

DEAR PEARL

March 2019 Volume XLVII - Number 1

Answering the Reading Needs of the Blind and Visually Impaired

Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon

Wednesday April 3, 2019

Social Time: 11:30 a.m. Lunch: 12:00 p.m.

Blackhawk Country Club

3606 Blackhawk Drive, Madison, WI

Followed by Program, Presentations, and Brief Meeting

BLTS invites you to attend its annual meeting and luncheon on Wednesday, April 3, 2019. Please join us at the beautiful Blackhawk County Club, 3606 Blackhawk Drive, at 11:30 a.m. to meet and greet old and new BLTS friends. The noon luncheon offers two choices, the always popular chicken and mushroom crepes or a veggie selection (Cost: \$16; see choices below). Entertainment will once again be provided by harpist Peter Feneht who will soothe us with beautiful music, as he has for the past six years.



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The luncheon will be followed by an interesting program, after which there will be a brief meeting and award presentations. This year's speaker will be Todd Schanke, Assistant Director on Adaptive Technology Services at the McBurny Center on the UW Madison campus. Todd manages Adaptive Technology Services, including supervising the Accessible Learning Technology Coordinator and Instructional Technology Consultant. He manages the adaptive technology lab and consults with and provides training for students regarding adaptive technology. It should be an enjoyable afternoon. We encourage all members of the BLTS family to attend. We would love to see you!

Don't miss catching up with friends and, of course, talking all things BLTS. So, put it on your calendar. We guarantee beautiful weather. Please RSVP by March 27th by emailing office@bltsinc.org or calling 608-233-0222, & remember to include your meal choice. No advance payment necessary, just bring a check or cash to the event. Let us know if you need a ride, and we'll make the arrangements.

Menu Selections

Chicken and Mushroom Crepes with Wild Rice and Fresh Fruit Garnish

Fettuccine Alfredo with Grilled Vegetables Primavera (vegetarian)

both options include rolls, coffee, tea, iced tea, or milk, & dessert

All selections are \$16 - Cash Bar Available

RSVP – Please email or call by **March 27, 2019**

and remember to include your meal choice.

Any questions? Contact BLTS at 608-233-0222 or office@bltsinc.org

President's Report March 2019

It's hard to believe. 2018 will be my last full year as BLTS president. We've all heard the saying, "The days plod on, and the years fly by. (Actually, at my stage of life, both the days and the years seem to fly by.) And it is true. Eight years, where did they go? And how did they fly by so quickly? I became BLTS President in April 2011, and what a ride it has been. During my four terms as BLTS President I have met so many wonderful people; admired the dedication of braillists, tapists, staff, and board members; and generally tried to avoid getting in the way of all the people who make BLTS work. Thank you everyone for such a wonderful experience.

My days helping blind people to participate in the joy of reading began almost 40 years ago with the McBurney Center on the UW campus. I ran into (literally) a blind student at the law school who needed a textbook recorded, and the rest is history. From McBurney, I transferred into BLTS (then named VBTI). My memory of the details is hazy but Lois Kibbe was somehow involved. Thanks Lois. From my first law book in 1980, I have recorded every type of book that can be imagined: religious tracts, histories of American cities, and biographies of fascinating people I never would have known about, but for BLTS. I learned more than I taught and received much more than I gave.

Some of us at BLTS have recorded books on good old fashioned tape, because there are blind readers who prefer to do their reading that way. Thanks and best wishes to my fellow tapists over the years as we strove to meet that need. But my envy and admiration goes out to our braillists who were willing to put in the enormous effort required to learn and be certified in the art and skill of braille. What dedication. What a contribution you make. You are truly angels. My great reward over so many years has been knowing and being inspired by everyone – no matter what your contribution – who contributed the effort that makes BLTS work. Thank you is not enough, but thank you.

BLTS has a bright future. The past year has seen us move into new offices at 6501 Watts Road. Thanks to everyone who's hard work made the move a success. And thanks to everyone who attended our housewarming reception in December. It was nice to see so many faces, old and new. The new faces included some of our new transcribers who will be the future of braille at BLTS. Welcome to BLTS and welcome to years of satisfaction in bringing the joy of reading to those of us who are blind or visually impaired.

So many people have helped and been a part of the BLTS family over so many years. Hugs, thanks, and best of luck to you all. Peace. Love. Be Well. "To unpathed waters, undreamed shores."

Best Wishes,
Steve Levine



New Braille Transcribers for BLTS

Last year Connie Risjord and Patricia Herrling co-taught a new braille transcriber class, which had four students complete the course. All four received their Braille Certifications from the Library of Congress and are now busy brailleing for BLTS! One student also currently works as an aide to the vision teacher in Monona. We also had one student who took the course online through NLS and also received her Braille Certification.

The course met every week, with one week devoted to their lessons and one week (a study group) used for questions, quizzes and bringing in speakers. During the study sessions, we had blind braille users talk about how they use braille in their everyday lives, our braille coordinator about how BLTS produces braille, BLTS transcribers discuss how they manage their work projects, vision teachers speak about teaching new students braille in the classroom, and many other topics. According to feedback from our students this really brought braille alive for them.

These students were:

Sue Danz
Melody Moore
Barbara Shoemake
Joan Scholt
Lisa Stefl



(L-R: Melody Moore, Sue Danz and Joan Scholt)

In addition to our new students, Debbie Hanson from Royal Oaks, MI has also been brailleing for us since late 2016.

Welcome to BLTS!

New Office on Watts Road

In October we moved offices from our longtime home at Segoe Rd. to a new (to us) office at 6501 Watts Rd, Suite 149. The move was a lot of work, and quite taxing — mentally, physically, and financially — but our volunteers and staff really stepped up, donating time and money to cleaning, culling/throwing things away, planning, packing, and the actual move itself. We couldn't be happier at the new location, so as stressful as it was, it was all worth it. If you haven't had a chance to see it, please come by and let us show you around!



Lists of Donors

Individuals:

Gloria Broderick
Bettine Lipman

Frank Burgess
Abigail Loomis

Lois Busby
Joan Scholt

Organizations:

Alliant Energy Foundation

Epic Systems Co

Evjue Foundation

Claremont S. Jackman
Foundation

Madison Community
Foundation

Jack Deloss Taylor Charit.
Trust

Madison Gas & Electric

Pleasant Rowland Foun-
dation

Cross Plains Community
Chest

Latta Living Trust

McFarland Lions Club

Middleton Lions Club

Westmorland Combined
Health Fund

Columbus Lions Club

Ladies Auxiliary VFW

Lake Wisconsin Lions Club

Madison-Monona Lioness
Club

Madison Central Lions
Club

McFarland Lioness

Wisconsin Council of the
Blind

American Legion

Open House

On December 11th, 2019 we broke in our new office with an open house. We had a wonderful turnout of BLTS members, board members, neighbors, friends, & family. Below are some pictures of the event thanks to Debbie Konkol. Thank you to everyone who came!

Again, if you haven't had a chance to see the new office, please stop by and let us show off the space. Tuesdays from 10:00 AM to noon is when the office is buzzing with staff and volunteers, so if possible that would be the best time to stop by.



2019 Annual Midwest Braille Conference Returning to Madison!

May 30 – 31, 2019 — Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites-Madison West

Sessions will be held on:

Thursday May 30th from 1:00pm to 4:30pm

Friday May 31 from 8:30am to 4:30pm

Registration Fee: \$100

Registration for the Midwest Braille Conference is now open! Use this link to create an account with myQuickReg and register:

<https://widpi.myquickreg.com/register/event/event.cfm?eventid=14907>

Please contact Julie Sumwalt with any questions regarding the conference.

Julie Sumwalt, Braille Specialist

Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

608-758-4928 (direct office)

866-284-1107 (toll free)

julie.sumwalt@wcbvi.k12.wi.us

In Memory of

Elizabeth Jane “Betty” Land of Spring Park, MN passed away at the age of 94 on August 11, 2017. While living in Madison, Betty was very active in volunteer work for the First United Methodist Church. Her passion for learning and compassion for the visually impaired led Betty to record narrations of many novels and texts to be used by sight impaired individuals. Betty learned braille and transcribed books as a volunteer brailist for BLTS/VBTI.

At the 25th year anniversary of BLTS, held at the University Club, Betty played the saxophone during the musical portion of the celebration.

Florence Margaret Poole of Madison passed away at the age of 98 August 26, 2018. Volunteer work was important to Florence. She volunteered at Meriter and St. Mary's Hospitals and was a brailist for BLTS/VBTI. At 98, Florence was as sharp as ever and the life of the party.



Braille Library & Transcribing Services, Inc. Annual Meeting, April 3, 2019 NOMINATING SLATE

Officers:

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------|
| President | Patricia Herrling | 2019-2021 |
| Vice President | Vonna Johnson-Porter | 2018-2020 |
| Secretary | Karen Perzentka | 2019-2021 |
| Treasurer | Sue Nelson | 2018-2020 |

Board Members:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Constance Risjord | 2018-2020 |
| Sandy Adams | 2018-2020 |
| Steven Levine | 2019-2020 |

Office Staff:

Aaron Konkol — Office Manager
Sue Danz — Braille Coordinator



BLTS Lending Library Report 2018

| | <u>Year</u> | <u>Adults</u> | <u>Children</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Loaned | 2018 | 529 | 605 | 1,135 |

Borrowers

Active: 199 (15 schools total)

New : 5 (3 schools)

Collection

Total new books added to collection

28 new adult books

40 new children's or print/braille books

Total Inventory: 2,534 items

Observations

Our new office lends itself well to the arrangement of our library shelves and was a smooth transition. BLTS had 5 new braille transcribers receive their certification this year and this will allow us to add more books to the library for our users. **A priority goal for 2019** will be to look at ways of increasing our communication to schools and potential library users about our lending library.

Titles Done Since March 2018



THANK YOU, BRAILLISTS!
(page counts follow names)



For children

9 print/braille books (Kathy Dorn, 41), 11 P/B books (Barb Schlinkert, 86), 4 print/braille books (Sue Nelson, 31), Buddy The First Seeing Eye Dog (Sue Nelson, 28), 7 P/B books (Barb Schlinkert, 79)

For adults

Encore Adventures: Everyday Throws (Kathy Dorn, 25), Dump Soups (Kathy Dorn, 105), Robert B Parker's Debt to Pay (Bev Pfister, 528), Not My Will (Julie Schoepp, 498), Heartbreak Café (Bev Pfister, 434), 8 knit patterns (Sue Nelson, 69), Quick & Easy Knitting (Sue Nelson, 82), The Light in My Window (Kathy Dorn, 379), Death Stalks Door County (Kathy Dorn, 461), Fresh from the Oven Cookies (Sue Nelson, 46), Baby Ripples to Knit (Debbie Hanson, 28), Where Courage Calls (Debbie Hanson, 526), Just Edgings (Debbie Hanson, 68), Every Which Way Crochet Borders (Barb Schlinkert, 448), Learn New Stitches on Circle Looms (Kathy Dorn, 59), The Zookeeper's Wife (Debbie Hanson, 626), Trendy Knit Dishcloths (Kathy Dorn, 70), 101 Best Super Foods (Barb Schlinkert, 477), Don't Let Go (Kathy Dorn, 522), Hip 2 B Square Totes & Bags (Kathy Dorn, 88), Knit Cowls (Debbie Hanson, 64), Child's Pullover and Cardigan P601, Child's Vest P563 (Debbie Hanson, 20), The Paris Wife (Joel Devore, 629), Mission Song, The (Bev Pfister, 623), Oodles (Julie Schoepp, 628), Small Victories (Melody Moore, 315), Bill O'Reilly's Legends & Lies The Patriots (Joel Devore, 642)

For schools, non-profits and businesses

3 MG&E bills and 1 flyer (Kathy Dorn, 29), 3 MG&E bills and 2 flyer (Kathy Dorn, 50), RTS Access Customer Survey (Patricia Herrling, 3), 3 MG&E bills and 1 flyer (Kathy Dorn, 35), 2 MG&E bills and 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 26), 3 MG&E bills and 1 flyer (Kathy Dorn, 33), 3 MG&E bills and 3 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 41), 3 MG&E bills and 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 33), Misc. documents for TX Riogrande Legal Aid (Sue Danz, 27), Spanish 1 (Bev Pfister, 1806), 2 MG&E bills and 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 24), 3 MG&E bills and 2 flyers (Kathy Dorn, 37), 16 documents for RBJ (Kathy Dorn, 90, Sue Danz, 160)

Special Projects

Life's Special Sunbeams, Vol 13, Iss 3 Mar. 2018 (Joel Devore, 97), Crosley CR2405H Director Instruction Manual (Sue Nelson, 32), Life's Special Sunbeams, Vol 13, Iss 4 Apr. 2018 (Joel Devore, 94), Micro Steamer Cookbook and Micro Baking Instructions (Sue Nelson, 66), Life's Special Sunbeams, Vol 13, Iss 5 May. 2018 (Joel Devore, 95), Life's Special Sunbeams, Vol 13, Iss 6 June 2018 (Joel Devore, 94), Thru the Bible Newsletter (Kathy Dorn, 26), New Direction (Kathy Dorn, 29), Life's Special Sunbeams, Vol 13, Iss 7 July/Aug 2018 (Joel Devore, 96), 3 print/braille books (Sue Nelson, 19), 3 print/braille books (Kathy Dorn, 19), 4 print/braille books (Sue Nelson, 34), Life's Special Sunbeams, Vol 13, Iss 8 Sept 2018 (Joel Devore, 96), Talking Telephone (Julie Schoepp, 70), Life's Special Sunbeams, Vol 13, Iss 9 Oct 2018 (Joel Devore, 96), 2 Prayers (Sue Danz, 2), Life's Special Sunbeams, Vol 13, Iss 10 Nov 2018 (Joel Devore, 106), Our Fourth Day (Barb Schlinkert, 132), Cursillos in Christianity – The Pilgrims Guide (Sue Nelson, 81), Life's Special Sunbeams Vol 13, Iss 11 Dec 2018 (Joel Devore, 94), Life's Special Sunbeams Vol 14, Iss 1 Jan 2019 (Joel Devore, 94), Optigrill Manual (Barb Schlinkert, 42)



DEAR PEARL

Newsletter of the Braille Library & Transcribing Services, Inc.



We're on the web

<http://bltsinc.org/>

Contributors

Sue Danz
Patricia Herrling
Aaron Konkol
Steve Levine
Betty Oakley

Sue Danz Editor

Answering the Reading Needs of the Blind and Visually Impaired



Office Hours:
Tuesday - Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Email: office@bltsinc.org
Fax: 608-233-0249
Phone: 608-233-0222
Madison, WI 53719
6501 Watts Rd. Ste. 149

Braille Library & Transcribing Services, Inc.