

# Reading is for Everyone...

## Macomb Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped @ CMPL

(586) 286-1580

Winter 2018

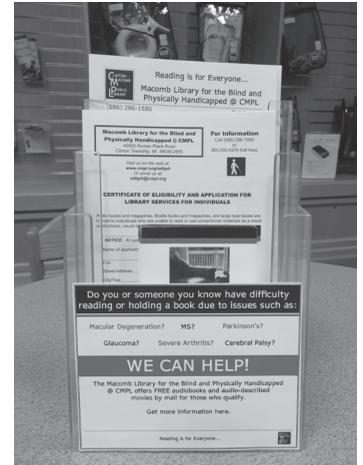
### Sharon's Corner

The cold, short days of winter have arrived. It's a time to stay in, stay warm and bake some muffins, or make your best batch of chili. Cooking and baking may be more difficult with low or no vision. However, did you know that there are many low vision and no vision aids that will enable us to measure, weigh and mark ingredients?

There are talking devices that will set the timer, test the temperature of the meat in the oven and tell you the weight of a cup of flour. We are expanding our AT Demo kit to include kitchen aids that help us cook delicious meals safely.

If you want to try out these cooking aids before buying them, call for an appointment and we will be happy to meet with you. We are expecting the arrival of these demonstration items soon. Contact Sharon at (586) 286-1580.

The Victor Reader Stream is a light weight, pocket sized device that reads books that are downloaded from BARD. It also allows you to access the KNFB Newslines which is a source for reading newspapers and magazines. You are welcome to call us to set up a demo or we can walk you through the basic operations of the device. Call Sharon at (586) 286-1580.



### Contact MLBPH

Phone: (586) 286-1580  
Toll-free: (855) 203-5274

[mlbph@cmpl.org](mailto:mlbph@cmpl.org)

### Hours

MLBPH Staff is available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

[www.cmpl.org/mlbph](http://www.cmpl.org/mlbph)

## To Our Dear Patrons

Our Fall 2017 Newsletter contained a patron survey which left us little room to report on the many things we did over the summer months of 2017. In this issue of our newsletter, we update you on our activities from the past summer.

## The Midlands/Northern Conference Ann Arbor District Library June 6-8, 2017

Every year, the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped encourages libraries for the blind to meet to exchange information, learn about new initiatives, and network with colleagues from around the country. This year, two of the regions met in The Midlands/Northern Conference, graciously hosted by the Washtenaw Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Staff from your Macomb Library for the Blind attended and below we offer you our highlights and observations from the meetings.

### **Notes from Barb:**

On June 6-8th, I had the opportunity to attend my very first Midlands/Northern Conference in Ann Arbor. The conference was a great opportunity to hear the latest news, goals, and accomplishments from the National Library Services for the Blind (NLS) and Libraries for the Blind

within the region in a much smaller setting. The common theme of this year's conference was enhancing accessibility to library users through technology, services, and resources.

Karen Keninger presented an overview of the goals that NLS has accomplished in the past year including the launch of BARD Express. She also gave us a glimpse of the future of the next-generation digital player which is an Internet connected player which automatically downloads books to the player upon patron's request. There are also several NLS Pilot Projects that are currently in the works including developing a Refreshable Braille eReader that will eventually be distributed to qualifying NLS patrons, and using Synthetic Speech as an alternative to Authentic Speech to narrate audio books, allowing for more books to be recorded in a shorter period of time.

This year's conference was full of excitement, energy, and innovation. I am proud to be part of an organization that is constantly improving its services to enhance users' library experience.

### **Notes from Kathy:**

Each morning I arose at 4:30 a.m. in order to meet my carpool for the ride to Ann Arbor to attend each day's meetings beginning at 8:30 a.m. The scenery and company were always entertaining but at times, the traffic was frustrating. The same can be said

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about the ride home. However, the effort was more than worth it.

It was a pleasure to be in the company of all those employees of so many different libraries for the blind and physically handicapped. We heard many very qualified speakers, shared common patron concerns and many hints for better service to our patrons.

It was exciting to hear about innovations and changes that will greatly improve our quality of service. One innovation, already available is "Bard Express". Learning more about it encouraged me to start using it now. I am looking forward to the time from title lookup to downloading onto cartridge being cut in half.

Other things to look forward to in the next couple of years may include more titles added per year to the database collection, a new generation digital player, duplication on demand and Braille e-readers. As the assistant in our library, I was glad to have the opportunity to attend the conference this year since it was held nearby.

#### **Notes from Anne:**

I attended the final day of the conference. It was great to meet up with colleagues near and far. They are such a warm and welcoming group of people.

Software services took up the first half of the morning's presentation,

with audience members discussing different aspects of our local database.

The second presentation featured information on how libraries were instituting disability awareness training for staff not only of libraries for the blind, but also of the facility in which they reside. The training would further the goal of having people become more responsive to different needs of patrons.

The Macomb Library for the Blind will be holding a similar presentation for staff in the near future, so this was a very useful demonstration to attend.

We hope these highlights give you a synopsis of the conference. We were delighted to have more staff attend since it was so close to home. We thank the Washtenaw Library for the Blind for being such a fabulous host for this year's event.

### **Technology Information**

Please call the library at (586) 286-1580 for details regarding the following free and informative programs:

Assistive Technology Computer Tutoring for Windows, iOS products

Assistive Technology Demonstrations for variety of low tech to high tech devices for patrons with low vision or blind.

## Summer Programming at the Library

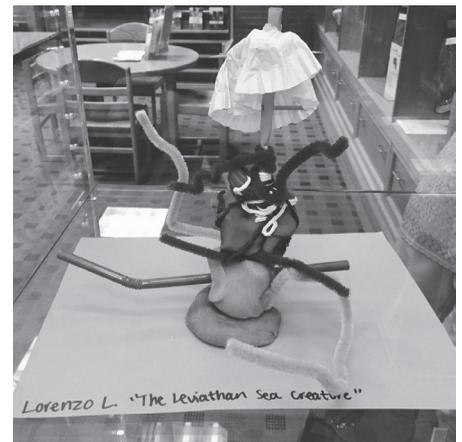
The Macomb Library for the Blind (MLBPH) hosted some very educational and enlightening programs during the past summer months.

In July, MLBPH Librarian Barbara Shipman collaborated with the Macomb Intermediate School District's (MISD) Visual Impairment (VI) Consultants and the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons' Katie Inkpen to host a meeting at the Clinton-Macomb Public Library's Main Library. The audience consisted of students who have visual impairments or who are blind as well as members of our Vision Network Group.

In the morning session, our computer tutor, Sharon Lotoczky and computer technician Mark Swidler updated the group on the latest in computer technology and assistive technology software and applications. After the initial talk, audience members were able to ask the presenters questions.

In the afternoon session, the students worked on art projects for the Lansing Braille and Talking Book Library's Summer Reading Contest. The challenge was to construct something without using tape, staples or glue. The Braille and Talking Book Library provided the supplies that included colorful play-dough, toothpicks, pipe cleaners and much more.

These clever, colorful and magnificent projects were on display in the Macomb Library for the Blind showcase through the end of summer.



The library also hosted the annual Vision Network Group summer meeting at the Clinton-Macomb Public Library. During the months of June, July, and August, patrons with visual impairments, patrons who are blind, and their guests met to discuss various issues of interest.

In June, Margaret Topous, from the Area Agency on Aging 1B, presented information on resources through the Agency. In July, the group held an open meeting to discuss topics of interest. In August, topics included Medicare and a presentation by Macomb County Sherriff Anthony Wickersham on scams.

Keep our summer meetings in mind for 2018, if you were unable to attend in 2017. Also, if transportation is an issue, please note that we offer a Vision Network Meeting by phone every third Monday of the month from 10 a.m.

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to 11:30 a.m.. By dialing the following phone number, (712) 770-4700 and when prompted, entering the following code, 465124, you will be connected to our conference call group.

## Braille/Large Print Games

Thank you to our patron, Dorothy, for inspiring us to purchase some games that patrons can check out with their library card. These games come in a special format and include the following: Scrabble with Braille and Large Print Tiles, Monopoly with Larger Print and Braille pieces, Playing Cards in Large Print and Braille and Tactile Checkers. Thank you to our librarian Barb for working on this project. Please note, we are unable to send these items to you through the mail. Items will need to be checked out and picked up at the library.



## Libraries Without Walls 2017 Program, Highlights from Barb

On June 13, 2017, I had the opportunity to attend my very first Libraries Without Walls Program. The program's keynote speaker, Larry L. Lewis Jr., Founder and President of Flying Blind LLC, delivered a very informative and inspirational presentation about utilizing the latest adaptive technologies to enhance experiences within the workplace and educational settings. Some of the adaptive technologies that Larry covered that improve users' experience includes Refreshable Braille, Zoomtext Screen Magnification Software, and utilizing Cloud-Computing through mobile applications and PCs, such as DropBox.

The program also offered many breakout sessions throughout the day. The breakout sessions that I attended were Apple iOS for Beginners and Advanced Users and Books Galore.

In the Apple iOS sessions, I learned both basic and advanced gestures of the iPhone. Another session that I attended was Books Galore. In this session, I learned how to access audio books and e-books from online resources other than the National Library Services for the Blind, such as Haithi Trust, Google books, and online streaming service which can be accessed from your local public library's website.

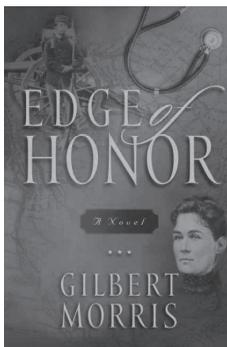
I came away from the program knowing a lot more about adaptive technologies than I ever had before. I also witnessed how accessibility features are quickly becoming the norm in the world of technology.

## Reader Recommendations

**James Rutt** recommends *A Certain Truth: The Trials of Kit Shannon, Book 6* by James S. Bell. Returning from her Hawaiian honeymoon via ocean liner, lawyer Kit Shannon Fox is approached by Wanda Boswell, whose obnoxious husband has been found dead. When the trial commences, Kit must deal with a client who may not be what she appears to be and unexpected but welcome family news.

James says this a very interesting book and it was good. The story shows a strong female role as a lawyer. **DB 86685**

**Rita Taylor** recommends *Edge of Honor* by Gilbert Morris. New York, 1865. Quent Larribee, studying to be a doctor, is conscripted into the army. Unable to find peace after accidentally killing a Confederate soldier, Quent moves to Arkansas where he plans to help the widow and her children. Yet in solving one problem he creates another.



Rita wants you to know not to start this book in the evening because you will be up until 2 am reading it, it is that good. Many twists and turns in the plot. **DB 60296**

**Rita** also recommends *Gold Rush Prodigal: Saga of the Sierras, Book 3* by Brock Thoene. David Bollin, son of a missionary to Hawaii, is on his

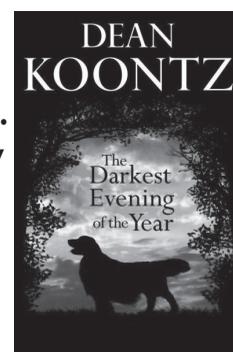
way to Boston and life as a gentleman when a freak accident aboard ship tosses him overboard. He is rescued by a whaling ship, and when it docks in California months later, the gold rush has begun. Lured by the dream of a life of ease, Bollin is drawn into a web of murder and greed. And his plan to be a gentleman seems to have collapsed. *Saga of the Sierras*.

Rita felt that this was a good, inspirational book. An intense story with a lot of adventure! **DB 33753**

**Anna Balicki** liked *The Perfect Horse: The Daring U.S. Mission to Rescue the Priceless Stallions Kidnapped* by the Nazis by Elizabeth Letts. The true story of the rescue of priceless pedigree horses during World War II from a Nazi program designed to engineer a master race of the finest purebred horses. American soldiers planned and executed a mission to kidnap the horses and smuggle them away.

Anna mentions that this book will warm your heart. It is a story of kindness and courage during war. It is the saving of the Lipizzan horses. **DB 85593**

**Zena Sadik** recommends *The Darkest Evening of the Year* by Dean Koontz. Southern California. Amy Redwing's personal mission is to rescue abused and abandoned golden retrievers, including the



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rambunctious Nickie. Widower Brian McCarthy suspects that Amy is hiding something. Things turn uncanny when someone begins stalking Amy and her charges. Some descriptions of sex and some violence.

Zena says this story had everything in it – a good message, mystery, suspense, spirits, and a good ending. A note of caution, the book features a fairly evil character, so it could be scary. **DB 65227**

**Lori Murphy** recommends *If Tomorrow Comes* by Sidney Sheldon. Tracy Whitney, a sweet young thing engaged to a wealthy banker, is framed by untouchable crime lords and sent to prison. Tracy herself eventually turns to a life of high-class crime, but no matter how many schemes she pulls off, love always seems just beyond her grasp. Strong language and explicit descriptions of sex.

Lori rated this book at 5 stars. It is exciting and emotional. What the protagonist goes through in prison is tragic, but she is a survivor. **DB 21534**

**Susan Perry** felt that *Fire and Light: How the Enlightenment Transformed Our World* by James M. Burns was a very interesting book. The Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom* (DB 58273) examines the influence of the Enlightenment era of the 17th and 18th centuries on world history--specifically through the American and French

Revolutions. It discusses the ways the questions of that period are still debated in the twenty-first century.

Susan says this is a good book. It lets you understand how people became critical thinkers. **DB 79495**

**Lawrence Robbins** recommends *A Life on the Road* by Charles Kuralt. In his forward, Kuralt claims to have come from a family of wanderers and that all the impulses to travel culminated in him. From his boyhood in North Carolina to his long tenure with "On the Road", he chronicles his adventures as he first circled the globe and then settled down to travel the back roads of America. He tells of the beauty he discovers in unexpected places and the wonderful people he meets along the way.

Lawrence says these are good, human-interest stories that are very interesting, especially if you are interested in travel. **DB 31988**

**Phyllis Gramza** would like to mention her regard for author Louise Penny. Louise writes the Three Pines mystery series featuring Inspector Gamache. Phyllis recommends Louise Penny as a down to earth author and says her website is great. The link to the author's webpage is [www.louisepenny.com](http://www.louisepenny.com)

### **Congratulations to our Summer Reading Program Winners**

Congratulations to our summer reading winners, Ashton, Carol, Olga, and Elaine!!

MLBPH @ CMPL  
40900 Romeo Plank Road  
Clinton Township, MI 48038

FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND  
OR HANDICAPPED

Macomb Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is a public service of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners.

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### **A Fond Farewell to Emily**

Many of you may have been assisted by Emily Kubash, the head of the Popular Materials Department for close to 19 years, at the Clinton-Macomb Public Library. The Macomb Library for the Blind was part of Emily's larger department, and it was Emily who made the smooth transition of the Library for the Blind from the Macomb County Library to the Clinton-Macomb happen back in 2012.

This was by no means an easy task. Emily not only helped move and reset inventory and materials, but trained herself and then her staff to support our services once the Library for the Blind reopened in February, 2012.

On a personal note, I would like to say thank you to Emily, and those two words seem very inadequate, for welcoming me and the Library for the Blind to her department. On behalf of myself, Barb, and Kathy, we at Macomb Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped wish you all the best.

*The Macomb Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped does not endorse any services or websites, outside of its own library, that may be referred to in this newsletter.*