



# Report to the Board of Trustees

September 7, 2016

## From the Director

As always, it feels like the summer passes with lightning speed.

The architect's review committee met in July to review proposals, interview firms, and finally choose a firm for the renovation project. Silver Petrucelli and Associates were chosen, and the kickoff meeting took place on August 31.

I officially began my CLA year as president on July 1. The numerous CLA committees have an exciting year ahead, full of workshops and training opportunities. Conference planning is well underway.

A collection of sculptures by artist Dylan Ward, entitled *Out on a Limb*, were installed on our grounds for the Branford Garden Club's tour on June 25. The artist agreed to loan them for the summer and they have been a welcome addition, offering an opportunity for residents to experience art in a serendipitous way. We hope to explore more ways to showcase local artists on library grounds in the future.

Library supervisors and staff have been meeting on a regular basis to complete the exercises outlined in the



*Teens coding on a sunny day in June!*

Aspen Institute pilot guide. So far we have completed section 4 and are excited to seek more input from the library board and community. Our work is confirming ideas that were documented in our recent strategic plan, and also gives us a chance to brainstorm new ways to make the library even more relevant.

I completed the e-rate paperwork for fiber installation. I also completed a grant request for State of CT funding to cover the rest of the installation cost. The latest word from the state is that they will be able to pay for part of the first year's access fee as well. No word yet on when the installation begins, but it will be complete sometime before June 2017.

The State Library continues to struggle with the Deliverit service. Our patrons seem to have adjusted to the 5 item holds limit and the state librarian reports that they have hired a consultant to look at the situation. They have approval to hire a part-time sorter, who they hope will also make a difference. Unfortunately, libraries in the LION system, including Blackstone, continue to experience backlogs.

An exciting fall season is in store at the Blackstone, with Caddystacks returning on Thanksgiving weekend, programs that will help patrons enhance their tech and writing skills, concerts, lectures and a staged reading by a local playwright.



## Summer Meals

This year the library participated in the Branford Schools free summer meals program. This is the second year of the program which offers breakfast and lunch to children in need in the community, who would have normally received breakfast and lunch at school. The library was a distribution point for bag lunches, which included a sandwich, milk and fruit. The library distributed over 620 lunches at children's programs between June 20 and August 12.

Karen Jensen

## June/July Highlights from the Youth Services Department

June marked the start of the children's and teen summer reading program made possible by The Guilford Saving Bank, Alan Louis Loeb Foundation and The Friends of the Library. This year's summer reading theme was all about staying active and keeping fit! It got us thinking outside of the box by creating physical challenges, hula hoop competitions, photography with action, family game nights and more. Our exciting new program lineup was complemented by a new calendar design by Katy. We received positive feedback on the new format and we believe it created additional interest.

To promote the summer reading program, Stephanie from Willoughby Wallace Memorial Library and I created a skit to present at all three elementary schools. We came up with a muscle head character known as Mr. Fitness. Mr. Fitness knows what it takes to keep his body in tip top condition but believes rocking his head back and forth as fast as possible is the best way to exercise his brain! (Mind you, Mr. Fitness is in full athletic gear, sporting muscles from an old Pop-eye costume and the Rocky anthem plays every time he steps into the room.) To set him straight we invited Book Lady, from last year's skit, to introduce him to reading and other services found at both libraries. Book Lady and Mr. Fitness are played by elementary school teachers, administrators and principals which lets students have fun seeing them act so silly. We also created a suitcase relay race

where two groups of three had to work together in order to dress up as various book characters found in their suitcase. Students had to wear the costume, then pass it to the person behind them.

A popular program this summer was "Build Your Own Game." Teens were introduced to code.org, a web based teaching tool that uses popular characters/storylines to teach coding. Teens were able to code their own Minecraft, Star Wars and/or Flappy Game. Once they understood the mechanics behind their game and how coding makes it possible for them to control their characters, they were then able to create their own video game from scratch on Sploder.com. Sploder is an interactive website that allows participants to create their own arcade, shooter and puzzle games. Imagine having the power to create your own Super Mario game? This website allows makers to create their own worlds, obstacles, bad guys and event levels seamlessly. Once participants completed their games they had the opportunity to share them, and show what they developed to the entire group. Some teens waited until their parents came to pick them up to show off their creations. Many parents were impressed enough to leave comments on our Facebook page.

July marked a couple of first(s) for the Youth Services Department. With all the craze surrounding PokemonGo, we decided to create a physical

scavenger hunt throughout the building. We hid a total of 8 paper Pokemon throughout the building with corresponding clues. Families had to work together to decipher each clue and find each Pokemon's location. Once completed they would receive a small prize. By August first we had gone through 120 sheets and families asked us to reset the game so that they can search for these Pokemon all over again. There were also a number of families that appreciated the fact that we hid the Pokemon on all three levels, making it possible for them to discover new sections of the Library. Plus, the entire staff got to get in on all the fun by offering clues and seeing tons of kids having a blast throughout the building.

In July, we also received two new pieces of equipment for our MakerLab thanks to the Friends of the Library. With their support we were able to purchase a new MakerBot, to help us out when our original printer acts up, plus a 3D scanner. The scanner uses a laser to get a 365 degree picture of an object which is converted into a 3D structure through online scanning software. A patron who wanted to replicate pieces from his 1950s board game will now be able to do so.

Finally, two girl scouts asked if they could put together a poetry program back in May. Both girls were working toward their Silver Award which requires them to create a project that will better the world. Both girls thought that creating a Poetry Slam would benefit Branford by giving



Amber, our first participant to complete the Pokemon Scavenger Hunt!

## Youth Services, continued

tweens and teens an outlet to express their thoughts and emotions. The girls created a two-hour program which allowed participants to write and share their poems in a contest format. The girls worked with library staff to

learn about program planning and promotion. They attracted 10 participants on a Sunday afternoon and the program was a huge success. We are hoping to replicate this event in the future, and possibly incorporate it into

the Branford Festival so that winners can share their pieces on the green's stage.

*Carly Lemire*

## Highlights from the Reference Department-June/July

June was another month with a wide variety of programs and activities.

A representative from the Arts Council of Greater New Haven visited to help artists in finding exhibition space/opportunities, performance/rehearsal space or developing new ways to promote their work or creative event.

We had a representative of Community Companion Homes (which are family homes licensed by the State of CT to provide residential supports and services to individuals serviced by the Department of Developmental Services) in the library on two different occasions to explain their program.

Our monthly programs, Ask-A-Lawyer, Saturday Cinema and Bestsellers Book Club were well attended as was the Menunkatuck Audubon Society program on Global Warming.

The Reference Department has been very busy with an ever expanding group of patrons, many new to the library, who come in for help

with computers, job searching, 3D printing, summer reading and genealogy.

We had a couple of interesting questions this month. One was from a gentleman in Texas who owns a photograph from the late 1890's taken by the largest camera ever built. The camera was commissioned by the Chicago & Alton Railroad to photograph their newest train. Since Timothy Blackstone was president of the railroad, this gentleman was hoping we might have some information, and specifically a copy of a pamphlet describing the photograph, here at Blackstone Library. We did not, unfortunately, but we were able to refer him to a variety of other sources.

Katy was asked for help in translating the phrase: "Was in unserer Macht liegt zu tun....liegt in unserer Macht nicht zu tun." She used Google Translate to find the translation: "What is in our power to do ... is not in our power to do." She provided additional information for the patron, explaining that it was in fact a quote from Aristotle:

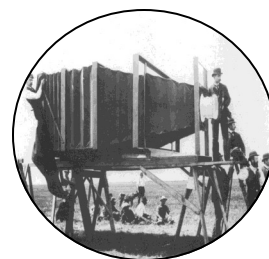
"What it lies in our power to do, it lies in our power not to do."

We welcomed two new part-time Reference librarians in July. Sarah Mallory joins us from the Hagan Library in East Haven and Andrea Belair from the President's Office at Yale. Both are learning quickly, settling in well and we are all enjoying working with them.

Christina attended a Mystery Summer Camp at Westport Library to further her Reader's Advisory knowledge on mystery titles.

Our 3D printer has been very busy this summer. We have children printing prizes for summer reading, staff printing a variety of objects to demonstrate the printer to our patrons as well as patrons bringing in their own print jobs. One young man designed and printed a grate to replace a broken one on the drink machine at the restaurant where he works.

*Debby Trofatter*



The mammoth camera of  
George R. Lawrence



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## September 2016 Program Highlights

### Hatha Yoga

**Mondays @ 5:15 pm**

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

### Starting Your Own Business Workshop\*\*

**9/13 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm**

*Sponsored by SCORE New Haven.*

### You Wrote a Book! Now what? \*\* 9/17 @ 1-2:30 pm

Jan Kardys talks about the

publishing process. *Presented by Unicorn for Writers.*

### Annual John Loeb Lecture\*\* Teddy Roosevelt—Mind, Body and Spirit

**9/18 @ 2 pm – 4 pm**

Actor and author Ted Zalewski brings one of America's greatest presidents to life. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library and the John Loeb Lecture Fund.*

### Digital Marketing Lunch & Learn 9/22 @ 12-1:30 pm

Let hibu show you how to grow your business online. *Sponsored by the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce, lunch provided.*

### Washboard Slim & the Bluelights

**9/25 @ 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm**

Blues, jugband, early jazz and rockabilly mix. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*

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

## June/July 2016 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

### Total Circulation

**June: 14,983**

**July: 15,757**

June 2015: 16,637

July 2015: 18,114

### ConnectiCard

**June: 3,121**

**July: 3,357**

June 2015: 3,445

July 2015: 3,489

### Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks

June: 681/July: 769

Overdrive audiobooks

June: 292/July: 297

Zinio June: 186/ July: 181

### Interlibrary Loan

June:

Borrowed **13**

Loaned **26**

July:

Borrowed **6**

Loaned **35**

### Average Daily Visitors

**June: 599/July: 617**

**Days Open:** June: 26/July: 26

### June Children's Programs:

*Babies (0-2)*

18 programs/347 attendance

*Preschool (3-5)*

5 programs/101 attendance

*School-age (6-11)*

11 programs/161 attendance

*All Ages:*

2 programs/24 attendance

### Total Children's Programs: 36

**Total Attendance: 633**

### July Children's Programs:

*Babies (0-2)*

18 programs/360 attendance

*Preschool (3-5)*

5 programs/122 attendance

*School-age (6-11)*

13 programs/146 attendance

### Total Children's Programs: 36

**Total Attendance: 628**

### Teen Programs (12+)

June:

2 programs/20 attendance

July:

4 programs/57 attendance

### Adult programs

June:

15 programs/280 attendance

July:

16 programs/332 attendance

### Lucy Hammer Room

June:

64 meetings/164 attendance

July:

85 meetings/203 attendance

### Computer Sessions

June: 2306/July: 2262

**Facebook: 1327 Likes**

**MailChimp: 5199**