THE BROADCASTER

**R A D I O T A L K I N G B O O K S E R V I C E**

APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER │ 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

**RTBS Celebrates**

**50 Years of Service in 2024!**

Radio Talking Book Service (RTBS) is celebrating 50 Years of Service in 2024! We are excited to continue serving our listeners with a mission to connect individuals who are blind, low vision, or print impaired to news, information, arts, and culture through the human voice and technology. Team RTBS will be celebrating this milestone all year long!

Founded in 1974 by Dr. Craig Fullerton, Radio Talking Book Network (RTBN) is Nebraska’s Audio Companion and only radio reading service. Over 80 volunteers read newspapers and magazines, and their diverse voices are broadcast across Nebraska and southwest Iowa over the radio and internet to 11,967 listeners. In 1992, we added Listening Link, an educational reading service, providing audio versions of textbooks and course material necessary for academic success. RTBS introduced our newest service, Audio Description (AD) in 2023. RTBS partners with community venues to provide live AD for theater performances, exhibits, parades, and more. Team RTBS has provided AD services for 54 individuals and ensured accessibility at 34 performances to date. Through human connection, RTBS enables all people to remain active and engaged in their community!

**Celebrate with us!**

**50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

Save the Date! Join us on **September 18** at **Benson Theater** for an evening of celebration!

**$50K for 50 YEARS!**

We **need your help** to raise **$50,000** for our 50th Anniversary!

**Donate Today!**

**SPRING OPEN HOUSE**

Stop by the RTBS Studios on **May 16 from 4pm to 6pm** for a tour, snacks, & visit!

**GET YOUR TICKETS TODAY!!**

Radio Talking Book Service is excited to announce we will be holding our 8th Annual Wining in the Dark at Nosh Wine Lounge! Test your taste buds with wines from around the world in a blindfolded tasting and delight in delectable delicacies created for your pleasure by the chef at Nosh Wine Lounge.

WHEN:

Sunday, April 21

4 to 6 p.m.

WHERE:

Nosh Wine Lounge 1006 Dodge Street, Omaha

Get your tickets today!

There will be a raffle including a night at the Omaha Symphony, a Nebraska Bookshelf filled with signed copies, a Film Streams package, a golf outing, dinner at Block 16, and more!

Seating is limited. Please purchase tickets by April 19 at rtbs.org or call 402-572-3003 to RSVP. Tickets are $80/person including gratuity, raffle entry, and a donation to RTBS.

Sponsorship opportunities available; contact Cami at 402-572-3003.

**SAVE THE DATES!! DO GOOD DAYS ARE APRIL 24-27**

## Join in SHARE Do Good Days, April 24-27.

These 4 days are focused on all forms of support for local causes, and we can’t wait to see what the Omaha metro can do when we give together for more than one day!

Team RTBS is excited for our **Community Read- a-Book-a-thon** during Do Good Days! We are inviting folks to pop in to read a chapter (or two!) of a Nebraska authored book with a goal to finish recording the book in three days to broadcast on-air for our listeners!

## Do Good Days makes it easy to support us with your dollars – and more!

Visit shareomaha.org/nonprofit/radio- talking-book-service-inc to learn more!

**APRIL VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:**

**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHTS**

M A R C H 2 0 2 4 :

B R O O K E W I L L I A M S

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 2 4 : J I M E L Y

J A N U A R Y 2 0 2 4 : M E M E S M I T H

D E C E M B E R 2 0 2 3 : D A V E L A F E R L A

N O V E M B E R 2 0 2 3 : K A Y E B E L L I N O

O C T O B E R 2 0 2 3 : T O M G A R V E Y

S E P T E M B E R 2 0 2 3 : R A C H E L S A M S O N

A U G U S T 2 0 2 3 :

B O B G O D I N G

J U L Y 2 0 2 3 :

K E N D R A K A R B O W S K I

J U N E 2 0 2 3 :

J E N N Y W U L F F

M A Y 2 0 2 3 :

T O M S H O M A K E R

**LARRY THORNTON**

Larry Thornton is the consummate volunteer at RTBS. He always approaches his reading with a cheerful demeanor. He is fun and respectful with his reading partners and almost never says no to a substitution request. Born and raised in South Omaha and Bellevue,

Larry graduated from Bellevue High in 1965. He was drafted into the Army and spent a year in Vietnam. When he came back, he worked at several jobs before discovering the joy of driving a truck and operating heavy machinery. Larry covered the whole gambit, working short day runs to long hall runs in a sleeper truck. He tried working for UPS at one point but disliked their high-pressure schedules.

Eventually, he moved to Council Bluffs, where he still lives with his wife, Sue. The only thing he loves as much as his wife are his cars (and motorcycle!), including his ‘56 ‘hot rod’ Chevrolet, his 2011 Camaro, his Corvette, and his Harley Davidson. Every summer, Larry and Sue participate in many car shows and often win trophies. Summer is the only time when Larry can’t always answer the call for a last-minute weekend sub read. He’s been with us at RTBS for six years and is going strong. Catch Larry every Monday morning at 10am reading the Lincoln Journal Star, as well as Tuesday mornings at 9:15am reading the Kearney Hub. Learn more about Larry in his interview with Ryan O, on our podcast page.

IN MEMORY OF:

LUCILLE DUNLAVY ANNE FOLEY MIKE GAHERTY SHERRYL RISSI WILLARD SPECH

BY-RYAN OSENTOWSKI, PROGRAM DIRECTOR



BEKAH JERDE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# DIRECTOR'S CORNER

The past year was filled with new opportunities to serve a larger

audience, improve accessibility in community spaces, and create connections. Team RTBS introduced our first Spanish language programming, Mundo Latino, in 2023. Mundo Latino is a minority- owned publication and has been the voice of the Hispanic community in Nebraska since 1999. New in 2024, we added The Good News Show, a program filled with uplifting, encouraging news to provide a moment of relief in heavy news cycles. Team RTBS debuted our Meet the Author segment, a conversation between our volunteer readers and the Nebraska authors they read. Our new AD program is growing, expanding into more

theaters and beginning relationships with local art institutions. And, the best news...it’s our 50th Anniversary in 2024! What an incredible accomplishment fostered over the years by generations of dedicated volunteers, innovative staff members, supportive board members, and generous donors. Celebrate with us by attending an event, making a donation, volunteering, or telling a friend about RTBS. Stay tuned for the next 50 years!

# A NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Fifty years ago, Richard Nixon became the first U. S. president forced to resign after the Watergate Scandal. The 55-mile per hour national speed limit was approved to preserve gasoline in the country following the October 1973 oil embargo. The Sears Tower opened in Chicago as the world's tallest building. U. S. inflation reached 12.34 percent. And Radio Talking Book Service was born.

We have weathered many challenges since 1974, as a people, as a nation and as a radio station. And, as our population ages, the

RALPH MOROCCO

BOARD CHAIR

need for the essential services RTBS provides -- critical news, vital health information, delightful entertainment, and audio

description of local arts events -- continues to grow. These are challenging times. This year we'll choose our nation's leaders for the coming four years. We are confronting changing climate, working to avoid another world-wide recession, healing from the ravages of Covid-19, and coping with wars in the Middle East and in Europe. As a radio station, and as an audio description service, we continue to cope with the challenges of meeting the growing and changing needs of our listeners, and the annual dilemma of funding our services in the absence of federal or state support.

But we look forward to the years ahead. We are confident in the importance of our mission. We count on the generous gift of talent and time we receive from our committed volunteers, the enormous talent and skills of our dedicated staff, and the generous financial support of our listeners, and the foundations and compassionate donors who selflessly support our mission, allowing us to bring the printed word to life. Thank you for making it possible for Radio Talking Book to celebrate 50 years of service, and to prepare for 50 more!

**DONATIONS: April 2023-March 2024**

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Cari Sommer Charitable Fund Dixon Family Foundation

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*Radio Talking Book Service thanks everyone for their generous support!!*



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