Antiques Valuation at the Library

Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County

Adults

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Free

Byline

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Boardman Library created a local version of "Antiques Roadshow" — minus the TV cameras. An appraiser provided free estimates of value and/or background history about antiques brought in by patrons. Some of the items were quite unique.

Advanced Planning

A local appraiser had expressed interest in presenting an antiques appraisal program at the library for several years. A recent change in rules allowing business

owners to present library programs gave me the opportunity to reconnect with him, explain and confirm our new policies, and set up the format for upcoming programs. Our goal was to provide programs of interest for adults, and this was a good fit.

Marketing

The library included advertising about the program in all traditional venues: the monthly library newsletter, email blasts to patrons, press releases to the local media, social media, library website and print signs in local libraries. The appraiser included information about the program on his website.

Budgeting

There was no budget for this program. The appraiser did not charge the library and advertising was accomplished without any additional expense.

Day-of-event Activity

Tables were set up where participants could display their treasures, and chairs were set up to give attendees a place to sit. One librarian managed the registration table, but given the large response, we could have used another person. We also had to set up additional tables for displaying the items.

Program Execution

Each participant was able to bring as many as five items for a verbal estimate of value, and was limited to items that could be easily carried (no furniture). On arriving, each participant was given a number that was placed with the items; this enabled the appraiser to keep items together and to keep the participants anonymous. People brought in their treasures and family heirlooms, which included jewelry, artwork, figurines and even antique swords and pistols.

More than 70 people attended, and in true "Antiques Roadshow" fashion, one participant learned that a painting she had purchased for $45 at a garage sale was actually an original Marc Chagall painting valued at between $5,000 and $7,000. This appraiser is exceptionally knowledgeable and was able to provide unique information about every item brought to the program, which kept everyone interested throughout the program. For example, there was a silhouette that was potentially of George Washington; if its authenticity could be verified, it would be much more valuable than the estimate the owner was given. This led him to talk about the difference between originals and duplicates, and how collectors could research further. We received nothing but great feedback, and achieved our goal of bringing adult patrons to a library program.

Advice

This is an entertaining program for collectors, but it also allowed participants to share family stories attached to their treasures. The appraiser himself has an engaging personality and relished learning the history behind the items. And he found a nice way to tell people when their cherished treasure had little monetary value. An enjoyable evening at the library for everyone who attended!

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

More Programs

May 19, 2009
Children (9 and under)+ | □□
Image



Arts Programming in a Public Library, Part I

Audiences:

Audience
Children (9 and under)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational
May 26, 2009
Children (9 and under)+ |
Image



Arts Programming in a Public Library, Part II

Audiences:

Audience
Children (9 and under)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational
Dec 3, 2012
Adults (21 and up)+ |
Image



Crafting an Adult Hand Skills Program

Audiences:

Audience
Adults (21 and up)