



A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE  
BAINBRIDGE SUBREGIONAL LIBRARY  
FOR THE BLIND & PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED OF  
SOUTHWEST GEORGIA



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Don't forget to wear your green on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **Who Was St. Patrick?**

St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, is one of Christianity's most widely known figures. But for all his celebrity, his life remains somewhat of a mystery.

### **Taken Prisoner By Irish Raiders**

It is known that St. Patrick was born in Britain to wealthy parents near the end of the fourth century. He is believed to have died on March 17, around 460 A.D. Although his father was a Christian deacon, it has been suggested that he probably took on the role because of tax incentives and there is no evidence that Patrick came from a particularly religious family. At the age of sixteen, Patrick was taken prisoner by a group of Irish raiders who were attacking his family's estate. They transported him to Ireland where he spent six years in captivity. During this time, he worked as a shepherd, outdoors and away from people. Lonely and afraid, he turned to his religion for solace, becoming a devout Christian. (It is also believed that Patrick first began to dream of converting the Irish people to Christianity during his captivity.)

## **Guided By Visions**

After more than six years as a prisoner, Patrick escaped. According to his writing, a voice-which he believed to be God's-spoke to him in a dream, telling him it was time to leave Ireland.

To do so, Patrick walked nearly 200 miles from County Mayo, where it is believed he was held, to the Irish coast. After escaping to Britain, Patrick reported that he experienced a second revelation-an angel in a dream tells him to return to Ireland as a missionary. Soon after, Patrick began religious training, a course of study that lasted more than fifteen years. After his ordination as a priest, he was sent to Ireland with a dual mission-to minister to Christians already living in Ireland and to begin to convert the Irish. (Interestingly, this mission contradicts the widely held notion that Patrick introduced Christianity to Ireland.)

## **Bonfires and Crosses**

Familiar with the Irish language and culture, Patrick chose to incorporate traditional ritual into his lessons of Christianity instead of attempting to eradicate native Irish beliefs. For instance, he used bonfires to celebrate Easter since the Irish were used to honoring their gods with fire. He also superimposed a sun, a powerful Irish symbol, onto the Christian cross to create what is now called a Celtic cross, so that veneration of the symbol would seem more natural to the Irish. (Although there were a small number of Christians on the island when Patrick arrived, most Irish practiced a nature-based pagan religion. The Irish culture centered around a rich tradition of oral legend and myth. When this is considered, it is no surprise that the story of Patrick's life became exaggerated over the centuries-spinning exciting tales to remember history has always been a part of the Irish way of life.)



## **WALGREENS**

Walgreens is rolling out a new program to assist for people who are visually impaired or totally blind. Script Talk is a machine that has special technology to read preprinted labels on medications, so that all dosing instructions, patient information, side effects, refills and doctor's name, are all read audibly, through the machine. The pharmacist places a special censor on the medication bottle, and you place the bottle over the Script Talk machine. In a clear, female voice, the machine reads all the information, on the printed pamphlet, provided with patient's medication. This machine is currently being given for free. It's quite small, about the size of a portable CD player, has an adaptor, but it can also be used with two double A batteries.

Call your local Walgreens, to see if this machine is currently available in your area.



Bainbridge Subregional Library  
F/T Blind & Handicapped  
Southwest Georgia Regional Library  
301 South Monroe Street  
Bainbridge, GA 39819

Free Reading Matter  
F/T Blind & Handicapped  
U. S. Mail  
Do Not Cancel

Winner of the 2002 National Library Award  
From the Institute of Museum & Library Service

Hours:  
Monday 9am to 8pm  
Tuesday 9am to 6pm  
Wednesday 9am to 6pm  
Thursday 9am to 7 pm  
Friday 9am to 6 pm  
Saturday 9am to 4 pm



Southwest Georgia Regional Library System

Phone: (229) 248-2680  
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Information presented in this newsletter will be provided in alternative formats upon request.

Online Catalog for ordering library books: [www.klas.com/glass](http://www.klas.com/glass)  
Call the library for your log-in and password.

**NOTE:** Please submit information or news that you would like to share to Kathy Hutchins.

