Bug Olympics

Knoxville Public Library

Children

Bug Olympics

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$251-500

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Byline

Roslin Thompson, Library Director, Knoxville (Iowa) Public Library

Knoxville Public Library’s annual Summer Reading Program (SRP) took place in June and July 2016, following the national theme for early readers and children, “On Your Mark, Get Set, READ!,” which focused on sports and keeping active.

As part of our SRP programming, we collaborated with Iowa State University to host a Bug Olympics event in which live insects (cockroaches and crickets, mostly) demonstrated their "amazing athletic abilities." These abilities included the speed of standard cockroaches, the incredible strength of Madagascar hissing cockroaches and the jumping abilities of crickets. Kids were able to get up close and personal with the bug “athletes,” and they also handled other animals brought by the presenters.

Advanced Planning

Every spring, the Iowa State Library hosts training sessions for librarians as well as a performers' showcase where we learn of various resources that we can use when hosting our library's SRP. These sessions and showcases are held at various locations throughout the state, and librarians receive a full day of training on SRP theme-specific programs suitable for audiences ranging from infants to adults. One training session, created by Iowa State University, was called The Insect Zoo and featured hands-on activities involving several different types of insects. We decided to present this program as part of our SRP, re-naming it Bug Olympics.

Our youth services librarian scheduled the SRP programs six months out, and then did program planning for three months leading up to the SRP. Our annual goals for the SRP are: have fun, keep children reading during the summer months, and learn something new, and the hands-on and scientific aspect of the Bug Olympics program definitely fit in with these goals. We collaborated with the Department of Entomology at Iowa State University, booking some students and a supervisor to come to our library to present the program.

We held two registration days for the SRP and ended up with 466 registrants for all SRP programs. Since space in our library is limited, we had people pre-register for the two Bug Olympics programs, to be held at 10 a.m. and noon.

Marketing

Promotion of all of the SRP events — including Bug Olympics — began in April, with multiple school visits. We printed fliers, bookmarks and calendars that were handed out in the library and at various community locations. **(View the Bug Olympics flier under Attachments at right.)** We also created radio and newspaper ads and provided word-of-mouth advertising. The programs advertised were mostly for kids 4 years old and above.

Additionally, our SRP is long-running and has always been successful. Since the community expects us to offer it each year, and we always plan lots of fun activities, this helps get the word out about the upcoming SRP.

Budgeting

The program cost about $250 to have the presenters (mileage plus event cost) come to the library. Advertising was a collateral cost.

Day-of-event Activity

We had two staff members present. Preparation was minimal, requiring only about 15 minutes and basic room set-up.

As with most of our programs at our library, we lacked adequate space but were able to limit the audience size for each Bug Olympics program to 40 using pre-registration.

We also had to watch the insects to ensure they did not escape.

Program Execution

We presented two programs, one at 10 a.m. and the other at noon, and there were a total of 81 children (aged four and up) at both programs. The Bug Olympic events were:

1. Roach races

2. Hissing cockroach strength races

3. Cricket jumps

4. Display of amazing live bugs from all over the world, with the children encouraged to get hands-on with the insects

We enjoyed the scientific aspect of the program. The presenters were great and good with the children. The kids enjoyed the hands-on activities, including experimenting with different weights that the cockroaches could pull, how far they could run, or seeing how high the crickets could jump. **(See photos of the**

amazing athletic feats of the insects under Photo Slideshow at right).

Advice

We wish we had more space, but that's something we are currently working on with our expansion project.

This program had a local aspect to it since the Iowa State University is just 90 miles away, and we are fortunate that they offered the Bug Olympics program. They proved to be a great resource, as their Insect Zoo program worked nicely with the SRP theme, and it was a successful and fun program. Next year’s Summer Reading Program theme will be“Build a Better World,” and there are already lots of bug-related ideas floating around our library, including a bug village!

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

Supporting Materials

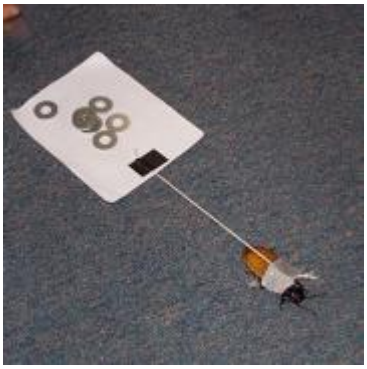
Document
bug_olympics_flier.pdf
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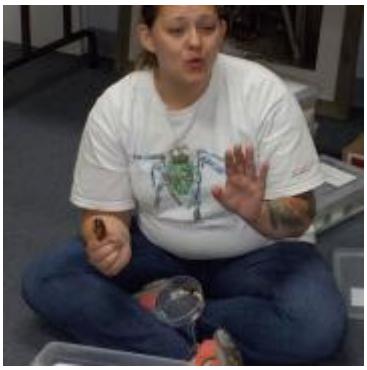
Slideshow Images



Image







More Programs

Jul 20, 2010
Children (9 and under)+ |
Image



Science in the Summer

Audiences:

Audience
Children (9 and under)
Jan 19, 2016
Children (9 and under)+ | $$
Image



Nature Detective Workshops for Kids

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)