

# ATLANTA PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMUNITY OUTREACH PLAN



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**Date: May 21, 2012**

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**This plan was created through the University of North Texas PEARL project. Funding for PEARL (Promoting and Enhancing the Advancement of Rural Libraries) is provided by the Robert and Ruby Priddy Charitable Trust.**



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>                                  | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Community Profile Narrative</b>                   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Library Profile Narrative</b>                     | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Library Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Outreach Program</b>                              | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>Detailed Action Plan</b>                          | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>Appendix: Evaluation Form</b>                     | <b>11</b> |

## Outreach Plan

### Introduction

Atlanta is located on U.S. Highway 59 in the northeast corner of the state of Texas. It is in the area known as the Piney Woods, close to the borders of Arkansas and Louisiana. Originally home to the pre-historic Caddo Indians, Atlanta developed along with the Texas and Pacific Railway in the late 1880's. Atlanta was named for Atlanta, Georgia, the origin of the first settlers. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century industries included lumber, oil, and agriculture. Atlanta is currently a prime recreational destination surrounded by state parks, lakes and forests. It is the largest town in Cass County.

### *Historical, Current, and Future Roles of the Library*

Historically the library has provided access to information and recreational materials.

Currently the library provides: free and equal access to information; public computers; Internet access; popular titles and topics; educational and recreational materials, and genealogy materials. The library provides basic, lifelong, and early childhood literacy as well as information literacy. The library serves as: a community meeting place; a center for technology; a place for career and workforce development, and a center for local history and genealogy.

Future roles for the library include support for business and formal education.

### *Existing Programs*

Library programs include: summer reading for children and teens; regular story time for preschoolers; work skills assistance; basic computer literacy classes; literacy programs with tutors and students; exam proctoring; weekly family game night; digitizing local history photographs, government records, local history and the local newspaper; interlibrary loan, and regular genealogy programs.

### *Identified Needs*

The community needs to revitalize its downtown area and add places where community residents can hold meetings.

The library needs space that is dedicated solely to library programming. The library needs to upgrade restrooms, provide ADA access to meetings and provide space that can accommodate different functions. The library needs a way to maintain consistent Internet connectivity.

### *Identified Assets*

Community assets include designation as a retirement community, cultural activities, and proximity to natural forest areas.

Assets of the library are: it is a repository for all known copies of the Cass County newspaper and is a shared location with the Cass County Family History Center.

## Atlanta Public Library Community Outreach Plan

### *Thank You Statement*

The library would like to thank the Friends of the Library for doing the monthly newsletter and for financial support provided through the annual book sale. The library thanks the Atlanta City Council for funding. The library is grateful for its partners: the Atlanta Senior Citizen's Center; the Cass County Family History Center; the *Atlanta Citizen's Journal*, and the *Texarkana Gazette*.

The Atlanta Public Library is grateful to the Robert and Ruby Priddy Charitable Trust for providing this opportunity for community outreach through the PEARL Project grant through the University of North Texas.

### **Community Profile Narrative**

Atlanta exemplifies small town America with a friendly atmosphere and a progressive outlook. Family life is scheduled around school and sports activities in the Atlanta Independent School District. There are many recreational opportunities available for families and individuals in the 88 acre city park and in the Atlanta State Park and Wright Patman Lake area.

Cultural opportunities in Atlanta are provided by the Cass County Performing Arts Council. There are a variety of musical performances throughout the season. The Atlanta Art League sponsors an annual exhibit. There are nearly thirty restaurants in Atlanta offering a range of culturally diverse menus. The Atlanta Historical Museum offers displays and interpretations of Atlanta's historical and pre-history past.

Other attributes of Atlanta include a very low crime rate, a hospital and clinic, and nearby higher educational opportunities. The climate of this Piney Woods community is moderate. These features make Atlanta an ideal location for retirees. Atlanta is one of 40 Texas State Certified Retirement communities.

### *Main Geographic Features*

#### Community Features

##### *Assets and Challenges*

Community assets include: forests; lakes; public parks; state park; campgrounds; historic site; airport; a major highway, and railroad. Nearby assets include: a dam; pumpkin patch; hunting and fishing; chicken farm, and farmland.

The community is challenged by the 150 mile distance to a major city, Dallas. Texarkana is 25 miles away.

#### Library Features

##### *Assets and Challenges*

The library is located near a historic railroad depot that houses the Chamber of Commerce. Nearby are: a museum; community college; the Department of Transportation; post office; Department of Public Safety; arts commission; dance studio; a grocery store, and newspaper office. The library is close to shops, restaurants, three schools, a senior citizen center, a nursing home, hospital, and fire station.

## Atlanta Public Library Community Outreach Plan

Although the library is near three schools, children cannot easily get to the library. They would have to cross a four lane highway.

### *Community Demographics*

According to the 2010 census the population of Atlanta is 5,675. The population is 65% White, 30% Black, and 4% Hispanic. 76% have a high school diploma; 15% have a Bachelor's degree or higher. The median income is \$32,567. 19% of the population is age 65 or older; 26% are under 18 years; and 55% are between 18 and 65 years.

### **Library Profile Narrative**

The Atlanta Memorial Library was established by ten area civic groups and organizations in 1954 as a private library. The Atheneum Club, Atlanta Garden Club, Atlanta Woman's Club, Mimosa Garden Club, P.T.A., and the Thursday Study club provided volunteer staff so the library could be open nine hours per week.

Open House for the second location, the former Nazarene Church Building on Miller Street next to the Smith Locker Plant, was held in 1959. At that time the collection consisted of 4,259 books, most of which had been donated by supporters of the library. The library moved into city hall on Louise Street in 1962, where it remained for the next 26 years. The collection grew to 20,000 items and 475 patrons. The library's status changed to "public library" after 1984, qualifying it for federal and state grants.

Since 1986, the library has been located in the historic Post Office Building. The building has three floors totaling 9,000 square feet. The library receives the majority of its funding from the City of Atlanta. Other sources include various grants, donations, and Friends of the Atlanta Public Library. The advisory board consists of a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a Secretary and 9 members.

### *Most Important Library Statistics*

In 2010, the library had 7,564 registered borrowers; 14 programs were held with 3,325 in attendance. The collection had 27,072 items. Circulation totaled 70,803. There were 5,537 reference transactions and 68,422 library visits. The library was open 46 hours per week, staffed by one ALA-MLS librarian, and two other paid employees.

### **Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives**

#### *Vision Statement*

The mission of the Atlanta Public Library is to provide an atmosphere of warmth and safety for community growth through information and social interaction.

#### *Mission Statement*

The Atlanta Public Library Board envisions a future in which the library's collections, programs, and leadership help ensure ways to:

Foster a love of the printed word.

Provide and teach new and ever-changing technology.

## Atlanta Public Library Community Outreach Plan

Create a community commons area of fun and learning.

Provide a varied collection that reflects the wants and needs of our community, as well as the changing world.

Offer the best information available on our area and its history.

### *Goals and Objectives for the Library*

Goal 1: Provide an “at home” atmosphere

Objectives: 1. Provide comfortable seating  
2. Arrange seating to promote discussions  
3. Provide coffee/coke bar

Goal 2: Provide a comfortable, safe environment for fun and learning

Objectives: 1. Install surveillance cameras on all floors  
2. Replace 2 air conditioners and add ceiling fans

Goal 3: Create an inviting atmosphere for targeted underserved populations

Objectives: 1. Begin a Teen Advisory Board  
2. Begin Young Adult Advisory Board  
3. Add Mobile Services  
4. Implement a Teen Gaming Program

Goal 4: Maintain a relevant, attractive collection

Objectives: 1. Increase average copyright dates to correspond to CREW weeding method  
2. Replace non-fiction material

Goal 5: Maintain and update library facilities to provide adequate space for the collection and the library’s role in the community

Objectives: 1. Build an addition on the west side of the building  
2. Increase usable conference room space  
3. Create a first floor work room  
4. Create more office space

Goal 6: Provide continuing education and training for staff

Objectives: 1. Annual review of shelving practices  
2. Classes or training for computer skills  
3. Classes or training for research techniques

Goal 7: Annually review collection development policy and practice

Objectives: 1. Provide diverse material responsive to the needs and/or wants of the community

### *Goals and Objectives for Outreach Program*

The outreach program goal for the basic computer skills classes for seniors meets two facets of the library mission: “Provide and teach new and ever-changing technology” and “Offer the best information available on our area and its history”.

## Atlanta Public Library Community Outreach Plan

### *Objectives:*

The program objectives are:

1. Provide seniors with requested basic computer skills.
2. Create documents that are personally meaningful and can be shared.

### **Outreach Program**

The library will partner with the senior citizen's center to teach basic computer skills. It will cover using Microsoft WORD, simple file management, a mouse, and a USB to create a simple personal history document. In consultation with staff of the Cass County Family History Center, seniors will answer simple questions about their lives that can be shared with family, friends, and relatives. In becoming familiar with simple word processing through this exercise, seniors will gain confidence in using computers.

The library will take 15 laptop computers to the senior citizen center for a series of four classes during the month of August. Each class session will have 15 students. The classes will meet on Thursdays for one hour between 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 before lunch is served. The library director will teach the classes by giving participants a USB preloaded with a file prepared with simple questions composed by the genealogist. In four sessions, the participants will learn how to manage a file, increase mouse skills, understand simple commands of WORD and practice keyboarding.

### *Statement of need*

Community survey results indicated that adult classes, computer literacy and genealogy programs were needed. Many seniors requested computer classes.

### *Description of the larger audience or target group the library wants to reach*

19% of the population is age 65 or older, nearly twice the normal proportion for the state.

### *Description of the specific segment of the target group the proposed program will serve*

Close to 40 seniors frequent the Atlanta Senior Center on a daily basis during the week. This is the group that the library will target for participation in the basic computer skills classes.

### *Estimated number of potential participants*

The library has 20 laptops. 15 will be used in the center, leaving 5 as backups in case of technology problems. The classes will have 15 participants.

### *Description of the characteristics of the audience (age, gender, interest, where they live, transportation issues if any, best hours for a program, etc.)*

Due to heavy use of the meeting room and inconsistent connectivity at the library, the classes will be held at the senior center. Senior men and women who attend the senior center for daily meals and recreation will be able to take this series of classes. The classes will be held for one hour before or after the noon meal on Thursdays. The class will be conducted for approximately 45 minutes. Seniors will provide their own transportation.

## Atlanta Public Library Community Outreach Plan

### *List potential partners based on your assets assessment*

The senior citizen's center will provide the space, tables and chairs for the program. It will post fliers for the classes and sign-up sheets. The *Texarkana Gazette* and the *Atlanta Citizen's Journal* will provide articles about the outreach program. A genealogist with the Cass County Family History Center will consult on biographical questions to answer.

### *List available library resources that could contribute to the success of the program*

The library will provide the following: laptops; preloaded USB devices on lanyards; mice; extension cords; instruction; publicity, and evaluation. The library will provide labor for setting up and cleaning the center's room before and after classes.

### **Detailed Action Plan**

#### *Action Plan Goals:*

1. Plan the program.
2. Promote the program.
3. Implement the program.
4. Evaluate the program.

#### *Action Plan Objectives:*

1. Create a meaningful framework to express life history in a WORD document.
2. Promote the program formally and informally through the library, the family history center and the senior citizen's center.
3. Teach basic keyboarding and computer skills over four class sessions.
4. Evaluate the program by asking seniors how their skills have increased.

#### *Action Plan Table*

The table below gives the library's action plan for the senior citizens basic computer skills class.

| <b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>                           |  | <b>EVALUATION</b>  |  |   |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Action</b>                                   | <b>Name &amp; Date</b>                           | <b>Resources Needed</b>                                  | <b>Measurement</b>   | <b>Analysis</b>   |
| What action, activity or task needs to be done? | Who will do it and by what date will it be done? | How much time, money, materials, personnel is needed?    | How will progress be measured (#, %, participation or attendance)? | How and when will data be gathered and analyzed to determine success? |
| Set dates/put on library calendars              | Director by June 15, 2012                        | Time – 1 hour<br>\$/materials – none<br>Personnel -1     | Four dates set   | Count #   |
| Schedule senior center                          | Director by June 15, 2012                        | Time – 30 minutes<br>\$/materials – none<br>Personnel -1 | Space scheduled  | Count #   |
| Consult with genealogist for document outline   | Director by July 1, 2012                         | Time – 1 hour<br>\$/materials – none<br>Personnel -2     | Genealogist consulted  | Count #   |

Atlanta Public Library Community Outreach Plan

|   |  |   |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| Create document to load on USB  | Director by July 15, 2012                | Time – 1 hour<br>\$/materials – none<br>Personnel -2          | Document created                         | Count #                                |
| Create press release  | Director by July 15, 2012                | Time – 1 hour<br>\$/materials – none<br>Personnel -1          | 1 press releases created                 | Count #                                |
| Send press release to <i>The Texarkana Gazette</i> and the <i>Atlanta Citizen's Journal</i> | Director by July 15, 2012                | Time – 30 minutes<br>\$/materials – none<br>Personnel -1      | 2 press releases sent                    | Count #                                |
| Create promotional flyer  | Director by July 15, 2012                | Time – 30 minutes<br>\$/materials – none<br>Personnel -1      | Flyer created                            | Count #                                |
| Photocopy & distribute flyers in library and senior center                                  | Director by July 20, 2012                | Time – 1 hour<br>\$1.00/materials – 10 sheets<br>Personnel -1 | 10 flyers photocopied & distributed      | Count #                                |
| Create & print sign-in sheets   | Director by July 20, 2012                | Time – 15 minutes<br>\$.40/materials – paper<br>Personnel -1  | 4 sign-in sheets created                 | Count #                                |
| Create & print evaluation forms   | Director by July 20, 2012                | Time – 10 minutes<br>\$1.50/materials – paper<br>Personnel -1 | One master form created & 15 copies made | Count #                                |
| Purchase 15 mice  | Director by July 20, 2012                | Time – 1 hour<br>\$60.00/materials –<br>Personnel -1          | Mice purchased                           | Count #                                |
| Gather extension cords, USBs & lanyards   | Director by August 9, 2012               | Time – 30 minutes<br>\$/materials – none<br>Personnel -1      | Cords & USBs gathered                    | Count #                                |
| Load USBs with files  | Director by August 9, 2012               | Time – 1 hour<br>\$/materials – none<br>Personnel -1          | 15 USBs loaded                           | Count #                                |
| Setup room for class  | Director/volunteer by August 9, 2012     | Time – 30 minutes<br>\$/materials - none<br>Personnel -2      | Room arranged, equipment ready           | Count seats                            |
| Evaluate 1 <sup>st</sup> class  | Director by August 10, 2012              | Time – 1 hour<br>\$/materials –none<br>Personnel -1           | 15 participants                          | Count #<br>Record responses & comments |
| Hold classes #2, #3, #4   | Director & volunteers by August 30, 2012 | Time – 4.5 hours<br>\$/materials –none<br>Personnel -1        | 15 participants each                     | Count #<br>Record responses & comments |
| Evaluate program  | Director/partner by September 5, 2012    | Time – 1 hour<br>\$/materials – none<br>Personnel -1          | 60 participants<br>Summarize feedback    | Count #<br>Record responses & comments |

Atlanta Public Library Community Outreach Plan

|   |                               |   |                                      |                             |
|---|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Write a press release & send to The <i>Texarkana Gazette</i> and the <i>Atlanta Citizen's Journal</i> | Director by September 5, 2012 | Time – 1 hour<br>\$/materials –none<br>Personnel -1                       | Press release created                | Count #                     |
| Write report and send to PEARL office   | Director by September 5, 2012 | Time-1 hour<br>\$/materials-<br>Personnel-1                               | Summarize evaluations, count numbers | Send report to PEARL office |
| Write thank you notes to partners & volunteers  | Director by September 7, 2012 | Time-1 hour<br>\$ & materials- thank you notes and postage<br>Personnel-1 | Thank you notes written              | Count #                     |

**APPENDIX: EVALUATION FORM**

**Atlanta Public Library: Basic Computer Classes**

*Thank you for participating!*

Place an X under the number to indicate how successful the program is for you.

|   | Yes<br>3 | Maybe<br>2 | No<br>1 |
|---|----------|------------|---------|
| <b>1. The day and time the program was offered was:</b> |          |            |         |
| Convenient for me.                                      |          |            |         |
| <b>2. The subject covered:</b>                          |          |            |         |
| Met my needs.   |          |            |         |
| Was enjoyable.  |          |            |         |
| <b>3. The person who did the program:</b>               |          |            |         |
| Was friendly and helpful.                               |          |            |         |
| <b>4. Because of this program I:</b>                    |          |            |         |
| Feel more confident in using the computer.              |          |            |         |
| Feel more connected to the community.                   |          |            |         |

Additional comments on the program:

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