Quaranzine (A Quarantine Zine)

Arlington Public Library

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Free

Byline

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Quaranzine is a small online publication of local art and writing by the Arlington community, distributed through the library website. Launched on April 3, 2020, Quaranzine is based on the DIY aesthetic of zines and shares creative works from our community that document how we respond to this strange time we find ourselves in.

The idea was to offer people a platform to share the projects they've been undertaking while quarantined at home. It was a way to reimagine the library as a gathering place, virtually.

We began with an edition composed of pieces by Arlington County staff and launched it alongside a call for submissions from the larger community. We will

continue with weekly publications for as long as Arlington Public Library branches are closed.

Submissions include, but are not limited to art, writing (essays, poetry, fiction, top-ten lists, reviews, etc), visual tutorials, comics, photography and recipes.

Advanced Planning

Once given approval to launch the program, I began by forming an editorial board. The editorial board is comprised of Arlington Public Library staff members: Katelyn Attanasio, Brit Austin, Hannah Axt, Ruth Compton, Clea Counts, Deborah Khuanghlawn, Liz Laribee, Janelle Ortiz, Peg Owen, Megan Wianecki and Alex Zealand.

The purpose of the group is to help spread the word, to upload and review community submissions, and to act as a sounding board throughout the life of the program. I also began working with the library's virtual services team to determine how our library website could host the Quaranzine content in an accessible, usable and attractive format.

The editorial board arrived at the language for our call for submissions. It included the information people needed to understand the scope of the project, to feel inspired to create a submission, and to know exactly how to do so once they were ready.

The editiorial board reviews submissions on the following criteria: Does it fit into the theme of "community response to quarantine"? We have gotten a handful of entries that were just advertisements for businesses, services and political campaigns. That's not what we're doing here. Is it high enough quality? Some images are too dark to be seen, for example. Is it in a format that we can include? Some people have submitted video; so cool! But not what we are doing here. Is it for a wide readership? Submissions with offensive language or visuals are filtered out.

Marketing

We believed that a call for submissions might have better reception if it came alongside a ready example; that thought informed our decision to begin with a staff edition, which included a link for submissions at the beginning and end of the issue. We also used Arlington Public Library's website, Facebook and Twitter to send out the call for submissions. Finally, individual members of the editorial board shared the call for submissions on their own social media.

After our first edition, the library's public information officer sent the link to various local publications. DCist called me for an interview, which was later shared by WAMU and ArlNow. In the week that followed, I was also contacted by Library Journal for a forthcoming interview.

Budgeting

This program was planned and implemented at no cost to the library, apart from the salaried staff using their work time to carry it out.

Day-of-event Activity

Quaranzine is published weekly on the Arlington Public Library website. Our first Kids Edition comes out on May 4.

Program Execution

Our workflow is as follows: All submissions come to my inbox. I then forward the submission emails to a group of six from our larger editorial board of 11. I rotate through them when I forward submissions weekly.

Those folks upload the raw files to a shared folder on our OneDrive intranet (it's an Outlook product, and all of Arlington County employees have shared access to it. I imagine Dropbox or Google Docs would work similarly, but we use OneDrive for to keep with FOIA requirements). They then upload the info from the submission form into our shared Excel spreadsheet where each edition is broken into separate pages.

The editorial board holds a weekly Friday meeting to discuss any issues or suggestions, and then we make our way through the notes we'd made in the spreadsheet. We arrive at around 30 pieces for publication per issue.

The edition is published as a blog post on our main library site, which uses Wordpress. On Friday, following our meeting, two of us build the next edition. This is done by cloning the last Quaranzine post and then swapping out the content and the metadata for each piece.

Rather than publishing it on a Friday close to the end of the workday, we wait to post it until Monday morning for higher readership.

Advice

We found that we needed to add specific language to the form to better organize our information, workflow and time management.

Have everyone name file submissions like this: "Firstname_Lastname.format."

Due to the volume of submissions, we are unable to respond to each one. We are unable to provide feedback on submissions that are not accepted.

Other advice is to stick to around 30 pieces per edition and to remember to be in touch regularly with your editorial board and listen to their suggestions.

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

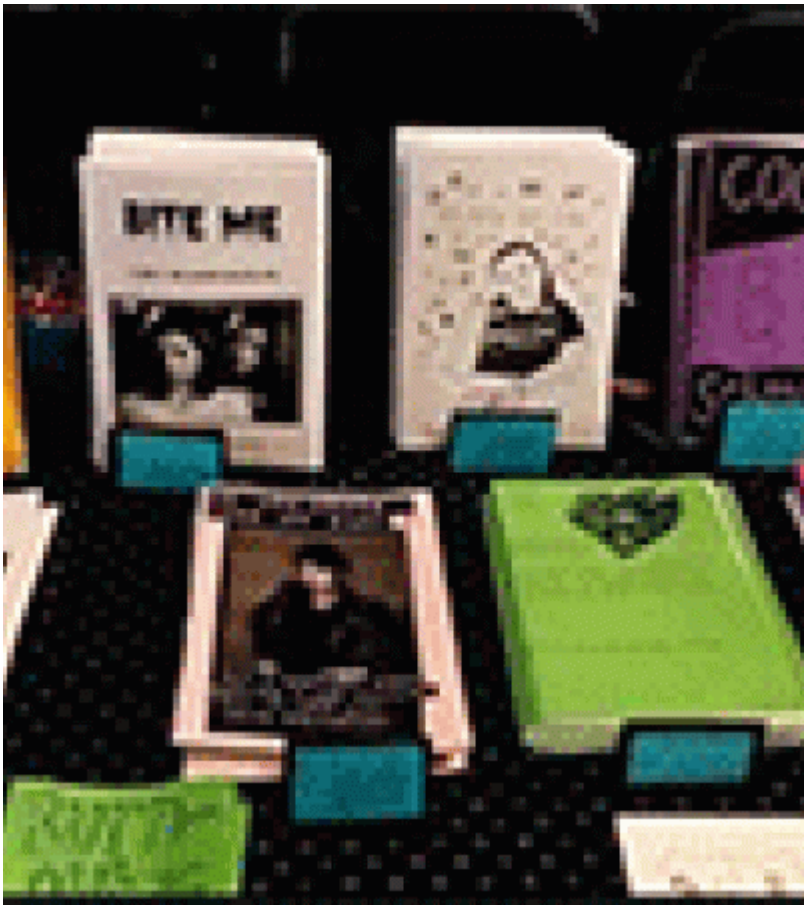






More Programs

May 6, 2019
Teens (13-16)+ | □□
Image



Zine Machine: A DIY Magazine Primer

Audiences:

Audience
Teens (13-16)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Dec 28, 2016
+ | $
Image



Library Zine Night

Audiences:

May 1, 2019
Children (9 and under)+ | $
Image



Zine Workshop

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Teens (13-16)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Apr 21, 2020
Children (9 and under)+ | $
Image



Flower Petal Suncatchers

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Apr 27, 2020
Children (9 and under)+ | □□
Image



"I Spy" Windows

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)