

**BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY
REPORT OF THE CITY LIBRARIAN
For the Month of February 2025**

The programming focus for February was Black History Month. A calendar listing all programs open to the public was distributed in January. The City of Bridgeport's communications department and the Mayor's office has been especially appreciative of the library for sending out a program lineup in advance for Black History Month and other significant holidays/monthly events. We also shared the complete list of programs and individually on social media and at the branches. Some of the notable programs for Black History Month at the library were Black History Story Times at the Burroughs- Saden Children's Department, where staff and others read stories each week during the month. I participated on the third week, along with firemen from a nearby firehouse. North Branch hosted the documentary "What Could Have Been," which documents the proposal for what would have been the first HBCU in New Haven, CT in 1831. A discussion followed a screening of the documentary. Other programs across the libraries included book clubs, movies and trivia challenge. Overall, the quality and breadth of programming is improving as we offer programs that appeal to children, teens and adults.

The final concert of our Klein Memorial Auditorium collaboration ended with a well-attended concert by perennial favorite, Ronda Denet. We estimate an audience attendance of around 250.

The Bridgeport Board of Education held a forum at Beardsley Branch on February 5, as part of their initiative to hear from parents and the community on school issues.

Brian and I attended a meeting with Brad Palazzo of the philanthropic arm of Comcast to discuss funding for Esports at North and its possible expansion to other locations. The meeting went well and it looks like approximately \$20,000 has been allocated for Bridgeport Public Library. These funds can be used for program costs, and also to cover materials and marketing costs. Comcast will be rolling out a low-cost Internet service plan shortly, and while they anticipate that their donations will translate into community good will, this partnership will also fit into our goals with our digital navigation program, helping residents find affordable Internet service providers.

Regular meetings, planning and activities that are ongoing include:

- Digital Navigation Regional Sharing Grant
- Computer Classes at each branch
- Total North -Logo and Marketing Plan
- Bridgeport Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Staff Development: CLA and ALA Annual Conferences

Tanarha Smith, Burroughs-Saden Head of Public Services attended a meeting with Mike Roer and others in the Bridgeport Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. As we move closer towards our first year with the BCIE, there are discussions on expanding training workshops, marketing and new program ideas. I will inform the library board of directors as these discussions yield concrete proposals.

Respectfully Submitted,
Elaine Braithwaite
City Librarian
March 19, 2025