



# DISCOVERY

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SPRING 2024

## Greetings from the Regional Librarian

It has been a long time since we put out a newsletter and for that I apologize. 2023 was a challenging year due to some staff changes in the patron service division here at the State Library. The good news is we are now fully staffed, and I think everyone is planning on staying for a while. One of my priorities for all State Library patrons, especially our Talking Books patrons, is to have every phone call answered by a real person. All the patron service associates have been cross trained to provide immediate basic assistance for Talking Books patrons. For more complex problems, such as BARD issues, calls may be forwarded to one of the Talking Books specialists.



My main job as a Talking Books regional librarian is to make sure we provide the best service we can to our patrons. I cannot fix a problem I don't know about. Along with that, I am also your first point of contact for anything NLS related. I get all the NLS communications and usually know the answer, or know who to ask. Please feel free to contact me directly with any issues or concerns. Compliments are always welcome, especially when staff do well. My direct phone line is 701-328-4021 or email [shammel@nd.gov](mailto:shammel@nd.gov).

Thanks Steve Hammel

### BARD Updates

Have you used BARD recently? Recent major updates to the BARD app for both Apple and Android have made searching and downloading books and magazines easier. Staff at the State Library have made a step by step how to get started guide to help patrons learn the process. The guides are available on our website.

NLS just announced BARD 2.0. This will be a major upgrade to the app and will include enhanced searching capabilities. No release date yet but initial indications are sometime before the end of 2024.

## Staff Introductions

**Austen Beck** - Although I'm new to the library field, my passion lies in connecting our patrons with great books. Originally from Bismarck, my roots keep me grounded and committed to serving our community. Outside of work, I prioritize raising my daughter and, when I have time, reading immersive science fiction or fantasy novels. Additionally, my basement workshop, where I tinker with my 3D printer, is a creative space where I work on new trinkets and toys that my daughter often tests out.



**Paul Ebach** – I am a born-and-raised Bismarck native who has been working with the State Library for just under a year. If I'm not playing with my adorable niece and nephew or playing Dungeons & Dragons with my friends, I'm usually either out for a jog or have my face buried in a good horror novel or history book. I've been on a break from school, but I'm hoping to go back soon and finish my Masters in Library Science.



## NLS Highlight

NLS is moving. After 57 years, the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled will be returning to Capitol Hill. The program's new offices will be on the third floor of the Library of Congress' John Adams Building. Returning to Capitol Hill has many advantages for NLS. "The money we save long term by being back in a library building, instead of in rented space five miles away, can be reinvested in service to our patrons, materials and improved content delivery," NLS Director Jason Broughton says. Working on Capitol Hill will also give NLS staff members more opportunities to take part in programs and collaborate with their colleagues across the Library. And the central location will make it easier for NLS to work with consumer groups and federal agencies that serve similar audiences and to engage with appropriators and other members of Congress.



*Picture of the Library of Congress' John Adams Building, NLS' new home. (Photo by Carol M. Highsmith. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.)*

### Did You Know?

Did you know, you can get cookbooks and other how-to titles through the NLS Braille-on-Demand Program? More than 500 of the 8,300 Braille-on-Demand titles requested by NLS patrons since the program began in the summer of 2022 are cookbooks. Hard-copy braille is a better format for cooking, crafting, and similar activities because it is easier to jump from section to section and scan instructions while working.

Did you know, North Dakota residents receive print Braille materials through our partnership with the Utah State Library? E-Braille readers with refreshable display are also available through our partnership. If you are a Braille reader and are not utilizing these services, please contact us and we will get you signed up.

### What's New?

Last year we did a complete update of our recording studio. We upgraded our recording software to the same program used by NLS. This gives us much better product support and training resources. We also updated the analog era microphone and mic preamp to a new digital interface and condenser microphone which provide a much cleaner recording. One of our volunteer readers commented they need to be much more aware of page turns and breathing because the microphone picks up everything.

We are once again recording local magazine titles. With the studio upgrade last year and declining number of volunteer readers, we got behind. Rather than trying to play catch up, we decided to skip recording the missed issues. Current issues will be recorded as soon as we can after they arrive.

Exciting news regarding magazines. As many of you are aware, the Magazine On Cartridge program has been experiencing numerous problems for the past couple of years. A solution has been found. Starting in mid-May, all North Dakota TB patrons who currently receive magazines on cartridge will receive them from and return them to the North Dakota State Library. Utilizing the same Duplicate On Demand technology we have used to download books onto cartridges for more than six years, all NLS and regional produced magazines will be handled similarly. Patrons will have the option to choose between one magazine issue per cartridge or a mix of two or more magazines on one cartridge. This is exactly the same way you currently receive books. With any new process, we anticipate a few bumps, but they should be minimal.

**FREE MATTER  
FOR THE BLIND**

**North Dakota State Library  
Talking Books  
604 East Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0800**

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**SPRING 2024**

## **Summer Reading 2024**

NLS is once again hosting a summer reading program for all Talking Books patrons. Sign up and details are coming soon. Most public libraries in North Dakota also host summer reading programs. Make sure to check your local public library's summer reading resources.



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