









# Stonington Free Library

Annual Report 2018-2019

#### FROM THE DIRECTOR

As all our patrons know, as do our many visitors, our beloved Stonington Free Library is beautiful but also small – our space challenges are constant and real. As many of you also know, we have plans in the works to refurbish and repurpose our space in such a way as to add 575 square feet of useable space. An addition, which will make the Library accessible to all, will add a further 700 square feet. There has been great progress in moving these plans forward over the past year thanks to the diligent and unrelenting hard work on the part of the Building Committee.

However, there is another sense in which libraries, whatever their size, and they come in all sizes and shapes, have no walls. The new digital world makes it possible for any library to extend its reach and to be accessible to its patrons at any hour on any day. The only limitations are those imposed by a failure of imagination. Also, in a very beautiful sense, a library is in itself a world without walls. It is a free space open to all comers, it is non-judgmental and unquestioning, it is the one place that asks 'what can I do to help?' and asks nothing in return.

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This has always been true but in today's world it is an aspect that is valued more than ever. Freedom of information, equality of access to information, free technical assistance that helps bridge the digital divide, all come with the friendly human interaction that so many need in an increasingly lonely and confusing world. Libraries are indeed community in action.

I continue to be astonished at the talent, commitment, and generosity that supports the Library, especially as we strive to transform ourselves into a library for the 21st Century.

I look back on the past year with enormous gratitude to all our supporters, our patrons and friends, our teams of volunteers, the Town of Stonington, both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance, the Warden and Burgesses of the Borough. I look forward filled with encouragement that, working together, our vision for our Library will continue to be realized.

Belinda de Kay, Director









#### STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY KEY STAFF

Belinda de Kay Director Micayla Hall Assistant Director Maris Frey Youth Services Director Stephanie Calhoun Development Coordinator

#### FROM THE PRESIDENTS

#### Our Vision of Service and Growth; SFL is Poised for the Future

It's hard to believe that 12 months have passed since we assumed our roles as Co-Presidents, and what a whirlwind year it's been! As we write this letter, the Library is a hive of activity, including scores of Summer Readers in the Children's Library and preparations for another packed house for our Thoughtful Thursday and Sunday lecture series.

Stonington's hometown library is a dynamic, vibrant place. SFL's history of service and value to the lives of our residents is well-known and appreciated, and as the role of libraries has changed over time, SFL has continued to evolve and enhance its offerings to meet the needs of our community. Throughout this evolution, our mission remains constant: to enrich lives and build community by bringing information, ideas and people together.

As we reflect on the past year, we are happy to report that progress has been made on many fronts, and we ended the year stronger and busier than ever before. We welcomed over 70,000 visitors over the course of the year, and delighted the more than 9,000 people who attended Library programs. Cardholders and items checked out increased year over year, while our outreach programs continued to expand across Stonington through initiatives at the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center, Stonington Community Center, Stonington Schools, local retirement communities and more.

As we reflect on the past year, we are happy to report that progress has been made on many fronts, and we ended the year stronger and busier than ever before.

All of this activity was supported by our generous donors and our municipal partners. The number of donors contributing to our Annual Appeal increased this year, as did the total amount raised, successfully exceeding our budget goal. Additionally, our continued advocacy efforts with municipal funding authorities yielded increased financial commitments from the Town and Borough of Stonington, protecting our ability to maintain our opening hours.

The coming months are shaping up to be even more exciting as we lay the groundwork for a new addition on the east side of the existing building which will provide a handicap accessible entrance, elevator and two ADA bathrooms while also reclaiming critical new floor space and paving the way for an interior refurbishment within the existing building. We received a huge vote of confidence from the Town of Stonington with a total commitment of \$100,000 toward the new addition and a \$145,000 matching grant from the State of Connecticut to assist in the interior refurbishment.

We are poised for the future but our work isn't done yet! The dedicated staff and board of your Library want to thank you for a great year, and we look forward to our continued partnership. We hope to see you in the library soon.

Allegra Griffiths and Denise Easton Co-Presidents of the Board of Trustees, Stonington Free Library









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#### INITIATIVES, OUTREACH AND PROGRAMMING

This past year the Library and its dedicated staff, board and volunteers have focused on advocacy, new fundraising initiatives and continuing to grow our programs, services and outreach initiatives.

#### **Advocacy, Grants, Fundraising and Volunteers**

We embarked on a significant advocacy campaign with the goal of increasing the annual municipal funding the Town distributes to the three libraries it supports. Due to our efforts the Board of Finance (BoF) created a Library Task Force made up of BoF members and representatives from SFL, Mystic & Noank Library and Westerly Library. The Task Force continues to look at the funding situations for all three libraries today, but we are pleased that they listened to our needs and gave us an additional \$15,000 for Fiscal Year 2020. The Borough also provided us with an additional \$1,000.

A significant grant opportunity with the CT State Library was pursued successfully. This \$145,000 matching grant will allow for an interior refurbishment project. We will update the community as this exciting project moves ahead in the coming year.

Many new fundraising initiatives came about this year. This past holiday season a Small Business Collaborative was spearheaded by members of the Library's Development Committee. An Italian Holiday Show during the annual Stroll benefited the Library thanks to the generosity of Tom Piacenza of Social Coffee Roastery and Italian singing sensation Gianpaolo Digrazia. A group of volunteers also held a Book and Bake Sale at the Stonington High School for the first annual town-wide Indoor Yard Sale & Market. Two new fundraising events to look forward to this summer are our Read & Raise Readathon and we will assume operation of the Stonington Village Fair Annual Book Sale.

All that we offer would not be possible without the support of our loyal and dedicated volunteers. This year 211 volunteers worked over 7,000 hours (an estimated value of \$180,000). We cannot thank each and every one of you enough for all that you do for both the Library and the community.

#### **Outreach and Collaboration**

Our branch at the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center is still open every Wednesday from 10 to 11:30am and is staffed by our volunteer librarians. This past year it served 235 people who checked out 371 items.

The Stonington Non-profit Roundtable, with current membership of 43 organizations, continues to meet and grow at the Library. The group's accomplishments this year include: a Volunteer Fair, the launch of a website (stoningtonnonprofits.org), a universal volunteer application for participating organizations, access to Grant Station at the Library and participation in Human Service's second annual Community Spring Fest.

The four Little Free Libraries (LFLs) in the Borough, a collaboration between the Stonington Village Improvement Association (SVIA) and the Library, were stocked with over 1,600 books.

#### **Circulation and Adult Programming**

This past year over 70,000 visitors stepped through our doors, our 3,487 active card holders borrowed 50,669 materials and 9,468 people attended 431 library programs. Library staff answered over 6,000 reference questions and there were over 6,000 sessions on our public computers and WiFi.

Adults enjoyed 133 programs, which drew 2,866 participants. We began offering One-on-One Tech Help sessions again this year on Friday afternoons. We also offered a special 3-week Introduction to Excel Class led by dedicated volunteer Sharon Sisitzky; look out for another 3-week session on PowerPoint this summer. Our weekly Knitting Group, monthly Book Group, outreach Book Groups at Masonicare and the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center are still going strong. Our inclusive program for adults with disabilities, SFL Nightclub, successfully ran again in the winter with the help of Deidre Tool, Community Classroom Coordinator and Transition Counselor at Stonington High School.

The J. D. McClatchy Memorial Corner in the Library Gallery was added this year. Visitors are welcome to browse and enjoy this unique collection, a gift of the estate of J. D. (Sandy) McClatchy (August 12th 1945-April 10th 2018). Library patron and Stonington resident Robert Palm most generously donated Sandy's typewriter. Along with the typewriter goes an invitation to browse the books from Sandy's library that are on the shelves and then write a poem of your own.

#### INITIATIVES, OUTREACH AND PROGRAMMING CONTINUED

#### **New Digital Services**

On Library Giving Day we received a generous offer from Sibby Lynch and Michael Schefers to fund a year's subscription to the Adobe Creative Cloud. This includes well-known programs for video, design, photography, and the web, such as Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Premiere Pro, Acrobat and more.

We were finally able to work through our backlog of video editing thanks to Library Assistant Brian Walls. If you missed one of our Sunday Evening Lectures or Thoughtful Thursdays, there is a good chance it is now available to watch on both our website and YouTube channel. We invite you to join the 1,600 that have already viewed our recordings.

This coming year we will continue to move the building, refurbishment and fiber plans forward, keep the

### Sunday Evening Lectures

- Stephen Lash Auction of the Peggy and David Rockefeller Collection
- John Heminway In Full Flight: A Story of Africa and Atonement
- Patrick Lynch Life on the Edge: Stonington's Unique Place on Long Island Sound
- Ben Coes Bloody Sunday
- Jonathan Post Bringing Shakespeare to Light: His Secrets in the Sonnets Laid Bare
- David Leeming James Baldwin
- James Longenbach and Joanna Scott James Merrill House Reading
- Harry Martin Brush Up Your Shakespeare
- Amy Kurtz Lansing Art and the New England Farm

SPEAKER PROGRAMS JULY 1, 2018 TO JUNE 30, 2019

#### Thoughtful Thursdays

- Amy Bass One Goal: A Coach, a Team, and the Game that Brought a Divided Town Together
- Norb Vonnegut Bitcoin and the Wave of Cryptocurrencies
- Markham Starr Swab Summer: Transformation at the US Coast Guard Academy
- Craig Floyd The Giving Garden of Coogan Farm
- Dr. Fredric Silverblatt Lyme Disease
- Stuart Vyse Going Broke: Why American's (Still) Can't Hold on to Their Money

#### **CT Authors Trail**

Gail B. MacDonald – Morton F. Plant and the CT Shoreline

#### **Pediment Society Event**

Howard Park – Circumnavigating the World

momentum of our advocacy campaign and continue to expand our services. We hope you will stop by soon whether it be to attend a program, check out an item, ask for tech help, use a computer/WiFi, or simply to read, relax, study, meet or work within the Library. Our friendly and welcoming staff are ready to offer a warm greeting and assist you with any question or need.

Micayla Hall, Assistant Director

#### YOUTH SERVICES

Bad libraries build collections. Good libraries build services. Great libraries build communities.

R. David Lankes

Each year presents new possibilities to build community in Stonington and this year brought expanded Winter Reading Challenges to our patrons. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Royce generously supported all three Winter Reading Challenges and we are most grateful for their continuing commitment to literacy in our area. We continued Read BOLD, a collaboration between the Library and Stonington High School. The purpose behind Read BOLD was to build bridges between adults and youth in our community, helping adults understand teens and opening a dialogue between the two groups. This year's book was *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas and a discussion group was held for adults and teens at the end of the program, along with a viewing of the movie. Free copies of the book were available at both the High School and the Library. Everyone finishing the book was eligible for a prize drawing of a Kindle Fire tablet or gift card baskets made possible through donations from Sift Bakery, Bank Square Books and Mystic Luxury Cinemas. These local businesses are truly our partners in promoting literacy.

Our new Family Reading Challenge for elementary and middle school age children was very popular with 188 family members joining the challenge. We offered a list of 18 titles and the opportunity to enter a drawing for gift card baskets or a Kindle Fire tablet with each book read. Our Teen Advisory Board requested that we put together a similar list for older students in conjunction with our Summer Reading Program and we were happy to add something new and different this year.

#### YOUTH SERVICES CONTINUED

It was a poetry theme for 50 to Grow On, an early literacy challenge for our youngest patrons. We curated a list of 40 books and each family read ten books of their own choosing. We incorporated titles in our weekly Story Times and this year, we read some of the books on our YouTube channel. Parents appreciated the option of having their child see and hear a book being read if they were waiting somewhere and didn't have a book with them.

The Youth Services departments offered 298 programs for children and teens this year with over 6,600 attendees. A grant from a family foundation funded our ever popular Summer Reading Program and enabled us to bring programming to summer camps in our community, along with free books for the campers to bring home. We include in this report a list of our many generous supporters; we rely on them to make our programs happen. Nice job and congratulations to all our summer readers!

Our Read and Feed Collaboration with the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center enjoyed another successful summer. The children helped others in our community by donating over 500 canned and dry goods to the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center Food Pantry.

We also began attending the monthly Mobile Food Pantry held at the High School. We offered a supply of new or gently used books to give away and believe this builds the presence of the Library in the community. Food for the mind along with food for the body!

Maris G. Frey, Youth Services Director

#### YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

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#### REPORT OF CONTRIBUTIONS



his report recognizes all annual donors to the Library during the past fiscal year – July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. The level of support we receive each year is a wonderful testimony to the continuing commitment of our patrons, donors and friends of the Library.

#### STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY PEDIMENT SOCIETY MEMBERS

The Pediment Society recognizes the generosity of donors at levels of \$500 and above.

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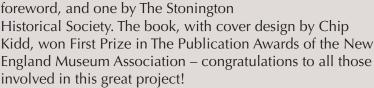
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#### A GIFT TO THE LIBRARY

A Village Love Affair -Rollie McKenna's Stonington

Two copies of this very beautiful book have been presented to the Library – one by Stonington resident Robert Palm, who wrote the



Having two copies means that we can circulate one and keep the other in our Local History collection – riches indeed! We are very grateful to both Robert and to the Historical Society for their generosity. This unique and historically fascinating book, which was published on the centenary of Rollie McKenna's birth as a part of the Stonington Historical Society's Rollie McKenna Project, is a valuable addition to the Library's permanent collection.



#### TRIBUTE & MEMORIAL

Tribute Gift: Nick Kepple – Susan Clapp & Charles Hatton

Tribute Gift: Kathryn C. Malcolm – Marble Harbor Investment Counsel

Tribute Gift: Charles T. Clark -Marble Harbor Investment Counsel

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#### **BABCOCK PHELPS SOCIETY**

The Babcock-Phelps Society, named for the two founding donors of the Library building, recognizes those individuals who have chosen to remember the Stonington Free Library in their wills or other estate planning documents.

John Michael Bass\* Jean Blanchet\* Mrs. Helen Brewster\* Peter Megaree Brown\* **Donald Charbonnier Jane Charbonnier** Mr. & Mrs. Theodore N. Danforth, Jr. Inger McCabe Elliott Elizabeth & Charles Harding Priscilla F. Hodges\* Jean M. Jones\* Cynthia Crawford Lichtenstein

Maria McVitty\* Mr. & Mrs. Frederic C. Paffard, Jr\* Joyce & Francis P. Pandolfi Santo Puglisi\* Carol & Edward Sauers Owen Sherry\* Heidi & Robert Simmons Anne T. Stevens\* Judith & Andrew Westwood

\*deceased

Richard & Koko Gildersleeve Judi Goldberg Brian & Susan J. Green David & Lucia Greenhouse Priscilla Griscom Charles & Elizabeth Harding III Stephanie R. Hartell Hilary Heminway Elizabeth Hopkins Peter S. & Laurie Delaney Humphrey Phil & Elizabeth Johnstone Mr. & Mrs. Tod Johnstone Sarah Anne Kealii Ronald Lewis Amanda Lindberg Rick & Mary Ellen McCarthy Mr. & Mrs. George Metzger Alexis & Cayre Michas Thomas & Laura Moran Linda J. Morrone Frederick & Amy Nicholas Louise O'Callahan

John & Lizabeth Olmstead Cindy Palmer Wright & Anna Maria Palmer David & Cheryl Purvis Betty Richards Margaret Luchars Richards Catherine M. Rose Donald & Mary Roy Sloan & Heather Sheridan-Thomas Martha Snyder Matthew Snyder & Amy Cochran Gigi & James Stanford Peter R. Stepanishen Jonathan Stevenson Switz Real Estate Associates, Inc. Kevin Turner Julia E. van Dyke Beth Walker Blunt & Nancy White Katherine White Joel S. & Gail Wildstein Franklin & Leith Wood



The Gaccione Family

Barbara Gildersleeve

Robin Geise







#### In Memory of Patricia Vargas:

Anne C. Connerton Gail Denisky Gregory & Robin Romanovsky David & Catherine Vargas

#### In Memory of Emily Lynch:

Charles & Elizabeth Harding III Susan Clark Ogden

In Memory of Sheldon Weinberg: Rabbi Marc E. Ekstrand

#### In Memory of Sue Buchman:

Richard & Elaine Berman Dan Buchman Gwen & Sarina McGugan Ann G. Moore Bergin O'Malley Allan & Joan Rayfield Sloan & Heather Sheridan-Thomas Alexandra Stoddard

#### FINANCIAL REPORT

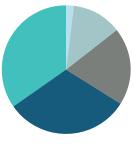
## Preliminary Financial Results for the Year Ended June 30, 2019 (unaudited)

Over the past fiscal year the Stonington Free Library recorded approximately \$546,400 in operating income. \$171,000 or 31% came from municipal funding including the Town and Borough of Stonington. Draws from the endowment amounted to \$107,000, providing just over 19% of the total, and the balance came from private donations.

In total, operating income exceeded SFL's budget for the year by \$2,700 or 0.5%, led by strong Annual Appeal results which exceeded budget by 4%. Other fundraising also experienced growth as a result of new development initiatives, the receipt of one-time restricted giving to preserve Friday opening hours and a generous number of memorial gifts. These increases more than offset lower draws from the endowment.

Operating expenses for the year totalled \$521,740 before depreciation, down slightly from the previous year and virtually in line with budget. As is typical, personnel costs accounted for the bulk of operating costs at just over 66%. Cardholder services, which include library programs, materials and digital resources, are the next largest category of expenses, comprising nearly \$80,000, or 15%. Operating income for the year amounted to \$24,648, slightly ahead of budget. Capital expenditures, which are not included in operating costs, amounted to an additional \$11,000 for the year, which were funded with operating income.





Annual Appeal\$188,232
Municipal Funding\$171,293
Endowment Draw\$107,320
Other Fundraising, Contributions, Grants & Bequests\$68,556

Service Fees ......\$10,987

Operating Expenses = \$521,740



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Resources	\$79,319
Building Maintenance &	
Utilities	\$43,442
Insurance & Professional	
Fees	\$31,868

Other.....\$22,118









#### SFL BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

Total Visitors	70,713
Books etc. Check Outs	46,451
Webpage Views	35,322
Program Attendees	9,468
Digital Check Outs & YouTube Views	
Cardholders	3,487

Hours Open / Year	2,236
Summer Reading Program Registrants	597
Programs Offered	431
Volunteers	211
Trustees	14
Part-time Staff	9
Little Free Libraries	4

#### LIBRARY **VOLUNTEERS**

**Little Free Libraries** Rory Contin Judy Westwood

#### **Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center Library**

Beth Freeman Rory Contin Barbara Corbeil Joyce Fingerut Annick Gillis Fred Souza Susan Terkanian Patricia Tuccio Meg Wilhelms

#### **Circulation Desk** Volunteer

Christine Nickerson

#### **Book Coverers**

Barbara Corbeil Patricia Tuccio Meg Wilhelms

#### **Stonington Non-profit** Round Table

Katherine Milde Leanne Theodore

#### **Tech Classes for Patrons** Sharon Sisitzky

**Night Club Social Group** 

Jean Baur and Therapy Dog Rudy Deidre Toole

#### **Book Group Moderators**

Jean Baur Mary Kelley Ann Moore Lynn Schroder Judy Westwood

#### **Program Committee**

Susan Martin (Chair) Sally Ball **Dodie Bump** Laurie Cameron Kathy Conger Susan Knox Pam Leeming Chris Turrentine Vivie von Walstrom

#### **Seed Library** Noreen Kepple

**Window Cleaning** John Adams

#### Flyers/Marketing Nan Danforth

#### **High School Volunteers** Jesyka Pacheco

Olívia Pasquin William Quell

#### **Summer Reading Help** Gail Woodrow

#### **Christmas Wreath & Lights** Dodie Bump David & Kathryn Burchenal

**Holiday Stroll Story Time** Doug and Cynthia Elliott

#### Landscaping

Terra Firma Landscaping-Kathy Weinberger

#### **Book & Bake Sale at Stonington High School**

Mollie Burton Susie Clapp Deb Dodds Denise Easton Barbara Ginsburg Allegra Griffiths Cheryl Purvis

#### **Village Fair Book Sale**

Dori Abele Judith Alexander Sally Ball Elizabeth Bartholet Stephen Bessette Jeff Callahan Jane Charbonnier Susie Clapp Anne Collette Rory Contin Barbara Corbeil Polly Dufresne Judy Dupont Jerry Fingerut Joyce Fingerut Marcia Fix Allegra Griffiths Elizabeth Harding Vera Harsh Charlie Hatton Barbara Heuer Sophia (Maya) . Heyniger

Mary Hughes Pamela Kenny Beth Leamon John Leamon Frank Lioneli Iane Lioneli Katherine Love Sibby Lynch Beth Barrett Lynn Kathleen Macdonald Malcolm Macdonald John Malmros Susan Martin lanet Mattiucci Dhannon McNeil David Moore Thea Moore Scott Muller Sandy Murray Rita Nason Cormac O'Malley

Joyce Pandolfi Jonathan Post Will Quell Linda Rutan McKenna Sisneros Kevin Sisson Steve Slosberg Elizabeth MacLeod Stevens Melanie Sullivan Pat Talar Chris Taylor and her sister Patty Tucchio Chris Turrentine John Turrentine Timothy Tyler Lissa ván Dyke Judy Westwood Meg Wilhelms Sage Williams Karen Wittliff Kathy Williams

#### J.D. (Sandy) McClatchy **Poetry Corner**

Kathryn Burchenal Doug & Cynthia Elliott Robert Palm Jonathan Post

#### **Mystery Dinner Hosts**

Alden Álexander & Kevin Costello Lisa Tepper Bates & Scott Bates Marybeth & Eric Bartholet Diana & Ted Beck Dodie Bump, James Eckerle & Mark Renfrow Lynn & Jeff Callahan Kate Careb & Amy Van der Velde

Nan Danforth, Susie Clapp & Charlie Hatton Deborah Dodds & Greg Smith Barbara & Chris Dixon Penny Duckham Ashley & Shaun Foley Allegra & Brian Griffiths Alice & John Groton Geraldine Nager Griffin, Alejandra & Josh Welch **Ruth Saunders &** 

Kathy & Tig Conger Harriet & Tony Crane

#### **Mystery Dinner** Committee

Dan & Alexa Pearson

Jim White

Elizabeth Leamon (Co-Chair) Sage Williams (Co-Chair) Ann Buffum Stephanie Calhoun Susie Clapp Nan Danforth Polly Dufresne Belinda de Kay Anne Fix Barbara Ginsberg Allegra Griffiths Barbara Heuer Sibby Lynch Sally McBee Jennifer O'Brien Margaret O'Neill Clare Sheridan Chris Turrentine Alejandra Welch









#### STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY - CONTACT US

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