EAST NORWALK ASSOCIATION
51 Van Zant Street
East Norwalk, CT 06855
Email: info@eastnorwalklibrary.org
www.eastnorwalklibrary.org
like us on Facebook

EAST NORWALK ASSOCIATION LIBRARY
The Cornerstone of the Community

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Without libraries what have we? We have no past and no future.

Ray Bradbury
THE PAST:

In 1910 30 Ladies of East Norwalk met at the Mayflower Fire House on Van Zant Street and formed a community organization .....dedicated to changing a few things in their neighborhood they thought could use and benefit from it and adding a few things the people needed.

In 1912 a young lady sent them letter asking them to consider the idea of a library for East Norwalk. So in 1913 in the front window of Rundles Bakery located at the corner of Van Zant and Osborne Avenue the ladies opened the first library collection consisting of 100 books. In April of 1914 a lot was purchased for $900. In May of 1914 the Association was formed and in 1916 plans were begun to build a hall of brick large enough for social gatherings, dances, card parties and other functions. It was voted that the two front rooms were to become the library and on November 6, 1917 the building was finished and formally presented to the then president with all members and guests present.

Time moves on to the mid-twentieth century and the need for the library to expand is recognized. The building is now debt free and with its mortgage being paid the board voted unanimously to present the building to the Third Taxing District. The commissioners accepted the building and promised to remodel the building to house a full library with the East Norwalk Association given the task of running the library.

**Since that time the Third Taxing District and the electors have graciously funded the East Norwalk Library and recognized its value to the community.**
The Present:

Active Library Programs Summary

D2R2 (Dogs to Read to)- Now in its 9th year, this weekly program (Saturday mornings from 10:30-11:30) has enjoyed great success as well as local and nationwide recognition. The program itself enables children to come to the library, pick a book of their choice, and take turns reading it to specially trained (R.E.A.D. Reading Assistance Education Dogs) dogs. The program, in addition to its popularity among children because of their interaction with the dogs, has proven to help instill self-confidence, overcome shyness and develop an appreciation for reading. The participants are able to keep the book they read.

Book Nooks- We have placed free “Book Nooks” at various locations within the community where people will be able to “take a book, read a book, share a book, return a book” at heir leisure. These book nooks are filled with donated books—non-fiction, young adult, and for children-replenished as required. This dovetails on the “Little Free Library” concept that’s being created to serve communities nationwide. To date we have installed 5 Book Nooks and have circulated many books at Penny’s Diner, TTD Offices, Ripka’s Beach Café, 25 Van Zant Street and Gus’s Barber Shop.

Home Bound Services- A volunteer driven program where a library patron is provided books on an as requested basis. These former library patrons are no longer able to get out so we believe that they should be able to continue to receive library services.

Sensational Summer Series- This free popular series of programs intended for youngsters is scheduled from late June until the beginning of August. The programs range from fun and frivolous to educational to musical. There’s something for everyone!

Norwalk Reads- A true collaboration with partners from the Norwalk Housing Authority, the Norwalk Mentor Program, the Norwalk Chamber and the Norwalk Public Library. Twice a year they sponsor a city- wide opportunity for youngsters in Norwalk to receive a free book. The East Norwalk Library is one
of five locations for the children to pick up a book. Since its inception fourteen years ago between 25,000 and 30,000 children have received books!

**Gaming Program**- Our newest program for all ages *Games and Gaming at the East Norwalk Association Library* began last June on Thursday afternoons from 4 to 5 pm. There is also a once a year event called *International Games Day @ Your Library* that is sponsored by various game companies who donate new copies of games to libraries that request them. This year’s event is scheduled for November 18, 2017. We may or may not run the event on the same day to facilitate the needs of our patrons and to accommodate staffing issues. The concept is to teach and play board, dice and card games with children and young adults to teach fair play and community camaraderie. The program can accommodate up to eight participants. The program will run even if one child attends. The average per week is four participants. Attendees are given a book of their choice from our selection of free books for children and young adults.

**Van Zilens Hall**- Monthly contract and individual rentals remain strong. Churches remain our most consistent regular renters with four coming in every Sunday! Not for profits such as the scouts meet regularly as well. Of course we have a number of folks who rent the hall for family celebrations on Saturday afternoons.

**Military Book Collection**- If you haven’t been in the library lately you should come and check out our collection of books that highlight our country’s involvement in military conflicts from the Revolutionary War to the War in Afghanistan.

**Memorabilia Display**- Created last year, featuring historical artifacts and photographs including a section devoted to Marie Corridon Mortell who won a Gold Medal for swimming at the 1948 London Olympics. A replica of her medal and other items are on display.
EAST NORWALK ASSOCIATION LIBRARY
The Cornerstone of the Community

In 2016:

92 Children participated in the D2R2 Program
179 Youngsters attended the Gaming Series
150 Children enjoyed the Sensational Summer Series Programs
1,782 People came in and used the computers
1,255 People came in for Misc. library requests (usage)
96 New library cards were issued
12, 541 items were circulated: Adult books
  Children’s Books
  Audio/Video
  Magazines

Magazines and Newspapers are also read here daily
EAST NORWALK ASSOCIATION LIBRARY
The Cornerstone of the Community

The Future:

Summer and Holiday Programs a the East Norwalk Association Library

Summer Programs will be scheduled for the tentative dates of:

July 14, 2017
July 21, 2017
July 28, 2017
August 4, 2017
August 11, 2017
August 18, 2017

Shows will be on Fridays, from 11 am to 12pm after which the library will open early to accommodate any attendees who would like to utilize the facility to check out books or obtain library cards. Shows will be booked with library themes in mind, in order for the connection between the programs and the library to be emphasized.

Two programs are slated to be booked, the Green Meadows Farm Bug Van (see and touch animals) and Justin Mazz (magician), both of whom are our most attended/popular shows.

Holiday programs are to be planned for Thanksgiving and Christmas whether day or evening still needs to be decided.
The Future: In October of 2016 the Board of Trustees of the East Norwalk Library voted unanimously to move the library forward by hiring a director holding a Masters in Library Science. We believe that the East Norwalk Library has terrific potential. Our patrons wish to see expanded hours and challenging programs. Under the current circumstances the growth simply is not possible. Why not a book club? Why not adult programs in the hall downstairs in the afternoons? Why not a morning program for young children? Why not expanded summer and holiday programs for children? Why not a sleepy-time story hour for the little ones in the early evening? Why not collaborate with other groups? Why not have a speaker or two once in a while? Let’s realize the potential we have here! And if we try something and it fails…..at least we tried. Programming is fluid. We try something else, collaborate with someone else! So please come join us, join the board, volunteer for a program, make a donation. This library is a community asset. Those of you that voted with the TTD to hire a consultant realized the potential that the library has, the value to East Norwalk and beyond. Let’s all continue to work together to build this library to be a resource to all.

Thanks to the staff (Maureen and Dan) of the East Norwalk Association Library without whose help this report could not have been completed.