

Anime & Manga Mini-Con: Teen Lock-in event set at Manitowoc Public Library

Lisa Pike, For USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin Published 7:55 a.m. CT Feb. 5, 2020

Fun fact: Japanese manga style of comic books and graphic novels actually received its start in 6th century Japan. The first known examples of manga were continuous picture scrolls drawn by Buddhist monks, which mirror modern comic strips.

These scrolls eventually influenced the popular art of woodblock printing during the 17th century. Woodblock prints were especially popular because they showed everyday scenes of popular fashion and distant travels.

These two traditional art forms eventually merged together and were given a proper name by the artist Hokusai, best known for his painting "The Great Wave off Kanagawa." Hokusai called some of his later artwork manga, which is the combination of two words — "man," meaning "whimsical," and "ga," meaning "picture."

Manga drawing evolved further once Japan became open to the West in the late 19th century. The standard European drawing style, which included more prominent shading and perspective within its work, greatly influenced the manga of traditional Japanese artists. Other concepts that were introduced to manga were the insertion of word balloons and separate action sequences within a comic.

At the turn of the 20th century, many of these European-influenced comics started appearing in Japanese newspapers and became extremely popular in the process.



Figure 1The Anime & Manga Mini-Con: Teen Lock-in event will take place from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Feb. 21 at Manitowoc Public Library. (Photo: Emily R. Ellerman)

But, as with any great art medium that speaks to the people, manga did have a period from the 1920s to 1940s during which its artists received harsh censorship from the government because of political satire that was often rampant in its pages. It was not until World War II that manga was reexamined by the government for its use in sharing war-related propaganda. Some artists followed orders, and others didn't. As you might suspect, those who didn't were forbidden from creating comics for the duration of the war and were often detained.

Following World War II, the manga comics world exploded with many small publishers taking advantage of the new marketplace, creating comics series and getting manga into mainstream animation. The style of anime was heavily influenced by the early characters of Disney cartoons in the 1950s and 1960s. At this time, Disney characters were known to have exaggerated emotions, gestures and features, such as big, wide eyes. These animation conventions became part of the typical anime style and continue until this day.

Anime also comes in a variety of genres, such as Giant Robot (which is often science fiction-based), Samurai (which is historical), and Boy's or Girl's (which focuses on topics typically aligned with each gender).

Anime has mostly been introduced to modern American audiences through the Studio Ghibli production company, which released such mainstream movies as "Howl's Moving Castle," "Princess Monoke" and the Academy Award-winning "Spirited Away."

The widespread publication and distribution of manga series with counterpart anime series has also helped fuel the popularity of the fandom in the United States.

Talking of manga series, be sure to check out some of the brand-new series now available in the Young Adult shelves at Manitowoc Public Library, including: "World Trigger," "Yona of the Dawn," "The Promised Neverland" and many others!

Similar to a fandom convention or anime club, Teen Services is giving teens an opportunity to share their love for all things anime and manga with other teens at our next event. This will be an after-hours event just for teens that will include a Manga Drawing 101 class with local artist Brianna Heraly, from whom teens can learn how to draw in the style of their favorite manga series. The evening will start with this drawing class — which will run for approximately 45 minutes. For teens who may not be interested in a drawing class, an alternative option of crafts and games will be available throughout the evening.



Lisa Pike (Photo: Provided)

A variety of crafts — such as D.I.Y. Fan Making, Origami 101 and 3Doodler Printing Pens — will be available, with an array of manga and traditional Japanese designs from which to choose to create your own plastic masterpieces. Popular Japanese snacks — such as Pocky Sticks and green tea — Studio Ghibli soundtrack music, and tabletop games like Tsuro and Sushi Dice will also be featured.

The Anime & Manga Mini-Con: Teen Lock-in event will take place from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Feb. 21 at Manitowoc Public Library. Be sure to reserve a spot quickly, as this event will be for ages 11-18 and is limited to 30 teens.

As with all after-hours teen lock-in events, a permission slip will be required. These will be available at the upstairs Children's Department Service Desk starting on Feb. 14. Teens are encouraged to attend dressed in their favorite anime or manga cosplay ensembles or themed clothes for the event.

Allow Manitowoc Public Library to introduce you to new cultures with our fantastic teen events!

Lisa Pike is teen associate and materials librarian at Manitowoc Public Library.

The Idea Box: Manitowoc library's new space for building, making and exploring technology

Karen Hansen, For USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin Published 7:53 a.m. CT Feb. 18, 2020



The Idea Box at Manitowoc Public Library. (Photo: Provided)

Manitowoc Public Library is thrilled to welcome tinkerers, entrepreneurs and tech enthusiasts to The Idea Box: MPL's new space dedicated to building, making and exploring technology.

Generously funded by the West Foundation, The Idea Box is a makerspace filled with a range of high-tech and low-tech tools and gadgets — an amazing laser-cutting machine, a sound booth, 3D printing tools, Cricut (an incredible cutting machine that allows the user to create more things than we could possibly list here), sewing machines and much more!



The Idea Box at Manitowoc Public Library. (Photo: Provided)

The addition of The Idea Box is part of the library's first-floor redesign efforts and is one of many new amenities targeted at meeting the changing needs of our dynamic community.

In a time when it seems like kids get to have all the fun, The Idea Box is primarily meant to engage and inspire adults and teens, fueling creativity and even the exploration of careers driven by STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) skills.



iMacs and Glowforge 3D laser printer inside The Idea Box at Manitowoc Public Library.
(Photo: Provided)

One of the reasons MPL created The Idea Box was to better meet the changing needs of Manitowoc's economy — an economy that increasingly relies on technology. The Idea Box can be utilized as an on-ramp for teens and adults to get comfortable with those technologies and pursue training at our local colleges or on the job at our manufacturing facilities.

Featured equipment and tools available in The Idea Box to MPL customers include the following:

- Glowforge 3D laser cutter;
- FlashForge Creator Pro 3D printer;
- iMac computers;
- Adobe Creative Cloud Suite, including Final Cut Pro;
- Cricut Maker, Cricut EasyPress and EasyPress Mini;
- Singer sewing machines with quilting tables;
- 3Doodler Create+ Pens;
- Film negative scanner and light table;
- Green screen and portable light reflectors; and
- Printmaking tools.

Beyond equipment and tools, The Idea Box is a place to learn and collaborate. The library will soon be offering a menu of classes to provide instruction on equipment use. In these classes, learners will receive

training that we're referring to as "badging." Badging involves understanding the basics of how to safely operate the equipment. Once someone has been "badged," learners can independently use equipment during most of MPL's hours of operation. Stay tuned for these trainings on the library's website, manitowoclibrary.org.



Karen Hansen (Photo:
Provided)

To use The Idea Box, you must have a valid library card in good standing. Children between the ages of 13 to 17 who want to use its tools and equipment must have parental permission. Idea Box users must also complete a liability waiver and badging training to use specific equipment.

All equipment in The Idea Box is free to use, but there is a small charge for consumable items. Details about Idea Box use, badging and other requirements are available at www.manitowoclibrary.org/ideabox.

Book fans: Here are two good reads, courtesy of Manitowoc Public Library

Laura Schreiner, For USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin Published 9:37 a.m. CT Feb. 26, 2020

As Manitowoc Public Library celebrates its 120th anniversary, we'd like to take a moment to reflect upon how library services have evolved ... and what has remained constant.

In years past, for example, MPL's collection circulated vinyl record albums, filmstrips, audio cassettes and even framed reproductions of fine art. Fast forward to 2020 when our circulating collection includes items such as Adventure Passes to area cultural attractions, ukuleles, cake pans, DVDs and WiFi hot spots. And our building itself has evolved from a largely silent zone to a vibrant, community gathering place.

What *hasn't* changed is our commitment to offering a robust collection of printed materials for patrons of all ages, covering every topic imaginable. Our desire to match each and every patron with the reading materials that best match their needs and interests remains intact. Our staff is composed of avid readers who are eager to assist you in your search for a book you simply can't put down!

To this end, we will periodically present reviews of books that are intriguing, engaging, compelling reads, which may have existed just below the radar of even the most avid readers. Both of the books featured today have found a loyal audience among MPL staff members, who are enthusiastically recommending them to patrons requesting suggestions. Both of these novels were published late in 2019 and are available from several libraries within the Manitowoc-Calumet Library System.

"Nothing to See Here," by Kevin Wilson, is an insightful, entertaining book. At first glance, this book may turn some readers off as its premise seems to be a little too "out there" — in a nutshell, a set of 10-year-old twins burst into flames upon becoming upset. I nearly dismissed the book myself because that notion simply seemed too ridiculous. But, Dear Potential Reader, that would have been a grave mistake. This book, which at first glance seemed to be too odd for my taste, is instead a witty and incredibly moving portrait of what it means to be a family.

Here's the plot: Lillian and Madison were roommates at their elite boarding school — until Lillian is forced to leave in the wake of a scandal. The young women do little more than exchange letters for several years, until Madison sends Lillian an impassioned plea to help with the aforementioned spontaneous human combusters, who are Madison's stepchildren. Lillian abandons her dead-end life and moves to the estate where Madison resides with her über-successful husband, who is in line to become secretary of state.

The children, admittedly, have a few issues — the fire thing being the most evident. Over the course of one summer, however, Lillian and the children begin to forge a unique relationship. No spoilers here, but "Nothing to See Here" is a charming, beautiful novel about life and learning how to protect the ones we love. The few hours spent reading this short, unforgettable book were definitely time well spent. And if you enjoy this book as much as I did, you may want to read more books by Kevin Wilson. MPL also has his titles "The Family Fang," "Perfect Little Word," and "Baby, You're Gonna Be Mine" in its collection.

Next up is "This Tender Land," the latest novel by William Kent Krueger, the Minnesota-based award-winning author of the Cork O'Connor mystery series and the 2003 novel "The Devil's Bed." I greatly admire Krueger's wonderful storytelling, so I was eagerly awaiting the release of "This Tender Land." Prior to reading it, a colleague highly recommended this amazing book, and we've enthusiastically talked about this beautifully written novel since.

Set in the summer of 1932, while the nation was in the throes of the Great Depression, "This Tender Land" is the story of Odie O'Banion, a spirited boy who has earned the wrath of the superintendent of a Minnesota school for Native American children. Odie is forced to flee the school after a terrible event, stowing away in a canoe with his older brother, their best friend, and a brokenhearted little girl.

The foursome heads for the Mississippi River, and over the course of an unforgettable summer, their journey brings them into contact with a mesmerizing cast of characters, all of whom are adrift in some way. Though it's a fairly long book, you'll find the pages flying by as you savor the pacing and melodious tone of this engaging story. "This Tender Land" is an absolute masterpiece by William Kent Krueger, an incredible writer and observer of what it means to be human.



Laura Schreiner (Photo: Courtesy of Manitowoc Public Library)

If you hated to reach the end of "This Tender Land," you will likely also enjoy Krueger's "Ordinary Grace," which is every bit as memorable and is a lovely elegy to innocence and displays the kind of grace that is anything but ordinary. Both of these magnificent books have quietly become book group favorites — there's nothing at all "splashy" about them, but they are destined to be talked about for decades to come.

So, whenever you're in search of an excellent read, consult your friends at Manitowoc Public Library. We've been helping patrons discover amazing books for 120 years!

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