

## Perkins Cassette Players and More...From New Perkins Online Store!

The Perkins Library is very pleased to have a small section of the new Perkins Online Store devoted to the sale of Talking Book Accessories. All of the featured Talking Book products are intended to make your listening more comfortable, portable, convenient, private, and most important – enjoyable! In addition to talking book accessories, you can also purchase the world famous Perkins Braille, Perkins Panda, and Perkins publications through the online store. We encourage you to visit [www.perkinsstore.org](http://www.perkinsstore.org) to browse our products and to order through our secure online website.

Six talking book products are currently being offered for sale to augment your listening experience. Products range from a small 4-track cassette player weighing less than 8 ounces to a special sleep switch for either the Library of Congress cassette player loaned by the Library or one for the small 4-track player sold commercially. Special earphones and headphones can also be purchased to facilitate private listening.

If you don't have access to the internet, you can call 1-877-473-7546 to place an order.

Here are the Talking Book Accessory products currently offered:

**Sony portable 4-track cassette player \$79.95**

Weighs less than 8 ounces and measures 4 inches by 3 inches. Plays 2-track and 4-track cassettes and records on 2 tracks. It features a built-in speaker and can also be used with headphones. Runs on 2 AA batteries (not included).

**AC Adapter for Sony Duel-Speed Cassette Players. \$12.95**

**Sleep Switch for Library of Congress Cassette Player. \$15.95**

This innovative "sleep switch" was designed by a talking book listener in Montana to help him keep from losing his place when he would relax and fall asleep while enjoying his book. The cord plugs into the Library of Congress cassette player in the remote jack, and the listener holds down an easy-to-press switch on the end of the cord. The talking book plays; but when the listener releases the

**Library Hours:** Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Phone:** 1-800-852-3133 or 617-972-7240 **Fax:** 617-972-7363

**TTY:** 617-972-7690 **Website:** [www.PerkinsLibrary.org](http://www.PerkinsLibrary.org)

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switch, the book stops at that point. The 6-foot cord allows for the machine to be conveniently placed beside a bed or lounge chair with plenty of room to spare.

**Sleep Switch for Dual-Speed Cassette Player. 15.95**

This particular "sleep switch" was designed especially to work with a variety of small dual-speed cassette players including the unit sold by Perkins. Similar to the Sleep Switch for the Library of Congress Cassette Player (above), this sleep switch features an auto play setting at the end of the 4-foot cord to allow for continuous listening.

Runs on two AA batteries (not included).

**Vanco Dynamic Earphones. \$8.95**

Designed for private listening in one ear. Comfortable over-the-ear design. Allows listeners to relax or lay down in complete comfort.

**Noise Canceling Headphones. \$38.99**

Portable, lightweight and fold up for easy carrying. For listeners reading in noisy environments.

**Holiday Cards featuring Student Artwork. \$10.00**

Every year Perkins students tap into their creativity to produce heartwarming holiday cards. Artwork depicts a snowy scene – featuring a house with a candy cane light and a sign that reads “The North Pole.”

Inside contains a handwritten message from the artist: “The North Pole is open 24 hours a day, 364 days a year.” The cards proclaim, “Seasons Greetings” in both print and braille. Sets of 10 are \$10 each, plus shipping. Orders placed now will be ready to ship in early November.

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**New Online Training Course for Perkins Library Online Catalog**

Would you like to use your computer to order your favorite titles on tape or in braille or large print from the Perkins Library anytime, day or night? The Perkins Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) is here for all of you who have computers to access our collection, see what we have through searching on the computer, and then order titles online.

Now we have also developed a new online training course that can teach you how to use the Library’s web-based catalog. Whether you are totally new to using computers and need lots of help learning to search or are an experienced computer user who just needs more specific advice on searching this particular system, this training course can help you get started and get the results you are looking for.

In six easy lessons you’ll learn how to get started; search and order talking books by author, title, subject, series or

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narrator; locate and order described videos; review the list of materials you've checked out; and review and update the list of books you've requested or placed on reserve. Before you know it, you'll be an expert at using our system!

To try this training course, simply visit:

[www.carrolltech.org/classes/opac](http://www.carrolltech.org/classes/opac).

You will then be prompted to register to use it; but there is no charge to register, and your information will remain private.

This state-of-the-art, accessible online course was developed in collaboration with the Carroll Center for the Blind. Funding for the development of the Keystone Library Automation System Online Web-OPAC training course was provided by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners through a Library Service and Technology Act grant.

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## **Worcester Telegram & Gazette Now on Newsline**

Our Newsline Service has been enhanced for readers in the Worcester area, and other interested patrons, through the addition of The Worcester Telegraph and Gazette (T&G) starting on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Through the Newsline Service, patrons can

listen through synthesized speech output to twelve Massachusetts newspapers and over 200 other national papers via a touch-tone telephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The funding for the addition of this title was made possible by a generous grant from the Memorial Foundation for the Blind.

As Worcester is the second-largest metropolitan area in Massachusetts, we are thrilled that this important newspaper will now be a part of the Newsline program. The T&G reaches 75% of adult households in Worcester County. With Newsline access to the T&G, people who are blind or visually impaired can read local news, learn about activities in the area, get information about city/county-wide meetings and events, and become more connected to their local communities.

### **Massachusetts newspapers currently available on Newsline include:**

- Berkshire Eagle
- Boston Globe
- Christian Science Monitor
- Lowell Sun
- North Adams Transcript
- Nashoba Publishing (covering Ayer, Groton, Harvard, Shirley, Townsend, and Pepperell)
- Springfield Republican
- Worcester Telegram and Gazette

To sign up for Newsline, contact the Library. You will be sent the local

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access number to dial to call Newline in your community, along with your identification number and security code. A Quick Reference Guide is available in large print, braille or on cassette, as well as a Newline tutorial tape. For more information call 1-800-852-3133 or 617-972-7240, email [Library@Perkins.org](mailto:Library@Perkins.org) or visit [www.perkinslibrary.org](http://www.perkinslibrary.org).

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## **Perkins Braille & Talking Book Library Salutes Patrons 100 Years and Older**

If you're looking for the best new novel by Danielle Steel, just ask Winchester resident, Audrey Wright. At 103 years old, she has been reading nearly all of her life and has continued to do so despite losing her eyesight due to macular degeneration well over a decade ago. An active patron of the Perkins Library, Mrs. Wright is one of over 1,600 readers above age 100 in the nation, including 28 in Massachusetts, who have been welcomed into the "10<sup>2</sup> Talking Book Club" by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress.

On April 20th, Mrs. Wright represented Massachusetts "10<sup>2</sup>"

inductees at a luncheon held on the Perkins campus, at which she received special recognition and a plaque honoring her. In his remarks, Frank Kurt Cylke, Director of NLS stated "The 10<sup>2</sup> Talking Book Club was conceived to recognize the accomplishments of the national reading program's centenarians."

"The Perkins Library is wonderful for my mother," says Wright's daughter, Beryl Browne. Born in 1901 in Rowe, Mass., Audrey Wright, mother of three, taught school in Vermont and, after losing her husband, taught kindergarten and third graders at the Cugler School in Somerville, Mass. This great, great grandmother was "very talented with needlepoint and cross stitch," according to Browne. When her eyesight failed, "she didn't know what to do with herself." At the age of 91, Mrs. Wright joined the Perkins Library after her great niece introduced her to talking books. Mrs. Wright now regularly enjoys *Guidepost* magazine; mysteries, especially those by Mary Higgins Clark; and, of course, a good Danielle Steele novel.

**Dots & Decibels is also available on cassette, in braille, or via email. To change the format you receive, give us a call at 1-800-852-3133 or email [library@Perkins.org](mailto:library@Perkins.org)**

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## **New Perkins History Title Now Available**

Most of our readers know that Helen Keller received her early education here at Perkins and then went on to become one of the renowned figures of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, did you know that Anne Sullivan, Helen's teacher, graduated from Perkins as Valedictorian of the class of 1886? Many of you also might not know that Charles Dickens in 1842 wrote about a visit he made to Perkins and described meeting with Laura Bridgman, the school's first deafblind student. You also might be interested to learn that Samuel Gridley Howe, Perkins' first Director, fought in the war for Greek Independence before he came to Perkins; and his wife, Julia Ward Howe, famous orator and abolitionist, wrote "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

A new book, Perkins School for the Blind—The Campus History Series, published in 2004, is a treasure trove of interesting facts such as these, spanning from the founding of Perkins in 1829 to the present day.

Kimberly French, an accomplished writer and essayist whose work has been included in the Best American Essays series, has compiled this rich, detailed history of the Perkins School

for the Blind, tapping both the extensive archives of the school as well as the rich experience of the Perkins staff. Photographs and engaging prose cover interesting details about Laura Bridgman, Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller as well as the Perkins legacy of establishing quality education programs for blind and deafblind people worldwide.

French's colorful history is available to borrow through the BTBL in either cassette or braille format. It was digitally recorded as a master through our Recording Studio in Watertown, and the book numbers are **RCM 790** (cassette) or **BRM 1067** (braille edition). There are also large print, regular print, 2-track audio versions and braille copies available for purchase for \$21 per copy through the Publications division of the Perkins Public Relations office.

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## **NLS Website Helps You "Know Your Narrators"**

Many of our readers have called to ask for books read by their favorite National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) narrators of our RC cassette titles. Now NLS has made it easier for readers with computers to get more information on the people behind the voices people love to

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listen to! If you would like to get more information on a particular NLS narrator, you can now log onto a special website ([www.loc.gov/nls/narrators](http://www.loc.gov/nls/narrators)). A few of the narrators have even included links to mp3 audio clips.

This information will only be available for the narrators who choose to make their information public. Some NLS books are narrated at the NLS professional recording studios, while others are narrated by other outside contracting companies.

Here is how the website works: Log on to the address above. Find the narrator's name in which you are interested and follow the links. If the narrator you have chosen is from NLS, you will link directly to a descriptive page if that narrator has chosen to make his or her information available. If the narrator is from an outside contracting agency, such as American Printing House for the Blind (APH), you will link to the company's website. Then if a person's link is active on that page, you will be able to click on it to get more information.

In addition, library patrons can send comments, criticism and letters of appreciation to national narrators in the following way:

MAIL:  
Name of narrator  
C/O Recording Studio Director  
NLS/Library of Congress  
1291 Taylor Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20542

FAX: 202-707-0711  
EMAIL: [nls@loc.gov](mailto:nls@loc.gov)

NLS will forward the feedback you send to the narrator's recording studio.

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## 2005 Summer Reading Program Winners Announced

This summer, thirty-seven readers participated in our annual BTBL Summer Reading Program, "Going Places at Your Library."

Collectively, the participants in the program, including elementary, middle school, and high school age students read a total of 285 books.

The Grand Prize Winners were:

**Grade K-3:** Mikaëlla Besson, Dorchester, Age 7, Read 20 books.

**Grade 4-6:** Keith Guenet, Abington, Age 11, read 21 books.

**Grade 7-8:** Sarah Mavilia, Cohasset, age 12, read 8 books.

**Young Adult:** Scott Varga, Holliston, age 14, read 39 books.

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### **Out of State Braille Category:**

Jessie Laurie, Georges Mills, NH, age 12, read 15 books.

All participants really enjoyed the program—both reading interesting books as well as receiving fun prizes after reporting on their titles.

Several parents let us know how seriously the students took their participation.

Our many thanks go out to Marilyn Poindexter, Children's Services Librarian, who both started the annual summer reading program and coordinated it during the five years she had worked at Perkins.

We're sure that children, young adults, parents and teachers in our reading audience will join us in wishing Marilyn well on her relocation to Mississippi to be near her family. Thanks also to the Friends of the Braille and Talking Book Library who have generously supported this program.

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### **Check Out Our New Magazines**

The Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library has added several cassette magazines to its collection. You might like to add them to your subscription list. They are:

National Geographic Traveler – Each of its eight issues per year

describes destinations around the world and shares practical tips to smooth and enrich your travel.

Vital Speeches of the Day – A biweekly compendium of important speeches made recently by leaders in many fields, including science, sports, government, religion, education, the arts, and business provides a sampling of contemporary thought in the United States.

Discover what the experts are saying.

Your Dog – This monthly from the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University covers new products for dogs and discusses canine behavior and health. (Also available in braille)

If you would like to subscribe to any or all of these magazines on cassette, just call Vicki Fallis at 617-972-7247.

### **Library Adds TTY Service**

Thanks to a generous gift from the Friends of the Perkins Library, a TTY (teletypewriter) has been installed for the use of patrons with hearing and/or speech impairments. **To use the TTY, call 617-972-7690.**

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## Lt. Governor Kerry Healey Tours Library and Reads with Students

On a chilly afternoon, Lt. Gov. Kerry Healey visited the Perkins campus to learn more about the Library and read with students.

“It was very encouraging to see both state and federal governments working together to make books on tape available to so many people with disabilities,” said Healey. “I was very impressed by the efficient operation of Perkins Braille & Talking Book Library, and the extraordinary number of people served. I wish all public libraries worked as well.”

After touring the Library, Healey joined Perkins students in reading from print/braille copies of Dr. Seuss’ book,

*Horton Hatches the Egg*, as part of the National Education Association’s Read Across America event, a weeklong celebration of Dr. Seuss’ birthday that promotes reading every day. Following the reading, children asked Healey questions ranging from, “Where do you live?” (Answer: “In Beverly.”) to “How did you get to be Lieutenant Governor?” (Answer: “I had to be elected.”) to “Do you know Arnold Schwarzenegger?” (Answer: “I’ll be meeting with him soon.”) Healey’s visit also provided a great deal of fun for the Perkins students who enjoyed the opportunity to meet such a well-known public official in their own classroom!

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# Dots & Decibels

PERKINS BRAILLE & TALKING BOOK LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

Free Matter  
for the Blind  
or Handicapped

Perkins School for the Blind

175 North Beacon Street

Watertown, MA

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