Bridgerton Afternoon Tea

Rock County Community Library

Adults

Bridgerton Afternoon Tea

Jun 21, 2024

$251-500

$$
Byline

Magie Wieneke, Assistant Director, Rock County Community Library, Luverne, Minn.

This program was a celebration of the "Bridgerton" books and the latest season of the Netflix series. We aimed to invite fans for a fun afternoon tea and to have an outlet to discuss the series and characters they love.

Advanced Planning

The goal of this program was to celebrate a series that has become vastly popular over the last few years and to invite fans to have a fun afternoon where they can

talk about the story and characters with others.

I started planning for this in February of 2024 and slowly bought items and thought of fun prizes to give away to make this tea as enjoyable as possible. I asked our Friends of the Library group for aid in covering some or all of the cost.

The hardest part was getting a good buzz about the event and making sure people RSVPed and followed through with that RSVP. My initial goal was a group of 50 for the event and it would have been more realistic to aim for 30-35. I didn't feel disheartened by how slowly the 31 RSVPs trickled in. After a few cancellations, we ended up expecting 23 and therefore planned for 30 when it came to getting the food for the event.

Marketing

We primarily used our Facebook to promote the event as well as posters hanging up in our library and a few businesses in town. The Facebook posts were hit and miss, some did quite well and others were barely interacted with at all. The posters in the library did allow for it to come up organically with some patrons, and I'd say a bit of word of mouth went into it as well which worked pretty well.

Budgeting

This program had a handful of costs, from the decorations to the food and prizes. I'd say the bulk of our spending was invested in decorations, including the utensils for the food and tea. Dollar Tree is your biggest friend when looking to get as much as you can for your dollar. I found a lot of our utensil-like items there, saving a ton of money.

I'd also suggest asking people to loan out some items. We elected to ask our community if they had teapots we could borrow for the day instead of investing in some ourselves. It worked out nicely and they added an extra fun discussion element to the event.

Day-of-event Activity

On the day of the program, a family friend and I came in three hours before to do the finishing touches like building the sandwiches and putting out other condiments and snacks. We did a big bulk of set up the night before which also took about two hours.

The biggest challenge we faced was not being able to begin our setup till late the night before the event due to another group needing the space. Had I been able to do small things here and there throughout the week leading up to the event, it would have felt less frantic and rushed. Do not hesitate to ask for help. Had I asked for a little more assistance it could have benefited us to have more breathing room before the event.

Program Execution

We hosted the tea from 12:00 to 2:00 pm on a Saturday. People began showing up about 15-20 minutes before which was a bit earlier than I anticipated, but at least the tea was all set up.

We had 18 attendees when we expected 23 and prepared for 30. While it was a little heartbreaking to have some no-shows, it worked out because it allowed for a more open and inviting discussion.

I started with some history and fun facts about Afternoon Tea, the Regency era and the tradition of the “social season." Then we had time to eat and mingle for 15-20 minutes. I prepared some discussion questions and we spent about 45 minutes going over them and ended with giving away prizes I’d say I achieved our goals by providing a fun afternoon for people to talk about a series they enjoy and to have some good food. Every attendee said they had a great time.

In preparation for the event, we created a display called 'Bridgerton and Beyond' which had the "Bridgerton" books and other Regency romances. We had some interest, and books left the display regularly. Everyone that attended the event made sure to mention they had a good time and would love to do something like it again so we considered that a major win since we have struggled with adult events

since COVID. We didn't do any type of survey, but in hindsight, I would have liked to so I could get more specific feedback as well.

Advice

Plan ahead. Never assume any time is too early to get started. I even started getting some of the decorations ready weeks to a little over a month in advance so they weren’t things I had to worry about week or day of. One of my major projects was to build a small floral arch as a photo opportunity area and I took an hour here or there in the afternoons to build it out so all that needed to be done with it the day of was to hang it from the ceiling.

Food is both easy and tasking for an event like this. You can easily Google ideas of tea-like food to serve and you’ll find hundreds of ideas and recipes. Narrow down your list and scout out options and prices in stores.

Don’t be afraid to ask for help. Many hands make light work and in a situation like this, it will aid you greatly.

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

Supporting Materials

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Discussion Questions.pdf
Document
Expense Report.pdf
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Books & Looks

Audiences:

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Young Adult (17 - 20)
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