As volunteers, you want to feel connected to the work you are doing. You want to know your efforts are helping someone—helping them connect with their communities, their nation, even their hobbies. You want to know you’re making a difference. But that connection goes both ways. Guess what—our listeners want to know about you, too!

Last month, I spoke to the Missouri Council of the Blind convention during their awards dinner. They asked me to talk about you, Audio-Reader’s volunteers. So I spent the evening sharing some of the stories I’ve collected over the years. From funny pronunciations to giggling fits to dozing off in front of the microphone, they were delighted to hear that the people on the other side of their radio are just that—people. People who love to read, who make a mistake here and there, and most of all, who care enough to give their time to Audio-Reader. This group was impressed by your dedication, your heart, and yes, even your bloopers. And I had great fun sharing so many fun memories of my time spent with you.

I left that evening feeling something I haven’t felt lately—I felt connected. Suddenly, the budget cuts, staffing shortages, summer absences, and first fall sick calls that have bogged me down for the last few months didn’t seem like such a big deal. It was as though I’d been in a room full of celebrities—people whose names I’d seen in a database or on an email listserv were suddenly before me in real life, recognizable by their nametags. I met people with whom I’d only spoken on the phone—and it felt like we’d been friends forever. I left that night feeling energized and ready to take on the challenges that lay ahead. And as I drove home, I thought of all of you, and your desire to connect with our listeners. I wish you all could have been with me that evening, and met this room full of people who think the world of you and what you do. I wish you could have heard it from them in person, seen their smiling faces, shaken their hands, and heard their stories, just like I did.

Hopefully, those of you who attended our volunteer appreciation brunch a few days ago are feeling inspired by Audio-Reader listener Travis Smith’s story, or by the many listeners who called in to leave phone messages for you. We’re going to post those comments on our website. I hope you’ll return to them any time you need a dose of inspiration, or need to connect with the people on the other side of your microphone. You do make a difference—each and every day. Hope-
NEW FACES

By Jennifer Nigro,
Coordinator of Volunteers

Katie Anderson is a KU senior studying secondary English education. She works at the Learning Resource Center in JRP Hall, and has volunteered with Americorps, Boys and Girls Club of Lawrence, and Sunrise Nursing Home. She enjoys reading, traveling, camping, yoga, and crafts. She has also taught abroad in South Korea and India. Katie begins as a Listener Liaison for our Audio Description program, and may help out in the Sensory Garden.

Taylor Axtell is a KU junior studying Behavioral Neuroscience. She is a member of Delta Gamma sorority. Though her studies keep her busy, she enjoys reading and writing, as well as learning about space. Taylor volunteers at the Audio-Reader front desk Thursday afternoons and helps with social media.

Lesley Brancaccio is a retired English school teacher. During the legislative session, she works at the state library in Topeka. She is the president of the Topeka High School Friends of the Library and delivers Meals on Wheels. In her spare time, Lesley enjoys walking, spending time outside, and taking tap dance lessons. Lesley begins as a Listener Liaison for audio described performances.

Erica Cordaro is a part-time preschool teacher in Prairie Village, and volunteers regularly at her daughter’s school as well as delivering Backsnacks to students in Wyandotte County weekly. She also enjoys hiking, paddling, climbing, running and spending time with family. Her grandmother was an Audio-Reader volunteer, and Erica is excited to honor her memory by volunteering. She will read on alternating Fridays from Alphapointe.

John Fogarty works at Naismith Hall and seasonally for Chestnut Charlie. He is a Master Gardener, and volunteers as a soccer coach. He enjoys gardening, world music, and witty conversation! John is excited to help tend Audio-Reader’s Sensory Garden.

Geri Slater is retired from the cataloging department at KU Libraries where she spent 39 years. In her spare time, she volunteers for Haskell University’s Tommaney Library and Lawrence Public Library. She is a member of the Welcome Club and Daughters of the British Empire. In her spare time, she enjoys travel, art museums, and visiting zoos, historic homes, and nature centers. Geri volunteers Tuesday and Friday mornings at the Audio-Reader reception desk.

Kris Vakas-McClelland is a retired trial assistant and legal secretary for the Douglas County District Attorney. She has volunteered for The Shelter, Inc., Wildcare, and the American Cancer Society. Kris enjoys gardening, and on a recent visit to the Sensory Garden, decided she’d like to spend more time there—so she signed up to volunteer!

Patricia Williams is the College Director for B.A. Programs at the Arts Institutes International in Kansas City. She’s on the board of directors for Cinema KC, helps with marketing for a Kansas City food pantry, and is a Temple Buddhist for St. Paul’s in Kansas City, KS. In her spare time, she enjoys writing, art, filmmaking, photography, knitting, swimming, directing theater productions, and other activities. She has read for family members with vision problems, and looks forward to volunteering as a substitute reader.

Connecting
Continued from page 1

fully you were energized by being in the same room as so many of your fellow volunteers. Your recordings may be done alone or in pairs in a tiny recording studio, but you are part of something bigger. You are part of a network of more than 400 volunteers who have banded together to help an even larger network of people who want access to their favorite newspapers, magazines, and books. As Helen Keller once said, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

This Month in Audio-Reader History: Nov/Dec

By Lynne Ellis,
Audio-Reader Volunteer

1987:
All of the volunteers who helped paint the new Audio-Reader facility were thanked with delicious homemade cinnamon rolls.

1997:
The long-awaited conversion from reel-to-reel recording to digital was scheduled to begin mid-November.

2007:
Diana Frederick announced her departure from Audio-Reader with many expressions of warm memories and appreciation of her years with KU.
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER
BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to the following volunteers!

November

November 2: Rachel Monger
November 3: Brett Leopold
November 4: Bill Beningfield and Caroline Ong
November 5: Samantha Cloon, Nadia Hamid, and Aspen Junge
November 6: Pam Baughman
November 7: Adam Yoerg
November 9: Kimi Worstell-Laabs
November 10: Susan Craig and Marilyn Daniels
November 11: Lana Naegel, Marianne Lafex, and Kim Radell
November 13: Maverick Moore
November 14: Rex Buchanan
November 19: Frank Day
November 20: Joe Sweet
November 21: Gil Chauza and Jason Davis
November 22: Janet Majure and John Trinkl
November 23: Rebecca Reagan
November 24: Karen Devictor
November 26: Jenny O’Driscoll
November 28: Victoria Brundage

December

December 1: Linda Irving
December 2: Randy Austin and John Gedraitis
December 3: Mike Lewis and Susan Stone
December 5: Jill LaPoint
December 6: Paty Moore, Harlanne Roberts, and Wendy Woods
December 7: Leigh Ann Monthey
December 8: Chris Malik
December 10: Charles Higginson and Barbara Schountz
December 11: William Woody
December 12: Erica Cordaro and John Robertson
December 14: Shantece Gonzalez and Maggie Schutz
December 15: Dave Corley and Kaye Drahozal
December 16: Elaine Roberts
December 18: Janelle Moore
December 20: Carly Efros
December 22: Ann Evans
December 24: Ron Scoles
December 26: Elinor Schroeder and Judy Weingarten
December 27: Laurie Chadwick-Entrup and Maureen Guth
December 30: Stephen Grimm and Olivia Schmidt
December 31: Dan Compo, Evelyn Fitzpatrick, James Norem, and Craig Sweets

Audio Description
Events

Audio-Reader is hosting an audio description training session on Saturday, November 11 and Sunday, November 12, 2017. If you’ve been wanting to learn how to audio describe live theater, museum exhibits, and other presentations, this is the training you need. For more information or to register, visit www.reader.ku.edu/descriptiontraining.

Then, join us Friday, November 27 at 5:30pm for an Audio Description Demonstration! We’re partnering with The Whole Person, 3710 Main Street, Kansas City, to help spread the word about the benefits of this service. If you can’t make this event, feel free to check out an AD headset at one of the following performances and listen in:

**Beauty and the Beast:** Sunday, December 3 (2:30pm), Saturday, December 9 (7:30pm), and Sunday, December 10 (7:30pm), Theatre Lawrence

**A Charlie Brown Christmas Live! On Stage:** Saturday, December 16, 2:00pm, Lied Center

Don’t forget to visit the Dole Institute of Politics’ League of Wives exhibit, on display in the institute’s reading room.

Performances and exhibits are updated regularly at www.reader.ku.edu/audio-description. If you are interested in learning more about our audio description program, contact Jen at jnigro@ku.edu.
15th Annual “For Your EARS Only” Sale Another Big Success for Audio-Reader

By Meredith Johanning, Development Assistant

Countless volunteer hours were put in to make the 15th annual “For Your EARS Only” sale another huge success for Audio-Reader. This year marked the second most successful sale, grossing over $34,500, and it was the largest sale yet with over 400 pieces of audio equipment, 8,000 vinyl records, and over 9,000 CDs. We had so much stuff, in fact, that we rented all of Building #21 of the Douglas County Fairgrounds and filled the entire space!

This year’s large sale required extra help, and our volunteers readily answered that call. From picking up donations at our various drop sites, to setting up the sale, to working all hours of the sale, we have some incredible volunteers that make this event the success that it is. A very special thank you goes out to Dave Dunford and Lori Tesdahl, who put in so many hours and so much effort to prepare the equipment and records for the sale!

We would also like to thank KPR and KCUR who helped us spread the word about the sale over their airwaves as well as serving as drop sites for donations. Sound Innovations in Lawrence and Sunflower School Supplies in Topeka also served as drops sites so we could reach more people for donations. And of course, we are grateful for the support from our event sponsors: Capitol Federal Savings & Loan, Central National Bank, GrooveWasher, Lawrence Tae Kwon Do, LLC, Minuteman Press, Scotch Fabric Care, and Stephens Real Estate.

We would like to especially thank these volunteers who invested many hours to make the sale the success that it was:

Michael Cornelius, Art Hadley, Tom & Melinda Kearney, and Mike Wood brought donations from KCUR to Audio-Reader several times throughout donation season.

Mike Cook with Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute hauled Audio-Reader’s trailers full of audio equipment to the fairgrounds.

Volunteers Cal Karlin, Randy Dyck, and Randy Austin sell tickets and greet customers ahead of the doors opening on Friday night of the sale.

Audio equipment guru and volunteer, Dave Dunford, assists customers making a purchase.

Jeremy Brady worked closely with audio equipment volunteer Dave Dunford to check all of the audio equipment ahead of the sale, and also helped set up and work the sale.

Dave Dunford provided his equipment expertise to personally test, clean, repair, and price over 400(!) pieces of audio equipment.

Lynne Ellis catalogued all of the 8-tracks we received.

Bob Heintzen took over organizing and categorizing the 9,000+ CDs we had for the sale.

Janis Hutchison helped secure additional food donations and provided the colorful balloons for the sale.

KU Organizations: Alternative Breaks provided dozens of hard-working volunteers for set-up and clean-up.

Mike Krings promoted the sale through various media outlets to help our event reach a broader market.

Wake Mitchell & Matt Suggs sorted through and individually priced our higher-end records.

Bill Padgett brought donations from Sunflower School Supplies in Topeka to Audio-Reader several times.

Peg Sampson drove all the way from Austin, TX, to head up the kitchen during the sale so volunteers and customers alike could have happy, full stomachs!

Lori Tesdahl handled the thousands of record donations we received and kept them organized and sorted. She is also the mastermind behind the floor layout each year to maximize the space in regards to the current year’s inventory.

Beverley Wilson made it possible for Audio-Reader to expand this year’s sale and rent all of Building #21 at the Douglas County Fairgrounds.
Audio-Reader Volunteers Recognized for Service

Audio-Reader held its Broadcasters Brunch, an annual appreciation event to recognize and thank the organization’s volunteers. This year, we had the opportunity to meet Reggie Robinson, the interim vice chancellor for public affairs at KU. We also heard from Audio-Reader listener Travis Smith, who lost his vision in a hunting accident and utilizes Audio-Reader services to access publications related to cars, hunting, news, and other information. The event culminated with the recognition of 41 volunteers for their years of service to KU. Congratulations to our honorees, and thank you to all of you for your dedication to Audio-Reader!

5 Year

Front Row: Kay Traver, Lorie Williams, Carol Rubsam, and Bill Padgett.
Back Row: Bob Shadburn, Jessica Mayhew, and Mary Conn.

10 Year

Front Row: Donna Decedue, Karen Wuenstel, and Judi Gitel.
Back Row: Susan Stone, Charles Decedue, Mike Krings, and Michael Rapport.
Not Pictured: Mike Doudoroff, Kurt Falkenstien, Betty Kline, Linda Manley, Dave Schaaf, Carla Tilghman, and Kimi Worstell-Laabs.

15 Year

Lynn Segebrecht, Bill Beningfield, and Bill Zimmer
Not Pictured: Martha Baxter, Hannes Combest, and Barbara Schountz.

20 Year

Carl Graves and Jill LaPoint
Not Pictured: Tim Nauman, John Trinkl, and Ray Wilbur.

25 Year

Marilyn Bradt
**NEWS AND NOTES**

**By Jennifer Nigro, Coordinator of Volunteers**

**Wedding News**

Congratulations to **Sean Easterly** and his wife **Jace** on their wedding! The two were married September 23 at The Elms in Excelsior Springs, MO. Sean reads portions of the *Springfield News Leader* for Telephone Reader on Sundays.

**Baby News**

**Lori Lange** is the proud grandmother of **Wade Brown**, born September 28 in Colorado. This is Lori’s first grandchild. She reads the *Missouri News Hour* on Mondays and is an audio describer.

**Janet Campbell**, FYEO volunteer and former Audio-Reader director, welcomed another granddaughter, **Josephine Helen Jones**, on October 10. Josephine joins big sister **Annie**.

**Congratulations**

Congratulations to **Marilyn Daniels**, who was recognized as Tonganoxie High School’s Alumni Achievement Award winner during halftime of the Homecoming game on October 6. Marilyn reads the opinion section of the *Kansas City Star* on Sundays.

**Condolences**

Our condolences go out to:

**Lori Lange**, whose father died September 20.


**Sue Nishikawa**, whose husband **Larry** died October 11. Sue is one of our substitute readers.

---

**Meet a Listener: Kenny Parker**

**By Kim Morrow, Audio-Reader Volunteer**

Nothing has ever slowed 80-year-old **Kenny Parker** down—not even total blindness. Kenny lost his vision 22 years ago as a result of retinitis pigmentosa, a gradual deterioration of the retinas. “I drove for two more years after being diagnosed with RP, but then I finally had to give it up. I was determined that blindness was not going to slow me down. I still had a lot of life ahead of me.” His favorite thing to do is to run errands in town, go for coffee or eat out, and enjoy the sunshine on warm summer days. “But everything comes to a complete stop at 2 o’clock,” he says. “That’s because I don’t want to miss a single minute of the Emporia newspaper.” Every day at 2pm, Audio-Reader connects Parker to his community in a way that is much different than the connection he makes with friends at the local coffee shop. “Local news, weather, sports—even the obituaries; that newspaper has everything and they read it all.”

Parker received his Audio-Reader receiver in 1996, shortly after his RP diagnosis. “When the state rehabilitation teacher for the blind brought Audio-Reader into my home, it opened up my world again.”

An Emporia native, Kenny first made his living as a mechanic before working production for Dolly Madison for 24 years. Blindness caused him to retire at age 58. “We would wrap somewhere around 100,000 snack pies a day,” Kenny says. He enjoys spending time with his three children, four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. His favorite books to listen to are mysteries. Kenny is also an avid collector of flags. “I have over 200 different flags in my house.” His favorite flag? “The American flag, of course. I love my country with all my heart.”

What would Kenny Parker like to say to the Audio-Reader volunteers who read his newspaper to him every day? “Wow... Audio-Reader has some really great people who bring me a lot of happiness every day. Thank you!”
Tips for a Cleaner Recording

By Jen Nigro,
Coordinator of Volunteers

Unless you’re reading live, fixing mistakes in your recordings is likely a regular occurrence for you. Whether you’re using the digital system or Telephone Reader, here are a couple of tips to make those corrections less noticeable:

• **Digital recording:** When you press the pause button, resist the urge to give it a strong tap. Instead, use firm pressure to engage the pause function, and gently lift your finger off the button. This will help minimize the click heard in your recordings.

• **Telephone Reader:** When you press the pause button, resist the urge to hold the button down for any length of time. When you press and hold upon unpau sing, a beep may become audible in your recording. Press as you would if you were dialing a phone.

Now, let’s talk mic placement. Regardless of which system you use, get that first breath out of the way BEFORE you press record! Otherwise, your listener will hear a big gasp. Not a pleasant way to start things off. (By the way, coughing, throat clearing, and other noises fall into this same category—get it out of your system before recording!) Within your readings, you can minimize breath sounds by watching mic placement:

• **Digital recording:** Your microphone should be a hand’s length away and off to the side a bit, so you are blowing past it rather than right into it.

• **Telephone Reader:** Make sure your mic is in line with your mouth so we can hear you, but don’t have it right up on your mouth—give it a little space.

Regardless which system you use, breathing deeply from your diaphragm can help you reduce that gapping for air sound that can often come across. Practice this by placing your hand on your waist, just above the hip bone. Take a quick, deep, quiet breath in, and you should feel your side expand. This indicates your breath is coming from your diaphragm, not your chest. Chest breathing (and nose breathing) are always noisy.

Follow these tips for a cleaner recording, and our listeners will thank you!

Five Questions:

Name: Barb Johnston

Current reading assignment: The Lion (published by Lions Club International)

Years of service: 7 years, 7 months

Q: Where did you grow up?
A: I was born in Shreveport, LA, then moved to Nebraska. I spent most of my youth in Neligh, a town of about 1800 people.

Q: What is your favorite book?
A: The Practice of the Wild by Gary Snyder. He talks about freedom, what a sense of place means, staying on the path and going off the path, learning from elders, and wilderness. He also shares a long story about The Woman Who Married a Bear, an American Indian story that relates to mystery, interaction between species, and the necessity for honoring the beings humans kill to survive.

Q: How or why did you get involved with Audio-Reader?
A: I wanted to do something for others. My own parents had macular degeneration and it took a toll on them. I wish they could have had access to something like this. Now I too have this vision problem, but am still able to read at this point.

Q: What is your favorite or most unusual reading assignment?
A: I once read a chapter or two of a medical text which someone requested. I enjoyed this as I worked as a nurse for many years before retiring. Now I'm busy with church and Lions, so rather than reading books, I only read The Lion magazine monthly.

Q: What is your favorite thing about volunteering for Audio-Reader?
A: The people at Audio-Reader are great! I enjoy going into the studio and pushing the buttons to get ready to read. I also love to hear the speaker overhead talking about various topics, although I only hear snippets, but they are very interesting always.
Audio-Reader celebrated 46 years of service on October 11! The station went on the air October 11, 1971 thanks to the vision of our founder, Petey Cerf. We started with a handful of volunteers broadcasting 80 hours a week to about 250 listeners. Today, we reach 6-8,000 listeners in Kansas and Missouri and have a corps of nearly 450 volunteers.