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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Survey: Disabled Alaskans Served Well by the Alaska Talking Book Center

ANCHORAGE -- For nearly 1,100 Alaskans who experience visual and physical disabilities, the Alaska Talking Book Center serves as their library lifeline to the world of books and magazines. Eighty-seven percent of these patrons rate the service they receive from the Talking Book Center as excellent and 11 percent rate service as good, according to a survey done in May 2009.

These 1,100 people each check out an average of 45 items from the Talking Book Center every year, while general library patrons check out an average of 11 items annually from Alaska's public libraries.

Patrons have consistently rated the Talking Book Center highly on seven questions posed on biennial satisfaction surveys gathered since 2003. Their comments complement their survey responses:

"What a joy to have this service as my eyesight lessens. It helps push away the nightmares and replaces them with good thoughts."

"I did not realize that the Talking Book Center existed. It has added a new dimension to my 92nd year."

"My husband's life would be empty and hopeless without the talking book service."

Alaskans whose visual or physical handicap prevent them from reading standard print may apply for this free library service. The Talking Book Center ships playback equipment and books to patrons from across Alaska and arranges to have recorded magazines and Braille materials delivered to their homes.

Patrons of all ages and from towns across Alaska are served by the center, which is located in Anchorage. Library materials are mailed to patrons under the Free Matter for the Blind stamp, which provides free delivery and return of these materials.



EDUCATION
& EARLY DEVELOPMENT

The Talking Book Center is part of the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development's Division of Libraries, Archives and Museums. The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a division of the Library of Congress, provides books and magazines and playback equipment for this program, while the state Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums provides staff and office space for the program.

See: <http://library.state.ak.us/dev/tbc.html>.

For additional information or a sample copy, contact: Patience Frederiksen, Regional Librarian, Alaska State Library Talking Book Center, at 907-269-6566 or patience.frederiksen@alaska.gov.

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