

Bright Future

Newsletter of the Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

A new way to provide books

Are you tired of keeping up with multiple cartridges, cases, AND mailing cards? What if you could get all of your books on one cartridge? Starting this month, you can! Instead of getting multiple books in the mail, patrons will get one cartridge with multiple titles. No more waiting lists! All of our books are available all of the time. Do you want an entire series in order? We can do that too! No more cliffhangers; the next book is queued up and ready to go.

Switching to this new system won't happen overnight. Regular service will continue for the time being. Please call the library and ask to speak to a librarian if you have any questions and let us know if you'd be interested in helping us test out this new service.

--Erin Byrne, Librarian

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Bright Future is also available in Braille, on Oklahoma Telephone Reader, on Oklahoma Recorded Magazines, and on our website.

Director's column

Here we are in August of 2021. We're *kind of* out of COVID-19 and kind of not so much, or "not so fast, my friend" as ESPN commentator Lee Corso quips. Business processes and supply chain wheels are still not quite back to the pre-pandemic pace we got accustomed to. The library, being no exception to the quasi-norm status, moves along, continuing to serve as best we can with more employees and volunteers on-site now. We have experienced slower delivery times for needed supplies to keep our audio book circulation going. However, the dedicated library employees in all disciplines keep improvising and finding ways to not only keep circulation going, but also recording studio operations and Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Center delivery of learning tools to our birth through 12th grade children.

My role as library director was, shall I say, "expanded" as a result of a seven-month vacancy of an Administrative Programs Officer (APO) position responsible for library business and building management. I was happy to fill in as I felt that was my part in the overall effort to keep library services moving forward amongst challenges.

That challenge brings me to a much anticipated update and announcement of our new hire, Linsey Sanders. Linsey comes to us from DRS' Financial Management Division as an accountant. I am very grateful that she has decided join Team Library as an APO and be an integral part of our operations. I'm confident that Linsey will help us be the best we can be. With that, I'll let Linsey tell us a bit about herself.

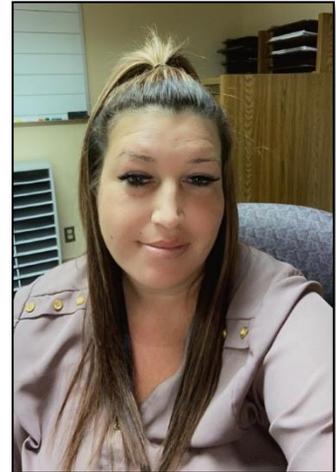
--Kevin Treese, Library Director

Meet the new member of the OLBPH family

Hello, everyone. My name is Linsey Sanders, and I am the new Building and Business Manager at OLBPH. I have been with the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) for one and-a-half years, working as an accountant before moving to this position.

I have a degree in Sociology/Social Counseling and am now working on my business degree. I also have a daughter who will turn 11 this month. She keeps me busy and on my toes!

I am excited to join the OLBPH team and get to know everyone!

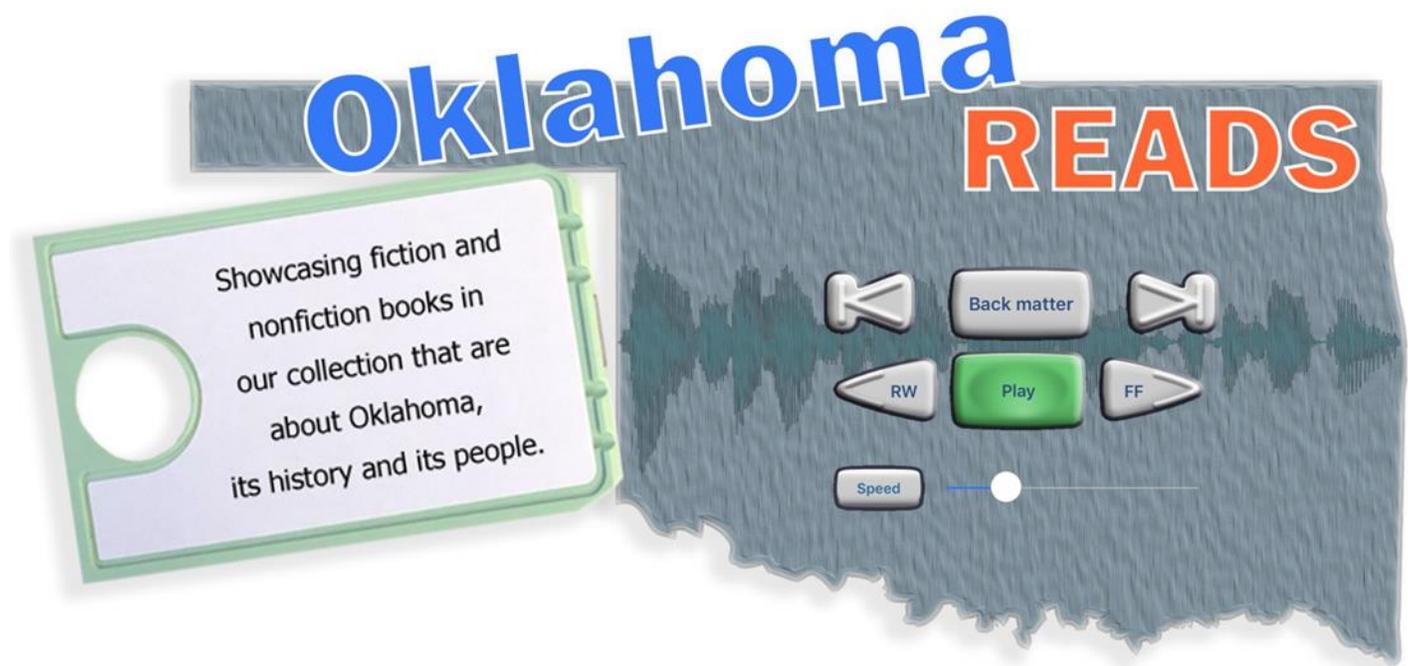


Big news! More people with reading disabilities now eligible

NLS, the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled, recently implemented a long-awaited change to its regulatory language. The update makes it easier for people with reading disabilities to enjoy OLBPH services. Now reading specialists, educators, librarians, and school psychologists are able to certify the eligibility of applicants with reading disabilities.

This means students and readers of all ages who have a perceptual or reading disability, such as dyslexia, can sign up and start enjoying NLS's huge collection of books and magazines. Our high-quality digital audio books can be downloaded to personal devices or mailed to homes free of charge.

For details on eligibility, please visit www.loc.gov/nls/eligibility, or call OLBPH and ask to speak to a librarian.



Jim Lehrer (1934-2020) was an American journalist, news anchor, and executive editor for the PBS Newshour. He was a moderator for twelve presidential debates. Lehrer was famous for his fair, straightforward, and impartial coverage of the news that presented both sides of the issues.

Lehrer was also the author of numerous fiction and nonfiction books that drew upon his experience as a newsman along with his interests in history and politics. Although Lehrer was born in Kansas and lived early on in Texas, he had family ties in Oklahoma and visited often. This led to his interest in Oklahoma politics and inspired him to write a hilarious series, *The One-Eyed Mack*.

After introducing Mack in *Kick the Can*, he follows his hero's later career as Oklahoma's lieutenant governor through a series of comic novels that have Mack solving mysteries in his spare time. Lehrer has written this series of mysteries, which is filled with political satire and laugh-out-loud humor, with a loving understanding of the Oklahoma spirit and mindset.

DB 28270 – *Kick the Can*

Account of a spirited boy who has been blinded in one eye by a game of kick the can and his misadventurous journey through Texas and Oklahoma in the fifties. Accompanying him are a band of endearing Norman Rockwell-like crooks and cranks. This is a coming of age novel that ranks as one of the favorite books in the series. When asked years later to describe Mack as a character Lehrer said, "He is a good man. It's harder to write fiction about a good man, but it's more fun."

--Sammie Willis, Librarian

Other titles in the One-Eyed Mack series to enjoy:

DB 30609 – *Crown Oklahoma*

It is the 1970s, and One-Eyed Mack is now the lieutenant governor of Oklahoma. Mack learns from a newscast that a new organized crime syndicate is being formed in Oklahoma. He is immediately assigned to check out the story – which he does with the help of family, friends, and a preacher. Before Mack can prove whether the story is true, a murder takes place.

DB 41630 – *Fine Lines*

Oklahoma is in an uproar. Someone is killing politicians, and the governor wants the One-Eyed Mack to find out who. Meanwhile, Mack is pestered by a museum curator, his wife is being honored for her success in the business world, his son needs attention, and the governor is having problems with the bureau of investigation. But Mack juggles it all until he finds out the shocking truth.

Also:

DB 35109 – *Short List*

DB 32689 – *The Sooner Spy*

Choosing books to record

Have you ever wondered how we decide which books to record in our recording studio? Since the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) records the vast majority of our collection, our studio's purpose is to focus on titles that are of specific interest to our patrons and have not been recorded by NLS or any of our sister libraries in other states. We have several criteria that guide our selections.

One criterion is simply whether or not the title in question is about Oklahoma, set in Oklahoma, or written by an Oklahoman. Sometimes these sorts of titles do not get recorded by NLS because they have to consider each of the 50 states and several U.S. territories, and it is impossible for them to record everything we would like them to record about our state. So, if a book is related in any way to Oklahoma, it is a strong contender for our recording studio.

Secondly, though no less important, is whether you, our library patrons, are asking for a specific title that we do not have and has not been recorded. If there is demand for a title and it has not been, nor will be, recorded by NLS or another state library, then it is a strong contender.

We also look for any reviews of the prospective titles in question. This typically means self-published titles are unlikely to pass muster.

Lastly, we have to consider if our studio's staff and volunteers have the time and capacity to add a given title to their schedule. There is more involved here than you may realize. On average, a narrator can record about ten pages of a book per hour. With most narrators volunteering once a week, it can take many months to record a book.

They also have to match titles to an appropriate volunteer narrator. For example, some books have a strong male lead and need a male narrator, or a Black female protagonist that would most authentically be voiced by a woman of color. There are many considerations when casting. Making the right match between narrator and title takes time and can make or break a recording.

The recording must also be edited, which can take even longer than the recording process. With such long time commitments required by both staff and volunteers to create a quality production, it is critical to make selections judiciously.

--Andrew Shockley, Administrative Librarian, and Jill Womastek, Studio Director

Our studio does more than record magazines and books. Volunteer Kent Graham (in photo at right) recently narrated an inspiring speech that was originally delivered by OLBPH patron Paul Smith to a Veterans' Day crowd in Sapulpa. Smith was a medical corpsman in World War II and described some of his remarkable experiences in Germany. His DRS counselor requested the recording to be shared with other blind and visually impaired Oklahomans. The speech is now available on Oklahoma Telephone Reader. Kent, a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Air Force, also did part of his service in Germany.



Volunteer Spotlight

This summer, our spotlight is focused on a retired state employee who has been a dependable contributor to Oklahoma Telephone Reader (OTR) for six years and counting. Valerie Thomason reads from *The Oklahoman* for us on Thursdays and Fridays and also narrates short stories from time to time.

Valerie's involvement with OLBPH can be traced back to her time as a dispatcher with the Oklahoma Highway Patrol. That's



where she worked with Becky Bates, and the two have been friends for nearly 30 years. Becky later worked for OLBPH – including managing OTR – before retiring at the end of 2020.

"I told Becky after I retired that if she ever needed someone to read for her, I was available," Valerie explained.

Valerie, who is also an avid quilter, lives in a rural part of Edmond. She still works part-time as a driver for a vehicle dealership in Guthrie, and of course, makes time for her OTR responsibilities.

"I like reading for OLBPH because I like the idea that I am helping other people," Valerie says. "They would not have the info that is so easily available to most people if it weren't for the many volunteers. I am so happy to be a part of this group."

--Brian King, Editor



Using Bookshelf to find magazines and book titles

Locating specific magazine or book titles on a cartridge containing multiple titles is easy if you use the **Bookshelf** feature on your digital player. It allows you to navigate back and forth through the cartridge to find the magazine or book title you want to read.

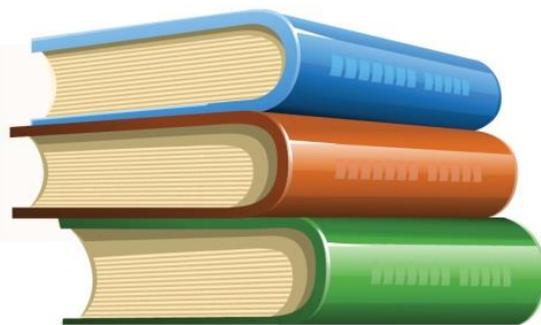
Follow these steps to locate the magazine or book you want:

1. Insert the cartridge into the digital player.
2. Hold down the green Play/Stop button until you hear the word "Bookshelf."
3. Release the Play/Stop button and tap down on the white arrow-shaped Fast Forward button to the right of the Play/Stop button to move through the titles on the cartridge until you hear the title of the magazine or book you want to read.

To move back through the titles on the cartridge, follow Steps 1 and 2. Then tap down on the white arrow-shaped Rewind button until you hear the title you are seeking.

--Sammie Willis and Andrew Shockley, Librarians

Book Corner



DB 100030 – *First Claim* by Luke Short

If you need more Westerns in your life, here is one to consider. Giff Ballew returns to the town he once called home before a corrupt rancher stole his pa's land. Now Giff plans to settle the score and take back his heritage.

DB 89782 – *The Girl in the Castle* by Santa Montefiore

In early 1900s Ireland, an aristocratic family holds Deverill Castle, despite family curses. Youngest daughter Kitty befriends a servant's daughter and the veterinarian's son. Her relationships with them cause friction in her family and lead her into the fight for Irish independence.

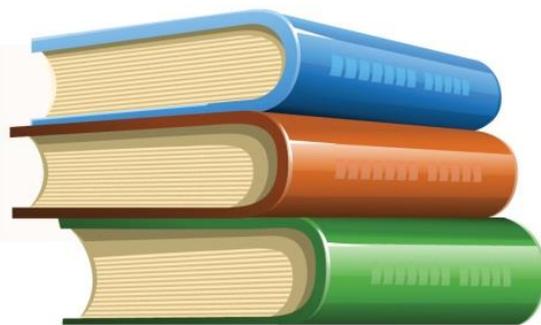
DB 99071 – *San Francisco Year Zero* by Lincoln A. Mitchell

In this cultural history of San Francisco, the author looks at 1978 in the famed city and the events he believes made the city what it is today. He focuses on the assassinations of Mayor George Moscone and Harvey Milk, the explosion of the local punk scene, and the breakthrough baseball season of the San Francisco Giants.

DB 73529 – *Guilt By Association* by Marcia Clark

L.A. deputy district attorney Rachel Knight is assigned the rape case of a teenage girl after the original investigator, her colleague Jake, is found dead. Rachel uncovers connections between the sexual assault and Jake's death. This title is the first novel by the lead prosecutor in the infamous O.J. Simpson murder trial.

Book Corner



DB 88999 – *All For Nothing* by Walter Kempowski

In January 1945, the German army is retreating, but in a rural East Prussian manor house, the wealthy von Globig family seals itself off from the world, protected from the chaos around them. Finally forced to flee from the advancing Russians, the family faces the catastrophic consequences of the war. This devastating portrait of the complicities and denials of German citizens as the Third Reich comes to an end is a page turner.

DB 88733 – *Blitzed* by Norman Ohler

This title examines drug use in Nazi Germany. It discusses Hitler's personal physician, Theodor Morell, and the impact of drug use in the military on specific operations.

DB 91547 – *Barracoon* by Zora Neale Hurston

The famous writer from the Harlem Renaissance recounts the story of Cudjoe Lewis, one of the last survivors of the Atlantic slave trade, as told to her in his unique dialect when she interviewed him from 1927 to 1931.

DB 102287 – *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah

Elsa Wolcott has few prospects before her as she's considered too old to marry in 1921 Texas. Then she meets Rafe Martinelli. Thirteen years later, everything on the Martinelli farm is dying, including their marriage. Elsa must decide to fight for the land of her heart or head to California.

--Andrew Shockley, Administrative Librarian

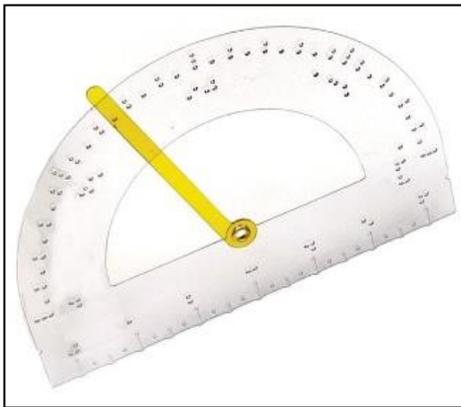
AIM Center has lots to offer!

Have you ever wondered how a blind student learns basic math skills, algebra, or geometry? Have you wondered how they feel or measure lines and angles? The Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Center at OLBPH carries all types of materials to support instruction in **ALL** subject areas.

The AIM Center serves blind and low vision students from birth to 12th grade and operates much like a regular lending library. We carry all types of aids and equipment such as magnifiers, large screen Chromebooks, large print and braille textbooks, specialized software, STEM products and much more!

To find out more about the AIM Center, how to register a student, or how to order products, please contact us at 1-800-523-0288 or visit our website at www.olbph.org/AIM. To find out more about the *types* of products we carry, please visit the online catalog for APH (American Printing House) products.

--Pepper Watson, AIM Center Director



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Dodgers and Dogs

It's that time of year when the seasons begin to change from Summer to Autumn, and the perfect way to end our Summer is by enjoying America's pastime - baseball. The crack of the bat, the cheer of the crowd, and the smell of a juicy hotdog are all waiting for you.



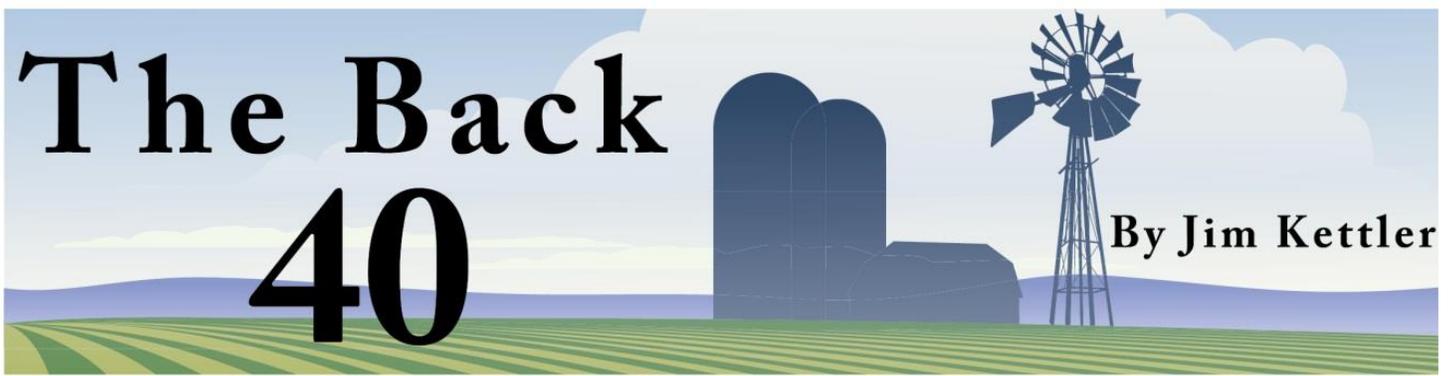
MLV Foundation is planning a trip to the Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark in OKC on Monday, September 6th, which is Labor Day; game time is 12:05 pm. We want to expand awareness of the blind community, so be sure to wear a Dodger blue type t-shirt or a t-shirt that helps to spread the message that we are here in the community. If you don't

have a shirt, MLV offers several designs for sale on their website including the "Blindness is not Contagious" t-shirt.

The Dodgers are offering a great deal: a ticket and all-you-can-eat hamburgers, hot dogs, and all of the fixin's. This deal is \$30 and includes your ticket, a baseball cap, and the all-you-can-eat spread. You may also just purchase the ticket for \$15 if you want to get your own food at any of the concession areas. The deadline to sign up and pay is Friday, August 20th.

To register and pay for your ticket, go to our Google registration form at: <https://forms.gle/Wqox2xt8B7neecau9> or go to the Activities and Events tab on the MLVFoundation.org website and look for Dodgers and Dogs.

--Debbie Sanders, MLV Foundation



Technology. Does that word cause you discomfort? It's a word whose meaning and impact have evolved with its nature. I have a saying that "technology is great when it works." That's a bit tongue-in-cheek, but it's also true! Think about our parents, grandparents, great-grandparents' technology and what we collectively have witnessed in our times.

My maternal grandmother told me of traveling with my grandfather from west Texas to New Mexico in a wagon. That was their technology for that time. They made a homestead claim in New Mexico and lived in a tent for most of a year. Tent = technology. They planted a crop, whose successful harvest would earn them the title to their land. They plowed with horses. Technology. Their technology, however, also depended on the weather which didn't cooperate, and their crop failed, sending them back to Texas. In this case, the technology worked but the other factors, time, and weather, failed.

Fast forward to today. Automobiles, airplanes, telephones, radio, television, computers, smart phones, etc. All of these modern technological wonders serve us, save us labor, give us rapid results, and make our lives generally better – as long as they work. But just like my grandparents experienced, there are other factors, including HOW we use our available technology, that come to bear on our success.

Last issue of *Bright Future*, new developments in technology for the Library were outlined. That news is so exciting to me, because the technology has been available for some time now, but NLS has learned a better way for it to serve us. We've come a long way since the discovery of fire and how it can make our lives better, haven't we?

--Jim Kettler, Contract Monitor & BEP Training Associate

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.



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