In addition to the 85,000 titles available to our library patrons through the National Library Service network, Braille Institute is also proud to offer the California Collection, a carefully selected set of audio and braille books featuring California themes, locations, and authors. The purpose of the collection is to ensure access to materials celebrating the history and culture of our state.

The California Collection includes over 3,000 titles, including fiction books like *The Mistress of Spices* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (CDB 01457), the story of a woman with supernatural gifts who opens a curative shop in California. The collection also features non-fiction titles such as *California Lighthouses* by Ray Jones (CDB 02067) and *California: Our Western Wonderland* by John Koch (CDB 02831), as well as popular history books like *Southern California in the ‘50s* by Charles Phoenix (CBB 02186).

Many of the older titles in the California Collection began their lifespan as reel-to-reel tapes. To properly preserve these books for today’s readers, the audio technicians at Braille Institute process the reel-to-reel tapes with heat and dehydration before converting them to analog cassettes. The cassettes are then digitized and reborn as downloadable audio files to be enjoyed on our digital talking book players.

For braille readers, the California Collection also includes a new set of essays in Unified English Braille (UEB) code, featuring articles, stories, and poems by members of the Southern California Writers Showcase. To explore the California Collection, contact a Reader Advisor at the Braille Institute Library by calling (800) 808-2555.
CALIFORNIA COLLECTION PICKS

My Friend, You are Legally Blind: A Writer’s Struggle with Macular Degeneration by Charles Champlin (CDB 02029)
A brief look at the author’s love of books and how age-related macular degeneration brought about a detour in his life as a writer.

The Other Side of Mulholland by Stephen Randall (CDB 02303)
In this hilarious novel about the manners and mores in contemporary Los Angeles, twins Perry and Tim Newman fight the ties binding them to their past.

Paradise Bay by James Michael Pratt (CDB 02210)
Although Jack Santos grew up believing that his father died in Vietnam, he later learns that he is instead alive and in a coma. By reading his father’s journals, Jack discovers truths about his family’s past.

Edward R. Murrow and the Birth of Broadcast Journalism by Bob Edwards (CDB 02418)
Edward R. Murrow was one of America’s most celebrated broadcast journalists who changed the way we understand the news. He pioneered “You Are There” broadcasts, radio reports from foreign locations, and nightly news roundups. Murrow was a complex, driven man who set a high standard to which those who followed could aspire.

The Dodgers: 120 Years of Dodgers Baseball by Glenn Stout (CDB 02419)
Published in 2004, this book traces the story of the Los Angeles Dodgers from their birth as the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1884, through the heart-wrenching move to Los Angeles in 1958, and up to the modern era. The Dodgers’ rich legacy includes stories about Jackie Robinson, Walter O’Malley, Sandy Koufax, and Tommy Lasorda.

Cactus Flower by Alice Duncan (CDB 02839)
When a desperate Eulalie Gibb comes to the remote Southwestern frontier town of Rio Penasco to escape a murderous maniac, no one, least of all Eulalie herself, believes she’ll find the love of her life there.

Farewell My Country by A. J. Harris (CDB 02840)
This biographical novel is set against the backdrop of the 1950’s McCarthy era, when anti-communist panic gripped America. Based on the true story of Dr. Jack S. Harris, it tells the experiences of a patriot/hero who was falsely labeled a traitor. Dr. Harris was an associate professor at the University of Chicago, a member of the Office of Strategic Services during World War II, and a prominent member of the United Nations Secretariat.
In 2017, the Braille Institute library team recorded three original audiobooks for the National Library Service collection. These three titles for young readers are the first in a planned series of digitally created audiobooks available for download by NLS users across the country. Emily Yancy, a professional voice actor based in Los Angeles, generously donated her time and talent to narrate two books by Willa Robinson – *I Will Be a Teacher When I Grow Up* and *I Will Be a Lawyer When I Grow Up*. These titles were chosen because of their empowering message for children who are dreaming about their futures. “I had fun working with the library team,” Ms. Yancy said. “We had some laughs, and I was glad to bring my voice to the project. If I can help young people make good choices in life, I’ll be glad to help.” Another skilled voice actor named James Hayden contributed a third children’s book called *What is a Friend?*, written by Etan Boritzer.

**PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:** *The Arcadia Public Library*

– Melissa Camaiore, Arcadia Public Library

At the Arcadia Public Library, we’re committed to serving all members of our community, including people with visual impairments. We have collections for everyone, including audiobooks on CD, Playaways, eMedia, and digital magazines. We are proud to be a long-standing community partner of Braille Institute. We host a collection of Braille Institute digital talking books and machines, as well as braille books for both children and adults. The Arcadia Public Library values its partnership with Braille Institute, because it allows us to best serve all of our patrons. This partnership allows our patrons to utilize Braille Institute resources, materials, and services in the San Gabriel Valley despite the geographic distance between our two organizations. The Arcadia Public Library looks forward to continuing and growing our beneficial partnership with the Braille Institute far into the future.

**BRAILLE INSTITUTE Creates FIRST DIGITAL AUDIOBOOKS for National Collection**

In 2017, the Braille Institute library team recorded three original audiobooks for the National Library Service collection. These three titles for young readers are the first in a planned series of digitally created audiobooks available for download by NLS users across the country. Emily Yancy, a professional voice actor based in Los Angeles, generously donated her time and talent to narrate two books by Willa Robinson – *I Will Be a Teacher When I Grow Up* and *I Will Be a Lawyer When I Grow Up*. These titles were chosen because of their empowering message for children who are dreaming about their futures. “I had fun working with the library team,” Ms. Yancy said. “We had some laughs, and I was glad to bring my voice to the project. If I can help young people make good choices in life, I’ll be glad to help.” Another skilled voice actor named James Hayden contributed a third children’s book called *What is a Friend?*, written by Etan Boritzer.

*I Will Be a Teacher When I Grow Up* is available on BARD using number DBC 12111

*I Will Be a Lawyer When I Grow Up* is available on BARD using number DBC 12112

*What is a Friend?* is available on BARD using number DBC 12113
When Palmer L. first visited Braille Institute Library headquarters in Los Angeles in 1994 and saw where talking book machines were refurbished and brought back to life for our readers, a switch went on in his head. “Maybe I can help Braille Institute as a volunteer by utilizing my electronics and computer expertise,” he thought to himself.

This California native’s dynamic talents are the result of a lifetime passion for problem-solving and all things electrical, initiated by his first electric train set at age three. A U.S. Navy Radioman in the 1950s, Palmer’s career path took him from electricity to electronics to computer technology.

But Palmer’s volunteer aspirations lay dormant for some 15 years until he finally retired in 2009 at age 77 from MagTek, a manufacturer of security systems for credit card authentication.

One month after retiring, Palmer became a Braille Institute volunteer. And every Tuesday since then he has taken a public bus from his home to our Library headquarters to spend the day repairing and cleaning Library talking book machines. “I feel like I’m doing something that makes a difference for people who are blind,” he says.

Palmer is also one of Braille’s most benevolent donors, including the Institute in his estate plan and making generous annual donations. In March, Palmer will join other supporters who have created a special donor challenge to stimulate gifts from Library readers and other friends who want to keep our Library strong.

Palmer knows that although Braille receives a small financial appropriation from the California State Library, donors must still give more than $2 million each year to keep our Braille Institute Library operating.

If you would like to donate to our Library and Braille Institute, please call our Philanthropy Department at 1 (800) BRAILLE (272-4553), Ext 1238.
DISCOVER FREE RESOURCES
to Live Well with Low Vision

FREE LOW VISION SERVICES

Our Braille Institute Low Vision Rehabilitation Specialists provide free low vision consultations at all of our six centers in Southern California, in your home, or in your community.

• Sample adaptive products (i.e. hand-held magnifiers, talking watches, printing guides, and large print materials)

Other Free Services

• Learn strategies to cope with sight loss
• Benefit from one-on-one assistance with independent living skills
• Sign up to receive an easy to use, talking book machine and electronic downloads of audio books, magazines, and newspapers
• Learn about adaptive and mainstream technology (i.e. computers, iPhones, Androids, iPads, Kindles, and other devices)

INCLUDE BRAILLE INSTITUTE IN YOUR WILL

While it’s natural to leave bequests to loved ones, there’s another group that deserves your generosity: children and adults who are blind or visually impaired.

By including Braille Institute of America in your will or trust, you’ll help brighten the lives of the thousands of children and adults served by Braille Institute each year.

Please designate your bequest to “Braille Institute of America, Inc., a California Nonprofit Corporation with principal offices currently located at 741 North Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90029-3594.”

Tax Identification Number: 95-1641426. To request more information, call our Philanthropy Department at 1 (800) BRAILLE (272-4553), Ext. 1256.
Author Visit: Thursday, March 8th at 1:00 p.m.
Join us at the Braille Institute Library for a reading by Dr. Edmond J. Clinton III, who will be reading from his book *Clifton’s and Clifford Clinton: A Cafeteria and a Crusader*. Dr. Clinton’s book, which has recently been added to our California Collection (CDB 2858), tells the story of the famed philanthropist and activist Clifford Clinton, who created the downtown Los Angeles landmark Clifton’s Cafeteria in 1931. Along with his wife Nelda, Clinton fed hungry Angelinos for decades with an open door policy and a “pay what you wish” motto. Clinton applied his principles to everything he did, including his community advocacy. He searched out “graft and corruption” and advocated tirelessly for “clean, decent, and honest government” for the people of Los Angeles.

Library Open House: Thursday, April 19th at 10:00 a.m.
Save the date for the annual Braille Institute Library Open House! The theme for 2018 is “Braille Institute Leads to Independence.” The Open House will take place in the Los Angeles library. The program will feature hands-on demonstrations of the latest library technology, fun events for children, and appearances by a popular narrator, an author, and an inspirational speaker. More details are forthcoming, so check your mailboxes and look for an email with a full schedule of events. For more information, contact the library at bils@brailleinstitute.org or 1 (800) 808-2555.

Author Event at Los Angeles Public Library: Thursday, May 24th at 7:30 p.m.
Mark your calendars for a unique upcoming event for book lovers! Braille Institute is partnering with the Library Foundation of Los Angeles to welcome Stephen Kuusisto, the author of *Planet of the Blind* and the forthcoming memoir *Have Dog, Will Travel*. Mr. Kuusisto will be speaking at the Los Angeles Central Library as part of the ALOUD series of author talks. Be on the lookout for more information, and please contact Reed Strege at (323) 906-3185 or rwstrege@brailleinstitute.org if you are interested in attending.
Cassettes are Going...Going...Gone!

The National Library Services (NLS) has declared its cassettes and cassette players to be obsolete. Most library patrons are using the newer digital format for their books, but there are a few of you out there who are still using cassettes. You may continue to use the yellow C-1 cassette player if you find it useful, but you are encouraged to return the cassette player to the Library if you are no longer using it.

For those of you who do not yet have a digital player, please contact Ivan Johnson at 1 (800) 808-2555 to get yours today.

Braille Institute Anaheim Center Relocated for Remodeling

Attention Orange County patrons! Due to the current construction of the new Anaheim center, your library service has moved to the

Laguna Hills Neighborhood Center at
24411 Ridge Route Road, Suite 110,
Laguna Hills, CA, 92653

You may continue to call (714) 503-2126 to order books through the mail, or you may call the Laguna Hills Neighborhood Center at (949) 330-5062 to pick up your books in person. You may also contact the main library in Los Angeles for your library needs by calling 1 (800) 808-2555. Construction is anticipated to be completed in one year.

Send Us Your Email Address!

Would you prefer to receive news and updates from the library via email? Please email the library at bils@brailleinstitute.org or call 1 (800) 808-2555 to provide us with your email address. Thank you for helping us save money and protect the environment by reducing waste.

Download the Telephone Reader Program Apps on your Smartphone or Tablet

The Telephone Reader Program (TRP) App has been updated for both the Apple and Android platforms. Look for the app in the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store by searching for TRP News. Once you install the app, you can access newspapers, magazines, and community information read by skilled narrators anytime, anywhere!

A sneak peek of the new Anaheim center.
JOIN A BOOK CLUB TODAY

Have you ever considered joining a book club? The Braille Institute Library Book Club in Los Angeles has been going strong for over ten years. The club meets for a lively discussion on the last Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. We read a variety of books throughout the year. Readers who are unable to meet in person are encouraged to participate over the telephone. If you enjoy exploring different viewpoints and talking about the themes inspired by the books you read, please call Siran Aytayan at 1 (800) 808-2555 and ask to join the LA Book Club.

The Braille Institute Santa Barbara Center also offers a book club, which you can attend in person or join remotely via phone or Internet. Subjects range from science fiction, historical fiction, mystery and more! The scope of the discussions goes well beyond the stories themselves. Would you like to join, or perhaps host, a book club? Call Nate Streeper at (805) 898-8318. We’ll let you know what book clubs are currently in session. And if none of the clubs interest you, we can help you start one of your own!
Discover the latest technology and get free hands-on training at Connection Pointe!

If you would like to learn how to get the most out of mainstream devices such as iPads, iPhones, and Androids or Specialized Adaptive Devices, Connection Pointe is the place for you. Our trained instructors provide both group classes and one-on-one support to help you reach your personal goals.

Call 1 (800) 272-4553 to get more information or to make an appointment.

With a Braille Institute Charitable Gift Annuity, you can enjoy a safe, high return on your savings while helping people with vision loss — a true win-win situation. In exchange for your contribution, you receive a return of up to 9%, depending on your age, in the form of annuity payments for the rest of your life. You also get a current income tax deduction, and part of each annuity payment may be tax free.

For more information, call 1 (800) BRAILLE (272-4553), Ext. 1256 today for your free, no obligation gift illustration, or just to ask questions. Never a fee and no hidden charges.

This is not legal advice. Prospective donors should seek the advice of a qualified estate and/or tax professional to determine the consequences of their gift.
NEW BOOK REVIEWS
– Braille Institute Library Staff

The Year of the Runaways by Sunjeev Sahota
Book Number DB 85331
Shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, The Year of the Runaways is a powerful and engaging story of four young immigrants from India who try to create new lives for themselves in contemporary England. Facing constant struggle in their new home, and burdened by painful secrets from their past lives, each character endeavors to beat the odds over the course of one long and eventful year. The Year of the Runaways is 484 pages long, and contains depictions of violence and strong language.

Astrophysics for People in a Hurry by Neil deGrasse Tyson
Book Number BR 21906
Astrophysics for People in a Hurry is not the script for a geeky TV sitcom. Instead, it’s an upbeat introduction to the origin of the universe, designed to hook a scientifically illiterate audience. Empowered by a solid training in astrophysics, Tyson imparts significant knowledge while punctuating the work with allegories and comic relief. He captivates the reader with thought-provoking discussions of dark matter, planets, galaxies, black holes, exploding stars, and dark energy. Astrophysics for People in a Hurry is 224 pages long and is recommended for anyone with an interest in science and the natural world.

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facebook.com/brailleinstituteyouth
Manhattan Beach by Jennifer Egan
Book Number DB 89445

A finalist for this year’s National Book Award, one of America’s foremost fiction writers has created a historical novel about an American shipyard before and during World War II. Anna Kerrigan, a young Irish-American woman in New York City, dreams of becoming a navy diver and reconnecting with her missing father. Egan populates her story with dockworkers, sailors, gangsters, and union men, each of whom has his or her own story to tell about surviving the Great Depression, the war, and the challenges of family life. Manhattan Beach is 449 pages long and recommended for fiction lovers and those who like learning about American history.

A Very Expensive Poison by Luke Harding
Book Number DB 88481

British journalist Luke Harding tells the incredible true story of the assassination of Russian dissident Alexander Litvinenko, who was poisoned (most likely by Kremlin agents) in London in 2006. The book is equal parts spy story, political biography, and black comedy. How could anyone think they would get away with poisoning someone with radioactive material that is so easily detectable? Did Vladimir Putin call the shots himself? Harding provides no easy answers to these fascinating and troubling questions. A Very Expensive Poison is 480 pages long and is recommended for anyone interested in contemporary geopolitics or spycraft.
BRAILLE INSTITUTE IS GOING GREEN

To reduce our global footprint, we are decreasing our use of paper and you can help us!

If you would like to go green with Braille Institute, simply send your email address to librarian@brailleinstitute.org to start receiving the electronic version of the Librarian. The environment will thank you!