

St. Clair County Library System Programming POLICY

The purpose of library programming is to support the library's mission of connecting people to the world of information. Programming is offered as a library resource that provides information, education, and recreation to library users. Programming will promote the services, collections, and other resources of the St. Clair County Library System. This policy reflects the Library's philosophy regarding free and open access to information and ideas. A person's right to attend a program will not be denied because of national origin, race, color, age, sex, religion, background, views, sexual orientation, disability, or ability to pay.

This policy is to provide library staff, Friends of the Library, and other groups and agencies working with the library with the necessary guidelines to assist them in the development of library programs. It is also intended to inform the public about the principles and criteria by which programs are selected.

Programs complement other library services by providing an opportunity to highlight collections, promote services and share knowledge and expertise. Programs stimulate outreach and promotion of the library by allowing the library to forge partnerships with a wide variety of groups and individuals and to attract both regular and new users of all ages and backgrounds. Programs raise the library's profile in the community and have a positive impact on library use.

Responsibility and Criteria for Scheduling Programs

Selection of topics for programming is made by library staff on the basis of interest and needs of library users and the community. Ultimate responsibility for programming policy lies with the Library Board. The Board delegates to the Director of the Library the planning and promotion of library programs. Staff members implement these programs as the Director instructs within applicable library policies. The general public may recommend topics or speakers for consideration.

Guidelines for the Selection and Presentation of Programs

1. All programs are intended to further the mission of the Library. They should address one or more of the following educational, recreational and/or civic needs:
 - To increase awareness and the use of library resources
 - To provide opportunity to widen horizons, stimulate imagination and reflection, and enlarge experiences
 - To provide programs for various age groups, cultures, and interests
 - To meet popular demand, both existing and anticipated
 - To promote reading and lifelong learning
 - To increase library use by under-served populations
 - To educate and inform on a variety of topics usually with a focus on one or several of the following areas:
 - i. Literature and cultural heritage
 - ii. Social awareness

- iii. Health and well-being
 - iv. Information technology
 - v. Literacy
 - vi. Current events and high interest topics
2. The Library seeks to present a broad variety of programs to meet the needs of a diverse community. If a program is controversial in nature, the Library will seek to present as many sides of the issue as possible. Beliefs and opinions expressed in the programs do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the Library.
 3. All programs are open to the public; most are targeted toward a particular audience (adult, teen, children, general, for example). Patrons may on occasion be prevented from attending a program or Library event if attendance exceeds the rated capacity of the particular meeting room space. Every attempt will be made to accommodate all who wish to attend a program. When safety or the success of a program requires it, attendance may have to be limited. When limits must be established, attendance will be determined on a first come, first served basis. Advance registration or distributing free tickets before the event may be used if attendance is anticipated to exceed program limits.
 4. No admission fees will be charged at library programs. There may be a charge for materials at some programs. However, purchase of these materials is optional and not necessary to attend the program.
 5. Charges for programs or events are permissible for the purpose of fund-raising to benefit the library by Library Friends Groups or the Library Foundation.
 6. The sale of books/CDs/artwork by artists as part of a Library program is acceptable when sales are in promotion of literature, literacy, or culture and are consistent with the library's mission.
 7. A library card is not required to attend a program but patrons attending programs are encouraged to apply for a library card in order to take full advantage of all the library resources.
 8. Programs must meet all the safety requirements stipulated in the county's liability insurance.
 9. Eligibility for prizes in contests designed for particular target groups is limited to that group.
 10. The Library may partner with another agency or community organization when these programs are central to the library's mission. The Library's role in such cases may include, but may not be limited to, furnishing space, aiding with promotion, and offering related book lists or on-site displays.

11. Unsolicited offers from individuals or organizations to present programs will be evaluated by the same standards used by library staff and Friends when planning programming.
 12. This policy will be reviewed every three years from the date of first approval by the St. Clair County Library Board.
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Approved by the Library Board on March 21, 2006