



Report to the Board of Trustees

January 3, 2018

From the Director

In December, we started the process of gaining approvals from town governing bodies for our renovation project. The Town Center Revitalization and Review Board approved the plan on December 18, and the Board of Finance voted unanimously to approve a bonding request for the full amount of the project at their special meeting on December 18. The full project cost of \$5.2 million will be offset by a \$1 million state grant and funds raised from our Capital Campaign, for which the goal is \$800,000. Next steps include the Ways and Means Committee on January 3, a P&Z hearing on the 4th, vote by the full RTM on January 10. We strongly encourage our community to attend the RTM meeting on the 10th in support of this crucial initiative.

The end of the year also brought donations to the capital campaign and the annual appeal. Currently we are at \$82,245 toward the BCF match, and \$683,000 toward our goal overall. The annual appeal has earned \$14,230 for the library so far.

As we go into the budget preparation season, department heads are examining ways to reduce costs in their respective departments. Anticipating reduced income as no private events are sched-



Families came together at the end of the month to create a light fusing modular origami techniques.

uled for the duration of the renovation process means we need to tighten our belts.

I attended ACLPD and CLA meetings this month, and participated on a hiring panel to interview candidates for a new children's librarian at the Trumbull Library.

ACLPD is the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development. At the December meeting, it was reported that the State Library will be piloting its best practices recommendations, the EXCITE program required 6 teams for the January cohort and the State Library has purchased an oculus rift for continuing education purposes.

Shoreline Libraries were featured in an article in Zip 06: <https://www.zip06.com/living/20171206/get-out-of-the-house-meet-some-new-people-learn-something-new>
The article featured Black-

stone's new game night and lock picking programs that have become popular and will continue in the Lucy Hammer Room once the renovation is underway.

The Friends of the Library held their annual holiday gift basket sale, and sold most of the items on the first evening. Being part of the Town Center Merchants' Sip Shop and Stroll definitely helped drive more traffic to the library.

This month we purchased a 65" Prowise computer, to be used as a smartboard, video display and more, for programs and educational opportunities in the auditorium and Lucy Hammer Room.

Finally, *Uncover Branford Vol. II* incorporated over 40 submissions from ERACE students and is at the printer!

Karen Jensen

We are grateful for your year-end donations!

Thanks to all who responded to our year end appeals. Your donations have helped support our operating costs and contributed to our capital campaign and we are deeply grateful. There are still naming opportunities available and the Branford Community Foundation is still matching gifts from individuals up to \$1,000, doubling the impact of your gift to the campaign.

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

November Highlights from the Youth Services Department



**Owl Prowl
Instructor and
"Co-Teacher"**

For the past couple of months I have been working closely with Miss Mary and Jenn so that our department will run smoothly while I am on leave. They have taken on the extra duties with open arms and I know that they will be able to handle whatever comes their way. The same goes for staff members in different departments who have been kind enough to oversee my last bit of programming and statistic gathering. We work in such an amazing and supportive environment and although I will miss everyone while I am at home with our newest bundle of joy it feels awesome knowing that programs, and processes will continue to run while I am away. Thank you for supporting me and for being equally as excited as we expand our family.

This month the Youth Services Department offered a couple of additional programs including: Owl Prowl from the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center and a hands-on cooking program through Shop Rite.

Owl Prowl was meant for 1st through 4th graders and focused on the different types of owls that can be found in the Northeast. The presenter kept the audience engaged by asking questions, passing around photos and owl relics. Kids and parents were then able to dissect an owl pellet, which was a first for many. The instructor also provided a bone identification sheet, so that they could see what their owl ate! Many

found pieces of skulls, which was pretty exciting while others tried to put whatever their owl ate back together again. The experience was eye opening for many and was a great way to introduce dissection and what can be gained through hands-on experiences. The program closed with an introduction to a live owl so that the audience could see the bird characteristics they identified earlier. The organization also talked a little about the animal rehabilitation process and what to do if they found an animal that was harmed. The owl they currently travel with will not be released back into the wild because she is blind in one eye, making it difficult for her to survive. Families had a wonderful time at the event and many of the parents said that it was neat to be able to participate in the dissection.

The Shop Rite cooking program was meant for middle school students and up. During the event participants were asked to create a pasta dish without pasta using a spiralizer. A spiralizer is a simple machine that can transform vegetables and carbohydrates into different sized spirals. After much discussion the group decided that they were going to spiralize zucchini and squash and then make a fresh pasta sauce with tomatoes, onions and Italian spices. The nicest part about the program was seeing this small group of teens work together. Every participant had a chance to take charge and share what

they thought would work in the dish. Seeing them share the responsibilities and help one another was a reminder that cooking teaches us more than how to create a fully balanced meal.

Jenn represented the Blackstone Library at the East Shore Health District's (ESHD) first town-wide baby shower. The baby shower was created in hope of sharing prenatal and after baby information with new parents. The ESHD invited different social services and medical providers to provide information and giveaways to expectant parents. Jenn said that the event was nicely attended and that they had nurses nearby to answer questions and teach swaddling and bathing techniques, a masseuse to demonstrate baby massage, dentists to talk about teeth/gum care and many more. The Blackstone table shared Library information, programming calendars and made library cards for Branford residents. We also gave away leftover copies of *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, which we received from the Connecticut State Library. This way every family could leave our table with a book. Jenn said that the families that attended were happy with what they gained and that the ESHD is looking to make this an annual event that they hope will grow with time. This truly was an excellent way to reach out and give-back to the next generation.

Carly Lemire

Everyday Adventurers-new program!

Everyday Adventurers, a rapidly growing brand of programs for adults under 40, has the whole library buzzing. We offer innovative and unusual events, classes, and activities aimed at bringing new, younger faces into the library and showing them all the great services we have to offer (and having some fun along the way!). Our dedicated Meetup pages now reach over 800 people and our targeted newsletter reaches over 1500 with both growing every day.

Our first program was the Books & Brews book club run by Katy and Jenna in partnership with the Thimble Island Brewery. We now offer two books each month because of the size of the group and attendance is stellar! The combination of a hip venue and unexpected titles has proven to be great for attracting new people. One of our members initially joined because he had never en-

joyed reading but wanted to give it another try. He hasn't missed a meeting yet! We've also been able to use it as a way to advertise other library services. After discussing a graphic novel this summer we recommended Hoopla, a great Blackstone resource for free comics, to one of our members who had never utilized the library before and he's now "obsessed".

Our game night program, F2G2, has also proven to be a huge success. Thanks to Whitney's knowledge and passion for board games we've been able to build a large group of dedicated gamers that's always growing. While we started with Whitney's personal game collection, the Friends of the Library soon recognized the success of the program and donated \$350 to build a collection for the library. We get together once a month to play a wide variety of modern board games and everyone

has a great time learning new games and meeting new people. One couple has been attending since our first meeting and appreciates the free date night doing something they love!

We've also noticed a distinct increase in the number of younger people attending regular library programs since advertising through Meetup.com. Classes like Lock Picking 101 fill up almost immediately and we've had to add several sessions due to demand. Programs like this allow our patrons to learn by doing and make real in person connections with people who share a common interest. We hope to continue to explore and innovate through Millennial programming and help create a whole new generation of library users for Blackstone and beyond!

Jenna Anthony



Join meetup.com for the latest information on Everyday Adventurers!

Highlights from the Reference Department-November

Debby finished uploading the Blackstone Library's photograph collection, which now includes library construction photographs, library post-cards, the Branford Carnival album, the Baxter collection and the VanDyke collection. In addition, Debby uploaded finding aids to the Branford Historical Society's photograph collection and the Historical Society's and the library's archives collections. Whitney continued work on the adult game group, purchasing 15 new games (thank you Friends of the Library!)

and renaming the group F2G2 for First Friday Game Group. Whitney was very pleased with the sold out program Vegan for the Holidays which received excellent reviews from our patrons and a request to host a vegan desserts program.

Christina and Sarah taught a Computer Basics class and are planning a Gmail class for January and an Internet Basics class for February. They both held quite a few one on one sessions with a librarian, helping patrons with tablets,

downloading eBooks, working with Excel and a number of other technology questions.

Andrea is organizing our vertical file of local history articles; she has indexed the main categories and will eventually create an Excel spreadsheet of every article in all of the categories. We can then make this spreadsheet available on our website. Our hope is to make our patrons and researchers everywhere aware of the depth of our local history collection.

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

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

Uncover Branford**

January 13 @ 1–2 pm

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

Ask A Lawyer**

January 18 @ 3:30 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.

Fiction Writing Workshop**

**January 13, 20, 27
@ 10am-12noon**

Award-winning novelist, Susan Strecker, hosts a three-

part workshop teaching eight tips and tricks for writing a novel, the essential elements of successful books and the importance of hooking the reader. Writers of all experience and ability levels are welcome.

Lock Picking 101**

January 28 @ 2–4 pm

Using transparent padlocks and some basic picks, you'll get hands-on with instructor Jim Davis to learn a variety of techniques for opening basic locks—and the legalities involved.

First Friday Game Group (F2G2)**

January 5 @ 6-9 pm

Join us for game night! We'll be playing all types of board games, from fast-paced, hilarious party games to highly strategic, thinking games that

will leave your head spinning! We've got games for everyone, no matter your experience level. Feel free to bring your own games too. Adults of all ages welcome.

Bestsellers Book Club**

January 27 @ 3:30 pm

We'll discuss *The Boy* by Tami Hoag. Copies available at the library—all are welcome!

Gmail 101

January 11 @ 2–3:30 pm

Learn the basics of using email. Attendees will create a personal email address and learn about navigating and composing emails.

3D Printing/Modeling**

January 11 @ 6–8 pm

Learn the basics of 3D modeling and create your own 3D files for printing with instructor Jim Davis. For all ages.

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

November 2017 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

Total Circulation: 11,764

November 2016: 11,629

borrowIT: 2,360

November 2016: 2,792

Renewals: 2,927

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks: 782

Overdrive audiobooks: 310

RB Digital (Zinio): 176

Hoopla: 169 users

Kanopy: 64 plays

Pronunciator: 188 users

Interlibrary Loan

Borrowed 6 Loaned 20

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: 31

Total Attendance: 473

Teen Programs (12+)

7 programs/27 attendance

Adult programs

28 programs/501 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room

40 meetings/185 attendance

Computer Sessions: 2,105

Facebook: 1,497 Likes

MailChimp: 7,122 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: 464

Days Open: 29