



Window to the World

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Newsletter of the Tennessee Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped

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The Great Magazine Conversion – Part 2

In our last issue we told you about the impending conversion of our audio magazines to digital cartridges. We told the truth – at least we tried to. But we have subsequently received more information to pass along.

First, the conversion is already happening. Tennessee patrons are already receiving current issues of their audio magazines on cartridges.

As of the end of June, the National Library Service ***has discontinued the cassette editions of all its audio magazines***. Instead of receiving each magazine on its own cassette, you will receive the current issues of all your magazines on a single digital cartridge. The only alternative to receiving audio magazines on a digital cartridge will be to download your audio magazines through our BARD download service.

The mail cases for magazines are a dark red in color, not blue, while the magazine cartridges are sky-blue. Both the cases and the cartridges are labeled “Magazine” in braille, and the cartridges are labeled in large print.

In addition, the magazine mail cases are imprinted with the tactile image of an open book, with raised letters saying “Library of Congress” and “Audio Magazines” just above and above and below the braille label. The mail cases for digital books are imprinted with a tactile image of the Great Seal of the United States, the bald eagle brandishing olive branches and arrows in its right and left talons. So you should be able to tell the new magazine materials from digital book cases and cartridges.

That's important because – as we told you in our last issue – ***you will have to return your magazine cartridge before you can get future issues.***

Your magazine cartridge is personalized especially for you, and will be re-used to record subsequent issues of your magazines. If the producer doesn't get your magazine cartridge back to re-use, you will not get your subsequent issues

You will return the magazine cartridge in the same way you return digital books, by reversing the mail card on the back of the magazine mail case and putting the case and cartridge back in the mail to us. The only difference is that the return side of the mail card is addressed to the producer of the magazine cartridges, the National Audio Company of Springfield, Missouri, and not to us.

Please treat your magazine cartridge gently and return it promptly. If your magazine cartridge fails or gets lost in the mail, we will be able to order a replacement cartridge for you. But we will only be able to order **two** such replacements per calendar year.

Remember that our digital cartridges cost about \$8 apiece. In a time of budget deficits and government service reductions, we can't expect the taxpayers to foot the bill for an indefinite supply of replacements.

Please be especially careful to avoid sending book cartridges back in magazine mail cases, and vice-versa. Book cartridges and magazine cartridges are returned to two completely different locations. Mismatched cartridges will be, for all practical purposes, lost.

Magazine Deadlines

Last issue we told you that you may keep your magazine cartridge as long as you want. Well...we lied...sort of.

We've since learned that magazine cartridges will come in two flavors: weekly and monthly.

If you subscribe to weekly publications, each week you will receive a cartridge marked "Magazines: Week *nn*," where "*nn*" indicates the week of the year (Week1 through Week 52). It will also bear the date of the Monday in that week.

For example, in the case of the first cartridge we saw, these values were “Week 17” and “April 22, 2013.” The second cartridge was marked “Week 18” and “April 29, 2013.”

If you subscribe to monthly magazines only, you will receive a monthly magazine cartridge with all the current issues of your monthly magazines. It will be marked “Month *nn*,” -- where “*nn*” represents the number of the month, 1 through 12, -- and will also bear the date of issue.

The cartridge loan period for weekly publications is **one week** after you receive them. The cartridge loan period for monthly, bimonthly, and quarterly publications is **one month** after you receive them.

Please treat magazine cartridges the same as book cartridges; read your publications, return the cartridge to the red container, flip the mailing card on the container, and place it with your outgoing mail. Timely reading and returning of magazine cartridges will help NLS continue to provide the high-quality audio-magazine program you have enjoyed.

In some cases you may receive a magazine cartridge that has more than one magazine on it. The NLS digital talking-book player is equipped with a bookshelf feature to assist you in navigating your digital cartridge.

To activate the bookshelf feature, press and hold the green, rectangular Play/Stop button on your player until you hear a beep. Complete audio instructions for using the bookshelf feature are included on all cartridges that contain more than one magazine issue.

Okay, now we'll throw you a curve. Some of you get both weekly and monthly magazines. In your case, your weekly cartridges will occasionally include issues of your monthly magazines as well. Please treat the hybrid weekly/monthly cartridges as *monthly* cartridges. The deadline for returning these types of cartridges will be **one month** from the date on the cartridges.

Enjoy your audio magazines but please remember to return them.

Firmware Upgrades

Just to keep you lively we've added another wrinkle. Your magazine cartridges will include an upgrade to your player's “firmware,” the computer programming embedded in your player. When you insert a cartridge into

your player, the firmware update program will check the version of firmware currently installed on your player.

If your player's firmware has not already been upgraded to the new magazine version, the update software will proceed to upgrade it. The player will announce "upgrading firmware" and instruct you to do nothing while the upgrade is being installed.

The player will then beep several times before announcing "upgrade complete." The entire process will take about fifteen seconds.

Be aware that bad things happen if the firmware upgrade is interrupted, whether the interruption is a sudden loss of power or by someone fiddling with the controls or the cartridge while the upgrade is taking place.

- So, please make sure that your player is plugged in the first time you insert your magazine cartridge. (You don't want the battery to run out of charge during the short upgrade process.)
- And please don't touch the player or cartridge while the upgrade is running. As we noted above, the upgrade only takes about fifteen seconds to complete.

Make Your Voice Heard

The Tennessee State Library and Archives is spearheading an effort to help Tennessee's public libraries meet the needs of all Tennesseans, now and in the future. *Public Libraries Roadmap 2013* is a statewide effort to create future-ready public libraries across the state.

We would be honored to have your input for *Roadmap 2013*. Whether you're an avid user of your community's public library or not, please take a few minutes to complete our online survey. Just click on <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/tennesseeresidents> and complete the survey to let your voice be heard.

Local Boy Continues to Do Good

A couple of years ago we ran an article on Nashville golfer, author and motivational speaker David Meador, a patron of the Tennessee LBPH. He had recently taken first place at the United States Blind Golfers Association (USBGA) 2011 National Championship in Columbus, Georgia. (It's considered the equivalent of Masters Championship for blind golfers.) Not long afterward, we alerted you to the publication of David's memoir, *Broken Eyes, Unbroken Spirit*.

David continues to be newsworthy. On April 10, at the annual Golf Writers Association of America (GWAA) awards dinner in Augusta, Georgia, he received the GWAA's annual Ben Hogan Award. The GWAA presents the Ben Hogan Award each year to an individual who, like the golfing great for whom it is named, continues to remain active in golf despite a physical handicap or serious illness.

Hogan, as some of us older folks may recall, had survived a near-fatal car accident in 1949. After being told that he would never play golf again, Hogan returned to win three of golf's four major championships in 1953.

Meador, who lost his eyesight at age 18 in an automobile accident back in 1966, joins a rather elite company of Hogan award winners. Past recipients include Lee Trevino, Tom Watson, Ken Venturi, Babe Zaharias and Calvin Peete.

The awards dinner took place in conjunction with the 2013 Masters Tournament at Augusta's National Golf Club in Augusta, GA. By the way, your editor understands from David that blind golfers consider the Masters Championship the equivalent of the USBGA's National Championship for the sighted.

Don't Let It Slow You Down

If you are looking for another example of people who didn't let vision loss curtail their careers or prevent them from doing what they enjoy, you may want to consider the eminent eighteenth-century mathematician, Leonhard Euler. Euler, who lived from 1707 to 1783, lost sight in one eye at the age of 28. At 59 he lost sight in his other eye due to a cataract.

Despite his vision loss, Euler continued to produce mathematical studies at a fearsome rate. In 1775, nine years after he completely lost his vision, he was still producing an average of one scholarly publication each week. Euler rang up a total of more than 800 publications by the time of his death at age 76.

GED Exams

If you've been putting off the test to earn the equivalent of your high school diploma through the General Educational Development program, the so called "GED" test, you may want to factor this information into your decision. Starting in January, 2014, the GED process is slated for some serious changes.

First, the cost may go up. According to Adult Education Division of the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Management, the cost to take the exam is now \$65. But it may increase to as much as \$120 in January.

Starting on January 2, 2014, it will no longer be possible to take the test using pencil and paper. Standard testing will be performed on a computer terminal. Testing agencies will provide accommodation for the disabled, which may include braille or audio testing for the blind and physically handicapped. Students will have to apply for such accommodations well in advance.

- For more information on the accommodation process, please visit the GED website at:
<http://www.gedtestingservice.com/testers/accommodations-for-disability>.
- Or, view the GED online brochure at:
<http://www.gedtestingservice.com/uploads/files/c9deba477af89558778c7a7bef3ecc30.pdf>.

Finally, the content of the exams will be overhauled. Students will no longer be able to carry over passing scores from sections of the test that they have already taken. Everyone will be starting over from scratch.

For more information on GED testing in Tennessee, please contact your local Adult Education office or the Division of Adult Education in the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development online at

<http://www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/AE/index.shtml> .

Or write to them at:

220 French Landing Drive
Nashville, TN 37243
Phone 1: (615) 741-7054
Phone 2: 1 (800) 531-1515
Fax: (615) 532-4899

For help in preparing for the current GED test, please visit **TEL**, the Tennessee Electronic Library, at <http://tntel.tnsos.org/>. Click on the “Job and Career Resources” link in the Highlights box on the right side of the page. Then click on the “GED Preparation” tab at the top of the resulting page. You’ll find practice exams, online courses, and skill improvement tutorials to help you prepare for success, including practice exams in Spanish.

Newsline

Speaking of Spanish, we have just learned that NFB has added four Spanish-language newspapers to its free Newsline service. We’ve told you about Newsline in some previous issues. It’s a service that allows users to listen to about 300 American newspapers over the telephone, by emailed audio files in Daisy 3 format, and now by an app on smart phones.

All four of Tennessee’s major metropolitan newspapers are now available on Newsline, as are such nationally distributed newspapers as *Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Christian Science Monitor* and *USA Today*.

Newsline also offers audio access to 35 magazines, including *Braille Monitor*, *Readers Digest*, and *Time*. As an added feature, Newsline now offers audio access to your local television listings by phone and over the Internet.

To find out more about this service, call NFB Newsline at 1-866-504-7300 or visit the web site at <https://nfb.org/audio-newspaper-service>.

Thanks to generous support from Tennessee Services for the Blind, Newsline offers this service free of charge to eligible patrons of the Tennessee Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (TLBPH). If you decide to sign up, contact your reader advisor to subscribe.

Hard Times at the LBPH Orphanage

In an era of reduced government spending, we can't afford to build an addition to Miss Amy's Home for Widowed and Orphaned Digital Books Sets. And that's a problem.

Ms. Amy's Home, which is located in your editor's former workspace, is beginning to burst at the seams as we get back more and more digital book mail cases with mismatched cartridges. Our stacks of widowed mail cases and orphaned cartridges are getting so high that they threaten to topple over into Ginger's workspace and crush her against the wall of her cubicle.

Ginger's husband would probably miss her, and he would almost certainly blame her supervisor (that's us, your editor) for subjecting her to such unsafe working conditions.

Please help us safeguard Ginger's life – and your editor's neck-- by making sure you've put your digital book cartridges back into their matching mail cases before you send them back to us. Ginger, her husband, and your editor will all be grateful to you. (And Miss Amy may stop nagging us about putting notices like this in your newsletter – at least for a few days.)

Another Source for Religious Books

Teresa Faust, a colleague at the Vermont LBPH, has identified another source for audio books on Christian topics. It is Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL).

CCEL is associated with Michigan's Calvin College, and aims to make classic works in the Christian tradition available to readers. You may find out more about the organization and its collections at <http://www.ccel.org/>.

CCEL currently offers approximately eighty titles in MP3 (audio) format, by authors as diverse as John Bunyan and Saint Athanasius. You may view the list of these titles at <http://www.ccel.org/index/format>.

CCEL offers its books in a variety of formats. MP3 downloads are generally free. Some of their audio titles are available on CD for a charge.

You may play MP3 files on your NLS Digital Talking Book player. Just place the book files in a folder called "Audio+Podcast." Use your player's Bookshelf feature to select this folder and listen to the MP3 version.

Library Closings

Labor Day

Monday, September 2

Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 28, and
Friday, November 29

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