



# Report to the Board of Trustees

January 4, 2023

## From the Director

We jumped right into the holiday spirit to kick off December. The Friends hosted their Holiday Gift Basket Sale beginning on December 1, to coincide with the Town's Shop, Sip & Stroll event. Congratulations to the Friends for having a record-breaking gift basket sales event, with over \$3,500 in sales!

While the gift baskets were being sold in the lobby, the library also hosted tables of gingerbread houses for a fundraiser by the Community Dining Room (CDR).

Deidre attended a Sierra Integrated Library System (ILS) training meeting at the Scranton Library in Madison to learn how to get the most out of running reports and network with other librarians to see how they use reporting to better manage the collections.

Alondra began working with a Branford resident to create and offer a seed library. We'll partner to solicit seeds from the community in the coming months and we hope to get teens involved in making seed library boxes to hold the contents. We hope to have the seed library ready in the spring, and will see how it 'grows' over time.

Jenna and I met with various organizations throughout the month to discuss and begin planning various community events; we met with representa-



We participated in the Town's Holiday Wreath Extravaganza. Thank you to Tina for creating the library's beautiful wreath, which was auctioned off during the event. All proceeds benefit Feed Branford Kids.

tives from Shoreline Adult Education, Branford Arts & Cultural Alliance, and The Rev. Dr. Martin L. Luther King Jr. Heritage Foundation of Branford. We're excited to begin work with these groups to provide excellent and varied events for the community.

Christina and Jordan conducted outreach with a visit to the Senior Center, offering one-on-one tech help.

I completed a University of Michigan EdX Online Course on **Public Library Management: Budgeting and Finance**. It was an 8 week course, that covered the basics of creating and presenting a public library budget. It included some theory and practical application. I will look for additional continu-

ing education opportunities on an ongoing basis.

Staff reviewed and voted on their top three choices for the Children's Room mural. It was not easy to get it down to three — the artists who submitted are all extremely talented. The top three choices will be reviewed by members of the board for a final recommendation.

The Friends approved our purchase recommendations for the generous special gift they made to the library in June 2021. We'll use the gift to expand the library's Library of Things collection and purchase display furniture and shelving for the library, to better highlight parts of our collection and improve service.

— Katy McNicol



The Community Dining Room's Gingerbread House Competition raised almost \$1,000 for the CDR, and made the rotunda smell delicious.

## Highlights from the Youth Services Department—November

### NEW CALENDAR & REGISTRATION SYSTEM

This month the Youth Services Department worked really hard to learn the new event calendar system and add upcoming events. Signing up for events has never been easier and we are now able to see everything that is happening throughout the building with a click of a button. Thanks to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this new system.

### MURAL

The Youth Services Department was also in charge of managing submissions for our upcoming mural installation in the children's play area. The mural will be one of the first things families see so we are looking for a joyful, welcoming, and timeless piece that will draw families into the space. The mural application process closed November 30 and we received over 15 submissions. Proposals are in the process of being reviewed.

### TEEN PROGRAMS

Emily, our new teen librarian, has just completed her first month of programming. Go Emily! She is currently creating new programming and drawing off of teen recommendations through a Google survey. One thing we are super excited about is her Teen Book Box project meant for high school readers.

Similar to a subscription service, teens fill in a short questionnaire detailing the types of books they are interested in reading. Emily then curates a personalized reading box with a couple of selections along with a snack or hands-on activity. This is the perfect way to discover new authors or a recommended read over winter break. Teens can access this service by stopping by the teen space, joining our text messaging string or following Blackstone Teens on our brand new Instagram page. To follow, search for [blackstone\\_library\\_teens](#).

### CRITTERS & CAMOUFLAGE

This month the Allan Louis

Loeb Foundation made it possible for us to invite the Denison

Pequotsepos Nature Center to talk about critters and their use of camouflage. The Nature Center always does an exceptional job, and bringing in live animals to enhance the experience. Miss Mary was impressed with the wealth of information as well as how the speaker held everyone's attention.

### OUTREACH EVENTS

We are looking forward to strengthening our connections with the community and creating new opportunities for families to take part in hands-on events. Emily has meetings lined up with the middle and high school media specialists so that she can introduce herself and see what they are working on. I am also looking forward to participating in the school's English Language Learners night again, which was on hiatus due to COVID. We will also be conducting a middle school library card drive sometime in the spring, where we visit Walsh Intermediate School, make cards and talk a little about our services. Miss Mary has also reached out to the local preschools to see about setting up recurring storytimes.

### HANDS-ON LEARNING

We are also planning our first set of mini maker table activities, where children and teens will be invited to tinker with high and low forms of technology. Participants can come any time after school to learn a new skill and leave with something that they have created.

– Carly Lemire



Our new 3D Printer cart came, allowing the Taz 3D printer to be moved around the building. Thanks to the Friends for sponsoring this purchase!



Emily shows off a personalized Teen Book Box.



## Highlights from the Reference Department—November

### WELCOME, JORDAN

We were delighted to welcome a new Reference librarian this month. Jordan Nolan joined us on November 14th in a full-time position and we are thrilled to have him. He has jumped right in and has already taken on several sections of the nonfiction collection for weeding and updating, he accompanied Christina to the Senior Center tech drop-in session and will assist her with future sessions as well. His learning curve was super short and it feels like he has been here for much longer than a few weeks.

### NEW CALENDAR INCLUDES PUBLIC MEETING ROOM BOOKINGS

The library launched our new events calendar this month (a huge thank you to the Friends for paying for the development and first year) and so far, things have proceeded very well. There are a number of great features that make the new calendar more useful to patrons and staff and it is more visually appealing. Patrons can now book study rooms themselves, up to two weeks in advance. Program registrations are simpler and faster and staff will be able to



Christina helps work through a tech problem at the Canoe Brook Center at the Community House. The next Senior Center Tech Help session happens January 23, 2023.

obtain a considerable number of statistics.

### ADULT EVENTS

This month's programs included book groups, Saturday cinema, Latin classes, Poetry discussion, knitting, coloring, Game Night, drop-in tech help at the library and the senior center, a Zoom program in collaboration with the Stony Creek Museum and a great concert by Ensemble Aubade.

— Deborah Trofatter



Jordan has hit the ground running in the Reference Department. Welcome to the team, Jordan.

# New Haven Register

## Online Access Expanded!

### BREAKING NEWS

### Extra! Extra! Read all about it!

Blackstone cardholders have online access to the text edition of the New Haven Register going back to 1988 and the image collection from 2019 to present day.

Accessing the image edition allows you to flip through the paper page by page. To see the New Haven Register, as well as the dozens of other CT newspapers available to cardholders, check out our website!



James Blackstone Memorial Library  
758 Main Street  
Branford, CT 06405

203.488.1441  
reference@blackstonelibrary.org  
facebook.com/blackstonelibrary  
instagram.com/blackstone\_library  
blackstonelibrary.org

...more than books

Join our email list for more  
information about programs  
[www.blackstonelibrary.org](http://www.blackstonelibrary.org)

## January 2023 Program Highlights

### Marshmallow Snowmen

**Wednesday, January 4 @ 4–5 pm**

In person. Celebrate the snowy weather with this food-based craft.

This month we will be making snowmen out of marshmallows and other edible items. Grades 5–8.

**Sponsored by the Branford Community Foundation.**

### Blackstone Artists Circle Gallery

**Opening Reception: Liz Celotto**

**Saturday, January 7 @ 2–4 pm**

Drop in and visit our top floor gallery to view stunning photographs by Liz Celotto.

### Awakening to Change: Social Justice Discussion Group

**Thursday, January 12**

**@ 7–8:30 pm**

**Online.** When Did I Realize I Was 'White'? In this session we will be discussing Stages of Racial Identity Development & Racial Consciousness.

### Blackstone Library Tour

**Saturday, January 14**

**@ 10–11:30 am**

**In-person.** Take a tour of the

Blackstone, learn historical tidbits, and get an insider's peek at a day in the life of a Blackstone Library employee.

### Making Sense of Writing Suspense

**Thursday, January 19**

**@ 6:30–7:30 pm**

**Online.** Jode Millman and Suzanne Chazin will discuss what goes into writing a compelling thriller. From building suspense to crafting great characters, you won't want to miss this opportunity to learn from two talented local authors.

### An Evening of Guitar

**Thursday, January 26 @ 6–7:30 pm**

**In-person.** A weeknight diversion for guitar and music enthusiasts led by local guitarist and teacher Neil Fitzpatrick. Connect with other who share your passion for classical guitar. All experience levels welcome.

### Ten Tips to Manage Stress

**Saturday, January 21 @ 2–3 pm**

**Online.** Stress happens to all of us. Up to 90% of all visits to the

doctor's office are stress-related, according to Harvard. Whatever your age or situation, Dr. Wendy Hurwitz will provide 10 tips to manage stress.

**Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.**

### Legacy Theatre Acting Workshop

**Saturday, January 28**

**@ 11 am–12 pm**

**In person.** Whether you've starred in a show or have never been on stage before, this workshop is for you! Join Legacy Theatre's Artistic Director and Co-Founder, Keely Baisden Knudsen for an acting workshop. All experience levels and abilities are welcome. Grades 5–12.

### Shoreline Jazz Quintet: Music of Bill Evans

**Sunday, January 29 @ 2–3 pm**

Celebrate the music of the jazz great Bill Evans. Widely regarded as one of the most influential jazz pianists, and best known for his iconic work with Miles Davis, his work set the bar for all future jazz pianists. Presented by the Shoreline Jazz Quintet.

**Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.**

*Check our website for more programs and registration details!*

"Where would we be without you, [Blackstone] Library. You cover it all! So many thanks for your continuing service, to all ages, in our community"

— Janice S.

"Truly, JBML is the most valuable resource in our community."

— Eunice L.

## November 2022 Statistics—Deirdre Santora

**Total Circulation: 7,256**

*November 2021: 9,433*

**borrowIT: 1,743**

*November 2021: 1,571*

**Renewals: 4,192**

**Computer Sessions: 596**

**WIFI Logins: 3,692**

**Website visits: 6,934 session**

**Facebook: 2,258 Likes**

**Instagram: 1,150 Followers**

**MailChimp: 7,670 Subscribers**

**Average Daily Visitors: 300**

**Days open: 28**

**Downloadable Circulation:**

**Overdrive/Libby ebooks: 1,412**

**Overdrive/Libby audiobooks: 753**

**Overdrive/Libby magazines: 195**

**Palace App: 10**

**HOOPLA: 1,181**

**Kanopy: 314**

**Pronunciator: 657**

**Ancestry Library: 262**

**New Haven Register: 279**

**Branford History Scrapbooks: 135**

**Creative Bug: 7**

**Lucy Hammer & Conference Room Usage: 95**

**Children's Programs**

*20 programs/389 attendance*

**Teen Programs (12+)**

*8 programs/47 attendance*

**Adult programs**

*29 programs/428 attendance*