

Winter is the Warmest Season

Kathryn Tatnall, Youth Services Librarian

I had high hopes that we would have a mild end of the autumn season. Based on last year's entrance into the New Year I did have hope. I arrived in New Ulm last winter just two days before the polar vortex hit and I don't remember it being overwhelmingly bad. Of course, I went from my place to the library, to the store, and then back home at the end of the day. So my exposure to the elements was brief. This year, I have my own home and a puppy, so that means I am out walking the dog three times a day or more, and shoveling my own snow. And being out in the weather so much this year has made me think about one of my favorite books about snow.

"Winter is the Warmest Season" is a picture book by Lauren Stringer that describes how the coldest time of the year is also a time of incredible warmth inside our home and our hearts. It is one of my favorite picture books about winter. I love the story and the illustrations in this book.

"Snow" by Cynthia Rylant tells the story of a little girl, her friend and her grandmother out enjoying all the beauty and poetry of a fresh snowfall. It makes me think of all the first snowfalls I've experienced in my life. From the ones where my sisters and I tried to catch as many fat snowflakes on our tongues as a child to watching my puppy chase the snowflakes of the first snowfall this year.

"Snowmen at Night" by Caralyn Buehner gives us a glimpse of what one little boy imagines the snowmen do at night when he is asleep. It describes a charming gathering of snow families gathering to socialize and have snowball fights and play games until dawn. If you like this one you will love the two other in the series, "Snowmen at Work" and "Snowmen at Christmas".

"All You Need to Build a Snowman" by Alice Schertle is a lyrical recipe for building a snowman. It is fun and whimsical story of how to create the perfect, and perfectly huge, snowman... or two. This book is another one that takes me back to childhood. I remember driving my mother crazy by running back into the house multiple times to get just one more thing for our snowmen.

If you are looking for winter and snow books we have a shelf or two waiting for you to come in and browse. The programming for children has slowed and is largely taking a break for the holiday season. While story time on hold for now, we will be having ECFE Bedtime Story Hour on Wednesday, December 11 at 6 p.m. Stories will be shared first and then families are invited to color, craft, and play for a while. Every child is offered a free book before they leave the session.

We are going to present Lego Club on Thursday, December 19 at 3:30 p.m. Builders age 5 through age 13 are invited to take up the challenge build of the month, or simply free build if that is more enjoyable for you. And our final program of the month will be Black Light Bingo on Friday, December 27 at 3 p.m. We are looking for tweens and teens (anyone in 5th to 8th grade) to join us for bingo in the dark. Glow sticks will be provided and we'll set up the black lights, so wear something white so we can see you when you call out, "BINGO!" We are going to serve pizza and you could win a prize for having the most bingos. Please register to participate; you can do so by calling the Library at 507-359-8331. Registration ensures we have enough pizza for everyone.

Finally, just a few notes about the library's holiday hours. The library will close early on Tuesday, December 24 at 1:30 p.m. for Christmas Eve. We will be closed all day for Christmas on Wednesday, December 25. We will re-open on Thursday, December, 26 at 9:30 a.m. On Tuesday, December 31 the library will close at 5:30 p.m. for New Year's Eve and remain closed for New Year's Day on January 1st. We hope you all have a wonderful holiday season filled with warmth, happiness, and love. Thank you all for a wonderful year!