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Fri. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sat. 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.



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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010

VOL. 5 ISSUE 1

DERBY PUBLIC LIBRARY

January



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February

Happy Valentine's Day!



- 1, 2 FRIDAY & SATURDAY
CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF NEW YEARS HOLIDAY.
- 6 WEDNESDAY
6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. **Teen Game Night** (Young Adults ages 12-17)
- 7 THURSDAY
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Knit-Teen!** (ages 12-17) w/Phyllis Kosar. Reg. req.*
- 8 FRIDAY
10:00 a.m. **Free Basic PC Class** offered on walk-in basis.
- 11 MONDAY
10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. **Family Place Parent/Child Wkshp.** Reg. req.*
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. **YA Chess Club** (ages 12-17). Registration req.*
- 12 TUESDAY
10:00 a.m. **Social Security Information Specialist**, Maria Grice. Walk-in basis.
3:30 p.m. **Let It Snow** (kindergarten - gr. 4) After-school program with craft activity, stories and hot chocolate. Registration required.*
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Young Adult Advisory Meeting.** (ages 12-17)
- 13 WEDNESDAY
10:00 a.m. **Baby and Me!** (6-12 mo.) Registration required.*
10:00 a.m. - Noon **Career Development Workshop. Resume Basics.** Registration requested.*
6:30 p.m. Meet the Valley Independent Sentinel. Registration requested.*
- 14 THURSDAY
10:00 a.m. **Nursery Rhyme Time** (12-24 mo.) Registration required.*
11:00 a.m. **Time for Two's** (24-36 mo.) Registration required.*
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Knit-Teen!** (ages 12-17) w/Phyllis Kosar. Reg. req.*
- 15 FRIDAY
10:00 a.m. **Preschool Story Time** (3-5 yrs.) Registration required.*
- 18 MONDAY
CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY.
- 19 TUESDAY
6:30 p.m. **Asian Cooking Demo** presented by Stacey Ference. Prepare a Chinese New Year feast. (ages 18 & over) Registration required.*
- 20 WEDNESDAY
10:00 a.m. **Baby and Me!** (6-12 mo.) Registration required.*
6:30 p.m. **Free Basic PC Class** offered on walk-in basis.
- 21 THURSDAY
10:00 a.m. **Nursery Rhyme Time** (12-24 mo.) Registration required.*
11:00 a.m. **Time for Two's** (24-36 mo.) Registration required.*
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Knit-Teen!** (ages 12-17) w/Phyllis Kosar. Reg. req.*
- 22 FRIDAY
10:00 a.m. - Noon & 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. **CT Works Career Coach** presents *Job Search Assistance*. Registration requested.*
- 23 SATURDAY
10:00 a.m. **The Missing Mitten Mystery** (ages 3-11). Registration req.*
11:30 a.m. **Read to Sandy** (ages 5-11). Registration required.*
- 25 MONDAY
10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. **Family Place Parent/Child Wkshp.** Reg. req.*
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. **YA Chess Club** (ages 12-17). Registration requested.*
- 26 TUESDAY
6:30 p.m. **Read to Sandy Birthday Celebration!** (ages 5-11) Reg. req.*
- 27 WEDNESDAY
10:00 a.m. **Baby and Me!** (6-12 mo.) Registration required.*
12:30 p.m. **Lunchtime Book Discussion Olive Kitteridge** by Elizabeth Stout. Bring a sandwich and a friend. Registration requested.*
- 28 THURSDAY
10:00 a.m. **Nursery Rhyme Time** (12-24 mo.) Registration required.*
11:00 a.m. **Time for Two's** (24-36 mo.) Registration required.*
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Knit-Teen!** (ages 12-17) w/Phyllis Kosar. Reg. req.*
- 29 FRIDAY
10:00 a.m. **Preschool Story Time** (3-5 yrs.) Registration required.*

- 1 MONDAY
10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. **Family Place Parent/Child Wkshp.** Reg. req.*
- 2 TUESDAY
6:30 p.m. **Yesterday's Headlines** presented by Rob Novak, Jr. Reg. requested.
- 3 WEDNESDAY
10:00 a.m. **Baby and Me!** (6-12 mo.) Registration required.*
6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. **Teen Game Night** (Young Adults ages 12-17)
- 4 THURSDAY
10:00 a.m. **Nursery Rhyme Time** (12-24 mo.) Registration required.*
11:00 a.m. **Time for Two's** (24-36 mo.) Registration required.*
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Knit-Teen!** (ages 12-17) w/Phyllis Kosar. Reg. req.*
- 5 FRIDAY
10:00 a.m. **Preschool Story Time** (3-5 yrs.) Registration required.*
- 8 MONDAY
10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. **Family Place Parent/Child Wkshp.** Reg. req.*
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. **YA Chess Club** (ages 12-17). Registration req.*
- 9 TUESDAY
10:00 a.m. **Social Security Information Specialist**, Maria Grice. Walk-in basis.
3:30 p.m. **Valentine's Day Celebration** (ages 4-8) Make a card, create a craft and enjoy some treats! Registration requested.*
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Young Adult Advisory Meeting.** (ages 12-17)
- 10 WEDNESDAY
10:00 a.m. **Baby and Me!** (6-12 mo.) Registration required.*
10:00 a.m. - Noon **Career Development Workshop. Job Search Strategies.** Registration requested.*
- 11 THURSDAY
10:00 a.m. **Nursery Rhyme Time** (12-24 mo.) Registration required.*
11:00 a.m. **Time for Two's** (24-36 mo.) Registration required.*
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Knit-Teen!** (ages 12-17) w/Phyllis Kosar. Reg. req.*
- 12 FRIDAY
10:00 a.m. **Free Basic PC Class** offered on walk-in basis.
10:00 a.m. **Preschool Story Time** (3-5 yrs.) Registration required.*
- 15 MONDAY
CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF PRESIDENTS DAY.
- 16 TUESDAY
6:00 p.m. **Make Your Own Jewelry** (ages 5+). Registration requested.*
- 17 WEDNESDAY
3:00 p.m. **Favorite First Lady Reading & Chocolate Fondue** (ages 12-17). A special winter school vacation program. Registration required.*
6:30 p.m. **Free Basic PC Class** offered on walk-in basis.
- 18 THURSDAY
10:30 a.m. **Oozing Oobleck** program presented by the Regional Water Authority's Whitney Water Center (gr. 1 and up) Registration requested.*
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Knit-Teen!** (ages 12-17) w/Phyllis Kosar. Reg. req.*
- 19 FRIDAY
10:30 a.m. **Craft Time** (ages 3-8). Registration requested.*
10:00 a.m. - Noon **CT Works Career Coach** presents *Job Search Assistance*. Registration required.*
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. **CT Works Career Coach** presents *Job Search Assistance* continues.
- 22 MONDAY
10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. **Family Place Parent/Child Wkshp.** Reg. req.*
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. **YA Chess Club** (ages 12-17). Registration req.*
- 23 TUESDAY
6:30 p.m. **Black Bears in CT** presented by Felicia Ortnr. Reg. requested.*
- 24 WEDNESDAY
10:00 a.m. **Baby and Me!** (6-12 mo.) Registration required.*
12:30 p.m. **Lunchtime Book Discussion The Guernsey Literary & Potato Peel Pie Society** by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows. Reg. req.*
- 25 THURSDAY
10:00 a.m. **Nursery Rhyme Time** (12-24 mo.) Registration required.*
11:00 a.m. **Time for Two's** (24-36 mo.) Registration required.*
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Knit-Teen!** (ages 12-17) w/Phyllis Kosar. Reg. req.*
- 27 SATURDAY
10:00 a.m. End of **Winter Reading Celebration.** Registration required.*
11:30 a.m. **Read to Sandy** (ages 5-11). Registration required.*

*For more information call (203) 736-1482 or go to www.derbypubliclibrary.org and click on EventKeeper.

FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

Cathy Williams

A new year is unfolding – like a blossom with petals curled tightly concealing the beauty within.

—Author Unknown

As has become tradition, my first column of the new year will combine the old with the new. I am happy to say that during a year of “tightening belts” and navigating through hard economic times, the Derby Public Library was here to provide valuable resources, along with a wide variety of entertaining and educational programming.

Looking Back:



Some memorable guests to the Library in 2009 included Mark Twain and Amelia Earhart (re-enactors). Perhaps one of the most popular visitors to the Library this past year was Derby, England resident, Richard Felix from the popular television series *Most Haunted*. Richard’s presentation on the paranormal was both thought-provoking and entertaining. He has promised to visit again as the two *Derbys* “across the pond” from each other continue to correspond. Speaking of England, we learned more about “The Fab Four” and the British Invasion as we explored a Beatles Fan’s Odyssey.

Another standing room only program was presented by the Smoking Gun Agency as they discussed Real Ghosts of Connecticut. And I never would have guessed that there were so many beekeepers in the area, as several were in attendance at our Honeybees and Beekeeping program. We were also excited to welcome back Derby author Tim Conlon to discuss his new book.

The Silver Sluggers completed their fourth season of “Sports Talks,” while career workshops, health and wellness seminars, local history presentations, driver safety courses, computer classes, book discussions and cooking demonstrations were regularly scheduled and well-attended.

Special events included our Spring Open House, Harvest Fair, Holiday Open House, Family Nights and Donor Recognition Reception. Speaking of recognition, volunteer Phyllis Kosar received the Valley United Way Living Treasure Award for her work at the Library while Carmela Donofrio was the recipient of the Derby Public Library’s Scholarship prize. New Library cards with key tags were introduced and three new electronic resources were added, JobNow!, Points of Interest and AtoZMapsOnline.com.

The Library received grants from the Valley Community Foundation, the Community Foundation of Greater New Haven, the Lawrence DeTullio Jr. Fund and Wal-Mart which were used for special projects and programming. A gift from Home Depot helped to purchase our new outside Christmas tree. The generosity of the community continued with numerous book donations and volunteer hours.

Three beautiful new portraits were added to our Local History Room in recognition of Harold B. Yudkin, Frances Fallon and Sadie Dziadik for their contributions to the Derby Public Library.

Looking Ahead:

As you have come to expect, the Library will continue to provide a wide range of programs and services for all ages in the new year. Already new in 2010 are Lunchtime Book discussions, along with a new Young Adult Chess Club. In addition, the Children’s Room has scheduled new Saturday and After School programs. Also now available to Derby residents are coupons for discounted admission to the Connecticut Science Center in Hartford. This is just the start of another busy year at the Derby Public Library!

Closing Thought:



*Snowflakes are one of nature’s most fragile things,
But just look what they can do when they stick together.*
— Vesta M. Kelly



Black Bears in Connecticut

A presentation on Black Bears in Connecticut has been scheduled on Tuesday, February 23 at 6:30 PM. In recent years there has been a dramatic increase in the number of black bear sightings in the state. With this increase, it is important for the public to learn more about these animals and how to co-exist with them. Accompanied by a slideshow presentation, Felicia Ortnier, DEP Master Wildlife Conservationist, will discuss history, facts and myths about these fascinating animals. Registration is requested.

STAFF BOOK PICKS

Cathy Williams	<i>A Change of Altitude</i> by Anita Shreve
Sue Sherman	<i>A Mountain of Mittens</i> by Lynn Plourde (Children’s Room)
Kathy Wilson	<i>Sarah’s Key</i> by Tatiana de Rosnay
Ann Mirisola	<i>Bed of Roses</i> by Nora Roberts
Carol Wiencko	<i>A Simple Christmas</i> by Mike Huckabee
Mary Bisaccia	<i>A Gate at the Stairs</i> by Lorrie Moore
Bernadette Bahner	<i>Why Dogs are Better than Cats</i> by Bradley Trevor Greive
Lorraine Piazza	<i>Shanghai Girls</i> by Lisa See
Grisela Dziewit	<i>The Boggart</i> by Susan Cooper (Children’s Room)
Tony Delos	<i>Brave New World</i> by Aldous Huxley (Young Adult)
Brian Karkut	<i>Cooty- Doo, Crick-Ette</i> by Stephen Cosgrove (Children’s Room)



Tech Corner

WINDOWS 7

Bernadette Bahner

Microsoft might be on to a winner with **Windows 7** according to industry analysts. In an interview with *Newsweek*, Bill Gates suggested that “this version of Windows would be more user-centric”. Senior Vice President Bill Veghte stated that “Windows Vista users migrating to Windows 7 would not find the kind of device compatibility issues that they encountered migrating from Windows XP”. Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer has confirmed compatibility between Vista and Windows. In response, Microsoft ZDNET Blogger and Editor in Chief Larry Dignam indicates that Windows 7 would be a refined version of Windows Vista.

Overall what’s new in Windows 7? Microsoft’s new operating system does improve on Windows Vista in many ways. *P.C. World’s* Harry McCracken has outlined the ten things *P.C. World* likes best about Windows 7 in an article entitled “Windows 7: 10 Best Features”.

1. The Taskbar Reloaded: It’s less cluttered and handles both running and non-running applications equally. You can scan through open files to find just what you are looking for.
2. Slicker, Quicker Taskbar Previews: Now they show you all of an application’s open windows all at once.
3. The Convenience of Jump Lists: The context-sensitive taskbar menus let you start accomplishing things in applications before you open them.
4. A System Tray You Can Love: New controls prevent the system tray from overflowing with unwanted apps and distracting you with irrelevant messages.
5. A More Media –Savvy Windows Media Player: New file format support enables Windows Media Player 12 to play back unprotected audio and video from Apple’s online store.
6. Alerts Via Action Center: Windows 7’s version of Vista’s security center queues up system messages so that you can respond to them on your schedule not when Windows feels like interrupting you.
7. User Account Control That You Control: You can tune Windows 7’s versions to make them less paranoid and intrusive.
8. Library Privileges: You can bundle folders from locations all across your hard drive into libraries designed to provide one-click access from the left pane of Windows Explorer to related files.
9. Reasonable Hardware Requirements: Historically, new versions of Windows have gobbled up twice the amount of CPU power and Ram that their predecessors did but Windows 7 runs a bit better than Vista on the same system. It’s even tolerable on a notebook.
10. The Potential of Touch: Windows 7’s support for multi touch input doesn’t change anything overnight but it does lay necessary groundwork for third party developers to build their own software.

In his review Mr. McCracken said that Windows 7 is hardly flawless. Some features feel unfinished; others won’t realize their potential without heavy lifting by third parties. While some long standing annoyances remain intact, the overall final shipping version that he test drove appeared to be a worthy successor to Windows XP, something that Vista never was.

Two features that will simplify your everyday tasks are *Snap* and *Windows Search*. *Snap* instantly arranges two windows exactly side by side and with *Windows Search* you can instantly search from the start menu by typing in a word or two.

- The good: Strong design and Microsoft don’t always go together, but they do in Windows 7. Users might take a while to get used to the new taskbar and Aero Peek, but they’re a pleasure to use.

- The bad: Performance is still hit-or-miss in Windows 7. At the ripe age of seven, Windows XP still performs better in some categories.

- The bottom line: Windows 7 is more than Vista should have been, it’s where Microsoft needed to go. How much damage Vista did and whether Windows 7 is enough for people to finally abandon Windows XP are questions that nobody has the answers to right now.

One big drawback is that it consumes more space - 600MB of RAM for itself (with *Windows Search* and *Superfetch* disabled). It is faster than Vista but very memory hungry. It is better to install on a clean format and not install as an upgrade. Price ranges for Microsoft Windows 7 are from \$168.99-\$315.08.

There are alternatives. You don’t have to upgrade! You can try *Ubuntu 9.10* a free “open source initiative”. *Ubuntu* is an alternative to *Windows* and *Office* and is a registered trademark of Canonical Ltd. Built by a worldwide team of expert developers it is the centre of a global open source software ecosystem. It contains all the applications you need: a web browser, office suite, media apps and instant messaging. Some critics say it is more stable, secure and powerful than *Windows*.



Yesterday's Headlines

The Library welcomes Rob Novak, Executive Director of the Derby Historical Society, on Tuesday, February 2 at 6:30 PM for another session of *Yesterday's Headlines*. This popular program has grown into a quarterly series at the Library.

Participants will be taken back to 1910, 1935 and 1960 to see what was happening locally 100, 75 and 50 years ago. Registration is requested.



Asian Cooking Demonstration

An Asian Cooking Demonstration has been scheduled on Tuesday, January 19 at 6:30 PM. Stacey Ference, local professional chef, returns to the Library to show participants how to prepare a Chinese New Year feast, combining technique and tradition. There will be samples of all demonstrated foods. The class is for ages eighteen and over only. Registration is required.

The Sentinel is Back!

The Derby Public Library invites everyone to come and *Meet the Valley Independent Sentinel* on Wednesday, January 13 at 6:30 PM. This new web site focuses exclusively on the news and events of the Lower Naugatuck Valley. It was launched on June 22, thanks to the support of the Valley Community Foundation and the Knight Foundation. Both Eugene Driscoll, editor, and Jodie Mozdzer, reporter, will talk about journalism in the age of the internet and the role the Valley Independent Sentinel hopes to play in the community. Registration is requested.

Lunchtime Book Discussions

Olive Kitteridge

The January Lunchtime Book Discussion is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27 at 12:30 PM. The 2009 Pulitzer Prize Winner for Fiction, *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Stout is the selected title. Through thirteen linked stories about a gruff retired school teacher in coastal Maine, Stout presents profound insights into the human condition, with its conflicts, tragedies, and joys, and the endurance it requires.

The Guernsey Literary & Potato Peel Pie Society

The Library has scheduled its February Lunchtime Book Discussion for Wednesday, February 24 at 12:30 PM. The New York Times best seller, *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by authors, Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows is the selected title. In this charming novel, Post World War II London author, Juliet Ashton strikes up a correspondence with a Guernsey native and learns about this oddly named book club the islanders quickly established to explain to German occupiers why they were breaking curfew. Written with warmth and humor as a series of letters, this novel is a celebration of the written word and of finding connection in the most surprising ways.

Multiple copies of both titles are available at the circulation desk. Participants are encouraged to bring a sandwich and a friend and join in this relaxing hour as they "chat and chew." Dessert and beverages will be provided. Registration is requested.



A Message from Miss Sue

Sue Sherman



We welcome a new year with the addition of several new children's programs. We are very excited to be offering programs on the fourth Saturday of each month beginning January 23 at 10:00 AM when the theme will be, **The Missing Mitten Mystery**, which will include a scavenger hunt in the Children's Room. The popular **Read to Sandy** program will also be moving to Saturday mornings at 11:30 AM. If your child hasn't had an opportunity to share a book with Sandy, our volunteer therapy dog, be sure to check out this wonderful program which helps young readers enhance their reading skills while enjoying a great reading experience. On Saturday, February 27 at 10:00 AM we will celebrate the end of our winter reading program **Chill Out and Read**. Everyone who completed the reading program is welcome to join us.

Be on the lookout for our after-school programs being offered on the second Tuesday of each month. Stop by for our **Let It Snow** program on Tuesday, January 12 at 3:30 PM. The activities will include creating a penguin snow measuring stick and listening to winter stories while sipping on some hot cocoa to warm us up! On February 9 at 3:30 PM, we invite children to celebrate **Valentine's Day** with us when we will be making cards for that someone special, working on a craft and enjoying some sweet treats!



On Tuesday, January 26 at 6:30 PM join us for **Sandy's Birthday Celebration**. Please stop by to introduce yourself to Sandy and find out more about her work here at the Library, create a craft and play some games. Refreshments will also be served. In lieu of birthday presents for Sandy, an item may be brought to be donated to Sandy's friends in the local animal shelters.

The winter school vacation week activities offer something for everyone! We start the week with Kate LaPlante presenting a **Make Your Own Jewelry Workshop** on Tuesday, February 16 at 6:00 PM. This unique program on the art of spinning, is a creative and entertaining way to learn the wool process using traditional tools. We get an early start on celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday with **Oozing Oobleck** presented by the Regional Water Authority's Whitney Water Center on Thursday, February 18 at 10:30 AM. On Friday, February 19 at 10:30 AM, it's **Winter Craft Time**. **Space will be limited for some programs, so register early!**

Our **winter story times** begin Wednesday, January 13 and run through Friday, March 19 with age-appropriate programs for children ages 6 months to 5 years old. We also start a six week session of **Family Place Parent/Child Workshops** on Monday, January 11 at 10:00 AM. For specific information on dates and times of classes, please check the newsletter calendar of events.

Reminder: It's not too late to participate in our winter reading program. Pre-readers including toddlers and preschoolers are encouraged to be a part of the program. It is never too early to instill a love of books for your child. We will take registrations through the month of January.

Registration is requested for all programs. There is no fee to attend children's programs and you are not required to be a Derby resident. For further information on programs and activities, please call the Children's Room at 203-736-1482, check the Library website or visit the Children's Room for a program calendar.

Stop by the Library to **Chill Out and Read** with a good book this winter!



Creative Corner

Children's

Parents and children often feel a sense of "cabin fever" this time of year. Take advantage of this time by creating some fun activities that also build pre-reading skills. Perhaps have an indoor picnic and put a cozy blanket on the floor. Make up some cards featuring pictures and simple words such as, apple, cup, milk, or some of the other foods you may include in your picnic lunch. Discuss the way in which your sandwiches were assembled and maybe your favorite foods. Have your child help make up a story about a fictional character (dog, pirate, fireman) while enjoying lunch. In the amount of time you shared your picnic, you have worked on word identification, sequencing, narrative skills and creative thinking. It is amazing how much you can teach your child in such a short amount of time. Did you know that the first five years of a child's life are the most important when it comes to developing literacy skills? You are your child's first teacher and your home is the perfect setting for fun activities that will prepare your child for reading. The Library has resources to get you and your child started—attend a story time, check out the parenting materials, participate in a parent/child workshop or drop in to share a book or two with your child.



Social Security Information Session



Social Security Specialist, Maria Grice, will be at the Library on Tuesday, January 12 at 10:00 AM and February 9 at 10:00 AM for informal information sessions. Come and find out how to apply for benefits, what benefits are available, on-line services, Medicare, COLA increases, the future of Social Security and more. This is an opportunity to have all your questions answered. Pamphlets and brochures will also be available. No registrations are necessary.

CT Works Career Coach Job Search Assistance

Friday, January 22, 10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon & 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Friday, February 19, 10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon & 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Career Development Workshop:

Resume Basics
Wednesday, January 13, 10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
Job Search Strategies
Wednesday, February 10, 10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon

FREE BASIC PC CLASSES
Friday, January 8 - 10:00 AM
Wednesday, January 20 - 6:30 PM
Friday, February 12 - 10:00 AM
Wednesday, February 17 - 6:30 PM

Local History

Mary A. Bisaccia

Black History Month would not be complete without a discussion of the Underground Railroad and the roles played in it by thousands of African American and white Americans. Now in 2010, there is a temporal and often geographical distance between what happened in the mid-1800s and how it affected the natives of Connecticut. However, history shows that Connecticut and many of her brave statesmen played a vital role in helping thousands of Negro slaves escape bondage.

Slavery was not just a product of the 1700 and 1800s. As early as 1501, Spanish settlers brought slaves from Africa to the New World. Britain joined in on this profit-making business in 1562, and by 1581, Spanish residents in Florida imported African slaves. By the 1700s, both slavery and abolitionism began to take root in the U.S. In 1794, the invention of the cotton gin created a huge demand for slave labor, which would be increasingly challenged in social, political and theological circles.

At the time of the Revolutionary War, if slaves could obtain by "bounty or hire" a sum to be paid their masters which would equal in value the sum they were judged to be worth by the selectmen of their town, they should be allowed to enlist in the "Connecticut Line" and be henceforth free and emancipated. In Meig's regiment, one whole company was made up of slaves commanded by Derby's General David Humphreys, who took command after others had refused and remained at the head until the declaration of peace in 1783.

Around the same time, abolitionists and humanitarians were developing a chain of escape routes and hiding places for runaway slaves fleeing the South. These secret routes became known collectively as the "Underground Railroad." Most "undergrounders" worked within their own circumscribed orbits in secrecy and danger. Canada was the most common destination for fugitives, because they were allowed to own land, vote, and were out of the jurisdiction of American bounty hunters, although many escapees decided to settle in "free states" such as Connecticut where slavery was eventually outlawed. However, before the runaways could reach freedom, they had to track their way through thousands of miles of often dangerous territory. Connecticut was one of the first states that made their abolitionist sentiments known. In 1790, Yale President Ezra Stiles formed an anti-slavery society, called "The Society for the Promotion of Freedom, and for the Relief of Persons Holden in Bondage." In Glastonbury, Hancy Z. Smith and her five daughters originated the first antislavery petition in the U.S., circulated it among her neighbors, and forwarded it to Congress with 40 signatures.

By 1776, petitions began to be presented to the General Assembly praying for the emancipation of slaves. In 1784, the legislature passed the first emancipation law. The first state to commit to such a law, Connecticut provided for gradual emancipation, requiring every enslaved child born after March 1st, 1784 to be set free at the age of 25. Slaveholders who did not comply were fined \$7 for every month overdue. In 1797, another



act was passed making all Negroes born after August 1, 1797 free at the age of 21. The law worked silently and steadily, so that in 1848, when the act was passed which abolished slavery forever in this state, there were only 6 slaves surviving.

It is clear that as time went on, Connecticut grew friendlier to escaped slaves. Several trusted Underground Railroad routes were established. One common route left Charleston, SC and transported the escapees by boat along the Atlantic coastline into Delaware Bay. They then traveled by land to Philadelphia and continued by land to New York City, and then on to New Haven, Connecticut. New Haven housed a devoted band of abolitionists and was an important center for Underground Railroad activity as both a terminus and a forwarding point. From New Haven, the Underground Railroad took various northern routes towards Farmington, which was Connecticut's "Grand Central Station" or hub of Underground Railroad activity. It is certainly possible that some of these routes went through the Valley area as they worked their way inland. It is believed that one "stop" in this area was the Washburn Tavern in Oxford.

Among New Haven's Underground Railroad "conductors," were Rev. Simeon S. Jocelyn, first pastor of the Temple Street Church, New Haven's original house of worship for Negroes. His brother Nathaniel Jocelyn was an artist who painted the *Amistad* passenger Cinque and stood ready to release the *Amistad* captives from jail by force, was also an active agent of the Underground Railroad. Rev. Samuel W.S. Dutton, pastor of New Haven's North Church, allowed his home at 113 College Street to be an Underground station. Other known agents were Amos Townsend, cashier of the New Haven Bank, and Rev. Henry Ludlow. Roger Sherman Baldwin, an attorney who helped an alleged fugitive by obtaining a writ of habeas corpus and bringing the accused before the Supreme Court, where the fugitive obtained release. Baldwin also represented the slaves of the ship *Amistad* with John Quincy Adams before the U.S. District and Supreme Courts. Countless other Connecticut citizens assisted in the operation of the Underground Railroad under a cloak of secrecy to protect both themselves and the fugitives they so desperately wanted to help.

The North Star was a guide for runaway slaves leaving the South, but once in the Underground Railroad system, the participants were conducted by foot, wagon, horse, or boat to a private house, barn, or church where they would be hidden until it was possible to send them to the next northward bound location. This operation required the cooperation of free African Americans, Native Americans and whites. It also required secrecy since free participants could be charged with breaking the law in helping slaves escape their owners. This secrecy has made it difficult to document fully what buildings in Connecticut were used in the Underground Railroad, and often this information has survived only in oral tradition. While Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass certainly deserve their high statures in the history of the Underground Railroad, let us also remember the thousands of brave black and white Americans whose discretion made the arduous journey to freedom safer for all involved.

Many of the most popular tax forms are available at the Library free of charge. Regular printing fees will be applied to any forms accessed through the IRS website.



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TEEN ZONE

Tony DeLos

Happy New Year Teen Zoners! My how time does fly. It seems like just the other day I was reminiscing about school summer vacations and now suddenly the holidays are behind us. These reflections on our recent past often prompt me to put myself in your shoes as I seek out parallels with my own teen years. The funny thing is, I often discover that some of the more exciting entertainment subject matter from the past and up through the present have really only changed in their level of marketing intensity. None the less, I suppose it might be fitting to categorize the fantasy genre, and similarly popular themes, under the general heading of "traditionally appealing to teens", or perhaps more appropriately, the honor of being deemed "classic." There's a lot to be said for tradition and the Library is just the place to seek out and enjoy some of the most captivating literature and entertainment proven capable of withstanding the test of time while you monitor the pulse of progress. Allow me to provide a couple of "for instances."

There is little doubt that the latest rage both in-print and on-screen has to be the Stephanie Meyer saga of vampire fare, starting with the fantastically successful first book *Twilight*, and followed by *New Moon*, *Eclipse*, and *Breaking Dawn*. Apparently Ms. Meyer is poised to challenge J.K. Rowling for the pinnacle of author popularity. These writers are appropriately classified as "contemporary" from a generational standpoint. But from the perspective of the classic fantasy novel, look back to the early part of the last century and notice other literary masterpieces such as, J.R.R.

Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings Trilogy*, as well as C.S. Lewis' *Narnia* series, both enjoying resurgence in popularity as new life is breathed through the latest cinematic technologies necessary to capture the

hearts and minds of a whole new generation of young adults. Maximizing enjoyment of any and all of these phenomenally enchanting series seems to follow the popular formula of "read the book first, then go see the movie." We have multiple copies of these series, so stop by the Teen Zone and pick up a copy. While I'm on the subject of classics, check out my staff pick this month, *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley, and ask yourself if we, as a nation, are about to embark upon a society such as he describes.

Building on our own DPL tradition, I'm pleased to announce Ms. Phyllis' return this month for her **Knit-Teen!** program happening Thursdays at 3:30 PM through the month of April. We'll supply the materials needed for your first project. Another of our DPL YA endeavors will delve into the realm of things classic as we explore the game of chess. We're starting a **Chess Club** which will meet twice monthly on the second and fourth Mondays at 6:30 PM. And don't forget our standard monthly get-togethers: **Teen Game Night** on first Wednesdays at 6:00 PM (we have added DJ Hero to our collection of Wii games), as well as the **Young Adult Advisory Board** which meets on second Tuesdays at 4:00 PM. We'll also be dipping into chocolate this February vacation as we explore favorite American presidential **First Ladies and Fondue**.

So, here we are with a brand new year upon us and the latest generation of writers creating a new era of exciting literary fare for your reading enjoyment. I do, however, urge you to keep in mind the classics and those things deemed traditional. Your academic future and personal sense of culture and accomplishment will be all the more enriched by it. Rest assured, your DPL will respond to your recommendations for the latest in popular books, music, and games. Yes indeed, time flies when you're having fun...especially around the Teen Zone!

