

SALB INSIGHT

Number 10 of 2020

Monthly news clips from the South African Library for the Blind (SALB)

CLEAN AUDIT 2019/2020

The Financial year-end for the Library is 31 March. The External Audit process for the 2019/20 Financial period began in August 2020 by the Eastern Cape Auditor General (AG) Office. The process concluded on the 30 September 2020 and the report issued by the Auditor General to SALB was an unqualified audit opinion with no material findings, therefore deemed a clean audit report. This is a significant achievement for the Library and the second consecutive clean audit report attained. The SALB Board and Management would like to thank all staff and stakeholders for their commitment and dedication that contributed towards this achievement. SALB Management will continue to build on this and strive towards maintaining this positive reflection of the financial affairs of the Library. The full AG report and Annual Financial Statements will be available on the 2019/20 Annual Report which will be available on the SALB website www.salb.org.za from November 2020.

SALB STAFF

The Board, Management and staff are eager to welcome Mr Mandla Ntombela, the new Director at SALB. He will take up office from 02 November 2020 and we look forward to him starting with the Library and giving him the required support in improving service delivery to our members.

As part of Government's employment stimulus programme which focuses on generating employment opportunities for woman, youth and persons with disabilities, the SALB employed one Admin Assistant and two drivers on short term contracts ending 31 March 2021. Ms Wendy Ximiya was appointed as Admin Intern on 01 September 2020 and Mr Zithobele George and Mr Mthandazo Mzizi were appointed as drivers effective from 07 September 2020. The two drivers alternate on a weekly basis so as to limit their potential exposure to Covid-19.

Mr de Lange (Head: Human Resources) attended a virtual training session on the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act on 30 September 2020. The amendments and monitoring of the POPI Act comes into effect on 01 June 2021 and employers and employees need to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the said Act.

SALB STAFF RETURN TO THE OFFICE FULL-TIME

As of 01 October 2020 and in line with Lockdown Level 1 regulations, the full complement of SALB staff are back at work full-time and all staff are committed to ensuring our services are returned to the new-normal. Health and safety protocols are in place and will be strictly monitored to ensure the well-being of staff and those coming to the Library against the potential contraction of Covid-19.

I.T. SERVICES COMMUNIQUE - SALB TO START DISTRIBUTING ENVOY DEVICES

The SALB I.T. and Technical Services section is getting geared to start distributing the Envoy connect devices as off 01 November 2020. This was after pilot testing was completed and feedback from members taken into consideration over two years. Budget constraints and changing technology are the main reasons why the Library is moving away from the Victor Reader Stratus devices. The Envoy device boasts the following features: The device has a solar panel and electricity charger points; can download more than 20-30 books to the internal storage capacity; can be used to download books directly from the website and the new developed application that will soon come into operation. The device is easy to use with only 6 buttons. The battery can last up to 8 hours. It is portable and easy to carry and the user can use earphones or a headset with the device. Members are welcome to contact the Library on 046-6227226 for more information about the Envoy device.

LIBRARY SERVICES COMMUNIQUE – UPDATE ON MINI-LIBRARIES

The SALB team in collaboration with Provincial and Local Library authorities were very busy checking on which public libraries will be opening since the lowering of the lockdown levels. The Gauteng, KZN, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Western Cape Province libraries are currently verifying the state of readiness and will communicate with members when it is safe to visit the mini libraries. The Eastern Cape libraries have started gearing up for opening, however, they are not fully functional yet.

SALB AND KHANYISA SCHOOL VIRTUALLY CELEBRATED THE NATIONAL BOOK WEEK IN THE “NEW NORMAL” WAY

Social distancing, face masks and virtual meetings have become familiar terms globally in 2020. The National Book Week (NBW) 2020 celebration was no exception. On Wednesday 09 September 2020, the SALB celebrated the National Book Week virtually with Khanyisa School for the Blind that is based in KwaDwesi, Port Elizabeth.

National Book Week (NBW) is celebrated annually on a national level. NBW is an initiative of the South African Book Development Council (SABDC) in collaboration with the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture. National Book Week is an important initiative in encouraging the nation to value reading as a fun and pleasurable activity and to showcase how reading can easily be incorporated into one’s daily lifestyle. This year it was held from 02 to 08 September and observed in different ways by different organisations. The event coincided with International Literacy Day which was on 08 September.

The SALB celebrated this day with a grade 7 class and language educators at Khanyisa School for the Blind where learners enjoyed participating in a Spelling BEE competition.

Ms Vuyo Mandongana, the SALB Senior Outreach Librarian closed the programme by reciting the poem “I opened a book” written by Julia Donaldson. She further encouraged learners to make reading for leisure a habit, as reading broadens one’s mind.

PRODUCTION SERVICES COMMUNIQUE

On Saturday 19 September 2020, the Provincial Executive Committee of the Eastern Cape held a virtual plenary meeting. Membership organisations of the South African National Council for the Blind (SANCB) were presented with the opportunity to highlight achievements and pressing challenges experienced.

Representatives from schools highlighted the challenges experienced during Covid-19, but also positive achievements such as excellent results of grade 12 learners and overall good results at Khanyisa School for the Blind.

SALB was also commended for the contribution of transport for members utilising mini-libraries.

During the meeting Honorary Vice President of The South African National Council for the Blind, Mrs Hazel Marshall commended member organisations in the Eastern Cape for their continued positivity and commitment to provide services to blind people.

STATS and HIGHLIGHTS

The following titles have been added to the SALB Collection for the months of April – September 2020. 313 new audio books titles, 288 new braille books, 13 new tactile books have been added to the collection. These are inclusive of indigenous titles. From July-September 2020, 15872 books have been circulated to members and 39 new members joined the library.

Various magazine and newspaper content is available for downloading from the library website: www.salb.org.za .

CONTACT DETAILS

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Email addresses:

- i. Library Services – audiolib@salb.org.za
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- iv. Braille Advisory and Standards - bbprod@salb.org.za or pasha.alden@salb.org.za
- v. Director - director@blindlib.org.za or director@salb.org.za
- vi. Marketing / Communication – marketing@salb.org.za

Social Media Links:

SALB Website: <https://www.salb.org.za/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SALibraryForTheBlind>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SALibBlind>

QUOTE INSPIRATION

“When ‘I’ is replaced with ‘We’ even illness becomes wellness.” —Malcolm X