**Summer 2006**

**Volume 1 Issue 1**

**Editor: Carrie Gors**

**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE LIBRARY**
**BRAILLE AND TALKING BOOK LIBRARY**

# PRAIRIE TRAILS MEMORANDUM

## Notes from the Director, Dan Boyd

## Did You Ever Wonder?

Did you ever wonder how the National Braille & Talking Book Library Program got started?

Records indicate that library service for blind patrons began as early as 1868. Few books were generally available in some of the larger cities during that period. The few books were produced with five separate embossed systems. This limited the number of books available to a blind adult.

In 1931 Congress passed the Pratt-Smoot Act to provide adequate service on a national scale through an appropriation to be expended under the direction of the Librarian of Congress. The Librarian of Congress selected 18 regional libraries to produce and distribute the books for the blind.

Two important developments occurred in 1933: the establishment of a uniform system of Braille for all English speaking countries and the development of the talking book. The talking book was a recording on a disc of the voice of a good reader that could be played back on a phonograph.

In 1968 with the development of the cassette tape system The Library of Congress began exploring the use of cassettes for talking books. The first cassette machines were made available in 1971. In 1977 the change was made in the cassette player to play at a slower speed 15/16 and four track. This is the player that is still in use today.

The National Network of Libraries for the Blind began with 18 regional libraries serving the entire country. In 1932 one additional library was added, in 1933 three additional libraries were added and in 1934 two additional libraries were added. This was the entire network until the mid 1960's when seventeen libraries were added and in the 1970's an additional thirteen were added. One additional library was added in 1995. The network now consists of fifty six regional libraries plus seventy three sub-regional libraries.

The South Dakota Regional Library was added to the network in 1969. Prior to 1969 blind citizens of South Dakota received library service through the Minnesota Regional Library for the Blind.

In the next issue I will talk about the production and distribution of talking books and the development of the "new generation of talking books."

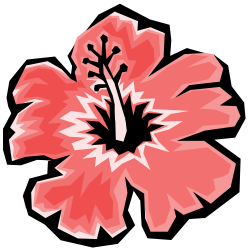
Meet **Carrie Gors** the new staff member at the Braille and Talking Book Library

Hello everyone. My name is Carrie Gors and I am the new Reader Advisor for last names starting with the letters J-R and also the editor of the Prairie Trails Memorandum. I started at the Library on April 10th and have been busy getting to know patrons and learning about my job. Here is a little bit about me.

I was born and raised in Pierre, after High School I moved to Sioux Falls where I attended Augustana College. I graduated in 2003 with a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work. During college I had a variety of jobs from retail sales to bartending. After college I worked at Southeastern Behavioral Healthcare with adults and children with developmental disabilities. This job was both challenging and rewarding. Last summer I decided that I wanted to move back to Pierre to be closer to my family.

I am very happy that I got the opportunity to work at the Braille and Talking Book Library and I thank you for your patience as I am learning about my new job.

If you have any questions, comments, thoughts or ideas regarding the Prairie Trails Memorandum please contact Carrie Gors.



## WebOPAC's Frequently Asked Questions

Patrons now have access to our full holdings catalog in one place at any time. The web site is available to our patrons twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. In order to use the web site, you must have access to a computer with an Internet connection. Patrons may check the WebOPAC for books by author, title, subject, narrator, series or annotation. The online catalog may be reached by the following URL (web address): talkbook.sdstatelibrary.com. The site can be read by most available Internet web browsers. Frequently asked questions about our online catalog are as follows:

**Do I need to have a User ID and Password in order to search the online catalog?**
No you do not, anyone may search the catalog, however, if you wish to actually order the books or obtain access to the person's patron information section, you do need to have a user ID and Password.

**Whom should I contact if I am experiencing problems with the web site?**
If you are experiencing problems with the web site, please contact the South Dakota Braille & Talking Book Library at 1-800-423-6665.

**How will I know if the book is available?**
Once you have submitted your search topic, the results page will be displayed. The availability column indicates whether there are copies available or if the are all checked out.

**What happens if I lose or forget my User ID and/or Password?**
Patrons will need to call their Reader Advisor at the South Dakota Braille and Talking Book Library to obtain this information.

**What do I do if my User ID and Password will not grant me access to the system?**
Try to log into the system again, making sure to use lower case. If you are still unable to log into the system, contact your Reader Advisor.

**When will I receive a book that I have requested?**
Materials that are marked "Shipped" in the patron information section will go into the mail on the next business day. Books that are marked "Reserved" will go into the mail as soon as a copy becomes available. Books that are marked "Requested" will be put on your list and sent at a later time in the future.

**Is there a way to see what I currently have checked out from the library?**
Patrons may see what they currently have checked out, on reserve, on request lists and has recently been sent to you by accessing your patron information section of the web site. This section also allows you to see what preferences and exclusions are listed on our database. If you would like changes made please contact your Reader Advisor.

## Different Authors to try if you like…

**If you like Danielle Steel…**
**Why not try:** Luanne Rice, Charlotte Vale Allen, Janet Dailey, Jennifer Blake, Katherine Stone, Lavyrle Spencer, Nicholas Sparks, Fern Michaels, Judith Michael, Rosamund Pilcher, Barbara Delinsky, Belva Plain

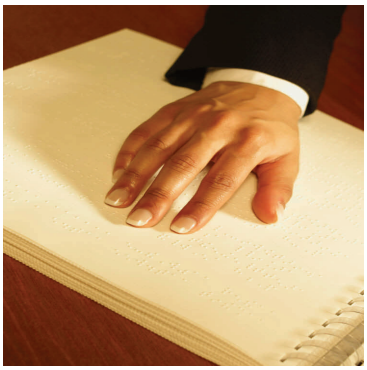
**If you like Lillian Jackson Braun…**
**Why not try:** Marion Babson, Laurien Berenson, Rita Mae Brown, Carole Nelson Douglas

**If you like Tom Clancy…**
**Why not try:** Dale Brown, Richard Condon, Stephen Coonts, Clive Cussler, Len Deighton, Clive Egleton, Paul Erdman, Ken Follett, Fredrick Forsyth, Brian Freemantle, Jack Higgins, David Poyer

**If you like Janette Oke…**
**Why not try:** June Masters Bacher, Taylor Caldwell, Grace Livingston Hill, Joseph Girzone, B.J. Hoff, Catherine Marshall, Gilbert Morris, Judith Pella, Michael Phillips, Miss Read, Bodie Thoene, Brock Thoene, Lori Wick

## Braille Behind Bars

## by Matt Belanger



Inmates at South Dakota's State Penitentiary are helping to bridge communication barriers. For years, they have translated books using Braille. But now they are also producing Braille graphics.

The Braille alphabet allows the visually impaired to read words and sentences by touching raised symbols on a page. Now, students who can't see will also be able to "read" graphs, maps, and pictures. In fact, they're charting new territory by becoming the first prison in the country to publish pictures for the blind.

"They can actually feel what the picture is, and these inmates are manufacturing this, they are kind of setting the standard for the industry," said Bob Rae, director of Pheasantland Industries, the prison-run company that operates the penitentiary's Braille unit.

The images are called "tactile" because they can be read by touch. Many of the books the inmates translate are textbooks for blind students to use in school.

"As you and I grew up with geography books, math books, science books, half of the texts are actually pictures," Rae said.

In the past, pictures were usually not included in the Braille translation because they took too long to make. But at 25 cents an hour, these inmates are carefully creating raised patterns and keys that someone who can't see can still understand.

"There's not a lot of interesting jobs in a prison, something that really makes you think," said Toby Ferguson.

Ferguson is the inmate who leads the Braille unit. He has achieved the highest level of certification a Braille translator can reach. Tackling Braille graphics is his latest mental challenge-one that has also become a bit of a headache.

"It would be easier if we had a model to build this on," Ferguson said. Ferguson developed the procedures the inmates now follow to translate books.

"Once it gets here, right away we rip the binding off of the book and we run it through our computer scanners. Then we have groups that plan these graphics out," he explained.

Inmates use computers to key in the text, but creating graphics is still done by hand. The process takes a tremendous amount of time and patience. A simple English book can take two to three months to complete. A social studies book filled with maps and graphs? Six months.

"We edit out all of the unnecessary information and make sure it's presented in a way that's useful for the kid," Ferguson said.

Accuracy is one of the most important goals when you are working with Braille graphics. Just one mistake can completely change a pictures meaning, which means you'll have to start over.

"So we try one thing and if that doesn't work we try something else and if that doesn't work we try something else, until we get just the right mix," he said.

The operation is still evolving, but the work being produced here is in high demand.

"We're growing more and more in demand and we have to make sure we don't grow out of what we can handle," Rae said.

Braille textbooks made at the penitentiary are shipped to libraries and schools, not just in South Dakota, but as far away as California and Texas. "They're dedicated to what they are doing. It gives them self-esteem, they feel better about themselves, and they don't get in trouble," Rae said.

"Being a part of that is something everyone in here is excited about, it's actually pretty cool. It's not just a normal job," Ferguson said.

And among the thousands of pages of Braille these inmates have produced lies a sense of pride, knowing South Dakota's confined are helping the blind. A total of 30 inmates work in the Braille Unit, nine are certified in Braille by the Library of Congress and three more are expected to reach that status soon.

**Source: Keloland TV, South Dakota**

## Important Reminder!

**Please use our telephone message system.**

When you call the South Dakota State Library there are many reasons the person you wish to speak with is not available. There are three Reader Advisors and each one of them is responsible for over 1,500 library users. You might continue calling and each time your Reader Advisor is on the telephone with another patron, pulling books for a patron or getting a cassette player ready to mail.

If you leave a message on their telephone they will get that message before they make another call or leave their desk. In most cases leaving a message will get your call returned faster than if you just continue calling.

## Patron Spotlight

**Please give a brief history of your life. Tell us who your favorite author(s) are. What book(s) you liked and what books you would recommend to patrons of this library. Helpful information you would give other patron about the Braille and Talking Book Library. Please send your history to us here at the Library ATT: Carrie Gors, Braille and Talking Book Library, 800 Governors Drive, Pierre, South Dakota 57501.**

## New DVS Additions

Descriptive Video Service (DVS) carefully describes the visual elements of a movie such as the action, characters, locations, costumes and sets, without interfering with the dialogue or sound effects. Our collection consists of over 400 videos that are available for loan. We have added many new videos to our collection including new releases, many westerns and classics. If you would like a complete listing of all the videos in our collection, contact your Reader Advisor at 1-800-423-6665.

## New Releases

DVS 00360 **Ray**
The celebrated film about rhythm and blues singer Ray Charles that traces his career from his early days as a poor musician in the segregated South to his rise to fame as one of the most influential musicians of his time. Rated "PG-13"

DVS 00361 **Shark Tale**
In this undersea CGI (Computer Generated Imagery) flick, Robert De Niro plays Don Lino, a mob shark who's looking to expand his operation. When one of his sons is killed by an errant anchor, a young punk named Oscar (Will Smith), disgruntled with his job at a day spa and car wash for whales, claims responsibility and is hailed as a hero. Fun for the whole family.

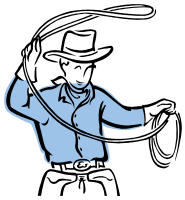
DVS 00462 **Finding Neverland**
This biopic focuses on the life of Peter Pan creator James Barrie (Johnny Depp), who bonded with his neighbors, four boys and their mother (Kate Winslet), in London around 1900, an experience that inspired him to invent the famous flying lad. Truly, an instant classic. Rated "PG"

DVS 00463 **The Incredibles**
Bob Parr (Craig T. Nelson) was known to all as Mr. Incredible, but now the erstwhile superhero has retired to a quiet life in the suburbs and a job as an insurance salesman. But after a mysterious communication summons him to a remote island, he springs back into action, along with his superpower-endowed family.

DVS 00464 **Meet the Fockers**
Ex-CIA man Jack Byrnes (Robert De Niro) has given permission for his daughter (Terri Polo) to wed male nurse Greg Focker (Ben Stiller), and now he is talking his wife (Blythe Danner) to Miami to meet his future son-in-law's parents (Barbara Streisand, Dustin Hoffman). Sequel to the blockbuster Meet the Parents. Rated "PG-13"

DVS 00465 **Million Dollar Baby**
A retired boxer named Frankie Dunn (Clint Eastwood) runs a gym in Los Angeles with another former fighter (Morgan Freeman). Dunn's still troubled by his painful estrangement from his daughter, and he's surprised when a female boxer, Maggie Fitzgerald (Hilary Swank), walks into his gym and asks him to train her. Oscars for Best Film, Best Director (Eastwood), Best Actress (Swank) and Best Supporting Actor (Freeman). Rated "PG-13"

DVS 00466 **The Phantom of the Opera**
The Phantom (Gerald Butler) is a masked man who roams around the Paris Opera House and haunts the singers. He falls for a young soprano named Christine Daae (Emmy Rossum) and tutors her so well that she passes another soprano (Minnie Driver) as the city's best. He's smitten and wants Christine for his own, but she still has feelings for a childhood love, Raoul Viscount de Changey (Patrick Wilson). Feeling betrayed, the phantom kidnaps Christine with plans to make her his eternal bride. Rated "PG-13"



**Westerns**
**(Many more Western titles have also been added)**

DVS 00370 **Gunslinger**
When the marshal of Oracle Texas is gunned down, his widow pins on his badge and sets out to avenge him. Beverly Garland and John Ireland star in this intriguing old west tale of love, deceit, betrayal and redemption.

DVS 00381 **The Outlaws**
Produced and directed by Howard Hughes, this classic intertwines three legends of the old west: Gambler and gunslinger Doc Holiday (Walter Huston), his best friend Sheriff Pat Garrett (Thomas Mitchell), and sweet-tempered, cold-blooded Billy-the-Kid (Jack Geutel). With sultry Jane Russell in her first major role.

DVS 00408 **Blue Steel/The Dawn Riders**
A double bill of early John Wayne Westerns. In the first, the young star has to track down a notorious thief and stop a gang of outlaws from terrorizing a small town.

DVS 00409 **Bonanza**
Two classic episodes from the much-loved TV series starring Lorne Greene, Michael Landon, Pernell Roberts, and Dan Blocker. In "Escape to Ponderosa", the Cartwrights are obliged to defend two deserters from a vindictive army officer. In "The Bloodline", Ben becomes the target of a troubled youth bent on misguided revenge.

DVS 00421 **God's Gun**
When the priest of a small town is murdered by a gang of brutal desperados, his twin brother assumes his identity and exacts a terrible vengeance. Lee Van Cleef, Jack Palance and Richard Boone star.

**Classics**

DVS 00458 **The Hobbit**
The quiet life of Bilbo Baggins takes a turn for high adventure when he sets out to recover a vast treasure from the dreadful dragon Smaug. Based on J.R.R. Tolkien's classic tale, with the voices of John Huston, Orsen Bean, Hans Conreid, Otto Preminger, and Richard Boone.

DVS 00459 **The New Adventures of Heidi**
After her Grandfather (Burl Ives) disappears during a storm on their mountain, Heidi becomes the companion of a lonely runaway schoolgirl she befriended. The girl's father takes them to New York for Christmas. But Heidi pines for her beloved Grandfather. Heartwarming family entertainment filled with songs and humor.

DVS 00404 **Our Town**
The 20th Century is drawing in on Grovers Corners, New Hampshire, and things may never be quite the same. But people, somehow, will be pretty much as they've always been. George Gibbs (William Holden) and Emily Webb (Martha Scott) are the boy and girl next door who grow up together and fall in love in OUR TOWN. They join their families and neighbors for the weddings, births and funerals that mark life's turning points in this superb adaptation of Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer Prize winning play.

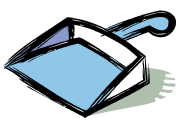
DVS 00434 **Little Men**
In 19th century New England, two street-smart urchins are sent to a country boarding school where they test the patience and principles of their teachers, Jo (Mariel Hemingway) and Fritz (Chris Sarandon). A wonderful, heart-warming adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's classic sequel to Little Woman.

DVS 00461 **The Last Time I Saw Paris**
Elizabeth Taylor is at her most ravishing and gorgeous self as the younger sister who falls in love with sister Donna Reed's man in this post World War II romantic drama based upon an adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Babylon Revisited. This formula love story directed by Richard Brook gained limited acclaim among critics. Nevertheless the film about American expatriates in Paris was popular with war-weary movie-goers of the mid '50's.

**All descriptive videos are on loan to patrons for one week. Please be kind and return the videos within that time frame so that others have a chance to receive them. Remember, you are responsible for videos that are on loan to you. If you experience any problems with the video or have questions about descriptive videos, please contact Judy at 1-800-423-6665.**

## Spring Cleaning

Please take this opportunity to look around the house and see if there are any books you have finished or extra machines that have not been sent back to the Braille and Talking Book Library. If so, please send them back to us so that others who may be waiting for them will have the chance to enjoy them also.



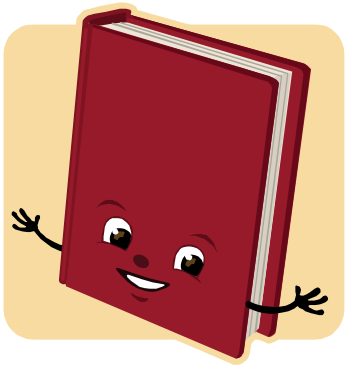
## Machine Tips

- Always call before returning a machine as defective. We might be able to help you with the problem over the phone, and save you the trouble of having to return the machine.
- The battery should be charged regularly by plugging the cord into a wall outlet for at least 12 hours. You should use the machine *unplugged*, to enable the battery to be discharged, and then plug it into the wall again when not in use. You cannot overcharge the machine.
- Save the box and packaging materials that your machine came in, you will need them should you have to return the machine.
- You can take your machine with you if you want to listen to talking books when you go on vacation, just remember it needs to be recharged periodically.
- Do not loan your machine to others, you alone are responsible for its care, and your machine has been personally assigned to you by serial number.
- If you are discontinuing services, the player must be returned to the South Dakota Braille and Talking Book Library. If you are moving out of state and wish to receive talking books in your new location, you may take your player with you. Just let us know ahead of time.

If you have questions related to the actual operation of the machine, any one of our staff would be happy to help. Just give us a call.

## Changes!?

If you happen to find that your reading preferences are changing or that you wish to increase/decrease the number of books that you are currently receiving, contact your reader advisor so that they may assist you.



If your last name starts with A through I, ask for **Mary**
If your last name starts with J through R, ask for **Carrie**
If your last name starts with S through Z, ask for **Brian**

## South Dakota Collection

**The following titles have recently been added to the South Dakota collection. If you would like to order any of these books call your Reader Advisor and list the SD (South Dakota) number assigned to the title.**

**SD003934 "Rich Grass and Sweet Water"**
**By: John Lincoln**
The myth of the cowboy is powerful in American Folklore, but the real life of the cowboy was hard, lonely, and rewarding, if one was seeking the less tangible rewards of being close to nature. The story tells of John Lincoln going from bookkeeper to president of the Matador Cattle Company and his view along the way to the top.

**SD003936 "Prairie Rattler, Long Johns and Chokecherry Wine"**
**By: Emma L. Wiley**
Emma Wiley tells the story of growing up on a homestead in northwestern South Dakota in the early 1900's.

**SD003937 "Cowboy Logic Continues"**
**By: Ryan M. Taylor**
A look at the lighter side of going broke, raising cattle and living on the prairie.

**SD003938 "The Way of Women"**
**By: Lauraine Snelling**
On the verge of Mt. St. Helen's historic eruption, three women must face the mountain: two to search for their missing husbands and the third to rediscover her life.

**SD003939 "Sisters of the Confederacy"**
**By: Lauraine Snelling**
Fleeing Kentucky with her freed slaves and thoroughbred horses Jesselynn Highwood discovers her destination in Missouri has been ravaged. With no place to go she gathers up supplies and heads west on the Oregon Trail, enduring grim adversity and danger along the way.

**SD003940 "The Long Way Home"**
**By: Lauraine Snelling**
When a disastrous decision by the new wagon train master forces Jesselynn Highwood and her companions to separate from the wagon train she races back to Ft. Laramie to find a guide to take them to Oregon. But the guide has far different

plans and following her heart, Jesselynn agrees to join him. The journey is filled with hardships and danger.

**SD003941 "Tender Mercies"**
**By: Lauraine Snelling**
By September 1887, the rich farmland of Dakota Territory had begun to yield the bountiful harvest the pioneers had dreamed about since leaving their home in Norway.

This is book five in the "**Red River of the North"** series. The other titles in series order are:
**SD003265 "An Untamed Land"**
**SD003229 "A New Day Rising"**
**SD003264 "A Land Called Home"**
**SD003267 "The Reapers Song"**

**SD003942 "One Man's Wilderness: An Alaskan Odyssey"**
**By: Sam Keith**
This is an account of a man living in an area unspoiled by man's advances, a land where no roads lead in or out. This story is from Dick Proenneke's journals and tells what he did alone with only simple tools.

**SD003945 "Love Takes Flight"**
**By: Jane Peart**
Robbie Mallory, and experienced flight attendant chose to ignore the attention she receives from Captain Tyler Lang. Her resolve weakens, however, when they are scheduled on the same flight to Bermuda.

**SD003947 "Robert In A Forbidden Land"**
**By: Mary Francis Sanders**
This is the story of the first white boy in the Black Hills, the Pana Sapa of the Indians. It also includes the discovery of Wyoming. This book was written by a South Dakota author.

**SD003949 "Little Town At the Crossroads"**
**By: Marian D. Wilkes**
Young Caroline Quiner, who would grow up to be Laura Ingalls Wilder's mother and her family have new adventures at the frontier outpost of Brookfield, Wisconsin as it grows into a bustling town.

**SD003951 "The Longest Rope"**
**By: D.F. Baber**
Bill Walker, cowpoke, scout, guide and freighter was the chief eyewitness to the brutalities served by the cattleman against the nesters. His startling accounts of the ruthless killing of two nesters by an enraged mob of cattleman – an act which brought into the open the Johnson County cattle war –reveals facts that until now, have remained dormant.

**SD003952 "Prairie Rose: A Town Called Hope"**
**By: Catherine Palmer**
Abandoned as a baby and raised in a crowded orphanage, Rosie Mills has always dreamed of a home of her own. Impulsively she head to Kansas to care for a widower's young son and finds a chance for lasting love. For senior high and adult readers. Contains some violence.

**SD003953 58 "Buffalo Valley"**
**By: Debbie Macomber**
Vaughn Kyle, visiting his parents in North Dakota, is investigating Buffalo Valley as a site for his retail conglomerate employer. He falls for a local girl and for small-town life, dumping the firms which threatens local industry and his engagement to a high-powered company executive. Sequel to "Always Dakota" SD003962.

**SD003959 "Doomsday Posse"**
**By: Ray Hogan**
Marshall John Rye assembles a posse of six men, each with a past as colorful as his to bring Harry Wilse and his gang to justice. Among Rye's "deputies" is a man with his own private score to settle with Wilse. Contains strong language and some descriptions of violence. 1977

The Braille & Talking Book Library will be closed on the following holiday. Please place your book orders in advance so that you will have plenty on hand.

Independence Day July 4, 2006

The Prairie Trails Memorandum, published quarterly, is our means of communication with our patrons. The Prairie Trails Memorandum is available in Braille, Cassette or on a diskette upon request and is also posted on our website.

If you wish to request this newsletter in an alternative format, please contact the Braille and Talking Book Library at 1-800-423-6665.

If you have any questions or comments that you would like to share with us about the library program, please contact us.

Write: South Dakota Braille & Talking Book Library
800 Governors Drive, Pierre, SD 57501

E-mail: talkbkreq@state.sd.us

Call: 1-800-423-6665

The Braille & Talking Book Library does not endorse any product or service listed in this newsletter.