

Talking Book Center News

News & Information from the
Voices of Vision Talking Book Center

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Autumn 2005

CHILDHOOD FAVORITES REVISITED

The first signs of autumn include leaves changing color, temperatures falling, and students returning to school. Some of the books we read as children, in school for our literature classes or for leisure time reading, are often titles that stand the test of time. They are books we may still enjoy as adults; the writing and the stories, whether “lighter fare” or on more serious themes, continue to hold an appeal for us.

The recent popularity of the **Harry Potter** series helped to motivate many adults to try out books written for children or young adult readers. During an informal poll among the staff here, a number of other books were mentioned, among them **The Wind in the Willows** by Kenneth Grahame; the books about **Winnie-the-Pooh** by A.A. Milne and those about **Frog and Toad** by Arnold Lobel; **The Little Prince** by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry; **Green Eggs and Ham** by Dr. Seuss; **Little Women** by Louisa May Alcott; **Inkheart** by Cornelia Funke; **Blitzcat** by Robert Westall, and **A Long Way From Chicago** by Richard Peck, and **The Hobbit** by J.R.R. Tolkien.

If there is a childhood favorite you'd like to re-read, or if you're interested in a contemporary book or author, let us know! We'd be happy to check on their availability on talking book or in braille.

INTRODUCING: OUR READERS ADVISORS The four Voices of Vision Reader's Advisors are ready to help you select reading materials. We'll start with an introduction by Ross:

Hi! My name is Ross and I've been a Reader's Advisor at the Talking Book Center for six years. I began attending St. Procopius College in 1966 and graduated with a B.A. in history from Elmhurst College only 24 years later!

As a World War II historian, I read mostly non-fiction, primarily World War II histories and biographies. An interesting book I've read recently is **James Arness: An Autobiography** (RC 55498) about the actor best known for his 20-year TV series "Gunsmoke." This book describes his Minnesota childhood, his World War II experiences during the invasion of Anzio, and his movie career. He includes anecdotes about what went on behind the scenes during his 50-year theatrical career.

I also enjoy fiction for grades 6-9 and young adult readers. In general, these stories tend to have fewer characters and lend themselves well to late night reading. While there is a great deal of excellent fiction in these categories, children's and young adult literature has changed since I was in school, often dealing with more serious issues. One of the first audio books I read was **Wish Me Luck** by James Heneghan (RC 47232). It contains some strong language and is a fictional account of a 12-year-old British boy and his sister being evacuated from war-time Liverpool to Canada. On the fifth day out, the ship is torpedoed and sunk by a German U-boat. The description of the children's ordeal in the lifeboat is as fresh in my mind as the day I read it over six years ago. The story is based on a true incident regarding the loss of the S.S. Benares which was sunk in September 1940 while carrying 90 evacuated children among its passengers.

I enjoy being a Reader's Advisor and having the opportunity to discuss books with our readers!

MAGAZINE NEWS

The Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service (ISLTBBS) offers subscriptions to a number of magazines recorded on cassette. Until recently, the cassette magazines were mailed to and from magazine readers in black or tan mailing cases, similar to the green boxes that hold the audio books. In July 2005, the ISLTBBS began a yearlong magazine delivery pilot program. You will NOT need to return magazines to us during this time period. These magazines are now delivered in non-returnable paper envelopes. When you are done listening to a magazine, you may keep it or dispose of it. If this pilot program is successful, it will become permanent. If you have any questions about the magazine program, contact your Reader Advisor at Voices of Vision.

“ILLINOIS ALIVE” WEBSITE BRINGS CENTRAL ILLINOIS HISTORICAL CHARACTERS TO LIFE

The Alliance Library System, the Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center, and the Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service announce the launch of a new website: “Illinois Alive! Early Illinois Heroes and Heroines: a Multimedia Montage.” The site, located at <http://www.illinoisalive.info> is designed to bring important historical characters in central Illinois to life for schoolchildren and others interested in Illinois history, and to make the images accessible to the visually impaired. In addition to movies about some of the figures and electronic books, there are audio descriptions that describe an historical image in detail for a blind or low-vision person. This project was funded in part by a Library Services and Technology Act grant from the Illinois State Library, a division of the Office of Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White. For more information contact Lori Bell at the Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center at lbell@alliancelibrarysystem.com or at 309-694-7935 phone, 800-426-0709 toll free.

Newsletter Formats: If you would like to receive this newsletter in braille or audio, contact the Voices of Vision Talking Book Center