



# Report to the Board of Trustees

November 6, 2019

## From the Director

We continued to enjoy our beautiful, convenient and functional new entry and we are basking in our patrons' appreciation of it. The new Youth Services Desk was completed and staff from all departments are pitching in to cover the lower rotunda area until all of the children's materials are moved to the lower floor. Work continued on the new fiction area and we expect it to be finished in November. The elevator repair project began at the end of the month and is expected to last until mid-December. We appreciate the kindness of the Branford Police Department who is allowing us to use their meeting room while our new conference room is inaccessible being on the top floor of the building.

We were very excited to receive delivery of some new conference furniture and tables for the computer lab this month. Kathy made arrangements to have all 130 auditorium chairs re-upholstered next month.

Our teen patrons have discovered the new teen room, and Sarah has started holding programs in the new space. It has been amazing how quickly the program has launched and both the high school and middle school



*The new Youth Services Desk!*

advisory groups are at capacity with waiting lists. We've experienced some minor growing pains—we learned that sound carries very well though the stairway in the teen room, up to the quiet study area on the mezzanine. Sarah and Carly are working to educate the teens and set expectations for behavior in this new space. While we support the need for conversation and collaboration, we also expect all of our patrons to exercise respect for each other. Once we have use of the new youth program room and the entire section is turned over to Youth Services, we can hold programs in a dedicated room and there will be consistent staff oversight.

Last month I reported renewed interest in the Capital Campaign, and I am pleased to announce that Dr. Norman Dahl and his family have donated funds to name the terrace furniture, and the McLeod family has made a donation and will name the youth services desk.

Our Friends are planning for their annual holiday basket sale to be held in our new lobby from December 12th — 15th, while supplies last. They welcome donations of goods and baskets throughout the month of November.

*Karen Jensen*

**Snuggle In and Read  
Halloween Ball**  
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26

Our "un-fundraiser" raised \$4800 for library programs and services over the October 26th weekend. We are deeply grateful for the support from our community, especially our local authors who promoted the event and donated toward the cause.

**#snuggleinandread**

## Highlights from the Youth Services Department—September



Teen made props and photo board for Love Your Library Day.

Back to school means back in the swing of things when it comes to programming. Our Maker Mondays for middle school students and half day hands-on activities for elementary school students started without a hitch. Three different sets of students came to learn about the 3D printer and completed design projects from start to finish. They enjoyed learning the design process and many said that they would continue creating from home. Our elementary school students transformed dollar store electric toothbrushes and pool noodles into spinning robots that drew once markers were attached! They got to add all sorts of accessories and it was fun to see how their robots differed even though the process was the same.

Our tween and teen advisory boards are still running strong. Both groups are committed to volunteering and doing projects that benefit the Library and community. They were instrumental in moving the young adult (YA) collection into its new home and they selected a combination of juvenile and adult DVDs to become our very first YA movie collection! All three DVD collections—kids, teen and adult—will be on the same level so “watchers” do not have to travel to different floors in order to find DVDs for the entire family.

Our tween and teen volunteers also helped Miss Katy prepare for our “Love Your

Library Day” at the beginning of the month and spent club time curating buttons, photo booth props as well as manning a photo app. They also volunteered the day of the event so that they could show walk-ins how to use the button machine and operate the photo booth. Katy was the organizer behind this event and truly appreciated their help.

After brainstorming programming ideas with our middle school students we realized that Roblox, a social gaming platform, is all the rage. The server is free, all you need is a username and password to connect to a multitude of games and socialize virtually. Tweens expressed the fact that they enjoyed playing together and learning from one another but they never know when friends or new faces will be available to play. In order to fill that void we have created a weekly gaming meetup where tweens can count on players being there and also be available to coach new players on “how to” create an account and navigate the site. Many are excited about this addition and we are going to see where it leads.

The Youth Services Department also took part in Bradford’s annual Family Day celebration on the green. We brought Library information and different Halloween themed crafts that families could complete. We snagged

the “Library Day” photo booth props so that we could setup a mini session of our own. A lot of people expressed interest in the renovation and cannot wait for it to be finished.

Sarah started two new programs for high schoolers this month. The first was a three-part creative writing workshop run by published authors that lead teens through a series of writing exercises to facilitate short story composition and editing. So far everyone has been really excited about the group and teens have been sharing some of their pieces with us. This teaching duo must have quite the gift since the teens don’t see this as “work” but a way to express themselves and fine tune their craft.

The other group Sarah has created is a combination of teens and adults that are into cosplay, a performance art where people dress up and take on the personas of their favorite TV show, movie and book characters. Cosplayers are maker-inspired and usually develop their own costumes and accessories from scratch rather than buying costumes. The first meeting engaged ten people who are looking to create costumes and share them with the community. We are already thinking of ways that we can incorporate this group with our storytimes once they begin this winter.

## Factual Fridays—Branford's Early High Schools

Branford's first high school was originally an ungraded school on Main Street at the corner of present day Harrison Avenue and was called "Center School". It was built during the Civil War for \$800 and was a small two story structure. In 1879 it became the high school and was enlarged to 35 X 75 feet by contractor Richard Bradley. East and west wings were added to the building in 1881. This structure was used as the high school for 16 years and later served as an elementary school. The steeple blew off during the '38 hurricane forcing the school to close. The building was torn down in 1940 and was replaced by the brick Frontier building which still stands today. The need for a larger high school was

realized in the late 19th century due to the growing immigrant population seeking employment at the Malleable Iron Fittings Company or the Branford Lock Works. In 1894 a building lot on Laurel Street was purchased from John Eades for \$1,400. The school was designed by architect John H. Edelman and built by Joseph N. Graveline for \$22,000. The school was originally 4 rooms and two temporary rooms were added to the rear of the structure in 1948.

Yet another high school was built on Eades Street in 1928 and the current Branford High School on East Main Street was built in 1958. What was the high school on Laurel Street became known

as the "Laurel Street School" and provided elementary education to the children of Branford Center until 1976 and then was used for the Branford Counseling Center and the Board of Education offices. Laurel Street School was torn down in 1994; the site is now the Branford Police Department.

*Jane Peterson Bouley*

*Factual Fridays will continue to run on Instagram and Facebook through the end of the year. The entire year's collection will be featured in the commemorative booklet being produced for Branford's 375th birthday.*



Branford's first high school

## Highlights from the Reference Department-September

September was another busy and rewarding month as we continue to move collections into their permanent locations. The Reference collection and often-used local history titles are located in the Reading Room. The adult DVD collection (except for nonfiction/documentaries) and the music CD collection were moved into the new media room on the ground floor. We are now interfiling nonfiction DVDs with nonfiction books; patrons can browse a call number and discover DVDs as well as books.

Christina and Sarah had another great game night, with 25 people in attendance. Christina led another Dungeons & Dragons session, taught a class on job searching, had four tech sessions with patrons and is continuing to work on relabeling our genealogy collection. She creates our monthly newsletters for both adults and children.

Jenna had four tech sessions with patrons, created weekly nonfiction displays, had 20 people attend our author talk and book signing, led two book club discussions and

created our millennial newsletter.

Debby has been busy moving computers and laptops and working with LION to set up the new computer lab and teen room. Our new printing software allows patrons to print in black and white or color from any computer in the building as well as from their own laptops or mobile devices.

*Debby Trofatter*



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## November 2019 Program Highlights

### ***Soldiers of a Foreign War with Charles McNair\*\****

**November 9 @ 2 - 3:30 pm**

Join us for some light refreshments and a fascinating fire-side presentation by local author and Vietnam War veteran, Charles McNair. He will discuss his book *Soldiers of a Foreign War*, the culmination of almost 45 years of effort. *Soldiers of a Foreign War* tells the story of the combatants, civilians and mindless policies which drove them all through a futile war, and the American and Vietnamese boys who were called upon, often unwillingly, to fight by their respective governments on alien soil.

### **Mail Merge Essentials\*\***

**November 14 @ 2 - 3:15 pm**

Learn how to use Mail Merge using the Step-by-Step Mail Merge Wizard in Microsoft Word. Space is limited.

### **Books 'n' Brews Book Club November 20 @ 6 - 8:00 pm**

Each month, Books 'n' Brews offers 2 titles to choose from, each with its own discussion group to take part in. We bring next month's books to each meeting. Come out and grab one for next month's group. New members welcome. Read one of the titles and come out and join the fun! ***Books 'n' Brews meets at Thimble Island Brewery.***

### **Ask A Lawyer\*\***

**November 21 @ 3:30-5:30 pm**

Free consultation with a lawyer, from the New Haven County Bar Association. First-come, first-served. Sign up at Reference up to 30 minutes before program begins.

### **Uncover Branford\*\***

**November 16 @ 10:30am-12**

Share your favorite Branford spots and plan an outing as a

group to visit and uncover new places in town.

### **3D Print Club\*\***

**November 26 @ 6 - 8:00 pm**

Are you curious about 3D printing? Are you a 3D design master looking to share your skills? Once a month makers of all abilities can come together to learn new things, teach others, and work collaboratively on their 3D printing skills. We provide the printers, filament, and computers, just bring your creativity. Jim Davis will be on hand to help if you get stuck, so all skill levels are welcome!

*The Library will be open on Veterans Day, November 11.*

*The Library will close at 5pm on November 27 and will be closed on November 28 in honor of Thanksgiving.*

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

## September 2019 Statistics—Deirdre Santora

**Total Circulation: 9,202**

September 2018: 11,021

**borrowIT: 2,383**

September 2018: 2,878

**Renewals: 6,599**

**Downloadable Circulation:**

Overdrive ebooks: 996

Overdrive audiobooks: 611

RB Digital: 372

Hoopla: 467 plays

Kanopy: 88 plays

Pronunciator: 454 users

**Children's Programs:**

*Babies (0-2)*

*0 programs/0 attendance*

*Preschool (3-5)*

*6 programs/160 attendance*

*School-age (6-11)*

*3 programs/14 attendance*

*All Ages*

*0 programs/0 attendance*

**Total Children's Programs: 8**

**Total Attendance: 138**

**Teen Programs (12+)**

*16 programs/110 attendance*

**Adult programs**

*20 programs/202 attendance*

**Hammer & Conference Room**

*109 meetings/328 attendance*

**Computer Sessions: 1,921**

**Facebook: 1,757 Likes**

**MailChimp: 7,759 subscribers**

**Average Daily Visitors: \*\***

**Days Open: 28**

*\*\*Count resumes in Oct. 2019*