**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 2021 NEWS L ET T ER │ 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

# The Show Goes On!

## One year ago, the Radio Talking Book Service made the difficult decision to close our doors and send our volunteers home due to the encroaching pandemic. Yet, the staff was adamant that our listeners should not be deprived of the news and information that was so critical to them during these perilous times. And so, the show did go on. Thanks to modern technology, we were able to bring the familiar voices of our readers into the homes of our listeners without interruption through remote recordings.



BY

RYAN OSENTOWSKI STATION MANAGER

## Every few weeks, the staff would discuss when and how we would reopen. Would it be mid-May, early June or late August? As the months rolled on and the COVID numbers mounted, we realized that, like most Americans, our work- from-home routine would be more long term than we had first hoped.

Now, a year later with three vaccines in circulation, we are finally solidifying our plans for a long-awaited reopening. Details are still evolving, and we are mindful of the caveat that this developing plan will only reach fruition if the situation continues to improve. But we cannot ignore the dawn of hope that is finally breaking to end this long, dark night of human isolation.

Through all of the anxiety, uncertainty and delays, our volunteers have remained constant, reliable, and firm in their resolve to help bring the printed word to our listeners. Thank you all for the past year. We love you and we can’t wait to see you again.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!**

* **April 19: Mission Monday**

Learn more about our work!

* **April 20: New Donor Tuesday**

If you’ve never given a gift to our organization, now’s the time!

Your gift could help us unlock a cash prize. (Plus, matching funds will double your gift!)

* **April 21: Wish List Wednesday**

Buy items from our wish list to support our work

* + **April 22: Volun-Thursday**

Join our volunteer team

* + - **April 23: Fund It Friday**

Help us meet our $5,000 goal! Your donation goes twice as far with matching funds!

* **April 24: Celebration Saturday**

Time to celebrate your generosity! Cheer for us as we hope to a win cash prize!

# DO GOOD WEEK is April 19-24!!

**Last year, 2020, marked the end of Omaha Gives – thank you for your past support!**

Mark your calendars for a new way to support our needs. **Join in SHARE Omaha’s Do Good Week, April 19-24, presented by FNBO.** This week is 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. **Do Good Week makes it easy to support us with your dollars – and more!**

**OVER $7,500 in MATCHING FUNDS!!**

Team RTBS is **super excited to announce** that we will have **over $7,500 in matching funds** available during Do Good Week to make your donations go twice as far! Mark your calendars & join us April 19-24! Team RTBS will keep you posted about how you can bring the printed word to life during Do Good Week! A **big thank you to our dedicated RTBS Board of Directors** for their generosity in providing this match!

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

**NEW PODCASTS AVAILABLE!**

**Tech It Out! Nebraska Life Huskerholics**

**rtbs.org**

**APRIL VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:**

**N**

 **DICK HARRINGTO**

### If you listen closely, you might hear a hint of a Boston accent because Dick Harrington and his three brothers were raised in that area. However, he has traveled the world enough that little of it remains. Dick enjoyed a 26 year career in the Air Force that took him to many states and overseas to Denmark, Spain, and Vietnam.

He followed that by working for FEMA for 14 years.

RICHARD "DICK" HARRINGTON

2020 STEP FORWARD VETERAN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

### In 2000 Dick retired and began his “careers” in volunteering. He began volunteering for RTBS in March of 2010 and has been the weekly reader/recorder of the Norfolk Daily News. Dick has been serving on the Board of Directors since April of 2014 and took on the Secretary responsibility almost from day one on the Board. He has also represented RTBS at community events including the CHI Health Fair and the Vision Resource Fair. Dick has also conducted special interviews with veterans used as part of special holiday programming. Dick has provided the introduction for our weekly Veterans Hour program including his personal contact information for those needing VA services for the blind, as well as any veteran service. Dick has been a volunteer at the Omaha VA hospital for 11 years. Dick helped form the Final Salute Society, to give deceased veterans with no known family a proper farewell at the Omaha National Cemetery.

**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHTS**

M A R C H 2 0 2 1 : D A V E R A D L I F F

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 2 1 : L A U R A C O O P E R

J A N U A R Y 2 0 2 1 : D O N V A N

M O O R L E G H E M

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

N O V E M B E R 2 0 2 0 : D I C K H A R R I N G T O N

O C T O B E R 2 0 2 0 : S U E B E E G H L Y

S E P T E M B E R 2 0 2 0 : F R A N K H E R Z O G

A U G U S T 2 0 2 0 : R I T A K U E N N I N G

J U L Y 2 0 2 0 :

B R A D S C H R O E D E R

J U N E 2 0 2 0 :

L A U R E N B A R T E L S

M A Y 2 0 2 0 :

J I M C A R L S O N

Dick was honored as the 2020 ServeNebraska Step Forward Veteran Volunteer of the Year. He was chosen by the Governor for this prestigious award for his dedication to services that impact people throughout the state. RTBS is lucky to have you as part of our volunteer team!

BY-MEME SMITH, VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR



JANE NIELSEN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



RALPH MOROCCO BOARD CHAIR

# DIRECTOR'S CORNER

### I am so impressed by and proud of Team RTBS! Bekah, Ryan, MeMe, and Michael responded to the COVID-19 crisis a year ago by transforming our dedicated volunteers into remote readers. We have over 60 volunteers reading newspapers, grocery and department store ads, and more, seven-days-a-week from their homes. We were able to maintain our 24/7 programming with no interruption and little change. We produced programming to directly address the needs for our listeners concerning COVID including a weekly program highlighting food delivery options, access to streaming Easter services, and a special edition of the Community Calendar that focuses on mail-in ballots and other election information. The Team modified our weekly, statewide Community Calendar to share closures and cancellations due to the virus. And now we are sharing re-openings; food assistance; medical assistance; and daily COVID updates with resources, contact information, and recently, vaccine information for our listeners.

Finally, the RTBS Team is hard at work on a plan to safely reopen the studios and office to our wonderful volunteers as early as June.

Thanks Team!

**A NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

A year has passed since the WHO declared a pandemic. What incredible changes we’ve all experienced. Changes have been required everywhere. How we shop, how we interact in person, whether we can see sons or daughters, parents or siblings, how we celebrate the joys and acknowledge the tragedies in life, are all much different today than they were just one year ago. RTBS has adjusted as well. Volunteers no longer read in our studios but have stepped up to bring the gift of their voices for our regular programming from their homes. Board meetings have been held by conference call or zoom. Our dedicated staff team has worked from both home and our office to keep our listener’s radios and web streaming services working and our website fresh.

As Board chair, I want to thank the volunteers who have adjusted to new technologies and new ways of doing things so that we could keep our commitment to deliver the news and information our listeners depend upon, while keeping staff and volunteers safe. I would also like to thank the donors – associations, foundations, individuals and listeners – who have helped us continue to meet the needs of our listeners for the news and information that is so critically important in these difficult times. We hope much better days lie ahead.

**DONATIONS: April 2020-March 2021**

#### CORPORATE/FOUNDATIONS

Back 2 Health Bank of the West

Cari Sommer Charitable Fund Dixon Family Foundation

Edward & Lida Robinson Charitable Trust Ethel S. Abbott Charitable Foundation Farm Credit Services of America

Gilbert M. and Martha H. Hitchcock Foundation Grant Dental Plaza

Hawks Foundation

Home Instead Senior Care Foundation Ike & Roz Friedman Foundation Immanuel Vision Foundation

JK Barker Foundation Kroger Stores

Manota E. Simon Foundation

Marshall & Mary Brondum Special Assistance Foundation The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation

Midlands Community Foundation

Milton S. & Corinne N. Livingston Foundation Oliver & Ferrol Barklage Foundation Trust Retina Center of Nebraska, P.C.

Robert Herman Storz Foundation Rupert Dunklau Foundation

Sarpy County Chamber of Commerce Foundation Sherwood Foundation

Seda Family Foundation TD Ameritrade Steinhart Foundation

University of Nebraska-Omaha Webster Family Foundation William R. Patrick Foundation

#### WINING IN THE DARK 2020 SPONSORS

Security National Bank

Paula Dietering, Prairie Wealth Advisors Outlook Nebraska

Bonnie Jerde

Bland Cares Foundation Bank of the West

Matt Jetter, Medicare Insurance Solutions Immanuel Communities

Identity Marketing Group

Golden Years Senior Relocation Experts Oh-K Fast Print

#### ORGANIZATIONS/COMMUNITY GROUPS

Battle Creek Lions Club Crete Lions Club

Hastings Evening Lions Club Hildreth Lions Club

Neligh Lions Club Ogallala Lions Club

Omaha Association of the Blind Papillion Area Lions Club Patient Care Counsel

Pierce Lions Club Tekamah Lions Club

#### UNDERWRITING

Enable Savings Plan Hillcrest Heath Systems Outlook Enrichment Senior Blue Book

#### INDIVIDUALS

Dorothy Abbott Cathie Adams Donna Aman Jon Anderson Nancy Anderson Anonymous

Howard Bachman Kim Balkovec Elizabeth Banset Kenneth Barjenbruch Melissa Barnett

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Ray Buell

John & Nancy Burch Sue Burger

Daniel & Sharon Burns Gerald Bushnell

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Connie Butterworth Nick & Evelyn Calava Jim Carlson

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Kim E Crayne Alistair Cullum

Charlotte & Roger Curry Nancy Davenport Richard & Melba Dean Lois Lynn Denzler

Jodie & Jim DeSordi Diane Diffey

Nancy Dirks Tami Doll

Marie Dougherty Mary Douglas Steve Douglas Marina Drake

Harlan & Teri Dreessen Wayne & Sheila Dreessen Lucille Dunlavy

Lori Ecklebe Gary Emenitove

Joe Ernst Bill Everhart

Amy & Todd Feltz Nancy Flearl George Flock Peggy Flynn Christina Frost Jack Frost

Jim Fullerton John Fullerton Robert Fullerton

Peter & Mary Gadzinski Mike & Ellen Gaherty Ruth Garrison

Pat Geary Cynthia Gibbs

Steve & Peg Gibbs Bonnie Gill Joanne Gilmore Bob Goding

Sue Goding Polly Goecke Jan Gorman

Katherine Graham Jeanne Gray

Patrick & Jocelynn Gray Sherri Green

Helen Griffith Jeffery Grinnell Carol Grote Anne & John Hall Peggy Hall Wendy Hamilton

Michael & Britt Hanson Lee Harlan

Dick Harrington Michaela Hart Elizabeth Harvey Cheryl Hazel Edith Hecht Brenda Hennigs Iris Herse

Frank Herzog Monica Hickman Don Hieb

Patti & Robert Hill Walt Hively Catherine Hohman Helen Hohndorf Lindsey Holley Nancy Holloran Marise Hopkins Donna Houghton

Kathy Hoyt Tara Hudson

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Bekah Jerde & Bart Vargas Matt Jetter

Alan Johnson

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Marj Krawczyk Jayne Krier Eunice Krohn

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Catherine McGowan

Raedeen McGowan Lisa McIntosh

Kristi McKamy

Dennis & Debra McMillan Melissa McMullen

Irene Meaker

Celeste & Frank Mech Peggy Menck

Linda & Thomas Mertz Barbara Metz

Mark & Carolyn Miller Weenonah Miller Rick Miner

Jim Minovsky Stephanie Miske

Richard & Helen Mitchell Ron Mohler

Ralph Morocco Karen Morris

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Jody Neathery-Castro Dean Nicholson

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Daniel & Annie Rezac Mary Reznicek

Marty Riemenschneider Beth Reilly

Marvin & Gloria Rinkol Darlene Rischling Todd Robinson

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First responders to COVID-19 pandemic

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Mike & Ellen Gaherty Shelly Gray

Michael Halula Bekah Jerde Janet McCrae Ralph Morocco Dean Nielsen, Jr Jane Nielsen

Ron (RE) Nystrom Ryan Osentowski Our grandchildren-

John, Mary Grace, Julia, Liz, Isam, Emily, & Ryan

Bill Rasmussen Mona Jean Roberts MeMe Smith Willard Spech Wyatt

The Fabulous RTBS Staff The great people & orgs that

help me with my vision loss!

#### GIFTS IN MEMORY OF

George "Andy" Anderson & Audrey Wright Anderson Lola Baker my grandmother Ray Barr

J Clarice "Dee" Bartek Ednamae Beaty Sarah Bogatz

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Kenneth Carlson Bob Casper

Jefford & Patricia Cold Eloise Craft

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Isabelle Trobough & Bernice Falk Ed & Darlene Veylupek

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

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