the need for either a computer upgrade or a new computer in order for Naturally Speaking to be effective. The Lions Club came through by providing funds for a new state-of-the-art computer.

Staff training on the use of our scanner software, OpenBook, was obtained through grant funds. However, the supplier sent someone to train on the latest version, OpenBook Ruby instead of the original version. As a result, the training was virtually useless. Complaints to the supplier resulted in the company upgrading the OpenBook to OpenBook Ruby at no cost. The information from the training session then made sense. OpenBook Ruby is an improved version but still has some problems organizing text from books with columns, text in boxes, or multiple layouts on a single page.

During 1999/00 the Assistive Technology Specialist has:

- Designed a campus map showing accessibility
- Improved ZoomText functionality
- Developed a presentation on adaptive technology
- Trained students in use of software
- Developed print instructions for use of adaptive technology software
- Researched additional technology for various disabilities

Also during this year, the MSC administration provided funds to purchase a computer-based microform scanner that will allow students with disabilities access to journals and newspapers stored on microform.

The new millennium offers technology that makes many older, expensive hardware devices such as the speech synthesizer more affordable or sometimes unnecessary. Most computer systems today include a sound card, making it possible to install and use text-reading software without purchasing an expensive voice synthesizer, which could be added at a later date if funds and needs warrant its use.

Systems now under development will enable greater independence for individuals with disabilities. One such system consists of a laptop computer, remote microphone, and special software that translates a speaker's voice into on-screen text or even into sign language for the deaf, reducing the need for expensive sign-language interpreters. Also under development is a similar device that will translate speech into Braille and back again for the deaf-blind individual. Braille equipment is still on the list of future purchases at Macon State College, but will be considered only when a specific need is identified or other current needs have been met.

Networking with adaptive technology software companies is a wonderful feature of the Internet. Free or very low-cost trial versions of the most popular adaptive software are available. JAWS for Windows, IBM Homepage Reader and WebSpeak, stand alone web readers, are software trial programs which may be downloaded before purchasing to ensure that your needs and expectations will be met. These versions are usually good for 30-45 days, enough time to learn the program basics and determine its feasibility. Additional shareware such as Adobe Access, which allows text reading of scanned pages opened in Adobe Reader, can be downloaded free of charge.

Accessing GALILEO for the totally blind is still an adventure. IBM Homepage Reader and WebSpeak did not work even in the text version. JAWS and Window Eyes work and are suitable choices for multiple-use licenses where the student will work independently. One local advisor suggested Screen Rover, a hardware and software solution that works in a frames format. It works better in the library setting where a staff person may need to offer searching assistance. It allows the blind to use a special mouse to provide on-screen input in normal GALILEO screens, permitting the staff person to interact with the blind researcher. These programs range in price from $600 to $2,000.

ZoomText allows selected text to be highlighted as it is read to a student. This is helpful to students with learning disabilities, but word prediction software for these students to use in