

“Our life is March weather, savage and serene in one hour.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

# BUZZ

The official newsletter of Rodman Public Library

Mount Union astrology professor Jodi McCullough will share her astrophotography when she talks about the 2024 eclipse at RPL on March 23.



## Mount Union Professor to Discuss Solar Eclipse



McCULLOUGH

Jodi McCullough is no stranger to solar eclipses.

A professor of astronomy at Mount Union, McCullough and her husband have attended five solar eclipses – one annular and several partial eclipses. And they have the photos to prove it.

Ahead of the April 8 eclipse in which Alliance is close to the area of totality, the couple will share their photographs with library patrons on Saturday, March 23 at 1 p.m.

See *ECLIPSE* on Page 5

## Friends of RPL to Hold Annual Meeting, Sale

The Friends of Rodman Public Library will hold a meeting as well as a mini book sale on Saturday, March 23.

The combined annual membership and board meeting will be held 10 a.m. inside the Rodman Auditorium.

Immediately following the meeting, a mini book sale and bake sale will be held in the children’s program room.

During the book sale, the following categories of books will be available: children, hardback fiction, biographies, gardening, large print, and hardback non-fiction. Puzzles, games and sheet music will also be available.

All items will be sold by donation.



## Local ASL Educator to Give Glimpse Into Deaf Community

“A Personal Journey” with Susan McConnell is March 12



Former Mount Union professor Susan McConnell will share her own story of how her son’s deafness put her on a path to learn and teach American Sign Language at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12 at Rodman Public Library.

McConnell’s “A Personal Journey” is part of the 2024 One Book One Community program and registration is required to attend the event at rodmanlibrary.com.

A wife and mother of three children, McConnell will detail how an illness to her infant son 39 years ago caused him to lose his hearing and how she and her husband immersed themselves into learning sign language, despite contrary advice from doctors.



McCONNELL

See *McCONNELL* on Page 5

## Lynne Kelly Looking Forward to Meeting Alliance Readers

OBOC author to speak at Mount Union March 21

Before becoming a writer, Lynne Kelly was a teacher.

Ahead of her visit to Alliance, the author has a homework assignment for readers.

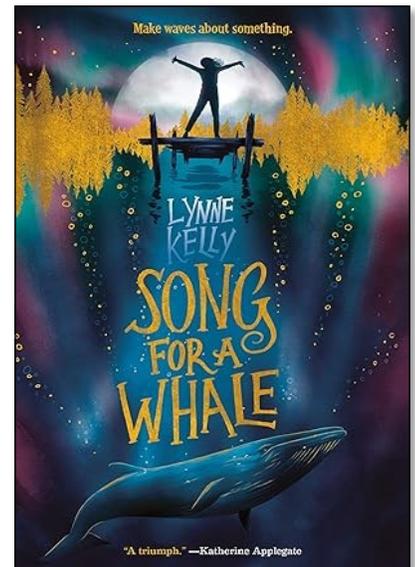
She urges them to come up with as many questions as they can for her when she appears at 7 p.m.

Thursday, March 21 at the Brush Performance Hall inside the Giese Performing Arts Center on the campus of the University of Mount Union.

“I love answering readers’ questions, so I hope to have lots of Q&A time,” said Kelly, who penned *A Song for a Whale*, the Carnation City’s 2024 One Book One Community selection. “I also like to talk about the idea-to-publication journey and show some behind-the-scenes things about the book, like character brainstorming, fun facts I picked up while researching, etc.”



KELLY



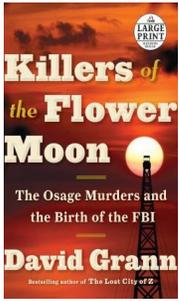
Copies of the One Book One Community selection for 2024, *Song for a Whale* by Lynne Kelly, are on sale now at both the Main and Branch libraries at the cost of \$8.99 plus tax.

See *KELLY* on Page 5

## BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS

For a look at future Book Club selections, visit [rodmanlibrary.com/Rodman-Book-Clubs](http://rodmanlibrary.com/Rodman-Book-Clubs)

### BOOKS & COFFEE



Meets every second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Branch Library.

**March 11**  
**Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI** by David Grann

Call 330-821-1313 for information.

### TRUE CRIME JUNKIES

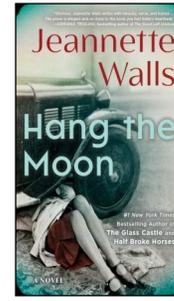


Meets every third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Main Library.

**March 19**  
**Scoundrel: How a Convicted Murderer Persuaded the Women Who Loved Him, the Conservative Establishment, and the Courts to Set Him Free** by Sarah Weinman

Call 330-821-2665, ext. 215 for information.  
Registration required at [rodmanlibrary.com](http://rodmanlibrary.com)

### RPL EVENING BOOK CLUB



Meets every fourth Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at the Main Library.

**March 25**  
**Hang the Moon** by Jeannette Walls

Call 330-821-2665 for information.

## ONGOING PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

### Maker Monday

Maker Monday crafters will create paper tulips in a vase when they meet for March's session inside Rodman Public Library's Main Auditorium.

Maker Monday is an in-person craft program for adults that is held monthly on select Mondays. All materials are provided free of charge, thanks to Friends of Rodman Library, but space is limited and registration is required for each session.

To register for Maker Monday sessions, call 330-821-2665, ext. 210 or visit [rodmanlibrary.com](http://rodmanlibrary.com).

**Monday, March 11 at 6 p.m.**



### Knit Wits

The Knit Wits, a circle for needleworkers of all types and skill levels, meets at 10 a.m. on the second and fourth Monday of each month at the Main Library. The group welcomes new members and any donations of yarn. For information, call 330-821-2665, ext. 204.

**Mondays, March 11 & 25 at 10 a.m.**

### Writers' Alliance

Writers' Alliance, a group for those who like to create with words and share their work with others, meets every fourth Monday of the month at RPL. All are welcome to the group, facilitated by John Milan. No registration is required. For information, call Milan at 330-581-1437.

**Monday, March 25 at 6:30 p.m.**



### Chess Club

The Rodman Chess Club is open to patrons of all ages who have an interest in the classic board game. Come make new friends and explore the ancient game of strategy. The club, which has no formal membership, meets at 5:30 p.m. every third Wednesday of the month. No registration required. For information, call 330-821-2665, ext. 216.

**Wednesday, March 20 at 5:30 p.m.**

### Want to help support RPL?

Join the Friends of Rodman Public Library by calling 330-821-2665 or by visiting any of the service desks.

### Alliance Vinyl Club

Open to all music lovers, Alliance Vinyl Club meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each even-numbered month — February, April, June, August, October, and December — inside the Main Library auditorium. Supported by Friends of Rodman Public Library, AVC provides the opportunity to listen to music, hang out, and make new friends. Those attending are encouraged to bring some of their favorite records to share a selection or two with others. Although it is called a club, there is no formal membership and no registration is required to attend the program. For more information about Alliance Vinyl Club, call 330-821-2665, ext. 216.

**Wednesday, April 3 at 6:30 p.m.**



### TECH Time Thursday

A librarian is on hand each Thursday from 11 a.m. to noon at the Main Library Information Center to answer basic questions about your electronic devices, including laptop computers, iPhones, Android phones, and tablets. No registration is needed. For information, call 330-821-2665, ext. 217.

**Thursdays from 11 a.m. to noon**



Starting March 1  
**StarkFresh**  
Get your free seeds!  
(While supplies last)

- Many varieties of
- Vegetables
  - Herbs
  - Flowers



### HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday through Wednesday: 10 a.m. — 8 p.m.

Thursday & Friday: 10 a.m. — 6 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m. — 4 p.m.

Sunday:

Main Library — Closed

Branch Library — 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

(October through April only)

[rodmanlibrary.com](http://rodmanlibrary.com)

<p><b>MAIN LIBRARY</b> 215 E. Broadway St. Alliance, Ohio 44601 330.821.2665</p>	<p><b>BRANCH LIBRARY</b> 1808 W. State St. Alliance, OH 44601 330.821.1313</p>
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# Preservation Architect to Speak at AAPS Annual Meeting



MURPHY

The Alliance Area Preservation Society will host renowned preservation architect Elizabeth Corbin Murphy, FAIA, during its annual meeting inside Rodman Auditorium on Tuesday, March 26 at 6:30 p.m.

Murphy will present “Debunking Historic Preservation Myths: Beyond Little Old

Gray-Haired Ladies in Sneakers” in which she will explore and honor the true essence of historic preservation, past and present.

A graduate of the University of Notre Dame, Murphy has been a trailblazer for architects and preservationists in Ohio for more than three decades. With a rich portfolio

of preservation projects and accolades from national and state preservation and architecture agencies, she is a cornerstone of the modern preservation movement, setting standards of practice.

**Registration is required** to attend the event at [rodmanlibrary.com](http://rodmanlibrary.com).

## KELLY

From Page 1

Winner of the Schneider Family Book Prize, *Song for a Whale* is about Iris, a 12-year-old girl who is the only deaf person in her school. When she finds out about Blue 55, a whale who is unable to communicate with other whales, she sets out to create a song and get it to him to show that he is not alone. And she doesn't mind breaking a few rules to accomplish her goal.

Here is a conversation with Kelly ahead of her visit:

**Q: In *Song for a Whale*, you gave Iris a hobby that is associated with sound -- repairing radios.**

A: Right, it's an unusual hobby! That was inspired by a college student I interpreted for. He'd always been interested in building and working with electronics, and started repairing old radios and TVs when he was a kid. It didn't matter that he couldn't hear the devices when they were working; he just enjoyed fixing electronics and he could figure out what needed to be done. I thought that was an interesting skill, and decided to give it to Iris. Those broken radios connected well with the whale who sings an unusual song, and it also shows readers that she's a smart and creative problem-solver.

**Q: It can be difficult to communicate with adolescents. Throw in a language barrier such as Iris and her father have and that would make it so much harder.**

A: Yes, it's a challenge for so many families. Since most deafness is not hereditary, family members probably haven't interacted with other deaf people before finding out they have a deaf kid. Ideally, the parents start learning sign language, but it's surprisingly uncommon. I've known countless deaf people who can't communicate well with their hearing family members.

**Q: You added a little humor into the story with the classmate who thinks she knows how to use ASL correctly, but was always getting things wrong. However, that character also illustrates how frustrating it would be for Iris.**

A: Yes, poor annoying Nina! I've actually gotten to know her better since she's the main character in my next novel, *The Secret Language of Birds*. I think she really wanted to be friends with Iris, but went about it the wrong way and instead ended up pushing her away. In addition to the isolation Iris experienced at school, it would be really frustrating to have the daily communication barrier and someone quite literally in her face not respecting her boundaries.

**Q: You worked as an ASL interpreter. How did you become involved in that?**

A: I'd planned to take just one sign language class as an elective in college, then enjoyed it so much, I took another class the following semester. That was all the college had at the time, but I want-

ed to continue learning more. I started taking community education classes taught by deaf people, and that's where I learned the most. I did that for about a year and a half. By the time I graduated, I knew I wanted to pursue a career in something related to sign language. I still interpret, usually in college classes or public schools, along with the occasional medical appointment.

**Q: What was the inspiration for *Song for a Whale*?**

A: Finding out about the real-life “lonely whale!” I saw a post about the 52 hertz whale, whose song probably can't be understood by other whales because of its unusually high frequency. Right away I started reading all the articles I could find about this whale, and couldn't stop thinking about him. I think as writers we look for those ideas that don't let us go - that lets us know that others out there will probably connect to the story too.

**Q: The story is a moving one in several ways for readers of all ages. What do you hope people come away with after reading the book?**

A: I've been so pleased to see readers of all ages enjoying the story. Of course when the book was released in 2019, I had no idea that a year later, themes of communication and isolation would be much more relevant than before. Though Iris' story is a unique one, I hope that readers will connect to those universal feelings she experiences and the need for community.

**Q: Did you always want to be a writer?**

A: No, like interpreting, that was something I stumbled into and fell in love with enough to do forever. I've always been a big reader, but writing a book was never something I'd considered. I was a special education teacher for third- through fifth-grade students when I got the idea for my first novel, *Chained*, about a captive elephant. At first, I was thinking it'd make an interesting story to tell my students, but later I wondered if could turn into something for a larger audience. I had a lot to learn about writing and publishing, but the book was published six years later. Though it took a lot of time and work and patience, I found that I liked taking an idea and turning into a story.

**Q: There is more attention being paid to the Deaf community. What else should be done?**

A: Probably the most important thing is to include deaf people in projects that have to do with them. Movies and TV shows are better now about casting deaf actors to play deaf characters, and hiring deaf consultants for sign language dialogue.

Learning some conversational sign language is easier than ever now, with the availability of online courses and ASL teachers on social media (just be sure to learn from deaf people to be sure you have a good language model!)

Events sponsored by Friends of Rodman Library, Greater Alliance Foundation, and University of Mount Union.



## McCONNELL

From Page 1

A teacher in the Boardman schools for 20 years, McConnell incorporated ASL into her teaching, and after retiring, took a position teaching ASL at the University of Mount Union, where she also started an ASL Club.

Now fully retired, McConnell is also the grandmother of seven, including a grandson who is deaf.

McConnell's family story has similarities to that found in *Song for a Whale*.

## ECLIPSE

From Page 1

### NEED GLASSES?

Eclipse glasses will be provided at all RPL eclipse programs. They will also be available starting April 1.

McCullough will also discuss the causes of eclipses and their rarity as well as detail the path of the 2024 event.

She will include information on how to safely view it and how to take photographs using cell phones or cameras with solar glasses and filters. She will also share a free app to capture the eclipse with a cell phone and a free program to process photos.

The event is free, but **registration is required**.

## Coming in April

Two new book clubs are forming at Rodman Public Library in April.

The I Read YA Discussion group will meet on Monday, April 1 at 6:30 p.m. with *Cinder* by Marissa Meyer being the selection for the month.

The group will meet on the first Monday of each month and registration will be required.

A cookbook club is also starting up in April, but details are still being worked out. Visit [rodmanlibrary.com](http://rodmanlibrary.com) and read April's Buzz for information.

# Rodman Staff Spotlight



## MATT LANSELL

A circulation assistant at the Branch who has been at RPL for 1 year and 5 months

### What is your favorite part about your job?

Helping our patrons and working with a great team.

### What is your favorite food or snack?

Cheetos, but don't eat them while reading a library book.

### What is your favorite color?

Blue.

### What was your favorite subject in school?

Accounting.

### Who is your favorite musical artist?

The band Yes.

I'm an old progressive rock fan.

### Are you a big fan of any sports teams?

Go Browns, Cavs, and Guardians.

### What do you like to do in your spare time?

Play my drum set.

### What is something people would be surprised to know about you?

I was the marching band percussion instructor from 2007 to 2014 and the auditorium technical director from 2011 to 2022 at Alliance High School.

### Do you have a favorite saying or motto you try to live by?

"If you're not getting the answers you need, maybe you're asking the wrong questions."  
- Matt Lansell

### What was your first vehicle?

My first motorcycle was a 1971 Harley Davidson 125cc Rapido. My first car was a 1974 VW Bus.

### What was the last thing you binge watched?

Yellowstone, 1883 and 1923

## ON THE ROAD



The RPL Bookmobile visits schools in the Alliance, Marlington, and West Branch school districts as well as Copeland Oaks between September and May.

# LOOKING BACK



After being introduced by the master of ceremonies, model Miss McFee walks the runway for the attendees during the Spring-Holzwarth Style Show that took place on March 28, 1941. This picture, from the collection of Michelle Dillon, is one of hundreds of photos that can be found on [alliancememory.org](http://alliancememory.org), a collaboration between Rodman Public Library and the Alliance Historical Society, a proud partner of the Alliance Preservation Society and the Castle Crusaders in preserving Alliance's history. Alliance Memory offers a view of history through photographs, personal recollections, and documents. To access RPL's online local history and genealogy resources, visit [rodmanlibrary.com/genealogy](http://rodmanlibrary.com/genealogy). For information about how Rodman Library can connect you to local history, call 330-821-2665, ext. 217.

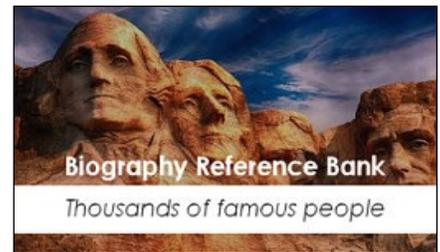
## FEATURED DATABASE

### Biography Reference Bank

Biography Reference Bank gives users access to biographical information on more than 335,000 people from throughout history, around the world, and across all disciplines.

One of more than 70 databases available on the RPL website, Biography Reference Bank features material taken from H. W. Wilson's collection of 95,000-plus biographies from more than 50 reference titles, thousands of biographical magazine articles, and more than 20,000 printable images.

Users can search by name, profession, ethnic background, place of birth, and more.



You can find all databases offered by Rodman Library at [rodmanlibrary.com/databases](http://rodmanlibrary.com/databases).

For information or help accessing RPL's free databases, call 330-821-2665, ext. 217.

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