



Report to the Board of Trustees

February 6, 2019

From the Director



Preparation of the area for the new entryway. Cedar Street stairs have been removed; usable slabs were saved.



The Town of Branford is 375 years old! Check out www.branford375.com and #branford375 to keep up with all that will be happening this year.

Phase I of construction has begun. During the week of January 7–11, the Youth Services department moved into the auditorium. The entire collection is available, with some books located behind the walls in storage. While our patrons are missing the play area, they have said they appreciate that all of the books and other materials are easily available. Miss Carly and Miss Mary were incredibly patient and positive as we went through the process. They set a wonderful example for the rest of us; fingers crossed that the rest of the project goes as smoothly!

I also want to share my ap-

preciation for the construction team, especially our on-site manager, Craig Ayotte, who has been nothing but patient all the way through.

Once the Youth Services Department was moved, demolition began on the 2nd floor, as well as the Cedar Street steps. A good portion of the marble was saved for future use. Temporary walls were built in the administrative office, which now serves as the temporary entrance. Soon, we will see the new offices, conference room and computer lab take shape on the 2nd floor, and work will begin on the new entry.

The Finance Committee met this month to draft our FY 2020 budget, which is due to the Town by February 8th.

The Friends of the Library approved funds for a summer intern to help scan and organize library archives. Joe Genua, the new chairman of their book sale, has held several planning meetings and the sale is scheduled for September 26–29.

January kicked off Branford's 375th anniversary, and our Reference staff have been preparing facts for the committee's Factual Fridays on Instagram.

Karen Jensen

Highlights from the Youth Services Department—December

The Youth Services Department spent a huge portion of this month preparing for our BIG move. Miss Mary and I worked hard clearing out our office and deciding which items were going to be stored behind the scenes. You would not believe the number of items you can accumulate after ten plus years! Everyone on our staff played a hand in unloading materials and we would not have been able to prepare for this move without their support.

One of the most challenging aspects of the move was deciding how our collection was going to look and FIT in our temporary home. Thank goodness that the construction company was in charge of not only putting up the walls but also deciding on which shelves would give me the most bang for my buck! Craig, the project manager, drew up a floor plan and then Karen, Angela and I worked together measuring out linear feet and then deciding what collection would fit best where. We decided to place our non-fiction, book on CD and holiday collection in storage. These items will still be accessible to the public, but a staff member will have to retrieve them when needed. At the end of the day this move is like a final exam - inevitable, well at least until the next one.

In between all of our deleting, sorting and packing Miss Mary and the rest of our staff came together to offer some fun programming over the holiday break. Offerings included: gingerbread house

construction, cookie cutter creation and Pom-pom friends. All three activities are “maker” based. During our gingerbread program families worked together to construct their own edible homes with graham crackers, frosting and candy. The best part about a project like this is that there is no wrong way to build so everyone was coming up with inventive ways to assemble walls, walkways and fences. No two houses were alike and that made them perfect for sharing with one another.

Our cookie cutter creation program was actually a 3D design session where teens used a graphics design program called Inkscape to convert clipart images into cookie cutter outlines. Thanks to Miss Katy and YouTube we were able to figure out the ins and the outs of the program and provide a clear set of instructions since the software has a multitude of functions. Once everyone chose their images and converted them to just the outlines we imported their new file into a 3D design program, so that they could see their 2D outline in 3D. Everyone was happy with the results and staff members spent the remainder of the week printing their designs, so that they could test their cookie cutters with dough before school started up again.

Pom-pom Friends was actually a Maker Monday project and the six participants could not have been more thrilled. The project requires yarn, scissors, glue, felt and googly eyes. Kids essentially spin and

tie yarn to create their own Pom-poms, which they can then personalize with felt, eyes and glue. The results can come in the form of a common animal. A yellow Pom-pom makes the perfect duck once you add wings, a bill and eyes. Or, you can be a 100% creative and make your own monsters or formations. Once again, the possibilities are endless so everyone had a different craft to share.

Miss Mary and I closed out our storytimes by hosting a Noon Years Eve party on December 31st. The party consisted of a storytime, dance music, crafts, a countdown and bubbles. We actually brought in more families than we anticipated and had to think fast by copying crafts, grabbing extra supplies and setting up additional tables. We must have had 50 plus families thrown together but everyone was gracious and happy to squeeze in.

This event was bittersweet since it was the last storytime we will share for quite some time. Miss Mary will continue to visit the local preschools and I will maintain programming in the Lucy Hammer Room while we are taking over the auditorium but we won't have space for daily programming once the renovation begins. Our families have been notified and we will continue to reassure them how amazing the end result will be.

Carly Lemire



“Noon” year’s eve was a hit!!

Factual Fridays — *Did you Know?*

The Blackstone Library's reference staff hold the key to a treasure trove of fun facts about Branford. In celebration of the Town's 375th anniversary, staff have shared a variety of facts on Instagram tagged #factualfriday. Here are some facts about Branford that you may be surprised to learn:

The Hindenburg flew over Branford on the day it went down. It left from Frankfurt Germany on May 3, 1937, crossed the Atlantic, passed over Boston on May 6th, and crashed in Lakehurst, NJ that evening. 13 passengers, 22 crew and one worker on the ground were killed. The acci-

dent marked the end of the airship era.

President Rutherford B. Hayes visited the Trowbridge Cottage at 93 Linden Avenue in 1880. He was in town to see the Totoket Hotel, which was built by his great-grandfather, Ezekiel. The hotel was located on Main Street, and the building held a book store until 1971 when it was destroyed by a fire.

Branford was the largest strawberry producer on the East Coast in the late 1800's. A large number of berries came from fields owned by the Plant family on a farm located at West Main Street and Short Beach Road.

Lucifer Matches were made on the site of the Library in 1830. The Lucifer matches made at this time were probably the first made in the country. After the wood was sawed into the proper lengths, it was split into match size and dipped into phosphorous, all hand work done by girls. The late Mrs. Harriet E. Graham, who lived to be 90 years, was one of those so employed.

The proprietor of this business, Capt. Butler, was a man of pompous appearance and dress, often wearing broad frills on his shirt front, was dubbed Lord Lucifer.



The Hindenburg flew over Branford on that fateful day May 6, 1937. This photo was given to the Historical Society by Stephanie Aumann.

*The Hindenburg flew
Over Branford
on May 6th, 1937*

Highlights from the Reference Department-December

December was a very busy tech month for the Reference department. Christina had four separate tech appointments for patrons asking for help on Word, Excel, downloading videos, saving attachments and uploading resumes. She also held a drop in tech session and hosted game night in the library with Sarah and helped with a gaming session for the ESL students at ERACE.

Jenna continued with her photo/postcard project, searching out stories on houses and their owners. She

is nearly done with our second such album and then will go to work on a collection of Branford postcards and photographs from the Branford Carnival, 1938 hurricane and several specific areas of town.

Anne has volunteered to keep our Twitter account up to date with regular posting.

All of us are very much enjoying pulling together items for Branford's 375th Factual Friday. We are including information on people, businesses, events, and more. This will be a project that will keep us

busy for the entire year. Be sure to check out our Facebook page and the Branford 375th page at <https://www.branford375.com/>

Debby Trofatter



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...more than books

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

February 2019 Program Highlights

Connecticut Architecture
February 3 @ 2— 3:30 pm
Connecticut boasts some of the oldest and most distinctive architecture in New England, from Colonial churches and Modernist houses to refurbished nineteenth-century factories. In his guide to this rich and diverse architectural heritage, Christopher Wiggen introduces readers to 100 places across the state. Books will be available for sale and signing.

All About Your Hair**
February 9 @ 12:30—1:30 pm
Christopher Rollins, owner of Christopher’s Salon and Day Spa and The European Academy of Cosmetology & Hair-dressing, will tell you all about different hair types, how to cut and style them, and let you sample some of the newest hair products!

Drop-In Tech Help
February 14 & 28 @ 2-4pm
Having trouble downloading books through OverDrive? Need help with a Microsoft Word document? Can’t figure out how to email a picture from your iPhone? Swing on by for drop-in tech help! Visit the Lucy Hammer Room anytime during the session to get a tech question answered. No registration required.

Ask A Lawyer**
February 21 @ 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.

Uncover Branford**
February 16 @ 10:30am-12
Share your favorite Branford spots and plan an outing as a group to visit and uncover new places in town.

Books & Brews**
February 27 @ 6—8 pm
Each month, Books & Brews offers 2 titles to choose from, each with its own discussion group to take part in.

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 on meetup.com to connect with the group and RSVP to the meeting. Books ‘n’ Brews meets at Thimble Island Brewery.

*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.*

December 2018 Statistics—Deirdre Santora

Total Circulation: 9,686
December 2017: 10,682

borrowIT: 2,701
December 2017: 2,318

Renewals: 2,897

Downloadable Circulation:
Overdrive ebooks: 935
Overdrive audiobooks: 354
RB Digital: 410
Hoopla: 374 plays
Kanopy: 102 plays
Pronunciator: 394 users

Children’s Programs:
Babies (0-2)
7 programs/201 attendance
Preschool (3-5)
7 programs/83 attendance
School-age (6-11)
8 programs/131 attendance
All Ages
0 programs/0 attendance

Total Children’s Programs: 22
Total Attendance: 415

Teen Programs (12+)
4 programs/52 attendance

Adult programs
10 programs/71 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room
46 meetings/178 attendance

Computer Sessions: 1,815

Facebook: 1,597 Likes

Instagram: 449 Followers

Twitter: 810 Followers

MailChimp: 7,313 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: 380
Days Open: 30