

BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY
REPORT OF THE CITY LIBRARIAN
For the Month of August 2023

August was a busy month at the library due to the Summer Reading Programs for adults and children (Theme: All Together Now.) and the many outreach events that staff and I attended. The library is tabling at the farmer's market from July – October on Thursdays, as staff is available. There have also been farmer's market events at the East Side. Our Summer Reading Program had its finale during the third week of August. (Please see Branch Reports for details on the Summer Reading Program.) Outreach events for children and families also included attendance at backpack giveaway events across the city.

Each location is holding voter registration activities during August through October. In addition, September is National Library Card Sign-up month, and we are planning outreach events in the schools and at Housatonic Community College.

An MOU has been received from the Alpha Community Services YMCA as the outcome of a meeting held with the City Librarian and senior staff at Burroughs Library and Ms. Carmen Colon of the YMCA. Her proposal to help the library provide social services at the library with a contracted social worker is included among the Board documents. Social work services at public libraries is quickly becoming more and more common as our most vulnerable patrons present themselves in the library needing acute help with housing, basic hygiene and, in many cases, mental health services.

The Barnum Museum received National Historic Landmark Designation from the National Park Service and hosted an outdoor celebration that drew the public, local organizations, city, state, and Federal officials together to celebrate this milestone. The Barnum Museum is the first National Historic Landmark in the City of Bridgeport. Executive Director Kathy Maher was very appreciative of the Library' presence at the event.

I have been selected to serve as a Parade Marshal in the 2024 Juneteenth Parade of Fairfield, Inc. This is a great honor, and I accepted on behalf of the library and plan to include our staff in as many events that will occur over the 2024 Parade Year, especially expanding our participation in the parade to include a decorated float, and more participants from among staff and our Friends and other interested library supporters.

I attended a Marketing Network Roundtable sponsored by the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County. Post-pandemic changes in Connecticut's demographics were presented by Patrick J. Flaherty of the CT Department of Labor. I have included the PowerPoint slide presentation in the board packets it as the has implications for all cultural organizations in Fairfield County.

The Library Office now has the complete procedure for moving forward with library board member reappointments in the City. We are now catching up with last year's appointees and will start with this year's appointees once the process for last year's appointees has been forwarded to the Miscellaneous Matters Committees. Any outstanding applications should be forwarded to me at the Library Office so that we can maintain a smooth reappointment process.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Braithwaite
City Librarian
September 20, 2023