

Report to the Board of Trustees

January 5, 2022

From the Director

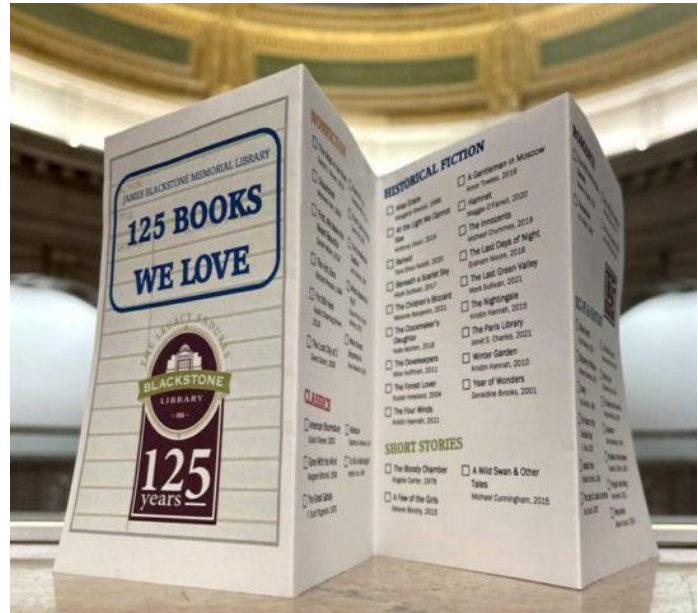
We were so pleased to be invited by the RTM Education committee to make a presentation about the library at their meeting on December 6th. It was a pleasure to meet new and re-elected RTM members.

Katy and I met with Mary-Rita and Pat to discuss ideas for a time capsule. We have a rough plan that we will continue to refine and execute in the spring.

Thanks to Mary-Rita, Pat and Katy again for the work in getting our 125th anniversary banners ready to print. We expect them to be ready for installation in January.

In the spirit of the season, we enjoyed a year-end celebration with trustees and friends, and were also fortunate to have a staff party. Thanks to the Friends for sponsoring this annual event, and to Katy and Carly for planning a fun event.

We received 3 applications through our call for artists in the fall. Patty Meglio is scheduled to show her work in April, and Bill Keane is scheduled for May. June's artist is Rich Monaco; We are accepting applications for the latter part of the year—they are available on our website.



Check out our favorite books and a printable craft on our website!

I ordered the new chairs for the rotunda, plus tables and chairs for the café. The purchase of this furniture is funded by the Friends—thank you!!

Our year-end appeal earned \$27,300 as of December 21.

The FY '21 financial audit was completed by Bailey Scarano and will be presented to the trustees at the January meeting. Thank you to Kathy Oxsalida and the finance committee for another year of excellent work in keeping the library's finances in perfect order.

The Community Deep Needs Analysis which staff worked on with Jeanine Esposito from Innovation Builders is complete. Trustees received

a presentation at the December 1st meeting. The next steps involves completing the strategic framework and activation plan. Michelle Blank has volunteered to work with staff to oversee this process. Staff received training on December 21, and have one more session on January 12.

As we close out the year, COVID is still in the news, with the latest variant, Omicron, said to be the most contagious so far.

I'm so proud of all of our staff, friends and trustees for their dedication and perseverance through the past 2 years, and I look forward to 2022!

Karen Jensen

FEATURING **CHRIS WILSON** AUTHOR OF **THE MASTER PLAN** "My Journey From a Life in Prison To a Life of Purpose"

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Heritage Foundation

MLK 37th ANNUAL BRANFORD MLK DAY SPEAKER

Mon. Jan 17, 2022 8:30 a.m. **TICKETS \$15**

Special Guest **MELVIN WILSON** Co-Director Turnaround Tuesday

zoom LIVE EVENT

Proceeds benefit charity.

The Annual MLK Breakfast takes place on zoom again in this year. This year's featured speaker is Chris Wilson, author of *The Master Plan*. The Master Plan will be available for purchase through People Get Ready Books in New Haven. Limited copies are available to borrow through the library. The breakfast has been held in Branford for the past 36 years.

Highlights from the Youth Services Department—November

This month Miss Mary and I increased the number of storytimes being offered so that we can continue to social distance indoors. We have also included a Saturday session so that working families have an opportunity to attend our classes. We still have two online classes for those that do not feel comfortable attending in-person.

Miss Sarah and I also decided to try our hand at hybrid programming with a multi-age class that has participants creating their own winter ornament scapes while learning about how animals adapt during the winter months with the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center. At this point there are more families signed up to join from home than in-person so we feel good about offering this option and actually have another hybrid program scheduled for February.

Miss Sarah has had the best time bringing her teens back in the building; gaming and volunteer groups have naturally formed and she is working on creating additional clubs. For those that transitioned to a new school (5th or 9th grade) during the height of COVID it can be hard at times to make genuine connections. Creating these small groups has been a great way for teens to meet one another and bond with those that have similar interests and she has received quite a few compliments as a result. This past month the

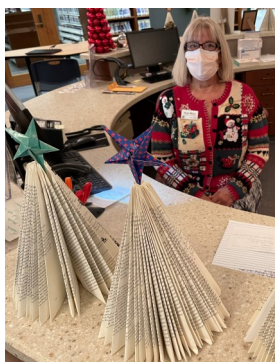
Teen Advisory Group decorated our department with recycled books! The teens were able to transform old quarterly reviews into 3D trees and they are currently on display. This month they are going to help Miss Mary prepare for our NOON Year's Eve Party for littles by creating a large number of paper hats. Having this help is invaluable and a great way for them to make a positive connection with the library as well as their community.

The Youth Services Department has also been working behind the scenes to replace our current museum pass circulating system known as LibraryInsight. We were notified that the system was no longer going to be accessible come 2022 so we have been reviewing what other libraries have been using since we do not want to lose the convenience of patrons being able to reserve passes three months in advance. We also like the fact that many of the passes are printable so users do not have to stop here before heading to their destinations which can be at times out of the way. After reviewing multiple platforms we have decided to purchase a subscription to MusemKey. The software is similar to LibraryInsight in the sense that we can maintain all of these conveniences but it also looks much more polished. Patrons and staff should be able to use the system with ease, especially if they had experience with LibraryInsight in

the past. With businesses continuing to open our hope is that many will take advantage of the passes they have grown to love. MusemKey has already been ordered so look for its full integration near the end of December.

Finally, the Youth Services Department has received a generous donation in memory of Dr. Holmes. He was a longtime Branford resident, pediatrician and steadfast library user. The family has requested that the money be used to create an inclusive collection throughout the department. Current topics, acceptance of others, understanding differences and even books to guide parents have been cataloged. What we have purchased so far is currently on display in the Youth Service's main area and a new shipment of books will be added next month. Inclusivity is wide and vast so we are honored to oblige and hope that these titles will be used to open eyes, hearts and minds. If you are interested in seeing them please stop by the department any time.

Carly Lemire



The kids desk, and Miss Mary decked out for the holidays!

Highlights from the Reference Department-November

Department staff completed a few projects this month that we have been talking about and working on for some time. Christina has been reorganizing our genealogy collection on the mezzanine. She re-labeled the books, and updated the call numbers in our catalog (over 1,000 titles). This will allow patrons to find items easily and staff to re-shelve them. In addition, we rearranged some of the books to make more sense topically and have added signs to the end of each shelf.

We worked on re-cataloging some of our collective biog-

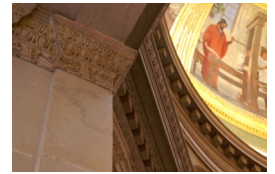
raphies, so that they can be shelved with our standard biographies and memoirs, making it easier for patrons to browse the entire collection as one. And finally, we moved our nonfiction DVD collection to the ground floor. We believe that patrons will enjoy being able to browse the collection and it is now closer to our other DVD collections.

Jenna had a positive interaction with a non-English speaking patron who was struggling to explain what she needed. Jenna pulled up Google Translate on the computer and had the patron do

the same on her phone and they were able to determine what the patron needed and help her to achieve her goal.

Our programs this month included a mix of in-person, remote and hybrid. In addition to our Latin and Poetry groups, book groups, virtual game night and knitting group, we had programs on copyright law for creative projects, Witness Stones presented by the Branford Historical Society and a Branford Forum presentation on civic journalism.

Deb Trofater



Architectural details.

Egg & Dart & Dentils

We always love when patrons marvel at our architecture! It's a great reminder for everyone on staff to take a step back and look up in admiration at the amazing achievements of our library's builders, so we thought we'd share some of those marvelous details with you for this 125th Anniversary Fact.

The paintings in the library dome are certainly show stopping, but have you ever looked closely at the marble details that surround them? The photo at the right showcases two of the most prominent details carved into the marble—the Egg-and-Dart motif and Dentils.

Egg-and-Dart is typically an egg-shaped object alternating with a V-shaped element which dates back to Ancient Greek architecture and is all over the building. It's well represented in marble here, but also makes appearances in the library in wood and plaster. In fact, some of our original plaster Egg-and-Dart suffered water damage over the years and was finally repaired with our most recent renovation. Master Plasterer may not be a common career, but we're grateful they're still around to help maintain buildings like ours!

If the Dentil makes you think of teeth, you're on the right

track! The name comes from the same Latin word that gives us Dental and Dentist (*dens* which means tooth). Dentils are tooth-like blocks in rows that often accompany Egg-and-Dart, and both were very common motifs around the time the library was built. Both of these little architectural details date back to Ancient Greece, and both appear on the Erechtheion, the Ancient Greek temple which the library is modeled after.

Jenna Anthony



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...more than books

Join our email list for more
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January 2022 Program Highlights

Genealogy Basics:

Intro to FamilySearch

January 8 @ 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Learn the ins and outs of a valuable genealogical resource from a professional genealogist! A free genealogy website run by the Church of the Latter Day Saints, FamilySearch offers genealogy webinars, how-to guides for local research, original records, and more. This incredibly rich site is priceless for Connecticut research, but it can feel challenging to navigate on your own. This event will provide you with an overview of the site and a discussion on how its different resources can be used. Whether you're new to FamilySearch or just want to be sure you're making use of all the available features, there's something for everyone! Registration is required to receive a link to this ONLINE

event. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*

Drop-in Tech Session

January 13 @ 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Confused about your new iPhone or iPad? Need help formatting a Word document? Drop in to the library between 2 & 4 PM to get a tech question answered. First come, first served. Sessions will be limited to 15 minutes per person. Registration is not required to attend this IN PERSON event.

The Shoreline Jazz Quartet: Tribute to Thelonious Monk

January 15 @ 2:00 - 3:00 pm

The Guilford-based Shoreline Jazz Quartet will perform interpretations of some well-known and other lesser-played works of the legendary pianist and composer

including Round Midnight, Bye-Ya, In Walked Bud, Well You Needn't, Ask Me Now, Bemsha Swing, Pannonica, Ruby My Dear and others. Registration is required to attend this IN PERSON event. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*

Sparkling Joy: KonMari

January 22 @ 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Christine Thorn of Wolcott, Connecticut's first certified KonMari consultant, will share the benefits of the KonMari Method™ of tidying and decluttering to help you experience the life changing magic of tidying up! She'll help you get your house in order for 2022 and beyond. Registration is required to receive a link to this ONLINE event. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*

For program registration—see our website at www.blackstonelibrary.org

November 2021 Statistics—Deirdre Santora

Total Circulation: 9,433

November 2020: 5,171

borrowIT: 1,571

November 2020: 948

Renewals: 4,261

Computer Sessions: 539

WIFI Logins: 2766

Facebook: 2033 Likes

Instagram: 1076 Followers

MailChimp: 7572

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks: 1,608

Overdrive audiobooks: 758

Overdrive Magazines: 206

HOOPLA: 931

Kanopy: 268

Pronunciator: 580

Ancestry Library: 545

New Haven Register: 160

Creative Bug: 18

Total Downloadable: 5,074

Children's Programs

20 programs/194 attendance

Teen Programs (12+)

6 programs/22 attendance

Adult programs

30 programs/311 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room & Conference Room

143 meetings/390 attendees

Average Daily Visitors: 214

Days Open: 29