The Southwest Georgia Library for Accessible Services 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, Dougherty, Early, Echols, Grady, Lanier, Lee, Lowndes, Miller, Mitchell, Quitman, Randolph, Seminole, Terrell, Thomas, Webster & Worth counties.

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

Staff: Susan Whittle, Director & Subregional Librarian, Kathy Hutchins, SWGLAS Supervisor, Arlene Freeman, Outreach Coordinator

January 2013

Happy New Year

The staff would like to wish each of you a Happy New Year and let you know we are still here to answer all your calls and help you with all your books and machine request. Help us spread the word about the Talking Book Program. If you need a speaker for a meeting at you center or for your social club, please contact us at 1-800-795-2680. We can also provide you with a brief article about the Talking Books service that can be shared in a newsletter.

Braille Calendars

If you would like to receive a free braille calendar, please give us a call at the number listed about and we will be glad to send you one.

MLK Day

The Library will be closed on Monday, January 21st in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.
January is Glaucoma Awareness Month

Look to the Future: Get an Eye Exam to Save Your Vision from Glaucoma

More than four million people in the United States have glaucoma, a group of eye diseases that damage the optic nerve and destroy eyesight. Unfortunately, nearly half of those with glaucoma are not even aware that they have it. Are you one of them? You owe it to yourself to find out by getting a comprehensive dilated eye exam that includes having drops put in your eye. With its painless and gradual loss of vision, glaucoma may have no early warning signs, but it can be detected during a comprehensive dilated eye exam.

Paul A. Sieving, M.D., Ph.D., director of the National Eye Institute (NEI), one of the National Institutes of Health, said, "NEI-funded research has shown that treatment during the early stages of glaucoma can control the disease and prevent future vision loss and blindness. This is why NEI encourages people at higher risk for glaucoma to get a comprehensive dilated eye exam every one to two years."

Anyone can develop glaucoma, but those at higher risk for developing the disease include:

- African Americans over age 40
- Everyone over age 60, especially Mexican Americans
- People with a family history of the disease

During a comprehensive dilated eye exam, an eye care professional can see inside the eye to detect signs of glaucoma, such as subtle changes to the optic nerve, before any symptoms appear. This allows the eye care professional to determine if you have glaucoma or are at risk for it, to monitor your condition, to treat glaucoma as early as possible, and to look for other vision problems. Once symptoms appear, it may be too late to prevent vision loss and the progression to blindness.

If glaucoma is detected early, treatments such as eye drops or surgery can slow or stop vision loss. High pressures inside the eye, which may be associated with glaucoma, does not by itself mean that you have glaucoma. Only a comprehensive dilated eye exam and evaluation of the optic nerve by an eye care professional can tell you that.
January is Braille Awareness Month

One might ask if Braille is still relevant today with the boom of the electronic age. People who are blind have many more options to access print than they did two hundred years ago. However, people who are Braille readers say it is an invaluable skill. The ability to read a book independent of peripheral devices can’t be duplicated. Not to mention the importance of self-communication. In the workplace facilitating meetings, sharing information at meetings, giving presentations to groups, etc., all require a method of self-communication. If one does not possess sufficient vision to read notes, Braille is a necessary employment skill. For parents, the ability to read a book to a child can’t be duplicated. Creating a grocery list that can be read at the grocery store is another way Braille is useful. How often do we rely on notes to ourselves as reminders? This is another way Braille can be used.

All of the ways that people with sight rely on the printed word are the ways that people who are blind or severely vision impaired rely on Braille.
Southwest Georgia Library
For Accessible Services
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
Fax: 229-248-2670

Take a tour & checkout training material at The Southwest Georgia Library for Accessible Services 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: http://webopac.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.