

Director's Report to the Board of Agents

Silas Bronson Library

September 27, 2016

Raechele Guest, Director

Circulation Division

June Statistical Reports: Main Library

Total Collection Size: 249,966
Total Items Circulated: 12,433
Total Circulation In-House: 131
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 1,003
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 341

Total Active Patrons: 13,158
Total Expired Patrons: 15,863
Total Patrons Added: 308

June Statistical Reports: Bunker Hill

Total Collection Size: 13,300
Total Items Circulated: 1,003
Total Circulation In-House: 0
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 75
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 376

Total Active Patrons: 453
Total Expired Patrons: 537
Total Patrons Added: 7

July Statistical Reports: Main Library

Total Collection Size: 249,390
Total Items Circulated: 12,137
Total Circulation In-House: 124
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 1,288
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 305

Total Active Patrons: 13,086
Total Expired Patrons: 15,784
Total Patrons Added: 250

July Statistical Reports: Bunker Hill

Total Collection Size: 13,295
Total Items Circulated: 857
Total Circulation In-House: 0
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 100
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 319

Total Active Patrons: 466
Total Expired Patrons: 515
Total Patrons Added: 15

August Statistical Reports: Main Library

Total Collection Size: 250,177
Total Items Circulated: 13,251
Total Circulation In-House: 108
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 968
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 434

Total Active Patrons: 12,908
Total Expired Patrons: 15,818
Total Patrons Added: 265

August Statistical Reports: Bunker Hill

Total Collection Size: 13,315
Total Items Circulated: 745
Total Circulation In-House: 0
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 81
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 284

Total Active Patrons: 437
Total Expired Patrons: 535
Total Patrons Added: 15

Online Presence

We continue to steadily increasing the number of page likes for our Facebook account; as of September 15, we are at 452 page likes and 17 people have subscribed to our Events listings.

Website Usage (Google Analytics)

June: 1,895 users

6,753 pageviews

home: 2,801

kidprograms: 331

findbooks: 265

museums: 245

contactus: 203

bunkerhill: 202

cardID: 190

July: 2,105 users

6,437 pageviews

home: 3,075

museums: 294

kidprograms: 260

bunkerhill: 221

contactus: 180

findbooks: 153

cardID: 148

August: 2,163 users

7,248 pageviews

home: 3,307

museums: 270

kidprograms: 251

contactus: 226

bunkerhill: 203

findbooks: 189

cardID: 182

emedia/ebooks: 158

Patron Services & Programs

We have launched six new services for our library patrons: Lynda.com, NoveList Plus, Small Business Reference Center, Small Engine Repair Reference Center, EBSCO eBooks, and InstantFlix. Our librarians are conducting classes on how to use all of our online services. We have also added one-on-one tutoring by appointment for people needing help using computers, tablets, and smartphones.

In response to requests from the public, we have launched a chess club which meets monthly. Now that the Children's Division is fully staffed, we have been able to add a weekly afterschool program, homework help, a coding club, and a monthly book club for tweens.

The Children's Summer Reading program exceeded previous records, with 1,631 children participating. Next year's summer reading theme is Architecture, Building, Construction.

Our monthly newsletter, Books & Happenings, is now being published quarterly, making it easier for the public to plan ahead.

Construction Projects

The City has gone out to bid for the front plaza project. The pre-bid meeting was held on September 22; the bid opening is scheduled for October 6. On a related topic, we have continued to experience minor problems with the lobby renovation. The carpet tiles behind the circulation desk had to be re-glued earlier this month. Six of the lights in the lobby have been stuck in "emergency" mode, requiring the contractor to request information from the manufacturer on how to reset them.

Wi-Fi, CEN, & CIPA

In August, Wi-Fi hotspots were added to increase coverage to the entire building, instead of just the Main Reading Room. Library patrons, especially parents in the Children's Room, have been very pleased by this improvement. In addition, the library's Wi-Fi coverage includes most of Library Park, making it possible for patrons to enjoy our internet service while sitting in the shade of a tree on a nice summer day.

Due to State of Connecticut funding cuts, the Connecticut Education Network (CEN), which provides a networked internet service for public libraries and schools throughout Connecticut, will now be charging for internet service. Our cost is \$450 per month for 100 Mbps, which is sufficient to handle the needs of the library staff and patrons. We are able to defray most of the cost through e-rate funding, which will reimburse us for 90% of the costs. The library was notified of this situation on July 5, with a deadline of July 21 to sign up for the e-rate program. With the Mayor's approval, we submitted an application for the e-rate funding.

In order to receive the e-rate funding, we must become compliant with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). See attached document for detailed CIPA requirements. Public libraries have traditionally been opposed to CIPA compliance, as it requires banning access to websites containing visual depictions defined as "obscene, child pornography, or... harmful to minors." While this may sound reasonable at first glance, it conflicts with the role of libraries in facilitating access to information, can be subjective, and can result in the wrong websites being blocked. For example (in a different arena), Facebook has frequently been criticized for banning images that are not considered objectionable by many people. CIPA does allow the library to disable the filter on individual computers for "bona fide research or other lawful purpose."

Prior to this, the Silas Bronson Library has prohibited the display of profane, obscene, or injurious language, texts, or graphics as part of library policy. Library patrons may be banned from the library for a minimum of one month if they violate this policy. Our Computer Use policy states that patrons may not view content unsuitable to an all-ages public setting. Therefore, adding CIPA filtering is not a departure from existing library policy. Instead, it is an enforcement of existing policy. However, our Computer/Internet Use policy should be updated to reflect CIPA language, the existence of filters, and the option to use the internet without the filters on request.

We are required by CIPA to post a public notice and hold a public hearing about the implementation of the filtering and the library's internet policy. This should be done before the end of the calendar year.

e-Cards for Students

We are testing a pilot program to collaborate with the public schools in order to get library cards to the students in the city school system. If successful, the schools will distribute permission forms to parents, allowing their children to sign up for library cards. Our staff will then visit the school with a laptop and issue cards to the students. The cards will be e-Cards, which means they can be used only for accessing our online services. Students will still need to visit the library with their parent or legal guardian, bringing documentation to verify their address, in order to sign up for a card that allows them to borrow physical books.

Staff Updates

Lisa Bartkus is our new Administrative Associate III, replacing Charlotte Williams, who is now at the Police Department. Lisa trained with Charlotte in August, learning the various City procedures, policies, and systems involved with running our administrative operations.

Mary-Beth Mason joined our staff this month as a Librarian II assigned to the Adult Information Services Division. She was previously a school librarian in Bridgeport and, years back, at North End Middle School in Waterbury. She has begun teaching some of our new computer classes and will be taking over management of the Hall of Fame program from Anita Bologna.

Jeffrey Lafontaine, one of our Pages, has left the library for a job with more hours.