



Report to the Board of Trustees

September 5, 2018

From the Director

This summer was as busy as ever as we waited for the renovation to begin. In the next few weeks, the Youth Services Department will move into the Auditorium for the duration of the project. Regular storytimes will cease for the year, but the full collection will be available for borrowing, and the team of the Misses Carly, Mary, Jenn and Carol will be available to help with whatever our patrons need.

The auditorium windows will provide the perfect view of the construction of the new entry from start to finish, and we hope our patrons young and old will stop in often to view the progress.

Once the Youth Services staff are moved, groundbreaking for the new entry starts, and renovation for the top floor begins.

We are still raising funds for the project. A town-wide mailing is scheduled for the first week of September. We still have just about \$100,000 to go to realize our \$800,000 goal.

Fundraising for our operating budget also continues throughout the renovation. On October 13, we have a special event planned. *An Evening with the Spirits* features a whiskey and spirit



tasting sponsored by Branford Wine & Liquor. The event will include psychic readings and raffle items. Katy McNicol, our associate librarian for development, and Beth Law, development chair, have been working hard to plan this fun event. Tickets are \$40 and available now.

Our consortium, LION, has long recommended that member libraries follow consistent guidelines for loans. The Blackstone Library is in compliance, except for our loan period. LION recommends that all books, even

new books, circulate for 21 days. Currently, Blackstone books circulate for 28 days, or 14 days for new books. After reviewing the potential impact to our patrons, we have decided to make the change to 21 days, effective October 5. This will bring us into compliance with our other member libraries, and it will give everyone an extra week to borrow our new books. As always, we welcome renewals on any item that does not have a waiting list. Patrons may call the library directly, renew through their online account, or via text through the Shoutbomb app.



Win Naming Rights In the Renovated Library

Raffle tickets are currently on sale in support of the library renovation. The tickets cost \$20 each—the grand prize is naming rights to the Upper Rotunda art gallery.

Tickets are available at blackstonelibrary.org and at the library Reference Desk.

Karen Jensen

Highlights from the Youth Services Department—June & July

The Youth Services Department kicked off summer reading with our StoryWalk® along Main Street, featuring *Ada's Violin*, by Susan Hood. The story is a 2019 Elementary Nutmeg Nominee, and is based on a village in Paraguay that transformed their predicament of trash picking into instrument playing, by making recycled instruments from items from the landfill.

With the renovation looming and not knowing what kind of space we were going to have to work with we thought it would be a good idea to create something the community could enjoy outside of the library. Miss Mary and I attended a discussion about creating your own StoryWalk® at the Connecticut Library Association (CLA) conference in April. Katy and I then approached local merchants along Main Street to see if they would be willing to host a Storywalk® by posting one of the book's pages in their storefront windows. We added to the reading experience by creating a map of the story pages and included questions on each book page to spark discussion and allow readers to relate to the story and its characters. Participants who read the story and completed all of the questions were eligible for a prize drawing at summer's end. Susan Hood (the author) visited Henry Carter Hall Library in Clinton and dropped by Main Street to see our StoryWalk® on display. She was overjoyed by our efforts and thought it was a cool idea.

This program would not have been possible without the

monetary support of the Guilford Savings Bank and Friends of the Library. Our local merchants were excited to be a part of the process and we hope that this community reading project will lead to more in the future.

We provided two ongoing programs throughout the summer. The first, Musical Art, a weekly program for elementary school students, used a combination of picture books, music and crafts to introduce different musical concepts. Activities ranged from identifying instruments, using recycled materials to create our own maracas and even going on a listening walk to decipher town-wide sounds.

We also held our final sessions of digital design, our weekly computer coding club for participants in 5th grade and up. This summer we focused on music and helped kids create their own music videos, sound effects and musical art masterpieces. We do have video footage of a few of their completed projects on our Instagram page, if you haven't started following us already please do [@blackstone_library](https://www.instagram.com/blackstone_library).

The Library also invited two preschool park and recreation classes to drop-in and take part in a special story time. Each group had about twenty participants and their sessions focused on construction equipment or dinosaurs. Each group of 3 to 5 year olds were extremely well behaved and worked hard on completing their crafts. We also held the "open play" part of our

storytime during our Friday Stay and Play class so that the participants could interact with children outside their camp. Since Stay and Play is held in our auditorium the camp was also introduced to a combination of different toys that they do not normally see in our playroom; which made the trip different from a traditional library visit.

The Youth Services Department also featured two special programs for elementary school students. One was provided by Edward Leonard who has a "Fun with Rhythms" program that features every percussion instrument under the sun! During this hour long hands-on program participants were introduced to different forms of percussion and how they work. Families then got hands-on experience with various instruments and took turns playing in a drum circle. Everyone had the best time moving from one instrument to the next and then performing "solos." Edward even brought a fully operational drum set—cymbals and all!

The Connecticut Science Center came near the end of the month to share a program based entirely around sound! During this program participants investigated sound and how and why it exists. Through a series of hands-on activities the group was able to deduce that sound is essentially vibrations that travel through different types of matter! Participants had the best time investigating and the presenter was engaging.

Carly Lemire



Our first StoryWalk®
On Main

Highlights from the Reference Department-June/July

As is so often the case in the Reference Department, our summer was filled with a fun combination of the old and the new. Both Whitney and Christina were very busy teaching classes (Computer Basics) and helping patrons with their technology. We helped patrons learn to transfer photos from their phone to their laptop, taught a patron how to use the email client MailChimp, helped to resolve a problem with a patron's Hoopla account, helped patrons with downloading eBooks to OverDrive, formatting a resume and with Word, Excel, email and apps. We also helped a number of patrons with their 3D printing projects. In addition to our usual monthly endeavors, the Reference Department fielded some interesting local history questions this month.

Two patrons inquired about a plaque that is in the sidewalk in front of Towne Pharmacy that reads "Circa 1876 - This spot marks the last remaining horse tying ring in Branford, used to tie a horse while shopping at the Hosley Block." Installed in 1976, our patrons hoped to find out where this particular plaque was manufactured. While the Reference Department has quite a bit of information and photographs about the Hosley Block, our research did not lead us to an answer to our patrons' question. We researched our digital scrapbooks, vertical file, various

local indexes we maintain, town reports and more. We have reached out to a few people in the community who we hope will be able to assist us and we hope to report success soon!

We were also contacted by the director of the Maitland Art Center, founded as an art colony in 1937 in Maitland, FL, by American artist and architect, J. André Smith (1880-1959). The director was hoping to locate letters and other information about Smith and we were able to share a considerable amount of information with him as well as make a connection to Smith's great-nephew and others who knew him in Stony Creek. J. Andre Smith was an official artist for the United States in World War I. A resident of Stony Creek, he had an art gallery and art school there.

Another question came up about the C.F. Bradley Company when we displayed our collection of library china (much of which was imported by the Bradley Company). An advertisement by C.F. Bradley in the 1900 Branford city directory reveals that the store sold: Bikes, Boots & Shoes, Clothing, Crockery & Glassware, Dry Goods, Fancy Goods and Gents Furnishings.

Another question involved a patron who was looking for information on Charles Chinetti. This type of question

can be difficult because immigrants' names are so often changed and/or misspelled. We knew of a naturalization record for a Carlo Cinetti that indicated he lived in Branford, but he was not listed in the census or city directory. Further investigation resulted in the discovery of an article in our Branford History Digital Scrapbooks reporting the death of Charles Chinetti in an accident at Norcross Brothers Quarry in Stony Creek. We were thus able to learn that he had a wife and two children and was buried in Guilford. Although saddened by the news of how he died, our patron was grateful to have the information.

Whitney and Christina hosted another successful adult game night. We had a busy and very popular book signing by Jane Bouley for her new book [The Origin and Naming of Branford's Streets](#). We have two book signings planned for August.

Deb Trofatter



*Bradley's General Store at
1008 Main Street in 1885*



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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

September 2018 Program Highlights

Programs with ** require registration. Call the library at 203.488.1441 ext 318, or visit the website: www.blackstonelibrary.org

Drop In Tech Help
September 12
@ 6:15—7:30 pm**

Having trouble downloading ebooks through OverDrive? Need help on a Microsoft Word document? Can't figure out how to email a picture from your iPhone? Drop in to the Lucy Hammer Room for

some tech help! No registration required. Help available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Ask a Lawyer
September 20 @ 3:30 pm**

A free consultation with a lawyer, brought to you by the New Haven County Bar Association. First-come, first-served. Signup available in the Reference Department 30 minutes before program.

Uncover Branford
September 15
@ 10:30 am—12pm**

Share your favorite Branford spots and plan an outing as a group to visit and uncover new places in town.

**Books & Brews
September 26
@ 6-8 pm**

Each month, there are 2 titles to choose from, each with its own discussion group to take part in. Meets at Thimble Island Brewery.

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

June/July 2018 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

Total Circulation
June: 13,430 July: 14,841
June 2017: 13,850
July 2017: 14,363

borrowIT
June: 2,523 July: 3,084
June 2017: 2,772
July 2017: 3,164

Renewals:
June: 2,616 July: 2,963

Downloadable Circulation:
Overdrive ebooks
June: 960/July: 994
Overdrive audiobooks
June: 306/July: 349
RB Digital June: 89/ July: 98

Interlibrary Loan
June:
Borrowed 7
Loaned 16
July:
Borrowed 12
Loaned 18

June Children's Programs:
Babies (0-2)
17 programs/252 attendance

Preschool (3-5)
6 programs/79 attendance

School-age (6-11)
1 programs/3 attendance

**Total Children's Programs: 24
Total Attendance: 334**

July Children's Programs:
Babies (0-2)
13 programs/253 attendance

Preschool (3-5)
10 programs/206 attendance

School-age (6-11)
5 programs/54 attendance

All Ages
4 Programs/52 Attendance

**Total Children's Programs: 32
Total Attendance: 565**

Teen Programs (12+)
June:
5 programs/22 attendance
July:
6 programs/32 attendance

Adult programs
June:
16 programs/238 attendance
July:
19 programs/286 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room
June:
48 meetings/168 attendance
July:
49 meetings/98 attendance

Computer Sessions
June: 1917/July: 2144

**Facebook: 1551 Likes
Instagram: 228 Followers
MailChimp: 7299**

Average Daily Visitors
June: 497/July: 534
Days Open: June: 26/July: 26