

Montana Talking Book Library (MTBL)

May 21, 2010 through July 20, 2010

Prepared for August 18, 2010 Commission meeting by Christie Briggs, Regional Librarian. This report represents accomplishments of Briggs, Gunderson, Landry, Meier, and Stanton, as well as 100 volunteers.

Goal One – Content – *Montana State Library (MSL)/MTBL acquires and manages relevant quality content that meets the needs of Montana library partners and patrons.*

May 21 – July 23 2010: four books and two magazine issues of *The Montana Magazine of Western History* and the *Montana Outdoors Magazine* were completed at both MTBL recording studios: *Montana place names from Alzada to Zortman: A Montana Historical Society Guide* by Montana Historical Society Press; *Upstairs Girls: Prostitution in the American West* by Michael Rutter; *Very Close to Trouble: The Johnny Grant Memoir* by Meikle Lyndel; and *Glacier National Park Legends and Lore* by C. W. Guthrie.

Goal Two—Access – *MSL/MTBL provides libraries, agencies, and its partners and patrons with convenient, high quality, and cost-effective access to library content and services.*

Circulation of digital and cassette materials over a 2 ½ month period (compared to last Commission report ending May 20):

17,161 digital books (versus 9,400) = 7,684 more for a 44.7% increase.

119,973 cassette books (versus 103,240) = 16,733 for a 13.9% increase.

1,145 digital machines checked out (versus 921) = 224 more for a 20% increase.

1,113 cassette machines checked out (versus 1,312) = 119 less for a 11% decrease.

The 80 new digital machines (NLS monthly allotment) are checked out to patrons within the same month- as soon as they are received, charged and can be distributed. The cassette machine distribution is falling as expected because it is an aging technology. The circulation of digital books has nearly doubled as anticipated and is beginning to catch up with the cassette book circulation.

We established full MARC record criteria for library's Keystone database (KLAS) and WebOpac cataloging systems. Set up a 3 month time table (May-July) to implement and update catalog.

Goal Three—Consultation and Leadership – *MSL/MTBL provides consultation and leadership to enable its patrons and partners to reach their goals.*

Partnered with MSL colleagues to discuss and address mobile technologies, their applications and pertinence as they relate to our website and its accessibility for the public at large as well as individuals with handicaps.

Goal Four—Collaboration – *MSL/MTBL promotes partnerships and encourages collaboration among its partners and patrons so that their information needs can be met.*

In late May a digital presentation was made to 25 members of the Helena Capital City Chapter of the MT Association for the Blind (MAB).

In June, 18 MT Health Care Association's Activity Directors attended a workshop about MTBL and were instructed on the new digital service.

Twenty-eight Girls State students dropped in unexpectedly to tour MTBL during the first week of June.

First week in July, nearly 30 MAB's Summer Orientation Program students received library digital training and toured MTBL.

Mid-July, 8 MT School for the Deaf and Blind's (MSDB) Blind Camp students and 5 instructors toured MTBL and learned about the new digital service and how to download books from the NLS BARD (Braille and audio reading download) website.

Partnered with Career Training Institute's (CTI) Summer Youth Program to continue as a training host agency to educate and offer new skills to young adults in using the various programs of the Talking Book Library.

Collaborated with MAB chapters in Montana to supply MTBL materials to information booths at many County Fairs as well as the State Fair.

Goal Five— Sustainable Success – *MSL/MTBL is a well-run organization and a sought-after employer; it is efficient and effective (measured against partner and patron outcomes), and successfully engaged in its ongoing mission.*

In mid-June, we met briefly with Michele Farrell, Institute of Museum and Library Services. We discussed the progress of the MTBL digital program and addressed other accessibility issues common to all public libraries.

In mid-July, we contracted with Express Personnel Services to provide a temporary 20 hour per week front desk receptionist allowing us to sustain our obligation and commitment to providing efficient and essential support of our patrons, staff and volunteers.

We have now passed the one year mark since we began offering digital services to patrons who cannot read standard print materials. It is very exciting, in this time of an uncertain economy, to be able to offer our patrons the new NLS digital audio books and players with a design that is simple to use, fluidly tactile and accessible. Our selection of online BARD titles is customized, flexible, simple and easily accessible with a variety of personal player choices for patrons to utilize.

We have truly "caught the wave" in bringing new technology to many Montanans who would not have been able to afford to participate. Although some may take this "Age of Technology" for granted, our patrons are deeply appreciative of what we do and they tell us that every day.