a child with occasional but grievous lapses from ladylike behavior. Cord Bennett, the son of his father's second marriage to a Cheyenne woman, is more than an embarrassment to his well-to-do family of ranchers and lawyers. When Anne and Cord are found alone together, her father's fury leads to violence. Cord's family accepts that the fault is his. Can Anne and Cord use the freedom of being condemned for sins they didn't commit to make a life together?

Books and Beyond: A Section for Children and Teens

Summer Reading 2025

Our Summer Reading Program is currently underway. Packets for children and teens are going out, but there is still time to sign up. Everyone who participates will receive a Grab 'n' Go Summer Packet with a welcome folder, reading log, activities, craft ideas, and reading incentives. There will also be a paper quilt. Just read books or magazines by Friday, August 30 and turn in your reading log to receive a free "All Jazzed Up" t-shirt, reading certificate, and other incentive prizes. Send in your summer reading invitation, or contact Charlene Moore at 225-342-9563, or email tbblkids@library.la.gov to register. Many thanks to the Jones Foundation for providing this year's summer reading program prizes. Special thanks to Alyssa Sanchez for designing the paper quilt and Millie Thomas for providing crafting assistance.

From Crib to Crayons

The TBBL Early Literacy Program *From Crib to Crayons* will start in July. Designed for children ages 0-6, quarterly literacy packets will be sent throughout the year to children and their parents. Each kit is focused on one of six early literacy skills. For more information, contact the Children's Librarian, Charlene Moore at 225-342-9563, or email tbblkids@library.la.gov. This program is made possible through the generous support of the Jones Foundation. Braille services and provided this year through the Louisiana Accessible Educational Materials Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

NLS Offers Virtual Summer Reading Events

The National Library Service is pleased to announce its nationwide Summer Reading Program, which will run from Monday, June 16, through Friday, August 15, 2025. Special virtual events are offered for all ages, and hosted by NLS, including a kickoff event with music, author talks, virtual tours, hands on cooking and gardening. Registration is required for event attendance.

Schedule of Events:

Kickoff event for all ages: Monday, June 16 at 12:00 noon central time. Join author Mac Barnett for this live Summer Reading Program kickoff event with a reading of his book *Extra Yarn*.

Master Gardening with Roger Erpelding: Monday, June 23 at 3:00 pm central time. Roger is a patron of the Iowa Library for the Blind and Print Disabled. He will provide tips and tricks for sighted and blind gardeners alike. This session will have time for questions, and provide a list of Roger's favorite gardening books from the NLS collection.

Storyteller Donna Washington: Thursday, June 26 at 3:00 pm central time. This one is for kids or kids at heart. Donna Washington will lead an inclusive storytelling hour for children, engaging with participants in a fun and accessible way. Kids will find fun and inspiration in this hour of creativity and be encouraged to color their world with summer reading.

Master Chef Christine Ha: Monday, July 14 at 6:00 pm central time. When Christine Ha won the third season of *MasterChef*, she was the first blind contestant on the show! Join us for a night of conversation about cooking, reading, and everything in between. Christine will tell us her story and maybe even share a recipe or two.

An evening with musician Jono Manson: Thursday, July 24 at 6:00 pm central time. Spend an evening with singer-songwriter Jono Manson, composer for the *Postman* movie soundtrack and a former musician for Blues Traveler. Join us for a lighthearted interview that captures some of Jono's stories and memories, as well as what he's got planned for his next project.

To register for the online Summer Reading events, go to <https://www.loc.gov/nls/services-and-resources/summer-reading/>, scroll down to the desired event and click the **Register for the...** link provided. For more information about registration, contact Charlene Moore at 225-342-9563, or tbbl@library.la.gov, or contact your reader advisor. Remember that participants in the current Summer Reading Program will receive email reminders for the Kickoff events and author talks.

Featured Books from the NLS Summer Reading Program

BR020047, DB127239 *Extra Yarn* by Mac Barnett

This is the story of how a young girl and her box of magical yarn transforms a community. Preschool-grade 2.

DB068370 *A Backyard Vegetable Garden for Kids* by Amie Jane Leavitt

Covers the basics of vegetable gardening, from planning what to plant--and when--through harvesting a crop. Grades 3-6 and older readers.

BR016392 *A Pride of African Tales* by Donna L. Washington

Six folktales from West Africa. Grades 4-7 and older readers.

BR020085, DB076676 *Recipes from My Home Kitchen* by Christine Ha

Winner of TV's *MasterChef* recalls teaching herself to make treasured comfort foods as a teenager after her mother's death, losing her vision at age twenty-five, and relearning to cook. Middle school and young adult interest.

BR021396, DB083657 *Backyard Beekeeper* by Kim Flottum

The author provides instruction for setting up a bee colony, caring for a colony in both urban and rural environments, the harvesting and uses of honey and beeswax, and more. Young adult interest.

DB121189 *Audio described tour of the Thomas Jefferson Building at the Library of Congress*

For all ages.

Support Our TBBL Friends Organization

Since 1981, the Mrs. W. Carruth Jones Foundation has acted as a friends group for the Talking Books and Braille Library in the State Library of Louisiana. It provides a mechanism for accepting donations to enhance and support services to the blind and physically handicapped community state-wide.

The Jones Foundation directly supplements the programs and initiatives of TBBL within the State Library.

It is a primary sponsor of the State Library's large print collection, TBBL's summer reading program, staff enrichment, and early literacy program.

To contribute, make checks payable to the Jones Foundation and mail to the following address:

Mrs. W. Carruth Jones Foundation
1131 N. River Road
Port Allen, LA 70767

All donations are tax deductible.

Anyone who makes a donation receives a one-year membership to the Jones Foundation.

For meeting information, call Shelia Coleman at 225-342-4942.

TBBL Directory

Library address

Talking Books & Braille Library
701 N. Fourth St.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Phone numbers

Baton Rouge: 225-342-0035
Statewide: 1-800-543-4702
Fax: 225-342-6817

Special services

Music section: 800-424-8567
Braille service: 800-453-4293

Email

tbbl@library.la.gov
tbblkids@library.la.gov

Walk-in hours

Monday – Thursday
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Phone and email hours

Monday – Friday
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Library services

Audio books and magazines
Braille books and magazines
Large print books and big books
Online catalog
BARD download service
BARD mobile apps
Newspaper reading service

Eligibility

Any Louisiana resident who is unable to read or use standard print materials as a result of a temporary or permanent visual or physical limitation is eligible to receive free library services.

State Library of Louisiana
Talking Books and Braille Library
701 N. Fourth Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

**FREE MATTER FOR THE
BLIND OR HANDICAPPED**

Special format library materials are loaned
to qualified patrons by

Talking Books and Braille Library

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