

# The Librarian

Newspaper of the Stonington Free Library

Winter/Spring 2014 Issue

## HATS OFF TO OUR VOLUNTEERS *We Couldn't Do It without You*

In this issue of *The Librarian* we're saluting our volunteers. They are many and deeply committed. The fact is, volunteering is alive and thriving at the Stonington Free Library.

Our volunteers include all of our Board members, and committee members. We have teen volunteers in the summer helping with the Summer Reading program. Our programs are provided by volunteers and volunteers help set up for programs. A volunteer designs our posters and volunteers place program posters around town. Our Mystery Dinner fundraiser is successful because of the large number of volunteer committee members, as well as the hosts who offer their homes to us. Our Battle of Stonington 5K Race is an all-volunteer affair. We have volunteers who meet weekly to prepare new books for borrowing and volunteers who help with various "library" tasks such as shelving books and shelf reading.

The following articles profile a few of our volunteers who were chosen to give a sense of how many ways the Library depends on them.

People voluntarily give their time freely because they are committed to the common goal of the Library: to enrich the lives of the people of Stonington. If you would like to join our volunteers, please stop by and ask for a volunteer application and we will be happy to find a place for you.

### Christine Nickerson: She Volunteers Because, "I Love Libraries"

Christine Nickerson might be called our Jack-of-All-Trades volunteer. If it needs doing, she does it: manning the front desk, shelving books, answering the telephone, sending faxes, checking books out, checking books in, and, as she puts it, "generally helping patrons." And she's been doing it for 10 years.

She explains, "My love of libraries dates back to my very first volunteer job, shelving books in my elementary school library. When I came back here from Michigan I was looking for a way to connect with the community, a way to get involved, so the Stonington Free Library was the natural answer. And I've been very happy here.

The Library is a haven, a wonderful, warm place where friends meet friends, or just come in to read the paper, or one of our magazines. The patrons are wonderful. They're so interesting, from the seniors to the young mothers with their kids and infants. They're why I love working here. It's such a pleasure to be of help in this environment and have a real effect.

This Library has been serving the community for—how long?—100-150 years? That's a great tradition. And, at the same time, we're very up-to-date with electronic readers, videos, wi-fi, that sort of thing. I have my own Kindle and I love it. I hope I'll be here for the next ten years."



*You might call Christine Nickerson a Jack-of-All-Trades volunteer.*

### Kathy Weinberger: Her Volunteer Work Grows Our Landscaping Budget

Kathy Weinberger whose company, Terra Firma, has been providing horticultural services to the Stonington area for years,



*Kathy Weinberger gives her time and she donates to the Annual Fund.*

does valuable volunteer work for the Stonington Free Library.

"Our landscaping budget is tiny, and Kathy enables us to spread it out in a way we never could if she didn't donate her time," says Director Margaret Victoria.

Ms. Weinberger's work crews do receive pay, but she doesn't. "It gives me real satisfaction to keep the Green looking well-tended in a way the Library can afford," she says. "We schedule work around the 4th of July and then the Stonington Fair in early August. Those are the times we want to look our best.

"I love libraries. They recycle knowledge and save trees. I've worked in libraries since high school. I worked in the Mystic Library when I first came here from California. I still do landscape work for them as well as for the Stonington Lighthouse.

"I brought my daughter to the children's programs years ago. I have a library card and check out e-books for my Kindle.

"Stonington Free Library is a community hub—a great place where you can read and stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer"

Director Victoria smiles appreciatively, "She gives us her time *and* she donates to the Annual Fund. You can't ask for more than that!"

### Our Fundraising Events Take Many Volunteers

Anne Fix and Chris Turrentine Co-Chair The Mystery Dinner



*Starting in October, Anne Fix & Chris Turrentine spend a lot of time in each other's company.*

Starting in October, Anne Fix and Chris Turrentine spend a lot of time in each other's company. It takes about 6 months to pull a Mystery Dinner together, and Anne has co-chaired all 6 of them (Chris has co-chaired 5).

"I guess you could say we're 'volunteer intensive.' Our committee has 15 members," says Anne. "And on top of what they do individually they have 6 committee meetings from October until the Dinner that go for 2, sometimes 3, hours."

"Yes," adds Chris. "And, of course, the hosts and hostesses are volunteers, too, so that adds up to 36 since we think we'll have 18 venues this year. And you have to remember that the hosts pay for all the food and wine and drinks that they serve. So it's quite a contribution of time and money. And many of them have hosted multiple times!"

In answer to a question, Anne says, "I do it because everyone is so incredible; it's a great group to work with, exciting and fun. And because the Library is so worth supporting."

Chris adds, "Everyone loves working together. We've developed our roles and they mesh and work so well. And it's wonderful the way the community supports this. It's a lot of fun and it does a lot of good."

### Stephen Bessette Is Race Director of The Battle Of Stonington 5K

Stephen Bessette started the Battle of Stonington 5K Race when he was a board member at the Stonington Historical Society. When he cycled off, he moved the Race to the Library. He has directed the Race for 16 years.

"My mother loved the Library," says Bessette. "It's a community, it's a home base. Even if you don't use the Library, you feel its impact because it serves the whole population from toddlers to seniors. It's not just a building, it's a pillar of Stonington. It's like a big living room. Plus, the Library also has speakers; it's a forum for discussion.

"I spend about 60 hours on it in total. Early in the year it's an hour here, an hour there, recruit, get insurance. Then in the last week or so it's 10-hour days. You have to be a good organizer, a good promoter, and, most of all, a good cheerleader."



*Stephen Bessette has directed the Race for 16 years.*



**Bold** = Adult Activities      📞 = Pre-registration Required. Please call.

FEBRUARY

- 5

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 2 – 6)
- 11:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 3 – 6)
- 6

12 NOON

**Books Sandwiched In: Bring a sandwich and enjoy Lisa Saunders discuss *The Mystic Seafarer’s Trail***
- 8

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington – Make a Valentine’s Day Card
- 9

5:00 pm

***Sunday Evening Lecture Series* Jenny Dixon shares her experience *Building a Museum***
- 11

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Babies – 2)
- 11:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 3 – 6)
- 12

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 2 – 6)
- 15

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington – Play Dough
- 17

***Library Closed for President’s Day***
- 18

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Babies – 2)
- 11:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 3 – 6)
- 19

10:30 am

Drop in Story Time (Ages 2 – 6)
- 20

3:30 pm

Fairy Party – Make your own fairy and fairy house! (Ages 3 – 8) 📞
- 22

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington Stamp Day
- 25

10:30 am

Drop in Story Time (Babies – 2)
- 11:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 3 – 6)
- 26

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 2 – 6)



MARCH

- 1

10:30-3 pm

Lego Day
- 4

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Babies – 2)
- 11:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 3 – 6)
- 5

10:30 am

Drop in Story Time (Ages 2 – 6)
- 6

12 NOON

**Books Sandwiched In: Bring a sandwich and enjoy Lisa Leach discuss *Subject to be announced***
- 8

10:30 am

Vroom! Build a Race Car – Home Depot will show you how (Ages 6 – 11) 📞
- 9

5:00 pm

***Sunday Evening Lecture Series* Tim Love presents *Think Like the Sun* at the La Grua Center, 32 Water Street**
- 11

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Babies – 2)
- 11:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 3 – 6)
- 12

10:30 am

Drop in Story Time (Ages 2 – 6)
- 15

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington – Make a St. Patrick’s Day Craft
- 18

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Babies – 2)
- 11:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 3 – 6)
- 19

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (ages 2 – 6)
- 22

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington – Spring Story Time
- 25

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Babies – 2)
- 11:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 3 – 6)
- 26

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (ages 2 – 6)
- 28

Last day for 50 to Grow On, our Winter Reading Challenge
- 29

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington – Sticker Day
- 31

Quack, Quack. It’s Duckling Week! Our babies should hatch this week!

APRIL

- 1

Voting OPENS for the 2014 Nutmeg Award Books of the year!
- 10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Babies – 2)
- 11:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 3 – 6)
- 2

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (ages 2 – 6)
- 3

12 NOON

**Books Sandwiched In: Bring a sandwich and enjoy Leslie McGrath discuss *Poetry as Food***
- 5

10:30-3 pm

Lego Day
- 8

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Babies – 2)
- 11:30 am

Drop In Story Time (Ages 3 – 6)
- 9

10:30 am

Drop In Story Time (ages 2 – 6)
- 12

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington – Stop in and visit our ducklings!
- 13

5:00 pm

***Sunday Evening Lecture Series* Merrill House Writer-in-Residence Kelle Groom**
- 19

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington Bunny Story Time
- 21-26

Green Week Celebration – Drop in and make a craft
- 26

6:00 pm

**MYSTERY DINNER Fundraiser – tickets required in advance, no walk-ins. Space is LIMITED. Please call the Library for information.**
- 30

LAST day to VOTE for the Nutmeg Awards!!



MAY

- 1

Nutmeg Nominees announced for 2015! There will be a NEW Grade 2 – 4 level!
- 3

10:30-3 pm

Lego Day
- 9

6:00 pm

***Special Friday Evening Lecture* Nathaniel Philbrick will speak at the Library**
- 10

10:30 am

Make a Mother’s Day Card
- 15

The Nutmeg 2014 WINNERS will be announced! Stop in and see if your favorite won!
- 17

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington – Story Time
- 24

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington – Painting Day
- 26

***Library Closed for Memorial Day***
- 31

10:30 am

Saturday in Stonington – Pony Bead Day

All events held at the Library unless otherwise noted.  
**Dates are subject to change. Be sure to confirm: 860.535.0658**

Bookworms

By Maris Frey, Children’s Librarian

Annual Children’s Opera

Both performances of our annual Children’s Opera were sold out at The Mystic Stage on January 25. Attendees raved about “The Frog Prince” presented by The Lollipop Express Opera Company! We are so grateful to the Library’s opera aficionado, who so generously underwrites this performance for the children in our own and area communities.



Both performances of our annual Children’s Opera “The Frog Prince” presented by The Lollipop Express Opera Company were sell-outs.

Upcoming Program Highlights

We are in the middle of our Winter Drop In Story Times and will swing right into Spring programs at the beginning of March. Tuesdays at 10:30 are for babies—2 year olds; 3—6 year olds are at 11:30; and Wednesdays at 10:30 are for 2—6 year olds.

Our first Winter Reading Challenge, 50 to Grow On, has been a great success so far! This early literacy initiative encouraging parents to read aloud to their children is open to all children, ages 7 and younger. It will continue until March 28. There are 95 children signed up so far and they have already read over 900 books! If you haven’t signed your child up yet, come in and join the fun!



Stonington Free Library  
Service to All – Young And Old, River to River

**Stonington Free Library**  
20 High Street, Stonington, CT

**Mailing address**  
PO Box 232, Stonington, CT 06378

**Hours**  
10am-5pm M, T, Th and F  
10am-8pm Wed • 10am-3pm Sat

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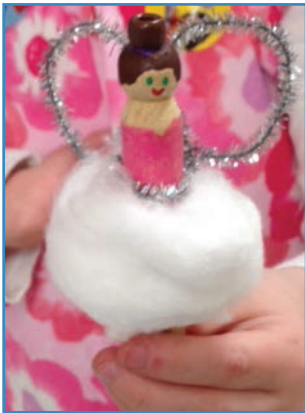
**Layout** CMB Creative Group



# More Bookworms

We are having a Fairy Party at 3:30 on February 20 for ages 3 – 8. We will be making fairies and fairy houses and there are fairy cookies to enjoy. Registration is required for this fun afternoon.

On March 8 at 10:30 am, we will have a kids’ workshop, Build a Race Car. The Home Depot will teach the class and provide all materials. We look forward to a great experience. Space is limited and registration is required. The program is open to children ages 6 –11 and they may require some parental help.



*We’re having a Fairy Party at 3:30 on February 20, ages 3-8*



*Don’t miss “Duckling Week” March 31–April 5*

Terra Firma Farms will generously provide us with an incubator and duck eggs this spring and we look forward to welcoming our newest “patrons” during Duckling Week, March 31—April 5. Be sure to stop in to say hello and check our web site and Facebook page for (shell) breaking news!

the program this year, as we are experimenting with some online aspects to the program. With this in mind, we are raising the age of our volunteers. The opportunity is open to students entering **seventh grade** or older who would like to work in our air-conditioned Children’s Room for one or two shifts weekly. We are flexible with family vacations, but we do require volunteers to commit to at least 4 weeks between June 23 and August 1. Volunteers must also attend one of two training sessions in June, dates to be determined. **Strong mental math, computer and social skills** are needed for this position and excellent organizational abilities, a good memory and creativity are appreciated. We hope this is an opportunity for a positive learning experience allowing young teens a chance to learn skills useful to a future paid position. Applications are available on-line at [stoningtonfreelibrary.org](http://stoningtonfreelibrary.org) under Children/Teen—Teen Volunteer Club or at the Library. Drop off your completed application in the Children’s Room! We begin working on schedules as soon as applications are received.

The themes for the Summer Reading Program are Robot Readers, Fizz Boom Read and Spark a Reaction. If you have a science background, we would love to have you present a program or talk about your career. Please contact the Library for more information. We are also looking for any donations for our store or basket raffle. If you are looking for ideas, please call the Children’s Room. Registration opens on June 16!



## Summer Reading Heads Up

We are looking for Teen Volunteers to help us out this summer. This “TV” program gives our volunteers real work experience and they earn community service hours at the same time! We have made a change to

## MEET MELISSA FLOYD, THE LIBRARY’S NEW DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR



businesses. Last year, before I got here, they ran a series of talks about estate planning that was a success, so we intend to do more along those lines. Also, we’ll be doing more to emphasize the Babcock-Phelps Society to recognize persons who leave posthumous gifts to the Library in their wills.

“I also want to work on the Web site and add a page dedicated to fundraising. Electronic access is a wonderful thing for a small library that’s constrained by its physical size. With our ability to download to Kindles and other e-readers, the Library is not as dependent on the amount of shelf space we have.

“And we’re expanding our social media presence. People say that Libraries should fear the Web, but I think quite the contrary. The Web expands our presence and enables our outreach. We put out an end-of-year e-blast asking patrons to support the Annual Appeal and it got a positive response.”

Melissa Floyd is an interesting, articulate, engaging person. She was born in Stonington, graduated from Stonington High School, earned her B.A. in Biology with a minor in Environmental Science from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania.

After college, she served two years in the Peace Corps in Ivory Coast, West Africa; then returned to Northern California where she spent 10 years developing a land-use planning consultancy to assist municipalities.

In 2011, she came home to her roots and set a new career course as a fundraising consultant at the Bill Memorial Library in Groton. Early in 2013, she learned that the Stonington Free Library was offering a part time staff position as Development Coordinator and, after interviewing, took the job. She also continues to consult at Bill Memorial Library.

“Stonington Free Library is very dependent on private donations—in fact, its percentage of private support is among the highest in the state. So naturally that’s where I put most of my effort,” Ms. Floyd explains. “I interact with the Board of Trustees—the Development Committee. For one thing, we’re trying to develop relationships with local



# Don't Miss The 6th Annual Mystery Dinner—April 26, 2014

No fun like it. This year's Mystery Dinner theme is "Hemingway in Spain". You'll drink Hemingway drinks at the Mystery Cocktail Party. You'll eat a Hemingway dinner at your Mystery Host's. And we hope you'll dress up in a Hemingway way. Invitations go out mid-March. Your ticket will cost what it did last year and the year before and the year before that: a very reasonable \$80 per guest, and we're expecting about 140 guests. Watch your mail (or e-mail) for your invitation and return it right away. Everything is first come, first served (of course, we do everything we can so no one has to be turned away).



*Scenes from last year's Mystery Cocktail Party, "Enchanted April"*

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Theme: "Hemingway in Spain"

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