

TAR HEEL TALK



SLNC-ABLS & Summer Reading

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Dear Readers,

Recently, mailing cards have been falling out of audio book and movie disc containers in the mail, meaning some patrons have not gotten their audio books. To fix this situation we are now taping mailing cards to the containers, so that they won't fall out.

Please note, for audio books only the library's address is already on the back of the container. This means you can simply remove the mailing card and recycle it. However, this does not apply to large print or braille mailing labels. Please continue to flip over the mailing card for large print and braille.

Please call or email the library if you were expecting specific books recently but didn't get them, and we will resend them. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Thank you very much for your help with this.

SLNC-ABLS

STAFF FEATURE

Meet ABLS Reader Advisor Marlene Debo

For some of our patrons, you may be familiar with Marlene Debo. Marlene has been one of the Reader Advisors on staff for over 10 years. For 14 years, she has helped the patrons of ABLS find books to borrow from the library.

In addition to her reader advisory services, she has also led the monthly VIP (Visually Impaired Patron) Book Club in discussion since 2014. Once a month our VIP Book Club members come together to discuss the selected book of the month. These book club discussions have been moderated by Marlene for nearly a decade!

Over the years, Marlene has also helped out with the various library programs we have



Reader Advisor Marlene Debo

hosted throughout the years. Whether it was helping navigate patrons during a tactile tour of the North Carolina Museum of Art or helping register students at Governor Morehead School for the Blind for our Summer Reading programs, Marlene would always be willing to help out with tasks that went beyond her responsibilities as a Reader Advisor.

Q: What led you to work at ABLS?

A: I have always loved libraries and worked in my college library and at NCSU's library after

college. I worked 10 years as a Brailist in elementary schools. This job combined two of my favorite jobs and has proved to be the right job for me.

Q: How has the service evolved from when you started working here up to this point?

A: When I started, we were still using the old cassette players – they required lots of explanation to patrons & lots of repairs! And we had about 600 patrons who were still using the even older record players! Digital players didn't exist. BARD didn't exist. When Catherine Rubin became Assistant Regional Librarian, we started presenting wonderful programs for adult and young patrons. She also gave us patron book clubs. And I was privileged to be involved in both these innovations.

Q: How do you feel about your contributions to ABLIS?

A: I feel really good about the VIP Book Club for patrons that

I have administered. We have been meeting since 2014 and 7 of the patrons who joined in that first year are still members. It's been a success and I've made some really good friends.

I've learned to give good customer service to our patrons – even when I didn't feel good. And I am proud and happy to be a part of providing a service that our patrons value so highly.

Q: What are some things you will miss working at ABLIS?

A: Mostly I will miss the people I work with here. I've never worked with a more congenial, caring group of people. And, of course, I will greatly miss the VIP Book Club and the friends I have made there. (I won't really miss the constantly changing technology. It's inevitable, I know. But I'm getting to be one of those older people who don't want to relearn everything every year!)

Q: How do you plan to spend your retirement?

A: I'm gonna sleep late and not leave my house before lunch-time! I'm going to shop during work hours. I'm going to spend way more time with friends and go to see more plays and art exhibits. I'm going to the beach and to Georgia and to D.C. to visit my friends and family there. I may get a part time job eventually, but I'm gonna let myself play for a while.

Q: What would you say to the patrons you've helped over the years before you retire?

A: I've made some good friends with many of you – telephone friendships – but valuable friendships. I will miss our chats. The gratitude and praise that our patrons heap upon us has made working here the most positive place I've ever worked, and I thank all our patrons for that. □

“Tar Heel Talk” is a quarterly publication of the State Library of North Carolina Accessible Books & Library Services section (SLNC-ABLS) and the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

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2023 WINTER READING WINNERS

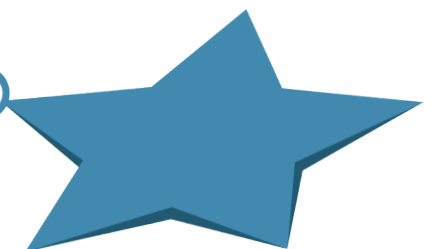


We concluded another successful Winter Reading program at the end of February this year. In total, we had 146 patrons participate. As we mentioned at the beginning of Winter Reading, we separated the readers who received Books on Cartridges and downloads from BARD from patrons who read Large Print and Physical Braille Books.

In addition to separating Digital Books from Physical Books, we offered patrons the chance to earn extra points for the books they read for our Rate and Review program! Here are our top winners in each category:

Physical Print & Braille Books

1. Dorothy Wildermuth
2. Tamara Jackson
3. Glenda Hartis





ADULTS

Jessica Smith

YOUTH

Anthony James

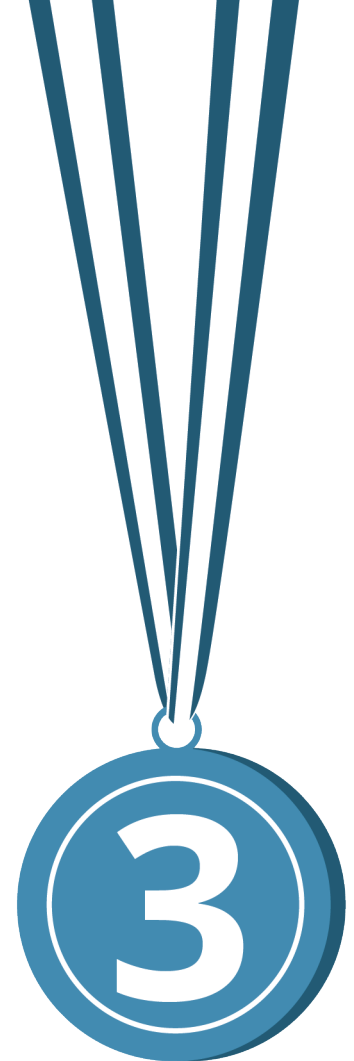


ADULTS

Guy Bobbitt

YOUTH

Delilah Baker



ADULTS

Libby Walton

YOUTH

Layla Hildenbrand

Digital Cartridge & Braille Books

Of the 146 readers we had this year, 132 patrons read at least five books during the program and will receive a small prize and a certificate! Our top three readers in each category will receive gift cards!

This year, we had 9 of our Winter Readers participate in our rate and review program! Those 9 participants combined to send in a total of 278 Rate and Review forms which added up to 2364 extra points to their total! We were happy to see our patrons reviews of the books they read during the program.

SUMMER READING 2023



Our Summer Reading program is just around the corner. Sign up starting June 1st!

From June 1st until August 31st, patrons who sign up to participate in our program will have their books read added to their overall Summer Reading score. The four categories for Summer Reading are:

- **Digital and Downloadable Books for Adults**
- **Digital and Downloadable Books for Youth**
- **Physical Books for Adults**
- **Physical Books for Youth**

Digital and Downloadable Books include books received on cartridges and downloadable braille books from BARD. Physical Books include large print and physical braille books you receive in the mail from us. If you read from multiple mediums, your highest medium used will be counted.

To register for Summer Reading, go to: slnc.info/sr23

SUMMER READING RATE & REVIEW



Patrons will once again have the option to participate in our **Rate and Review program to earn extra points to their **Summer Reading score**.**

In addition to the point you receive for reading one book, rating that book will earn you one extra point and writing a review of at least 50 words will earn you 8 points. That adds up to be 10 points per book!

To participate in our rate and review program, simply fill out the form at the following link: slnc.info/srrr

Or if you would like to participate in our rate and review pro-

gram without using the online form, we can send you a pack of 10 paper forms to fill out and return to us using the following address:

**ATTN: OUTREACH
1841 Capital BLVD
Raleigh, NC 27635**

Forms may also be downloaded from slnc.info/rrr-dl and scanned and emailed to abls.outreach@ncdcr.gov or faxed to (984) 236-1199.



COLLECTIONS COMMUNIQUE

A Quarterly Collections Update

- We now have eleven high-contrast children's large print books in the collection. These large print books are rendered in highly contrasting colors and employ additional methods to ensure that the text and images are viewable to users with significant vision loss. We have also created a new patron preference code that is linked to these books: HC – High Contrast Book. If you would like to try these books out, give us a call and ask a reader's advisor to add this patron preference code to your account.
- If you are a BARD user and no longer need your digital talking book player, we have a Digital Talking Book Machine recycling program. We will take your no longer needed player, recondition it, and send it out to another patron in need. You can send it back in the box it came in. Please include a note in the box stating that the player is no longer needed. Please also make sure to take out the mailing card on the top of the box, flip the card over, and reinsert it so that our name and address is visible, rather than yours.

If you don't have the box that your player came in, please call us at 1-888-388-2460, and we can send you an empty box. Once your player is boxed up, simply hand the box to your mail carrier or take it to your local post office. No postage is required for sending your player back to us.

- We have added a collection of cookbooks in Braille from the Braille Superstore. Titles include but are not limited to Deluxe Appetizers, Vegetarian Favorites, Happy Hour, Desserts Galore, and International Classics. Give us a call if you'd like to borrow any of these titles. These titles are available in embossed Braille format and have a BRX prefix. These titles are not available for Braille on Demand.
- NLS has added a new Book Recommendation online form

that you can use to send requests for titles to be added to the NLS collection. This form can be used for books that you would like to see in audio and/or Braille formats. You will need the title, author, and publication year. In addition, you will need to select "State Library of North Carolina, Accessible Books and Library Services" from the dropdown menu at the beginning of the form. To access the form, please go to the following webpage and click the "Book Recommendation" form listed at the beginning of the first paragraph of text: <https://www.loc.gov/nls/about/organization/standards-guidelines/collection-building-policy>

FRIENDS CORNER

Dear Friends,

Several years ago, I was asked to give a short presentation about blindness and accessibility. As a blind person myself, I wrote my presentation on my iPhone and used a bluetooth headset with voice over to skim through my notes. This worked fine until my headset died half-way through my presentation. I learned two valuable lessons: always make sure your devices are charged, and have a back-up plan in case something goes wrong. Now, I usually write my notes in braille before giving a speech because I know that braille won't die or malfunction during my presentation.

I don't use braille every day, but I'm constantly reminded that it's like an old friend – always reliable and available when I need

it most. That's why I hope you'll get involved with our **James Benton Braille Writer Program**.

We established the program in memory of **James Benton**, who was a longtime Friends board member and past president, avid braille supporter, and a patron of the SLNC Accessible Books and Library Services. The program assists individuals who are in need of securing a braille writer for their personal use.

We have a number of braille writers in our possession that we would love to donate to those who can benefit from them. If you or someone you know is in need of a braille writer, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We want to make sure that these valuable tools find their way to

those who truly need them.

In addition to distributing the braille writers we currently have, we are also asking for your help in expanding our inventory. If you or someone you know has a braille writer collecting dust, please consider donating it so we can send it to another braille reader.

Literacy is our passion. We know that braille literacy is invaluable. Only about 10 percent of students with visual impairments can read or write braille. And while the unemployment rate of adults stubbornly hovers around 70 percent, 90 percent of employed blind people can read braille, according to the **National Federation of the Blind**.

Let's work together to change these statistics and promote braille throughout North Carolina, one braille writer at a time.

To learn more or download an application for the James Benton Braille Writer Program, visit us at https://www.friendsncibph.org/james_benton_braille_writer.php.

- Brice Smith

Chair, James Benton Braille Writer program, Friends of the State Library of North Carolina Accessible Books and Library Services

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ABLS Director

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Untangling Our Roots

Experiences with **African American Genealogy**

Join the **SLNC Government & Heritage Library and State Archives of North Carolina** on June 15, 12:00 pm-1:30 pm at 109 East Jones Street for **Untangling Our Roots: Experiences with African American Genealogy**

Genealogy research requires hard work, persistence, creativity, and often courage; and no two stories are exactly alike!

The State Library and State Archives of North Carolina, in partnership with the Capital City Juneteenth Celebration Committee, present a Lunch and Learn panel of veteran researchers. The panelists will offer research strategies and share their own experiences untangling the in-

tersected knots of history, memory, and surviving records, to reveal their ancestral roots. Question and answer session including staff of the SLNC and SANC to follow.

Speakers: Cheryl Williams, Emerson Foster, and Lisa Withers

For more information, please contact the SLNC Government and Heritage Library at ghl.info@ncdcr.gov.



NEW TIPS FOR BETTER SERVICE

- You may return material now. We are checking in and checking out material.
- If you receive cartridges, please return the cartridges one at a time.
- If you leave a phone message, please spell your last name, state the city you live in, and leave us a phone number to respond to your call if necessary. Also, due to possible phone connection problems it always helps to repeat the phone number if possible.
- If you are calling for someone else please leave their name and city, so we can pull up their record in our computers and would have another contact number if we can't reach you.
- In order to avoid a delay in your service, notify us immediately of any change of address.
- If you email the library, please include your name, phone number, and mailing address in the email.



NEW DESCRIPTIVE MOVIE TITLE LIST

- For a long time, we have sent incredibly large packets to our patrons containing our entire Descriptive Video Catalog. This included the movie title, the rating, release date, and a brief description of the movie. Moving forward, the Descriptive Video Catalog will omit the brief descriptions of the movies.
- The movies will also be listed in alphabetical order instead of the Movie Disc (MD) number. This will make it easier to find the movies you want to order. With far fewer pages, our patrons won't have to do as much flipping and the library can save on some paper!
- Movie descriptions will continue to be available on our Online Public Access Catalog. You can access the catalog by going to ncabls.klas.com. Use the Quick Search to find movie descriptions. You can also search for descriptions on IMDB or Google. Be careful to avoid spoilers! If you are not subscribed to our Descriptive Video Service, membership is a one-time fee of \$20. The loan period for a movie is two weeks. Applications can be requested by emailing ncabls@ncdcr.gov.
- The Descriptive Video Service is not available at all talking book libraries. Our Descriptive Video Service is funded entirely by our Friends of the Library.



medicare

MEDICARE INFORMATION IN ACCESSIBLE FORMATS

Medicare provides free auxiliary aids and services, including information in accessible formats like braille, large print, data or audio files, relay services and TTY communications. If you request information in an accessible format, you won't be disadvantaged by any additional time necessary to provide it. This means you'll get extra time to take any action if there's a delay in fulfilling your request.

To request Medicare or Marketplace information in an accessible format you can:

1. Call us

- For Medicare: **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)**
- TTY: **1-877-486-2048**

2. Send us a fax: 1-844-530-3676

3. Send us a letter:

**Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Offices of Hearings and Inquiries (OHI)
7500 Security Boulevard, Mail Stop S1-13-25
Baltimore, MD 21244-1850
Attn: Customer Accessibility Resource Staff**

- Your request should include your name, phone number, type of information you need (if known), and the mailing address where we should send the materials. We may contact you for additional information.
- Note: If you're enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan or Medicare drug plan, contact your plan to request its information in an accessible format.
- For Medicaid, contact your State Medicaid office.

DOWNLOAD SOMETHING NOBLE

One of the many services we offer our patrons is access to our version of BARD we call NOBLE (North Carolina BARD Local). NOBLE features digital braille books and digital talking books and magazines which are published in North Carolina and produced by our library. While there is no patron application necessary to use NOBLE, all media downloaded from NOBLE can only be played on a digital book player approved by the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled. You may visit NOBLE to see if there is anything you would like to download by going to bit.ly/LBPH-NOBLE.

LIBRARY CLOSING DATES

Independence Day Tuesday, July 4, 2023