



Report to the Board of Trustees

December 7, 2016

From the Director

Friends Holiday Basket Sale

Just in time for the holidays, the Friends of the Library are bringing back their popular basket sale.

For the past several weeks, members have been donating baskets and a variety of items to fill them with.

You will find everything from specialty food, to children's books, stocking stuffers, ornaments, handmade items and more.

Don't miss this opportunity to purchase a unique gift for a special someone.

The Holiday Basket Sale takes place one weekend only:

Friday December 9 —
Sunday, December 11

Shop early for the best selection!

This month I attended the annual ACLB conference with several trustees, FOCL bootcamp, a Chamber of Commerce workshop and several advocacy workshops on behalf of CLA with the CT Places coalition.

Our group of four staff, including me, Katy Dillman, Whitney Gayle and Carly Lemire, interviewed several library patrons as part of our project for the State Library's pilot program: *Excite-Transform Your Library*. We met again for two full days of training in Middletown at the end of the month. We now have a rough plan for a library program that we will test with a potential audience and community partners. As a reward for participating in this program, we may receive a grant to pay for the program.

Several special events were booked at the library this month. A memorial service took place, and two weddings are scheduled for the upcoming year.

The State Library continues to work on solving the deliverIT problem. Deirdre and I attended a State Library board meeting to provide feedback to the consultant who was hired to investi-



Caddystacks brought the community in for fun on all levels! Over \$5,000 was raised for the library this year.

gate the service. Librarians from all over the state were there with suggestions and a report is due in January. For now, the 5-hold limit still stands.

The building committee met and agreed on a final design which will be revealed to the public in the upcoming weeks. The design improves on the concept of the entry-way and outdoor terrace.

The Garden Club came to decorate the library as they traditionally do. Each year, our space gets a fresh design to celebrate the season. This year we also have a holiday tree from the Community

Dining Room requesting donations to seniors in need. Patrons can volunteer to purchase a gift listed on one of the tags to brighten someone's holidays.

The library participated in the Town Merchants Association holiday wreath auction, helping to raise over \$1,000 for Feed Branford Kids.

Finally, Jenna, who works in the circulation department, is creating list of Best Books and Staff favorites of 2016. Our reader's advisory pamphlets are used often by staff and patrons looking for a good read.

Karen Jensen

October Highlights from the Youth Services Department

This month the Youth Services Department said good-bye to Katherine Steer, our Youth Services Assistant. Katherine has been working with Miss Mary and me for over year and brought a lot enthusiasm and ideas to the Department. Katherine assisted with our MakerLab, put together our first Saturday storytime and worked hard weeding and updating various collections. Most importantly, Katherine enjoyed working with children and we know that a lot of our parents are going to miss her.

Moving forward we are excited to announce that we have hired a new Youth Services Assistant, Jennifer Aldieri. Jennifer's background includes experience working as a middle school teacher and elementary school media center paraprofessional. Her training starts in November and we cannot wait to call her a member of our team.

Miss Mary and I were able to wear our Halloween costumes twice this month, which made October that much more fun! We kicked off our fall festivities by taking part in the town-wide Trick or Trunk event with the Parks and Recreation Department. Every year the Park and Rec Department works with Town Hall and other agencies to put on a toddler trick or treat event. The kids and caregivers come in costume and then walk and collect goodies from different Town Hall departments. The families then head back to the Park and Recreation Department's parking lot to find

a series of cars decorated in various themes. This was our first year participating in the event, so we were not sure what to expect. Viewing various trunk or treat displays online got our brains thinking and Nancy came up with a fantastic book based theme all around Dr. Seuss! She actually created a series of bright and beautiful boards with different Dr. Seuss characters and book titles along with streamers and our life sized cardboard Cat in the Hat! I then purchased candy to hand out as well as bookmarks and came fully dressed in our Cat in the Hat costume from Halloween Parade's past. It was really awesome to see the kids dressed up and families participating in all the fun - there was even a Thing 1 and Thing 2, which made for a great photo op. We cannot wait to be part of the fun next year and if you head to our Caddy Stacks mini-golf event in November you may just see Nancy's Cat in the Hat theme make an appearance.

The Youth Services Department got into the Halloween spirit early by putting together a Pumpkin Painting Party. We based the program around our annual egg decorating event in the sense that we would provide all the decorations while the families would be responsible for bringing in all the pumpkins. Miss Mary and I prepared for the event by pulling together different colored paints, types of brushes and stencils so that everyone felt the freedom to create. We thought asking participants to bring in

their own pumpkins would also create a level of creativity seeing as they come in various colors, shapes and sizes. Miss Mary and I kicked the painting party up a notch by playing Halloween music, handing out candy and coming in fully dressed as life sized pumpkins! The kid's got a kick out of our costumes and thought that we were super silly. We enjoyed seeing everyone's designs and hope to make this an annual October tradition.

We held our Halloween Parade on Monday, October 31st. We had 50 plus families participate and had the best time singing, dancing and reading. Children and caregivers came fully dressed in their Halloween gear and Miss Mary and I were able to dress up as pumpkins all over again. The rest of the staff also participated by handing out goodies at each of our Library desks. Many of our staff members look forward to this event every year because they get to interact with our families in a fun and engaging way. After every major event Miss Mary and I take some time to reflect - we think about what went well as well as what we would change. After much discussion we realized how amazing our Library Community is; even though there were 100+ people in the room our families still listened, danced and even sang with us. Hearing so many voices and seeing happy faces at once made our day and reminded us why being a part of this Library is so great.

Carly Lemire



Miss Mary and Miss Carly at the Pumpkin Painting Party

Caddystacks-Year Two

Caddystacks returned to the library for its second year over the Thanksgiving weekend. Over 300 children were able to play the course over the three days. The 19th Hole party was great fun for the adults and sponsors of the fundraiser. Thank you to our volunteers and businesses who supported us this year:

2016 Hole Sponsors:

- #1 Guilford Savings Bank
- #2 Andy McKirdy & Attorney Robin Sandler
- #3 Dr. Norman F. Dahl III
- #4 Jersey Mike's – Branford
- #5 Branford Community Foundation
- #6 New Neighbors Realty

- #7 Connex Credit Union
- #8 Matthew Hughes
- #9 Michael Horton
- #10 Susan Cosgrove Barnes
- #11 Shoreline Orthodontics
- #12 Raymond James
- #13 Branford Garden Club
- #14 Betsy & Stan Robison and Brian Prinz
- #15 Republican Town Committee
- #16 Branford Rotary Club
- #17 Branford Building Supplies
- #18 Friends of the JBML

Scorecard Ad Sponsors:

- Anderson-Krause Insurance
- Bailey Scarano, LLC, CPAs
- Criscuolo Engineering
- Fasano, Ippolito, Lee & Florentine, Attorneys at Law
- Democratic Town Committee

In Kind Donors:

- Adventure Park at Discovery Museum
- All Pets Club
- Andy McKirdy
- Beau Hair Salon
- Big Y Foods
- Blu Hair & Bridal Studio
- Chuck's Margarita Grill
- Deke's Solid Wood Furniture
- Ellen Clark
- glow face & body
- Grossman Chevrolet Nissan
- Hartford Stage
- Merle Norman Cosmetics
- Old Quarry Olive Oil Co
- Pine Orchard Country Club
- Pull Rowing
- A Sound Choice
- SportsCenter of CT
- Stony Creek Brewery
- Thimble Island Brewery

Highlights from the Reference Department-October

Professional development is an important part of our job as reference librarians. In addition to keeping up with new books and movies through Library Journal, Forecast, Publishers Weekly and a variety of online publications, we borrow titles from the State Library's Middletown Library Service Center. Some of the titles we are currently reading include:

New routes to library success : 100+ ideas from outside the stacks by Elisabeth Doucett

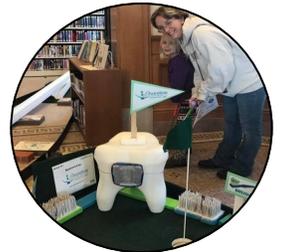
The librarian's guide to book programs and author events by Brad Hooper

Accessing the classics : great reads for adults, teens, and English language learners by La Vergne Rosow

We had a busy month of programs that included Yoga, 3D Printing, Job Searching in the Digital Age, a Branford Forum discussion of the Polarization of Presidential Politics, a Writer's Workshop series on Short Stories, a Computer and Email Basics Class, a Menunkatuck Audubon Society program on the Impact of Sea-level Rise on Coastal Marshes of Long Island Sound, Yours in Words: A Staged Reading, a lecture on Edgar Degas, Ask-A-Lawyer, a historical society lecture on Connecticut in the American Revolution, a jobs program on healthcare careers, Saturday Cinema, Bestsellers Book Club and our most attended program (over 100 people) of A Supernatural Evening with Trance Medium Chrystyne McGrath.

One interesting question this month was helping a patron identify a mushroom – Whitney used book and online sources and took and emailed a photograph to the Connecticut Valley Mycological Society who confirmed that it was a puffball mushroom.

The mushroom in the picture is likely *Calvatia craniiformis*, also known as a puffball. They grow in lawns and fields and often come up in large numbers. They start out white inside, but as they age and begin to create spores, they turn yellow and then dark. When they mature, they "puff" spores when you step on them. There is a related species known as *Calvatia gigantea* that can grow to enormous size, sometimes over 20 pounds!



Caddystacks II took place over Thanksgiving weekend.



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

December 2016 Program Highlights

Hatha Yoga

Mondays @ 5:15—6:30 pm
Join yoga teacher Helen Lespier every Monday evening. Free and open to all ages.

CT Accordion Orchestra Holiday Concert**

December 10 @ 2—3 pm
Get in the holiday spirit with CT Accordion Orchestra! The orchestra consists of over 20 performers, including some of the finest musicians in the accordion world.

Music Makers Holiday Concert

December 11 @ 2—3:15 pm
Join the Music Makers for an hour long celebration of the holiday season with a short sing-a-long to follow! The Music Makers are an elite group of singers chosen from all of the singers in the Branford High School Choral program. They are considered

the “musical ambassadors” of not only the school, but of the Town of Branford as well. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.*

Turn Your Dream of a Healthcare Career into a Reality**

December 13 @ 1—3:30 pm
You could be eligible for free short-term job-related training in the health care field through the Health Careers Advancement Project. Presented by American Job Center Workforce Alliance (formerly CT Works). Join us for a free information session. For more information, contact Sherreida Reid at 203.624.1493, ext. 207.

Menunkatuck Audubon Waterbabies: Wetland Birds December 14 @ 7—8 pm

From the comic-monster herons to the fuzzy ducklings and

stick-legged sandpipers, the downy young of wetland birds have personality and spunk. To photograph these youngsters and adults, William Burt prowled their wetland breeding grounds each spring and summer for some 7 years, all over North America, from the arctic circle to the Gulf of Mexico. The result: a portrait of these wild birds of the wetlands as both young and old, unknown and known, new and familiar. William Burt’s feature stories are seen in Smithsonian, Audubon, National Wildlife, and other magazines, and he is the author of 3 previous books. Burt’s photo exhibitions have showed at some 35 museums across the U.S. and Canada. He lives in Old Lyme, Connecticut.

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

October 2016 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

Total Circulation: 12,059
October 2015: 12,431

borrowIT: 2,810
October 2015: 2,497

Renewals: 3,159

Downloadable Circulation:
Overdrive ebooks: 649
Overdrive audiobooks: 299
Zinio: 153

Interlibrary Loan
Borrowed 9 Loaned 20

Children’s Programs:
Babies (0-2)
18 programs/381 attendance

Preschool (3-5)
8 programs/150 attendance

School-age (6-11)
12 programs/169 attendance

All Ages
0 programs/0 attendance

Total Children’s Programs: 38
Total Attendance: 700

Teen Programs (12+)
4 programs/21 attendance

Adult programs
28 programs/619 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room
58 meetings/206 attendance

Computer Sessions: 2351

Facebook: 1365 Likes

MailChimp: 5344 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: 538
Days Open: 29