



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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WHITE CONGRATULATES NETWORK OF ILLINOIS LIBRARIES SERVING BLIND ON 75TH ANNIVERSARY

SPRINGFIELD--Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White today congratulated the Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS) and its four regional Talking Book Centers that are hosting 75th anniversary celebrations marking the beginning of free braille library services for the blind.

White noted the federal Pratt-Smoot Act was enacted on March 3, 1931 establishing free library services for blind adults under the administration of a National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) in the Library of Congress. Originally, 19 libraries were created nationwide to serve the blind, and Illinois had one of the 19, located in Chicago.

The Network of Illinois Libraries serving the print-impaired was created in 1966. This program is administered by the Illinois Secretary of State's office, and is a division of the Illinois State Library. The Illinois network consists of the TBBS regional library in Springfield and four local talking book centers: the Southern Illinois Talking Book Center in Carterville; the Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center in East Peoria; the Voices of Vision Talking Book Center in Geneva; and the Chicago Public Library Talking Book Center, located in the Harold Washington Library Center.

"I am proud that Illinois has such a strong, cooperative network of libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped, and I am honored to congratulate NLS on providing 75 years of outstanding service," White said. "More than 27,000 Illinoisans use the wide variety of materials provided by our network of libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped. These individuals can choose from a collection of more than 400,000 items, ranging from audio books and braille materials to descriptive videos and magazines. With the cooperation of the U.S. Postal Service, these materials are mailed free of charge to participants.

"Though we are celebrating the past, we can also look forward to some exciting new initiatives in the future. Our network of libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped are engaged in pilot programs and developing such new innovations as accessible virtual reference programs and more Web-based offerings for patrons. The print disabled community should have access to the same new technological, educational and entertainment opportunities as their sighted friends."

White is pleased that so many Illinoisans are taking advantage of talking books, but he noted that as many as 150,000 citizens in our state are eligible to enroll in the service.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, as Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian, I have the pleasure of congratulating individuals and groups as they celebrate major milestones; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS) and its four regional Talking Book Centers are taking part in 75th anniversary celebrations this year marking the beginning of free braille library services for the blind; and

WHEREAS, the federal Pratt-Smoot Act was enacted on March 3, 1931 establishing free library services for blind adults under the administration of a National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) in the Library of Congress; and

WHEREAS, originally 19 libraries were created nationwide to serve the blind, and Illinois had one of the 19, located in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, in 1966 the Network of Illinois Libraries serving the print-impaired was created; and

WHEREAS, this network is administered by the Illinois Secretary of State, and is a division of the Illinois State Library; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois network consists of the TBBS regional library in Springfield and four regional Talking Book centers: the Southern Illinois Talking Book Center in Carterville; the Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center in East Peoria; the Voices of Vision Talking Book Center in Geneva; and the Chicago Public Library Talking Book Center, located in the Harold Washington Library Center and

WHEREAS, more than 27,000 Illinoisans are registered with and use the wide variety of materials provided by our network of libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped; and

WHEREAS, these print disabled individuals may choose from a collection of more than 400,000 items, ranging from audio books and braille materials to descriptive videos and magazines; and

WHEREAS, with the cooperation of the U.S. Postal Service, these materials are mailed free of charge to participants; and

WHEREAS, though this year is a celebration of the past, the network of libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped are engaged in pilot programs and developing such new innovations as accessible virtual reference programs and more Web-based offerings for patrons; and

WHEREAS, all citizens of Illinois are proud that the state has such a strong, cooperative network of libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that I, Jesse White, am honored to congratulate the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped on providing 75 years of outstanding service; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this proclamation be presented to NLS, the Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service and its four regional Talking Book Centers.



JESSE WHITE

Secretary of State and State Librarian

TBBS 75th ANNIV./ADD1

“That number will grow rapidly in the coming years as the ‘baby boom’ generation ages,” White said. “I strongly encourage anyone who qualifies, or who knows a friend, family member or loved one who may qualify, to sign up for this outstanding free service. These materials have the ability to greatly enhance the lives of citizens who cannot read regular printed material because of a visual or physical disability.”

Persons interested in more information, or wanting to register, may contact TBBS at 1-800-665-5576, option 6, or log on to the Secretary of State’s website at www.cyberdriveillinois.com, clicking on “Services” and “Illinois State Library”.

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