



News Release

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Community invited to come celebrate Robert Frost's Birthday with NMCC 'Frost Fest'

Aroostook County - Northern Maine Community College will be hosting a "Frost Fest" in honor of Robert Frost's birthday on Friday, March 26, from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. in the Edmunds Conference Center on the Presque Isle campus. Members of the community are invited to come and take part in the celebration, which will feature both informative and fun activities for participants of all ages.

"Frost Fest developed from a deep love for Frost's poetry," said NMCC instructor Jennifer Graham, one of the coordinators of the event. "I teach Robert Frost in my literature classes every year and students really respond to his work. There are images and ideas in his writing that resonate with students because he describes life in rural New England. His poems have a down-to-earth, commonsense air about them which appeals to people. Frost uses almost deceptively simple language to express his ideas about the world."

Activities for Frost Fest will include a reading circle at 12:15 p.m., with NMCC humanities instructor Dave Raymond presenting Frost's "Two Tramps in Mud Time." After a group photo at 12:30 p.m., Graham will lead a presentation on Frost's life at 1:15 p.m. In addition to a historical display, displays of creative work based on Frost poems, and a giant snowflake display, there will be light-hearted activities, such as frosting your own cupcake, making a Frost bookmark, and hearing the premiere of a Frost song written by Thomas Burby. All who attend will be entered into a drawing for door prizes.

"Frost Fest is a chance to indulge in pure appreciation for Frost's work," said Graham. "We've asked students, staff and community members to create their own original art in response to their favorite Frost poem. This allows us to connect with Frost on a creative level. We've had excellent response to this point, and the art displays will be the centerpiece of the event."

Among those submitting their original work inspired by a Frost poem, are NMCC students Matthew Dobson and Morgan Kiser. The Presque Isle couple, who were married last fall, are both seniors in the College's business administration program.

“The first time I went to college, ten years ago, I was given a complete set of Robert Frost poems by my instructor. I still have that book, and Frost is my favorite poet. As soon as I heard about Frost Fest, I went through the book looking for a poem that would inspire me,” said Dobson. “I chose ‘Fire and Ice’ because it is one of Frost’s more visual poems when it comes to my photographic art.” Dobson submitted a series of five photo manipulation compositions inspired by the poem.

Kiser, who has been painting since high school, created an oil pastel painting entitled “Calm of Heaven” inspired by the imagery in Frost’s poem “On Looking Up by Chance at the Constellation.”

“Robert Frost is one of America’s most famous poets, yet many of us have read only a few of his more well-known poems. We hope this celebration of Frost’s life and work will encourage people to read more of his poetry and learn more about his life,” said Gail Roy, NMCC assistant dean of learning resources, who is coordinating the event with Graham.

Among those planning to take part in Frost Fest is Heather Nunez from the Carleton Project. She will be bringing half a dozen students from Houlton and Presque Isle to campus to take part in the activity. Some of the students also plan to contribute work to the art display.

“Some of our students are working on a poetry section, so Frost Fest was ideal timing. Others just wanted the chance to take part in this cultural enrichment opportunity,” said Nunez. “This is also a great chance for us to foster a good community relationship with NMCC. Our students will be touring the campus when they arrive, giving them a chance to get comfortable with the campus.”

Graham and Roy encourage members of the local community to come to the College and take part in Frost Fest.

“Stopping to appreciate Frost’s work allows us to reflect on what is important in life,” said Graham. “Frost’s writing focuses on the beauty of the natural world, the wonders of childhood, the importance of family, the value of work, and the joys and struggles of life. These are things we should all take time to reflect upon, but are easy to lose sight of as we get caught up in the demands of daily life.”

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Members of the Northern Maine Community College campus community have begun submitting original artwork inspired by Robert Frost that will be on display during ‘Frost Fest’ being hosted at the College on Friday, March 26, in honor of Frost’s 136th birthday. Among those submitting pieces are, from left, NMCC instructor Pam Crawford, who created a wooden box assemblage based on Frost’s “The Road Not Taken;” business student Morgan Kiser, who created an oil pastel based on Frost’s “On Looking Up by Chance at the Constellation;” and business student Matthew Dobson, who created a series of five photo manipulation compositions based on Frost’s “Fire and Ice” (shown are two of the compositions, Banquet of Nightmares and Layers of Ice). Coordinating NMCC’s Frost Fest are, back from left, Gail Roy, NMCC’s assistant dean of learning resources, and Jennifer Graham, an English instructor at the College.