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BOOKS:

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sible," she said. "If an activity director has a particular need, they can come get books, or they can request that I take them some."

Hansen said Proudfoot and fellow Guardian Angel Homes resident Judy Barkhurst are "voracious readers," so she supplements the books delivered to the facility with special deliveries from the library's shelves to those residents.

"It's great because, otherwise, where would I get my books?" Barkhurst said. "I can't get to the library."

She has been an avid reader since the age of 4 and could normally finish a novel

in one day.

"I don't know how many books I've read in my life," she said. "I've always read a lot. My TV is under the desk over there. I don't like TV. I get so aggravated at all those commercials on there. Why am I paying money to watch commercials?"

Librarian Marie Baldo said the Elderlibraries program began during her tenure in 2004 following the efforts of her predecessor, MLou Williams.

"MLou wrote the grant and got it all started, and she retired before we were actually awarded the grant from the Meyer Foundation," she said. "It was all her concept."

Baldo said the two-year grant included funding for a library van and a part-time

employee, and the duties were transferred to the volunteer coordinator when the funds expired.

"With a grant-driven program, you have to figure out a way, once those grant funds dry up, to integrate it into your normal operations and to sustain it," she said. "That's where there has been changes over the years."

Baldo said she understood the benefit of a program such as Elderlibraries because her mother's "greatest joy" was reading, and she resided at Hermiston Terrace until she passed away in her 90s.

"It's just a good program," she said of Elderlibraries. "It's like any kind of outreach that we do. Libraries really are trying to be about outreach."



SEAN HART PHOTO

Hermiston Public Library Volunteer Coordinator Jodi Hansen shows some of the books she delivered as part of the Elderlibraries program to a small library at Guardian Angel Homes Thursday in Hermiston.

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read it and (think) OK, now we're all right. It's kind of the pits."

The condition has been getting worse, but she plans to try a new method to fulfill her desire to read: audio books.

Library Assistant Jodi Hansen said the Library of Congress has been making materials for people with sight impairments since the 1800s and has had audio books for more than 50 years, but many people are not aware they are available.

"Sight-impaired people have rights too, so the Library of Congress works with almost every state library in the country to make sure that they have braille or Talking Books available," she said.

Through the LOC, the Oregon State Library provides people who have disabilities with free Talking Books machines that read books aloud from cartridges, which can be exchanged through the mail, Hansen said. The machines also have a USB port, she said, so people can listen to

downloaded audio materials.

"It's an audio book system that they've tried to make as absolutely simple as they can so people don't feel like they're losing out," she said. "I guess they have a really large library of newspapers and current events. They try to keep up on with that too."

Hansen said the Hermiston Public Library recently received one of the Talking Books machines, so staff members can show people how they work.

"This is a really cool program that a lot of people don't know about," she said. "We would like to let people know that this is available. They don't have to be sight-impaired. If they're physically handicapped where they can't read a book like you and I can do and go into the library and get a book, then they can qualify for this program. They just have to fill out an application."

Applications are available at the library and online at www.tbabs.org.

Librarian Marie Baldo said the library is also utilizing newer technology to help provide services.

"I love what's going on with the digital age," she said. "A Kindle is a large-

print book, and when I'm ready for them, I'll have my electronics, so we'll be

supplying (electronic books for download) through Library2Go. There's just a

number of ways that libraries adapt and try to provide service to people."

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