

Report to the State Library Board

March 28, 2022

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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 March 28, 2022 meeting of the Board, covers the period of January 25, 2022 through March 18, 2022.

Office of the State Librarian

The Governor's proposed midterm budget was presented on February 9, 2022, and the State Library's testimony before the Appropriations Committee was on February 17, 2022. This budget included three modest proposals which support the work of our agency and our state-wide mission: 1) adding a new position to our Public Records unit; 2) adjustments related to the state's IT consolidation efforts; and 3) funding library materials for the blind and print disabled. The State Library supports the policies behind all three initiatives and included several suggestions to enhance them further. In particular, the State Library requested the allocation for Braille materials be expanded in scope to include services, programming, outreach, and other initiatives which directly support Connecticut's blind and print disabled patrons. We also continue to monitor and respond to proposed legislation which impacts the State Library agency's work and related communities and partners throughout the legislative session.

As with many others in state government, the State Library anticipates several retirements and vacancies this Spring. We continue to work closely with the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of Policy and Management to retune (as needed) and refill these positions. The process for approving positions is already slow, and we anticipate it may be slower with so many in Connecticut choosing to retire. As needed, we will adjust services and hours temporarily and with the full intention of resuming normal operations as quickly as possible.

The Executive Branch issued new pandemic guidance in March, permitting staff and visitors into its facilities without masks. The Judicial Branch issued similar guidance shortly after, so all of our locations, including 231 Capitol Ave., have consistent guidelines. The State Library continues to encourage the use of masks for the protection of others.

Unit Activities

Partnerships and Community Engagement

In February, Kevin Johnson received two awards, from the Ha Rambee African American Historical Society of Hartford and the City of Hartford, in recognition of his tireless efforts to share the Black experience in Connecticut's history via his **presentations of William Webb**

and Jordan Freeman. According to Mel Smith, “Kevin has given hundreds of performances to audiences throughout the state on behalf of the Connecticut State Library for over two decades and encouraged countless individuals in the process to learn more about the African-American experience in Connecticut. These awards are well deserved!” We all agree. Kevin’s recent presentations include:

- a presentation of William Webb to 2nd graders at CREC (Capitol Region Education Council) Academy Aerospace and Engineering Elementary School, Rocky Hill. This was a combined presentation with Patrick Smith.
- a virtual presentation of Jordan Freeman for the Department of Transportation. Kevin also offered a Q&A session using Teams.
- a virtual presentation of William Webb for the Shiloh Baptist Church in New London, which included a Q&A session after the presentation.
- a presentation of William Webb to the Deloitte Company in Stamford. It was a hybrid in-person/Zoom presentation.

The Division of Library Development (DLD) and KEDGE The Futures School have completed the fourth Cohort of the new Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS) grant for **Transformation for Libraries: The Futures School**. Since the Futures School Pilot began in June of 2020 and the new IMLS grant in October 2021, DLD and Kedge have trained over 500 librarians in CT and across the country in Natural Foresight. Dawn La Valle was invited to present at the 2022 Computers in Libraries Virtual Conference for the Big Picture: Leader Learnings, Digital Divide and Transformation track to discuss this groundbreaking training and its impact on libraries and librarianship.

To help librarians just getting started working with veterans, as well as those looking for new ideas to bring to their libraries, the **Libraries and Veterans National Forum** has created an [online toolkit](#) to collect the shared knowledge of librarians working with the veteran community. It contains lesson plans, program outlines, collection development policies, best practice documents, and more to help ease the way for those just getting started in this work - and to make it easier for those already engaged to find new ideas and new strategies to increase the success of their programs. Dawn LaValle and Brad Bullis were integral in the toolkit’s development.

DLD concluded the application process for “**Fiber to the Library – Internal Connections**” **grant** program, which will allow libraries who recently built a CEN (Connecticut Education Network) fiber connection to leverage that connection to the fullest via a standardized local network assessment and select equipment upgrades. Forty-one eligible libraries applied for a grant for the first step of the process, an internal connections assessment by CEN and their subcontractor NOVUS.

On February 7, **Hartford HealthCare (HHC)** staff visited the Welles-Turner Memorial Library in Glastonbury for Ask the Expert: COVID-19 Vaccine for Children, a live virtual program with Dr. Juan Salazar, Connecticut Children’s Medical Center Physician-In-Chief, and moderated by Elisabeth Michel, Health Equity Specialist at Hartford HealthCare which addressed the status of COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccine among children.

DLD has continued to build and create partnership opportunities with the other New England state for Children's and Young Adult Services. The New England consultants partnered on March 4th to offer the New England Summer Summit. The event had over 300 registrants and great reviews.

Gail Hurley is working with Cornerstones of Science on a two-year IMLS grant they received to build a **STEM equity** framework and training module to support state library agencies and public libraries in Connecticut, Idaho, and Maryland in this work. She along with staff from the Idaho State Library and Maryland State Library are working on a phase of the project to help identify public libraries in the respective states as potential pilot libraries around what makes an exemplary STEM Equity library.

In December, the **Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped** (LBPH) finalized a plan to provide patrons with Expanded Service Locations to pick up and drop off LBPH materials. Locations include all public libraries in Connecticut, as well as other CT State Library buildings. Patrons who wish to use any of these locations to pick up and drop off materials can contact their reader's adviser to make arrangements. This expansion provides additional options, though patrons overwhelmingly continue to prefer accessing LBPH materials through USPS mail service or download items via BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download) or BARD mobile. LBPH has also completed a move from its former facility in Rocky Hill, CT to the Connecticut State Library's Middletown Library Service Center. The move was completed with minimal service disruptions to patrons.

158 patrons responded to the most recent **LBPH User Survey**. Survey highlights:

- Just over half, 53%, of our patrons use LBPH services on a weekly or monthly basis.
- 6.9% of respondents use print braille, 81% of respondents use Talking Books, 23.4% use BARD, and 31.65% of patrons use BARD mobile.
- 98% of our patrons rated overall quality of service as adequate or above, with 89.9% of patrons rating service as good or excellent.

In January, Lizette Pelletier and Damon Munz met with members of the cultural heritage community in Connecticut including Conservation ConneCTion, CT Humanities, Yale University, and the Branford Historical Society to begin reconstituting the **Connecticut committee of the Coordinated Statewide Emergency Preparedness [COSTEP-CT] program** that has gone somewhat dormant over the past few years. A second meeting followed, between Deborah Schander, Lizette, Kathy Craughwell-Varda, and Damon with Lori Foley, a Heritage Emergency National Task Force (HENTF) Specialist with the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA).

Programs & Trainings

On February 17, Anna Newman presented a talk on getting started with digitization for the **Connecticut Library Consortium's Genealogy Roundtable**.

LeAnn Burbank, Lizette Pelletier, Elise Marzik, Damon Munz, Allen Ramsey, and Susan Bigelow presented a virtual **Records Management Workshop** at the municipal Town Clerk School hosted by Central Connecticut State University on January 19 and 20. Over 100 town

clerks attended, and topics included records management, records preservation, archival records, municipal documents, and disaster recovery. LeAnn, Lizette, Elise, and Susan also introduced the role of records management and the Connecticut State Library at a virtual **Orientation for New Town Clerks** on January 26.

In February, as part of the Growing Equitable Library Services (GELS) program, DLD hosted the **Racial Equity Institute (REI) Groundwater Presentation**, a 3-hour introduction to racial equity that uses stories and data to present a perspective that racism is fundamentally structural in nature. Beginning with this program, DLD is now hosting **GELS Postscripts** to create a space for processing, discussion, engagement, and determining action after a GELS program. It is not a training or a presentation, but rather a space for reflection, processing, and thinking about action within the library. They are participatory and facilitated. [GELS program recordings](#) are on YouTube.

Maria Bernier hosted **construction grant webinars** in January and February to showcase recently completed library renovation projects in Madison and Stonington that were funded in part with grants from the Connecticut State Library (CSL). The presenters from each library shared their experiences and the lessons they learned along the way for the benefit of others who are embarking on similar projects. Additional case studies are planned for the spring.

In advance of the March 31 spending deadline for **ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) grant** recipients, Maria Bernier fielded numerous questions from library directors regarding the status of their grants, eligible expenses, budget revisions, and supply chain delays. Air purifiers, charging stations, cleanable furniture, mobile shelving, touchless fixtures, and self-checkout systems have been popular purchases.

Gail Hurley compiled the annual **Professional Development** Survey results in February. Of the 150+ responses from staff in CT libraries, the top area of interest was in Community Engagement, with Technology being second. Gail also worked with staff from the CT Judicial Branch Law Libraries and UConn Law Library to bring *Hands-on Legal Reference for Public Librarians* to library staff in February. A sampling of upcoming programs this Spring include two *Grant Writing* workshops for all library types, and a workshop on *Working with Patrons with Mental Health Conditions* with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS).

Resource Updates

As part of an ongoing joint effort of Collection Services and Reference staff, 330 **new CT State Library card applications** were processed during January and February 2022. These cards provide our patrons with 24/7 remote access to many CSL and researchIT CT online databases. Special note goes to Jerry Seagrave, who processed 311 (or 94%) of the applications and mailed cards and letters to patrons.

Staff in Collection Services continue to process new **Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP)** shipments of printed documents, microfiche, maps and CDs. Using FDLP shipping lists, Gertrude Adusei added 346 microfiche item records to our online catalog.

Kris Abery completed and submitted the **2021 Biennial Survey of Depository** Operations to FDLP. She processed over 3,000 discards from selective depository libraries in both Connecticut and Rhode Island. She also prepared the [Connecticut document index](#) for posting to the Government Information Services state & federal indexes.

Griselle Colon digitalized three volumes of **Maritime court records**.

DLD completed its work with QualityMetrics, a firm hired by the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies in New England, to carry out the mandatory evaluation of the execution of the **2018-2022 Five-Year Plan** that the CT State Library submitted to the Institute of Museum and Libraries Services. The completed evaluation will soon be submitted to the IMLS.

The launch of the Palace Project as part of the **eGO CT** program is underway. To date, eight libraries have moved into production and 131 libraries have been configured and tested in the Palace app. We will begin deploying libraries that have OverDrive collections as soon as OverDrive completes its security audit. The content streams from Baker & Taylor, Biblioboard, and Digital Public Library of America are all in place. DLD continues to purchase new content to coincide with the launch of the Palace app. To date, over 700 new items have been added. Focus areas include Connecticut authors and Connecticut as subject, children and YA titles including simultaneous use titles that support the school curriculum, backlist bestsellers, biography and memoir, professional development titles for librarians, and self-help titles.

To date this fiscal year (July – February), the number of items lent in fulfillment total 7,866 compared with 4,461 over the same period last fiscal year. This represents a percentage increase of over 76% for the **requestIT CT** service.

Maria Bernier received annual reports from 177 public libraries, compiled them into a [Statistical Profile of CT's Public Libraries for Fiscal Year 2021](#), and submitted them for inclusion in the nationwide Public Libraries Survey sponsored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Connecticut was one of the first two states to submit their data for this fiscal year. Three webinars for library directors and staff were offered on how to use that data during budget season to advocate for library funding. One attendee commented in the post-webinar survey: "Thank you, this is the kind of meat-and-potatoes kind of learning that is so necessary for directors."

Gail Hurley issued a call to CT library directors in February to share [updated library policies](#). Approximately 100 policies were shared including ones that were new because of the pandemic. These sample policies have been helpful to libraries over the years when they are developing or updating their own policies.

Kandace Yuen used the ExLibris Portfolio Loader to bulk import 566 eBook titles into Alma for the **West Academic Reference Collection**. This law reference collection on subscription at the Connecticut State Library (CSL) provides access to nutshells, hornbooks, and concise hornbook series. The individual titles are now accessible in our Primo catalog. After obtaining usage statistics directly from our subscription database vendors, Kandace also compiled a **database usage report** for CSL for the period July-December 2021, which helps us monitor the cost-effectiveness of online subscriptions.

On February 17, 2022, the Secretary of the State's Office launched electionhistory.ct.gov, a **database of Connecticut election results** from 1787 to the present. In support of this project, CSL digitized 41 volumes of vote statements and provided over 5,800 images for use in the database. Particular recognition goes to Griselle Colon, who completed the majority of the digitization work for this project. High-resolution images of selected vote statement volumes are available in the [Connecticut Digital Archive](#) (CTDA), and more will be added in the coming months.

The OCLC bibliographic database (branded as "WorldCat") is, in addition to being a source of cataloging records prepared by OCLC member institutions, a database of library holdings information. In OCLC, holdings are used by libraries to communicate what resources they currently own or license by associating their unique institution symbol with specific records in the OCLC bibliographic database. In late February, the Connecticut State Library accepted an offer from OCLC to perform for us, without charge, a "**Streamlined Holdings Update**" project. This program provided a one-time update of OCLC holdings by adding holdings to matching database records and removing inaccurate holdings. This process reconciled the holdings of the State Library in Hartford and the holdings of the Middletown Library Service Center with the holdings information in OCLC.

The Cataloging Unit continued working on our project to replace 27,000 hyperlinks for **electronic state documents**, exporting revised bibliographic records from OCLC into Alma and Primo. As of February 28, 16,100 revised records have been exported. The team also made progress on correcting the 9,000 records for Connecticut state government electronic publications that had been incorrectly designated "Open Access" in Primo, many of which will be corrected in the electronic state document hyperlink replacement project.

Verna Thomas-Green completed her segment of a project to update **state university press publications** incorrectly identified as government documents in Primo. This project benefits all Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) institutions and supports our custodial responsibility for research produced by federal and state government. CSL is coordinating an additional phase of this project where records not identified in the first phase are being updated by staff at Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) and at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU).

The Office of the Public Records Administrator issued one updated **records retention schedule** for the Fiscal State General Schedule (1 series revised, effective 2/18/2022). Elise Marzik is currently working with four agencies on updates to agency-specific retention schedules.

Public Records is **hosting an intern** from Southern Connecticut State University for the Spring 2022 semester. Jordon Hensley, a Library and Information Science graduate student, is working with Elise Marzik on a project to revise state and municipal records retention schedules.

The **Historic Documents Preservation Program** supports records preservation and management in the municipalities and at the State Library. The State Library awarded a total of \$947,500 in grants to 151 municipalities in FY22, most recently awarding 37 Cycle 2 grants on

December 28, 2021. LeAnn Burbank processed 37 grant contracts for FY2022. She also emailed the FY2023 grant guidelines to municipal Chief Executive Officers and Town Clerks on February 1, 2022.

LeAnn Burbank and Cherie Miles processed 235 municipal and 93 state agency **authorization forms** for records disposals.

The **State Records Center** provides off-site inactive records storage for state agencies free of charge. Doug Yaeger and Mike Soltesz accessioned 398 cubic feet of agency records; deaccessioned 1,288 cubic feet; processed 261 reference requests; and processed 102 re-files and inter-files.

Christopher Eck, Executive Director of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), sent his compliments on the **The New Haven County Court Records - NHPRC Grant Project** writing, "I want to let you know that the Archivist of the United States David S. Ferriero and I enjoy reading the blog posts from the New Haven County Court Records project. We've enjoyed the blend of subjects and topics covered by the blog articles and the work of your staff displays the creativity on how to make the nation's early legal records of interest to the public." Sarah Morin and Lizette Pelletier's 20-minute session on utilizing court records in genealogy research recorded for FamilySearch's virtual RootsTech 2022 conference, also received high praise from John de Jong, North America Partners Strategic Relations Manager for the FamilySearch Records Division. He wrote that, "This is certainly one of the best Archives and Records Custodians presentations available to RootsTech attendees this year – and I am sure for many years to come. I only wish other states would follow your lead and create such well thought out and very accessible resources for their patrons." He was very impressed with the project's focus on underrepresented individuals in Connecticut.

State Archives staff submitted a request on February 2 to State Procurement to rebid the current **Emergency Response and Recovery Services for Records and Collections Statewide Contract** that has been in place since 2011 and expires in April. This contract is for use in the immediate aftermath of a disaster affecting public records or the long-term recovery when a state or municipal agency cannot cope on its own. Such a disaster might include fire, flood, mold outbreak, or furnace puffback.

The final manuscript proof of **Public Records of the State of Connecticut – Vol. XXIII** was approved and returned to the printer. Last minute changes were necessary due to supply issues with paper and the cover materials, but the substitutions should not be noticeable. Delivery of the final product is expected to be within the next couple of months. The volume will be made available for free to all state institutions of higher education, state law libraries, and public libraries. The public and other institutions will be able to purchase the volume for \$45 plus \$5.00 for shipping and handling. Volumes can be ordered through the State Library website when available.

Recent Archives Accessions include:

- Dept. of Economic and Community Development Enterprise Zone project files and Planning records - international business development, 2004-2015, 5 cubic feet (RG 022). *The records consist of Enterprise Zone Project files - Approved, Enterprise Zone*

Certifications, 2007-2010; and Planning Records - International Business Development - Africa, CONNIX, Israel mission, and China, 2004-2015.

- Dept. of Transportation planning map files and aerial photograph, circa 1920-2000, 31 drawers (RG 089). *The planning map files consist of drawings with some attachments including but not limited to correspondence. The oversize color aerial photograph shows parts of Middletown including the Arrigoni Bridge, the Connecticut River, and parts of Portland.*
- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner medical records, 1970-2015, 13 cubic feet (RG 194)

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 continued work on an **electronic records policy** and **electronic records standards document**. The new policy and standards will govern all digital imaging and electronic records management and preservation projects carried out by executive branch state agencies and municipalities. The standards document is currently under internal review.
- Lizette, LeAnn, Allen and Elise continued to meet with the Department of Administrative Services/Bureau of Information Technology Solutions (DAS/BITS) on several **CSL projects in FileNet** including disposition authorization form review and approval workflow, and the permission to publish process. The disposition authorization form workflow is now in staging and a final demonstration was held by DAS/BITS on March 4.

In the **Museum of Connecticut History:**

- Minor exhibit repairs have been made in the Connecticut Collections area.
- A new, more accurate map of the exhibit cases is being made to help Museum staff and Judicial security respond to periodic exhibit case alarms are triggered when a visitor bumps them or batteries in the individual case alarms need replacement.
- The Governor's Chair, on long term loan to the Old State House, will require minor repair after being damaged by a visitor. The chair will be brought to a furniture conservator in the Norwich area for inspection to see what repairs and conservation are needed.
- The "Nathan Hale Trunk" on long term loan to Connecticut Landmarks will soon have some conservation work as well to preserve and protect its structural integrity.
- Object donations continue to arrive at the Museum at a steady pace. Recent acquisitions to the collection include a model 1883 Colt Hammerless Shotgun and associated tools, several ceramic pieces, a Governors Footguard pamphlet from 1862, and Model 5 Royal Typewriter made in Hartford. Associated forms, acknowledgement letters, and other paperwork are all being sent to the object donors as they are entered into our collections database.
- Research requests from the public are being handled on a consistent basis. Recent requests have included topics such as Connecticut made buttons, the Michelson Coin Collection, images of the State Library building construction, and Connecticut made magicians' supplies.