



Report to the Board of Trustees

April 3, 2019

From the Director

Construction has been moving along this month as concrete for the wall footings was poured and work began on the ground floor family toilet room. The 2nd floor spaces were approved for temporary occupancy only for staff, and Kathy and I have moved into our new offices.

Our Spring appeal is set to be mailed during library week which runs from April 7 — 13. The development committee has planned a Shred-a-Thon for Saturday, June 22 from 9am-12noon. Tickets for shredding will be sold in advance; \$7 for the first box and \$5 for each additional.

As part of Branford's 375th birthday, the Volunteer Services Center is holding an open house on April 11 from 5-7pm. The Friends, who share the space for online book sales, and sorting for the annual September sale, will be on hand to greet potential new members.

Jenna Anthony has been promoted to Reference and Programming Librarian beginning April 1. Congratulations to Jenna—we are so excited for her to get started!

LION is installing an update to Sierra. This update includes automatic renewals for items with no other patrons waiting. Items can be re-



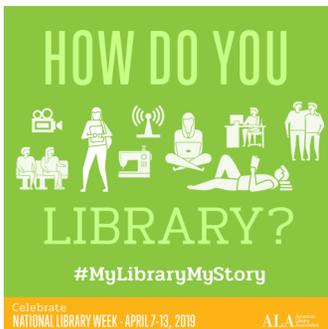
The concrete slab was poured on March 23—we will soon see the walls start to come up. Photo by First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove

newed up to two times automatically. This will be a great benefit when our patrons need a little more time to finish a book or movie. Of course, for very popular items for which there is a waiting list, no renewals will be allowed, just as always. Automatic renewals will be tested first; hopefully available by the end of April.

I joined Robin Sandler and

Dave Henderson to present our FY '20 budget request to the Town of Branford Board of Finance on March 21 and so far the Library's request has survived intact. The RTM Education Committee will hear our request on April 1 at 7pm at the Fire Headquarters.

Karen Jensen



**National Library Week is
April 7—13
Bit.ly/ALAnatlibweek**

Highlights from the Youth Services Department—February



Here for the
Harmonica!

This month we participated in some programs that brought families together in new and interesting ways. Take Your Child to the Library was set up throughout the building this year since we are temporarily without a formal programming space. Rather than not hosting anything, we decided to put together an interactive event that had families completing various maker tasks throughout the building. Activities varied from stop-motion video creation to a good-old-fashioned paper airplane competition. If you head to our Facebook page you can see Miss Mary playing a version of Frogger on our large touchscreen! We had forty or so families participate with children of various ages and everyone said they had the best time moving throughout the building and completing each task. In order to be in multiple stations at once we enlisted the help of six teens from Katy's Teen Café. These young adults helped with setup, cleanup and rotated throughout the event to show families how to complete different challenges. Their assistance was welcomed and a great way to get a wide variety of ages involved.

This month also brought an interactive harmonica workshop to our reading room! Local harmonica player and enthusiast Bob Hennessy shared the history and evolution of the instrument including examples of different harmonicas and how their sound has changed over the dec-

ades. PLUS, he played samples from different eras showcasing his talent and the harmonica's capabilities. He even threw the Sesame Street theme in there! Once everyone got a taste of what the instrument can do, we were able to provide a free harmonica to every child that participated. Bob then walked everyone through the harmonica's basic components, how to play various notes and how to clean the instrument once their playing was through. He closed the program with a mini jam session, which was delightful.

This program was made possible by the Connecticut State Library, which had received a large number of anonymously donated harmonicas! The only stipulation was that these harmonicas would go to children only. When I first heard about the harmonicas I was not sure how they were going to be received but we actually gave out every harmonica we acquired. And, the coolest part, each harmonica came with a free set of online lessons, so the kids could continue playing at home.

This year's preschool fair was also well attended with thirty or more families walking through the event. Many were either new to the area or their children were just turning three, so it was time to research all the possibilities. We had a total of ten preschools attend and they made sure to bring an interactive activity for the little ones while their parents

could ask questions and gather information. Both the Blackstone and Willoughby Wallace Libraries were represented at the check-in table where we could create library cards, talk about our services and direct them to the specific preschools present. This event is something I look forward to each year, since it is a great way to introduce ourselves to new families in the community.

We closed out the month with a collaboration with the Connecticut Experiential Learning Center (CELC). At the beginning of the second semester the school visits the Library to start researching their end of the year projects. This year the program is focusing on immigration and how different communities had varying experiences coming to America. Knowing that we did not have our usual computer space meant that we had to provide information the "old school" way. So, Angela and I worked together to compile a list of materials on immigration and their chosen countries from here and other libraries. The DeliverIt system made it possible for us to have these resources here for the taking and a way for us to supplement the class while I cycled students through our kid's computers. Best part, everyone brought their library card so they could take the books they were reading through home.

Carly Lemire

More Factual Fridays

One of the earliest automobile races was held on July 25, 1900 at the Branford Driving Park, a one mile dirt oval, which was located on what is now East Main Street. This was the first closed-course auto race in Connecticut. The race meeting had two feature events, one for three-wheeled vehicles and one for four-wheeled vehicles, both being run in three heats. *Source: New England Auto Museum)*

Novelist Mark Twain, former U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson, writer Thorne Smith, U.S. Vice President James Sherman and dancer and choreographer Agnes DeMille all stayed at the Montowese House. Located in Indian Neck and known as

the “The Queen of the Sound,” it was built by William Bryan in 1866 and operated by the Bryan family for 96 years. The hotel could accommodate 250 guests and offered fine dining, boating, swimming, horseback riding, golf, tennis, water skiing, dancing and a panoramic view of Long Island Sound. The hotel closed and was torn down in 1965, signaling the end of Branford’s summer hotel era.

Branford’s summer resort era began before the Civil War and reached its peak by World War I. As many as 20 summer hotels sprung up on the Branford shoreline as visitors spent from a few days to the whole summer at the seashore. A trolley brought

visitors there in the summer. *Source: Jane Bouley*

A Navy hot air balloon landed in Hotchkiss Grove in September 1933. You can view a glass plate negative showing the starting point in Chicago: <https://bit.ly/2SEvtHm>

Nellie Green, aka “Old Iron Horse Nellie”, operated a speakeasy in the Hotel Talmadge during the Prohibition era. The building still stands along Short Beach Road at the Farm River. Most famous for being a rumrunner, she was also a talented opera singer — in her youth, she traveled the East Coast as a mezzo-soprano with New York’s Savage and Whitney Opera Companies. *Source: CT Explored*
<https://bit.ly/2Uhv8iJ>



A Navy hot air balloon landed in Hotchkiss Grove in 1933

Highlights from the Reference Department-February

February was a busy month for the library with a number of events. We had a Game Night, two Tech Drop-In sessions, an embroidery program, book club, Ask-A-Lawyer, a program on hair care, Take Your Child to the Library day, a very well-received harmonica program, a book signing and a 3D printing class. We have been able to schedule small events in the Lucy Hammer Room and a few larger ones in the Reading Room. In addition, we are continuing with staff training for the new comput-

er lab and scheduled one-on-one tech appointments for patrons.

Work continues on preparation for the library renovation project moves of the DVD collection and the nonfiction collection. We are weeding the collection and updating all sections. Each reference librarian and the director continue to weed older titles, maintain the stacks and order new books for their assigned Dewey decimal number ranges.

We have made great progress with our research on historical places, people, and hotels for the Branford 375th map and brochure. We are working closely with the Town Historian, Jane Bouley, and we are excited about what we expect the end result to look like! We will continue sending Factual Friday entries to the 375th committee; these historical tidbits can also be viewed on the library’s Facebook page.

Debby Trofatter



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...more than books

Join our email list for more information about programs
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April 2019 Program Highlights

F2G2 Game Night**

April 5 @ 6—9 pm

We play all types of board games from fast-paced, hilarious party games to highly strategic, thinky games that will leave your head spinning! Adults of all ages and experience levels welcome.

Intermediate 3D File Creation & Printing**

April 8 @ 6 — 8 pm

Join instructor Jim Davis for intermediate 3D file creation. Recommended for those who attended one of Jim's beginning classes in Fusion 360. For all ages.

Uncover Branford**

April 13 @ 10:30am — 12

Share your favorite Branford spots and plan an outing as a group to visit and uncover new places in town.

Ask A Lawyer**

April 18 @ 6 — 7:45 pm

Free consultation with a lawyer, from the New Haven County Bar Association. First-come, first-served. Sign up at Reference up to 30 minutes before program begins.

Books & Brews**

April 26 @ 6—8 pm

Each month, Books & Brews offers 2 titles to choose from, each with its own discussion group to take part in. This month, choose from *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro or *Nimona* by Noelle Stevenson.

We bring the following month's books to each meeting. You can also borrow one from the library (place a hold on our online catalog), or purchase your own copy.

New members welcome.

Find us at bit.ly/blackstonebooksbrews or meetup.com to connect with the group and RSVP to the meeting. Books 'n' Brews meets at Thimble Island Brewery.

Bestseller Book Club**

April 27 @ 3:30 pm

We'll discuss *Island of Sea Women* by Lisa See. Copies available at the library—all are welcome!

*Check our website for more programs! Programs with ** require registration. Please note that during construction, the auditorium will not be available. Programs will take place in other areas of the library, or off-site as indicated.*

February 2019 Statistics—Deirdre Santora

Total Circulation: 10,132

February 2018: 11,358

borrowIT: 2,270

February 2018: 2,649

Renewals: 2,580

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks: 1053

Overdrive audiobooks: 428

RB Digital: 461

Hoopla: 458 plays

Kanopy: 117 plays

Pronunciator: 405 users

Children's Programs:

Babies (0-2)

0 programs/0 attendance

Preschool (3-5)

8 programs/210 attendance

School-age (6-11)

1 programs/35 attendance

All Ages

1 programs/40 attendance

Total Children's Programs: 10

Total Attendance: 285

Teen Programs (12+)

4 programs/45 attendance

Adult programs

16 programs/188 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room

52 meetings/210 attendance

Computer Sessions: 1,622

Facebook: 1,617 Likes

Instagram: 493 Followers

Twitter: 894 Followers

MailChimp: 7,452 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: N/A*

Days Open: 26

* The people counter at rear entrance is disabled until new entry is complete