

The Friends of the Colorado Talking Book Library Annual Report for 2021 ** Prepared February 2022

Description of Programs and Activities

The Friends of the Colorado Talking Book Library (Friends of CTBL) is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that supports The Colorado Talking Book Library (CTBL) in its mission to provide books in alternative format—audio, braille, and large print—to Coloradans who are blind or print disabled. CTBL provides library services in every corner of the state, reaching every county with books, magazines, and other media.

CTBL patrons tell us:

- *CTBL has been an invaluable resource to my mother. It helps lessen her depression and sense of isolation.*
- *I really look forward to getting my books, they are my lifeline.*
- *My world would be so small without talking books.*
- *With every book you light-up my life with a new adventure.*

The financial support the Friends of CTBL provides is crucial to the success of CTBL's mission as the State budget does not provide sufficient funding for the complex nature of the services necessary for the library's success. Key programs the Friends of CTBL supports include an on-site recording studio, outreach to the blind and print disabled community, and volunteer program support.

The studio recording program at CTBL records books and magazines for CTBL patrons. The books CTBL records are of interest to the patrons, focus on local Colorado authors, and/or about the Rocky Mountain region. The Friends supports a portion of the studio director's salary, the equipment, software, and supplies necessary to run the program. All of the work is done by approximately 45 volunteers under the supervision of the studio director. The program includes two distinct processes: recording and the digital audio processing. The studio records books as well as two local magazines and then converts the audio files into National Library Service (NLS) regulation digital talking books. The program also records the annual Colorado Legislative Blue Book and makes it available in MP3 format on the website.

Outreach is an ongoing priority for CTBL. As the Colorado population ages, the demand for audio and large print books continues to grow. As an organization, CTBL prioritizes outreach to ensure Coloradans that need the service can get it. Many agencies were grateful they could provide their residents or customers with solutions that kept them connected to life.

The CTBL News, the triannual newsletter, is paid for by the Friends and is circulated to about 10,000 people in audio, braille, and large print formats. It is available on the website and notification is emailed to those requesting it. The Friends also support the software and embosser to create the braille version of the newsletter. The newsletter updates patrons and supporters on CTBL services and materials, keeping them informed about their library.

In addition, the Friends of CTBL supports the purchase of supplies for duplicating books for patrons which requires cartridges, mailing containers, labels and working printers, and braille embossers.

Key Accomplishments

Studio: Last year, CTBL recorded 49 new titles and 2 magazines: Colorado History and Colorado Outdoors. The CTBL News was also recorded and made available in audio format.

In 2021, 48 books were posted to the NLS's database of audio books (BARD) and downloaded 15,325 times by patrons in the national network. A total of 559 CTBL recorded books are on BARD.

Outreach: Before the pandemic shut things down, staff attended 66 events around the state. Last year, CTBL added a reader advisor who specializes in outreach and contacts libraries, retirement communities, and other groups to raise awareness about CTBL services and materials. The Friends of CTBL also contracts with a consultant to make cold calls to organizations that have a population that might benefit from library services from CTBL.

Patron Services: Reader advisors spoke with patrons 11,000 times last year and answered more than 2,000 emails.

Volunteer Recognition: The Friends of CTBL provide support for the volunteer program by funding volunteer recognition events, certificates/plaques, and breakroom supplies. The Friends have always supported the critical work the approximately 145 volunteers do for the library year in and year out.

Names and contact information for Friends Board leadership personnel Executive Board members for 2021 were:

Norine Domenico, President

Jadwiga Brown, Vice-President/Secretary

Kristy Corcoran, Treasurer

Board members include:

Hank Braaksma

Peggy Chong

David Dawson

Alice George

Pamela Newton

Alan Mackey*/**

Frank Oldham

Debbi MacLeod, ex ex officio

Methods of solicitation for Donations

The Friends of CTBL sends an annual giving letter to patrons, past donors, volunteers, and interested community members each year in November. There is a donation page on the Friends website -

<http://www.friendsofctbl.org/donations.htm>. In the triannual CTBL newsletter there is a page about how to donate to the Friends.

Reporting and Transparency

The Friends of CTBL maintains a website and posts the annual report there. The news about the library and its programs is reported in CTBL News which is distributed to 10,000 people 3 times a year.