

Manager Highlights August 2025

FACILITIES DEPARTMENT

STACEY BIALEK

MISSION MOMENT



Born in August of 1797, Mary Shelley was only 18 when she wrote *The Modern Prometheus* or *Frankenstein*. During a summer get together with friends, including Lord Byron, the group was tasked with who could come up with the best ghost story. Mary was inspired by a prior night's vivid nightmare and penned the basis for the iconic horror story.

Check out



Manitowoc Public Library, Frankenstein. Shelley, Mary. Book, Fiction

PERSONNEL



We will be working with HR to begin the process of posting and exploring potential candidates by next month.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT



City Management Staff attended a CVMIC-sponsored training session regarding Recruiting and Onboarding new hires. Thanks to the CVMIC reps for taking the time to help improve our workplace culture.

Thanks to the City of Manitowoc and all those who coordinated another successful annual Employee Summer Picnic at the Aquatic Center. We appreciate the effort and energy that goes into celebrating staff and the hard work they put in everyday!

OUTREACH



Thanks to everyone involved with coordinating the National Night Out event that the library hosted on the northeast section of our parking lot on August 5th. Informative community-building event!

Great weather and a great turnout for Balloon Glow on Friday, August 15th. A lot of delicious food, great music, & family-fun events. Thanks to all the volunteers and hard-working event coordinators for all their enthusiasm and energy!

The City of Manitowoc continued their tours of city departments for city employees with a special look at our very own library. Highlights included our efficient materials handling system, the Idea Box, and a behind-the-scenes look at the day-to-day operations.

ASSET MANAGEMENT



As we conduct the last of the vendor tours for replacement of the HVAC mechanicals and controls, the online portal will be open until August 6th for all interested contractors to submit their quotes.

We are gathering and digitizing the pertinent schematics for the renovation of the 2nd floor Family Restroom being planned in the current custodial supply room next to the Board Room.

CUSTODIAL MANAGEMENT



As the plans for the new 2nd floor Family Restroom begin to take shape, we will be creating and renovating other spaces to house all our custodial cleaning and paper supplies.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS/FIRE SAFETY



We will be taking part in the training session for the All-Staff meeting coming up in September. We will be focusing on refreshers on safety/security exercises we have trained on in the past couple of years.

REPAIR/MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT



We continue to utilize our modified control schedules that allow the HVAC some “downtime”. Along with our meticulous daily cleaning, we will easily last throughout the cooling season and until our new HVAC unit is installed.

We continue the replacement of the 3’ and 4’ light fixtures to LED. With the freedom of being closed Sundays, we have also taken the time to upgrade some of the safety features that are lacking from the original installation, such as providing rubber grommets for cushioning wire bundles that are fed through sharp conduit.

We are also advancing through eliminating some of the unused, outdated, and soiled assets, such as soiled chairs, broken office equipment, and outdated shelving units. Some of the very worn items are thrown out, while others are recycled.

IN THE FUTURE



More lighting LED upgrades in A/V, Children’s, and 1st Floor

2nd Floor Family Restroom Planning

Materials Department
Meredith Gadzinski

1. Mission Moment:

- Laura and Susie in Interlibrary Loan received a sincere thank you from the Neillsville Public Library, to which we had loaned a book discussion kit: "Thank you! This was appreciated by all of us." We are seeing a large increase in usage of our book kits by libraries across Wisconsin. We like being known as generous lenders.
- With the school year underway, we have begun working with a teacher who is new to the area. He did not give us much lead-time with his requests for multiple copies of 30 plus unique titles, but we've been fortunate and have gathered them relatively quickly. His most recent email stated 'You are WAY over the top!' We are hoping he means that in a good way.

2. Personnel:

- The Materials Intern, Rory, last day was August 15, 2025.

3. Staff Development:

- Meredith attended a training on August 26 on "Securing Talent" presented by Cities & Villages Mutual Insurance (CVMC).
- Meredith attended SWIG (SirsiDynix Wisconsin Interest Group) hosted by MCLS (Manitowoc County Library System). The round table discussions on the library catalog were helpful.

4. Outreach Activities:

- Lisa P. and MCLS staff met with ILS (Integrated Library System) administrators for OWLS (Outagamie Winnebago Library System) to give an overview of the SirsiDynix catalog system since they are considering a migration from their current system.
- Lisa P. worked with the Local Subject Headings subcommittee of the Statewide Bibliographic Standards Committee to prep their WLA (Wisconsin Library Association) conference poster session for October and continued work on subject heading recommendations for catalog records.
- Meredith gave tours of the first floor of the library to other city department staff. The tours were a great opportunity for other city department staff to learn about services MPL offers to the community.

5. Operation Activities:

- Interlibrary worked with 24 book groups to provide multiple copies, and with 2 teachers who had requested multiple copies of 39 titles.
- Lisa P. selected and ordered books for the book exchange with our Sister City in Kamogawa, Japan.

6. What's coming up?

- Lisa P. will be appearing on Coolest Coast to promote library materials.

Youth Services
Sharon Verbeten

Literary Quote of the Month:

“Listen to the MUSTN’TS, child, Listen to the DON’TS

Listen to the SHOULDN’TS The IMPOSSIBLES, the WONT’S

Listen to the NEVER HAVES Then listen close to me

Anything can happen, child, ANYTHING can be.”

Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein

Mission Moments

- Lynn was dining out at a local sushi restaurant when a small child recognized her from storytime and approached her. Lynn said she felt honored when this “tiny paparazzi” engaged with her outside the library. 😊
- A family recently visited Youth Services noting they had moved here after having lived in Green Bay and Milwaukee; they were impressed with our youth department and especially commented on the quality of our summer reading prize books.
- One Lincoln High School student, who recently graduated, brought in his parents to view his artwork displayed in our teen rotunda.

Programming/Outreach/Dept. News

- We had about 150 attendees for the animal program by the Lincoln Park Zoo, which brought a rabbit, hissing cockroach and snake, among other creatures.
- One program featured bearded dragons, snakes and even a millipede for selfie-snapping teens.
- Betty did our final summer storytime on the road at the Rahr-West Art Museum, with about 35 attendees; attendees also enjoyed a craft celebrating Wisconsin art icon Georgia O’Keeffe.

- Sharon and Jade represented MPL with a table in the children's area at Lakeshore Balloon Glow; they handed out more than 1,400 glowsticks.
- Sharon and Betty represented MPL at the MPSD Community Fair at Washington Middle School. They promoted library cards, as well as the many free resources we provide to students and families.
- Kirsten and Lynn created four new program options for school field trips—topics include preschool and Grades 1-2 programs on creepy crawlies (bugs), dinosaurs, silly stories and the hilarious books of Mo Willems.
- The library served as the location for local law enforcement's National Night Out, which drew about 150 attendees.
- Storytime favorite Pete the Cat made a special appearance during a storytime for Ascend Services youth.
- Betty added several new items to our toy library, thanks to a generous donation of toys and games by a local patron.
- Sharon led tours of the Youth Services department to city employees.



- Over the course of summer, several patrons took our portable Youth Services “mascot” Rocky “on the road” on their vacation travels; we asked them to send us back some photos from his travels; they didn’t disappoint!



- As students approached the beginning of the school year, we had quite a few preschoolers complete our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten challenge; many proudly posed for their accomplishments!



Staff Development

- Youth Services will do a three-hour strengths training workshop with consultant Kristin O’Dell. This will build on earlier teamwork trainings we did in 2024-25.
- Kirsten was in Pennsylvania when she had the unexpected opportunity to visit the Fred Rogers Institute. She said, “The values reflected throughout the exhibit closely mirror the approach I strive to bring to my work... I continue exploring how to create inclusive, emotionally resonant experiences.” In a separate capacity, Kirsten also traveled to Madison this summer to collaborate with PBS on educator materials. She has then taken what she has learned and created special storytimes for MPL.
- Multiple staff watched the Ryan Dowd webinars on dealing with teenage audiences.

What’s Next?

- School has started! Gearing up for hopefully a good year of field trips and school visits.
- Program planning for our Winter session—including a Storytime with Santa!
- Trunk or Treat Tuesday, Oct. 21
- All-Staff Development Day Friday, Sept. 26
- Sharon and Tony will provide a recap of our Summer Reading Program statistics to the Library Board at its September meeting.
- Sharon will do a family storytime at the YMCA during its Welcome Week in September.

Public Services

Karen Hansen

MISSION MOMENTS

- Patti reported that a One-to-One English language learner/citizenship student has been working hard for months to prepare for her September 9 naturalization interview. In August, she worked one-on-one with two different tutors for 20+ hours here at MPL. It is this type of amazing collaboration that gives our learners confidence to try and succeed at really difficult things.
- Tim reported that a patron called to express her enthusiasm and appreciation for MPL's Seed Library. She was so happy, she said our library "was easily the best library that she had ever been to on every level," while noting that she had lived in many other places.
- Olivia and Emily had a nice conversation with a patron picking up DVD holds, some of which were not on any streaming service she could find. She was very grateful she had access to the DVDs through the Library so she could finally re-watch these movies, and she was very appreciate of library services in general.
- Matt helped a patron print documents from her phone, and she commented that staff "are lifesavers since her kids are off at college and not there to help." Tim also assisted a very grateful patron with complex printing needs.

PERSONNEL

- Nothing to report.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Patti attended Wisconsin Literacy's Forward Conference in Brookfield.
- Public Services staff have been engaging in a variety of online learning opportunities through Learn with NovelList, a tool that trains library staff how to engage with readers about their interests and recommend books they might enjoy.

OUTREACH

- Karen gave a presentation about library services and activities to a group of women at Autumn Ridge Golf Course.
- Tony gave a presentation at the Senior Center for Golden K Kiwanis.

OPERATION ACTIVITIES

Programming Highlights

- **Summer Reading Program:** The Summer Reading Program was a great success this year, with a total participation of 2,849 people (up 13% from 2024). Tony played a key role in efforts for adults, while Emily and other staff also assisted a great deal.
- **ManitoWalk Historic Downtown Walking Tour:** Tony led two historic downtown walking tours this month – the first after a long break.
- **Skin Cancer Screening:** Karen is working with staff from Froedtert and Forefront to plan a September 15 no-cost skin cancer screening to take place at the Library.
- **Volunteer Fair:** Lisa D is coordinating a Volunteer Fair for September 17 from 2-5pm.

- **Winter Reading Program:** Staff are already preparing for our Winter Reading Program, which will start in January.
- Other adult programming included a viewing of *The Minecraft Movie*, Cats on Mats, Glowforge Badging, and Drop-In Chess Club.

Other Operational Highlights

- **First Floor Renovation Project:** Karen continues to work with vendors to select flooring. Stacey arranged a quote for electrical updates for the Adult Computer and Business Center area.
- **Marketing:** Tim and Emily focused on promoting the Shelf Care Boxes, ManitoWalk Historic Downtown Walking Tours, and other programming. Staff continue to submit articles for Seehafer News, as well as appear on Coffee on the Coast and Be Our Guest.
- **Homebound Services:** Margo and June reported a strong participation in the Summer Reading Program for Homebound Services patrons, with 24 participants this year. This is the highest level they have experienced since they started offering the program to Homebound Services patrons in 2017.
- **One-to-One Literacy:** Patti has continued to whittle down the waiting list for individual tutoring, while supporting efforts to serve many learners in our Conversation Circles. She completed One-to-One's submissions for the annual Wisconsin Literacy demographic survey and the annual ProLiteracy survey.

SIGNIFICANT STATISTICS

- Tony and Lisa D provided 32 notaries.