

Messages From MARRS



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It is a terrible thing to see and have no vision.
Helen Keller

Listener Jan Stanko says:

"I love the radio reading service. It really changed my life."

Board Elects New Officers

The MARRS Board of Directors elected new officers at its Annual Meeting on June 20, 2011. Officers for 2011-2012 are: Dan Bradshaw, President; Patti Sharp, Secretary, and Phyllis Youngberg, Treasurer. Other members of the Board include: Tom Leeder, Judy Davis, Katy Farlow, Susan Haldane, and Laura Jansen. Linda Hynson serves as General Manager of Operations and Sheila Horine (past president) is a special consultant to the Board.

The MISSION of MARRS

MARRS mission is to link people who are blind, visually and print impaired to their Western North Carolina community through audio access to printed material.

Volunteers Needed

We are looking for people to manage the station on any given weekday. Managers would need to be at the station from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00, 1:00 or 2:00, depending on the day they manage.

This is a pleasant job in a centrally-located, ground floor office in downtown Asheville.

There is ample free parking in the deck behind Pack Library, which is across the street from the MARRS office. Our door is half a short block up from the parking deck.

Managers supervise readers preparing articles from the newspaper, answer phone calls from prospective listeners or readers, and, most importantly, record our volunteer readers using the computer. Our system is very user friendly. Training will be provided, and instructions are printed next to the computer. Technical assistance is also available by phone during work hours. If you are somewhat hesitant about the computer aspect of this job, don't let that keep you from trying this unique volunteer opportunity.

We are looking for people who are friendly, easy-going and possess a positive outlook. You can choose to volunteer one day a week, or more. This is an ongoing position, but if you need to be away, substitutes can be arranged.

For more information, please contact General Manager, Linda Hynson at 251-2166.

Board Recognition

The Board wishes to thank Sheila Horine for her 6 past years as President and member of the Board as well as Linda Hynson and Larry Rostetter whose services have been invaluable to the continued operation of MARRS. The Board also appreciates the hundreds of hours our volunteer readers have given to the organization this year.

July 2011

I am honored to have been selected by the MARRS Board to serve as President of this organization for 2011-2012. This new program year will be one full of challenges as we strive to enhance our serves to the blind and visually impaired here in Western North Carolina. My priorities for the year include: increasing the number of persons we reach with our programming; getting the message of our services out to the community; and increasing the funds needed to continue our operations.

This first edition of our Newsletter is the first step to enhancing our communication with our volunteers, listeners, and community partners. We plan to publish this newsletter quarterly and we welcome your comments and suggestions on how we can better serve you. We need to know what you like about our programs and what we can do to make it more interesting and informative. We also need your financial support. As all of you know the economy has been hard on everyone and that includes non-profit 501(C)(3) organization like

ourselves. We also need volunteers to read the news daily, deliver radio's to listeners, manage the office, and to present our message to others in the community. If you would like to help please contact me or Linda Hynson at :

MARRS
75 Haywood Street,
Suite G-4
Asheville, N.C. 28801

I look forward to hearing from you.

Dan Bradshaw

A Bit of History on MARRS

MARRS was started back in 1987 by Robert Brummond. Bob was a man who, though legally blind, was very technologically savvy. In his concern for rights of the sight impaired to have equal access to information, he founded this radio reading service and ran it for seventeen years. He was not paid to do this, but made it his mission to make the service the best it could be. He was widely respected by those in the IAAIS, an organization that serves to advocate for most of the radio reading services in the country. When they had questions about what was up and

coming in the technology used by these services, they would look to Bob to inform them. To say he ran MARRS on a shoestring, an understatement at best, would elicit laughs from any who knew him.

In 2005, Bob passed away after an eighteen month battle with cancer. At that time, there was a board that met quarterly, but Bob was really the sole motivating force behind the station. Upon his death, the board really didn't know what to do to keep MARRS going.

Feeling strongly that all of Bob's work shouldn't have been for nothing, Linda said she would

keep the office open and keep the volunteer readers recording. In the ensuing six years, Linda, with the help the board and its chair, Sheila Horine, kept MARRS going. The volunteers have read, the listeners we serve have heard the news, as is the mission of this station. Along the way there have been many challenges.

The MARRS Board now meets monthly and depends solely on volunteers and contributions from the community to continue its mission. We also partner with local radio stations WNCW (88.7 FM) and WCQS (88.1 FM) to broadcast our programs to the community.

Weathering the Storm

MARRS is fortunate to partner with radio stations WNCW and WCQS as well as the Internet to deliver our programs to listeners. Five days a week volunteers record the news in our Asheville and Hendersonville studio's. Those programs are then transmitted to towers owned by the radio stations atop area mountains. The signal is then beamed to our listeners via sub channels of the two stations. We currently broadcast 4-6

hours of local news daily with the rest of the schedule coming from other radio reading services around the country.

Sometimes our programming is temporarily interrupted due to storms that affect the broadcast towers or the equipment located at those sites. When there are equipment failures we must work with the radio station engineers to reach the towers and make repairs to the equipment. Unfortunately this can

result in lengthy periods of programming not reaching our listeners. We regret these interruptions and hope you will understand our dilemma and be patient with us until we can resume broadcast.. If you are not receiving our broadcast on your radio please contact our offices at 828-251-2166 or e-mail us a info@marrswnc.org to let us know as there are times failures happened when we are unaware.

The Show Must Go On

In order to bring our readers the latest news our programs are recorded Monday through Friday each week at both Asheville and Hendersonville studios. All programming is broadcast over both radio stations and the Internet. As noted earlier, one of both stations may be temporarily off the air at times but the programming continues on all outlets. If there is a recording failure at either of our studios the previous days programming will be played until a new program is recorded.

Our listeners live in various Western North Carolina counties and

enjoy hearing about the news from our entire region, not just the community in which they live. We even have listeners from outside our region and outside our state who tune in via the Internet. Therefore we continue recording our programs even when the broadcast of those programs may not be going out over all the stations.

Those who miss a particular days news or wish to hear certain programs repeated can do so by going to our web site at www.marrswnc.org and selecting **Archived Programs**, one can then select from the menu programs

previously recorded and click on those programs to hear them replayed. Some love being able to hear the obituaries while others love hearing about local history, or editorial opinions. One woman listens while she irons, and another is a past editor of one of the sections of the Asheville Citizen Times and cherishes hearing it, now that she can no longer read it for herself.

**Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much.
Helen Keller**

**Mountain Area Radio
Reading Services
(MARRS)**

75 Haywood Street., G-4
Asheville, NC 28801

Phone: 828-251-2166
E-mail: info@ marrswnc.org

**We're on the
Web**

www.marrswnc.org

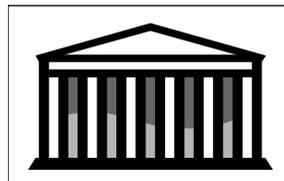
**The Americans
with Disabilities
Act says"**

"the Nation's proper goals regarding individuals with disabilities are to assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for such individuals"



Support our Services

MARRS needs your financial support to keep providing services to the blind and visually impaired.



The recent economic climate has had an adverse affect on many social services and MARRS Services are no exception. Audio Information Services across the country have been forced to reduce local programming, cut staff and step up private fundraising efforts in an attempt to continue to provide current, LOCAL, print information to low vision, Blind and elderly residents of their communities.

While it's true that the Internet, smart phones and other amazing new technology can

open up a world of information for many people, there are also large numbers of people who aren't able to afford and successfully operate such devices. These are the people who benefit from a special tabletop radio with an on/off switch, which provides personal access to daily readings of grocery ads, obituaries, local news and events. Providing these service costs only pennies a day. MARRS programs provide equal access to local news, local govern-

ment actions and information about events in the community, that allow full and informed participation by sight impaired listeners.

Please consider making a financial contribution to help us continue these services in Western North Carolina. Send your tax deductible donation to

MARRS, 75 Haywood St., G-4, Asheville, NC 28801.

Your gift will be greatly appreciated.