



Report to the Board of Trustees

March 6, 2019

From the Director



Shepard and Marlene Stone win naming rights to Rotunda Gallery

The winning ticket was drawn at a reception on Friday, February 1st. There were 414 tickets sold, raising \$8,280 for the Capital Campaign.



The best view of construction is from the reference room and Lucy Hammer room windows.

Construction has been moving along this month as concrete for the wall footings was poured and work began on the ground floor family toilet room. The 2nd floor spaces are almost finished and staff will be relocating to those offices soon.

This month also brought some staffing changes. After 43 years of service, our Tech Services Supervisor, Gennett Grinnell, announced her plans for retirement on May 1. We look forward to celebrating this milestone with her.

Also, our program coordina-

tor has been out on leave, and the reference staff have done a tremendous job in covering her hours and making sure the programs run smoothly in her absence.

Our Development and Outreach Librarian, Katy McNicol, is preparing for an extended leave as she welcomes a new family member this spring. Katy plans to return in July. She has already prepared our spring appeal and marketing materials in advance; Carly and reference staff will fill in to cover Katy's teen activities and hours at the reference desk.

LION has offered its member libraries the opportunity to supplement its collection of downloadable materials with local funds. Soon, the library will be able to purchase extra copies of popular ebooks for which our own patrons will have priority. Use of ebooks through Overdrive has more than doubled from 409 in January 2013 to 1050 in January 2019. Use of downloadable audiobooks increased from 81 in 2013 to 422 this year. These resources will certainly increase in popularity as more funds are allocated to support their purchase.

Karen Jensen

Highlights from the Youth Services Department—January



You can now find the YS staff in the auditorium.

This month we transitioned into our new home, the auditorium. Miss Mary, the rest of the staff and I worked four days straight to empty shelving so that we could reassemble our collections down below. The process was physically intense but the end result is something to be seen! Working with Karen and Angela on mapping out the space made all the difference and we were actually able to fit more of the collection than we originally thought. Being on the second floor has opened up a whole new world - patrons that are getting used to this transition are constantly checking in and they are amazed by not only the transformation but also how quickly we were able to turn things around. One of the best parts of spending this next year in the auditorium is that we have a birds-eye view of the construction happening outside, so be sure to check in on our insta-stories as Blackstone's addition begins building up!

Not having a programming space within the building has pushed Miss Mary to work outside of it. She has already reached out to The Family Resource Center, Child Development Center and East Shoreline Catholic Academy to set up story time sessions. We are also reaching out to additional preschools and daycares like The Branford Early Learning Center to see if they would like us to offer a program once a week? Next month our town-wide Preschool Fair will take place at the Congregational Church.

We will also be present, making new connections in hope of offering additional services. Expanding our outreach is one way we are going to put this smaller space to good use and we cannot wait.

This month's minimum day program was all about electricity as families worked together to create paper circuits. All you need is LEDs, coin cell batteries and copper tape to create! Participants watched a hands-on "how to" video and then tested out the paper circuit process by following a circuit flow chart that Jenna created. The chart shows participants where to place the coin cell, LEDs and copper tape in order for the circuit to be complete! Once they understood and tested out the concept they spent the rest of the session creating their own cards that turned their LEDs on when the card's corner was pressed. One participant made a Christmas tree with a light up star, another the Empire State Building with windows lit. My personal favorite, two fingers that lit up when they snapped. The process truly was a lot of fun and parents had the best time being a part of the process.

Our Teen Café with Miss Katy is also still going strong. The group met twice this past month and spent a little time brainstorming ways they can improve the YA Department and programming ideas for the spring/summer. A handful of the teens that participate are interested in gaining community service hours, so

Katy has put together an email list so that we can contact them when we have a special programming. The list already came in handy since we are planning Take Your Child to the Library Day activity the first Saturday in February. I was able to email everyone, create a fillable form which allowed them to sign up for volunteer shifts. The list filled within 24 hours and knowing that we have teens available on call is wonderful; especially with summer in sight.

Nicole Herget, the middle school media specialist, reached out to Katy in hope of hosting a 5th grade library card drive. Nicole wants to ensure that every 5th grader has a card, so that they can use our downloadable services like Libby and Hoopla. Her hope is that students will use these services to gain access to the library even if they cannot enter the building. Both services make it possible for students to download books and audio materials to their tablets and cellphones; allowing the pool of titles they have to choose from to grow. Once we have created the cards Nicole will show her 5th graders how to create accounts and search the sites for titles they need. I find both services to be user friendly and I am always reminding families to use them because they are a great way to gain access to books when you are in a pinch.

Carly Lemire

More Factual Fridays

Factual Fridays continued this month on Instagram in celebration of Branford's 375th birthday:

Greta Garbo, Walter Winchell, Harold Stassen, Sinclair Lewis and Jack London all visited the Arrowhead Hotel in its heyday. Built in 1911 with steam heat, the Arrowhead was the first year-round hotel in Short Beach. It was named by Ella Wheeler Wilcox for the Indian arrowheads found during its excavation. It still stands as an 8-unit apartment building at 117 Shore Drive in Short Beach.

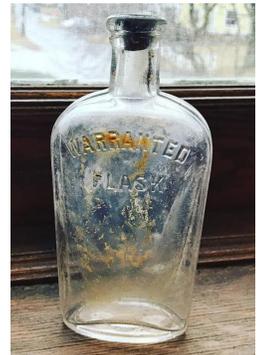
In August of 1938, three years before he directed *Citi-*

zen Kane, Orson Welles directed what was billed as the event of the summer season: Mercury Theatre's production of the comedy *Too Much Johnson* by William Gillette. The play opened at the Stony Creek Theater in advance of its run on Broadway. It was to include a film component which could not be shown due to the lack of a film projector at the theater. Cost for the best seats for an evening performance was \$1.65.

Rudy Vallee and Guy Lombardo played in Branford at Palmer's Casino in the 1920's. Located at Limewood Avenue in Indian Neck, Palmer's Casino was known as a stamping

ground for music lovers who came from all over the state in the 20s and 30s to dance and hear music from famous bands and artists. The building was razed in the late 1960s.

Ayn Rand wrote *Anthem* over two summers in the late 1930s while staying at 16 Hall's Point Road in Stony Creek. Her husband, Frank O'Connor, was performing as "Guts" Regan in another of Rand's work, *The Night of January 16th*, at the Stony Creek Theater. The nearby quarry provided inspiration for the setting of *The Fountainhead*.



The construction crew discovered this bottle while working on the top floor. The bottle is a 'strap side union oval #flask', 7 oz, and dates to around late 1800's-early 1900's. While very old, these flasks don't seem to be super rare or valuable. Just really cool! ...And we're sure the librarians from the early days of Blackstone only had it at work for medicinal purposes!

Highlights from the Reference Department-January

The Reference Department has been busy with archives projects, tech training and preparation for the next phase of the renovation. Jenna completed her photo project and is looking forward to organizing and indexing the boxes of Blackstone Library articles, photographs, and pamphlets. Anne is working on the Vertical File, making photocopies of newspaper articles (newsprint deteriorates and damages adjacent papers), organizing and indexing the four drawers of local history material.

Christina and Deb held training for all staff on a variety of computer and software tasks, so that everyone is prepared to work in the new computer lab. Christina also held two drop in tech help sessions, a third was held at the Branford Senior Center and she planned out a series of computer classes for the spring.

All of the Reference staff continued working in the nonfiction stacks, ensuring that the collection is in great shape, up to date and ready to be moved to the Reference floor, when we get to that

phase of the renovation.

We all continue to look for interesting facts to include on Branford's 375th Factual Friday page. Debby is working with Karen and Town Historian Jane Bouley on the map brochure being created for the 375th celebration, which will include information on Branford's summer hotels (there were about two dozen), the literary and artistic figures who stayed in them, as well as interesting facts and locales for each of Branford's neighborhoods.

Debby Trofatter



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...more than books

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March 2019 Program Highlights

Uncover Branford**

March 9 @ 10:30am — 12
Share your favorite Branford spots and plan an outing as a group to visit and uncover new places in town.

Intermediate 3D File Creation & Printing**

March 19 @ 6 — 8 pm
Join instructor Jim Davis for intermediate 3D file creation. Recommended for those who attended one of Jim's beginning classes in Fusion 360. For all ages.

Ask A Lawyer**

March 21 @ 3:30 — 5:30 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.

Books & Brews**

March 27 @ 6—8 pm
Each month, Books & Brews offers 2 titles to choose from, each with its own discussion group to take part in. This month, choose from *The Library at Mount Char* by Scott Hawkins or *Yes Please* by Amy Poehler.

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 at bit.ly/blackstonebooksbrews or meetup.com to connect with the group and RSVP to the meeting. Books 'n' Brews meets at Thimble Island Brewery.

Intro to Excel**

March 28 @ 2 — 4pm
In this introductory class, students will learn the basics of Microsoft's spreadsheet program. This includes the basics of creating and working with spreadsheets and the construction of formulas. Familiarity with using computers and mice is necessary. You may bring your own laptop (with Excel installed) or use one of ours

Bestseller Book Club**

March 30 @ 3:30 pm
We'll discuss *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens. Copies available at the library—all are welcome!

*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.*

January 2019 Statistics—Deirdre Santora

Total Circulation: 11,388
January 2018: 11,522

borrowIT: 2,400
January 2018: 2,440

Renewals: 2,897

Downloadable Circulation:
Overdrive ebooks: 1050
Overdrive audiobooks: 422
RB Digital: 499
Hoopla: 436 plays
Kanopy: 137 plays
Pronunciator: 399 users

Children's Programs:

Babies (0-2)
0 programs/0 attendance
Preschool (3-5)
3 programs/58 attendance
School-age (6-11)
1 programs/7 attendance
All Ages
1 programs/47 attendance

Total Children's Programs: 5
Total Attendance: 112

Teen Programs (12+)
3 programs/32 attendance

Adult programs

15 programs/191 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room

54 meetings/246 attendance

Computer Sessions: 1,850

Facebook: 1,609 Likes
Instagram: 465 Followers
Twitter: 816 Followers

MailChimp: 7,354 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: N/A*
Days Open: 29

* The people counter at rear entrance is disabled until new entry is complete