

## Report to the State Library Board

September 19, 2022

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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 September 19, 2022 meeting of the Board, covers the period of July 26, 2022 through September 9, 2022.

### Office of the State Librarian

On August 22, U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal joined State Archivist Lizette Pelletier and me in Memorial Hall for a joint press conference to announce a \$948,000 federal grant to the State Library. The State Library received this grant through the Community Project Funding / Congressionally Directed Spending process (informally also known as “earmarks”) as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 signed into law by President Biden on March 15, 2022. The funding awarded through the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), a statutory body affiliated with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), will support the library’s efforts to automate the transfer of archival state government records to the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA), the State Library’s digital preservation repository, and research and plan for a digital repository to preserve records restricted by law. Special thanks go to Lizette Pelletier, Allen Ramsey, Barbara Austen, Damon Munz, Elise Marzik, LeAnn Burbank, and Greg Colati of CTDA for their countless hours of work to secure the funding and now shepherd the project to fruition.

On August 24, Maureen Sullivan and I were invited to meet with the Executive Director and Board leadership of the Connecticut Historical Society (CHS). The CHS team shared their ideas for the future of CHS, and we discussed how those ideas might lead to collaborations on exhibits and programs.

The FY24/FY25 budget process has begun, and I am coordinating with our budget partners at the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of Policy and Management to finalize the agency’s submissions for the next biennium. Final submissions are due in early-October.

### Unit Activities

#### Partnerships and Community Engagement

Lizette Pelletier was interviewed in Memorial Hall by Dennis House about “**Governor John Davis Lodge: A Look at the Last Time an Incumbent Governor Was Defeated**”. The interview aired on August 21 on *This Week in Connecticut* on WTNH ABC 8 and can be viewed online, <https://www.wtnh.com/this-week-in-connecticut/this-week-in-ct-a-look-at-the-last-time-an-incumbent-governor-was-defeated/>.

Allen Ramsey and Lizette Pelletier continue to identify items of interest for the Connecticut Radio Information System (CRIS) National Park Service planning grant to provide **accessibility**

at the **Redding Revolutionary War encampment** located within the Putnam Memorial State Park.

Lizette Pelletier worked with Steve Mirsky and Mel Smith to research **Italian dual naturalization requirements** to revise a document stating that all Connecticut Naturalization Records were transferred in the early 1980s by the Judicial Department to the National Archives and Records Administration in Waltham, MA. The Italian Consulate requests a certified declaration of non-existence of naturalization records as part of the application process.

LeAnn Burbank, Lizette Pelletier, Elise Marzik, Damon Munz, Allen Ramsey, and Deborah Schander met with **Scan-Optics** for a quarterly meeting on July 18 for a status update and continued discussion as public agencies take on new digital transformation initiatives.

Elise Marzik, Allen Ramsey, Barbara Austen, Anna Newman, and Deborah Schander are meeting monthly with the **Digitization of Building Codes Working Group**, including 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”. A findings report is due January 1, 2023.

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 Burbank has been working with towns on vault construction and renovation projects, including projects for the City of Bristol, the Naugatuck Probate Court, and the Town of Avon, Cromwell, East Hartford and South Windsor. These vaults provide a high level of fire protection and security for towns’ permanent and essential records.

As part of CSL’s partnership with CT Latino News, Dawn LaValle was featured on the latest **CTLN Opinion+ episode**, where major issues facing local Latin and underrepresented communities are discussed. Dawn told the audience: “Digital Equity is about everyone having access, everyone being able to use a device to do their homework, to do their work.”

**CT Libraries & Partners for Digital Equity** (CTLPDE), a project of the CT State Library, held July and August membership meetings. In July, attendees heard from Colin Rhinesmith on a participatory action research model for community assessments of digital need, Michael Kemezis of CT Humanities on their interest in collaboration on digital inclusion, and Burt Cohen from the Office of Consumer Counsel on the CT State Broadband Infrastructure Request for Information public comment period. Attendees at the August meeting heard presentations from the Denver Public Library and the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition on how to best serve the immigrant community considering recent revelations of illegal surveillance when aiding sign up to the Affordable Connectivity Plan (ACP).

Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) staff conducted **six LBPH outreach sessions** during July and August 2022. Outreach sessions included a visit to the Southeast Connecticut Community Center for the Blind, an informational table at the town of New Britain’s Ability Walk and Roll Event, and informational outreach sessions for staff members of several public libraries. Matt Geeza also led “**Becoming an LBPH Hub Library**” **informational webinars** on August 24 and August 31. LBPH and CSL seek to partner with at least 6 libraries across the state of CT to provide regional access points for LBPH services and resources.

Gail Hurley was invited by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) partners to participate in monthly meetings and subgroup work of the [CT Health Improvement Coalition](#) to work on the **Healthy Connecticut 2025 action plan**, specifically in the priority area of Community Strength and Resilience of which libraries would play a role.

The Division of Library Development (DLD) is partnering with CT State Parks to design, create, and implement a **CT Storywalk Passport Program**. Kym Powe will be working with CT State Parks to establish four permanent Storywalks to be built at four state parks with year-round maintainers. The Library for the Blind and Phtsically Handicapped (LBPH) will be consulted to ensure that the Storywalks are accessible. This project is funded by the EBSCO donation to support statewide reading initiatives.

## Programs & Trainings

In the Museum of Connecticut History, the popular “**Hiking Through History**” public programs have continued. Recent visits have been to the Lebanon Town Green and a section of the Old Connecticut Path in Willington. **Outreach school programs** are resuming as well; future visits include elementary schools in Enfield and Madison, where topics will include the Charter Oak and Revolutionary War history.

The Connecticut State Library’s **Five-Year Plan** has been approved by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) as required by the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). Prior to the Five-Year Plan, the CT State Library, like each State Library Administrative Agency (SLAA), is required to independently evaluate activities funded by IMLS prior to the end of the Five-Year Plan and provide a report of its findings to IMLS’ Director. The independent evaluators’ report, submitted to IMLS in March 2022, indicated that the Division of Library Development’s (DLD) existing core services are highly regarded by respondents. For instance, deliverIT is “indispensable” (p. 4), the supplementary library collections are “of high value,” libraries of all types “have come to rely on” statewide databases, the DLD consultants are a “lifeline,” and competitive subgrants are “high in impact.” The new LSTA 5-Year Plan outlines three strategic goals that will underpin the agency’s programs and services:

- Support the library workforce as they integrate social justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (SJDEIA) into their daily work and their approach to patrons.
- Support the impact of libraries as community anchors serving diverse populations with increased institutional capacity, community partnerships, and programming.
- Ensure equitable access to information and library resources for all residents of the state.

These three goals will guide the CT State Library through the next five years, alongside ongoing feedback from libraries, the library workforce, strategic partners, and all the communities that together we serve.

Kym Powe presented “**From Diversity to Inclusion: How to Audit Your Collection and Why**” with Niche Academy to over 1,000 participants from around the country and beyond. The training is now part of Niche Academy’s permanent professional development catalog.

In July, DLD provided the first **in-person workshops** at the Middletown Library Service Center since the pandemic began on the topics of *Basic and Advanced Book Repair*. **Virtual trainings** in July and August included *Principles of Great Flyer Design*, *Making Instructional Videos Using WeVideo*, and *Introduction to Canva*.

As part of **Growing Equitable Library Services** (GELS) Ashley Sklar initiated a relationship with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regional Community Relations Officer and, inspired by a partnership with IMLS, confirmed a three-part fall series: Immigration 101 (September 13), Naturalization 101 (September 28) and USCIS Online Tools (October 12).

Maria Bernier, State Data Coordinator, identified dozens of CT libraries that are no longer complying with **borrowIT CT regulations**, which require lending of all physical materials to non-residents. To ensure that libraries are complying and remain eligible for reimbursement, DLD added certifications to the report form and set up new training on the regulations and reporting. DLD launched the new Annual Report form on July 15 and offered training sessions on how to complete it for new directors and administrators. The new due date for the report is November 1.

## Resource Updates

Donations continue to arrive to the **Museum collections**. Recent items include a Connecticut made Criterion telescope and a Weed sewing machine and table base.

The **Governor's Chair** has been repaired and is being retrieved from the furniture conservator. The chair will be returned to the Old State House and put back on exhibit in the Senate Chamber.

A portable, temporary exhibit, "**A History of US**", created by the Gilder Lehrman Institute, was recently given to the State Library by the Guilford Library, which had been exhibiting it at a branch library. The exhibit, which traces the history of the United States from the 1770s to the 1970s, will be set up in Memorial Hall for a short period then offered to other museums, public libraries, and cultural institutions for temporary exhibit.

Patrick Smith has been coordinating with Judicial Marshalls to replace **exhibit case** alarm batteries and ensure the continued safety of museum items on exhibit.

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. Lizette Pelletier submitted the request to DAS Procurement for a **five-year Sole Source contract** with NEDCC on August 11. There is currently no new target date to send the documents.

*Recent Archives Accessions include:*

- Capital Region **Library Council records**, 4 cubic feet
- Town of East Hartford **voter registration cards**, 1897-2000, 15 cubic feet (RG 062:043)
- Town of North Canaan **aerial photographs**, undated, 31 items (RG 062:100)

*Digital Records Processing Completed:*

- The **1934 aerials** are **uploaded into Connecticut Digital Archives (CTDA)** and have been **reviewed for quality control; missing photographs have been added**

*Between July 8 and August 26, Family Search scanned the following records:*

- Bible & Family Records, 1579-1978, 18,505 images
- Fairfield County Coroner Records, 1948-1952, 10,565 images
- Town of Ashford Vital Records, 4 volumes, 1710–1851, 557 images
- Brooklyn vital records, 1782–1867, 21 images

- Town of Colchester Vital Records and Land Records, 2 volumes, 1697–1729, 481 images
- Columbia Vital Records, 1 volume, 1848–1907, 123 images
- Durham Vital Records, 1 volume, 1747–1909, 162 images
- Deep River Vital Records, Saybrook Births, Deaths, and Marriages, 4 volumes, 1767–1833, 506 images
- East Lyme Vital Records, 2 volumes, 1855–1898, 289 images
- East Windsor Record of Deaths, Original Manuscripts, 1783–1848, 53 images
- Ellington Vital Records, 1 volume, 1786, 104 images
- Franklin Book of Marriages, Births & Deaths, Vital records, 1 volume, 1760–1848, 269 images
- Hartford Vital Records, 1 volume, 1639–1852, 115 images
- Harwinton, Town records includes vital records, 2 volumes, 1724–1792, 842 images
- Lebanon Town Records, Births, Marriages, Deaths, 1 volume, 1699–1840, 489 images
- Mansfield Marriages, 1817–1829, 20 images
- Middletown, Land Records includes vital records, 1 volume, 1654–1742, 616 images
- Milford vital records, 6 volumes, 1649–1874, 973 images
- Burton Collection of Marriages, Norwalk marriages, 1834–1853, 292 images
- Southbury Certificates of Marriage, 1 volume, 1820–1868, 153 images
- Necrological record from Fitch's Home for Soldiers, Darien Connecticut, 1 volume, 1884–1951, 128 images
- Necrological Record, Veterans at Fitch's Home for Soldiers, 1 volume, 1884–1897, 31 images
- Necrology record for the Connecticut Veteran Home & State Hospital, 2 volumes, 1950–1971, 189 images
- Historical Register of Connecticut State Soldiers Home, 9 volumes, 1884–1923, 4,636 images
- Invalid Soldiers admitted to Fitch's Home and Hospitals, 1 volume, 1878–1891, 219 images
- Hartford County, Superior Court, Divorce Case Judgements, volume 112, 1951, 681 images
- Connecticut Archives Series
  - Crimes & Misdemeanors, Series 1, 7 volumes, 1662–1789, 3,362 images
  - Crimes & Misdemeanors, Series 2, 5 volumes, 1671–1820, 1,969 images
  - Ecclesiastical Affairs, Series 1, 16 volumes, 1658–1789, 9,780 images
  - Finance & Currency, Series 2, 16 volumes, 1689–1820, 6,708 images
  - Lotteries & Divorces, Series 2, 2 volumes, 1718–1820, 873 images
  - Miscellaneous, Series 1, 6 volumes, 1635–1789, 2,186 images
  - Miscellaneous, Series 2, 2 volumes, 1686–1820, 709 images
  - War, Colonial, Series 2, 1 volume, 1689–1806, 103 images

Sub-total of records since July 8: 66,709

Total images of records since March 14: 203,025

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 continue 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 policy and standards have been submitted for final review.

Elise Marzik created a new Records Management Liaison Officer (RMLO) designation form for an **electronic authorization process**. The new forms are replacing the hard copy mail-in system for RMLO designation and have been posted to the State Library website effective August 11. Paper designation forms are still accepted during the transition to the electronic system.

The Office of the Public Records Administrator issued two revised **records retention schedules** for the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP-01 and BPP-02, effective 7/11/2022) and one new records series for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP-02, effective 8/9/2022). Elise Marzik is currently working with four agencies on updates to agency-specific retention schedules.

The **State Records Center** provides off-site inactive records storage for state agencies free of charge. Doug Yaeger and Mike Soltesz accessioned 492 cubic feet of agency records; deaccessioned 937 cubic feet; processed 378 reference requests; and processed 128 re-files and inter-files.

In July, the State Library received **seven boxes of uncataloged Connecticut State publications** from Eastern Connecticut State University. These publications had been determined suitable to the University's curriculum but were transferred to the State Library due to personnel retrenchment. Kris Aberly has processed and added 24 publications to the Connecticut State documents collection and created 103 brief bibliographic records.

In August, Laura Diller assumed responsibility for compiling and sharing **Electronic Collections in the Alma Network Zone**. The State Library submits these collections to the Alma Network Zone each month, so that consortium partners may include them in their institutional catalogs. Recent shared items include:

- Congressional Research Service Reports (from State Library United States Government Publications Office (USGPO) electronic collection)
- Federal COVID-19 resources (from State Library USGPO electronic collection)
- FRASER (Federal Reserve Archival System for Economic Research ) Publications (from State Library USGPO electronic collection)
- Geological Survey Professional Papers (from State Library USGPO electronic collection)
- State of Connecticut COVID-19 resources (from State Library Connecticut State Government Publications electronic collection)
- Vital and Health Statistics (from State Library USGPO electronic collection)

Verna Thomas-Green began a project to standardize formats of hyperlinks to electronic versions of tangible state documents, as delivered in Primo from the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA). In addition, she is adding **new original bibliographic records to OCLC** which describe the CTDA versions of these resources. These new records are available from OCLC to libraries who wish to acquire and catalog the electronic versions. As of August 31, Verna has contributed approximately 600 of these new records to the OCLC database.

Susan Bigelow, Mel Smith, and Kristi Finnan have scanned and made available the **Public Utility Commission (PUC) docket index** on CTDA. The Public Utilities Commission dockets range from 1901-1976, and mainly concern railways, street railways, and buses. The indexes

are arranged by location. The PUC docket index be found online at <http://hdl.handle.net/11134/30002:720603900>.

Mel Smith gave a Zoom presentation on July 12th to the **Connecticut Society of Genealogists** highlighting the Connecticut State Library webpage. There were approximately 65 individuals in attendance, some from as far away as California.

On August 4, 310 **Connecticut redistricting maps for 2020** were delivered to the State Library. The maps will be processed and added to the Connecticut State documents collection.

61,000 new records went live in the **Historical Bills & Acts database** which now includes legislation from 1913 through 1982. Eric Paiva continues to digitize related data in addition to a project that will allow the database to link directly to the library's unique collection of individual bill files. Asaf Aliev separated and batch uploaded **scanned bill files to CTDA** so they can be linked individually to each item.

In the Bill Room, Asaf Aliev, Andrew Bourque, and Steve Mirsky continued indexing **2022 transcripts** received during this past session totaling approximately 15,000 pages. Efforts to acquire Judiciary and House transcripts not yet transcribed are still underway.

The Preservation Office has started an ongoing project to digitize **unique Connecticut state documents** from our collections, for many of which CSL holds the only known copy. Of the 654 documents selected for the first phase of the project, 200 (31%), have been digitized, and 60 (9%) documents are now preserved and publicly available in the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA).

The Connecticut Digital Newspaper Project (CDNP) selected ten newspaper titles that will be digitized during **its fifth National Digital Newspaper Program grant** from the National Endowment for the Humanities. These include four short runs of World War II-era newspapers (1941-1948), three weekly newspapers from eastern Connecticut (1857-1949), the Italian language newspaper *La Verita* (1926-1946), and the *New Haven Union* (1905-1920), which was co-founded by Augusta Lewis Troup, a suffragist, journalist, and labor activist. More details can be found on the CDNP website: [www.ctdigitalnewspaperproject.org](http://www.ctdigitalnewspaperproject.org).

As part of an ongoing joint effort of Collection Services and Reference staff, 367 new **CT State Library card applications** were processed during July-August 2022. These cards provide patrons with 24/7 remote access to many CSL and researchIT CT online databases. Jerry Seagrave processed 349 (or 95%) of the applications and mailed cards and welcome letters to patrons.

Elizabeth Esquilin searches discards lists from selective Federal Depository Libraries in Connecticut and Rhode Island. During July-August 2022, Elizabeth verified our holdings for 548 federal documents. This process enabled us to **replace documents** missing from our shelves or in fragile condition.

The National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) has notified its network libraries, including LBPH, that it will cease the publication of its periodical, **Braille Book Review** (BBR), in large print format. BBR will remain available in hard copy braille, e-braille, and HTML formats.

The **launch of the Palace Project** as part of the eGO CT program is underway. To date, 81 libraries have moved into production and are sharing content with their patrons, and 166 libraries have been configured and tested in the Palace app. There are 938 patrons that are registered in the app. DLD continues to purchase new content to coincide with the launch of the Palace app. Since January 2022, 1,967 new items have been added. Focus areas include Connecticut authors and Connecticut as subject, children and Young Adult (YA) including simultaneous use titles that support the school curriculum, backlist bestsellers, biography and memoir, veterans and military families, Spanish language, professional development titles for librarians, and self-help titles.

The **usage statistics for researchIT CT's licensed full-text databases** for FY22 were posted in July. There was a total of 3,141,381 page views (a measure of when search results are viewed), with 201,710 (or 6%) from public library patrons; 702,312 (or 22%) from school library patrons; and 2,237,351 (or 71%) from academic library patrons. While academic and public libraries showed a decrease in usage, school libraries saw a 68% increase in usage over FY21. In addition, public libraries viewed Connecticut State Library Collections in Ancestry.com 10,670,593 times in FY 2022. The researchIT CT program Saves the state's libraries and municipalities \$4,480,464 annually.

**FindIT CT**, the statewide library catalog, has 25,001,319 bibliographic records and 19,005,920 items as of August 2022. In FY2022, it had 386,282 visits, and 4,594,605 page views.

Recognizing that public libraries are crucial to digital inclusion, the CT State Library awarded 41 libraries that have fiber connections via the CT Education Network (CEN) a total of \$404,383.64 for **standardized assessments of their local area network infrastructure**, inclusive of the underlying systems to support a well-performing network. This is the first cycle of a grant program known as Fiber to the Libraries – Internal Connections. The assessment grants are designed to help libraries leverage their fiber-based internet connection to the fullest.

Ashley Sklar and Maria Bernier are continuing to meet and gather information from librarians who lead nonfiction book discussions, with the goal of creating and supporting **adult discussion sets on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) topics** to lend from the Middletown Library Service Center. They talked with staff from Bloomfield Public Library, Henry Carter Hull Library, Russell Library, and Saxton B. Little Free Library about their book groups, facilitation styles, and well-received titles.