



TOWN OF GROTON

GROTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



BETTY ANNE REITER
DIRECTOR
BREITER@GROTON-CT.GOV

52 NEWTOWN ROAD, GROTON, CONNECTICUT 06340
TELEPHONE (860) 441-6750 FAX (860) 448-0363
WWW.GROTON-CT.GOV WWW.GROTONPL.ORG

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Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing to express my concern about the elimination of funding for Connecticut Humanities in the Governor's proposed FY 2015-17 budget. The programs, grants and leadership they provide are extremely important for Connecticut's cultural institutions, including the Groton Public Library. In the past year, our patrons have benefitted from the following CT Humanities initiatives:

- **The Way We Worked.** In November – December 2014, thousands of residents of the southeastern corner of the state were able to explore an exhibit from the Smithsonian detailing the history of work in the U.S. Visitors, from school children to residents of assisted living centers, toured the exhibit and left behind their impressions ranging from memories of first jobs to “what I want to be when I grow up.” The most common request in the visitors' book was to bring more of these exhibits to our town. In a related CT Humanities grant, the Library was able to capture the memories of dozens of workers at Electric Boat during the cold war in an oral history project which will become part of our permanent collection.
- **One Book, One Region.** CT Humanities supports our community reading project aimed at residents in eastern CT from high school age through adults. In its thirteenth year, this popular program offered about 400 people the opportunity to meet the author of the chosen book, ask questions and have their books signed. To foster a sense of community, the readers also attend book discussions, panel presentations and other programs related to the book at libraries and schools throughout the region.

“SUBMARINE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD”

- **StEPs CT.** The Library recently received the local history collection of the Town Historian which more than doubles our resources about Groton. Participating in StEPs CT, a best-practices, year-long program for management of historical collections funded by CT Humanities, will help ensure that the new collection is properly preserved, protected and made accessible to researchers.
- **Book Voyagers.** In November 2014, CT Humanities sponsored a multi-week Book Voyagers program with a professional storyteller at the Library for families with children in grades 1-3 to build an early love of reading and intellectual curiosity that is a proven stepping-stone to academic achievement and economic success.

Programs supported by CT Humanities touch library users of all ages, income levels and backgrounds; they bring the arts and humanities to communities where opportunities are lacking. As part of *The Way We Worked*, students from one of Groton's most disadvantaged schools partnered with the Library to create projects about workers in our Town. Their pride in having their projects displayed beside an exhibit from the Smithsonian should be encouraged; without CT Humanities, this collaboration would have been impossible.

Please maintain state funding for Connecticut Humanities at current levels. The programming, grants and educational opportunities they provide have a direct bearing on the quality of life in Connecticut.

Sincerely,



Betty Anne Reiter
Director of Library Services