

# DEAR PEARL

September 2017 Volume XLV - Number 2

*Answering the Reading Needs of the Blind and Visually Impaired*

## President's Report September 2017

One of my most enjoyable activities as president of BLTS has nothing to do with holding that office. It is something that anyone can do – president or not. I love to record books. I regret that I don't have the ability and talent that our transcribers have as they braille the books for our free library or on personal request; but, I'm glad that BLTS does receive some requests for tape-recorded books and magazines in addition to braille. My world would be much less enjoyable without these requests.

Recording books does a number of things for me. First, it forces me to take the time from a much-too-busy world and just enjoy reading. Since I retired, almost seven years ago, my life is much more busy than when I was working and time rushes by even faster than it did. (Everyone who retires soon learns this fact of life.) Recording books allows me to slow down from the complexities of life and just enjoy reading.

Second, recording books exposes me to subjects that I never would have explored on my own. In the last year, I recorded books in a number of areas – some completely new to me: a book by a cast member telling the story of the filming of the movie, "The Sound of Music", a book relating the history of South Orange, New Jersey, with emphasis on the town's famous residents, like Thomas Edison, and a book entitled "My Last Step Backwards" – the heart-tugging story of a high school actress paralyzed when she fell through a hole in the stage. From religion to cooking to Swedish law, each new book exposes me to an area of life I might never have explored.

Third, there is something different about reading a book out loud. Like most people, I do my reading silently to myself. But reading out loud adds another dimension. Both seeing and hearing the words imprints the story on my brain via two senses and I seem to remember it better. After typing that sentence, I went online to check, and there are, in fact, studies that confirm my experience: Readers do remember better by reading out loud. Who knew?



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## President's Report

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All of these benefits are frosting on the cake. They don't obscure the biggest benefit of all: the good feeling I get from knowing that my recording of books brings these stories to others who must read by senses other than vision. Whether through braille or tape, making these stories of life available to everyone is what BLTS is all about. So on to a new season of reading, whether by eyes, ears, or fingers. Best wishes to everyone.

Steve Levine

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### Steve Levine receives the Founder's Award

In 1990, Volunteer Braillists, Inc. recognized that since we were already doing some taping we should look to doing more because our tape requests were increasing. We worked with the McBurney Center at the University of Wisconsin, received some grants to buy recorders and, in 1992, offered an orientation program for several would-be tapists who took up the challenge. We then changed our name to Volunteer Braillists and Tapists, Inc.

Our current president, Steve Levine, has always been one of the few men we've had in the organization. They've always kept a low profile and just went about their business of taping a wide range of items. As of this writing, we've still never received a complaint from our clients about the work completed. The clients have always been very appreciative of our work. While taping requests have declined over the years, there are still a few requests and we are still taping... on cassettes!

Back in 1988, a blind law student was having difficulty with some of the materials he was supposed to read. He needed someone to tape them for him and none other than our own Steve Levine volunteered and thus began a long career of taping for the blind.

Steve has done all sorts of taping projects and is always willing to take on more. Since most of his projects have been for one client who is deeply interested in religion, Steve can probably answer any questions you have on the subject. He can probably tell you about missionary travels in China, everything you ever wanted to know about West Orange, New Jersey, and the Baker Manufacturing Company.

Steve has moved on to include other challenges. In the past 6 years he has served as a very able president and he and Aaron have been able to revitalize our Community Contribution efforts.

Steve's contributions to BLTS over the years deserve recognition and appreciation, therefore, we have awarded Steve Levine the Founder's Award (formerly the Founding Mother's Award) for his years of service, professionalism and leadership. Thank you Steve.

## Word Searches in UEB

Dear Ms. Pearl,  
How to do puzzles in UEB?

Puzzled,  
Cody Morse

Dear Cody,  
"Puzzles" is a broad category! Let's start with word searches. We'll talk about crossword puzzles, Sudoku puzzles, and code puzzles in later letters.

Word searches involve individual letters with a space before and after each letter. That means they are standing alone. To ensure that they are read as letters, we need to use the grade 1 passage indicator ⠠⠠⠠ before the puzzle and terminate the passage ⠠⠠ at the end. If the letters are capitalized, then we need to indicate that as well with the capitals passage indicator ⠠⠠⠠ and terminate the passage ⠠⠠ at the end. Note that the indicators are closed in the reverse order of opening, called "nesting." If we put these indicators on the same lines as the letters of the puzzle, they will skew the alignment, so we want these indicators on lines by themselves. That makes it difficult to tell whether these dot configurations are in the upper or lower part of the cell, or on the left or right side of the cell. That's where dot locators come in.

UEB has two dot locators, the dot locator for "mention" ⠠⠠⠠ and the dot locator for "use" ⠠⠠⠠. The dot locator for "mention" is used when introducing symbols that will appear later in the text. The symbols are inactive and do not affect the following text. Situations like this include the special symbols page, a transcriber's note, or a document that discusses braille itself. In this case, however, the grade 1 passage and capitals passage indicators are active, retaining their true function and meaning. The dot locator for "use" is used for these situations, which simply orients the reader to the dot positions in the following cell or cells.

See *Braille Formats 2016*, §19.6 and *Rules of Unified English Braille 2013*, §3.14 for details.

Example:  
BRAILLE  
CELL  
ENGLISH  
INDICATORS  
LOCATOR  
MENTION  
PASSAGE  
UNIFIED  
USE  
VOLUNTEER

I L T A E H H E V M  
A N L C S X G L O E  
D A D E U N K L L N  
W I F I C X U I U T  
Y V X F C N W A N I  
P E C O I A T R T O  
A Q U F X I T B E N  
H S I L G N E O E R  
Z E L O C A T O R O  
D E G A S S A P B S

*(Continued on next page)*

### Midwest Regional Braille Conference

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Midwest Regional Braille Conference was held this year in Madison in May. The conference took place over three days and several people from BLTS were able to attend. These included Sue Danz, Joel DeVore, Kathy Dorn, Patricia Herrling, Sue Nelson, Bev Pfister and Connie Risjord. The conference had attendees from all over the Midwest and included vision teachers, braille transcribers and braille users.

Most of us attended workshops on UEB braille formatting. There was a basic and an advanced workshop led by Cindi Laurent, the chair of the Braille Formats Committee for NFB. She brought many practical day to day examples of formatting various materials and provided plenty of time for questions from the audience. It was always interesting to see what situations other people encountered and hear how the different situations could be handled.

Connie and I attended a workshop on providing tactile materials for braille users. As a person totally new to tactiles this was particularly useful. Connie was also able to attend a workshop led by vision teachers on methods of introducing braille to young children.

Several people went to a Braille 2000 hands-on workshop which had many hints and tips on how to use the many tools Braille 2000 has to offer. This class was also presented by Cindi Laurent.



### Word Searches in UEB

*(continued from page 3)*

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- Answers: (Over, Down, Direction)
- BRILLE (8, 7, N)
- CELL (5, 4, NW)
- ENGLISH (7, 8, W)
- INDICATORS (1, 1, SE)
- LOCATOR (3, 9, E)
- MENTION (10, 1, S)
- PASSAGE (8, 10, W)
- UNIFIED (7, 4, SW)
- USE (5, 3, N)
- VOLUNTEER (9, 1, S)

A suggested way to convey the answers is shown . A transcriber's note may be needed. In this case, the print already explains the method.

*Happy puzzling!*  
*Ms. Pearl*

## New Class for Braille Transcribers

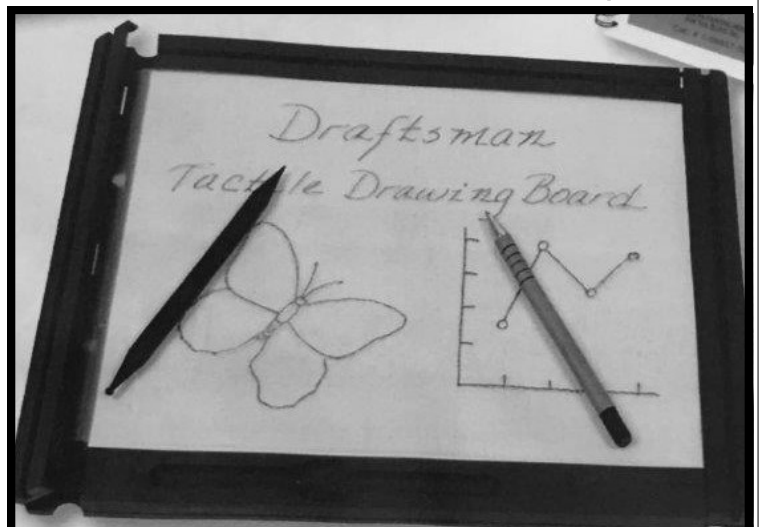
Our first new braille student for 2017 has just sent in her manuscript to the Library of Congress! We are so encouraged that this fall BLTS will be holding an orientation for people interested in learning how to transcribe print into braille. If you know anyone who would be interested in learning braille, please let them know about this orientation. Even if they can't come; but, would like more information about learning braille, please have them contact us.

**Just because you can't see doesn't mean you can't read.** Braille Library & Transcribing Services, Inc. (BLTS) helps make that true for blind and visually impaired adults and children by translating print into the raised dots of braille. Our trained volunteer brailleists prepare and provide books in braille of all kinds: children's stories, school books for all ages (pre-school to grad-school), books for leisure reading, cookbooks, knitting patterns, work related material and much, much, more. Want to learn how you can help make this happen, too? A new class will be starting this fall. Come to our orientation meeting on Tuesday, September 12th at 10:00 am at 517 N. Segoe Rd, #200-B and find out how you can turn print into braille dots. To learn more about BLTS and the braille transcription course call 608-233-0222 or visit our website at [www.bltsinc.org](http://www.bltsinc.org).

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## New Tactile Drawing Board for BLTS

At the Midwest Regional Braille Conference this May there was a demonstration of a Tactile Drawing Board from the American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. BLTS does not currently do many tactiles; but, there are occasions when it would add value and this particular device seems like it will meet some basic needs, like charts, shapes, and simple line drawings. One nice feature is that it creates raised lines and shapes completely on the board, without needing thermoform copies. It also allows tracing of a copy of a map or other diagram. Simply clamping special drawing film onto the board and using a stylus creates a raised image. We will be trying out this new device whenever we see an opportunity to add clarity to braille material and are hoping to hold a mini-training session later in the year for our braille transcribers. Obviously this will not meet all of our tactile needs, but it may make it easier to provide simple tactiles when appropriate.



This board has a plastic frame that encases a double-layered rubber surface.

## Titles Done Since February 2017



THANK YOU, BRAILLISTS!  
(page counts follow names)



### For children

*The Jungle Book* (Kathy Dorn, 104) ; 10 P/B books (Barb Schlinkert, 93)

### For adults

*Quick & Easy Microwave Meals* (Kathy Dorn, 94) ; *A Perfect Life* (Barb Schlinkert, 471) ; *The Simple Truth* (Kathy Dorn, 136) ; *For the Benefit of Those Who See* (Bev Pfister, 587) ; *All the Light We Cannot See* (Debbie Hanson, 806) ; *Dead Loudmouth* (Kathy Dorn, 300) ; *The Power of Now* (Bev Pfister, 385) ; 2 Crochet Patterns (Debbie Hanson, 36) ; *Fast & Healthy Cookbook* (Sue Nelson, 421) ; *Touching the World* (Bev Pfister, 847)

### For schools, non-profits and businesses

TDS bill, 2 flyers (Barb Schlinkert, 20) ; 4 MG&E bills and 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 43) ; TDS bill, 1 flyer (Barb Schlinkert, 19) ; 4 MG&E bills and 1 flyer (Kathy Dorn, 34) ; TDS bill, 2 flyers (Barb Schlinkert, 27) ; 4 MG&E bills and 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 43) ; TDS bill, 2 flyers (Barb Schlinkert, 19) ; 3 Menus for Tuscany Grill -Wyndham Hotel (Sue Nelson, 31) ; 4 MG&E bills and 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 43) ; UW Research Participation Consent Form (Barb Schlinkert, 8) ; 4 MG&E bills and 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 27) ; 3 MG&E bills and 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 28) ; Vocational Evaluation Assessment (Bev Pfister, 88)

### Special Projects

Perfect Cooker (Kathy Dorn, 53) ; Life's Special Sunbeams Vol 12, Iss 2 Feb 2017 (Joel Devore, 100) Life's Special Sunbeams Vol 12, Iss 3 Mar 2017 (Joel Devore, 96) ; Life's Special Sunbeams Vol 12, Iss 4 Apr 2017 (Joel Devore, 98) ; Expecting to see Jesus (Barb Schlinkert, 128) ; Life's Special Sunbeams Vol 12, Iss 5, May 2017 (Joel Devore, 98) Life's Special Sunbeams Vol 12, Iss 6, June 2017 (Joel Devore, 98) ; Access to Independence - 7 docs (Julie Schoepp, 37) ; The Magnificent Obsession (Julie Schoepp, 116) 7 Print/Braille Books (Barb Schlinkert, 80) ; 7 Print Braille Books (Kathy Dorn, 92) ; Life's Special Sunbeams Vol 12, Iss 7, July/Aug 2017 (Joel Devore, 89) ; 4 Delta Lake Brochures (Kathy Dorn, 23)

No kind action ever stops with itself.

One kind action leads to another.

Good example is followed.

A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions,  
and the roots spring up and make new trees.

The greatest work that kindness does to others  
is that it makes them kind themselves.

— Amelia Earhart

## **BLTS 2017 Fall Frolic**

**Wednesday, October 4th, 2017  
at 12:00 pm in the Library**

BLTS invites you to attend a "Fall Frolic" on Wednesday, October 4th, 2017. 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 29th – 608-233-0222 or [office.blts@tds.net](mailto:office.blts@tds.net). Let us know if you need a ride, and we'll make the arrangements.

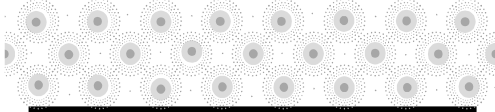




# DEAR PEARL

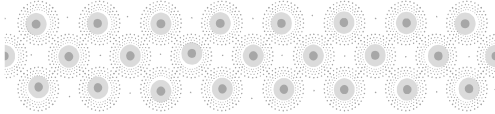


*Newsletter of the Braille Library & Transcribing Services, Inc.*



We're on the web

<http://bltsinc.org/>



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Thanks to Michelle Rueckert



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*Answering the Reading Needs of the Blind and Visually Impaired*

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