

# Norwalk's Annual Lit Crawl draws local notables

NancyOnNorwalk - online

By Jeniece Roman

4 : 01 am EDT April 6 2017 2 Comments

Assistant City Clerk Irene Dixon reads a poem during the annual Norwalk Lit Crawl on Wednesday in Fat Cat Pie Co. (Photo by Jeniece Roman)



NORWALK, Conn. – Norwalkers gathered in the Wall Street area Wednesday to participate in the Fourth Annual Lit Crawl to benefit the Literacy Volunteers in honor of National Poetry Month.

Christine Bradley, director of the Norwalk Public Library System, said that when she first heard about the concept she thought Norwalk would be a great place to do it because the restaurants are located close together and “walk-able.”

“It’s just an event, like the idea of taking a pub crawl and adding the literature to it,” said Bradley, “I thought, this would be really fun for Norwalk.”

According to Bradley, the first two years the event was held in SoNo and this year was the second time it was held in the Wall Street area. The “crawl” involved readings in Peaches Southern Pub & Juke Joint, BJ Ryan’s Banc House, Fat Cat Pie Co. and Aji 10. Bradley said there was a large amount of people that signed up to read on roster.

“The first year we did it, I put the word out to Council people, ‘Board of Ed,’ library Board, people I thought would be interested in doing it,” said Bradley. “It’s kind of grown since then.”

Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce Vice President Brian Griffin speaks at the annual Lit Crawl, as State Sen. Bob Duff listens. (Photo by Jeniece Roman)



Brian Griffin, vice president of the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce, hosted the readings at BJ Ryan’s Banc House with Kathryn Hebert, director of the Parking Authority.

“It’s just a chance for people who love literature and poetry to get together,” said Griffin. “Have some fun, draw attention to poetry month and enjoy good company.”

Bradley said State Sen. Bob Duff, Council member Douglas Hempstead, State Rep. Gail Lavielle, and various other leaders in the community attend the event every year.

“What makes it interesting is, the people that are reading these are local notables that a lot of people know and what not so you’re kind of getting a little insight into them,” said Griffin.

Duff presented a donation to Norwalk Reads, an organization that gives out free books to children. Duff began the poetry readings at BJ Ryan’s Banc House by reading *The Road Less Traveled* by Robert Frost.

“If you’re going to be a leader in this crazy political climate that we have right now, sometimes you need to take the road less traveled,” said Duff.



Mayor Harry Rilling, left, listens as his wife, Lucia Rilling, reads a poem Wednesday in Norwalk’s annual Lit Crawl. (Photo by Jeniece Roman)

Mayor Harry Rilling said he has been a part of the Lit Crawl since it started. He said an event like the Lit Crawl reminds people that literature and the arts should be a part of their lives. Rilling read a work by Theodore Roosevelt called *It’s not the critic that counts*.

“I think it’s very, very important for people to share in these kind of events because we all have favorite works of literature that have meaning to us,” said Rilling.

Norwalk resident Tony Hardy said it was his first time attending the Lit Crawl and that he came to support Common Council member Travis Simms. Hardy, a Google guide from Norwalk, said events like these have a greater impact on the community.

“The more we post about the positive events and places and things to do in Norwalk, the more attention it brings to Norwalk on Google,” said Hardy. “So when out of towners come to Norwalk and they want to know, what’s is there to do in Norwalk.”

Attendees were asked to make a \$10 donation to Literacy Volunteers of Greater Norwalk; an organization that teaches utilizes 60-70 volunteers that teach 500 students that are out-of-school adults to speak English. Bradley said the goal was for attendees to have an enjoyable time and make money for Literacy Volunteers.

“It’s an enjoyable event because you have people coming together to share literature and its helps the restaurants,” said Bradley. “It’s just, like a nice community gathering around literature or in this case, poetry.”

Chris Bradley [April 6, 2017 at 7:26 am](#)

What a nice article by budding journalist Jeneice Roman! And the photos are great too. Thanks Nancy for showcasing this student’s talent, and of course, the LitCrawl!

Bob Welsh [April 6, 2017 at 10:23 am](#)

A special evening in which Norwalkers of varied backgrounds shared literature that speaks to them. Each selection was like a glimpse into the reader.

I especially enjoyed this inspiring excerpt from the Mayor’s reading:

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

A big thank you to Chris Bradley and all of the LitCrawl organizers. More please!

What is a Google guide?