

**Book Sale is  
May 15 - 18!  
Preview Night  
is 5/14**

# *The Buzz* from & about the Friends of the Beebe Library

*March 2025*



*Marching bees with the Friends'  
Independence Day Parade float from 2005*

## **Meet Kat Lewin, new Head of Youth Services**

*By Nancy Tolleson*

If you are a parent or frequent visitor to the lower level at the Beebe Library, chances are you have already met Kat Lewin, the new head of Youth Services. Kat has many years' experience working with children, most recently with the Tewksbury library. She is excited to be able to lead a much larger staff with so many creative people bursting with ideas.

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## ***Are you creative? Consider building a Friends float for the Independence Day Parade***

*By Nancy Tolleson*

Wakefield has shown its enthusiasm for the 4th of July by hosting a parade most years since 1922. The Wakefield Independence Day Committee, ([Julyparade.org](http://Julyparade.org)), has been the group leading it for many years.

The Friends of Beebe first submitted a float to promote the library and its summer reading program while The Library was in its smaller temporary location at Lakeside Office Park in 1996 during the major renovation at Main St. It was a spur of the moment request so a small simple non-float of a wagon with parents and children dressed up as

*Continued on page 7*



reading many of the same titles that other avid readers are enjoying. While there's nothing wrong with that, I try to ensure that my reading is diverse and covers fiction and non, covers a wide variety of topics, authors and date of publication. For the 2024 Challenge, I re-read *Anne of Green Gables* for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in maybe 55 years and was thrilled (again) with the story. Reading *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* brought me back to the time when I was in high school and reading my 1<sup>st</sup> ever graphic novel was a brief hour filled with laughter. This is a great organization and I have so appreciated the reading challenge. I encourage everyone to review the 2025 topics and join if you are interested.

## Massachusetts Center for the Book Reading Challenge

By Karen King

Several years ago, a posting that the Beebe Library made on Facebook caused me to do some research into Massachusetts Center for the Book. They host an annual reading challenge, being an organization that is focused on Massachusetts books, authors and readers. Their goal is to foster literacy, promote Massachusetts authors and publishers and promote unrestricted access to all titles.

The annual challenge provides a general topic each month, not a book title. At that time, I checked out the monthly topics and was intrigued and decided to join. This is a no pressure, online monthly suggestion and submission. There is no discussion about the book although you are asked to submit some info about what you have read each month. You simply register to join in this reading challenge [Reading Challenge: for Adults — Massachusetts Center for the Book](#) and then submit the book titles, authors and some brief comments once you have read the book for that month. There is no pressure to read a specific title or finish a book, no travel time to get to a book club meeting. The timing is all up to what works best for you.

So, what do I love about this program? I am an avid reader and go to the Beebe weekly. Annually, I read 70 – 100 books so I am often picking up books on the 7-day loan table which means I am

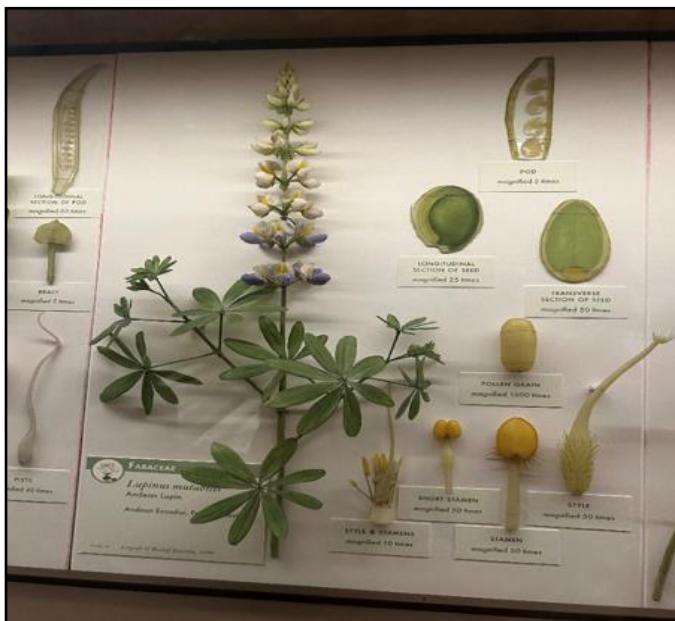


LUCIUS  
BEEBE

Where Wakefield Connects

### COME VISIT US AT OUR MARCH 23<sup>RD</sup> OPEN HOUSE

On Sunday, March 23 from 2 – 4 pm the Friends of Beebe Library will hold an open house in the Lecture Hall at the library. We welcome you to stop by to meet some of our Board members, hear about what we have been doing and our plans for the future, learn about how we help the library, and hear about volunteer and leadership opportunities. We'll even have snacks! Do you know anyone who might be interested in becoming a member or volunteer or learning more about us? Tell them about our event or, better yet, bring them with you. We look forward to seeing you then!



*Lucy and April, Our Captive Guide*

## ***Museum Pass Spotlight: The Harvard Museums of Science & Culture***

*By Lucy Skeldon,  
with an assist from Helen VanBenschoten*

The weather called for an indoor destination this time, so it was off to Harvard for your valiant Museum Pass team to check out their Museums of Science and Culture. The HMSC is comprised of 4 collections: the Harvard Museum of Natural History, the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology, the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East, and the Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments. The latter two are closed on Saturdays, which is of course when we were able to go, so we planned to thoroughly investigate the others, which are physically connected. Natural History takes up only one floor. How long could that take? But we had drastically underestimated our opponent.

Full disclosure: we had both been to this museum before, albeit back in the murky past, accompanied by small and insistent beings who were bent on seeing dinosaurs and dinosaur-adjacent creatures. So, we resolved to focus on exhibits previously denied to us. We began with the Glass Flowers. This was our first mistake.

The Ware Collection of Glass Models of Plants is fairly amazing for several reasons. The almost

4,000 pieces, of which only a portion are on display at once, were handcrafted from glass and wire by Leopold and Rudolph Blaschka between 1886 and 1936. The pieces that are life-size look as though they were just plucked from a greenhouse or arboretum. Many other ancillary pieces, created at a magnified scale to demonstrate the structures of tiny sections of the plants, had to be designed with help from a microscope.

We had so many questions! Luckily, April, a very knowledgeable gallery guide, happened into the room. We immediately captured her. Under interrogation, April explained: (1) that the collection was commissioned to illustrate plants for studies of “economic botany”, that is, plants that had commercial value, whether their uses were nutritional, decorative, medicinal, or recreational (tobacco); (2) the Blaschka had made all of these themselves, not involving any of their employees in the project, as they felt it was too complex and important; and (3) that they created these delicate little masterpieces in their studio in Dresden, Germany. They were then Shipped to Harvard. What it entailed to transport these incredibly fragile little glass-and-wire stems and petals and stamen and so on across the Atlantic back then I cannot imagine.

So, we spent over an hour and a half with the flowers, but totally worth it! Highly recommended. And then we thought we’d take just a few minutes to look at the mineral displays in the Earth Sciences room. Wow, that was astounding too. The variety of shapes and colors that nature comes up with – who knew? And they had the elemental



*A Whole Lot of Amethysts (Arm for Scale)*

makeup listed for many of the examples, which our team scientist appreciated. Going to a geology exhibit with a material scientist is also highly recommended.

About an hour later, we were almost out the door when we spotted a geologic timeline display. So, then we had to check that out and read about the entire History of the Earth.

Now we were way past our self-set time limit, but we still had to inspect the gift shop. It's bicameral here, with separate shops featuring treasures appealing to the very young and the not-quite-so-very-young. The selection in each seemed well-curated and fun.

Final score: we were there for 3 hours, saw 1.5 rooms, and never made it to the Peabody Museum at all. Definitely worthy of more than one visit – so much to see!

The museum pass provides a 50% discount on admission (adult admission is \$15) for up to 4 adults. It is free to MA residents Sundays from 9am-12pm and Wednesdays from 3pm to 5pm. And, by the way, even though we were there on a Saturday in January, it was not inconveniently crowded.



## *How can I support the Friends year-round?*

*By Alicia Brennan*

The Friends of Beebe Library are probably best known in the Wakefield community for our Annual Book Sale each spring, and for good reason – each book sale season brings in hundreds of volunteers, hundreds of avid readers, and thousands of books! However, did you know that there are other ways to support the Friends throughout the year aside from the Annual Book Sale?

One great way to support the Friends is by purchasing honey. The Friends source their honey from Crystal Bee Supply, a family-owned beekeeping business in Peabody, Massachusetts. A small (8 oz.) jar of honey is \$8., a medium (16 oz.) jar is \$12. and a large (32 oz.) jar is \$20. This is a great way to support both local, sustainable honey production and the Beebe Library – a win-win!

Another way to support the Friends is by purchasing our tote bags. The tote bags are branded with the Lucius Beebe Memorial Library



*A selection of some of the great reads you can find at the Everyday Book Sale.*



*Samples of the Friends' merchandise, available for purchase at the Circulation Desk*

logo and are made with durable material and straps for easy carrying. They even zip closed for when you're on the go! These bags make great gifts for avid readers who need to transport several books, knitters and crocheters who like to carry their projects from place to place, or even frequent travelers as carry-on bags. They also make great reusable shopping bags.

We would also like to mention that there are some merchandise items that will be available while supplies last, including Beebe Library branded blankets and crochet bee keychains. For any of these merchandise options, please stop by the Circulation Desk to purchase, or with any questions.

Finally, if you're looking for an affordable book fix before the Annual Book Sale, stop by the Friends' Everyday Book Sale! The Everyday Book Sale, located on either side of the marble staircase on the lower level of the Beebe, is a great way to purchase books at a reasonable price AND support your local library. Hardcover books are \$2.00, large paperbacks are \$1.00, small paperbacks are 50¢ and magazines are 10¢.

Our dedicated "worker bee" volunteers switch out the books frequently and often include a theme on the shelves that follow seasons and trends throughout the year, ranging from holiday and baseball to travel and beach reads. The Beebe also stocks the EBS with "Buzz Books," or recent bestsellers that tend to fly off the shelves. Feel free

to stop by and browse, and bring your picks to the Circulation Desk for purchase.

Whether you're looking for honey to sweeten your tea, a sturdy bag to carry groceries, or your next great read, please consider checking out the Friends' merchandise and Everyday Book Sale. All proceeds go to the Beebe Library so we at the Friends can continue supporting the Beebe's services, programming, and resources. Thank you in advance for your continued support, and see you at the Annual Book Sale!



## **NEW BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED!**

Have you been thinking about becoming more involved in a community organization? Do you love books and the library? Consider a role with the Friends of Beebe Library! In June we will be holding our annual elections to fill open Board seats. So far we know that the following positions will be vacant: President, Secretary, and one of our Director roles. Think you might be interested? Contact us at [friends@friendsofbeebe.org](mailto:friends@friendsofbeebe.org) for more information.

## FROM THE BOARD

By Karen Williams

What better to do during the cold winter months than to snuggle up with a good book, attend a fun and/or informative library program, or utilize one of the other great offerings from the library?

Did you know the Friends of Beebe Library provides funding for many of the library programs and services that you enjoy? And did you know that we can only supply those funds with your help? A partial list of items that you allowed us to provide to the library last year were adult and youth programming, including summer programs; museum passes; Plaza Jazz; the new privacy pods; and the costs of the “Friends of Beebe Library Document Center”, including a copier, scanner and fax machine.

So how, you may ask, do we get the money to pay for all of these things? Last year about one-third of our revenue was book related – through the annual book sale, *the Every Day Booksale*, and our participation in events such as the Festival by the Lake and the farmer’s market. Another one-third came from memberships. About ten percent came from donations, with the balance coming primarily from sales of honey, and copier and fax usage.

With one-third of our support for the library coming from the book sale and related activities, we are going to run into a major challenge next year. We were very happy to have a reprieve and be able

to use the Hurd School again for our 2025 book sale. However, we expect this to be the last year at the Hurd, and we have been unsuccessful in our efforts to locate alternative sites to store, sort, and sell books. Your donations of books to us have been very generous this year. We hope to have an extra-special book sale with so many good books coming our way. But after this year we expect to have a sharp drop in revenue, resulting in a reduction of support for library.

What can you do to help? Well you can help us to make this year’s book sale a great success! You can do this by donating books, volunteering your time in sorting through and organizing book donations, and coming to the sale in May to buy lots of books! You can also help by letting us know of any alternative sites that we could use to continue the book sale next year. Reach out to us at [friends@friendsofbeebe.org](mailto:friends@friendsofbeebe.org) if you have any leads. Be sure to renew your membership each year. You can do so at <https://www.friendsofbeebe.org/join>, or make a donation at <https://www.friendsofbeebe.org/donate>. Besides volunteering for book sale-related activities, we also have opportunities to help in other ways such as at the Board level and with fundraising - we are branching out to add a new fundraising coordinator role. Join us at our open house at the library on March 23 for more information. And thank you so much to all of you who are already helping us out in so many ways. We have many wonderful volunteers who give countless hours to our organization. Thank you!

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**Don't miss our book sale on May 15 - 17,  
with preview night for members on May 14!  
See our website for more details  
as we get closer to the sale dates.**

*Friends float, continued from page 1*



*The Beebe crew presents a parade float with the theme "Wild Reads"*

their favorite story book characters got lots of applause and recognition from the enthusiastic well-wishers along the route. From that start, a loyal group of volunteers created floats for the next 20+ years, often taking 1st place in the small float division.

The Friends participation dropped off as events changed – and COVID had a big impact.

Are you creative and good at recruiting like minded volunteers? If so, this could be the year for the Friends of Beebe to enter a float this July. Be part of the marching bands, fire engines, dancers and more. Wave to all the adults and children along the 2-mile route.

What can we offer? A small 5x8 trailer if wanted, ample stores of supplies built up over the past years and supportive advice from past experience (i.e. Tie everything down. It's always windy by the lake.)

What do you need to do? Chair the float, find volunteers – lead a brain storming session to create an idea, create the float, recruit cute children to promote the summer programs, be present for the judges' review before the parade. Walk the route, practice your Queen Elizabeth parade wave, and feel great when you turn the corner onto Main Street and see the crowds clapping in front of the library. For more information, email [volunteer@friendsofbeebe.org](mailto:volunteer@friendsofbeebe.org)

Looking for inspiration? You can find a photo from the original parade circa 1922 (the same year

the library broke ground on the current location at 346 Main St) at this link: <https://digitalheritage.noblenet.org/s/wakefield/item/20658>. In this newsletter, you'll find pictures of some floats for the Friends from the mid 2000's. One year, we did marching bees chanting library themed drill marches in a salute to women in the military, and another year the Summer Reading theme "Wild Reads" inspired us to create a float with a giant gorilla in the pickup truck reading to a "captive audience" of kids inside the cage.



Follow us on Instagram  
[@friends\\_beebe\\_library\\_](https://www.instagram.com/friends_beebe_library_)

*Meet Kat Lewin, continued from page 1*

Fresh eyes have led to new displays and new layouts for some materials. All the old favorites such as story times are still there but you may notice new offerings such as more book groups for different age levels. Busy Bees Book Builders is for preschoolers led by Kat, a new book groups for kindergarten through grade 2, is led by Holly Turner. This group includes a book and hands-on activity. Annie Hochheiser is now focusing on the teen area.

One of Kat's responsibilities is to be able to take on the unexpected day-to-day challenges to create a happy space for patrons and staff in a welcoming creative environment. Arts and crafts are one of her passions both in the Youth Room and at home, where she loves to crochet. You can see a sample of her handiwork keeping the new denizen of the Egyptian sarcophagus, "Fred Bones," warm.

When at home, Kat has three cats she shares with her fiancé. She started crocheting when she received an animal crochet kit as a holiday gift. The project unleashed a crocheting demon.

Please stop by and introduce yourself to Kat and welcome her to Wakefield!

**FRIENDS OF THE BEEBE LIBRARY**  
**P.O. Box 1610**  
**WAKEFIELD, MA 01880**



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**Where Wakefield Connects**



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Treasurer ..... Keith LaGraves  
Assistant Treasurer ..... Louise Good  
Photographer ..... Sherri Caouette  
Float Coordinator ..... **volunteer needed**

Director ..... Jody Sherman  
Director ..... Missy Thompson  
Director ..... Alastair Drummond  
Director ..... Lou Prosperi  
Newsletter Editor..... James Horne  
Newsletter Co-Editor ..... Alicia Brennan

*Everyone is invited to our Board meetings on the second Thursday of the month, September through June, starting at 7 p.m., at the Beebe Library.*

**Become a member...**

Visit our web page to download an application or pay online via PayPal.

For more information, visit [www.FriendsofBeebe.org](http://www.FriendsofBeebe.org)