



**Newsletter**, December 2015  
**IFLA Libraries Serving Persons with Print  
Disabilities Section**

2015/2

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The IFLA/LPD Newsletter is issued twice a year.

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## **Word of Hello from the New Chair of the Section, Karen Keninger**

Greetings to all who aim to improve access to knowledge for people throughout the world with print disabilities. This is a very exciting time in our field, with the Marrakesh Treaty \*\* halfway to full ratification and implementation, the World Intellectual Property Organization's Accessible Book Consortium reaching lives in more and more places, and new technologies emerging to make access to knowledge easier and cheaper for everyone. I am honored to serve as Chair of the LPD for the next two years.

As stated in our current Action Plan,  
**<http://www.ifla.org/about-lpd>**  
our goals for the Committee remain clear.

1. To further the development and actively participate in the international library network through sharing accessible materials and services.
2. To influence international policy on access to knowledge and information
3. Establish and support guidelines and best practice

of products and services to persons with print disabilities.

4. Raise the profile of LPD and accessible library services within the library community.

In addition to supporting WIPO's Accessible Book Consortium, promoting ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty wherever we can, developing and disseminating guidelines for best practices, and raising awareness within IFLA itself, we will be co-sponsoring a satellite conference next August in Louisville., Kentucky. I know that our regular jobs keep us all very busy, but I am looking forward to working on these goals throughout the year. I know that with input and help from everyone, we can make significant progress toward an accessible world.

Speaking of our regular jobs, mine is to direct the activities of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a division of the Library of Congress in the United States. I have had these responsibilities for the past three and a half years, and am pleased to see progress at NLS. This is due to an outstanding staff at NLS, most of whom were here when I came, and a network of libraries throughout the United States dedicated to providing front-line service to people with print disabilities. Working together we

have been able to increase the number of titles available to our patrons and expand the options they have for reading NLS books and magazines.

I have been a patron of NLS since I was seven years old, reading braille and talking books voraciously since childhood. I have served as a regional librarian in Iowa, overseeing the Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. I have also served as director of that library's parent agency, the Iowa Department for the Blind. I chaired a consortium of libraries focused on developing and maintaining a highly capable circulation system for libraries for the blind, and served in other national organizations. This experience has provided me with a variety of perspectives on our services, but the most fundamental perspective will always be as a reader of braille and talking books.

On a personal note, I am a mother and grandmother, with roots deep in the fertile soil of my home state of Iowa. I love to read, to write, to tandem-bicycle, and to travel to new places. I am looking forward to my first trip to Oslo in February.

I encourage everyone to read our action plan and pick one item where you feel you can have the most impact. Let me know what it

is and we'll work together to make it happen.

As Margaret Mead is quoted as saying: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

Sincerely,

**Karen Keninger**, Manager NLS,  
LPD Chair

## **And a word of hello from our new secretary of the section, Yasmine Youssef**

First, I would like to extend my appreciation to the standing committing members for electing a young, new incoming member of the committee as secretary. I am honored and humbled that you have placed your trust in me. I am inspired by each and every one.

My name is Yasmine Youssef. I currently work as a digital talking books production specialist in the Taha Hussein (TH) Section for the Blind and visually impaired in Bibliotheca Alexandrina. I hold a bachelor's degree in Spanish language. I started working as a reference librarian in the TH section in 2006. I worked for four years as a librarian in the TH

library, then starting 2010, started working in the production of digital talking books.

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina has taken the lead in establishing the first library that offers services for the blind and visually impaired community in Egypt. The Taha Hussein Library for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TH) holds; a big, diverse collection of braille, audio and large print books, and has recently introduced digital talking books. The TH library allows its users to access the Library's Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) and other e-resources. In addition to the library services offered to the visually impaired; the library gives classes to its patrons to teach them how to use the computer through screen readers, how to use the library resources, as well as mobility classes.

Today the Taha Hussein Library is developing a Digital talking book collection as a step forward on the way to providing accessible information to the blind and print-disabled, books and other printed materials, of interest available in the main library, will be converted to the DAISY digital format.

The library joined the DAISY Consortium as an associate member in 2008. In June 2009 The DAISY consortium has provided the library with a training on

production of accessible books with the DAISY standard. In November 2009, the library began an experimental phase to test the DAISY production tools with the Arabic language. By 2010, we established a production unit for digital talking books, concentrating on only Arabic titles for the time being. The library succeeded in producing a number of books, some of which are audio DAISY books and some are audio and text DAISY books. Based on the assessment of the information needs of the library users through a number of surveys, the library's book selection concentrates on the areas of Natural sciences and Technology. However, the DAISY book collection also includes literature books ranging from classical, to modern novels.

In 2010, I was awarded the Ulverscroft/IFLA Best Practice Award. I have been selected for a one month visit to South Africa to give hands on advice and instruction on all aspects of DAISY production line, design and implementation in three institutions; National South African Council for the Blind, Open Air School, Durban and Madrassa Annour for the Blind. I have learned a lot from this experience, working closely with professionals in the field, has been of great benefit to me in my work as a

librarian serving persons with visual impairment.

Currently, the TH library has produced more than 150 DAISY Arabic titles, and we are in the process of building an online library for the library patrons. There's a great demand from the print disabled community to make available the Arabic titles published as well as the academic material in accessible formats, and this is the current goal of our library. And we are hoping that we will be able to extend our services to cover all Egypt not just Alexandria.

Finally, We are still way behind in terms of laws giving the rights for print disabled to accessible material, and we are still not any close to signing the Marrakesh Treaty, but the library is hoping through the IFLA LPD section to do its part and help not only the local print disabled community but also on an international level, promote print disabled rights to easy access to all published material.

**Yasmine Youssef**, Digital Talking Book Production Specialist, The Library of Alexandria, LPD Secretary

**IFLA LPD is on Twitter now! Search for IFLA\_LPD and start following us. Keep updated on the latest LPD news and find out what is going on during LPD conferences and meetings.**

**Kirsi Yläne** from Celia is managing the Twitter account.

**The new book season at Association Valentin Haüy... in Text to speech**

Each year the new book season is an important event for the French readers. It used to be a big source of disappointment for print impaired persons not able to gain access to these books when they were in the news... but the times are changing!

**A bit of context**

In France access to the publisher's files is guaranteed by law and the most recent French synthetic voices are of very good quality. AVH uses the products from the company Acapela. In 2014, out of the 10 books most borrowed 4 were audiobooks made with

synthetic voice (4 novels). On a total of 160 945 audiobooks loaned: 19 313 were in synthetic voice (12 %)

### **The 2015 new book seasons**

100 books have been produced in accessible format for this new book season. This year we were able to offer access to these books at the same time their print equivalent were available in the bookstores.

### **Results**

Out of the 25 most borrowed in September and October (24 of them being novels) 14 were made with TTS. On a total of 29 316 loans of audiobooks 12 % were made with TTS. The possibility to have access to the books the same day they arrived in the bookstores is very appreciated by the AVH users: we received a lot of positive commentaries on this point!

**Luc Maumet**, Responsable Médiathèque, AVH, Paris, France.

## **Benchmarking on recording equipment with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC): The South African Library for the Blind (SALB) trip to Port Elizabeth 20th August 2015**

Five staff members from Audio Production (Melton Kivitts; Thembile Gxekwa; Andrew Brooks; Nomfuneko Melitafa and Zodwa Gqolodashe) together with the Senior Manager of Production; Pumla Mahanjana, visited the SABC offices in Port Elizabeth on the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015.



**Figure 1: some of SALB staff who visited the SABC studios**

The SALB Audio team went on a benchmarking trip to basically see how the radio side of the SABC

(Umhlobo Wenene) in Port Elizabeth does their usual business in bringing content to their listeners

Ms. Ntombi May, the Deputy Station Manager met SALB staff and briefly explained their operations.



**Figure 2: Ms. Ntombi May**

First, there was a brief introduction in the boardroom, then SALB staff were introduced to Ntombesizwe Ndzima who is the Studio Manager. The studio manager (Ntombi) took the SALB staff on tour to the various recording studios. Staff went through the old/new broadcasting studios and the equipment demonstration was done specifically the one used for editing and live broadcasting. The broadcasting studios software used is called Dalet/playout system.



**Figure 3: Ms. Ndzima with SALB staff**

Staff met with Mr. Mzileni who is an Editor and a Producer in the Drama studios. Staff were impressed about the way SALB does editing in their studio; e.g. while the actors (narrators) were busy reading, the Producers are doing the editing at the same time. This was something that SALB can consider in the near future. Some of the Producers uses Pro-tool; Audacity and Folly sound effects software to do the editing and sound effects.



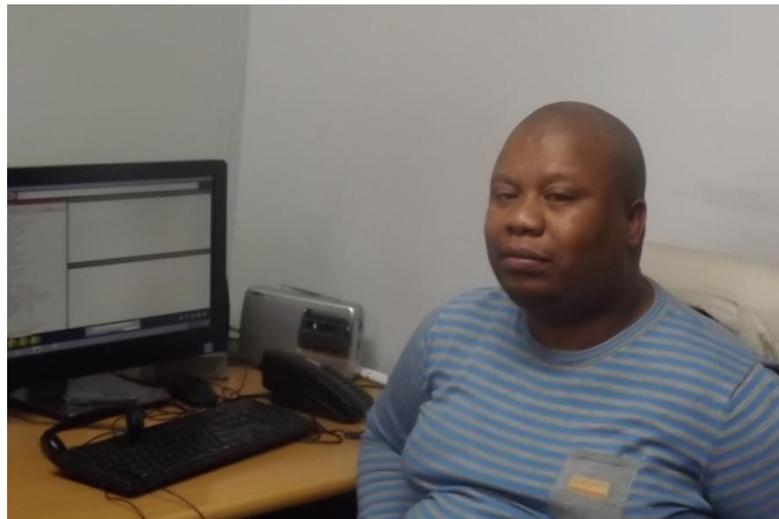
**Figure 4: Mr. Mzileni**

SALB staff met Mr Phethelo who's been working for more than 30 years at Audio Library Archives. SABC's music library archives has a collection of more than 7000 CDs and LPs. They use library management system called: Media Management Record Library System. This is potentially something that the Audio Production can look into to manage their own Audio books in the near future.



**Figure 5: Mr. Phethelo explaining to SALB staff**

SALB staff also met Mr. Xolisa Yekani, the only blind Producer at SABC. Mr. Yekani is a member of South African Library for the Blind. He uses Jaws software and Audicity for editing.



**Figure 6: Mr. Xolisa Yekani**

## Summary of the day's activities

The highlight of the tour was a new experience and educational expedition. Reviewing at how SALB can improve its technology to upgrading their existing studios in Grahamstown.

Staff were fascinated by the Audio Library Archives and the software used to allocate their CD's.

Some of the staff were impressed with SABC's knowledge of sound, energetic staff members and their willingness to share information.

They liked the drama studio equipment and in overall the danced equipment used and how everything works together.

It was truly a learning experience and now, Production Services is busy with implementation of new technology to revamp the recording studios.

**Neli Kaunda**, Senior manager Library and Information Services, South African Library for the Blind

## Croatian Library for the Blind

Since 1965 Croatian Library for the Blind (CLB further in text) has been providing services to all persons with print disabilities. Just like many libraries of that kind, CLB was part of the Croatian Blind Union. In 2000, the Library becomes an independent public institution for culture by a Regulation of the Government of the Republic of Croatia. Through its services, the Library aims at meeting the needs of various categories of print disabled users, who differ in type of impairment, age and in level of IT literacy. Its goal is providing access to knowledge, information and cultural contents in order to educate, inform and ensure quality use of free time to all persons with print disabilities.

Library has 19 employees, 3 employees and 3 collaborators are visually impaired persons and 12 employees are fluent in Braille. Library produces and lends out talking books, books in Braille and e-books. Lending department focus is on user services and processing of library collection. Here is also where we organize all of our events. Department of production of audio publications consists of three studios and copying facilities for book distribution and equipment for digitalization of old

library holdings. Braille printing and book binding department works on the production and distribution of Braille books and periodicals as well as on xml books.

Library collection consists of 3300 Daisy and MP3 talking books, with the average of 120 new titles per year. We still have holdings of 2700 books and musical notation in Braille but we do offer print on demand service. Our users can also choose TXT and XML formats, Playaway audio books in English and small collection of music CDs. Twelve periodicals that library produces vary in theme from politics, culture and science to chess games, radio amateurism and topics regarding teenagers.

Croatian or foreign citizens can become Library members upon presentation of a document certifying their difficulties in reading standard print. Annual membership fee is 50 Kuna (around 8 Euros). Students and persons with lower income are exempt from the membership fee. Users' personal data are confidential and are treated in accordance with the provisions of the Personal Data Protection Act. We have around 2500 active users.

The library still has a borrow-return lending system but next year we are planning to implement non-returning lending system. The

majority of our users prefer mail service. Users from Zagreb love to stop by, chat with us and borrow books directly from the library where they can also use computer equipment and digital pianino. For some of the users from Zagreb area that are immobile and living on their own we have a door to door service. In 2015 we have launched download service. The new option was well accepted especially among the students with dyslexia. On-line approach was developed step-by-step with visually impaired persons and it is Braille keyboard and voice software friendly.

Changes in technology (from analog to digital era; from cassettes to CD's and download service) together with changing tendencies in the structure of users (from blind persons to persons with print disabilities in general, mostly pupils with dyslexia) are asking librarians to act and react. It's not just about distributing knowledge and information, or making the pleasure of reading available for print disabled individuals. It is also about obtaining direct and creative communication with CLB users in the digital era, where library services are making patron-librarian relationship virtual and non-personal.

Braille reading contest is one of the *real time and space* activities that

CLB offers to the community of its „core“ users – the blind persons. Braille means literacy for blind persons. Nowadays most of our blind users, from an early age, prefer talking books. In 2009, celebrating 200th birthday of Louis Braille, CLB started annual competition in fast, accurate and expressive Braille reading. Aloud, off course. Library's goal was to encourage Braille readers of all age, to participate no matter how strong their reading skills are. We wanted to remind our users that reading is fun and different from listening to the narrator's voice. It is certainly more active. And along the way, it is making your writing better.

In the domain of Braille literacy promotion, short-story contest, promotion of tactile atlases and picture books have also been organized. We tend to promote creative work of the blind and visually impaired through the tactile exhibitions, literary afternoons, poetry reading evenings, musical events, thematic lectures etc. During our events we always try to combine professionals with amateurs, actors with enthusiasts, sighted and blind persons. Like every other library in Croatia, we are engaged in international events and marking of important dates (White Cane Day, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, World Book Night,

Croatian Book Month, as well as celebrating birth anniversaries of prominent persons).

The Library represents a reference point for the implementation of services for the blind and visually impaired in public libraries in Croatia. We are obliged to inform and educate colleagues about our new services.

Application of Braille script on medicines and other products is one of the long term projects that we do with pharmaceutical companies.

Among the awards and acknowledgements, Library is proud of its 2005 Charter of the Republic of Croatia for successful 40-year involvement in providing library services to the blind and award by the “Dr. Ljerka Markić Čučuković” Foundation for special success in the enhancement of library services.

We have many goals and challenges ahead of us like already mentioned programming of CD robot for non-returning service, launching of text-to-speech titles etc. Convincing programmers and IT experts to meet the libraries needs, is always the biggest challenge.

We are working on the more satisfactory policy regarding

Croatian authorship law. It is stated there that it is permitted to use copyrighted works for the needs of people with invalidity in a noncommercial way to the extent that is directly related to the invalidity of the person. CLB has a growing population of dyslectic users and dyslexia is not considered invalidity. Also, we have to change the Croatian ISBN policy toward us, because we are obliged to use new ISBN numbers for every title, the obligation that should involve only commercial publishers.

**Jelena Lesaja**, Croatian Library for the Blind

## **20 years of sharing open standards- a word from the Chair of the DAISY Consortium Jesper Klein**

The DAISY Consortium celebrates its 20 year anniversary next year. A highlight for me and many others in our community will be the upcoming **Take Part conference in Stockholm, May 16-18, 2016**. We have come far in two decades, but we still have a long way to go to make sure that people with disabilities can access information as they wish - with eyes, ears and fingers, at the same time, cost as well as the same user-friendly

reading experience that people without disabilities enjoy.

I want to share with you some facts about the current situation in my home country Sweden to cast light on some issues that I believe are universal and relevant around the globe.

To begin - a short crash course on Sweden:

It is a fairly small nation in Northern Europe. With a population of 9,8 million, it is country number 89 in the world according to Wikipedia. Immigration is fairly high -1,6 million Swedes were born outside Sweden. Sweden has one of the highest Internet use rates in the world – and in the field of accessibility Sweden is known for being the place where the DAISY standard was born.

Agencies in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Norway and Iceland specializing in providing accessible books and other types of information to people with print disabilities, share target group definition. Our assumption is that at least 6% of the population have visual impairment, dyslexia or both. For Sweden, this means approximately 600 000 people. But we also regard persons with cognitive disabilities, dementia or intellectual disabilities to be part of the target group. In other words the total number of people with

print disabilities is difficult to specify. In this article I'll keep using the number 6 % for Sweden.

My home agency, the Swedish Agency for Accessible Media (MTM) - is proud to have reached many new users this year. One main reason for this growth is the popularity of our core service *Legimus* - the digital library of accessible reading materials for people with print disabilities in Sweden. Legimus is many things in one package: a website, an iOS and Android app and also a DAISY online server – that can be accessed using online DAISY players.

In early 2016 we will surpass 100 000 Legimus users (1% of Sweden's population) - a number we could only dream of 10-15 years ago.

When I write this, Legimus contains a collection of 111 181 DAISY talking books, most of them human narrated in the Swedish language. The oldest titles were recorded in the 1950s. All titles are constantly available for free to all registered users. In 2014, we were able to add talking book versions of about 25% of all trade books and textbooks published in Swedish language that year. They are mostly narrated by skilled readers, but not by famous actors like commercial audio books.

I get so thrilled when I think about the fact that more and more young dyslexic people discover DAISY talking books, and therefore, can kickstart their reading. Some of them write to us saying things like "it changed my life" or "I made it through high school thanks to talking books."

### **Do all talking book users in Sweden download or stream digital books?**

No. We estimate that on top of the Legimus users, another 20 000 - 30 000 users keep using the CD-based service provided through local public libraries. Their profile is of higher age and dominated by people with visual impairments. They represent a big volume of usage – CD loans currently represent half of the total number of loans, the rest is digital.

### **Now comes the itching thought that clouds my mostly happy mind: 130 000 is only 21,7 % of 600 000 – why don't we reach more of the target group?**

The following four reasons come to mind:

- Some people with low vision or dyslexia read print books including large print and / or commercial e-books in PDF or EPUB2 format. It may be slow and take much effort, but it works well enough for them to prefer it to listening.

- Many adults in the target group don't have a tradition of reading books. They live their lives without books, therefore there is a low interest to subscribe to our services.
- The existing talking book services are not known among many people with print disabilities, or they have misleading information about the services.
- The existing commercial services of streaming audio books cover the best-selling titles and are useful to many. Since they meet much of the demand, the Legimus services are not interesting enough to everyone.

Rather than providing answers to how we can cope with the above-mentioned challenges I want to say this:

I strongly believe that when publishers in my country implement the EPUB 3 standard, and with support from the accessibility industry reach a point where most e-books are born accessible, we will see a growing number of people in our target group shift from talking books to e-books. Additionally, we'll see a higher interest in reading as the whole reading experience will be designed to include those who have reading disabilities. There is, however, a long way ahead before we are there. Let's keep sharing

open standards, tools, and best practices – I'm sure we can get there.

**Jesper Klein**, Chair of the Board, DAISY Consortium

### ***Tailoring the Reading Experience to Meet Individual Needs and Collaborating across borders- making accessible resources available.***

LPD Satellite Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, United States. The LPD satellite will be hosted by the American Printing House of the Blind, Louisville, Kentucky.

Dates: 11 and 12 August (Thursday and Friday) for 1,5 day

Arriving on the 10<sup>th</sup> and leaving in the afternoon of the 12<sup>th</sup> allowing for travelling up to the IFLA congress in Columbus, Ohio (distance is 206 Miles, or 330 km)

Venue TBA in Louisville, Kentucky

Theme: Tailoring the Reading Experience to Meet Individual Needs.

No size fits all. Personalizing the reading experience through apps, online players and assorted assistive technologies, creates new and exciting ways to read.

The title for LPDs presentation in Columbus, Ohio, is now set:

**Collaborating across borders-  
making accessible resources  
available.**

Please start planning for Kentucky  
and Columbus!

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