

# checkitout

FALL 2015

a movie licensing usa publication

for the professional librarian

## FROM CHARACTERS TO COSTUMES

A Quiz to Help You Choose  
a Literary Halloween Costume

## Mad About Minions!

The Top 10 Cutest Craft Ideas

## Grant Your Funding Wish!

Tips for Great Grant Applications

## Libraries Come to the Rescue

## Celebrate 2016 with a Noon Year's Eve Party!

## CAMP READ-A-LOT:

Celebrating the Outdoors Inside

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the **FALL** issue



# Share Your Story with Readers Across the Country!

Reach more than half of all U.S. public libraries with a submission to *Check It Out* magazine!

Ever dreamed of seeing your library's story in print? Good news – we're seeking programming ideas, staff development strategies and industry news to feature in future issues.

## This is the perfect opportunity to:

- Share **success stories** from your library
- **Promote your library** in a national magazine
- **Inspire** other libraries with **affordable programming** ideas that are easy to plan, promote and staff
- Contribute **tips** on fundraising, successful processes, proactive plans and more!

If you have any topics or ideas you would like to share, simply send us an email at [libraries@movlic.com](mailto:libraries@movlic.com) or give us a call at 1-888-267-2658!

**Movie Licensing USA®**

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# W

elcome to the fall issue of *Check It Out* magazine! The following pages are filled with ideas to use as the weather turns cooler and the holidays quickly arrive. However, before we dive into what's in this issue, we'd like to know a little more about how your summer programming went. If you have any successful program ideas or creative summer reading stories to share, please let us know by emailing your Account Executive!

This issue focuses on programming to spark creative ideas in the upcoming fall and winter months. Don't miss our special "Mad About Minions" feature on page three to celebrate this new release or our "Camp Read-A-Lot" special on page eight for excellent ways to bring the outdoors inside. In addition, this issue covers tips on grant applications on page 10 and a look at how libraries have helped communities in crisis this year on page 14.

Also in this issue, we've included a few holiday related articles like a Halloween costume quiz based on popular literary characters on page six, a look at why some libraries are skipping holiday plans on page 16, and a unique way to celebrate New Year's Eve with your small patrons on page 18. Last but certainly not least, turn to page 12 for a look at how to use your license to feature some of the smaller, critically acclaimed movies that your patrons many not be able to see on the big screen.

We hope this issue is filled with ideas to help your library develop new and exciting ideas to share with patrons. As always, if there's anything you'd like to see in a future issue, feel free to give us a call at 1-888-267-2658. We look forward to hearing from you and thanks for your patronage!

Sincerely,

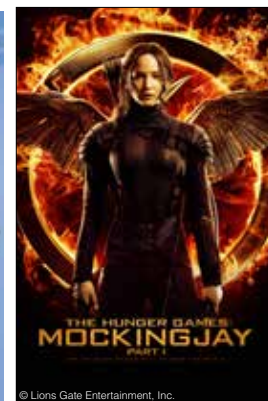


CHAIRMAN

## *Incipit*

"I stare down at my shoes, watching as a fine layer of ash settles on the worn leather. This is where the bed I shared with my sister, Prim, stood."

*Mockingjay* By Suzanne Collins





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**The Light Between Oceans**  
by M.L. Stedman

*the*  *book*

# Mad About Minions!

## The Top 10 Cutest Craft Ideas

Prepare for some colorful, crazy fun! These gibberish-talking, little yellow creatures took over the box office this summer, delighting audiences young and old with their kooky antics. Your license from Movie Licensing USA covers the first two movies featuring minions, *Despicable Me* and *Despicable Me 2*, along with their latest solo blockbuster *Minions* that arrives this fall. Try a few of these cute craft ideas to celebrate children's love of fun, creativity and of course Minions!



# minions

© Universal Studios

## DIY Minion Balloons

Turn a pack of regular yellow balloons into your favorite Minions from the movies with the help of some markers, tape or glue, and some construction paper.

## Minion Soda Bottle Weights

What's more festive than holding down your balloons with custom Minion weights? Made out of recycled 2 liter bottles, yellow and blue paint, googly eyes, and some markers, you can customize their facial features to reflect the Minions' task of holding on to the balloons. Plus, they're easy to fill with whatever you have on hand, such as coins, beads, beans and more.

## Despicable Me Party Hats

Black yarn, foam and construction paper come together to make these festive Minion hats. Make sure to grab some elastic string to keep these on your partygoers' heads!

## Minion Bowling

Similar to the minion party weights, gather ten of these to set up your own bowling game. Have your patrons take turns knocking them down with a soccer ball or basketball.



## Minion Goggles

Precut the bottoms off of washed and dried Greek yogurt containers, then trace the insides on yellow construction paper. Cut these out then trace around a quarter in the center of your yellow circles. Cut out the quarter sized circles inside the larger yellow discs to make pupils. Next, cover the empty cups in tin foil, staple the two cups together and cut two slits on either side of the cups to thread an elastic band through. Pop in your yellow circles, tie knots in the elastic to secure the ends, then enjoy!



## Pin the Goggles on the Minion

Draw your own Minion on poster board, color it in and leave a space for the Minion's goggles. Next, draw and cut out some googles on another piece of poster board and attach tape to the back of each one. When it's each patron's turn, blindfold them and have them take turns trying to attach the goggles to the correct spot.

## Minion Door Cover

Go all out by letting patrons know they're entering the land of Minions! Poster board, butcher paper, paint and tape is all that's needed to create a huge Minion door.

## Minion Bookmarks

Combine your love of reading with these cute little characters. You'll need popsicle sticks, a yellow marker, a black marker, blue paper, googly eyes and glue. Color about an inch of one end of the craft stick with the yellow marker. Next, cut out a blue rectangle, glue on the "overalls" and add a black band for the goggles and some eyes.

## Minion Marshmallow Cupcakes

Blue cupcakes make the perfect base for Minion-like marshmallows. To make the Minion toppers, melt a bag of yellow candy melts and coat your marshmallows. Next, add small candy eyes and details with a black edible food pen. A couple of chocolate candy sprinkles make the perfect finishing touches for hair.

## Minions Ornament

With the holidays right around the corner, Minion inspired ornaments just might be the perfect addition to your patrons' wreaths and trees. To make them, you'll need clear glass bulb ornaments, ribbon and paint.



Photo courtesy of Happy Home Fairy



Photo courtesy of Crazy Little Projects

# From Characters to Costumes

## A Quiz to Help You Choose A Literary Halloween Costume

Can't quite put your finger on what you want to be this year at your library's costume party?

Take this fun quiz to help you tap into your inner book-themed disguise.

It's just me.

I'm crafty.

I'm part of a couple.

I've got some money to spend this year.

Jay Gatsby & Daisy Buchanan from *The Great Gatsby*



© Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc.

Let's keep it simple...

We've haven't known each other for long.

We've been together a long time.

Let's keep it kid-friendly.



*Curious George and the Man with the Yellow Hat*

© Universal Studios

I don't mind putting in some effort.

The clock is ticking! I need a costume ASAP!

Let's keep it adults only.



*50 Shades of Grey with paint chip pieces*

© Focus Features

I've got time to prep.

Effie Trinket, President Snow and members of the Capital from *The Hunger Games*



© Lions Gate Entertainment, Inc.



I'm part of a group

We want to go all out.



Alice in Wonderland costumes

We want to do something classic.



Wild Thing from Where the Wild Things Are



Where's Waldo characters

I'm ready to start dreaming..

I want to stay human.



Lisbeth Slander from The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo



Charlie and the Chocolate Factory characters

I don't mind looking scary or silly.

I still want to look nice.

Scooby Doo, Harry Potter or Peanuts characters



# Camp Read-A-Lot

## ▶ Celebrating the Outdoors Inside

Camping is an inexpensive way to help children explore the outdoors, solve problems and experience nature. It provides a rare chance to get away from screens, homework and stress, encourages kids to appreciate their surroundings and encourages family bonding. However, camping is a pastime that's often forgotten due to the constant on-the-go nature of the digital age. Help your little patrons experience a taste of what camping is like and encourage parents to enjoy some time outside unplugged with their kids.

### ● Create the Camping Atmosphere

▶ With a little imagination, you can create your own faux campsite to mimic the look of the great outdoors.

**The majestic campfire:** Spray paint a couple of foam pool noodles and cut them into "logs." Next, you can use a few different colors of felt to create the fire's "flames," layering colors and shapes to create a cool faux fire. Now, glue your wood pieces together in a stacked wood formation and attach your flames in the center of the wood pile in a circular shape.

**Tent-inspired storytime:** Try a streamer tent to create the atmosphere of an outdoor tent during your camping themed storytime. Hang a hoola hoop from your library's ceiling. Next, attach the ends of streamers to the hoola hoop and unroll them to the floor. Tape the ends outward so that the streamers create a tent shape.

**Starry night:** Teach little ones all about constellations with glow in the dark stars. Place stars in the shapes and order of your favorite star formations and use flashlights to help point out names and locations.





## Trail-Worthy Snacks

These treats are easy to make and less messy than traditional campfire snacks, making them perfect for your library's program.

**Walking S'mores:** One of the best things about camping is, of course, the sticky s'mores. However, since having an open flame in the library probably isn't possible, try this twist on the old classic. Take a graham cracker based cookie or cereal (both Teddy Grahams and Golden Grahams work well) and mix it with mini marshmallows and chocolate chips.

**Create Your Own Trail Mix:** These days, trail mix has gotten a lot fancier than just peanuts and raisins. Lightweight, portable and packed with energy-dense ingredients, the perfect mix can include nuts, seeds, dried fruit, grains, sweets and even seasonings. Peanut butter chips, almonds, cinnamon, cereal, cranberries, dried bananas, coconut flakes, white chocolate and even popcorn are recent additions that many are now craving in their mixes. Have kids mix up their own custom batches to take home.

**Walking Tacos:** Perfect for those on the go, treat your campers to something tasty yet simple to make. To make these snacks, open mini bags of Fritos and toss in some seasoned taco meat, Velveeta queso and black beans. Add extras like lettuce, tomato chunks and sour cream, and this no mess treat lets kids create a meal right in their own chip bag. Grab a fork and dig in!

## Activities

After reading a few camping themed books, try out a few of these cool outdoor ideas.

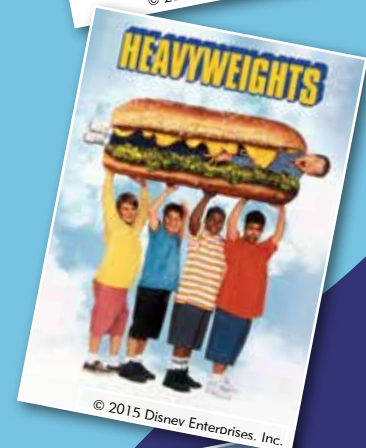
**Campfire Songs:** There are tons of classic camping songs for kids that are fun, involve movement and are easy to teach. Check out [www.campsongs.wordpress.com](http://www.campsongs.wordpress.com) for song ideas.

**Camp Skills Workshop:** Brush up on your knot tying, teach kids how to use a compass and demonstrate survival skills! This is a great chance to show campers how to be safe in the outdoors, what to pack and what activities you can do when enjoying the great outdoors.

**Mini Campfires:** Kids get a kick out of creating their own campfires from toilet paper rolls, tissue paper and cellophane. Want to make it look a little more realistic? Pop in a mini light to simulate a real fire.



**Animal Tracks Book:** There are tons of great books to help kids learn more about the animals in the forest, but making animal scrap books is an engaging way to help kids learn. Supply construction paper, animal pictures, prints of animal tracks, pictures of habitats and more to help create profiles for common animals found in the woods such as rabbits, raccoons, deer, bears and owls.



Classic camping movies:



Grants –they’re a way to get a specific program partially or even entirely funded, yet writing one for the first time can be an intimidating process. After all, it’s much more labor-intensive than filling out a form and simply sending it off. While grant writing can be a competitive process, don’t let that discourage you from taking the time to apply. These tips below can help steer you through the grant writing process from start to finish.

## Grant Your Funding Wish: Tips for Great Grant Applications

### Start with research

Great grant work starts with an impressive foundation made up of valuable information, and Google is probably a natural first step when looking for grants to apply for. Shelley R. O’Brien writes in her article titled “Grant Writing Tips for the Non-Grant Writer” that, “There are many resources on the Internet, but it’s simplest to start with a Google search of opportunities in your community.” She adds that most foundations and corporations have websites that detail their application process, and it’s important to adhere to all directions to be considered. She urges grant seekers that are in need of additional information to check out the Foundation Center’s website at [FoundationCenter.org](http://FoundationCenter.org) since they also provide excellent free webinars and classes on grant writing.

Starting small in regards to a grant’s location might also pay off thanks to a lower number of interested parties that may apply for the grant. As Herbert Landau shares in his book *Winning Grants: A Game Plan*, “Writing a competitive grant is a

gamble, with no guarantee of a payoff for the effort invested. In evaluating the odds of winning a grant, apply my rule number 3 of successful grantsmanship: Do not pursue a grant if the odds against winning are more than 10 to 1.”

### Do your homework

Request guidelines, annual reports, promotional materials, white papers and any other pertinent information from the foundation or organization before you start writing your grant proposal. This will help you organize your work around their beliefs, practices and goals. The Association for Rural and Small Libraries board member and branch manager of the Washington Branch Library in Washington, Utah, Lorie Womack also advises in her article “Grant Writing Tips for Beginners” “to clarify things such as who will complete what parts of the project, where additional money for the project may be coming from and what donation or in-kind contributions may be coming to the project.

You might also want to take time to get to know individuals who have worked with the foundations to which you're applying. Talk to foundation personnel to pick up little suggestions and hints from phone and email conversations, which can make major differences in the final form and focus of your proposal. The more personal contacts you make, the better shape your proposal will take. According to grant writing tips from Loan Eagle Consulting, foundations "appreciate those who take the time to gather all the facts, and they might even recognize your name when your proposal comes up for review. Pay careful attention on what to emphasize and what to tone down."

## Ask yourself questions as you write

Craft your proposal with the target reader in mind. You want your grant to answer many of the questions that the reader may have, such as "how does this project help meet my organization's goals and mission?" and "why is this grant important to the success of their library?" Be sure to include specifics about the duration of the project, constructive milestones, measures of success and more. Plus, you'll want to illustrate your grants with real examples, specific outputs and a logical outcome. According to the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's article on successful grant writing, "the proposal should explicitly state expected practical, tangible outputs and outcomes [and] you should be very clear about what outputs or outcomes would make you think the project has been a success."

## Review everything

Once you've written a thorough, well-thought-out grant, the last thing you want is for it to get rejected because you did not adhere to the formatting and content requirements. Be sure to go over all of these details with a fine tooth comb. Also, get a few pairs of extra eyes on your application to proofread everything before you submit.

## Don't forget to give updates

If you're the recipient of the grant, congratulations! Now you have the perfect opportunity to show how your library is using the funds whether it's requested or not. By keeping in touch with your funding sources, you'll stand a better chance of receiving future funding from this organization. Keep updates to once every few weeks, so your funders stay in the know and up-to-date.

# Components of a Grant Proposal

## Typical grants consist of:

- Proposal summary
- Introduction of the library seeking funding
- Problem statement or needs assessment
- Project objectives
- Project methods or design
- Project evaluation
- Future funding
- Project budget
- Appendices

## Try searching these sites for grants:

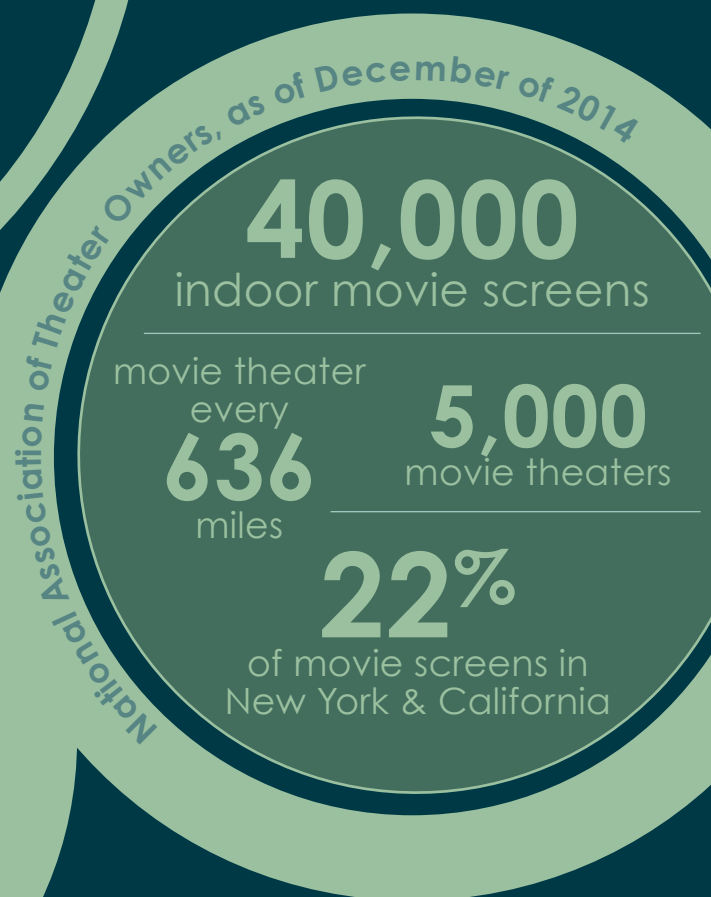
- National Endowment for the Humanities - [www.neh.gov/grants/](http://www.neh.gov/grants/)
- American Libraries Association – [www.ALA.org](http://www.ALA.org)
- Institute of Museum and Library Services - <http://www.imls.gov/>
- Library of Congress - <http://www.loc.gov/>
- Internet Library for Librarians - <http://www.itcompany.com/>

# Celebrate Indie Films in Your Library with Your License

Chances are you can name the big box office hits that arrived in theaters this year, but what about the smaller budget movies that are getting big buzz from critics? Many Academy Award® winners or Cannes entries never quite make it to mainstream theaters, but are still very much worth seeing. Trying to find a theater around you that shows one of these films can be a challenge unless you live in a big city like New York, Chicago or Los Angeles.

The good news is that your Movie Licensing USA license covers thousands of critically acclaimed indie titles, allowing you to host your own indie film series right inside of your library!

According to the National Association of Theater Owners, as of December of 2014, there are approximately 40,000 indoor movie screens and more than 5,000 movie theaters throughout the U.S. Factor in the size of the U.S., about 3,537,000 miles according to the U.S. Census Bureau, and that leaves one movie theater every 636 miles. Nearly 22% of these theaters call California and New York home, leaving roughly 4,000 theaters left across the country. Furthermore, since most movie theaters are interested in showing films that will bring in the most revenue, many of the smaller, but equally engaging, entertaining and enjoyable films are left out in the cold.



Your library film program can offer an easy alternative to traveling miles to the nearest theater and has the luxury of showing more than just big blockbusters. Patrons can be exposed to smaller budget, yet equally compelling films, while your library's related discussions and activities can give the showing a deeper meaning. Patrick Corcoran, Director of Media and Research for the National Association of Theatre Owners, suggests that smaller communities might actually be better served by locally-owned theater programs because organizers "tend to know the people in their community and are more in tune with what the community needs," meaning you can pick films in tune with what your community is interested in.

The vast range of films your library can show also adds a degree of artistic appreciation to your community. According to an article titled "Cinemas of the Future" in cinematic arts magazine *Cineaste*, film-showing organizer

Rebecca M. Alvin states that the "glory of extending independent cinema into suburban and rural communities is that it eliminates the perception that art-like films are only appreciated in big cities." This means that no matter where your library is located, you have the option to show more thought provoking and offbeat movies, like independent titles and foreign films, to expose patrons to something new and different.

A movie program at your library offers more than just the power to entertain; it also has the ability to show movies relating to all different ages, points of view and lifestyles. There are hundreds of excellent movies each year that are not released to a wide-theater distribution. In fact, only a sample of theaters actually show critically acclaimed movies. Why not take your film program to the next level by showing and discussing these great films that flew under the radar?

Only a fraction of movie theaters showed critically acclaimed, award-winning movies like these:

Movie Title	Screens Shown	Awards/Recognition
The Theory of Everything	885	Nominated for Best Picture at the 2014 Academy Awards®
Extraordinary	121	Riveting Winner, Featured at 2014's Sundance Film Festival
Mamey	21	Jury Prize Winner at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival
Maps to the Stars	66	Best Actress Winner at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival
Gloria	98	Premiered at the 2014 Berlin International Film Festival
They Came Together	3	Premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival
Inherent Vice	244	Premiered at the 2014 New York Film Festival
Black Sea	353	Won a Black Lion for Best Feature at the 24th Courmayeur Noir Film Festival
Flight Up	87	Premiered at the 2014 Toronto Film Festival
Wish I Was Here	753	Premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival

# BUILDING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

*By: Alesia C. Johnson,  
Program Director at Kids Video Connection*

## How Kids Video Connection Helps Teach Media Literacy at DeKalb County Library

There were lights, cameras and action at the DeKalb County Public Library located in the state of Georgia this summer as children had the opportunity to learn about media literacy and video production during the Kids Video Connection's Family Film Festival.





In an effort to teach media literacy to children throughout metro Atlanta, Kids Video Connection (KVC), a non-profit 501(c)3 educational media arts organization, started the festival in 2007 with funding and support from the Georgia Council for the Arts. Now in its 6th year, this eye-opening festival is two weeks of fun and educational activities, including movie screenings, media literacy seminars and video production workshops. This year's festival kicked off at the Decatur Library with a special screening of the movie *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, an entertaining family movie adapted from the popular children's book by Judith Viorst. After the showing of the movie, one of KVC's instructors introduced children to media literacy concepts as they discussed the movie.

Each year for this festival, KVC partners with the DeKalb County Library, a big supporter of using movies as teaching tools and the owners of an impressive collection of films and videos for children and adults to check out. Alesia Johnson, KVC's Co-founder and Program Director, said, "We are excited to partner with DeKalb County Public Library to introduce students to media literacy concepts while teaching them about video production." Media literacy is the ability to analyze, understand and create media in order to cultivate a better understanding of the world around us.

According to Johnson, the mission of KVC is to teach children media literacy and effective communication skills through the study and use of the disciplines and techniques of video production. Effuah Chisholm, Children's Librarian at Decatur Library stated, "More children are using online information for academic reasons. In today's technological world, it is very important for children to have media literacy skills."



Photos by CONCEP

Throughout each year, KVC conducts a variety of video production, editing and public speaking workshops for teens and children in after school programs and summer camps. In an effort to give back and teach low income children in the community, KVC started conducting a free Intro to Video Production seminar at the Gresham Library when they began the festival. In 2008, KVC was awarded the DeKalb County Arts Visionary Award for creating innovative art programs to teach children.

This year, in addition to expanding their outreach services to more libraries, KVC premiered their new workshop

Technology/Media and the Family at the Decatur Library. During this workshop, parents learned media literacy concepts, ways to protect children while communicating online and cyber-bullying prevention tactics. Mia Manekofsky, Youth Services Sr. Librarian at the Decatur Library noticed the increase of new patrons visiting the library thanks to this program, stating, "When we partner with outside organizations, people who don't typically use the library come to the library for the program and rediscover all the library has to offer."

During the festival, KVC conducted the well-attended Intro to Video Production Workshop at three libraries in DeKalb County. As part of the workshops, students created public service announcements (PSA) to promote the library. The children divided into media teams; they brainstormed, wrote a short script and shot the video. Isaiah Marshall, an 11-year-old boy and one of the workshop's attendees at the Gresham Library said, "It was fun learning to create a video while working on a team with other people."

Elizabeth Harris, Children's Librarian at the Tucker-Reid H. Cofer Library said, "The Video Production Workshop helped our library bring a community of tweens/teens together." Frank Mastrogiacomo, Lead Teacher at KVC and DeKalb County School of the Arts Media Instructor said children utilize many different skills as they create their own video projects, tapping into creativity and imagination. He added, "We teach the students in two hours how to create a short video project and media literacy concepts." The students were very creative with books and props in the library to produce PSAs about the library and the importance of reading.

In an effort to reach children throughout the metro Atlanta area, KVC instructors also go to libraries, schools, summer camps and art/community centers to teach. In addition to learning about media literacy and video production, students in the Video Production II Workshop interview a prominent person who has contributed to their community. Under the supervision of a professional producer, children researched, formulated questions and interviewed a "living legend." KVC plans to use the workshop interviews as a vehicle to deliver history to children in the new educational children's series Living Legends Connections, according to Johnson. Currently, the KVC website [www.kidsvideoconnection.org](http://www.kidsvideoconnection.org) features students interviewing civil rights living legend, Congressman John Lewis. If you would like to learn more about KVC or schedule one of the 10-week workshops which includes video production, editing or public speaking, please contact, Alesia Johnson at [ajohnson@kidsvideoconnection.org](mailto:ajohnson@kidsvideoconnection.org).

# Ditch Holiday Programming?

## A LOOK AT WHY SOME LIBRARIES AGREE

When it comes to the holiday season, programming, decorating and even celebrating can all be areas in which librarians may feel the need to tread lightly. Your internal holiday monologue may go something like this: “Should I add a tree?” “What about a menorah?” “What should I include for Kwanzaa?” This line of thinking is the reason why some libraries are actually forgoing any sort of holiday programming, in favor of creating a winter schedule that focuses on more secular ideas. With patrons of varied backgrounds, religions and cultures, and often a tiny budget, it’s hard to incorporate everyone’s favorite decorations, keep the mood inclusive and create a complete holiday program.

Those skipping holiday programming have some valid points that they’re bringing to the table. As the Fair Housing Institute claims in an article titled “Are Holiday Decorations Making You Miserable?” displaying religious items in common areas of apartment complexes may offend some individuals, leading them to believe that the management prefers one belief system over another. The same risk exists in government-run organizations like public schools and libraries.

The distinction between religious and secular programs and decorations can be tricky. This has been the subject of many court cases, including the court case of the County of Allegheny v. American Civil Liberties Union that traveled all the way up to the United States Supreme Court. The question in these cases is whether public displays of symbols are in violation of the Establishment Clause located in Amendment 1 of the United States Constitution.

Some librarians believe that by promoting one or two holidays, they’re excluding those who don’t celebrate these specific occasions. They claim that when kids come into the library during the holiday season, they should be able to participate in all children’s programs, not just the ones that pertain to their own family’s beliefs. By offering programs around themes like snow, winter and more instead of other holiday themed programming, everyone can participate.

Kendra Jones, a children’s librarian and a regular contributor of Storytime Underground and “joint chief and creator of Storytime University” has strong views on why holiday programming should not be a part of program scheduling. “It is not your right to celebrate Christmas in a public institution. It is your right to celebrate whatever you want on your own time and your job to help patrons find places, outside of the library, offering celebrations or events around any holiday in which they might be interested. Remember that those who celebrate holidays during the winter do not need the library to help them celebrate,” she wrote in a November 2015 post on School Library Journal’s website [www.slj.com](http://www.slj.com). “Conversely, those who do not celebrate Christmas, specifically, have very few places (basically their own home, if they have one) where “holiday spirit” is not constantly in their face. The library should be one of these places,” stated Jones.

Ester Weissman, who lives in Back Bay, a suburb of Boston, has been on a mission to get her local library to add a menorah in celebration of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. “All I’m asking for is inclusion in the holiday decorations of a public building,” Weissman stated to CBS Boston last December. “Instead I’ve gotten exclusion and I find that really offensive,” she said. The library responded to her requests, noting that their wreaths are purely secular symbols and do not particularly represent any religion. Some patrons took the side of “it’s a library, not a church,” while others stated that the library should represent everyone since it’s a public space.

Despite these opinions, many libraries around the country still plan on hosting parties, trimming the tree and much more. Their reasons for including Christmas programs and events boil down to tradition, demand and even just reflex. When it comes to your library, you have to be comfortable about where you draw the line. If you feel any hesitation about a holiday related theme or program, it may pay to explore the gray area and investigate other ways to celebrate the winter months.

# Secular Decorations Everyone Enjoys

## Nature

Pinecones, greenery, red bows and logs are natural elements you can use to spruce up your spaces this winter. White spray paint, pinecones and some faux berries are all you need to make this pretty winter wreath.



## Snowflakes

Concentrate on what's happening outside on the inside of your library. Paper snowflakes are easy to make, and counter snow banks made of fluffed up cotton can help add ambiance. If you're feeling crafty, you can even make Olaf from *Frozen* out of library books!



## Lights

Place extra emphasis on your lighting displays this holiday season. Faux candles, bright white lights and stars work together to create a show stopping scene. You can even create your own lighted garland with a string of white lights and some ping pong balls



# Celebrate 2016 with a Noon Year's Eve Party!

Do you remember how excited you were to try to stay up until the clock struck midnight when you were a kid? A lot of the time, it's hard for little ones to make it until 12:00 o'clock, and some might not get the chance to try if their parents adhere to their normal bedtime schedules.

Most New Year's Eve parties are adults-only events, but kids get excited about celebrating this holiday, too. By throwing a Noon Year's Eve party, young patrons can get a taste of what it's like to celebrate New Year's Eve without keeping your doors open late or worrying about bedtimes. Plus, the clock still can strike 12:00, but it'll be noon instead of midnight so there's plenty of time left in the day to continue celebrating.

## Talk About Traditions

This is a great opportunity to teach little ones about New Year's Eve traditions that other countries practice. Host a quick session that covers how people around the world celebrate, separating ideas into different categories like "make some noise," "lucky snacks," "give a gift" and more. Some of our favorite traditions and facts about New Year's include:

- In Dutch homes, people eat ring shaped donuts to symbolize the year "coming full circle."
- Those from Spain eat 12 grapes at midnight in the spirit of good luck in next 12 months of the new year.
- Noise making and fireworks were believed to have originated in ancient China where fire and loud sounds were thought to scare away evil spirits and bring good luck.
- The birthplace of "Auld Lang Syne" is Scotland, where neighbors would visit each other shortly after midnight and impart wishes for the year.
- In Greece, a cake is baked with a gold coin inside. Whoever finds the coin in their piece of cake will be especially lucky in the coming year.

## Kid-Friendly Food

Take the adult tradition of champagne in fancy glasses and replace it with milk (with a sprinkle rim, of course!) and cookies or sparkling grape juice for a children's take on an old timeless tradition. Finger foods like English muffin pizzas, mini pigs in a blanket, fruit, cheese cubes, veggies and dip, and mini grilled cheese sandwiches are easy to prep, satisfy picky eaters and can look fancy when placed on snazzy plates.

## Make Some Noise

What's a faux New Year's Eve party without some noisy merriment? Try the two craft ideas below for ways to raise a clamor when the clock strikes noon.

**Homemade party poppers:** Tissue paper, toilet paper rolls, wash tape, string and confetti (plus other materials for stuffing like glitter and small toys) are all your patrons need to create fun homemade celebration poppers. Measure and cut your tissue paper 12 inches wide and 4 inches long, then lay your toilet paper roll at one end of the tissue paper and begin rolling. Gather the end on one side, twist and secure with tape or string. Fill the other side with confetti, printed messages and your trinkets and twist the second end, securing it with tape or string. When you're ready to celebrate, simply grab both ends and pull hard!



**Recycled bottle noisemaker:** Turn an empty water bottle into something that'll shake up your party. You'll need empty plastic bottles; tissue paper to cover the bottles; sequins and stickers to decorate the bottles; ribbon; white craft glue; water; scissors; and beans, coins or beads to place inside of your bottles.

To create your shaker, simply place a handful of your beads, coins or beans inside of a clean, dry water bottle. Glue the cap back on and make a mixture of  $\frac{1}{2}$  white craft glue to  $\frac{1}{2}$  water (keep in mind you will need enough of this mixture to cover all of your bottles a few times over). Paint some of the glue mixture on your bottle and cover all the way around with white tissue paper 2 to 3 times. Next, apply small squares of colored tissue paper, sequins and stickers all over your bottle so they resemble confetti. Lastly, tie ribbons around the bottle's neck and curl the ends. Let it dry and then start shaking!

## The Grand Finale

To finish your noon celebration with a grand send off, try crafting a dazzling balloon drop out of a standard paper tablecloth, yarn, a hole puncher, some duct tape, a little confetti and a ton of balloons (you'll most likely need more than 100 to make a big impact for the little ones). First, cut the table cloth in half to create two rectangles. Along the edge of each half, punch holes about 1" apart.

Next, thread the yarn through the holes to create a "zipper" effect through the middle of the table cloth. Be sure to leave most of the yarn hanging from one side to become the ripcord when you're ready! Now, hang the tablecloth from the ceiling with tape (duct tape works well); you'll want to leave some slack in the tablecloth to in order to fill it with your balloons. After you're done blowing up your balloons, place them into your tablecloth and throw some confetti in, too. Now, just wait for the moment when the clock strikes 12!





Photo credits: Ferguson Public Library

# Libraries Come to the Rescue

With cameras flashing and people all over the world watching, libraries across the country have been thrust into the spotlight after community unrest during the last few years. This isn't a new phenomenon, as libraries have been serving as a community refuge in times of need for decades, even centuries. Wayne Wiegand, Florida State University LIS professor and author of the book *Part of Our Lives: A People's History of the American Public Library* stated to *American Libraries* magazine, "Generally as a profession, librarians bring that sense of humanity into their job. That's what librarians have been doing since the Boston Public Library opened in 1854."

Wiegand also noted that in every crisis throughout American history, you'll notice librarians stepping up to fill in. Citing examples from the Great Depression, the Civil Rights Movement and even 9/11, the power of libraries in times of crisis remains impressive. During the week of April 27, 2015, the Pennsylvania Avenue branch of Baltimore's Enoch Pratt Free Library faced strong community unrest. Pratt Library CEO and former ALA President (2003–2004) Carla Hayden spoke with *American Libraries* magazine about the decision to remain open, stating "The library has been the community's anchor. It's the heart of the community at good times and bad times."

She went on to tell how Branch Manager Melanie Townsend-Diggs "quietly locked the doors and kept the patrons inside. Later, [Townsend-Diggs] was able to let the public and the staff leave through the back door." Townsend-Diggs told Hayden, "I really feel at a time like this, the community needs us, and I want to try to open." Hayden supported her wishes, believing that in many challenged communities, libraries are the only resource available when times are tough. The community responded with a general message of gratitude for what they're doing. "It's almost like they knew they can count on us. I've never been prouder to be a librarian," Hayden stated.

Before the Enoch Pratt Free Library addressed unrest in Baltimore, Director Scott Bonner of the Ferguson branch of the St. Louis Public Library system quickly realized the library's importance when the Ferguson community experienced several days of unrest during the summer of 2014. When the first outbreak of chaos occurred in August 2014, Bonner was in just his fifth week on the job. He used social media to organize more than 100 volunteers to help turn the library into a place for kids whose classes had been canceled and a safe place for all patrons to learn, read and talk. Adults also came to the library to meet with volunteer social workers and to learn how to access emergency loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration. "People from all over Ferguson showed up to take care of the kids, and it was a common cause," Bonner told CNN. Inside the library, children were given "healing kits" with backpacks stuffed with books, worksheets and teddy bears.

While the rest of the world saw images of violence in Ferguson, Bonner saw a community coming together to help those when they needed it most. "What we did in Ferguson that caught people's attention is something people and libraries do every day," he said. "Libraries provide the means

to make you a better you, and your community a better community," he stated in a CNN.com article titled "Library of the Year goes to Ferguson for Efforts During Protests."

"I defined the library mission as widely as I could. I wanted to look back at this time and regret saying 'yes' too much instead of saying 'no' too much," said Bonner, a philosophy he continues to implement. "I've done a lot of thinking about the library's mission and how broadly we can define it so that I can say 'yes,' and not be gatekeeping and stopping things," Bonner stated. "I want to say 'yes' to everything I can. We're going to run the library too hot, things are going to break. Things are going to go sideways. I'd rather do too much and have things go sideways than do too little."

There is always tension between "do you open to serve your public" or "do you play it safe."

While the rest of the world saw images of violence in Ferguson, Bonner saw a community coming together to help those when they needed it most.

Bonner also appreciated that others noticed his library's efforts. Steven V. Potter, Director and CEO of the Mid-Century Public Library in Independence, Missouri, even nominated Bonner's library for Library Journal's Library of the

Year. "The Ferguson Library provided the example for all of us to live up to. It behaved as all of us hope that we would behave if confronted by a similar situation," wrote Potter. As the winner, the Ferguson library was awarded \$10,000 which will go toward programming and responding to current and future community needs. It also received a grant to replace all of its technology equipment.

Bonner himself said what FMPL did is what other libraries did after tornadoes in Joplin, during hurricanes in New England, and at many other times. "I think libraries step up all the time. There is always tension between "do you open to serve your public" or "do you play it safe," Bonner explained. He even reached out to Townsend-Diggs during Baltimore's unrest. "He just wanted to give us encouragement, [say] that he understood what was going on here, having gone through it," said Townsend-Diggs to Library Journal. "And I told him that he was an inspiration to us."

As far as advice for other libraries that may be facing similar community situations, Hayden advised, "You may not be fighting, but you're in the fight. Recognize that you have to think of yourself as that anchor. Things will follow after that."

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CHILDREN



Based on *Aschenputtel*,  
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Rated PG



Based on *Cloudy with a  
Chance of Meatballs* by  
Judi Barrett  
Rated PG



Based on *Madeline* by Ludwig  
Bemelmans  
Rated PG

TEENS



Based on *Insurgent* by  
Veronica Roth  
Rated PG-13



Based on the play *Peter Pan*  
by J. M. Barrie  
Rated PG



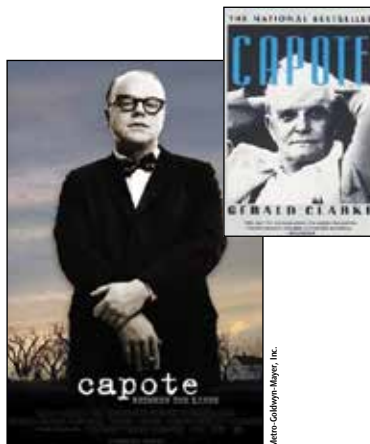
Based on *Beautiful Creatures*  
by Kami Garcia  
Rated PG-13



ADULTS



Based on *Don't Point That Thing at Me* by Kyril Bonfiglioli  
 Rated R

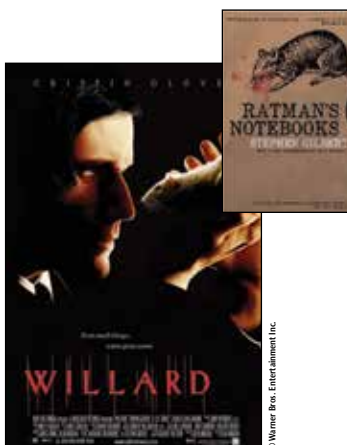


Based on *Capote: A Biography* by Gerald Clarke  
 Rated R



Based on the comic book series *Ant-Man* by Stan Lee, Larry Lieber, and Jack Kirby  
 Rated PG-13

HALLOWEEN MOVIES



Based on *Ratman's Notebooks* by Stephen Gilbert  
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Based on *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman  
 Rated PG



Based on *Ring* by Koji Suzuki  
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Based on *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill  
 Rated PG-13

# LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT

WHETHER IT'S BIG OR SMALL, RURAL OR URBAN, NO TWO LIBRARIES ARE QUITE THE SAME. HERE WE INTERVIEW LIBRARY WORKERS TO FIND OUT WHAT PROGRAMS, SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES THEY ARE PROUD TO PROVIDE.

## SHREWSBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY - SHREWSBURY, MA

### Daniel N. Barbour

#### Number of cardholders?

21,659

#### Number of books/items in circulation?

108,299

#### What was your library's best program or event?

From fun events like trivia nights, scavenger hunts, cooking competitions, crafting events, and of course, movie nights, to educational programming like ESL classes, a job-seekers network, and a Let's Make skills series, patrons can learn and be entertained in countless ways. It's hard to single out one event as the best – our programming reaches so many people in so many different ways that the best programs are the ones that truly impact people's lives for the better.

#### What books are you reading right now?

As a huge pop culture fan, there was no way I was going to pass up reading Ernie Cline's *Armada*. This is the same author that wrote the hit *Ready Player One* which is currently being adapted into a film directed by Stephen Spielberg.

#### How does your Library create community?

Our library has definitely fostered a community center environment by offering diverse materials, programs and services. The mission of Shrewsbury Public Library is to stimulate the imagination, nurture literacy in young children, empower people to find and use information, encourage lifelong learning, and support our evolving community.

#### What are some ways your library receives funding?

Apart from our town funding, the Friends of the Shrewsbury Public Library are a huge support system for the Shrewsbury Public Library. They sponsor many events, programs, and services, including our annual movie license fee. This hard-working group of volunteers donates countless hours to running fundraisers that truly enhance

the resources and events that our library provides.

#### How do you attract volunteers? What programs have they helped with?

As the Young Adult Librarian/Volunteer Coordinator, I have developed a very successful volunteering program thanks to a group of very hard-working and committed members of the community. We allow volunteers to begin in middle school which helps to develop an appreciation for giving back to the community at a young age, and helps develop very strong library advocates for when they reach high school and beyond. Our volunteers are on hand at most of our events in some way, shape or form helping set up, take down, serve food, run games and any other tasks needed.

#### How do you use movie programming in your library?

Movies have played a large part in many different library events. Outside of the standard film screenings which we offer from time to time, we also hold film series/festivals, and incorporate movies into other programs. One year around Halloween, we did a scavenger hunt for families called "The Hunt for Hitch" where we transformed different portions of our library into scenes from classic Hitchcock films. One challenge at this event was based on *The Birds*, so we turned our projector up to the ceiling of one room in the library and played an attack sequence on loop so when teams entered, it was as if they were walking into Bodega Bay and under attack! It was dizzying and simple to execute – and it was a really fun way to incorporate a movie into an event.

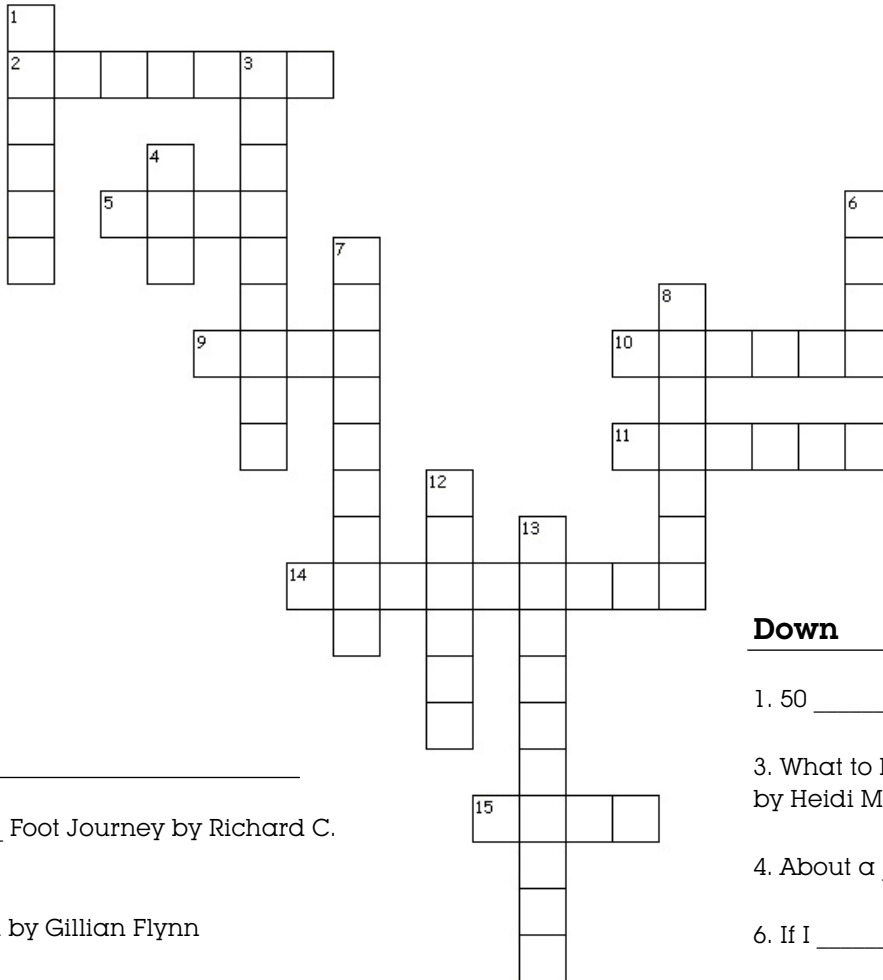
#### What's your favorite part of your library??

The best part of the Shrewsbury Public Library, by far, is the patrons. Shrewsbury is a very diverse and wonderful community full of fascinating people of all walks of life. Getting to work at this community center and meet and learn from so many amazing individuals is something I never take for granted.

# FUN, *GAMES* & **C?**ONTESTS

## Book to Movie Crossword Puzzle?

Can you fill in famous book to movie titles to complete the puzzle?



### Across

2. The \_\_\_\_\_ Foot Journey by Richard C. Morais
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Girl by Gillian Flynn
9. The Time Traveler's \_\_\_\_\_ by Audrey Niffenegger
10. Guardians of the \_\_\_\_\_ by Gene Colan
11. The Great \_\_\_\_\_ by F. Scott Fitzgerald
14. Cloudy with a Chance of \_\_\_\_\_ by Judi Barrett
15. The \_\_\_\_\_ of Wall Street by Jordan Belfort

### Down

1. 50 \_\_\_\_\_ of Grey by E. L. James
3. What to Expect When You're \_\_\_\_\_ by Heidi Murkoff
4. About a \_\_\_\_\_ by Nick Hornby
6. If I \_\_\_\_\_ by Gayle Forman
7. \_\_\_\_\_ and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst
8. The Boy in the Striped \_\_\_\_\_ by John Boyne
12. Harry \_\_\_\_\_ and the Half Blood Prince by J. K. Rowling
13. The Perks of Being a \_\_\_\_\_ by Stephen Chbosky

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