

## Annual Highlights of Calendar Year 2015

**Community Leadership:** *The Library will extend its reach and share its resources to enhance its benefits to the community.*

- Career Services Librarian accepted appointment to another library, so staffing was adjusted to enable continuation of services (e.g., self-improvement, how to get a better job), and to hire a Teen Librarian.
- Children's Services teamed with Family School Connection; promoted Summer Reading Programs at all schools; presented literacy-based story times at preschools and in-house programs for ages from birth-4th grade; worked with School Readiness Council, Family Resource Centers, Nurturing Family Network (Middlesex Hospital), Early Head Start, CRT Head Start, and preschools to help enhance their programming, and support their efforts in literacy based programming and sharing of material; met with parents through Adult Education (immigrants learning English, Teen mothers getting their GED, parents retraining for work), and provided story times for their children who attend Even Start while the parents attend classes.
- Circulation Services Assistant Christy Billings is CLA Region 5 Representative and coordinated Veterans' Writing Group, "*We Were There: Writing Your Military Experiences.*"
- Connecticut Library Association Award Winners: Denise Mackey-Russo Special Achievement Award, Bob Carlson Support Staff of the Year Award; Pat Tully Supporter of the Support Staff Award.
- Facilities Maintainer Shane Grant contributed to "Feet to the Fire Festival" with a fishing demonstration.
- Head of Circulation Services Brandie Doyle co-chairing *One Book on the Riverbend* Committee, which plans community-wide cultural enrichment events.
- Head of Information Services Jason Neely on Board of Middlesex Area Interagency Council and Middlesex Community College Library Advisory Council.
- Head of Technology Services Deb Barberi chairing LION eBook Development Committee.
- Interim Assistant Director Pat Tully led search committee to hire Rolande Duprey as Community Services Librarian, was appointed to the City's Records Management Commission, and continued as Treasurer of Middletown Rotary Club and Vice-President of Middlesex County Historical Society.
- Jason and newly-hired Teen Librarian Heather Brine presented overview of our services at Middlesex Community College class.
- Job & Career Services: 70 participants found jobs, hosted Employment and Income Committee job fair; and Jeff Grant promoted to Program Specialist.
- Older Adult Specialist Anne Matthews began service to senior residences.
- Reference Librarian Denise Mackey-Russo on Board of Godfrey Memorial Library (genealogy).

**Effectiveness and Efficiency:** *We will aggressively upgrade the Library's operations and strengthen its financial status.*

- Circulation Services analyzed patron traffic to arrange the desk schedule for a more efficient use of staff.
- Information Services staff members served on the Adult Programming Team.
- Head of Technology Services Deb Barberi researched and recommended replacement for staff server.
- Job & Career Services gained a total of \$11,600 in donations from the family of a former participant, as well as a grant from the Mortensen Foundation for sign language interpreter for programs.
- Pat led staff in reducing City expenditures by \$30,000, arranged for a staff development retreat on managing change, prepared with Deb an impact statement and estimate for replacing the staff file server, and prepared budgets (FY16 Company, FY17 City.)
- Technology Services increased hours for covering Circulation and Information Services desks, upgraded half of the staff computers to Microsoft Office 2013, and replaced Public Access Computers and Information Services training and instructor computers.

**Inventiveness:** *We will adopt a more active and forward-looking profile to address our patrons' interests in the areas of our collections, our services and our programs.*

- Adult Summer Reading Program exceeded its target with **334 participating!**
- Children's Services: positive response to *AWE Early Learning Stations* resulted in purchase of two EDGE computers for 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade users, added 25 Play-a-ways, (recorded books for easy "books on the move") due to patron delight, began Maker Faires (cross-connection between Children's and Teen Services for creative programming), presented live Hampstead Stage Company (*Hercules and the Heroes, Christmas Carol, and The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*), and provided Edna & Benjamin Shenker Creative Writing Contest.

**Library as a Place:** *The Library will become an even more welcoming, hospitable and comfortable community cultural center. Patrons will be able to find the resources they want quickly and conveniently, engage with staff, and meet their friends and peers to study, to talk and to learn, in quiet contemplation or comfortable discourse.*

- Children's A/V area expanded so patrons can find materials easier and in a less constrained space.
- Facilities staff reconfigured lighting in the Main Reading Room, providing a brighter, more inviting atmosphere; installed a picnic table in the courtyard to read or study while enjoying the fresh air; overhauled Meeting Room 3 (thanks to Regan Family donations) by painting ceiling, walls and trim, installing large, wall-mounted TV for presentations and computer classes, and purchase of portable tables to replace the large board room-type table; arranged for replacing deteriorated main Information staircase material with a safer, brighter, rubber material; made major improvements in Teen area, with new lighting, counter top with stools and personal device charging outlets; reconfigured display units in the AV area for a more "open" feel and better flow throughout the department and leading to the Teen area; removed overgrown bushes at entrance and exterior of the Library; replanted main front Friendship Garden; and maintained the corner Butterfly Garden in a collaborative effort initiated by the Middletown Garden Club, with financial support by the Friends of Russell Library; and coordinated Exterior Renovation project through Council Bond Issue and Local Capital Improvement Program funds.
- Health Department grant provided many programs (e.g., Alternative Wellness, Meditation, Classical Stretching Class, Chair Yoga, Family Zumba, Natural Products Workshop, and Laughter); purchase of *Universal Class* database with over 500 continuing education courses on such topics as Computer Training, Pet/Animal Care, and Music; and renewal of *One Click Digital* database (thousands of downloadable audiobooks and ebooks for simultaneous use.)
- Information Services staff brought forward a celebration of the heritage of India, used World War I posters and programming to commemorate the Centennial of the beginning of the war, and began "Middletown Then and Now" project with historic postcards noting locations today.
- *Middletown International Film Festival* (in 7<sup>th</sup> year) had 60+ attendees at 6 showings at Russell Library, Middlesex Community College and Wesleyan University, featuring cultures of South Africa, India, West Africa, Israel/Palestine, Russia, Pakistan and Estonia, thanks to funds from the Friends of Russell Library, Middletown Rotary Club, New Haven Philatelic Society, and individual donors.
- Money Smart Week programming, arranged by Asst Head of Information Cathy Ahern, well-attended.
- Pat prepared Annual Report to community, worked with staff and Board President on retirement celebration for Director, and prepared *Russell Library 2020 Vision Statement*, drawing from reports and documents.
- Programs /Publicity staff established a space for creativity and collaboration in Information Services.
- Staff team is working with WebSolutions on a major website redesign.
- Wesleyan dancer/choreographer Eiko Otake performed in the Library, resulting in article by Community Services Librarian in *American Libraries Online*.