

The Librarian

Newspaper of the Stonington Free Library

Winter/Spring 2017 Issue

INTRODUCING THE CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY BOOK DRIVE

By Charles Harding

Educators generally agree that learning to read should begin at home—before kindergarten for most children. To the Stonington Free Library, that means getting age-appropriate books into the hands of area children between 4 and 10 years old. To do that, we launched the Children's Holiday Book Drive on December 2 with a special event the evening of The Borough Holiday Stroll. Parents and children were invited to gather around a special "Giving Tree" where parents could place books under the tree and children could help decorate it by making ornaments.



We had a great response to our call for book donations

A steady stream of children ranging in ages from about 2 to 13 came to make ornaments, enjoy cookies and holiday music and donate books. Everything went beautifully. The Drive continued through December 23 with over 75 books donated to *Opening Doors for Westerly's Children*, a non-profit alliance of volunteers who raise funds to get books, backpacks, and school supplies into the hands of disadvantaged area children.

It's a little known fact that nearly 1/3 of children attending Westerly elementary schools from pre-school to 4th grade—



Trustee Denise Easton helping children decorate ornaments for the tree

the "learning to read" years—come from low-income families that lack books to help their children learn to read. In just over 2 1/2 years of operation, *Opening Doors for Westerly's Children* has distributed books and backpacks to 390 disadvantaged boys and girls and awarded 20 scholarships. The Library hopes to make the Children's Holiday Book Drive an annual event.



The Giving Tree for a great cause

SOUTHEASTERN CT LIBRARIES CELEBRATE WALLY LAMB

By Micayla Hall, Assistant Library Director

On November 20th, eleven public libraries in the region kicked off "SECT Libraries Celebrate Wally Lamb," a community reading event honoring distinguished local author Wally Lamb. The announcement was made at The Garde Arts Center in New London during their annual holiday screening of *Wishin' and Hopin'*, the film adaptation of one of Mr. Lamb's novels. The celebration began in the lobby of the Garde where each library had an information table with special prizes. Betty Anne Reiter, of Groton Public Library, officially announced the collaboration between the libraries and the Garde on stage before the film.

Each library involved will host a book discussion on Wally Lamb's new novel, *I'll Take You There*, in January. The Stonington Free Library's discussion will take place on Thursday, January 12th at 2 pm. Coffee, tea and cookies will be served. If you are interested in attending or need a copy of the book, please contact the library 860-535-0658.

The Garde will host a special event with Wally Lamb to celebrate *I'll Take You There* on Sunday, December 18th at 3 pm. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing. This event is ticketed, please contact the Garde for more information 860-444-7373 ext. 1.

The finale event will take place on Sunday, February 12 at 3 p.m., the Garde will host all of Wally Lamb's local fans. Mr. Lamb will speak about his novels, meet his readers and sign books at this free event.



Assistant Director Micayla Hall at kickoff event at The Garde

Bold = Adult Activities ☞ = Pre-registration Required. Please call.

ONGOING

Drop In Story Times begin January 10 and run through April 5
 Tuesdays @ 10:30 am for Babies – Age 2
 Wednesdays @ 10:30 am for Ages 2 – 6
 Sandwich & Stories begin January 10 and run through April 4
 Tuesdays @ 11:45 am for Ages 3 – 6 Bring your lunch!
 First Saturdays are Junior Maker Spaces with LEGO® bricks
 Second Saturdays are Minecraft® Junior Maker Spaces Ages 6+
 First Wednesdays are PJ Story Times @ 6:30 pm
 WiiU Gaming – Fridays 2-5 pm and Saturdays 12:30-3 pm Ages 9+

JANUARY

2 **New Year's Day – Library Closed**
3 Registration opens for ONE FAMILY – ONE BOOK, a new Winter Challenge to reinforce literacy skills and enjoy Roald Dahl's first popular classic, James and the Giant Peach. **NEW!**
11 6:30 pm ONE FAMILY - ONE BOOK, come hear chapters 1 – 7 read aloud from James and the Giant Peach
12 **2 pm** **Join us for a book discussion on Wally Lamb's new novel I'll Take You There. Coffee, tea and cookies will be served. If you are interested in attending or need a copy of the book, please contact the Library.**
16 **Martin Luther King Day – Library Closed**
21 10:30 am ONE FAMILY - ONE BOOK, come hear chapters 8 – 15 read aloud from James and the Giant Peach
25 5-7 pm *We Are Makers!* Marshmallow Maker Night – marshmallow catapults and team marshmallow challenges. (Ages 8+) ☞
28 10:30 am *Saturdays in Stonington* – Stamping Day

FEBRUARY

4 10 am *Take Your Child to the Library Day* recognizing the special place libraries play in the lives of children all over the world!
8 6:30 pm ONE FAMILY - ONE BOOK, come hear chapters 16 – 20 read aloud from James and the Giant Peach
12 **3 pm** **SECT Libraries Celebrate Wally Lamb – a community reading event honoring distinguished local author Wally Lamb. Lamb will speak about his novels, meet his readers and sign books at this free event at The Garde Arts Center in New London.**
18 10:30 am ONE FAMILY - ONE BOOK, come hear chapters 21– 26 read aloud from James and the Giant Peach
20 **Presidents' Day – Library Closed**
22 5-7 pm *We Are Makers!* Sharpie Tee Shirt Decorating – bring an all-cotton tee shirt and a plastic bag (Ages 9+) ☞
25 10:30 am *Saturday in Stonington* – Sticker Day



MARCH

10 10:30 am Enjoy the school holiday – ONE FAMILY - ONE BOOK, come hear chapters 27– 33 read aloud from James and the Giant Peach
18 10:30 am *Saturday in Stonington* – Irish Step Dancing Demonstration
22 10:30 am ONE FAMILY - ONE BOOK, come hear chapters 34– 39 read aloud from James and the Giant Peach
25 10:30 am *Saturday in Stonington* – Spring Story Time
29 5-7 pm *We Are Makers!* Magic Milk and Walking Water (Ages 6+) **NEW!**
31 LAST day for our 50 To Grow On Reading Challenge! Bring in your reading log! Movie Screening James and the Giant Peach Winter Reading Challenge ONE FAMILY – ONE BOOK. Check for details at the Westerly or Stonington Libraries. Reservations are required! ☞

APRIL

1 Voting OPENS for the 2016 Nutmeg Award Books of the year!
9 **5:00 pm** **Sunday Evening Lecture Series - in celebration of National Library Week! – Merrill House Poet, Mark Wunderlich reads from his work @ the Library**
10-15 Celebrate National Library Week and Duckling Week! Drop by during school vacation and see our little quackers!
13 **5:30pm** **Ballroom Dancing with Marc Pernaveau to celebrate National Library Week @ the Library**
22 10:30 am *Saturday in Stonington* – Celebrate Earth Day with an upcycled craft
22 **Annual Mystery Dinner Fundraiser**
26 5-7 pm *We Are Makers!* Slime Makers tonight! Ages 5+
29 LAST day to VOTE for the Nutmeg Awards!!
29 10:30 am *Saturday in Stonington* – Painting Day

TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES

The Library has made significant advances in the last year toward improving our digital services for the community. We have upgraded our internet service from an old and slow DSL connection to a digital internet service that has tripled upload and download speeds.

We have also installed wireless boosters to strengthen our free internet service throughout the building – and even into the park!

In addition to our internet upgrades, we have also installed wireless printing service. Patrons can now easily print from their own laptops, and mobile devices, to Library printers behind the front desk.

The Library is also expanding its technology offerings by lending eReaders. We currently have five Kindles available to patrons. The devices can be checked out for three weeks and come preloaded with popular eBooks and apps. This is a great way to try before you buy!

Our social media presence continues to grow with the Library on YouTube! Several of our Sunday Evening Lectures and Thoughtful Thursdays are now available on our YouTube channel. We are adding programs often, so continue to check our channel for the latest selection of thought-provoking talks.

These improvements are just a few of the technology upgrades we hope to provide for the community to use in the coming year. We are striving to expand the Library beyond its brick and mortar limits to connect the community to lifelong learning resources that technology can provide access to.



BOOKWORMS

By Maris Frey, Youth Services Director

Upcoming Program Highlights

We have a new Winter Reading Challenge in the works, ONE FAMILY – ONE BOOK, to reinforce literacy skills and encourage reading aloud as a family activity. Our book this year will be James and the Giant Peach, Roald Dahl's first popular classic. The Westerly Library will join us in this pilot program and both libraries will offer opportunities to hear portions of the book read aloud as well as activities to increase the fun. Registration will begin on January 3 and the program will run until March 31. We will roll out the red carpet for a movie screening at the end of the program; stay tuned for details. But there will definitely be popcorn...



Winter Drop In Story Times will begin the week of January 9 and will continue with Spring programs at the beginning of March. Tuesdays at 10:30 am are for babies – 2 year olds and Wednesdays at 10:30 am are for 2 – 6 year olds. Sandwich and Story Time for 3 – 6 year olds is Tuesdays at 11:45 am. Bring a little lunch and relax with friends before stories and a craft. Story Times will run until April 5.



We will have a Donut Day celebration 10:30-11 am for *Take Your Child to the Library Day* on February 4. Drop in for some deliciousness!

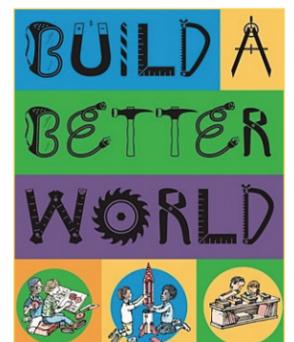
Our STEAM programming, *We Are Makers!*, will continue with Marshmallow Makers catapults in January for ages 8+, Design a Sharpie T shirt in February for ages 9+, Magic Milk and Walking Water in March for ages 6+ and Slime Makers in April for ages 5+. Please check the calendar or our Facebook page for more info and registration requirements.

Our Winter Reading Challenge, 50 to Grow On, has begun! 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 31. If you haven't signed your child up yet, come in and join the fun! Our Celebration Party for the children who participated this year will coincide with our celebration for ONE FAMILY – ONE BOOK.

To celebrate National Library Week and school vacation week, we are looking forward to welcoming our baby ducklings!

Summer Reading Ahead

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! The opportunity is open to students entering seventh grade or older. Applications are available on-line at stoningtonfreelibrary.org under Children/Teen - Teen Volunteer Club. Drop off your completed application in the Children's Room!



We are also looking for donations for our Store or Basket Drawings. If you are looking for ideas, please call the Children's Room.

Registration opens on June 19!

STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY EMBARKS ON THE NEXT GENERATION OF THE DIGITAL LIBRARY

By Denise Easton - Trustee

Understanding both the how and why our community uses the Stonington Free Library (SFL) prompted us to address the importance of digital access of information, media, books and communications. The SFL website www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org stands at the center of our commitment to build a responsive digital library that expands access and accessibility for everyone, from computers to mobile devices.

Beginning in January 2017, the Library will undertake a total redesign of the existing website, www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org. The current site was originally created in 2009 and no longer meets the needs of the Library and users. From the look and feel to the integration of the latest applications and software for access on any device, the new site will be the foundation of SFL's digital strategy.

After an extensive research phase conducted by Micayla Hall, SFL Assistant Director, and the volunteer eLibrary committee, requests for proposals were sent to leading site designers in the Library and information services arena. Two finalists were interviewed by the committee and a final recommendation was made to the SFL board in November.

Design Agency, (www.design-agency.org) a Rhode Island firm was selected to lead the design and implementation of the website project. Their emphasis on building a digital presence that embodies the spirit and unique qualities of the Library complements the firm's depth of experience to deliver a site that establishes the Stonington Free Library as a true 24/7 resource for our community.



Jane Androski and Emily Rye of Design Agency

STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY ADDS TO STAFF; LINDSEY MAHN, JASON ACKERMANN BRING EXCEPTIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

By Charles Harding

The Stonington Free Library is very pleased to announce the addition of two staff members, Lindsey Mahn and Jason Ackermann. They come to us with gleaming credentials: both pursuing a Masters of Library and Information Sciences from San Jose State University; Jason from a job as Digital Library Assistant, Kansas State Library, Topeka KS.

Lindsey states, "I am currently enrolled at San Jose State University in their Masters of Library and Information Sciences program. I participate in the program through online courses. It is my hope to continue to inspire learning through a different medium: the library."

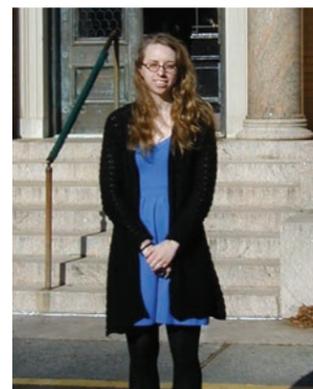
She continues, "I was also a substitute at the Mystic Noank Library. I would fill in when librarians went on vacation and I also helped out at special events. This position introduced me to using a library system and the Dewey decimal system."

"Education is my passion. What I have learned is that sometimes educational experiences come from outside the classroom as well. That is what led me to pursue my masters in library sciences. I hope to be able to create programs that get people young and old excited about broadening their minds."

Jason Ackermann is equally enthusiastic. "For two years I worked in the State Library of Kansas as the team lead on their digital initiative to harvest, scan, and house state government documents." The major goal of this project was to make state government documents more accessible to the public and to interested researchers.

"I have experience with reference questions and directly helping patrons, especially with complex historical government questions. Furthermore, my experience as an educator has honed my ability to connect patrons with pertinent library resources and highlight the library's practical uses."

The Library invites you to come in and meet our new library professionals. They are already contributing to the Library's commitment to offering the highest level of service to the community.



Lindsey Mahn



Jason Ackermann

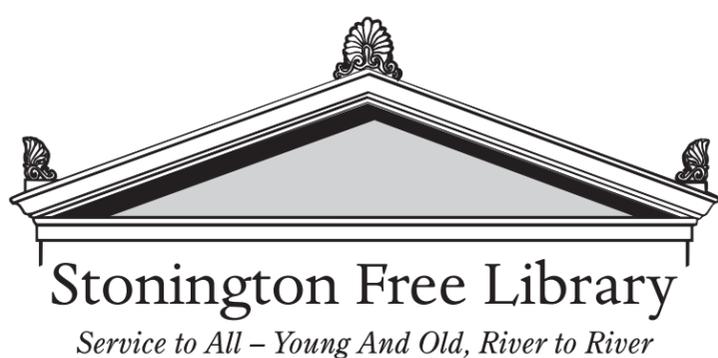
STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

By Mary Kelley, Chair of Strategic Planning Committee

The Stonington Free Library's strategic planning efforts are well underway as we continue to explore avenues to strengthen our connection to the community. To date, more than 600 Stonington residents have met and shared with us what they value about our library and also what they'd like to see happen in the future. More than 500 have also shared their views through print and online surveys. Perhaps the most wonderful aspect of this process has been to see the eagerness with which the community has engaged in our work.

Participants have reminded us that Stonington is indeed a special place, one that is family centered and caring of others. Residents choose to live here because of the town's good schools, its natural resources, and of course, its quality of life. Participants let us know the Library is one of the reasons why Stonington is special, and they have praised us for creating a welcoming place, especially for children. In addition to praise, respondents also let us know what they'd like to see going forward. These responses range from increased availability to increased programming.

Our efforts now will focus on analyzing all the information participants have provided to us and creating long term goals. How do we best reinforce the role of the Library as a center of Stonington life? What steps will we need to take to make certain we remain the welcoming and wonderful resource our community values while still ensuring we address future needs? That becomes the exciting work of the Library's Board of Trustees, and as they identify varied options, they will share their goals and action steps with the community. Updates will follow in future editions of the Librarian.



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

Phone 860.535.0658

Fax 860.535.3945

E-mail stonlib@stoningtonfreelibrary.org

Web stoningtonfreelibrary.org

Executive Director Belinda de Kay

Assistant Director Micayla Hall

Youth Services Director Maris Frey

Board of Trustees

President Nick Kepple

Vice President Scott Muller

Secretary Kaylan Randolph

Treasurer Allegra Griffiths

Trustees Stephen Bessette

Richard Cole | Deborah Dodds

Denise Easton | Allegra Griffiths

Vera Harsh | Elizabeth Leamon

Susan Martin | Beverly Phillips

George Sylvestre

Editors Charles Harding | Melissa Floyd

Layout CMB Creative Group

Our grateful appreciation goes out to those who have donated to the Library, both through our Giving Tuesday matching gift challenge and our end-of-year annual fund drive. Your donations make up over half of our operating budget each year. We rely on your generosity even more this year as we have big plans in the works to greatly improve the services and programs we provide to the community in response to the feedback you have given us during our strategic planning process.



We still have a ways to go to reach our annual fund goal of \$177,000 by the end of June 2017, but we are thankful for the gifts that have helped us take a bite out of that total. We wish you a very happy and healthy 2017!

BATTLE OF STONINGTON 5K RAISES MONEY FOR THE LIBRARY

The Stonington Free Library wishes to thank the generous sponsors and racers who participated in the annual Battle of Stonington 5K Road Race to benefit the Library. The race was held August 23rd and raised \$5200 for Library programs and services. We are sincerely grateful for their support. We extend a particular thank you to the event sponsors:

Baude & Rolfe, CPA, P.C. F&F Distributors
 Cottrell Brewery I Can Fitness
 Dime Bank Kelley's Pace
 Dog Watch Cafe Mystic River Consulting
 Soundview Orthopedics
 Yellow House Coffee Shoppe



Race Director and Library Trustee, Stephen Bessette, says "The Battle of Stonington 5K is proud to support the Stonington Free Library in its mission. With our generous sponsors and the over 200 runners, this year's event was held on a beautiful late summer evening starting and finishing near the Library."

Inside: WINTER/SPRING 2017

- Children's Holiday Book Drive** Donations to benefit local charity
- Wally Lamb Event** Regional collaboration to celebrate new book
- Bookmark** January through April calendar of Library events
- Bookworms** Happenings in the Children's and Teen Rooms
- Website Development** A new Library website is in the works!
- Strategic Plan** Update on the process
- New Faces** Meet the new staff members
- Technology Upgrades** Upgraded resources available
- Battle of Stonington 5K** Thank you!
- Annual Appeal** Thank you!

NON-PROFIT ORG
 US POSTAGE
PAID
 MYSTIC, CT
 06355
 PERMIT NO. 139

The Librarianian

Stonington Free Library PO Box 232 Stonington CT 06378