Filmmaker Jen Kaplan—*A Father’s Kaddish*

*Tues., April 20th    7:00 PM*

Jen Kaplan, a local filmmaker, recently finished a new film entitled “*A Father’s Kaddish*.” The film tells the poignant story of how one father uses art to grieve the loss of his son.

*In 2005, Jared Branfman died of brain cancer at the age of 23. A week after his death, his father, Steve Branfman, a potter and teacher, went into his studio, took some clay and made a chawan, a Japanese style tea bowl. Each day for one year, he made one chawan—they were the only pots he made. Steve’s daily chawan made at his wheel was his own personal Kaddish (the traditional Jewish prayer of mourning).*  

For almost a decade, these 365 bowls sat unfinished on shelves in his studio. After nine years of mourning, Steve glazed and fired the chawans, bringing them to life with color and sheen. According to Kaplan, “It was like Steve was finally able to start a new chapter in his grief process. As a filmmaker, I felt humbled to capture his heart-wrenching process.”

Steven Branfman who lives in Newton, is the founder of a studio in Needham (Gorse Mills Studios) and teaches at Thayer Academy in Braintree. We will be streaming the documentary and hosting a conversation afterwards. *Sponsored by the Library Foundation of Needham.*

*Registration for these programs is required on Assabet to receive the Zoom link. Register here at [https://needhamma.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/](https://needhamma.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/)*

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**Boston Sunday Globe** columnist Beverly Beckham—“Evolution of a Columnist”  

**Sun., April 25th   2:00 PM**

How does a columnist transform observations of everyday life into essays that move and enlighten readers—week after week, and year after year? Beckham examines themes that spring from the daily lives of her family, friends, readers and herself. With insight and clarity, she makes them relevant to everyone. Curious and observant, she examines a wide range of contemporary issues and presents them in thought-provoking ways to make them personal. Some of her recent columns are “The Summer of Covid-19 Fed My Soul, But Broke My Heart,” and “Why Isn’t Kindness News?” Her 15-year-old column about becoming an empty nester, “I Was the Sun, the Kids Were My Planets,” is so popular that it has been republished many times. Beckham finds inspiration in talking with her audiences and hopes attendees will come with plenty of questions. **This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Needham Public Library.**

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**Needham Free Public Library Expands its Technology Lending With its Wi-Fi Hotspot Pilot Program**

Needham Free Public Library is introducing its Wi-Fi Hotspot Lending pilot program. These devices can be requested through our curbside services. The program allows Library customers to check out active Wi-Fi hotspots that provide mobile access to the internet. Many Needham residents look to the Library for free Internet access and our expanded technology lending pilot program will allow even more Library customers to use our services without having to travel to our Library’s two parking lots to access the Library’s wireless Internet. Digital inclusion is a strategic priority for the Needham Free Public Library, and an important part of the Library’s vision for equal access to all. The Wi-Fi HotSpot Lending pilot program: supports students and their parents by providing access to educational resources, supports job seekers by providing access to employment information and resources, and bridges the digital divide in low- to moderate-income families.

A limited number of devices are available at the main library for check-out. Additional devices and locations will be added as funding becomes available. (There are currently five Wi-Fi hotspots available for lending out.) **The Friends of the Needham Public Library have generously funded this pilot program.** Call 781-455-7559 x202, starting April 1st, to request a hotspot for a two week loan period.

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This Month in the Virtual Friends’ Gallery

**Needham Open Studios**

go to [http://www.needhamma.gov/3168/](http://www.needhamma.gov/3168/) for our virtual slideshow
**Children’s Virtual Programs in April**

Music with Stacey Peasley for ages 2-5
Wed., April 7th  10:00 AM
Mon., April 12th  10:00 AM

Sing-Alone with Ed
Fri., April 9th  10:00 AM
Thurs., April 15th  10:00 AM

Lego Club with Veronica and Marianna
Wed., April 21st @3:00 PM
Build and share Lego creations for kindergarten and older.

Preschool Palooza—Wed., April 14th, 21st and 28th @ 10:00 AM
Join Ms. Elise for stories, song, and movement.

Yoga for Kids with Lyn Jekowsky—Saturday, April 10th @ 10:00 AM
A 30-minute set of yoga for young children and their families. No experience necessary—all levels welcome for ages 5 and up.

Read to Tucker the Reading Dog
Build confidence in reading with Tucker the popular therapy dog. Tuesday, April 6th and 13th at 3:00 PM. Individual 15-minute reading sessions for kindergarten and older.

Dance Me a Story
Tues., April 20th  10:00 AM
Join Princess Lisa from the Joanne Langione Dance Center for an enchanting tale and dance for ages 1 to 5.

**STEM Kits**

Pea Growing Kit
*Donated by the Needham Community Farm* for ages 6 and up, the week of April 5th while supplies last.

Chemistry Kit
Seven unique experiments involving a chemical reaction for ages 8 and up, available the week of April 20th while supplies last. *Kits donated by Mass Cultural Council.*

**Programs**

Grow Peas with the Needham Community Farm
Thurs., April 15th  4:00 PM
Join NC Farmers over Zoom to learn how to grow your peas!

Little Labcoats—Cooking!
Mon., April 19th  6:00 PM
Understand the science behind taste, what makes food delicious, and unique ways chefs use science to create edible masterpieces. For grades 3 to 6.

Howie Newman’s Musical Baseball Show
Tues., April 20th  2:30 PM
Baseball songs, stories, and trivia from Howie’s days as a sportswriter on the Red Sox beat for the *Associated Press* and *Boston Globe*—for ages 5 and up. *Sponsored by the Library Foundation of Needham.*

**Registration begins two weeks before events.**

Go to [https://needhamma.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/](https://needhamma.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/) to register for these sessions.
April 2021 Book Clubs on ZOOM

NPL Book Group
Tuesday, April 13th  1:00 PM
The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek
by Kim Michele Richardson
The hardscrabble folks of Troublesome Creek have to scrape for everything—everything except books, that is. Thanks to Roosevelt’s Kentucky Pack Horse Library Project, Troublesome’s got its very own traveling librarian, Cussy Mary Carter.

Cussy’s not only a book woman, however, she’s also the last of her kind, her skin a shade of blue unlike most anyone else. Not everyone is keen on Cussy’s family or the Library Project, and a Blue is often blamed for any whiff of trouble. If Cussy wants to bring the joy of books to the hill folks, she’s going to have to confront prejudice as old as the Appalachias and suspicion as deep as the holler.

Inspired by the true blue-skinned people of Kentucky and the brave and dedicated Kentucky Pack Horse library service of the 1930s, The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek is a story of raw courage, fierce strength, and one woman’s belief that books can carry us anywhere—even back home. Please email neemail1@minlib.net if you wish to have your email address added to our monthly Zoom link mailing. *May 11, 2021—The Library Book by Susan Orlean*

The Bookworm’s Evening Book Club
Monday, April 26th  7:00-8:00 PM
The Great Alone
by Kristin Hannah
Cora will do anything for the man she loves, even if it means following him into the unknown. Thirteen-year-old Leni, caught in the riptide of her parents’ passionate, stormy relationship, has little choice but to go along, daring to hope this new land promises her family a better future.

In a wild, remote corner of Alaska, the Allbrights find a fiercely independent community of strong men and even stronger women. The long, sunlit days and the generosity of the locals make up for the newcomers’ lack of preparation and dwindling resources. But as winter approaches and darkness descends, Ernt’s fragile mental state deteriorates. Soon the perils outside pale in comparison to threats from within. In their small cabin, covered in snow, blanketed in eighteen hours of night, Leni and her mother learn the terrible truth: they are on their own.

*May 24, 2021—Help Choose Next Year’s Titles. *Registration required on Assabet to receive the Zoom link. Register here at: https://needhamma.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/

Diversity and Discussion Book Club

Co-sponsored by the Trustees of the Needham Free Public Library, Needham Diversity Initiative & Needham Human Rights Committee
Don’t Ask Me Where I’m From by Jennifer De Leon
Thurs., April 22th  7:00 PM
Liliana Cruz is bitting a wall—or rather, walls.
There’s the wall her mom has put up ever since Liliana’s dad left—again.
There’s the wall that delineates Liliana’s diverse inner-city Boston neighborhood from Westburg, the wealthy—and white—suburban high school she’s just been accepted into. And there’s the wall Liliana creates within herself, because to survive at Westburg, she can’t just lighten up, she has to whiten up.

So what if she changes her name? So what if she changes the way she talks? So what if she’s seeing her neighborhood in a different way? But then light is shed on some hard truths: It isn’t that her father doesn’t want to come home—he can’t...and her whole family is in jeopardy. And when racial tensions at school reach a fever pitch, the walls that divide feel insurmountable.

But a wall isn’t always a barrier. It can be a foundation for something better. And Liliana must choose: Use this foundation as a platform to speak her truth, or risk crumbling under its weight. This discussion on Zoom will be facilitated by Jenn Scheck-Kahn. Author Jennifer de Leon will be joining the discussion.
Registration is required at: https://needhamma.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/
Yesterday’s Soldier: A Passage from Prayer to the Vietnam War

Tom Keating is a veteran of the Vietnam War and has written this unique memoir titled, “Yesterday’s Soldier: A Passage from Prayer to the Vietnam War.” The book tells the story of his struggle with the Army, his family, and the Church during this time when, as a highly trained and skilled infantry soldier and officer candidate, he suddenly realizes he could not kill another person and declares his Conscientious Objection. The Army wanted him in jail, his family was against his decision, and his Catholic Church tried to convince him that killing communists was just. His Vietnam War is different from what we think of the Vietnam War, but it was still a war... Sponsored by the Needham Free Public Library.

*Registration for this program is required on Assabet to receive the Zoom link.
Register here at https://needhamma.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/
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Events subject to change. Registration Required for Children’s Events.

[www.needhamma.gov/3035](http://www.needhamma.gov/3035)

Needham Free Public Library
1139 Highland Avenue
781-455-7559 x204
neechild@minlib.net

Library Hours
Pick-up and Phone Only
Monday: 9 am to 8:30 pm
Tuesday to Friday: 9 am to 5 pm
Saturday: 9 am to 4:30 pm
Sunday: Closed

Funding for special events generously provided by

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