The Giving Tree

Bedford Public Library

Adults

|

Children

|

Intergenerational

|

Teens

|

Young Adult

The Giving Tree

Oct 12, 2017

Free

Byline

Linda Trinkle, Marketing Specialist, Bedford (Ind.) Public Library

The Giving Tree is an annual event that begins right after Veteran's Day and runs through mid-December. We set up an artificial pine tree that collects donations of new children's hats, gloves, scarves and socks (and sometimes new picture books) for distribution within our community before the December holidays.

Advanced Planning

The Giving Tree needs very little planning, as all we need to do is set up the tree in the library and make explanatory signs. Once the tree is up, customers and staff begin bringing in donations and putting them on the tree. (**View photos under Photo Slideshow at right**).

Our customers look forward to this program as it provides an easy way to do something nice for our community. One year we had a woman bring in 35 beautiful hats that she had crocheted. We see grandmothers bring in their little grandchildren to place items on the tree, thus helping the children to appreciate the importance of giving to others.

Marketing

We promote the Giving Tree via all our usual marketing outlets starting about two weeks before the tree goes up. We send information to the local newspaper, radio stations, public access channel and a community website. We also promote the program on our own website, via in-house fliers, a calendar brochure and our e-newsletter. (**View a sample flier under Attachments at right**).

Our outreach services team presents programs in our schools every day, and they take quarter-sheet fliers promoting the Giving Tree. The tree is also a great advertisement for itself, as it stands in a prominent spot in our adult services department on the main floor. People see the tree and are heard to say, "Oh, what a nice idea. I need to bring in something."

By the time the program is ready to end, the Giving Tree is always full of items.

Budgeting

The cost of an artificial tree is our only expense; we even re-used an old tree that we had for another program, and have used the same tree for the eight years we've hosted the Giving Tree in the library.

Day-of-event Activity

The work for this passive program is absolutely minimal, with a reward that is maximal.

One staff member puts up the tree, and patrons donate their items. Occasionally, when a patron drops off gifts but is unable to put them on the tree themselves, library staff will place items on the tree.

After items are collected, we take them to local organizations to distribute. In the past we've donated items to Head Start, a local women's shelter and the local food pantry

Program Execution

Our goals are to gather winter items for children who need them and to provide an easy way for our customers and community to give. The Giving Tree is convenient for our patrons, and the items can be purchased (or made) inexpensively by those who donate them. As customers come into the library to get books and other materials, they pass the tree and can easily deposit their donations there.

This is a feel-good program for everyone involved. Those who donate may feel more connected to their community, and staff who deliver the items to the local organizations for distribution get to experience the gratitude of that agency's staff. Staff often hear comments from customers about what a nice program it is, and they express their appreciation for the opportunity to give so conveniently.

Advice

There’s nothing to stop you from growing a Giving Tree in your own library. No program could be easier to do, and the rewards are heartwarming.

You’ll earn more community good will toward your library. You’ll help provide winter garments for children. You’ll give your staff and customers an easy way to give — and everyone will feel good about this program. We've done it for eight years and have never heard a complaint.

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

Supporting Materials

Document
giving_tree_flier.pdf
Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

Slideshow Images



Image



More Programs

Mar 17, 2017
Children (9 and under)+ | $
Image



No-Sew Pillows

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)

Tweens (10-12)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational
Sep 21, 2017
Adults (21 and up)+ | $
Image



Twiddlemuffs for Charity

Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational
Dec 15, 2015
Children (9 and under)+ |
Image



Rural Roots: Holiday Tradition

Audiences:

Audience
Children (9 and under)
Apr 18, 2016
Young Adult (17 - 20)+ | □□
Image



Giving Food for Fines

Audiences:

Audience
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational