



Report to the Board of Trustees

November 2, 2016

From the Director

CaddyStacks at Blackstone Thanksgiving Weekend November 24–27

The Blackstone Library Board of Trustees presents the second annual CaddyStacks. The event will take place on Friday and Saturday from 10am-4pm, and Sunday from 1pm-4pm, where the library will be transformed into an 18-hole mini golf course for the enjoyment of the community (and will still be open for regular business!).

In addition to daytime play, on Saturday evening there will be a special adults-only event, **The 19th Hole Party**, which includes the opportunity to play the entire 18-hole course, enjoy wide, beer and appetizers, and a silent auction/prize drawing.

Tickets on sale at the library or on our website.

This month was busy! As CLA President, I attended several meetings—for the CT Library Consortium, CT Center for the Book, CT Places Matter Coalition, and New England Library Association.

I also attended the CLA's Customer Service Section annual meeting and workshop with John Huber on the 27th, and the CLA Support Staff section annual meeting on October 28.

A group of four staff, including me, Katy Dillman, Whitney Gayle and Carly Lemire, attended the State Library's pilot program: *Excite-Transform Your Library* in Middletown this month. I had attended a condensed version of the same program earlier in the year, and the State Library Division of Library Development decided to expand it based on the feedback they received. Our team learned how to create new programs and services for the library, based on a careful study of target audiences. The term for this new way of planning is often referred to as design thinking, and the workshop was led by a Branford native and veteran marketing professional, Jeanine Esposito. By the end of our



Since its modest beginning on the library lawn in 1990, the Friends of the Library's annual book sale has grown from \$333 in revenue to over \$58,000 at its most recent sale on October 13–16. Thank you Friends!

three-day intensive workshop, we were given a project to complete before we convene again in November for two more days. In January, the work will culminate with a concrete program that we will develop for the library. The staff who attend will also be qualified to use this process for future planning.

Katy and I also went to the Branford High School to provide training on Overdrive downloadable ebooks for a group of English teachers. The teachers passed the word along to the middle school, and now Carly is setting up a day for a library card drive and future training for their

teachers. LION was able to load our Sierra software onto a laptop so that we can create the cards on site for immediate use by the students.

Carly was also able to attend the Hammonasset Festival for the library. Katy and I were invited to the Community Dining Room to help their clients with resumes. We have two more sessions scheduled and hope that the word spreads that we are there to help.

Finally, I submitted our annual report to the town, and we are working on our annual report to the State Library.

Karen Jensen

September Highlights from the Youth Services Department



One of our patrons printed a rocket at the library. Check out our facebook page to see it launch!

This month the Youth Services Department started our brand new coding class for 3rd—5th graders! The idea came from our past experience with code.org as well as families asking for tech classes for younger students. In the past we expanded our offerings by having participant and caregiver classes which have been successful but we really wanted to create something that would be consistent and bring students rather than caregivers together. Through a little bit of research Katy and I came across a series of free computer science classes created by Google. The program is called Computer Science First or CS First and allows students to explore different computer science fields by creating with free online programming software known as SCRATCH.

There are 6 to 8 different CS First tracks that you can grab onto, we thought it would be fun to start with music since we have not done a lot with music creation in the past. The program uses a combination of videos created by Google that introduces different SCRATCH components so that participants can learn how to change backgrounds, code objects, add music and more. Once they complete each video they are asked to put what they learned to use by creating music videos, soundbites, dance parties and more. Each week the videos and exercises build upon one another so that they can create their own music video from start to finish by the program's end.

The program is currently full and meets twice a month for a total of four months. One of my favorite parts about the program is that before each session begins participants have a chance to share what they created the week before. The entire group gets a kick out of watching each others videos and it is nice to see them cheering each other on. Since the program is self led, (meaning that everyone reviews the videos and creates code at their own pace.) it also makes it possible for neighbors to share their findings and work together. Even though everyone is essentially making their own project they still check-in with one another and ask questions. Problem solving is always great to see and its nice knowing that the program will transform our participants from a group of strangers into a cohesive team.

Once the four months are complete Katy and I will have a chance to assess the program based on not only what the kids created but also their personal reactions to the sessions meeting twice a week. If the response is positive we will have the kids pick the next CS First track and we will dive into another form of Computer Science till the end of the school year.

This past month Mary, Kat, other staff members and I have been working hard to get the Youth Services Department back in order. The summer months left us with a lot of billed, missing and lost-materials. We have been working as a team to not only

recover these items but also to shelve read each section so that all items are accounted for and back in shape. Kat and I have also been working on weeding the children's non-fiction, biographies and parent shelf sections so that we can replace damaged copies and update certain topics. Miss Mary has spent a portion of each day deleting old books and packaging them for recycle. It is nice knowing that we can now expand the collection with more popular, updated and relevant materials.

We also took part in this month's Family Day celebration on the green. Every year the town comes together to put on a series of free activities for children and their parents. The Recreation Department puts on a series of relay races, the Rotary provides food and drink, and there is always face painting, pumpkin painting and more. The town also sets up a stage and sound system so that they can have live magicians, comedy shows and music. Seeing the community come together for families of all ages is refreshing and we enjoy participating.

This year we provided a series of sand art activities for all ages. Some were more detailed where children had to complete outdoor scenes while others were quick and easy as children filled various sand art bottles. We planned on providing crafts for 100 kids and ran out! The town should know that their efforts were a total success.

Carly Lemire

Did You Know...

Continuing the theme from last month, did you know that the library has a growing collection of book club sets, which can be checked out for six weeks? These sets contain 8 regular print and 2 large print copies of a book, along with a brief author biography and discussion questions. You can see the list of book club titles and their availability by searching for the keywords **Book Club Set** in our online catalog.

Did you know that you can bring in your documents or photos to scan to your email or to a flash drive? You can even scan a document into MS Word so that it can be edited. The scanner is in the Reference department and there is no charge to use it.

Did you know that with your library card, you have access to discounts and/or free admission at 25 museums in Connecticut, New York and

Rhode Island? You can pick up a brochure listing all the passes at the library, or search for the keywords **Museum Pass** in our online catalog to see the list and check on availability. Soon, patrons will have the ability to reserve passes to participating museums and print them from home in advance of a visit.

Highlights from the Reference Department-September

We have made quite a few updates to the website this month. The Blackstone Library Learning Commons (under the Research drop-down menu) has been expanded to include a number of new categories. We have also worked on our Job Seekers page and created a Local Business Resources page.

The job seekers page will continue to be expanded; we have many patrons looking for jobs and we are offering digital job searching classes (our first one was full and had a waiting list - we have scheduled a second class) and Tech Thursday appointments to assist these patrons. In addition, Karen and Katy are offering job and resume assistance at the Community Dining Room.

Programs this month included classes for iPad basics, 3D printing and job searching in the digital age, yoga, writer's workshops for poetry, a program of music students performing a variety of

pieces, Ask-A-Lawyer, a Branford Forum on U.S. foreign policy with China, a starting your own business workshop, an Audubon Society presentation on wood frogs, a program for authors on publishing, a John Loeb lecture/presentation on Teddy Roosevelt, a digital marketing luncheon, Saturday Cinema, Bestsellers Book Club and concerts by Bear Minimum and Washboard Slim and the Bluelights.

Whitney and Christina viewed several webinars; including JobNow, Reader's Advisory using pop culture, and the new OverDrive. A number of staff attended the library's genre book club; this month's topic was celebrity biography.

One interesting question this month came from a gentleman who was trying to locate the wing of a WWII Japanese plane that had been on display at the library a number of years ago. We were able to track it down by first pulling articles on the display from

our vertical file and then by searching online. The original display was to honor the Battery Boys of Branford.

The following appeared in the New Haven Register in 2005: "In October 1944, the "Branford Battery Boys" shot down a Japanese Mitsubishi Zero in the battle of Tacloban Airfield on Leyte Island in the Philippines. On Wednesday morning, the plane's tail wing was the centerpiece of a Corcoran-Sundquist American Legion Post 83 dedication honoring the eight surviving veterans of the 211th AAA Battalion, Battery D. "Their World War II record is outstanding and astounding, and the wing is their legacy," said Nicholas D. Palermo, chairman of Post 83's wing program, at the dedication held at the James Blackstone Memorial Library on Main Street."

The wing is currently on display at the West Haven Veterans Museum and Learning Center.



The Hillstead Museum in Farmington is one of the library's newest museum passes.



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November 2016 Program Highlights

Hatha Yoga

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

Surfin' USA: Blue Meanies Celebrate the Beach Boys November 13 @ 2 - 3:15 pm
The Blue Meanies is one of the most popular tribute bands on the East Coast. The New York/New Jersey-based band has been performing together since 1984 and are renowned for energetic and fun shows. *Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.*

Family Talk: Healthy Communication between Parents and Teens November 14 @ 6:30 pm**
Family Talk is an engaging and interactive presentation that focuses on helping parents and children/teens com-

municate in more helpful ways by using a combination of Active Understanding and Motivational Interviewing. Questions/real-world examples are welcome.

The Purple Heart Battalion: The Story of the Japanese American Nisei and Their Fight for Citizenship November 15 @ 6:30 pm
The 442nd Regimental Combat Team was all Nisei (second generation Japanese Americans), distinguishing themselves in fierce combat in World War II. Presented by Col. (ret) Richard Young, Connecticut Army National Guard. Refreshments will be served.

Cake Decorating 101 November 19 @ 2 - 4 pm**
Learn to decorate beautiful cakes just in time for the holidays with certified cake deco-

rator Janet Holland! She'll show you the Wilton method of cake decorating, basic buttercream icing and piping techniques, tinting icing, using a decorating bag, and more. Limited space.

BOOK GROUPS

Mystery Book Club November 2 @ 3 - 4 pm
X by Sue Grafton

2nd Tuesday Book Group November 8 @ 6:15 pm
Brooklyn by Colm Toibin

Bestsellers Book Club November 26 @ 3 - 4 pm**
Today Will Be Different by Maria Semple

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

September 2016 Statistics—Deirdre Santora & Gennett Grinnell

Total Circulation: 12,482
September 2015: 13,653

ConnectiCard: 3,035
September 2015: 2,870

Renewals: 2,876

Downloadable Circulation:
Overdrive ebooks: 616
Overdrive audiobooks: 309
Zinio: 165

Interlibrary Loan
Borrowed 14 Loaned 22

Children's Programs:

Babies (0-2)
16 programs/218 attendance

Preschool (3-5)
5 programs/64 attendance

School-age (6-11)
8 programs/60 attendance

All Ages
0 programs/0 attendance

Total Children's Programs: 29
Total Attendance: 342

Teen Programs (12+)
3 programs/24 attendance

Adult programs

23 programs/526 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room
48 meetings/187 attendance

Computer Sessions: 2598

Facebook: 1340 Likes

MailChimp: 5329 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: 545
Days Open: 27