

# DEAR PEARL

April 2026 Volume LV- Number 1

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

## BLTS Luncheon and Annual Meeting

Tuesday April 28, 2026

Social Time: 11:30 a.m. / Lunch: 12:00 p.m. / Speaker: 1:00 p.m.

Imperial Gardens

2039 Allen Blvd., Middleton, WI

\$15 per person to be paid at the meeting

*Please RSVP by Wednesday, April 15th*



### In this issue

President's Report	2
Nominating Slate	2
Brailist Spotlight Patricia Herrling	3
Community Donors	4
Tactile Embosser	4
Titles Done	5

BLTS invites you to attend our annual luncheon and enjoy a buffet meal together. Following lunch, Jim Denham, Technology Specialist at the Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired, will present on new braille technology.

After the presentation, we will hold a brief meeting, including an election of our new Board members. The slate of nominees is included on page 2 of this newsletter.

We encourage all members of the BLTS family to attend, including friends and/or spouses. We would love to see you!

Please RSVP to [office@bltsinc.org](mailto:office@bltsinc.org) or by phone: 608-233-0222 by April 15<sup>th</sup> so we can plan accordingly.

Please let us know if you need a ride and we will make arrangements.

Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush.  
—Doug Larson

# President's Report

SAVE THE DATE Tuesday April 28th at 11:30am-2:00pm. This is the time we will be holding our annual meeting. It will be a time to reconnect, share, and hear from an interesting speaker (details in this newsletter).

During our annual meeting we will hold our Board elections. The slate of nominees is listed inside.

BLTS has been busy with client and library transcribing, as well as tactiles for schools. To keep us all sharp with our transcribing skills we continue to enjoy our virtual Braille Conversations, led by Lindy Walton. While talking about formatting in these sessions, we realized we needed to update our own format specifications. A subcommittee met and you can now find this updated document ([BLTS Format Specifications 2026](https://bltsinc.org/transcribers.html)) on our website at <https://bltsinc.org/transcribers.html>

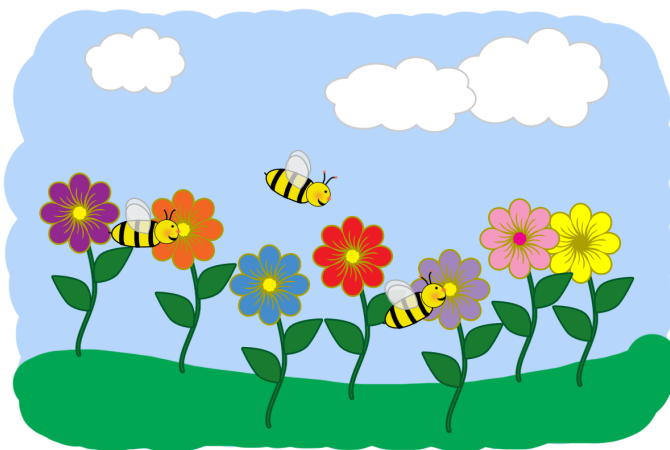
We welcomed new braille transcriber Jo Ann Gustavson this year. Our class from this fall is almost completed and due to demand we began another braille transcription class this Spring.

We have lots of books to add to our lending library, thanks to donations from Thrivent (via Lynn Mack) and the Wisconsin Braille Project. Come in and take a look at these fun and entertaining children's books.

I look forward to seeing everyone in person at our annual meeting.

As always, many thanks to all our volunteers!

Patricia Herrling, BLTS President



---

## Braille Library & Transcribing Services, Inc. Annual Meeting, April 28, 2026 NOMINATING SLATE

### Officers:

President	Patricia Herrling	2025-2027
Vice President	Melody Moore	2026-2028
Secretary	Karen Perzentka	2025-2027
Treasurer	Lori Hanson	2026-2028

### Board Members:

Sandy Adams	2026-2028
Dorothy Brar	2026-2028
Elizabeth Kanne	2026-2028
Sue Nelson	2026-2028
Joan Sholdt	2025-2027

### Office Staff:

Aaron Konkol — Office Manager  
Sue Danz — Braille Coordinator





## **Brailist Spotlight—Patricia Herrling**

by Office Manager Aaron Konkol

Many of our dedicated brailist volunteers prefer to stay out of the spotlight—but their work is too important not to celebrate. This new feature highlights the incredible people behind the scenes, and who better to kick things off than our multi-hyphenated title bearer and fearless leader, Patricia Herrling?

In 2024, Patricia—our president, librarian, and braille teacher—received the Founder’s Award in recognition of her tireless work and dedication to sustaining the 55-year legacy of BLTS and advancing braille literacy.

I sent her a few questions and these were her answers. Thank you, Patricia!

### **Did you have a career before BLTS/VBTI?**

I was an academic librarian at UW’s Steenbock Library for 21 years before I became a braille transcriber.

### **What are your other hobbies?**

I read voraciously—usually nonfiction history and biographies, along with mystery fiction of all kinds. I also knit (not very well!) and am an oblate and volunteer at Holy Wisdom Monastery in Middleton.

### **How did you get involved with braille?**

I tried to take the braille course many years ago while I was a parent, grad student, and part-time employee. That did not work at all! I vowed to try again when I retired and had more time. As soon as I retired in 2008, I took the course with Betty Oakely as my teacher and was very relieved to pass. When Bernice Schnieder decided to retire as BLTS librarian, I volunteered to take over that duty and have been involved ever since.

### **Do you have a favorite volunteer memory?**

One of my favorite memories is being mentored by Connie Risjord in teaching braille transcription classes. She encouraged me to start co-teaching with her, and it was a great joy to see how she inspired new students to develop a love of braille. I co-taught with her for many years and now co-teach classes with Deb Hanson. Meeting people who want to serve the visually impaired community through braille has been fun and rewarding. I learn so much from teaching, and it helps keep our BLTS community strong and growing.

### **Proudest moment?**

Earning my literary braille certification from the Library of Congress—I have it framed in my study! I was also honored to receive the Founder’s Award last year. I am very proud to be a member of the BLTS organization and the services we provide.

## Lists of Community Donors

Member donations not listed. See [annual report](#) for complete donor list.

### Individuals:

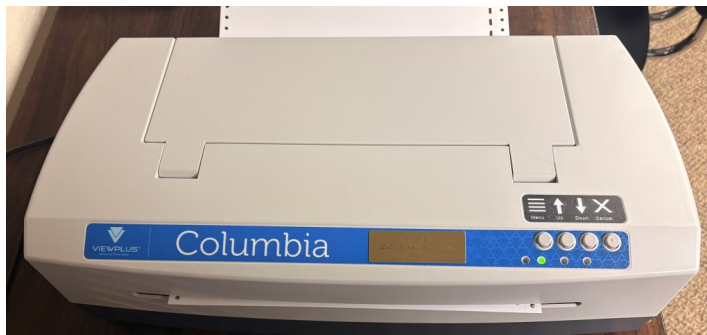
Norman & Barbara Berven	Lana Hanlon	Barbara Dillon Kehrein
Burton Kushner	Bettine Lipman	Mary Nelson
Sanford Weisberger		

### Organizations:

The Blackbaud Giving Fund	Claremont S. Jackman Fdn.	Delta Gamma Foundation
Epic Systems	The Evjue Fdn, the charitable arm of the Capital Times	Faircrest Assoc. Health Fund Drive
Fidelity Charitable	Glen Stacey Memorial Fund	Jack Deloss Taylor Charitable Trust
Madison Community Fdn.	McFarland Lioness / Lions Club	McFarland Lions Club Foundation. Inc.
PayPal Giving Fund (Anonymous)	Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation	Stafford Rosenbaum LLP
Strand Associates	Thrivent	Xantusi Design LLC

## New Tactile Embosser & Software

Thanks to a 2025 grant from the Delta Gamma Foundation, our office has expanded its capacity to support accessible learning with the addition of powerful new technology. After receiving confirmation of the award last March, we were able to purchase a ViewPlus Columbia tactile embosser along with CorelDraw software.



This new equipment significantly enhances our ability to produce high-quality tactile materials—including math diagrams, graphs, maps, charts, and other visual content that cannot be effectively communicated through text alone. These resources play a vital role in ensuring that blind and visually impaired students can fully engage with the same educational materials as their peers.

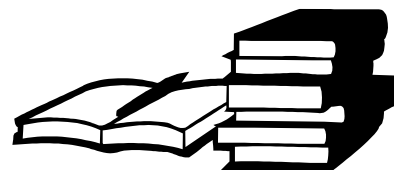
We are sincerely grateful to the Delta Gamma Foundation for their generous investment in accessibility and inclusion. Their contribution, commemorated on the embosser's plaque reading "Donated by Delta Gamma Foundation 2025," will make a meaningful and lasting difference for the students we serve.





## Titles Done Since October 2025

THANK YOU, BRAILLISTS!  
*(page counts follow names)*



### For children

2 P/B books (Elizabeth Kanne, 16), 7 P/B Books (Sue Nelson, 52), 5 P/B books (Dorothy Brar, 45)

### For adults

The Thursday Murder Club (Lynn Mack, 595), Stranger in the Lifeboat (Elizabeth Kanne, 282), The Zen Monkey and the Lotus Flower (Sue Danz, 171), Dead Boogie (Debbie Hanson, 345), The Memory Palace (Debbie Hanson, 477), Storm Watch (Bev Pfister, 495), The Kindred Spirits Supper Club (Barb Schlinkert, 523), Broken County (Sue Danz, 457), Seven Sisters in the Kitchen (Sue Danz, 294), A Century of Uplifting Short Stories for Seniors (Sue Nelson, 237), Hands Down (Lynn Mack, 588), 32 Stories of Inspiration (Barb Schlinkert, 88), At the Edge of the Woods (Debbie Hanson, 354), Miles to Go (Bev Pfister, 502), Sitting Pretty (Barb Schlinkert, 380)

### For schools, non-profits and businesses

Helping with English Gr 5 (Bev Pister (404), PUD (Kathy Dorn, 10), KC Water (Kathy Dorn, 32), The American Continents (Julie Schoepp, 924), Heidi's Children (Barb Schlinkert, 263), MGE (Kathy Dorn, 36), KC Water (Kathy Dorn, 32) MGE (Kathy Dorn, 26), KC Water (Kathy Dorn, 32), Theo, The Big Brother (Barb Schlinkert, 402), Sheboygan School (Vicki Holm, 404), Sheboygan School (tactiles) (Melody Moore, 32), MGE (Kathy Dorn, 30), Her Father's Daughter (Debbie Hanson, 714), Freckles Comes Home (Sue Danz, 464), The Bishops Shadow (Debbie Hanson, 363), Advent. of Ready Fox (Barb Schlinkert, 97), Adventures of Prickly Porky (Barb Schlinkert, 93), Adventures of Poor Mrs. Quack (Barb Schlinkert, 93), The Adventures of Blacky the Crow (Debbie Hanson, 135), Charlie Berens Bio (Overture) (Sue Danz, 3), The Adventures of Mr. Mocker (Sue Danz 95)

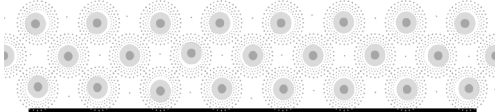
### Special Projects

Tales of Restoration (Elizabeth Kanne, 221), Tales of Resistance (Kathy Dorn, 183), Grand Theatre, Wausau Welcome (Sue Danz, 6), Gods Direction is always Best (Sue Danz, 82), Foot Care with Diabetes (Sue Danz, 16), 7 P/B books (Sue Nelson, 81), 2 P/B books (Sue Danz, 24), From My Mailbox (Sue Danz, 102), LSS Vol 20, Iss 8, Sept. 2025 (Joan Sholdt, 98), 2 P/B books (Elizabeth Kanne, 17), 3 P/B Books (Elizabeth Kanne, 7), Overture Cntr Flyer (Sue Danz, 12), Church & Sunday School Hymnal (Julie Schoepp, 729), A Madison Symphony Christmas (Sue Danz, 62), LSS Vol 20, Iss 9, Oct. 2025 (Joan Sholdt, 98), ), LSS Vol 20, Iss 10, Nov. 2025 (Joan Sholdt, 98), Special Male Chorus Selections (Vicki Holm, 722), LSS Vol 20, Iss 11, Dec. 2025 (Joan Sholdt, 96), Light for the Path (Julie Schoepp, 220), Office visits and medication list (Sue Danz, 12), 6 brochures (Sue Danz, 51). LSS Vol 21, Iss 1, January 2026 (Joan Sholdt, 92), LSS Vol 21, Iss 2, February 2026 (Joan Sholdt, 92), P/B book (Barb Schlinkert, 18)

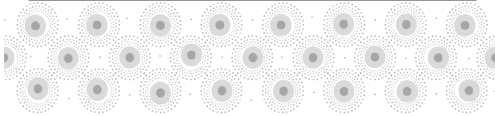


# DEAR PEARL

Newsletter of Braille Library & Transcribing Services, Inc.



We're on the web  
<http://bltsinc.org/>



## Contributors

Sue Danz  
 Patricia Herrling  
 Aaron Konkol

## Editors

Sue Danz  
 Aaron Konkol




---

*Answering the Reading Needs of the Blind and Visually Impaired since 1971*




---

**Braille Library & Transcribing Services, Inc.**  
 6501 Watts Rd. Ste. 149  
 Madison, WI 53719  
 Phone: 608-233-0222  
 Fax: 608-233-0249  
 Email: [office@bltsinc.org](mailto:office@bltsinc.org)  
 Office Hours:  
 Tuesday - Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.