

CRAFTY IDEAS

Talking Books Help Blind Crafters Keep Up

(NAPSA)—Fifteen years after losing her sight, crafter Joyce Kane can still enjoy a good yarn, thanks to the free reading program of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS).

Kane, 61, has always loved crafting—sewing, knitting, quilting and more. When her children were young, she owned a yarn shop. Later, she was a regular at craft shows and sold her work to wholesalers.

But in 1998, Kane underwent coronary bypass surgery and awoke completely blind. Her doctors were unaware that diabetes had damaged her optic blood vessels, which became starved for oxygen during the operation.

With the help of a friend who recorded a pattern, though, Kane relearned how to knit. She would knit all day, unravel much of her work at night, and begin again the next day until she was satisfied—and had created a sweater.

“I got back to all the things I was doing before,” says Kane, who lives in Stratford, Connecticut. “And I’ve learned some new things, too.” Five years ago she started *Krafters Korner*, which offers classes by conference call and e-mail to blind crafters.

Today, the NLS talking-book program helps Kane and others keep up with new ideas and techniques.

NLS, part of the Library of Congress, offers a free reading program for U.S. residents and citizens living abroad who are blind, have low vision, or cannot hold a book because of a physical disability. NLS patrons may choose from tens of thousands of books and dozens of magazines in



A free reading program that serves blind and physically handicapped people offers dozens of books on the art and business of crafting.

audio and braille. NLS also loans the portable playback equipment needed to read its audiobooks. Computer-savvy patrons may access books online through the NLS Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) service.

The NLS collection includes dozens of books on the art—and business—of crafting, from Kari Chapin’s “The Handmade Marketplace: How to Sell Your Crafts Locally, Globally, and Online” to “Disney’s FamilyFun Crafts.”

When she’s not crafting, Kane enjoys mysteries and thrillers such as John Grisham’s “The Racketeer” and Tom Clancy’s Jack Ryan spy novels.

To learn more about the program, visit www.loc.gov/nls or call 1-888-NLS-READ.