

Thomas Memorial Library kicks off Community Read, hosts exhibit on participatory photography in Stier Family Gallery

Community Read 2022

February - April 2022

Community Read Kickoff Event with author Gene Weingarten

Tuesday, February 15, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. via Zoom

Connect with your community this winter, via our second annual Community Read!

Once again, Thomas Memorial Library will be collaborating with South Portland and Scarborough Public Libraries on a three-town Community Read.

What is a Community Read? A Community Read is a large-scale book club, spanning an entire community and cultivating a local culture of reading and conversation by bringing people together around a common book.

This year's Community Read book is "One Day: The Extraordinary Story of an Ordinary 24 Hours in America" by Gene Weingarten. On New Year's Day 2013, two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Gene Weingarten asked three strangers to, literally, pluck a day, month and year from a hat. That day—chosen completely at random—turned out to be Sunday, December 28, 1986, by any conventional measure a most ordinary day.

Weingarten spent the next six years proving that there is no such thing. "One Day" asks and answers the question of whether there is even such a thing as "ordinary" when we are talking about how we all lurch and stumble our way through the daily, daunting challenge of being human.

There will be many opportunities to participate and engage with friends and

neighbors and perfect strangers over the course of the next two months. The author will be (virtually) joining our library communities to discuss the book, both to kick off and to wrap up the Community Read.

In between, all three libraries will be working together to offer book discussions, read-alouds, creative opportunities and a full slate of related programming around the book's themes of daily life in America. All events will be open to residents of all three towns and there will be opportunities to meet, converse and get to know your neighbors from Cape, SoPo and Scarborough.

Registration for the Community Read is on the library's website, where you can also see the schedule of events and reserve your copy of the book. Multiple copies are available at all three libraries. Then, join us for our Community Read Kickoff with author Gene Weingarten on Tuesday, February 15 at 7 p.m.

THIS MONTH IN THE STIER FAMILY GALLERY

In a Whole New Way: New Yorkers on Probation Photograph Their World

February and March 2022

What is "participatory photography?" The practice empowers marginalized individuals to take charge of their own public narrative by documenting their lives authentically. Turning traditional photojournalism on its head, participatory photography counters prevailing negative media stereotypes that under-

mine human dignity.

The first such initiative by the New York nonprofit Seeing for Ourselves led to the publication of "Project Lives: New York Public Housing Residents Photograph Their World" (powerHouse 2015), which can be found in the library's collection. The success of this effort led the city to ask Seeing for Ourselves to conduct a similar program for New Yorkers on probation.

"In a Whole New Way: Undoing Mass Incarceration by a Path Untraveled," the book resulting from this new effort, was drafted at the library in 2019 by a Seeing for Ourselves official living in Cape Elizabeth. "In a Whole New Way," the accompanying award-winning short documentary—written and directed by the same official—was fine-tuned during the summer of 2020 in TML's Writers' Accountability Group.

This exhibit will be on display at the library throughout February and March 2022. Join us for an exclusive screening of the documentary "In a Whole New Way" via Zoom on February 17 at 7:00 p.m.

A panel discussion with the filmmakers and Maine public officials working in the justice system will follow the film. In addition to the filmmakers from Seeing for Ourselves, we'll be joined by Cumberland County District Attorney Jonathan Sahrbeck, Assistant District Attorney Nicole Albert and Christopher Arbour of Maine Department of Corrections. They will discuss how this initiative can help curb both mass probation and mass incarceration in our country.

Smith at msmith@thomas.lib.me.us.

We'll be meeting via Google Meet once a month to choose and discuss some great books.

Character of the Month for February: Winnie the Pooh

Stop by the Children's Room to discover the Character of the Month during our celebration of FebruBEARY! We'll have a fresh set of activities along and crafts to explore.

Take and Makes

Looking for a crafty way to spend part of your day? Check out the latest Take and Make kit available in the children's room.

Always fun, always free! (While supplies last.)

PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

Across the Universe: Exploring the James Webb Space Telescope

Tuesday, February 8, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. via Zoom

The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is the most ambitious space-based observatory ever flown, and was developed and built by an international collaboration between NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA).

The observatory will provide unprecedented views of the universe at near- and mid-infrared wavelengths, and will enable astronomers to observe the light from the first galaxies that formed after the Big Bang, and investigate how these galaxies evolved over time. It will also observe planetary systems around other stars to study how they form and evolve, and examine the atmospheres of exoplanets, providing information on their compositions and possible evidence of life.

Due to its very large size, the telescope and its sunshield had to be folded to fit within the limited space inside the rocket faring. After launch, a series of delicate orchestrated steps were execut-

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PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

Last Pineapples Middle School Book Club

Friday, February 4, 2:45-3:45 p.m. via Google Meet

Register to join TML's Middle School Book Club, The Last Pineapples on Earth, by emailing Family Engagement Librarian Megan Smith at msmith@thomas.lib.me.us.

New 4th Grade Book Club!

Register to join a new group of avid readers and 4th graders by emailing Family Engagement Librarian Megan

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