



Report to the Board of Trustees

March 1, 2023

From the Director

Blackstone Library was selected to be the February community bag partner for Big Y. Throughout the month, each purchase of a Big Y Community Bag generated a \$1 donation to the library. Thank you, Big Y, for selecting us!

I wrote a column for the Friends of the Library Marble Columns newsletter highlighting the tremendous value of the Friends. Friends members work year-round to support the Blackstone through various events. Become a Friends member today to help support their efforts.

I attended the CLC New Director's Roundtable, which was a wonderful opportunity to connect and talk with other new library directors from across the state.

Angela updated new Reader's Advisory brochures and posted them to the website. People love these brochures for finding new reads with the recommendations of books we own in a wide variety of genres.

Kayla took over the task of creating our keepsake magnets. These small handmade glass bead magnets are sold for \$5 each, with proceeds benefitting the library.

I attended a CLA Legislative event at the Old Saybrook public library. There was a presentation about CLA, CLC,

and the CT State Library, and the proposed eBook legislation they are trying to get support for. Legislators attended the session and had positive support for libraries and the proposed bill, SB 500: An Act Concerning Electronic Book and Digital Audiobook Licensing.

We bid Miss Carly farewell this month. She is going to the North Branford Libraries to be their new Assistant Director. We wish her all the best in this new adventure!

Tina has sent out mini golf sponsorship requests to new sponsors and is working with

event co-chair Lynette Gannon to begin planning the silent auction.

Alyson Mathews continued her work on the library's new Emergency Management Plan, completing a floor-by-floor inventory of emergency equipment.

Kathy and I completed documents for the budget request to the Town. Along with Trustees Janice Kochanowski, Jack Thompson, and Matt Roth, we met with First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove and Financial Director Jim Finch to review the budget request.

— Katy McNicol



The Blackstone went red for February, supporting the American Heart Association's initiative, Go Red for Women, a comprehensive platform designed to increase women's heart health awareness.



We received a donation of some 3D puzzles and turned them into a drop-in community program. Stop by the Reading Room any time the library is open to put some pieces together and help build the castle.

TWO GREAT EVENTS • ONE FANTASTIC WEEKEND

Mini Golf
at Blackstone Library

Save the Date

MINI GOLF:
After Hours

Saturday, April 29 & Sunday, April 30

protect your privacy | protect your identity | protect your confidentiality

BLACKSTONE LIBRARY HOSTS A

Shred-a-thon
SHREDDING EVENT

Fundraiser to benefit the James Blackstone Memorial Library

SATURDAY, JUNE 10

Save the dates for these upcoming fundraising events: Mini Golf @ Blackstone Library, Mini Golf: AFTER HOURS, and Shred-A-Thon. Tickets on sale soon.

Highlights from the Youth Services Department—January

OUTREACH PREP

The Youth Services Department spent a good portion of January prepping for spring events and making sure our calendar was ready. Every year we participate in Read Across America Day (RAAD), Week of the Young Child (WOTYC), and Branford's English Language Learners Night (ELLN). All three events take place outside our building so they are an excellent way to promote the library and the services we provide.

RAAD takes place in March and is organized by the United Way. Every year community members are invited to read to local elementary schools and talk a little bit about what we do. The nice part about this event is that the United Way provides everything you need, including the book! This year Emily will be representing the Blackstone since this is her first time experiencing the event.

WOTYC brings together some of our youngest patrons and celebrates early childhood education. Every year the School Readiness Council puts on a Saturday full of events and invites all the local preschools to create art based around a particular book. Those pieces are then put on display inside Branford's Community House, along with an array of activities. The Library has always helped by contacting all the area schools, explaining the event, and then delivering the books to the schools that want to participate. This year's book is *The Caring Me I Want to Be* by Mary DiPalmermo and would not be possible without support from the Branford Community Foundation. The

book centers around kindness and the little acts everyone can do to make the world a better place.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS NIGHT

ELLN is something I look forward to every year since it originated at the Blackstone. We worked with the ELL coordinator to host this event in our auditorium, offering early literacy activities while we provided library cards and tours. The event was always a blast and it was nice to meet new families. The program has grown in size, bringing on new services and community contacts, so it is now hosted in the Murphy School gymnasium.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL TOUR

At the beginning of the month Emily hosted her first library tour with a small group of students from Walsh Intermediate School. The group came to see all the resources the Youth Services Department has to offer and we were even able to create library cards. During the hour we handed out programming information, took questions about the building and focused on attractions and upcoming events. Everyone was encouraged to check something out so I am sure we will be seeing these students in the near future.

TAKE YOUR CHILD TO THE LIBRARY DAY



Emily and Mary pose with props in front of our pop-up photobooth in celebration of "Shelfie Day."

Another exciting program in the works is our Take Your Child to the Library Day event. Libraries across the country and in Canada celebrate children's programming and encourage families to visit on the first Saturday in February. This year a local author, Kimberly B. Kenna, will debut her new novel *Artemis Sparke and the Sound Seekers Brigade*. The book focuses on activism and how power can be found in anyone's voice. Kimberly and I have been working closely to make this event special. She will bring swag bags, treats, and hands-on activities that ask her audience to express themselves.

LEGACY THEATRE CONNECTION

Emily created a new connection with Legacy Theatre, working with them to create and offer an improv workshop for middle and high school students. The event produced a large sign up and we hope to continue working with Legacy Theatre to offer more workshops for various ages in the future.

– Carly Lemire



The Friends sponsored Kitchen Creations: Marshmallow Snowmen, a fun craft program for teens.

Highlights from the Reference Department—January

MANY POPULAR PROGRAMS

We had a busy month of programs in January with two drop-in tech help sessions, Friday Game Night, an art reception, book groups, knitting and poetry groups, Latin classes, two musical programs — an Evening of Guitar and the Music of Bill Evans, Saturday Cinema, a Zoom program on writing suspense, a tour of the library, Awakening to Change discussion group, a program on stress management, and a Branford Historical Society presentation on the Quinnipiac People.

DATABASE RESOURCES

The Reference staff is working on increasing our database usage by increasing our social media posts and by creating new bookmarks, flyers and brochures. We have a wide array of database offerings and we want to make sure our community is aware of what we have and how these databases can be useful to them. This month, I am going to feature databases for the general researcher.

NEWS RESOURCES

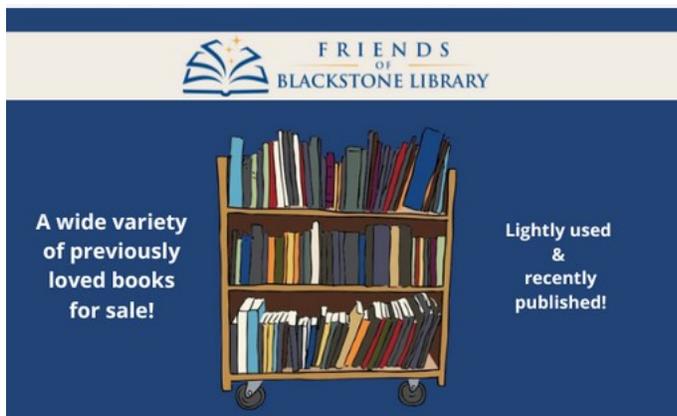
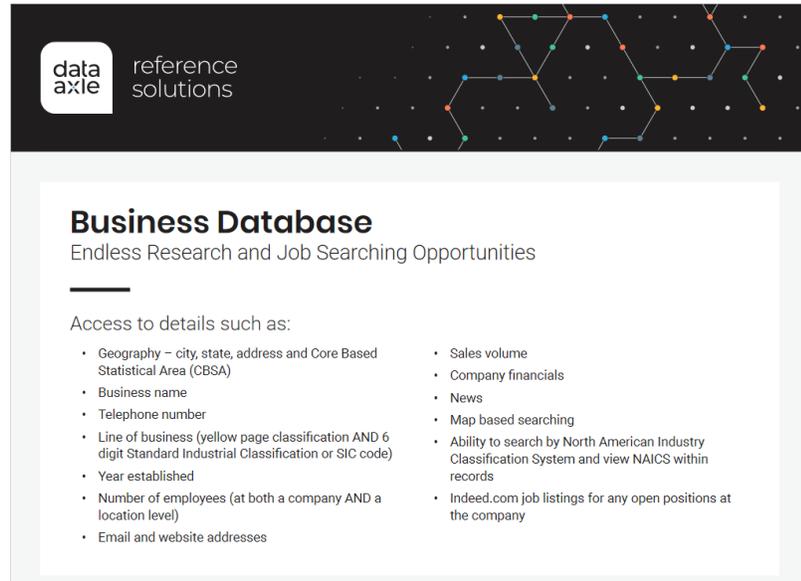
For general news, Blackstone patrons have access to the New Haven Register, searchable text back to 1988 and an image ver-

sion of the current paper; bonus access to the Connecticut Post, New York Post, Greenwich Times, Shoreline Times, and many other newspapers. In addition, through researchITCT, all CT residents can access the New York Times (1985-present), Chicago Tribune (1985-present), Hartford Courant (1992-present), Los Angeles Times (1985-present), Wall Street Journal (1984-present) and the Washington Post (1987-present). Patrons can also access thousands of magazines through OverDrive and through researchITCT.

PHONE, ADDRESS, BUSINESS & JOBS DATA

Reference Solutions offers Blackstone patrons searchable databases for addresses, telephone numbers, business data, and job listings. They can access legal forms through Gale Legal Forms and practice tests for college and a variety of jobs at Petersons Test Prep. In addition to newspapers and magazines, researchITCT also provides databases on business, science, law, history, education and much more. All of these resources can be easily accessed through the Quick Links sidebar on our website.

— Deborah Trofatter



FRIENDS VIRTUAL BOOK CART IS BACK!

The Virtual Book Cart is back! It is an easy way to obtain lightly used books (mostly 2022-2023 publications) in both hardcover and trade paperback format, at great prices (\$4 for hardcover and \$3 for trade paperback). Visit blackstonelibrary.org/Friends to see available titles and how to order.

If you have questions or want to join our mailing list, please send us an email at JBMLFriendsBookCart@gmail.com.



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instagram.com/blackstone_library
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...more than books

Join our email list for more information about programs
www.blackstonelibrary.org

March 2023 Program Highlights

Jolly Beggars Concert

Sunday, March 5 @ 2–3 pm

In person. The Jolly Beggars bring the rich tradition of Celtic folk music and storytelling to modern day audiences. They tell traditional stories from Irish folklore and intersperse their musical arrangements with traditional reels and jigs. **Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.**

Writers Group

Tuesday, March 7 &

Thursday, March 21

@ 6:30–7:30 pm

In person. Looking to connect with other writers in the Branford area? Join our writers group! Group will meet biweekly for sessions that include a block of writing time, as well as a workshop session. Meet fellow writers and workshop new and old pieces in a friendly and supportive environment. All genres/levels welcome. Space is limited!

Awakening to Change: Social Justice Discussion Group

Thursday, March 9 @ 7–8 pm

Online. Awakening to Change is designed to help unify our community by developing a shared understanding of the history, policy, and experiences shaping contemporary discussions of race. We tackle a new topic each month, sometimes reading books, discussing films, or learning from articles. All are welcome to join.

Skunk Misery Ramblers

Sunday, March 12 @ 2–3 pm

In person. Enjoy some old time fiddle tunes with bass, banjo, and guitar. Representing a wide variety of ages and skill, this group loves to play Celtic, Bluegrass, and Old Time music in an informal setting. Presented by the Musical Arts Society of Branford.

Meet Me @ The Mini Maker Table

Monday March 13 @ 4–5 pm

In person, drop-in event. During this informal hour we will try out equipment, build things out of various materials and test our creations all in an effort to help you learn how to do something!
ACTIVITIES: March: 3D Printing Demo. Grades 2-8.

How Branford's Government Works Saturday, March 18 @ 1–2 pm

In person. This presentation will shed some light on how Branford's government works and answer questions you didn't even know you had. Presented by the Voter Engagement division of the Branford Democratic Party.

Delicious Adventures with Peeps

Monday, March 27 @ 3:30–4:30 pm

In person. Come celebrate spring with an edible Peeps craft! We'll use Peeps, Twinkies, and other edible treats to create a delicious scene. Be sure to bring your creativity and your appetite! Space is limited. **Sponsored by the Friends of Blackstone Library.**

Careers in Healthcare

Thursday, March 30 @ 10–11 am

In person. Shoreline Adult Education (SAE), the American Job Center, and area employers host a free workshop for job seekers, with an overview of the American Job Center services, information regarding careers in the healthcare industry and training opportunities, a local employer's perspective, and the resources available through SAE and Blackstone Library.

Check our website for more programs and registration details!

January 2023 Statistics—Deirdre Santora

Total Circulation: 7,595

January 2022: 6,962

borrowIT: 1,574

January 2021: 1,255

Renewals: 4,350

Computer Sessions: 600

WIFI Logins: 3,517

Website visits: 10,044 sessions

Facebook: 2,530 Likes

Instagram: 1,161 Followers

MailChimp: 7,710 Subscribers

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive/Libby ebooks: 1,566

Overdrive/Libby audiobooks: 831

Overdrive/Libby magazines: 175

Palace App: 18

HOOPLA: 1,266

Kanopy: 364

Pronunciator: 676

Ancestry Library: 677

New Haven Register: 125

Branford History Scrapbooks: 165

Creative Bug: 84

Lucy Hammer & Conference Room Usage: 156

Children's Programs

26 programs/676 attendance

Teen Programs (12+)

8 programs/55 attendance

Adult programs

41 programs/579 attendance

Thank you to the Blackstone for providing so many services to the community. The Library is a gem among us.

— J.S.

Average Daily Visitors: 352

Days open: 27