Celebrating Alabama and Helen Keller

When DeKalb County Public Library staff requested a program to celebrate Alabama’s Bicentennial and Helen Keller, the Talladega Subregional Library team stepped in to help.

DeKalb library staff specifically wanted a children’s program about Helen Keller that would involve someone reading Braille. Talladega Library Director Teresa Lacy enlisted the aid of volunteer Jim Bob Rutlin to read one of his favorite books to the audience. Rutlin, an alumni of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, read the humorous Braille adaptation of the well-loved song The Wheels on the

See Keller, continued on page 6

Rutlin with Johnson-Thompson, Helen Keller’s great niece
Celebrating our BPH Volunteers

Volunteers make a difference when it comes to providing the very best in patron service—especially at the Alabama Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (BPH). With that in mind, the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) and the BPH Consumer Advisory Committee took the opportunity to recognize seven BPH volunteers on May 21.

In the photo above, BPH volunteers are shown with Advisory Committee members and staff. Collectively, the seven volunteers provided more than 300 hours of service to BPH in 2018. The volunteers included Janet Hamilton, Johanna Eisen, Stefan Eisen Jr., Ed Leader, and Linda Taylor. Volunteers unable to attend were Claudette Colvin and Erika Fergato. Advisory Committee officers include Graham Sisson, Chair; Donté Little, Vice Chair; Tamara Massey, Treasurer; and Mary Erwin, Secretary.

The BPH Consumer Advisory Committee provides advice and makes recommendations to BPH, the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS), and, when appropriate, to the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) regarding services. The Committee also serves as an advocate for the promotion and further growth of library services throughout Alabama for all blind and physically handicapped.

BPH Holiday Closing Dates

The Alabama Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is opened Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. and closed on weekends. Our holidays through November 2019 are as follows:

- July 4-5 - Independence Day
- Sept. 2 - Labor Day
- Oct. 14 - Columbus Day
- Nov. 11 - Veteran’s Day
- Nov. 28 - Thanksgiving
Each quarter, BPH Reader Advisors Mike Coleman and Tim Emmons, share NLS annotations from titles they think may be of interest to our readers. In conjunction with the State of Alabama’s Bicentennial Celebration and Summer Reading, we recommend the following “Sweet Home Alabama” titles to you:

**DB09501**
*Narrated by Robert Donley*
*Bryant, Paul W.; Underwood, John*
*B 12 hours and 30 minutes*
*Bear: The Hard Life and Good times of Alabama’s Coach Bryant*
Autobiography of the Alabama football coach from his childhood on an Arkansas farm to his controversial career at various universities. 2016.

**DB37543**
*Narrated by Gregory Gorton*
*Childress, Mark*
*F 14 hours and 57 minutes*
*Crazy in Alabama*
In 1965, Peejoe’s Aunt Lucille kills her husband Chester because he won’t let her take a part in “The Beverly Hillbillies.” She leaves her six kids with her mother, and heads for Hollywood with Chester’s head in a Tupperware container. Some strong language, some violence, and some explicit descriptions of sex. 2009.

**DB60189**
*Narrated by Catherine Taber*
*Jackson, Joshilyn*
*F 8 hours and 4 minutes*
*Gods in Alabama*
Lena Fleet leaves Alabama after high school intending never to return. But ten years later in Chicago her African American boyfriend insists on meeting her racist family. Then a former schoolmate tries to find a mutual friend Lena has already murdered. Strong language and some explicit descriptions of sex. Commercial audiobook. 2005.

**DB65533**
*Narrated by Jack Fox*
*Joyner, Tom; Boyce, Mary Flowers*
*B 4 hours and 54 minutes*
*I’m just a DJ but -- it makes sense to me*
African American host of the nationally syndicated Tom Joyner Morning Show radio program recalls growing up in segregated Tuskegee, Ala. Describes his career, which began in college, and his eventual success. Extolls the virtues of personal responsibility, hard work, and contributing to the community. 2005.

**DB88676**
*Narrated by Jennifer Hubbard*
*Denton, Lauren K.*
*F 9 hours and 46 minutes*
*The Hideaway*
After the death of her grandmother, Sara Jenkins travels home to Sweet Bay, Alabama, for the reading of the will. She finds out she has inherited her grandmother’s bed-and-breakfast, but only if she agrees to renovate the place. 2017.

**DB33904**
*Narrated by Ray Foushee*
*McCammon, Robert*
*F 19 hours and 51 minutes*
*Boy’s Life*
Zephyr, Alabama, 1964. Cory and his father, Tom, are making milk deliveries when suddenly a car speeds past them, hurtles down an embankment, and plunges into a lake. Tom immediately leaps into the lake, hoping to save the driver. But when he reaches the car, he sees the face of murder. As Cory and his father seek answers to the killing of the unknown man, Cory finds himself in a world of adult evils. Violence and strong language. Bestseller. 1991.

*If you are interested in receiving the titles listed above and need assistance, please call BPH at 334-213-3906 or toll-free at 1-800-392-5671.*
WE HEARD FROM YOU!

BPH has completed its biennial patron survey. A total of 4,865 surveys were mailed to library patrons and another 802 emailed to active BPH BARD users. The survey was combined with the Winter 2019 BPH newsletter. A total of 330 surveys were tallied and a summary of the results is included below:

- **54%** have used this service for more than 5 years
- **5%** use Braille
- **More than 20%** reported placing orders in three different ways—by phone (25%), by mail (26%), and by using the BPH Online Public Access Catalog—OPAC (24%)
- **53%** do not use BARD due in part to **37 percent** not using a computer and **20 percent** not having high-speed internet access
- **20%** use our Download Alabama service (where staff download books onto a single cartridge to give quick assistance, volume, and variety to patrons who do not use the computer) with **16 percent** asking for 16 or more books on one cartridge
- **Over 40%** are either **Satisfied (41%)** or **Very Satisfied (46%)** with the selection of materials available through the Talking Book Program
- **66%** have learned something new by reading the BPH newsletter
- **63%** are **Very Satisfied** with the service they receive from BPH staff and **23 percent** are **Satisfied**
- **37%** of our patrons are over the age of 80 and at least **63 percent** live with family or friends

Important Dates to Remember:

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<th>Event</th>
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<th>Venue</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alabama Disability Conference</strong></td>
<td>Sept. 9-11</td>
<td>Hyatt Regency Birmingham — The Wynfrey Hotel</td>
<td>1000 Galleria Circle, Birmingham, AL 35244</td>
<td>Self-advocates, family members, caregivers, educators, lawmakers, direct support staff and others are invited to attend the conference to learn more about resources, trends, and future plans. Learn more at <a href="http://www.aldisabilityconference.org">www.aldisabilityconference.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alabama Council of the Blind State Convention</strong></td>
<td>Sept. 27-29</td>
<td>Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Birmingham</td>
<td>808 South 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35205</td>
<td>Registration and conference agenda not available at press time.</td>
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The best way to improve on something that’s already good is to do it over and make it great! The Alabama Humanities Foundation extended an invitation to the Alabama Public Library Service Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (BPH) Division to again join them in presenting the Alabama Veteran’s Experience Reading Group. This program will provide another opportunity for 15 veterans to come together for fellowship over lunch, to read and discuss literature important to the veteran experience.

In 2018, The Alabama Veteran’s Experience Reading Group, *What My Eyes Saw, What My Heart Remembered* was held at APLS. More than 35 guests, program participants and sponsoring partners attended the closing program last December that marked the culmination of a grant-funded partnership between the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) and the Alabama Humanities Foundation (AHF). More than 20 Montgomery metro area veterans participated in the program. The closing program, took place just two days before Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day and marked a day of reflection and one to celebrate the individuals—many who are blind or visually impaired.

**Book Request Hotline**

BPH patrons can always count on receiving their Talking Book Topics catalog every other month. The bi-monthly publication is filled with all the latest titles made available through the National Library Service (NLS) and accessible to all network library patrons. If you are ready for a new title—or want an author or title from a few years back—be certain to call BPH on its Book Request Hotline at 334-213-3906. If you cannot get through to a staff member, leave your name, city, and the book numbers for any titles you want to order. Also, let us know if you want several books on a single cartridge or if you can only handle one title at a time. We are here to serve you. BPH is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Please call before 4:45 p.m. to place any orders or after 5:00 p.m. to leave a message for the next business day.
Bus to a delighted summer reading audience of more than thirty children. DeKalb library staff went straight to the source to incorporate information on Helen Keller by inviting her great niece, Keller Johnson-Thompson to speak at the program.

The Alabama Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (BPH) in Montgomery works with two subregional libraries that support the delivery of reading materials to more than 8,000 individuals who are blind, have visual impairments, or physical disabilities that prevent them from holding books. These wonderful libraries are located in Huntsville, as a part of the Huntsville Madison County Public Library and in Talladega on the campus of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind. Schools and organizations interested in outreach programs can contact BPH in Montgomery. Staff are able to share information about the Braille and Talking Book Program which is available free of charge to residents who qualify. For more information, or to book an outreach event, please contact the regional librarian at 334-213-3906.

Donors to BPH

Donations made to BPH go a long way in providing promotional materials about library services, as well as new products for library patrons. Staff use the promotional products to share as take-away items at various outreach events. Thanks to the following who donated during the first quarter of 2019 through June 15:

- Anonymous
- Joan F. Baccus in memory of Laura B. George
- Dorothy J. Eaves on behalf of the J.O.Y. Sunday School Class of Forest Hill Baptist Church in Florence in memory of Dot Ward the sister of Virginia May
- Lenora Fuller
- Phyllis H. Neff
- Carole A. Schmitz
- The Sojourners’ Literary Club in loving memory of Mrs. Henry Paull (Dora) Haas
- Mrs. W.H. (Lena) Speir, Jr.
- Josephine L. Struempler
- G.M. (Carol) Vest in honor of Laura B. George
- Mrs. John Pitt (Rebecca) Williams

For information about how BPH uses donations, please contact the BPH regional librarian at 334-213-3906.
Here at BPH, a large number of our magazine subscribers have overdue accounts. All magazines are shipped from the National Audio Company in Springfield, Mo. and all cartridges must be returned to that location. Unlike the audio and Braille titles mailed to patrons from BPH that can be kept for as long as three months, the magazines must be read and returned soon after they are received. Magazine cartridges for the digital player come in red containers and have light blue cartridges inside. Please listen to your magazines right away and send them back. If you misplaced the mailing card, do not worry. The return address label is already affixed to the container. All magazines should be returned promptly to prevent your account from being suspended. Please call us if you have questions or concerns. We can be reached at 334-213-3906.

Staff at several network libraries have indicated their patrons are still inquiring about the availability of a carrying case for their digital players. One of our regional librarians has finally found an answer. The Executive Leather Case for the NLS/BPH digital talking book player is available for purchase from the A.T.Guys: Your Access Technology Experts. For more information, visit the website www.atguys.com/store.
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Contact Information

Regional Librarian
Angela Fisher Hall

Toll-free (in Alabama)
1-800-392-5671

Local
334-213-3906

Email
bph@apls.state.al.us

APLS website
www.statelibrary.alabama.gov

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