"It is better to take many small steps in the right direction than to make a great leap forward only to stumble backward."

~Chinese Proverb

In the February issue of Closed Circuit, I urged you to start stepping outside your comfort zone and opening your mind to the possibility of reading an e-edition of your newspaper or magazine. Overall, I would say the response was positive, with a healthy dose of trepidation mixed in. That’s exactly what I was going for. Opening your mind to making a change is the first step to actually making it! Several of you expressed an interest in learning the ins and outs of online reading; others expressed their concerns about making such a move. All promptly asked what’s next. My answer—baby steps!

As we make this transition, we want to be sure we’re setting everyone up for success. There will be training sessions in the future, to be sure, but for starters, Nick and I want to expose you to the e-editions we use and let you start to explore them. To that end, live readers will start seeing those publications brought up on the monitors in their studios. You’ll still have the print papers to read from, but you might, during the time you aren’t reading, click around a bit. See what happens when you do. Learn that whatever you click, you can’t break it. You might get somewhere you didn’t intend to go, or lose your page. That’s okay, because you aren’t reading from it yet—you’re just learning about it. To learn how something works, you have to make mistakes with it. For those of you who pre-record, I’d be happy to turn you loose with a newspaper or two to play with at home, or in the studio, no recording expected when you finish. Maybe you have a tablet at home, and you’d like to try reading it on there. Go for it!

As you approach this next phase, think about your first time driving a car—if you were anything like me, you were pretty scared to be behind the wheel of that thing. Nevertheless, you released the break, put it in gear, and pressed the gas pedal. Maybe you stayed on the road; maybe, like me, you bumped up over the curb and started heading through a field toward a creek, with your mom grabbing the “oh crap” handle and pumping her imaginary brake on the passenger side. Did I give up driving because of that one experience? No. Was it my last mistake as a driver? Certainly not. (Ask my dad about the time I hit the brakes on an icy highway and bumped a guardrail with our minivan.) But with time and practice, I ended up being a pretty decent driver!

While we’re going through this process, make some notes! Tell us what works and what doesn’t. Share your fears and successes with us. We as staff are here to listen and facilitate your learning. This is the information gathering stage, where we take all the feedback you give us and turn it

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Lawrence Thomas resides in Kansas City, MO, and has been an Audio-Reader listener for 15 years. His favorite Audio-Reader program is *Soap Opera Digest*. “I am very thankful to all of the ladies who read *Soap Opera Digest* for me. I look forward to the new issue each week,” stressed Mr. Thomas.

Mr. Thomas was born in Kansas City, KS, but at the age of six he moved to St. Louis so he could attend the Missouri School for the Blind. At the time, it was the only school for the blind anywhere near Kansas City. He would stay with his grandmother in St. Louis during the school years, and go home to Kansas City for the summers. He would get up early and his grandmother would make him pancakes or French toast every morning before school. Lawrence still enjoys getting up early. “I try to get stuff done in the morning when I have more energy,” Lawrence shared.

In his free time Lawrence enjoys music, reading, television shows, and movies. Music is by far his favorite way to spend his time. “I record music for myself and my friends. I play the organ at home and at church,” remarked Lawrence. Lawrence was the full-time organist at his church for 23 years. Recently he somewhat retired and is now the substitute organist for his church. He couldn’t give it up altogether. While he mostly plays and listens to gospel, he enjoys all kinds of music. Lawrence has been on various area radio talk shows over the years to discuss his music and organ playing.

One of Lawrence’s favorite books is *The Screw Tape Letters*. He enjoys movies too but usually watches them at home. He doesn’t go out to many movies but occasionally his brother or sister will convince him to go to a movie with them. “I don’t see a lot of movies but when I do go to one, I like for there to be an audio describer so that I can keep up with what is going on. It makes all the difference to have the audio description. When there is no audio description I have to ask the person I am with questions during the movie and sometimes other audience members get upset with me for talking during the movie. Even though I do my best to whisper, someone always gets annoyed. So I usually just watch movies at home so as not to bother others,” Lawrence explained.

Family is very important to Mr. Thomas. He lives with his brother and sister in-law and his sister lives across the street. “It is a blessing to have my family nearby and also to be close to them,” Lawrence said fondly.

I enjoyed getting to know Lawrence Thomas better. His love of music is very inspiring and his knowledge of all of the soap opera characters and actors is amazing. It puts my memory to shame! Music and family are the two most important things in his life. Oh, and German chocolate cake!

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**Audio Description Dates for March and April**

**Church Basement Ladies:** Saturday, March 11, 7:30 p.m., Theatre Lawrence  
**Church Basement Ladies:** Sunday, March 12, 7:30 p.m., Theatre Lawrence  
**Erth’s Dinosaur Zoo Live:** Sunday, April 9, 4:00 p.m., Lied Center  
**Chris Perondi’s Stunt Dog Experience:** Friday, April 28, 7:00 p.m., Lied Center  
**Noises Off!**: Saturday, April 29, 7:30 p.m., Theatre Lawrence  
**Noises Off!**: Sunday, April 30, 2:30 p.m., Theatre Lawrence  

Additional performances are listed at www.reader.ku.edu/audio-description. Want to volunteer to hand out listening equipment, or become an audio describer? Contact Jen at jnigro@ku.edu.
MARCH BIRTHDAYS

We would like to wish the following people a sunny, springy Happy Birthday:

1. *Lana Mitchell* volunteers from our location at the Homer Cole Center in Pittsburg.
2. *Crisi Hansen* is one of our substitute readers.
4. *Amy Henderson* reads regional news from our location at Alphapointe in Kansas City, MO.
5. *Kelley Hurst* reads the *Joplin Globe* on Fridays.
6. *Rita Tutschulte* is one of our substitute readers.
7. *Martha Baxter* reads regional news from southeast Kansas from our studio at the Homer Cole Center in Pittsburg.
8. *Harold Asner* is one of our audio describers.
9. *Jeanne Jones* reads business news, advice columns, and horoscopes from Tuesday’s *Kansas City Star* for Telephone Reader.
10. *Mary Conn* reads the *Lawrence Journal-World* on Fridays and also reads books.
11. *Carole Bishop Smith* reads the *Sunflower Dailies* and the western Kansas regional news on Fridays. She also serves on the Audio-Reader development committee.
12. *Michelle Suter* hosts *Hear We Grow*, Audio-Reader’s monthly gardening program.
14. *Roxanne Reith* is one of our Emeritus volunteers.
15. *Christopher Riels* reads *Prevention Magazine* and portions of *Toastmaster Magazine* for special request.
16. *Harlan Roedel* hosts *Playing with Words*, Audio-Reader’s poetry show. He also co-hosts the Wednesday *Breakfast Table Times*, reads books and serves as a cleanup reader for Telephone Reader.
17. *Stephen Brand* reads *Travel Magazine* for special requests.
18. *Kay Traver* reads *Pan Pipes* magazine for special request.
19. *Pamela Ungashick* reads Kansas City-area regional news from our studio at Alphapointe.
20. *Mary Gaarder* reads southeast Kansas regional news from our studio at the Homer Cole Center in Pittsburg.
22. *Lori Lange* hosts the *Missouri News Hour* on Mondays and is one of our audio describers.
23. *Kelly Loeb* reads *People Magazine* each week.
24. *Kris Shields* co-hosts the Monday eastern Kansas regional news.
25. *Cynthia Van Roden* reads news of the Kansas City-area from our studio at Alphapointe.
26. *Melinda Kearney* reads *Soap Opera Digest* and co-hosts *Playboy Magazine*.
27. *Anrenee Reasor* reads the *Joplin Globe* on Mondays for Telephone Reader.
28. *Carol Cole* reads southeast Kansas regional news from our studio at the Homer Cole Center in Pittsburg.
29. *Carol Rubsam* reads Local news from the *Kansas City Star* on Wednesdays for Telephone Reader.
31. *Jan Butin* is one of our Sensory Garden volunteers.
32. *Jackie Hilton* reads *Home and Family Magazines* each week.
33. *Barbara Wunsch* is one of our Emeritus volunteers.
34. *Debra Kirmer* reads sports and weather from the *Kansas City Star* on Saturdays.
35. *Al Rogers* is one of our substitute readers.
36. *Rachel Gadd-Nelson* hosts the *Shoppers Showcase* grocery ad program each week.
37. *Mike Wood* reads books.
38. *Georgia Ransone* is a long-term sub for the *Tonganoxie Mirror*.
39. *Dick Ashcraft* is one of our Emeritus volunteers.
40. *Karen Davis* reads regional news from southeast Kansas from our studio at the Homer Cole Center in Pittsburg.
41. *Sally Elwing* reads portions of Monday’s *Springfield News-Leader* for Telephone Reader.
42. *Rachel James* reads *Momentum Magazine*.
43. *Alana Alexander* reads *National Geographic* for special request.
44. *Chris Miller* hosts the *Outdoors Show* each week.
45. *Nathan Poell* helps with our *For Your EARS Only* fundraiser each year.

STAFF BIRTHDAYS:

March 25

Wish a Happy Birthday to our coordinator of volunteers, *Jennifer Nigro*!

Once again, a very happy birthday to all of our March birthday celebrants! And to all of you, thank you for all you do to keep us going 24/7, all year long!
Let It Be: A Beatles Tribute Band Concert Benefiting Audio-Reader

By Meredith Johanning, Development Assistant

Listening to Beatles songs and benefiting Audio-Reader….what more could you ask for? Come join us on Friday, April 14 at 8:00pm at Liberty Hall when Audio-Reader hosts its first benefit concert – featuring a Beatles tribute band! Barry Lee, station manager of KKFI, has been instrumental in putting together an amazing gig with a band featuring members of The Rainmakers, The Quivers, Fortnight, Broken Arrows, Liverpool and Potters Field. Fast Johnny Ricker will open up the show. Tickets will be sold at Liberty Hall and will be $20 in advance or $25 the day of the event. Proceeds from the concert will benefit Audio-Reader – “we get by with a little help from our friends!” For additional information please contact Beth or Meredith at Audio-Reader at 785-864-4600.

Tee-Up for Audio-Reader!

By Meredith Johanning, Development Assistant

Audio-Reader’s 8th Annual Golf Classic will take place at Eagle Bend Golf Course on Monday, June 5. Erin O’Neil, KU Women’s Golf Head Coach, is back again to chair this fun event. With her help, last year’s golf classic was Audio-Reader’s most successful – bringing in over $25,000. Help us make this another great event by either signing up to play or becoming a sponsor of the event. This is a great way to support Audio-Reader while enjoying a morning out on the beautiful greens of Eagle Bend! To register your team or inquire about sponsorship opportunities, contact Beth McKenzie at 785-864-5336 or bethmckenzie@ku.edu.

The Leaven is Up and Running!

By Susan Tabor, Administrative Assistant

The Leaven, the newspaper of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas, made its debut on February 10, and all systems are Go! There are several ways that Audio-Reader is benefiting from this new partnership.

It’s a source of new listeners for us. Some people interested in an audio version of The Leaven are not yet Audio-Reader and Telephone Reader subscribers, so this gives them an opportunity to not only have access to The Leaven, but also to many other books, magazines and newspapers.

It also provides another vehicle for outreach for us. Lori Kesinger and the archdiocesan disability consultant, Tom Racunas, will share news and information and will collaborate and publicize that information when it is appropriate.

It has also been a very lucrative source for new volunteers, which we are always happy to receive! New requests for items to be read are always coming through here, so our source of work to be processed is growing as well.

If you’d like to give The Leaven a listen, you’ll find it on Audio-Reader’s website at www.reader.ku.edu/leaven.

Love Audio-Reader? Consider sustained giving!

By Beth McKenzie, Development Director

Make donating easy by signing up for a monthly electronic funds transfer! Tax deductible contributions to Audio-Reader can be set up using KU Endowment’s electronic funds transfer authorization. A minimum of $10 a month is required for participation in the EFT program. You can change your monthly gift amount or cancel anytime. The registration form is available at http://www.kuendowment.org/Your-Gift/By-Mail,-Phone,-ETF-or-Wire-Transfer. You can also contact Beth (bethmckenzie@ku.edu) or Meredith (mjohanning@ku.edu) in the Development Department.
Five Questions:

Name: Luke Rounda

Current reading assignment: substitute reader

Years of service:
4 years, 7 months

Q: Where did you grow up?
A: I was born in Lawrence but grew up in Leavenworth County. I went to high school in Tonganoxie.

Q: What is your favorite book?
A: Snow Crash by Neal Stephenson. Starring a sword-wielding samurai pizza delivery driver named Hiro as the protagonist, the book is a blend of science fiction, computer science, and linguistics (specifically the concepts of linguistic determinism and linguistic relativity) in which it is revealed that the ancient Sumerian language was actually the "programming language" of the human brain. Armed with this knowledge, hackers create the titular Snow Crash "language virus" able to mind control humanity. Published in 1992, Snow Crash also predicted certain elements of the modern day internet, such as MMOs like Second Life or World of Warcraft, where players can customize their characters, or "avatars," to appear however they choose, even if that means you're standing on a street corner talking to a giant slice of pizza wearing a baseball cap... or something more risqué and ridiculous.

Q: How or why did you get involved with Audio-Reader?
A: Both my mother, Judy, and sister, Nancy, have volunteered or worked for Audio-Reader in the past, and encouraged me to volunteer as well. Also, everyone has always told me I have a good radio voice, so I wanted to explore putting it to work. Audio-Reader gives me a chance to practice narration and voiceover in various styles while also providing a valuable service to listeners.

Q: What is your favorite or most unusual reading assignment?
A: That would have to be the National Enquirer. Though I don't read it on my own time--no, really, I swear--the variety and sometimes lurid outlandishness of the stories therein provides ample comedy and entertainment when narrating. There are minor opportunities for voice acting (carpe diem, you know). I like to imagine that I've brought the magazine to life for anyone listening who might not be able to turn on E! or celebrity gossip television.

Beyond that, and on the opposite end of the spectrum, the special request book Inspirational Walk: More Devotions for Baseball Fans by Hugh Poland, which uses baseball as a means of telling Christian parables and devotions, was also not something I would otherwise have read on my own, but it was an enjoyable and unique experience.

Q: What is your favorite thing about volunteering for Audio-Reader?
A: As mentioned, I enjoy imagining I've brightened a listener's day. I picture them laughing, nodding along, or otherwise enjoying the broadcast or tape. Also, the staff and other volunteers are always friendly and eager to help.

Editor’s Note: Luke has started narrating books for Audible Audio Books. Here is a link to the books he has read so far: http://www.audible.com/search?searchNarrator=Luke+Rounda

He is also doing some voiceover work for voice.com. Here is a link to his voices page: https://www.voices.com/people/threestarsmash

Congratulations, Luke! Awesome!
Please give a warm welcome to the following new volunteers!

**Kelly Davis** is a senior in KU’s School of Journalism. She also works as a student assistant in the Journalism Advising Office, and is a member of Delta Delta Delta sorority. Kelly is looking forward to helping us with a variety of tasks, including fundraising, special events, marketing, community outreach, and graphic design.

**Sean Easterly** is a wealth advisor for Boyer & Corporon Wealth Management, LLC. He volunteers for We the People at Blue Valley Northwest High School, preparing students for state and national competitions discussing the constitution. He also enjoys photography, watching the Kansas City Chiefs, and spending time with family. Sean begins by reading part of Sunday’s *Springfield News-Leader* for Telephone Reader.

**Dee Dee Eccles** is a substitute preschool teacher and a huge K-State, Royals, and Chiefs fan! In her spare time, she enjoys traveling and taking photographs. She has volunteered for Junior Achievement, Junior League of Wyandotte and Johnson Counties, and with her church. Dee Dee begins by reading *The Leaven*.

**Linda Irving** is an administrative assistant for a financial services company. She volunteers for Harvesters, and enjoys reading in her spare time. Linda begins by reading from Saturday’s *Springfield News-Leader* for Telephone Reader.

**Jeanne Jones** is a technical writer as well as the poet for *The Quiviran* newspaper in Lake Quivira, KS. She enjoys walking her dog in her spare time, as well as spending time on her family’s farm in Cameron and watching baseball. Jeanne begins by reading the business, advice, and horoscope sections from the *Kansas City Star* for Telephone Reader on Tuesdays.

**Jan Kinney** is a paraprofessional with the Shawnee Mission School District. She volunteers in her church’s community garden and serves as a Eucharist minister there. She also enjoys home renovation, reading, and spending time with family. Jan begins by ready the Hy-Vee ad.

**Megan Linquist** is in her second semester at KU. She has volunteered at the Children’s Discovery Center in Topeka, worked as a cashier at Habitat for Humanity Restore, and worked on swimming skills with disabled children through the Capper Foundation. Megan begins by reading *The Leaven*.

**Nisha Patel** is a second year medical student at the University of Kansas School of Medicine. She has volunteered with several area hospitals and enjoys playing tennis, running, drawing, and writing poetry. She begins by reading portions of Friday’s *Springfield News-Leader* for Telephone Reader.

**Laura Pederson** is an attorney who is currently serving a one-year clerkship with a federal judge. She enjoys performing and attending comedy improv, throwing dinner parties, collecting postcards, and cooking. She also has her own podcast: https://soundcloud.com/tellgoodstories. Laura begins by reading part of Saturday’s *Springfield News-Leader* for Telephone Reader.

**Georgia Ransone** is a retired teacher. She enjoys sewing crafts, quilting, making jewelry, and collecting antiques in her spare time. Georgia has been active with Girl Scouts, Awana, and coaching summer softball. She came to us at the recommendation of fellow volunteer Pat Keller. She begins by reading *Tonganoxie Mirror* for special request.

**Tandy Reussner** is a professional musician. She plays organ for her church, and volunteers as a director for the children’s and adult choirs there, as well as Family Promise. In her spare time, Tandy enjoys cooking gourmet meals, sewing, painting, writing, traveling, and organizing concerts, as well as caring for her daughters! She came to Audio-Reader because she loves to read, and it gives her an activity to share with fellow volunteer and father Michael Beckett. Tandy begins as a substitute reader.

**Jeri Safarik** is a nurse by trade, and currently works for Caption Associates, a closed captioning company, as an office assistant. She learned about Audio-Reader while working for the Visiting Nurses Association, and is excited to get involved! Jeri also volunteers for Meals on Wheels and makes jewelry for silent auctions held by that organization as well as the Lawrence Jewish Community Center. Jeri is currently a nominee for the ‘Best of Lawrence’ in the best nurse category! She begins by reading from *American Hunter* and *American Rifleman* for special request listeners.

**Tamara Seyler-James** is a stay-at-home mother of two. She has worked in the legal field as a prosecutor and business litigator, as well as in radio as an editor, reporter, and anchor. Tamara volunteers for her church as well as her kids’ elementary school. In her spare time she enjoys Jazzercise, cooking, and crochet, and is working on a multi-session faith-sharing program to help people through caring for an aging parent or relative. Tamara begins by reading *Hunting Magazine* for special request listeners.

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into a step-by-step training document for future hands-on sessions. As Vincent Van Gogh once said, “Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.” This change has been a long time in coming, but together, we will cross the bridge to online reading successfully!

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**Julian Silverman** is a post-doctoral student at KU, studying chemical engineering. He has volunteered at Housing Works Bookstore Café in New York City as well as for the New York Academy of Sciences. He is an avid reader, runner, and theatre-goer. Julian begins by reading *Newspapers of Eastern Kansas* on Tuesdays.

**Brian Watt** provides technical support for Frontier Communications. In his spare time, he enjoys playing guitar and bass as well as recording and audio editing. He is excited to get started helping Audio-Reader with some audio description editing projects!

**Gary Wilbers** may be retired, but he remains active with the welding repair business he owns. He enjoys metal work, some mechanical work, and reading. He learned about audio information services from a mentor who volunteered for Minnesota Radio Talking book several years ago. Gary begins as a substitute reader.

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**This Month in Audio-Reader History**

*By Lynne Ellis, Audio-Reader Volunteer*

**March 1987:** KANU completed installation of translator service making sub-carrier Audio-Reader service available to residents of Manhattan and Junction City without relying on cable.

**March 1997:** A feature in Closed Circuit was entitled "Audio-Reader on the World Wide Web". There was a directive to send those folks with questions to the Audio-Reader home page for answers as to how to volunteer, what books are on, the broadcast schedule, etc.

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**Chair of Audio-Reader Development Committee to Receive Honor**

Audio-Reader volunteer **Randy Austin** will be among seven Topekans honored at the 2017 Junior Achievement of Kansas Business Hall of Fame event on March 2 for their business successes and leadership. Randy is the chair of our development committee, and reads the *Breakfast Table Times* on Sundays. To read more, visit http://cjonline.com/news/business/2017-01-28/ja-business-hall-fame-2017-nominee-randy-austin. Congratulations on this tremendous honor, Randy!

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**Deaths**

We at Audio-Reader would like to extend our sincere condolences to the following volunteers and their families who are grieving a recent loss:

**Jane E. Haas-Sherman**, the mother of Audio-Reader volunteer **Marilyn Daniels**, died on January 6.

**Rosalie T. Icenogle**, mother of Audio-Reader volunteer **Camille Olcese** and grandmother to Audio-Reader volunteer **Abby Olcese**, died on February 2.

Audio-Reader volunteer **Mary Healzer** lost a family member in February.

Audio-Reader volunteer **Bill Kallahurka**’s mother-in-law died in February.

Audio-Reader volunteer **Becky Janzen**’s uncle died in February.

To all noted above, we here at Audio-Reader offer you our most sincere condolences.
What a lovely sight in the Audio-Reader living room! Our book club is growing and thriving, as evidenced by the 10 volunteers and staff members who gathered for a discussion of *Mr. Limoncello’s Library* and Valentine’s Day treats on February 14. Our next selection is *The Worst Hard Time* by Timothy Egan. The Audio-Reader book club meets on the second Tuesday of each month in the Audio-Reader living room. For more information, contact Lisa Werner at llwerner@ku.edu or Susan Tabor at stabor@ku.edu.