

THOMPSON FREE LIBRARY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER 2024

The Wicked Busy Summah

by Kim Brawn



Summer is a non-stop whirlwind at the library. No one knows this better than youth services librarian Michelle Fagan. This year's lineup did not disappoint! We had owls, fairies, puppets, science experiments, and exotics animals. Not to mention, an author/illustrator and a magician! Michelle shared her appraisal, "I love summer program time. It keeps me and the library busy. It brings people who might not come in regularly and I always strive to bring new people into our library community. I always end the season feeling tired and accomplished. Ready for a 'quiet' few weeks. But always thinking



of what next year could bring."

When it comes to favorites, Michelle and the kids probably part ways a bit. "I think kids loved the puppet show but they also love seeing the animals. I love author visits, so Kevin Hawkes was a great program for me," she said.

All the hard work and planning paid off for everyone involved. "We had a great summer," said Michelle.



Art All Around

The first annual Dover-Foxcroft Art Walk was a lot of fun on June 29th and the library was excited to participate! Travis Sudweeks, local potter (@roselinepottery on Instagram), threw some clay, while Doug Webster and his students from Ice Dance International skated on glie (fake ice made with glycine-covered plastic) under the pavilion. Other local artists joined throughout town. Looking forward to next year's walk! —Jon Knepp



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Good Pie to Summer

by Kim Brawn



Everyone agrees, the true highlight of the “End of Summer Reading Party” wasn’t the bounce house, it was TFL’s Ms. Michelle getting multiple pies in the face! “It made everyone laugh,” she said of her whipped cream facials!

TFL’s Shannen Rhoda manned the popular bounce house, and later watched as summer reading contest winners excitedly jumped up and down as they heard their names read. The weather on that mid-August night turned out ok after all. The sound of laughter filled the air, and the pavilion lights made for a wonderfully festive atmosphere.

Michelle said, “I was so glad to get pie in the face because it meant kids read. It makes me happy when kids are happy and having fun. Everyone had a great time. Kids all played together; adults all talked together. A nice time was had by all.”



Mission Accomplished!

by Jon Knepp



After a summer that was equally exhilarating and exhausting, our first year of the Read and Feed program is in the books. Ms. Michelle was off recently from her summer of slinging veggies and books, but she took some time to tell me how the bookmobile went from her perspective:

“I think the Read and Feed program was a great success. We gave a lot of people food and books, it feels good to feed the community’s minds and bodies!”

I enjoyed being out in the community and seeing library patrons who come to the library, but it was really great to connect with the people who don’t use the library. I could share and connect people to

information they might need and not have, I saw where the greatest needs are and could think about how we can better serve them. I made really wonderful connections with some of our older folks who don’t have the ability to get out much. Our older population was always so thankful for the books and especially the fresh produce.

I just really enjoy being out in the community and talking with people, and listening to what they have going on in their lives and community areas, something I think that doesn’t always happen when serving the underprivileged community members. It feels good knowing you are connecting with people while also feeding them.”

The Read and Feed program will definitely be back in 2025. Michelle is going to spend the offseason thinking of ways to tweak the program slightly so that it’s even bigger and better than ever in the future. See you then,



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Is Morgan Talty Ok?

by Jon Knepp



We were very fortunate to have local-ish celebrity Morgan Talty come visit us in October of 2022. In the weeks leading up to his appearance, *Night of the Living Rez*, his debut short story collection was blowing up, receiving praise and attention that even Morgan didn't anticipate. After a successful book tour, the accolades only increased. After being a finalist for the Carnegie Medal for Fiction, amongst others, I reached out to Morgan to see if he would like to come back to promote his debut novel *Fire Exit*, expecting he had more important stops to make. To my surprise, he said he would love to!

In setting up the event and again during the talk on June 20th, Morgan said that TFL will always hold a special place in his heart. During his first visit, Lisa Sockabasin of Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness presented Morgan with words of praise from indigenous people inspired by Morgan's writing and the success he's achieved. It was a touching moment and really stuck with him.

While I knew I couldn't create something as heartfelt, I've come to know Morgan fairly well in the last few years. He has a self-



deprecating sense of humor and especially loves bad reviews of his books, which came up in his first appearance. He often shares these on his social media and joked that he wished someone would recreate his book jacket but take off the glowing accolades and replace them with negative Goodreads and Amazon reviews. I was happy to oblige!

Using Canva to create the image, a Dollar Tree frame, and reviews like "Horrible, boring book," I created a keepsake Morgan loved! His favorite review came from my wife, Kazia: "Is Morgan Talty Ok? The book is good, but that was a lot! I went into a Morgan Talty dark hole."

The gift at the beginning really helped to set the mood, as the rest of the conversation with Morgan was low pressure and injected with humor. Morgan's books and short

stories are really dark (as Kazia pointed out) but Morgan personally deals with heavy subjects in much the same way I do—humor, often really dark, as a coping mechanism, and this comes out through his writing.

By bringing humor to conversation, we were able to discuss issues like blood quantum, race, family dynamics, substance abuse while making the conversation enjoyable and approachable for all in attendance. Morgan stayed and talked for almost two hours, which was extremely generous of him. It was a great conversation and honestly I could fill up this newsletter with my thoughts on our discussion. Instead, please go watch the talk. Morgan is one of the most talented Maine writers today and one of my favorite writers period. It was a true honor to have Morgan visit, to be able to talk with him, and to use my elite Canva skills to make a dumb joke that he loved. We look forward to having Morgan back in the future. (Find Morgan on Facebook, Instagram, or visit morgantalty.com)

 **Watch this on Youtube**



Dear Diary

By Kim Brawn

Archivist and author Jefferson Navicky hosted "A Day in the Life of Maine Women," part of the Maine Speaks series from the Maine Humanities Council on September 5. Jefferson shared entries from numerous

diaries spanning the 19th and 20th century kept by women from around the state. By sampling and discussing a selection of these diaries across time, he hopes people will connect with the common struggles and small triumphs of what it's like to be human and live day by day.

Youth services librarian Michelle Fagan stayed past her shift to attend the program and really enjoyed it. She found the whole session interesting, especially the idea of collecting the common person's journals and writings. "I appreciated seeing the everyday woman's life instead of famous or well-

known people . . . it was interesting to try and read people's handwriting," said Michelle.

TFL director Jon Knepp echoed similar points, "I think we all had a lot of fun taking peeks into the personal lives of our predecessors, while trying to decipher their handwriting at the same time. The audience really appreciated the talk because diaries provide a glimpse into one person's life, which are often overshadowed by larger events when historical accounts are written."

(Visit mainehumanities.org for more info)

 **Watch this on Youtube**

Music to Our Ears

by Kim Brawn

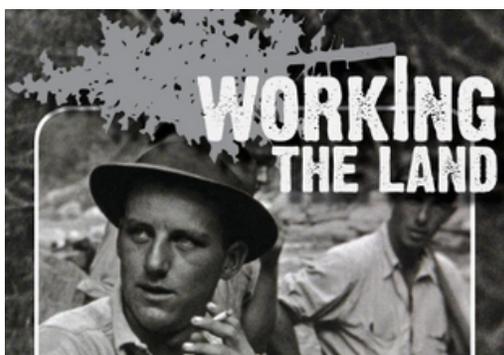


TFL's Summer Concert Series was a big hit with a wide range of music, styles, and even special guests.

I checked in with our director Jon Knepp to get his thoughts: "This year's concerts were a lot of fun to set up and a lot of fun for those who attended. Last year, I didn't know if we would have a pavilion, so I had to rush into scheduling concerts. This year, I had more time, was able to mix up the schedule a bit and even add a few new concerts. I really liked bringing the FA Alumni Jazz Band this

year with their cool playlist. And, it was great to have the kids (and Susan and Ruth of course) from North Woods String back. Seeing a lot of our library kids playing the Garden Song with David Mallett was magical!"

My colleague Shannen Rhoda always enjoys the Caribbean-flavored drum beats of PanStorm, a community steel band from the Bangor area, and thought this year's highlight was a couple who got up and danced and danced. "They were dancing with abandon in front of a big crowd. There was so much energy all around," she said.



A Walk Down Memory Lane

Our patrons love when David Weiss, Executive Director of Northeast Historic Films, brings a film to share. On August 20th, we were treated to Working the Land, which detailed farming, logging, and other outdoor vocational pursuits in the Maine woods.

Especially fascinating to me were the logging practices depicted in the film. Massive teams of men and horses cut down trees and drug the logs to the riverbanks in the dead of winter. In the spring, expert log drivers ferried the logs down river. Some of the drives depicted were the last log drives in Maine in 1976. One of the patrons at the event regaled us with tales from his time spent driving logs in the 70s. For more information about Northeast Historic Film, visit their website: www.oldfilm.org.—Jon Knepp

Head, Heart, Hands, and Health

TFL's pavilion was the perfect place to gather for "5 Weeks of 4-H" this past July. Enrolled 4-H'ers had the opportunity to create exhibits for the Piscataquis Valley Fair, and all kids were welcome to join in the fun and educational activities. Trisha Smith, Positive Youth Development 4-H Professional, Piscataquis County was joined by community members to lead workshops in book binding, native bees and their homes, acrylic painting, meeting Bo the La Mancha goat, and sewing leather. —Kim Brawn

(FMI: visit <https://bit.ly/3NgH7Hj>)



Eli Rollins (L), 4-H Archery Leader, demonstrates leather sewing techniques to John Rosso (R) under TFL's pavilion



Bringing Up Baby

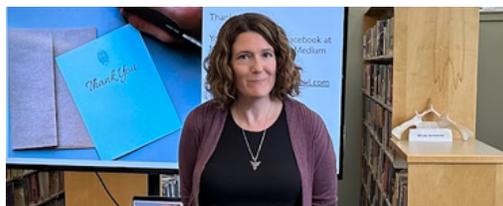
Northern Light Mayo Hospital's "Baby & Me" is held at TFL every Wednesday from 12:30-1:30 p.m. This program is for new or expecting parents and covers a variety of topics, including breast/chest feeding. It's also a great opportunity to ask questions, get support, and to connect with other parents. (Learn more: <http://ow.ly/P71e5oSJlCM>)

▶ Watch this on Youtube

Did you know that many of our programs are streamed via Facebook Live at: www.facebook.com/thompsonfreelibrary and then uploaded to our Youtube channel: bit.ly/TFLyoutube? Look for this symbol with our stories to find recorded programs on our Youtube page.

All Hands on Deck

by Kim Brawn



What I like about coordinating TFL's 101 series is the variety of topics we highlight. When it comes to presenters and themes, I like to mix it up. July's focus was a notable change of pace with oracle cards taking center stage.

Our guide for the session was Michelle Fisk, a certified special education teacher who's also a psychic medium and pranic healer. She's been developing oracle card workshops, and I wanted to delve into that genre (remembering how popular the Camp Etna program was in 2022) so it seemed like a good fit. Michelle even told me that it was that TFL program that really inspired her to explore the psychic realm.

Michelle's July 11th presentation included a great overview on oracle cards—a divination tool that can help you build your intuitive connection and gain clarity. They can be read in a free-flowing way without a set structure and make for a great daily routine for yourself. She shared her best practices when it comes to readings, giving examples from her work with clients and also described her own card drawing ritual.

If we didn't bring our own deck, Michelle had us choose one from the enticing array she brought with her. She instructed us to draw a card for ourselves, and interpret its meaning, and then interpret a card that our partner had drawn. Hearing different interpretations of a card's meaning was especially interesting. The whole group was really engaged, and I found myself fascinated to the extent that I almost forgot my marketing duties!

A variety of people attended—with varying degrees of knowledge and experience with oracle cards. I think many went away wanting to schedule a reading and buy their own deck. Others were excited to talk with like-minded folks who share their passion for these special cards that be used for healing, personal growth, and spiritual guidance.

(Find Michelle Fisk on Facebook at <https://bit.ly/3YawOun> or contact her at michelle.spiritwork@gmail.com)



Garden State

On September 11th, UMaine Extension's Kate Garland served up lots of useful information and practical tips and fielded many questions during her presentation. The small group got a mini-master class for the fall gardener. Although she did a deep dive on several aspects, Kate also gave a recap of the points she highlighted including making the most of your harvest, improving your soil for next season, reducing waste all winter by composting, planting bulbs to enjoy next season, and practicing good record keeping.

Probably most gardeners, no matter the season, can relate to her last item: Don't work harder or spend more money than necessary!

—Kim Brawn
(Contact Kate at katherine.garland@maine.edu or visit extension.umaine.edu)



Macro Benefits

By Kim Brawn

You've probably heard about microgreens—maybe they even came on a sandwich or salad you ordered somewhere. Because they've been garnering a lot of attention, I called on Brian and Heidi Lourie who own HF Microgreens, an indoor farm in Harmony, to give us the inside scoop on these nutrient-dense and flavorful greens.

At "Microgreens 101" on August 8, Heidi

showed us the step by step growing process. Microgreens are harvested at any early stage of growth; usually within one-two weeks at a height of two-three inches. There are over 50 varieties.

Microgreens are exceptionally versatile. You can make smoothies, layer them into sandwiches or wraps, put them on pizza or pasta—even make pesto, which I told Heidi would make a great sample.

Heidi explained that early research indicates that microgreens contain up to 40 percent more phytochemicals (beneficial nutrients) than their full-grown counterparts. These greens may be tiny, but they contain extremely high levels of powerful vitamins, minerals, and health-

supporting components.

The audience eagerly took in all the information and several members were very curious about how they could grow them at home.

(Find HF Microgreens on Facebook, contact them at harmony4@gmail.com & watch this program on our YouTube channel.)



Screen Shots



With DJ Bobby Hartford spinning the tunes, people of all ages took to the dance floor to celebrate the promise of summer at the Summer Kickoff Community Dance Party!



Shannen won the gold with her displays: "Books We Hate" had people talking and politely disagreeing, while everyone was riveted by anything Olympics-related, especially her makeshift torch!



(L) We all scream for ice cream! Darling's Ice Cream truck joined in the "End of Summer Party" fun with donation-only ice cream, proceeds went to Piscataquis Regional Food Center, an invaluable area resource.

(R) Ashley Gosselin draws a prize winner for the Summer Reading Contest.

Special thanks to Kazia Knepp for bringing her designer's eye to the newsletter!



Eulogy for A Neighborhood Cat Like No Other

For those who weren't aware, Sparky (who we originally called Dewey) passed away recently on one of his beloved jaunts around the neighborhood. All of the neighbors loved him. In fact, he was such a frequent visitor at the police station that they made him a deputy. He was at nearly all of our programs.

Sparky was, as all good cats are, a perfect combination of angel and scamp. He would rub against your leg, then lie down, asking you to scratch his belly.....only to attack your hand when you did so. He kept the rats under control, but then would drop them in the middle of the pavilion. Once, he was missing for months. Someone had taken him to Guilford, thinking he was their cat. Eventually, he made it back, no worse for the wear.

It's hard to believe he's gone, but a small part of him will always be here...under the pavilion....IYKYK. RIP Sparky, we love you. <3 Jon

