

V MidwesternBraille S VOLUNTEER

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Brailleing since 1963

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



It has been a while since Midwestern Braille Volunteers (MBV) has been in a position to publish a newsletter. The organization has had a very significant growth over the last few years. As a result we have been unable to find the time to stay in close touch with our many friends and supporters. We have now reached a point where we can resume the publication of this newsletter and tell you about our growth and recent accomplishments. We hope that you will find this publication of interest.

Midwestern Braille Volunteers is a non-profit organization dedicated to producing brailled material for the visually impaired. Evolving from a small group of women working in a church basement in the mid 60's, MBV is now a state of the art organization thanks to modern technology and the dedication of our volunteers.

We are now able to scan books into a computer program that will convert the text into Braille using specially designed software. Books requiring tactile graphics are handled by our experienced graphic design volunteers Lee Erickson, Ginny Mattler and Mark Turkcan. This year they have produced over 1600 tactile graphs and maps to include in the textbooks.

Our newly acquired double sided printer (see page 2) reduces the number of pages required for a book, making it much more manageable and less cumbersome.

Midwestern Braille Volunteers provide a variety of services to the visually impaired. We help with job instructions, restaurant menus, cookbooks, bank and stock statements, even wedding invitations and personal letters. MBV also transcribes textbooks for blind students attending sighted classes on the elementary, secondary, college and post-graduate levels.

Our goal is to provide access to brailled material that will help blind individuals lead active, productive, and more meaningful lives.

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Board of Directors

- Executive Committee
- Frank Lane-President
- Allan Davis-VP Fund Raising & Development
- Lorraine Mild-Secretary
- Dan Mickelson-VP Operations
- Fred Sutton-Treasurer

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- Loretta Bryant
- Eugene Edwards
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- Robert Jaco
- Jack Kraemer
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Honorary Lifetime Members

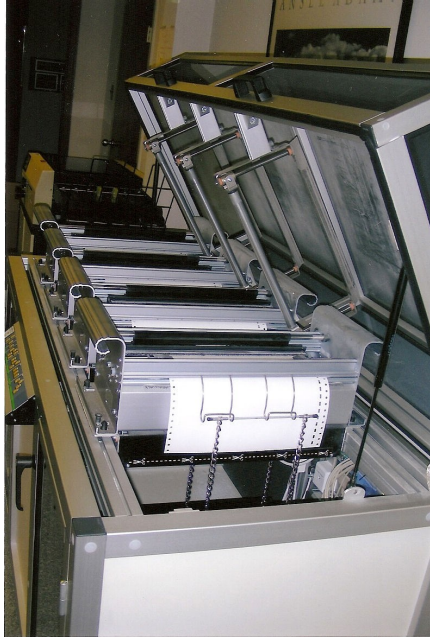
- Howard Adams
- Louise Schatz

Volunteers

- Philip Baker
- Robbe Brown
- Virginia Burns
- Ruth Brock
- Joan Chlan
- Rita Clark
- John Davis
- Patricia Diekroger
- Curt Elmer
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- Lee Erickson
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- Jerry Range
- Karen Sacco
- Victoria Scarborough
- Patti Schonlau
- Margaret Smith
- Mary Smith
- Evelyn Stockman
- Mark Turkcan
- Pam Walsh
- Robert Walsh
- Carol Weaver

Thanks to the generous contributions of both individuals and organizations, MBV has acquired a new Braille embosser that allows us to print Braille on both sides of a page and 8 pages at a time. Not only will the new machine emboss up to 1000 pages an hour, but our brailled books will now be much less cumbersome and easier to manage for the reader since they will be only half the number of volumes.

MBV always strives to keep our cost per page reasonable so that printed Braille is available to everyone. This new printer will help make this possible.



BOOKS IN BRAILLE

Our website now lists a total of 614 brailled books that are available. The books are listed by title and the ISBN number. The lists also give the subject matter and grade level of the book. For information as to what is available, visit us at our website www.mbv.org.

GROWTH

We have had a strong growth in Braille production during the last few years. Volunteers helped produce a record year of 268,000 pages of Braille material in 2007 and over 250,000 pages in 2008 compared with 130,000 pages in 2005. More growth is expected in the future as the need for Braille books and other material has had a 50% increase in the United States.

Volunteer Opportunities:

MBV has many volunteer opportunities available from binding, scanning, tactile graphic department, embossing, fund raising, and even delivery to the post office of books.

Call the office at 314-966-5828 for an appointment to view our facility to see what opportunity looks of interest to you.

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our Volunteers come to us with a variety of skills and from many localities. On an average day at our facility you might find people scanning at the computer, embossing books on the embosser, doing graphics at the thermoform machine, binding pages and packing books for shipping. But not all of our volunteers live in St. Louis.

Liz Gensler, one of our most prolific brailists lives in a small retirement complex just outside Wooster, Ohio. A widow with two daughters, both of whom live out of state, Liz was looking for a new hobby when she found out about Braille transcribing. She saw this as the ideal opportunity to be able to volunteer, to work at home and be able to work on a computer.



She received certification in 1998 but the two agencies that she was volunteering for did not keep her as busy as she would like. A click on the internet connected her with MBV... a lucky day for us!

We were able to meet Liz when she attended the National Braille Association convention in St. Louis, which Midwestern Braille Volunteers hosted. What a charming lady she proved to be in addition to one of our hardest workers.

It is always sad when we lose volunteers. Long time workers Louise Schatz and Howard Adams were forced to retire from the board because of health problems and were awarded lifetime memberships. Other retirees include Rick Reilly, John Davis, Elaine Henkle, Karl Weinkauff, Brian Forney and Debbie Naucke. And saddest of all is those we lose through death, all of whom will be missed both for their dedication to MBV and their friendship.



VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

IN MEMORIAM

Wallene Derby, William Lang, Darrell and Theresa Lauer, Dale Hill, Marguerite Knox, Bill Wilson, Rosalie Swanson, O. Clyde Jones, Charles T. Fike, Jim Ross and Lee Manske. Our most recent and invaluable losses were Jim Ross and Lee Manske. Jim was an inspiration to everyone at Midwestern Braille Volunteers. He led us to expand the braille of textbooks for blind school children throughout the country. His vision has been a key to our success and he will be remembered for his many contributions. Lee, who was blind has been our proofreader for the past 12 years. Her expertise in proofreading Braille produced by our braillists has been vital to the final quality of Braille we send to the blind. She will be missed by all.

Midwestern Braille Volunteers gratefully acknowledges your gifts. Please call 314-966-5828 with any corrections or omissions. We apologize for omitted or misspelled names.