

Spring/Summer 2009



The Magnifier



**The Newsletter of the Oakland County Library
for the Visually and Physically Impaired**

Digital Transition Progress

In mid-June 2008, the Library of Congress awarded a contract to produce standard and advanced digital talking-book players. Mass production of players is currently scheduled for Summer 2009.

By law, distribution of machines starts first with armed forces veterans, followed by patrons aged 100 years and older, and then to all others.

Three years ago, the LVPI began compiling a list of patrons interested in the digital machines. Please be aware that there will not be enough machines in the first shipment or even in subsequent shipments throughout the rest of 2009 to respond to everyone who has their name on the waiting list. However, rest assured that you will receive a new digital machine as soon as quantities become available.

We will continue to alert patrons via the newsletter with any updates we receive, and we appreciate your continued patience as we make our way through the transition process.

Michigan Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (MPVI)

MPVI was formed in 1989 as an independent parent support group. In 1999, MPVI became an affiliate of NAPVI—National Association of Children with Visual Impairments.

MPVI members whose children have visual impairments meet, share and support each other. Professionals in the community assist parents and work together to provide informative and growth inspiring activities for our membership, such as annual family retreats, ski trips, museum outings, technology workshops and more.

Basic membership is \$10 annually. For more information, e-mail Gwen Botting, President, at info@mpvi.org or call 989-855-2430.

Patron Book Recommendations

Raye Dinnerstein recommends:

***Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen RC 62718**

In 1931, veterinary student Jacob Jankowski's world comes crashing down when his parents die in a car accident. Broke, Jacob joins the circus, falls for Marlena, a married circus star, and cares for animals like Rosie the Elephant. Strong language, some descriptions of sex, and some violence. A 2006 bestseller.

Harriet Purdy recommends:

***Away* by Amy Bloom RC 65368**

In 1924, after her family is killed in a pogrom, Russian Jew Lillian Leyb flees to New York and finds work in a Yiddish theater. Learning that her daughter may have survived, however, Lillian begins another journey--west across America for Siberia. Explicit descriptions of sex, violence, and strong language. 2007 bestseller.

Staff Book Recommendations

Kelly Armata recommends:

***Story of Edgar Sawtelle* by David Wroblewski RC 66656**

Wisconsin, 1970s. Gar and Trudy Sawtelle raise an intuitive and intelligent dog breed on their farm. One dog, Almondine, can communicate with the Sawtelle's son Edgar. After Gar's brother arrives, Gar dies and fourteen-year-old Edgar flees into the forest with three of the dogs. Some strong language. A 2008 bestseller.

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A Note from the New LVPI Supervisor

Hello! My name is Maria Danna, and I'm the new Supervisor of the Oakland County Library for the Visually & Physically Impaired. I will be working closely with the LVPI team to continually review and improve our patron services and programs. My goal is to make this Library the best it can be for its community of users.

This year, we will provide patrons with exciting new "digital talking book player" technology while gradually phasing out the older cassette tape player system and its recordings. Transition to this new technology will occur without interruption to current patron services, and the LVPI team will be here to walk you through the learning process with your new machines.

Be assured that this new digital talking book player is designed for enhanced ease-of-use and listening enjoyment. In addition, when you receive your new player (as quantities become available), a variety of new (and older) interesting recordings will be available for check-out.

The LVPI is also planning several enrichment programs for 2009 and beyond—we look forward to hosting additional book discussions, introducing a "descriptive video service" film series, and sponsoring a few "wellness" presentations. Your participation in this planning process is crucial to its success. If you have any programming ideas for the LVPI, please feel free to contact me at 248-452-9162.

Many thanks! --Maria

The Magnificent Seven

It's not just a classic 1960s Western film anymore. Our "Magnificent Seven" is a list of interesting and noteworthy items from very reliable sources. Enjoy these entries, and enlarge your life!

1) Companies all over the United States have **free birthday treats** waiting just for you! Some of these free treats are even good for your entire birthday month. Make your special day plentiful! Website: www.freebirthdaytreats.com
Source: Bottom Line Personal, Volume 30, Issue 4 February 15, 2009

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The Magnificent Seven (Continued)

2) **Increase green tea's health benefits** by adding three tablespoons of orange, lemon or lime juice to one cup of the hot tea. These juices improve the stability of cancer-fighting antioxidants and make them more easily absorbed.

Source: Mario Ferruzzi, PhD, Food Science Department, Purdue University

3) The National Association of Letter Carriers "**Stamp Out Hunger**" **Food Drive** will be held on Saturday, May 9th, 2009. Annually since 1993, U.S. Postal Service employees have collected nonperishable food items left by mailboxes and in post offices from postal customers. "Stamp Out Hunger" is the largest, one-day food drive in the nation. For more information, go to: **www.nalc.org**

4) **Quote:** "The only normal people are the ones you don't know too well."

--*Rodney Dangerfield, Comedian 1921-2004*

5) **Low-cost hearing devices do not help many types of hearing loss**—and may cause damage. Devices sold for under \$100.00 through mail order or the Internet typically are of poor quality and tend to overamplify, possibly harming the ear. Mid-priced devices costing \$100.00-\$500.00 generally are safe, but are effective for only some people with hearing loss. The best--but most expensive--hearing aids are custom-fitted/supplied by a professional audiologist.

Source: Perry Punch, PhD, MSU Hearing Aid Laboratories.

6) **The Helen Keller Festival in Tuscumbia, Alabama** is scheduled for June 25th through June 28th, 2009. The Festival commemorates the remarkable life of Helen Keller with stage shows, arts and crafts fairs, free musical entertainment, historic tours of Keller's birthplace, and much more. For more information, contact Debbie Wilson at Florence/Lauderdale Tourism, 1-888-FLO-TOUR or visit the website: **www.VisitFlorenceAl.com**

7) **Amaze your friends with this historical tidbit!** The Boston Molasses Disaster, known as the Great Molasses Flood, occurred in 1919 in the North End district of Boston, Massachusetts. A large molasses holding tank burst, and a wave of the sticky stuff rushed through the streets at an estimated 35 mph, killing 21 and injuring 150. The tragic event has entered local folklore, and today's residents claim on hot summer days the area still smells of molasses.

Source: Dark Tide: the Great Boston Molasses Flood of 1919 by Stephen Puleo (NLS book RC 59335)

Association of Blind Citizens Assistive Technology Fund

The Association of Blind Citizens operates the Assistive Technology Fund. The Assistive Technology Fund (ATF) will provide funds to cover 50% of the retail price of adaptive devices or software. The ABC board of directors believes this program will allow blind and visually impaired individuals access to technology products that may improve employment opportunities, increase independence, and enhance overall quality of life.

The products covered by this program must retail for a minimum of \$200 with a maximum retail price of \$6,000. Applications will be reviewed by the Assistive Technology Committee (ATC) and recommendations will be submitted for board approval. If applicants are selected to receive an ATF technology grant, they will be notified by ABC within 45 days after the application deadline. Applicants will provide documents such as income tax returns, bank statements and other documents that the ABC board or its designee deem necessary to assess financial need for the grant.

Important Requirements:

- Applicants must be legally blind and residents of the United States to qualify for this program.
- Eligible applicants must have a family income of less than \$50,000 and cash assets of less than \$20,000.
- Applications must be submitted by **June 30th** or **December 31st** for each grant period (two per year). Applicants may submit **one** request per calendar year. Please do not use attachments when submitting requests.
- All applications **must be submitted via e-mail**.
- The grantee will have 30 days after notification to purchase the product. If the purchase is not made within that time, ABC reserves the right to withdraw the award and give it to another applicant. All decisions are final.

Visit the website at http://www.blindcitizens.org/assistive_tech.htm

NOTE: The information contained herein is provided as a public service with the understanding that the LVPI makes no warranties, either expressed or implied, concerning the accuracy, completeness, reliability or suitability of the information.

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