

*Fall 2007*

# TALKING TIMES

**REGIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND & PHYSICALLY  
HANDICAPPED**

**Office of Library and Information Services**

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**Andrew Egan, Regional Librarian**

**Hope Houston, editor**

## **Digital Talking Books**

Many patrons have asked what the new recorded book and talking book machine will look like. The National Library Service has sent some pictures and descriptions of the upcoming Digital Talking Book Player which is shown here, along with the recorded book and case.

The player is about 6 inches wide, 9 inches long and 2 inches high. It weighs just a little over 2 pounds. In contrast, the present Talking Books machine is 9 by 11 by 3 inches and weighs over 7 pounds.



There are a few special features about the new machine that will make your listening a lot more enjoyable, too. In particular, the Rewind, Play, and Fast Forward controls are easier to manipulate. The play button, a large, green square button, is located on the front and center of the machine. On either side of the play button are large, white triangle-shaped buttons for rewinding and forwarding the story. One new feature is that, as

you rewind or fast forward your book, the machine will tell you how far you are moving through the text. Another nice feature of the new machine is the Sleep button, a crescent-shaped button which, when pressed, will shut down the machine in 30 minutes. So, no more falling asleep and then having to rewind to find out where you left off!

The recorded book itself is changed considerably. While it is roughly the same size as a cassette, its features are vastly different. It is completely enclosed, with one end of the book cartridge having a finger hole for easy removal from the player. The other end is equipped with a USB connector, similar to a plug, which you will insert into the front of the player. The cartridge shipping container is slightly longer and wider than the green cassette box, but only half the thickness.

For those patrons across the country who tested the new digital talking book, the experience has been positive. More than 86% of users found that they were able to navigate easily through the book. The ability to jump to different sections of the book is a very useful feature that makes the overall reading experience much more enjoyable. Production of the recorded book has already begun and player production will begin in 2008, with distribution of the first players scheduled for 2009.

## **Facts about the Current Cost of Producing Recorded Books**

Approximately 2,000 books are produced in RC format per year:

- It costs \$2,900 to produce one book.
- A duplicate copy of a title costs an average \$2.16 to make.
- The average number of copies made per title is 925.
- It costs \$780,000 to purchase 2 million cassettes a year.
- Total cost for mass duplication of RCs, including containers is approximately \$4,980,000, or \$2.65 per copy.

### **RI Talking Books Holiday Closings**

Columbus Day ~ Monday, October 8, 2007

Veterans Day ~ Monday, November 12, 2007

Thanksgiving ~ Thursday, November 22, 2007

Christmas Day ~ Tuesday, December 25, 2007

New Year's Day ~ Tuesday, January 1, 2008

Martin Luther King Day ~ Monday, January 21, 2008

Please order ahead so you have enough books to enjoy  
when the library is closed.

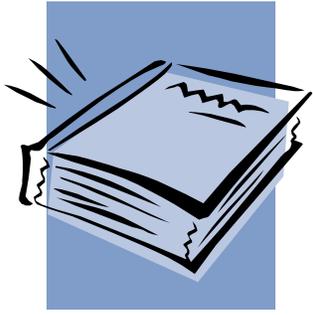
### **Digital Media Downloads . . . my library, anytime**

The opportunity to offer equal access to digital books and media to Rhode Island citizens who have visual or physical disabilities is now available through the Ocean State Libraries E-Zone digital collection. With a valid public library card and connection to the Internet, any member of the RI Talking Books Plus program will be able to access over 1,500 digital audio books, eBooks, music, or video. We are able to offer direct access to you because of our participation as a member in Ocean State Libraries.

How does E-Zone work? Patrons will need a valid public library card number, access to the Internet, and free digital software for their computer or storage device. All digital download software is available on the Ocean State Libraries E-Zone website. After configuring the free software, the E-Zone digital resources can be accessed online from home, work, or school with a computer or other portable device at no charge to you.

You may begin downloading your favorite books today, by going to the Talking Books webpage at [www.olis.ri.gov/tbp/](http://www.olis.ri.gov/tbp/) and clicking on **Welcome to Ocean State Libraries E-Zone**.

Please call us at 222-5800 if you have any questions about this new service.



# What Should I Read Next?

## Talking Books at the Movies

Arthur C. Clarke. **2001: A Space Odyssey** (RC58814)

On a voyage into the unexplored universe, the spacecraft Discovery hurtles its human passengers through time toward a confrontation with an unknown, powerful intelligence. *Movie director: Stanley Kubrick (1968)*

Mark Bowden. **Black Hawk Down** (RC48028)

Recreates the U.S. military operation in Mogadishu, Somalia, on October 3-4, 1993, when ninety-nine American soldiers were surrounded and trapped. *Movie director: Ridley Scott (2001)*

Helen Fielding. **Bridget Jones's Diary** (RC46267)

Despite a long list of resolutions, British Bridget Jones's year gets off to "an exceptionally bad start" when her parents try to fix up their thirtyish dateless daughter with their friends' unappealing divorced son.

*Movie director: Sharon Maguire (2001)*

Michael Blake. **Dances With Wolves** (RC32009)

The army is unaware that Lieutenant Dunbar has been assigned to an abandoned army outpost by the mentally incompetent major. Alone with a wolf and Indian friends, he finds himself adapting to the Indian way of life - a life in which he is happy until his past comes back to haunt him.

*Movie director: Kevin Costner (1990)*

Winston Groom. **Forrest Gump** (RC38876)

Forrest Gump admits he's slow, but that doesn't stop him having bewildering adventures. Gump tells of becoming a football star, a war hero, an astronaut, a professional "rassler," an actor, a businessman, and a politician. An idiot savant, Gump is a champion chess player and a musician. *Movie director: Robert Zemeckis (1994)*

Robin Moore. **The French Connection** (RC16544)

Two New York policemen of the Narcotics Bureau track down heroin smugglers from the U.S., France, and Corsica and succeed in smashing one

of the biggest international operations. An actual case history.

*Movie director: William Friedkin (1971)*

Herbert Asbury. **The Gangs of New York** (RC55088)

Uses police records, newspapers, and criminals' memoirs to chronicle the crime permeating New York City in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Includes the history of such notorious neighborhoods as the Bowery, Hell's Kitchen, and Five Points. *Movie director: Martin Scorsese (2002)*

John Steinbeck. **Grapes of Wrath** (RC21574)

The story of Depression farmers and their families driven from the dust bowl of their Oklahoma farms to the promised land of California to find work. Instead they face organized opposition to their struggle to survive. *Movie director: John Ford (1940)*

Edward Behr. **The Last Emperor** (RC29552)

Biography of Pu Yi, the last emperor of China, who ascended the Manchu throne in 1908 when he was almost three years old. *Movie director: Bernardo Bertolucci (1987)*

James Fenimore Cooper. **The Last of the Mohicans** (RC19920)

During the 1757 siege of Fort William Henry on Lake George by the French and Iroquois, two daughters of its commander set out from a neighboring fort to join their father. *Movie director: George B. Seitz (1936); Michael Mann (1992)*

Dashiell Hammett. **The Maltese Falcon** (Complete Novels) (RC55472)

In searching for the murderer of his partner, Sam Spade runs afoul of the police and several characters all in search of a mysterious statuette. *Movie director: John Huston (1941)*

Judith Guest. **Ordinary People** (RC10149)

Compassionate novel about guilt-ridden seventeen-year-old Conrad Jarrett who returns home from a stay in a mental institution after he attempts suicide. With the help of an understanding psychiatrist, Conrad learns about love and forgiveness. *Movie director: Robert Redford (1980)*

Jane Austen. **Pride and Prejudice** (RC50549)

A classic novel of social customs in late eighteenth-century England. Depicts the personality clash between Elizabeth Bennet, one of five daughters of a

country gentleman, and prosperous, aristocratic landowner Fitzwilliam Darcy, which eventually develops into courtship. *Movie director: Joe Wright (2005); Simon Langton (BBC) (1995)*

George Bernard Shaw. **Pygmalion** (RC25029)

Professor Henry Higgins, a speech teacher, transforms a Cockney flower girl into an elegant woman with regal bearing, who then falls in love with her mentor. *Movie director: Anthony Asquith & Leslie Howard (1938); TV director: George Schaefer (1963); **My Fair Lady** - George Cukor (1964)*

T.E. Lawrence. **Seven Pillars of Wisdom** (Lawrence of Arabia) (RC16339)  
Controversial classic of war and adventure, describes the revolt in Arabia against the Turks from the viewpoint of the Englishman Lawrence, who took part in it. Includes portraits, philosophies, emotions, and dreams.  
*Movie director: David Lean (1962)*

Tennessee Williams. **A Streetcar Named Desire** (RC46212)

In this play, a recently widowed, faded southern belle visits her bohemian sister and lusty brother-in-law in the French Quarter of New Orleans. Seeking the lost gentility of her early life, she instead faces a mental breakdown because of the insensitivity of those around her.  
*Movie director: Elia Kazan (1951)*

Isabel Allende. **Zorro** (RC60590)

Retelling of the legend of Zorro. In the early 1800s, Diego de la Vega leaves Southern California and travels to Napoleonic Spain for his formal education. There he joins an underground resistance movement and, disguised as Zorro, fights for the oppressed. *Movie director: **The Legend of Zorro** Martin Campbell (2005)*

***Check out the TBPlus catalog at***  
[www.klas.com/ribph](http://www.klas.com/ribph)



## **TBPlus works with RFB&D to Provide Accessible Educational Materials for Students**

On July 1, 2007 Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D) in Princeton, New Jersey changed their format of educational books from cassette to CD. To promote this change, RI Talking Books Plus received a free one year subscription from RFB&D to access their collection of 39,000 education titles. We now order titles online for patrons who need accessible educational materials, and have them mailed to us. In turn, we forward the titles to our patrons. Patrons receive the titles free through this service, but they must purchase the proprietary compact disk player sold by RFB&D to read them.

Patrons may purchase a player from Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic national headquarters by calling 1-800-221-4792. Once you have the proprietary CD player, you may call Talking Books Plus at 222-5800 to request educational titles on compact discs. To find out how individuals and schools may also subscribe to RFB&D for direct service, go to their webpage for more information - [www.rfbd.org/](http://www.rfbd.org/)

## **National Exhibits by Blind Artists**

National Exhibits by Blind Artists, Inc. is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to promoting the works of artists who are blind or visually impaired. NEBA, located in Philadelphia, began in 1975 when Michael Coyle, director of the Philadelphia Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, hosted an art show at the Library. The show was a success with many works of art being sold.



The main objective of NEBA is to promote the work of blind and visually impaired artists and "to create a demand in the professional field of art, furthering the careers of blind artists and making them part of the mainstream of life."

For more information on the exhibits or on how to enter your art work in the 2008 art show, contact the National Exhibits by Blind Artists toll free: 1-800-222-1754.

To contact NEBA by mail, send inquiries to:

National Exhibits by Blind Artists, Inc., 919 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

# Common Machine Problems with Standard Cassette Players

Here are a few of the recurring problems and possible solutions that patrons experience with their standard cassette players:

## **1. My cassette plays too fast.**

This is caused by a loose tape, static electricity build-up, or the wrong speed. Eject the tape from the cassette player, place the tape in the palm of your hand and rap it against a flat surface three times. Re-insert the tape in the cassette player, rewind the tape for a minute, then stop. Fast forward the tape for a minute, then stop. Then press PLAY. The tape should play at the correct speed if the rocker switch is on the 15/16 IPS setting.

## **2. I cannot hear the whole book.**

This is caused by the side selector switch not being in the right position. When starting with side 1, push the side selector switch down to the left, marked 1-2. Do not change the switch to listen to side 2. Push the side-selector switch down to the right for sides 3 and 4. It is important to be methodical about the use of the side switch, or you may find yourself skipping whole segments of the book.

## **3. The sound fades from high to low volume.**

This is caused by the battery losing its charge. Remove the power cord from the rear of the cassette player and plug it into an electrical outlet for recharging. This takes approximately fourteen hours. You should not play your cassette player during the recharging process.

## **4. The machine plays and then stops.**

This is caused by a defective battery. Contact Rhode Island Talking Books Plus and request a replacement cassette player. The number to call is **401-222-5800** for a replacement player.

## **5. The machine does not play when unplugged.**

This is caused by a low battery. Plug the electrical cord into the wall outlet and do not play the cassette player for fourteen hours. This will recharge your nickel-cadmium battery so you can once again listen to a book up to six hours while the machine is unplugged.

(troubleshooting advice taken from Missouri's Wolfner Library and the National Library Service websites)

## Calling All Veterans



Please call the library and let us know who you are. We need to update our records to prepare for the digital age of the talking book. If you are a veteran, please call Talking Books and have a staff person add veteran status to your patron record. The number to call is **401-222-**

**5800.** *Thank you!*

### **Reader's Digest and Newsweek**

Talking Books provides subscriptions to both Reader's Digest and Newsweek to patrons who request them by notifying the American Printing House for the Blind. We also notify them when there is a change of address, or if you no longer wish to receive the magazines. We do not have access to their mailing list. Once a year, the American Printing House sends a letter to each subscriber asking for a donation and also asking if the patron would like to continue receiving the magazine. It is not necessary to send a donation in order to continue your subscription. However, you must return the letter indicating that you wish to continue receiving the magazines or your name will be removed from the mailing list.

### **Winter Camp Mauchatea 2008**

The Rhode Island Lions Sight Foundation will be sponsoring a Winter Camp Mauchatea, a 3-day, overnight program for twenty children who are blind or visually impaired. The Camp will take place Wednesday, February 20 through Friday, February 22, 2008 and will include a variety of field trips and activities. Contact Linda Hughes, R.I. Services for the Blind, 401-222-2300 x423, or email her at [lindah@ors.ri.gov](mailto:lindah@ors.ri.gov) to learn more about the winter camp or how you may help.

## Meet Ann Piascik

Ann Piasik is the newest voice on the telephone at Talking Books, but not the newest face at the R.I. Office of Library Services. Ann has been with state services since 1983 where she began as consultant to institutional libraries. In 1995, Ann acquired additional duties - managing state aid grants to public and institutional libraries, publishing Rhode Island library comparable statistics, and field service consultant to public libraries, as well as managing adult literacy grants for public libraries. Ann started serving TBP patrons in May 2007. Ann is committed to giving the best possible service and looks forward to serving the reading needs of the Talking Books patrons. You may contact Ann at 222-5800.

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