

The Buzz from & about the Friends of the Beebe Library July 2025



Friends Book Sale Huge Success

By Nancy Tolleson

Once again, the months of preparation and hundreds of volunteer hours hauling, sorting and arranging books led up to a great four-day event. The Friends' Members Only Preview Night on Wednesday May 14 opened to a lengthy line of shoppers waiting for the first rush to find their favorite selections. The next day was very busy with families and many book lovers from the greater Wakefield area. Every day you could peruse the sections again and again and find something you missed before. Whether pouncing on a favorite sci/fi title, finding huge coffee table books to relax with or stocking up on fiction from baby board books to lengthy series, there was so much to find for personal pleasure or gifts to share.

Beebe Library Lecture Series

By Karen King

Some good things happened as a result of the pandemic and, for me, the best result was that the Beebe Library joined a consortium that offers us access to a creative, diverse and interesting lecture series. As I speak to people during our book events, it always surprises me how few have joined in to listen so I hope my recap of a recent lecture by Jodi Picoult will encourage you to be part of some of these great learning opportunities.

For some years, Jodi Picoult has been a favorite author. She lives in NH and writes fiction that focuses on current social issues. When her latest book came out, "By Any Other Name", I was excited to find it on the 7-day loan table at the Beebe. The story fascinated me as it focuses on the premise that William Shakespeare was not likely the author of all his famous works, that it is possible that women sold their poetry, plays and stories to him as they were not legally able to publish in their own name. While the idea may seem like a stretch, the research in her book seemed extensive and she elaborates on it during her lecture.

I often wonder when reading historical fiction how much is fact vs fiction. Well, as Jodi spoke to her audience in the April lecture, she went into detail about the key female character in her book. She traveled to Europe and did extensive research on Emilia Bassano, an Elizabethan poet, who battled societal limitations and is possibly the author of some great classics we credit Shakespeare with. Emilia had been partnered with a royal as a mistress, sold to a cousin when she became pregnant and then abandoned by that husband. In order to support her child, Emilia potentially sold her writings to

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Worker Bees were on hand to help pack boxes, assist carrying bags if needed and hand out empty bags to be filled or answer questions on the spot. My favorite, “Do you have something that is very cold to read for when it’s really hot this summer?” The Friends always get great feedback on the sale’s scale, organization and enthusiasm of the Worker Bees in their distinctive green aprons.

This year, we had a large increase in the number and range of graphic novels for children through adults. There were many more sets and special oversized books set out to catch the eye as well as unique vintage/antique books.

A few people asked for assistance to find books because it was hard to do for themselves. One 93-year-old reader received many titles from her wish list. Normally her daughter would shop for her but couldn’t this year.

Beside books, the new, brightly colored Friends of Beebe Book Bags and jars of honey flew out the door and many people joined the Friends on the spot to support the work of our organization. Monies raised cover the cost of museum passes, and adult and children’s programs.

Yes, there are books left over, but don’t worry, they all find a good home through give-aways, beginning in June with the Festival by the Lake and the Farmers Market opening weekend. Additional days were made available for teachers and non-profits to select books for classrooms, literacy programs, large print books to senior centers and more. If you wish to get on the teachers/non-profits contact list for the future email us at beebebooksale@gmail.com.

The Book Sale Team is happy to sit down and finally rest with our own personal pile of must reads. Please watch for updates on the status of the book sale for 2026. We are always interested in hearing about other possible accessible locations to store books and/or host future sales.



Friends Advocacy: Supporting Public Libraries

In addition to raising funds for library services and programs, Friends groups are valuable advocates for their libraries’ financial support. In Massachusetts, numerous organizations work together to provide coordinated services that allows sharing of resources and efficient use of funding. Some of these organizations, such as the Mass Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) and the Mass Library System (MLS) receive federal funds. Current federal cuts to a wide range of services will both directly, and likely indirectly, affect libraries. This situation is changing rapidly, so a good place to keep track of it is on the MBLC website:

<https://mblc.state.ma.us/federal-cuts.php> .

In addition to contacting legislators, a great way to support your library is simply to use it. Regular use will keep you abreast of the library’s many valuable benefits to our community. Thank you for all you do to support Beebe Library.

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Shakespeare which he then published under his own name. Fact or fiction??? Emilia was a real person and her life is documented in European history. In her later years, as the laws allowed, she published plays - fact. Shakespeare had two daughters who were never taught to read or write, owned no books at the time of his death and never left England - fact. Hard to believe that a man who had become so well known for his classics did not educate his daughters, owned no books and did no traveling, so the possibility of others writing the classics we attribute to William Shakespeare became real to me.

As Jodi brought out more facts about this time in history and her female focused characters, her enthusiasm for story and her outrage that women had to write themselves out of the history books is evident. I have always enjoyed reading her books but she is so passionate about her topics that she is even more fun to listen to.

Please take the time to go to the Beebe website, as you can listen and watch past recordings of these great authors. From the Beebe website, click on EVENTS, then Virtual Author Series, choose past or future and you will be given a list of topics and authors. Yes, you can go now and listen to a captured recording of Jodi Picoult and other authors as well. Thanks to the Beebe Staff for offering these lectures, and kudos to Jodi Picoult as she ended her lecture by telling listeners that they should consider supporting local libraries and Friends of Libraries.

Take advantage of what the Beebe Library offers us...best way to support them is to utilize the services.

Thank you!

Thank you to Jim Horne for his work as Editor of the Buzz for the last several years.

From the Board

By Karen Williams

Thank you! We had another successful book sale this year. You donated thousands of books to us. Dozens of volunteers helped us through our multiple book drop-offs, the organization of books, and helping customers during the sale. Hundreds of people came and browsed and gave us thousands of dollars to help the library. You came through for the library once again!

As a wholly volunteer organization we cannot emphasize enough the impact that you, our volunteers, have. We could not do it without you. From youth to seniors, from those who devote many hours to those who can only spare a few, you all make a difference. And in the process we have seen so much connection and camaraderie between people. It makes us happy to see how your volunteering with us makes you happy as well.

Your contributions of books, time, and money recently permitted us to donate \$15,000 to the library to cover costs for the upcoming Plaza Jazz and Summer Youth Programs. Thank you for helping us to help the library keep these programs in operation!

Moving forward, it is uncertain whether we will be able to continue to hold our annual book sale due to the expected loss of our space at the Hurd School. Do you know of an alternative site that we could use? If so please let us know.

What else can you do to help? Be sure to renew your membership each year - you can do so at <https://www.friendsofbeebe.org/join>. Make a donation at <https://www.friendsofbeebe.org/donate>. Purchase some honey at the circulation desk at the library. Or volunteer to fill one of our open positions. Do you enjoy fundraising? We are searching for new fundraising options to potentially replace the book sale, and are recruiting people with an interest in fundraising to help us. Do you have other skills that you think might be useful to us? See the back page for a list of positions we are specifically recruiting for.

Here's wishing you a great rest of the summer!

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Everyone is invited to our Board meetings on the second Thursday of the month, September through June, starting at 7 pm., 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

