

This publication was supported in whole or in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the State of Tennessee.

Window to the World is published quarterly by the Tennessee Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Department of State. It is available on cassette, in braille, and on the web at www.tn.gov/tsla/lbph/newsletter.htm. Please call the Library at (800) 342-3308 to request alternate formats.

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Department of State, Authorization No. 305224, 6000 copies, August 2009. This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$.06 per copy.



Window to the World

Summer, 2009 Vol. 13, No. 3

Ed Byrne, Editor

Newsletter of the Tennessee Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped

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Troubleshooting Your NLS Cassette Player

As many of you now know, we are having lots of problems with our fleet of aging four-track cassette players. One peculiar problem is that some of the players we're getting back are actually in satisfactory working order. So we're including a few troubleshooting tips that patrons can use to test their players before they return them to us.

1. Is the player plugged in to a live power outlet?

Seems simple, but many of our patrons can't see when a power cord has been accidentally disconnected by a rambunctious pet, a grandchild, or absent-minded spouse.

To test whether the power outlet is live, plug in a radio and see if it works.

2. Is the battery fully charged?

If you usually listen to your player on battery, check to see if it will play when it's plugged in. If it does play, then leave it plugged in overnight (at least eight hours) without playing it. In the morning check to see if the battery has charged back up.

3. Is the problem due to a faulty cassette?

Remove the current cassette and try another, then a third, preferably from another book. If the problem persists with **all** the cassettes you try, it's due to a defect in the player. If it doesn't, the problem is probably due to the cassette.

4. Is the problem due to defective headphones?

Remove the headphones and listen to a cassette through the player's built-in speaker. (Note: if you have hearing loss, you may want to ask a friend or relative with normal hearing to perform this trial for you.)

5. Does the narrator sound like Alvin and the Chipmunks?

First, check the sliding variable speed control at the top right hand side of the control panel. Make sure it's pushed all the way to the left.

Next, check the speed control switch just below the variable speed control. Make sure it's pushed down on the left. (It's easy to trip this switch accidentally when you're feeling for the side control switch just below it.)

If both the speed controls are properly set, then try this remedy. Remove the cassette and turn it end up, then tap it firmly once or twice on a table or desk top. Now put a pencil or your little finger in one of the capstan holes and rewind the tape until it feels snug.

Editor's Note: Nobody can explain why this remedy works, but it often does.

You can also try running the cassette on fast forward for a few seconds and then rewinding it.

Return services requested

Tennessee Library for the Blind
and Physically Handicapped
403 Seventh Avenue North
Nashville TN 37243-0313

Free Matter for the Blind
and Handicapped

Editor's Second Note: Nobody can explain why this trick works, either.

6. Are you hearing what sounds like a conversation between space aliens?

Stop the cassette and then snap the side switch back and forth decisively a few times. Then press play.

You can also try the fast forward/rewind remedy above. If neither of these remedies work, check to see whether the cassette may be defective.

We're always willing to send a replacement player to you. But these simple home remedies may have you reading again in minutes rather than days.

New Talking TEL Databases

By Sue Maszaros,

TSLA Special Projects Coordinator

Last fall we alerted you to the ReadSpeaker feature on the *Kids InfoBits* database, one of the 31 Gale online databases available in the Tennessee Electronic Library (TEL). This text-to-speech synthesis feature allows users to listen to a database entry read aloud on their computers. It also allows users to download the audio version in MP3 format to their computers or MP3 players for later use.

Now the ReadSpeaker feature is available on an additional twenty-three Gale databases within the TEL collection. These ReadSpeaker-enabled databases include such valuable employment-related resources as the *Infotrac Vocations, Careers & Technical Education Collection* and the *Infotrac Small Business Collection*, as well as the *Junior Edition* and *Student Edition* databases for middle and secondary school students.

Using the ReadSpeaker feature is simple. Once you have selected the entry you want,

look for the light blue ReadSpeaker control bar under the Tools box. That's about a third of the way down on the right side of the entry screen. Press the play button, and adjust the volume using the "+" and "-" controls.

To download the audio entry, click on the "Download MP3" button inside the Tools box. A drop down menu will ask you to affirm that you will not use the item for commercial purposes. If you agree, the download proceeds immediately.

You can check out these 24 talking databases by visiting the TEL website at www.tntel.info, where you may experience another pleasant surprise. With its new geolocation capabilities, TEL no longer requires our users to enter passwords. It can automatically determine that the user is contacting the TEL website from a location within Tennessee. Since TEL is available to every Tennessee resident, free of charge, it will be ready to "talk" whenever you are.

New Reader Advisor Assignments

In our continuing effort to keep our patrons on their toes, we've modified our reader advisor responsibilities once again. Revised assignments are:

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Reader Advisor</u>
<u>Begins With:</u>	
A-D	Ed Byrne
E-K	Francine Sharpe
L-R	Annette Hadley
S-Z, students, and institutions	Amy Tangerstrom

Free Student Access to RFB&D

Continuing through January 25, 2010, any student in the United States with a qualified learning or print disability can sign up for 12 months of free access to RFB&D's CV Starr Learning Through Listening® Library. The

Library offers more than 46,000 textbooks and works of literature via Internet download.

This special offer, in celebration of RFB&D's 60th anniversary, is made possible by the generous contributions of RFB&D donors and by major funding from the U.S. Department of Education.

Any student in America with a certified print disability such as a visual impairment, learning disability or other physical disability is eligible.

The program applies to students in grades K-12 and post secondary education programs (college, graduate or professional school, trade or vocational school), regardless of whether the student is attending a public or private institution or is being home-schooled.

To learn more, visit the RFB&D website at <https://custhub.rfbd.org/Registration>. Students under 18 must be enrolled by a parent or guardian.

Peer-to-Peer Downloading Help

We now have two patrons who have, in folly, wisdom, or Christian charity, volunteered to assist others with downloads from the NLS BARD website. Just give us permission to disclose your contact information, and we will forward it to one of these volunteers. He or she will then contact you to offer help.

Local Patron Makes Good

(Food, that is.) Brenda Rice, an LBPH patron, Hadley School for the Blind graduate, and authority on show dogs, has added a new distinction to her extensive and diverse resume. She is currently hosting a "webinar" on crockpot cookery for Hadley's online extension program, Seminars@Hadley.

You can check out Brenda's hour-long webcast by going to http://www.hadley.edu/2_f_past_seminar_hadley.asp and double-clicking on "[Crockpot: Slow and Easy Cooking Streaming Audio](#)".

Remember, though, that crockpot recipes usually take a while to cook. Be prepared to salivate.

Magazine Changes

In early July we learned that NLS will no longer provide the popular news weekly *U.S. News and World Report* in audio format. In its place NLS is substituting the weekly news magazine *The Week* (TWK3).

NLS is dropping *U.S. News and World Report* because the magazine has altered its format: news segments of the magazine will now be published exclusively on the Internet, while a monthly print publication will be devoted solely to consumer guides.

NLS is replacing its braille edition of the *Washington Post "Book World,"* which has ceased publication, with a braille edition of the weekly *New York Times Book Review* (NYB1)

The magazine *Parenting*, has become two separate magazines: *Parenting: Early Years* (PAE1) and *Parenting: School Years* (PAS1). Subscribers will receive both magazines.

Subscriptions will be changed automatically unless patrons notify their regional libraries that they do not want the alternative publications.

Holiday Closures

September 7

Labor Day