



Report to the Board of Trustees

January 4, 2017

From the Director

Friends of the Blackstone Library revived their basket sale this month, raising \$2,000 for the library. A huge thank you goes to all the Friends who donated gifts and volunteered at the sale—especially Friends President Hatsie Mahoney and Pam Roy who put all the baskets together!

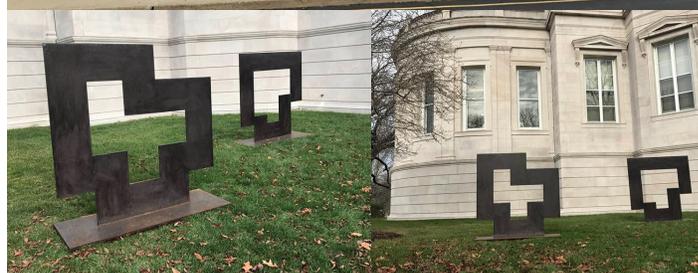


TRANSFORMED is a new way to experience art at the library. A collaboration with Westport's nonprofit Beechwood Arts and Innovation, this exhibit presents selected work by visual artists from Beechwood's Spring 2016 Arts Immersion "Transformed" Salon. The artists were asked to transform an existing canvas--theirs or someone else's--in any way and document the process with photos. The photos were then made into Aurasma-app "videos," enabling viewers to see the transformation. Borrow an iPad from the Checkout desk for the full experience!
Through January 9.

The building committee met with Silver Petrucelli Architects to refine the plan for the new entryway. Katy and I met with development consultant Ron Katz to plan collateral materials and our website to include information to support the capital campaign. The capital campaign committee will meet this month.

The Board of Trustees has pledged over \$30,000 to kick off the capital campaign, and our deepest appreciation goes to each and every member of the board.

The end of year appeal has been very successful, raising \$22,140 to date. The development committee decided to raise the amount required for the Oliver Dennett Grover League to \$125 and introduced the Ella Wheeler Wilcox Guild at \$250. We also began including coupons for car



The Branford Arts & Cultural Association organized an exhibit of Jonathan Waters' sculptures on the grounds this month.

magnets at those levels in our acknowledgement letters.

Katy attended an arts group networking meeting with the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce and was invited to participate on iCRVradio.com for their regular show, Library Chat, on December 15.

Carly, Whitney, Katy and I worked to further to refine our proposal for a program through the *Excite: Transform your Library* program we are participating in through the State library. Final workshops are scheduled for January.

Deliverit cleared out our backlog during the week of December 19. Deirdre has also helped reduce the backlog by delivering Guilford items once a week. The State Library consultant's report is due at the end of the month.

We received our check from the State Library for the cost of fiber internet installation. Debby and I met with Rick from LION and are expecting installation to happen sometime in April.

Karen Jensen

November Highlights from the Youth Services Department



November's 1st 1000
Books Before
Kindergarten finisher

This month our department featured two new programs. On November 4 we held a special preschool-aged storytime that used a combination of books and activities to focus on shapes. The idea behind the storytime came from the nonprofit organization known as Bedtime Math. Bedtime Math encourages families to embrace mathematical concepts the same way they would reading by being exposed to math problems every day. The organization reaches families with an interactive website and app that provides real life problems daily as well as a line of math books that tell different stories that call for mathematical solutions. The organization reaches public libraries by putting together a series of different mathematical activities and providing all the necessary supplies to run them for free! The library then chooses books and music and movement activities that work best to illustrate each mathematical theme. This particular Bedtime Math program had children and parents creating different shapes out of mini glow sticks and styrofoam connectors. We actually turned all the lights off and closed the shades in the auditorium in order to bring the shapes to life! Kids “oooooed” and “ahhhhed” at their colorful creations and even got the opportunity to share the shapes they made with the entire group. Families were able to leave the program with some glow sticks in hand so that they could replicate the process and share what they learned at home. We

hope to use Bedtime Math in the future for more math-filled storytimes.

On election day, we hosted a special performance by Tellabration, a nationwide movement that showcases storytelling in all of its forms. Throughout the month of November the entire state of Connecticut hosts different events that are showcased on the Connecticut Storytelling website. This year Anne-Marie Forer shared multicultural stories told through music and movement. Ann has over 25 years of experience playing music and telling stories to participants of all ages. She did a fantastic job of putting together an hour-long storytelling session that not only used live music but also asked the audience to participate in order to complete each tale.

Our bi-monthly Digital Design workshops for 3rd-5th graders are also coming to a close. Over the past couple of months a small group of kid coders have been meeting to complete a series of activities that ask them to manipulate sound in a variety of ways. This past month our group was able to create their own DJ sound booths. Using the online program SCRATCH our kids were not only able to string different beats together but also coded their keyboards to play certain notes and/or sounds! Our group got a huge kick out of the project and enjoyed sampling their creations for one another. Seeing them engaged, working together and sharing their projects was

exciting; something that I look forward to every other week. We actually uploaded one of our participants DJ sound booths to our facebook page. Feel free to view the video and see what these bright and talented kids have been up to.

We also updated our holiday collection this month. Jenn and Miss Mary worked hard to locate missing materials and discarded titles that were no longer in good condition. Both were then able to make suggestions about which holiday sections needed to be updated. New titles have been ordered and will be added to our collection the following month.

Finally, we had two new young readers complete our 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten challenge! Photos of these voracious readers can be found on our “Hall of Fame” bulletin board. Even though completing the program is pretty exciting I would have to say creating a nameplate in one of our brand new books when they reach 700 books is my favorite part! Patricia does an excellent job of selecting the perfect titles and then puts that book on hold for that particular family so that they can be the first to read it. The kids cannot believe that their name is in one of the Blackstone’s circulating books and it is a nice way for the community to see their continued efforts.

Carly Lemire

Technology Makes Library Resources More Accessible

As reported in the January/February 2017 issue of *American Libraries*, library cards are evolving into a technologically sophisticated tool that can help patrons access information more quickly and easily than ever before. It is now possible to access a robust collection of library resources entirely remotely.

Many libraries have digital “cards”—usually a number—that allow patrons to access the library’s digital collections, such as Overdrive, Zinio and research databases at any hour of the day regardless of when the library’s physical location is open. Blackstone Library card barcode numbers can be used in the same way.

Through its membership in the LION consortium, the Blackstone Library offers an option for new members to sign up for a card remotely, and even place holds on items before they visit the library for the first time. Instructions are included in the letter we mail to each new resident to Branford. Also through LION, patrons have access to Shoutbomb, a new texting service that will send alerts via text when holds are available for pick up, along with other alerts that the patron can choose.

The American Library Association believes that physical library cards will persist as an effective tool, even though

many libraries, like ours, have shifted to keychain cards for convenience.

For further convenience, there are now apps to store library card numbers on smartphones—we recommend Stocard and we have scanners that read a smartphone screen.

Recently, Carly and Katy issued library cards to more than 300 students at the Walsh Middle School. Many of the students had cards that simply needed to be updated. This was an initiative by teachers to make better use of library resources and teach students about the tools available to them as members of the community.



Staff received a gift of delicious and beautiful cupcakes decorated by a patron who attended our cake decorating class! Thank you Jodi!

Highlights from the Reference Department-November

Based on requests from several patrons, we have started a Spanish language collection. Included are popular novels by American and Spanish authors as well as a selection of nonfiction titles. We will expand this collection as we can, based on budget and circulation.

We had a great month of programs, including a Menunkatuck program on bluebirds, a class on Digital Job Searching, the Blue Meanies concert, a discussion titled Family Talk: Healthy Communication between Parents and Teens, another titled The Purple Heart Battalion: The Story of the Japanese American Nisei and Their Fight for Citizenship, Ask-A-Lawyer, a very popular Cake Decorating class, a Bran-

ford Forum discussion of the science of how we see, Best-sellers Book Club and CaddyStacks!

After receiving a number of requests for information on citizenship, Whitney created a document of local citizenship classes to hand out.

Katy had a request from a patron in Poland, looking for an obituary. She was able to locate it, using Ancestrylibrary.com and the New Haven Register and then scan and email it to the patron.

Whitney fielded a request from a patron looking for information on vampires. She located an article in *National Geographic* titled “The Bloody Truth about Vampires.” Here is an excerpt; the

full article can be found at: <http://bit.ly/2dMdB8W>

“The traits of modern-day vampires are pretty well established. They have fangs, drink human blood, and can’t see themselves in mirrors. They can be warded off with garlic, or killed with a stake through the heart. Some, like Dracula, are aristocrats who live in castles. But vampires didn’t start out so clearly defined. Scholars suspect that the modern conception of these Halloween monsters evolved from various traditional beliefs that were held throughout Europe. These beliefs centered around the fear that the dead, once buried, could still harm the living.”

Deb Trofatter



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...more than books

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

January 2017 Program Highlights

Hatha Yoga

Mondays @ 5:15—6:30 pm

Join yoga teacher Helen Lespier every Monday evening. Free and open to all ages.

OverDrive 101: How to Download E-books

January 5 @ 2-3:30 pm

Learn how to sign up for an OverDrive account, search for ebooks and audiobooks, download, and place holds. All devices must have access to the Internet (Kindle Fire/iPad/tablet). Kindle and Nook eReaders will not be covered. If you are unsure if your device has Internet access, please call the library.

Fresh Start: Intro to Tea**

January 7 @ 1 - 2:15 pm

Phil Parda of Savvy Tea will discuss the pleasures and benefits of tea. The "Fresh Start" tea program is all about taking steps to make

the new year healthier and more enjoyable by enhancing your life with tea. Learn about the benefits this amazing plant can offer! *Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.*

Lincoln Center Screening: Show Boat**

January 10 @ 1 - 3 pm

Join us for a screening of Show Boat performed at Lincoln Center on Nov. 15, 2014. Broadway's most revived and revised work, Show Boat was the first musical performed by an opera company — by New York City Opera in 1954.

Scents & Sensibility: Herbal Reed Diffusers**

January 14 @ 2 - 3:30 pm

Sniff through our stinky past and make your own herbal reed diffusers! Discover historical tidbits about King Henry VIII's leg wound, smelly baldness "cures", & much

more. You'll also create your own 8-oz Herbal Reed Diffuser based on your needs or preferences. Presented by Velya & Ehris Urban. Space is very limited.

The Road Ahead: Stories of the Forever War**

January 21 @ 2 - 3 pm

Discussion with Adrian Bonenberger, author of *The Afghan Post* and editor of the new book *The Road Ahead*, a collection of fictional works written by 25 veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan war, reflecting the evolving nature of what has become American's "Forever War."

Argyle Sax Quartet Concert

January 22 @ 2 - 3 pm

This versatile ensemble entertains audiences with selections in classical styles, jazz styles, pop and novelty themes.

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

November 2016 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

Total Circulation: 11,629

November 2015: 12,797

borrowIT: 2,792

November 2015: 2,707

Renewals: 2,902

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks: 644

Overdrive audiobooks: 279

Zinio: 150

Interlibrary Loan

Borrowed 13 Loaned 19

Children's Programs:

Babies (0-2)

8 programs/290 attendance

Preschool (3-5)

9 programs/169 attendance

School-age (6-11)

10 programs/185 attendance

All Ages

0 programs/0 attendance

Total Children's Programs: 27

Total Attendance: 644

Teen Programs (12+)

1 programs/8 attendance

Adult programs

21 programs/381 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room

45 meetings/155 attendance

Computer Sessions: 2311

Facebook: 1384 Likes

MailChimp: 5485 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: 494

Days Open: 29