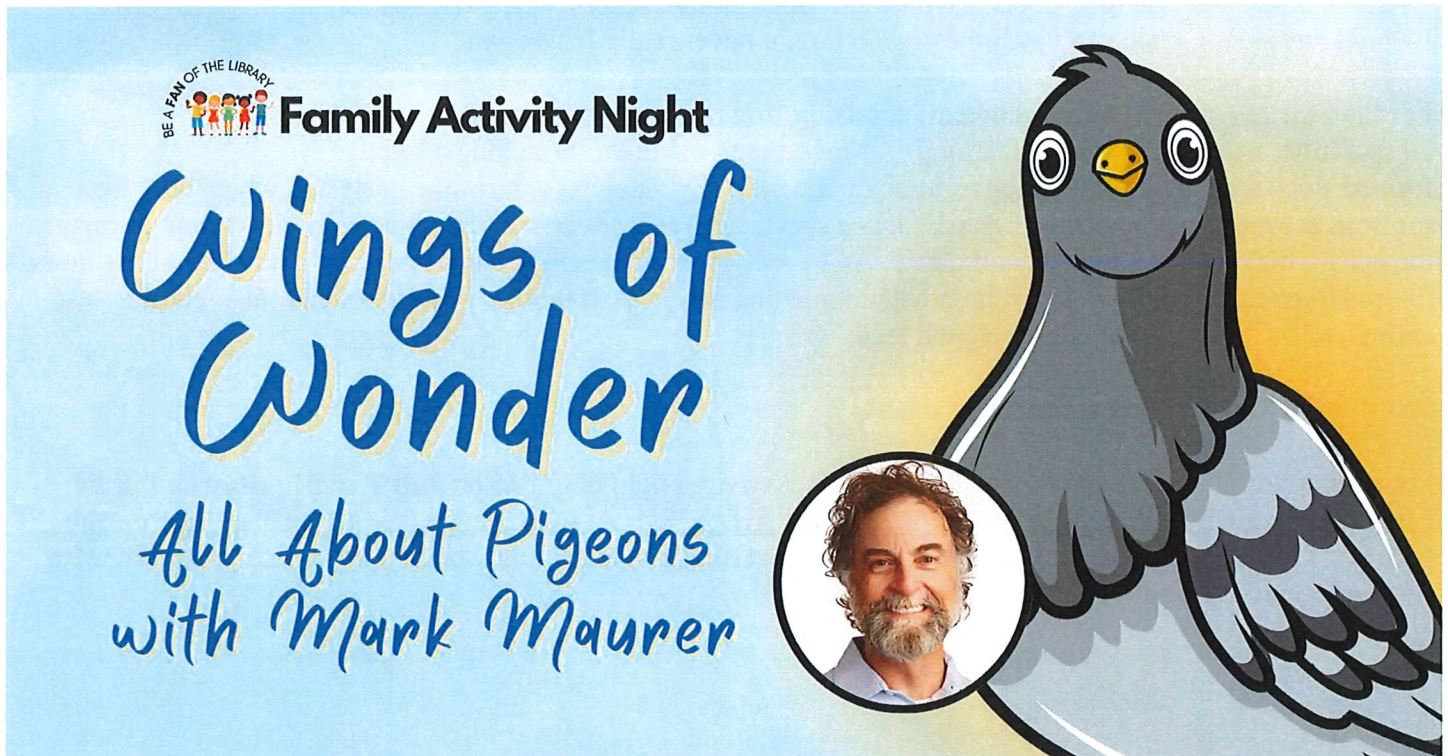


Pigeons: Flying Rats or Thoroughbreds of the Sky? Find out at MPL's Family Activity Night on July 8!

Jul 1, 2025 | 2:30 PM

[Local News](#)



The following article was written by Family Activity Night Presenter and Pigeon Enthusiast, Mark Maurer.

The homing pigeon, also known as the rock dove, has long been both reviled and revered. Often dismissed as “vermin with wings,” these birds are commonly seen as pests competing for scraps in public spaces. What many people don’t realize, however, is the historically vital role pigeons have played throughout human history.

Ancient civilizations such as the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans used homing pigeons to carry messages. Even Reuters News relied on them in the early 1900s. During both World War I and World War II, homing pigeons were crucial to military communications. Two of the most famous birds—Cher Ami and G.I. Joe—are credited with saving hundreds of lives.

So, when I mention in conversation that I’ve spent the past 25 years raising and racing homing pigeons—birds that have flown 100, 200, even 500 plus miles in a single day, often averaging 40–45 MPH and sometimes exceeding 60 MPH with favorable winds—people take notice. And they’re intrigued.

I’m always happy to share my perspective on this remarkable one-pound bird, equipped with a compass-map navigation system that scientists still don’t fully understand. They are not “nuisances”—they’re elite athletes of the sky with a legacy that deserves far more respect.

The conversation usually begins with me sharing how I grew up in Sheboygan Falls and became fascinated with pigeons around the age of ten. My neighborhood friends and I would catch wild young pigeons and raise them in a makeshift coop. Eventually, after some persistent pleading, my parents agreed to a more permanent setup—and my grandfather built a small coop attached to our garage. At ten years old, I was unofficially a “pigeon fancier.”

Over the next few years, I kept about a dozen pigeons. Some were given to me young enough to be “settled” or “re-homed” in my loft, while others were the offspring of my own birds. I never raced them or joined a pigeon club, but caring for them and taking them on short training flights with my dad brought me a lot of joy. It also gave my friends—whose parents weren’t quite as indulgent—a chance to share in the fun.

Eventually, teenage life took over. My time shifted to sports, school, and girls. But, as I would later learn, once you catch the pigeon bug, it never really leaves you.



Mark Maurer

For the past 25+ years, I’ve been breeding, raising, and racing homing pigeons. And in all that time, I’ve never stopped learning—or marveling—at them. Watching a tightly formed flock soar around the neighborhood on a windy day, banking against the gusts and whooshing over rooftops at what must be close to 70 MPH, is a spectacle. I still chuckle at the strutting cocks trying to impress the hens—like boys at a high school dance. And I still get a rush on race day, especially when one of my birds returns from Luverne, MN (428 miles) with a time that beats out 100 other birds from 15 lofts—earning just enough to buy a 40-pound bag of pigeon feed.

So—Flying Rats or Thoroughbreds of the Sky?

I hope that you’ll be able to join me at for Family Activity Night 6:30 PM on **July 8 at Manitowoc Public Library when we explore [Wings of Wonder—All About Pigeons with Mark Maurer](#)**. We’ll gather on the **Library Lawn** for a conversation about these often-misunderstood flying wonders, complete with a *live bird release* (weather permitting).

MPL Invites Everyone to Sing & Play with Award-Winning Musician and Author, Jim Gill, on Burger Boat Park on July 9

Jul 5, 2025 | 12:00 PM

[Local News](#)



The following article was written by Lynn Christiansen, a Youth Services Associate at the Manitowoc Public Library.

Manitowoc Public Library's Youth Department is thrilled to host Award-Winning musician and author, Jim Gill, for a free, family-friendly concert. This interactive experience encourages children and their grownups to sing and play *together*.

Mr. Gill has a graduate degree from the **Erikson Institute of Chicago** with a special emphasis on the study of play. In addition, he has spent 20 years creating and leading playgroups for families with children with special needs. Inspired by his work, Mr. Gill's music combines wordplay and movement to encourage playful interactions between children and their caregivers.

Our "Sing-along & Play-along Concert" is open to All Ages and will take place in Burger Boat Park (directly across Quay Street from the Library) on Wednesday, July 9, at 2 PM. Bring your blankets and chairs, and be ready to sing and dance along! Concessions will be available for purchase. In the event of inclement weather, the concert will take place in the Library's Balkansky Community Room.

We have both of Mr. Gill's books—*May There Always Be Sunshine* and *A Soup Opera*—as well as several of his music CDs in our collection. In addition, his music is available on popular streaming services such as Pandora, Spotify, Amazon, and Apple Music.

We would like to thank the Manitowoc Public Library Foundation, as well as the City of Manitowoc and Visit Manitowoc for helping to make this concert possible.



Lynn Christiansen

Summer for Teens at the Library-When It Gets Too Hot to be Cool Outside

Jul 8, 2025 | 2:30 PM

[Local News](#)

TEEN HANG-OUT **WHAT THE DUCK?**



The following article was written by Kristin Keck, a Teen Associate at the Manitowoc Public Library.

Summer is here! Lazy days outside! The beach! The swimming! The hiking and the fishing! The heat. The sweaty backs. The flies, the ants, the mosquitoes . . .

Maybe we should go inside.

If there are teens out there looking for something to do, stop by the library and try some of our free *air-conditioned* programs. Hi, I'm Kristin, the Teen Services person at Manitowoc Public Library, here to tell you about the Teen Programs (and some All-Ages ones) at the Library this summer.

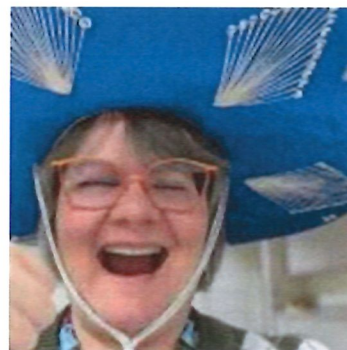
[Teen Hang-Out: Take the Mic!](#) Have your five minutes of fame and an audience, too! Whether you sing, dance, juggle, perform puppet shows, or tell jokes—your stage awaits! Bring some fans or make some new ones. The Library will provide the microphone, sound system, space, and concessions (free snacks). You provide your talent or your applause—or both!

[Teen Hang-Out: What the Duck?](#) Create some avian cosplay with rubber ducks and crafty stuff. Raid the cabinets for hot glue, fabric, feathers, paint pens, cardboard—all the things to transform your ducky into the character of your choosing. One lucky duck will be voted best in show, earning their proud owner a prize.

[Teen Hang-Out: On the Table—Ransom Notes](#) Welcome to my new favorite game: Ransom Notes! All the wild competition of Refrigerator Magnet Poetry and the subtle elegance of Charades combined into one tabletop extravaganza! Or maybe I have those descriptions backwards. Try to respond to prompt cards with the word tiles you have, with the best response winning the round. Time is short, words are limited—how will you answer?

[Teen Hang-Out: Wild Side Selfies](#) Warning: May Contain Snakes. The Library will provide backdrops, a light ring, a phone stand, and some scaly friends from J&R Aquatic Animal Rescue for dry selfies with a wild flair. Bring your glam look and your phone or other picture-taking device. What goes with python? You decide. Participants will get a five-minute photo session with one reptilian co-star. First come, first served. A handler will be on hand to ensure the safety of all humans and animals.

[Teen Hang-Out: Sundae Funday!](#) Let's eat our feelings, along with some ice cream! Let there be sprinkles and sticky syrups and, you know, sundae stuff. From marshmallow fluff to gummy worms, create your own masterpiece of tooth decay. Spoons, bowls, and various sugar applications provided. Just bring your appetite! And please register so I know if there are food allergies! #AnaphylacticShocker



Kristin Keck

Once you've cooled off sufficiently, you might risk some of the outdoor programs as well, like [Paint the Library](#) or [Tie Dye Tuesday](#). Just remember what I said about the mosquitoes.

Touch the Trucks Roars Back to Manitowoc Public Library on Wednesday, July 16!

Jul 15, 2025 | 2:30 PM

[Local News](#)



The following article was written by Sharon Verbeten, the Youth Services Manager at the Manitowoc Public Library.

Big trucks have a big impact—especially with little kids! They love them so much, in fact, that Manitowoc Public Library repeats its most popular outdoors event every summer! This year's Touch the Trucks event will take place on Wednesday, July 16, from 10 AM to noon in the Briess Parking Lot, directly across Quay Street from the Library.

Me? I love the cement mixer (and think it should actually be filled with smoothies!). Some kids? They're all about the fire trucks or police cars. Others think there's nothing better than a good old fashioned farm tractor or construction vehicle. Good thing is—all those vehicles will be there for kids to climb aboard, toot the horn, turn the wheels, wave to parents, and pose for pics. The only thing better would be driving these big boys—but unfortunately, those fun days will have to wait.

Last year's event drew over 1,000 attendees, so plan accordingly. Bring your littles (and their stuffies—what teddy bear doesn't want to pose in an excavator scoop?). Wear your walking shoes. Bring your sunhats. Don't forget the sunscreen. Pack your patience. Just be ready for what kids are sure to call their best morning ever!

This is the stuff dreams are made of. Little kids often dream of becoming firefighters or police officers. Some just inherently have the need for speed. Touch the Trucks brings all of these dreams a little closer to reality.

Fingers crossed for good weather! See you there! Beep, Beep, Beep, Beep—YEAH!

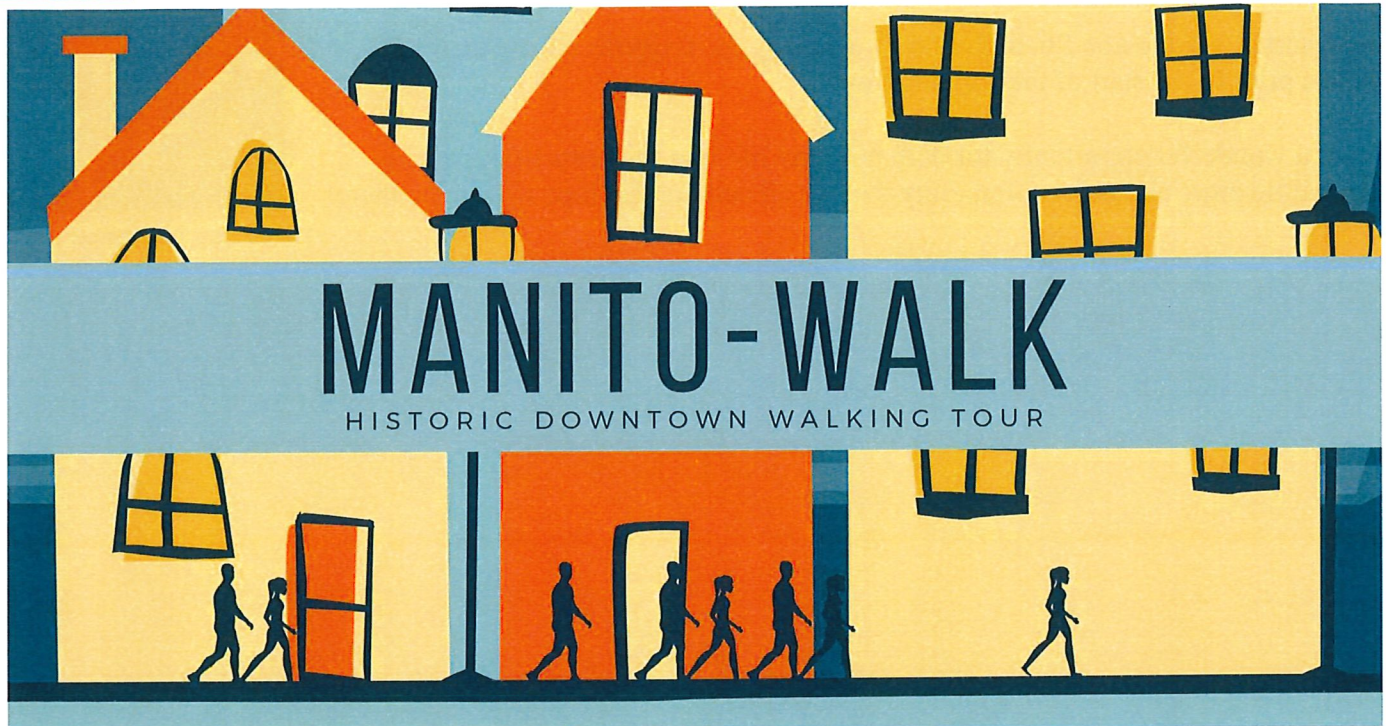


Sharon Verbeten

Manitowoc Public Library to Offer Walking Tours of Historic Downtown Manitowoc This August

Jul 22, 2025 | 2:30 PM

[Local News](#)



The following article was written by Manitowoc Public Library Public Services Librarian, Tony Plekan.

As you drive down 8th Street, you might not be aware of how much history you pass along the way. Downtown Manitowoc has seen significant change over the decades, but landmarks of our city's past remain—if you know where to look!

Manitowoc Public Library is offering an opportunity to learn more about the origins of some of Downtown Manitowoc's most iconic buildings. That said, we hope that you will be able to join us for "ManitoWalk: Historic Downtown Walking Tour."

Manitowoc Public Library is offering two opportunities for you to take a walk with us and learn about some Downtown Manitowoc history:

- Monday August 4 from 10-11:30 AM
- Registration opens Monday July 21 at 9 AM
- Monday August 11 from 5:30-7 PM
- Registration opens Monday July 28 at 9 AM

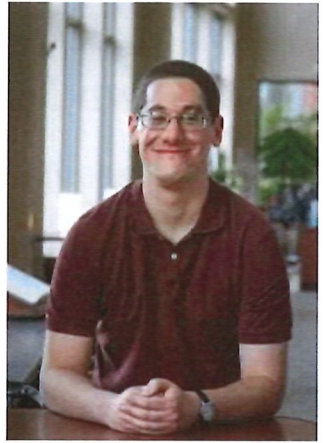
The tour will cover 10 historic buildings and focus on the stories of those who established those venues. You'll hear about businesses that were once the cornerstones of downtown like *Schuetz Brothers Department Store* and *Fehr's Jewelry Store*. Learn how a jailbreak helped lead to the Manitowoc County Court House we know today. The tour concludes at *Kathy's Stage Door Pub*, which is the current occupant of the oldest building on our route (built in 1853!).

It is truly remarkable how much history is contained in just a few blocks!

Registration is required and space is limited. You must be at least 18 years old and be able to withstand walking and standing for over an hour. We will view the historic buildings from the sidewalk only (the tour does not include the interior of the buildings). In the event of inclement weather, the event will be canceled.

Tours start at Manitowoc Public Library outside by the flagpole. Please arrive 10 minutes prior to the start of the walking tour.

This is a wonderful opportunity for both new and lifelong residents of our area to learn a little more about the community that we all call home. Hope to see you there!

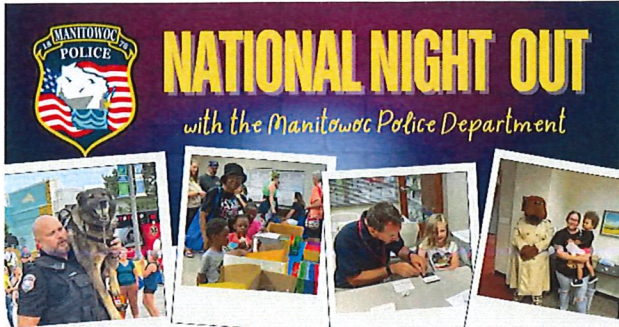


Tony Plekan

Manitowoc Police Department and Manitowoc Public Library Join Forces to Present National Night Out

Jul 29, 2025 | 2:30 PM

[Local News](#)



The following article was written by Manitowoc Police Department Crime Prevention Sergeant Paul Krock.

Hello. This is Crime Prevention Sgt. Paul Krock from the Manitowoc Police Department and I wanted to share some exciting information with you about our upcoming [National Night Out](#) event being held at Manitowoc Public Library on Tuesday, August 5, from 6-7:30 PM.

[National Night Out](#) is an annual event that provides a great opportunity to bring police and citizens together under positive circumstances to create stronger ties between law enforcement, neighborhoods, and communities, creating a safer environment for everyone.

This year's [National Night Out](#) will offer community members a wide variety of activities, as well as information on keeping children and families safe. One of the many activities that children can participate in during this year's [National Night Out](#) is a scavenger hunt. Children who complete the scavenger hunt are eligible to receive school supplies that have been generously donated by Walmart.

The Manitowoc Police Department will also be offering free child identification kits. These child identification kits take only a few minutes to complete and are stored at home by parents or guardians should law enforcement ever need their child's vital information to assist in locating a missing child.

Officers from the Manitowoc Police Department and firefighters from the Manitowoc Fire Department will be available in the Library's Parking Lot during [National Night Out](#) to provide children and families with a chance to get up close and explore our emergency vehicles that are used every day to help keep the community safe.

Officer Schleis and the Manitowoc Police Department's newest K9—K9 Rolo—will also demonstrate how K9s can assist police in finding lost citizens, illegal drugs, and apprehending dangerous criminal suspects. Officer Schleis and K9 Rolo's demonstration will showcase a K9s unique role in helping to keep the community safe.

New to this year's event will be a drone demonstration, conducted by Officer Klunker that will highlight how this technology is used to assist law enforcement in their duties. Also, making their first appearance at [National Night Out](#) is Manitowoc County 4-H who will have several animals onsite for children to interact with.

Many other organizations from the City of Manitowoc that are focused on keeping kids and families safe and healthy will be at the event to share information with parents and children. These agencies will have stations set up in the Balkansky Community Room, which is located on the Library's Second Floor.



Manitowoc Police Department Crime Prevention Sergeant Paul Krock

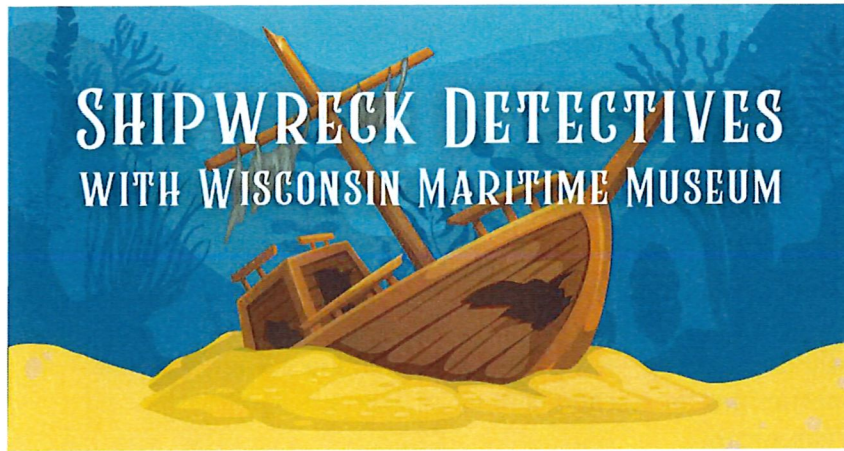
Learn about the Manitowoc Crime Prevention Committee, Neighborhood Watch, TRIAD Committee, and Manitowoc Police Department Citizens' Academy Alumni Association who will all have members on-hand to answer questions and provide safety information to those in attendance. McGruff the Crime Dog will also be making a special appearance!

I hope that you're able to join the Manitowoc Police Department at Manitowoc Public Library for an evening of fun activities and learning on Tuesday, August 5, at 6 PM for this year's [National Night Out](#).

Ahoy! “Shipwreck Detectives” at Manitowoc Public Library on Wednesday, August 6

Jul 31, 2025 | 2:30 PM

[Local News](#)



The following article was written by Kirsten Smith, a Youth Services Associate at the Manitowoc Public Library.

Calling all young explorers! All Aboard for an afternoon of discovery at Shipwreck Detectives, a hands-on maritime archaeology adventure designed especially for families! Join us at Manitowoc Public Library on Wednesday, August 6, at 2 PM in the Balkansky Community Room for an exciting look beneath the waves, presented by Wisconsin Maritime Museum.

Exploring Lake Michigan’s Shipwrecks

Lake Michigan is home to hundreds of shipwrecks, each with its own fascinating story. From schooners and steamships to tugboats and barges, these vessels once navigated the Great Lakes, carrying passengers and cargo across the waters. Some met their untimely fate due to treacherous storms, navigational errors, or collisions, leaving behind submerged mysteries waiting to be unraveled.

One recent discovery is the *J.C. Ames*, a 160-foot tugboat scuttled near Manitowoc in 1923. Once among the largest and most powerful tugs on the Great Lakes, it boasted a 670-horsepower engine. Its wreck offers insight into early 20th-century ship retirement practices and the evolving life cycle of working vessels.

Arguably, the most iconic shipwreck in the region is the *Rouse Simmons*, affectionately known as the “Christmas Tree Ship.” This three-masted schooner sank in 1912 while transporting a festive cargo of evergreens to Chicago. Now resting off Rawley Point, the wreck endures as a poignant tribute to the area’s maritime heritage.

The Science of Underwater Archaeology

Shipwreck exploration goes beyond diving—it is about uncovering history through scientific methods. Maritime archaeologists rely on sonar imaging, underwater photography, and meticulous documentation to investigate wrecks while preserving their delicate structures. The Wisconsin Historical Society’s Maritime Preservation Program plays a vital role in safeguarding and interpreting these submerged artifacts for future generations.

Participants in the Shipwreck Detectives program will get an introduction to these techniques, learning how experts analyze artifacts, map wreck sites, and uncover clues about the past. To bring shipwreck exploration to life, children will hand-draw **their own shipwreck site** and tell the story behind their vessel—what it carried, how it sank, and what future archaeologists might uncover about it!



Kirsten Smith

The Urgency of Shipwreck Preservation

Studying shipwrecks has never been more important. Quagga mussels, an invasive species, are rapidly deteriorating Lake Michigan's historic wrecks. Unlike zebra mussels, quagga mussels thrive in deeper waters, covering shipwrecks and accelerating their decay. Their weight and acidic secretions weaken wooden and metal structures, causing them to collapse over time. Maritime archaeologists are racing against time to document and preserve these wrecks before they are lost forever. Programs like Shipwreck Detectives help raise awareness about this urgent issue and inspire future generations to protect Wisconsin's underwater heritage.

Resources for Shipwreck Enthusiasts

For those eager to dive deeper into Wisconsin's maritime history, several resources offer incredible insights:

- PBS Wisconsin's "Legend of the Lost Emerald"—An interactive game that lets players step into the shoes of a maritime archaeologist, solving shipwreck mysteries inspired by real Great Lakes history: <https://pbswisconsineducation.org/emerald/play-the-game/>
- Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary—A protected area in Lake Michigan that preserves historic wrecks and offers opportunities for research and education: <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/wisconsin/>
- Wisconsin Maritime Museum—Located in Manitowoc, this museum showcases exhibits on shipwrecks, the *USS COBIA*, and Great Lakes shipping history: <https://www.wisconsinmaritime.org/>

Join the Adventure!

Whether your child is a history buff, a budding archaeologist, or simply curious about the mysteries beneath the surface of Lake Michigan, the Shipwreck Detectives program is the perfect opportunity to explore, learn, and uncover hidden stories.

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, August 6, at 2 PM and set sail for an unforgettable adventure at Manitowoc Public Library. Who knows—you might just solve one of the lake's greatest mysteries!