



Forbes Library  Northampton's Public Library

Summer Newsletter



Garden Tour

The Garden Tour is celebrating its 30th year anniversary!

This is a longstanding tradition and beloved event in Northampton. The Garden Tour Committee is composed of volunteers, each with an area of expertise to share with those who are committed to home gardens. This hardworking group has been coordinated by Jody Rosenbloom for about 10 years.

People visit from Massachusetts and adjoining states to attend this event. At each of the six gardens on the tour, viewers receive handouts explaining the plantings in that garden and have the opportunity to ask questions of master gardeners. This is an opportunity to enhance your knowledge of plantings and approaches to garden design.

Last year's tour raised over \$23,000 from ticket and raffle sales as well as the tour sponsors. All proceeds benefit the Friends of Forbes Library, Inc. to support library programs, events, and projects that could not otherwise be funded.

Prizes from compost to mulch are part of the tour's raffle, and special this year to celebrate its 30th anniversary, limited edition Northampton Garden Tour t-shirts with original artwork will be available for \$30.

TICKETS

Tour tickets are \$20 if bought in advance and are available from May 13 to June 7 at Bay State Perennial Farm (Whately), Cooper's Corner, State Street Fruit Store, Gardener's Supply Company/Hadley, Sugarloaf Gardens (Sunderland), and Forbes Library. You can also pre-pay online at www.forbeslibrary.org/friends to reserve tour tickets from May 13 through Wednesday, June 5. Pick up at Forbes Library ONLY on Thursday afternoon, June 6 from 4-8 pm; Friday, June 7 from 10 am-to 6 pm; and Saturday, June 8 from 10 am to 1.

On Saturday, June 8th, Tour Day, tickets are \$25 and available ONLY at Forbes Library from 10 am to 1 pm.

If you are interested in being a part of the Garden Tour Committee or would like to suggest your garden for consideration for future tours, please contact Jody Rosenbloom at jody.kabloom@gmail.com.

Come and be inspired! Don't forget to pick up your t-shirt!

See Page 6 for a photo



Coolidge Corner



Did your grandfather deliver newspapers to the Coolidges? Did your great aunt wait on Mrs. Coolidge when she shopped at McCallum's department store? Did you ever meet Mrs. Coolidge? The Coolidges considered Northampton their home, and it was here they returned after his presidency. After Calvin died, Grace continued to live here until her death, in 1957. As residents of Northampton, before and after his presidency, the Coolidges shopped locally, attended Edwards Congregational Church, hired local tradesmen, and engaged with members of local agencies such as the Northampton Red Cross. Their son Calvin Jr worked on a tobacco farm in Hatfield, MA. They remained very engaged in the life of the community.

Unfortunately, with the passage of time, the number of people with first-hand stories to tell about Calvin and Grace is dwindling. If you have a story to tell, or know of someone who does, please consider sharing your story as part of the Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum's oral history project. Coolidge Standing Committee member and retired UMass history professor, Rob Weir, has been conducting interviews with individuals who have memories of the Coolidges (one interviewee is a centenarian!). You may have your own story to share, or you may have one a relative has shared with you. When you add that story, it becomes a part of local history. If you would like more information about sharing your story, please send an email to Coolidge@forbeslibrary.org.

Long Awaited Renovations

The City of Northampton has funded the long-awaited renovations to the Library's restrooms, using \$37,250 from a Community Development Block Grant, \$66,500 from Community Preservation Act funds, and \$175,000 from the City's Capital Improvement Program.

The most needed change is improved access to the restrooms. The doors are heavy and each has a marble threshold, making it difficult for people with mobility issues to enter, especially if they use a walker or wheelchair. Once inside, pulling the door open to leave the restroom while using a mobility device is an even greater obstacle.

The renovations will include removing the threshold and installing push-button switches to open the doors from inside or outside the restroom.

Another welcome improvement will be better ventilation, which will circulate fresh air into the restrooms.

Solar Eclipse

When Forbes Library holds a party, you can be sure of a wonderful time, especially when it features accordion players, painters, scientific demonstrations for all ages, and the guest of honor, a nearly total eclipse. Some four hundred twenty-five people gathered on the west lawn to witness the eclipse. Molly Wastein, a community support scientist for the large Millimeter Telescope, an international observatory co-run by UMass Amherst, gave a running commentary as the moon slowly passed over the sun.

The program was scheduled to begin at 3:00, but many gathered earlier to stake out a good spot for viewing and to get a pair of free eclipse glasses, which the library staff handed out. By 3:00 the lawn was filled with excited children, picknickers, adults of all ages, and a good number of well-behaved dogs. As the eclipse began amidst many oohs and ahhs, the anticipation and excitement were palpable, and when 95% obscuration was reached at 3:25, the crowd cheered and applauded. People lingered afterwards, in part to enjoy the lovely warm afternoon after a week of gloomy weather, and in part to share and compare impressions of this awe-inspiring event.



Thank You Party for Donors and Volunteers



Many people coming into Forbes for the first time are struck by how beautiful the building is. Not only does it provide the public with a wide variety of materials and programs for all ages, but the building itself is a work of art. It is well cared for, clean, and comfortable. Blessed to have volunteer help and generous donors, the library is also a wonderful space for a party to show our friends how much we appreciate all their help.

On a Sunday afternoon in February, the library held a thank-you party for all its donors and volunteers. The first floor was gaily decorated with flowers and tiny plants for the guests to take home. Tables were covered with wine, coffee, and clever, delicious finger food. There was even music – guitarist Peter Blanchette treating guests to his artistry – and a guessing game about book titles with prizes for the lucky winners.

The event was so successful, the library wants to do it again each year. Stay tuned, everybody.

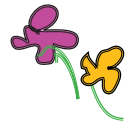
Library Giving Day

Library Giving Day 2024 was a record-breaking success for the third year in a row with 262 donors giving \$37,118. The Friends of Forbes was excited to have been part of this fantastic day in support of the library by providing \$30,000 in matching funds.

Gifts from Library Giving Day will be put to work in support of the new performance stage and the many library and community events that will take place in that new space. The money will also support the library in its mission to grow its collection in a way that reflects and celebrates our diverse community and to increase the “Library of Things” collection, which lets patrons borrow everything from telescopes to ukuleles.

Thank you again for joining the Friends in making Library Giving Day a success and for all that your gifts make possible for Forbes!

Why I Give



I sat down with Benjamin Kalish, who is not only a donor to Forbes Library and the Friends of Forbes, but also Forbes’ Cataloger/Technology Librarian. It shows a huge amount of trust, engagement, and passion to be both an employee and a donor to an organization. So why give?

“I believe in the mission of the library and the ways that it supports Northampton,” said Ben. “I know that the money I donate is put to good use and has a high impact. We really make the most of every dollar for our community.”

Ben went on to say that as a library insider and husband of a Friends of Forbes board member, he gets to see his gifts in action, supporting everything from a wonderful home for Paco, to the new materials he catalogs, to the programs he and other library staff help run.

“I also give because I want Library Giving Day to be a success,” Ben said. “When patrons see how much people value the library and want to give, it will help convince them to donate too.”

Florence Bank Community Award

On May 16, 2024, Florence Bank held its Annual Customers Choice Community Grants Awards ceremony at Look Park. Forty local non-profit organizations received a total of \$150,000 in grants. The Friends of Forbes Library received \$5000.00, the maximum grant amount. This money will help fund the outdoor performance stage that will be built on library grounds and will be used for library programming and community events.

We are grateful to the Florence Bank for its incredible generosity and community engagement, and we are grateful to all of you who voted for the Friends of Forbes Library. Florence Bank customers can vote any time during the year 2024. Please consider filling out a ballot and supporting the Friends of Forbes Library.

<https://www.florencebank.com/custom-choice-community-grants>



Athena

All the activity you saw at the front of Forbes Library this spring was to welcome a sculpture of the goddess Athena.

Athena was the daughter of Zeus and is the goddess associated with wisdom, very appropriate for Forbes.

This beautiful metal sculpture was created by local metal artist Brian McQuillan. The sculpture garden is a gift from Eileen Travis

in memory of her husband, Thomas J. Ruane, who had a lifelong love of reading and knowledge. Eileen described Tom as being 'all about knowledge, a voracious reader, always inquisitive, and an inspiration to others to seek out wisdom and knowledge'. Interestingly, in another unique connection to Forbes, Tom was also a fan of presidential libraries, and Eileen and Tom visited many over the years.

It was Eileen who chose Brian to be the sculptor. They had a fortuitous meeting at Art in the Orchard in Easthampton where they both had installations. When Eileen decided to create this wonderful tribute to her husband, Brian was the ideal artist.

It should also be noted that Eileen gifted her professional expertise as a landscape architect in the design of the flower beds, including the layout, selection of plants, and consideration of height of plants, textures, and colors.

As you walk up the sidewalk to the library, you will see many flowers encircling Athena. There is an accessible bluestone path to and around the sculpture. Surrounding Athena are hundreds of flowering plants with an emphasis on native and low maintenance varieties that are either from or derivations of plants that would have been here during the Victorian era.

A public unveiling for the new sculpture will be held on the afternoon of June 15 with the 22nd as the rain date.



Mark your calendar for October 6, 2024

- the third annual Artisans Fair! Browse 45 booths showcasing jewelry, photography, fabric creations, prints, pottery, and more. Find amazing gifts for the holidays - or treat yourself to something wonderful. Feast on food from the Holyoke Hummus Truck or Masa Mexicano. Indulge in a delicious sweet treat.

Artisans can apply at forbeslibrary.org/friends/artisans-fair

If you are interested in sponsoring this event

Contact friends@forbeslibrary.org

Summer Reading Kickoff Party!

Mark your calendar for our Summer Reading kickoff party-the fun begins Saturday, June 22! This year's theme is "Metamorphosis." Stop by to sign up for Summer Reading, eat a free popsicle, and enjoy:

10 am-12 pm: Facepainting and bubbles on the library lawn

10:15 am-11 am: Ed the Wizard's Alchemy Laboratory

11:15 am-12:15 pm: Hula hooping demo and instruction on the library lawn with Wildkat Hoops

We'll also have special events all summer long, from puppet shows to musical petting zoos. Learn more on our online calendar at: forbeslibrary.org/events/

SPOTLIGHT ON THE STAFF

Dylan Gaffney, Local History Specialist, is a Northampton native, attended the city's public schools, and has worked in Northampton's public libraries for over 25 years. At Forbes he has worked in Interlibrary Loan, Circulation, Reference, and Arts & Music. Having in the last 10 years taken on increasing responsibilities in Local History and Special Collections, he was promoted to his current position of Local History Specialist in 2023.



Dylan Gaffney

Dylan devotes much of his work to enlarging and enhancing the archival collections to better reflect the community in which he lives and grew up. He has focused on collecting music history, the history of the arts and alternative press, LGBTQ+ history, Black history, and expanding Forbes's resources for study and understanding of people historically underrepresented in archives. He has given presentations at conferences throughout the country and has helped produce local public history related programs, concerts, exhibits, films, and walking tours through collaboration with various local councils and organizations. He has published essays online about his work at Forbes, and some of his presentations are available on the library's YouTube channel. He was awarded the Massachusetts Library Association's Paralibrarian of the Year award in 2018, serves on the Northampton Historical Commission, and served on the Northampton Charter Review Committee.

Dylan and his wife live in Northampton with their twins, Liam and Millie. The family enjoys birding and other kinds of nature walks. They love seeing live music and working on art projects and are currently spending weekends and 5 nights a week on travel soccer. Dylan reads mostly non-fiction, watches a lot of classic films, and listens to music from nearly every genre and decade, he says. When asked why he walks to work every day, he answered that he's always been a walker, "for all the reasons." Among his favorite teachers in the Northampton schools were Friends board members (or former board members) Christine Nolan and JoEllen Mackenzie. And he has high praise for Forbes's reference librarian Elise Bernier-Feeley, from whom he is still learning.

The Friends of Forbes Library Board of Directors

For the first time in recent memory the Friends of Forbes Board of Directors has 11 Members!



First Row: left to right -Suzy Campos, Nicole Sibley, Chris Hannon (Secretary), JoEllen MacKenzie (President) , Serena Smith, Jacquie Fraser, Martha McCormick (Vice President). Second Row: Left to right- Scott Monroe (Treasurer), Ella Longpre, Maxine Schmidt, Eli Porth.

PACO has an exciting life! In case you think all she does is swim around in her tank and smile sweetly at visitors, here's an update. Paco's tank is cleaned regularly by a fish expert who knows her well. The Friends of Forbes funds Paco's housecleaning. On April 1, Paco ventured into downtown Northampton with a couple of friends. In February, she took over the Library's Instagram account and told a little bit about herself. She's a pacufish, she's 37 years old (lookin' good, Paco!), and has lived at Forbes since she was 8. Fruit is her favorite food, especially bananas and strawberries.

One day that month was "Ask Paco Anything" Day. She mentions her favorite books (anything about fish and animals), her favorite music (Baby Shark is high on the list, of course) and her favorite movies (The Little Mermaid, Finding Nemo, Mr. Rogers Neighborhood). Paco's posts were popular and there has been a growing demand for more Paco content. Follow her on the Library's Instagram account! Paco has her own line of merch too. You can see it and order on the Library's website.

June

Hosmer Gallery



Stan Sherer
Retrospective (photography)



Sarah Marquesen
Acrylic Animal Portraits

July



Dan Chiamis
Animal Portraiture



Renee Hill
Macro Photography

August



Wendy Woodson
Collages



Chaldea Emerson
Watercolor Illustration



Pamela Acosta
Illustration/Paper Arts

September



Portraits x 4 (Photography)
Robert Aller, Bill Hughes, Robert
Tobey
and Frank Ward

October



Action: A History of Florence
Suzanne Dudley, Althea
Keaton,
Nancy Meagher,
Deborah Sacon, and Rochelle
Shicoff

Water bottle Stations



Soon library visitors will be able to avail themselves of a wonderful enhancement – new water bottle filling stations. The library will be installing new water fountains on the first and second floors that will include spots to fill water bottles. Patrons will have access to cold, filtered water without needing to rely on plastic water bottles.

This project is made possible by a collaborative funding effort including the Friends of Forbes, a generous donor, and the Trustees of the library. The timeline for the new fountains coincides with the accessibility and ventilation work on the library's restrooms.

Garden Tour T-Shirts

Limited edition Northampton Garden Tour t-shirts with original artwork will be available for \$30.

