

# AT Banter Podcast Episode 319 - Riane LaPaire & NNELS

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

braille, people, working, website, tactile graphics, talking, ryan, lego, rob, game, playing, library, podcast, tactile, canadian, organizations, january, team, public libraries, canucks

## SPEAKERS

Rob Mineault, Steve Barclay, Lis Malone, Riane LaPaire, Ryan Fleury

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**R** Rob Mineault 02:15  
Hey, and welcome to another episode of AT Banter.

**S** Steve Barclay 02:20  
Banter, banter.

**R** Rob Mineault 02:23  
Oh, listen to the sound of that sweet sweet cowbell.

**S** Steve Barclay 02:32  
What was the issue last week?

**R** Ryan Fleury 02:34  
I don't know, I swapped audio interfaces this week.

**R** Rob Mineault 02:37  
Oh, there you go. So it was clearly a technical snafu. Yep. That that has been worked out. So we herald the return of a cowbell. And so really, I mean, really, we could sign off right now and this would be a win, winning podcast. We're gonna stick around for the whole episode as a

bonus for our listeners. So of course, this is of course the podcast where we talk with advocates and members of the disability community to educate and inspire better conversation about disability. Hey, my name is Rob Mineault, and joining me today, along with the cowbell Mr. Ryan Fleury.

**R** Ryan Fleury 03:24  
Hello again.

**R** Rob Mineault 03:27  
We've got Mr. Steve Barclay.

**S** Steve Barclay 03:30  
Hey, wait, I'm third? That's crazy. I'm always last.

**L** Lis Malone 03:36  
No, I'm the caboose.

**R** Rob Mineault 03:41  
And of course, last and certainly not least, Mis Lis Malone.

**L** Lis Malone 03:54  
I want to be the tail wagging the dog.

**S** Steve Barclay 03:58  
You likely are.

**L** Lis Malone 04:01  
I'll take it. I'll take the tail end.

**R** Rob Mineault 04:04  
How the heck is everybody?

**S** Steve Barclay 04:09  
Ducky

**L** Lis Malone 04:12  
Did you each say ducky?

**R** Rob Mineault 04:14  
I did. Yeah.

**L** Lis Malone 04:16  
I thought you said yucky.

**R** Rob Mineault 04:18  
This is like the worst part of the show. When i ask how you are it's like I'm asking you know, some sort of a physics question. You guys must be guarded because you're on a podcast.

**R** Ryan Fleury 04:37  
it's a tough question.

**R** Rob Mineault 04:42  
Clearly, hard hitting questions all around. Okay.

**S** Steve Barclay 04:47  
Well, how are you Rob?

**R** Rob Mineault 04:49  
Oh, well, sure. Turn the tables. Well, listen, hey, I'm fine. Okay, I have a little rant for you guys. I'll play along with this. You guys familiar with bread?

**S** Steve Barclay 05:06

**S** Steve Barclay 05:06  
Yes.

**R** Ryan Fleury 05:07  
Okay, the band or the food?

**R** Rob Mineault 05:10  
No, not the 70s soft pop band. No, I'm talking about real bread. That little clip thing at the end of it. Can we do something with? Like, could we improve the technology about bread bags? Like, I'm always losing that thing. I made a sandwich before the podcast because I didn't want to get hungry during the podcast, and then I immediately lost the damn thing. Now I have nothing to close the bread bag with. There's got to be some sort of a solution where they get like a zip or something or something, something to secure the bread bag, that's not one of those little things.

**L** Lis Malone 05:46  
Can we start a movement that those little plastic bread clips are not very accessible?

**R** Rob Mineault 05:54  
Not only that, and they're probably really bad for the environment. There's probably a landfill filled with those things. Because who keeps those?

**S** Steve Barclay 06:00  
They're probably choking endangered sea hares?

**L** Lis Malone 06:03  
They're ending up in our dog food.

**R** Rob Mineault 06:07  
That's right. So so there you go. That's how I am. I'm angry. Okay, Hey, Ryan. Yeah, Rob. Enough this silliness. What are we doing today?

**R** Ryan Fleury 06:25  
Today we are speaking with Riane LaPaire from NNELS, or the National Network for Equitable

Library Service. Welcome, Riane.

**R** Riane LaPaire 06:34

Thank you for having me.

**R** Ryan Fleury 06:36

I have to say that's a mouthful. I had to practice that all day today.

**R** Riane LaPaire 06:40

That's how I feel every day.

**R** Rob Mineault 07:14

Let's talk a little bit about NNELS. Can you give our audience just a little bit of a taste of what NNELS does and what you do there?

**R** Riane LaPaire 07:25

Absolutely. So, the National Network for Equitable Library Services is a nonprofit organization in Canada, working towards advancing the agenda of accessible publishing, offering quality employment opportunities for people with print disabilities. And we build and maintain a repository of digital books in accessible formats for people with print disabilities in Canada, which are distributed through the Canadian Public Library Network. And my role at NNELS, I am the Braille and Accessibility Testing Coordinator. So anything to do with Braille or accessibility testing comes my way. For accessibility testing, we do different library applications, specifically reading applications, such as novelist Rocket Languages, Reading Simply E, which is a platform created by New York Public Library, World Book, LinkedIn Learning, Flipster, Hoopla, Creativebug, Libby, Overdrive and Press Reader. And then we also do accessibility testing for websites for different organizations that may contact us for for that. So we are for hire, and our team consists of nine accessibility testers with varying print disabilities, and they test on their different assistive technologies with their lived experience. And then we provide some sort of report to our clients with waste to fix their inaccessible content.

**R** Rob Mineault 09:03

So have you found that lately things are getting busier? Like, are you seeing an uptick in that sense?

**R** Riane LaPaire 09:13

Yeah, BC is hopping right now. I think it has to do with the accessibility legislation that's coming in lots of clients from BC, which is great. We are seeing a few clients from Ontario as well. And then definitely, I think Saskatchewan is on the on the rise as well, not only because I'm based out of Saskatchewan, but also because their provincial legislation is around the corner as well.

R

Rob Mineault 09:40

So in terms of of that, then like, do you sort of just have a checklist that you go through in terms of checking, checking how accessible say a website or any given services?

R

Riane LaPaire 09:51

Yeah, we, we do we have a starting point of checklist that you know, there's certain things that we want to make sure that we check for, we kind of focus on usability testing, which then obviously coincides with WCAG. And then we can look at the violations if we wanted to, and note those, but mostly we go from the usability perspective. And then outside of that list, our testers go through a website through a sitemap. And then checking each page in a site as kind of like formulate it. And then sometimes vendors will give us user journeys of how they expect a user to go through their website to make sure that at least those functions are prescribed and working as they had hoped. Of course, that also means that you can find out that your website isn't usable for maybe somebody with a learning disability who wouldn't know to take that prescribed route to get somewhere. So we're able to look at different holes and, and whatnot, and gaps in the usability of their website in that way as well.

R

Rob Mineault 11:11

And how long does that that process kind of take for, say, an average sized website?

R

Riane LaPaire 11:18

Usually, our testers will spend 20 to 35 hours per website per platform that they test on. So some of our users will test on iOS and Mac or Android and PC or just one of those or Linux. And then if there's like an app to go with, like a mobile app to go with it, then we also look at those, and then compiling the reports takes about 20 to 30 hours as well. So it's quite an extensive process.

R

Rob Mineault 11:49

Interesting. And so how did you kind of land at NNELS and doing the the accessibility testing.

R

Riane LaPaire 11:51

So we had some people move around, staffing wise and I was what I like to call "living in a Braille cell" at the time with nails, so I was working solely in braille, and I didn't really talk to

anyone outside my realm. And then as Daniela moved into the manager of NNELS role, she was the former coordinator of accessibility testing. And so her responsibilities needed to be taken on and she thought that I would be a really good fit for the job. So I stepped into the role.

R

Rob Mineault 12:28

And how long have you been at NNELS?

R

Riane LaPaire 12:31

I've been there since 2018.

R

Rob Mineault 12:33

How did you land at NNELS?

R

Riane LaPaire 12:35

I was working in the K to 12 alternate format sector with the Saskatchewan alternate format materials library. And then I was working in schools part time and this job came open. And a whole bunch of people contacted me and said, Hey, you should apply for this. And I said, You know what, I think I can't look at another Scholastic Book Fair ever again. And so they were looking for a Braille coordinator for six months to to do a pilot of having Braille in public libraries. And I was the lucky person who was hired to do that. And then they kind of just kept me on to, to extend that pilot further and and then now we have it kind of in our grant funded projects that we can keep building on that original Braille project and expanding on it. So now we don't just do Braille, we also do tactile graphics as well.

S

Steve Barclay 13:37

Okay, just just to rewind a little bit. Lis, do you recall from your schooling down in the States, did they ever have Scholastic Book Fairs? Is this like, is this a Canadian thing?

L

Lis Malone 13:50

We we had, I mean, we are very familiar with Scholastic, but I don't remember actual Scholastic Book Fairs per se.

R

Riane LaPaire 13:59

Okay, so Scholastic packs up a whole bunch of their best sellers, usually in paperback, and sends them in the giant crates, and they get set up in a school library or a gym. And often it falls on the library staff to like coordinate the selling of these books. And then Scholastic takes

up percentage, but then they also give a huge percentage to the school as a fundraiser. And often it'll go like to certain things, but if the library organizes it, then the library would get that funding, and often it's in scholastic credit. So a lot of schools use it to build their classroom libraries or their school libraries.

S

Steve Barclay 14:39

And from a parent point of view, it is a horrifying experience with children running around making demands about what they want.

R

Riane LaPaire 14:47

Oh, yeah, and there's like erasers and posters and pencils and like weird gimmicky things, and that's what every kid wants.

S

Steve Barclay 14:55

Terrifying, terrifying.

R

Riane LaPaire 14:57

It's terrifying.

R

Rob Mineault 15:00

Yeah, it sounds like it sounds pretty much like any sort of conference except without alcohol.

S

Steve Barclay 15:10

Betting there's a lot of a lot of alcohol.

L

Lis Malone 15:13

I was about to say I'm sure there were many flasks being passed around to the parents of the teachers.

R

Riane LaPaire 15:20

Who's been looking at my locked drawer?





R

Rob Mineault 15:27

Okay, so I've got a stupid question for you. We excel at that here. So do you read Braille?

R

Riane LaPaire 15:36

With my eyes? Yes. With my fingers? No.

R

Rob Mineault 15:39

Okay. How, how long did it take you to learn braille? And I'm asking for a friend.

R

Riane LaPaire 15:47

Um, the alphabet? Maybe like a couple days?

R

Rob Mineault 15:52

Really? Man? Okay. I wasn't asking for a friend. I was I was asking you about me. It's been my New Year's resolution for like two years to learn braille. And I've gotten to "H".

S

Steve Barclay 16:03

Dude, how is it that you set up that entire Braille chart? And you never absorbed any of that?

R

Rob Mineault 16:12

I was working on the graphic design elements of it!

S

Steve Barclay 16:17

For people who don't know this years ago, Duxbury, the Braille translation company used to make this wonderful Braille chart. And then when everything went to UEB, they weren't going to update it. So I went to Cay Holbrook at UBC and, and her group helped actually put together this Braille chart. And then Rob laid the whole thing out. So now it's beautiful and all laid out and it's a wonderful UEB resource. K actually includes it in the textbooks that she authors as well for teachers. But Rob, laid the whole damn thing out anded learn nothing.

R

Riane LaPaire 17:04

Yeah, I still have that one.

**S** Steve Barclay 17:07  
Yeah, it's available on our website now on Canadian Assistive Technologies.

**R** Rob Mineault 17:11  
Classic, it's a classic.

**R** Riane LaPaire 17:13  
I have it laminated. Beautiful.

**R** Rob Mineault 17:17  
Really? Wow, something I made, someone laminated something I made. Wow.

**R** Riane LaPaire 17:23  
I might even have three of them. Wow.

**R** Rob Mineault 17:28  
You know what, just for being on the podcast, I will send you an autographed one.

**R** Riane LaPaire 17:33  
I won't be able to laminate it, but okay.

**S** Steve Barclay 17:36  
I have a laminator. I can laminate it for you.

**R** Riane LaPaire 17:38  
Oh, perfect. Thank you. Perfect. Then I can hang it on my wall.

**R** Rob Mineault 17:42  
Excellent.

**R** Riane LaPaire 17:44  
I recommend you to do your to learning online. It's great.

**R** Rob Mineault 17:53  
Yeah, becuse a couple days. I mean, I two years now I have no excuse. If it really should take somebody who has a brain two days to do it. I should be able to do it in two years. Thanks for disagreeing everybody.

**L** Lis Malone 18:08  
Right, that would be a magnificent New Year's resolution for you.

**R** Rob Mineault 18:13  
I know.

**L** Lis Malone 18:17  
Are you gonna learn I can learn sighted Braille or finger Braille. Tactile Braille?

**R** Rob Mineault 18:21  
Oh, it would have to be sighted because I don't think my fingers are sensitive enough to to be able to pick up the difference between the dots. I mean, that must take a long time to really develop. It's one thing to sort of learn the dots but I'm assuming that it's it's very different sort of learning how that translates in terms of touch.

**R** Riane LaPaire 18:46  
Practice, practice, practice.

**R** Rob Mineault 18:50  
Maybe I'll maybe I'll just do it. I'll use my own damn Braille chart apparently.

**S** Steve Barclay 18:58  
Good idea.

R

Rob Mineault 19:01

Now January is a big month. It is, in some places, National Braille literacy month. But NNELS is participating in something that's that's being called World Braille Days. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

R

Riane LaPaire 19:19

Yeah, absolutely. So, NNELS collaborates with a number of organizations including Canadian Council of the Blind, Braille Literacy Canada, The Center for Equitable Library Access of Provincial Resource Center for the Visually Impaired, Alternate Education Resources Ontario, and the CNIB Braille Room to bring together a month long celebration of Braille. So we are offering a number of either panels or workshops or information sessions or activities all month to celebrate World Braille Day. So our first kind of celebration is actually tomorrow, January 11. And it is kind of targeting people who would like to learn braille that are maybe hesitant or think it's hard, or, you know, like you Rob, who just wants to come and learn how to get past "H". And there are some like great ideas there. And there, we were going to have a panel of some people who were our teachers of people who are like adults who are learning Braille for the first time, we also have some adult Braille learners, who will be there, and it will be a fantastic time. And I think that it'll really show people that it's never too late to learn braille and that it doesn't just have to be like reading books, it's all the practical things that you can use Braille for, such as, you know, elevators, labeling things around your home, like your spices, or playing cards, or making a grocery list, things like that. We're like, I think a lot of people, especially in the holidays, since we're, you know, approaching orthodox New Year here, maybe we want to label some presents, and remember what present is for who. So that's another great use of Braille. So a session all about those kinds of wonderful things, is coming tomorrow, January 11. And all of these are taking place at 1pm. Eastern, 10 Pacific. And then on Wednesday, January 18. We're having a session all in French, which I'm not going to botch the French language version of the title, but it's called Living with Braille. And it is talking about the relevance of Braille in our current time, and how broken in enhance the lives and open doors to new opportunities. So this one's going to have kind of an exploration of the different ways that Braille can make a difference in daily living, work, school and play. They're going to have various panelists and talking about how Braille has impacted their careers, their education, and all aspects of their lives. And then they also provide a handy dandy list of Braille, French Braille resources during that session, so I know that those are going to be available to download afterwards. And the first two sessions are going to be recorded as well. So those will be available on the Braille Literacy Canada YouTube channel after the event, and there'll be links on the NNELS website, World Braille Day website afterwards. So then on January 25, there is going to be a session, mostly kind of like an information plus panel session for kind of targeting post secondary, so not necessarily just talking about getting your textbooks in Braille, but all aspects of like the university life and the post secondary experience in where Braille can be used. So we're talking about like, signage, we're talking about extra curricular, we're talking about, you know, how Braille can be used from like that very, like, entrance. And like getting your very first days at university or when you're like looking at a university or post secondary institution? Is there like a tactile map of campus? Is that tactile map, like coinciding with the, you know Braille signage? And is the Braille signage in a great place? Are there other electives or extracurricular kind of opportunities where you have access to Braille? Can you go into the library and take out a book in Braille? Or can it be made into Braille, that kind of those things

and so rather than identifying the problems that we already know, exist in post secondary, we're looking at some positive solutions and some positive experiences that different people in having have experienced real readers have experienced in their post secondary education and hoping that that will spread across the country with different people who attend. And we also think that public libraries or university libraries would also find this session useful because we believe that a lot of the practices universal so and then to save the best for last We have a variety night showcasing Braille called CeleBrailition Time. And this is an opportunity for people to get together and celebrate Braille and in the form of a variety night. So whether you have an interpretive dance with described video, song, a poem, a story, a homage, a collage, an art form that can be described any kind of thing, we're taking submissions, which closes on Friday, January 13. For the variety night, and then anyone who submits a submission will be entered to win a door prize actually, two of those were sponsored by Canadian Assistive Technology. So we are so thankful to have those prizes. And we can't wait to award them. We look forward to looking at the entries and having those shared on the variety night and then of course, anyone can take part in the variety night and by watching and listening and we will not be recording that session just so people feel comfortable about sharing their love songs to Louis Braille or to Braille in general. I haven't seen anything quite, you know, super lovey dovey racy yet so there's no romance novels written or anything.

R

Rob Mineault 26:38

Well, listen, are employees of Canadian Assistive Technology, can they enter this because Ryan, get the chops, and the tutu and the hula hoop out! I tell you, he's got an interpretive dance that will knock your socks off.

R

Riane LaPaire 26:59

As long as he describes it. As long as you have a you know a video describer.

R

Ryan Fleury 27:03

Yeah. Descriptive Video works will be all over that.

R

Riane LaPaire 27:07

Yeah, yeah. Perfect.

S

Steve Barclay 27:12

No, I'm claiming that role. If you're dressing in a tutu and doing a dance I'm describing.

R

Riane LaPaire 27:22

If you need help describing the dance, the dance moves, let me know.

**S** Steve Barclay 27:32  
I'll mostly be things like, Oh my god. Nobody needs to see this.

**L** Lis Malone 28:07  
Does he get to keep the dollars that are thrown onto the floor for him?

**R** Ryan Fleury 28:10  
The loonies that are chucked at my head.

**R** Riane LaPaire 28:14  
Well, remember, they're virtual. It's really hard to get money chucked at you? You could start maybe a Go Fund Me and proceeds go to next year's World Braille Day events.

**R** Rob Mineault 28:28  
Yeah, there you go. Perfect. Well, no, that all sounds very exciting. That's very cool. Now, have you guys been doing world Braille Days for a while now? Or is this sort of the first year that you've rolled something like this out?

**R** Riane LaPaire 28:42  
This is our third annual event. So the first year we did it all in one day. That was absolutely exhausting, and exhilarating and wonderful all at the same time. And then last year, we split it up and we said yep, this is the way to do it. Oh, I forgot one more thing. Ongoing all month long is a Braille boost for World Braille Day. And this is for K- 12 students, or adult learners of Braille. And there's a variety of Braille focused pursuits like lots of dot word searches, tactile graphics activities, and they're available in contracted and uncontracted Braille. There's kind of like three different levels. And they're going to be available like all the time, will be a downloadable package and your TSVI or Braille transcriber, or EA or what have you, or if you're super tech savvy and, you know, browsing then NNELS website for some reason, you can register yourself as well. And you can download It's a package. And if you don't have an embosser I've been told that there are different avenues that you can get them embossed, so you can email [braille@nnels.ca](mailto:braille@nnels.ca) and we can point you in the direction of having those embossed if you don't have access to an embosser through your school or other organization.

**R** Rob Mineault 30:20  
Well, hey, listen, at least you're not making them do a scavenger hunt.

**R** Riane LaPaire 30:25  
I would love to do a real scavenger hunt. That'd be fun. Yeah. Should we do that online? We should do we should come up with this for Braille day next year.

**R** Rob Mineault 30:34  
Oh, there you go. Yeah. We could.

**S** Steve Barclay 30:40  
We could conspire on this. Yeah.

**R** Riane LaPaire 30:44  
We're gonna let you into the into the organizational planning committee fold.

**R** Rob Mineault 30:49  
Ryan would love to. Ryan needs more committees.

**R** Ryan Fleury 30:56  
Yeah. No, I'm good.

**R** Riane LaPaire 31:00  
Loads of sarcasm there. You're gonna have to talk to Riane. More? No.

**R** Ryan Fleury 31:07  
Not at all.

**L** Lis Malone 31:08  
Not you know, it's just the idea of being more committees.

**R** Rob Mineault 31:13

He's on board. and he's very happy about it. As you can tell. Thrilled,

R

Ryan Fleury 31:20

I'm happy. I'm just busy. Super busy. Yeah.

R

Riane LaPaire 31:23

Well, we meet bi weekly, every two weeks, not actually like twice a week to clarify which bi weekly I mean, starting in September, October until January, basically and it's a lot of fun. There's a lot of laughter.

R

Rob Mineault 31:42

We'll see. There you go. Maybe we'll join. It's good.

S

Steve Barclay 31:46

It'd be fun.

R

Ryan Fleury 31:47

Yeah, I read my Braille for the year.

R

Rob Mineault 31:51

I did too. But it's you know how hard it is to read anything when you can only read up to "H"?

R

Riane LaPaire 32:01

Ah, ha, ha.

R

Rob Mineault 32:06

Very difficult.

R

Ryan Fleury 32:08

I just think it's great that we're seeing Braille still being pushed forward. We're seeing I think more momentum, people are still talking about Braille, even though they say the numbers are  
- ...



Braille users are decreasing.

S

Steve Barclay 32:21

I got a question. Okay. Riane. I hear this all the time. And I'm wondering what your response to it typically is, hey, now that we've got all these computers, is Braille really important anymore?

R

Riane LaPaire 32:38

Absolutely. Everywhere there is print there should be Braille. Whether that be electronic Braille, or like physically embossed Braille, there should be access to Braille. Without Braille, you're losing out on so many things that we can get into like grammar, punctuation, spelling, inflection, but more importantly, especially at NNELS, we like to focus on the personal enjoyment and the choice as a sighted reader. When a book comes out in Braille. I can preorder it in hardcover, in sometimes in paperback, I can get an audiobook often of it, you know, like, right when it comes out. And I, I believe and NNELS believes that those same options should be made available to people with print disabilities, so whether you want to read it in an accessible ebook and accessible audiobook, and have that available through your public library. Or if you'd like it in electronic, Braille or hardcopy Braille that should be available to you on the same day as that release. So we are working with publishers all the time to make that a reality. And hopefully one day it will be.

S

Steve Barclay 34:03

Is there a movement with the publishers to actually go out and you know, kind of simultaneously release multiple media?

R

Riane LaPaire 34:12

We have been working with publishers to do that. So far with our grant funding, it means that the federal government is paying for that braille to be transcribed, but there are a lot of publishers who are willing to pay for the embossed copy to be created. And then they're selling it at the same cost as their print counterparts. So even if it costs \$100 to be embossed, they're still selling it for the same customers same prices, like the hardcover or the paperback. So it'd be like \$20, for instance. And then anything that we produce is available for free digital download either from the publisher or from the NELLs repository, and then we also place a hardcopy Braille in a public library across the country, we call those host libraries. So they're volunteer libraries who are willing to house our collections since NNELS technically only operates in the digital realm. Do you want to know about our tactile projects?

R

Rob Mineault 35:17

I would love to.

R

Riane LaPaire 35:18

So one of the other things that NNELS is working toward is not only that importance of having Braille available, but also having tactile graphics available for leisure and fun and further learning and just having a good time. So you think about Lord of the Rings, there's a map in the front of that book. How often is that book then produced in Braille, but never including that map? A more relevant example would be some of the newer fantasy young adult fantasy novels that have come out like the Poppy Wars, or Skyward or things like that. Most of those don't come with any of the illustrative materials that are in them. And we produce those with their, with the tactile graphics. So there'll be flight patterns, they'll be spacecraft, there'll be all sorts of maps and things like that, included in our books for downloadable content, and then available through the libraries as well. So we really focus on these young reading materials, then we also kind of dive into looking at things like origami. And those are still to come, they're a work in progress. So that's a little bit of a teaser there. And then another thing that we're working on is what we like to call the Lego project. And we know that this has existed in different forms, and other with other companies and different organizations and different people. But we are working on accessible instructions for Lego builders, of all ages and experiences, experience levels. So we're looking at some of those bigger kits and smaller kits and more complex kits and easier kits. And we're looking at creating those written instructions in a BRF format, and then also an ePub format. And then occasionally, we will also do a tactile supplement for some of them. So that way, we have multiple modes of access. And if we can have something that's navigable, then someone can actually set their project aside and come back to it when it's larger build for instance, and know where they are, if we have an index table of contents. And some people just want to be able to emboss the instructions to and build it 8000 times. And then we also want to make those instructions available to public libraries so that when they have Lego in their makerspaces, that there's an opportunity for people to build independently. Without the use of someone sighted, we are writing them in such a way that we will let you know if the color is important. Or if it isn't important, or if it's only important, if you want to show it off to your friends. We recommend a color identifier as well, so that you can essentially build everything, including applying those terrible, terrible stickers onto every terrible piece. So we do want to try and make it as independent as possible. And so we have a group of us that we will build and look at the instructions and rebuilds and then we have another group that will try and build from the instructions only instead of like the in time instructions. And it's it's a lot of fun. We get to build together which is really great. But then we also build to have some instructions out and whatnot as well.

S

Steve Barclay 38:53

So cool. Yeah. So basically you're saying government funding is letting you play with Lego?

R

Riane LaPaire 39:07

Yes, that was my librarian. Shush.

R

Rob Mineault 39:11

Oh. I thought you actually hissed.

- R** Riane LaPaire 39:18  
But let me tell you when I lose a piece of Lego underneath my desk, and when some of my colleagues lose Lego under my desk under their desks, it's really a contest to see who can find it first.
- R** Rob Mineault 39:32  
It's whoever takes off their shoes and walks around. Lego magnetizes to bare feet.
- R** Riane LaPaire 39:38  
It really does.
- R** Rob Mineault 39:39  
Okay, well now so before we let you go, I'm doing my podcast peeps a solid by asking you this. What's your favorite hockey team?
- R** Riane LaPaire 39:52  
Montreal Canadiens. The Habs.
- S** Steve Barclay 39:56  
Yeah, you see that's that's my third favorite hockey team. As listeners will know, my favorite team, of course is the Vancouver Canucks. Second favorite team is whoever's playing the Toronto Maple Leafs and then it's Montreal Canadiens.
- R** Riane LaPaire 40:10  
So whoever is beating the Montreal -
- S** Steve Barclay 40:17  
So sometimes sometimes Montreal is my second favorite team.
- R** Riane LaPaire 40:20  
That's fair. That's fair. How do we stand on Boston? That's really the most important question.

**S** Steve Barclay 40:25  
I'm hoping that the Boston gardens will implode one day and take the entire team out with it.

**R** Riane LaPaire 40:35  
Including the Maple Leafs.

**S** Steve Barclay 40:37  
Well now while they're playing the Leafs of course. Maybe the Golden Knights

**R** Rob Mineault 40:50  
The Knights? Is that a new team?

**S** Steve Barclay 40:53  
Las Vegas.

**R** Riane LaPaire 40:55  
The last the second last Expansion Draft.

**R** Rob Mineault 40:58  
Oh, man.

**S** Steve Barclay 40:59  
Yeah, who have who have already won a Stanley Cup, which the Vancouver Canucks have never done.

**R** Rob Mineault 41:04  
Right. Yeah, but we've had three riots. So suck on that Las Vegas.

**S** Steve Barclay 41:09  
.....

That's true. That's true. We are beating them on riots.

**R** Ryan Fleury 41:16  
Has any team had more coaches than the Canucks?

**S** Steve Barclay 41:19  
I can't imagine. Why did they finally figure it out? No, it's not the coach. It's these jerks on the ice.

**R** Riane LaPaire 41:33  
You gave us Tofoley so thank you. And then we promptly gave him away, which was really sad.

**R** Rob Mineault 41:41  
Well, it's, I just thought I would I would give you guys a chance to talk a little bit about hockey.

**S** Steve Barclay 41:47  
Yeah, so Tofoley. He's in Calgary now, right? Yes. Yeah. Yeah. I don't like seeing him there.

**R** Riane LaPaire 41:53  
No, me neither. I'd rather see him in Vancouver.

**L** Lis Malone 41:57  
I have a confession to make. I have the Devil's game right on my TV at the moment on mute.

**R** Ryan Fleury 42:07  
That's a given.

**R** Riane LaPaire 42:09  
We do realize that if there the Habs were playing I wouldn't have agreed to this today, right?



S

Steve Barclay 42:15

Well, there is a Vancouver game on I believe right now, but honestly, I'm terrified to watch any game that these guys play, unless it's a major contender because they can be anybody who's a really really good team, but they can't beat anybody else. It's weird. It's just so weird. It's like they show up for the big games and then they just don't show up for the for for you know, the the games that count.

R

Riane LaPaire 42:41

It looks like it could be a really good game right now. It's gonna be a high scoring game. Oh,

S

Steve Barclay 42:48

Okay. No spoilers.

R

Rob Mineault 42:51

Well, we know what that score looks like. It's zero to something.

R

Riane LaPaire 42:56

Three to four for for the Penguins. Oh, has 11 minutes left in the second. Wow. There we go.

L

Lis Malone 43:03

You know, ran I've been to the the Hab's arena up there. I went to a half skate when I visited Montreal. I was very surprised that I said the sponsoring beer was Coors Light. I said, Wow, I had to come to Canada to get Coors Light.

R

Riane LaPaire 43:20

Yeah, that's weird when it's like Molson country.

L

Lis Malone 43:26

I was like, Oh, my God was close. Like really? Like we are in Canada. Right. Okay, just just just checking.

R

Riane LaPaire 43:32

That's weird. Why would we want American beer?

L Lis Malone 43:35  
Did we come to the conclusion that Molson purchased Coors or decor is purchased Molson one of the other.

R Riane LaPaire 43:42  
Maybe?

R Rob Mineault 43:43  
Probably. Oh, yeah. Cool. Cool.

R Riane LaPaire 43:48  
Yeah, they totally are together.

R Rob Mineault 43:50  
Ah. Wow. Well, now I'm outraged.

S Steve Barclay 43:55  
They had to upgrade their game somehow.

R Rob Mineault 43:59  
And Coors Light as well. Like that's, that's a hard sell for Canada. Who's drinking Coors Light in Canada?

L Lis Malone 44:07  
I was.

R Rob Mineault 44:11  
You didn't know any better.

...

**R** Riane LaPaire 44:16  
Did you remember your ear protection at least for the game? Because it gets loud in there.

**L** Lis Malone 44:20  
It was, you know, it was a very rowdy in a good way. Very enthusiastic fan base there and they were playing kind of who they were playing there were I think it was the wild. It was you know, and they they killed them. So it was it was a it was a fun time.

**R** Riane LaPaire 44:36  
Yes. They didn't get booed off the ice like yesterday. Oh boy.

**S** Steve Barclay 44:39  
Oh, good. Who were they? Who are they playing yesterday?

**R** Riane LaPaire 44:43  
The Kraken.

**R** Rob Mineault 44:46  
Wait, the Kraken? Wait, are the all these real teams?

**R** Riane LaPaire 44:50  
Seattle got an Expansion Draft and they are home of the Kraken.

**R** Rob Mineault 44:57  
Really? That's kind of a cool team name.

**S** Steve Barclay 45:05  
This year, the Utica unicorns as well.

**R** Rob Mineault 45:09  
Really?



**R** Riane LaPaire 45:10  
Yeah. Yeah, the Regina Unicorns

**S** Steve Barclay 45:15  
I thought it was Utica. Is it? Is it Regina?

**R** Rob Mineault 45:20  
Okay now you're pulling my leg.

**R** Ryan Fleury 45:27  
It's okay Rob she made she made Steve question himself.

**R** Rob Mineault 45:39  
Hey, this gives me an idea for a podcast. Maybe it'd be fun to host a podcast about hockey, knowing nothing about hockey and then just have people on that know a lot about it on...

**L** Lis Malone 45:48  
We're gonna turn it into a game. professional sports team or mythical animal.

**S** Steve Barclay 45:55  
Okay, yeah, or both. Yeah, we can do that

**R** Ryan Fleury 45:58  
The anniversary show in May. There.

**R** Riane LaPaire 46:00  
Yeah. You could do around playoffs.

**R** Rob Mineault 46:03

Very well, hey, listen, we'll have you back for that.

 Riane LaPaire 46:07

I would love to come back for that. That'd be a lot of fun.

 Rob Mineault 46:10

Okay, well, it's a deal. Well, listen, we've had a lot of fun. And we really appreciate you taking up your evening talking to us dummies,

 Riane LaPaire 46:21

Anytime.

 Rob Mineault 46:26

So yeah, obviously, yeah, we need we need to figure out that scheduling. Before we let you go. Is there anything that you would like to plug? Where can people find more information about World Braille Days? You got anything going on?

 Riane LaPaire 46:42

Oh, well, first of all, thank you so much for for having me. I just want give a huge shout out to the organizers of World Braille Days. So the team is amazing. And more information about World Braille Days are on the NNELS website. Or even easier, you can email [braille@nnels.ca](mailto:braille@nnels.ca) and I will forward a link along and answer any questions that may come up.

 Rob Mineault 47:35

Excellent. And we'll make sure that we actually include a link in the show notes as well.

 Riane LaPaire 47:39

I just can't talk about how great the Organising Committee is, and how great it is to work with so many organizations toward a common goal. I know a lot of times people see that so many organizations exist, and that we don't work together. But we do work together more than I think people realize, and it's really exciting to to bring together something that's cohesive and not. You know, like, there's like, what seven organizations involved in instead of having seven events, we have events that are cohesive and free and available for everyone.



- R** Rob Mineault 48:13  
That's a really good point. And that is awesome, actually, because, you know, in some ways, it's the community can feel really fragmented in some ways. So yeah, it is it is great to see.
- R** Riane LaPaire 48:24  
Yep, so that's one thing I'm really proud of. So we hope to see everyone there and feel free to register and we look forward to seeing you. I think Ryan for sure registered.
- R** Rob Mineault 48:39  
If he hasn't I'm registering for him.
- R** Ryan Fleury 48:41  
I did. Yeah. I did.
- R** Rob Mineault 48:44  
Oh well, goo for you.
- R** Riane LaPaire 48:46  
I wasn't lying.
- R** Rob Mineault 48:48  
I thought you meant he signed up for the the variety show.
- R** Riane LaPaire 48:52  
I haven't received a submission from him yet.
- R** Ryan Fleury 48:56  
No submission for that.
- R** Riane LaPaire 48:58  
But I mean, if you know Ryan and Steve want to write a song together about you know, the sounds of the year, know, the hustle, embrace, then you let's do it.

sounds or the, you know, the braille embosser they can let's do it.

**R** Rob Mineault 49:06  
Call it Chugga chugga chugga chugga.

**R** Riane LaPaire 49:09  
You can call it Romeo and Juliet.

**R** Rob Mineault 49:13  
Oh, hey, that's a that's a good idea.

**S** Steve Barclay 49:16  
Meets meets the Phoenix

**R** Riane LaPaire 49:17  
You can do a mash up of love story and ...

**R** Ryan Fleury 49:23  
Then they get wiped out by a Cyclone.

**R** Rob Mineault 49:29  
And the embosser puns are just flying out. Braille geeks.

**R** Riane LaPaire 49:37  
But, ya know, we look forward to having at least someone at the Celebrailltion to give away their fancy prizes. So awesome. Thank you again, and thanks so much for having us and are having me.

**R** Rob Mineault 49:53  
Awesome. Well, thanks again and .. Go Habs go. Go Habs go. That's right.

R Riane LaPaire 50:02  
I sure hope you put that on.

R Rob Mineault 50:04  
100%. That will make it in.

R Riane LaPaire 50:06  
Thank you very much for the opportunity to talk about Braille and NNELS. As you know, I can talk about that for a while.

R Rob Mineault 50:12  
So yeah, and yeah, listen, if we next time we have hockey chat, we'll invite you back as well.

R Riane LaPaire 50:18  
Oh, thank you. I will wait for you to invite me and I just won't show up and unannounced.

R Rob Mineault 50:23  
Okay. Yeah, that works too. You could show up unannounced. That'd be fun.

R Riane LaPaire 50:28  
Really funny if you did this day at any time and I accidentally clicked on the link and just showed up.

R Rob Mineault 50:34  
It would kind of be funny.

R Riane LaPaire 50:37  
Yeah, I think I think being invited is probably a better way to go.

R Rob Mineault 50:40  
Yeah, that's fair. Yeah, well, we'll definitely find some space for you in coming shows for sure.

Yeah, that's fair. Yeah, well, we'll definitely find some space for you in coming shows for sure. Because it was fun.

**R** Riane LaPaire 50:47  
It was. Thank you so much and go Canucks!

**R** Rob Mineault 50:59  
Go Canucks

**L** Lis Malone 51:00  
Go Canucks to hell in a handbasket.

**S** Steve Barclay 51:03  
Yeah, apparently. Yeah.

**R** Rob Mineault 51:05  
Wow. What was that team that you wished death on?

**S** Steve Barclay 51:11  
That was the Boston Bruins.

**R** Rob Mineault 51:13  
Okay. All right.

**S** Steve Barclay 51:15  
They can die in a fire.

**L** Lis Malone 51:16  
They are so far in the in the in the league it's they're having just a ridiculously good season that it's God like.

**R** Rob Mineault 51:29  
Oh, I see. So that's why you're mad.

**S** Steve Barclay 51:31  
No, no, no, I hate them because they had knocked the Vancouver out in the Stanley Cup Finals last year. Canucks haven't been anywhere close in the last bunch of years. But now this is just a while ago.

**R** Rob Mineault 51:46  
I think I will start a hockey podcast and I can just ask stupid questions. I feel like there's some entertainment.

**S** Steve Barclay 51:58  
It should be done entirely with homers, like people who are unabashedly homers for their team. It's like, you know, no. Their team sucks. Yeah, your teams suck. Yeah.

**R** Rob Mineault 52:13  
I really liked the fact that that all those organizations are sort of banding together and putting on the this sort of month long series of events because I feel like that's so much easier to track than seven different organizations doing a bunch of different things in the month of January.

**S** Steve Barclay 52:30  
Yeah, it's nice to see collaboration. Yep.

**R** Rob Mineault 52:33  
Yeah, for sure. So what did you do Steve, did you supply them with with door prizes?

**S** Steve Barclay 52:41  
Yeah. gave them some door prize stuff.

**R** Rob Mineault 52:48  
What color is the hula hoop by the way?

R Ryan Fleury 53:08  
I think my wife said it's a pinky purple with like, sparkly glitters that run through it.

L Lis Malone 53:16  
Did you just say glitter?

R Ryan Fleury 53:18  
I did. Yeah.

L Lis Malone 53:19  
Oh, you know what that means? I gotta ask. Where's my song?

R Ryan Fleury 53:25  
Well, let me just tell you, the lyrics are done. And I've hired somebody to write the music. So the song is in process. And I don't know when it will be finished. The lyrics are done.

R Rob Mineault 53:40  
Wow. Yeah, I'm gonna have a music video to edit again.

R Ryan Fleury 53:44  
Yes, you will. Yeah, yeah, you guys. It's yeah, I'm, I'm impressed with it. And I'm not a songwriter, but it's totally out of my realm. But it came together and like you said, I'm just waiting on the music now.

R Rob Mineault 54:05  
He's gonna hire the 45 piece orchestra.

S Steve Barclay 54:17  
All right, where are you playing my theme song?



R Rob Mineault 54:22  
Is that your ringtone?

L Lis Malone 54:24  
That's a little shout out to Ryan.

R Rob Mineault 54:27  
Yeah, I like to see him hula hooping in my mind.

L Lis Malone 54:29  
I think I totally could see him hula hooping to that. Yeah, I mean, come on that that is like perfect hula hoop music.

R Ryan Fleury 54:42  
Yeah. You guys need to get out more.

R Rob Mineault 54:46  
Well, that's a given Ryan.

L Lis Malone 54:49  
You're just noticing that now?

R Ryan Fleury 54:51  
Really need some entertainment in your life.

R Rob Mineault 54:54  
Oh God, yeah, let's get out of here.

S Steve Barclay 55:00  
Lord, yes, let's do that.

**R** Rob Mineault 55:02  
Hey, Lis.

**L** Lis Malone 55:04  
Yeah, Rob.

**R** Rob Mineault 55:08  
Where can people they find us? This show, man.

**L** Lis Malone 55:14  
I'm so glad you asked. They can find us on the web atbanter.com

**R** Rob Mineault 55:22  
They can also contact us by email. What is wrong with me? Did you see footage of that Edmonton reporter last week that that basically, I don't know if she had a stroke. I don't know what happened. But she was in the middle of a live report and she just kind of trailed off and basically fainted. I forget what her name is. And so but that's how I feel it is this entire episode. They can they can reach us they can they can get us ...

**L** Lis Malone 56:10  
Do we need to call 911?

**R** Rob Mineault 56:13  
Okay, they can email us if they want to as well at [cowbell@atbanter.com](mailto:cowbell@atbanter.com).

**S** Steve Barclay 56:22  
And if they're so inclined, they can also find us on those annoying social media platforms. We are on Facebook and we are on Instagram handle on Twitter and still on Twitter, despite my objections.

**R** Rob Mineault 56:40  
-

For now.



Ryan Fleury 56:42

Until something new comes along.



Rob Mineault 56:43

Yeah. There you go. All right. Well, that is going to be about do it for us this week. Big thanks for first Riane for joining us, and we will see everybody next week.