

Report to the State Library Board

November 22, 2021

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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 November 22, 2021 meeting of the Board, covers the period of October 26, 2021 through November 5, 2021.

Office of the State Librarian

Since the last board meeting, Deborah Schander met with new Board Chair, Maureen Sullivan, to discuss the role and their shared plans for Board and State Library initiatives in the next year. The two also welcomed new Board member Jessica de Perio Wittman with an orientation meeting and newly developed information packet in advance of her first meeting. The orientation meeting and packet will serve as a model for onboarding future new board members.

November 1 marked both the arrival of Matthew Geeza, new Unit Head for the Middletown Library Service Center and the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and the retirement of long-time Museum Administrator, Dean Nelson. Matt brings 13 years of experience working in school and public libraries, most recently serving as the Teen Services Librarian at the Westport Library, where he oversaw the teen collection, created programming, and developed community partnerships to serve teens in the Westport area. The State Library is grateful for Dean's years of able museum leadership, as he worked to develop our military, industrial, and political collections. The hiring process for his replacement has already begun and offers the new administrator a wonderful opportunity to lead our museum into the next era.

Unit Activities

Partnerships and Community Engagement

October 2021 was **Connecticut Archives Month**. This annual event raises awareness of the value of Connecticut's historical records and archives. It also recognizes the work of archivists, paraprofessionals, and dedicated volunteers who assess, collect, organize, preserve, and provide access to historical information that protect rights and support cultural identities. The Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board (CT SHRAB) selected "Archives: the Vaccine Against the Virus of Disinformation" as this year's poster theme. The members felt this was an appropriate topic given the ongoing pandemic and the disinformation surrounding treatments, vaccines, and other hot button topics that spilled over from 2020. The poster was published in the Fall issue of *Connecticut Explored*, <https://www.ctexplored.org/fall-2021-victorian-connecticut-excess-and-empire/>. CT SHRAB extends its thanks to Archives & Special Collections, University of Connecticut Libraries, for its financial support of the poster.

The four libraries recently awarded American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)-funded grants totaling \$396,400 to carry on **Digital Navigation Pilot Projects** under the direction of the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) began their consultations with the NDIA and are preparing for November training sessions for newly hired digital navigators. Following the September 10,

2021 training session for the Advisory Council on Library Planning and Development (ACLPD) Digital Inclusion Task Force, the group, led by Christine Gavreau, held its first business meeting focused on the work of building a **state digital inclusion coalition**. The group adopted as a template the Franklin County Digital Equity Coalition Framework and launched workgroups on mission and scope, outreach, and organization. Burt Cohen of the CT Broadband Policy Office volunteered to act as a resource for all three committees.

All CT Reads (spearheaded by Kym Powe), the State Library's new year-long initiative to promote lifelong reading, learning, and connection, announced the 2022 line up of selected titles as part of the CT Book Awards on October 22, 2021. This was followed by email and social media outreach to spread the news. The [All CT Reads website](#) was also launched and outreach is in process for a January virtual author launch event. All CT Reads is a partnership with the Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC), CT Humanities Center for the Book, and the CT Association of School Librarians (CASL) and others. All CT Reads is supported by a generous grant from EBSCO to the Connecticut Heritage Foundation whose mission is to support the programs and purposes of the Connecticut State Library and Museum of Connecticut History.

Growing Equitable Library Services (GELS) is a new overarching direction for a series of workshops and programs as part of a collaborative Division of Library Development (DLD) initiative with Kymberlee Powe. The goal of GELS is to help guide library staff in the understanding that professional development initiatives which may not appear to have a common thread, in fact do; we all need to consider how to create more accessible, Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI)-conscious libraries with services rooted in social justice.

- The first training with Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH) staff was offered on October 19, 2021: Growing Equitable Library Services: Preparing Library Staff to Assist People Experiencing Homelessness. It was an information and resource rich session that also offered some scenarios and practical applications for library staff in terms of engagement.
- The November session will be a hands-on interactive session with deeper training on the practice of sheltered diversion and connecting with people who may be experiencing a housing crisis.
- Also in development is a workshop with DataHaven on their new Town Equity Reports and how these can be accessed and utilized by libraries

This year the CT State Library transitioned to partnering with iRead for the **Summer Reading program**. The new 2022 summer theme is Camp iRead, Read Beyond the Beaten Path. To amplify this, DLD is partnering with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and their "No Child Left Inside" initiative.

DLD has launched [CT Pages](#), a channel for sharing community engagement success stories. CT Pages allows Connecticut libraries with interesting community programs and initiatives to explain their initiative and details to the greater library community.

With a growing need for conversation around immigration and new Americans, DLD purchased four [Welcoming Library Kits](#) for public libraries to borrow, all of which were requested within 24 hours. The Welcoming Library is a traveling library of 30 picture books that center around new arrival and new American experiences.

The **Historic Documents Preservation Program** supports records preservation and management in the municipalities and at the State Library. Funded through a fee on land recordings, the program has now awarded over \$19 million in municipal grants since its

establishment in FY 2001. For the FY 2022 grant year, the program has awarded Cycle 1 grants to 114 towns totaling \$727,000. Cycle 2 grant applications are currently being processed. The grants provide significant support for municipal records initiatives, including increased public access to electronic records. In addition, each town clerk's office directly retains a portion of the program's land recording fee, providing an important additional source of records funding for municipalities.

LeAnn Burbank and Kathy Makover attended the Fall Conference of the **Town Clerks' Association** in Westbrook on September 23. They staffed an information table, addressing questions from town clerks and records vendors related to agency policies and the Historic Documents Preservation grant program.

Public Records and Archives staff joined the State Librarian for an informational meeting on October 27 to learn more about **Scan-Optics** capabilities, tour their facility and operations in Manchester, and engage in conversation about how we can support each other as public agencies take on new digital transformation initiatives.

Programs & Trainings

The Office of the Public Records Administrator launched a new **State Records Management Webinar Training Series** for Records Management Liaison Officers (RMLOs) on October 20. LeAnn Burbank, Elise Marzik, and Kathy Makover presented to approximately 230 state employees representing a majority of the executive branch state agencies. Session 1, "Records Management Essentials", provided a high-level overview of state records management requirements, including scheduling, retention, storage, disposition, and best practices for managing email and electronic records. Elise Marzik is developing the ongoing training series, with each session covering a different state records management topic.

Gail Hurley set up two **new professional development series for librarians** in the Fall months. The first is a continuation of the successful Lead Your Library workshops called "Lead Your Library: Core Competencies" and focuses on management-related topics. A second series focusing on strategic communications has been set up specific to academic libraries and is called "Positioning Your Library as an Essential Service: How to Access the Resources Your Academic Library Needs and Deserves". In addition, DLD has subscribed to a year-long frontline customer service course for libraries in CT which runs from October 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022. This is a self-paced six-week course accessible from the State Library's Niche Academy. A management tool has been set up for all public and academic library directors as well, in the form of access for a year to Library 2.0 webinars on safety, security and management. This also runs through September 30, 2022.

Christine Gauvreau prepared for the mid-November 2021 launch of the "**Fiber to the Library – Internal Connections**" **grant program**, which will allow libraries who recently built a CT Education Network (CEN) fiber connection to leverage that connection to the fullest via a standardized local network assessment and select equipment upgrades.

Patrick Smith assisted several researchers and members of the general public with various projects they are working on using the **museum collections**, including photographs of our Governors' portraits collection and items from the Mitchelson Coin Collection.

Patrick Smith also continues to offer **museum education programs** through a variety of avenues.

- Upcoming school group outreach programs will include Colonial Connecticut, the Charter Oak Story, and a new program being created using the Freedom Trail Quilt and focusing on different aspects of the African American experience in Connecticut in the 18th and 19th century.
- Five “Hiking Through History” outreach programs were presented around Connecticut. Topics presented included a walking tour of Hartford History, The Windsor Locks Canal, the Old Connecticut Path in Willington, and a visit to Cedar Hill Cemetery in Hartford. The programs went on rain or shine and a total of 63 adults attended the programs. Plans are to expand the offerings and subjects of the programs beginning next spring.
- A new updated Museum Scavenger Hunt was uploaded to the Museum website.
- Home School Co-Op programs are being scheduled for the Spring of 2022. Topics will include Connecticut Inventions, Connecticut Monuments and Memorials and Colonial Connecticut.

Resource Updates

Gail Hurley and Anna Newman announced that the CT State Library received a supplemental award of \$147,734 from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to continue to digitize historically significant Connecticut newspapers through the **National Digital Newspaper Program** (NDNP) over the next two years. The total award amount the CT State Library has received for this project to date is \$1.2 million. This is the fifth grant award received for newspaper digitization, which will allow Connecticut to add another 100,000 pages, digitized from microfilm of newspapers published in the state between 1690 and 1963, to the Library of Congress’ Chronicling America database. The CT Digital Newspaper Project (CDNP) Advisory Board will meet in November to select the newspapers to be digitized. Digital images from this project are freely available on the Chronicling America website, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>.

The Preservation Office continues to scan new content from the library collection and preserve digitized materials in the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA). The following **prison newspaper titles**, digitized with support from Reveal Digital for their American Prison Newspaper Collection, are now available in the CTDA:

- [The Monthly Record \(1897-1909\)](#)
- [The Bridge \(1961-1971\)](#)
- [Adelante \(1971-1972\)](#)

On October 21st, Allen Ramsey received word that the **Congressionally Directed Spending Funding Request** submitted to Senators Blumenthal and Murphy was included in the publicly released draft spending bills by the Senate Appropriations Committee on October 18th. The amount requested was reduced in the draft bill from \$948,800 to \$948,000. The proposed project, “Planning to Preserve Connecticut’s Digital Government History”, would support expanding and improving the automatic digital connection required to transfer essential long-term and historically significant digital records from state agencies to a secure digital repository certified as meeting digital preservation standards. There is a long process ahead before these appropriations bills, and the project funding included in them, could become law in the final federal fiscal year 2022 budget.

Preparations for sending the **Royal Charter and the “Bill of Rights” document** to the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) continue to move forward, albeit slowly. The State’s insurance broker informed us that the State’s property insurance was renewed with FM Global along with supplemental coverage through Huntington Block, detailing what insurance coverages would apply during transport to and from NEDCC and during the time the documents were being conserved. The next step in the process is a contract with NEDCC. There is currently no new target date to send the documents.

New Haven County Court Records – National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) Grant Project archivist Sarah Morin gave a 45-minute presentation on the project titled, “**Uncovering New Haven: Finding Hidden Treasures in the New Haven County Court Records, 1666-1855**” for the State Library’s Third Thursday event program on Thursday, October 21.

DLD is continuing its work with Lyris and the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) on a new initiative called **the Palace Project**. This December, the Palace app will be launched to replace the SimplyE app. The app is currently being tested by multiple libraries and institutions including the Connecticut State Library. The configurations for Connecticut libraries are in the process of being tested and updated as needed to ensure they will be up to date when the new app is launched. To prepare for the launch of the Palace app this Fall, 421 new items have been selected for purchase with a focus on children and young adult titles, Spanish language titles, titles for veterans and military families, backlist bestsellers, and self-help titles. Included in these selections are 100 titles from the Ideas Roadshow Conversations: individual, carefully edited books developed from in-depth conversations with world-leading experts across all disciplines.

To help library circulation staff make a more accurate count of the incoming and outgoing **deliverIT** items, Maria Bernier created a short “How to Count deliverIT Volume” video for YouTube: <https://youtu.be/YvPi3zVMZPY>

Kris Abery and Carol Trinchitella worked with **ProQuest on digitalization projects** that included materials from our federal documents collection and from our collection of U.S. Supreme Court Records and Briefs. The library as a digital partner has increased access to several ProQuest databases, including U.S. Supreme Court Insight Collection.

Kandace Yuen has secured PDFs of the publication **Annual Property Transfers**, which is now only available electronically. The PDFs can be used in the library and assist researchers with historical research. Bill Anderson completed the original cataloging records for these compilations. Bill also contributed several original records for **Connecticut public policy titles** from the late twentieth century, including works issued by the Connecticut Public Expenditure Council.

Collection Services coordinated the loan of *Mental Hygiene News*, issue Vol. IV, No. 7 (April, 1926), to the Connecticut Historical Society for its exhibition **Common Struggle, Individual Experience: An Exhibition about Mental Health** presented by Hartford Healthcare Institute of Living through October 2022.

In October, the Connecticut Society of Genealogists presented **generous donations from several historical and genealogical societies** to the State Library. The History and Genealogy unit will be purchasing several genealogies and local histories with the funds.

The **H&G unit has produced two more databases**: *Connecticut Courts, Papers by Subject, Inquests into Deaths, 1711-1892* <https://ctstatelibrary.org/connecticut-state-archives-archival-record-group-rg-003/> and *Connecticut Courts, Papers by Subject, Loyalists 1776-1784* <https://ctstatelibrary.org/connecticut-state-archives-archival-record-group-003/>.

Kandace Yuen tested and implemented the library's **first use of Alma Digital** (Alma-D). This feature of Alma/Primo enables the State Library to host full-text digital resources purchased from commercial vendors and restricted to access onsite.

Staff in the Collection Services office continue to process new **Federal Depository Library Program** (FDLP) shipments of printed documents, maps and CDs, while updating the online library catalog holdings records for FDLP microfiche through telework.

The Cataloging and Access Services units collaborated to review and revise State Library practices for representing **closed-captioning** in original cataloging records for CT-N (Connecticut Network) presentations on DVD.

Glynis Georgie, in her role as Name Authority Cooperative (NACO) Program Connecticut Funnel coordinator, continued working with Laura Diller and Bill Anderson **on contributing authority records to the NACO database** through the OCLC NACO gateway. Entries examined and approved in September and October include Geno Auriemma. NACO is a Library of Congress program by which participants contribute authority records for agents, places, works, and expressions to the NACO Authority File at the Library of Congress.

Verna Thomas-Green made considerable progress on her project to update **state university press publications** incorrectly identified as government documents in Primo. This project benefits all CSCU institutions and supports our custodial responsibility for works produced by federal and state government. In September and October Verna completed updating records for the following publishers: University of Minnesota, University of Missouri, University of Nebraska, University of Nevada, University of New Mexico, University of North Texas, University of Oklahoma, University of Pittsburgh, University of South Carolina. Stephen Slovasky is coordinating a second phase of this project, whereby records not identified in the first phase are being updated by staff at Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) and Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU).

The Office of the Public Records Administrator issued one updated **records retention schedule** for the Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection (1 series revised, effective 10/22/2021). Elise Marzik is currently working with six agencies on updates to agency-specific retention schedules.