



Report to the Board of Trustees

March 1, 2017

From the Director

**Uncover Branford
Kicks off April 22
From 1:00 pm—2:30 pm**

Get up, get out and uncover Branford! We're bringing you and your neighbors together to share your favorite Branford places and stories. As a group, you'll go out into the community to explore and uncover new places! Along the way, you'll make new friends, have lots of fun, and discover the hidden gems of Branford. Document your adventures with photos and a short write up of the places you visit that will be turned into a community exhibit at our Open House on May 23.

This project is made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the Connecticut State Library.



New entry design by Silver Petrucelli & Associates

We have made a significant amount of progress on our renovation plan in the past month. We presented the plan to the Rotary Club, the Friends of the Library and the Branford Board of Finance. The Branford Community Foundation voted to award a \$100,000 matching grant supporting the project and we have a meeting scheduled next month to discuss the conditions of the grant.

The Friends of the Library voted to award a \$25,000 donation to the project and will have naming rights to the conference room planned for the top floor.

We are planning to present the plan to members of the

media and the Town Center Revitalization Review Board in March.

Supervisors have gathered feedback from staff regarding the renovation, and reported to our architects. More meetings are scheduled to refine the interior space design so that each department has maximum functionality within the constraints of our footprint.

Carly and I worked with ERACE to plan a series of events and an exhibit in April called Welcoming Branford. Based on concepts like Humans of New York and Story Corps, the project will encourage members of the community to share personal stories accompanied by a

photograph. The works will be exhibited in the rotunda throughout April and a reception is planned for the evening of the 19th.

Our inservice day focused on emotional intelligence and tools to improve communication skills when under emotional pressure.

I testified on behalf of the Connecticut reimbursement program in my role as CLA President at the state capitol on February 21. The program reimburses libraries for loans they make to out of town residents and is in danger of being cut from the State Library budget.

Karen Jensen

January Highlights from the Youth Services Department

This month I was invited along with Stephanie Carvin, the children's librarian at the Willoughby Wallace Memorial Library, to speak about both of our libraries at the Branford Early Childhood Collaborative's (BECC) monthly roundtable.

Once a month the BECC hosts a roundtable for preschool and home care providers about different topics of interest. This past month the organization focused on free services the town of Branford provides. Speakers included: local libraries, Read to Grow and the Family Resource Center.

During our presentation Stephanie and I focused on the early literacy services and opportunities we offer. We brought brochures of our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program, samples of our early literacy backpacks and baby bundles, as well as picture book and CD combos that classrooms can use if they have a CD player. We both shared our storytime schedules, aspects of our play areas as well as contact information so that teachers could place holds and talk to us about outreach. We also talked a little about the preschool fair we co-host with the BECC every year in hope of encouraging them to participate.

Preschool attendees were really excited about the backpacks and liked the idea that they could call the library to request certain books or even topics. They were also overjoyed to hear that we do trav-

el and would be more than happy to provide a storytime. As a matter of fact, the day after the presentation requests for our backpacks came up on our holds list so I know that they were eager to take advantage of what we have to provide. I know that we will be getting phone calls to do outreach soon and cannot wait to make a bigger mark in our preschool community.

I also worked closely with my EXCITE group this past month to formalize our project and prepare for our formal presentation. Since October, Katy, Whitney, Karen and I have been attending a series of EXCITE workshops that focus on program planning and transformation. Through these sessions we have been learning about the power of collaboration and how coming up with new or innovative ideas takes a "village." Some of the skills we have obtained over the past couple of months include: how to collaborate, run focus groups, draw out information and how to zero in on a target population.

Working with Katy, Whitney and Karen over these last couple of months has been eye opening since spending our days in a three leveled building in different departments makes it difficult for our paths to cross. Having time to plan and execute ideas made it possible for us to work together and get a feel for what our strengths and weakness are. One of the most fascinating things I learned about Whitney is that

she enjoys to sort and analyze data! She is a wiz at Excel and thrives off of order. Knowing that she is good at data collection and analysis means that I can call on her expertise in the future when it comes to mining for information.

One of the coolest parts about these workshops is that they are created around real world applications, so each time we meet and learn the next steps to innovative thinking we then have to test our newly acquired skills in our Library and community. Over the past four months the four of us have been meeting each other along with staff and community members to come up with a program that provides opportunities for collaboration, socialization and skill building. The road has been long and there have been a lot of rewrites along the way but we believe that we have finally come up with a community wide program that speaks to what it means to live in Branford.

Next month we will be presenting our program idea to a panel of judges to see whether or not we will receive grant funding for our community projects. The panel includes: Librarians, entrepreneurs and marketing gurus. We are excited to present and cannot wait to bring all of our hard work to life.

Carly Lemire



Miss Carly and Miss Mary will be inducted into the Branford Education Hall of Fame on April 20!

Looking for your next great book?

Did you know that the Blackstone Library staff maintains over 25 different reading lists to help you find your next read? The pamphlets are available next to the new fiction section in the lower rotunda, and include genres like humor, international thrillers, read-alikes, staff picks and the best books of the preceding year.

These lists can also be found on the library's website, along with links to other helpful sites:

BookBrowse – Browse new books and read book reviews.

Bookish – Easy to navigate book recommendations.

Fantastic Fiction – Bibliographies for over 30,000 authors

Goodreads – Find new books, post reviews, see what your friends are reading, & more.

Gnooks – Explore the literature map and discover new authors you'll like based on what you currently read.

LibraryReads – Check out the top 10 books published this month that librarians love.

Pinterest – Visit Blackstone's Pinterest page to see staff picks, upcoming books, & lots of book news.

Reader's Advisor Online – Choose your favorite genres & themes to get book recommendations.

Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America – Recommendations and reading lists for SF & Fantasy fans.

Stop, You're Killing Me! – Mystery, suspense, crime, spy, and thriller recommendations.

Whichbook – Receive personalized recommendations based on factors of your choice.



We have lots of resources to help you find your next great read!

Highlights from the Reference Department-January

Our program attendance this month was great. Programs included a class on OverDrive ebooks and audiobooks, the Blackstone Library Tour, an Audubon Society lecture - Phantasms and Fallacies: the Pitfalls of Bird Identification, Scents and Sensibility, a local author book talk and signing, Healthcare Careers, Ask-A-Lawyer, book discussion groups, Yoga, our knitting group, a Branford Forum on global warming, creating 3D characters with an iPad, Saturday Cinema, a Tilde Café lecture - Oenology 101: the Science of Wine and our first Lincoln Center screening, Showboat.

We have joined the Lincoln

Center screenings program, which allows us to download and show archived live performances from Lincoln Center. Our next showing will be an opera preview of Dvorak's Rusalka (which will be one of Regal Cinema's Live in HD performances).

LION has introduced a new text messaging service called Shoutbomb. Patrons can opt in to the service and receive text messages when their items are ready for pick up, available to renew, etc. The service can also be used by libraries to notify patrons of special events and news. Instructions can be found at Blackstone's service desks and online at <http://catalog.lioninc.org/screens/>

ShoutbombHELP.html

Whitney was very busy this month with the conclusion of the EXCITE Innovation training (with Carly, Karen and Katy) and preparations for the result of the EXCITE meetings, Uncover Branford. She also planned, scheduled and made flyers for the Spring programs; we are looking forward to a busy and exciting Spring. Sarah has begun a digitizing project; the library has a wonderful archives collection of local history, letters, programs, genealogical notes, etc. that we will gradually scan. Ultimately, our hope is to make these files searchable on the catalog and available online.

Deb Trofatter



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March 2017 Program Highlights

Hatha Yoga

Mondays @ 5:15—6:30 pm

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

Discovering Opera*

March 4 @ 1:00 pm

This three part series will walk you through the many elements of opera, expose you to great opera scenes and broaden your appreciation of the art form. With Charlotte D’Aniello.

Tilde Cafe: The Physics of Bird Nests

March 11 @ 3:00 pm

Presented by Corey O’Hern, Professor, Departments of Mechanical Engineering & Materials Science, Physics, and Computational Biology and Bioinformatics, Yale University.

Jolly Beggars Concert

March 12 @ 2:00 pm

The Jolly Beggars bring the rich tradition of Celtic folk music and storytelling to modern day audiences.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Crash Course Life Skills:

Banking & Financial Literacy*

March 15 @ 6:30 pm

This interactive program will introduce you to banking basics, and give you tips on how to use banks, managing your money, using credit wisely, and protecting yourself against identity theft.

Presented by Shalonta Ford of Guilford Savings Bank.

Masaccio to Raphael: The Development of the Italian Renaissance Portrait

March 22 @ 1:30 pm

The panel portrait in Italy evolved from early silhou-

ettes, probably based on Roman coins, to full face portraits by the 1480s. Presented by Marcie Slepian, Ph.D.

Sponsored by Shoreline Village CT.

Branford Land Trust: LIS Lobsters

March 22 @ 7:00 pm

Saturday Cinema: Jackie

March 25 @ 1:00 pm

Bestseller Book Club: Behind Her Eyes*

March 25 @ 3:00 pm

Books ‘n’ Brews Book Club

March 29 @ 6:00 pm

We’re venturing outside of the library & bringing a book club to you! Books ‘n’ Brews will meet at Thimble Island Brewery. Join us for this kick-off meeting in the tasting room, where we’ll talk books and vote on the first book.

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

January 2017 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

Total Circulation: 11,766

January 2016: 13,031

borrowIT: 2,681

January 2016: 2,808

Renewals: 3,059

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks: 793

Overdrive audiobooks: 350

Zinio: 203

Interlibrary Loan

Borrowed 10 Loaned 23

Children’s Programs:

Babies (0-2)

17 programs/372 attendance

Preschool (3-5)

10 programs/190 attendance

School-age (6-11)

6 programs/43 attendance

All Ages

0 programs/0 attendance

Total Children’s Programs: 33

Total Attendance: 605

Teen Programs (12+)

6 programs/59 attendance

Adult programs

22 programs/579 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room

50 meetings/198 attendance

Computer Sessions: 2229

Facebook: 1397 Likes

MailChimp: 5795 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: 489

Days Open: 29