

Your Monthly News & Updates

Programs @ Lanier

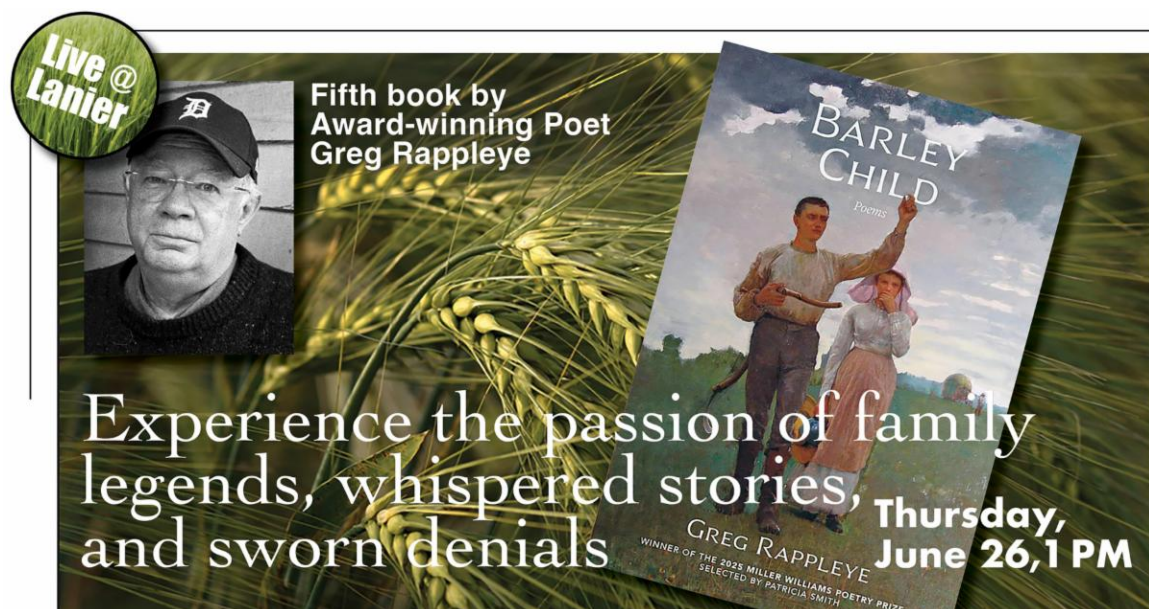
A promotional graphic for a library event. In the top left, a blue circular badge says "Chill @ Lanier". The background is a collage: a garden with purple flowers on the left, a giraffe in a field in the center, and a man with a long white beard, wearing a straw hat and sunglasses, on the right. Overlaid on the bottom is a large vinyl record. The record's label is yellow and red, with the text "THOSE LAZY-HAZY DAYS OF SUMMER (C. Tobias-H. Corns)" at the top, "NAT KING COLE" on the left, and "4965 (45-AA39473)" on the right. To the right of the record, the text "Spinning Those Oldies But Goodies" is written in a stylized font. On the left, below the badge, the text "OPEN HOUSE Beverages/Appetizers Friday, June 6 5-6:30 PM" is displayed in yellow and red. In the center, over the record, the text "Make Your First SUMMER TRACKS Stop at Sid's Place" is written in white and black.



Corrie Woods' photos for Lichty Guitars received an Honorable Mention in the International Photography Awards and have been featured in Acoustic Guitar Magazine, Ukulele Magazine, WNC Magazine, and elsewhere, but the Tryon photographer says, "Nature photography is my passion." She remembers her first image taken while backpacking in Wyoming at age 14. "I wanted badly to capture the vastness and save that moment."

She describes her Live@Lanier presentation as "about the ways that nature photography allows me to experience nature in a deeper way. It's a mix of simple tips, reflections of 'ah-ha' moments, and the stories behind some of my favorite images."

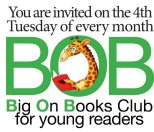
In this Felburn Nature and Wildlife Program, she will share why she considers the most important moment in photography comes before you take the image.



Winner of many awards, poet Greg Rappeleye describes poetry as his "profession pursued with a passion." That skill and heart-felt drive is lyrically evident in his newest book that gives voice to four generations of Irish American lives. These are real and imagined people found in or inspired by old letters, church registries, yellowed newspapers, census records, and vintage photographs. With the sarcastic wit of the Irish, each bears witness to measures of poverty, absurdity, madness, violence, strained religious faith, alcoholism, and shame.

He became acquainted with Lanier Library when winning a second place and two honorable mentions in the 2020 Sidney Lanier Poetry Contest and has been quite an active poet since. In addition to five books and four chapbooks, Rappeleye's poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *The Southern Review*, *North American Review*, *Arts and Letters*, *Shenandoah*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, and more.

He teaches in the English department at Hope College in Michigan and has delivered readings across the United States.



Big On Books (BOB) Club for Younger Readers

The BOB Club for K-12 readers will meet on June 24 at 3:30 at Lanier Library. Regular meetings will be on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 3:30. This is a get-together for young readers to share thoughts and feelings about whatever they are reading, from Adventure to Zoology, fiction and non, and to get ideas of what they may want to read next. Lanier Library members and non-members are welcome. BOB (Big On Books) is the name of the giraffe presiding at the top of the Chestnut Street hill outside the Library.



Chess Moves

Interested in learning to play chess or improving your game?
Join Lew Martin and other players on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm in the Holmes Room at Lanier.
No experience is necessary and chess boards are provided.

Note from the President



"Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole."

This quote, by Roger Caras, former head of the ASPCA, has been running through my head this month. Sharing my life with my beloved terrier, Scout, has given me so much happiness. He is now fifteen years old, and spends most of the day sleeping in the sun. Hang in there, little buddy.

My book club is reading *Dogland* this month. All of us were able to hear Tommy Tomlinson, the author, speak at the Lanier Library Distinguished Speaker event earlier this year. I loved this book, and really enjoyed hearing Tomlinson talk about the dog show culture, and whether or not these show dogs are happy. Following one dog and its handler, he went behind the scenes and shared his impressions of this very special world.

I listened to the book this time, since it has been a while since I first read it, and found myself laughing out loud, and then crying as I experienced his stories of dogs and the people who love them. I needed to immerse myself in *Dogland*, to be reminded of the place dogs will always have in my heart.

Right now, our world is full of change, both at home and abroad. There is so much uncertainty and negativity. Everyone deals with this in their own way. I find comfort in going to the Periodical Room at Lanier, and catching up on my favorite magazines.

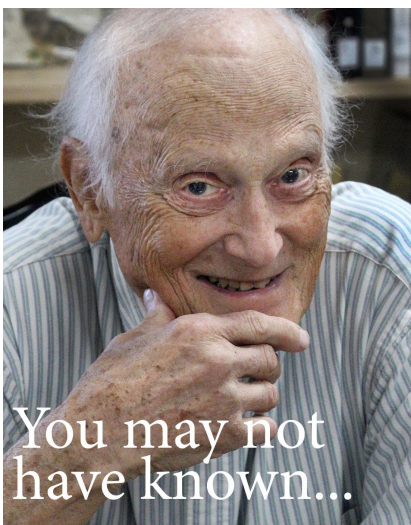
With a cup of coffee and a pile of New Yorkers to read, the problems of the world do not seem quite so bad. And you can't feel stressed with a dog's head on your knee.

I hope the Library serves as a refuge for you, too. I'll see you there soon! **Cindy**



The Lanier Library board is looking for an individual who is interested in leading hospitality efforts at the library. If you would like to know more, please contact Jenny Purtill at 828-859-9535 or thelanierlibrary@gmail.com.

Board Profile



You may not
have known...

New Board Member Profile: Derek Harrison

You may know Derek Harrison as a Saturday morning regular in the Holden Periodicals/Reading Room or as a musician/singer with Becky Kraai at local venues such as retirement communities and farmer's markets. You can also get to know him as the At-Large Board member working on a variety of projects.

What you may not have known is that Derek graduated from Seattle University in 1964 with a BA in English and Philosophy, followed by an MA in Literature from the University of Washington, and then a PhD in Higher Education from the State University of New York Buffalo. A few years later, he added an MA in Philosophy.

He says, "For over 50 years I was in the academic world, mostly teaching at the 12,000-student campus of Monroe Community College SUNY." He has worked under multiple grants, published dozens of articles in professional journals, and wrote five books.

With that career, he concludes, "Books have been the major preoccupation almost my entire life, both personally and professionally. The first books in my memory were those read to me by my mother: adventures like 'Treasure Island.' On my own, there were Zane Grey and the Hardy Boys. These days I read mostly non-fiction, history, and philosophy, and it is fun to-read some of those books from graduate school and the teaching years."

Derek reads in English, German, Haitian Creole, and Spanish. He has travelled in 65 countries and worked as a volunteer in nine of them

His fondness for the Holden Room is not just for the magazine variety, stillness, and architecture. "It reminds me of the Senior Commons Room of the University of Kent at Canterbury. I spent a term there studying philosophy as a 'visiting academic.' The room was bigger, the tea and scones better, but Lanier Library has its own ambience, and it's ours."

Membership Renewal Time

Is your membership about to expire? No need to come in to the library, just visit the library website by clicking on:

<https://thelanierlibrary.org/membership/online-membership-form/> and [renew online](#).

If you aren't sure when your membership expires, please contact the library at 828-859-9535.

Browsing Our Collection



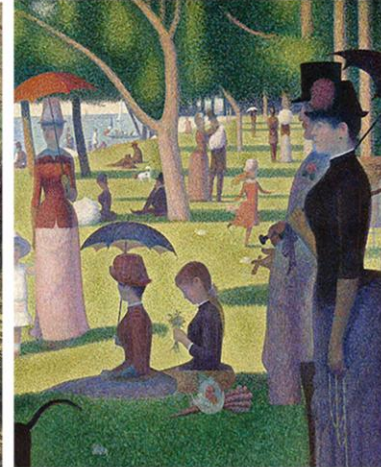
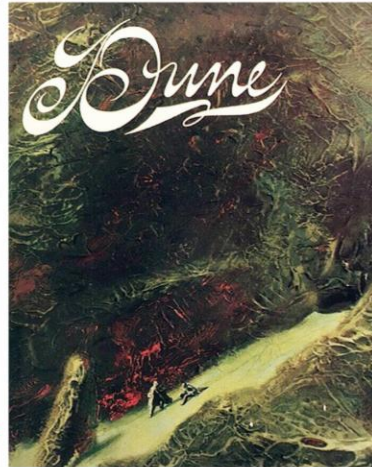
"Wellington and Blucher Meeting After the Battle of Waterloo," shown here, is one of two Stevengraphs, circa 1880, at the Library. The other is "Death of Nelson." Stevengraphs are pictures woven from silk, an art form created by Thomas Stevens in the 19th century. During the 1930s, Stevengraphs were collectable items, and more so during the 1960s and 1970s with the renewed interest in Victorian culture. These two, produced by a patented machine weaving process in England, were found in the cellar of the Library in 2001. Anyone know the donor?

Culture Quiz

COMPOSER?

AUTHOR?

ARTIST?



- Mozart
- Wagner
- Strauss

- Herbert
- Asimov
- Clarke

- Seurat
- Manet
- Signac

SCROLL TO BOTTOM FOR ANSWERS

Book Lovers June 7, 2025

Book Lovers will meet on June 7 at 10 AM to discuss books they've enjoyed (or not)! It's casual, enlightening, and there are no rules. Join the fun!
Here are current favorites.

Fiction

When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead
The Shadow Land by Elizabeth Kostova
A Refiner's Fire by Donna Leon
Shadow of the Solstice by Anne Hillerman
Moloka'i by Alan Brennert
Joe Nuthin's Guide to Life by Helen Fisher
Shy Creatures by Clare Chambers
The Magnificent Ruins by Nayantara Roy
Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng
Our Missing Hearts by Celeste Ng
The English Problem by Beena Kamlani
Miss Morgan's Book Brigade by Janet Skeslien Charles

Mystery

The Crossing Places by Elly Griffiths
The Janus Stone by Elly Griffiths
The House at Sea's End by Elly Griffiths
A Room Full of Bones by Elly Griffiths
Dying Fall by Elly Griffiths
Ten more titles by Elly Griffiths
Who Will Remember by C.S. Harris
Broken by Karin Slaughter
Fractured by Karin Slaughter
Undone by Karin Slaughter
Hang On St. Christopher by Adrian McKinty
Memoir/Biography

A Wilder Shore: Odyssey of Fanny and Robert Louis Stevenson by Camille Peri
No Friend but the Mountains by Behrouz Boochani

Nonfiction

Bloody Williamson by Paul M. Angle
Dogland by Tommy Tomlinson
You Can't Kill A Man Because of the Books He Reads by Brad Snyder
When the Germans Come by David Hewson

Nonfiction Book Club

On June 8 at 1:30, the Nonfiction Book Club will meet to discuss the nonfiction book club
On Freedom by Timothy Snyder. On July 13th at 1:30 PM, the group will discuss *The
Message* by Ta-Nehisi Coates.

Orders & Acquisitions

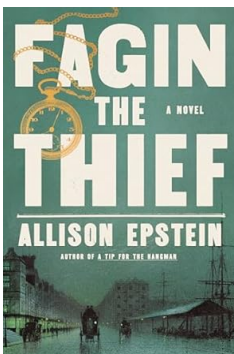
Below are the links to our **May** Acquisitions & Orders. Feel free to contact the library to put your name on the hold list for any you would like to read.

You can call us or [log in through the catalog on the website using your library card number for ID and PIN.](#)

And, as always, let us know if there is a book or DVD you think would enhance the collection.

Click here for [Orders.](#)
Click here for [Acquisitions.](#)

May Book Review



A TWIST FOR FAGIN

Fagin the Thief, by Allison Epstein

Even if you never read Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* anywhere along your educational journey, you have quite possibly seen – or at least heard of -- *Oliver!*, a successful 1960 stage music drama that became an even more successful musical film in 1968. At the least, you may have some name recognition with *Oliver Twist*, with his buddy the Artful Dodger, or even with Fagin, one of the most reviled Jewish characters in literature, right up there with Shylock.

Dickens' novel, printed initially as a serial in 1837 – 1839, is based on a young band of ragamuffins that runs loose through the streets of central London, picking pockets and lifting jewels as if they're out for a simple stroll in the park and decide to pick a posey. They always return home, such as it is, to Fagin, their semi-adopted foster father, teacher of the craft of picking pockets, and general protector and provider. For if he doesn't look after them, who will?

In her new novel, *Fagin the Thief*, (2025 – 317 pp) Allison Epstein creates the backstory for Jacob Fagin, the mastermind of these young villains who are well on their

way to lives of established street thuggery – or dead on the streets from cold, illness, or starvation. Not particularly likable, certainly not trustworthy in either Dickens or on the stage, Jacob Fagin is humanized in Epstein's novel. In these pages we see a boy with a sad history, a man with a heart that has been hardened through years of anti-Semitism and the need to fend for himself in order to survive. However, though no helping hands were offered to him at the time of his mother's death, he finds in himself a way to help these wayward souls. We may also find a way to adjust our own feelings and perceptions of him.

Fagin the Thief fits handily into the growing genre of novels about The Other: *Wide Sargasso Sea*, *Mary Reilly*, *The Red Tent*, *Grendel*, *Circe*, *Wicked*, and, most recently, *James*, to name just a few. An entire industry awaits with characters to be harvested from literature, from mythology, from the Bible; I predict this genre is just beginning.

But what of the subgenre? In these stories we are allowed to glimpse the humanity of these evil characters that we have loved to despise and to fear. What happens to us as these mean-spirited, demon-inspired characters appear to have a soul? Are our own natures shifting as well? Will the Wicked Witch still prompt us to hide under the bed as she rides her broom through the sky, threatening Dorothy? Do we admit to "a tightening at the bone" and a closer clutch of our crossbody bag when we see a contemporary of Fagin heading our way on a crowded city street? The choice is ours.

I encourage you to renew your acquaintance with Fagin and discover for yourself.

Submitted by [Gloria Underwood, Ph.D.](#)

Last Month @ Lanier

Strong Women, Dark Corner

Local historian Jim Stehlik entertained a large crowd on May 21 as he shared stories of strong women in the history of the Dark Corner community. Jim is the author of three books on the Dark Corner community, all available at the Lanier Library.



Pets @ Lanier

*Lanier Library welcomes all library-friendly dogs & cats,
but asks that they remain on leash or in their carriers at all times.*

Last month Crystal
stopped by with Nora
(left)



and Avenly (right)

Displays @ Lanier

Sandra's Shelf Display

June's book display will feature books that staff and members have enjoyed and will recommend some authors similar in theme or style and will be titled: *If You Like These Authors, Try Some Of These Recommended "Read-Alikes"*.

June Display Case

This month Corrie Woods will fill the display case with items showcasing her love of the natural world and how to capture nature through photography.

Thank You

Thank you to Becky Hudson and the Polk County Historical Association for loaning items relating to moonshining for the May display case.

Poem of the Month

The Lanier Library Poetry Committee is pleased to introduce a poem of the month program. Each month we will be posting a different poem that we hope will inspire you. The poem will be in the monthly newsletter and posted at the library. Please let us know what you think of each month's selection.

Helldivers

by Greg Rappleye

--Curtiss SB2C Helldivers;
downriver Detroit, July, 1943

The girl who'll be my Mam is alone,
free of the asylum on a weekend pass,

sprawled on the steps of Maggie's faded two-story,
listening as Helldivers from Grosse Ile

strafe Plum Island, sortie after sortie,
each scored by an ensign aboard a gray tug

Buoyed off the mid-line, because "Practice makes perfect,"
and our best will be needed at Truk and Iwo Jima.

Not supposed to drink (Amobarbitol, too young),
she's on her fourth beer from Waddy's extra ice-

box, and is eating blind robins on dark rye—
over-salted herring filets; stinky, the worst snack ever.

She knows that Paul Witkowski, who's slumped
in a wheelchair on the porch of a bungalow

kitty-corner across St. John Street, who lost both legs
and much of his face to phosphor and bunker fuel

aboard the *Oklahoma*, will persuade himself
the Helldivers are Japanese Zeros

and begin to scream, sure that he's back
at Pearl; four hours a day, seven days every week

he wails, unless the Helldivers—thumping live ammo
to the Plum Island mud before pulling up

and circling back, their high-horse engines
roaring all the way down Eureka Road—

don't score well enough and need more practice,
sometimes flying deep into the buzzy, mosquitoed dusk,

Paul Witkowski and Mam echoing those perfect
machines wail for wail, scream for scream.

Culture Quiz Answers

1. "The Flying Dutchman" premiered 1843, composed by Richard Wagner (1813-1883).
2. Frank Herbert (1920-1986)
3. Georges Seurat (1859-1891, French post-Impressionist artist who created the pointillism technique.

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