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Southwest Georgia News and Notes

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Library Director Joe Forsee commented that this project highlighted the importance of how good things happen when people work together. The project, the brainchild of the garden club, grew out of concern of club members of the importance of supporting the public library. Early in 2009, Mrs. Williams spearheaded an effort to increase local funding of the library. Forsee credits her and other library advocates with securing an increase in local funding during a period of economic downturn. Forsee presented Beautification Awards to Four Seasons, the 44th Georgia Volunteer Infantry, and to Starrscapes. ▶▶

Sara Hightower news and notes

“Be Green,” an environmental awareness show hosted by Susan Cooley, director of the Sara Hightower Regional Library System, and Mary Hardin Thornton, director of Keep Rome Floyd Beautiful, received a 2009 Urban Forestry Award from the Georgia Urban Forest Council. The award was presented at the organization’s annual conference in Stockbridge on Nov. 5. The Rome-Floyd County Library is the only library in the state to include a full television studio and to offer its own five-and-a-half-hour slate of prime-time, public-access programming through the local cable television system’s Public Education and Government Channel, Channel 4. ▶▶



Keith Mickler, Floyd County extension agent; Cooley; and Thornton.

Southwest Georgia news and notes

On Oct. 27, the Bainbridge Subregional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped supervisor Kathy Hutchins presented their first digital player to World War II veteran and Purple Heart recipient Kenneth Smith. The new digital players offer many advantages over the old tape players. They are smaller in size, have a



Hutchins and Smith

longer battery life and have a bookmark function. As only a small number of the machines are currently available, the Library of Congress, which oversees the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped program, designated veterans as the first group to receive the new machines.

Smith was excited to be the first in the area to receive his digital player. “It will get used,” he said exuberantly. “Those talking books, that’s just about my total entertainment. I really enjoy them; they’re great,” Smith explained to Hutchins. The Bainbridge Subregional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped selected him as the first veteran due to his status of having listened to the most titles. He has listened to over 500 titles since learning about the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped program at the Southeastern Blind Rehabilitation Center at the Birmingham VA Medical Center in Birmingham, Ala. Smith served in the Navy as a boatswain’s mate from 1942 through 1948.

The Bainbridge Subregional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped provides resources to qualifying patrons who are legally blind, unable to handle print books due to a physical handicap or certified as having a reading disability. For more information, visit www.swgrl.org/handicap.php. ▶▶

Statesboro Regional news and notes

The Statesboro Regional Public Libraries board has announced that Sharon Rowe will become director of the system on Dec. 1. Rowe, who has more than 20 years of experience as a professional librarian, holds a bachelor’s degree in political science from Valdosta State College and a master’s degree in library and information studies from Florida State University. She most recently served as director of the Marlboro County Library in Bennettsville, S.C. Rowe succeeds Lois Roberts, who has stepped down from the position, but who will continue to serve as public services librarian for the system. “The public service side of library work has always brought me the greatest satisfaction in my career, and I can think of no finer way to conclude my career than to be once again active in that arena,” Roberts said. ▶▶



Rowe



Roberts