Plant Share and Propagation Library

Hickory Public Library

Children

|

Teens

|

Adults

|

Intergenerational

Plant Share and Propagation Library

Feb 9, 2022

$501-1000

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Byline

Stephanie Abbott, Digital Services Librarian, Hickory (N.C.) Public Library

The Plant Share and Propagation Library is an area where patrons can donate loose cuttings and/or small potted plants to share. This area is the first part of our makerspace that has a STEAM identity and embraces the heritage of Catawba County, one of artisans, craftsman, textiles, furniture and entrepreneurship.

Advanced Planning

The Plant Share and Propagation Library is the first component of the library's developing makerspace. As the makerspace is themed for STEAM activities, it's essential to include a living lab component, and it reinforces our commitment to healthy living. This component allows us to teach science, ecology, plant propagation and more. It is also a great way to serve patrons who want a more indirect library experience during the pandemic.

The project embodies the importance of what we can share as a community while embracing where we are located, at the heart of the Salt Block campus, which houses not only our public library but a children's science museum and an art museum.

The physical area is set up with a plant wall display, propagation tables, information on propagation, plant care, and more. It took very little time to build the furniture and construct the wall with help from our maintenance coordinator.

I've been providing programs to support the plant service (e.g. houseplant care, plant propagation, how to propagate plants). I also plan to teach how to make botanical scanned art, botanical wood transfers, and classes on pollinators and beekeeping.

Marketing

We've just started the program/service. I promoted the plant wall coming in all my STEAM programs. I've reached out to NC Cooperative Extension to help promote, and we've used Facebook as well. I hosted a Plant Swap in January to highlight the plant wall coming and showed off the wall to attendees. We also had a wonderful local entrepreneur, Plants Don't Succ, teach a class on winter care for your plants in

the fall.

Budgeting

There was cost to buy the furniture and supplies for the wall, including plant beakers, paper towels, etc. It is a low-budget project after you purchase the furniture. Once started, the project will cost very little to maintain.

Day-of-event Activity

Plant Swap activity: Set-up for the plant swap is very minimal with some organization of plants and creating plant propagation flyers. For the event, patrons bring in healthy plants, rooted in dirt or loose cuttings ready to be traded with others participants. We then have a short conversation on proper plant care and propagation.

Building the wall took three hours maximum. We also painted the wall to protect it from any humidity and/or water damage. There will be ongoing workshops for plants, such as an upcoming program where I will teach plant propagation.

Program Execution

The interest in the wall and STEAM programs is very high. I held our first plant swap in January with 25 in attendance. I am coordinating with NC Cooperative Extension to have Master Gardeners help adopt the program as well as having plant volunteers, whom I call Plant Ambassadors, to help maintain the wall.

I am also working toward doing a Plant Doctor program, which will be a one-on-one plant appointment to address any plant needs you may have (e.g., leaves are droopy, how do you propagate a plant, how do you repot a plant). I am hoping that an enticing and attractive natural area will help make the makerspace accessible and inviting. I love where science, art, technology and craft meet with our natural everyday world environments. As this is a service point with programs coordinated

around the service, I think we will help our community continue to learn and grow, together and independently.

A recent survey of patron interest in programming listed gardening as very high. The interest in the wall, the makerspace, and all of our STEAM-based programs are high and program attendance is always full. People are often requesting more programs. This service offers a way for patrons to volunteer and take ownership and learn from one another.

Advice

The most important thing I did was research what was already available in the community, decide what the community would be passionate about, and promote and plan and talk with the community to make it unique.

Since Programming Librarian published this article, our readers have tried the program at their own libraries! Here’s what they have to say:

Feedback
I took the idea of your program and made it a permanent addition to our library. The response from customers has been amazing! The Propagation Library is open whenever the library is, it is fully donation based, and we just surpassed 400 plant cuttings taken after being open for 8 months.

Update - This has become one of our most popular programs at the library! The propagation library is open any time the library is open. We've also done a plant swap, and that was also incredibly successful! We were asked to have another, and we will now be doing two a year.
— Kaye Johnson, Librarian, Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library, Denver, Colo.

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

Supporting Materials

Document
houseplant_swap_flyer.pdf
Document
sansevieria_care.pdf
Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

Slideshow Images





Image







More Programs

Apr 1, 2021
Children (9 and under)+ | $$$
Image



The Seed Library

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Tweens (10-12)
Teens (13-16)
Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational
Aug 13, 2021
Children (9 and under)+ | □□
Image



Adopt a House Plant

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Teens (13-16)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational