



Window to the World

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Ed Byrne, Editor

Newsletter of the Tennessee Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped

403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville TN 37243-0313

Phone: (615) 741-3915 or (800) 342-3308 **Fax:** (615) 532-8856

E-mail: tlbph.tsla@tn.gov

The Falling Leaves

As part of our recent Summer Reading Program for kids, “Read, Think, Create@Your Library,” we invited our student patrons to submit stories and poems of their own. One submission that seemed particularly apt for our Fall issue comes from thirteen-year old Jessie Rogers, a student from Church Hill. It’s entitled:

Life of a Leaf

“What am I supposed to do, twiddle my thumbs? I just remembered that I don’t have any thumbs. I’m bored.

“I haven’t introduced myself. I’m a leaf. The last leaf on my tree. I’m lonely and bored. This tree is almost bare and I know my life is short. I wish I would just fall off.

My tree is teasing me a lot. I am proud of my color and all, but I want to turn brown and fall off.

“I’ve got to go. My time is up. Goodbye tree, goodbye world. I’m off to the ground, finally. I’ll see you – or at least the bottom of your shoe – later.”

Thanks to Jesse and her family for permission to run her story in this issue.

Free RFBD Memberships

Last issue we reported that Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFBD) was offering free memberships to *all* U. S. students with print disabilities. Thanks to major new funding from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs, this organization has now expanded its free membership offer to all individuals with certified print disabilities.

Readers who sign up by June 30, 2010 will receive full-year memberships at no cost. If funding for this program continues, members may also be able to renew their free memberships for the following year.

RFBD currently offers more than 56,000 digitally-recorded titles available on MP3

CDs or via download, including thousands of textbooks and professional non-fiction titles. You can register for free RFBD membership online at <https://cushub.rfbd.org/Registration/>.

Library Economics 1A: Cutting Costs

As many of you have heard, Tennessee is facing a serious budget crunch. Like all state agencies, we at LBPH are being asked to cut costs however we can. As patrons, you can help us do so in two ways.

First, please send back all your overdue books ASAP. A book becomes overdue six weeks after the date on which it is mailed to you. (The mailing date is printed on the front of the white address card, just under our return address.) Also, please make a practice of sending back all books in a timely manner. Prompt returns allow us to operate with fewer books, at less cost to taxpayers. And fewer books are what we are getting in today's economic environment.

If, for example, you've been holding the second or third book in a series until an earlier volume arrives, please bite the bullet and send it back. Just let us know as soon as you do get the earlier volume, and we will send the later volume back to you pronto.

Second, please keep your telephone calls with us as brief and businesslike as possible. As a group, librarians and reader advisors love to talk to patrons about books at great length. But the phone companies charge us by the minute for both our incoming and outgoing calls. We have been asked to cut back significantly on those minutes.

Don't misunderstand. We're not trying to discourage you from calling us. We want to talk with you whenever you need to talk to us. Just don't be hurt if we get down to business and take care of business as quickly as possible. Or if we sign off promptly so we can take care of another patron.

Student Programs

High school seniors can compete for the *Young Entrepreneur Awards*, sponsored by the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB). These non-renewable scholarships are presented to graduating seniors in recognition of their entrepreneurial spirit and initiative. Since 2003, the NFIB Young Entrepreneur Foundation has given over \$2 million in scholarship funds to almost 2,000 graduating high school seniors.

The deadline for this year's applications is December 31, 2009, and those who are selected as semi-finalists must be nominated by a NFIB member. For more information, visit www.nfib.com/yea.

Students in grades three through six can apply to attend the *Junior Science Academy*, hosted by the National Federation of the Blind's Jernigan Institute. The Academy's two four-day sessions are scheduled for July 28-August 1 and August 4-8 this summer in Baltimore, Maryland.

The sessions will expose blind and low-vision students to the excitement of earth and physical sciences using real life applications designed especially for the visually impaired. You can find out more about this program by visiting www.blindscience.org or by calling the Jernigan Institute's Director of Education, Mary Jo Hartle, at 410-659-9314, ext. 2407.

Blank Cartridges for Digital Players

Small allotments of our long-awaited -- and long-delayed -- new digital players have started to arrive. All the ones we have received so far have been sent to our armed services veterans, as federal law mandates. We hope that within a month or two we will be able to begin distributing the new players to our other patrons.

We're getting very positive reviews on the new players, especially in regard to volume and sound quality. The few problems that have been reported to us concern the transfer of downloaded digital books from a patron's personal computer to his or her new DTB player.

As we mentioned previously, one way to transfer a book is to use a USB flash drive, sometimes referred to as a "jump drive" or "thumb drive." Another method is to use an SD memory card in a USB card reader.

Now there is a third possibility: a blank DB cartridge similar to the cartridges we use to distribute our digital books.

Independent Living Aids (ILA) is offering blank 1 GB cartridges and a connecting USB cable for \$17.95. To find out more, you can contact ILA by phone at 1-800-537-2118 or online at www.independentliving.com.

Please be aware that in providing this information to our patrons we are not endorsing or recommending this product or this supplier. We will provide similar information on other devices or suppliers as we become aware of them.

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