
Accessible News Anywhere

Highlights from NFBNY-Newsline

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Greetings from President Robinson

On behalf of the NFBNY Affiliate and the Newsline team, I would like to extend a warm welcome to you. The Newsline team is here to help you get the most out of the service. If you have questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to us. Our contact information can be found at the end of this newsletter.

I would also like to extend my sincerest thanks to the New York State Commission for the Blind and to the New York State Legislature for their generous support of Newsline. Without their support Newsline would not be available in New York.

Please Help Us Spread the Word

We are working hard to make sure that our subscribers can take advantage of all the content that Newsline makes available and to reach out to all New Yorkers who can benefit from Newsline. Besides being here to provide program information, we would like to hear from you about your experiences with NFB-Newsline. If you know of someone who can benefit from Newsline, please let them know about us and share our contact information with them.

If you are using the service and find it helpful, please share your story with us. Testimonials help us by letting possible funding sources know how Newsline makes a difference to you. Please remember

that we will never use your story without your consent.

If you are having trouble using the service, we want to know that too. We cannot identify issues or help to improve the service without your input. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to phone or email us.

Some Thoughts from Your Newslite Director

The coming of spring takes me back to afternoons spent outside or sitting by an open window enjoying the gentle breeze while my fingers glided across the pages of the latest Braille book that I had gotten through the mail from the New York State Library. As somewhat of a history buff, I spent countless hours reading what was then available to me on ancient and medieval history. These memories bring to mind the staggering changes in the availability of information that has occurred not only throughout history, but particularly since my high school days.

Through much of human history the written word was as precious as a gem. Only a privileged few could read and write thus having access to written records, manuscripts, and books. Even at the height of Roman imperial rule, perhaps one in every ten people could read, and even fewer had the wealth to collect enough books to

be considered as having access to a private library.

The invention of mechanized printing revolutionized literacy by making it possible for printed materials to be mass-produced and made widely available inexpensively. Later, the creation of Braille brought literacy to blind people; however, for blind people and others with disabilities limiting access to the printed word, access to books and other printed information remained challenging well into the late 20th century.

As with the invention of mechanical printing, the development of text-to-speech and refreshable electronic Braille technology and the tremendous growth in digital telecommunications services have revolutionized the expansion of access to written information to people with disabilities that would otherwise limit their access to print.

Capitalizing on these breakthroughs, the National Federation of the Blind developed NFB-Newslite, a service designed to utilize digital text-to-speech and refreshable Braille displays to bring newspapers, magazines, and other print content to people who are blind and others for whom reading print is precluded or is challenging due to disability.

NFB-Newslite is proudly made available, free of charge, to all eligible New York State residents

by the New York State affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind. Since March of 2002, New Yorkers who have registered to receive the service have been able to call a toll-free or local telephone number to gain access to an ever-increasing and diverse wealth of content ranging from breaking news to the latest happenings in the world of sports and entertainment.

NFB-Newsline can now also be accessed via a mobile app, through the Amazon Alexa platform, on a fully accessible website, and through on-demand emails. You can also have content downloaded to your specialized reading device of choice. As more fully covered in the next article, the NFB-Newsline App also allows registered users to access and use basic features of the KNFB Reader to scan documents and convert them to speech, enhancing the ability of eligible NFB-Newsline subscribers to gain access to print materials anywhere.

As Director of the NFBNY-Newsline service I consider it a privilege to have been asked to play a role in promoting access to news and information to our fellow New Yorkers who might not otherwise have access to print information because of blindness or other disabilities.

NFB-Newsline News

KNFB Reader on your i-Devices

Did you know that when you download the most up-to-date NFB-Newsline App on your i-Device, you get a free basic version of the KNFB Reader?



Photo source:
nfb.org/programs-services/knfb-reader

What is It?

KNFB Reader is a character recognition program you can use to scan printed material. How many times have you been in a meeting for your job or a workshop, and a printed handout is distributed that you cannot read?

How many forms do you sign without having them read to you? Even though lawyers tell us all the time not to sign something we have not read, the reality is that many times we are asked to sign something when there is nobody willing or able to read it to us.

How can I benefit from having access to the basic version of the KNFB Reader?

- Privacy: You do not need to involve anybody else to read personal documents.
- You can read and sort your snail mail.
- You can identify packages and read preparation directions.

- You can read a computer screen your speech software is not reading to you.
- Just plug in your earphone to your i-Device, scan, adjust the volume and reading speed, and read.

If you have not downloaded the latest version of NFB-Newsline on your i-device, KNFB Reader is a fantastic reason why you should. You never know when you will need something printed read to you.

We are Available to Make Presentations

Do you represent an organization in need of a speaker or an interesting presentation? Do you have clients or know of people who can benefit from Newsline? Please contact us. We would be happy to speak to your organization or group about Newsline. We would be delighted to explain what NFB-Newsline is, how to use it, and how to sign up for the service. We would also gladly sign up any eligible people who attend the presentation, and remember, Newsline is provided free to all eligible subscribers, so there is no need to provide payment or other financial information.

Your Input is Valued and Always Welcomed

Do you have a question or topic you would like us to write about in this newsletter? Remember, if you want to know, probably others have the same question too. Email or call, and we will do our best to include that information in a future newsletter. Staff contact information can be found at the end of this newsletter.

Do You Have a Question or Need Help Using Newsline?

All the New York State NFB-Newsline staff have new phone numbers and new email addresses, so that you can contact us. Phone numbers and email addresses can be found at the end of this article.

Whether you signed up at a public event or agency, and you have not yet used this informative free service, or you have not used NFB-Newsline for a while and you do not remember your login information, please do not hesitate to contact Bernice Bird, our Outreach Coordinator. She will make sure that you get up to speed on how to use Newsline and make sure that you receive your log-in information and that your subscriber data is up to date. If you have any other questions or concerns, please feel free to share them with your Newsline Director.

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Watch for the NFB-Newsline
newsletter coming to your inbox
again soon.