

# THE LIBRARIAN

Newspaper of the Stonington Free Library

Winter 2017 Issue

## COMMUNITY GATHERS FOR CONVERSATION ON REIMAGINED LIBRARY



Over a hundred people attended the Library's Community Conversation and Open House Week in late October. We reported back to the community the findings gleaned from a two-year strategic planning process which surveyed over 700 people. Nick Kepple, President of the Library's Board of Trustees, led a conversation themed *A Path to a Reimagined Library*. "The two-year process we just completed to create our strategic plan provides a crystal-clear message from the community: The Library is beloved, is essential to our quality of life, and the people of Stonington want and need more from their library," said Kepple.

The first strategic goal is to extend the reach of the Library into the community through program offerings, collaborative relationships and increased digital resources. The second goal is to restore, renew and repurpose the Library's physical and digital spaces. The third goal is to ensure the institution's fiscal sustainability.

Another dimension of our strategic plan features a proposed \$420,000 addition to the Library. It would have an elevator, accessible bathrooms and a wheelchair ramp. Our lift was damaged by a flood in 2010 and has been deemed irreparable. The addition would redesign the entrance on the east side of the building and allow the repurposing of the middle room of the Library, creating more usable space and better use of the beautiful main lobby. Drawings of the proposed addition, from Dewright Design of West Hartford, are available at the Library and on our website along with the full presentation from the conversation, [www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org](http://www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org).



*Nick Kepple, President of the Library's Board of Trustees*

*Article continued on the following page.*



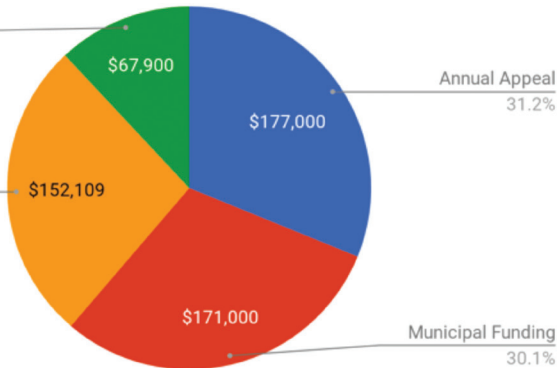
# LIBRARY FINANCES

## SFL Sources of Income

2017/18 Operating Budget = \$568,009

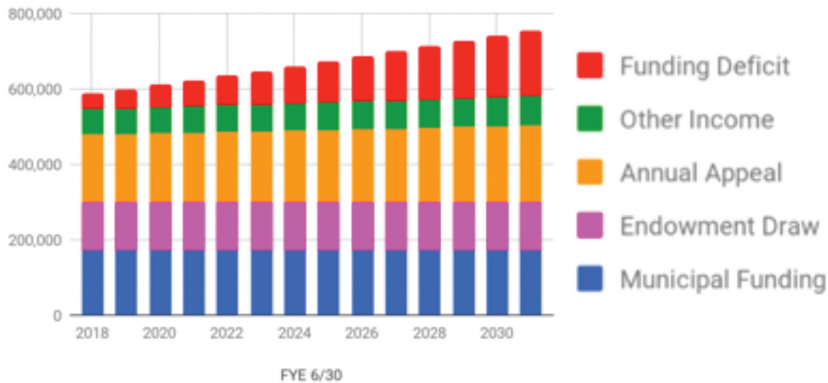
Other Income  
12.0%

Endowment Draw  
26.8%



Available funding has not kept up with the Library's needs and the community's expectations. One of the objectives of the conversation was to educate our community about our financial constraints. The Library's endowment is about \$3.2 million. Withdrawing 4 percent, or about \$130,000, per year would not erode the principal. But the 2017-18 budget includes a withdrawal of \$152,000 to cover operating costs and \$20,000 for capital expenditures, depleting the endowment by \$42,000. The Library's current annual budget is \$568,009. Funding sources are the Annual Appeal (\$177,000), the Town of Stonington (\$147,000), the Borough of Stonington (\$24,000), the endowment draw (\$152,109) and other income (\$67,900).

## SFL Funding Deficit Analysis



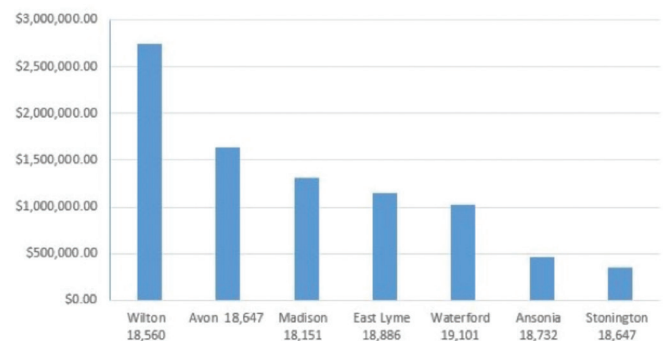
Our operating budget is projected to grow at 2 percent annually if no new services, staff, hours or extra capital expenditures are added. If annual donations increase by an expected 1 percent per year, municipal funding remains flat, and endowment withdrawals are held at present levels, our funding deficit would increase by about 5 percent per year, from \$42,000 in 2018 to \$141,000 in 2028. Without any new funding, the endowment would be exhausted by early 2035.

Stonington's total municipal funding for all libraries is \$354,500, or 0.5 percent of its budget. The percentage is the lowest among Connecticut towns of similar populations, which spend on average about 1.5 percent on their libraries. Traditionally we have been predominantly supported by the generous donations of private donors. For the accessibility project, we are hoping to flip that model and have applied for Town funding for two-thirds of the \$420,000 project cost.

Kate Randolph, Vice President of the Board, said the meeting was important because it initiated conversation about the Library's finances, infrastructure and the needs of the community. "Historically the vast majority of the funding was private but moving forward this Library is serving very much a governmental function," she said. "The reality is we are re-thinking and we're being far more creative about how we do these capital fund drives."

We look forward to hosting additional outreach events in the future to keep the community updated on all of our programs and services.

## Projected Endowment Balance





# NEW WEBSITE AND VISUAL IDENTITY

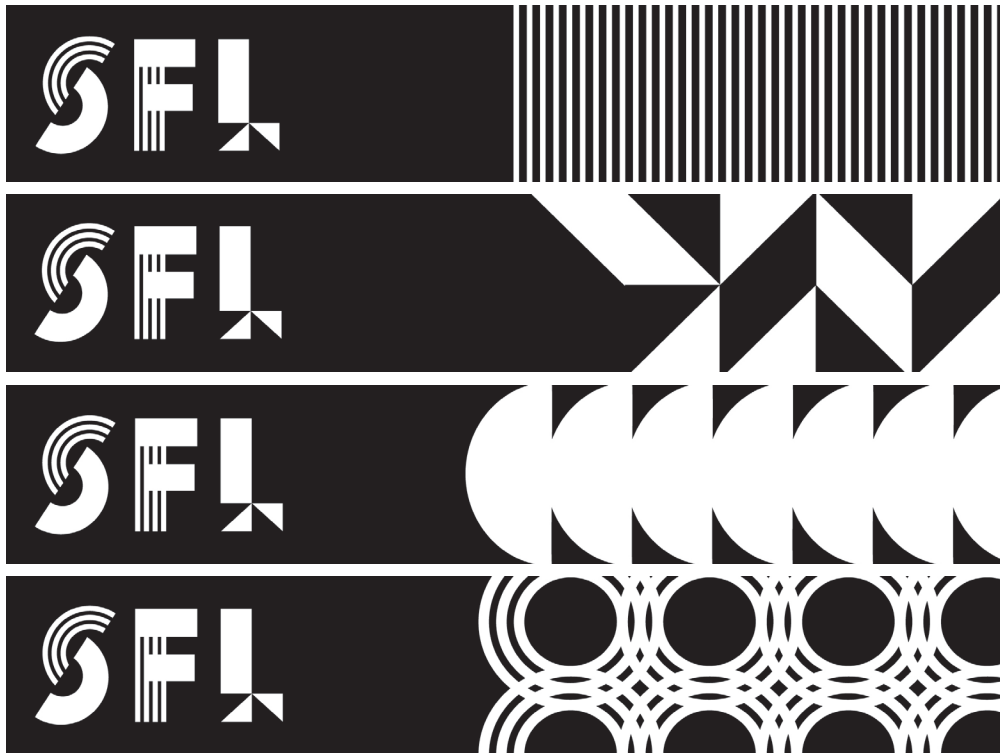


fter many months of dedicated work by our eLibrary committee and web designers, our new website launched on Monday, August 21! The new site serves as a 24/7 digital branch, where one can access library resources and services even when we are closed. It is easier to use across all types of devices! Be sure to check it out - [stoningtonfreelibrary.org](http://stoningtonfreelibrary.org)

Design Agency, the Rhode Island firm selected to redesign our new website, also created an entirely new visual identity for the Library. The redesign of both the website and visual identity began in January 2017. Design Agency's first step was to conduct a visual audit of our current and historic marketing materials, print collateral, photographs and more. They toured and took photographs of the building and architecture with a focus on the patterns they saw both inside and out. It is with these patterns in mind that they developed our new visual identity.



The building's architectural patterns can be seen throughout the new identity materials, including our logo and headings. The new identity colors consist of cool ocean blues balanced with a warm red and yellow. In addition to the full color logo, there are also single color and black and white applications of the identity.



**STONINGTON  
FREE LIBRARY**



Design Agency created a style guide to instruct us as we apply the new identity across our print and digital materials. Library cards with our new logo have arrived, stop by to update yours! Next time you are in the Library - we challenge you to take a close look around the building to find the architectural details echoed in these images.



## STONINGTON FREE LIBRARY

### Stonington Free Library

20 High Street, Stonington, CT

### Mailing address

PO Box 232, Stonington, CT 06378

### Hours

10am-6pm Monday  
10am-6pm Tuesday  
10am-7pm Wednesday  
10am-6pm Thursday  
10am-5pm Friday  
10am-1pm Saturday

### Phone

860.535.0658

### Fax

860.535.3945

### E-mail

stonlib@stoningtonfreelibrary.org

### Web

stoningtonfreelibrary.org

### Executive Director

Belinda de Kay

### Assistant Director

Micayla Hall

### Youth Services Director

Maris Frey

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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# LIBRARIAN BOOKWORMS WINTER 2017 – 2018

By Maris Frey, Youth Services Director

## FALL RECAP

We have had a busy fall season, with many new and returning favorites! Preschool story times, both here at the Library and as Outreach programs, are ongoing and all the third graders in town made an annual Look It Up visit to the Library. The students received a library tour, library card, story time, personal dictionary and the visit ended with a scavenger hunt. This program is made possible with collaboration between the Rotary Clubs of Mystic and the Stoningtons, the Leslie Buck Memorial Fund and the Stonington Free Library. Library cards were also given out at the Westerly Library when the fifth graders from Pawcatuck Middle School visited on a field trip. We Are Makers STEAM programming takes place the last Wednesday of each month and the middle school IMPACT group from the COMO have been visiting here each month for a preview of STEAM programs and a chance to browse and check out books. It's great to have the students in the building! Our annual gingerbread haunted house workshop was lots of fun and we offered two time slots this year to accommodate a larger group. Our Teen Advisory Board had a second meeting in November and will be spearheading the social media platform, Snapchat, for the Library.

## UPCOMING PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

*"When we read together – when a grandfather reads to a granddaughter, when a teacher reads to a classroom, when a parent reads to a child, when a sister reads to a brother, when everyone in a town reads the same book silently, together – we are taken out of our aloneness. Together, we see the world. Together, we see one another. We connect. And when we connect, we are changed."*

-Kate DiCamillo

We have a new One Book Winter Reading Challenge in the works, Read BOLD, a community wide program revolving around a young adult book serving as a bridge between youth and adults. The book will be chosen by young people and will foster community discussion and help adults understand teens in today's world. The library is partnering with Stonington Human Services and Stonington High School to promote and facilitate this new initiative, slated to kick off in January. Our goal is to have as many teens and adults reading the same book as possible, to hold book discussions for both adults and teens and give away free copies of the book to teens. We are offering an opportunity to connect diverse members of the community over a common experience. We will publicize the title on our webpage and social media as soon as it is chosen. Please participate in this new community read!

Our early literacy Winter Reading Challenge, 50 to Grow On, has begun! This program encourages parents to read aloud to children and is open to all children, ages 7 and younger. This year, we are mixing it up and celebrating the year of the nursery rhyme. Nursery rhymes enhance all early literacy skills, as well as promoting listening skills, rhyming word recognition and memorization skills. The finger plays that accompany many of them promote both gross and fine motor skills. The challenge ends March 31. Sign up, come join in the fun!

Winter Drop In Story Times will begin the week of January 8 and will continue until April 11. Tuesdays at 10:30 are for babies – 2 year olds and Wednesdays at 10:30 are for 2 – 6 year olds, Sandwich and Story Time, for 3 – 6 year olds, is Tuesday at 11:45. Bring a little lunch and relax with friends before stories and a craft.

Take Your Child to the Library Day is February 3. We are making plans for a fun day here at the Library. Watch our website and social media for details!

Our STEAM programming, We Are Makers, continues with Teen Snowball Launchers in December, Sensory Minion Bottles in January, a Teen Beat the Winter Blues Chocolate Workshop in February, Unicorn Snot Slime in March and Spring Paper Pinwheels in April. Please check the website or our Facebook page for more info and registration requirements.

# ANNUAL APPEAL

## *Thankful for You!*

Thanks to many of you, we had another successful Annual Fund drive last year. We have already made great progress toward our 2017-2018 goal of \$179,000! If you have not yet donated to our Annual Fund, we ask that you help us in any way that you can. We rely heavily on private donations to provide the rich array of programs, materials and services you enjoy. Every bit helps!

**You can send a donation by mail to PO Box 232, Stonington CT 06378, in person at 20 High Street or on our website at [www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org/support](http://www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org/support)**

Thank you!!

## POLAR EXPRESS STORY TIME AND ANNUAL VILLAGE STROLL



In the spirit of the season, the evening of Friday, December 1st was merry and busy at the Library and throughout the Borough. The festivities kicked off at 3 pm when families came to make ornaments, enjoy cookies and cider, enter a Children's Holiday Raffle and donate books to our Children's Holiday Book Drive.

In celebration of the 20th anniversary of Tom's News Stand, children were able to enter a holiday raffle for either a giant stocking of children's toys or gift certificates to Tom's News Stand. All prizes are courtesy of Tom's News Stand. The raffle drawing will take place on Thursday December 21st.

Our Children's Holiday Book Drive benefits *Opening Doors for Westerly's Children*, a non-profit alliance of volunteers who raise funds to get books, backpacks, and school supplies into the hands of disadvantaged area children.



Following the ornament making, families enjoyed a Polar Express story time. Santa even made an appearance to award the "first gift of Christmas" and give treats to all the children present. After story time, all in attendance were able to join in the Village Stroll merriment with carol singing, tree lighting and a guest appearance by Santa who announced the winner of the Boro Aglow window dressing contest organized by the Stonington Borough Merchants' Association - an event that added a special touch of glimmer and glamor to the evening.

We extend our gratitude to the Stonington Village Improvement Association. Each year before the Village Stroll, SVIA members decorate the Library's exterior with lights and wreaths. This year especial thanks to Dodie Bump for the lights and to Kathryn Burchenal and Kirby Williams for the beautifully decorated wreaths which were hung at risk to life and limb by Joe Williams! Finally, thank you to SVIA President, Charlie Hatton without whose assistance our special Polar Express story time visitor would not have been possible.



# QUALITY OF LIFE GRANT

Stonington Free Library is proud to announce that it has received a \$7,500.00 Quality of Life grant from the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation. The Quality of Life program awards grants to fellow nonprofits that mirror the Reeve Foundation's mission and commitment to foster community engagement, enhance independence and promote healthy self-esteem.



The Library will use the grant for accessibility improvements; specifically the award will support architectural design consultant fees for Dewright Design, LLC to develop accessibility modification plans.

Improving access to the lower level will promote inclusion in all library programs and services for people with accessibility challenges, their families and caregivers. The evaluation and potential redesign of the upstairs bathroom, side entry door and ramp will ensure that those with physical challenges will have an improved ease of access to Library facilities and enhance their experience when visiting the Library.

The Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation, a national nonprofit dedicated to improving quality of life for individuals living with paralysis, announced it has awarded \$809,291 to 90 nonprofits nationwide during the 1st grant cycle of 2017. The Quality of Life program conceived by the late Dana Reeve has awarded over \$22 million in grants to 2,956 programs since its inception in 1999. Funding for the grants is made available through the Paralysis Resource Center (PRC) operated by the Reeve Foundation under a cooperative agreement with the Administration for Community Living in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

“We are continually looking for new ways for individuals living with paralysis to reintegrate themselves into the community through our grant recipient programs,” said Maggie Goldberg, VP of Policy and Programs. “Whether it is a small grant for a ramp to access a public building, or a larger award to support an accessible playground or create a transportation service, each project brings us closer to our ultimate goal of full inclusion and independence.”

The Stonington Free Library is honored to be a recipient of a Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation Quality of Life grant. We are very thankful organizations like theirs exist so that we can improve the programs and services offered to our community.

## NEW BOOK AREA AND LAPTOPS

We extend our thanks to all who pledged support to our Giving Tree fundraiser at our Annual Mystery Dinner on April 22nd. This initiative raised more than \$5,000 toward replacing and updating some of the Library's desktop computers with laptops and expanding the new book collection.

The money raised has been used to purchase five new laptops, wireless mice, a new high capacity wireless printer, several new comfortable chairs and book stands. The laptops have been met with much excitement as users can work and print from any space within the building. A new work area has been created with desks by the window in the west reading room and comfortable seating in our expanded new book area. Thank you again to all those who made this project possible!



## LITTLE FREE LIBRARIES

An idea inspired by Board President, Nick Kepple, has led to a collaboration between the Library, the Stonington Village Improvement Association (SVIA) and Stonington High School. "Little Free Libraries" have been placed at Stonington Point and Mathews Park, where free books are available for anyone to take, enjoy and keep. The project was funded by the SVIA. The Stonington High School shop class, led by Stephen Beale, constructed the libraries. Library volunteers will keep them stocked with books that will make great reads at the beach or the park. The libraries are registered to the Little Free Library world map available at <https://littlefreelibrary.org>

We are looking for book donations to keep the Little Free Libraries stocked. If interested in donating like-new or gently used books please call the Library at 860-535-0658.



A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to the  
#GivingTuesday matching gift challenge from the  
**law offices of Leckerling, Ladwig, & Leamon, LLC**  
along with **Switz Real Estate Associates**  
and **Avena & Kepple, LLC**.



#GIVINGTUESDAY™



Leckerling  
Ladwig &  
Leamon LLC  
Legal Counsel



Avena & Kepple, LLC  
Proudly Serving Southeastern Connecticut

The response was incredible - we raised \$17,700 for Library services -  
well exceeding our goal!  
We are deeply grateful for your support.



## KINDLE PAPERWHITES

Our sincere thanks to The Mystic Woman's Club for the generous grant allowing the purchase of three Kindle Paperwhites for our patrons. The Paperwhites, as well as our Kindle Fires, are preloaded with eBooks for enjoyment. The Paperwhites can easily be read outdoors because of their no glare screens. Stop by and check out one of our Kindles today!

# THE LIBRARIAN

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## NEW HOURS

After a community survey and several focus groups conducted as part of our strategic planning process, it's clear that more user-friendly hours are what our community desires. In response, we changed our hours of operation on Monday, August 21st. We did not actually increase the number of hours we are open each week, as that has large budget implications. We instead re-allocated the times we are open to better serve our community. The Library is constantly seeking new ways to serve the community and to be responsive to suggestions.

### OUR NEW HOURS OF OPERATION...

**MONDAY** 10 am to 6 pm

**TUESDAY** 10 am to 6 pm

**WEDNESDAY** 10 am to 7 pm

**THURSDAY** 10 am to 6 pm

**FRIDAY** 10 am to 5 pm

**SATURDAY** 10 am to 1 pm

**SUNDAY** closed