



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



The Subregional Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped of Southwest Georgia is a part of your public library and the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, serving Baker, Brooks, Calhoun, Clay, Colquitt, Decatur, Early, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, Quitman, Randolph, Seminole, Terrell, Thomas and Webster counties.

We do not endorse any product or service mentioned in this newsletter.

(229) 248-2680, 1-800-795-2680, or lbph@swgri.org

Staff: Susan Whittle, Director and Subregional Librarian, Kathy Hutchins, Supervisor,
Arlene Freeman, Tammy Lindsey

January 2010

Georgia's Talking Book Centers Seeking Public Opinion

Georgia Libraries for Accessible Statewide Services (GLASS) of Georgia Public Library Services (GPLS) has announced an initial statewide service plan that will hopefully result in more efficient, effective service to citizens with visual or physical disabilities that prevent the use of standard print materials.

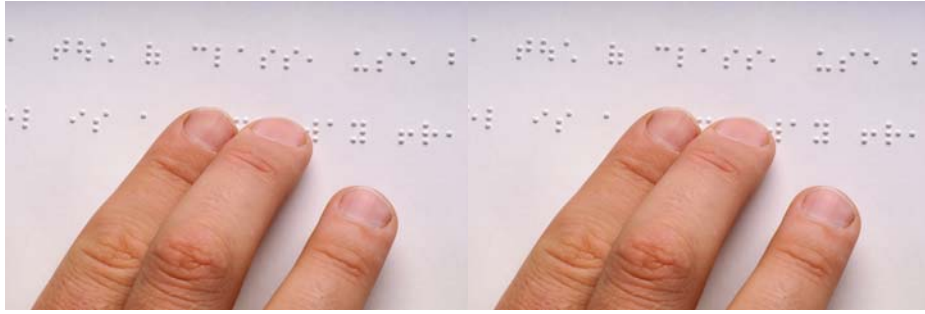
A series of public meetings will be held to give consumers and providers in each service area an opportunity to learn about and respond to the draft plan. GLASS and GPLS encourage everyone who uses or is interested in the service to attend and share opinions and information that will help the planning team develop a final map for delivering the best service possible with the available resources.

Who Should Attend This Meeting?

- Current and potential consumers of subregional services
- Representatives of service providers who serve the target population (such as nursing homes, schools, etc.)
- Talking book library staff members and library directors

We encourage everyone interested to attend the meeting that will be held at the **Southwest Georgia Regional Library located at 301 S. Monroe Street, Bainbridge, GA on Monday, January 11, 2010 at 2:00 p.m.**

For more information or to share your concerns please call or write to Susan Whittle, Bainbridge Subregional LBPH Director & Subregional Librarian, Kathy Hutchins, LBPH Supervisor or Arlene Freeman, Outreach Coordinator at the address and phone numbers listed above.



January is Braille Awareness Month

Over 200 years ago, it was said that the blind would never be able to read. People thought that it was only eyesight that could help humans see and read words. A young French boy Louis Braille, who was blind, was determined to find the key to access new methods for himself and all other blind persons of the world.

Louis Braille was born on January 4, 1809 at Coupvray, near Paris, France. His father was a harness and saddle maker. At the age of three, Braille injured his left eye with a stitching awl from his father's workshop. This destroyed his left eye, and sympathetic ophthalmia led to loss of vision in his right eye. Braille was completely blind by the age of four. He continued to attend school, with the support of his parents until he was required to read and write.

Louis Braille was unhappy in school, because his blindness prevented him from reading books. At age ten, he was sent to Paris to live and study at the Royal Institute for Blind Youth, the world's first of its kind. The children were taught basic craftsman's skills and simple trades. They were also taught how to read by feeling raised letters. He thought there had to be a better, easier, and faster way for the blind to read and he was determined to invent it.

From age 12 to 15, he experimented with codes, using a knitting needle to punch holes in paper to represent letters. He shared his progress with the officials at the institute but wasn't taken seriously. Braille, a bright and creative student, became a talented cellist and organist in his time at the school, playing the organ for churches all over France.

When Louis was 15, he developed an ingenious system of reading and writing by means of raised dots. Two years later he adapted his method to musical notation. He used a pattern of 6 raised dots to represent letters, numbers, punctuation marks, and mathematical symbols. He shared his Braille method with his classmates who liked it and began using it, in spite of the fact that it was banned from the institute. At age 17, Louis graduated, became assistant teacher at the institute, and secretly taught his method. Mr. Braille accepted a full-time teaching position at the institute when he was 19.

He had always been plagued by ill health, and he died in Paris of tuberculosis at the age of 43. Not one newspaper in all of Paris wrote of his death. Although he was admired and respected by his pupils, his Braille system was never taught at the institute during his lifetime.

Six months later, the institute officially adopted his 6-dot method. His raised 6-dot system became a worldwide standard, helping the blind read books, clocks, wristwatches, thermometers, sheet music and even elevator buttons.

On the 100th anniversary of his death, newspapers everywhere printed his story. His portrait appeared on postage stamps, and his home is now a museum. In his honor, the French government moved his remains to the Pantheon in Paris. There Louis Braille was laid to rest with other great French heroes.

He was a kind, compassionate teacher and an accomplished musician. He gave his life in selfless service to his pupils, to his friends, and to the perfection of his raised dot method. Today, Braille has been adapted to almost every major national language and is the primary system of written communication for visually impaired persons around the world. The name of Braille will always remain associated with one of the greatest and most beneficent devices ever invented.

January 4, 2009 marked the bicentennial of Louis Braille's birth. Today, the world recognizes the contribution of this genius, and braille readers around the world look forward to celebrating his accomplishments.

Holiday Closings

We will be closed on Friday, January 1st, 2010.

We wish each of you a Happy New Year.

Each year the third Monday of January is designated as a Federal holiday in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. This year that Monday is January 18th and the Bainbridge LBPH will be closed in observance of this holiday.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

The text "HAPPY NEW YEAR" is written in a bold, red, sans-serif font with a black outline and a slight 3D effect. The words are arranged in a slightly curved line. Two yellow starburst graphics, resembling multi-pointed stars with radiating lines, are positioned above the word "NEW" and below the word "HAPPY".

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

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

Phone: (229) 248-2680
1-800-795-2680
Email: lbph@swgrl.org
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Take a virtual tour of our libraries
and Subregional Library
for the Blind and Physically
Handicapped by clicking on
www.swgrl.org/handicap.php

Information presented in this newsletter will be provided in alternative formats upon request.

Online Catalog for ordering library books: 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.

