

# Report to the Board of Trustees

November 6, 2013

## From the Director

We started off the month with a mini-makeover in our lower rotunda. The dark teal columns were painted a lighter, sage green and the feedback from the public and staff has been overwhelmingly positive.

The Friends slatwall also got a makeover with a new sign and redesigned posters for the variety of events they sponsor. The Friends are planning their budget for the upcoming year and I am preparing a "wishlist" for the library.

Improving marketing is one of our strategic goals, and we chose a web designer this month. Fredi B. has designed websites for many libraries, including The Public Library of New London [plnl.org](http://plnl.org), and the Bridgeport Library [bportlibrary.org](http://bportlibrary.org), winners of the 2013 and 2012 CLA best Connecticut library websites respectively. We look forward to the new design, which should be ready to launch at the beginning of 2014.

We had a great turnout for our featured events in October: Two programs with the chefs of G-Zen and La Cuisine restaurants were filled to capacity, Poe Times Two sponsored by the Friends had 40 in the audience and Tech



Winners of the 2013 Best Library by *New Haven Living*

Tuesdays continued to be popular.

We launched Zinio and Axis 360 this month. With over 100 free magazine titles available on tablets and mobile devices, Zinio is an excellent value. We are adding popular titles to Axis 360 every month as a supplement to titles with longer hold lists on Overdrive.

We will have a new first selectmen by the time our board meets on November 6. I am preparing a binder with information about the library to help with the transition.

We are excited to offer a community-wide reading of *Our Town* on November 16, organized by Keely Knudsen of Legacy Theater and Kate Marsland. A planning committee comprised of Branford residents has been meeting to organize a community

event hosted by the library called *Strengthening the Bonds of Our Community*. The primary goal of the event will be to explore, discuss and celebrate the diversity of Branford.

The library will have a presence at the 12th District Senior Fair to be held at the Fire Department on November 14. We plan to offer a drawing for a free bookbag, collect e-mail addresses and offer library card signups.

I made a presentation about library resources to the Sound Network Group in October and I am scheduled to speak to Exchange Club members on November 12.

*Karen Jensen*  
Library Director

### ***Our Town for Our Town***

Saturday, November 16th at 1pm,

All are invited to join Legacy

Theater and community partners

(including *Branford Cares,*

*Friends of the Blackstone*

*Library, The Blackstone Library,*

*Branford Early Childhood*

*Collaborative, Read to Grow, Inc.,*

*Branford Community Gardens,*

*Branford Public Schools, Wil-*

*loughby Wallace Memorial Li-*

*brary, United Way, Branford*

*Rotary, and the Branford Histori-*

*cal Society) for a town-wide*

staged reading of *Our Town* at

Branford's Blackstone Memorial

Library! Admission is a donation

to benefit the Branford Food

Pantry. To learn how you or your

organization may become

involved in this exciting commu-

nity-wide event, email

[info@LegacyTheatreCT.org](mailto:info@LegacyTheatreCT.org).

## This Month in the Youth Services Department—September

Staff members have been working hard to ensure that all of our collections are shelved in proper order and place. It takes a lot of time and effort to shelf read, check on item statuses, and as a result reshelve - especially after a busy summer! So, I want to thank everyone for taking their time and working hard to bring a sense of order back to our department.

This month the local Music Together provided a baby through age five music class. The program is a curriculum based hands-on music and movement class that uses developmentally age appropriate songs, instruments and actions to elicit a love for music and learning. The class promotes the importance of parental interaction and shows participants how to bring music and movement back to their homes. Twenty-five families attended and we are looking forward to having them back in the winter.

At the beginning of the month we hosted a back to school puppet show provided by Laurie Murphy and inspired by Todd Parr's book *It's Okay to be Different*. During the show participants listened to the book describing a colorful cast of characters and showing ways in which they are different but still the same. The group was then presented a humorous puppet show embracing diversity and encouraging listeners to be accepting and

kind. The show was interactive—the audience was asked whether or not the puppets were making the right decisions when faced with difficult situations based on acceptance. Afterwards, children were invited to meet all of their brand new puppet friends! A total of 33 families attended the show and thought that sharing diversity and kindness was a terrific way to remind children how to start off the new school year.

We closed out the month with a Forensics program provided by the Children's Museum of West Hartford. Since Dr. Lee was scheduled to present a program for adults, we thought it would be fun for younger patrons to learn about forensics with a fingerprinting and chromatography workshop. Children tested various forensic activities, identified certain characteristics and put what they learned to the test by solving a "crime" that took place at the Children's Museum of West Hartford. A total of 14 children in 3rd grade and up attended. A photo of the group wrapped around a high resolution microscope can be found on our Facebook page.

This month I attended the Branford Early Childhood Collaborative's fundraiser *Are You Smarter Than a 3rd Grader?* The collaborative is supported by the Graustein Memorial Fund, State Department of Education, and the Children's Fund of Connecti-

cut. Its mission is to ensure that all Branford children, birth through age eight are happy, healthy, safe and successful with a love of learning in school and in life. BECC is dedicated to disseminating early childhood information, making connections and pooling resources to support a child's early years. The event took place at the Pine Orchard Country Club and was set up like the popular show *Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?* Adult teams and 4th grade "experts" competed against teams made up of 3rd graders. The kids who participated had the BEST time beating adults on various questions.

This month Christina took over my PJ storytime duties while I was away. I have heard nothing but fantastic comments about her book choices, abilities and singing voice! A huge thank you to Christina and the rest of our youth services staff for taking over the department while I was away. Your commitment made it possible for the department to run business as usual and it was great to come back to a desk free from a long list of "to dos." So, thank you for being so unbelievably sensational and know that I may just have to go away again really soon!

—Carly Lemire



**Crime solving via  
a high-powered  
microscope—  
thanks Children's  
Museum of West  
Hartford!**

## September Highlights from the Reference Department

### Technology

We started Tech Tuesdays in September which are scheduled opportunities for patrons to have one-on-one sessions with a librarian to get help with technology-related questions. This month, we helped 14 patrons with Nook Tablet, Mac & Overdrive & more. *Patrons were thrilled to have this personalized help!*

Katy used a feature available with our Constant Contact (monthly online calendar) service to allow online registration for selected library events. *Patrons like this new option for program registration!*

Deb made improvements and changes to our website pages to include the addition of help sheets, links and information about our new (and slightly complicated) Axis 360 service. Use of this service requires a bit of patience and handholding which we will happily provide. *We try to anticipate our patron's needs.*

### Community Outreach

We post almost daily to Facebook & Twitter promoting the library and featuring interesting bookish articles. At press time, 782 people "like us" on Facebook.

We strive to reach out to our community with programming choices which appeal to the range of interests our patrons have: Local History: Branford Historical Society lecture on the 1938 Hurricane; True Crime: Lessons Learned from Famous Cases with Dr. Henry Lee

(sponsored by the Friends); Music: Opera Lecture with Charlotte D'Aniello, Meet a local celebrity: 'Unk' DaRos: The Stony Creek Quarry and the Age of Granite; monthly CT Works Job Networking Group; Blood Pressure Screening; Second Tuesday Book Group, M.S. Support Group, Mystery Book Club and Knitting Group and Yoga. *The library is hopping with programs!*

Whitney provided Branford visitors with information on bike trails and restaurants in town. We are the unofficial Welcome Wagon for Branford!

Katy and Whitney created a great Banned Books display for Banned Books Week called 'Discover What You're Missing' which was very well received. *Celebrate the right to read!*

### Reference & Research

We received a phone message asking for the daily rainfall amounts in July & August. Did some searching and found a website ([www.stillweather.com](http://www.stillweather.com)) with a lot of weather info. *We can often find a needle in a haystack!*

We helped college, elementary, and high school students with research projects on a wide variety of interesting topics such as medicine in colonial America, causes and treatment of agoraphobia, sailboat construction, and diseases of the respiratory system. *The library is still a great place to go for personalized homework and*

*research assistance.*

We assisted an adult returning to school after many years with database and journal research tips and techniques. *You are never too old to learn about how to use the library's resources.*

Since the Branford Review is no longer being published, we needed a way to research Branford obituaries. Our local Branford resident obituary index, collected from the New Haven Register obituaries is a valuable research tool. Deb set up this very important local history index.

We have a new in-library use only database CGO (Connecticut Grantmakers Online) provided by the Connecticut Council for Philanthropy. A database of more than 1,500 Connecticut foundations and corporate grantmakers, it is a useful resource for nonprofit grant seekers, grant makers or donors. *A great database for local funding sources.*

We continued work on our collection maintenance project (shelf reading, deleting non-fiction books that have not circulated). *We work hard every day to keep the book collection up-to-date.*

Barb attended a workshop on the Affordable Care Act designed for Connecticut librarians to help assist and guide and refer library patrons properly. *We can be a source of information, leads and referrals during this transition period.*

—Barbara Cangiano




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**September was  
banned book  
month.**

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James Blackstone Memorial Library  
758 Main Street  
Branford, CT 06405  
203.488.1441  
reference@blackstonelibrary.org  
facebook.com/blackstonelibrary  
twitter.com/blackstonlib  
www.blackstonelibrary.org

...more than books

Join our email list for more information about programs  
[www.blackstonelibrary.org](http://www.blackstonelibrary.org)

## November 2013 Program Highlights

**Tech Tuesdays @ 10am**  
one-on-one sessions with a librarian for tech help.

**Knitting: Wednesdays 6:00 PM**

**Mystery Book Club 11/6 3pm**  
*Buried in a Bog* by Sheila Connolly

**App/Tablet Tips 11/6 @ 6 PM**

**VNA Blood Pressure Clinic 11/7 @ 12noon**

**Closed for Veteran's Day: November 10 & 11**

**Community Discussion Sunday, 11/3 @ 2:00 PM**

**Yoga: Mondays @ 5:00 PM November 4, 18, 25**

**2nd Tuesday Book Club 11/12 @ 6:45 PM**  
*What Alice Forgot* by Liane Moriarty

**Women in Wyeth's World 11/12 @ 7-8 PM**  
Lecture by Fred Biamonte.  
*Sponsored by the Friends.*

**Menunkatuck Audubon Society: 11/13 @ 7pm**  
*Under South African Skies*

**Our Town-Staged Reading 11/16 @ 1-3 PM**

**Holiday Letter Writing Workshop 11/17 @ 1:30-3:30 PM**

**MS Support Group 11/20 @ 5:30 PM**

**Ask A Lawyer 11/21 @ 6pm**

**Tildé Café 11/2 & 23 @ 3-4 PM**  
Face-to-face conversations with a scientist about current science topics.

**Rave On! 11/24 @ 2-4 PM**  
Music of early Rock n' Roll-back by popular demand!  
*Sponsored by the Friends.*

**Opera Appreciation 11/25 @ 7:00 PM**  
**CT Works Networking Group 11/26 @ 10:00 AM**

**Closed for Thanksgiving: Wednesday 11/27-close at 5 Thursday, 11/28-closed Friday, 11/29-open**

## September 2013 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

**Total Circulation: 13,985**  
*(September 2012: 16,122)*

**ConnectiCard: 2,645**  
*(September 2012: 3,349)*

**Downloadable Circulation:**  
Overdrive ebooks: **533**  
Overdrive audiobooks: **101**  
Axis360: launching in October  
Zinio: launching in October

**IndieFlix: 100** total patrons registered; **57** films viewed

**Interlibrary Loan**  
Borrowed **46**/Loaned **76**

**Average Daily Visitors: 654**  
**Days Open: 30**

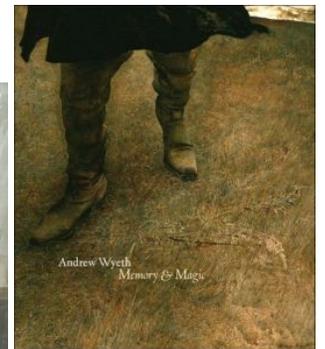
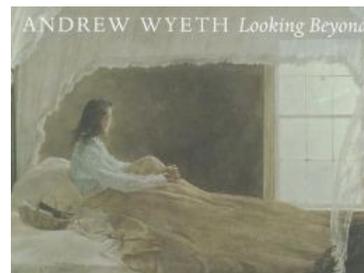
**Facebook: 782 Likes**

**Constant Contact: 2946**

**Children's Programs:**  
*Babies (0-2)*  
8 programs/495 attendance  
*Preschool (3-5)*  
16 programs/262 attendance  
*School-age (6-11)*  
10 programs/255 attendance

**Total Children's Programs: 34**  
**Total Attendance: 1012**

**Teen Programs (12+)**  
*Beginning in October*  
**Adult programs**  
9 programs/495 attendance  
**Lucy Hammer Room**  
99 meetings/189 attendance



Books about Andrew Wyeth are available through the LION system.  
Or visit [andrewwyeth.com](http://andrewwyeth.com) to view images and bibliography.