

OCTOBER 2025

Summer's Mad Dash

Youth Services librarian Michelle Fagan made it through another completely crazy summer! How she did it all, I'm not quite sure, but everything came together. Now that she's had a chance to breathe, I asked for her reflections, the following is from her email:

The summer programs this year went well. We had really great turnouts. Summer always feels like we are in full hustle mode, this summer for sure felt like a sprint! I always learn something new during summer programs, like how to do things differently or what really worked well.

People really enjoyed the Magic Show. Phil Smith was a new presenter for us, and he didn't disappoint. Kids and adults really enjoyed the show. The card trick and the ring trick were great. We had no idea how he did it!





All ages always enjoy seeing animals, so Josh Spark (Sparks' Ark) was a hit with many. Mad Science had a hard presentation this year. Many experiments didn't work but that taught our kids that sometimes things just don't work, and you learn from that and keep trying or just let it go.

Lego Challenge and Paint By Number, programs I did, were fun ways for kids to explore their creative side with just a little help from me. It was great to see how kids built and painted and talked with the people around them.

The End of Summer Reading Summer Party is always a lot of fun. The bounce house is a hit with the kiddos and worth a laugh at the end when we try to put it away. Darling's Ice Cream for a Cause raised \$120 for Piscataquis Regional Food Center!

—Kim Brawn





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No way! (Way!)

by Tom Lyford, TFL Emeritus



Listening to author Nomar Slevik's presentation of several stories from his new book, Humanoid Encounters, was fun in the way that spooky-stories told around a late-atnight, deep-woods campfire are fun. I was pleasantly surprised. I had almost remained home that night.

"Guess I'll pass," I'd told Jon (Knepp, TFL's director) that afternoon.

"But Tom, I thought this would be right up your alley."

"No, UFOs are much more my cup of tea."

"Well...this author also writes UFO books."

"Oh . . .?"

So yeah, I showed up. And happy I did so. First and foremost, Mr. Slevik turned out to be an easygoing storyteller and effortlessly managed to engage the audience with lots of give and take concerning the cryptological entities and lore he'd gleaned from nearly every nook and cranny of our state.

During the presentation, I spied a couple of UFO books lying on the table in front of Mr. Slevik. My curiosity piqued, I approached him when he'd finished his talk. Jon introduced me to him with, "Hey, this guy here used to be a UFO investigator."

"Oh, really? Then you're probably in this book," he said, pointing to UFOs OVER MAINE.



"Nah. There's no way you'd know about any of the cases I worked on. I mean, nobody ever interviewed me, so . . ."

"I dunno. I've been pretty thorough . . ."

"Yeah well, I only covered one case that ever really made much of a splash. One that happened over in Augusta. I'm Tom Lyford, by the way."

He just stared at me. "Augusta? And your name's . . . Tom Lyford?" "Then you are in this book."

"What?! No way!"

"Yeah. I got the story and all the info from the State MUFON director. I dedicated six pages to you and that case." He flipped open the book to show me.

I was flabbergasted. He was right. I was in there. And to think I almost didn't show up! I bought the frickin' book, of course.

Find all things Nomar at https://allmylinks.com/slevik, read Tom's most recent writings at https://tomlyford.com & find their books at TFL.



The Read and Feed Rides Again!

Our Read and Feed bookmobile/mobile food distribution was back in 2025 to build on the success of last year's inaugural season! Ms. Michelle, the tour-de-force behind the project, reported that "The Read and Feed was successful again this year. We had some return users and some new families. We added Brownville to the mix and I really enjoyed meeting those new people and will return there next year. I really enjoy doing it, even when it is too dang hot and I am too dang tired! It is so nice to engage with the community and feel like we are making a difference along the way." Last year it rained every Wednesday. This year heat seemed to be a constant problem. What weather will we see next year? Stay tuned in 2026! —Jon Knepp



Winning is Everything



"They'd be fun to hang out with," said Shannen of the devoted group that came to hear author Dave Albee talk about his popular book *The Last One Out of Town Turn Out the Lights at TFL* on August 7.

The camaraderie was evident; they had a good time talking with one another and there was lots of back and forth with Dave. These "Daveheads" seemed to be mostly a mix of FA classmates, teammates, and relatives who were excited to get another chance to remember the glory days and wax nostalgic about that winning team from 1975. Dave, with his sports writing and newspaper skills, made that memorable season jump off the pages and he brought that same enthusiasm to his presentation. —Kim Brawn

You can find Dave on Facebook and his book at TFL!

Laughing Through The Loss



Cherie Stitham White's Letters of Laughter and Loss isn't the type of book I usually read, but once I started I couldn't put it down. It consists of Cherie's emails to family and friends, detailing her sudden loss of her husband of 46 years and the weeks and months that followed. In reading the book this way, you understand how the author's geographically-spread but still tight-knit support system, along with her ever-present sense of humor, helped her overcome the worst of her grief. Talking with her on July 31st about the book in front of a large audience just highlighted this fact. Cherie discussed an obviously heartbreaking chapter in her life, but, surrounded by friends and family, she was still cracking jokes and smiling. It was a pleasure to speak with her after riding along on such a personal journey in her memoir. Cherie's book is available at the library. —Jon Knepp



Poetry in the Round

We were honored to have Maine Poet Laureate Julia Bouwsma and her poetic partner in crime Audrey Gidman visit the library on July 29th. Julia, who is also the librarian at Webster Library in Kingfield, read works from her three collections, including her latest Death Fluorescence. Audrey shared writings from her chapbook as well as unpublished works. They spoke about their lives, writing processes, and artistic influences, riffing off of each other before delving into more verses. It was a format I hadn't seen previously and reminded me more of the songwriter in the round programs that we've had than our typical poetry reading. If you're interested in more of their work, Julia and Audrey's books can be found at the library! —Jon Knepp



Spending Time with Tim

by Jon Knepp

It's always a good day when Tim Cotton comes to visit. Though he's something of a Maine/Facebook celebrity, he's never let it go to his head. He still seems genuinely surprised and thrilled whenever anyone shows up to hear him talk. When he came to TFL on August 19th, he showed up without any fanfare, just a box of books "in case anyone is interested." We chatted for a bit and as people started showing up, eventually turning into a large, energetic crowd, they joined in on the conversation. It was honestly hard to tell when the "program" started, we just eventually transitioned into a slightly-more Tim-centric, slightly-less participatory, but still very conversational talk.

This format meshes perfectly with his writing style. Tim's latest, Donut Holes for the Soul, exemplifies this more than his other books. The stories are mostly unrelated. I read the book, which Tim gave me a free copy of

because I "handled the money side of selling books" for him, in starts and stops. I woke up, made coffee, and read a story or two. I think it's the perfect way to read the book. After reading a story about gutters, I emailed Tim, asking if he still had that guy's number. It was 5:30 AM, but being a reader, I knew he'd be up and happy to help. He was, and he sent the recommendation pretty quickly.

I think that explains why he has such a massive following despite having entire stories about gutters. His writing is like talking to your uncle. There may or may not be a point to the story. It will probably take the long route to get there. But, as Tim often says, the scenic route is worth the extra travel time. If you're ready to meander through life and experience it through Tim's eyes, pick up any of his books, all available at the library, or head to timcottonwrites.com.





Some Reely Great Musicians

TFL's Concert Series is always one of the highlights of summer. Director Jon Knepp, who is also our musical coordinator, gave me his take on the 2025 lineup: "Over the last few years, we've been able to work with organizations like Maine Highland Council for the Arts and local artists to bring a great lineup throughout the season. One of the highlights for me is always seeing Susan Ramsey's students, many of whom have grown up in the library, perform. I also enjoyed Dave Pearson's running, very dry and witty, commentary through the Some Reel People show. We really enjoy being able to present the concert series to our community every year. More live music in Dover is always a good thing and making it free for the public is a plus!" —Kim Brawn







Down by the Sea (aka Jonathan Livingston Seagull)



While many locals may associate Lindsay Tudor with incredible apples (Tudor Farm & Orchard in D-F!), she was also a well-known shorebird biologist for many years with Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, focusing on the Gulf of Maine. On August 14, Lindsay headlined a 101 on Maine Seabirds and Shorebirds.

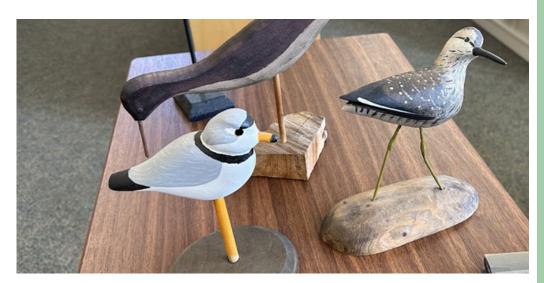
Lindsay's talk was very interesting, with anecdotes from her long career, and filled with tidbits and factoids about a variety of birds. My favorite was when she described puffins as "flamboyant . . . with a thick layer of fat and a dense layer of feathers." The fat is important for migration.

She talked about mapping the coast of Maine, counting shorebirds. (There are over 4000 islands off the coast!)

We learned that gulls (seagulls is a misnomer), terns, puffins, and razorbills are seabirds; while sandpipers, plovers, whimbrels, and Short-billed Dowitchers are among those classified as shorebirds. Sadly, both populations are in decline due to climate change and other factors.

—Kim Brawn

Two great resources that Lindsay recommended are Merlin Bird ID (merlin.allaboutbirds.org) and eBird (ebird.org). You can also download their apps.





Preserving Our Delicate Ecosystems

I'm a sucker for a nature program! Here in Maine we have so many wonderfully wild places and many groups dedicated to promoting and preserving them. Amanda Reimer, of the Maine Appalachian Trail Club, spoke at the library on August 28th and better acquainted us with the state's alpine habitats. Amanda led us through these fragile ecosystems-plants and animals barely hanging on in some of the harshest environments in Maine. In other states, like our neighbor New Hampshire, most of the alpine environments have been trampled by hikers, unable to regenerate. In Maine, MATC and others have worked on signage, education, and other methods to preserve and protect these dwindling areas. And the amazing flora and fauna found only in alpine areas are breathtaking. So, if you get a chance and can do so respectfully, get out there and observe the few remaining mountaintop environs in the state! —Jon Knepp To learn more, visit: https://www.matc.org



Scaping By

I had been wanting to do a 101 about garlic for many years and finally the stars (or should I say bulbs?!) aligned thanks to Peyton Ginakes from UMaine Cooperative Extension.

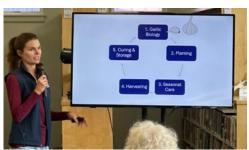
Peyton, who works at Highmoor Farm in Monmouth, drove up to TFL to talk garlic on September 11. She lived up to her promo blurb and really did give us "an A-to-Z overview of how to grow a great crop of garlic." The program covered garlic biology, planting, seasonal care, harvesting, and curing and storage. Peyton also highlighted the lesser known and underutilized garlic scape.

"I learned the difference between the two types of garlic (hardneck and softneck), along with their characteristics. Peyton shared great tips and resources and was an excellent presenter," said attendee Pat Juska. —Kim Brawn

The book that Peyton recommended, *Growing Great Garlic* by Ron L. Engeland, is available at the library.

Garlic resources:

<u>https://extension.umaine.edu/agriculture/garlic/</u>



Vegetable Management Guide <u>www.nevegetable.org</u> Peyton can be reached at peyton.ginakes@maine.edu





What A Relief!

Everyone experiences muscle aches and pains to varying degrees. Physical therapist Susan Garrettson stopped by on July 10 to show us ways to help ease that pain. She focused on something called Strain Counterstrain, a gentle, manual therapy developed by Dr. Lawrence Jones to relieve pain and dysfunction by addressing muscle spasms and tight connective tissue. Benefits of this technique also include improved range

of motion and enhanced strength and function.

During "Muscle Pain 101" Susan demonstrated various ways to use strain counterstrain movements to achieve pain relief and ease muscle tightness in various parts of the body called tender points. She is a great teacher—very knowledgeable and accessible—who gives plenty of relatable examples and helpful context. —Kim Brawn



Color Therapy

Despite the breezy backdrop, Adult Coloring 101 in June was a fun way to de-stress with lots of cool designs to choose from—plus tasty snacks to energize our creative muses!



Have You Seen Our Merch?

Shannen Rhoda wears a warm & comfy TFL hoodie while engaging in important library tasks! That's right, there's still plenty of merch available (t-shirts, hoodies, & totes). Perfect for gifts & all profits go to a good cause (library programming!)

Special Thanks to Kazia Knepp for helping, as always, with the layout of the newsletter!

Also, an extra special thanks to Tom Lyford for returning to the newsletter after five years

Screen Shots



Everyone falls in love with Erma and hopefully with reading too!







August was a weird, mysterious mix—whodunits to challenge readers of all ages and the strangest works from our shelves that even Weird Al would love!



It was like watching Batman & Spiderman team up, as patrons Doris & Iris met for the first time and put their puzzle-solving super powers into play!





Perkins was a worker & immigrant rights advocate and the first woman Secretary of Labor, AND she developed Social Security policy.



Michelle helps to officially bring an end to summer with the annual deflation of the bouncehouse! Until next summer, everyone!