



Snuggle in and Read a Book Halloween Ball

You're invited to participate in our coziest fundraising non-event... Instead of buying a ticket, make a donation to the Blackstone Library when you RSVP. No need to leave the house, simply get some snacks, curl up with your friends and family, snuggle in... and read!

#snuggleinandread

Report to the Board of Trustees

October 2, 2019

From the Director

The new entry is officially complete and open to the public! So far the response from our patrons and staff has been overwhelmingly positive.

LION helped us to set up the computer lab this month and it has opened to the public. Many thanks to LION—when we told them that we did not have funds available for new computers, they were able to help us install solid state drives to extend the lives of older computers. The lab is now fitted out with 20 computers available to the public. We'll have furniture for the lab and our new conference room by end of October. We also moved into the teen room and the new media room this month!

Now that the project is wrapping up, we have received renewed interest in the campaign—it's the last chance to make a donation before the campaign closes at project's end.

The Friends' annual book sale took place on September 26 — 28 and raised almost \$65,000—making it the most lucrative sale yet. Many commented that it was very well organized and a positive experience for all who volunteered and shopped. We owe tremendous thanks to Joe Genua and Barbara Bar-



The exterior of the new entry on September 6th. Photo by David Wenchell

rett, who sacrificed countless hours throughout the year to make sure the sale went smoothly. This was their first year running the sale and it was extremely well-organized. This year, special book displays were a huge hit, and a new 1/2 price sale on Saturday night in addition to the bag sale on Sunday, kept customers coming back. With approximately 70,000 books, many discovered things they missed on the first visit.

We were very pleased to welcome Moira Healey to our part-time circulation staff on September 3. Moira has been volunteering at the library and with the Friends on their book sales as well.

Finally, as part of a professional development opportunity sponsored by the Friends, I was able to attend a meeting of library administrators at the newly renovated Westport Library. While Westport is a very different community, it is similar in size to Branford. I noticed that they had accomplished goals that are similar to ours—to reuse existing space, find more square footage for community events, enhance the experiences for children, teens and families, and offer more access to technology. They also were conscious of keeping space as flexible as possible.

Karen Jensen

Highlights from the Youth Services Department—August



Two of our oldest summer reading achievers - they rolled through on their bikes, not realizing the signs would be so big.

By the end of August we had sixty-five readers come in to claim their summer reading signs, which is really exciting since we did not know how many to expect. As stated in past reports, I have seen them on display throughout different neighborhoods and I know that many have been looking forward to seeing their picture displayed on our social media pages. Any left over signs will be distributed between all three elementary schools so that they can give them to their top readers the second week of school, so it looks like we will be seeing more around town.

Our tween and teen advisory groups were busy manning a concession stand for our end of summer movie and actually designed buttons for "Love My Library Day" coming up in September! Our summer reading movie was put together in collaboration with the children's, teen and adult department to celebrate the end of summer with a movie showing at Foote Park. Our Teen Advisory Group thought it would be the perfect time to put together a "fundraiser" and thought offering a concession stand during the movie could drum up some cash. We saw that they were committed to the cause and came up with drinks, snacks and candy to sell. Our tweens got involved in the process by creating publicity signs that would be used to feature what we were selling. Meanwhile, the teens would come the evening of the movie to

man the table and talk up the library. The kids that came had a blast and worked hard setting up and breaking down the stand. They enjoyed watching the movie and stayed till the bitter end to ensure that everything was picked up. We couldn't have asked for a better volunteer turnout and know that we can depend on them with similar projects in the future.

Our tween and teen advisory groups also helped us prepare for "Love My Library Day" by creating a series of love my library buttons that we were able to produce with our button maker. The idea is to give everyone a pin when they participate in our love my library photo booth. We enticed both groups to create images that were colorful and positive by offering the BEST submissions Blackstone Library bags! We got some pretty awesome designs and celebrated early by giving everyone on our staff a button and every tween/teen that participated a bag.

This month we also tested our subscription to BreakOut EDU by putting on a series of "breakouts" for middle school students focusing on space. BreakOut EDU is essentially a clearing house of escape room activities that have different educational themes. They can be done on a computer by working through a series of digital locks that can be solved by decoding pictures, solving riddles and completing problems OR you

can physically lock boxes and hide clues throughout a space to be solved as a group. We tried both setups and they were equally successful. The coolest part about these mini breakout sessions is that you do not have to be an expert in whatever the educational "focus" is, all of the answers can be found by deciphering codes, reading between the lines and looking at pictures in different ways. PLUS, since they are education-based they may just leave the Library with some new insights rather than bragging about whether or not they were able to escape from zombies (a typical escape room setup).

One of the most interesting programs we provided this month was entitled Celestial Creatures and it focused on the power of storytelling and how the constellations were used to create stories with meanings. Before books were published stories were passed down orally and the night sky was one of the things you could count on since the constellations would change seasonally. Since the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center was providing the talk they focused on the constellations and stories dealing with animals. The kids got a kick out of seeing the star formations and admitted that the constellations did not entirely look like their live counterparts! Everyone left with a mini constellation to take home.

Factual Fridays

Author Sinclair Lewis directed two plays at the Stony Creek Theatre in 1941; one of his own plays "Angela is 22" as well as "The Good Neighbor" by Jack Levin.

Marquis de Lafayette visited Branford in 1824, where he had dinner with Daniel Averill in his home at 87 Montowese Street, which is currently the site of the Branford Armory.

Branford's **town jail** once stood on the Green, just to the west and rear of the current Town Hall. Ground was

broken for the jail in 1878 and it was used until the 1890's. At that time, it was reported that the conditions in the jail were a disgrace and prisoners were housed in the basement of Town Hall. In 1916, the jail was used to house stray dogs, to the dismay of local residents on Montowese Street who complained about the noise. The old jail was used for storage and torn down in 1968 to make way for a new addition to Town Hall.

Before the 20th century,

childbirth was a home event and it was not until after the depression that babies were routinely born in the hospital. After World War I, sanitariums provided a place for childbirth and convalescence. The **Forbes Sanitarium** was such a place and was located on Branford Hills and run by the Forbes Family. Harriet Gray Forbes was a private nurse and established the sanitarium in her home. It was closed in 1931, sold as a private home and ultimately torn down when Route 1 was developed.

Highlights from the Reference Department-August

The Reference Department has had a very busy and fulfilling month. We moved our entire nonfiction and biography collection from the ground floor to its permanent place on the main floor in just a few days. We have made a few adjustments to the shelving and are helping patrons navigate the new location.

Debby and Karen, along with Jane Bouley, the artists Jean Polka and Pamela Morgan and the calligrapher Pamela LaRegina presented the completed Branford 375th print to the 375th committee at Town Hall. Everyone was very pleased to see the end result and we are deciding how to print and sell the finished product. Debby is working on a new website that will describe each item included on the print and add historical

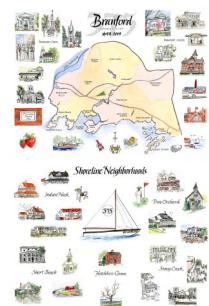
details whenever possible. Christina had a very busy month of technology, teaching both an introductory Excel class and an intermediate one, a Pronunciator and SCOLA class at the Branford Senior Center, a drop-in tech session at the Branford Senior Center, as well as 6 individual tech appointments. She continues to enter non-fiction on-order records and handles book ordering for the majority of our book clubs. Christina and Sarah had another successful game night, attended by 25 people.

Jenna finalized our Fall programs, which include book signings, MakerLab activities, including 3D printing and sewing, game nights, book groups, a new Mueller Report reading group, Latin classes, knitting, Cosplay 101, and a

talk on witchcraft in Connecticut. She continues to lead our Books 'n Brews and Bestseller Book Clubs, posts to Instagram and Facebook, and updates our readers advisory lists; all in addition to her daily responsibilities at the Reference desk.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the entire Reference staff of Jenna, Christina, Anne, Katy and Sarah for all of their hard work and cooperation during the nonfiction move and the renovation in general. I'd like to extend those thanks to the entire staff as well; everyone has been extraordinary in their willingness to help and in their patience with ever-changing spaces. We are all excited to see the renovation near its end in certain areas and see glimpses of the completed project in other areas.

Debby Trofatter



Commemorative Maps celebrating Branford's 375th Anniversary are on sale at blackstonelibrary.org



October 2019 Program Highlights

James Blackstone Memorial Library
758 Main Street
Branford, CT 06405
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reference@blackstonelibrary.org
[facebook.com/blackstonelibrary](https://www.facebook.com/blackstonelibrary)
twitter.com/blackstonelib
www.blackstonelibrary.org

...more than books

Join our email list for more information about programs
www.blackstonelibrary.org

Getting A Job:

Searching to Interviewing**

October 5, 26

& November 2 @ 9-12 noon

In this free, 4-part class, you'll learn how to create a resume, search for and apply for jobs online, and prepare for interviews. Offered by the Blackstone Library and East Shore Regional Adult & Continuing Education (ERACE), with support from the American Library Association and Grow with Google.

your own games too. Adults of all ages welcome.

Intro to Gmail**

October 17 @ 2 — 3:15 pm

Want to get a Gmail account but nervous to get started? Come to this intro class, where we'll start by setting up a Gmail account. We'll also learn how to send and receive emails, download attachments such as pictures and documents, forward, delete, and print emails, and more.

First Friday Game Group

(F2G2)**

October 11 @ 6-9 pm

Join us for game night! We'll be playing all types of board games, from fast-paced, hilarious party games to highly strategic, thinking games that will leave your head spinning! We've got games for everyone, no matter your experience level. Feel free to bring

Ask A Lawyer**

October 17 @ 6-7:45 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.

Connecticut Witchcraft:

Witch-Speak and Social Unrest in the 17th Century**

October 17 @ 6:30 — 8 pm

October in New England often means picturesque foliage, apple harvests, and, of course, stories of witch trials. On October 17th, local teacher and historian Patrick Cumpstone will speak on the Connecticut witch trials of 1647-1697. The talk will include an overview of the trials, his research and explanation of why they happened, and information regarding their rising popularity and influence across the state.

Uncover Branford**

October 19 @ 10:30am-12

Share your favorite Branford spots and plan an outing as a group to visit and uncover new places in town.

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

August 2019 Statistics—Deirdre Santora

Total Circulation: 12,252

August 2018: 15,238

borrowIT: 2,932

August 2018: 2,878

Renewals: 6,724

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive ebooks: 1,084

Overdrive audiobooks: 552

RB Digital: 377

Hoopla: 495 plays

Kanopy: 132 plays

Pronunciator: 451 users

Children's Programs:

Babies (0-2)

0 programs/0 attendance

Preschool (3-5)

6 programs/126 attendance

School-age (6-11)

2 programs/12 attendance

All Ages

0 programs/0 attendance

Total Children's Programs: 8

Total Attendance: 138

Teen Programs (12+)

14 programs/98 attendance

Adult programs

15 programs/205 attendance

Lucy Hammer Room

55 meetings/198 attendance

Computer Sessions: 1,902

Facebook: 1,719 Likes

MailChimp: 7,819 subscribers

Average Daily Visitors: **

Days Open: 27

***Count resumes in Oct. 2019*