



# CRIS AIR WAVES



Audio Access for the Blind or Print-Challenged

Summer / Fall 2014

## CRIS

315 Windsor Ave.  
Windsor, CT  
06082

www.crisradio.org  
info@crisradio.org

P: 860-527-8000  
F: 860-727-9581

### Inside this issue:

Volunteers Make	2
In Honor and Memory of Friends and Family	3
Team Effort:	3
CRIS en Español	
CRISKids™ ...	4
In their Own Words	

### Through **YOUR** generosity, CRIS provides:

- ◆ Service 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- ◆ Service to schools for children who are blind or print challenged
- ◆ Service to nursing homes, assisted living facilities, senior centers and health care facilities.

## Thanks to Donors, CRIS Expands Audio Service to Museums

Donors like you are making it possible for CRIS to improve the museum experience for visitors who are blind or print challenged.

Audio versions of signs displayed at museum exhibits, audio descriptions of the exhibit, and information about tactile opportunities are part of the CRISAccess™ service.

CRISAccess integrates smartphones and QR Code technology to instantly "link and play" audio files of information posted on signs or other printed materials at museums for visitors with print challenges.

Launched in 2013 with Old Sturbridge Village, three other museums are joining the pilot, including the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, the New England Air Museum, and Hill-Stead Museum.

Individual gifts and foundation grants, including an award from Help for the Blind of Eastern Connecticut during the past two years, are supporting



Old Sturbridge Village was the first to participate in the CRISAccess™ pilot.

the initiative.

CRISAccess is based on suggestions made by a focus group of people who are blind or visually impaired convened by the Smithsonian Institution Accessibility Program, the National Center on Accessibility, and the National Park Service.

Museum visitors can listen to the CRISAccess recordings with any mobile device with a QR Code Reader application. See how it works by scanning the QR Code below with a smartphone:



## CRIS Volunteers Make A Difference

CRIS volunteers were honored at the Governor's Mansion in June for celebrating their long-standing service.

Volunteers are essential at CRIS, providing the voice talent and other tasks necessary to produce the audio recordings of more than 70 newspapers and magazines, Common Core text, and classroom materials, an estimated value of \$392,000 annually.



Barbara Flynn celebrates 15 years as a CRIS volunteer. Pictured with Barbara are her grandsons Christopher, left, and Michael.



CRIS volunteers pictured on the lawn at of the Governor's Mansion.

Photos / Steve Laschever

Volunteers recognized for celebrating milestone anniversaries include Stanley Zwirn (20 years); Barbara Flynn (15 years); Terence Maher (15 years); Carol Mon (15 years); and Russell Partridge (15 years).

Honored for 10 years of service are: George Akerley; CRIS Chairman William Austin; Jim Bates; Dolores Dallam; Paul Kaschuluk; Chris Kelly; Stephen Lis-kow; Francine Michaud;

Elisa Stark-Rifkin; and Sara Titus.

Marking five-years are: Chris Barrett; Elizabeth Bradley; Suzanne Dunlap; Michael Marino; and Rosie Morlene. Also honored for five years are:

Kerry 'Keefe; Charlie Schein; John Schloss; and Russell Schneider.



Stanley Zwirn is presented with a 20-year-plaque by CRIS Executive Director Diane Weaver Dunne.

Remembering  
friends  
&  
family

## Special Recognitions ...

Thanks to the donations made in memory or in honor of friends or family, children and adults who are blind or print-challenged continue to receive CRIS services that include an extensive audio library ranging from classroom materials to store circulars.

Your gifts help those with print challenges have access to the same print materials enjoyed by their classmates, friends, and family.

From July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014, the following people were honored or remembered with donations made in their names. They are:

- *Dave Burke*
- *John Burke*
- *Judith Brodeur*
- *Mary Carter*
- *Norma Dunn*
- *Carol Gillispie*
- *Stanley Grecki*
- *Gaetano & Julia Grossi*
- *Thomas Kriwacki*
- *Barbara Niccum*

## Collaboration Creates CRIS en Español

CRIS is getting help from its donors, funders, and bilingual friends at Aetna and ESPN who bring Spanish words to life for Spanish-speakers who are blind or print disabled.

This new service comes together as a collaborative effort, including generous funding from Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. CRIS en Español is available on demand at the CRIS Web site, [www.crisradio.org](http://www.crisradio.org), or toll-free on the CRIS Telephone Reader. It is also streamed to the Hispanic Senior Center in Hartford.



## CRISKids for Schools .... In Their Own Words

For students with a disability or who struggle with reading, school can be very difficult. Thanks to the generous support from The Gibney Family Foundation and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, as well as sponsorships to schools from individuals, CRISKids™ for Schools is making reading easier for students with disabilities.

CRISKids provides audio versions of children's magazines, classroom materials and text featured in the

Common Core State Standards.

Teachers download the audio recordings onto an MP3 player to enable students with disabilities to listen or listen and follow along in the print version at home or in school.

"The best part about using an MP3 player is that there's not a stigma that makes the kids feel different. Kids don't want to be different and this is actually cool," said Meghan O'Brien, a teacher at Clover Street School in Windsor, Conn.

Brook Doyon, a special education teacher in Hartford, Conn., said CRISKids helps students better understand what they are reading. "When using the CRIS Radio, the MP3 players, they are able to understand comprehension questions at the end of a nonfiction article better than they would independently," she said.

To hear more about what is being said about CRISKids for Schools, go to [www.crisradio.org](http://www.crisradio.org) and click on the video.



Adrian listening to CRISKids' with an MP3 player.

*'I like reading my assignments with CRISKids because it is just easier for me to understand the article better with harder words.'*

-Adrian, Grade 7

### Save the Date

5th Annual CRIS Radio Dining & Dancing In the Dark  
Saturday, April 18, 2015 \* Bond Ballroom, Hartford, Conn.