



Window to the World

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Newsletter of the Tennessee Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped

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Tennessee Remembers: Vietnam and Korea Veterans

As many of you know, the Tennessee Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (TLBPH) is a department within the Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA). Among its other major roles, TSLA serves as the state's chief repository of Tennessee history.

We're proud to announce that TSLA is launching a new program called *Tennessee Remembers: Vietnam and Korea Veterans*. The aim of this program is to help Tennessee's veterans of the Vietnam War and the Korean War preserve their own personal histories by collecting original documents, memorabilia and personal accounts related to their in-country experiences during the war. As part of this program:

- The State Archives will accept donations of material as small as a single item or as large as dozens of boxes. We accept all forms of original material, including letters, photographs, books, film, audiotapes, slides, negatives, artifacts and maps.
- Professional archivists will arrange, organize and conserve the collections to ensure that these materials are preserved for future generations and made accessible to the public for research. Collections will eventually be microfilmed or digitally imaged for archiving and sharing with the donor.
- The State Archives will distribute Vietnam Veterans and Korean Veterans surveys that will give individuals an opportunity to tell their own personal stories from the war. *We would like to have the guidance and assistance of veterans in designing this questionnaire.*
- TSLA's goal is to carry out a project that honors the men and women who served in Vietnam and Korea by preserving—as only professional archives can—the history of their individual wartime experiences.

We know we have a significant number of Vietnam War and Korean War veterans among our patrons, and we urge those of you who did serve in Vietnam or Korea to participate.

We particularly note that our archivists are looking for your input in structuring the questionnaire they will use to record each veteran's own personal experience of the war. And we know they could use your help in making sure that their questionnaires and materials will be accessible to people who have visual or physical impairments.

If you want to participate or if you know a Vietnam or Korean War vet in your community who might want to participate, please contact the Archives by phone at 615-253-5788 or by email at VIETNAMVET.TSLA@TN.GOV or KOREANVET.TSLA@TN.GOV.

Local Girl Makes Good

Okay, we may be cheating to claim celebrated actress, storyteller and playwright Estelle Condra as a "local girl." She was, after all, born in South Africa, which is a ways over there on the other side of the Smoky Mountains. But she has been a resident of Nashville, where she lives with her husband David, and a patron of TLBPH for some years now. So we get to shine in her reflected glory.

And shine she did on the evening of April 12. In our last issue we included a late-breaking news flash that on that date Governor Bill Haslam would present Ms. Condra with a *Tennessee Distinguished Artist Award*, the state's highest honor for its citizens in the arts.

The *Distinguished Artist Award* "recognizes artists of exceptional talent and creativity in any discipline, who over the course of a career, have contributed to the arts and have helped guide and influence directions, trends, and aesthetic practices on a state or national level." Every two years the Tennessee Arts Commission recommends one to three recipients for these awards, which in the past have included actress Patricia Neal, poet/scholar Andrew Lytle and gospel group The Fairfield Four, along with country music legends Earl Scruggs and Dolly Parton.

Joining such company in a ceremony at the Governor's mansion would make a full evening for most of us. But Ms. Condra couldn't linger. She had to hop into her enchanted coach for a trip to the Schermerhorn Symphony Center, where she would receive the Decade Award from *VSA arts Tennessee*, an organization she helped to found in 2002.

VSA stands for Vision, Strength, and Artistic Expression. *VSA arts Tennessee* is

a chapter of *VSA arts*, an international non-profit organization founded in 1974 by Jean Kennedy Smith to create opportunities for people with disabilities to learn through, participate in and enjoy the arts.

Ms. Condra's works range from one-woman plays such as "Vibrations of Laughter," the story of Helen Keller's teacher Annie Sullivan, and "Blind People Shouldn't Vacuum," an irreverent take on sight loss, to a highly-regarded children's book, *See the Ocean*. In her spare time – and where does she find any? – she skis, rides camels and Lipizzaner stallions when she has the chance, and whips up a first-rate Cape Malay curry.

Ms. Condra has been visually impaired since her teenage days and lost her sight completely some fifteen years ago. So her achievements aren't lost on the blind students she entertains and mentors. We, your editor, were privileged to catch Ms. Condra in a benefit performance of "Vibrations of Laughter" at the Country Music Hall of Fame's Ford Theater several seasons back. As the audience filed out of the theater, we overheard one TSB student's evaluation: "Ms. Condra is awesome!" We agree.

Local Guy Makes Good, Too

The achievements of TLBPH patrons are not confined to the arts. If we need examples of success in business or sports, we can find both in the career of one patron: motivational speaker, blind golf champion and – most recently – book author David Meador.

Last spring, Meador took the Guiding Eyes Classic championship, blind golf's equivalent of the Masters Tournament and one of the nation's two major blind golf competitions. In capturing the title, he beat an invitational field of the world's top 32 blind golfers, including fellow Nashvillians Jim Baker and Dan Dillon.

When we asked him to name his key to championship golf, we got an unexpected answer: teamwork. Meador defines blind golf as the ultimate team sport. Blind golfers play with sighted coaches, who help them to align their shots. In effect, the blind golfer learns to see the course through the coach's eyes. In most other respects, though, blind golf sounds like golf, the individual matched against the course and his or her own demons.

We planned to feature Meador's victory as part on all-sports issue of the newsletter we had scheduled for last summer, but that issue never materialized. Now Meador has given us another achievement to feature, the recent publication of his new book.

Meador has distilled his experience as a golf champion and business leader into an inspirational memoir, *Broken Eyes, Unbroken Spirit*. In addition to revisiting his wins and losses in business and on the golf course, the book recaps what Meador considers his most important triumphs, his 40-year marriage to his wife Connie and his two victories over cancer.

You can buy *Broken Eyes, Unbroken Spirit* from BookManBookWoman Bookstore in Nashville's Hillsboro Village or from online booksellers like Amazon.com. Or order an autographed copy directly from the author at www.DavidMeador.com.

Like Estelle Condra, Meador grew up sighted, but at 18 he lost his vision in an automobile accident. Some people might have let such a devastating personal calamity derail their lives. Meador got busy. He took crash courses in braille and mobility skills, and then headed off to college.

After picking up a bachelor's degree in Business Communication at Southern Illinois University and a master's degree in Industrial Relations at Loyola University, Meador launched a twenty-year career in insurance sales with Northwestern Mutual Life here in Nashville.

There's an old-fashioned belief that all the most important business activity in the insurance and banking industries takes place on the golf course. In Meador's case it just may be true. Over the years he put in enough time on the golf course to register three holes-in-one. (We, your sighted editor and a former golfer, have never even seen a hole-in-one, much less scored one.) Apparently, his golfing didn't hurt his career at Northwestern, where he set sales records by bringing in new business every week for eleven straight years, a 572-week hitting streak.

In recent years Meador has turned his experience in overcoming the challenges of blindness and the demons of the golf course into a successful practice as a motivational speaker who – when he isn't writing books or winning championships -- also leads golf fund-raisers for non-profit organizations.

The message we get from patrons like Estelle Condra and David Meador seems pretty clear. It's a big world out there, full of opportunity in business, the arts, sports and personal life. You just can't let a little thing like total vision loss hold you back.

Spotlight Downloading: BARD Opens for Institutions

We're glad to announce that our institutional patrons, such as schools and assisted living facilities, can now register for BARD. Once registered, they may download books for any of their students or residents who would qualify for LBPH service.

BARD currently offers more than 25,000 books available for download along with current and past issues of 48 magazines. And the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) is adding about fifty titles each week. Selections include classics by favorite authors like Jan Karon and Louis L'Amour as well as recent best sellers and inspirational titles.

To register, institution representatives may go to the BARD application website at <https://nlsbard.loc.gov/TN1A/ApplicationInstructions.html>. Click on the Link to BARD application for institutions and fill out the short online application. **(Please use your institutional email account to register.)**

Once we have reviewed and approved your application, generally on the next business day, we will email you a UserID and temporary password. As soon as you sign on to the BARD main page, you can create a permanent password and begin downloading books.

Remember that your institution must already be registered as a TLBPH patron before you can sign up for BARD. Please contact us by email at TLBPH.TSLA@tn.gov or by phone at 1-800-342-3308 (toll-free long-distance) or 741-3915 (Nashville area) to request an application.

Spotlight Downloading: Download NFB-Newsline Files

Many of our patrons already subscribe to *Newsline*, the telephone service maintained by The National Federation of the Blind (NFB). *Newsline* gives its subscribers same-day audio access to more than 80 major newspapers and magazines, including all four of Tennessee's major dailies.

Now NFB is joining the downloading parade with new software that lets its subscribers download these audio stories over the Internet and play them back on NLS Digital Talking Book Machines.

It's called the NFB-Newsline® NLS DTB Loader (rather a mouth full, but that's what it does), and you can find out more at the NFB Newsline web site. Go to <http://www.nfbnewslineonline.org/nlsdtbloader.htm>. The new software is free to NFB Newsline subscribers.

NFB is offering similar applications for other digital book players such as the Braille+, Victor Reader Stream, Book Port Plus, Icon, and Book Sense. To find out more, visit www.nfbnewsline.org. Or you may contact NFB directly at nfbnewsline@nfb.org or by phone, (866) 504-7300.

Of course, you must be a NFB-*Newsline* subscriber to download and use these new

services. For more information, or to subscribe through TLBPH, please contact your reader advisor.

Spotlight Downloading: Download Straight from NLS Catalog

As many of you already know, NLS maintains a complete catalog of all audio and braille books in its national network collection. What I didn't know, until a colleague pointed it out to me, is that BARD users may initiate downloads directly from this catalog.

To access the NLS catalog, go to <http://nlscatalog.loc.gov/webvoy.htm>. You'll have a choice of using either the *Voyager* or the *Text* interface to search. Only the *Voyager* interface now offers the direct download feature, so click on it.

This link will take you to the *Voyager* Basic Search page, where you can search for books by author, title, key word, or other terms. The real trick here is to take advantage of the "Quick Limits" capability, available through the "Step Two" dialog box, just under the "Step One: enter search term" box on the left.

Quick Limits allows you to hone down your search in a variety of ways. For today's purpose, you'll want to select "NLS Digital Talking Books," which will limit the results of your search to those books available for downloading.

When you see a book that interests you, you may click on the title to get a "Brief Record," which will include a brief annotation describing the book. Right below the annotation you will find a link called "Downloadable talking book."

Click on this link and the BARD sign-on page will appear. Fill in your email address and password, and the download begins immediately.

This feature will be helpful to readers who want more control and flexibility in their searches than the BARD search pages currently offer, or those who want more information about a book than the BARD listings provide. The only drawback is that the *Voyager* interface lists its search results in a more complicated format, which can be more difficult for visually-impaired patrons – or computer screen readers – to interpret. You pays your money; you takes your chances.

Another Source for Recorded Christian Books

We recently received an email from Tape Ministries North West, asking us to alert our patrons to its services. According to the organization's website, which you can visit at http://www.tapeministries.org/Tape_Ministries_NW/, it has a collection of some 1,300 Christian books recorded on cassette tapes. It circulates these

books by mail, along with monthly cassette issues of *Our Daily Bread* and *Decision Magazine*.

The group's collection includes inspirational and Christian fiction titles, Biblical commentary and theology, and even some collections of sermons. There appears to be some overlap between its collection and ours, but the group appears to have many titles we do not.

Tape Ministries' services are "free to anyone who qualifies, including people who are blind, visually impaired, dyslexic, or who have disabilities that make it difficult to hold a book or turn the pages." Since these criteria are very similar to our own, patrons of TLBPH would almost certainly qualify with Tape Ministries.

Interested readers can download the Tape Ministries application at http://www.tapeministries.org/Tape_Ministries_NW/Services.html. Or, they can contact Tape Ministries directly by telephone at 206-243-7377 or email at tmnw@tapeministries.org.

The organization's website describes it as "a non-denominational Bible-based religious organization which partners with churches and individuals from many denominations, including Presbyterian, Lutheran, Covenant, Methodist, Episcopalian, Baptist, Assemblies of God, and many more."

Note: Tape Ministries NW is a private, non-profit organization that is supported by grants and donations. So, while its services are free, the group does solicit readers for donations.

LBPH Library Hours – No Change

As many of you may have heard, TSLA, our parent organization will soon reduce its hours of operation. Starting July 1, TSLA will be open to the public from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM, Tuesdays through Saturdays.

This change will not, repeat *not*, affect the operations of the LBPH. We will continue to be open for calls and visits from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM, Mondays through Fridays. While the rest of the Library will be closed on Mondays, a security receptionist in the Lobby will admit LBPH visitors.

If you intend to visit us on a Monday, *we strongly recommend that you call us beforehand* so we can alert the security receptionist and have a reader advisor ready to escort you inside the building.

The Library will be closed Monday, July 4, for Independence Day.

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