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Celebrate Reading! Open House

By Tina Herbison, Reader Services Manager

It's that time again and it only gets better. We invite you to attend a day filled with information you need to know. Come and celebrate what is important to you...the joy of reading at our Open House, Thursday, October 18, 2007, from 10 a.m. to noon. Get to know your Reader Advisors, who will provide you with a list of 50 of their favorite books. Learn more about online book ordering and our Overdrive Unabridged services. Visit our national award-winning Telephone Reader Program recording area. Spend your day learning about new technology from various vendors who provide low vision aides and computer technology. Meet our special surprise guests and pick up free audiobooks.

We are thrilled to welcome phenomenal best-selling author Janet Fitch to our Open House Celebration. Fitch is the author of the #1 bestseller and Oprah Book Club Selection, *White Oleander*, as well as numerous other works. She most recently received rave reviews for her newest masterpiece, *Paint It Black*. Additionally, award-winning mystery-thriller author, Robert Levinson greets our patrons. Levinson, who is the author of *Where the Lies Begin*, *Ask a Dead Man*, *The Elvis Affair* and *The James Dean Affair* will surely delight all who attend.

We are also excited to welcome back the Director of the National Library Service, Frank Kurt Cylke. After 11 years he is returning to give first-hand information about the most anticipated new media, Digital Talking Books and Players. There will be tours, refreshments and free parking. You can also plan a day of shopping at our Vistas store, which will be open from 9 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Come to Braille Institute at 741 N. Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90029. The morning program will be held in the Weingart Center and will start promptly at 10 a.m. Please arrive early to get a good seat. Escorts will guide you to all the activities that follow the morning program.

Author Profile: Simply Living

By Daniel Brooks, Reader Advisor

If asked about your favorite spiritual writers, you might name such luminaries as Thomas Merton, Abraham Joshua Heschel, the Dalai Lama, Billy Graham, Maimonides, Pope John Paul II and many others whose best works describe eternal truths and the ways they may be realized.

Others may argue that all good writing is an expression of genuine inspiration and is, therefore, spiritual. Authors like William Shakespeare, Mark Twain, John Steinbeck, and J.R.R. Tolkien, just to name a few, illustrate the same ideals as the theologians through the effects these truths have on the lives of their fictional characters. In the world of literature, the hero is always the one who embraces and expresses the highest ideals of the writer. The villain is always the one who violates those same ideals.

Then there is the approach presented by Anne Lamott. In her autobiographical essays and works of fiction, she simply tells stories about herself. She is not a heroine, a great sage, or a cautionary figure, but nothing more or less than a faithful human being who openly shares her experiences, for whatever they may be worth. With earthy wit and piercing humor she writes of her own challenges of sorrow and joy, of confusion and inspiration, of love and, well, her lack of love for a certain politician.

Born in 1954 (and still going strong), Anne Lamott grew up in Northern California. Her parents were committed atheists, but they instilled in her the deeply rooted beliefs that intelligent people have a moral obligation to try to make the world a better place, and that literature is vitally important. Like many of her generation, she reveled in the unprecedented pleasures of the counter-culture '60s and '70s, so much so that she developed serious problems with drugs and alcohol, relationships, bulimia and depression.

In spite of her budding success as the writer of *Hard Laughter and Rosie* (RC 20356), by the age of 30 she had reached a crisis point. Suffering from yet another hangover and filled with sorrow after her abortion, she inexplicably became aware of the tangible and unshakeable presence of the divine. A little freaked out, she spent the next few days simply living with the experience. Finally, as she writes, "I took a long, deep breath and said out loud, 'all right. You can come in.'" One week later, she was surprised to find herself drawn to the music pouring out of a Presbyterian Church. Her conversion had begun.

Of course, a life does not just change overnight. She spent the next year overcoming her addictions to drugs and alcohol and continued for years to struggle with eating disorders. When she became a single mother in 1989, she realized that her relationship with her congregation had developed into a source of support and strength. Her writing, which had consisted entirely of fictional works including *All New People* (RC 31881) and has since continued with *Crooked Little Heart* (RC 44316) and *Blue Shoe* (RC 55100), took on a whole new dimension with the autobiographical *Operating Instructions and Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* (RC 40554).

In the telling of true stories about her own life, Anne Lamott finds grace in unexpected places. In *Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith* (RC 47831), *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith* (RC 60194) and *Grace (Eventually): Thoughts on Faith* (RC 64417), her spirituality is lived and written on a deeply personal level. With humor, humility and honesty, she offers her unadorned humanity as an example of how matters of the spirit play out in real life. As a result, she is anything but a typical spiritual writer.

New Patron Workshop in Spanish

The Braille Institute Library would like to welcome you to our New Patron Workshop in Spanish on Thursday, September 27, from 10 a.m. - 11 a.m., at 741 N. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles. Some of the topics that will be covered are ordering books, Registration, Library Counter, descriptive video tapes, Telephone Reader Program, WebOpac, Reference and other library events. We hope to see you! Refreshments will be served!

La biblioteca del Instituto Braille dara una presentacion en Espanol el dia Jueves, Septiembre 27, de 10 a.m. - 11 a.m., en el 741 N. Vermont Ave. Los Angeles. Algunos de los temas que se hablaran son ordenando libros, Registracion, mostrador de la Biblioteca, videos, Programa Telefonico para lectores, WebOpac, Referencia, y otros eventos de la Biblioteca. ¡Esperamos verle! ¡Serviremos refrescos!

FREE Seminar on Glaucoma and Cataracts

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Braille Institute Los Angeles Center

Call (323) 663-1111, Ext. 1519, to RSVP or to order a free tape of the seminar.

Fall Into A Good Book

By Dawn Fuller, Assistant Reader Services Manager

Leaves of brilliant gold, siren red and fiery orange crunch under your feet as you make your way back through the country lane, with the brisk air nipping at your cheeks, to the lighted hearth and the cup of steaming cocoa waiting for you at home. Fall is the perfect time to curl up in front of a crackling fire and warm your hands and heart with a classic novel.

Ride alongside Catherine and Heathcliff through the untamed moors in Yorkshire and feel the black revenge and passionate longing in *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë (RC 25178). Raise your bedazzled goblet, pull your sword from the stone and roam the countryside for the Holy Grail with King Arthur and the noble Knights of the Round Table in *Le Morte d'Arthur* by Sir Thomas Malory (RC 35429). Confront the pitchfork-wielding crowds by torchlight in the dark of the night in Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein*; or *The Modern Prometheus* (RC 25835). Swoon with Buttercup as chivalrous Westley fights off rotten Prince Humperdinck at the Cliffs of Insanity and the Zoo of Death in *The Princess Bride* by William Goldman (RC 58817). Swab the deck and man the gunnery beside old sea dog Horatio Hornblower in *Horatio and the Hotspur* by C.S. Forester (RC 46118).

Whichever book you choose to fall into, put on your woolen socks, pull your fuzzy afghan up to your neck, treat yourself to some caramel apples and settle in for the best reading season of all.

If You Enjoyed...

By Dawn Fuller, Assistant Reader Services Manager

If you enjoyed the mouth-watering recipes combined with passion for life in *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel (RC 36256), then your tastebuds are sure to be thoroughly engaged by reading *Chocolat* by Joanne Harris (RC 49086). In this novel, the secreted, repressed French village of Lansquenet is transformed by the magical chocolates made and sold with care by mysterious new resident Vianne Rocher. In the sordid battle between church and chocolate, love and bon bons conquer all. Readers are teased with tantalizing descriptions of sumptuous glasses of melted chocolate, heavenly truffles and divine interventions of chocolate proportions.

In *Lucia, Lucia* by Adriana Trigiani (RC 56867), readers will be delighted with the tightly-knit Italian family who cooks up fun and Italian delicacies in 1950s Greenwich Village. In a bold move, vibrant fashionista Lucia Sartori breaks off her engagement with her childhood sweetheart to pursue her career in fashion design and is

mesmerized by the charms of mystery man dapper Dante DeMartino. Trigiani delights readers with young love and intrigue, and as a bonus, shares a few of her grandmother's traditional recipes for Fish Brodetto, Quick Tartufo and other cozy family meals.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni transports her readers to her enchanting Oakland spice shop in *Mistress of Spices* (CBB 1457). Tilo, Mistress of Spices, has a lot more to offer than what her ancient jars of Haldi root appear to hold. Transcending time and appearing in a crone-like form, multidisguised Tilottama provides those who enter her shop with supernatural cures for overcoming life's dreams deferred, blended from her extensive magic spice collection. Fluffy coconut naan and tangy tamarind treats are no match for the love that transcends time in this beautifully breathtaking tale.

The Book Club Needs New Members

What does a good book mean to you? What could a good book mean to you? Braille Institute Library's Book-of-the-Month Club sets off on a new literary adventure at 1 p.m. on the last Wednesday of every month. You may be pleasantly surprised at how much joy, insight and inspiration can be gotten from this lively discussion about a good, carefully selected book, one that you might not have otherwise considered. Past selections have included: *The Alchemist*, *The Life of Pi*, *Chocolat*, *The Lovely Bones*, *The Kite Runner*, *A Confederacy of Dunces* and *Cold Mountain*. If you are interested in discussing each month's selection with other intelligent, enthusiastic people, then please contact Dawn at (800) 808-2555, Extension 1381.

Overdue Books

Please be kind to your fellow readers and return any books you have finished reading as soon as possible. You are always free to check out any book as often as you like, but in the meantime, there are others who are waiting to read your collection.

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If mail is returned to us undelivered, your account may be put on hold until we hear from you. If you are moving, changing your address or phone number, please contact the Registration Department at (800) 808-2555 to let us know as soon as possible.

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How To Contact Us

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