

# READING MATTERS

Fourth  
Quarter  
2024



## WASHINGTON TALKING BOOK & BRAILLE LIBRARY

2021 9th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98121-2783

8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday

Phone: 206-615-0400 • Toll free: 800-542-0866

wtbbl@sos.wa.gov • www.wtbbl.org



## That All May Read

# FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY DANIELLE MILLER



It has been a busy year at your Talking Book & Braille Library and once again you've all been reading! In federal fiscal year 2024 we circulated more than 412,000 titles and had more than 130,000 downloads. We had more than 1,300 new patrons sign up for service. At the National Library Service (NLS), more books than ever are being added to the collection. More than 10,000 audiobooks and nearly 2,000 braille books were made available and the Braille on Demand program continued to be popular with patrons requesting 5,926 books to be embossed and sent to them. NLS

acquired 2,418 works in eighteen languages from other countries that are part of the Marrakesh Treaty and approximately 200,000 titles that were produced by NLS or network libraries like WTBBL that are available through the Accessible Books Consortium were downloaded more than 6,000 times by readers in 37 countries.

We have had a lot of staff changes this year with more on the horizon and I believe this will help us continue to provide you with even better service. One new staff member is our Braille Program Manager who is expanding our production capacity in the Department. They have 86 books currently in process and in the past several months have completed more than 50 books that are ready to go up on BARD. Our Audio Department has also been busy with adding new staff, as well as more volunteer narrators and reviewers. They have 598 books in process and have uploaded 76 books to BARD. The Audio Department also produced the Washington State Voters' Pamphlet



Brecken stands behind the mail-bins full of USB drives that were mailed out to individuals who requested an audio version of the voters' pamphlet.

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Washington Talking Book & Braille Library

in audio, which is a huge job, especially in a presidential election year. This work helps ensure our patrons and others needing audio access can participate in the democratic process and be fully informed for voting.

WTBBL sponsored several events at the library, offsite, and on Zoom. We hosted the annual White Cane Day Walk event again this year and it was a great success with nearly 100 walkers. This year the walk started and ended at WTBBL with a gathering and speakers at Westlake Park in between. At the end of the walk, we had refreshments and information tables at the library. We also held additional sessions of our Touch of Braille workshop at the Lacey Branch of the Timberland Public Library System. At WTBBL, we held another session of the Living with Vision Loss - Low Vision Workshop with an option to attend via Zoom. These workshops are very popular and will have sessions scheduled for next year.

I wish everyone very happy holidays, hope you can make time to curl up with a good book, and as always, reach out to me with any feedback on WTBBL services.



White Cane Day Walk participants are crossing a Seattle street.



A vendor table at the White Cane Day Walk reception.



We are sending you a flurry of wonderful winter wishes from WTBBL's Youth Services Department! After a fantastic fall full of events like the Spooky Musical Instrument Petting Zoo with Project Klikk, Washington Council of the Blind's annual convention, and joint Accessible Gaming Nights with the Department of Services for the Blind, we are ready to keep the ball rolling into next year. More exciting programs and events are coming up!

One such event is, of course, the annual Regional Braille Challenge. 2025's contest will take place in-person on

Saturday February 22nd at the library in Seattle. Students in grades 1-12 are encouraged to sign up and show off their braille skills! This friendly competition blends braille literacy with fun and is a great opportunity to meet up with other braille readers from around the state. As usual, there will be prizes, pizza, and special guests! Winners from regional contests may also be eligible to compete at the Braille Challenge Finals – an opportunity which includes a free trip to California and possible cash prizes. Registration closes on January 24th so don't wait to sign up! More information and the registration form can be found on the Youth Services web pages of [wtbbl.org](http://wtbbl.org).

Speaking of information found on the Youth Services pages, we want to send out another reminder about the recent policy change from The National Library Service regarding youth patrons. A signed Parental Acknowledgment form is now required for all library users under the age of 18. This policy change means that any youth patrons who do not have the completed form on file will be



Youth patron examines a flute while a Project Klikk volunteer demonstrates the different features.

automatically suspended from WTBBL services, including BARD, beginning January 1, 2025 and will remain suspended until the completed form is returned. Please check your email inbox, mail, and the Youth Services pages of the WTBBL website for access to the form and more information. We will send out more reminders in the coming weeks as well, with the hope that no youth patrons' service will be interrupted. We thank you for your understanding and quick response!

Want more Youth Services news? Be sure to subscribe to "DOTS: WTBBL's Youth Patron Newsletter," sent directly to your email inbox. More information can be found at [wtbbl.org/youth](http://wtbbl.org/youth).

### **Bookshare Accounts Available**

Hoping to expand your book collection beyond BARD? WTBBL has a limited number of free memberships available for Bookshare! Bookshare is a service for people with print disabilities that offers eBooks in audio, braille, large text, and more which can be read on your smartphone, tablet, or computer. It has more than 1.2 million titles from textbooks, educational materials, career resources, and bestsellers in over 40 languages. The Bookshare program is in addition to WTBBL and National Library Service.

Memberships are available to WTBBL patrons with an active BARD account and will be given on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you're currently a student in primary, secondary, or post-secondary (college or graduate) school, you are already eligible for a free Bookshare subscription, so you will not be eligible for a WTBBL Bookshare membership. Learn more about how to sign up for a free student account at [www.bookshare.org/parents-and-students](http://www.bookshare.org/parents-and-students).

If you're interested in a Bookshare subscription through WTBBL, please email your request to [jordyn.richey@sos.wa.gov](mailto:jordyn.richey@sos.wa.gov) or call us at 206-615-0400. We look forward to providing you with access to more books.

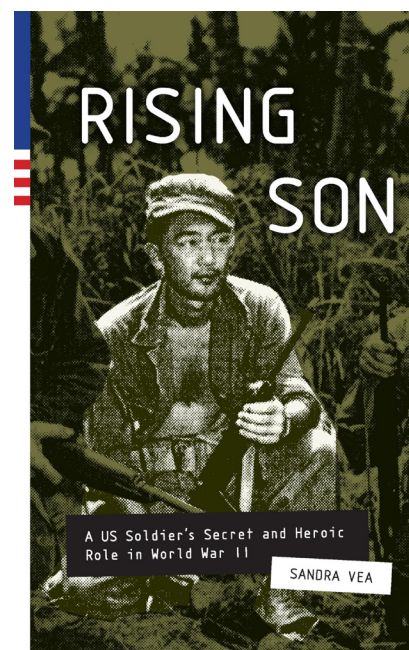
Fall is back with us! The leaves are turning! The Audio Department has new books for your reading pleasure!

## ADULT NONFICTION

[DBC07137](#) **Rising Son: A US Soldier's Secret and Heroic Role in World War II** by Sandra Vea

Masao Abe was a Nisei who found himself doing intelligence work on the frontlines in the Pacific in World War II. Based on a series of interviews with his daughter-in-law, he describes being distrusted by other American troops and hated by the Japanese he faced. 2019.

Narrated by AC Petersen.



[DBC19072](#) **Invisible: How Young Women with Serious Health Issues Navigate Work, Relationships, and the Pressure to Seem Just Fine** by Michele Lent Hirsch



Michele Lent Hirsch weaves her own harrowing experiences together with stories from other women, perspectives from sociologists on structural inequality, and insights from neuroscientists on misogyny in health research. She shows how health issues and disabilities amplify what women in general already confront: warped beauty standards, workplace sexism, worries about romantic partners, and mistrust of their own bodies. By shining a light on this hidden demographic, Hirsch explores the challenges that all women face. 2018.

Narrated by Camille Blanchette.

[DBC19133](#) **The Dangers of Denial: Embracing the Challenges of Alzheimer's and Dementia** by Elizabeth Lonseth

Lonseth draws on her own experiences as caregiver for her parents and in-laws living with cognitive decline to provide tools and information needed by others to cope with the reality of their situation and their loved one's condition. 2015.

Narrated by Winfield Hobbs; Reviewed by Martha Oman.

[DBC19292](#) **Safe Without Sight: Crime Prevention and Self-Defense Strategies for People Who Are Blind** by Wendy David

The Safe Without Sight program contained in this book was developed at a rehabilitation agency and a residential school for the blind. This program teaches both crime-prevention strategies and physical self-defense. Blind men and women are potential victims of crime, like anyone else, and can learn how to avoid dangerous situations, or, if necessary, to fight back. The authors include a blind clinical psychologist, specializing in trauma and assault, a blind director of a rehabilitation center where the program was developed, and a sighted self-defense instructor, who had designed a variety of programs for people with disabilities. Together they have put together a solid curriculum of practical, life-saving techniques for staying safe without sight. 1998.

Narrated by Mary Schlosser; Reviewed by Steve Zon.

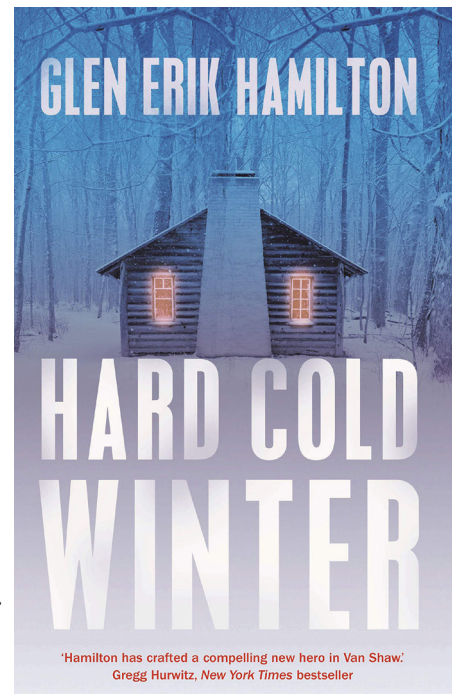
## ADULT FICTION

[DBC19118](#) **Hard Cold Winter [#2, Van Shaw]** by Glen Erik Hamilton

When Van Shaw is asked to find a missing woman who's an old friend, he finds two dead bodies. One of them is the son of a billionaire, and soon Van is caught between him and local gangsters. 2016.

Narrated by Rick Sipe; Reviewed by Mark Danner.

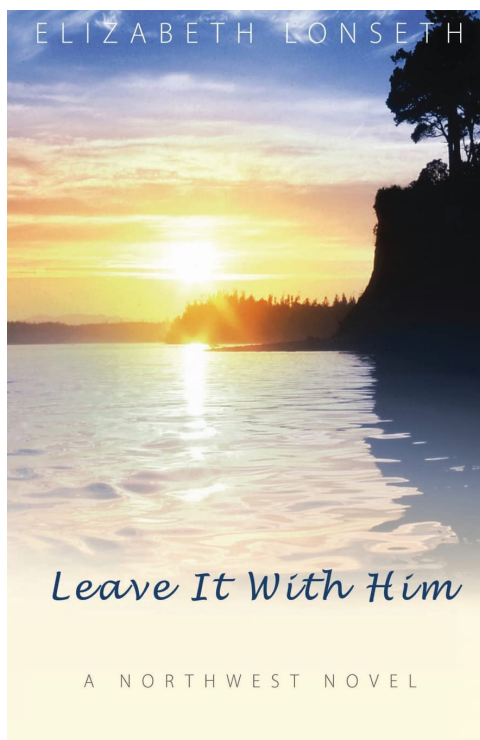
We have produced other books in the series, too: #1: **Past Crimes** ([DB086032](#)), #3: **Every Day Above Ground** ([DBC19121](#)), and #4: **Mercy River** ([DBC19120](#)). The following are in process at WTBBL: #5: **A Dangerous Breed** ([DBC30235](#)) and #6: **Island of Thieves** ([DBC30194](#)).



[DBC15690](#) **Thunder Pass** by Lauren Paine

Hyde Belmont, a Texas Marshal, and Buck Forsythe, one of Oklahoma's wild bunch, were on the opposite sides of the law. Katherine Merritt was caught in the middle, and that was a dangerous place to be when the bullets started to fly. 2003.

Narrated by Mary Kelly; Reviewed by Judy Ogliore.



[DBC19275](#) **Leave It with Him: A Novel [#1, Johansen Family Saga]** by Elizabeth Lonseth

Fifteen-year-old Luke Johansen's idyllic life in the San Juan Islands of Puget Sound is shattered by his parents' divorce, his mother's illness, and uprooting to his father's home in the state capitol, Olympia, to start high school. Luke's faith is challenged by this onslaught, as he's left to attempt to do things his way, or leave it in the Lord's hands, and up to God's grace. 2007.

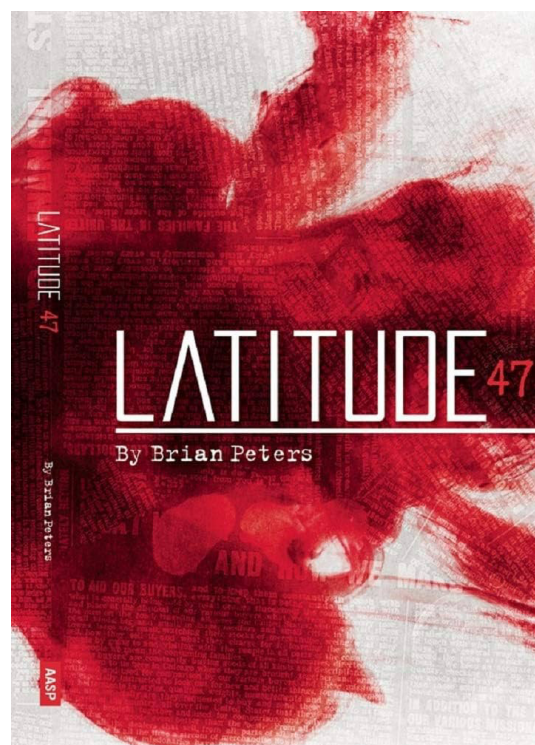
Narrated by Rick Sipe.

We are producing the following books in the series: #2: **Cares of this World** ([DBC19276](#)), #3: **Anchor For Your Soul** ([DBC19277](#)), and #4 (Prequel) **The Things Hoped For** ([DBC19310](#)).

[DBC19209](#) **Latitude 47** by Brian Peters

Seattle noir set in the 1990s. Newspaper reporter Clay suffers from sleep disorders and stumbles through life. Kiki, a member of the Duwamish Tribe, researches a murder that happened in the 1800s. Police detective Carpenter investigates a string of present-day murders. Their paths converge, and not in a good way. 2012.

Narrated by Michael Memmo; Reviewed by Amy Cook.

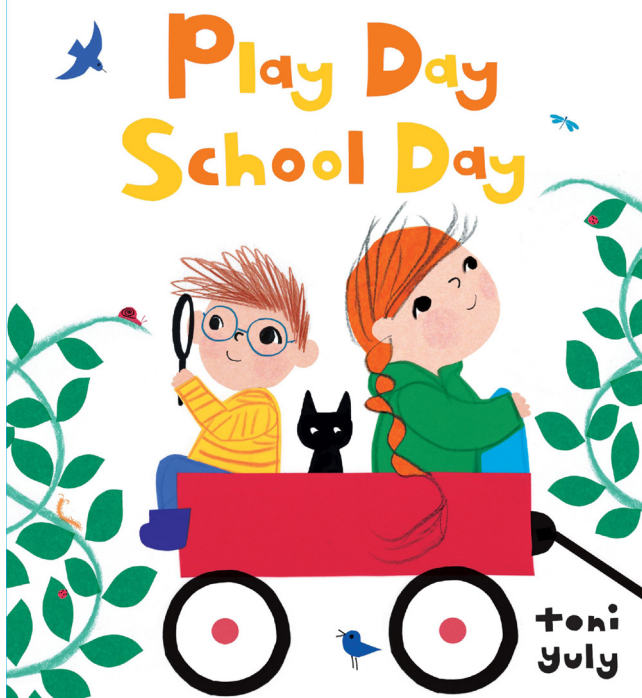
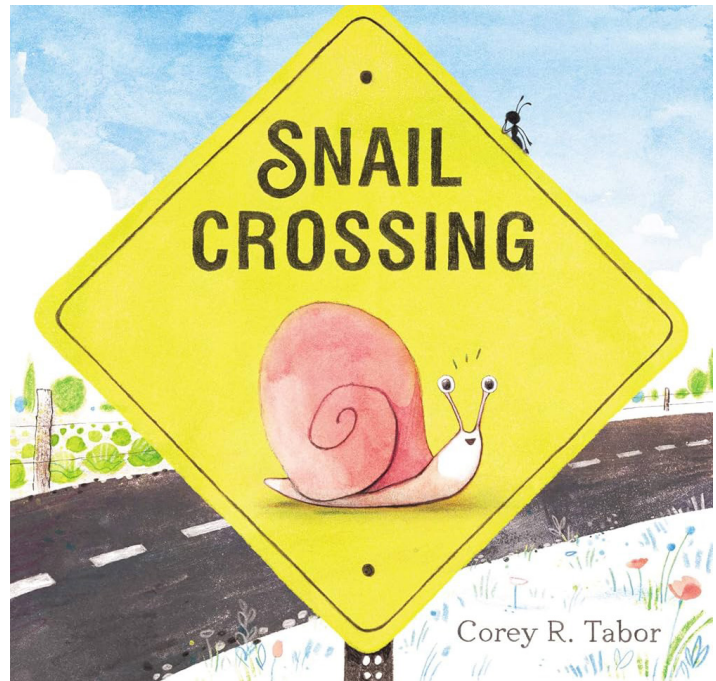




## BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

[DBC19173](#) **Snail Crossing** by Corey R. Tabor

A slow and steady snail's determination and kindness bring him the best reward of all: friendship. For preschool and older. 2020. Narrated by Margarita Munoz.



[DBC19177](#) **Play Day School Day** by Toni Yuly

Tomorrow is the first day of the new school year, and big sister Mona can't wait to go back. "What do you do at school?" asks little brother Milo. As he listens to Mona recount the many things she does during the school week — riding the bus, practicing spelling and reading, learning about science, playing with friends — Milo's activities illustrate that with a little imagination, nature itself can be a classroom. For preschool and older. 2020. Narrated by Margarita Munoz.

# NEW BRAILLE BOOKS

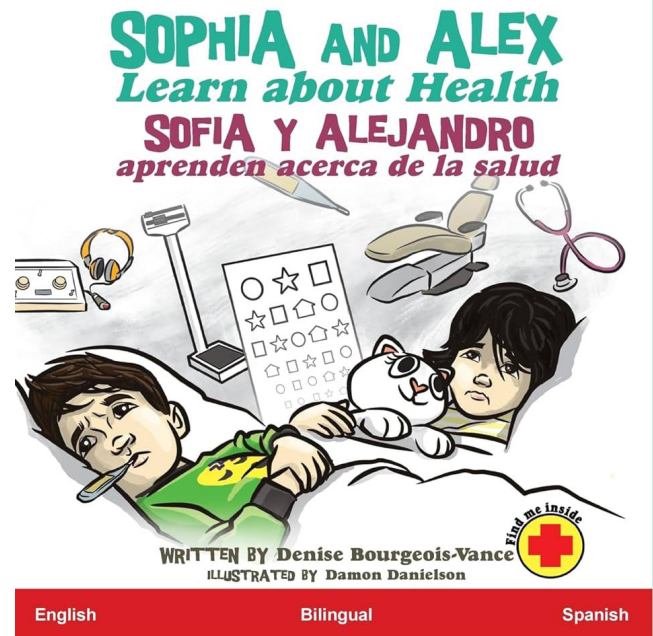
BY TRACI TIMMONS

We are still working with NLS to get our braille books uploaded to BARD. In the meantime, we've continued to produce hard-copy braille books.

## BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

[BER00186](#) **Sophia and Alex Learn About Health/ Sofia y Alejandro aprenden acerca de la salud** by Denise Bourgeois-Vance English/Spanish bilingual book. As Sophia and Alex are home sick today, their school mates discover and learn about good health habits from eating right and maintaining good hygiene. From brushing their teeth, to testing their hearing and eyesight, the children learn that staying healthy is essential to feeling good and staying active. Note: the embossed uncontracted braille version is spiral bound and packaged with the print version of the book. PRINT/BRAILLE. For preschool and older. 2020.

Transcribed by Gail Viscione and Pam Lorenz; Proofread by Pam Lorenz.



[BER00187](#) **On the News: Our First Talk about Tragedy** by Jillian Roberts

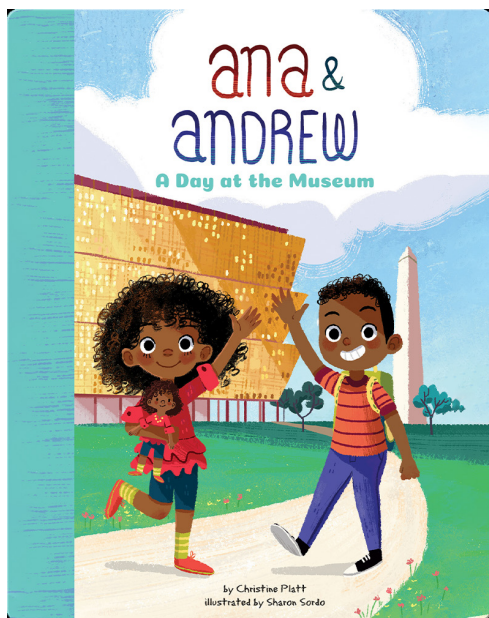
Gently introduces young children to the realities of natural disasters, terrorism and other forms of tragedy. In age-appropriate language and tone, Dr. Roberts explains what tragedy is, the feelings it may create and how to manage those feelings. Note: the embossed contracted braille version is spiral bound and packaged with the print version of the book. PRINT/BRAILLE. For kindergarten to grade 3. 2018.

Transcribed by Traci Timmons; Proofread by Srithi Srinath and Jessica Sanneman.

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Five more books in the Ana & Andrew series by Christine Platt are available:



**BER00181 Ana & Andrew: A Day at the Museum**

It's a surprise visit! Ana & Andrew are excited when Grandma comes to visit. While she is there, the family tours the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture and learns about important African American achievements. Note: the embossed uncontracted braille version is spiral bound and packaged with the print version of the book. PRINT/BRAILLE. For preschool and older. 2019.

Transcribed by Emi Green; Proofread by Pam Lorenz.

**BER00182 Ana & Andrew: A Snowy Day**

School is canceled! Ana & Andrew play in the snow with their neighbors and learn to make snow ice cream.

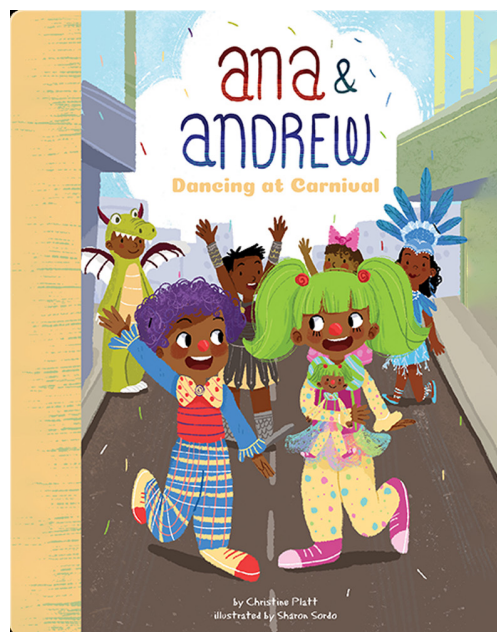
They save some snow cream in the freezer for their cousins in Trinidad who have never seen snow. Note: the embossed uncontracted braille version is spiral bound and packaged with the print version of the book. PRINT/BRAILLE. For preschool and older. 2019.

Transcribed by Emi Green; Proofread by Pam Lorenz.

**BER00183 Ana & Andrew: Dancing at Carnival**

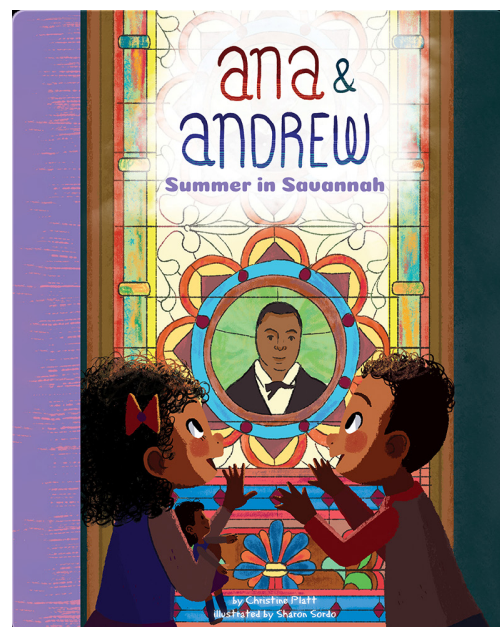
During Carnival, Ana & Andrew travel to visit their family on the island of Trinidad. They love watching the parade and dancing to the music. This year, they learn how their ancestors helped create the holiday! Note: the embossed uncontracted braille version is spiral bound and packaged with the print version of the book. PRINT/BRAILLE. For preschool and older. 2019.

Transcribed by Emi Green; Proofread by Pam Lorenz.



[BER00184](#) **Ana & Andrew: Summer in Savannah**

Ana & Andrew travel to visit their grandparents in Savannah, Georgia. While they are there, they learn Grandma and Grandpa's church was built by slaves -- with some help from an unusual source! Note: the embossed uncontracted braille version is spiral bound and packaged with the print version of the book. PRINT/BRAILLE. For preschool and older. 2019. Transcribed by Emi Green; Proofread by Pam Lorenz.



[BER00185](#) **Ana & Andrew: The Magic Violin**

Ana & Andrew are learning to play the violin! They are excited to join the youth orchestra. At first it is fun. But when they start to lose interest, Ana & Andrew learn from an important African American musician about the importance of practicing. For preschool and older. Note: the embossed uncontracted braille version is spiral bound and packaged with the print version of the book. PRINT/BRAILLE. For preschool and older. 2020. Transcribed by Emi Green; Proofread by Pam Lorenz.

We also have: [BER00177](#) **Ana & Andrew: The New Baby.**

### Tactile Braille Readers Needed!

Our Braille Department is growing, and we are looking for additional tactile braille readers to be part of our proofreading teams. These braille readers work with a sighted proofreading monitor/print copy holder to make sure that the braille version of a book matches the print version. Tactile braille readers should have knowledge of UEB (Unified English Braille). Teams can work onsite (free parking available) or offsite. To learn more, please visit [wtbbl.org/volunteer](http://wtbbl.org/volunteer) and click on the "Braille Proofreading Team - Braille Proofreader" link. To apply to volunteer, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/2fpj8esx>.

# NEW STAFF AT WTBBL

BY BRECKEN CHAMNESS



Hello! My name is Brecken Chamness, and I am the new Audiobook Production Technician for the audiobook production team at WTBBL. My work includes editing and processing audiobook narration, as well as duplicating accessible audio materials, such as the November General Election Voters' Pamphlet. These materials are recorded and reviewed by our wonderful volunteer readers, and it is a pleasure to work with such dedicated and generous people. I'm also honored to be able to provide a valuable service for my community.

Before this position, I worked for four years in Burbank, California, at a post-production studio that provided audio description and English dubbing services for Netflix and Disney's streaming platforms. I worked closely with

directors and actors to dub and adapt foreign media. I am proud to have translated more than twenty different TV shows and movies, spanning more than seven different languages, into engaging and accessible English, while striving to keep local and cultural references intact. It was exciting and rewarding to work with so many unique personalities and talents, as well as having tangible evidence of my own talent preserved on various platforms. The show I most enjoyed working on was "The Playlist" on Netflix, which explores the story of how Spotify came to be.

Outside of work, I've recently developed a passion for cooking, thanks to my partner, who has also convinced me to enjoy karaoke. I love exploring sound design and music production in my free time, as well as unwinding with video games or tabletop games. I'm also an avid audiobook listener and would highly recommend **Gravity's Rainbow** ([DB023792](#)) by Thomas Pynchon and **Neuromancer** ([BR009062](#); [DB034589](#)) by William Gibson, two of my recent favorites.

# NEW STAFF AT WTBBL

BY JENNIFER KILBOURN



Hello! My name is Jennifer Kilbourn and I'm beyond grateful and excited for this opportunity to work for the Office of the Secretary of State as the ALL Foundation Administrator in support of the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library, State Library, State Archives and Legacy Washington.

I've been working with and for nonprofits since the mid-1990s starting in downtown Denver, Colorado and then continuously since 1999 in Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico. Beginning as a door-to-door canvasser, then an administrative assistant, I've held positions such as staff Development Officer, Board Member, President, and Chair of a Board Development

committee during a successful capital campaign for an emergency and transitional housing services organization.

For twelve years, I owned my own consulting firm dedicated to nonprofit organizational health and fund development, and provided hands-on administrative and nonprofit fundraising consulting and trainings to Indigenous, traditional, urban, rural, and all-volunteer run nonprofits and agencies within animal welfare, youth development, education, arts and cultural resources, and human services sectors. My focus of service was primarily annual fund implementation, grant writing, individual and institutional prospect research, and creating and nurturing the systems to balance and track the activities of a diversified fundraising program.

My spouse of 25 years grew up in Washington State and we continue to have many close relatives still residing in Washington and throughout the Pacific Northwest. I enjoy fishing, camping, cooking, gardening, and sewing in my spare time.

I studied Anthropology at Hamilton College (Clinton, NY) and completed my Bachelor of Arts degree in Humanities, Cum Laude, at the College of Santa Fe (later called The Santa Fe University of Art and Design, Santa Fe, NM).

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# NEW STAFF AT WTBBL

BY CLAIRE ARBAUGH



Hello! My name is Claire Arbaugh, and I'm the new receptionist and office assistant at WTBBL. You can usually find me at the front desk greeting people and answering the phone. I transferred here from the Washington State Library in Olympia, where I held the same position. I am so excited to help provide a warm and welcoming experience here at WTBBL alongside this incredible team!

I have lived in the Seattle area for most of my life, growing up in Olympia and attending Cornish College of the Arts (right next door!) studying illustration and design for my freshman year of college. During Covid I moved back home, got a job at a bookstore, and took a break from school

before transferring to The Evergreen State College. Evergreen gave me some amazing opportunities, and I was able to take an organic farming intensive that required working full time on the school farm. While this was very rewarding, it helped me realize I'm much more of a gardener than a farmer, and I found myself returning to my passion of art after the yearlong course was over. I was then able to study art and archaeology abroad in Greece and Italy for two months before graduating with a major in art and archaeology and a minor in sustainable agriculture in 2022.

After graduating I built out an old van and left my bookstore job to work as a ranger at Yellowstone National Park for the summer. This was an incredible opportunity, and full of adventure! After this I traveled to Winter Park, Colorado to work a ski season with my boyfriend. After returning to Washington I was able to get a job with the Washington State Library as their receptionist and office assistant, and through this I was given the opportunity to work for WTBBL. I am very excited to be back in Seattle and can't wait to explore the city once again!

In my free time I enjoy making art, playing with my cat, reading books, and having picnics if the sun is out. I love backpacking and when the weather is cold or rainy (as it so often is here) I enjoy the climbing gym and taking aerial acrobatics classes. You can also find me spending time with my family and playing with my niece and nephew or getting coffee with friends.

# NEW STAFF AT WTBBL

BY PAM LORENZ



Hi, my name is Pamela Lorenz, but I like to go by Pam. I am the new Braille Program Manager at WTBBL and can't imagine working anywhere else. The staff, volunteers, and patrons have been so welcoming, I feel like I've found my second home.

I grew up in the Puget Sound area and love it here. In May of 2005, I was offered a position to be a braille transcriber for the Ogden Resource Center (ORC) at the Washington State School for the Blind, so I moved south. I received my Literary Braille Certification in English Braille American Edition (EBAE) in December of 2006 and didn't stop there. I went on to earn the following certifications: 1) Music – where I learned to braille lead sheets, chorale pieces, music for various instruments including piano,

clarinet, trombone, percussion and many more; 2) Nemeth – which is a specialized braille code for Math and Science; 3) Formatting and Proofreading; 4) Unified English Braille (UEB) which is an updated code that took the place of EBAE in 2016. While working for the ORC, I transcribed textbooks for various school districts across the United States ranging from pre-kindergarten to post-college. The visually impaired students need to be given the same opportunities as the sighted, so I had strict deadlines and had to follow the rules and guidelines given for braille.

After 19 years, I decided to move back home to the Puget Sound area to be closer to my parents and children, and I started my own braille business. However, working from home reminded me how much I missed the interaction with people and when the staff at ORC referred me to the braille position here at WTBBL, I couldn't wait to apply, and here I am. At WTBBL the work is a lot more relaxed and less stressful because I don't have the deadlines that the school districts have. Plus, I get to share my knowledge of braille with all the wonderful volunteers in the Braille Department who are very eager to learn.

When I'm not at WTBBL you can find me at home either transcribing music braille, which is my passion, working in the yard and garden, or hanging out with my family doing puzzles, watching movies, looking up our family in Ancestry, or just relaxing and reading a book or watching TV.

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# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

BY TRACI TIMMONS



This month's volunteer spotlight is focused on WTBBL Braille Department volunteer, Abby Traverse. Abby has been volunteering as a braille tactile proofreader since 2019 and works with several sighted print copyholders—two onsite and one offsite—as part of braille book proofreading teams. Abby explains, "I work with a sighted person who has the print copy of the book, and I read an embossed braille copy. I read my copy out loud, we note any mistakes, and I circle them." Having the braille copy match the print copy of a book is important and can only be accomplished through this tedious process.

Abby has had a lifelong relationship with libraries for the blind and print disabled. She first became an NLS patron in 2005 (and has been a braille reader since age 3) while growing up in Michigan. When she moved to Seattle, she became a patron of WTBBL. She first began to volunteer with WTBBL in high school, helping to rewind cassettes in the time before books on digital cartridge. She remembers finding all kinds of odd things in those cassettes—hearing aids and even candy!

She really appreciates that WTBBL has a braille department and works to produce books about the Northwest or by Northwest authors for those who read braille. She enjoys proofreading everything from children's books to adult nonfiction and gets a kick that her work gives people more access to books they might otherwise not be able to read. "I love that someone can upload a book that I worked on. I love that I can recommend those books to my braille-reading friends, too." To Abby, braille is vital to the blind community, and she feels strongly that, when someone loses their sight, braille should be the first skill they learn.

She's an avid reader and uses the BARD app regularly to read her books. She's currently reading the **Hunger Games** series ([BRA01009](#), [BR018554](#), and [BR019134](#)) by Suzanne Collins. She is also listening to another service's full-cast reading of Bram Stoker's **Dracula**, featuring British actors Tim Curry and Alan Cumming (additional

versions include [BR00827](#), [DB031689](#), español [DB040864](#)). When she's not volunteering at WTBBL, Abby likes to play the farm life simulation role-playing video game, Stardew Valley. She finds it very relaxing and has named her farm animals after book characters from American fantasy author, Leigh Bardugo, and **The Lord of the Rings** (Book 1: [BR009745](#), [DB047486](#), [LP019643](#)) author, J. R. R. Tolkien, among others. Abby also loves to sing and she's currently pursuing NLS Literary Braille Proofreading certification.

Abby loves what WTBBL does and really recommends being a volunteer.

### **Sign up for the NLS patron listserv!**

WTBBL is a network library of the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) and NLS now offers many programs and updates about services. To learn how to make the most of the services NLS provides, consider signing up for the NLS patron listserv. The NLS Patron Engagement Section hosts an announcement-only listserv with information and updates about NLS programs, services, and products. New posts are added to the list a few times a week. To sign up for this listserv, send your name and email address to the Patron Engagement Section at [nlspes@loc.gov](mailto:nlspes@loc.gov). You can unsubscribe yourself from the list at any time.

### **Sign up for "Collections Connections" to find more titles**

Looking for reading ideas? The NLS Collections Division has launched a monthly e-newsletter called "Collections Connections." The subscription-based newsletter highlights works of diverse interest that can be downloaded from BARD. In addition to titles focused on a particular theme, the newsletter spotlights books that are newly available on BARD. "Collections Connections" will be emailed to subscribers monthly. It also comes with a quarterly audio supplement that will take readers on a deeper dive into that month's theme. The audio supplement can be accessed from a link in the "Collections Connections" e-newsletter or downloaded directly from BARD. If you are interested in receiving the newsletter, please send your email address to [connections@loc.gov](mailto:connections@loc.gov).

# END OF YEAR REFLECTIONS

BY WTBBL STAFF

We asked WTBBL staff to reflect on 2024. Here are some staff members sharing their favorite memories and books of 2024, and their hopes for 2025!

## **Alicia Eissler, Audiobook Production Technician**

Favorite Memory: Getting engaged in Taiwan!

Favorite Book: **An Elderly Lady is Up to No Good** by Helene Tursten ([DB107281](#)).

88-year-old Maud is sick of people and their shenanigans, and she is not opposed to a little bit of murder to get rid of them.

Hope for 2025: I hope to continue to serve this community.

## **Brecken Chamness, Audiobook Production Technician**

Favorite Memory: Driving up the coast to Seattle from LA with my partner. It's such a beautiful drive and we are blessed to now live in this gorgeous city!

Favorite Book: **Witch King** by Martha Welles ([DB114938](#); español [DB123734](#)).

Lots of action and fantasy magic with interesting limitations that makes for a thrilling adventure.

Hope for 2025: I hope to keep bringing new ideas to the audiobook production team.

## **Danielle Miller, WTBBL Director**

Favorite Memory: Finishing the year-long WTBBL window replacement project!

Favorite Book: **A Court of Thorns and Roses** series by Sarah J. Maas (Book 1: [BR021862](#); [DB081722](#); español [DB103209](#))

Hope for 2025: I look forward to having all our new staff on board and doing strategic planning.



From left to right: Izzy, John, Brecken, Alicia

### **Erin Groth, Youth Services Librarian**

**Favorite Memory:** Got to do some traveling and had great mini trips this year to Nashville, Denver, Boston, NYC, and Austin! I love to visit new places so I'm very thankful for the opportunities.  
**Favorite Book:** **They're Going to Love You** by Meg Howrey ([DB111350](#)). One of the most well-written books I have ever read.

**Hope for 2025:** I hope to host more engaging programs and events for children and teens around the state.



From left to right: Pam, Traci, Erin

### **Izzy Fernandez, Patron Services Specialist**

**Favorite Memory:** Continuing my quest to find the best fish n' chips in Seattle!! (So far, Bait Shop is winning).

**Favorite Book:** **Emily Wilde's Encyclopedia of Fairies** by Heather Fawcett ([BR024964](#) in process; [DB112234](#))

**Hope for 2025:** I hope to have a definitive answer to the question - who has the best fish n' chips in Seattle?!

### **John Pai, Audiobook Production Supervisor**

**Favorite Memory:** Walking the Camino de Santiago for 110 miles from Portugal to Spain in the spring with my daughter Naima.

**Favorite Book:** **My Unforgotten Seattle** by Ron Chew ([DBC19241](#)).

**Hope for 2025:** The preservation of democracy.

### **Pam Lorenz, Braille Program Manager**

**Favorite Memory:** Getting hired here and becoming a part of the WTBBL family.

**Favorite Book:** **Zero Days** by Ruth Ware ([DB116107](#)) is packed with suspense and is a fast-paced read.

**Hope for 2025:** I hope to expand the Braille Department here at WTBBL and have a wider outreach.

### Reilly Curran, Outreach Librarian

Favorite Memory: Spending a week in the San Juan Islands this summer.

Favorite Book: **Memory Police** by Yoko Ogawa ([DB095999](#)) is a dreamy dystopian tale about the power of memory and the importance of found family. Very thought provoking!

Hope for 2025: Continuing to spread the word about WTBBL!

### Sally Jo Hagen, Shipping Supervisor

Favorite Memory: 2024 was a year for reflection as I planned for my imminent retirement.

Reflection: I've seen a lot of changes at WTBBL and feel lucky to have worked for Danielle and a place with staff who truly care about our mission and therefore our patrons.

Hope for 2025: I look forward to sleeping in and discovering what my next chapter in life will include as I figure out what to do next.

### Shannon Curry, Readers' Advisor

Favorite Memory: I really enjoyed the opportunity to table at PrideFest this year. It was great to reach a whole other group of people who could learn about our service.

Favorite Book: **The Vegetarian** by Han Kang ([DB083452](#)). I read it last January and I still think about it often.

Hope for 2025: I hope the library continues to do bigger and better things.

### Traci Timmons, Managing Librarian

Favorite Memory: Working the WTBBL booth at PrideFest. This was the first time we'd done this event and the reception was overwhelming. So much joy!

Favorite Book: It's a tie between **Master Slave Husband Wife: An Epic Journey from Slavery to Freedom** by Ilyon Woo ([DB112758](#)) and **Brave the Wild River: The Untold Story of Two Women Who Mapped the Botany of the Grand Canyon** by Melissa L. Sevigny ([DB116384](#)).

Hope for 2025: I hope to get my UEB certification!



From left to right: Shannon, Reilly, Danielle, Sally Jo

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