

# THOMPSON FREE LIBRARY

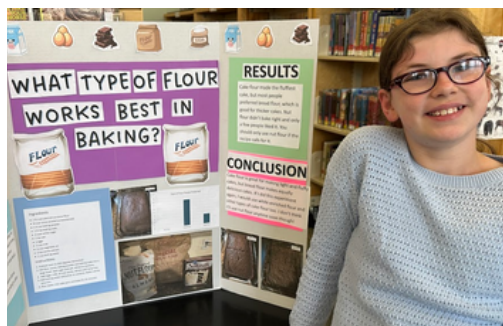
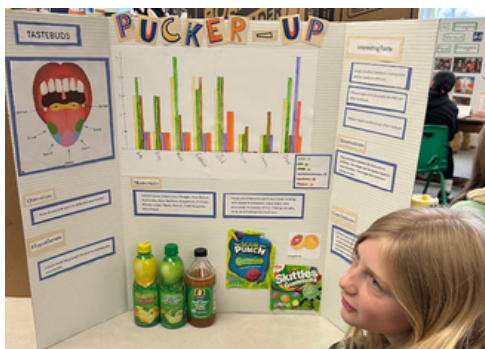
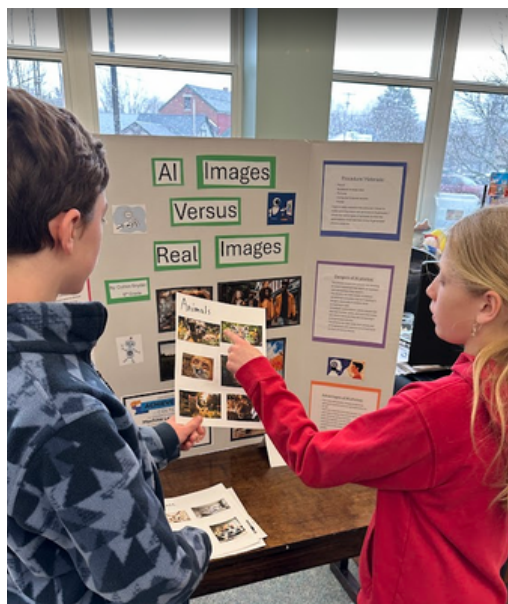
## SPRING NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2025

### The Right Stuff

Science fairs can teach kids a lot about scientific method, time management, design, and public speaking.

TFL's Science Fair showcased nine budding scientists and their fascinating experiments on April 26. Youth services librarian Michelle Fagan reports, "It went really well. We did have some community members come check it out, and they all gave positive feedback about the program and the kids. I really thought the AI test was great. It showed us how real the pictures look and how hard it is to tell sometimes. All the projects were so well done. The kids work hard, and it shows in the work that they do." —Kim Brawn



### Lighting the Way

TFL was happy to be part of the Two Lights for Tomorrow Celebration locally on April 18th to commemorate the famous rides of Paul Revere, William Dawes and others 250 years ago. Starting at the library, where portions of Paul Revere's Ride were read by Nancy Battick, the procession continued to the Central Hall Commons, Historical Society, and Congregational Church. I would say that those who attended the event found it informative and inspiring. Eric Boothroyd, who spearheaded the event, said "the youth engagement was great. Selectboard member Emery Cox told me he was moved as he read the words of the town's proclamation to those of us assembled at our final stop, the Congregational Church." Follow along with us as we help celebrate more milestones as part of our nation's 250th anniversary! —Jon Knepp

**Thompson Free Library**

186 E Main St.

Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426

(207) 564-3350

[thompsonfreelibrary@gmail.com](mailto:thompsonfreelibrary@gmail.com)

[www.thompsonfreelibrary.org](http://www.thompsonfreelibrary.org)



## You Can't Choose Your Family

by Kim Brawn

"Expect to find the unexpected in your family tree," cautioned genealogist Nancy Battick as she began "Exploring Your Roots 101" on April 17. Nancy writes the Family Discoverer column in the Piscataquis Observer and is a past president of the Maine Genealogical Society. She knows all too well about surprises that an ancestry search can unearth. (No spoilers here, go watch Nancy's video on our YouTube channel with some fava beans & a nice chianti!)

Your roots may include slave owners, bigamists, prisoners—or even a sea captain with various families in different states. And before you reach for that swab, Nancy reminds us that you "never know what DNA will reveal." She ran down a partial list of family secrets that might come to light: half-siblings you didn't know about, your father isn't your biological father, and wow, your parents are not your parents.

They're not all Jerry Springer and Maury Povich-like revelations, genealogy is kind of like detective work and Columbo seems like a good spirit animal because there can be lots of red herrings: memories get scrambled, you may find many people with the same name, town names change—town and county



borders change. "Be careful," says Nancy. "I'm passing along all the stuff I learned the hard way."

How do you begin? Well, you start with yourself and a pedigree chart and a family group record sheet. There are two main sources you'll use: primary records like birth, death, and marriage certificates and eyewitness accounts. Take a cue from journalism: verify and check your sources and from academia: cite your records. A census can provide a good snapshot; postcards might contain helpful information—even Christmas cards may provide clues when they include those love or hate 'em family update letters.

A golden rule of genealogical research is to

be organized. Come up with a system that works for you. Don't buy expensive software or apps without trying them first—many come with a free trial period.

The past can be relevant today: make note of any diseases or health issues that may run in your family.

And don't forget about your descendants. While many of your children, grandchildren or other relatives might not be the least bit interested—now or ever—in genealogy, someone down the line, or way way down the line, will be. So write down information about yourself and your family members for those future Columbo's who have just one more question. "They will bless you," says Nancy who has created a wonderfully handy and accessible primer for those starting their own genealogical journey.

*If you would like a copy, stop by TFL or email me at [kim.tflibrary@gmail.com](mailto:kim.tflibrary@gmail.com). Nancy welcomes your ancestry questions at [nbattick@roadrunner.com](mailto:nbattick@roadrunner.com).*



**Watch this on Youtube**  
go to: [bit.ly/TFLyoutube](https://bit.ly/TFLyoutube)

## Sometimes You Can Choose Your Family

by Jon Knepp

Robert Klose provided a unique perspective on both the adoption process and international relations when he visited the TFL to discuss his two books *Adopting Alyosha* and *Adopting Anton* on April 24th. A professor at UMaine, Robert always knew he wanted to have a child, but being a single man, struggled to find any adoption agencies willing to let him adopt a child.

This reluctance to trust a single man led Klose to adopt internationally from orphanages, first adopting Alyosha from Russia, and later his brother Anton from the Ukraine. But the process was never easy or linear! Countries were very reluctant to allow their children to be adopted by foreigners, especially single men. And policies would change on a whim day to day. Klose was nearly not allowed to adopt Alyosha, as Russians

were moving to close foreign adoptions when he was in the country and had already met Alyosha. That closure of foreign adoptions remains to this day over 25 years later.

Klose's stories were fascinating and pointed out that while cultures around the world vary drastically, the people in those cultures are a lot more alike than they are different! I had never heard or thought much about single men adopting children, but listening to his struggles, dedication, and ultimately triumph allowed me to gain a new perspective on the adoption process.

*You can find more information about Robert at [www.robertklose.com](http://www.robertklose.com) I would recommend any of his books.*



**Watch this on Youtube**  
go to: [bit.ly/TFLyoutube](https://bit.ly/TFLyoutube)

## Made in Maine

by Kim Brawn

What do maple trees, blueberry bushes, and pussy willows have in common?

They are all native to Maine. As are bush honeysuckles, fiddleheads and wild chives, to name just a few.

Kate Garland, UMaine Cooperative Extension horticulturist, stopped by TFL in April to offer up an engaging session that explored the rising interest in using native plants. She explained why they matter and how to integrate them into your spaces.

In case you're wondering, native plants are plants that grew in a specific region before settlers arrived. Native species (such as insects) co-evolved with native plants and rely on them to survive. Native plants improve biodiversity which plays an essential role in creating and maintaining resilient ecosystems, including the food web. During her "Native Plants for Ornamental Gardens" program, Kate said that assessing your site is very important. She urges gardeners to look for a diversity of nectar, pollen, and caterpillar host plants that work all season long to fill in the gaps; ensure there are



plenty of water resources throughout your space; and offer diverse shelter options for different species.

To illustrate the hardiness of native plants, Kate told the group about the Eastern Maine Native Plant Arboretum outside the Cooperative Extension offices in Bangor. It was created about 25 years ago and is located in a very urban landscape, near the airport, where the soil and air quality are terrible—but it's still there and thriving even today.

One weekend when Kate stopped by to get some things from her office, she noticed that the native cherry tree was totally

buzzing with all kinds of insects. Whereas the one token nonnative plant—a white lilac about 20 steps away—was dead silent with no activity.

The cherry tree was rocking the house down. Pollinators are the life of the party when native plants are invited!

For more info, contact Kate at [katherine.garland@maine.edu](mailto:katherine.garland@maine.edu) or visit <https://extension.umaine.edu>.

 **Watch this on Youtube**  
go to: [bit.ly/TFLyoutube](https://bit.ly/TFLyoutube)

## When the Gale-Force is With You!

I watched through the window as Gale Robinson pushed her cart full of supplies up the TFL walkway ahead of her third arts and crafts program in as many years. "Design a Bookmark 101" drew a group of around 15—ranging in age from about 8-80 years old. This time she guided us through designing our own wooden bookmarks using acrylic paints, Washi tape, & rub on transfers.

There was a dizzying array of wonderful designs to choose from. The group focused intently on their projects while chatting, commiserating, and vying for Gale's attention. She patiently and efficiently helped participants stuck at different points in the process and answered questions; sharing her own experiences along the way.

Unlike last year's rock painting, which morphed into a perpetual-fanning

workshop, we brought blow dryers this time! Happy crafters took home their unique finished designs. Clean-up was easy. Everything fit back on Gale's cart and off she went.

*Find out what's going on with Gale & family at Leaves and Bloom Greenhouse on Facebook or catch her at the Dover Cove Farmers' Market.*

—Kim Brawn





## Too Good to Pass Up

### Ask about FREE Theatre, Museum & Park Passes



Boothbay



Rockland



We are happy to announce the launch of our Center Theatre Pass! Patrons can stop into the library to get two free passes to any showing of any movie. We will also have free tickets available for Slightly Off Center Players plays like Small Mouth Sounds, Oklahoma, and the One Act Plays. Much like our other passes to museums, Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens, and our beautiful state parks, we see this pass as a way to help our patrons enjoy themselves even when they're not at the library and we're excited to partner with the Center Theatre once again. For more information, please stop in and ask! —Jon Knepp



Milo



Bangor



Statewide

## Picking Up the Pieces

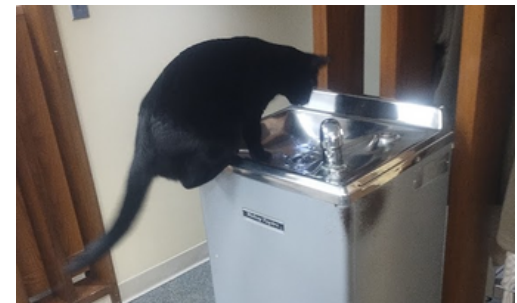


TFL's Puzzle Exchange proved to be a big hit! It generated a lot of interest. Many people continued to bring in puzzles after it ended, thinking it was a permanent fixture.

Our goal was to get rid of some of the old and donated puzzles that had been accumulating in our Jetson Room (long story!) and get some fun new ones to use for our ongoing jig-saw puzzle that sits on a table in the circulation area at the library. But we ended up with even more than

we started with. No worries, with book sales, a free box, and avid puzzle fans who enjoy working on them while at TFL we're making headway—or at least breaking even!

While some people just wanted to clean out their closets, many did take advantage of switching out their old puzzles for appealing new ones. Unlike the Kobayashi Maru, it was a win-win scenario! (That one is for the Star Trek fans!). —Kim Brawn



### Long Live Caturday!

Freya and Andy Jr. continue to draw a following on Caturdays! Stop in and see them every fourth Saturday





# Screen Shots



Watching the months fly by with ever-changing displays thanks to TFL's Shannen Rhoda. Her popular themes get patrons talking—and taking books and DVDs they might never have seen or heard of.



Few made it out the door without stopping to browse the drawers and take a packet or two (or four) from our perennially popular Seed Library.



Alec Reier stands next to the Eiffel Tower, as part of the homeschoolers' unit study: Learning about landmarks from around the world.



Ms. Michelle really gave the kids something to chew on with this one!



A bracelet that's up to code thanks to Ms. Michelle!

Thanks to Kazia Knepp for help with the layout and design of the newsletter!