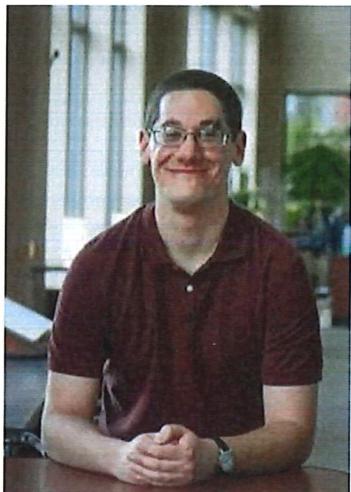


# Manitowoc Public Library's "Best Gift Ever" Campaign is Collecting New Books for Kids in Need

Nov 4, 2025 | 4:13 PM

[Local News](#)



*The following story was submitted by MPL Public Services Librarian Tony Plekan.*

Every moment a child spends reading, they are enhancing their imagination and learning about the world around them. Owning a book also does wonders for a child's sense of self-worth. Unfortunately, not every kid can afford a book of their own. Manitowoc Public Library is conducting our annual "Best Gift Ever" campaign to get books into the hands of disadvantaged Manitowoc County kids.

Manitowoc Public Library's Best Gift Ever book drive runs **November 3** through **December 5**. We are asking for your help to collect donations of new, unwrapped children's books for kids who are in need.

In 2024, nearly 500 books were donated to Best Gift Ever. We greatly appreciate everyone who contributed and hope that we can give away even more books this year!

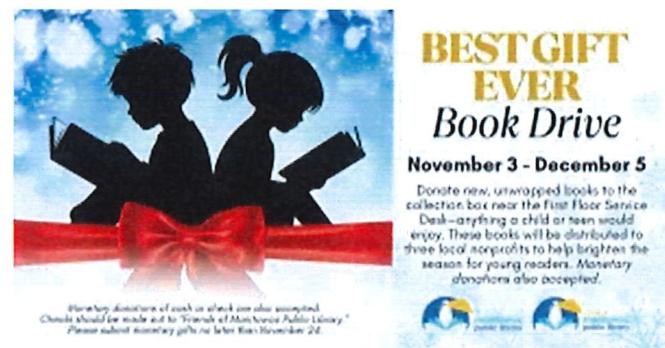
## How You Can Help

- Bring a new, unwrapped Children's Book to Manitowoc Public Library anytime from November 3 through December 5
- All types of books are welcome! Picture Books, Chapter Books, and don't forget about Teens who would enjoy a graphic novel or young adult book. Any book you feel a kid or teenager would love is the right book to donate!
- **The books must be new.** We want to give these kids the encouragement that comes with having something that is truly theirs from the get-go.
- Financial donations are also accepted.
- For checks, please make them out to "Friends of Manitowoc Public Library" and write "Best Gift Ever" in the "Notes" field.

Everything donated to Best Gift Ever will be distributed to three Manitowoc County nonprofit organizations:

- InCourage
- Lakeshore Foster Family and Friends
- The Salvation Army of Manitowoc County

These organizations, in turn, will give out these books over the holiday season. These fine organizations do remarkable work, especially with our youth. Your generous gift will directly benefit children in our area.



These kids are in such tough situations through no fault of their own. Books have a remarkable way of helping us through difficult times. Let's work together to collect as many books as we can to give to our community's youth!

We thank you in advance for your generosity and support!

# “Big Emotions for Little People” returns to Manitowoc Public Library with “Gratitude”

Nov 11, 2025 | 2:30 PM

Local News



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

As the season of thankfulness approaches, Manitowoc Public Library is delighted to welcome back its preschool series, [Big Emotions for Little People](#), with a special session focused on gratitude. Held on Tuesday, November 25, at 10:30 AM, this heartwarming program invites young children and their caregivers to explore the joy of appreciating everyday treasures through storytelling, music, and a thoughtful craft.

The theme comes to life with media from PBS Kids’ Carl the Collector, a gentle and insightful show featuring Carl, a neurodivergent raccoon who finds meaning in the objects he collects. Carl’s story offers a beautiful entry point for preschoolers to learn about emotional awareness, empathy, and the value of noticing the good in their lives. His unique perspective helps children understand that gratitude is not just saying “thank you.” It is about recognizing and cherishing the things, people, and moments that make us feel safe, happy, and loved.

Gratitude is more than a seasonal sentiment. It is a foundational emotional skill. Studies suggest that children who learn to express appreciation early in life tend to develop stronger emotional resilience and a more positive outlook as they grow.

The preschool years are especially important for building these habits, as young children are naturally attuned to fairness, kindness, and connection. When adults model thankfulness and create space for reflection, like noticing a friend’s help or celebrating a shared snack, kids begin to internalize these values in meaningful ways.

Programs like [Big Emotions for Little People](#) offer a developmentally appropriate space to nurture this growth. Through songs, movement, and hands-on activities, children will be encouraged to think about what makes them feel grateful.

Whether it is a favorite toy, a cozy blanket, or a hug from a loved one, these small moments become stepping stones toward deeper emotional literacy. The program also fosters social connection, helping children recognize gratitude in others and practice expressing it themselves.

As we prepare for Thanksgiving, this joyful gathering reminds us that gratitude is not reserved for grand gestures—it is woven into the everyday. Carl the Collector’s story teaches us that treasures come in many forms and that noticing them is a skill worth cultivating from the very start.

To continue the conversation at home, families can explore picture books that gently reinforce the theme of gratitude. These stories offer rich opportunities for reflection, connection, and cozy read-aloud moments:

- *We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga*, by Traci Sorell



Kirsten Smith

- *The Thank You Book*, by Mo Willems
- *Last Stop on Market Street*, by Matt de la Peña
- *Llama Llama Gives Thanks*, by Anna Dewdney
- *Thankful*, by Eileen Spinelli

Preschool families are invited to join this celebration of thanks on Tuesday, November 25, at 10:30 AM in the Library's Balkansky Community Room. No registration is required. Just bring your curiosity, your kindness, and your favorite little collector!

# Make Your Season Bright with Holiday Movie Fest at Manitowoc Public Library!

Nov 18, 2025 | 2:30 PM

Local News



highlight another Film Fest for the holiday season titled [Holiday Movie Fest](#) for the month of December.

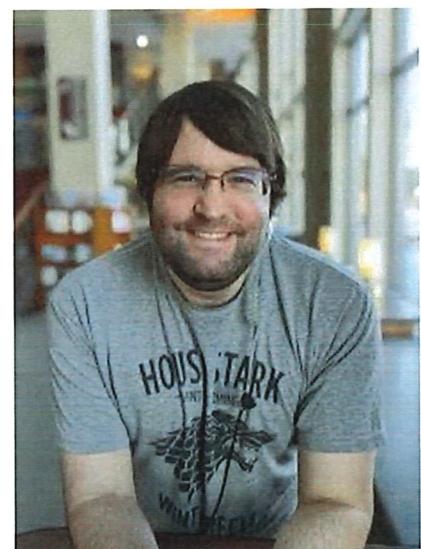
There is nothing better than popping in a holiday movie and getting that feel-good feeling all through your body. As a kid, I grew up with the classic Rankin/Bass classics like *Rudolph the Red Reindeer* and *Santa Claus is Comin' to Town* and the many others that are holiday staples for multiple people. As the years went on and I grew up, more holiday films soon became classics in their own right, like *Elf* and *The Polar Express*. With this [Holiday Movie Fest](#) though, I wanted to focus on the more obscure and lesser-seen holiday movies that are not easy to catch on your television compared to the classics I previously mentioned.

Manitowoc Public Library's [Holiday Movie Fest](#) will show movies on select nights and days throughout the month of December and will feature these six holiday films:

- A magical journey through the land of Toyland to help stop a sinister force from ruining the holidays in the 1960s musical film, *Babes in Toyland*.
- A musical adaptation of the classic Charles Dickens novel, "A Christmas Carol," in which an old miser is shown the true meanings of the holidays in the film,
- An unlikely pairing of a young girl and a magical reindeer from the North Pole in
- A remake of a classic holiday movies where an elderly man may not be what he seems and a little girl's mission to find the truth in *Miracle on 34th*
- A holiday comedy set in an airport, featuring a cast of rambunctious kids without parental supervision in *Unaccompanied Minors*.
- Finally, a horror-based holiday film featuring an ancient monster who visits one holiday eve—

*The following article was written by Matt Mottl, a Public Services Assistant at the Manitowoc Public Library.*

Happy Holidays! 'Tis the season where enchantment and merriment fills the air. A time of joy and peace on earth for all. More importantly, it's time to kick back, relax, and indulge in a time of holiday movies that run rampant for two months of the year. Coming off our Horror Movie Fest and the spooky season, Manitowoc Public Library is proud to



Matt Mottl

Similar to the Horror Movie Fest in October, this [Holiday Movie Fest](#) will not only be on Thursday evenings, but also Monday mornings and will showcase another double-feature weekend! With all the holiday sparkle

around the Library—with the centerpiece being the iconic annual [Evergleam Forest](#), of course—it's beneficial to have another offering we can give to patrons during this time of year to just sit down and enjoy something that gives you that holiday feeling. And here's another benefit during a season that seems to have a price tag attached to almost everything—every single one of these movies is absolutely FREE! There's no admission charge, whatsoever!

Do not allow the cold and potential snow to put a frown on your face! Instead, come to Manitowoc Public Library and enjoy a festive movie with us. I hope that we can make this a tradition every holiday season, so please visit us in December and let all those good holiday vibes fill you up. See you at the movies!

# Celebrate 10 Years of Holiday Sparkle with “Evergleams on Eighth” & “Enchanted Evergleams at MPL!”

Nov 25, 2025 | 2:30 PM

Local News



*The following article was written by Barba Bundy-Jost, the President of Manitowoc Aluminum Kitschmas Inc.*

10 is a powerful number.

On the day we are born, people curiously inquire if the number of fingers and toes we have equals 10. In school, we learn the Dewey Decimal System (which has 10 main classes, each divided into 10 sections, which each have 10 sections) and how to count by 10s. In some sports, a “10” is considered a perfect score. Gymnasts strive for it every time they bound across the floor. In the 1979 movie, “10,” Bo Derek helped us all to understand the importance of being a “10” on the scale of physical perfection. Being a 10 was something powerful.

Like sands in the hourglass, so are the days of our lives!!!! 10 represents a decade of living life! When important events in our life go from single digit 9 to double-digit 10, it’s a big deal! This year, the “Evergleams on Eighth” display is celebrating 10 years of SPARKLE in Downtown Manitowoc! It’s hard to believe the 40 trees being displayed at downtown businesses in 2015 have multiplied to almost 200 in the decade since it all began. 10 years! How many sands traveled through the hourglass to get us to 2025?!

A monumental change since 2015 is the development of Manitowoc Aluminum Kitschmas Inc. (better known as MAKi), a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit organization. MAKi was created for the purpose of fostering an appreciation of the rich manufacturing history in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. We strive to preserve historic artifacts and pieces of art/design worthy of display and public appreciation. We hope to one day celebrate what you now see each holiday season with a brick-and-mortar museum that will be open to the public throughout the year! It’s important for us to preserve the stories of how our community’s history shaped the lives of not only us, but those who came before us and those who are yet to come!

The Evergleam Elves that started this display in 2015 are Steve Siehr, a Manitowoc native, and Cathy Karl, owner of Heart & Homestead. They worked their tails off making the town gleam in celebration of an aluminum tree story that started here in 1959. The 2015 Evergleam workforce has grown from a dynamic duo to a ratpack of groovy, hardworking Evergleam collectors. Their “Stash of Sparkle” numbers in the hundreds and they all share their treasure troves with us every holiday season. You’ll see their trees featured in downtown businesses as you travel up and down the streets of Historic Downtown Manitowoc.

Manitowoc Public Library’s role has undergone a huge change from 2015’s sparkling display. MPL joined in the fun several years after the Evergleam display started and it is now lovingly referred to as “[Evergleam Central](#)”. Library staff partners with us each year as we turn part of the main floor into “Frankie’s Forest”—a magical arboretum that illuminates the main floor with glitz, glam, and a whole lot of SPARKLE!

Fran Pfeffer-Guyette, also a Manitowoc native, shares her rarest of the rare Evergleam collection with the community each holiday. Like Steve, Fran was born and raised here, just like the Evergleam tree manufactured and packaged here. She loves giving back to the place she was born and her smile glows each time someone asks about her passion for Aluminum Specialty’s Evergleam tree. In honor of our ten-year anniversary, Fran is pushing the GLEAM by bringing together the BIGGEST Frankie’s Forest EVER!



Barba Bundy-Jost

Get yourself to the Library between November 26, 2025, and January 4, 2026, to bask in the glow of a most [Exceptional Enchanted Evergleaming Forest](#)! Manitowoc Public Library will host [Sparkle! The History of Aluminum Trees, In-Person](#) on Thursday, December 4, at 6 PM, and [Virtually](#) on Thursday, December 18, at 5 PM. Discover the story behind the Aluminum Specialty company’s Atomic Age innovation and design with your guides, Barb Bundy-Jost and Jordan Kabat. It will warm your heart and take you back through the hourglass to a time where you were marveling at the Space Age sparkler and loving every minute of it!

Celebrate the number 10 with us this year! As luck would have it, a traditional 10-year anniversary gift is aluminum. If you can’t dig out a family heirloom sitting in the attic, basement, or hall closet, if you can’t listen to the swoosh of an aluminum branch being dragged through a paper sleeve as you free each dazzling bough from its confines and put it into holes drilled at specific angles in a wooden pole, then do this—ponder the beauty of 10. Be it 10 people you love, 10 hours with those you cherish, or 10 minutes of peace and quiet. Ponder the movement of those sands of time and appreciate each grain.

Go ahead! Fill the car with family and friends! Pick up a map at the Library or any local business and in the dark of night, do an Evergleam Drive-By. Our Evergleam timers turn on by 4 PM and stay on until midnight. Buzz the gut—get your GLEAM ON! Go around the block for another view. Put some miles on those tires! The display will be gone before you know it! Like sands in the hourglass, time will float by and the trees will be packed and stored until the next season finds the top level of the ancient timekeeper. Don’t miss this year’s 10!