

Report to the Board of Trustees

May 4, 2016

From the Director

The Friends of the Library were chosen as a competing charity in the Chamber of Commerce's fourth annual Chili Challenge on April 2nd. While they didn't win, they raised awareness of the group and the library at their station located at the Bell'Oliva Olive Oil Shop.



Murder at Blackstone Abbey

Tickets are selling fast for our second annual murder mystery fundraiser planned for Friday, May 13th from 7-10pm.

Solve the clues, interview suspects, and help catch a killer.

Tickets are \$50 and include food, drinks and a deathly funny interactive play.

Following the RTM's approval of funding for the next phase of the renovation project, we met with the first selectman and town engineer to draft an RFP for architectural firms. The RFP is scheduled to be advertised in mid-May, with firms being selected in June.

Robin Sandler and I presented the library's budget request to the RTM Education Committee on April 18.

The LION board of directors met on April 26. A majority of the meeting was taken up with a discussion of concerns about the re-organized deliverIT service. The State Library Division of Library Development (DLD) took the service in house in January and it seemed to work smoothly until last month. Now we are hearing that there are backlogs of several weeks, when items once moved through the system in a few days. This seriously affects the ability



This summer's reading theme for teens is Get in the Game: Read. A local group of teens led by Natalie Leonffu created a 90 second video to advertise the program. It was chosen as Connecticut's winner in the Teen Video Challenge. You can view it at: www.vimeo.com/mksuper8/game-on

of our patrons to obtain items from our LION libraries. Some libraries have been filling in by making their own deliveries-clearly a better solution is needed. More meetings are scheduled for May.

The matter of the CEN and fiber connections was also discussed. For now we are advised to complete the Erate paperwork needed to get us on a list to have the fiber connection installed at no charge.

Kathy Oxsalida and I worked with our Pro Bono attorney to draft an update to our personnel policy. Ultimately, the policy drafted in 2009 needed minimal updating, and the review was a necessary and productive process.

CLA's Passport to Connecticut Libraries Program brought many new people into the library. Winning entries will be drawn in May.

11 staff and 2 trustees attended the CLA conference this month. Congratulations to Katy Dillman for her work on the committee that created such an outstanding program. Congratulations also goes to Katy for our two winning publicity entries: our 2015 Murder Mystery poster, and our 2015 annual report.

Karen Jensen

March Highlights from the Youth Services Department

This month Miss Mary was invited to be a Mystery Reader for one of Sliney School's Kindergarten classes. Mystery readers can be family members, important people in the community or even teachers from different classrooms or special programs. Mystery readers are invited to share one of their favorite books with the class and students are then welcome to ask questions about the book or the reader. Miss Mary was excited to read since this was her first time being invited to Sliney School. One of the best parts about the reading was that a majority of the kids in the class not only came to her storytimes as toddlers but also continue to use the library to check out books, so there were a lot of friendly faces. Miss Mary's reading skills must have traveled throughout the school because she has been invited back to read to another class this coming April!

We were also able to reach out to the adult community this month by offering an Introduction to 3D Printing. This was our first of four classes for adults. These new classes were created to sustain the demand for adults interested in our 3D printer. Ever since we moved our newest printer to the middle rotunda it has been getting a lot of use and as a result, drawing a lot of questions from our adult patrons. Debby, Katy and I have been working together to teach the classes.

Our first class was this past month and although it was

small it was a lot of fun and interesting to see how adults and children approach the 3D printer differently. For the most part, both age ranges have the same kinds of questions and are interested in seeing the printer in action. Both are also eager to work with the 3D design software and usually have an idea of what they want to create. When it comes to handling the printer the adult classes are a little more hesitant to press any buttons or load the filament since this is their first experience and they know that this piece of equipment is quite expensive. Our child filled classes have the exact opposite take on handling the printer—they are not afraid to test, try, and try again which I admire and know that it comes with their familiarity with technology and ZERO fear of breaking an element. I look forward to working with the adults in the future and found it to be a nice change of pace.

This month's Learning Lab's program for teens provided by the Connecticut State Library and the Institute of Museum and Library Services was all about circuitry and connecting to an Arduino board. The class was run by volunteer Jim Davis and invited participants to design a series of fan blades that would rotate as the temperature went up or down. The Arduino boards were programmed to recognize the temperature change and the participants were then asked to record their results.

Sitting in on the classes gave me first hand experience with the Arduino boards and allowed me to get comfortable with programming in a new way. One of the best parts of observing these classes is that you get to see the teens work together and really become a team. I witnessed them asking each other questions and comparing their findings. On the final day of class multiple parents complimented Jim on his teaching style and thanked him for his service, which proves that the teens really enjoyed the program and were sharing what they learned at home.

Miss Mary and Kat also worked together to host a special math-themed storytime entitled March of the Stuffed Animals. This storytime was specially created by Bedtime Math, a nonprofit organization that encourages families to practice mathematical concepts daily; similar to reading. The program asked storytime participants to bring one of their stuffed animals to class so they could take part in a parade! Miss Mary and Kat reinforced mathematical concepts by reading an interactive counting book and used the stuffed animals to count body parts, sort and even identify shapes. Families closed the program by marching with their stuffed animals and worked with a set of tangrams to create various pictures. We found this to be a fun way to introduce new concepts and something we will continue in the future.

-Carly Lemire



Everyone working on their Cat in the Hat craft for Dr. Seuss' Birthday.

Genre Study: Regency Romance

A genre study involves reading a variety of genres and subgenres in order to become familiar with the appeal factors of those genres. It's an opportunity to read books we wouldn't ordinarily read and understand why these genres appeal to patrons.

In March, reference librarian Whitney Gayle led a group of staff in a study of the romance genre, with special attention to the subgenre of Regency Romance. A sample of titles included in this subgenre are:

- *Nine Rules to Break When Romancing a Rake*, by Sarah MacLean

- *Devil in Winter*, by Lisa Kleypas
- *Desperate Duchesses*, by Eloisa James
- *The Duke and I*, by Julia Quinn
- *Flowers from the Storm*, by Laura Kinsale
- *A Night to Surrender*, by Tessa Dare
- *The Rake*, by Mary Jo Putney

You could also read any other Regency romances by these authors, if you can't find these exact titles.

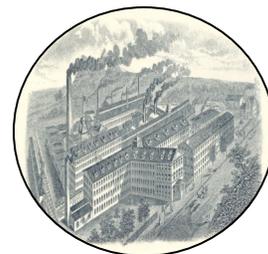
Our primary book was:

- *Lord of Scoundrels*, by Loretta Chase

This book not only epitomizes Regency romance, it almost always makes any list of best romance novels ever written.

Unsure if you've picked a Regency? See this very basic guide: www.eclectics.com/allisonlane

Once we had read our choices, we met after hours at the Stony Creek Brewery for a lively discussion. Staff had a lot of fun, and we are looking forward to our next study, which is science fiction, subgenre: Space Opera!



The Bradley & Hubbard
Factory of Meriden,
circa 1880.

Highlights from the Reference Department-March

March was another busy and varied month for the Reference Department. Christina and Kirsty taught iPad basics and Microsoft Word. Debby attended the LUX Committee meeting and worked with Justin from LION to get the Makerspace laptops updated and loaded with new software, including Burlington English in support of ERACE (East Shore Region Adult Continuing Education) and our ESL patrons.

Whitney attended the Reader's Advisory Roundtable and has formed a library staff book group, with the goal of helping staff improve their reader's advisory skills. Each

month the group reads from a different genre (this month was Romance) so that we all learn about genres that we don't ordinarily read. Then we meet to discuss what we thought of the books. Our hope is that we are then better equipped to help patrons when they ask us to "suggest a good book."

The Reference Department received an interesting phone call from The Netherlands, from a gentleman by the name of Robert Pearce (he's originally from Meriden). He is attempting to track down all of the work of a Meriden company by the name of Bradley & Hubbard, whose

company records were almost entirely destroyed in a fire. They manufactured metal work, including lamps, fences, architectural grilles, railings, window guards and more. Mr. Pearce found a reference to Bradley & Hubbard in our online catalog; Bradley & Hubbard drew up the original architectural plans for our metal stacks and the mezzanine in Reference. We have located some invoices from the company in our records and we are continuing to work with Mr. Pearce. The Smithsonian maintains a web page at (http://www.si.edu/ahhp/bradley_hubbard) about the company.



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May 2016 Program Highlights

Local Author Expo*

May 21 @ 1—5:00 PM

Our first Local Author Expo will begin with a presentation by Ann Nyberg, author of *Slices of Life*, followed by panel discussions featuring adult and children’s authors. Over 30 additional authors will be located throughout the library to sell and sign their books.

Julius Caesar, Presented by Shakesperience*

May 22 @ 2:00—3:30 pm

Witness the story of “the noblest Roman of them all” as Shakespeare’s tale of political intrigue and betrayal is brought to life in this adaptation by Emily Mattina. This production illustrates how the themes in Shakespeare’s plays still relate to our lives today. The balance of power is staged on a metal toy construction set that devolves

along with the action. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.*

Bestseller Book Club*

May 28 @ 3—4 PM

We will read *Everyone Brave is Forgiven* by Chris Cleave. Books are available at the library.

Saturday Cinema

May 28 @ 1—3 PM

Come see a hot new release that you’ve been dying to get your hands on. Refreshments provided.

Intro to 3-D Printing*

May 31 @ 1—2:30 PM

Learn to create 3-D files that you can print using our machines. Create a bookmark or key chain using Tinkercad: a free online 3-D design program. In this class, you’ll learn by using Tinkercad’s online lessons, with guidance from

our staff. Go at your own pace, and create something that’s truly yours.

Lloyd Buzzell’s

Weekly News Group

Thursdays @ 1-2 PM

Alzheimer’s Association of CT Family Caregiver Education

Tuesdays @ 6—8 PM

May 24, 31 & June 21 & 28

For family members and friends of people with any type of dementia, including Alzheimer’s disease. To RSVP, contact Maria Tomasetti at the Alzheimer’s Association—203-230-177, ext. 14 or mtomasetti@alz.org

**Programs with an * require registration. Call us at 203.488.1441 ext. 318 or visit our website at blackstonelibrary.org*

Check our website for more programs!

March 2016 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

Total Circulation: 13,164

March 2016: 14,819

ConnectiCard: 2,861

March 2015: 3,092

Renewals: 3,593

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks: 691

Overdrive audiobooks: 261

Zinio: 270

Interlibrary Loan

Borrowed 5 Loaned 20

Children’s Programs:

Babies (0-2)

15 programs/296 attendance

Preschool (3-5)

13 programs/268 attendance

School-age (6-11)

10 programs/221 attendance

All Ages

0 programs/0 attendance

Total Children’s Programs: 38

Total Attendance: 785

Teen Programs (12+)

7 programs/41 attendance

Adult programs

28 programs/570 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room

47 meetings/103 attendance

Computer Sessions: 2224

Facebook: 1264 Likes

MailChimp: 4880 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: 492

Days Open: 31