

Look Again

Fall/Winter 2016-2017



OTBS Oakland Talking Book Service @ RHPL

Stay Tuned

This past July, legislation introduced by Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY), passed the Senate as an amendment to an unrelated bill (S. 2893). That bill was then approved by the House. That's great news because it authorizes the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) to extend its service by providing refreshable Braille display devices to NLS users. Previously, NLS could only supply Braille books in print which are expensive to produce and costly to ship. The NLS did have the capability of sending Braille files

continued on next page

Why We Need Braille

Do you wonder why books and magazines are still being produced in Braille? Braille is the only method of reading for people who use their sense of touch as their primary means of gathering information. According to the National Braille Press, 74% of working-age people who are blind are unemployed. Of the 26% of people who are employed, the majority are Braille readers.

In an attempt to make Braille materials produced by all English-speaking countries uniform, the eight member

continued on next page



Rochester Hills
Public Library



Stay Tuned Continues

to users, but many could not afford the refreshable Braille display devices. Braille readers— popular with many people with print disabilities— allow readers the ability to read Braille from a device connected to a computer keyboard. With so much content now displayed on a computer screen, Braille readers are indispensable. Isn't technology cool?

Kudos to Senator Schumer for acting quickly and effectively — with critical assistance from Senators Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Roy Blunt (R-MO) — on a recommendation from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) in its recent report entitled “Library Services For Those With Disabilities: Additional Steps Needed to Ease Services and Modernize Technology.” GAO urged Congress to “give NLS the opportunity to provide braille in a modernized format and potentially achieve cost savings, Congress should consider amending the law to allow the agency to use federal funds to provide its users playback equipment for electronic braille files (i.e., refreshable braille devices).” The bill was signed by the President in late July.

Why We Need Braille Continues

countries of the International Council on English Braille have adopted Unified English Braille (UEB), effective this past January 4, 2016, which happens to be Louis Braille's birthday.

UEB is designed to be easy for current Braille readers. Using the same six-dot cell pattern as the present code, it drops some contractions, adds some punctuation symbols and uses different spacing rules. It also allows for a wide array of symbols made necessary by advancements in technology, such as email and website addresses.

For more information about UEB, you can request the UEB reader in Braille by calling the UEB information line at 617-972-7248.



Braille Calendars

There is a limited supply of 2017 APH InSights large-print/Braille calendars available upon request. The type is 36 point and the calendar measures 8.5 x 11 inches. To request a calendar, contact Michelle at 248-650-5681 or email michelle.wisniewski@rhpl.org. Limited to one per customer.

Always Here to Help

One-on-one assistive technology training is available via phone or in-person. Marsha, our OTBS assistive technology trainer, has years of experience as an active patron of the National Library Service, is literate in Braille and very knowledgeable about services and resources available to members of the low vision and blind community. Give her a call with your technology questions at 248-650-5682.

Sitecues by Ai Squared

The Rochester Hills Public Library is in the process of adding Sitecues by Ai Squared to the RHPL and the OTBS websites. Sitecues is software that allows each user to customize his/her experience. It improves accessibility by allowing users to customize the font size or have the screen read to them. It is designed to be simple and intuitive for the first time user or persons with low vision and other physical limitations.

Optelec ClearView + Speech Makes Reading Easy Again



Does reading your newspaper or favorite book become too tiresome with a video magnifier? Do you lose time searching through text? The Oakland Talking Book Service is happy to announce that the Optelec ClearView+Speech is now available for use in the Outreach Services area of the Rochester Hills Public Library. Visit us and sit back, relax and listen to any printed documents as they are read aloud.

The ClearView+ Speech combines video magnification and accurate text-to-speech that makes it easy to select what you want to read. It allows you to enlarge materials to a more comfortable size or change the high contrast viewing modes with one master dial. To activate the Speech feature, just touch the screen and instantly enjoy listening to articles, letters and books with a natural sounding voice and full page overview. You also have the option to select video magnification to view photos, bills and read shorter text.

For more information, please contact us at 1-800-774-4542 or 248-650-7150.

Closed Circuit Television Magnifiers (CCTV)

If you have a gently-used CCTV that is in good working order, please consider donating it to OTBS. We do have a few people waiting to borrow this type of equipment.

If you would like to borrow a used CCTV, please give OTBS a call. We will do our very best to match your needs with donated equipment in our inventory. For more information please contact Michelle at 248-650-5681 or michelle.wisniewski@rhpl.org.



BARD App Now Available for Android and Kindle Fire Devices

Good News! BARD Mobile App has arrived! The updated version of BARD Mobile is now available from the Google Play store. BARD Mobile enables NLS patrons to download and listen to audiobooks and magazines directly from their Android devices. Registered Oakland Talking Book Services patrons will need an active BARD account and their devices must be running Android OS 4.1 or later to use this app.

Now you can also use the BARD Mobile app for Android to read BARD books on your Kindle Fire. BARD Mobile is now available in the Amazon App store. Registered OTBS patrons will need a BARD account and at least a second-generation Kindle or later to use this app. For more information or assistance, call OTBS at 1-800-774-4542.



High Volume Player and Headphones

NLS has developed a high-volume version of the digital talking book machine for use by patrons who are hearing impaired. The high-volume player, which is paired with a headset, is available as a standard or advanced digital player that has been programmed to have an amplified volume up to 120 dB. It can be issued only to NLS patrons and will bear a warning label. The high-volume feature only works with the set of stereo headphones that NLS provides. The pairing replaces the amplifier/headset accessory.

To receive a high-volume player and headset a patron must provide certification of hearing impairment by a physician or audiologist. An agency may assist an eligible patron by obtaining an application from www.loc.gov/nls/pdf/hvp.pdf and returning the patron's completed and fully signed application to the NLS equipment control officer (ECO) via email at nls-eco@loc.gov or fax at 202-707-0712.

The Lansing BTBL is required to retain the original completed applications and will continue to provide service to patrons with high-volume players. Patrons are asked to return their current player upon receipt of a high-volume player and headset. A return label will be included with the high-volume player.



'Tis The Season

If you are having a hard time coming up with a holiday gift for friends or family, please consider recognizing them with a contribution to OTBS. A donation is one of the most satisfying ways of recognizing a special occasion, honoring a relative or friend's birthday, anniversary or other event and can be used as a thank-you gift for your enjoyment in using OTBS. We will send you an acknowledgement for tax purposes and a letter to the person you are recognizing to inform them of your gift.

You might want to invest in tomorrow by designating a gift from your current assets or a portion of your estate to OTBS. By participating, you will help us continue to improve and enrich the lives of people with low vision. Our 2017 OTBS wish list includes: improving the walkway through the sensory garden as well as the addition of some musical elements in that area. There are a variety of ways you can contribute. If you want to make a bequest, the library has sample legal forms that you can use as you plan your estate.

Gifts to OTBS are deductible on your federal and state income tax forms to the extent allowable by the law. If you would like more information about how to support OTBS, we invite you to contact us so we can explain the many benefits and strategies for making donations.

We wish to thank the following people for their generous gifts to OTBS this past year. It was through their generosity that we were able to add the Braille signage to our beautiful sensory garden.

Dr. Rose Marie Schmidt

Stephanas Vafeas

3-Dimensional Services Group

Bernard & Judy Cantor

Raymond J. Shindorf

Sensory Garden

After months of anticipation, our new braille and standard text signs for the library's garden are here! Each sign identifies two to three plants and encourages visitors to touch or smell them. We even have some plants that have distinct sounds! The signs were manufactured by the American Printing House for the Blind, and the display mounts were fabricated and donated to the library by 3-Dimensional Services Group. This is just the beginning of making our beautiful garden a more interactive, sensory experience!



The Most Valuable Card In Your Wallet

by Director Christine Lind Hage

Well maybe not the most valuable card, but your Rochester Hills Public Library card gets you all kinds of special perks. In addition to borrowing and downloading reading materials, you are entitled to borrow large print books. Our collection of over 10,000 titles is constantly kept up to date and we are happy to arrange for home delivery.

At some point, even large print may no longer be comfortable for you to read. At that time, you may want to move up to our low vision aids. This collection of about 70 optical devices includes stand and hand-held magnifiers, as well as both stationary and portable closed circuit televisions. They come in a wide variety of powers enlarging print from two to nine times. Some devices have lights; others have bifocal lenses. They

“We are people helping people and hope that our personalized service is something you will use.”

range in price from a few dollars to several hundred dollars. Although we do not sell these devices, the collection allows you to take them home to try a variety of styles in order to determine what will best meet your needs. We are happy to provide ordering information.

Although assistive technology is amazing, it is helpful to have someone walk you through use instructions. Our assistive technology trainer, Marsha Katona, will be happy to meet with you by appointment to explain the various options or to instruct you on how to use specialized software. Marsha is very familiar with software designed to aid people with low vision including both Apple and Android products. She is able to help you over the phone, or in person, whichever one works best for you.

The library is also a place to experience. We have a wide variety of programs available to OTBS patrons. You, and an assistant, may register for the hundreds of programs offered throughout the year. The programs are usually held here at the library, but we do have book discussion groups that meet off site or via a telephone conference call. Registration is required, so that we know we will have enough seats, but there is no charge for any of the programs or services offered by the Rochester Hills Public Library.

Here at the Rochester Hills Public Library we pride ourselves on our customer service. We are people helping people and hope that our personalized service is something you will use. Please call (800) 774-4542 to get more details.

OTBS Book Discussion Groups

If you are looking for an opportunity to discuss great books and network with other Oakland Talking Book Service customers, please consider joining this stimulating book discussion group. The group meets monthly at the Good Samaritan Lutheran Church, 517 W. Walton Blvd. in Pontiac. The Church is accessible by the SMART bus system. Visit otbs.rhpl.org for the upcoming schedule of discussions. For digital copies of the discussion books, contact Marsha at 248-650-5682.



Only a Phone Call Away

If you prefer not to travel, we are happy to announce a new virtual book group that requires only a phone call. Every month, the group will discuss books via a conference call. To learn more about this brand new group, visit otbs.rhpl.org or contact Michelle at 248-650-5681.

Come On In!

If you live in the Rochester area or are traveling through, we'd love for you to stop in and visit us! We're open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m.-9 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sundays during the school year from 1-6 p.m. For directions, you can call us, find us at otbs.rhpl.org or see the map below.

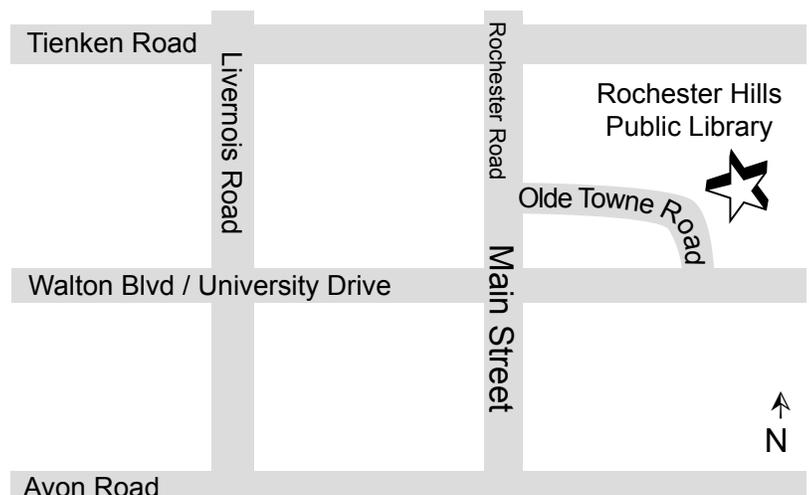
We love welcoming visitors of all ages, whether they want to meet the OTBS staff, work in the adaptive lab, browse our large print and magnifier equipment or simply stroll through our new sensory garden. The library is ADA compliant and we have disability parking in close proximity to both public entrances.

Library Location

We are located on the edge of the central business district in downtown Rochester, Michigan.

The library is located on Olde Towne Road just north of University Drive and two blocks east of Main Street.

500 Olde Towne Road
Rochester, Michigan 48307-2043
248-650-7150





Oakland Talking Book Service @ RHPL
 Rochester Hills Public Library
 500 Olde Towne Road • Rochester, MI 48307

**FREE MATTER
 FOR THE BLIND
 AND HANDICAPPED**

Look Again:

News from OTBS is also available in Braille by request. The current version of the publication can be found at otbs.rhpl.org. Connect with us on Facebook at rhpl.org/otbsatrhpl

OTBS Hours

Monday -Thursday..... 9 a.m.-9 p.m.
 Friday & Saturday..... 9 a.m. -6 p.m.
 Sunday..... 1-6 p.m.

OTBS Closings

Nov 23-24Thanksgiving
 December 24-25 Christmas
 Dec 31-Jan 1 New Year



1-800-774-4542 or 248-650-7150

outreach@rhpl.org

Visit us at: otbs.rhpl.org