Audio-Reader celebrates 45th birthday, volunteerism, at annual appreciation event

By Jennifer Nigro, Coordinator of Volunteers

Audio-Reader volunteers and staff gathered on October 2, 2016 at Maceli’s Banquet Hall and Catering to mark the organization’s 45th anniversary and recognize the 400 volunteers who make it all possible. The event, which is usually a dinner, had to be modified due to a $100,000 cut to Audio-Reader’s state funds. Yet no one seemed to mind the plastic plates or the simple, buffet-style brunch, made possible with a sponsorship from McDaniel and Knutson Financial Partners.

During the event, Audio-Reader listener Mary Chappell shared her story of vision loss and thanked volunteers for their time, which is valued at over $1.5 million annually. “When I lost my sight, I knew I was going to have to do some things differently,” said Chappell. “It wasn’t that I couldn’t do them, it’s that I needed to do them differently. Audio-Reader was probably that first bridge for me.” Chappell, a listener for nine years now, particularly enjoys the Lawrence Journal World and University Daily Kansas.

Dr. Neeli Bendapudi, KU Provost and Executive Vice-Chancellor, also spoke, calling Audio-Reader and its volunteers community champions for the University of Kansas. “Part of our liberal arts education is making sure that these messages, that information, is not just in the classroom, but outside, when you’re driving to work, when you’re doing your chores, and that’s what you provide.”

In addition, 59 volunteers received awards for years of service ranging from five to 45. The group included Audio-Reader’s first volunteer, Eleanor Symons.

5 Year:

David Dinneen, Lenita Richardson, Anna Napolitan, Karen DeVicotor, Chris Riehs, Judy Weingarten, Karen Boyer, and Anne Burgess.


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Kurt Bailey has been an Audio-Reader listener for over 30 years. Kurt’s favorite on-air radio shows are National Enquirer, Double Order of Freys, and Blind Handyman. He also likes being able to call in to Telephone Reader to listen to the daily weather and obituaries, and looks forward to receiving the monthly special request magazines Guideposts, Health After 50, and Taste of Home. Kurt is a diverse listener; he utilizes it all.

Kurt was born and raised in Topeka, KS, and still calls Topeka home. As a child he loved to travel. Some of his fondest childhood memories are of family trips with his parents and sister.

These days, Kurt does a lot of traveling around Topeka. He likes to spend his mornings getting things done: appointments, errands, chores, etc. In the evenings he meets friends to sing karaoke, listen to local bands, or play guitar. Music is a big part of Kurt’s life. He collects vinyl records and plays music from a variety of genres: big band, pop standards, country, rock & roll, gospel, etc. The only genres of music he isn’t really fond of are rap, heavy metal, and opera.

Another thing Kurt loves is food. His favorite meal is steak, baked potato, and tossed salad with German chocolate cake and a glass of cold milk for dessert. Most evenings he dines with his faithful friend and companion, Snowball. Snowball is an eight year old white schnoodle (schnauzer & poodle). Snowball celebrated his 8th birthday on October 9th. Kurt and Snowball have been together for five years, celebrating their anniversary on September 28th. “Snowball isn’t a service dog, but I would be lost without him,” Kurt chuckled fondly. “He is my little buddy.”

In the past, Kurt was employed at the Workshop for the Blind in Topeka and Wichita. During the late 1980s and early 1990s he and his mom taught senior citizen exercise classes. Now and then he entertains residents at nursing homes with his singing and guitar playing.

The one Audio-Reader show Kurt misses from the past is The Kitchen Sink. “It was a daily show that aired from 12pm-1pm. It included a list of various important or interesting or funny things that happened on that day throughout history. It also included daily TV listings,” Kurt shared.

I really enjoyed visiting with Kurt and getting to know him better. He has a great sense of humor and a kind heart.
2 Rachel Monger reads Soap Opera Digest, Airwaves and the Anderson County Advocate for Special Requests.

4 Bill Beningfield co-hosts the Breakfast Table Times on Thursday mornings.

5 Samantha Cloon reads from Cosmopolitan Magazine.

Nadia Hamid reads the FYI and Faith sections from the Kansas City Star for Telephone Reader on Saturdays.

Aspen Junge serves as clean-up reader for Telephone Reader on Saturdays.

Kimi Worstell-Laabs is one of our audio describers.

6 Pamela Baughman reads eastern Kansas newspapers on Wednesdays.

John Taylor is one of our Emeritus volunteers.

Phyllis Rhodes is an Emeritus volunteer.

Darrell Ward is an Emeritus volunteer.

10 Hank Brauer is one of our Emeritus volunteers.

Susan Craig hosts Shopping the Discount Stores each week.

Marilyn Daniels reads the Sunday Opinion section from the Kansas City Star for Telephone Reader.

11 Marianne Lafex reads the Hen House ad each week and reads business news from the Kansas City Star for Telephone Reader on Wednesdays.

Lana Naegel reads news from the Joplin Globe on Sundays.


John Sprague is one of our Emeritus volunteers.

13 Maverick Moore reads our Sunday Magazines program.

14 Fred Bahr reads books.

Rex Buchanan reads TV Guide.

18 Jerelyn Kaesler is one of our Emeritus volunteers.

19 Frank Day hosts the Missouri News Hour on Tuesdays.

20 Joe Sweet reads from the Sports section of the Kansas City Star for Telephone Reader on Wednesdays.

22 Janet Majure reads books.

John Trinkl is one of our audio describers.

23 Rebecca Reagan reads books and is one of our audio describers.

24 Karen DeVictor hosts the news hour for southeast Kansas on Tuesdays.

25 Aileen Ball reads Soap Opera Digest for Special Requests.

Mary Healer reads Kansas City-area news from our location at Alphapointe in Kansas City, MO.

Jenny O’Driscoll reads the Wichita Eagle on Wednesdays.

There are no Audio-Reader staff members with birthdays in November. It’s getting to be that time of year when we might expect some inclement weather! If you can help us out extra during those times when bad weather will make it difficult for some of our volunteers to get here, please let us know! Thanks in advance!

We are full of gratitude for all of you! Because of you, we can stay on the air 24/7, even during the holidays! Thank you so much for your dedicated service to our listeners!

Audio-Reader staff and volunteers wish a thankful (November is Thanksgiving month, after all!) Happy Birthday to our volunteers with birthdays in November.
Thanksgiving is almost here! In view of that, I’m offering a couple of options here. One is a cranberry sauce I tried that is yummy. The second one I’ve printed in this column before, but it’s so yummy for holiday festivities that I wanted to print again. Enjoy!

**Maple Cinnamon Cranberry Sauce**

*Cook Time: 9 minutes; Total Time: 10 minutes*

**Ingredients**
- 16 ounces (454 g) fresh cranberries
- 1/2 cup (100 ml) maple syrup
- 1/4 cup (50 ml) water
- a few pinches of ground cinnamon or a cinnamon stick

**Method**

Bring all ingredients to a boil in a saucepan over medium high heat. Reduce to a simmer and cook until the sauce thickens, about 6 minutes. Stir frequently. If using, remove the cinnamon stick before serving. For chunky cranberry sauce leave as is. To make it smooth, purée in a blender.

Source: [https://marlameridith.com/maple-cinnamon-cranberry-sauce-recipe](https://marlameridith.com/maple-cinnamon-cranberry-sauce-recipe)

**Cranberry Cinnamon Punch**

This next recipe for cranberry cinnamon punch came courtesy of former Audio-Reader staff member Peg Sampson. This might taste good with a little cinnamon Schnapps added!

**Ingredients**
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 large can pineapple juice, chilled
- 1 32 ounce bottle cranberry juice, chilled
- 1 28 ounce bottle ginger ale, chilled

**Method**

Combine water, sugar, and cinnamon in a saucepan and boil until sugar dissolves. Chill. Add all ingredients over ice ring in punch bowl. Yield: nearly 1 gallon.
**Five Questions:**

**Name:** Heather Nelson  
**Current reading assignment:** Saturday *Joplin Globe*; soon: Monday *Springfield News-Leader*  
**Years of service:** 4 years, 6 months  

Q: Where did you grow up?  
A: I grew up in Jasper, MO, a small town about 25 miles north of Joplin in southwest Missouri. The population is under 1,000 human souls, but I’m pretty sure we’d triple or quadruple in size if you could count the livestock in the nearby vicinity. Farming is the major industry, and if you aren’t a farmer, you most likely drive at least 20 minutes on the highway to get to your job. We hit the big time when we got a Dollar General in town a couple of years ago. :)  

Q: What is your favorite book?  
A: My favorite book changes all the time. I read the *Bible* a little just about every day, and usually something else besides.  

Q: How or why did you get involved with Audio-Reader?  
A: I love reading and having access to all kinds of information, and I feel honored to be able to help create a source of information and entertainment for others. If I were unable to read I would feel that loss profoundly, and the chance to keep reading available to others is a joy. I learn something every time I read! I first heard of Audio-Reader in an article distributed campus-wide and was intrigued. It was the first I’d ever heard of an outreach to the community like that. I emailed Jen the same day to be put onto the waiting list for volunteers, and I was thrilled when my number finally came up!  

Q: What is your favorite or most unusual reading assignment?  
A: I’ve read the health news, Kansas City-area papers, the *Joplin Globe*, and soon will begin reading the *Springfield News-Leader*. I learned so much reading the health news, and routinely cut out articles and recipes from those newsletters to try at home. One of my favorites was a butternut squash pizza recipe that is seriously one of my favorite things I’ve ever made. It has been very fun lately to read the Joplin paper, since that is essentially my own hometown news source. I’m excited to be able to soon read the *Springfield News-Leader* and gain more connection to my current community.  

Q: What is your favorite thing about volunteering for Audio-Reader?  
A: My favorite thing about volunteering for Audio-Reader is using my voice in a way that I haven't before. I'm a singer and a teacher of singing by trade, so I'm used to using my voice in that way. Reading each week gives me a chance to develop my skills in another vein and I've seen improvement in other areas of my voice use. Plus, it's just plain fun.

**NEW FACES**

Continued from page 4

**John Stauffer** is a senior analyst and fiscal officer for the Kansas City, MO, public works department. He has volunteered for the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, and read for the reading service based at UMKC when it was there. John begins by reading Saturday’s *Joplin Globe* for Telephone Reader.

**Jeff Vincent** is a financial aid advisor for Metropolitan Community College. He enjoys reading, movies, podcasts, and musical theater. He’s already put his interest in theater to good use, serving as a listener liaison for audio described theater performances, and hopes to become a full describer. Jeff will also read the Thriftway and Country Mart ads for Telephone Reader.
Audio Reader Celebrates

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10 Year:
Ron Scoles, Bill Vermooten, Merilee Dy-macek, and Thomas Howe.

15 Year:
Nancy Colyer, Mary Ann Saunders, Molly Mulloy, Lynne Ellis, Jo Anne Kready, Jane Tedder, and Cindy Penzler.
Not pictured: Susan Hoefer, Cindy Koester, and Jane Pennington.

20 Year:
Pat Ashley-Hiscock.

25 Year:
Randy Austin, Rob Tabor, Carol Jones, Kris Shields, Thelma Taylor, and Jim Taylor.
Not pictured: Susan Tabor.

35 Year:
Harold Asner

45 Year:
Eleanor Symons

Audio-Reader Has Changed Its Mailing Address!

PLEASE NOTE: To cut costs, Audio-Reader has done away with its post-office box. Going forward, here is the mailing address you should use when mailing anything to Audio-Reader:

University of Kansas
Audio-Reader Network
1120 W. 11th St.
Lawrence, KS 66044

Thank you!
Compiled by Susan Tabor, Administrative Assistant

Condolences
Audio-Reader staff and volunteers send our most sincere condolences to the families of those listed here who have died and to all who are grieving their loss:

Audio-Reader volunteer Emeritus Bill Beeson died on September 27. Bill, a volunteer from 2004-2015, read a variety of assignments, including Special Request, Missouri News Hour, Wichita Eagle, and live newspapers.

Audio-Reader Emeritus volunteer Wade Dexter died on October 4. Wade read for more than 20 years, most recently recording books from a home studio set up by his son.

Ruth Turney, the wife of Audio-Reader volunteer Austin Turney, died on October 9. Audio-Reader volunteer Steve Smith’s sister, Eileen, died in September.

Volunteers to Participate in Art Show
Helen Martin and Ann Dean are among the artists who will be at Prairie Found Farm’s annual open house, November 5 and 6 from 10-4. Prairie Found Farm is at 859 E 1500 Rd in Baldwin City. Helen, who reads eastern Kansas regions on Tuesdays, creates pottery; Ann, who reads Cosmo magazine each month, is a photographer.

Washington Creek Lavender Holiday Open House
Volunteer Jack Wilson and his wife, Kathy, will host a holiday open house at their farm, Washington Creek Lavender, on November 5 and 6. It runs from 10-4 each day. The farm is located at 858 E 800 Rd, near Lone Star. Jack reads eastern Kansas regionals on Tuesdays.

A quick reminder:
If you attended the volunteer appreciation brunch and have not yet paid for your guest meal, please do so! The cost for guest meals is $15, payable to Audio-Reader. Cash or check can be dropped off or mailed to us at Audio-Reader Network; Attn: Jen Nigro; 1120 W. 11th Street, Lawrence, KS 66044. Thank you!

Volunteer Needed!
We are looking for a volunteer to serve as a greeter at our front desk Mondays from 1-3:30. Basic office experience preferred. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact Jen Nigro at jnigro@ku.edu or (785) 864-4604.

Giving Tuesday
This Giving Tuesday (November 29) we are “Giving You a Glimpse” behind the scenes at Audio-Reader. We plan to live stream some of our broadcasts and will be inviting guest speakers from the newspapers we cover. We want to give you a look at how Audio-Reader, along with our team of volunteers, bring the printed word to life for the thousands of listeners across Kansas, Missouri, and beyond. Stay tuned for more details and perhaps be inspired to “give the gift of sight through sound” this Giving Tuesday.
Congratulations to Brandon and Christie Barnett on the birth of their daughter! Beatrice Clementine Barnett was born at 12:22 pm on October 1, 2016. She weighed 6 pounds, 13 ounces at birth, and was 18 inches long. Brandon reads the front page, world, and nation news from the Kansas City Star for Telephone Reader on Mondays. Again, congratulations, Brandon and Christie! Enjoy the heck out of that baby!!!