

More than Books

A good book speaks for itself

June is National Audio Book Month. It makes sense: summer is the perfect time to discover audio books. Consider this week's column an invitation to come to the library where you can select a couple of audio books CDs for your next road trip.

The audio books collection is located upstairs, but this month and next month, we are going to put new titles on display on the first floor just as you enter the library.

What so great about them?

What's so great about audio books? This is a question I try to answer whenever I make a presentation about the services the library offers. First of all, they're great traveling companions. You can't read a book and drive a car at the same time. If you're headed on vacation, ask someone at the library to suggest a family listening favorite for your next road trip with the kids. Audio books range from read-a-long children's CDs that come with books to teen reads to full length novels and non-fiction for adults.

Audio books aren't just for the car! Although that is how I became a fan, I soon discovered there are lots of routine, repetitive tasks that can be a lot more enjoyable with the right audio book.

Playaways

I like the portable "Playaway" format for walks around the neighborhood with my pooch Frances. I'm not using them yet when I walk our newly-adopted dog Sam, however. Sam is still learning to walk nicely on a leash, so I need to focus on him and encourage him not to pull. That involves many treats accompanied by an equal number of "Good boys!" to convince him it is more fun to walk at my side than to drag me down Stephenson Street.

The Playaways are pre-recorded audio books that weigh just a couple of ounces and are about half the size of a deck of cards. Talk about portable! Talk about convenient! All you need to make it play is one AAA battery. Plug in your earphones, and you're set. No CDs, no downloading. Just press play, pause, and stop in any order you like.

eAudio books

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On My Nightstand

My most recent “read” is “Rules of Prey,” a 1989 John Sanford mystery from OneClick digital. It is the first mystery in Sanford’s Lucas Davenport mysteries. I’ve either read or listened to almost all of them. Somehow, I managed to miss “Rules of Prey.” I’d call it a page turner if I were reading it in print instead of listening to it electronically.

A month or so ago, Library Board Member Judy Barney recommended “Love and Treasure” by Ayelet Waldman to readers of this column. I am delighted to find it is available for download, either as an eBook or an eAudio book from OneClickdigital. It is one of those multigenerational novels I seem to be drawn to. It takes readers (listeners?) from the present day back to World War II Salzburg and the contraband art in the Hungarian Gold Train. Just as soon as I finish “Rules of Prey,” I’m going to download “Love and Treasure” and give it a chance to speak for itself.

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