



DIVISION OF BLIND SERVICES
Florida Department of Education | dbs.fldoe.org

Touch and Listen

The Newsletter of the Florida Braille and Talking Book Library
Spring 2026

What's Happening in Florida

From Nicole Sanders, Bureau Chief

Welcome to 2026! We at the Library are excited to bring you more great books, fun reading challenges and new programs. We are proud to announce the Division of Blind Services is celebrating 85 years of dedicated service to blind and visually impaired Floridians this year.

In 2025, we at the Library commemorated a milestone of our own - 75 years of service!

History

Prior to 1934, people with print disabilities either had to be read to or learn braille if they wanted to enjoy books. Florida first received library service from the regional library of Georgia. In 1950, the Library of Congress authorized the establishment of the 32nd regional library in the National Library Service (NLS) network, the Florida Talking Book Library in Daytona Beach. It was housed in a 4,000-square-foot former World War II Women's Army Corps dormitory, known as "The Barracks." With a staff of six, and with the help of volunteers, it served approximately 900 blind Floridians with talking books. In 1994, the library was officially renamed the Florida Bureau of Braille and Talking Book Library Services.

Today

The Library partners with nine subregional libraries located in Brevard, Broward, Duval, Escambia, Lee, Miami-Dade, Orange, Palm Beach and Pinellas counties. Together, we serve over 21,000 patrons across Florida!

Last year, almost 2 million items were circulated, including:

- books, magazines, descriptive DVDs, kits, and
- talking book players, accessories and braille eReaders.

Volunteers record books and magazines in studios across the state.

- Since 2015, Florida has posted over 400 audio and braille books to BARD for readers all over the country to enjoy.
- Last year, Florida magazines were downloaded over 6,000 times and Florida books over 5,000 times.

We conducted a Patron Survey and were very happy to hear from so many of you who were pleased with our services. We look forward to so much more in the future.

Be sure to take part in one of the reading challenges and programs this spring! Our Reader Advisors are excited to hear from you and look forward to helping you get exactly what you want. Thank you for being such a dedicated library patron, and happy reading!

Programming at your Florida Braille and Talking Book Library

Reading Challenges: Email your name and the titles of the books you read to reading@dbs.fldoe.org with “SPRING” in the subject line. Challenges end May 31, 2026.

- **Spring Clean and Reset:** Read three books about healthy eating, cleaning, organization or resetting your goals.
- **Read Four for Fun:** Read four books from the same subject heading or author.
- **Spring Forward:** Read a book about time travel!

You can also call 1-800-226-6075 and leave a message for Maureen Dorosinski, the Library Program Specialist.

Call In Programs

Helpful tips

- **When calling in to join a program**, there will be an automated question asking if you are the organizer; do nothing. Wait for the prompt to record your name and then you will be admitted to the meeting.
- **If you use a computer and prefer the Microsoft Teams link**, send an email to reading@dbs.fldoe.org with the name of the meeting you would like to attend typed in the subject line.

SPECIAL EVENT CALL IN PROGRAMS

Using the Online Public Book Catalog Webinar: In this webinar, you will learn how to search the catalog and request books to get exactly what you want! Email reading@dbs.fldoe.org for the Microsoft Teams link (for visual access).

- Tues. April 7, 11:00-11:30 am Eastern Time
 - Call 1-850-583-5063, Phone conference ID: 143 436 71 #
- Tues. May 5, 2:00-2:30 pm Eastern Time
 - Call 1-850-583-5063, Phone conference ID: 768 866 548 #

BARD Help: In this session, you can call in and ask our staff about downloading to the DA2 talking book machine, braille eReader and other questions.

- Tues. April 21, 2:00-2:30 pm Eastern Time
 - Call 1-850-583-5063, Phone conference ID: 725 346 409 #
- Thurs. May 21, 2:00-2:30 pm Eastern Time
 - Call 1-850-583-5063, Phone conference ID: 439 355 618 #

Birding By Ear- In this webinar, you will learn about Spring bird migration during its peak in Florida! Hear bird songs and identify who's visiting your backyard!

- Thurs. April 23, 11:00-11:30 am Eastern Time
 - Call 1-850-583-5063, Phone conference ID: 127 994 215 #

Music Appreciation: In this webinar, you will learn about the NLS music collection and publications. Play a musical game at the end of the program and win a Braille and Talking Book Library commemorative 75th anniversary item!

- Wed. May 6, 2:00-2:30 pm Eastern Time
 - Call 1-850-583-5063, Phone conference ID: 811 477 24 #

RECURRING MONTHLY CALL IN PROGRAMS

Calling All Cooks Quarterly Meetup

Whether you're a seasoned cook or just starting out in the kitchen, connect with others to share experiences, recipes, and helpful tips. Meets the 4th Friday of January, April, July, and October from 10:00-11:00 am Eastern Time.

- **Next Meeting: April 24!** Enjoy a recap from the last meeting. Join the challenge of cooking a recipe from a BARD magazine or share your funniest cooking disaster!
 - Call 1-850-583-5063, Phone conference ID: 511 001 794 #

Paws To Read Book Club

Pet and animal enthusiasts will enjoy this book club! The first Thursday of every month from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

- Call 1-850-583-5063, Phone conference ID: 986 932 234 #

Email reading@dbb.fldoe.org to sign up with "PAWS" in the subject line to get the books added to your book service queue.

- **March 5** DB008757, BR016763 *My Eyes Have a Cold Nose*. Author: Chevigny, Hector.
- **April 2** DB066787, BR017801 *The Art of Racing in the Rain*. Author: Stein, Garth.

Wrangling All Writers Monthly Meetup

New or lifetime writers: all are welcome for 'what happens next' prompts and story challenges. The first Wednesday of every month, from 10:00-11:00 am Eastern Time.

- Email reading@dbb.fldoe.org to sign up with "WRITE" in the subject line to get the call-in information.

OTHER REMOTE PROGRAMS

NEW! Get Crafty Kids: Mail and Make

Get Crafty by mail! Receive monthly craft projects in the mail with instructions in large print and braille. Some materials will be included. Two groups: ages 3-5 and ages 6-11.

- Email your child's name to reading@dbb.fldoe.org to sign up with "CRAFTYKIDS" in the subject line.

NLS Corner

Get to know The Many Faces of BARD

NLS staff members offer tips, answer questions and demonstrate new features of BARD, the BARD Mobile app and BARD Express each month during The Many Faces of BARD. This online event is held at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the second Thursday of every month. Find the link to this and other Zoom events from the Announcements and Notices page on our website:

<https://dbs.fldoe.org/Library/announcements.html>

BARD Express turns your PC into a talking-book player

With BARD Express, any Windows computer can now potentially be a talking-book player! The new feature is included in the latest BARD Express version and allows NLS audiobooks and magazines to be downloaded from BARD, the NLS Braille and Audio Reading Download website and played directly on PCs—no need for an NLS digital talking-book player.

BARD Express offers thousands of items that can also be easily downloaded to a USB drive. Users can adjust the narration speed; jump to navigation points such as part, chapter and article; create bookmarks and much more.

Call your library to find out how to download BARD Express!

The Reading Room

Key Documents in American History

As we count down to America's 250th anniversary on July 4, 2026, we would like to remind you that many of the key documents in American history are available in our collection! Items such as the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and historic speeches of national figures are available in braille and audio.

Learn about the United States

Find a book about United States history and notable figures by searching or signing up for these subject headings:

- History: United States
- Travel & Geography: United States, North America
- Biography: US Presidents

- Biography: First Ladies, President's Spouses

Celebrate America's Pastime

- Sports: Baseball. (nonfiction)
- Sports Fiction: Baseball stories

Call your Reader Advisor and find out about these and more!

Changing your reading options is easy!

When you signed up for service, you may have decided to get automatic book selection based on your specific authors or genres such as biography, romance or westerns. But if you've found a new favorite author or want to explore a new genre, all you need to do is let your reader advisor know! You can ask your reader advisor for specific titles, too—or download them yourself from BARD.

Call 1-800-226-6075 or email **OPAC_librarian@dbs.fldoe.org** for help today! We are eager to connect with you.

If you belong to one of our subregional libraries, you can find their contact information on the main page of our website: **<https://dbs.fldoe.org/Library>**, or you can always call us to find out! We are happy to help.

Is it time for a new book?

Has it been a while since you requested a book from the library or downloaded something from BARD? You need to check out one book or magazine per year to stay an active reader. NLS BARD accounts need to be logged into every 6 months to be considered active. Now is the perfect time to request your next favorite book!

Search our catalog online at **<https://flopac.klas.com/>** or from the BARD website or the app, click on *Recently Added Books and Magazines* or *Most Popular Books*.

Subject Headings in our Catalog

If you like reading about people, we have many categories of biographies to choose from:

- Biography: Actors & media celebrities
- Biography: Contemporary

- Biography: Golden Age of Hollywood
- Biography: Historical
- Biography: Individuals with Disabilities
- Biography: Literature (Writers, Poets, Playwrights)
- Biography: Music - Composers, Songwriters
- Biography: Notable Women
- Biography: Sports

Other fantastic formats of this newsletter

This newsletter is produced twice yearly, in the Fall and Spring. It is also available in braille, email and English and Spanish audio!

Call 1-800-226-6075 or email reading@dbs.fldoe.org with “NEWS” in the subject line and the name of the library patron to get this newsletter in your email or to get the audio format on cartridge for your talking book player.

Resources

Accessible World

Accessible World, sponsored by Helping Hands for the Blind, is a website full of resources, news, and mailing lists. Their mission is, “Accessible World seeks to educate the general public, the disabled community and the professionals who serve them by providing highly relevant information about new products, services and training opportunities designed specifically to eliminate geographic and access barriers that adversely affect them.”

Find Zoom book discussions, mailing lists, and more at <https://www.accessibleworld.org/>.

NFB-NEWSLINE® Mobile App

Did you know that NFB-NEWSLINE® has both iOS and Android versions of a mobile app for access to over 600 publications?

- State, national, international, magazines, breaking news online and Kids Reading Corner Publications

You can even use your Amazon Alexa smart speaker!

There are also emergency weather alerts and forecasts, TV listings, job listings and weekly circulars from national retailers. Contact your library to sign up today!

The Bureau of Braille and Talking Book Library Services are part of the
Florida Department of Education, Division of Blind Services.
Visit our websites at www.dbs.fldoe.org or www.fldoe.org

Contact us at 1-800-226-6075 or via email at [OPAC librarian@dbs.fldoe.org](mailto:OPAC_librarian@dbs.fldoe.org)



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FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND AND
PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED