Having books for the holidays

By planning ahead, you can help make sure you have plenty of reading material for the upcoming holidays. As part of a state agency, OLBPH will be closed on these dates:

- Nov. 28 and 29 – Thanksgiving
- Dec. 24 and 25 – Christmas
- Jan. 1 – New Year’s Day
- Jan. 20 – M.L. King Jr. Day
- Feb. 17 – Presidents’ Day

We don’t want you to run out of books during a long holiday weekend. So be sure to get your book and magazine orders in to us 3-5 business days ahead of each of these holidays. To do so, simply call the library and ask to speak with a librarian. Alternatively, you can also email us your book requests.

Please keep in mind U.S. Postal Service deliveries may slow down some due to increased volume, especially between Thanksgiving and Christmas.
Director’s Column

The 2019 OLBPH Customer Satisfaction Survey was recently distributed to a sample of 326 patrons. The most noteworthy results are the first three questions relating to OLBPH employees being helpful, respectful and resolute in responding to complaints. Average positive response is 98.7%. This is up slightly (1.2%) from the 2017 survey. Hard to vastly improve such stellar service.

While all the wonderful library employees contribute to this success, a special shout out goes to our professional reader advisory staff: Andrew, Erin, Sammie, and Kayla. They are the ones who handle most of the direct patron interface maintaining their accounts. 84% surveyed agreed that our automated book selection works well for them, and of course our reader advisors can make selection adjustments.

Of the 8% of patrons using OTR (Oklahoma Telephone Reader) 90% responded positively regarding the dial-up newspaper and short story reader service. We do have some work to do in both marketing and further development of this program. One final note regarding the survey is over 97% responded favorably to this publication, “Bright Future.”

A name change for the DRS division that includes the library became effective November 1, 2019. What was the Division of Visual Services (VS) is now the Division of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI). Division Administrator Tracy Brigham states “We believe the new name better identifies our mission as a division and allows individuals to locate the services they need.”

In closing, November ushers in the holiday season. For me, being a veteran, the season starts with Veterans Day. I am thankful for my service opportunities both then and now. I hope all of you in
some way in your life journey share this same thought when celebrating Thanksgiving.

Thank you all for being awesome patrons.

--Kevin Treese, Library Director

**NLS has a new name**

The Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, which provides braille and audio materials to the Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, has changed its name. As of October 1, 2019, it is officially the "National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled." The new name addresses the use of outdated language and more clearly communicates the breadth of those served. NLS sought input on this name change implementation from stakeholder groups and gathered data through various public channels, including its users.

“We’ve been considering a change for some time, so we’re happy to see this day arrive,” NLS Director Karen Keninger said. “We are very pleased to share our new name and accompanying graphic identity with the public and feel that the new name, as with all of NLS’s work, puts the emphasis on the people we serve.”

This name change will not affect the acronym by which the program is known generally, so NLS will still be NLS.
Books with an asterisk (*) next to the title were produced by our own digital recording studio. Other titles are books produced by the National Library Service, a branch of the Library of Congress.


Woody Guthrie (1912-1967) was the greatest composer and singer of folk songs America has produced.

In this 1943 autobiography, he tells how he grew up in Oklahoma, rode the rails and found inspiration for his music through his own hard times during the Dust Bowl and Depression. A free spirit with a guitar slung over his back, he made his way across the country to California, Florida and New York City, where he became a political activist. During the journey of discovery that was his life, he composed and sang words and music that have become a national heritage.

His songs told the stories of the American people: their land, their labors, their trials and their joys. A spokesman for the poor and downtrodden, he also sang of the beauty of the open road until 1943 when
he went off to war with the Merchant Marine. His music stayed rooted in the blues and ballads he’d been raised on in the Oklahoma Dust Bowl. Guthrie’s life was filled with tragedy as well as joy. He spent his last years battling Huntington’s disease, a fatal neurological disorder that causes mental and physical deterioration.

To learn more about Woody Guthrie’s life, read DB 17197 – *Woody Guthrie, a Life* by Joe Klein.

--Sammie Willis, Librarian

* DBC 12210 – *School for the Blind* by Daniel Simpson

This unique collection of autobiographical poetry invites readers to experience what it feels like to be blind. The author shows us the cruelties and kindnesses of living without vision in a world dominated by it. Through his aesthetic and rhythmic verse, the author makes us question who is sighted and who is blind and gives us an unusual sense of the world around us.

* DBC 12212 – *Voices from the Heartland* edited by Carolyn Anne Taylor, Emily Dial-Driver, Carole Burrage, and Sally Emmons-Featherston

This title is a celebration of women's contributions to Oklahoma's recent past. It records defining moments in women's lives - whether surviving the Oklahoma City bombing or surviving abuse - and represents a wide range of professions, lifestyles, and backgrounds to show how extraordinary lives have grown from the seeds of ordinary girlhoods. From former Cherokee principal chief Wilma Mankiller, First Lady Kim Henry, novelist Billie Letts, and prima ballerina Maria Tallchief, to OU basketball coach Sherri Coale, the authors share their personal reflections and convey the wisdom they have unearthed on their journeys thus far.

--Andrew Shockley, Librarian
Studio staff and volunteers get high-level training

One of the National Library Service’s top experts in studio narration and production spent a few days in Oklahoma City in October to both educate and inspire. Chris Mundy is the Quality Assurance Specialist at the Multistate Center East in Cincinnati, Ohio. His guidance has been a big reason why Oklahoma’s recording studio is highly regarded in the NLS network.

Mundy’s visit included two main objectives. The first was to train our new studio technician on using the Hindenberg Audio Book Creator production tool. According to Studio Director Jill Streck, that training went very well and enhanced the team’s skills, especially in creating multiple levels of audio book navigation.

The second objective focused on the volunteers, both for the studio and Oklahoma Telephone Reader. About 20 volunteer narrators and editors listened as Mundy gave an informative and conversational presentation about narrating audio books and magazines.

“He quickly developed rapport with the audience,” Jill said, “and the question-and-answer section at the end of the talk evolved into one big conversation amongst the group, fostering camaraderie and a sense of kinship that was really neat to see.”

Following a library-hosted luncheon, Mundy conducted informal, one-on-one coaching sessions with volunteers. He gave constructive, encouraging feedback while also pointing out “opportunities” to make subtle changes that would improve the narrators’ deliveries. The 16 mini-coaching sessions took up the whole afternoon, and Jill said Chris seemed to enjoy the interactions as much as the volunteers did.
Another highlight of the visit was Mundy’s participation when a writer for *Oklahoma Today* magazine came to do an interview for an upcoming article about OLBPH and its recording studio. The studio produces the audio version of *Oklahoma Today* as well as *Cowboys & Indians* magazine and selected books.

“Chris was able to chime in with relevant points of clarity, helping describe the bigger picture and how we fit in to the nationwide network of libraries for the blind, and specifically, their recording programs,” Jill said.

--Brian King, Editor, with help from Jill Streck, Studio Director, and Kevin Treese, Library Director
Volunteer spotlight: George Fracek

George Fracek was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. He lived across the street from the CBS studio where Richard M. Nixon and John F. Kennedy held the first televised presidential debate. He met his wife Linda in Chicago, and the couple had two children, Elizabeth in 1980 and Matthew in 1982.

After working in different industries, George became a freelancer, relying on the various skills he’d developed working for and with various companies.

In 1994 the Fracek family moved to Grove, Oklahoma. Linda taught high school, first in Vinita, then in Grove. George set up a company to provide services for senior citizens.

Inspiration struck George in 2008 when he watched a Good Morning America segment about the Washington, DC District Court upholding the lower court’s decision that the US Treasury Department was not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act for not providing a way for blind and visually impaired individuals to differentiate currency notes.

George’s idea was a system of marking currency so that blind and visually impaired people could determine currency just by touch. Briefly, one corner of a bill is marked with something tactile. That is the orientation mark. Then, along the edges of the bill, but not at any other corner a tactile denomination mark is placed which creates a
unique relationship between the orientation mark and the denomination mark. Each denomination is marked consistently.

As a sighted person, George knew he needed to run the tactile system past people without sight. So, he contacted the American Council of the Blind (ACB), who steered him toward the OLBPH, who gave him the phone number of a person who could give him some feedback on his system.

This was the start of his relationship with the Library. Jay Doudna convinced him to start reading for the Older Blind Information Line when the program was housed at the Tulsa Visual Services office. George continued volunteering when the program transferred to the Library and still reads for the current incarnation of the program, the Oklahoma Telephone Reader.

Usually, George reads from home, but he also reads from places such as Gilbert, Arizona, Springfield, Illinois, and Chicago. One cold winter, George went to the Chicago area for an extended visit with a family member. Determined to keep up with his volunteer work for OTR, George would bundle up and drive into town to a McDonald’s parking lot to use their free WiFi since his family member didn’t have a good internet signal. He recorded the Tulsa World from the quiet of his car via cell phone.

George enjoys reading Ask Amy, the staff editorial from the Tulsa World, and, in particular, the Cryptoquote and Scrabble puzzle. The challenge for the last two is in the precise identification of the letter that needs to be communicated. He uses both the NATO and Western Union lists of words (phonetic alphabets: alpha for A, beta for B, foxtrot for F, e.g.) and sometimes has to add another word of his own choosing.

He greatly enjoys reading for you!

--Lacey Downs, Administrative Assistant
Ken Burns’ recently released documentary miniseries *Country Music* has spawned interest in several country music singers. Below are a sampling of biographies and autobiographies of these country music stars.

**DB 56467 – Will You Miss Me When I’m Gone? The Carter Family and Their Legacy in American Music by Mark Zwonitzer**
Life and times of country music’s legendary Carter family, who hail from the Appalachian Mountains of Virginia. Chronicles the commercial success of A.P. Carter, his wife Sara, and sister-in-law Maybelle during the 1930s and the subsequent careers of Maybelle and her daughters after the breakup of the original band.

**DB 39868 – Dolly: My Life and Other Unfinished Business by Dolly Parton**
Parton, born in 1946 in a one-room cabin in East Tennessee, was the fourth child in a family that would eventually number twelve children. Parton discusses her early years, especially her schooling and love for music; the strong ties that kept the family together; her relationship with her best friend Judy Ogle; her rise to fame in Nashville; and her marriage of twenty-eight years to Carl Dean.

**DB 42850 – I Lived to Tell It All by George Jones**
The rough-and-tumble life of a hard-living icon of country music is told to us by George Jones. This autobiography takes us through his
hardscrabble early years in East Texas, growing fame, and difficult
times to his clean-living sobriety. Jones admits that binge drinking,
drugs, and violent behavior plagued his life and career.

**DB 47599 – Coal Miner’s Daughter by Loretta Lynn**
The country music star from Butcher Holler recalls her life from rags
to riches. Lynn emphasizes the importance of her twenty-five-year-
old marriage and her faith in people and in God.

**DB 32896 – Almost Like a Song by Ronnie Milsap**
Taken in by dirt-poor, but loving grandparents after his mother
rejected him, Ronnie was soon sent off to a school for the blind.
There, among other things, he learned discipline, determination, and
classical music - acquirements that shaped his boyhood, his career,
and his success as a country music superstar. His inspiring story
reveals little-known aspects of the music industry where he rose to
the top.

**DB 58571 – Honky Tonk Angel by Ellis Nassour**
This biography portrays Patsy Cline as the first female country singer
to cross over into pop music. From interviews with Cline's family and
friends, the author details the performer's trailblazing career,
dynamic relationships, and untimely death in a plane crash.

**DB 90060 – Hank: The Short Life and Long Country Road of
Hank Williams by Mark Ribowsky**
Music historian Mark Ribowsky looks at the short life of country

*(Continued on next page)*
music icon Hank Williams. He examines the music, but also the man's life, from his roots in Alabama, through his meteoric rise to fame, his troubled marriage, and his alcohol-fueled end at the age of twenty-nine.

**DBC 14316 – *Sing Me Back Home* by Merle Haggard**
Born in Oklahoma and raised in poverty in central California, Merle Haggard served a prison sentence in San Quentin before becoming one of the most popular country music singer-songwriters in the nation. In this funny, searching, and intensely honest autobiography, he tells his story.

**DB 53472 – *Stand By Your Man* by Tammy Wynette**
Country-western singer's memories of her rise to stardom from the obscurity of a tar-paper shack in rural Mississippi. Wynette recalls her five marriages, including one to fellow performer George Jones; her children; physical and emotional problems; and the tragedies she has had to cope with.

**DB 58372 – *Man in Black* by Johnny Cash**
In this candid autobiography, legendary country-western singer Johnny Cash revisits the "good and bad times" of his life and career. Describes his rural Arkansas childhood, older brother Jack's death, seven nightmarish years of drug addiction, marriage to June Carter, and the faith in God he ultimately found.

--Andrew Shockley, Librarian
Fall food: Easy Pumpkin Soup

Autumn and cooler temperatures are upon us. If you’re looking for a simple meal to keep things warm and cozy, try this easy pumpkin soup. There is no pre-cooking or ingredient chopping required—just throw all ingredients in the pan and heat it up!

Ingredients:
- 1 (10.5 oz) can condensed cream of potato soup
- 1¼ cups water
- 1 (15 oz) can pumpkin puree
- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 1 cup cream
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 pinch paprika, for garnish
- 1 cup seasoned croutons (optional), for garnish

1. In a saucepan over medium heat, combine the cream of potato soup, water, pumpkin, butter, and cream. Season with salt, pepper, garlic powder, and ginger. Stir until blended, and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low, and simmer for 15 minutes stirring occasionally.
2. Remove from heat, and pour into serving bowls. Sprinkle the

(Continued on next page)
top with paprika, and top with seasoned croutons. Makes 6 servings.

Per Serving: 265 calories; 20.8g total fat; 17.6g carbohydrates; 3.2g protein; 67mg cholesterol; 1007mg sodium.

Further Reading
Nonfiction: DBC01614 – *The Taste of Home Cookbook*
DB067815 – *The Best of Cooking with Three Ingredients*
DB087396 – *Not Your Mother’s Slow Cooker Cookbook*

Fiction — For mysteries that include recipes, check out:
Booktown Mystery series by Lorna Barrett
Hannah Swenson series by Joanne Fluke
White House Chef Mystery series by Julie A. Hyzy

--Marka Simms, Circulation Librarian

**Harris family visits OLBPH building**
The library welcomed some special guests on Sept. 7. As part of their family reunion, 13 relatives of the late Travis Leon Harris came to tour the building that is named after him.

Harris was a longtime Visual Services director, served on the Oklahoma Commission for Human Services, and earned national honors for organizing a regional ham radio network to coordinate eyebank donations.
Lately I’ve been working with the BEP (Business Enterprise Program) which many people know as the “Blind Vending Program.” This program, which was established by the Randolph-Sheppard Act of 1936, trains people who are legally blind to operate a vending and/or snack bar enterprise.

The BEP provides locations, equipment, guidance, and support for the facility managers. It also steps up to help them with any challenges they may have conducting business.

It’s rewarding to me to be able to lend a hand to this program. My experience with BEP goes way back to the 1950s when I received medical treatment at the Children’s Hospital in Oklahoma City. There was a blind vendor there named Charles Simpson. He amazed me when I realized he was blind and able to service the vending machines as well as run the snack bar in the hospital. Charles might be glad if he knew that little kid who watched him working back then is now trying to contribute to the current generation of BEP associates.

Life has a way of making circles, adding to the “small world” narrative. A few years ago I made the acquaintance of Charles Simpson’s daughter, then his granddaughter. They both have ties to DRS, the agency where I work and where BEP is a program. They are both high-achieving persons, contributing to our state in many ways. They also happen to be blind.

Such has been my wonderful journey, working in DRS. Such has been my life. Every day is a gift and that’s why we call it “the present”.

--Jim Kettler, Contract Monitor
Do you know someone who could use OLBPH?

Think for a moment about the people you know – relatives, friends, neighbors, people in church and civic groups, and so on. There’s a good chance one or more of them needs a different way to enjoy books, magazines, and newspapers. They may have worsening low vision, eye diseases, or could be dealing with conditions that make holding traditional books difficult or even impossible.

Tens of thousands of Oklahomans are eligible for OLBPH’s free statewide audio books service, but they don’t know about us. That’s where you can help. Even with all our outreach efforts, a word-of-mouth referral from a satisfied patron or supporter is still one of the most powerful ways of raising awareness. Please encourage the person you thought of to contact OLBPH so he or she can enjoy reading again.

★★★★

Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
300 N.E. 18th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND