



Report to the Board of Trustees

May 2, 2018

From the Director

The State Bond Commission held a special meeting on April 13, and our State grant was approved! The project also passed review by the Town Center Revitalization Review Board and the Planning & Zoning Commission. A meeting is scheduled for May 4 to review the bid schedule.

We continue to raise funds for our Capital Campaign. We met the Branford Community Foundation match this month, and we are still working to raise \$114,000 more toward our \$800,000 campaign goal.

The RTM Education Committee reviewed our budget request over the course of two meetings on April 2, and April 12. The Committee voted to reduce the amount of the Repairs and Maintenance line by \$19,703. The RTM will vote on their recommendation on May 8th.

Nine staff attended the CLA annual conference; this year's theme was "Build a Better Library." Dave Heer and Diana Colcord from Downes Construction, Marie Hasskarl from the Burlington Library, and I presented a session on "Case Studies in Capital Project Development." Staff were able to attend programs ranging from puppet programming, serving the needs



The State Bond Commission met on April 13 and we were there to witness the unanimous vote in support of State funding for the renovation project. L-R: Andy McKirdy, President, Board of Trustees, Karen Jensen, Governor Dannel Malloy, and State Representative Lonnie Reed.

of LGBTQ+ children and families, customer service, podcasting, social media, management and more. Librarians from around the state presented a Technology "Petting Zoo" on Monday evening. The range of new technology available can be overwhelming, so it was helpful to see in-person demos.

Our board president, Andy McKirdy, was interviewed for The Sound's Person of the Week column which ran on April 5th. We thank him for taking the time to speak with the reporter; the result was an informative article which also provided information about the library renovation.

I attended a LION Board meeting last month, where the new catalog enhance-

ment, PIKA, was discussed. PIKA is set to launch on May 14 and will vastly improve the user experience with our online catalog. It was created to address the needs of patrons by solving several common usability issues: all formats of a work are grouped together, patrons can serendipitously discover titles to read next, and all functionality works on any size device with responsive design. PIKA also allows staff to create book lists and load records from our digital collections (HOOPLA, Kanopy and Overdrive).

PIKA is live now—all are invited to try it out—feedback is welcome! Go to: <https://br.catalog.lionlibraries.org/>

Win Naming Rights in the Renovated Library

Over the next several months, members of the Board of Trustees will be selling raffle tickets in support of our renovation.

Tickets cost \$20 each—the grand prize is naming rights to the Upper Rotunda art gallery. Once the renovation is finished, this space will feature a rotating exhibit of works by local artists. This is also the gallery which affords the best view of the murals decorating the dome. If you have not visited this space, it is certainly worth a look.

The grand prize drawing will be held at the library on Friday, February 1, 2019 at 6:00 pm.

Karen Jensen

Highlights from the Youth Services Department—March

This past month the Youth Services Department took part in a couple of different community outreach programs

The first was at Mary T. Murphy School where everyone celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday by participating in Read Across America. Read Across America is a national movement that celebrates reading by asking children and teens to all read on the same exact day. Murphy School kicked-off the day by inviting community members to read in various K—4 classrooms. Miss Mary and Katy represented the Blackstone Library and had a blast mingling with the other volunteers. Miss Mary really enjoyed her time at the school since she got to volunteer in an upper elementary classroom. Reading to the older kids was a treat since she is used to reading to preschoolers. She loved being able to draw out their thoughts about the books and felt that their comments were very insightful. Miss Mary also brought back and displayed a couple of thank you notes that the kids made for the volunteers. You can find them in the Youth Services rotunda.

Miss Jenn worked with the Branford Early Childhood Collaborative and Willoughby Wallace Memorial Library to put on the town's annual preschool fair. Every year the event is held at Trinity Church and invites Branford based preschools to bring information about their programs as well as small activities to keep the kids occupied. Jenn was able to check family's in

at the door and gave them information about the library as well as a copy of *Harold and the Purple Crayon*. This year's attendance was not the strongest but Jenn was able to make a couple of library cards, which will hopefully bring new families into the building.

I had the pleasure of working "on the fly" with Karen on our most recent drop-in maker program. On Thursday March 15th the library hosted a DIY T-shirt project that essentially transformed old t-shirts into reusable grocery bags! The activity itself was simple—calling for some minor cuts and basic stitches but the real fun began when kids of various ages wanted to participate. Many had never used a sewing machine before and looked to Karen for guidance. I worked on setting up each machine, making sure the bobbins were good to go and cleared any sewing jams. Karen worked with each child one-on-one not only showing them but encouraging them to sew on their own. As a matter of fact, one girl was so inspired that she decided to use some of our remnants to create her own purse, realizing that sewing was not that hard at all! We worked with a total of five people the hour and half we were in the auditorium and everyone left with not only a bag but also feeling accomplished. Providing the drop-in was a lot of fun and something that we should continue in the future.

This month we also held our seasonal Musical Folk demo class that invites families to

try a Music Together class for free. The program drew in a total of 54 participants which was really energizing. During the forty-five minute class the instructor used a combination of recorded and live music to introduce music and movement activities She warmed up the audience with traditional songs like "Old MacDonald Had A Farm" and then moved into some of their songs created especially for the class. Everyone had the best time singing and moving and parents thanked us for offering the class once the demonstration was through.

Katy also started her new program for 7th graders and up called Teen Café. The program is drop-in based and meets once a week to give teens a safe space to talk, do homework, play games, make crafts and more! The first few meetings were canceled due to snow but by the end of the month the club really started to form with kids popping in to perform on our stage, mingle and play games. We hope that the club will morph into a Teen Advisory Board where participants can create programming, invite their friends and possibly even help us when it comes to designing the new Teen Space. Forming this core group will give us some insight into what teens are looking for and hopefully create a stream of programming that interests them. To learn more about the program head to our website and a huge congratulations to Katy for coming up with a program that is drawing one of our sought out populations in.



Look who dropped in to Music Together!

Branford Community Foundation Matching Grant-We Did It!!

Almost exactly one year to the day that the grant was announced, individual donations to our capital campaign have reached the amount needed to qualify for the Branford Community Foundation's match of \$100,000. The \$100,000 grant, to be distributed over four years, is the largest single contribution to an organization in the history of the BCF.

The match to the BCF grant was achieved more quickly than anticipated, due to the generosity of the Branford Community. Over 600 individuals stepped up with donations of all amounts ranging from \$10 to \$1000.

"The Branford Community Foundation is thrilled to be able to leverage this support in order to provide a mean-



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ingful impact on the campaign and the community," said Liza Petra, BCF Executive Director.

"This significant milestone demonstrates tremendous public support for the renovation project", said Andy

McKirby, President of the Library Board of Trustees. And while the campaign has reached \$686,000 in total donations, he said "The RTM expects the library to meet its goal of \$800,000, and we are dedicated to doing so."



Jenna Anthony was awarded not one, but TWO scholarships at CLA!

Highlights from the Reference Department-March

The Reference staff has been very busy this past month, with our usual tasks as well as some new and updated ones. Whitney continues to keep our programming going, even as we prepare for the renovation. She hosted a mystery theme night for her adult gaming group, joined Katy to help teach a new game to the Maker Monday group, and prepared for the Family Game Night she is hosting with Katy in April. Whitney is still attending an American Sign Language class every week and has read dozens of YA books as a member of the

High School Nutmeg Book Award committee. She also hosts our Bestsellers Book Club on the last Saturday of every month.

Christina has revamped all three of our newsletters, creating new templates, adding more graphics and more colorful headings. Patron and staff response has been very favorable. Christina continues to manage all of the book groups that we advise and order for. She has worked with several patrons on Tech appointments this month,

including Excel help and eBook downloading assistance.

Christina and Sarah handle the bulk of our Tech appointments and our patrons are very grateful for this service. Sarah has recently taken over a specific call number range in the collection; weeding and ordering new books as needed. She is also helping Deb to make copies of the library's photograph collection and preparing to move the photographs into new albums.

Deb Trofatter



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

May 2018 Program Highlights

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

SCORE Business Workshops
May 1, 14, 22 @ 5:30—7 pm**
This series of workshops will review the basics of financing, business contracts, and how to write a business plan. Each session will be led by a SCORE New Haven volunteer.

Uncover Branford
May 12 @ 10:30 am**
Share your favorite Branford spots and plan an outing as a group to visit and uncover new places in town.

Ask a Lawyer
May 17 @ 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.

Lock Picking for Beginners
May 17 @ 6—8 pm**
A lock is really just a puzzle waiting to be solved. Using transparent pin-tumbler padlocks and some basic picks, I'll teach you a variety of techniques for opening basic locks. This will be a hands-on session. There will be some legal talk, a demonstration, and then plenty of time to try to pick as many locks as you can. Taught by Jim Davis.

Bestsellers Book Club
May 26 @ 3:30 pm**
We'll discuss *White Houses* by Amy Bloom. Copies available at the library—all are welcome! *Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.*

**Books & Brews
May 30 @ 6-8 pm**
Each month, there are 2 titles to choose from, each with its own discussion group to take part in. This month, we'll discuss *The Dog Stars*, by Peter Heller – OR – *The Farm*, by Tom Rob Smith. Meets at Thimble Island Brewery.

Intro to Overdrive
May 31 @ 2—3:15 pm**
Learn the basics of free, downloadable e-books and audiobooks accessible with your library card through Overdrive. To attend this class, you must be proficient in the use of your tablet or smart phone.

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

March 2018 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

Total Circulation: 13,356
March 2017: 13,029

borrowIT: 2,796
March 2017: 2,900

Renewals: 3,019

Downloadable Circulation:
Overdrive ebooks: 899
Overdrive audiobooks: 373
RB Digital (Zinio): 160
Hoopla: 260 plays
Kanopy: 98 plays
Pronunciator: 351 users

Interlibrary Loan
Borrowed 6 Loaned 10

Children's Programs:
Babies (0-2)
7 programs/180 attendance
Preschool (3-5)
9 programs/167 attendance
School-age (6-11)
6 programs/110 attendance
All Ages
0 programs/0 attendance

Total Children's Programs: 22
Total Attendance: 457

Teen Programs (12+)
4 programs/20 attendance

Adult programs
12 programs/153 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room
70 meetings/249 attendance

Computer Sessions: 2,048

Facebook: 1,530 Likes

MailChimp: 7,213 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: 479
Days Open: 28