



Report to the Board of Trustees

December 6, 2017

From the Director

It was a busy month with Campaign activity. Adam Greenberg and Chris Velardi presented an informative book signing and Q&A as a campaign fundraiser on November 4 to an enthralled audience. Thanks to Colin Sheehan for planning this unique event!

Consider a year-end donation to the Campaign for the Blackstone!

The Branford Community Foundation is still matching gifts from individuals up to \$1,000, doubling the impact of your gift to the campaign.

Your gift will help make the Blackstone Library able to adapt to 21st Century needs, while maintaining the library's iconic architecture.

For more information on how to donate, visit the library's website at www.blackstonelibrary.org

The Campaign Committee met with two potential large donors this month, and announced a major gift on November 28th. We have received over \$640,000 toward the campaign goal, including over \$75,000 toward the BCF matching grant.

The Friends held the annual Loeb Lecture on November 19 featuring Chris Cryder, Special Projects Coordinator from Save the Sound. He discussed preservation efforts on Plum Island, which is home to rare wildlife species and is in danger of being sold by the federal government for development.

The Friends are also planning for a gift basket sale, coordinating with the Town Merchants Shop, Sip and Stroll this year. The Town Merchants also hosted their second annual Wreath Extravaganza to raise funds for Feed Branford Kids. Angela decorated the library wreath and it earned \$35 for the cause!



With the pledge of an anonymous donation of \$150,000 from a Branford family to name the auditorium, the Campaign is 80% toward its goal!!

We were able to try out a 65" Prowise computer this month, using it for film programs, games for children, and general presentations. These units are portable, and function like white boards with more potential uses for presentations, technology lessons, interactive games, and more. The new Walsh Intermediate school will have the units in their classrooms, and we decided to purchase one as well.

ERACE has participated fully in Uncover Branford this month. We have 41 submissions for inclusion in Volume 2 of our booklet (funded by an IMLS grant administered through the State Library). The submissions will also be included on our website and we are planning a special celebration with ERACE students in January. We were also able to showcase all of

our collaborative work with ERACE at a November meeting of the State Education Department, which took place in Branford.

This month, First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove was elected for a third term, and was sworn in with other elected officials at the library on November 21.

Trustees attended the ACLB meeting in Hartford on November 3.

We met with Silver Petrucelli and Downes Construction to discuss next steps. SP&A is working on construction documents, and will make a presentation to the Town Center Revitalization and Review Board on December 13.

Finally, the annual appeal has been mailed and we are starting to receive donations!

Karen Jensen

October Highlights from the Youth Services Department

This month we worked with the Branford Public Schools to provide library tours for high school and preschool students.

During the high school tour Katy and I used the auditorium, library website and projector to show students how to access downloadable materials, research databases, and the online catalog. Many were impressed by the number of resources they could access from home. Katy also took the students on a historical tour and we closed out the day with a free exploration period where students could explore the building and search for materials. Circulation staff members also helped by creating cards for those that lost or did not have one, so students were able to leave with an active card before heading back to the high school.

During the preschool tour Sliney students were able to walk over and enjoy a story time especially created for them. Jenn knew that the kids were going to check out the scarecrows on the Branford Green and took it upon herself to read a corresponding scarecrow story and create an appropriate craft. Participants also received a mini tour of the youth services department and took some time to explore our playroom. We had copies of *Harold and the Purple Crayon* that were donated to public libraries across the state. Students were able to leave with a copy which was a pretty

exciting way to end their day at the Blackstone.

Jenn also took part in the town's annual Trick or Trunk event for preschoolers. This year the event took place near the Family Resource Center and brought in more participants since the school could simply walk over. Jenn decorated her car with a monster theme that included books and colorful boxes that mimicked the monsters from the Disney film *Monsters Inc.* Jenn handed out Halloween themed rubber duckies for bath time and caught up with patrons that visit the library. She had a blast running our stand and cannot wait to take part in next year's festivities.

Miss Mary and I were able to reuse the monster boxes for our annual Halloween Parade on October 31st. Every year Miss Mary and I put together a special storytime that has families visiting the library in full costume to take part in singing and dancing as well as a small parade around the building. The best part about the parade is that the entire staff gets to participate by handing out goodies to the kids as they move throughout the building. This year we transformed the monster boxes from Trick or Trunk into baskets, so that the kids could reach inside each monster to pick their prize! Plus, they made excellent desk decorations to celebrate the day. We had over 50 families participate in this year's parade and the kids had a great time dancing to the *Monster Mash* and reciting *Five Little*

Pumpkins Sitting on a Gate. Plus, Miss Mary and I made pretty cute pumpkins! Pictures of the event can be found on our Facebook page.

This month also marked the end of my participation in the Connecticut State Library's pilot project, Uncover Branford. Uncover Branford took a year to research, create, implement and then complete. The project was created with collaboration and community outreach in mind and brought community members together to share what they love most about Branford and its local sites.

One of the most exciting parts about the project is seeing how it has expanded. Our contacts with the community and sites to visit have grown to include guided tours of historical sites and nature walks. We are also working with the East Shore Regional Adult and Continuing Education program to include those that are learning English as a second language in the program. Giving them a chance to share what they love most about moving to Branford.

Even though the grant is over we are going to continue to support Uncover Branford by hosting monthly meetings and scheduling outings that anyone can sign up and be a part of. To learn more about the project or to get involved you can simply head to our website or take one of the Uncover Branford booklets.

Carly Lemire



Our Trick or Trunk
Monster-Mobile!

Historic Photos on Library Website—The Baxter Photograph Album

Deb has been working very hard the past few weeks to post the library's photographs and archives on our website.

One of the unique collections owned by the library is an album of photographs taken in 1917 by Charles N. Baxter.

As our Town Historian Jane Peterson Bouley described in

May of 2006:

"Baxter was the long time librarian of the library and took these one by one and one half inch photos probably with a brownie camera. The quality of the images is only fair but provide a view of buildings during that period, many of which no longer stand. The album was probably put together in the 1970s.

All of the images are labeled, some with the addresses from 1917. Many street numbers changed in 1956 so it is difficult to correlate the previous addresses with the current ones. A notation has been made giving current addresses if the building now exists."

You can now see the photos on the library website.

Highlights from the Reference Department-October

The Reference staff had a very busy month planning new programs, wrapping up a number of projects and doing community outreach.

Whitney gave a presentation on Uncover Branford to ERACE students and worked with her colleagues to complete the final report for our LSTA grant for Uncover Branford. She attended a Gaming Roundtable and submitted a proposal to the Friends to purchase a number of new games for the Game On adult program. Whitney is working with SCORE (Counselors to America's Small Business) to set up a series of business workshops. She worked with Jenna on the Forbidden Forest Escape Room that was part of Hogwarts Halloween. In addition to her regular schedule at the reference desk, Whitney creates all of our program flyers, submits press releases, orders bus and train schedules, hosts the adult Game On program and

leads the Bestseller Book Club.

Christina taught a Microsoft Excel class with Sarah and together they gave two classes on JobNow to ESL students at ERACE. Every month Christina creates all three MailChimp newsletters, assists Debby with DVD purchases, teaches classes, manages all of the library book clubs, updates our local obituary index and helps patrons with general reference.

Sarah taught the Excel class with Christina as well as the two JobNow classes at ERACE. She and Christina will be returning to ERACE in December to teach the ESL students about Pronunciator. She helps Whitney create program registrations every month. Sarah has also been working on a digitization project; Jane Bouley has made some recommendations about some of our archives that she feels should be dig-

itized and we are slowly making our way through that list.

Andrea continues to work weekends in Reference, assisting patrons and developing a greater knowledge of the library's holdings. Debby will be working with her in the coming months on a couple of archives projects, which is Andrea's particular area of expertise.

Katy continues to lead a monthly tour of the library on the first Saturday of the month. Her major focus for the month was the well-attended and very well received Hogwarts Halloween fundraiser. Katy also maintains, weeds and purchases books for a wide range of subject areas. She does all of this while working one full day a week in the Reference department. We rely on her regularly for coverage of vacation or sick time as well. Many thanks!



Photo from the Baxter Collection-St. Mary's Steeple looking East ca. 1917



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...more than books

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December 2017 Program Highlights

Hatha Yoga

Mondays @ 5:15 - 6:30 pm

Yoga teacher Helen Lespier leads an ongoing hatha yoga class every Monday evening. Free and open to all ages.

Connecticut Rock 'n' Roll w/ Author Tony Renzoni**

December 2 @ 2:00 pm

Branford author Tony Renzoni will be here to discuss his new book Connecticut Rock 'n' Roll.

Music Makers

Holiday Concert

December 10 @ 2 - 3:15 pm

Join the Music Makers for a celebration of the holiday season with a short sing-a-long to follow! *Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.*

Menunkatuck Audubon

Presents: Hummingbirds:

Magic in the Air

December 13 @ 7:00 pm

With more than 330 species known in the world, hummingbirds are the second largest family of birds after flycatchers. This program illustrates the amazing adaptations of these glittering gems and describes their fascinating life histories. For more information contact Carl R. Harvey at (203) 389-6076 or program@menunkatuck.org.

Uncover Branford**

December 16 @ 10:30 am

Get up, get out and uncover Branford! We're bringing you and your neighbors together to share your favorite Branford places and stories. Then,

plan a group outing to a special spot! As you go out into the community to explore and uncover new places, you'll make new friends, have lots of fun, and discover the hidden gems of Branford.

Bestsellers Book Club**

December 30 @ 3:30 pm

We'll discuss Manhattan Beach by Jennifer Egan. Copies available at the library—all are welcome!

Saturday Cinema**

December 30 @ 1:00 pm

Watch the new release *Dunkirk* and enjoy refreshments.

*Check our website for more programs! Programs with ** require registration.*

October 2017 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

Total Circulation: 10,767

October 2016: 12,059

borrowIT: 2,358

October 2016: 2,810

Renewals: 2,716

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks: 753

Overdrive audiobooks: 287

Zinio: 187

Hoopla: 206 users

Kanopy: 41 plays

Pronunciator: 169 users

Interlibrary Loan

Borrowed 7 Loaned 21

Children's Programs:

Babies (0-2)

18 programs/277 attendance

Preschool (3-5)

5 programs/80 attendance

School-age (6-11)

8 programs/116 attendance

All Ages

0 programs/0 attendance

Total Children's Programs: 38

Total Attendance: 473

Teen Programs (12+)

7 programs/27 attendance

Adult programs

23 programs/492 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room

56 meetings/251 attendance

Computer Sessions: 2,111

Facebook: 1489 Likes

MailChimp: 7,101 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: 475

Days Open: 29