

Association of Connecticut Library Boards
Connecticut State Library
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Association of Connecticut Library Boards Newsletter

The Association of Connecticut Library Boards (ACLB) is Connecticut's library trustee organization representing public library boards throughout the state.

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Summer 2017

ACLB Executive Board Seeks New Members

The Association of Connecticut Library Boards is currently seeking new members to complete the Executive Board. If you are a current, former or retired trustee or library director experienced with board issues, ACLB needs you to help continue our mission, which is:

- Enabling member library boards to improve library services in their communities;
- Broadening trustee knowledge of current developments in the library field;
- Improving communication and cooperation among library boards.

ACLB's work includes:

- Providing workshops geared to the needs of trustees across the state;

- Maintaining strong liaison with library-related organizations on the state and national levels;

- Providing consultant help to library boards and individual trustees.

If you are, or know of, a dynamic, engaged individual who would be interested in serving on our executive board, please contact Gail B. Richmond, President, c/o the Connecticut State Library at (860) 757-6665. We look forward to hearing from you!



Association of CT Library Boards

Connecticut State Library, 231 Capitol Avenue Hartford, CT 06106

Phone: 860-757-6665 Email: info@aclb.org

Our Mission

- Enable member library boards to improve library services in their communities.
- Broaden trustee knowledge of current developments in the library field.
- Improve communication and cooperation among library boards.

What We Do

- Provide workshops geared to the needs of trustees across the state.
- Maintain strong liaison with library-related organizations on the state and national levels.
- Provide consultant help to library boards and individual trustees

Officers

President: Gail B. Richmond

Vice President: Cyndi Sanders

Secretary: Wendy Berlind

Treasurer: Carole Stroud

Newsletter: Denise J. Stankovics

2015 ACLB Keynote Speaker Elected to United for Libraries Board

Public library advocacy consultant Libby Post was elected to the board of United for Libraries, the national library trustee, friends and foundation organization, during the 2017 annual American Library Association convention. She is a trainer for the Connecticut State Library on strategic communications and branding for libraries and works with CSL on communication strategies. Please join ACLB and CSL in congratulating Libby on this new opportunity.

Save the Date: 2017 Trustee Leadership Conference

Friday, November 3, 2017
Gray Conference Center,
University of Hartford
9:15 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Details on engaging keynote speakers and informative breakout sessions will be announced in August. Nomination forms for trustee awards will be available at that time as well.

So Who Uses Libraries Anymore?

By State Librarian Kendall F. Wiggin

As a library trustee, you have probably been asked this question many times. Implied in the question is an assumption that younger generations are so “plugged in” that they don’t use libraries.

But Abigail Geiger, an associate digital producer and writer for the Pew Research Center, reported last week that “a new analysis of survey data from fall 2016 finds that 53% of Millennials (those ages 18 to 35 at the time) say they used a library or bookmobile in the previous 12 months.” (The question was specific to public library use, not the college library.) By comparison, 45% of Gen Xers (ages 36-51), 43% of Baby Boomers (ages 52-70) and 36% of those in the Silent Generation (ages 71-88) reported using a public library or bookmobile in the past 12 months.

The high usage by Millennials may be related to the transformation of the public library over the past 20 years. Library investments in providing Internet access, maker spaces, collaborative learning spaces and other services is paying off. In Connecticut we have also experienced a steady investment in new library buildings, additions and renovations which have made libraries more attractive to all age groups. Millennials also tended to make greater use of library websites than other groups of adults. But the survey also showed that libraries could do more with mobile apps to draw in more users of all age groups.

I encourage you to check out the many surveys that the Pew Research Center has done (<http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/09/09/libraries-2016/>) regarding public libraries because they provide insight on library users and usage that your local library data collection doesn’t. For example, while we know how many people visited Connecticut

libraries last year (20.4 million), we don’t know demographically who they were. But you can find out the demographics of your community from census data. Understanding your community’s demographics and user perceptions is essential to developing your library’s programs and services.

As a profession we are currently struggling with the question of library data collection and how to collect more meaningful data to tell the library story better. As most librarians will tell you, circulation statistics, while important, do not convey what is going on in today’s library. Library services have an impact on individuals and communities.

But how do we measure the impact of services, particularly in areas of job and career development, digital literacy, financial literacy and health literacy? I am currently involved in “Measures that Matter,” a joint project of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). A summit will be held in September that will bring data experts from various fields together with library thought leaders to develop an action plan to help libraries better collect, understand and use data—measures that really matter. Hopefully through this effort, library directors and library trustees will have ready answers to questions such as who uses libraries and why they are essential to successful communities.

Do You Have Friends on Other Library Boards? If So, Encourage Them to Join Us!

ACLB always welcomes new members, so if you know people on the boards of other libraries, please encourage them to join our organization. The more of us there are, the stronger our ability will be to improve library services in our communities, especially at this time of fiscal challenges.

Connecticut Libraries Offer Services ‘Beyond the Walls’—II

In preparation for our last issue we asked librarians to tell us about services they provide “beyond the walls” of their buildings. The enthusiastic response was so extensive that we limited that first article to accounts of materials delivery to those who cannot come to the library. In this issue we look at other “beyond the walls” offerings. Again, this is only a representative sampling of services offered by our state’s libraries.

Some libraries conduct book discussions off-site, sometimes in unexpected settings. The Canton library has held a mystery book club at a pizzeria. The Howard Whittemore library in Naugatuck offers a Pints & Pages Pub Book Club which meets at a local tavern. The goal is to engage with people who might not otherwise join a book club or use the library on a regular basis. To draw in readers, the focus is on books adapted for film or television. Librarian Kirk Morrison notes that the library is looking for other ways to “embed the library in our town.”

Senior centers are popular venues for outreach book discussions. The Ledyard libraries (Bill and Gales Ferry) have been holding monthly book discussions at their town’s senior center for more than 10 years, facilitated by an assistant librarian who provides the books in several formats.

The Wilton library also conducts book discussions at the town’s senior center. Another offering at this site is the Free Downloads series in which library staff teach patrons how to download or stream material on their electronic devices. The library also maintains a circulating collection at an assisted living facility where a new selection of books is delivered every three weeks for the residents to check out on their library cards.

Some libraries offer other types of programs outside their walls. The Canton

library takes advantage of its gardens and grounds to hold concerts and poetry readings outdoors. The Wilton library participates in a scholarly lecture program with the town’s historical society in which professors from nearby universities and authors speak on subjects on the series theme for each year. The library and historical society take turns hosting the programs.

Many libraries provide outreach services to facilities serving children in their towns. The Ledyard libraries provide monthly story hours to preschool, kindergarten and after school programs. They visit elementary school open house sessions to provide parents with information about the library. They also visit the schools to promote the summer reading program and to recognize those students who participate each year.

The Bill and Gales Ferry libraries also participate in kindergarten orientation to inform parents of ways in which the libraries can provide assistance during this transitional time for their children. They take part in the October Ledyard Children’s Day to promote the library and in the community “Trunk or Treat” event in which they decorate a car trunk with books for Halloween and pass out candy. During the winter holidays the libraries host a “giving tree” to collect new children’s books to be given to parents of children in need during the town’s annual toy distribution.

The Otis library in Norwich holds monthly story hours at preschools and checks out books to these centers for in-house use. The Wilton library also holds monthly story times at preschools and daycare centers, complete with music and puppets.

As community needs and expectations change, Connecticut’s libraries are working to meet new challenges. As Diane Deedy of the Otis library said, “Our library is a vital part of the community, so if they can’t come to us, we go to them.”