



March 5, 2024

Report to the Board of Trustees

From the Director

Library staff were not immune from the many illnesses going around this month — there were a lot of days where at least one staff member was out sick. We are hoping spring will come soon and we can move past this trying season of viruses and germs.

We secured a title sponsor for the upcoming fundraiser, and are so pleased to announce the new title: the Gail and Alan Rosen Memorial Mini Golf at Blackstone event! Thanks to Amy Rosen, founder of the Snuggles for Shoreline Seniors program, who generously became the title sponsor as a way to honor the memory of her parents.

Also for the mini golf event, Rhea and I met with Scott from Coastal Wine & Spirits to discuss their participation for the Mini Golf: After Hours wine, beer, and spirits tastings. Coastal is an enthusiastic partner who helped with the fall Evening with the Spirits event, and we're so grateful for their return. Tickets for both daytime and evening events will go on sale soon.

I gave Tim Kellogg, Assistant Director for the Scranton Library in Madison, CT, a tour of the building. He is also the head of circulation and facilities at Scranton. They have a mix of historic and new building elements, so our two libraries have many things in common and it was interesting to compare notes.



The newly-wedded couple in the rotunda (the candles were battery-operated!).

We hosted a wedding ceremony after hours. I did a walk-through with the bride's friend/wedding planner, and then the ceremony took place a week later. The bride and groom were thrilled with their special location and shared some great pictures.

I also had a walk-through with the caterer for an upcoming private event in March.

Rich Pfeifer met with Emily and Nicolette to record another podcast episode — this time featuring the youth services department. Episode three is up on the website now!

We hosted the first book club discussion presented by the Branford Schools superintendent. We've heard great feed-

back from this event. The next discussion will take place at Walsh Intermediate School on March 27, and then they will be back at the Blackstone for a third discussion in April.

We also hosted an event presented by the MLK Heritage Foundation. Rev. Leroy Perry, of Saint Stephens AME Zion Church, led a discussion on the book, "Strength to Love," written by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Rev. Perry detailed Dr. King's emotional, spiritual and physical journey, and how, despite the hardships he endured, he found the "Strength to Love." We also worked with the Heritage Foundation to reserve space for their upcoming Meetings of the Mind events.

— Katy McNicol



The third episode of the library's podcast was recorded, all about the youth services department.

Highlights from the Youth Services Department—January

We started 2025 in the Youth Services department with lots of fun and relaxing programs! Angela, who works in the circulation department, ran a wonderful crafting program for teens using recycled materials. Using glass yogurt containers, tissue paper, and mod podge, we created beautiful votives complete with electric candles. Then, using painted newspaper, magazine clippings, and twine, we created festive and cheerful garlands to decorate our windows in the winter. We also had a mini-masterpiece painting program for teens this month, using miniature canvases and easels.

Other teen programs included our very popular Dungeons and Dragons group, which meets monthly for an ongoing campaign. We had a few new faces this month, and one of our long-time participants stepped up to help lead the group of newer players. This month I also ran two 3D printing workshops, one open to all ages where participants were able to design or pick out objects to be printed, and one special workshop for a scout troop, which is working on a badge on 3D design and modeling.

Our Science Saturday program, led by Claudia by Coolology, was all about animals in winter and how they hibernate, migrate, or adapt during the season. Participants learned about hydrophobic adaptations, like the insulating oil on animals' coats and feathers, by spreading oil and water on a piece of paper and then add-



Science Saturday attendees learn about how animals adapt during winter.

ing a drop of water to see how the two surfaces responded. Did you know that penguins have 100 feathers per square inch of skin? Participants got to visualize this number by getting an inch of playdough to see how many feathers they could fit in the space.

Our homeschool meetup this month was also inspired by winter, and was all about the science of snow. We learned about how snowflakes form and what kinds of shapes they make, and then we used this knowledge to make snowflakes out of marshmallows and toothpicks. Our take-and-makes this month were also snow-inspired! The kits included supplies to make snowmen made from paper plates, cotton balls, googly eyes with paper hats and scarves to celebrate winter.

We also had a visit from an educator from the Steward Day School this month. The program focused on a Muskogee tribe story, How Grandmother Spider Stole the Sun. Families explored the story

through interactive storytelling, shared ideas about teamwork and courage, and designed their own sunshine monoprints.

We had two special programs geared towards younger children and their families in January. Nicolette offered a dance and movement class for kids ages 3-5 where they learned how to move based on the sounds in the music and were taught some basic choreography. They also read a picture book about dance and finished the class by performing with scarves to Let It Go from Frozen. We also had a presentation by local music educator Linda Franklin-Biggs which focused on the importance of early communication skills during a child's first 24 months. We have finalized all of our programs for the spring and can't wait to see you there! Check out the library's events calendar to see what's happening!

— Emily Yates



Teens created these wonderful mini-masterpieces— the canvas was small but the talent was immense!



Nicolette reads to children before they all dance to music.

Highlights from the Reference Department—January

In many cases, we are able to predict pretty accurately which of our programs will be popular. Concerts always rank high up in our most attended programs and our recent concert with Silk 'n Sounds was our most attended yet, with nearly 150 people in attendance.

Other programs surprise us at times and that was the case with our recent jigsaw puzzle tournament. We had a great response and a very successful tournament. Jordan purchased identical puzzles for each team (500-piece Wintry Cats) and the winning team completed their puzzle in just under 24 minutes. We were impressed! Given the popularity of the event, Jordan is planning to offer another tournament in the near future.

— Deborah Trofatter



THE GAIL & ALAN
ROSEN MEMORIAL

MINI GOLF

AT BLACKSTONE LIBRARY

SATURDAY, APRIL 26 10 AM - 4 PM
SUNDAY, APRIL 27 1 PM - 3:30 PM

PLAY 18 HOLES THROUGHOUT
THE ENTIRE LIBRARY!

VISIT BLACKSTONELIBRARY.ORG TO BUY YOUR TICKETS TODAY

\$5 PER PERSON

ADULTS ONLY, AGES 21+

MINI GOLF: *After Hours*

SATURDAY, APRIL 26 7 PM

\$30 PER PERSON

FEATURING APPETIZERS, PRIZE DRAWINGS, AND
SPIRITS, BEER, & WINE TASTINGS SPONSORED BY
COASTAL LIQUORS!

VISIT BLACKSTONELIBRARY.ORG TO BUY YOUR TICKETS TODAY

PROCEEDS FROM THIS FUNDRAISER SUPPORT THE INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND
CRUCIAL SERVICES OFFERED TO THE COMMUNITY BY THE BLACKSTONE LIBRARY.

Mini golf is coming back to the Blackstone Library this spring. Save the date for the Gail and Alan Rosen Memorial Mini Golf at Blackstone Library weekend, which includes Saturday night's Mini Golf: AFTER HOURS for ages 21+.

SAVE THE DATES: SATURDAY & SUNDAY, APRIL 26-27



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instagram.com/blackstone_library

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

MUSEUM PASSES AT THE BLACKSTONE LIBRARY



Looking for a fun outing for the whole family? Check out our museum pass collection! Passes offering free or discounted admission to museums all across the state (and beyond!).

Reserve passes online and get many passes sent directly to your smartphone or print from home.

More info: blackstonelibrary.org/museum-passes

Passes have been generously provided by the Friends of the Blackstone Library and the Allan Louis Loeb Foundation.



March 2025 Program Highlights

Branford Microfund Info Session

**Saturday, March 1
@ 10 am–12 pm**

Drop-in event. The Branford Microfund is a 501c3 non-profit organization providing interest-free loans of up to \$3,000 for unexpected financial challenges to Branford residents. Members of the organization will be here to answer your questions on how to apply for a loan.

Laugh Like the Dickens: Humorous Stories with Mr. Dickens

Monday, March 3 @ 6-7:30 pm

Professor Emeritus and Dickens performer Kenneth Noll will perform a selection of humor stories from Charles Dickens. Registration required.
Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.

Fireside Chats with local authors

**Saturdays: March 8, March 15
1–3 pm**

Drop-in event. Join us for readings and discussions with local authors in front of the fireplace in our Reading Room! Registration is not required to attend these events.
March 8: Jen Payne
March 15: Tony Ferraiolo

Sprout your Success: A Beginner's Guide to Seed Starting

Monday, March 17 @ 6-7 pm

Get ready to take the first step towards a successful gardening journey! Mark Gostkiewicz, of Tri Gable Lea Farm LLC, will guide you through the basics of starting your own seeds. Registration required.
Sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.

Poet Laureate Poetry Reading Saturday, March 22 @ 3–5 pm

Poet Laureate Judith Liebmann reads from her forthcoming collection Quantum. Poet Gemma Mathewson reads from her book The Museum of Rain, as well as new poems. Readings will be followed by an open mic session. Registration required.

Center Cemetery Presentation Series with town historian, Jane Bouley, Part 1:

**"Remember Them Who Have
Spoken to You"**

**Monday, March 24th
@ 5–7 pm**

Jane will share her findings and research on the history of Center Cemetery in Branford.
Sponsored by the Branford Center Cemetery Association & the Branford Historical Society.

Check our website for more programs and registration details!

January 2025 Statistics—Deirdre Santora

Total Circulation: 7,868

January 2024: 7,918

borrowIT: 1,921

January 2024: 1,630

Renewals: 4,065

Computer Sessions: 872

WIFI Logins: 3,475

Website visits: 7,341

Facebook: 2,873 followers

Instagram: 1,463 followers

MailChimp: 8,642 subscribers

Downloadable Circulation:

Overdrive/Libby ebooks: 1,429

Overdrive/Libby audiobooks: 1,286

Overdrive/Libby magazines: 828

Palace App: 39

HOOPLA: 1,104

Kanopy: 494

Transparent Languages: 123

Ancestry Library: 322

New Haven Register: 168

Branford History Scrapbooks: NA

Creative Bug: 111

**Lucy Hammer & Conference
Room Usage: 165**

**Children's Programs
33 programs/876 attendance**

**Teen Programs (12+)
6 programs/45 attendance**

**Adult/All Ages programs
46 programs/864 attendance**

**Average Daily Visitors: 430
Days open: 28**