

READS Roundtable Discussion

Rye Public Library 4/4/18: Community Wide Programming

- Community wide programs tend to involve greater preparation time, planning, resources and community partnerships. Buy-in from partners also essential.
- Helps to make library a community space.
- How-to-Festivals
 - First library-led How-to-Festival in Louisville, KY.
 - 2014: Portsmouth first library in New England to host a How-to-Festival.
 - Setting goals
 - Skillshare
 - Helping people learn what others in their community do.
 - Layout
 - Series of events with various artisans
 - Heavily scheduled 1-hour slots
 - High cost printing out schedules of all the events.
 - 2014 pdf will be sent out to attendees.
 - 40 presentations in 5 hours.
 - Each presenter saw 20 people on average.
 - All of the presenters were volunteers.
 - Tried to have events for all ages.
 - Kid friendly events.
 - Challenging logistics of where to best have events for all ages.
 - Working with a generally autonomous youth services department to bring them into the event.
 - Having passive programming available including tactile displays.
 - Getting input from the community.
 - Event was held on first week of August.
 - Attended Market Square Day, Portsmouth Pride Day
 - Showing interest in the various activities on these days can greatly increase the chance of convincing someone to volunteer for the How-to-Festival.
 - Often one person ends up enacting much of what committees/departments plan on.
 - First year recruitment was done exclusively, then an application was filled out, but this still required a similar recruitment pitch.
 - A number of presenters agreed to do future How-to-Festivals.
 - Pitch to presenters
 - Exposure somewhat different from regular demos/expos of artisans.
 - Concern approaching actors, musicians and other presenters who are being asked to volunteer what they are otherwise paid for.
 - Easier to pitch by someone who is a part of that community.
 - Often aligns with mission of their organization.
 - Some organizations may pay their members to attend particularly if education is a part of their overall mission.

- Focus on learnable skills within the context of the short presentation: “Not teaching people how to do their taxes, but instead organizing their receipts.”
- Different programs
 - Origami
 - Inventor: organizing ideas visually.
 - Pick depth and breadth.
 - Library provides supplies for takeaways, though next time they are considering not always doing this.
 - Determining the cost/value of providing all supplies.
- Library policy very clear on not selling anything at the library or for library events. Definitely tell presenters to bring business cards.
- Some displays “too salesy”
- Ability to have longer demonstrations that people can stop in on part of.
- Potential for mix of both events.
- Craft fairs can be good for recruitment as well.
- Concord’s 2017 How-to-Festival: 25 minute programs.
- Determine desire for quick experience vs. longer event.
- Potential for complaints about a presenter taking too much or too little time. Similarly presenters may feel they did not receive enough time or were expected to stay too long.
- Concord has a programming group from a number of departments.
- Attendees picked a schedule of programs they were interested in attending.
- Potential problem if presenters do not show up.
- Determining the best way to count participants
 - Door counter
 - Pen/pin giveaways
 - Presenter feedback.
- Have been held both indoors and outside.
 - Latter may require tents, rain days or rain location.
 - Portsmouth opted for tents with an emergency rain location.
- Next time Portsmouth would aim for a shorter festival that was more of a “free for all”
- Mechanisms in place for feedback from both presenters and participants.
 - Google form.
 - Paper handout.
 - Banner of what was learned.
 - Sometimes feedback shows things that ultimately cannot be fixed.
- Community-wide reads
 - PBS Great American Reads.
 - Things They Carried Community read across several communities.
 - Wonder Community Read.
 - Conversations about disabilities.
 - Conversations about bullying.
 - Choosing book for a community read is hugely challenging.
 - Wide appeal essential, but ultimately not everyone will be interested.

- Concord has a committee composed of librarians, members of the Concord Public Library Foundation, and members of the community (rep from local book store, rep from Trustees, etc.) who provides much of the funding, booksellers and librarians. Also, highly valuable to have a teacher on the committee.
 - Ask community for recommendations.
 - Set criteria then have community vote.
 - Make sure book is available in paperback to defray costs.
 - Also make sure there are different formats available (audio cd, large print, e-book and digital audio).
 - See if it is possible to bring the author in for the event (this may influence what book is chosen).
 - Last year in Concord the author of *Adrift* was interviewed by students, which led to some different types of questions than many authors receive.
- Concord currently doing community read on *Following Atticus* by Tom Ryan.
 - Book revealed in January. Author event April 19th.
 - Red River Theatres generally used as venue, can support up to 150 people.
 - Ryan said he has brought in 700-800 people in the past.
 - Capitol Center too costly.
 - Municipal center might not bring in enough people to bring it close to capacity.
 - Current author talk only open to Concord library cardholders and registration is required.
 - Ryan will also present at the high school.
 - Concord Reads Trivia night compilation of trivia questions about the book submitted by the library, and trivia questions around book topics selected by the presenting bar.
 - Partnership and events with Concord Trails Committee including book giveaway for hiking trails in the city.
 - Book discussions including one at the SPCA.
 - Many programs are “free” or close to free because of partnerships.
 - Children’s activities around the book.
 - Desire to reach every age level.
 - Foundation raises funds.
 - 170 copies purchased for high school
 - 75 circulating copies.
 - Worked with graphic design instructor and high school print shop to make PR materials.
- Other ways to circulate Community Reads books
 - Selling books at a reduced rate at the library.
 - ILL 10-15 copies to have on hand.
 - Purchase several extra copies.
- What can be done with books after the event?
 - Most end up in book sale.
 - Create book kits.

- Send out to little free libraries.
 - Possible to create permanent host collections in libraries that have the space?
 - Create decentralized book storage and share information through READS about books and spaces available.
 - Way to vet potential community reads books.
 - Could include write up of the event and all surrounding programs.
- Programming with partners
 - Almost all programs in Concord and Portsmouth work with some sort of partnership.
 - Camp Lincoln and Kingston Library collaboration
 - Joint advertising.
 - Usage of spaces
 - Library uses camp for outdoors activity.
 - Camp uses library for meetings.
 - For-profit: Show willingness to bring in competitors as well in a given industry.
 - Non-profit:
 - Potential for awkward conversations about what is within an organization's purview.
 - E.g. problems with Rec department and library over athletic programs.
 - Some of this can be prevented through clear policies.
- Other events
 - Winter book reading: Hampton.
 - Book reading coffee sleeves.
 - Coffee giveaway for reading four books: 50% donated, 50% library funded
 - Financial planning for library prizes, particularly if they vary based on participation.
 - Work with partners to establish a desired range.
 - Pros and cons of raffles: easier to budget, lack of payoff for non-winners.
 - Summer reading: choice of prizes, choice of genres to read.
 - Having prizes that are more of an experience than a toy or trinket.
 - Types of incentives
 - Providing a sense of ownership: "Tricia's favorite book."
 - Concord: Book Bingo and Bookopoly both popular games.
 - Having some sort of prize for all, but also a raffle.
 - Touch a truck event:
 - Hugely popular children's event for several libraries.
 - Good for building community partnerships.
 - Concord music programs outside on the closed off street.
 - Generally over 200 attendees.
 - Partner with local restaurants and food trucks.
 - Promote local artists.
 - Hudson DCU Free Concert
 - Given \$3500 grant from Digital Credit Union (has several locations in town).
 - 70-80 attendees generally.
 - Generally look for artists in the \$200-\$300 range.

- Poetry contest: partner with schools and individual language arts teachers to reach as many students as possible.
 - Have five age ranges from preschool to senior citizens.
 - Winners have picture in the newspaper and receive prizes.
 - Contact all winners, but allow all interested attendees to read submitted poems at poetry read event.
- Books to big screen program with Red River Theatres in Concord.
 - Need to figure out cost that works: free vs. reduced admission.
 - Public performance rights may be different for a theater versus a library.
 - Movies at the Concord Library have tended to have low attendance.
- Movies
 - Time and food seem to influence movie attendance.
 - Hudson great increase in afternoon movie attendance versus evening.
 - Hampton: afternoon matinee and evening movie/potluck.
 - Rye: 25-30 attendees for afternoon movie.
 - Kingston 62 attendees for showing of Coco with pizza.
 - Licensing concerns: if an event is not sponsored by the library can they use the library's licensing agreement?
 - Should libraries not let organizations show a film if they do not have the appropriate license?
 - Organizations that come in to show a movie or have an event at the library may feel that the library is or should be promoting that event or be angry at the library when attendance is low
- Programs with registration
 - Many times people will register and not attend or try to attend the day of the event.
 - Value in contacting registrants the day before the event.
 - Some scheduling software has an automatic option for this.
- Group mediation
 - Rye 6 week program.
- Chair yoga
 - Rye's most popular recurring event.
 - Taught by a nurse volunteering her time.
- Problems with yoga and aromatherapy when competitors feel one business is being given free space and access to clients for paid library programs.
 - One way to get around this is to ask for a donation versus having a mandatory fee.
 - Call it a small business incubator.
 - Make library space(s) open to all businesses.
 - Different than having a material fee.
 - Hampton: no recurring groups in the evening for their program space, but recurring groups can use the space between 1 and 5. This was determined based on when the space was most popular.
- Possibility for a regional How-to-Festival

- Greater pool of potential experts.
- May be the only way some smaller libraries could participate.
- Logistics could be incredibly challenging.
- The seacoast cooperative had done a regional storytellers event.