

Report to the State Library Board

May 20, 2024

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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 May 20, 2024 meeting of the Board, covers the period of March 26, 2024 through May 10, 2024.

Office of the State Librarian

In reflecting on the past two months, collaboration has been the standout theme running throughout the State Library's recent work. From Take Your Child to Work Day growing and growing as more constitutional offices learned of our willingness to host their families to the State Police's enthusiasm for coordinating on the transport of the 1662 Charter – to say nothing of the excitement with which the museum, archive, and library communities are embracing our Outreach Van as a resource for their own events and work – the State Library's reputation as a trusted, professional, and sought-after collaborator continues to mature. This report chronicles these efforts and much more.

In addition to the work of each of our divisions and units, I will also highlight some of the collaborative efforts in the Office of the State Librarian. As State Librarian, I am an ex officio member of the CT Supreme Court Historical Society's board. With this new year, I will also become Chair of the Archives Committee; as the State Archives is the permanent home of the Society's archives, this role will allow for greater coordination directly between the Society and the State Archives as we move that collection forward. As a member of the CT Semiquincentennial Commission (a.k.a. the America 250 | CT Commission), I represent the State Library in those conversations and efforts; the State Library has also recently formed an internal committee so our staff can plan for the agency's commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2026. I recently had the honor to represent the State Library (and particularly the Division of Library Development's work) at a roundtable sponsored by the Connecticut General Assembly's Early Childhood Caucus for a discussion on the importance of early childhood literacy. The session, which included legislators, literacy non-profits, the Office of Early Childhood, and the State Library, was held to a packed room and recorded for broadcast on CT-N. The State Library and the Old State House recently opened up dialogue with The Bushnell on possible ways our three organizations could collaborate in the areas of arts and civics education; it was a stimulating conversation with more to come. Jay Yasensky, our new Director of Operations, and I recently met with the administrative and facilities team in the Judicial Branch to discuss our shared facility at the State Library and Supreme Court Building; vital topics including security, the history of care and maintenance of the building, and how we can collaborate to ensure the long-term well-being of this historic space were discussed. Finally, in April, I was honored to be appointed by Governor Lamont to serve on the CT Humanities Board of Directors; as the state's humanities council and non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, CT Humanities plays a vital role in our state, and I feel privileged to now participate in that arena on the Governor's behalf.

Unit Activities

Partnerships and Community Engagement

At the request of the Constitutional Offices, Reference Services and Museum of Connecticut History staff worked together to coordinate eight tours throughout the library and museum during **Take Your Child to Work Day**. Throughout the day, CSL staff collaborated to offer joint tours of the building to the employees and families of the Offices of the State Comptroller, the Treasurer, the Secretary of State, and the Attorney General. In the Museum of Connecticut History, Jennifer Matos and Beth Burgess took tour groups through Memorial Hall and Connecticut Collections to discuss the State's founding documents, Connecticut's governors, citizens' quests for rights and freedom, Connecticut's role in military service, and the state's industrial history. After an introduction to the State Library by Lindsay Cawley, each tour group got a glimpse at our unique historical records from Susan Bigelow, Kevin Johnson, and Elizabeth Swan while Kris Aberly and Jenny Groome also spoke about the importance and permanence of our state and federal documents collections. CSL staff was pleased to be able to successfully accommodate about 140 participants, including State Comptroller Sean Scanlon.

Work is progressing on the federally funded **Planning to Preserve Connecticut's Digital Government History Project**. The redaction web application project completed user authentication into the web-application and held its final project readout on April 4. Mark Conrad, Information Management Consultant, received from the federal General Services Administration, Market Research as a Service to state and local governments and federal agencies, responses from 29 vendors with information about their offerings and suggestions for improving our request for information. Mark is in the process of analyzing and incorporating the information into the current draft of the RFI (Request for Information). The working group will review the draft RFI and provide feedback. The group plans to issue it in the next month. Mark also continues to meet with other state archives to gather information that will be useful for our final report with recommendations.

Firelock, a division of Ultra Modem Industries that installs modular fire resistive vaults in Connecticut town clerk offices submitted its final design for the fire-resistive case for the **1662 Charter**. Firelock staff made a second visit to determine the best route to move the case in/out of the building on the day of transport. The State Police will be escorting the transportation. Lizette Pelletier is waiting on a final quote for insurance during transport to select the transport company. Once that is determined, we will be able to set a transport date in consultation with the Northeast Document Conservation Center.

Damon Munz and Lizette Pelletier met with other members of the **Connecticut Statewide Emergency Preparedness (Co-STEP)** to plan a May Day lunchtime event for the Connecticut League of Museums on May 1. May Day, the international call for assistance in an emergency, is an annual, national event to promote disaster preparedness within the Cultural Heritage community. Seventy-five people registered for *MayDay: Emergency Preparedness Basics* which was held on May 1.

Lizette Pelletier, Sarah Morin, Jennifer Matos, and Beth Burgess met with Beth Caruso, Sarah Jack (a descendent of Winifred Benham), and Josh Hutchinson, members of the Connecticut Witch Trial Exoneration Project, who were involved in the successful legislative effort to **exonerate the victims of Connecticut's witchcraft trials**. They are seeking to commemorate

the victims with a permanent exhibit somewhere in the state. State Library staff provided them with suggestions including a portable exhibit that could travel to historical societies and public libraries in those communities along the witchcraft historical trail that the group is seeking to establish. Staff will arrange an introduction with Amrys Williams, the executive director of the Connecticut League of Museums.

The Division of Library Development (DLD) team exhibited the **Outreach Van** at the 2024 CT Library Association Annual Conference. CT Library for Accessible Books, CT Libraries and Partners for Digital Equity (CTLPDE), National Park Service, Smokey the Bear Reading Challenge, and Growing Equitable Library Services (GELS) were among the DLD projects, programs, and initiatives featured.

Dawn La Valle conducted 32 stakeholder interviews for the State Library's **Strategic Framework**.

Ashley Sklar is serving as a facilitator and member of the CT team for the University of Maryland's IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) National Leadership grant **Ready NOW: Supporting Youth and Families During Crisis** initiative along with two youth services staff from the Ferguson Library in Stamford. The training sessions began in January alongside each team engaging in the resources and tools to craft their specific project based on the [*Library Staff as Public Servants: A Field Guide for Preparing to Serve Communities in Times of Crisis*](#). Ferguson Library staff have identified their project as Supporting Early Grade Literacy. The CT Team recently presented their work to-date during the bi-weekly co-design session with the national cohort, cross connecting with initiatives at other public libraries and informing the growth of the Field Guide and the essential tasks from community-engaged libraries.

A collaboration between Kym Powe and Ashley Sklar, the 2024 **All CT Reads** program is under way with over 25 reservations for book discussion sets and over 300 checkouts of All CT Reads 2024 titles on the Palace app. Together with partner the Connecticut Library Consortium, the behind-the-scenes cycle of All CT Reads 2025 is underway as the kids, teens, and adult committees are coming together to nominate this year's reading lists.

Building on previous years, Ashley Sklar collaborated with Barbara Ghilardi on two communications initiatives based on the **CT's Public Libraries: A Statistical Profile, 2022-2023**. Once again, DLD offered two Canva Fact Flyer templates, one for the free version and one for those with Canva Pro, for public libraries to customize with their own data and storytelling. DLD also continued the social media campaign #CTLibrariesTrends for the fourth year, sharing a suite of data-driven posts on statewide public library statistics running from mid-March through National Library Week in mid-April on DLD's Facebook and Instagram accounts.

Co-created by Kym Powe and Adult Services and, **Growing Equitable Library Services (GELS)** is a workshop series that strives to provide the trainings that help libraries become strength-based, trauma-informed, antiracist, social and emotionally conscious community institutions. This spring, GELS continues with a trauma-informed services series with Beatriz De La Espriella, a licensed clinical social worker and mental health expert. Beatriz specializes in providing training and coaching to libraries on trauma informed services in which she highlights the prevalence of trauma and provides library staff with essential skills to recognize and respond to trauma.

DLD continues to anchor **CT Libraries & Partners for Digital Equity**. The network carried out a survey of members, who, in turn, supported the continuation of network programming that will assist libraries in the ongoing development of digital inclusion activities and regarding state

grant opportunities. In addition, DLD continued to guide the eight libraries implementing an IMLS Leadership grant that is supporting the development of a regional digital navigator sharing process.

Gail Hurley participated in CT Saves Week activities during **Financial Literacy Month** in April. Activities included participating with Dawn La Valle at the annual financial expo hosted by the CT Department of Banking at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, participating in the annual financial education event at Hartford Job Corps, and participating in a new financial education event for students at the University of Connecticut Hartford campus.

CT Library for Accessible Books (CTLAB) staff conducted nine outreach sessions between March and early May 2024. The outreach visits reached over 100 people. Outreach sessions included a presentation to the greater Hartford chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut; a visit to the Southeast Connecticut Community Center of the Blind's April Lunch and Learn program; a meeting with the caregivers' support group at the Weston Senior Center; a presentation for the staff of the New Haven Free Public Library; and a visit to the Otis Library in Norwich.

Barbara Ghilardi, Matt Geeza, and Ashley Sklar met to discuss potentially adding a few questions regarding accessibility to the **CT Public Library Annual Report** for FY2024 and beyond. This was prompted by the work Matt and Ashley are doing with CT Humanities, which is working to collect more data on the state's cultural organizations' ADA accessibility needs. The intent of this group is to develop questions that can help us better understand what is currently being done regarding accessibility in CT Public Libraries and where there are opportunities for growth.

DLD is reaching out to another ten academic sites to participate in the **Palace Project**. The Connecticut State Colleges & Universities System (CSCU) already has access to eGO CT and the Palace Project. There are a total of 165 sites sharing content from the Connecticut State Library through the Palace app in addition to the 149 school sites participating in the **eGO CT Community Sharing Program**.

Launched in January 2022, the purpose of the **Summer Enrichment Grant** is to empower public libraries to enhance their 2024 Summer Reading Programs with additional enrichment opportunities for their public by providing library-led programs and activities that spark creativity and productivity, engage individuals, and benefit their communities. The CT State Library accepted 12 Summer Enrichment Grant applications and awarded grants in amounts ranging from \$300-\$2,000 per library. These grants will support summer activities that are outcome oriented, engage the community, and promote active learning experiences that are positive, experiential, educational, and fun.

The **Historic Documents Preservation Program** supports records preservation and management in the municipalities and at the State Library. The FY2025 Cycle 1 application period closed on April 30, 2024, and the State Library received applications from 102 municipalities. Nicole Besseghir is currently reviewing and processing the applications for approval by the Public Records Administrator; award letters and grant contracts will be sent to municipalities in late June.

Nicole Besseghir has been working with towns on **vault construction and renovation projects**, including projects for the Town of Avon, Town of East Hartford, the Town of Farmington, Town of Ledyard, the Town of Lebanon, the Town of Pomfret, the Town of South

Windsor, the Town of Windsor Locks, the Town of Bethany, the Town of Plainfield, Town of East Windsor, and the Town of Stonington.

Public Records staff conducted a follow-up inspection of William B. Meyer, a records storage facility in Windsor, CT as part of the certification renewal to provide **off-site records storage** for State of Connecticut records. Nicole Besseghir is managing the review process and attended the inspection with Joseph Duval, Fire & Life Safety Specialist from the Office of State Fire Marshal. All off-site storage facilities must meet the requirements of Public Records Policy 03 and receive a certificate of approval to store state agency records.

Over the last two months, the **Museum of Connecticut History** has hosted 880 students via field trips and 37 adults through group tours.

Museum staff exhibited at the **Declaring Freedom Conference** held at Central CT State University from March 13-16. Day 1 and 2 of the conference was aimed at empowering students to exercise their voice and engage with the historical context and lasting legacy of America's founding documents. Day 3 was hosted by the America 250 | CT Commission to introduce the mission and vision of the commission and engage in meaningful conversation about the America 250 | CT themes. Day 4 was hosted by the Association for the Study of Connecticut History to discuss the role Connecticut's museums, historical societies, organizations, and individuals can play during the Semiquincentennial. Museum staff was present throughout the conference with an information table and an exhibit that discussed the Declaration of Independence and the power those words had on a group of soldiers when it was read aloud for the first time on July 9, 1776. In an act of iconoclasm, Patriots tore down a sculpture of King George III and sent it to Litchfield to be melted into bullets. The Museum told this story using interpretative materials and artifacts that included a fragment of the statue of King George III, a period bullet mold, and a facsimile of the State's copy of the Declaration of Independence. In addition, Curator Christine Pittsley enhanced the display with Augmented Reality, using iPads and a "Merge cube" to allow guests to experience a three-dimensional view of the statue fragment.

The Museum of CT History took the CSL Outreach Van to the **Connecticut History Day State Contest** held at Central CT State University. With thorough training and instructions provided by the DLD team, Museum staff members were delighted to exhibit Museum collection items "on the road" for the first time. Among items on display in the van was a fragment of a sculpture of King George III (1770), an 18th-century bullet mold, a facsimile of the State's copy of the Declaration of Independence, and interpretive signs. Outside the van, Museum staff set up an information table, along with iPads that utilized Augmented Reality to allow visitors a 360-degree view of the fragment. The event afforded a wonderful opportunity for staff to promote both the Museum and the CSL. About 100 attendees visited the Outreach Van.

On Friday, March 22, the Museum of CT History arranged for a group of 14 graduate students from Central CT State University to visit the Museum and Archives. The students were participating in an **Anthropology / Local & Community History class** offered by Professors Elizabeth Clay and Evelyn Phillips. Jennifer Matos and Beth Burgess toured the group through the museum, and then escorted them to the History & Genealogy Reading Room, where the group was assisted by Mel Smith.

The first **Hiking Through History** event of the year was held on Friday, April 19 at the Windsor Locks Canal with 31 participants. Patrick Smith is preparing for the remaining six hikes, which are already nearly at capacity. A waiting list has been created for the locations generating the

most interest, and additional hikes may be added later this summer and fall depending upon demand.

Programs and Training

Bryan Kohlen represented the State Library's Law & Legislative Reference unit on a Connecticut Library Association conference panel entitled **Legal Research Support: Navigating Questions with CT's Law Libraries**. Along with representatives from UConn Law School and the Judicial Branch Law Libraries, Bryan described why public libraries might refer their patrons to Law & Legislative Reference and what services they can expect when that happens.

Allen Ramsey, Damon Munz, and Lizette Pelletier presented on the State Archives policies and procedures, preservation and conservation of municipal records, and basics of disaster mitigation respectively for the Records Management module of the **Town Clerks School** on May 8th at Central Connecticut State University.

Matt Geeza presented at the **Public Library Association's Annual Conference** in Columbus, OH. Matt, along with Mary-Beth Mason of the Darien Library, presented about CTLAB's (CT Library for Accessible Books) partnership with the public libraries that serve as hubs for CTLAB.

DLD presented an overview of digital resources from the Connecticut State Library (researchIT CT, and eGO CT) to **Career Technical Education Career Sytem** as part of their Professional Development training on April 24th.

Gail Hurley offered four series of workshops during April and May, including workshops on facility management, human resources basics, and budgeting and financial reporting under the Lead Your Library's **Practical Management of Public Libraries series**. A related series of workshops include two capital projects workshops and two construction grant information sessions. A third series on **Augmented and Virtual Reality** included workshops on Augmented Reality books and the Metaverse in the library.

The Office of the Public Records Administrator continued the new **State Records Management Webinar Training Series**, with a session presented by Reference Services staff on March 20. Lindsay Cawley, Mel Smith, and Wafaa Razeq presented Session 5: CT State Library: Reference Services & State Documents. On April 17, Lizette Pelletier and Allen Ramsey presented Session 6: State Archives & Archival Records, an overview of the State Archives, archival records, and state agency responsibilities for the management of permanent records. Both sessions were attended by approximately 100 state employees representing a majority of Executive Branch state agencies. Elise Marzik is developing the ongoing training series, with each session covering a different state records management topic.

Elise Marzik and Nicole Besseghir presented a records management training to 28 municipal employees at the **Litchfield County Tax Collectors Association** meeting in Barkhamsted.

LeAnn Power, Nicole Besseghir, and Nicole Marino presented a records management training to approximately 300 municipal employees at the **Registrar of Voters Association Conference in Bristol**.

LeAnn Power, Elise Marzik, Nicole Besseghir, and Nicole Marino attended the **Fall Conference of the Town Clerks' Association** in Bristol on April 18. They presented an update on electronic records, municipal vaults, and other public records topics for approximately 200 town clerks and vendors. They also staffed an information table, addressing questions from town clerks and records vendors related to agency policies and the Historic Documents Preservation grant program.

The **Department of Economic & Community Development's Museum Division** hosted the Museum of CT History team at Old New-gate Prison in East Granby on April 18 for a second joint staff meeting. Staff members toured the facilities and discussed operations, curatorial best practices, and collaboration opportunities, especially in regard to the upcoming America 250. The two groups plan to have joint staff meetings on a quarterly basis.

Beth Burgess participated as a mentor in an informal "**Career Day**" at **Central CT State University** on Friday, April 26 for History and Public History students. Beth met with students to discuss and provide advice about the museum collections field.

Resource Updates

Maria Paxi has completed the first stage of a long-term project of processing archival records for the **Connecticut State Farm for Women**, also known as the York Correctional Institution. Maria has finished processing approximately 46 boxes of inmate files by removing all metal staples and paper clips and arranging them for future easy access by staff. She will continue this work by next processing various administrative records for this institution which includes death records for inmates of the institution as well as birth and death records for children of inmates.

Jeannie Sherman has completed a new "**Church Records**" **subject guide** that is found on the History & Genealogy webpage. This new subject guide details the Connecticut State Library's vast church record collections and the many denominational resources that may be accessed by our patrons. Highlights include information about our Connecticut Church Records slip index as well as information about Connecticut Church Histories and the Works Progress Administration Church Record Surveys held in the State Archives.

The **Historical Bills & Acts database** has been updated with the addition of 17,829 records, which adds six more years of information that was previously unavailable online.

Stephen Slovasky met with a group of librarians from the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) in a teleconference with librarians from the University of Wisconsin System (UW System) to discuss the UW's experiences when implementing the new **PRIMO VE** discovery platform (provided by ExLibris, our library management system and discovery service). Stephen then participated in a similar discussion with librarians from the Orbis Cascade Alliance. Based on these discussions, the CSCU Primo VE Assessment Task Force voted ten to one to recommend implementation.

Verna Thomas-Green and Stephen Slovasky are reviewing all unassigned digital inventory of copies of state library physical resources and, when available in Internet Archive or as a permanent link created by the United States Government Publications Office (USGPO), assigning the resource to the **Internet Archive** electronic collection or the **USGPO** electronic collection. During this reporting period we completed 4,200 updates. Examples:

United States. Marine Hospital Service. Bulletins of the public health. Washington, 1878-1879. Wilcox, Henry S. Foibles of the bar. Chicago, 1906.

Laura Diller and William Anderson contributed 75 records to the **Name Authority Cooperative (NACO)** database. Noteworthy contributions were Daughters of the American Revolution. Martha Devotion Huntington Chapter (Bay Village, Ohio), for finding the publication *Thank you for your service: remembering our Revolutionary War Ancestors, 2023*, and Farmington Garden Club (Farmington, Conn.) for finding *Shade Swamp Sanctuary, Farmington, Connecticut* (guidebook).

Significant **USGPO** titles cataloged by Laura Diller: *Trusting AI : integrating artificial intelligence into the Army's professional expert knowledge*. United States Army War College Press, Strategic Studies Institute, 2023. *Recovery from substance use and mental health problems among adults in the United States*. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2023.

Noteworthy historical titles cataloged by William Anderson: *Bridgeport : a name built into the industrial history of America*. Bridgeport Board of Trade, 1913. (broadside) *An act to incorporate the Second Company of Governor's Horse Guards at the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut, holden at New Haven, on the second Thursday of October, A. D. 1808*.

The Office of the Public Records Administrator issued one **new records series** for the Council on Environmental Quality agency specific schedule (CEQ-01, effective 4/5/2024), and one new agency specific schedule for the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA-01, effective 5/3/2024). Elise Marzik is currently working with four agencies on updates to agency-specific retention schedules.

LeAnn Power and Cherie Miles processed 586 municipal and 293 state agency authorization forms for records disposals.

LeAnn Power, Elise Marzik, Nicole Marino, and Allen Ramsey met with the Department of Banking (DOB), Department of Administrative Services Bureau of Information Technology Solutions (DAS BITS), and Slalom Consulting to discuss a system for records digitization and management of electronic records. DOB has partnered with Slalom Consulting, and Public Records and Archives staff are serving as electronic records subject matter experts in the project.

At the **State Records Center**, Doug Yaeger and Mike Soltesz accessioned 631 cubic feet of agency records; deaccessioned 1,665 cubic feet; processed 298 reference requests; and processed 190 re-files and inter-files.

Sarah Morin, State Library staff, student interns, and volunteers processed 12 cubic feet (24 boxes) of the **New Haven County Court records**. They completed Superior Court files 1740-1769; Superior Court papers by subject categories Costs 1750-1798, Divorce 1850-1859 and no appearance 1808-1865, Jurors; and County Court papers by subject category Executions 1817-1824. They scanned 34 cases (107 pages) for ingest to the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA) and identified approximately 38 cases involving Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Sarah Morin published two blog entries, [A Curious Case of Witchcraft Slander, Continued](#), and [Meet Our Student Interns! Part 4](#), as well as two Instagram posts, [court costs](#) from the witchcraft slander case and [counterfeit bills](#) from a Superior Court case.

Recent Archives Accessions include:

- **General Assembly, Joint Committee on Executive and Legislative Nominations** records, 2019, 2 cubic feet (RG 002:025)
- **Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection, State Police** (RG 161:001). The records are not open to the public per CGS 1-210 and federal Criminal Justice Information (CJI) policy.
 - Investigation files, 2002, 47 cubic feet
- **Insurance Department** docket files, 1983-2019, 9 cubic feet (RG 011)
- **Insurance Department** regulation making records, 1991-2019, 18 cubic feet (RG 011)
- **Town of Bolton** land records, 1909-1980, 6 cubic feet (RG 062:012)
- **Town of Pomfret** records, circa 1798-1976, 0.25 cubic feet (RG 062:112)
- **Town of Sherman** voter registration cards, 1950-2016, 0.25 cubic feet (RG 062:127). The registration cards are not open to the public per CGS 1-210 due to personally identifiable information (PII).
- **Pierre Starr Papers**, 1834-2022, 4 cubic feet (RG 069:193)

The **Preservation Office**, primarily Maritza Pagan, completed the digitization of the **Trumbull Papers**. These letters, documents, and other papers dating from 1631 to 1784, collected by Governor Jonathan Trumbull, are valuable primary sources for research into the colonial and Revolutionary War periods in Connecticut and American history. Over the course of this project, 48 volumes were digitized, totaling over 20,000 images (1.5 TB). Due to the Connecticut Digital Archive's ongoing system upgrade, the images are not yet publicly accessible, but are available for staff and patron requests.

The **CT Digital Newspaper Project** (CDNP) announced the 50 newspapers that will be digitized during the sixth National Digital Newspaper Program grant (2023-2025). Newspapers selected include early Connecticut newspapers, such as the *Danbury Times*, 1837-1871; New Britain's Polish language newspaper *Przewodnik katolicki* (Catholic Leader), 1908-1932; newspapers illustrating the suburbanization of Hartford, such as the *Weekly/East Hartford Gazette*, 1925-1963; the labor newspaper *Connecticut CIO Vanguard*, 1943-1958; and further years of the daily *Bridgeport Times/Evening Farmer/Times-Star*, 1923-1928. The full list of newspapers that will be digitized and made publicly available in the Library of Congress's Chronicling America database can be found on [CDNP's website](#).

Collection Services continues to deaccession materials that CSL staff have identified for weeding. During March-April 2024, we **deaccessioned 93 volumes** of looseleaf legal treatises. The materials weighed approximately 201 pounds and freed 17.8 linear feet of shelf space in the library Stacks location.

The CSL Reference staff issued **680 new Connecticut State Library cards** during March-April 2024. These cards provide patrons with 24/7 remote access to many CSL and researchIT CT online databases.

The **borrowIT CT** 2023-2024 year wrapped up at the end of February. There were 2,521,068 items loaned out and 2,526,489 items borrowed, and payments were given to 167 Principal CT Public Libraries. Libraries will be required to report how they spent their 2022-2023 payment by October 31st, 2024.

CTLAB recently acquired an iPad mini, a Google Pixel tablet, and a Kindle Fire tablet. The **BARD mobile app**, the download service available from the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS), has been installed on all three tablets. CTLAB staff will receive

training on use of the BARD mobile app on each device. CTLAB staff will use these devices to demonstrate use of the BARD mobile app during outreach and to provide BARD mobile customer support to CTLAB patrons.

Effective May 23, 2024, CTLAB **magazine requests** that is currently being used to fill book requests. The NLS and CTLAB anticipate that the use of the DoD system to fill patron requests for magazines will improve the speed with which patrons receive their magazine subscriptions.

Barbara Ghilardi is meeting weekly with Novus about the **new platform for the CT Public Library Annual Report**. Last week, Barbara was introduced to the platform and given an overview of how to create a template to use for the FY2024 report. Over the next couple of weeks, she will be finalizing questions and putting the template together for use. User testing of the template should take place later in May to prepare for the release of the survey in early July.

The Museum of CT History team visited the **Yale University Art Gallery** on March 19 to meet with Curators Benjamin Hellings and Emily Seigerman from the Numismatic Department. The two teams met to discuss the coin collections of both institutions and best practices for storage, display, and digitization. The team toured the Art Gallery's new Numismatic Gallery and viewed examples of how coins have been integrated into other exhibits. Mr. Hellings and Ms. Seigerman are scheduled to visit the Museum in June 2024 to continue the conversation.

A **Votes for Women pennant** (Accession #1921.004.0179) in the collection of the Museum of CT History has returned home after being on loan to the Hill-stead Museum in Farmington since October 2023 for their exhibit, [Born in 1867: Theodate's Generation](#).

Staff Updates

Children's and YA consultant Kym Powe recently received the **CLA (Connecticut Library Association's) Special Achievement Award**, which honors an individual who has implemented a significant project or initiated an innovative program during the past year. In addition, Kym received a **2024 Literacy Champion Award** from Read to Grow at their event - "A Night For The Books". Kym's exceptional, enthusiastic, and creative dedication to making books and dynamic literacy experiences accessible to all children across Connecticut makes her a stellar choice for both awards and we congratulate her wholeheartedly.

Digital Records Archivist **Barbara Austen** retired effective April 1. Barbara received congratulations from the staff at CTDA for being the most prolific submitter to the CTDA during her time as Digital Records Archivist from 2018 through March 2024. She successfully ingested over a million records during that time.