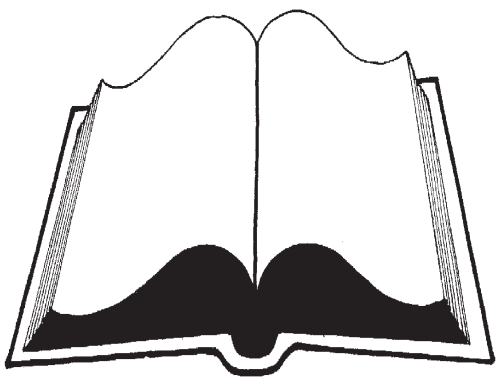


Talking Book and Braille Services

Talking Book and Braille Services (TBABS), a free service of the State Library, kicked off a summer ad campaign this month to inform Oregon seniors, their families and friends about library services available for individuals who cannot read standard print. A "talking book" is a professionally recorded book on tape for use on special players. Tapes and players are provided by the library at no charge to borrowers.



"Talking Book and Braille Services offers those who can't see regular print, hold a book, or turn a page an opportunity to continue enjoying reading," said Jim Scheppe, State Librarian. "The TBABS campaign is directed specifically toward seniors because so many experience a decrease in sight or physical dexterity. We hope that the campaign will help increase the number of seniors who take advantage of this free library service to help them continue to read, learn and enjoy books."

The campaign's ads depict a woman in her 60s with age-related macular degeneration (AMD), an eye disease that affects part of the retina which enables one to see fine detail. According to the National Institute on Aging, AMD is the leading cause of vision loss in Americans age 60 and older. Oregon's fastest growing age group is citizens over 60.

"These ads are telling my story," said Sharon Baker of Milwaukie, Oregon. Baker has used the TBABS program since 2002 and also serves on the program's advisory board. "By age 60, I had lost sight in both of my eyes, which was devastating for me. It is such a shock when you can't pick up your favorite book or read about what's going on around you. It was like an entire world was closed to me. Talking books opened up my world again."

According to Baker, TBABS is very easy to use. "I choose the books I want from the catalog each month and TBABS mails the tapes to me. When I'm finished, I just put them in my mailbox for free pick up by the U.S. Postal Service."

Funded by private donations from State Library patrons, the ad campaign features a television ad and two radio ads in English and Spanish. The ads are airing in cooperation with member stations of the Oregon Association of Broadcasters.

TBABS currently serves more than 7,000 individuals and 600 institutions in Oregon, many of whom are seniors who have experienced loss in their eyesight. "Individuals can either go to our Web site or call us toll free to register for TBABS to borrow talking books," said Susan Westin, program manager for State Library's Talking Books and Braille Services.

TBABS has more than 60,000 book titles in recorded formats as well as popular magazines, such as Good Housekeeping, National Geographic, People Weekly, Sports Illustrated and U.S. News & World Report.

These high-quality recordings are played on easy-to-use playback equipment. The talking books and playback equipment are available at no charge to people who are eligible.

For more information about eligibility for TBABS or to learn about other library services for individuals with visual, physical or learning disabilities, call the State Library toll free, 800-452-0292, or visit the Web site, www.tbabs.org. The ads are on the State Library's Web site at www.oregon.gov/OSL/TBABS/tvads.shtml.

Power of the People

By W. Marc Farmer,
General Manager
West Oregon Electric Cooperative



The True Value of Electricity

It is easy in life to lose perspective on things until we receive a reminder of reality. Such is often the case when it comes to electricity. It is a daily necessity that we easily take for granted, and we tend to forget what it provides for our lives and the many uses we come to rely on, until the power goes off. Then reality reminds us of the many things we cannot use or do without electricity.

My staff and I put together a list of typical household electric uses in an average day, and we came up with 45 different items. The list included lighting, heating and cooling, water for drinking and washing or bathroom use needs a pump, refrigeration and freezers, washing clothes and dishes, communication items such as phones, computers, and cell phone chargers; entertainment from television, radio, and stereos; cooking with stoves, toaster and microwaves; vacuum cleaner, clocks, hair dryers and curling irons, power tools, and much more.

A utility company wanting to demonstrate the value of electricity has been offering a challenge to a couple of individuals or families to go for 60 days without using electricity and write about their experience. The received a check for the amount they would have normally spent if they could successfully go the entire 60 days. What looked like a simple challenge on the outside became a song of a different story when the reality set in of how much of

their daily lives were dependent upon the use of electricity. For one couple who decided to purchase a generator, it was a lesson in the expense of replacing their power source and the time and money spent to operate it was more than they received for going without.

The time we most often forget is when the power bill arrives and it is time to pay for all of the things we used over the past month. Think about that. How many products or services do you get to use and then pay after you have used it? At the end of the month, we pay for only that amount we have actually used to provide warmth, light, a means to cook food, keep our homes and ourselves clean, be entertained and more.

What is the real value of the electricity we have used and for which we are now being asked to pay? I think a simple way of recognizing the true value can best be shown this way. Take the average power bill on our system of \$118. Divide that by a monthly average of 30 days. Dividing \$118 by 30 days shows us that it only costs an average of \$3.93 per day for all of the many things we use in our homes. That is a small price to pay for all that we receive from the use of electricity during a 24-hour period.

To put the daily price of \$3.93 for electricity into even more perspective, I went to the store and looked at some things we might spend the same amount or close to that

amount to purchase. As you consider these items, think about the total benefits we receive from each and I think you will be surprised about the true value of electricity. For approximately the same amount, I observed people purchasing a frozen pizza, half gallon of orange juice or bottle of other juices, a carton of ice cream, a six pack of beer, a box of cereal, package of cookies, a pack of cigarettes, a magazine, family size frozen dinner, a bag of chips and a soft drink. I then thought about the fact that if I drove my car I could only make it as far as Staley's Junction for \$3.93. It would cost someone that much or more for a fast food combo meal or a latte or espresso. They are all things that some people purchase every day and only fill one momentary want or need, not a full day and night of needs.

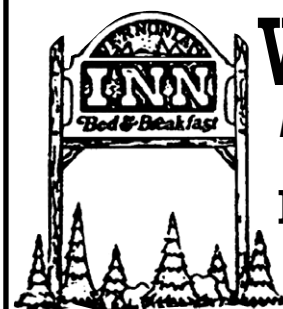
It might be an eye-opening experience to write your own list of all the items you use that require electricity and see for yourself all that you receive for only \$3.93 per day. It definitely puts things into perspective and helps to better understand the true value of electricity in each of our lives.

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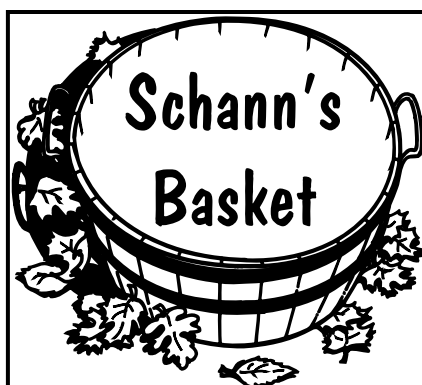
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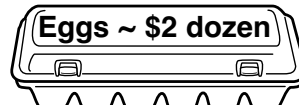
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