



**Snuggle in and
Read a Book
Halloween Ball**

You're invited to participate in our coziest fundraising non-event... Instead of buying a ticket, make a donation to the Blackstone Library when you RSVP. No need to leave the house, simply get some snacks, curl up with your friends and family, snuggle in... and read!

#snuggleinandread

Report to the Board of Trustees

September 4, 2019

From the Director

It's exciting to report that we are getting ready to open the new entryway to the public in a few short weeks! We've received many positive comments, and our patrons and staff are looking forward to the new space. We're kicking off this milestone with an Open House and first look at the new space with our major donors and town officials on September 6th; the entry will be open to the public on the 9th. From that point on, work will begin to create the new fiction & popular materials area, and finally the children's space and auditorium. Staff have worked incredibly hard to accommodate the myriad of changes, often at the last minute, and our patrons have been flexible as well. We have a great construction crew and are so happy to be in the home stretch!

Notwithstanding the renovation, this summer was busy. Students were excited to participate in our summer reading program, earning lawn signs to celebrate completing their goals. With the summer reading theme being a Universe of Stories to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the landing on the moon, programs included a Star Lab, Meals on Mars, Full Moon Wildlife, and Celestial Creatures.



Carly has been doing a great job posting project updates on social media!

Our teen and tween groups have been active over the summer, helping us to move the reference collection and planning a concession stand at a movie night held in Foote Park to celebrate the end of the summer reading program. Miss Sarah received a complement from a mom who was thrilled her daughter had an opportunity to enhance her skills at the teen paint night. Another teen was anxious to begin working on community service hours before school started; since these groups meet weekly, there was a spot for her.

Debby and reference staff worked throughout the summer with artists to complete a map of Branford in celebration of its 375th anniversary. The map is complete and waiting to be printed. The library will sell limited edition copies as a fundraiser and will begin taking orders on our website.

At the end of August, Nancy Graves, who has worked part-time at the circulation desk for the past 10 years, decided she will retire. She will be missed and we wish her well.

Karen Jensen

Highlights from the Youth Services Department—June & July



Teen Paint Night!

This year we partnered with the Willoughby Wallace Memorial Library to present our Summer Reading programs with a skit at all three elementary schools. We decided on the first moon landing as our theme with a “news” program where the librarians keep getting interrupted by pesky news reporters (school staff members). Kids have been checking on throughout the summer and picking up lawn signs as they completed their goals.

One of our most popular programs met on Monday afternoons and featured various space topics including: moons, rockets, constellations and the solar system. Each class incorporated a hands-on activity; for the moon we used Oreo cookies to show its phases, with rockets we set up different string courses around the Lucy Hammer Room and participants used straws and balloons to shoot their creations across the room! We incorporated science and history by reading about famous astronauts, the first moon landing and viewing archived footage from NASA.

Sarah's Teen and Tween Advisory Boards have been extremely successful, especially our middle school bunch. We currently have 15 - 20 middle school students visiting weekly for crafts, games and community service projects.

The school district's summer meals program included the library again this summer so we were able to offer free lunches to our youngest pa-

trons Monday - Friday. Feed Branford Kids has been unbelievably generous by dropping off assorted snacks in bulk on a weekly basis.

Before summer reading officially started Miss Mary and I also attended a day long workshop dealing with early literacy and emergent readers. The day focused on a program entitled “Countdown to Kindergarten” and shared the building blocks of what it takes for children to decode and read.

This year's annual StoryWalk® on Main featured *Sun and Moon* by Lindsey Yankey; a folk tale that focuses on why we **all** should be grateful for what we have. We collected quite a few completed StoryWalk maps and printed well over 60. Although it is impossible to track the number of people who participate, families have told us that they are using it as an event or outing. The program promotes healthy habits - walking, talking and experiencing a moment as a group. Our partners at ERACE used our StoryWalk as one of their summer class assignments. Adults learning English as a second language read the book ahead of time and then took their friends and family along the actual walk with our map. Kids and family members were then encouraged to read the book together. The class then met on the green to eat ice cream and talk about the book.

Sarah has put together a summer reading competition for middle and high school

readers. She took the “Universe of Stories” theme and asked participants to get creative and tell a story through writing, drawing and even video production.

We took on two paid interns from the Counseling Center's youth worker program. The program helps teens build their resume and gain experience. Ryan and Athul worked 20 hours each week in the youth services department. They helped with day-to-day activities and programs, especially Boxed Out of Space which was an interactive program that had teens working in groups to solve different puzzles in order to break out of the space. Both Ryan and Athul have been excellent.

Miss Mary and Miss Sarah took on our annual tie dye party and were pleasantly surprised with the number of families that shared their creations on social media. We always wondered how their shirts came out! We also partnered with the Willoughby Wallace Memorial Library to provide an indoor planetarium at the Stony Creek Library.

Miss Sarah also took on two additional events - a paint night showcasing the solar system and a Dungeon and Dragons evening where first-time players could learn from those that were more experienced. Both brought a lot of teens into the building and they are already planning another game night in August. It certainly has been busy but nice to see so many ages enjoying our building.

Highlights from the Reference Department-June/July



Could this be a self-portrait of William Hopson, designer of the library's original book plate?

Everyone on staff helped with another collection move in June; this one involved moving our archives collection into the new History Room and moving hundreds of Branford Scrapbooks from the high density shelving into the Branford Room on the top floor so that construction can begin on the new Children's Craft Room. In addition, the Reference staff, with help from a terrific group of teens, moved the Genealogies, Town Histories, Connecticut Collection and Branford Town Reports from the Reference stacks to the mezzanine.

Debby received a call from our Newsbank representative about the possibility of subscribing again to the New Haven Register database. With a huge price drop and an increase in newspaper coverage, the library will once again be subscribing; all Blackstone Library cardhold-

ers will be able to log in from home and anyone can use the database from a library computer or from a personal device within the library. The database provides access to the full text of the New Haven Register from 1988 to the present, as well as thousands of newspapers from around the country.

The summer was also busy with technology appointments, Game Night and book clubs. Work continues on a number of photograph and archives projects. Everyone in the department is working hard to organize these files and to get them ready for digitizing. Once again, we had help from intern Rachel Wells, who continued to work on the library archives.

Debby received a call and subsequent email from the registrar at the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art in New York City, asking if

we could help identify an artist. The museum had received a donation of what looked like the original drawing of the invitation to the opening of the library in 1896, with two sketches on the back. Debby went through the receipts from the building of the library and found a bill from William Hopson for the original invitations. Hopson was a local artist and printer who also designed the library's bookplate from that time.



Captain Joshua Slocum, who sailed alone around the world in 1898, lectured at the Blackstone Library and docked his boat, "The Spray", in Lanfare's Cove in about 1907.
#branford375

Jenna has completed putting together the library's album of hurricane photographs. She also organized an interesting line-up of programs for the fall.

The library officially implemented its new room scheduling using free software that Jenna found, making it possible for all staff members to see at a glance what is scheduled for each of our meeting rooms.

Christina and Sarah hosted a Dungeons & Dragons session with a group of excited players; enough interest was shown that we now have two sessions scheduled each month.

Deb Trofatter



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...more than books

Join our email list for more
information about programs
www.blackstonelibrary.org

September 2019 Program Highlights

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

The Gift of Forgiveness
September 14 @ 2:00 PM
A literary and humor-filled celebration of the debut novel *Today My Name is Billie* by Neile Parisi. Neile will share the story of the book and her own personal stories of change and survival.

Cosplay 101**
September 21 @ 2:30 pm
Join veteran cosplayer Denny McDermott for an intro to costuming, conventions & more! Cosplay, or costume play, is a unique art that combines costuming, sewing, arts and crafts, and acting. Cosplayers don't just get into costume—many get into character! Both teens and adults are invited to join us for this hour-long presentation, followed by a Q&A.

Get to Know Your Sewing Machine**
September 22 @ 2:00 PM
Do you have a sewing machine sitting around collecting dust? Come finally learn how to use it with instructor Sara Normand! It's the perfect opportunity to brush up on your skills or start from scratch. Students should bring in their working machines if they have them, but library sewing machines will also be available to practice on if necessary.

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

June/July 2019 Statistics—Deirdre Santora

Total Circulation

June: 10,532 July: 12,552
June 2018: 12,692
July 2018: 14,841

borrowIT

June: 2071 July: 2622
June 2018: 2,523
July 2018: 3,084

Renewals:

June: 2,551 July: 4,173

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks
June: 975/July: 1203
Overdrive audiobooks
June: 430/July: 497
RB Digital June: 386/July: 292
HOOPLA
June: 502/July: 485
Kanopy
June: 111/July: 213
Pronunciator
June: 419 /July: 438

June Children's Programs:

Babies (0-2)
0 programs/0 attendance
Preschool (3-5)
9 programs/159 attendance
School-age (6-11)
4 programs/32 attendance

Total Children's Programs: 13

Total Attendance: 192

July Children's Programs:

Babies (0-2)
0 programs/0 attendance
Preschool (3-5)
9 programs/156 attendance
School-age (6-11)
9 programs/125 attendance
All Ages
Storywalk: 200 Attendance

Total Children's Programs: 20

Total Attendance: 481

Teen Programs (12+)

June:
10 programs/98 attendance
July:
10 programs/111 attendance

Adult programs

June:
15 programs/135 attendance
July:
10 programs/99 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room

June:
48 meetings/176 attendance
July:
52 meetings/156 attendance

Computer Sessions

June: 1749/July: 1999

Facebook: 1700 Likes
Instagram: 593 Followers
MailChimp: 7763

Average Daily Visitors

(New Patron Counter to be installed in September)