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The Jones Library Celebrates the Thoreau Bicentennial Statewide Read, Marking Henry David Thoreau's 200th Birthday

Amherst, MA – This spring, the Jones Library is participating in the Thoreau Bicentennial Statewide Read, a yearlong event that has events taking place in every city and town in Massachusetts through 2017. The Thoreau Bicentennial Statewide Read is part of a global celebration that highlights the continued relevance of Thoreau's writings and philosophical contributions, even 200 years after his birth on July 12, 1817.

A variety of events for all ages will be taking place at the Jones Library throughout the spring, and the Amherst community is invited to participate. While the book club reading "Walden" has already filled, we invite the Amherst community to join us in other programming being offered – or to use these events as inspiration to read one of Thoreau's works on your own. Please join us in celebrating this great American author, philosopher, and poet. His message still rings clear in our hectic society, and perhaps some of his words might help alleviate the pressures of modern-day life.

On Thursday, April 6 at 7 pm, Dr. Thomas Dumm of Amherst College will present a program entitled "Thoreau on Resignation and Resistance", exploring Thoreau's understandings of resignation and resistance, and suggesting ways in which we may be able adapt his understanding to the current political crisis in the United States.

On Thursday, May 11 at 7 pm, Dr. David Glassberg of the University of Massachusetts will present an interactive lecture on Thoreau and his legacy.

The Special Collections department will feature an exhibit entitled *Let Us Consider Walden*. This exhibit explores the influences of Henry David Thoreau on Clifton Johnson and Robert Francis, two writers living in Western Massachusetts. The exhibit is on display in Special Collections at the Jones Library in Amherst from May 1st to June 30th. Special Collections is open Monday and Saturday from 2pm to 5pm and Tuesday-Friday from 10am to 5pm.

North Amherst Library
8 Montague Road
Amherst, MA 01002
t: 413.259.3099
f: 413.253.2573

The Jones Library
43 Amity Street
Amherst, MA 01002
t: 413.259.3090
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Munson Memorial Library
1046 South East Street
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t: 413.259.3095
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There are also events planned for young people. On Thursday, April 20 at 1 pm, Tom Ricardi of Mass Birds of Prey will give an informational demonstration and provide a chance to meet live birds of prey. As an introduction to the program, there will also be a story about Thoreau, and a true story about a wounded hawk and how Mr. Ricardi helped to rescue and rehabilitate her. This program is free and open to children ages 4 and up.

On May 1st at 2:00 pm, Story and Play story time will feature stories of nature and Thoreau.

A program for teens ages 11 – 17 entitled “Plant Printing on Greeting Cards Celebrating Thoreau” will take place on Thursday, April 20 at 3:30 pm. Thoreau spent a vast amount of time in nature, and to celebrate that time, participants are going to quickly study images of his sketches with the intent of being inspired, and then use the samples of plant material provided by the library to create greeting cards. Pre-registration strongly encouraged at 413-259-3091.

All events are free and open to the public.

The Walden Woods Project (Lincoln, MA), Freedom’s Way National Heritage Area (Devens, MA), University of Massachusetts Lowell Honors College (Lowell, MA), and Massachusetts Center for the Book (Boston, MA) are co-sponsors of the Thoreau Bicentennial Statewide Read. Their goal is to have every town or city in Massachusetts participate by coordinating at least one event in 2017 that brings community members together to read a work by Thoreau.

In the spirit of self-determination championed by Thoreau, the coordinators of each town’s Read event can choose when in 2017 they want to carry out their Read; how they want to implement their Read; and which Thoreau piece they will read. With that said, to facilitate some shared experience among participants across the state, organizers will provide a brief excerpt from Walden for all participants to read, providing a connecting thread between all Read events across the state.

For more information on the Read event in Amherst, please contact Janet Ryan at 413/259-3223.

For more information about the Thoreau Bicentennial Statewide Read as a whole, please contact the Walden Woods Project at education@walden.org or visit www.walden.org/bicentennial/read.

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Amherst, MA

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