



# Report to the Board of Trustees

September 2, 2015

## From the Director

### *The Friends Annual Book Sale is Coming!*

Over 70,000 books will be available to purchase under the tent. Proceeds help support the library's programs and events. Thursday's preview night is free to all members of the Friends. Hours of the sale are:

Thursday  
September 24  
5—8 PM

Friday  
September 25  
9AM—10PM

Saturday  
September 26  
9AM—10PM

Sunday  
September 27  
12noon-5PM

Volunteers are always needed, especially on the preview night. If you are available, please go to [signupgenius.com](http://signupgenius.com) and search for [jbmlfriends@gmail.com](mailto:jbmlfriends@gmail.com), or follow the link from our website.

One year after establishing our mobile maker lab, we have added a second 3-D printer, 8 sewing machines, and more equipment through a grant from the state library. The first round of Learning Labs began this summer with a 4-week program on 3-D programming and printing and 4 weeks of Arduino circuitry. The program ends with 4 weeks of sewing instruction in September. Teens will show off the skills they have learned at the Learning Labs Open House on Tuesday, September 29.

The children's summer reading program had the strongest participation ever. Last year there were 259 kids and 5,000 books read. This year, because children were encouraged to sign up for the program before school let out for the summer, there were over 1,700 participants, with over 11,000 books read. With the increase in numbers came an increase in visits by families who had not been regular users in the past—we welcome them and hope that they will be back often!

The Development Committee met, with its new chair, Ed Kirk, to begin planning for our Caddystacks fundraiser. There are lots of surprises in store for the 19th Hole Party!

There are only four holes left for sponsorship and they are going fast.

The library was invited to create a display at Guilford Savings Bank for September (library card signup month!).

I spent some time covering the reference desk while staff were on vacations this summer. I also worked on weeding and updating my section of the nonfiction collection. It was great to meet new patrons and experience some of the day to day challenges on the library front lines.

Friends held their annual meeting in June and presented the library with an end of year gift of \$10,000 which will be used to supplement our materials collection.

We continued to offer tote-bags to people who responded to our survey about what they love about the library and what they would change. Overall, patrons are most impressed by the friendliness and responsiveness of the staff, and the top four "wants" are more parking, more computers, more programs, and more books.

Katy Dillman continued to work with CLA to help plan the 2016 conference. It will



*A practice hole for Caddystacks was set up in the lower rotunda in July to the delight of our pa-*

be titled "Through the Looking Glass" in celebration of its 125th year.

Mary and Matt Hally, book sale chairs for the Friends of the Library, will be honored at Shore Publishing's annual Beacon Awards held at the Water's Edge on Thursday, October 8th. Congratulations to them both!

Some important maintenance projects were completed: the parking lot was paved, carpet and windows were cleaned and concrete repair is scheduled for September.

*Karen Jensen  
Library Director*

## This Month in the Youth Services Department - June/July

Our summer reading program kicked off on the last day of school, June 17. This year, over 1,700 children signed up online through school. By the end of June, there were more than 2,000 books read, and our marble machine was back again this year, so we think it will be pretty full!

We attended the Branford Fest to issue library cards and promote some of our newer offerings like 1000 Books Before Kindergarten and Mango Languages. Kat, Christina and Katy worked the table, highlighting each of their departments. We were able to add a little “tech” to our tent since Katy was able to purchase a Wi-Fi hub that made it possible for us to connect to our iPads and a computer so that people can see and even use our databases.

Kat and I kicked-off the summer reading program with a teddy bear storytime for babies through age 5. We played music, finger plays, rhymes and rhythm sticks. We also shared a couple of superhero stories with fun and engaging characters like SUPERWORM! Children then transformed their bears into superheroes.

The Stepping Stones Children’s Museum brought an interactive program about alternate sources of energy in June. Children learned about renewable resources like solar, wind and water power. Everyone got to experience the power of water firsthand by creating a water wheel with Legos. Participants worked together to make the

strongest and fastest wheels possible—it was great seeing kids who had just met come together as a team.

We hosted a local Girl Scout troop that needed to earn their technology badge. The troop leaders and I put together a series of MakerLab activities for them to master, including 3D printing and stop-motion video. The group met on two Saturdays, and everyone was able to create their own 3D print and work in small groups to produce a series of stop-motion videos. The leaders met with me in advance to learn the equipment so that they could field questions and split the troop into small groups.

At the close of July our department was in full summer reading mode. We recorded over 7,500 books read with many children already meeting their summer reading goal and claiming their completion prize. This year we allowed those who met their goals to make a 3D printed superhero piece. The response has been extremely positive and it is fun watching the kids see our 3D printer in action for the first time.

Having the 3D printed superhero pieces as a summer reading prize has also made it possible for other staff members to learn how to use the printer and have the confidence to run it all on their own.

This summer also marked the introduction of our new Baby Bundles. Baby Bundles are available for families expect-

ing a newborn up to eighteen months and are a collaboration of local health, safety and programming information for babies. Some of our contributing parties include: Branford Early Childhood Collaborative, Read to Grow, the Exchange Club and many more. The bundles are all contained in colorful diaper bags and include pamphlets, sippy cups, a potty training video, board books and more.

We were very lucky to have a teen intern from the Branford Counseling Center’s teen summer working program again this year. Teens are paired with different job sites, which helps them to build job experience and gets them to think about future careers. This year Dowson Canaveral worked with us to learn how to check out books, create displays, prepare craft materials and work with our summer volunteers. He also learned how to complete 3D prints.

We hosted numerous superhero-themed programs in July. One of our favorites was Super Hero Training Camp. During the hour-long program children took on different superhero challenges set up in our auditorium. Some of the challenges included an obstacle course, web slinging, mask creation as well as finding superheroes outside the building and attacking them with silly string! Angela and I had the best time running the program and the kids had a blast pretending they were heroes. We closed the event by taking their picture against our MakerLab green screen. Jenna then took those images



Greek Gods and Goddesses performance by the Hampstead Stage Company

## June/July Highlights from the Reference Department

The focus of the Reference Department in June was on Summer Reading, Reader's Advisory and Technology. Our Adult Summer Reading program, *Escape the Ordinary*, kicked off on June 17. We are encouraging everyone to hand in their one word review of each book they read this summer, to be entered in our end of summer drawing.

Whitney led the first Blackstone Book Chat, started the Bestsellers Book Club with Karen, created a Cookbooks readers advisory pamphlet and participated in Publishers Weekly #queerabook initiative on Twitter for National Pride Month.

Christina joined Kat at the Branford Festival to promote our summer reading programs. She participated in the Blackstone Book Chat. Christina continued her work on our Technology classes, giving a class on Creating and Navigating Email.

Kirsty participated in the Blackstone Book Chat, continued her work on expanding the Graphic Novels collection and taught the Email class with Christina.

Kirsty and Christina are expanding the technology

classes so that they can offer an intermediate class shortly after teaching a beginning class on a particular subject. They have scheduled classes this fall in Microsoft Excel, Word and Powerpoint.

Debby is working on reorganizing the reference collection and consolidating the genealogy collection. She met with Jane Bouley and a grandson of A.M. Young, who donated or loaned for digitization a number of maps of the Young property in Pine Orchard as well as a collection of photographs. Debby will work with Jane on digitizing and organizing these items.

In July, we said goodbye to our colleague, Shauna Carrano DeStefano, who has worked with us for the last five years. Shauna is looking forward to the birth of her son in October and we wish her and her husband, Pete, all the best.

The entire reference staff continues to develop the non-fiction collection. While we all recognize how much libraries have changed and we are aware of the importance of staying current with new technologies, a lot of our daily work involves helping our patrons find books. The

weeding process is key to keeping the stacks looking good and we are excited about purchasing new titles to update the collection. We also provide daily help with reader's advisory and continue to add new handouts to help our patrons find books, both fiction and non-fiction, that interest them. Some of our new handouts include Self Help and True Crime.

Another aspect of our reference work that we all enjoy is local history and genealogy. We had several interesting questions in the last few months. Whitney helped a patron date a photograph of downtown Branford. She was able to estimate the date of the photograph (circa 1915) to a span of just a few years by noting the names of the stores in the photograph and referencing our city directories, vertical file articles and various documents that our town historian has provided for us. Another patron was interested in finding the date that Johnson's Quarry burned down (July 3, 1919) and a third asked for information on when Lafayette (officially Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette) visited Branford and East Haven (twice, in 1778 and 1824).

*Debby Trofatter*

## Youth Services Department - continued

and edited them in Photoshop to give them superhero backgrounds. They came out amazing! Images from the day were posted on our department bulletin boards.

Finally, we began offering our

grant-funded Learning Labs Workshops in July. The grant makes it possible to offer six Learning Labs for teens throughout the year with trained professionals. Each class maxes at 12 participants and focuses on different tech-

nologies including 3D design, circuitry and sewing. The first three sessions were completely filled within a couple of weeks and we cannot wait to see how quickly they will fill in the spring.

*Carly Lemire*



Learning Labs week 2-designing houses and interiors with Sketchup. The room was full of future engineers and architects!



James Blackstone Memorial Library  
758 Main Street  
Branford, CT 06405

203.488.1441  
reference@blackstonelibrary.org  
facebook.com/blackstonelibrary  
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www.blackstonelibrary.org

...more than books

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

## September 2015 Program Highlights

### Intro to Excel

September 3 @ 2—4 PM  
September 12 @ 2—4 PM

Basic computer skills, including the ability to use a mouse, are necessary. You may bring your own laptop (with Excel, already installed) or use ours.

### American History Book Club

September 10 @ 6—7 PM

Led by Rev. John Heeckt, Senior Minister, First Congregational Church. September's title is *A Consumer's Republic* by Lisbeth Cohen.

### Indian Cooking

September 15 @ 6:30 PM

Madhu Gupta will introduce Indian cooking techniques, highlighting the regional differences in regards to spicing, flavors and recipes.

### Board Game Gathering

September 24 @ 6—8 PM

New games each month. Experienced players and newbies are welcome.

### Saturday Cinema

September 26 @ 1—3 PM

Hot new releases!  
Refreshments provided.

### Bestseller Book Club

September 26 @ 3—4 PM

September's title is: *Circling the Sun* by Paula McClain. Books are available at the library.

### Brian Gillie's

#### Roots of Rock 'n Roll

September 27 @ 2—3 PM

A one-hour retro-groove of singing, dancing, history & impersonations. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*

*Registration is required for all programs. This is just a sample-more programs are listed on our website.*

## June/July 2015 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

### Total Circulation

June: 16,637

July: 18,114

June 2014: 15,347

July 2014: 19,269

### ConnectiCard

June: 3,445

July: 3,489

June 2014: 2,789

July 2014: 3,150

### Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks

June: 662/July: 610

Overdrive audiobooks

June: 165/July: 188

Axis360: June: 2 /July: 16

Zinio June: 196/ July: 134

IndieFlix June: 14/July: 6

### Interlibrary Loan

June:

Borrowed 19

Loaned 19

July:

Borrowed 14

Loaned 28

### June Children's Programs:

*Babies (0-2)*

12 programs/203 attendance

*Preschool (3-5)*

5 programs/120 attendance

*School-age (6-11)*

9 programs/156 attendance

**Total Children's Programs: 26**

**Total Attendance: 479**

### July Children's Programs:

*Babies (0-2)*

16 programs/191 attendance

*Preschool (3-5)*

5 programs/119 attendance

*School-age (6-11)*

13 programs/204 attendance

*All Ages:*

3 programs/106 attendance

**Total Children's Programs: 37**

**Total Attendance: 620**

### Teen Programs (12+)

June:

4 programs/33 attendance

July:

7 programs/60 attendance

### Adult programs

June:

24 programs/364 attendance

July:

19 programs/268 attendance

### Lucy Hammer Room

June:

53 meetings/199 attendance

July:

70 meetings/264 attendance

### Computer Sessions

June: 2678/July: 2429

**Facebook: 1176 Likes**

**Constant Contact: 4755**

### Average Daily Visitors

June: 675/July: 654

Days Open: June: 26/July: 26