From the Director

The highlight this month was the library’s fourth, semi-annual, A Hogwarts Halloween. The incredibly talented team of volunteers led by Beth Law and Katy Dillman worked for months to plan an event that was enjoyed by almost 400 children and earned $15,000 for the library. A new feature this year was an escape room, Escape from the Forbidden Forest, designed by our own Jenna Anthony, and modified to work as an adult event on Saturday evening. It received rave reviews, as did the entire weekend.

Silver Petrucelli & Associates has been engaged to work on the final phase of the renovation construction documents. Our next meeting with the design team is scheduled for November 10. The State of CT delivered some good news with a budget proposal approved by the House and Senate and currently being considered by the governor. Elections for Town leadership take place on November 7 and we will plan to introduce our renovation plan to new RTM members. The campaign has received $455,180 to date, including $70,400 matched by the Branford Community Foundation. American Polyfilm and Guilford Savings Bank have each made generous donations this month.

Rick Mahoney, Andy McKiridy and I attended two RTM meetings to request town funding for the shortfall in our health insurance line. We are very pleased and grateful that the RTM voted in favor of this request, granting the library $36,234 to fund the health insurance increase. Without these funds, the library would have been forced to reduce operating hours and materials for the collection.

The EXCITE team of Katy Dillman, Whitney Gayle and Carly Lemire completed the grant process and submitted their report on Uncover Branford to the State Library. The program was very successful in achieving its stated purpose to bring community members together to form new relationships, while learning more about their town. Through the process of running the program, the team was able to make adjustments based on needs and interests of the participants, and they have shaped this into a sustainable program that we plan to continue as long as there is interest.

The library’s finance committee met to review the annual audit and all is in order.

Christina Kondziela and Sarah Mallory introduced ERACE students to JobNow and Pronunciator resources this month.

As the holidays approach, we have agreed to host a tree for the Community Dining Room’s Be a Santa to a Senior program.

Karen Jensen
September Highlights from the Youth Services Department

The Youth Services Department took the entire month of September to get our collection back in working order. The start of the school year brings a slower pace to the department as families are getting back into the swing of things. Every year we take advantage of this downtime to shelf read our collection and look for missing materials. For the most part our shelves were in pretty good shape, partly due to our awesome teen volunteers who took their time to be sure that everything was put back right.

We also took part in a couple of special events. Every year we participate in Pat Androle’s Family Day on the Branford green. During the day different Branford agencies come together to provide music, food and entertainment for families at no cost. The event is always well attended and is a great way to meetup with families outside of the library. During the event I was able to talk-up our upcoming events like: Hogwarts and the Book Sale, which are drawing a lot of attention and are going to be fantastic events.

Karen and I also visited an East Shore Regional and Continuing Education (ERACE) classroom to talk about Uncover Branford and ways that they can participate. ERACE provides an English as a second language program for those that are new to the area. Uncover Branford will give these classes the opportunity to not only learn about Branford and its sites but also build their confidence by speaking and writing in English. Classes will be required to complete an Uncover Branford assignment, which includes visiting and writing about a particular site. Our hope is that these students will want to continue being a part of our Uncover Branford community so that they can meet new people and discover interesting tidbits about their hometown with our group at the Library.

Miss Mary started her outreach classes this month by traveling to Saint Mary’s School and the Family Resource Center. The Child Development Center also made their way to the library twice this month in order to play and hear stories. When Miss Mary meets with different preschools she sings songs, brings a variety of books as well as stickers. The kids really enjoy her time spent in the classroom and look forward to seeing her every month.

Music Together was scheduled for a music and movement program at the beginning of the month but had to change dates due to an unexpected emergency. Miss Mary and I knew that we could not leave the families hanging, so we put on our own impromptu storytime - complete with stories, songs and instruments! The group was really understanding about the schedule change and were happy to partake in the storytime that we created. It was a lot of fun working with such a large and responsive group. Some families were new to the library, so it was nice to be able to give them a taste of how our storytimes are formatted. At the end of the class many of the families thanked us for our time and wanted to know when our regularly scheduled storytimes are held, so I think we held our own as “stand-ins”. Music Together was able to reschedule later in the month. We reached out to the previously signed up families, so that we had a total of 24 in attendance.

Katy and I held our first Maker Monday of the 2017-2018 school year. This first class was especially well attended because Branford’s after school program was bussed over for the class. We decided to showcase our 3D printers for the first session, allowing kids to see it in action and then walked them through the design program called Tinkercad to create their own prints. Three participants were able to complete their designs and one actually made a replica of the sun and the moon for her upcoming science project. Everyone was really engaged throughout the hour and a half class and enjoyed being able to mess around with the design software. Participants worked together seamlessly and it was nice to be able to give them a taste of how our storytimes are formatted. At the end of the class many of the families thanked us for our time and wanted to know when our regularly scheduled storytimes are held, so I think we held our own as “stand-ins”. Music Together was able to reschedule later in the month. We reached out to the previously signed up families, so that we had a total of 24 in attendance.

Carly Lemire
Debby has been working on uploading collections of historical photographs to the website. Our previous host, Photobucket, has become very commercial with excessive numbers of ads and popups so we will no longer host our photographs on this website. Under the Library Information dropdown menu is a link to our photograph collection. Right now library construction photographs and Branford Carnival photographs are available with many more collections to come. As always, a big thank you to Jane Bouley who provided us with descriptions and information on each photograph.

Events in September included our monthly library tour, book groups, Saturday cinema, a new Latin class, Uncover Branford, writers workshops, a Menunkatuck Audubon lecture, a book talk and signing, a lock picking class and an Opera lecture.

Whitney helped a patron locate an old photo of his neighbor’s house. They were just moving in and he wanted to give them a gift of a framed photograph of what their house looked like when it was built. She was successful in finding one for the patron.

Debby Trofatter
November 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**
November 11 @ 10:30 am
Get up, get out and uncover Branford! We’re bringing you and your neighbors together to share your favorite Branford places and stories. Then, plan a group outing to a special spot! As you go out into the community to explore and uncover new places, you’ll make new friends, have lots of fun, and discover the hidden gems of Branford.

Vegan for the Holidays
November 11 @ 2pm
Be the life of the party with these delectable gourmet vegan treats that make entertaining easy. Chef Mary Lawrence, owner of Well on Wheels, will prepare appetizers that pop with color, sizzle with spices, and taste as good as they look. Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.

3D Printing/Modeling**
November 14 @ 6—8 pm
For all ages—with Jim Davis.

Annual Loeb Lecture: Protecting Plum Island**
November 19 @ 2:00 pm
Chris Cryder, Special Projects Coordinator for Save the Sound, will speak and show new imagery of Plum Island. Chris has been working for Save the Sound for the past 9 years and is currently the outreach coordinator for the Preserve Plum Island Coalition. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Connecticut Rock ‘n’ Roll w/ Author Tony Renzoni**
December 2 @ 2:00 pm
Branford author Tony Renzoni will be here to discuss his new book Connecticut Rock ‘n’ Roll.

Music Makers Holiday Concert
December 10 @ 2 - 3:15 pm
Join the Music Makers for a celebration of the holiday season with a short sing-along to follow! Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.

September 2017 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

Total Circulation: 11,496
September 2016: 12,482

borrowIT: 2,559
September 2016: 3,035

Renewals: 2,858

Downloadable Circulation:
Overdrive ebooks: 804
Overdrive audiobooks: 305
Zinio: 145
Hoopla: 179 users
Kanopy: 87 plays
Pronunciator: 169 users

Interlibrary Loan
Borrowed 3 Loaned 17

Children’s Programs:
Babies (0-2)
16 programs/318 attendance
Preschool (3-5)
7 programs/158 attendance
School-age (6-11)
10 programs/100 attendance
All Ages
0 programs/0 attendance

Total Children’s Programs: 33
Total Attendance: 576

Teen Programs (12+)
3 programs/24 attendance

Adult programs
21 programs/410 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room
58 meetings/249 attendance

Computer Sessions: 2,165

Facebook: 1470 Likes

MailChimp: 7,121 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: 524
Days Open: 27