

# TAR HEEL TALK



NCLBPH  
**VIRTUAL  
PROGRAMS**

## FEATURES

- Staff Feature - Hal Starling 2
- Writing Contest Winners 12
- Summer Reading 17
- NCLBPH Virtual Programming 18

# STAFF FEATURE



## The NCLBPH Welcomes Hal Starling

We would like to introduce our new Patron Processing Supervisor and senior staff member, Hal Starling.

While Hal is new in this role, he is by no means new to the library.

Hal began working with NCLBPH in 2010. He started his service at the library in the circulation department where library materials are inspected, shipped, and received. In 2012 he began working in the patron processing department. In this position, he was responsible for the management of our library's patron records. This included approving new patron accounts and updating their status as the patrons' situation calls for, such as handling inactive and suspended accounts or patrons who have moved to another state. He also prepared welcome packs for new patrons, covered the receptionist's desk when necessary, and

he helped patrons who called in with their library inquiries.

When the department's previous supervisor retired after 30 years of service to the library, Hal applied and interviewed for the position and got it. Many of his duties will remain the same, but now he will supervise the work of two patron processing assistants, as well as our receptionist.

Hal is also an excellent team player. Sometimes when we are short staffed, he is normally one of the first people to assist with pressing library duties such as pulling books for the daily mail run. He is also willing to help with special tasks at the library when they come up and makes sure his work is thoroughly checked and completed. When he notices something

is wrong, Hal will bring it to the attention of the correct staff member and advises ways to remedy the issue. Hal also assists with tasks such as adjusting clocks around the library, and even bakes delicious cakes for library birthday parties on occasion.

**Q: What is a typical day like for you?**

A: I start each day checking emails to see which ones need attention, after that I check for transfer in accounts, process mail, and adjust accounts as needed.

**Q: What lead you to work for the library, and what do you feel has kept you here for these years?**

A: Service is a big deal for me. Being able to help the visually impaired citizens of North Carolina is an ongoing task that is ever evolving. My upbringing was to treat others as you would like to be treated and to help where possible.

**Q: What is one of your most memorable moments you**

**have had at the library?**

A: It is rewarding to be thanked by a patron. That is a bonus that working in patron processing provides. We get to interact directly with patrons and see the efforts of all staff members.

**Q: What sort of things are you looking for in your new role?**

A: To instill a philosophy of KEH – kindness, efficiency, and hard work. Learning new tasks and helping my staff to accomplish things in a patron focused manner.

**Q: What has been the most challenging task for you in this new position?**

A: Working remotely is a challenge at times. I agree with the thought of a focus on staying healthy during a pandemic. There are some things that can only be done in person, and they will be accomplished when the time is right.

**Q: Will there be anything you miss from your old position?**

**A:** I enjoy making sure a patron's account is setup correctly to start with, even though patron processing handles applications, I will not be as involved in that process in my new position.

**Q:** What advice would you give the person who will eventually fill your previous position?

**A:** It is important to ask questions, pay attention to details, and learn when mistakes are made.

**Q:** We have been working from home for about a year.

**How have you adapted to working from home?**

**A:** Thankfully being able to have access virtually to staff, work has gone relatively well. I am able to have access to equipment to allow me to accomplish tasks. Some forms are now electronic instead of in paper form.

Adaptability has been the biggest challenge of working from home.

The greatest reward has been the ability to adjust procedures to a seamless transition where needed. ■

**“Tar Heel Talk” is a quarterly publication of the N.C. Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NCLBPH), State Library of North Carolina, and N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.**

**Address ...** 1841 Capital Blvd  
Raleigh, NC 27635

**Voice .....** (919) 733-4376

**Fax .....** (919) 733-6910

**TDD .....** (919) 733-1462

**Toll Free ..** 1-888-388-2460

**Email .....** [nclbph@ncdcr.gov](mailto:nclbph@ncdcr.gov)

**Governor .....**Roy Cooper

**Secretary .....**Reid Wilson

**Regional Librarian** Carl Keehn

**Editor.....**Clint Exum

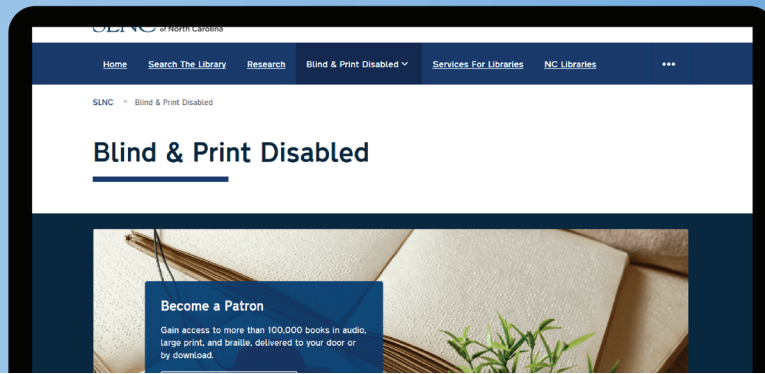
**Editorial Staff .....**Josh Berkov

**Web Page:** <http://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/blind-print-disabled>  
**Internet Catalog, Ordering Site:** [ncbph.klas.com](http://ncbph.klas.com)



## **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** WEBSITE STRUCTURE

Our website has gone through some changes! We have updated the structure of our website to be easier to navigate.

Our chat service is still available on our website; you may chat with one of our Reader Advisors Monday through Friday, from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

If you are curious about what we have and feel like exploring, you can find your way to our online catalog and browse our collection. Don't forget our download section! You can download audio and braille books from BARD, as well as use NOBLE to download audio books and magazines produced in our library. If you are more of a movie person, check out our descriptive video collection and learn how to subscribe to that service.

If you are curious about additional accessibility services, take a look at the resources on our page; they are divided into Living, Working, Learning, and Recreation resources. You can also learn all about the library's seasonal reading programs and resources for readers. Take some time to learn about our outreach services, how you can volunteer for our library, get caught up on all of the library news, and how you can help our Friends group!

Check out our updated website:  
[statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/blind-print-disabled](http://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/blind-print-disabled) ■

# FRIENDS CORNER



*Friends of the*

North Carolina Library for the  
Blind and Physically Handicapped



Dear Friends,

As I sit in front of my laptop and write, it is a cold and dreary February day. It is at times like this that my mind turns to comfort food. How about you?

I have been experimenting with soups, and bean dishes. Fortunately, my experiments have turned out well thus far. I usually go online to find a recipe that fits what I have on hand in the pantry and refrigerator. My spouse is the opposite. He decides what he wants to eat and then gets the ingredients to make it. What is your cooking style? My spouse is a chef, and consequently we have lots of cookbooks. Sometimes I page through them looking for inspiration. I know a lot of people are cooking more since

we are all having to stay home more due to the pandemic. Maybe this is a good thing to come out of this challenging time.

Tonight, I made baby lima beans with smoked turkey and green chilies. The family and I liked it! The nice thing about bean dishes is that they freeze well for another meal later if you have leftovers. In my case I usually double the recipe so I can freeze the rest for an easy dinner the next week. The NC Library for the Blind has a selection of cookbooks in large print, Braille and audio for your perusal and culinary inspiration. Some examples for comfort foods are Fannie Flagg's Original Whistle-Stop Cafe Cookbook, The Comfort

Food Diaries: My Quest for the Perfect Dish to Mend a Broken Heart, Home Cooking, and the Quota Club of Durham Calendar Cookbook. In the spirit of sharing with Friends, here is one of my favorite recipes. I wrote it myself. It was inspired by a meal my spouse and I picked up in a corner shop in Paris many years ago:

## Susan's Parisian Roast Chicken (Serves 4-6)



### Ingredients

- 1 medium size chicken
- 2 medium size ripe tomatoes
- 1 big handful of good green olives, pitted
- 1 medium onion, preferably a sweet onion
- Cajun Seasoning (I prefer Tony Chachere's in a green canister at the grocery store)

### Directions .....

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees
- Wash chicken, inside & out, in cold running water, remove & discard innards.
- Cut tomatoes & onion into bite size pieces, cut olives at least in half. If they are large cut more.
- Put tomatoes, onions and olives into a mixing bowl and mix with seasoning. Add seasoning until well coated, use your judgment, if you like things salty & spicy add more.
- Lightly grease the bottom of a roasting pan, so the chicken won't stick.



- Stuff the veggies into the cavity of the chicken, as much as you can.
- Put the chicken, breast side up in the pan, and sprinkle seasoning over the bird.
- If you have veggies left over put them in the pan with the chicken.
- Put pan in oven for 45-60 minutes.
- The chicken is done when a thermometer placed in the thigh reads 160, or when a test cut in the thigh only yields clear juices. The thigh is the part behind the drumstick.
- When done cut the chicken up to serve and remove the stuffing to serve as a side dish. If you want to, you can skim off the fat from the chicken juices in the pan, then discard the fat. Then drizzle the juices over the stuffing for extra flavor.

Note: If you do not want to roast a whole chicken, get a cut-up chicken or chicken breasts and thighs with the skin on instead. You can put the veggie mixture in the bottom of a greased pan, put the chicken pieces on top skin side up and cook it that way. It probably will cook faster, and you may need to reduce the heat a little bit. If you try the recipe, let me know how it turned out.

.....

To segue into my next topic, I will borrow a catchphrase “And now for something completely different!” Credit due to a 1970s British comedy show called Monty Python’s Flying Circus. Guess what?

It is membership renewal time! We have sent you a membership renewal letter by post. Additionally, we have emailed the same letter to you. BIG thanks to all of you who have already responded. If we have not heard from you yet, NOW is the time! Please take 5 minutes to go to our website and renew online or drop a check in the mail. The books, periodicals, and programs we support together are

worth the next five minutes of your time.

Your \$10 annual membership means that we can be ready to support the needs of the library, and the programs that are near and dear to you and the NC vision community. Donations, in addition to your membership, are always welcome!

Speaking of program support, we have a new grant program designed to support Braille literacy efforts in NC. Please visit our Facebook page and website for details. We will have more information about the grants in the next Tar Heel Talk. We are excited to offer grants this year, and long into the future.

Get cooking Friends, and bon appétit!

Susan L. King  
President ■

## We love to hear from you!

**Follow us on Facebook:**  
FriendsNCLBPH

**Check out our website at**  
[friendsnclbph.org](http://friendsnclbph.org)

**Email us at**  
[info@friendsnclbph.org](mailto:info@friendsnclbph.org)

**Write to us:**  
North Carolina Library for  
the Blind and Physically  
Handicapped

Attn: Friends of the Library  
1841 Capital Boulevard  
Raleigh, NC 27635

# **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

## **PRESIDENT**

**Susan King**

C (828) 238-6195

## **VICE PRESIDENT**

**Sharon Benton**

H (919) 833-0007

## **SECRETARY**

**Debbie Meadows**

C (919) 219-2677

## **TREASURER**

**Mary Flanagan**

H (919) 602-1334

C (919) 435-1504

## **PAST PRESIDENT**

**Eddie Weaver**

H (919) 619-4084

## **MEMBERS AT LARGE**

**Donnie Best**

C (910) 340-7210

**Karen Broderick**

H (919) 518-1088

C (919) 906-0804

**Vedina Gillette-Simms**

H (919) 414-5316

**Angelo Sonnesso**

H (252) 202-1190

**JoAnn Wood**

C (252) 292-3733

**Dawson Hart**

H (828) 202-0881

**Donna Permar**

H (919) 452-6920

**Kellie Hightower-Spruill**

H (704) 677-7339

C (336) 253-6566

**Melaney Stein**

C (919) 662-2580

**Yvonne Kea**

H (910) 283-3981

## **NON-VOTING**

**Carl Keehn**

**Regional Librarian - NCLBPH**

W (919) 733-4376

# WRITING CONTEST WINNERS

Last year, our library had its first writing contest! We had originally planned to have it during the Summer of 2020, but due to the pandemic the delivery of the announcement in our newsletter was delayed. As a result of the delay, we decided to move the contest deadline to November. However, we were unable to make changes to the delayed newsletter as the copies had already been published.

Luckily, some of our patrons were able to participate in our writing contest despite the rescheduling. We were thrilled to see this kind of participation and we hope to have more entries in the future.

---

## Here are our winners!

---



**Avery Boyer**  
*The Haunted Hunters* (Short Story)

**Kristine Gupta**  
*The Bunnies* (Short Story)

**Edward Rizzuto**  
*Me and My Dog* (Song)

You may enjoy *Me and My Dog* by Edward Rizzuto right now by visiting [http://bit.ly/MMD\\_lbph](http://bit.ly/MMD_lbph).

---

## Me and My Dog Lyrics

*Well my ice is melting a little too fast*

*The sun is moving a little too slow*

*Me and my dog have been out here all day*

*Not much to do, we've got nowhere to go  
There's some shade at the other end of the porch  
It's too hot to move there, but I guess we still will  
And summer's been dragging like none before  
We've got too little of too much and too much time to kill  
Well it feels a little better sitting here in the shade  
Crossing over was worth it, my dog thinks so too  
On our way here, I filled up my glass  
Got some fresh cubes of ice and a new point of view  
But other than that, not much else has changed  
There's a new cricket chirping on the window sill  
And summer's still dragging like none before  
We've got too little of too much, and too much time to kill  
When I open my eyes, and I shake out the fog  
I see the sun's gone down, but my dog's still around  
Just a splash of melted ice in my glass  
Before I head in, I toss it on down  
And later tonight, we'll be out here again  
Watching the moon setting over the hill  
And summer's been dragging like none before  
We've got too little of too much, and too much time to kill  
Later tonight, we'll be out here again  
Watching the moon setting over the hill  
And summer's been dragging like none before  
We've got too little of too much and too much time to kill*

We plan to make the rest of our winners' stories available to our patrons in a talking book format in the future when we can return to recording at our library. We congratulate our winners and thank all of our participants! We look forward to hosting a program like this again!

If you are interested, please send us an email to [nclbph@ncdcr.gov](mailto:nclbph@ncdcr.gov) with the subject line "Writing Contest" or leave us a voicemail, and we will notify you when the next contest begins. ■

---

---

## **COLLECTIONS** COMMUNIQUE

### **A Quarterly Collections Update**

- We hope that you are enjoying the library's new Books on Demand service. In order to better serve all patrons, we ask that you return your Books on Demand cartridges when you are done with them. This will not only allow us to get more books out to you, but it will help us to get a more accurate picture of who is actively using the service and who is not. We appreciate your cooperation.
- We are beginning to see the fruits of the newly implemented Marrakesh Treaty. This treaty allows participating countries to circulate accessible books across borders. We now have over fifty of these titles in our collection in audio format, and these titles are available to patrons via the Books on Demand service. The books we have received so far are mostly in French, and all have the book number prefix DBG. If you are interested in sampling some of these books, please call and leave a message for our readers advisors.

- Due to the pandemic, we have not been able to add new Braille titles into our physical collection. If you have asked for the newest titles that the National Library Service (NLS) has added since April 2020, we will be able to send them to you once we have our Collections staff back on site in the library.
- And now, a note about donations to us. If you have sent us donated books and materials since April 2020, we apologize for not being able to send donation receipt letters to you. We are unable to process these donations currently, but we will process them once we have our Collections staff back on site in the library.
- NLS has begun adding commercially produced versions of some previously NLS-produced audio titles that were already a part of the collection. When we are made aware of these additions, we notate them as a “Reissue” in our catalog records. If you would like to ensure that you do not receive these new versions of titles that you may have already had, please give us a call and ask to have a Reissue Exclusion placed onto your account.

---

## CRAIG’S DESK PODCAST



Looking for answers to your library technology questions, like using the online catalog, downloading from BARD and local books or how to use some of the other online resources NCLBPH has to offer? Look no further than the library’s newest podcast,

Craig's Desk. Our Technology Librarian, Craig Hayward, answers your library technology questions, offers insight about the library's digital and online resources, with an occasional look at what's happening with the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled. You've got questions, he's got answers. Sign up to listen using your favorite podcast app using the feed - <https://craigdesk.podbean.com>

---

## **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](http://bit.ly/LBPH-NOBLE)





## **Summer Reading 2021: Tails & Tales**

Summer Reading is just around the corner! This year's theme is Tails & Tales.

- All participants who read at least five books will win a prize!
- Patrons ages 20 and below will be in the Kids' Summer Reading group.
- Patrons ages 21 and up will be in the Adults' Summer Reading group.
- Both reading groups will be separated by patrons who receive their books in the mail and patrons who download books using BARD.
- The top three readers in each category will win an Amazon gift card!

**Summer Reading Begins June 1st and will conclude on August 31st**

### **How to Register**

You can complete this form and mail it to the library, call the library to register or sign up on our online registration form.

- **Website:** [bit.ly/LBPH\\_SRP](https://bit.ly/LBPH_SRP)
- **Chat with us:** [statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/blind-print-disabled](https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/blind-print-disabled)
- **Leave us a voicemail** at 1-888-388-2460
- **Email us** at [ncldbph@ncdcr.gov](mailto:ncldbph@ncdcr.gov)

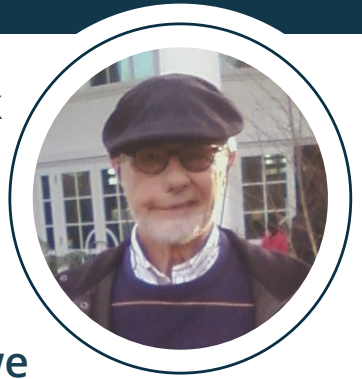
# NCLBPH VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING

## Interview with Bill Stepien

While we have been able to return some services to the library, such as machine repair and shipping materials, all of the other library services are being provided from home. To speak with one of our reader advisors a patron must leave a voicemail first, and a reader advisor will return their call as soon as they can; patrons can also email us, or use our new chat service offered on our website. Outreach has been done over the phone and over video calling software. There are also certain volunteer services that can be completed from home.

Before the pandemic, we hosted programs mainly in Raleigh. Our library is in Raleigh, and a great number of our patrons are in the Raleigh area; however, we have thousands of patrons all over the state of North Carolina. This would mean many of our patrons would not be able to travel from their towns to attend our programs. We do have

a monthly book club that meets over the phone with our Charlotte area patrons, and we have even had a program in Charlotte. However, without any staff in other parts of the state, we cannot regularly offer library programming to patrons in areas like Asheville, Kitty Hawk, Greensboro, or even Beech Mountain. Of the many awful things this COVID-19 pandemic has burden us with, we can at least be happy with the chance it has given us to expand our programming's reach through virtual means.



In 2020, we dipped our toes in the waters of virtual programming. This past December, we hosted a story telling program with one of our library's patrons, Bill Stepien. Bill is a retired history teacher who now gives presentations on different historical events. Our Assistant Regional Librarian, Catherine Rubin, first learned of Bill when

he called the library with a question. He mentioned that he was doing a series of programs called "History's Mysteries" for the Mecklenburg Libraries. He sounded like a great speaker, so when NCLBPH staff discussed having our first fully virtual program, Catherine immediately thought of Bill, contacted him, and fortunately, he was willing to do a program. The program he did this past December was a presentation about how the post office created America. It can be viewed using the following link: [youtu.be/acKcgFEJ1ns](https://youtu.be/acKcgFEJ1ns)

We plan to have more virtual programs like this in the future with Bill. We hope all patrons all over the state are able to join us. We would also like to offer these virtual programs to everyone else since it will be on Zoom and streamed on YouTube as well.

Let us know if you are interested in attending future virtual programs, like another History's Mysteries, by sending an email to our outreach specialist at [clint.exum@ncdcr.gov](mailto:clint.exum@ncdcr.gov). You may also contact the library and re-

quest to be put on the virtual programming subscription list. We hope you can join us for future virtual programs!

## **Get to know Bill Stepien!**

**Q: How did you come up with the idea of your History's Mysteries series?**

**A:** A number of years ago, I started training teachers on how to teach problem solving skills in their classrooms. For history teachers, this meant finding problems that were important during different periods in our history and writing them up in short story form. Students were then given the role of a character in each story faced with solving the story's problem.

As I explored important problems from the sweep of American History, it became very clear that students loved exploring history more than just reading about it. From there, I moved to finding historical events, connections, and mysteries that adults knew little about but were fascinated by when they explored them with me. When an organization in Charlotte

asked me to share such stories with their members five years ago, I started History's Mysteries.

**Q: How do you decide on what you want to make a presentation?**

A: My fifty years of teaching, writing, and reading/listening to interesting authors has shaped my ability to find interesting history events to turn into my programs. And I have a partner in this process. Both my wife Abby and I have been very fortunate, it seems, to have been born with third eyes – eyes that notice what interests people, both young and old. When we see something on TV, hear an interesting book, or get into a fascinating conversation, lights go on and we start imagining what kind of presentation might intrigue others.

**Q: What sort of research is involved for your presentations?**

A: I usually start by searching the internet for background. That research takes me to lots of related topics. I sift through the material and make a tenta-

tive plan on how a program might be put together. Then I search for books in the collection of the North Carolina Library for the Blind that will give me the solid, and fascinating, information I can pick through for an interesting, and accurate, presentation.

**Q: What topic have you found to be the most interesting?**

A: Here's a short list from the fifty or so presentations we've done so far that stand out:

- The Evolution of Time
- What Was It Like to Live in a Medieval Castle?
- How the Sears Catalog Helped Change America
- Mysteries about the White House
- The Americas Before Columbus Arrived
- Mysteries Archeologists Can't Explain
- Where Did Skyscrapers Come From - How High Can They Go?

**Q: While you've researched different topics for this series, has any of your research contradicted any of your previous knowledge?**

**A:** Most often, our research widens and deepens our understanding. We have learned to stay away from sources, especially some internet sites, which have little scholarship behind them.

**Q: How long have you been a patron of our library? How did you learn about our services?**

**A:** I became a patron about fifteen years ago when it was discovered that I had very active macular degeneration and also needed cornea replacements. My vision faded fast and I found I could no longer read print well. Large type was also a challenge. The Mecklenburg Association for the Blind then pointed me to the NC Library for the Blind. The library helped me rebuild my life.

**Q: What has been your experience with your library service so far?**

**A:** The library is extremely easy to use – from doing searches for books online to getting people to guide you through fixing problems with my book reader. In my case, I needed a human being to walk me through changing a worn out battery. I also need to point out that the library's collection is extensive; I have never come up dry on a search for sources!

**Q: Do you prefer your books through the mail or by downloading them?**

**A:** It is very difficult for me to read print, so I get all my books downloaded. When I first came to the NC Library for the Blind, I also received large print books.

**Q: What other reading interests do you have?**

**A:** I love travel topics and science fiction. Good detective fiction stories can also be found on my reader. Oh, that reminds me, I love the "Bookshelf" feature on my reader that allows me to keep three or four books on the machine. I can jump around to each as I feel motivated. ■

## **LIBRARY CLOSING DATES**

Memorial Day .....Monday, May 31, 2021

Independence Day .....Monday, July 5, 2021

---

---

## **DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO CATALOG**

The library has produced an all audio version of the Descriptive Video Catalog. The catalog is a collection of all of the DVD's available today from the library. It is available from NOBLE as a downloadable digital talking book so you can listen to it on your Digital Talking Book Player and from our Descriptive Video page on the website as a now playable MP3. Listen Now - [bit.ly/LBPH-DV](http://bit.ly/LBPH-DV)

---

---

## **SUBSCRIBE TO DIGITAL TAR HEEL TALK**

The Tar Heel Talk has a digital exclusive edition. They are released in the summer and winter between the paper editions of Tar Heel Talk. If you would like to receive the digital newsletter, please sign up to be put on our newsletter list by visiting [bit.ly/LBPH-NEWS](http://bit.ly/LBPH-NEWS).

## **CHOICE** MAGAZINE LISTENING

Choice Magazine Listening (CML) is a free audio magazine for adults with impaired vision or other disability. Four times a year, listeners can download or receive by mail 12 hours of great stories and articles chosen from 100 of the finest magazines, absolutely free of charge. All CML's selections are wonderfully read by some of America's top audiobook narrators. CML subscribers include those with conditions such as low vision, macular degeneration, blindness, MS, diabetes, cerebral palsy, ALS, dyslexia, and Parkinson's. If someone you know would enjoy this free service, please call 1-888-724-6423 or visit [www.choicemagazinelisting.org](http://www.choicemagazinelisting.org).