

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO SANTA'S LIBRARIAN!



High Plains Library District

CommUNITY

NOVEMBER 2025

Ask a Librarian

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Daughters of the

American **REVOLUTION**

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What do **YOU** have to **SAY** about our newsletter?

What do you have to say about our newsletter? Think about this as our Letters to the Editor option. If you have something to say about our newsletter, head to mylibrary.us/letters to get your feedback in the right hands.

Ask a Librarian



In this edition, we've pulled a couple questions from the ol' internets, and with gifting season coming up, we thought it might be good to take a look at some "books-as-gifts" sort of questions.



QUESTION:

I asked my husband not to write in a hardback artistic cover book I bought for my son.

I have been buying hardback books with decorative covers for our son (6m) since he was born. Recently I bought a book that had different things boys would enjoy learning about

(how to make the best paper airplane, how to tie a knot, how to use a compass, etc) in a hardbound art cover at a used book bookstore.

While showing my husband the book he excitedly said he wanted to go through the book and teach our son the skills in the book I replied that I was glad he liked it and that's how we left it.

Tonight he was telling me how they enjoyed the book and showed me that he had dog eared the pages instead of using a bookmark. I said please don't do that it ruins the book (in more of a teasing manner) and later took him

something to use as a bookmark. He then informed me he was also writing in the margins of the book and I got a little perturbed and said "No! Don't do that!" He then proceeds to get upset and ask what I expected him to do so I told him I expected him to read the book not make notes in it like a textbook which started an argument.

Now he is saying that if I am not ok with him writing in the book and basically doing whatever he pleases with it he won't do anything with it and won't be teaching the skills to our son and I basically ruined their fun. I tried to compromise and let him put post it notes in it and had no issue with any type of notes being made otherwise and put in the book, I just don't want it written in directly or abused.

Who is right, here?



ANSWER:

I'm a librarian, and my personal library is... eclectic. There are some books that are worth a bit of money (nothing wild, don't set up an elaborate heist to get at my book collection, you'll be disappointed), some books that are rare but financially worthless, some utter trash, and then there are items that I've kept because they have a...different kind of value.

One of my most treasured books is a paperback copy of *Survivor* by Chuck Palahniuk. I bought this when I was probably 19, and I read it while I worked in a phone center, which is why, when Chuck Palahniuk signed it at a reading, he inscribed it with: "To Peter: 1...2...3...Don't call me!! -Chuck Palahniuk."

This book, this particular copy, has been through the wringer, because in addition to being my personal copy, it was a copy I passed around to a couple friends who passed it to a fourth and even fifth person, and all of us bent corners, dropped it a couple times, the cover has a crease in it, and there are a few underlines and notes in the book as well.

These other readers are buddies I don't really see anymore. One of them moved up to the mountains and started a family, the other lives in L.A. and runs a super awesome comics store, and we just lost touch over the years. Nothing bad happened, just the way things are with friends from that time of life, right?

That copy of *Survivor* is one of my most treasured books, not despite being a bit worn out, but because of the particular way it's worn out. It's personal. It's like a totem from a time that I can't ever go back to, proof that these good times really existed, that those friends really were my friends.

I understand your aim and the idea of keeping books nice for your son, and I generally agree with you. However, this feels like a special case. Because I would kill for a book that me and my dad had shared, that showed in such a black and white way that my dad loved me and wanted to teach me things, do things with me, and be a part of my life. I would love, LOVE to have a copy of a book like the one you described that I could page through and use to bring back memories of things I did with my dad.

I know you bought this book with the intention of building a beautiful library for your son, and I think that's an awesome idea and very touching. At the same time, I think the connection you see between your husband and your son is perhaps worth more than the cost of this individual book. I think that your husband and son sharing this together, dog-earing pages, making notes, and ultimately beating the heck out of this book will transform this book into something unique, something meaningful in a way that a perfect copy might not be.

I think, in taking some damage, in being marked up, the book becomes a lot more than the sum of its pages. Now, that doesn't mean I totally agree with your husband. Let's address your question: Who is wrong here?

This touches on a big, underdiscussed issue between romantic partners: how do you treat your books?

Not usually the first topic in marriage counseling, not something we see modeled by other couples on TV or in real life, but take it from a librarian, go ahead and have this discussion.

I don't think you're "wrong" because you want to keep your son's library pristine, and I totally get it. Many, probably most, people see books as sacred objects that shouldn't be tainted, and I understand that's a value you hold and are passing to your son. And the librarian side of me very much appreciates you teaching your son that it's good to be thoughtful of the way you treat books.

And I do think your husband's reaction was harsh in denying your son the opportunity because of a disagreement the two of you are having over the book. However, it's hard for me to say your husband is "wrong" in his way of interacting with your son through books, even though his ways are very different from yours.

In your question, you talk about "use" and "abuse," and to me, that seems to be where the conflict sits: What you see as abuse of the book, your husband sees as use of the book. That might be why he was so upset and why you are upset as well: you have different definitions of "use" and different ideas about the purposes of books.



Which means the answer here is found in talking it out with your husband.

I think it's very likely that your husband is looking at this from a "What's the big deal?" perspective, and perhaps he doesn't recognize that for you, there's more emotion tied up in this than just the one book.

I might suggest you start by telling your husband how you feel, not just about the book, but about how building this library for your son has been something you've been doing his entire life, and how you have a vision for what that library looks like and how it functions, and this is a very sudden and unexpected change of course on that. Which doesn't mean it's wrong or bad, but I think we all have a strong reaction when we have a specific idea, an outline, a vision in our heads about a young boy growing up with this fantastic library that will carry him through his entire life. When that vision is changed, it can be hurtful.

Also, if I'm correct in thinking you might be feeling like you've been pushed into the "unfun parent" box in this situation, tell your husband about that. Because that dynamic creates a lot of problems in a lot of relationships.

Then, ask him about his ideas and what he sees the library looking like, and ask him about how he sees this one book in the larger context of the library as a whole. Do make the effort to be open and to hear him out.

And I really encourage you to remind each other and approach the conversation with the understanding that you're both showing your son you love him by keeping up with the library project. You are showing him that you've cared for him and thought about him his entire life. And your husband is showing his love and enthusiasm for your son by wanting to do those book-based activities with him.

You're both connecting to your son through books, and there's very little on this Earth more heartwarming than that.

Neither of you is wrong. You just need to recognize that your different ways of showing love to your son have crossed paths, and parenting together is about figuring out how to resolve that as a team.



QUESTION:

Am I Wrong for giving my niece a book of "controversial" fairy tales?

I (25F) sent my niece (6F) a book with the original collection of Grimms' fairy tales as an early Christmas gift.

I texted my brother (30M), her father, to see if they had gotten my gift. He just said yes. I thought this was a weird, short answer (I mean, he didn't even say thank you or anything else), so I followed up and asked if my niece liked it. Eventually, after some hesitation, my brother told me that his wife (31F) read some of the stories with my niece and she (my SIL, not my niece!) thought they were disturbing and inappropriate for a 6-year-old.



Bear in mind, I read those tales myself when I was her around my niece's age. It's the original version of those classic tales like Cinderella and Snow White, except they don't sugarcoat the darkest aspects of the story. It didn't traumatize me in any way and millions of children have read them throughout history.

I got offended by my brother's suggestion that this was an inappropriate gift. My brother then said it's up to them, the parents, to decide if she's old enough to read them or not, and I should just drop it. I don't disagree with him, I was not saying they SHOULD read everything now (or ever), I just don't think I'm wrong for not thinking this would be a problem.



ANSWER:

Well, let me start by giving you the "thank you" that you deserve for giving a book as a gift. I understand you were doing something nice, something that you thought would be appreciated, and it sounds like you didn't get much appreciation for a thoughtful gift that connected to your childhood.

Now, let's get into the idea of what's appropriate for a young reader.

Reading is a bit like eating: different bodies react to different foods in different ways. I can eat dairy, some people can't. I'm not trying to rub it in, there's some pretty good coconut milk ice cream out there (although it's SUPER expensive, kind of like a tax for being lactose intolerant. Whether it's through your wallet or a more unpleasant way, one way or another, you are going to PAY for eating ice cream).

I tend to think that kids are that way with books: Some can tolerate books that others cannot.

I LOVED those dark versions of fairy tales when I was a kid. I loved the dancing to death in burning hot shoes, I loved the cursed idea of The Little Mermaid feeling like every step she took on human legs was like walking on

broken glass (I always assumed this was the inspiration for *Die Hard*—bet you didn't know *Die Hard* was a *Little Mermaid* spinoff!). I liked *Goosebumps*, *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*, all that stuff, and your niece is right at the age where I started diving into those kinds of things.

At the same time, I probably wouldn't show my nephew *Terminator 2* when he was 8, even though that's when I saw it. It didn't mess me up or make me a bad person, but as an adult, I have to say 8 years old is a tad early for the horrors of liquid metal programmed to kill.

So there's a little something I'd like to say to all parties involved:

To you, I know you were raised with these tales, and your POV that these stories aren't traumatizing is valid. However, parents/guardians get to make the call on what is and isn't appropriate for their kiddos, and those of us who aren't parenting those kids have to accept their decisions, even if they aren't the same decisions we'd make. Them's the breaks.

I think you're kind to give a gift, and I think that while things didn't work out, you shouldn't feel guilt or like you need to defend yourself for your gifting choice. It's a totally legit option, just not what your relatives are looking for today.

To the parents: Making the decision to not continue

reading this book to your kiddo is totally fair, however, you could be a little bit more delicate with your sister/sister-in-law. Saying that those stories were "disturbing" makes your sister feel like she's done something horribly wrong, or that you're judging the things that are a core part of her childhood and personality.

Sometimes, when someone gives a gift like that, they feel that your opinion of the gift is kind of your opinion of the gift-giver.

You might make it clear that while the gift is appreciated, you want to wait a bit longer to share it with your child. You might give some insight into your child's personality ("She's easily scared and has nightmares when we read her scary stuff"). Consider making it about your child's readiness as opposed to the book, because that's really is the issue here, and that might make it easier for your sister/sister-in-law to feel appreciated while also understanding that your kiddo isn't there yet, and it'll make it easier for her to pick books in the future that everyone can agree on.

READ All Year Long

Challenge yourself to read 12 books in a year with the Adults Read On program and earn prizes along the way! Adults (16+) can participate by picking up a paper log at any branch, by downloading the Beanstack Tracker App and following the instructions, or by visiting highplains.beanstack.org/reader365. For more details, check out www.MyLibrary.us/aro.

ADULTS READ ON

Complete 12 books in 12 months. Redeem prizes at your local HPLD location, after you've read 4, 8, and 12 books!

| Book No. | Title |
|----------|-------|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |
| 7 | |
| 8 | |
| 9 | |

HPLD Friends & Foundation | highplains Library District

Traveling Exhibit

Headed Erie's Way!



The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and American Battlefield Trust have teamed up to create an incredible traveling exhibit: The American Revolution Experience, and we're proud to say that the exhibit's next stop will be at Erie Community Library, and it'll be available during all open library hours starting November 15th and ending December 1st.

This is a huge, incredible opportunity to learn a lot about how our country got its start, and with us right on the eve of the 250th anniversary of the signing of The Declaration of Independence, seems like pretty solid timing.

To tell you a little more about it, we caught up with Tracey Reichart, Regent for the Indian Peaks Chapter of the [National Society Daughters of the American Revolution](#).



High Plains Library District (HPLD): I think for a lot of people, their familiarity with Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) comes from Emily Gilmore on *Gilmore Girls*, which I'm guessing is not a very complete picture. So tell me a little bit about what you're all about, what DAR does and so on.



Tracey Reichart (TR): NSDAR was founded in 1890 and is headquartered in Washington DC. DAR is a non-political women's lineage and service organization that focuses on three key pillars: Historic Preservation, Education, and Patriotism. Roughly 1,000,000 women have found purpose and passion in the DAR. We are members in over 3000 local chapters across 50 states and in multiple countries around the world. Colorado has 49 chapters and approximately 3000 members. The Indian Peaks Chapter was formed just 10 years ago and serves Louisville, Erie, and Lafayette with 125 members currently. Indian Peaks is a vibrant and social chapter that has provided generous support to local schools and the community, providing history education materials and school supplies.

Veterans are another key group that we support through our Quilts of Valor recognition program, holiday outreach, Rocky Mountain Honor Flight, and more.

This past year we completed fundraising to purchase and distribute patriotic all-weather American flags to families who recently rebuilt homes from the devastating Marshall fire.

There are so many opportunities to provide much needed community support through DAR!



HPLD: I noticed the [DAR website](#) has a lot of genealogical research resources, and there's a whole library of information. I didn't realize how parallel public libraries were in that way. Tell me a little bit about that aspect of DAR.



TR: As a lineage society, DAR is built on genealogy and has one of the most extensive libraries in the country, located at the national headquarters in Washington, D.C. The library and building are open to visitors with a full staff of genealogists eager to assist anyone with research and records. Additionally, DAR provides members with opportunities to take online genealogy courses at multiple levels of complexity to build individual genealogy skill sets. At the chapter level, trained genealogists (Genies, as they are called) help new applicants research their families and obtain documents necessary to qualify for membership.

Many times, women who believe they could not have possibly had an ancestor that gave aid to the American Revolution, do find they indeed do qualify either through their ancestor's military records, civic records, and more. If you think about it, citizens in the 1770s either identified as a Revolutionary or as a Loyalist! So, there's pretty good odds that a patriot does exist in one's family! We help sort that out!



HPLD: I was looking through your membership, and I saw highlighted an architect, a farmer, a nun, firefighters, military folks, and a few librarians. What do you think it is about DAR that appeals to people in such different fields or of such varying interests?



TR: There is literally something of interest for everyone in DAR. Each member comes with their own individual passion and can engage in a variety of activities and events, as much, or as little, as they would like. Through common interests in conservation efforts, women's topics, patriotism, history, education, literacy, DAR is a vibrant group of women who enjoy volunteering and participating in social events together. DAR is an incredibly rewarding experience!



HPLD: Let's talk about the display going up at Erie Community Library. Tell me a little bit about it. What's in it? What's it about?



TR: There are lots of details about it at the [American Battlefield Trust website](#), and some of their highlights include bits about how people chose sides during the war, roles in the army, including lots of non-combatant roles, and how the legacy of The American Revolution is still visible all around us today.



HPLD: When we spoke previously, you mentioned that the exhibit is great for around third graders and up with no upper limit, and that there are interactive elements, especially for kids. Tell me a little bit about those interactive, kid-friendly pieces.



TR: The exhibit is great for the entire family and is specifically geared toward middle school to high school student ages. However, younger children will benefit from exposure to the exhibit with hands-on materials made available to engage younger students at the exhibit area. We also plan to provide Spanish language guides to participants needing assistance. A fun Revolutionary War "scavenger hunt" will round out the available activities.



HPLD: It's okay to come if you really don't know much about American history or government and that kind of thing, right? There isn't a test you have to pass, and you won't be totally lost even if you have very little background in American history?



TR: What I love about the exhibit is that you do not have to have any knowledge of the American Revolution or the history of the United States. The exhibit is a sequential journey, told over multiple high quality color panels, that takes each participant through the history of numerous causes that led up to the Revolution. It explains how peace talks failed and ultimately led to that first "Shot Heard Round the World" confrontation between the

patriots and the British in 1775 in Concord and Lexington. It's understandable to everyone, whether you are a history "geek" or are just curious about how our country became independent from England and created the first democracy in the world. This extraordinary exhibit will engage you right at a time when America is kicking off the celebration of The Declaration of Independence and its 250th birthday on July 4, 2026! This milestone will resonate in the heart of every American!



HPLD: Talk to me about the importance of seeing things in person. We can see a lot of things online, pictures and so on. Personally, I like to go and see stuff myself, but what's your opinion on the importance or value of going and seeing something like the display that'll be at Erie in real life?



TR: People learn in different ways. So much information is online these days. However, this exhibit is such a visual treat, and we are extremely lucky to have this "live event" in our community! I think that physically coming together as neighbors to engage, reflect on the significance, and generate conversation about the exhibit and what it represents, is crucial for our society, especially at a time when the world feels so fragile. We need connection! The fact that this is physically accessible to anyone is incredible.



HPLD: With so many options all over the country, I definitely appreciate the choice to place the exhibit in Erie. Tell me a little bit about how Erie became one of the exhibit's selected locations.



TR: The touring exhibit first started visiting locations around the country in 2024 at state capitals and other government buildings, exhibit halls, museums, libraries, and more. Indian Peaks Chapter jumped on the opportunity early on and had hoped to be selected at some point in this multi-year tour. As a prime location in the Denver Metro Area along the I-25 corridor, Erie Community Library is a beautiful and accessible venue for so many in the north Denver, Broomfield, Boulder, Weld, and Larimer counties. Additionally, Golden was another area selected venue, along with western slope and eastern plain's locations for the Colorado tour in November and December.



HPLD: I gather you're all gearing up for 2026 and the semiquincentennial, 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Tell me a little bit about how that's affected DAR's plans for the next year. I imagine it's quite busy!



TR: Yes, there are plenty of semiquincentennial events in the planning stages across the country, and Colorado is no exception! Additionally, next year marks Colorado's 150th state anniversary that coincides with the

250th, and there are lots of plans coming on that also.

Stay tuned as DAR introduces events and celebrations for both the state and local areas!



HPLD: I did see that **DAR offers scholarships**, and that the window opens in November. We serve a lot of folks with kids headed to college, so that might be of interest. Can you tell me anything about that?



TR: Yes! As a part of our education pillar, DAR does offer chapter, state, and national level scholarships to high school seniors, students in undergraduate and graduate programs, and even trade schools. Our local chapter would be happy to work with anyone interested in pursuing these scholarships that typically begin at the local level and then work their way through other screenings at the state and national level. A variety of scholarships range from \$200 upwards to several thousand dollars and typically require participation in our annual student essay contest for those who are middle through high school levels. Additional scholarships at higher levels of study are more merit and needs based. Please contact Indian Peaks Chapter, NSDAR directly via email at ipregent.treichart@gmail.com for more information.



HPLD: Let's give everyone those details about the display: The dates, when it's available, and I just want to remind everyone it's free and there's no registration, you can just come check it out anytime the library is available.



TR: I hope everyone in the community and even classroom field trips will take advantage of this incredible opportunity to view the American Revolution Experience! This free national touring exhibit will be held at the Erie Community Library from November 15 – December 1 during standard library hours each day. Educational handouts, themed puzzles and games, along with an exhibit scavenger hunt will be available, as hosted by Indian Peaks Chapter members.



HPLD: If people want to learn more about DAR, where should they go?



TR: To learn more about the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, please go to the national website www.dar.org or visit our local chapter website at www.indianpeaks.coloradodar.org or contact Indian Peaks Chapter Regent, Tracey Reichart, at ipregent.treichart@gmail.com.

Letter to **Santa's Librarian:** **Mailbox is OPEN!**



We've got something big this year: A direct line to none other than Mr. Claus himself.

Well, a direct line to his LIBRARIAN, anyway.

The thing is, the Big Guy gets pretty busy around about now, so it looks like he's started farming some of his work out to some of his staff, specifically his Librarian Elf, Rickets.

Rickets, a longtime helper of Santa with an excellent selection of cardigans, specializes in answering your bookish questions around holiday season, as well as

reprinting letters to Santa that are book-heavy.

So, if you've got a kiddo who's hard to buy books for, or maybe a kid who's read everything, or maybe a kid who doesn't want to read ANYTHING, or if your kiddo has a letter to Santa that features a good number of books, or if you just have a bookish question for Santa, send us a letter:

https://hpld.formstack.com/forms/rickets_xmas_letterbag

We'll pass it on to Rickets, and we'll do our best to reprint those letters that speak to Rickets, really light up his little, elfin, bookwormish heart.

The Playaway:

HPLD's Answer to an Over-Connected World



Not too long ago, [Microsoft put out some stats based on data they collected, and the report they made was titled “Breaking Down the Infinite Workday.”](#)

Infinite workday? Ominous, right?

Here are some highlights, if being ground into a fine paste by working too much can be deemed a “highlight”:

- About 40% of workers are checking messages by 6 AM.
- Workers get, on average, 153 Microsoft Teams messages per day.
- After-hours meetings were up 16% in 2025, the average employee sends or receives 50 emails after hours, and about 20% of employees look at email before noon on the weekends.

That’s JUST the Microsoft stuff and doesn’t include any other things, like if your workplace uses Google products or Slack or a red phone that connects directly to the snack machine repair person. Just for example...

And the time spent on our tech doesn’t end there.

We average about 2.5 hours per day on social media.

And we send something like 50 texts per day.

The average American checks their phone...you guess, I’ll wait.

...

159 times per day! That's every 6 minutes for the entirety of the time we're awake.

The summary here is that we spend A LOT of time, between work and our personal lives, connected to tech and connected to others through tech. Probably more time than most of us realize.

It's Not All Bad

I don't want to come off as seeming like I think technology is ALL bad, even though [I do worry that an AI is going to become self-aware and crush us swiftly and without feeling](#), although I guess that would be better than a crushing that is very slow, if thoughtful.

Tech is definitely a huge benefit in a lot of ways.

Those of us who remember the days of driving through the southwestern parts of Colorado at night with only a map, a best guess of where the next gas station might be, and a bladder full of energy drinks that you don't really see anymore, like Sobe Adrenaline Rush, have found a lot to like about maps and navigation.

If you're like me and would never remember a birthday, ever, without putting it in a calendar that'll automatically remind you, boy does that save you some awkward conversations.

If you're working on finding every Goosebumps book at thrift stores, and if you can pull up a quick list and see that you've already got TWO copies of *Revenge of the Lawn Gnomes*, it's pretty nice to save the \$1.99 and the shelf space gobbled up by a third copy.

And I sure like the idea that a person can have a pretty direct line to emergency services should they need it.

It's SOME Bad, Though

I don't think I could say for sure why things are kind of bad right now, tech-wise, but I read a pretty intriguing take on it a bit back:

Basically, the writer pointed out that up until pretty recently, if you worked a job, you went to a building, and everything you needed to do your job was in that building. Whether you were a factory worker who needed access to machinery or a cubicle drone coding on a computer, your work equipment was owned by your workplace, and that stuff stayed at your workplace.

Meanwhile, you had your OTHER stuff at home, and like a

responsible Ghostbuster, you never crossed those streams. And what THAT meant is, for example, nobody could contact you and ask you to do something "real quick" after hours. I mean, they COULD, but you would have to go into the workplace and fire up machinery to do it. It would have to be pretty darn important.

It also meant there was no temptation to check email on Sunday, no thought of paring it down to make Monday a little easier, because you had no access to it.

But now, that's different, right? Because the camera you take to your kid's soccer game also receives work messages. It gets emails about stuff like whether you're getting a package delivered. It can remind you, for like the fiftieth time, to review a restaurant you ate at like 2 months ago and will probably never eat at again, not because it was bad, but because IT'S IN MINNEAPOLIS AND I DON'T LIVE IN MINNEAPOLIS, OKAY!?

Because we sandwiched our personal stuff, work stuff, and most of our lives into a single device, we've created a situation where you can't have fun without also opening

the door to work or to renewing your car registration or to the opinions of some fool online who doesn't recognize that *Halloween III* is objectively the best Halloween franchise film.

We all get on our personal devices to watch fun videos, and while a video plays, we might get a notification that an email has popped in.

We get on our devices to keep in touch with family, and there isn't a simple separation between texts from your brother because you haven't RSVP-ed for his wedding yet (bro, I'm so sorry!) and texts from your boss asking you about when you're going to get in the draft of the next newsletter because it's getting a little late in the game to advertise the awesome DAR exhibit at Erie (Nov. 15 through Dec. 1!).

To get to your audiobook, which you're really digging, you have to brush by SO MANY other things.

Our devices really have become the hub for all of our activities, all at once. Which means we're kind of working AND having personal lives AND doing things like filling out a grocery list, all together, all at once, all the time.

Playaway History

Okay, let's finally get to the good stuff.

For those who don't remember, Playaways were these



devices HPLD used to have. They were, essentially, MP3 players pre-loaded with audiobooks.

I think their original purpose was to replace CD audiobooks, which are definitely the bane of most libraries' audiobook existence.

CDs are cool and everything, but when you have something like, I don't know, *Pillars of the Earth*? That's 32 discs! And if one, ONE of those 32 discs goes missing or gets damaged or whatever, the item is rendered useless. Unless you feel like you can get by without a random 1/32nd of the narrative, which...maybe you can. I guess it depends on how much background you have in cathedral construction as well as how good your memory is. Mine? I wouldn't remember disc 5 by the time I hit disc 27 anyway, so it might work out fine.

Playaways are also quite a bit better to use if you're a person with low vision. With discs, it's VERY hard to keep them in order and know which one is next, whereas the Playaway means there's nothing to get out of order.

Playaways had all the convenience of streaming, but no requirement to have an internet connection, and folks with very little internet savvy could still easily use them.

The Playaway's first niche was in being a technological stepping stone, a stopgap between the age of CDs and the time when streaming was super common.

The Playaway Device

The Playaway itself is a super simple device: It's small, it'd probably fit inside a pack of cigarettes...wait, geez, there has to be a more wholesome, relatable size comparison that doesn't involve smoking...ah, got it: A Playaway would probably fit inside one of those large spice tins, like the big cinnamon tins you use to make a nice, homemade apple pie. How's THAT for wholesome?

The Playaway is powered by a single AAA battery, and it has a headphone jack, a small screen that tells you which part you're on, a small number of buttons, and that's about it.

Each Playaway has a single book loaded on it, so there isn't any navigation between titles or anything like that to worry about. Just push play to listen, push stop when you're done for the moment, and repeat until you finish the book.

It's simple, and that's what makes it really cool.

Playaways Today

Playaways are coming back, both in general and in HPLD's collection.

I think a big part of why Playaways are coming back, why HPLD is getting back into the Playaway game, is because people want to listen to audiobooks, and as much as we all love Libby and Hoopla, it's nice to be able to listen to something that's not playing through the same device you use to get your email, the device you use to doomscroll Reddit, the device that serves as an inbox to any kind of request a person might make of you.

It's hard. It's hard for me. When I pull up my phone to do something specific, gosh, maybe there's something new on YouTube for me. That Instagram app sure is mighty tempting, what with its gummi peach ring icon colors and all.

When I use a Playaway, though, there are no stops on the way, nothing to distract me. I pick it up, turn it on, boom, we're right back in the story.

And that's why [I encourage you to give a Playaway a try](#).

They're fun, they're incredibly easy to use. They're super lightweight, so if you work out while you listen to audiobooks or garden or have to spend the next month or so taking down your elaborate Halloween displays, you Pumpkin Kings, you, they're perfect.

And what they really do, their secret benefit, is that they give you a break from your phone. A break from being constantly connected to not just other things, but to EVERYTHING.

I'm not here to tell you that you should completely separate from everything, that you should NEVER text your

brother back about his wedding (again, I'm SO sorry!). But I am here to suggest that if you try it out while you do some chores, while you sit in the car and wait for your kid's soccer practice to end, you might find that if you listen to audiobooks on a device that's not connected to the entirety of human knowledge, all content ever created, you might have better, deeper, more focused experiences with audiobooks that are ultimately more pleasing. You might actually finish more audiobooks.

And even if you're not the hugest audiobook person, you might just appreciate a break from your phone.

If nothing else, I say we all make the attempt to cut down from 159 phone checks per day to a more reasonable, I don't know, 99? Keep it in double digits if we can? Maybe just on the weekend?



LOCATIONS

LIBRARIES Visit www.MyLibrary.us/locations-and-hours for library hours

Administration & Support Services

2650 West 29th Street
Greeley, CO 80631
1-888-861-READ(7323)

Carbon Valley Regional Library

7 Park Avenue
Firestone, CO 80504
1-888-861-READ(7323)

Centennial Park Library

2227 23rd Avenue
Greeley, CO 80634
1-888-861-READ(7323)

Eaton Public Library

132 Maple Avenue
Eaton, CO 80615
(970) 454-2189

Erie Community Library

400 Powers Street
Erie, CO 80516
1-888-861-READ(7323)

Farr Regional Library

1939 61st Avenue
Greeley, CO 80634
1-888-861-READ(7323)

Fort Lupton Public & School Library

370 S. Rollie Avenue
Fort Lupton, CO 80621
(303) 339-4089

Glenn A. Jones, M.D. Memorial Library

400 S. Parish Avenue
Johnstown, CO 80534
(970) 587-2459

Grover Library

402 Chatoga Avenue
Grover, CO 80729
1-888-861-READ(7323)

Milliken Location of the Glenn A. Jones, M.D. Memorial Library

1109 Broad Street
Milliken, CO 80543
(970) 660-5039

Hudson Public Library

100 S. Beech Street
Hudson, CO 80642
(303) 536-4550

Kersey Library

332 3rd Street
Kersey, CO 80644
1-888-861-READ(7323)

LINC Library Innovation Center

501 8th Avenue
Greeley, CO 80631
1-888-861-READ(7323)

Nantes Library

703 Birch Street
Gilcrest, CO 80623
(970) 737-1035

Northern Plains Public Library

216 2nd Street
Ault, CO 80610
(970) 834-1259

Outreach

2650 W. 29th Street
Greeley, CO 80631
1-888-861-READ(7323)

Platteville Public Library

504 Marion Avenue
Platteville, CO 80651
(970) 785-2231

Riverside Library & Cultural Center

3700 Golden Street
Evans, CO 80620
1-888-861-READ(7323)

AFFILIATED LOCATIONS

Hazel E. Johnson Research Center at the City of Greeley Museum

714 8th Street, Greeley, CO 80631
(970) 350-9220

Poudre Learning Center

8313 West F Street, Greeley, CO 80631
(970) 352-1267

PUBLIC COMPUTER CENTERS

Briggsdale Community Library

210 Main Street, Briggsdale, CO 80611

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