



FORBES library

NORTHAMPTON'S PUBLIC LIBRARY

*Thank You for Supporting
The Friends*

Raising a Glass to Forbes



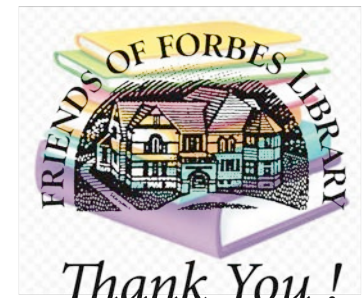
Cheers! Sante! Prost! Salute! Salud! Na Zdrowie!

On Friday, October 23, library supporters toasted Forbes from the comfort of home - no masks, no Zoom! The *Virtual Toast to Forbes* event featured video recommendations from eight local wineries, breweries and retailers. Ten local host authors suggested good books - fiction, poetry, travel, cookbooks, science fiction and children's literature - and favorite drinks ranging from margaritas to Manischewitz. A wine/beer-themed reading list offered an enticing array of fiction and non-fiction titles. Check out the website at forbeslibrary.org/friends/events.

In an ordinary year the Friends of Forbes sponsor two major fundraisers - the Garden Tour in June and the Wine Tasting in September. Covid forced us to cancel both, so we created the *Virtual Toast to Forbes*, a new venture in online fundraising. To our great delight and appreciation, twenty-two local businesses gave generous monetary donations, helping us net about half our annual fundraising goal. Please join the Friends in thanking

Atlas Farm
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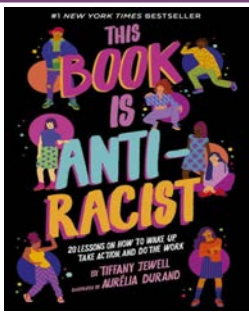
Books and Art to Go ! Kits

This fall, the Children's Department collaborated with The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art to create 50 picture book and art kits geared for children ages 3-5. Each kit contained a hardcover picture book and related art materials so that kids could create their own art inspired by the techniques shown in the book. The kits also included art tips and prompts written by Carle Museum

educators and early literacy tips written by Forbes Library children's librarians.

With in-person programming still not possible due to the pandemic, these take-home kits are a great way to provide tactile and art-rich experiences for our young patrons and we were so thrilled to be able to partner with such a wonderful local arts institution.

The kits would not have been possible without the generous support of the Friends Group and a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The Friends Group provided the necessary funding to purchase the 50 picture books, enabling us to help children add to their own at-home libraries!



Anti-Racism Webinars

In October, the Children's Department was honored to host the anti-bias and anti-racist educator, activist, and author Tiffany Jewell. Tiffany led two anti-racism webinars for our community, one for youth ages 11-16 titled "Wake Up, Take Action, and Do the Work: Be Anti-Racist" and one for adults titled "Supporting Antiracist Youth." A CARES Act grant from the IMLS covered the cost of the webinars, and support from the Friends Group enabled us to give away 50 copies of Tiffany's *New York Times* best-selling book, *This Book is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on How to Wake Up, Take Action, and*

Do the Work to attendees. The book is in high demand, so it was great to be able to give it to our patrons to keep and share with their friends and family. At a time when we all may be feeling socially isolated due to the pandemic, it was nice to be able to create a space where teachers and other community members could connect and discuss this critically important issue together.

These programs were made possible through CARES Act funding to the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Winter Reading Challenge!

From January 1st to January 31st 2021, Forbes Library is taking part in Beanstack's Annual Winter Reading Challenge, sponsored by Simon & Schuster (S&S). We are challenging our patrons to read at least three books during the month of January and keep track of their reading on our Beanstack site at forbeslibrary.beanstack.org. Everyone is free to read whatever they choose, and listening to audiobooks and reading articles online count, too!

Patrons will earn a ticket for every book they read, review they write, and activity they complete. They can then redeem their tickets for entries into our prize drawings for free books, ice cream, Forbes Library swag, and more!

Thousands of libraries and schools across the nation will encourage their communities to read a target number of minutes and books, and the top-performing ones will earn rewards from S&S, including book collections and virtual author visits. We hope you'll join us for this fun challenge and kick off 2021 right by reading a bunch of great books!



New Book Drops

Being able to drive by the library any time

of the day or night to return materials in a secure, weatherproof container is a huge convenience. But the library's book drops were no longer safe or secure and were removed earlier this year to make way for new ones. Those new ones are due any day now. They are larger than the previous ones, stainless steel for durability, and ADA compliant. Although the Friends helped to fund them, the bulk of the funding came from the Aldrich Fund, a memorial fund in honor of Michelle Aldrich, which supports accessibility efforts at the library. The new book drops will be handicap accessible, set at ADA-compliant height, and the library has widened the driveway near the book drops so that traffic can move more smoothly.

Gift Shop

Did you know that Forbes Library has an online gift shop? For those of you who are wanting to shop locally this holiday season, it's a great place to purchase some reasonably priced gifts for the book lovers and Forbes Library fans on your list. There are some wonderful books on local history. Hampshire County Memories: Volume II is chock full of local photographs from the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. For the sports lover, how about The Hurrah Game, Baseball in Northampton, 1791-1953?



If your little one is missing Paco and visits to the children's room, Paco tee shirts are available in a variety of sizes. The gift selection also includes tote bags, a mug, a baseball cap, and Forbes Library notecards. To see these and other items go to [Forbes library.org/store/](https://forbeslibrary.org/store/). You may safely pick up your purchases using the self-service hold pick-up or curbside pick-up. All proceeds support Forbes Library.

The Virtual Hosmer Gallery

The Virtual Hosmer Gallery was born in April after the pandemic forced the Library building to close. We invited western Massachusetts artists to submit up to 3 digital images of their work to create an online community art exhibition. It is now in its eighth month and still growing! As of today, there are 134 artists participating with a total of 389 images on display. The range of media represented includes painting, photography, sculpture, fiber arts, collage, drawing and printmaking. The variety and creativity of our region continues to amaze and delight! You can visit it 24/7 at <https://forbeslibrary.org/virtual-gallery/>. And if you're making art you'd like to have included, please fill in the [Submission Form](#). The Virtual Gallery will persist at least until it's safe to reopen the physical Hosmer Gallery, and maybe a lot longer than that!

Outdoor WiFi

Forbes Library has acquired equipment to boost its outdoor wifi signal. Many members of the Northampton community rely on the library for their internet access; during the pandemic, however, the library has been unable to provide computer and internet access inside the building. The new wifi equipment, which is expected to be installed by the end of this year, will allow patrons to enjoy faster internet speeds from the safety of the library's parking lot and lawn. The library also plans to expand outdoor seating options in the spring. The Friends of Forbes want to thank all our donors. Your gifts made it possible for us to finance this important project.

Wondering what to read next? Ask us for Your Next Great Read!

One of things we miss during limited in-person service is talking to patrons about books! One of the ways we can soothe that is to help you find great reads (or listens, or watches) from a distance!

There are several options:

1. Drop in to visit with us most Friday afternoons at 1 pm for our Forbes Library Book Chat
 2. Respond to us via Facebook or Twitter on the last Friday of the month between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm, sharing a title you enjoyed to which we will respond with 3-4 suggestions we think you'll also like
 3. Fill out a reading profile at <https://forbeslibrary.org/readers/next-read/> and we will respond with a curated list of suggestions just for you
 4. Email us any time at reference@forbeslibrary.org and tell us what you're in the mood to read, listen to, or watch
- All of these options are available for all age levels, and for books, movies, music, and more! Librarians are standing by to help.

We also make gift suggestions! Use any of the above options with your recipient in mind and we'll help you give them just the right thing!

Storytime for Grownups is back!

getting together as a community to read aloud and listen to a variety of short, reader-chosen selections that may include novel excerpts, essays, poetry, short stories, and zines. Stop by our virtual reading room on December 9 at 2 PM to listen, enjoy and celebrate the power of story and human voice to connect us.

If you'd like to read a selection, please email reference@forbeslibrary.org with your name, author & title of the reading, and how many minutes your reading will be, and we'll be in touch about putting you on the program! Reading choices can include anything you like that's 15 minutes or less and appropriate for a general audience.

This popular program got its start in the early days of lockdown and has since taken on a life of its own. Over the last several months we've been



MUSIC !



As the days get colder and the nights start in the middle of the afternoon, a guitar (or ukulele, banjo, keyboard, drum, or theremin) is just the thing to occupy your mind and your hands with creative fun and learning! You can borrow a musical instrument for 3 weeks (renewable) by requesting it from the [online catalog](#) and then picking it up during self-service hours or with a drive-up appointment.

We have synthesizers, loopers, djembes, dulcimer, mandolin, concertina, electric and acoustic guitars, and a variety of ukuleles of all sizes! As with all materials, they are quarantined upon return before they can be checked out again. They must be requested in advance, and returned the same way they're borrowed (not in the book drops). Ask for instructional books and videos to go with it or explore YouTube to get started!

<https://forbeslibrary.org/help/borrow-a-musical-instrument/>

Racial and Social Justice Committee

This past summer the Forbes Library and Trustees adopted a statement on racial justice, which was posted on the library's website and published in the Daily Hampshire Gazette. The library, its staff, and the Friends of Forbes Library will promote antiracism in its services, materials, and programming, and will hire, mentor, and train staff members that reflect the diversity of the community. To that end, the Trustees approved the formation of a committee composed of staff and Trustees to review the library's policies and procedures and to identify action items related to racial and social justice. The committee works in parallel with the library's Racial and Social Justice Advisory Committee, which is composed of library staff and community members.

In addition, the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum is producing new materials that will present a more honest portrayal of Coolidge's record. In November the library is sponsoring a three-session, mandatory training on racial justice for library staff. Members of the Board of Trustees, Coolidge Library and Museum Standing Committee, and the Friends board have also been encouraged to participate.



New Board Member Eli Porth

We moved to the pioneer valley 2 1/2 years ago from Orlando, Fl. Our son and daughter have been in MA for many years, and we wanted to be near them and our two granddaughters- Stella and Amelie. They are 9 and 11 years old. They are both precious and we spend as much time with them as possible. We lived in Orlando for 40 years. I practiced Ear, Nose, and Throat medicine and surgery and my wife was my office manager.

I have always had a great love of books and am an avid reader. I founded a book club in Orlando some 20 years ago and it is still going strong via zoom.

When we moved here I started going to Forbes Library when I was auditing a literature course at Smith College. The architecture of the building was truly impressive and the staff was warm, personable, and always willing to help.

Being on the board of the Friends of Forbes Library will give me the opportunity to help this great institution. Thank you for the opportunity to express my feelings for the Forbes Library.

Also, rejoining the Friends' Board of Directors, after a year's hiatus, is former President of the Board, Martha McCormick.



Calvin Coolidge casting his vote in the November 2, 1920 Presidential election in Northampton, MA. Grace Coolidge is on the right. This was her first time voting in a National election. Photo from the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum.

The Right To Vote Discussion Series

On this 100th anniversary of the year U.S. women gained the right to vote, Forbes Library presented a series of scholar-led public discussions about voting in America called *The Right to Vote: Past, Present, Future*.

Forbes Library received support for the event series through “The Vote: A Statewide Conversation About Voting Rights,” a special initiative of Mass Humanities that includes organizations around the state.

Forbes librarians worked with project scholar Kathleen Banks Nutter to develop the series. The first event looked at the history of the women’s suffrage movement in the U.S. in the 19th century and early 20th century.

Subsequent forums explored the impact of the Civil Rights movement on voting in the South, present-day barriers to voting including incarceration and gerrymandering, and topics of particular interest to young voters such as the movement to lower the voting age to 16.

A number of scholars in US history, women’s history, African-American studies, and Massachusetts local historians gave detail and context to how people have gained or lost the franchise from the mid-19th century to today. To name just a few of the speakers, they included Historic Northampton co-executive director Elizabeth Sharpe, UMass Professor and activist John H. Bracey Jr., Representative Lindsay Sabadosa, author David Daley, and Easthampton High School’s award-winning team of Constitution scholars.

Videos of the events are on Forbes Library’s YouTube channel and the links can be found at <https://forbeslibrary.org/events/right-to-vote/#videos>.

In addition to the discussions, we hosted a virtual screening of the documentary film *Borderland* about Massachusetts suffragist and Smith College alumna Blanche Ames Ames.

Paco and the Pandemic



Many Patrons have asked library staff how Paco, the much loved star attraction of the Children’s Department, is doing during the pandemic. Librarian Sarah Johnson reports that the library’s facilities team- Mark, Frank and Jason- have been feeding Paco. Her longtime caretaker, Russ, a local bird store owner, checks in on her and cleans her tank. Recently he installed a heater in her tank to make sure she’s comfortable even if the library gets a little chilly this winter.

The library staff visit her frequently and she is always excited to see them. Ms. Johnson says, “Paco is by far the most famous and beloved member of our staff. I think of her as the golden retriever of fish- always friendly and happy to see people. I know she misses our patrons, just as we do!” Director Lisa Downing agrees that it is clear Paco misses her friends and the attention she regularly received from her many visitors, but that she is doing well. The library staff and her caretaker will continue to make sure that she is safe and comfortable, and everyone hopes that she’ll have little faces peering into her tank (much to her delight) soon.

