

DEAR PEARL

September 2016 Volume XLIV - Number 2

Answering the Reading Needs of the Blind and Visually Impaired

President's Report Fall 2016

It seems just yesterday that we met at Blackhawk Country Club for our April annual meeting and program. We were treated to a wonderful presentation by Loretta Himmelsbach and Jean Kalscheur of the Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired. Loretta provided us with an overview of the Council's activities, and Jean presented us with examples of new and creative assistive devices available at the Council's Sharper Vision Store — an educational and interesting program! It seems like our April meeting happened just yesterday and now autumn is about to begin — school has started, temperatures are crisp, and football is in the air. Sunrise, sunset. There are a number of developments at BLTS to report.



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First, we are very pleased to announce that we have four new students who are learning to braille under the tutelage of Connie Risjord and Patricia Herrling. The process is expected to take a year or so, after which they will seek certification by the Library of Congress. The process requires much practice and dedication, so we thank all braillists, new and veteran. More about the new students can be found in Patricia Herrling's article later in this issue.

Financially, 2016 has been a very blessed year. We have received some very nice contributions from foundations, corporations, individual contributors, and friends of BLTS. Financial support from all of you is the foundation for the personal efforts of our braillists, tapists, office and library staff, board members, and everyone who makes BLTS work. Thank you so much. (A full list of contributors since the March edition of Dear Pearl is contained inside.)

This issue of Dear Pearl makes note of the recent passing of BLTS family member Val Knudtson. Please take the opportunity to read Betty Oakley's moving tribute to Val and her important contributions to BLTS over so many years. We mark Val's passing with both sadness and admiration for a life well lived, full of contributions to others.

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President's Report

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I began this message with a thank you to Loretta Himmelsbach, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired, and one of the speakers at our annual meeting last April. Now comes word that Loretta will be leaving that position at the end of this month — after 6 years of guiding Wisconsin's premiere organization for blind and visually impaired adults and children. Bravo, Loretta. May an enjoyable retirement lead you to "unpathed waters, undreamed shores."

Finally, I want to extend a warm invitation to everyone to attend our Fall Frolic get-together, beginning at noon on October 4 at our Segoe Road offices. Read the invitation inside. Come for the food, drink, and great conversation with BLTS members and friends. See you there.

Best to Everyone,
Steve Levine
President, BLTS

New Braille Students at BLTS

Recently several of the BLTS Braille transcribers were trained in the new Unified English Braille (UEB) code thanks to a series of lessons by teacher Connie Risjord and additional refreshers offered by the Midwest Regional Braille Conference held in Madison in May of this year. In a happy coincidence the BLTS office also received several calls from people interested in learning to be Braille transcribers! Some of them were better served by taking the online Braille course, due to their physical location and busy schedules. Our own Sue Danz, BLTS Braille coordinator, is taking the online Braille course both for her own training and to provide some experience and feedback to BLTS on how this course works for students. One student, who is working full-time in Madison, is taking lessons via email with Connie Risjord. Two more individuals are taking lessons in-person and are progressing very nicely. These two people are being taught by Patricia Herrling and Connie Risjord. This is wonderful news for BLTS. As some of our volunteers are ready to cut back or retire their transcribing duties, we need to have new people coming into the organization to fill those requests. Imagine what we could do if we advertised. Some of these new students came to us by word of mouth from former or current transcribers; so, when you are talking to your friends or acquaintances who are looking for a meaningful and rewarding way to fill their days, remember BLTS and Braille transcription.

Braille Formats 2011 introduced two new symbols representing any symbol used in the primary and secondary levels of a bulleted list. The symbols were based on level, not what was actually there in print. UEB symbols for bullets follow the print symbol regardless of level. The symbol for a bullet is the same in both codes. The difference is that in EBAE it means any mark at the first level, whereas in UEB it means "bullet" and nothing else.)

A bullet in print is a filled in circle. Any other marks are shown exactly as they appear, whether they are hollow circles, squares, checkmarks, stars or gears. Some of these symbols, such as the circle, square, triangle and checkmark, already have official UEB configurations. Some will need to be transcriber-devised. See *Rules of Unified English Braille 2013*, Sections 3.22.1 and 11.7 and *Guidelines for Technical Material*, Section 14 for lists of shape symbols and how to use them. Follow *Braille Formats 2011* for formatting guidelines. (*Braille Formats 2015* will be coming soon.)

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A checkmark in UEB is $\dot{\cdot}\dot{\cdot} \dot{\cdot}\dot{\cdot}$. It was added after the rule book was published.

Individuals:

Mr. Dale Nordeen

Mr. Gerald Ring

Ms. Lee Elyse C. Weiss

(Continued on next page)

BLTS Library Update Fall, 2016

Our print/braille collection has recently been weeded. Many older books were in poor shape and were eliminated from the shelves to make space for the new books we have been producing in the UEB code. Thanks to volunteer Kathy Dorn for helping with this project! Speaking of volunteers, we have a new helper in the library unpacking boxes. Sandy Adams, a retired vision teacher and BLTS Board member, has been coming in once a week to help out with this task. The library couldn't function without this support.

The BLTS Library Committee met in June, 2016, to review the status of new books for the library. We will be adding 5 nonfiction titles, 5 fiction titles and several cookbooks to the collection. Several handicraft books will also be produced. We will be meeting again in the fall to select additional books to add to the collection. If you have a suggestion of a book you think our readers would enjoy, please let the office know about it!

We recently purchased new bookends for the library. These were necessary to keep the braille books straight on the shelves and reduce bending of the spines. It also keeps the library looking neat and tidy.

We have added 15 new library users since January 2016. Many of these new users hear about us by word of mouth from happy library borrowers talking to their friends. It is nice to be appreciated.

Lists of Donors

(continued from previous page)

Organizations:

Alliant Energy Foundation	Hallman / Lindsay Paints	McFarland Lioness Club
American Legion Post 501	Herbert H. Kohl Charities	McFarland Lions Club
Claremont Jackman Foundation	Jack DeLoss Taylor Charitable Trust	Middleton Lions Club
Columbus Lions Club	Lake Wisconsin Lions Club	Mukwonago Lions Club
Epic Systems Corp	Lange Living Trust	Strand Associates, Inc.
Cross Plains Community Chest	Madison Central Lions Club	Sub-Zero Wolf Foundation, Inc.
Evjue Foundation, the charitable arm of <i>The Capital Times</i>	Madison Gas & Electric Foundation	Westmorland Combined Health Fund Drive
Faircrest Association Health Fund Drive	Madison Monona Lioness Club	Woodman's Food Market, Inc.

In Memory of Val Knudtson

Val Knudtson died on June 23, 2016 at her home in Black Earth, Wis. She was 96. She had three siblings, all now deceased.

In 1941 Val graduated from Whitewater State Teachers' College earning a Bachelor's Degree in Education. She taught high school commercial subjects in Granton and Lodi.

Val loved to sing and while in college sang in the Acapella Choir, Treble Clef and the Madrigal Singers.

In 1945 she joined her sister Dorothea in Washington, D.C. where she worked as an accountant in the Special Service Division of Naval Personnel, Navy Dept., Washington, D.C. She retired after 30 years, returning to Wis in 1980.

Val became interested in learning braille and earned Library of Congress braille certification in 1982. She contributed many hours to BLTS/VBTI.

Val was a lovely and caring person. She will be very much missed.



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How beautifully leaves grow old.
How full of light and color are their last days.

— John Burroughs

Titles Done Since February 2016



THANK YOU, BRAILLISTS!
(page counts follow names)



For children

13 UEB P/B Books (Barb Schlinkert, 128), 8 UEB P/B Books (Barb Schlinkert, 87), 6 UEB P/B Books (Barb Schlinkert, 51), UEB P/B Books (Barb Schlinkert, 98)

For adults

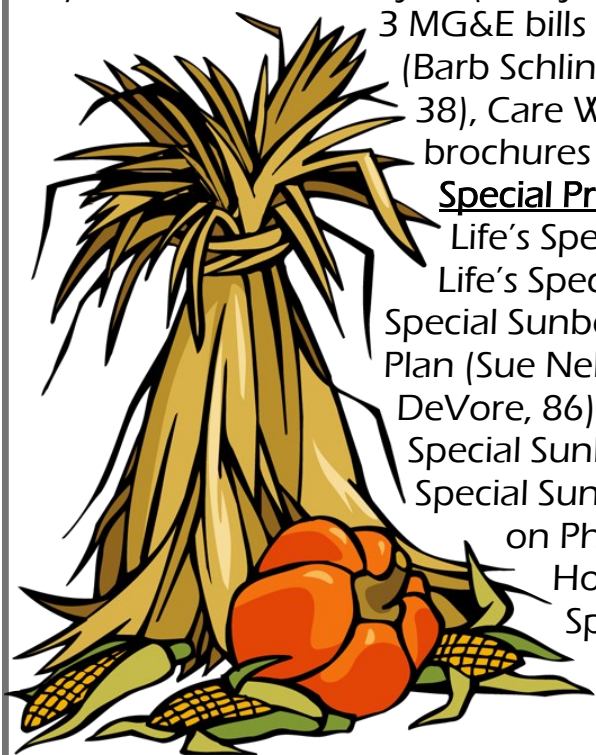
Great Chefs of Lodi (Judy Amacker, 340), *Rose Harbor in Bloom* (Judy Amacker, 535), *The Uncle Book* (Barb Schlinkert, 252), *Everyday Mediterranean Diet Cookbook* (Kathy Dorn, 115), *One Hope, One Purpose* (Barb Schlinkert, 66), *HOPE...the Best of Things* (Barb Schlinkert, 42), *Walk Home With Me* (Patricia Herrling, 55), *The Riches of His Grace* (Kathy Dorn, 29), *Hope With Your Heart* (Kathy Dorn, 34), *Molly* (Barb Schlinkert, 12), *Recipes for the Turbo Blend Two Speed Vitamix* (Kathy Dorn, 242), *Pure Joy: The Dogs We Love* (Joel DeVore, 178), *I Can't Believe I'm Loom Knitting* (Barb Schlinkert, 164), *Lutheran Book of Worship* (Julie Schoepp, 1012)

For schools, non-profits and businesses

3 MG&E bills & 3 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 48), TDS bill and 2 flyers (Barb Schlinkert, 27), Helen Keller Project (Sue Nelson, 5), Survival Coalition (Sue Nelson, 11), 2 MG&E bills & 3 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 33), TDS bill, 1 flyer (Barb Schlinkert, 20), 2 MG&E bills & 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 27), TDS bill, 2 flyers (Barb Schlinkert, 26), 3 Menus (Kathy Dorn, 38), 2 MG&E bills & 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 27), TDS bill, 1 flyer (Barb Schlinkert, 23), 2 MG&E bills & 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 20), TDS bill, 2 flyers (Barb Schlinkert, 21), 3 MG&E bills & 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 38), TDS bill, 2 flyers (Barb Schlinkert, 26), 3 MG&E bills & 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 38), Care Wis. Notice of Action (Barb Schlinkert, 16), 3 brochures for MD Cntr for Dev Dis (Sue Nelson, 18)

Special Projects

Life's Special Sunbeams Nov 2015 (Joel DeVore, 90), Life's Special Sunbeams, Feb 2016 (Joel DeVore, 90), Life's Special Sunbeams, Mar 2016 (Joel DeVore, 88), Care Wis Serv Plan (Sue Nelson, 14), Life's Special Sunbeams, Apr 2016 (Joel DeVore, 86), RCN Channel Lineup (Sue Nelson, 35), Life's Special Sunbeams, May 2016 (Joel DeVore, 98), Life's Special Sunbeams, June 2016 (Joel DeVore, 109), Hooked on Phonics (Kindergarten) (Patricia Herrling, 92), Hooked on Spelling (Barb Schlinkert, 122), Life's Special Sunbeams, Jul-Aug 2016 (Joel DeVore, 109), 5 P/B books (Barb Schlinkert, 28)



BLTS 2016 Fall Frolic

**Tuesday, October 4th, 2016
at 12:00 pm in the Library**

BLTS invites you to attend a "Fall Frolic" on Tuesday, October 4th, 2016. Please join us in the BLTS Library for sub sandwiches (donations welcome) as well as desserts and beverages provided by the Board.

We look forward to this social as a way of reuniting with old friends, meeting new friends, and thanking everyone for your wonderful support throughout the year. As always, spouses and guests are welcome.

Don't miss catching up with friends and, of course, talking all things BLTS. Put it on your calendar.

Please RSVP by September 30th – 608-233-0222 or office.blts@tds.net.

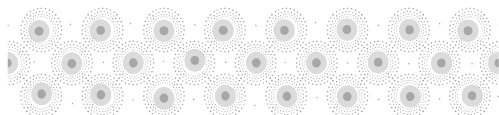
Let us know if you need a ride, and we'll make the arrangements.





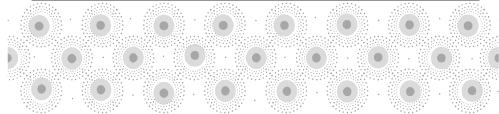
DEAR PEARL

Newsletter of the Braille Library & Transcribing Services, Inc.



We're on the web

<http://bltsinc.org/>



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Thanks to Michelle Rueckert



Answering the Reading Needs of the Blind and Visually Impaired



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