

# NEWS

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February 2, 2009

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## ***Brunswick-Glynn County Library partners with collection agency*** Delinquent patrons owe more than \$105,000

BRUNSWICK—The Brunswick-Glynn County Library is implementing two new policies to crack down on patrons with excessive unpaid fines and overdue materials, library officials announced today.

Brunswick-Glynn County Library, a member of the Three Rivers Regional Library System, has partnered with Jeffersonville, Ind.-based Unique Management Services, Inc., a collection agency that works exclusively with libraries. The agency specializes in materials recovery with an emphasis on patron goodwill.

This month, Unique will begin contacting patrons owing at least \$25 in late fees and those with materials 60 days or more past due, said Leslie A. Jones, director of the Three Rivers Regional Library System. In addition to fines, those patrons will face a \$10 collection fee and risk damage to their credit.

“Some people check out books or DVDs and simply forget to turn them in,” Jones said. “They get a friendly reminder from us, and the problem is quickly resolved. However, there are some patrons who need a stronger nudge to return overdue materials, pay their late fines or reimburse the library for lost or damaged materials.”

Of the 30,160 patrons whose statewide PINES library cards were issued by the Brunswick-Glynn County Library, 1,595 owe more than \$25. The largest individual debt is \$528.55. The total amount owed by Brunswick-Glynn County Library patrons is more than \$105,000.

The Brunswick-Glynn County Library also is implementing a new “family group responsibility” policy. The new rule blocks library privileges, including computer use, for an entire household or “family group” if one person in the group has his or her privileges suspended. Household members may find their privileges suspended at more than 275 libraries statewide that accept the PINES library card.

Jones said the policy is to prevent a family member with a delinquent account from borrowing library items using another household member’s card.

“Library books, DVDs and other materials belong to everyone in our community,

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and it is the library's responsibility to take care of these valuable resources," Jones said. "Refusing to turn in or pay for library materials is like stealing from your neighbor."

Library patrons receive multiple notices by mail or e-mail about overdue materials and fines, so there is ample time to clear up delinquent accounts, Jones said.

The Brunswick-Glynn County Library will evaluate the effectiveness of its new policies, and other affiliate libraries in the seven-county Three Rivers Regional Library System may consider adopting the rules.

For more information about Unique, visit its Web site at [www.unique-mgmt.com](http://www.unique-mgmt.com). The Three Rivers Web site is at [www.trrl.org](http://www.trrl.org).

### **In other library news:**

PINES library cardholders statewide can now receive e-mail "pre-minders" when the due dates for borrowed materials are approaching. Patrons may sign up to receive pre-minders by adding their e-mail addresses to their accounts online at [www.gapines.org](http://www.gapines.org), or library staff will add it on request at the circulation desk.

Seven- and 14-day overdue notices will now be sent via e-mail to patrons who provide e-mail addresses in their PINES accounts at [www.gapines.org](http://www.gapines.org). The new policy will save Georgia taxpayers the cost of paper and postage, PINES library officials said. Patrons who do not provide e-mail addresses will still receive their notices via the U.S. Postal Service. Thirty-day overdue notices also will continue to be sent via regular mail.

*Brunswick-Glynn County Library is located at 208 Gloucester St., in Brunswick, Ga. It is home to the headquarters of the Three Rivers Regional Library System, which also includes Brantley County Public Library, Camden County Public Library, Charlton Public Library, Hog Hammock Public Library on Sapelo Island, Ida Hilton Public Library in Darien, Long County Public Library, St. Marys Public Library, St. Simons Public Library on St. Simons Island, and Wayne County Public Library. Three Rivers libraries are members of PINES, the Public Information Network for Electronic Services, a program of the Georgia Public Library Service, which gives libraries and their patrons access to more than 9.6 million books and materials, at more than 275 libraries and service outlets in Georgia. Visit the Three Rivers libraries online at [www.trrl.org](http://www.trrl.org).*

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