

Report to the State Library Board

January 23, 2023

Deborah Schander
State Librarian

This report is prepared bi-monthly in conjunction with the regular meetings of the Connecticut State Library Board. The report, which will be included in the minutes of the January 23, 2023 meeting of the Board, covers the period of November 29, 2022 through January 13, 2023.

Office of the State Librarian

The legislative session opened on January 4, 2023, and the Governor's proposed budget will be released by February 8, 2023. The State Library will be closely monitoring its request to increase the CT Digital Library appropriation to reflect rising inflation costs there as well as proposed several options to better capture fees which support the Historic Documents Preservation Fund. In addition to budget-related legislation, further efforts related to eBook/eAudiobook costs and the digitization of municipal building codes are anticipated.

Jennifer Matos joins the State Library as its new Museum Administrator on January 23, 2023. Most recently, she served as the Executive Director of the Noah Webster House & West Hartford Historical Society and brings with her nearly 20 years of history museum experience. Under the general direction of the State Librarian, Jenn will lead an ambitious initiative to strengthen and reaffirm the museum's place in the Connecticut heritage community. Retired curator Dave Corrigan has also returned to the museum on a temporary basis to assist with collections processing and organization.

The Connecticut Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) is adopting a new name: the Connecticut Library for Accessible Books (CT LAB). The new name was selected with the full support and approval of CT LAB's Advisory Committee and concludes a process the State Library began before the disruption of COVID and the retirement wave. On October 1, 2019, CT LAB's federal partner, the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) changed its name from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to its present name; CT LAB's name change is part of a wider movement to update names of regional libraries within the NLS nationwide network of libraries to more current nomenclature. Though the library's name has changed, its core services and resources remain the same. CT LAB continues to serve people who are blind, individuals who have a visual disability, people who have a perceptual or reading disability, and persons unable to read print materials as a result of a physical disability.

Unit Activities

Partnerships and Community Engagement

History & Genealogy has seen an increase of **in-person traffic** in recent months, particularly the use of State Archives materials by academics conducting extensive historical research over multiple days. These individuals often travel great distances to use these unique materials and History & Genealogy staff has been working diligently with many of these patrons prior to their visit to help identify items of interest for their research needs.

In an effort to make it easier for staff and patrons to access Connecticut State Library materials that have been digitized by FamilySearch at the Van Block facility, Jeannie Sherman has created a **“Newly Digitized Records on FamilySearch!” page** on the State Library website. This page currently directs patrons to various digital Connecticut Census, Court Records, Family & Bible Records, Veteran’s Records, Vital Records, and documents from the Connecticut Archives Series of records. More digitized records will be added as they become available from FamilySearch.

All CT Reads 2023 announced this year’s titles and hosted a Virtual Author Launch with the three primary title authors event on January 12, 2023. Division of Library Development (DLD) staff already have five reservations for three unique users for All CT Reads 2023 book discussion sets. eGO CT is once again supporting the program as well. Each of this year’s titles have been added to the Palace app and an All CT Reads 2023 lane has been added to all participating libraries’ public access interface.

Virtually every library has patrons who are veterans, military service members, or military family members. As part of DLD’s ongoing partnership with Texas A&M University and the National Veteran’s Forum, Dawn LaValle, along with her partners Sarah LeMire, Associate Professor, Texas A&M University; Christy Billings, Program Coordinator, Russell Library (CT); and Lee Ann Amend, Library Director, Sharon Public Library (MA), presented a Webjunction Webinar, **“Practical Strategies for Engaging Veteran and Military-Affiliated Patrons at Your Library,”** which introduced practical and engaging library programming ideas for serving veteran and military communities. The presenters shared their experience developing programming for veteran and military communities and shared best practices and practical ideas for engaging veteran and military-affiliated patrons. The presenters also shared the [Libraries & Veterans Toolkit](#), a new resource to help workers at all types of libraries garner new ideas for veteran-related exhibits, book clubs, events, collections, celebrations and more.

Ashley Sklar, Dawn LaValle, and Matt Geeza, building on their Preliminary Proposal for an IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Grant program, are preparing an **Accessible Museums Project** full application and pilot program with Perkins Access, Massachusetts, the CT Office of the Arts (COA) within the the Department of Economic and Community Development, and CT Humanities to develop accessibility training and resources for different types of Connecticut museums to create audio descriptions and possibly

tactile tours. In addition to the full IMLS grant package, DLD is drafting a standalone pilot project to be funded with CT LAB funds.

The **eGO CT Community Share program for schools** continues to grow. There are now 90 sites participating in the program. There are approximately 170 school sites that are eligible to join. We continue to reach out to schools and add relevant content for the new school year. To date 665 new items have been added specifically for this program in addition to the Children & YA (Young Adult) content already available.

Ashley Sklar submitted a successful panel session proposal on DLD's COVID collaboration with Hartford Health Care for vaccine clinics and information session at public libraries in 2021-2022. The 2023 Accelerating **Health Equity Conference** by the American Hospital Association will be held May 16-18, 2023.

Allen Ramsey met with Diane Orson, Special Correspondent with Connecticut Public Radio / WNPR, on December 6 to view and talk about collections held by the State Archives, **Newtown 12/14 Condolence Letters (RG 062:097)** and **Letters and Other Submissions to The Newtown Bee in Response to the Sandy Hook Shootings Collection (RG 069:170)**, that document the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings on December 14, 2012. Ms. Orson's reporting on the efforts to preserve these types of items was broadcast on Wednesday, December 14th.

Deborah Schander, Christine Pittsley, and Lizette Pelletier met virtually with Betsy Pittman, the University Archivist - University of Connecticut, Storrs; Andrea Rapacz from the Connecticut Historical Society; Michael Kemezis from CT Humanities; and William Keegan, former staff member with the defunct **Trumbull Papers Project** to explore potential collaborations among the various repositories that hold Trumbull materials. With the approach of the semiquincentennial of the United States, researchers, educators, and grant project directors are seeking better access to the materials and an opportunity to help reframe the stories they contain to reflect new perspectives.

Elise Marzik, Allen Ramsey, and Deborah Schander continued to meet with Representative Christine Goupil (Clinton, Killingworth, and Westbrook), officials from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), and officials from municipalities and regional council of governments regarding Special Act 22-14 "An Act Concerning Building Officials, Resources Relating to the Administration of the State Building Code and the Promotion of Careers in Related Fields". The **Digitization of Building Codes Working Group** drafted and reviewed a report on the proposed digitization of state building code records. As part of the process, Elise and Allen participated in a focus group to work on Records Retention and Best Practices for the final report. The focus group discussed electronic records requirements and determined next steps to revise the M10 Land Use and Development municipal records retention schedule for use in the project. The final report was submitted to the Connecticut General Assembly Planning and Development Committee on December 28.

The **Archives Connection System Workgroup** met December 7 to watch a demonstration of the File Net IER system. State Archives and Public Records staff, Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Bureau of Information Technology Solutions (BITS) staff, and Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA) staff attended. It also met on December 14 to discuss the project business requirements of the Connecticut State Library and CTDA.

Deborah Schander, Dennis Mitchell, and Public Records and Archives staff met on January 5 with Marianna Garcia and Sally Whipple with the **Old State House** to brainstorm ideas for a series of programs later in the spring about the history, active and future issues in managing and preserving state and local government records, and how researchers use public records.

Patrick Smith met with several researchers who used the museum collections for a variety of purposes (articles, books, exhibits etc.), including a visit from a Curator of Arms and Armor from the **Metropolitan Museum of Art** who came to see our firearms collection.

Museum school outreach programs continue. Recent visits include presentations to three 4th grade classrooms in Madison and a joint program with Kevin Johnson to the CREC Aerospace Academy in Rocky Hill. 60 very enthusiastic 2nd graders took part in this program about what museums do and different ways to learn about the past.

Programs & Trainings

Nicole Besseghir presented a talk in November entitled “**Read All About It! World War II and Connecticut’s Historic Newspapers**” at the Association for the Study of Connecticut History (ASCH) Fall Conference - World War II in 2022: Connecticut and the Second World War.

Kym Powe, Ashley Sklar, Maria Bernier, and Matt Geeza have developed a **Growing Equitable Library Services** mini-series entitled “ADA and Beyond” for 2023. This series will help library staff learn to support and provide the best customer service for patrons with a variety of abilities and needs. Sessions include the following programs: Making Programs Accessible for All, Disability 101, Disability Accommodations in Libraries, Digital Accessibility, Accessible Documents: PowerPoint and Word, and Tech Petting Zoo. Ashley is also finalizing a four-part series with Dr. Audrey Barbakoff on Community-led Planning for Responsive, Equitable Services in February and March 2023.

DLD provided workshops in November/December on a wide variety of topics for all library types such as weeding, augmented and virtual reality, creating instructional videos, as well as an in-person cataloging workshop. In addition, information sessions were held on the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and additional training sessions were held for libraries set up to use the Northstar Digital Literacy program. DLD continued to offer **webinars and self-paced tutorials** from subscriptions to the Library 2.0 safety/security training webinars, and People Connect Institute (PCI) webinars through the Niche Academy platform as well as through WebJunction. Niche Academy had 6,353 views in 2022 from 278 unique

webinars/tutorials. Customer Service took the top two spots with survival Spanish, homelessness and de-escalation tutorials following to make up the top five viewed.

Chris Gauvreau has begun analyzing the data produced by the four recently completed **Digital Navigator pilot projects** funded by the State Library with funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services American Rescue Plan Act. The experience of the four pilot projects, carried out at the Ferguson, Hamden, East Hartford, and Hartford public libraries, confirmed that significant numbers of Connecticut residents were truly in need of digital navigation services. Within the nine months of navigator deployments, the pilot libraries cumulatively received 1,600 appointment requests and served over 700 unique clients. Almost half of these interactions led to multiple meetings between navigator and client. Of those 700 unique clients, approximately 380 received the large-screen devices they needed to conduct job searches, take classes, find affordable housing, carry on telehealth appointments, communicate with family, or break their social isolation. The data and stories that each library gathered and took to their library boards, town officials, and other stakeholders were so compelling that the door for post-grant support and funding to maintain the program was opened in three of the four towns. Those three towns have found stakeholder support to sustain navigation work after the grant cycle ended. The fourth library opted to limit their digital inclusion work to previously established skills training and device distribution but is now also engaged with a youth workforce development program to train navigator interns to assist libraries. In addition, the pilot project experiences are being referenced as part of the ongoing state planning process that will determine how best to spend federal Digital Equity Act funds to build a digital inclusion ecosystem in Connecticut.

By statute, **Town Clerk and Probate Vaults** must be constructed and maintained in accordance with state regulations and approved by the Office of the Public Records Administrator. LeAnn Power has been working with towns on vault construction and renovation projects, including projects for the Town of East Hartford. Vaults provide a high level of fire protection and security for towns' permanent and essential records.

LeAnn Power and Elise Marzik met with **Scan-Optics** to discuss the new Electronic Records Policy and Standards, including implications for digitization projects, and how Scan-Optics can support public agencies with the new requirements as they take on digital transformation initiatives.

Resource Updates

History & Genealogy received a generous financial donation from the **Naugatuck Valley Genealogy Club** for use in the purchase of library books in December.

Beginning with the 2023 legislative session, Bill Room staff has begun **digitally archiving bill file material and sessional publications** such as calendars and bulletins instead of receiving paper copies. Materials will be downloaded once per week via FTP connection to the

Connecticut General Assembly's (CGA) server and uploaded to a newly created collection in CTDA.

Lindsay Cawley has linked the existing bill files and legislative histories to the development version of the Historical Bills & Acts database and incorporated the subject heading search capability. Jackie Bagwell and IT Support are working on reproducing and supporting these changes in the live site environment. Eric Paiva and Asaf Aliev continued work on a related project to separate our digital bill files in CTDA so that they can be individually linked and more easily accessible.

Steve Mirsky is in conversation with the Judicial Branch regarding the legal materials that the State Library's Law staff receives from Judicial, including **Housing Court decisions, Supreme and Appellate Court Records & Briefs, and Statewide Grievance Committee Opinions**. The library currently receives housing court and grievance committee opinions in paper only while the records and briefs have been digital only since 2014. Judicial is looking to establish consistency in how they distribute all their documents and will follow up with a plan on how the State Library can obtain them via an FTP connection for eventual upload to CTDA.

A **second new book scanner** was installed in the Preservation Office. The i2s CopiBook OS A2 is a top-of-the-line, highly efficient overhead scanner for digitizing bound volumes, as well as flat materials. The CopiBook and the recently installed BookDrive Mark 2 book scanner represent a significant upgrade for CSL's digitization program.

The Preservation Office has completed 75% of the first phase of its ongoing project to digitize **unique Connecticut state documents** from our collections, for many of which the Connecticut State Library (CSL) holds the only known copy. So far, 442 documents have been digitized and are publicly available in the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA).

The Preservation Office is also digitizing **historical legislative transcripts**, which will be made publicly available in the CTDA. Since starting the project in October, 27 volumes (66%) from the 1969 Senate and Joint Standing Committee proceedings have been digitized, and 22 volumes are now available in the CTDA.

Kandace Yuen activated 159 Alma portfolios for **Newsbank's Access World News Connecticut State Collection** so they are now discoverable in our Primo catalog.

Maria Bernier received and checked 177 **Public Library Annual Report** forms to confirm completeness, accuracy, and adherence to standard definitions. She compiled the data into a Statistical Profile for 2021-2022 and posted it to the Division of Library's Development's [Statistics LibGuide](#). Additional do-it-yourself Excel tools incorporating this data will help library staff prepare comparison charts, trend charts, and concise data tables for reporting. Individual Fact Flyers, available in either Publisher or Canva formats, will be available for individual libraries to publicize their achievements over the past fiscal year.

Suzanne Vick has successfully taken the **DLD communications** baton from Ashley Sklar, producing DLD's Weekly Wrap-up and monthly newsletter, and creating social media graphics and posts to help us connect with the library community around the state.

The **Palace Project** continues to grow as we move into 2023. There are now 105 sites that are live in the app and actively sharing content with their patrons. DLD continues to purchase new content for the eGO CT program and the Palace app. Last year we added 3,700 items to the collection for a total of over 15,400 items now provided for free to public libraries and schools. Focus areas include Connecticut authors and Connecticut as subject, children and YA that support the school curriculum, backlist bestsellers, biography and memoir, veterans and military families, Spanish language, and professional development titles for librarians. Titles that offer favorable licensing terms such as perpetual ownership and simultaneous use are given priority.

Usage in requestIT/fulfillment for 2022 was 12,832 versus 10,334 in 2021. This is an increase of 2,498 lends (24% increase).

Noteworthy titles cataloged by Laura Diller and William Anderson include:

Library of Congress Congressional Research Service Insight series

- *COVID-19 vaccination: selected U.S. data sources*. Ada S. Cornell, Angela Napoli: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA51185541540003451
- *Domestic terrorism and the attack on the U.S. Capitol*. Lisa N. Sacco: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71185543550003451
- *Federal economic development and COVID-19 recovery : issues and policy options*. Michael H. Cecire: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71185543400003451
- *Planning and paying for college : federal government resources*. Laura L. Monagle: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71185704740003451

The State Library's significant events newspaper collections series

- *1938 hurricane Connecticut newspapers collection*. Cage F100 .A1938 1938: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71186529710003451
- *1936 flood Connecticut newspapers collection*. Cage F100 .A1936 1936: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71186094570003451

- *United States Bicentennial Connecticut newspapers collection*. Cage E285.C8 U55 2022: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71185539510003451

Other noteworthy titles

- *The Civil War : Strange and Fascinating Facts*. Burke Davis ; drawings by Raymond Houlihan. [200-] E655 .D25 2000z: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71185644720003451
- *Noah Webster as Epidemiologist*. Aldred Scott Warthin. [1923?] PE64.W5 W378 1923): https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71185884990003451
- *Antique & collectible Stanley tools :a guide to identity and value*. 2nd edition, revised edition. John Walter. 1996. TJ1195.W34 1996: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71185531300003451
- *Victorian decorative art : a photographic study of ornamental design in antique doorknobs*. Leonard Blumin. 1st edition. [1983] NK8459.D64 B551983: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1aj269h/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71185531310003451
- *Blue book of gun values*. S.P. Fjestad. 39th edition. [2018] TS534.7.F45 2018: https://cscu-csl-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/148en6t/01CSCU_NETWORK_ALMA71185531320003451

Certain **Library of Congress (LC) Classification numbers**, those which employ notation defining groups of individuals, have been updated to remove insensitive linguistic contexts. An example is the notation for the topic “African Americans and Christianity”, BR563.N4, which LC has replaced with the notation BR563.B53. The N4 in the original notation meant “Negroes”, the .B53 in the new notation means “Black People” and is used for African Americans. In November and December, the Cataloging Unit, with the assistance of Kevin Johnson from History and Genealogy updated the catalog entries and the call number labels for 56 books.

The Office of the Public Records Administrator issued one updated **records retention schedule** for the Department of Banking (DOB-04, effective 12/15/2022). Elise Marzik is currently working with three agencies on updates to agency-specific retention schedules. LeAnn Power and Cherie Miles processed 333 municipal and 104 state agency authorization forms for records disposals. At the **State Records Center** Doug Yaeger and Mike Soltesz accessioned 847 cubic feet of agency records; deaccessioned 1,663 cubic feet; processed 228 reference requests; and processed 176 re-files and inter-files.

Lizette Pelletier, Allen Ramsey, and Damon Munz met with Brian Tamms, of Assured Partners, the state’s insurance broker, and Melissa Frank, Risk Insurance Director on January 9th to

review the insurance requirements and needs for transporting **the Royal Charter and other key documents** to the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC). Both Mr. Tamms and Ms. Frank are new to their positions. They will be reviewing the various property insurance policies that come into play for the state, the transportation vendors, and NEDCC to ensure that there are no gaps in coverage.

Recent Archives accessions include:

- **East Hartford Probate Court record books**, 1887-1975, 171 volumes (RG 004:043)
- **Town of Canterbury records**, 1923-1989, 0.25 cubic feet (RG 062:022)
The records consist of beekeepers' records and permit forms, 1960-1989 and ledger (account book), 1923-1926.
- **Town of Eastford voter registration cards**, 1942-2016, 2 cubic feet (RG 062:039)
- **Dept. of Transportation photographs**, 1990-1993, 3 cubic feet (RG 089)
Photographs of the construction site for the Department of Transportation (DOT) Headquarters facility located at 2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington. Dates of construction between 1990 and 1993.
- **Dept. of Public Works, Bergin Correctional construction records**, circa 1989-2011, 13 cubic feet (RG 181)

Digital records processing completed:

- Two-thirds of **Governor Malloy's 60,000+ constituent emails** have been reviewed, redacted, converted to PDFs and uploaded to CTDA.
- Documents from ***Rex (King George) vs Dr. John Hallowell et al.***, a significant court case from 1747 found in the Windham Superior Court Records, have been scanned and uploaded to the State Library's name space in the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA) https://collections.ctdigitalarchive.org/islandora/object/30002%3ARG003_WSC_Cases_Rex-Hallowell What makes this case involving abortion and a charge of murder against the doctor significant is the amount of documentation and the details provided about the circumstances, the procedure, and the young woman's subsequent death.

Public Records and State Archives staff continue to collaborate to move forward with initiatives for the management and preservation of statewide electronic government records:

- Allen Ramsey, Elise Marzik, and Barbara Austen completed work on **Public Records Policy 04: Electronic Records Management** and companion **electronic records and digital imaging standards**. The policy and standards were published on the State Library website on December 1. They also issued a memo on December 21 explaining certain aspects of the policy regarding permanent records. The new policy and standards govern all digital imaging and electronic records management and preservation projects carried out by executive branch state agencies and municipalities.
- LeAnn Power, Lizette Pelletier, Elise Marzik, Damon Munz, and Allen Ramsey met with staff from the DAS (Dept. of Administrative Services), DAS BITS (Bureau of Information Technology Solutions), and Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to discuss the statewide **GovQA project** which can be used to manage **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests** received by executive branch state agencies and records retention requirements for records managed in the system.

