



Jesse White
SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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White Opens New Talking Book and Braille Service Building

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White today presided over the official opening of a new facility for the Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service in Springfield.

The newly renovated, three-story 20,000 square foot structure located at 401 E. Washington provides books in Braille, descriptive videos, books on cassette, magazines, Internet access and other reading materials for patrons with a temporary or permanent physical or visual inability to read regular printed material. The new facility was made necessary when the Illinois Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in Chicago closed two years ago. The Illinois State Library assumed administration of the Chicago library's duties, renamed the service and moved its operations to Springfield. The TBBS works with six subregional Talking Book Centers in Illinois to provide reading materials to the print disabled.

"This new facility is a welcome step forward in improving the lives of print disabled citizens who are determined to reach their greatest potential," White said. "The possibilities and opportunities inside this new building are endless, and we gladly welcome patrons to come here and use this facility and its contents."

Joining White in a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the grand opening of the building were Karen Hasara, Mayor of the city of Springfield, and Carolyn Sung of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in the Library of Congress, which oversees the national Talking Book program.

While nearly 25,000 Illinoisans benefit from the services provided by the TBBS and its subregional centers, White said he hoped more patrons would sign up to use the service.

"I am thrilled that the Talking Book and Braille Service is enriching the lives of so many citizens," White said. "I hope patrons who use this service will spread the word to others about the wide variety of materials available. Our Talking Book and Braille Service staff is engaged in a determined effort to expand our rolls. We are especially interested in signing up senior adults for the Talking Book program."

White also thanked the directors of the six subregional Talking Book Centers in Coal Valley, Quincy, Carterville, Pekin, Chicago and Geneva for partnering with the TBBS to provide materials to the print disabled.