

Director's Report to the Board of Agents

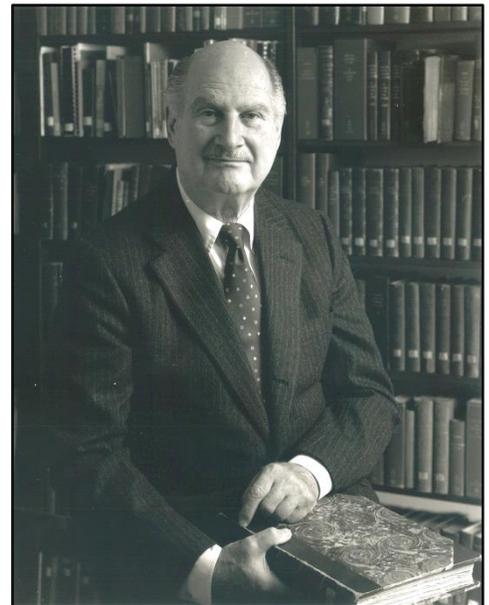
Silas Bronson Library

July 15, 2019

Raechel Guest, Director

Stanford Warshasky

I am sad to report that the library's sixth director, Stanford Warshasky, passed away on June 15, 2019 at the age of 96. He served as director of the Silas Bronson Library from 1972 until 1989, overseeing the computerization of the library's circulation procedures, increasing the number of spaces in the library's parking lot, and ensuring that the library's collections kept up with changing demands. He was hailed as an innovator at the time of his retirement, praised for increasing the range of services, programs, and materials to meet the many needs of Waterbury's diverse community.



Serving the public was Warshasky's mission as a librarian, reflecting upon his retirement that he had "enjoyed being of assistance to people looking to improve the quality of their life in some way" and that "the library is a place where anyone can come to learn how to improve themselves."

In 1985, Warshasky received the Connecticut Librarian of the Year award from the Connecticut Library Association in recognition of his work to improve and extend good library service.

During his tenure as the library's director, Warshasky was a vocal advocate for the library, campaigning for the City to increase its funding of the library. He often noted that the Silas Bronson Library was the most underfunded public library in Connecticut. Warshasky oversaw the closure of three of the library's five branches due to insufficient funding and inadequate staffing levels. In 1981, Warshasky declared that the public was being "cheated" of services that it had a right to expect, as

the library's share of the total city budget was only about 73 cents per \$100 (today it is about 20 cents less than that). Thanks to his efforts, the library's professional staff saw their wages increased to levels equal to those at other public libraries, and overall staffing levels were eventually increased.

Warshasky was also an advocate and tutor for Literacy Volunteers of Greater Waterbury, establishing space in the main library for that organization, launching a relationship that has proved beneficial to the public served by both organizations.

Warshasky served as chairman of the Advisory Council on Cable TV for Middlebury, Plymouth, and Waterbury in 1975, and as president of Region One Cooperating Library Service Unit in 1977, promoting regional library cooperative services.

Prior to leading the Silas Bronson Library, Warshasky served as deputy director of the Mohawk Valley Library System in Schenectady, NY; director of the New London Public Library in New London, CT; and head librarian at the Montgomery County Library in Rockville, MD. Warshasky was born in Kansas City, MO on November 14, 1922 and was a graduate of the Columbia Library School, Columbia University.

Front Plaza

There were additional problems with the fountain that have since been resolved. Additionally, the sump pump failed to operate when the fountain flooded the basement. The City will be replacing the sump pump in the near future.

Whale Update

We have reached out to the City's engineer to discuss the logistics of installing the Joseph Stein whale sculpture on the front of the building. We have not yet been able to set up a meeting to discuss the matter in-depth.

ALA Annual Conference

I attended the American Library Association's Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. last month. There were a number of panel discussions focused on ways to restructure library operations for better service, greater efficiency, and improved employee morale. Later this year, the library staff will be engaged in a series of workshops to rethink how we operate.

Summer Interns

We have five interns at the library this summer. Four are high school students from the Northwest Regional Workforce Board, one of whom has been interning with us since last year. The fifth intern is a college student from NVCC's WAVE (Workforce Achievers Value Education) program. The interns are assisting with a variety of tasks, including shelving books and preparing materials for programs.

Staffing Updates

As of August 1, we will be short one Admin and four librarians. Three of those positions are vacant due to retirements; one vacancy is due to a librarian accepting employment elsewhere; and the fourth is a temporary vacancy due to illness. Depending on the pace of hiring, there may be a delay in resuming our Saturday hours this fall.

Up until now, each division has been "siloeed," with managers being uninvolved in one another's divisions and division members working only in one division. This has led to times in which one division has plenty of staff members present while another division is severely short-staffed for the day. To help rectify this situation, all librarians are being trained in every division's activities. So, for example, if the Circulation division doesn't have enough people to cover the front desk, any available librarian from Adult or Youth Services can jump in to assist.

Additionally, managers are now working as a team to create a single monthly desk schedule, rather than creating individual desk schedules in isolation.

Patron Services

After testing out a charging locker in the new Teen Zone, we purchased two more for our adult patrons to use in the East Wing and the Main Reading Room. Each locker has a USB connector and is large enough to store a tablet. Over the years, a number of our patrons have had their phones stolen when they left them charging in the Main Reading Room; patrons will now be able to secure their phones while they are charging.

As a related service, we will soon be making charging cables available for purchase at the front desk. There have been several times when patrons have needed to charge their phone but didn't have a charging cable. Similarly, we are looking into adding other items for purchase, such as individual envelopes, based on patron requests.

We are looking into adding inexpensive umbrellas with the library's logo to our selection of items for purchase. This is another item that patrons have expressed interest in getting from us, as they are sometimes caught without an umbrella when it's raining.

Circulation Division

June Statistical Reports: Main Library

Total Collection Size: 261,298
Total Items Added to Collection: 873
Total Items Circulated: 10,656
Total Circulation In-House: 172
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 589
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 391

Total Active Patrons: 10,968
Total Expired Patrons: 13,236
Total Patrons Added: 186

June Statistical Reports: Bunker Hill

Total Collection Size: 15,511
Total Items Added to Collection: 31
Total Items Circulated: 539
Total Circulation In-House: 0
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 71
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 175

Total Active Patrons: 392
Total Expired Patrons: 453
Total Patrons Added: 7

Museum Pass Usage, June 2019

American Clock & Watch Museum: 0	Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk: 0
Barker Comic and Cartoon Museum: 1	Mark Twain House: 0
Barnum Museum: 0	Mattatuck Museum: 1
Beardsley Zoo: 4	Mystic Aquarium: 0
Children's Museum/Roaring Brook Nature: 1	Mystic Seaport: 1
Connecticut Forests & Parks: 0	New Britain Museum of American Art: 2
Connecticut Science Center: 2	New England Air Museum: 2
Connecticut's Old State House: 0	New Haven Museum: 0
EverWonder Children's Museum: 1	Old Sturbridge Village: 1
Harriet Beecher Stowe Center: 0	Peabody Museum of Natural History: 0
Imagine Nation: 4	Wadsworth Atheneum: 1
Institute for American Indian Studies: 2	White Memorial Conservation Center: 1
KidsPlay Childrens Museum: 4	

Online Presence

Facebook Followers	as of 7/12/2019: 1,571
Facebook Reach	June 14 – July 11: 14,403
Facebook Post Engagements	June 14 – July 11: 3,975

Instagram Followers	as of 7/12/2019: 474
Bronson Teens Instagram Followers	as of 7/12/2019: 185
Twitter Followers	as of 7/12/2019: 369

Website Visitors	June 1 – June 30:	1,937
Website Sessions	June 1 – June 30:	3,668
Website Pageviews	June 1 – June 30:	7,338

Most Visited Website Pages (June 1 – June 30):

Home Page: 3,731	Research: 153	New Movies: 35
Programs: 507	How to Get a Card: 139	Board of Agents: 26
Museum Passes: 354	eBooks: 128	Friends: 26
How to Find Books: 258	Borrowing Questions: 87	Library History: 20
Bunker Hill Branch: 204	Newsletters: 78	City Directories: 16
Children's Division: 198	Teen/YA: 75	Email Signup: 13
Calendar: 174	Hall of Fame: 59	Directions: 11
About Us: 170	Computer Classes: 47	Suggest a Purchase: 11
Genealogy/Local Hist.: 164	Book Sale: 41	School Visits: 10
Ask A Librarian: 164	News: 38	Meeting Rooms: 5