



# myMCLS

## MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

WINTER 2024  
NEWSLETTER

Celebrating the

**37TH YEAR OF THE ANNUAL BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

# Blues Series



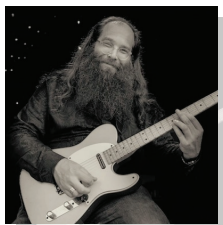
RECIPIENT OF THE BLUES FOUNDATION'S KEEPING THE BLUES ALIVE AWARD 2009



More than a month of live Blues performances are scheduled for the Library's annual celebration of Black History Month. Now in its 37th year, the series acknowledges the profound impact made by African American artists to our country's cultural traditions. As with last year's program, artists from the Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Toledo areas will present concerts in branches across Monroe County. All events are free and appropriate for all ages.

This year's list of "Tuesday is Blues Day" artists include Toledo jazz and blues singer Ramona Collins, Detroit blues legend Zoom, guitar and harmonica duo Howard Glazer and Harmonica Shah, the contemporary gospel group The Jones Trio, and acoustic blues singer and guitarist Danny Kroha.

The highly anticipated 2024 *Big Gig!* will feature an all-star line-up features Ann Arbor's nationally acclaimed singer and guitarist Laith Al-Saadi, and the Bobby Murray Band with special guest singers Lenny Watkins and Tosha Owens. Laith Al-Saadi gained national recognition with his performance in the finale of NBC's "The Voice" in 2016. Bobby Murray served as the longtime guitarist for the legendary Etta James and leads his own band of veteran musicians. Following the tradition from the program's start in 1988, Rev. Robert Jones will open the show and serve as master of ceremonies.



Monroe County's 37th Annual Black History Month Blues Series is presented by the Monroe County Library System, Monroe County Community College, and the 2024 Blues Coalition of community partners: DTE Foundation, Monroe NAACP, Friends of South Rockwood, Friends of Carleton, Friends of Dorsch, Friends of Ellis, Friends of Ida, and Friends of Bedford.

This project is funded in part by Michigan Humanities, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Michigan Arts and Culture Council.

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For more information on all 2024 Blues Series events visit us online at <https://mymcls.com/blues>

# Letter

## From the Director

Kicking off the New Year with a preview of what's to come is a favorite tradition of mine. Beloved library events such as storytimes, book clubs, and family crafts are always strong in our branches, but our 37th Annual Black History Month Blues Series kicks our programming into high gear in February, setting the stage, so to speak, for March's One Book, One Community events.

The full schedule of 2024 Blues Series events can be found in this newsletter and online at [mymcls.com/blues](http://mymcls.com/blues). I hate to reveal too much breaking news at once, but in this case I can't help giving you more incredible things to watch for! Our online event calendar, which is always the place to look for upcoming library activities, will be updated by March 2024, with a wonderful new look and user experience that will bring the events you love right to your fingertips!

The Library System's 90th Anniversary celebration will also be taking place in the fall of this year. Watch for future announcements on special programming to celebrate the occasion in style.

I'm keeping my message brief to make room for articles highlighting programs and services, but I must thank you again for your support during the past year.

- Nancy Bellaire

# Kids Corner

Coming soon to a BRANCH near YOU



## Reading Dragons

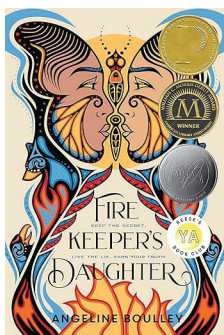
### What is a Reading Dragon?

The Reading Dragons game is a fun, card based reading incentive program. Track your reading to earn new cards. Earn a family of mythical creature cards to build your collection and play against your friends.

Each family of creatures includes 4 cards showing the egg, baby, teen, and adult of the creature you choose.

The Reading Dragons game started at the Erie and Rasey Memorial Branch Libraries, and will soon expand to be available across Monroe County.

Check back for more information coming in the summer of 2024 at [mymcls.com](http://mymcls.com).



### What if everyone read the same book and then joined all those readers in talking about it?

That's the idea behind One Book, One Community of Monroe County. Each year, the One Book, One Community of Monroe County selection committee chooses a readily available and discussible book written by a major author. Monroe County residents are then invited to read the same book at the same time and discuss it through a series of free programs running approximately one month.

Each year's events feature book discussions and free county-wide community activities related to the themes raised by these provocative and inspiring stories. One Book, One Community of Monroe County aims to enrich the experience of reading for everyone, regardless of race, gender, age, income, or the neighborhood they call home.

The Committee is excited to announce that the One Book One Community selection for 2024 is *Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley - the story of a biracial, unenrolled tribal member, Daunis Fontaine. Daunis has never quite fit in her hometown or on the nearby Ojibwe reservation. When her family is struck by tragedy, Daunis puts her dreams on hold to care for her fragile mother. The only bright spot is meeting Jamie, the charming new recruit on her brother's hockey team.

After Daunis witnesses a shocking murder that thrusts her into a criminal investigation, she agrees to go undercover. But the deceptions—and deaths—keep piling up and soon the threat strikes too close to home. How far will she go to protect her community if it means tearing apart the only world she's ever known?

*One Book, One Community of Monroe County aims to enrich the experience of reading for everyone, regardless of race, gender, age, income or the neighborhood they call home. For more information and to find a One Book One Community event, visit [www.monroecc.edu/onebook](http://www.monroecc.edu/onebook).*



# BLUES SERIES 2024 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024 at 7:00 PM**

**The Jones Trio - Carleton Branch Library**

The Jones Trio takes traditional gospel and rhythm & blues in new directions. The group includes Robert Jones II, Rosa Warner-Jones, and Arnesia Jones. Opening for the trio is Detroit performance poet and singer One Single Rose.

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2024 at 7:00 PM**

**Ramona Collins - Bedford Branch Library**

Toledo's acclaimed singer Ramona Collins explores the roots of American music with a performance called "When Jazz and Blues Come Together." She is joined by her all-star band including pianist Cliff Monear, bassist Dave Stearns, and drummer Sean Dobbins.

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2024 at 7:00 PM**

**Danny Kroha - Ida Branch Library**

Acoustic county blues singer and guitarist Danny Kroha takes early blues, folk and country and creates a new sound from old styles.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2024 at 7:00 PM**

**THE BIG GIG! - Monroe County Community College**

This year's edition of *The Big Gig!* is heavy on vocals and guitar. In traditional form, Rev. Robert B. Jones, Sr. opens the show and serves as master of ceremonies. Ann Arbor's acclaimed singer and guitarist Laith Al-Saadi gives a solo performance of his high energy blues and soul. Metro Detroit guitarist Bobby Murray and his band are joined by some of the area's finest singers including Lenny Watkins, Tosha Owens, Smoke Jones, and Greg Nagy.

Rev. Jones is a nationally known multi-instrumentalist and storyteller preserving the roots of the blues. Laith Al-Saadi gained national attention with his performance in the finale of NBC's "The Voice" in 2016 and is renowned for his high energy shows. Bobby Murray served as the longtime guitarist for the legendary Etta James and leads a band of veteran Detroit area musicians.

*The Big Gig! is an extremely popular event. No advance tickets are required and seating is general admission, first-come, first-served until Meyer Theater capacity is reached. Doors to the theater will open at 6:00pm and the show begins at 7:00pm sharp.*

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2024 at 7:00 PM**

**Zoom and Her Band- Ellis Library & Reference Center**

Dynamic Detroit singer Zoom features a high energy show in the tradition of classic women blues artists like Koko Taylor. Special guest Chris Canas will join the band on guitar.

**TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024 at 7:00 PM**

**Howard Glazer and Harmonica Shah**

**South Rockwood Branch Library**

Blues veterans Glazer and Shah are Detroit's own version of the classic guitar and harmonica duo. Both artists have played the Detroit circuit for decades and toured nationally and internationally.

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**@The Branches** (More at [bit.ly/eventsmcls](https://bit.ly/eventsmcls))  
**Puzzle in a Day**

**At the Ellis Library & Reference Center**

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024 from 9:00 AM - 7:00 PM**

Join us upstairs at the Ellis Library and Reference Center as we attempt to put a puzzle together in a day! All are welcome!

**My Punny Valentine Make and Take Craft**

**At the Ida Branch Library**

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024 from 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM**

"Dad Jokes" aren't just for Dad's anymore. Come make some hilarious Punny Valentine Cards for your friends, family or yourself. We'll provide materials, you bring the giggles!

Register Online! [bit.ly/idapunny](https://bit.ly/idapunny)

**Bedford Genealogy Club**

**At the Bedford Branch Library**

**Friday, February 16, 2024 from 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

Please join us for our after hours Genealogy Club. This is open research time to use Ancestry and other computer programs, as well as our local history resources. It's also a great place to meet other genealogist and find people to help you locate that one ancestor who keeps eluding you.

**Mommy Meet-Up!**

**At the Dundee Branch Library**

**Saturday, February 17, 2024 from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

Play Group for caregiver (not just Mommies!) and children birth - preschool age. We will be offering a time for young children and their caregiver to interact through playing, creating art, singing, and reading. We will have coffee for the adults!

Doors open at 9:45 am. Please leave older children at home.

This is a program for children ages 0-5 years old.

This program is drop-in.

**Native Plants at the Ida Branch Library**

**Saturday, February 17, 2024 from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

Bring your garden to life by selecting native plants that support wildlife. Paul Russeau, Master Gardener and Board member of the Wild Ones Oak Opening Chapter, will be our presenter.

Register Online! [bit.ly/plantsida](https://bit.ly/plantsida)

**Tail Waggin' Tutors**

**At the Maybee Branch Library**

**Saturday, February 24, 2024 from 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

The "Tail Waggin' Tutors" program is brought to you by Therapy Dogs International. This program encourages children to read by providing a non-judgmental listener and furry friend to read to. Pick a book and come read with a furry friends.

**Coming Soon Booklist**

**April 2024**

A Calamity of Souls by David Baldacci

Lost Birds by Anne Hillerman

Extinction by Douglas Preston

**May 2024**

Summers at the Saint by Mary Kay Andrews

Camino Ghosts by John Grisham

You Like It Darker by Stephen King

**Discover GREAT TITLES coming to MCLS:**

• [mymcls.com/all-recommendations](https://mymcls.com/all-recommendations)

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**Holiday Closings**

All branches of the Monroe County  
Library System will be closed:

February 19, 2024 in observance of  
Presidents' Day  
and

March 31, 2024  
in observance of Easter



# Become a Friend of the Library!

If you love the library and want to help enhance library services and promote library use, we extend an invitation to you to become involved in the Friends of the Monroe County Library System. Your membership also entitles you to invitations to Book Sale previews, special Friends events, and related Library mailings.

Please fill out the application below, call 734-241-5770, or visit <http://bit.ly/myclsfriends>

☐ **New Membership** ☐ **Renewal**

Name: .....

Address: ..... Phone: .....

City: ..... State: ..... Zip: .....

Please make checks payable to **FRIENDS OF THE MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM.**

**Classes of membership:**

Individual (annual)-\$10.00

Family (annual)-\$15.00

Senior (annual)-\$5.00

Junior (annual)-\$2.00

Life- \$200.

Joining the **FRIENDS of MCLS** entitles you to membership in your local **FRIENDS** group. With which branch library would you like to be affiliated? .....

What would you like **FRIENDS** to support?

Books ☐ Technology ☐ Programs ☐ Beautification ☐

Other? .....

We also welcome corporate sponsors. Please call the library for details.

**The Monroe County Library System Board of Trustees**

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