Library News

- The Library will be closed on May 27th in observance of Memorial Day.

- Check out the permanent Friends of the Library Book Sale display set up near our front door. There are some great books, DVDs and CDs available for purchase.

- The library’s Strategic Planning Committee will meet on May 16th at 6:00 PM. Please speak to a staff member if you would like to be a part of this important committee.
Challenger: A True Story of Heroism and Disaster on the Edge of Space

By Adam Higginbotham

A searching history of a disaster-laden effort to build & launch a space shuttle.

Higginbotham, author of Midnight in Chernobyl, begins in 1986, when the space shuttle Challenger experienced what a controller dispassionately called “obviously a major malfunction,” exploding with no survivors. He then looks backward at a fraught moment in earlier NASA history, when a fire in the inaugural Apollo capsule killed the three astronauts aboard, “the most lethal accident in the short history of the US space program.” Mission commander Gus Grissom had noted shoddy construction beforehand, and the rush to get the spacecraft into space before the Russians could claim the Moon led to deadly shortcuts.

As the author capably chronicles, the space shuttle program began with major obstacles—not just the technical hurdles of building a reusable shuttle capable of withstanding the rigors of launch and reentry, but also “a further new parameter, one of which NASA had no existing experience: a limited budget.” That tight budget, imposed by Nixon-era austerity measures reducing a $14 billion request to just $5.5 billion, “the first of many fatal compromises,” led to shortcuts in construction that NASA leaders overlooked even as contractors voiced worries about them.

Famous scenes from the Challenger postmortem are seared in memory, including when physicist Richard Feynman plunged a rubber O-ring into ice water to show its instability in cold temperatures. Unlike Apollo, the space shuttle program was effectively terminated, if slowly, after a second shuttle, Columbia, exploded, with NASA engineers and administrators having ignored “signals lost in the noise of a complacent can-do culture of repeatedly achieving the apparently impossible.” Higginbotham’s book is without Tom Wolfe’s flash, but it’s a worthy bookend to The Right Stuff—albeit marred by the wrong stuff—all the same.

A deeply researched, fluently written study in miscommunication, hubris, and technological overreach.
**Adult Programs**

Please register for programs by calling the library at 508-867-0208 or by emailing hastonfreepubliclibrary@gmail.com

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**Craft Night for Adults**
Monday, May 13th at 6:00 PM

*Make a Felt Succulent*
*Registration Required*

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**Book Group**

May 28th
7:00 PM
The House of Doors by Tan Twan Eng

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**Movie Discussion Group**

May 30th 6:00 PM
The Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind 2004
Rated R

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**Learn how to use ASPEN**

The library’s new online card catalog!

We will be offering 15 minute one-on-one tutorial sessions on Monday, May 20th 1 PM to 6:00 PM.

We will show you how to:
- Search for items
- Log into your account
- Place a hold from home

Sign up: 508-867-0208 or email hastonfreepubliclibrary@gmail.com
Art Club
Every 1st and 3rd Monday
4:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Relax and Read Tween Storytime
Every Wednesday
4:00 PM to 5:00 PM