Puppies and Pi(e)

Winter Park Public Library

Teens

|

Adults

|

Intergenerational

Puppies and Pi(e)

Jun 8, 2018

$1-50

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Byline

Lisa Blue, Young Adult Librarian, Winter Park Public Library (Fla.)

Every year on Pi Day, March 14, local animal shelter Pet Rescue by Judy brings puppies to our library, and we set up an area in our larger meeting room where teens and adults can play with them. Because it's Pi Day, we also buy seven or eight pies from the local grocery store.

So we eat pie and play with puppies for a couple of hours. This year, the event lasted from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

Advanced Planning

First, I have to contact the shelter and make sure Judy knows the date and has puppies to bring. I then need to figure out a way to protect our carpet. Right now it's in terrible shape so I just had to put down some plastic dropcloth and two ginormous white tablecloths. I also work with our Teen Advisory Board to figure out which flavors of pie we want to provide.

This is a very low-maintenance program as long as you have a good connection in the community that will bring puppies.

Marketing

We create a flier and a digital slide in-house, and we promote the event through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The Teen Advisory Board is also tasked with getting the word out in communities and schools; they write public announcements and put out fliers wherever they think they'd be useful. Judy from the pet rescue also promotes the event on her end.

Budgeting

I had initially requested $50 to spend on the pies, but then The Dairy Council of Florida provided us with a gift card as a part of our monthly Hungry Games program where we focus on food skills. I originally had put in money for puppy toys, too, but Judy assured me they'd be bringing little toys with the dogs. So this is a pretty cost-effective program.

Day-of-event Activity

We make sure the floor is cleared of tables, then we put the chairs in a big circle and cover the space inside the circle with plastic and tablecloths.

I set up the Apple TV to stream puppy videos on YouTube and a table full of dog-themed books like "Bad Dog: 278 Outspoken, Indecent, and Overdressed Dogs" by Harry Prichett, R.D. Rosen, and Rob Battles and Elliott Erwitt's "Woof."

We set up more tables in the back for pie serving, making sure there are small plates, forks, napkins and cups for milk.

Once the puppies arrive, we make sure to keep the doors to the room closed so they can't run off. We also make sure to discuss the right way to introduce yourself to a dog using ASPCA introduction tips.

Program Execution

We probably had 93 people attend the event this year. In the pictures we took, I see a lot of smiling teens. Even the surly teens were sitting there smiling while snuggling with a puppy.

We encouraged patrons with their own puppies, if they felt they were friendly, to bring them in as well, so a couple of the patrons went out to the lobby with their puppies to say hi to the kids who were too small to participate in the event. (We do not allow smaller children to come; this is a 10+ event. These are not trained service dogs and a puppy's behavior is unpredictable, so we're very wary of the safety of the children.)

The families that came and brought their own dogs had a really good time, too.

Advice

Develop a relationship with a local shelter. We originally tried to partner with the local animal control, but they said they don’t bring dogs to remote sites. So it was fortunate that we had this alternative shelter we were able to partner with.

Make sure you protect your carpet because there are puppy accidents.

Dogs — even young ones — can be unpredictable, so it's important to make sure the dogs you are bringing in are easy-going and get along with one another. In our case, Judy is very experienced with dogs and can select ones whose personalities work for

this event.

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

Slideshow Images





Image









Image





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Build Your Cat a Castle

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Unicorn Party

Audiences:

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Children (9 and under)
Teens (13-16)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
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Adults (21 and up)+ | $
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Warm and Fuzzy: Hot Chocolate and Alpacas

Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)
Children (9 and under)
Intergenerational