

# **Director's Report to the Board of Agents**

## **Silas Bronson Library**

**February 25, 2019**

**Raechel Guest, Director**

### **Front Plaza Project**

LaRosa will be opening up the wall in the basement break room to see where the flooding is coming from. We will be meeting with them tomorrow morning to review the scope of work and schedule.

### **East Wing/Teen Zone Renovation**

The wall demolition is complete. In order to complete the wiring, we removed the two large metal shelving units from the Friends Book Store. These shelves were already slated for removal as part of the project. Now that they are gone, the space is far more open and inviting.

We have put in a work order to have a small ramp built for the entrance to the new Teen Zone. There are some minor wiring details to complete.

After the ramp is built, the carpeting will be installed. This will require closing the East Wing for about a week. Once the carpeting is installed, the Teen Zone will be opened, the computer classroom will be moved, and the Business/Computer Center will be set up.

The Friends book store will continue to have a featured books display in the front lobby, a set of shelves on the floating wall, and several sets of shelving where the Teen/YA collection is currently located.

The final detail will be the installation of the glass wall for the new computer classroom.

## **Upcoming Events**

Xhenet Aliu, author of the novel *Brass*, will be at the library for a book talk & signing on Saturday, March 9, at 3 p.m. *Brass* tells the story of a working class mother and daughter in Waterbury, which is where Aliu grew up. The Boston Globe called it "an exceptional debut novel, one that plumbs the notion of the American Dream while escaping the clichés that pursuit almost always brings with it...."

Aliu has spoken fondly of the Silas Bronson Library in some of her interviews. When we asked her for a quote about the library for publicity purposes, she wrote the following:

*I'm certain I wouldn't be a writer today if not for all the childhood hours I spent the Silas Bronson Library, and not just because all of the books I checked out. My mother borrowed paintings she hung on the wall to make our apartment a home; my brother borrowed albums that made us shake our little tails; we all looked in awe at the whale sculpture outside the library on every single visit. In short, the library exposed us all to possibility and imagination, and it gave us the tools to help us recognize and realize our potential. Like the characters in my novel, I didn't always recognize or appreciate how much opportunity the people and places of my hometown offered me until I was older, wiser, and far from home, but I'm returning to the Silas Bronson Library with extreme gratitude and affection.*

We have received excellent coverage in the press for this event.

## **Accounting Issues**

We are making progress on the new Cash Handling Procedures. Each new procedure and form is being tested by the staff before implementation. After the final draft is approved, we will conduct training sessions to ensure that all staff know the new procedures.

## **Reasonable Suspicion Training**

All supervisors have received the City's new Reasonable Suspicion Training as part of the new Drug & Alcohol Policy. The training pertains to situations in which library employees show signs of intoxication in the workplace.

## **Capital Budget FY20**

At a meeting of the City's Capital Budget Committee, it was requested that the library's Board consider picking up the expense of the cyclical replacement of staff computers, peripherals, and software (estimated at \$11,000 for the upcoming year). It is difficult for the City to secure funding for staff equipment, as funders usually consider this to be an overhead expense that should be borne by the funding recipient.

The other Capital Budget requests from the library, not included in the Committee's request to the library Board, are \$30,000 for cyclical replacement of public computers, \$12,000 for cyclical replacement of our servers, and an additional \$20,000 for the upgrade of the security cameras.

## **Year in Review**

A printout of our Year in Review PowerPoint report for the Mayor is enclosed in your packets. One highlight to note: the number of visits to the main library for the calendar year (January to December 2018) was 226,609. This is a big jump from the fiscal year (July 2017-June 2018) count, which was 174,715. By comparison, the number of visits for the previous fiscal year was 243,201. I think it is safe to say that the decrease in visits was due to the front entrance being fenced off, and I believe that we have fully recovered from that drop in attendance.

## **Friends of the Library Book Sale**

A new volunteer with the Friends, Miki MacKennedy, has been making great strides in preparing for a spring book sale. She has secured the free use of a downtown storefront for the sale, and has been boxing up thousands of books by category to take to the storefront when it's time.

The book sale will require some involvement from the library, if only for the use of our folding tables. More volunteers are welcome, either to help with the prep work or to help at the time of the sale.

Our staff and interns are continuing to assist the Friends with scanning the withdrawn books for shipment to Better World Books, a vendor that the Friends use to sell higher value books online.

## Card Suspensions Due to Fees/Fines

As a follow up to the report from San Francisco Public Library distributed at last month's meeting, here is additional data on the revenue we collected over the past five years from late fees. The revenue collected in a given fiscal year is used for the next fiscal year budget to help make up for shortfalls in the City's allocation for our book budget. Our total annual operating budget is approximately \$2.3 million.

	<b>Late Fee Revenue</b>
<b>Fiscal Year 2017-2018</b>	\$15,631
<b>Fiscal Year 2016-2017</b>	\$17,929
<b>Fiscal Year 2015-2016</b>	\$18,820
<b>Fiscal Year 2014-2015</b>	\$17,356
<b>Fiscal Year 2013-2014</b>	\$ 5,602

The library's investments have grown significantly in the past year thanks to the Paul bequest. The increase could be used to offset the loss of revenue from late fees.

If we were to eliminate late fees, we would still expect patrons to return items after the loan period has expired. Currently, items convert to LOST status after they are four weeks overdue.

Email/text reminder sent 3 days before an item is due (already in place);

Email/text warnings sent when items are x, y, and z days late (already in place, can be increased to as many warnings as we wish).

Any account with a lost item would be blocked. Patrons would have the choice of either paying the fine or donating a new copy of the item.

The Bibliomation system does not currently have an option for automatic renewal, but they anticipate this will be available later this year.

Differentiating between adult and child cards is difficult, as we would have to put restrictions on their use. So, for example, adult cards would not be able to be used for checking out children's materials.

## **Circulation Division**

### **January Statistical Reports: Main Library**

Total Collection Size: 266,231  
Total Items Added to Collection: 827  
Total Items Circulated: 10,765  
Total Circulation In-House: 238  
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 860  
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 410  
  
Total Active Patrons: 10,946  
Total Expired Patrons: 13,497  
Total Patrons Added: 217

### **January Statistical Reports: Bunker Hill**

Total Collection Size: 15,350  
Total Items Added to Collection: 50  
Total Items Circulated: 621  
Total Circulation In-House: 0  
Total Circulated at Other Libraries: 48  
Total Circulated from Other Libraries: 196  
  
Total Active Patrons: 399  
Total Expired Patrons: 452  
Total Patrons Added: 11

## **Museum Pass Usage, January 2019**

American Clock & Watch Museum: 0  
Barker Comic and Cartoon Museum: 0  
Barnum Museum: 0  
Beardsley Zoo: 0  
Children's Museum/Roaring Brook Nature: 2  
Connecticut Science Center: 0  
Connecticut's Old State House: 0  
EverWonder Children's Museum: 2  
Harriet Beecher Stowe Center: 0  
Imagine Nation: 1  
Institute for American Indian Studies: 0  
KidsPlay Childrens Museum: 2

Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk: 1  
Mark Twain House: 0  
Mattatuck Museum: 3  
Mystic Aquarium: 0  
Mystic Seaport: 0  
New Britain Museum of American Art: 3  
New England Air Museum: 1  
New Haven Museum: 0  
Old Sturbridge Village: 0  
Peabody Museum of Natural History: 2  
Wadsworth Atheneum: 0  
White Memorial Conservation Center: 0

## Online Presence

Facebook Followers as of 2/25/2019: 1,310  
Facebook Reach Jan. 28 – Feb. 24: 6,635  
Facebook Post Engagements Jan. 28 – Feb. 24: 2,535

Instagram Followers as of 2/25/2019: 370  
Bronson Teens Instagram Followers as of 2/25/2019: 155  
Twitter Followers as of 2/25/2019: 337

Website Visitors January 1 – January 31: 2,058  
Website Sessions January 1 – January 31: 3,445  
Website Pageviews January 1 – January 31: 6,875

### Most Visited Website Pages (January 1 – January 31):

Home Page: 3,385	Bunker Hill Branch: 140	Directions: 37
Programs: 314	City Directories: 124	Suggest a Purchase: 35
Genealogy/Local Hist.: 304	eBooks: 119	Newsletters: 31
How to Find Books: 272	Children's Division: 115	New Movies: 29
Ask A Librarian: 200	Hall of Fame: 82	Library History: 28
Museum Passes: 198	Borrowing Questions: 80	Email Signup: 28
Research: 191	Teen/YA: 45	Friends: 19
Calendar: 171	News: 43	Board of Agents: 17
About Us: 158	Computer Classes: 44	Library Policies: 12
How to Get a Card: 146	Book Sale: 38	