

SPRING 2008

Scholarship Awards given nationally & by our unit

Daniel Steck of San Antonio, TX received The 2007 Marion Huber Learning Through Listening® Award, which is a national scholarship for RFB&D® members who are high school seniors with learning disabilities. Diagnosed with dyslexia in the third grade, Daniel started using RFB&D's audiobooks on a regular basis, fueling his love of reading.

As a teen, Daniel approached life as an adventure and opportunity to assist others, volunteering at his church, local hospital and most predominantly through the Red Cross, helping at local flood shelters, manning first aid stations, and organizing school fundraisers and a shelter for Hurricane Katrina victims.

Daniel is currently studying mechanical engineering at Texas A&M University, gathering the necessary prerequisites to go on to medical school. He hopes to become an interventional

Daniel Steck, San Antonio, TX



"Unlike my father, who also has dyslexia, I never came to dread books, but instead saw them as doors to knowledge and adventure."

cardiologist, offering his services to the Red Cross in the future on medical missions.

Locally, the Regional Unit of the South Central States awarded Kevin Luecke (Austin), Steven Mintz (Dallas), and Jessica Adams (Houston) with scholarship awards. Congratulations!

Board Chair notes latest playback technology

When asked what education meant to her, Helen Keller replied, "Have you ever been at sea in a dense fog, when it seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut you in and the great ship, tense and anxious, groped her way toward the shore with plummet and sounding-line, and you waited with beating heart for something to happen? I was like that ship before my education began, only I was without a compass or sounding line, and no way of knowing how near the harbor was. Light! Give me light! was

the wordless cry of my soul, and the light of love shone on me in that very hour." RFB&D's vision is for all people to have equal access to the printed word. In order to realize our vision, changes must occur in our organization. RFB&D must expand its services, reach

areas not currently served and continue enhancing technologies which provide greater access to our digitally recorded books.

RFB&D is poised to expand its service area and reach out to students

in areas which are not currently served. In 2007 RFB&D and HumanWare announced that the HumanWare family of BrailleNote mPower, PK and Maestro-accessible PDAs will have the ability to play RFB&D's AudioPlus® books on CDs.

Coming in Fall 2008 RFB&D members will be able to download books and special software from a web site which will allow users to store the books and play them on select MP3 players. Features such as book marking and recording notes will be enhanced.

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RFB&D



learning through listening

Regional Unit of the South Central States

Reaching Out to Students in Texas, Arkansas & Oklahoma

Scholarship Winners

Board Chair notes latest playback technology

Michael Ver Schuur

Lions Club Sponsorship

Volunteer reader fits right in with RFB&D and their many projects

Regional Stats

Oklahoma School for the Blind's Learning Through Listening® Membership

A Growing Staff

Last spring RFB&D launched an innovative collaboration with the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST), a new, fully accessible educator support website at www.learningthroughlistening.org. The free service is offered 24/7 as a powerful resource to assist all educators seeking to integrate listening skills into their classrooms and is available to anyone with an interest in improving learning through listening. As we continue to evolve, grow and expand our services, RFB&D will become ever closer to realizing its vision for all people to have equal access to the printed word.

- Michael Ver Schuur, Board Chair

The Central Park Lions Club in San Antonio recently sponsored the Winston School, a private school in Bexar County, for one of RFB&D's Learning Through Listening® Institutional Memberships and four pieces of playback equipment. This sponsorship amounts to a gift of \$1,000 and will give the school the ability to borrow 35 audiobooks on CD from RFB&D's library within the year.

"We decided to assist the Winston School because we were looking for another school to support through RFB&D," said Dennis Alvey, Vice President of the Lions Club. Over the years, the service club has sponsored two other schools in this same way in San Antonio. "We want to approach the Winston School with the idea of starting a LEO club."

The LEO club was adopted as an official program of the Lions in 1967 as a way to provide youth with an opportunity to grow by learning about their community and providing

service to their neighbors. LEO is an acronym for Leadership, Experience & Opportunity, three characteristics which they hope will be evident in the member's activities and meetings. The Winston School does not currently have this program.

The Central Park Lions Club was chartered on May 23, 1969 and now has 30 members who work to raise money for the various organizations in need. Their biggest project is a contract bingo operation, from which most of their money is raised. The organization has donated over \$100,000 to various organizations, such as St. Peters & St. Joseph's Home, Roy Maas Youth Alternatives, Jefferson Outreach, and Any Baby Can. They also provide college scholarships and make significant contributions to Sight Research Foundation.

The service club is always looking for new members. Anyone interested can contact the membership director, Patti Bordelon at 210-497-8700.

10th Anniversary

2008 marks the 10 year anniversary of our Unit being housed in a beautiful and resourceful facility built specifically for RFB&D's mission & vision. The building was built in 1998 on the corner of 45th & Burnet Road near the Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired. Because of our continuing expansion our administrative staff will be moving into another office space in June. More details to follow!

The Specifics:

People Using RFB&D in Region
22,071

Member Schools/Districts
1,262

Teachers Trained
2200

Hours Recorded/Completed
4,250

Volunteers
507

Volunteer Hours Given
15,222

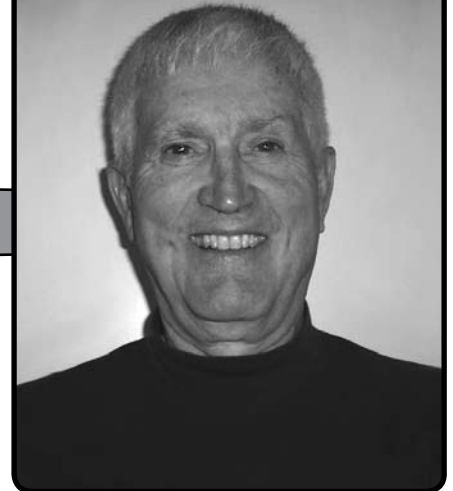
Books Ordered
4,361

Volunteer reader fits right in with RFB&D and their many projects

George Innis has been volunteering for over six months in the studio and has already accrued over 230 hours of volunteer time! In addition to working diligently on our slew of math books, he also helped us finish a large electronics textbook and has helped us record a very challenging math demo project. George is actually very suited to the task of reading such books – he was UT math professor for a number of years and loves the material. The only problem comes when he starts working the problems in his head while he is trying to read!

The mission of RFB&D truly resonates with George. Not only has his sister done volunteer-recording for the blind in the past, but George's dad developed macular degeneration late in life and, George says, "he devoured books on tape from RFB&D." George says he always wanted to contribute his time to an organization like this so when he and his wife moved back to Austin it was a natural fit to begin volunteering in the studio.

George Innis, Austin, TX



George also volunteers for Keep Austin Beautiful which he really enjoys, not only because they are doing such good work in our community but because he loves being outdoors. He tries to spend time every weekend working on projects for them and can get quite a good workout "using a weed wrench for three to four hours!" George's industriousness has also led him to bring a ladder to the studio on a couple of occasions and voluntarily clean out our gutters. Way to go to Keep Us Beautiful here at RFB&D!

George's other hobbies include bicycling and hiking. This August he and his daughter will hike nearly 100 miles together in Utah.

Thanks again for all your help George!

Oklahoma School for the Blind receives Learning Through Listening® Program.

School for the Blind the potential to provide audiobooks to more than 30 students. The school has already checked out 19 audio textbooks that go along with the school's curriculum and seven teachers and staff members were trained. Training includes showing teachers how to navigate through RFB&D's audioplus textbooks and how to utilize RFB&D's new Teacher Support Website, www.learningthroughlistening.org. This site includes lesson plans, graphic organizers, listening activities and video resources to assist teachers in the successful implementation of our program.

Since RFB&D's Regional Unit of the South Central States began serving Oklahoma in July of 2007, eight new schools have become members of RFB&D and 18 have renewed their memberships. Twenty-two new individuals have become members and 61 individuals have renewed their memberships. There are now 217 individuals served and 46 schools or districts are members. We estimate that over 850 people are utilizing RFB&D in Oklahoma.

During our transition to serving more states, Mary Alexander, our North Texas Outreach Coordinator, has served Oklahoma as well as all 20 counties in her North Texas area. With the new position of State Director in Oklahoma taken by Rachel Hernandez, and our plan to hire an Outreach Coordinator for Oklahoma, we hope to reach more students in need at a faster pace.



The Carl C. Anderson, Sr. & Marie Jo Anderson Charitable Foundation gave a generous gift to fund the placement of RFB&D's Learning Through Listening Membership at the Oklahoma School for the Blind. Mary Alexander, Regional Sales Manager, and Ginger Cleveland, Regional Outreach Director, are pictured above with some of the students who were very excited to receive the digital playback equipment. The students are now using RFB&D's audiobooks in their classrooms.

Thirteen pieces of equipment were delivered to the school along with other supplies such as headphones and adapters. These players and their membership gives the Oklahoma

Thank you to the following Corporations, Foundations, Organizations & Individuals.

The levels of giving are: **Reader's Circle (\$1,000-\$2,499)**, **Author's Circle (\$2,500-\$4,999)**, **Collector's Circle (\$5,000-\$9,999)**, **First Edition Circle (\$10,000-\$19,999)**, **Complete Series Circle (\$20,000+)**. The following donors gave between July 1, 2007 & Feb. 13, 2008. We also included those who have multi-year pledges in the giving categories of their total pledge.

Corporate, Foundation, & Organization Gifts Complete Series Circle

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† This individual is deceased.

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A growing staff: Regional Unit of the South Central States Staff

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Regional Executive
Director
Shelly Adame
Regional Sales Manager
Mary Alexander
Regional Sales Manager
Laurie Born
Regional Development
Director
Ginger Cleveland
Regional Outreach
Director
State Director
Rachel Hernandez (1)
Oklahoma
Production
Rose Imperato
Studio Assistant
Cheri Nightingale
Studio Producer
Carter York
Studio Administrator

New Staff members since July 2007 are pictured.

Communications

Jenny Falke
Communications Manager

Finance

Sandra Hutton (6)
Bookkeeper

Administration

Kelly Taylor
Administrative Assistant

Outreach

Gigi Franklin
Member Services
Christina Ashing
West Texas
Alex Blocker
Panhandle Plains
Justin M. Czimskey (7)
Central Texas

Diana Gatlin(5)

Gulf Coast
Terrie Noland
Midwest Texas Plains
Lucy Poludniak (3)
Rio Grande
Amanda Self (2)
East Texas
Rhea Thompson
Gulf Coast
Teresa Tran (4)
Coastal Bend





learning through listening

Regional Unit of the South Central States

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www.rfbds.org
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AUSTIN, TX

Calendar Markers - Upcoming Events

April 17th - Rawson Saunders Art Show & Open House 6-8pm

Special Art Show! Join us in the Austin Studio to see art by the Rawson Saunders students. Hear from staff and others about our services and the 10 year anniversary of our studio.

April 26th to May 3 - Record-A-Thon

National Volunteer Week = Volunteers record books like crazy! To join the fun such as theme days and food, sign up to volunteer for some extra times that week! Email lborn@rfbds.org to bid on our auction items - How about box seats to see the Round Rock Express at the Dell Diamond? Or, a weekend trip to Puerto Vallarta?

May 7th - Houston Celebration Breakfast

You're invited - email [Rheaa](mailto:Rheaa@rthompson@rfbds.org) at rthompson@rfbds.org for more info.

June 19th - Photography of John Dennis Art Show & Open House

Also, please note: Good Search is a search engine, powered by Yahoo, that donates half its revenue to charity. Go to www.goodsearch.com and enter Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic-RFBD (Princeton, NJ) as the charity you want to support. The more times you search, the more money we raise! 500 people x 4 searches per day = \$7,300 raised for RFB&D without spending a dime!

Don't forget to sign up for our quarterly eNewsletter on our website.

Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic®, RFB&D®, a nonprofit volunteer organization, is the nation's educational library serving people who cannot effectively read standard print because of visual impairment, dyslexia or other physical disability.

Our mission is to create opportunities for individual success by providing, and promoting the effective use of, accessible educational materials.

Our vision is for all people to have equal access to the printed word.