Montana Talking Book Library (MTBL)
July 1, 2008 through August 31, 2008

Prepared for October 15, 2008 Commission meeting by Christie Briggs, Regional Librarian. This report represents accomplishments of Briggs, Gunderson, Madison, Meier, Miles, and Stanton, as well as 100 volunteers.

Goal One – Content – *Montana State Library (MSL)/MTBL acquires and manages relevant <u>quality content</u> that meets the needs of Montana library partners and patrons.*

- In July and August, four books and one issue of **The Montana Magazine of Western History** and three issues of the **Montana Outdoors Magazine** were completed at both MTBL recording studios: **Stories of Young Pioneers: In Their Own Words** by Violet Kimball; **Birds of a Feather** by Ed Lahey; **The Coming Storm: Heirs of Montana #2** by Tracie Peterson; **They Rode the Shining Hills** by Norman A. Fox; and **Golden Gulch: The Story of Montana's Fabulous Alder Gulch** by Dick Pace.

- Helena author Stan Lynde is in the process of recording his book "Vigilante Moon: A Novel of Old Montana".

- We experienced low production of Montana cassette books (MCB's) in July and August due to volunteer summer vacations at the Helena recording studio and a brief closure in August of the Montana State Prison recording studio.

- In July and August we continued to have a variety of perplexing and difficult technical problems in the Helena recording studio, affecting staff and volunteer workflow. Additional efforts are being pursued to resolve these issues.

- As of July, there are ten Montana Talking Book Library patrons participating in the National Library Service (NLS) digital download extended project, using third party playing devices. Twenty-three patrons are participating in the WebBraille digital download service, using electronic Braille devices. Patrons currently are required to purchase their own downloadable playing devices for this service until NLS produces digital players which is projected to begin distribution starting mid-2009.

- In July, the four year conversion plan of the NLS monthly copy allotment book program began offering one quarter of the book selection in digital cartridge format. Three quarters are still offered in cassette format until 2009 when half digital, half cassette titles will be offered on a monthly basis. This is in preparation for the mid-2009 multi-phase distribution of digital cartridge books and free patron players.

Goal Two—Access – *MSL/MTBL provides libraries, agencies, and its partners and patrons with convenient, high quality, and cost-effective access to library content and services.*

- August marked the third phase of our long range plan to upgrade our current Keystone Library Automated (database) System (KLAS) from version 5 to 7. Several steps leading up to the conversion are in process. This phase includes cleanup of current patron, collection and equipment data. This will continue through September and most of October. Phase One: workstation upgrades. Phase Two: Server Upgrade. Total Completion is projected for mid-December, 2008.

Goal Three—Consultation and Leadership – *MSL/MTBL provides consultation and leadership to enable its patrons and partners to reach their goals.*

- Activities in July included: Talking Book Library joined other MSL programs in presenting an overview of our services to participants of the Montana Center for International Visitors and twenty-five attendees from the Montana Association for the Blind's Summer Orientation program were given a guided tour of Talking Book Library services.

- Activities in August included: Participated in the Montana State Fair Health and Education Day on August 1st in Great Falls, reaching over 750 individuals and groups about our services.

Goal Four—Collaboration – *MSL/MTBL promotes partnerships and encourages collaboration among its partners and patrons so that their information needs can be met.*

- The Montana Talking Book Library partnered with Blind and Low Vision Services to host a 12 week Work Experience Program at the library. This program will offer training in software and hardware approved by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and increase technical skills for a library patron and Blind and Low Vision services client. Our trainee is Brian Persons. This is being done in conjunction with the Blind and Low Vision/Vocational Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburg, PA, where Brian will be attending additional training classes in October so he can be more effective on the job site. Brian is working as the Low Vision Montana Information and Referral Services advocate in the Talking Book Library. He responds to requests from all over Montana and the United States about low vision services available in Montana.

- Our volunteer receptionist Joanne Maynard left in August. Becky Barker joined our receptionist team starting in mid-August for 20 hours/week through the Federal Experience Works program. In addition, several volunteers have joined us from the Young Adult Career Training Institute program to assist in the circulation department.

Goal Five— Sustainable Success – *MSL/MTBL is a well-run organization and a sought-after employer; it is* efficient and effective *(measured against partner and patron outcomes), and successfully engaged in its ongoing mission.*

- Three Montana Readers' Advisors are participating in a monthly online OPAL conference called "Book Break" being hosted by Illinois Talking Book Library for all Readers' Advisors of Talking Book Libraries in the U.S. This is a lively networking conference for sharing ideas, book and genre discussions and patron service support. This will ultimately enhance our service for our patrons.

- Our Circulation department continues to increase collection efficiency through the use of volunteers to shift our regular collection and convert standard to turnaround shelving, relocate archives and withdraw non-circulating and/or non-repairable copies for the Web Xcess process in November. Internal repair locations are being streamlined for faster repair and circulation of books to patrons.