

WILTON LIBRARY

Annual Report 2020-2021



A message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As I write my last annual report message as Executive Director of Wilton Library, I am reminded of one of my favorite track and field sporting events – the relay race. For me, the relay race is one of the most beautiful illustrations of teamwork and coordinated efforts.

A critically important element of this race is the passing of the baton. This action, which occurs in just a few seconds, demonstrates trust and readiness to accept what is put in the palm of one's hand. When a runner receives the baton, he or she often accepts it without seeing it. Yet, it is grasped by the runner with the knowledge that it is necessary to build on all the hard work and efforts that enabled the transfer of that baton. The receiving runner must then sprint as fast as possible to pass that baton smoothly to the next teammate. The more smoothly the baton is passed, the easier it is to maintain and build on the team's momentum.

In many ways, the past year has been a relay race. Over the last several months, new members of our team have had to accept the proverbial batons from colleagues who had retired, moved away to join family, or chose new career paths. And now, I too am completing my leg of the race and will soon hand off the administrative baton to the next Executive Director of Wilton Library, just as I happily received it from Kathy Leeds, the previous director.

As I conclude my tenure, I am particularly mindful of the generous support, camaraderie, trust, and warm friendships that I have been privileged to receive from you. So it is with much appreciation and fondness that I say thank you to our many loyal patrons, town officials and departments, friends, sponsors, community partners, volunteers, and especially the Boards of Trustees and my colleagues for your collaboration during the past year, and the years prior. Your unwavering commitment to our library – during times of celebration as well as times of challenge, such as the COVID pandemic and unforgettable storms – validates the importance of our institution as a traditional library, an essential cultural and intellectual center, and most of all, a special place in the heart of this community.

I hope you will enjoy reading about this year's programs, events, and accomplishments, all of which kept us connected and enabled Wilton Library to thrive during the past year.

Elaine Sai hanna

Elaine Tai-Lauria

A message from the President

Dear Friends,

This year's Annual Report must begin with our thanks. Thank you to our patrons, young and not so young, who enjoy Wilton Library's resources and programs; to our Executive Director Elaine Tai-Lauria, for her expert management and enduring warmth during these difficult times; the teamwork of our library staff; and to the entire community, whose participation and financial support keeps our library vibrant and thriving. We thank you all.

The fiscal year 2020–2021 placed extraordinary demands on our staff. COVID-19 disrupted social interactions worldwide, requiring innovation in every facet of library services. Our staff has risen to the challenge of providing engaging and meaningful resources with creativity, and we could not have done it without them. Beyond just surviving, our library has evolved into an even more essential resource center for all who seek information, enrichment, connection, and inspiration.

Through careful financial management, the library's fiscal position is strong and stable. Our publicprivate partnership with the town of Wilton provides the largest source of funding, approximately 75% of our operating budget – indeed, your tax dollars at work. However, it is the generous support of our patrons, whose donations provide funds for all materials and programs, that make the library Wilton's vibrant center of inspiration, education, and connection. For this we are truly grateful.

We recently opened The Brubeck Collection archive, where Dave Brubeck's fantastic legacy of recorded, printed, and physical materials are available for research and inspiration. The library will welcome researchers from around the globe seeking knowledge of Dave's contributions to the world of jazz and beyond, and we hope to create and expand programs and activities that will make Wilton a major presence in the musical world.

The coming year also presents new challenges. As many of you know, Elaine has announced her retirement in early 2022. The Board of Trustees has established a search committee and engaged the services of Bradbury Miller, a nationwide search firm, for the formidable task of finding her replacement. This is a tall order indeed, and we will keep you informed of our progress and hope to welcome a new Executive Director early in the new year.

Maintaining the open and welcoming presence of Wilton Library in the face of a pandemic is truly challenging. I am humbled to serve on a Board of Trustees with many insightful members who will explore and implement new operations and programs to support and inspire our patrons. I believe that the future we now see dawning will be filled with all of the challenges that change brings. With your engagement, generosity, and support, Wilton Library will remain at the center of our town's civic life in new and compelling ways.

So we invite you to come in or Zoom in, meet your friends, welcome new residents and staff, and explore all that Wilton Library has to offer.

Rob SAMPENCE

Rob Sanders

Wilton Library

Connected...and Thriving

It is hard to imagine what our lives would be without connections.

Through connections, we inform.

Through connections, we enrich.

Through connections, we inspire.

For Wilton Library, it was a year full of meaningful connections. Still facing challenges due to the Coronavirus pandemic, we continued to work tirelessly to fulfill the intellectual and cultural needs of our community. During this time, one thing always remained constant – connections. We managed to stay closely connected to you, while striving to connect everyone in our community to each other and to the world beyond.

And so we came to realize... through connections, we thrived.

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Phil Lauria & Elaine Tai-Lauria

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Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

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Not only did we succeed in maintaining all of these important connections – they energized us and we continued to grow and to flourish. We adapted and evolved to provide resources and services that our community needs. We successfully celebrated our momentous 125th Anniversary with a re-imagined Virtual Gala. And we were immensely proud to welcome The Brubeck Collection, one of the most prestigious jazz archives in the world, into our newly designed and constructed archival space.

Although Wilton Library had its start in the corner of a post office in 1895, we have grown immensely over the years. Nothing makes us more gratified than serving our community. We invite you to connect with us and stay connected. For our part, we will always work diligently to stay true to our purpose and mission: to inform, enrich, connect, and inspire our community.

Gregory and Adams, P.C. Lila Griswold Elissa & Charles Grodin Anne & Rich Hackett Dr. & Mrs. Francis Hamilton, Jr. Russell J. Handelman Thomas B. Harris Thom & Sally Healy Nancy Helmig Judy & Hal Higby

> "Thank you for being there in the most needed times. Thank you for all of your help."

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> "I would not have survived COVID without you guys...my life jacket. Having no books in my life would be like having no food in the fridge."

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"Thank you, Wilton Library! Your newsletter and programs have been heartening and welcome touchstones all through this year."

Susan J. Pels & Joseph E. Sweigart The Petroski Family The Pfeffer Family Dr. Lauren & Mr. Greg Pinchbeck Karen & Bob Pingarron Charles A. Prescott Ronald & Barbara Quist Ray Rauth Anne & Philip Richards Ridgefield Academy The Ravishing Renegades Book Group Dodo Roberts Andrea & Thomas Sato Sauter-Martin Family Philip Schenck The Schiff Family Hon. Michael E. & Marilyn Shay The Sheehy Family Christopher & Melinda Smith Andrew & Tara Snow Sweet Pierre's

"AWESOME

list of books on Racism! Thank you for stepping up to add to the conversation."

Connecting to You

In the face of the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, the Wilton Library staff pivoted successfully to fulfill the needs of the community and keep everyone connected. We offered a dynamic mix of virtual and in-person services and programming that brought new knowledge and experiences to patrons of all ages.

Our drive-thru window offered a safe and easy way for patrons to borrow and return materials, while our librarians provided personal one-on-one assistance and instruction via video chats, email and phone. We continued to boost our Digital Library resources, including audio and video entertainment, and celebrated our 100,000th eBook checkout winner. Our Children's Library maintained a steady stream of online story times and other learning activities to keep children and parents engaged. Older and younger generations connected through Zoom or YouTube to participate in virtual author talks, seminars on art, music, history, and literature, and other enrichment programs.



One highlight was our community-wide reading program, *Wilton Reads 2021*, which explored the timely topics of racism and race relations with the book *Memorial Drive: A Daughter's Memoir* by Natasha Trethewey and included a virtual visit from the Pulitzer Prize-winning author.

And when it was safe for the public to visit our building again, we were happy to greet everyone with face-to-face service, in-person seminars and workshops, a big spring book sale, and lots of smiles to welcome new Wilton residents at our Ice Cream Social.

Every effort has been made to acknowledge all donors

Connecting Through Art and Music

Wilton Library continued its strong tradition of music and arts programming, connecting our community with renowned local and international musicians and artists. We hosted art exhibits and teamed up with the Wilton Historical Society to celebrate the contributions of Connecticut artists from all disciplines with our scholarly lecture series, "Connecticut Creativity." Also of note, our popular virtual music discussion series "From Bach to Brubeck," featuring musicologist Gil Harel and famed composer and musician Chris Brubeck, son of Dave Brubeck. Another huge success: our Hot & Cool Jazz special virtual concert broadcast featuring jazz pianist Taylor Eigsti and Chris Brubeck.

Welcoming The Brubeck Collection

This year Wilton Library was immensely proud and honored to welcome The Brubeck Collection, one of the preeminent jazz archives in the world, into its new home in our specially designed and constructed archival space. The majority of construction took place under strict protocols during the pandemic, while the building was closed to the public. The Collection arrived in Wilton in June 2021. During the next few months, the materials were transferred to Wilton Library, where they are now housed in our new archival space.

The Brubeck Collection was established by late jazz legend Dave Brubeck and his wife, Iola, as a "living archive" to Dave's long and illustrious career as a celebrated musician and composer. It is a treasure trove of thousands of musicrelated materials, passing on Dave's legacy to future musicians, musicologists, researchers, historians, jazz aficionados, and the public. The Brubeck Collection is a special and important addition to the Wilton community, a unique source of inspiration that will continue to draw interest from around the world.





ZOOI



Karin Triester & David O'Brien Gary & Sheila Wakoff Kim & Jim West Ann & Steve White Whitman Family Wilton Arts Council

READER'S CIRCLE (\$250 to \$499)

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Gil Harel music presentation: "Thank you so much for these wonderful, wonderful presentations. They really are terrific!"

Peg & Rick Koellmer Janet Lawless & Pat Carroll R.B. & Liz Lerch Edythe & Roger Levy Ronnie & Gary Lilien Paula & Kevin Magner Ceci Maher Lisa & J. Matthew Mannix Robert & Marcia Marafioti Adam & Amy McCabe Kenneth Meister & Laurie Shahon Jennifer & Maurizio Morello

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Every effort has been made to acknowledge all donors

Connecting with Children and Teens



With inviting spaces dedicated to encourage a lifelong love of reading, learning, and discovery, the Children's Library and Teen Services department enthusiastically continued the tradition of engaging and connecting younger members of the community. Children participated in a wide variety of virtual and in-person activities and programs, including story times with Wilton police officers and firefighters, our popular summer reading program, arts and crafts, dancing, music, and virtual chess,

continues from page 9 This list o

Mike Ahel Adam Broderick Salon & Spa Inta & Taggart Adams Rachel & Russ Albanese Monroe S. Alechman & Niall McMorrow Jacqueline Algon Judith Altmann Janet Anderson The Aquan Family Tim Armenta Stephen L. Auslender, Ph.D. Melissa Baker Thomas & Patrice Banahan Laura Bard The Barnett Family Kathy Barton Andrea & Jeff Bates

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> Summer **Reading:** "This has been a wonderful program and SO motivating for our son. I am proud of how much he can read!!"

Mary Bendix Karen Benfield William E. Bergeron Jan & Judy Berman Liane Bernard Kristin Beylouni Michelle & Richard Beyman Betsy & Hank Bianco Katherine Bieger The Blackbaud Giving Fund Arleen Block Gladys Blundin Barbara Boas John & Colleen Boepple Annet & Peter Bonfanti Toni & Bud Boucher Theresa & Fred Brasco Zelda & Joe Brenner Dr. & Mrs. Allen S. Brings Mae K. Tighe & Thomas J. Bronner Brookfield Lions Club David & Karin Brooks Eliza Brown Elizabeth & Kemper Brown Heather Brown & Daniel Southern Robert & Debra Browne

with Wilton Library's team winning the Fairfield County Libraries Chess Tournament! Several programs featured STEAM learning, including coding and robotics, offering children the opportunity to broaden their horizons in the areas of science, technology, engineering, arts, and math.

Popular programs attended by teens and tweens included an iPhone photography workshop, a Poetry in Motion virtual reunion and performance event, crafting and baking sessions, college planning programs, and more. Wilton Library's teen robotics team, Singularity Technology, persevered through a challenging virtual robotics season, working diligently to build their complex robot while social distancing. Team members are eagerly looking forward to next year's challenge.



Jessica Butchko Cagenello/Johnston Family Mary & Sean Cahill Celia Campbell-Mohn Cvnthia M. Cannella Peter & Marie Cappelli Georgia Carrington & Becky Strominger Terry & Mike Castellano Celona Family Arjun Chandrashekar Debbie & Greg Chann Amy Miller Christofer JoAnn Ciavarelli Ellen Clegg Amy Clepper Joan & Eugene Cohler Robert & Robin Como Ralph & Patricia Conte Jerome & Judith Cook Linus & Lillian Cooke Kathy & Doug Coombs **Bethany Cooper**

"All of the other children watching who were laughing, moving around, having a wonderful time. It was great to see so many joyful faces. Thanks to everyone who put this together."

Mr. & Mrs. Anthony J. Cooper, III Jacqueline & Andrew Cox Craft 14 Kitchen + Bar Marilyn Crandall Nancy Cross Terri Cuddy Chuck & Mary Cunningham Dawn Dahl John & Mary Lee Danaher Ellen Davis Doug Davison Lauren Day Melissa DeBernardis Cathy & Don DeCesare



"I came across this quote (by David Lankes) and it reminds me of what Wilton Library does for our town: "Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities."

Connections through Partnerships

Wilton Library teamed up with our valued community partners to open doors to new knowledge and experiences – such as meeting award-winning authors, learning more about Bach and Brubeck, sharing poetry, knitting, baking, and much more. Thank you to our partners who made our performances, seminars, programs, and workshops possible.



Partnerships

Ambler Farm	Fairfield County Bank
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Weir Farm
Wilton Bulletin
Wilton Chamber of Commerce
Wilton Fire Department
Wilton Go Green
Wilton Historical Society

- Wilton Interfaith Action Committee Wilton Land Conservation Trust Wilton League of Women Voters Wilton Mom's Club Wilton Police Department Wilton Presbyterian Church Wilton Public Schools
- Wilton Senior Center Wilton Social Services Wilton Youth Council Wilton Youth Services Woodcock Nature Center





\$2,737,846



investment income)

\$292,342

Income

\$78,299

Total Revenue: \$3,709,397

*Excludes Endowment Donations

Our collection, programs, and services would not be possible without the generous support of our donors.

page 11 Meghan & Steve DeMasi Shawn M-DeTroy & Matthew continues from DeTrov John & Therese DiCenzo list his l

Connie Jo Dickerson & Jon Young Kathleen & Tim Dineen Donna Disch Marie Donahue Franev & Barbara Donovan Meaghan Donovan Andrew & Lynn Driver Drum Hill Chapter, NSDAR Nancy H. Dryden Janette & Thomas Duchnicki Genevieve & Robert Eason Susan B. Edwards Teryl A. Eisenberg Vanessa & Eugene Elias Alyce & Jed Englund

Rebecca Erickson & Doris Dyer Steven Erickson . John Fahiani Andre & Lindsay Fankhauser Irene R. Farley

"... I really appreciate the work you are

doing. It makes a huge difference to be able to borrow materials during this difficult time! Thanks for helping to keep me sane!"

Josh & Shinobu Farrell The Fasano Family The Fechter Family Janell Federico Linda & Michael Fein Sasha Feldstein Dr. Brian D. Fengel Suchitra Fields Douglas & Deborah Fine Joseph & Ann Fiteni Bart & Heidi Flaherty Nancy Flaherty Lisa & Mal Flanagan Laura Flanagan The Floyd Family Cecilia Moy Fradet Jeanne & Wesley Fredericks Grace Frericks

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Salaries & Benefits

(\$)

\$2,370,740

Library Content

& Programs

\$434,128

0000

Susan & Irve Goldman The Gordon Family Elaine Gordon Aleiandra Gordon

"The library is Wilton's treasure chest. Thank you for all the wonderful services."

Linda & David Gortz Beniamin A. Gott South End Capital Corp. Victoria & Todd Green Margret & Matthew Greene

Library Operations



\$63,126

Fundraising & Development



\$35,240

The Greens at Cannondale

Susie Gross

Total Expenses: \$3,239,536

Expenses

Building Maintenance

& Utilities

\$181,714

Technology

....

....

\$154,588

Marie Grossi Diane & Peter Gucciardo Dennyse & Bucky Gunts Matt & Kim Hall Ross & Paula Hand Elinor L. Hauff Arlene H. Hazlewood Jeffrev Headden Mr. & Mrs. Gregory J. Hefner Alissa Helgesen Sigrid J. Henrichson The Herve Family Myra Hess Patricia Hessel Naomi & Anthony Higgins Caroline Hoffman



Every effort has been made to acknowledge all donors

Wilton Library Annual Report 2020-2021 15

Facts & Figures



Total Items Circulated 162,284



Attendance at **Innovation Station** Sessions 409



Questions answered by reference librarians











Total Number of Programs 450



Number of times people **Library Visits** logged in to library 28,738

computers 26,598

⊠′—

Total Program

Attendance

10,309



Total number of items available in the collection 511,390



Number of website visits 233,261



Jody Holmes Mona & Rae Spilke Paula Hopewell Kim Horner Neil Horner Eva Horowitz Karl & Leslie Hueglin Susan & Trevor Huffard David & Berta Hull Nagore Huntley Anita & Javed Hug Virginia Hyde Richard & Brenda Isaacs Barbara Jay Amy Jenner Joan Jevne & Kirk Minnis Jesse G. Johnson Nancy E. Johnson Barbara J. Jones Carol & Michael Kaelin Ourania Katsapis Annette Schwarz Kaye & Richard Doris & Roger Kaye Sylvia Kaye Nathan Kellish Ty Kepner Joshua & Sharon Kesselman The Kilmartin Family David & Tricia King Nerina R. Klobas

"Thank you for all you are doing. I'm grateful for Overdrive and your pick-up window. It has made this unusual time so much easier to take."

Jennifer Knapp David & Linda Koch Anita Kohli-Pamnani, M.D. Kondreddi Family Keerthi Kongettira Noel & Bruce Konrad Rosaria Konstantin Carol & Gene Kopfmann Jill S. Kotch Camille & Alan Kramer Janet Krauss Alexandra Krithades John & Charissa Kronenberg

"The Big Read was a great find. Thank you for all of your fine coordination. I greatly value these seminars."

Lucy Krupenye Andrea & Peter Kryworuczko Barry & Beverlee Kutner John & Peg Lagnese George & Nancy Lamb Linda Lange Susan & Paul Lauricella Steve & Joan Lauten Gail & Jean-Pierre Lavielle The Law Family Christopher Lawther John & Charlotte Layne Mary Joy Leaper Fran LeBarron Carol & Robert Lenihan Melissa Leonard Georgiana Leporati Jeff & Jane Lerner Susan S. Levack Dina & David Levi Doris J. Levinson

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Connecting to the Future

The Wilton Library Endowment Fund links our organization to the future. Established for the long-term preservation of the Wilton Library Association and its mission, the Endowment Fund provides an enduring source of support, contributing to the library's present and its future. The Cornerstone Society recognizes donors who have made a minimum contribution of \$10,000 to the Wilton Library Endowment Fund.

Thanks to our donors, we have established and grown an Endowment Fund for Wilton Library, safeguarding the crucial role Wilton Library plays in the fabric of our community, today and in perpetuity.



\$100,000+ Cornerstone Society Pinnacle

Amadeo Family Nick & Dorie Davatzes/Davatzes Family Foundation Paul & Carol Evanson Family Foundation The Daniel E. Offutt, III Private Family Trust Louise & Erv Shames

\$50,000-\$74,999

Cornerstone Society Gold The Foster Family Fund In Memory of Phillip Lauria Dr. Mark & Linda Rubinstein The Stroup Family

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Cornerstone Society Silver Mike Boswood & Mary Pytko Greg & Gina Jansen Stacy & John Reynolds

The Cornerstone Society

\$10,000-\$24,999 Cornerstone Society Bronze

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125th Anniversary Gala

Wilton Library was thrilled to (finally) host its 125th Anniversary Gala on Saturday, November 14, 2020. The special celebration, originally scheduled for March 28, 2020, was postponed twice due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Because a large community gathering was not possible, the gala was re-envisioned as a full virtual event.

The gala was an enormous success - a memorable evening featuring a special concert by jazz pianist Taylor Eigsti and Chris Brubeck recorded at the Brubeck family home in Wilton, virtual toasts and a lively online auction. The event honored Jennifer and Claude Amadeo for their exceptional contributions to the library's STEAM programs



for children and teens, and Catherine Romer for her loyal contributions to the library's Hot & Cool Jazz series for more than a dozen years. Nick Davatzes was also honored with a surprise Endowment Philanthropy Leadership Award, recognizing his steadfast leadership and dedication toward building the Wilton Library Endowment Fund.

All proceeds from the event support library resources, programs, and services. We sincerely thank all of our sponsors and advertisers who made our 125th Anniversary Gala possible.

Wilton Library 125th Anniversary Gala Sponsors and Advertisers

Gala Co-Chairs: Leti Manuel and Carol Boehly

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"...my son watches all of the stories on YouTube from all three librarians! He watches them over and over and absolutely loves them!! Then he pretends to be you or Mrs. Keogh and teaches me a class."

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"We so appreciate the library and the great work that you are doing there."

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> "Thanks for all you're doing with the recipes on Zoom. It's a nice change of pace!"

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"Many thanks to all of you for everything you are doing, especially now in offering in-library services. It is appreciated!"



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> "I want to thank you so very much for treating us all with incredibly enriching, interesting, inspiring, and beautifully presented programs during this challenging time."

"I just love seeing the ladies at the drive-thru. It's such a nice service. My father is 93 so this is very important to us."

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> "One of the best things about living in Connecticut is the wonderful library system, and the ability to use all of the beautiful libraries throughout the state."

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> "The Wilton Library is an extraordinary place. I just love all of your efforts to make us readers."

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