

CONVERSE PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMUNITY OUTREACH PLAN



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Department of Library and Information Sciences



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Outreach Plan

Introduction

The city of Converse in Bexar County is located 13 miles northeast of San Antonio, Texas' second largest city. According to the 2010 census, the population of Bexar County was 1,714,773 and the population of Converse was 16,953.

Founded in 1877, Converse and the surrounding area was originally settled by German farmers. The town was named for a chief engineer of the Southern Pacific Railroad, Major James Converse. The Houston to San Antonio railway, carrying the region's "king crop" of cotton, helped this former outpost grow into a thriving township. Converse also boasts the oldest 4-H club in Texas.

Historical, Current, and Future Roles of the Library

Historically and currently the library roles include: a center for lifelong learning; basic literacy; free and equal access to information; technology center; information assistance; gateway to information; public computer access; career and workforce development; early childhood literacy, and community commons. In the future the library would like to add the following roles: a community meeting place; adult learning; cultural awareness; business support; heritage center; local history and genealogy, and information literacy.

Existing Programs

The library has programs for adults and children. Some of the programs are: story time; Movie Matinee; Texas Summer Reading Club; computer classes, and help for job seekers.

Identified Needs

The City of Converse has a handful of vital needs including. These include the need for a Chamber of Commerce; annexation opportunities in surrounding Bexar county; new retail businesses; a Community Civic Center; a larger tax revenue that will help grow the size of city departments; a bona fide information technology and computer systems department; greater partnerships with surrounding cities to decrease costs of services and equipment, and a much greater partnership between the City of Converse and Judson Independent School district.

The library needs: one or more additional full-time staff members including a Children's librarian; more shelving; study rooms; new rug; a larger more efficient set of air units for heating and cooling; ADA compliant entrance; meeting rooms, and digital downloads. The Young Adult and children's collection need to be strengthened. There is a need for more children's and adult programming. The library needs a better website, and more promotional penetration and activity in social media such as Facebook, twitter, and blogs.

Identified Assets

One of the major assets of Converse is the size of the Judson Independent School District (JISD). JISD is large with a wealth of resources that could be used with partnerships between the Converse Public Library and the Judson Independent School District. Partnerships with teachers and their specific areas of teaching could be valuable to the public library, especially in the area

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of the arts and sciences. Another major asset is the relatively untapped partnership with the African-American Community. Converse has a large population of African-Americans who could bring their experiences, perspective, and activity to the City of Converse and specifically to the Converse Public Library. This could be a very large advantage to the library.

Converse is culturally diverse with a great predominance of Hispanic, African-American, and German-American traditions. These traditions express themselves in restaurants, churches, athletic groups, gyms, businesses, civic organizations, and community groups.

Thank You Statement

Thank you to the Converse Lions Club for initially starting the journey of the Converse Public Library and to the City of Converse for assuming management of the library to improve its financial stability. A big thank you goes to our small, but loyal, group of volunteers who have made the Converse Public Library a vitally important resource to the community. The library is thankful that the Robert and Ruby Priddy Charitable Trust funded the PEARL project and included Converse Public Library in the project.

Community Profile Narrative

Converse is a community that was founded in 1877. It became an incorporated town in 1961, to be able to maintain its autonomy. The town began as a German farm settlement. Randolph Army Air field was located nearby in 1930. In 1947, the government brought international scientists to Randolph to work on “Operation Paperclip” a project where the scientists did research on space medicine. The scientists conducted experiments to answer the question of whether or not life could be sustained in space. The School of Aviation Medicine (SAM) was founded at Randolph. This had a profound effect on the National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA) and the space program. Today Converse is considered a military support town with many military personnel and retired veterans as residents.

There are over 390 small businesses in Converse. Major retailers include: Walgreens; Walmart Supercenter; Dollar General; Family Dollar, and Dollar Tree. Restaurants include small local cafes and national chains such as Chili’s, Subway, McDonald’s, Pizza Hut, Sonic and Wendy’s.

Two city parks with baseball, softball, and football fields are in the town. There is a municipal swimming pool and a playground for children. One of the parks has a fishing lake.

There are eleven churches in the community, two senior care facilities, and a senior center. Youth organizations include the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boyville, Converse Youth Sports League, Greater Randolph Area Youth Soccer Association, Judson Youth Sports, and the Saint Monica’s Catholic Youth Organization. Service organizations include the Lion’s club, American Legion, William M. Randolph Post 593, Converse Sons of Herman Lodge 157, and the Salatrillo Liedekrantz.

Events held in Converse include: Night in Old Converse; Second Saturday Art Festival; Spring Jubilee on Memorial Day weekend, Christmas in Converse, and the nationally sanctioned Converse Strongman and Strongwoman Competition.

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Main Geographic Features

Community Features

Assets and Challenges

Converse sits just to the south of the beautiful Texas Hill Country and sits atop one of the largest artesian springs which provide water for a great many of the sprawling counties of south Texas. This area still boasts much ranchland and unspoiled wilderness. Converse is in close proximity to many state parks and nature areas such as Natural Bridge Caverns and Palmetto State Park.

The South Texas Region often experiences drought and these last few years have been some of the worst on record. The City of Converse has taken major steps in acquiring more potable water from surrounding jurisdictions and installing another well site to relieve the pressure on its existing water system.

Library Features

Assets and Challenges

The Converse Public Library is located just off of the main road that traverses the city and near the historic downtown and municipal buildings. Several schools are within a two mile radius. The city transportation has stops just outside of the library doors making it accessible by many means.

Though it is ideally located, the size of the building is rather demure and commonplace, blending too closely into the municipal buildings it resides near. Many of the residents have reported that they did not know the building was there. Along the main thoroughfares, there are no directional signs or advertising that the public library is nearby.

Community Demographics

The population of Converse is 16,953. In the 2010 Census, figures show 91.0% of the residents in Converse over the age of 25 had the equivalent of a high school education. 22.9% of the residents had a bachelor degree or greater. 8.5% of the population in the town was under 5; 27.4% of the population in the town was under 18 years old with 9.4% of the population over 65. 8.5% of the population was below the poverty level. The median household income was \$58,105. Of the population, 40.2% were White, 14.2% were Black and 40.2% were Hispanic or Latino.

Library Profile Narrative

In 1988, the Converse Lions Club came up with the idea for a community library and presented a resolution to the City Council. Upon the passage of this resolution, the Lions' Club, the Converse Grange, and a host of volunteers combined their efforts to make the library a reality. On September 1, 1991, the Converse Area Public Library officially opened its doors and in 1993, was accredited by the Texas State Library System. The library is located in a city facility with other city services in the building.

Today, the library has over 20,000 fiction and nonfiction books, videos and reference materials. It provides much needed computer and internet access, Wi-Fi, fax and copy services, and the staff helps to provide research and job seeking assistance.

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Most Important Library Statistics

In 2010, the library had 20,515 titles with a total collection of 21,181 items. 20,181 items were circulated. There were approximately 20,688 cardholders and 37,489 library visits. 1,127 volunteer hours were served at the library.

The library is open 48 hours a week. It is staffed by 3 people.

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

Vision Statement

The vision of the Converse Public Library is to grow into a 21st century, globally connected library that provides tools, resources, materials, connectivity, and community space to achieve high standards of research, creativity, information-navigation, and community-sharing.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Converse Public Library is to give life to purposeful learning, creative discovery, and to serve our community with the expansion of knowledge, technology, and responsive library services.

Goals and Objectives for the Library

Goal 1: The library collection will be built.

Objective 1: Read book reviews, blogs, and follow award lists to select materials for the library

Objective 2: Weed the collection using the CREW method

Objective 3: Seek and secure funding for library collection

Goal 2: The library will expand its technology and computer resources.

Objective 1: Apply for and secure E-Rate funding to reduce broadband costs

Objective 2: Improve the library's webpage in the areas of overall usefulness for patrons, publish library policies, and establish social media outreach

Objective 3: Add children and teen computers to the library

Goal 3: The library will expand its program outreach.

Objective 1: Create partnerships within the community

Objective 2: Utilize social media to reach out to community

Objective 3: Create a community survey to establish the need within the community

Objective 4: Plan and hold outreach programs of interest to the community

Goals and Objectives for Outreach Program

In keeping with the library's Goal 2 "expand its technology and computer resources", Objective 3 "add children and teen computers to the library", the library will add a computer reserved for teens to use. The primary goal of the outreach program is to help teens improve their reading skills, and to develop a social media community of their peers. The objective of the outreach program is to encourage teens to read and share reviews with others.

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Outreach Programs

The library will develop a computer club for teens. It will be called Books For You Computer Club (B4UCC) and can also be read as “Before you see”. The library has purchased a new computer with grant funds. This computer will be dedicated for teens in the B4UCC to use. Teens will be encouraged to review books they have checked out and read. They will be able to use the computer and installed software to write their reviews and share them with others. They will be able to use the software as a platform for them to discuss with each other what they would like to read and what they would like the library to purchase to build the Young Adult Collection. A monthly meeting will be held where teens can review and discuss books.

Statement of need

The Converse Public Library has never targeted teens (ages 13-17) for literacy materials, programming or services. The library has recently begun a Young Adult book section. This has increased teen use of the library. The library surveyed teens to determine what kind of program they would be interested in the library providing. 100 surveys were sent out, with 61 returned. Results of the targeted survey conveyed that 31 teens were interested in participating in a program at the library for teens with 33 teens indicating they would attend special events targeted for teens.

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

According to the Census Bureau, in 2010 Converse had an estimated 5,600 teens.

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

The Judson Independent School District has an enrollment of 3,600 high school students. 1,800 of these students attend Judson High School which is less than one mile from the library. The students at this school are the ones being targeted for the outreach program.

Estimated number of potential participants

Of the 61 surveys returned, 31 teens indicated they would be interested in participating in a program at the library. Based on this, the library expects 15 to 20 teens to participate in the first B4UCC meeting. Participation online will begin with this first group and is expected to grow exponentially as teens learn about the program.

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

The B4UCC program is developed for teens (ages 13-17). The High School is located less than one mile from the library. Teens can walk to the library, or depending on the age and transportation availability, the teens can rely on parents to provide transportation to and from the library. Online access is all that is needed to participate in the book review platform. There will be a monthly meeting of club members. The first is scheduled for November 2, 2012.

List potential partners based on your assets assessment

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission provided a grant to purchase the computer for this program and covered the consultant cost. Sarah Allen, school librarian, and Judson High

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School are participating by allowing access to teens at school. *The Herald* newspaper will provide advertising and articles on the B4UCC program.

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

The library has a computer dedicated for use by teens and purchased by grant funds available. The library director understands the need to develop service to teens to meet an unmet need within the community. There is bilingual staff available. The library has space available for meeting.

Detailed Action Plan

Action Plan Goal(s):

The primary goal is to establish and grow programming for teens.

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

Action Plan Objective(s):

1. Partner with Judson High School to develop and present a monthly meeting to review and discuss books.
2. Develop an online presence for book reviews written by teen users.
3. Implement a workshop in the library for teens of Converse to develop peer-to-peer interaction.
4. Distribute post-meeting surveys and evaluate results.

Action Plan Table

IMPLEMENTATION			EVALUATION	
Action What action, activity, or task needs to be done?	Name and Date Who will do it, and by what date will it be done?	Resources Needed How much time, money, materials, and personnel are needed?	Measurement How will progress be measured (#, % of participation or attendance)?	Analysis How and when will data be gathered and analyzed to determine success
Make target survey master	Director by Sept. 18, 2012	Time-3 hours \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	One master made	Count #
Copy target survey	Director by Sept. 18, 2012	Time-15 minutes \$ 20.00 Materials-paper Personnel-1	100 copies made	Count #
Distribute and facilitate 100 surveys to JISD on Sept. 19, 2012	Director by Sept. 19, 2012	Time-3 hour \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	100 distributed	Count #

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Evaluate survey	Director by Oct. 5, 2012	Time-3 hour \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	Survey compiled	Count #
Meet with Librarian and students at Judson High	Sarah Allen, Judson High School Librarian and Director by Oct. 20, 2012	Time-40 minutes \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	Meeting held	Count #
Create Flyer	Director by Oct. 25, 2012	Time-3 hour \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	Master flyer created	Count #
Copy flyer to distribute	Director by Oct. 25, 2012	Time-15 minutes \$5.00 Materials-none Personnel-1	Copies made	Count #
Post flyers and social media announcements at library, library's Facebook/Website, and Judson High	Sarah Allen and director by Oct. 27, 2012	Time-2 hours \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	Flyers posted	Count #
Put the program on the library website calendar	Director by Oct 20, 2012	Time-1 hour \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	Listed on calendar	Count #
Announce program and event schedule on Facebook	Director by Oct.20, 2012	Time-1 hour \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	Listed on Facebook	Count #
Write press release for <i>The Herald</i> ; send via email	Director by Oct. 20, 2012	Time-2 hours \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	Press release written	Count #
I.T. consultation for computer system for Teen Readers	Greg James and director consult by Oct. 15, 2012	Time-2 hours \$ 200.00 Materials-none Personnel-1	Formal document detailing type, brand, cost of comp. hardware/software by Greg James	Document made
Purchase computer hardware/software for dedicated teen computer	Greg James and director by Oct. 31,2012	Time-4 hours \$ 2000.00 Materials-none Personnel-1	Purchase made	Count #

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Check that configuration works exactly as we want it for teens to review books and use social media to communicate	Greg James and director by Oct. 31, 2012	Time-6 hours \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	Computer working as wanted	Computer working
Schedule first B4UCC meeting at Converse Public Library	Director by Nov. 2, 2012	Time-1 hours \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	Teens attending	Count #
Finalize evaluation and report to PEARL	Director by February 28, 2012	Time-3 hours \$ 0 Materials-none Personnel-1	Report written and emailed	Report turned in to PEARL office

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APPENDIX: TEEN SURVEY

Converse Public Library Post Program Teen Survey

1. How many times have you been to the Converse Public Library in the past 3 months?

Circle One.

2 times 4 times 6 times 8 times 10 times More than 10 times

2. Did you find that the availability of Young Adult books brought you into the library?

Yes No

3. Did you find that the availability of a teen Before You See Computer Program made a difference in coming to the library?

Yes No

4. Is the B4UCC computer station fun and interesting to use?

Yes No

5. Has the B4UCC computer program a well organized reading and reviewing program?

Yes No

6. Are social media such as Facebook, twitter, and blogs a good way to share ideas with your fellow students about books you enjoy reading?

Yes No

7. Has the B4UCC program inspired you to read more books?

Yes No

8. If you could suggest anything new to the library staff about changes to this program, what would they be? Write in the space below.

9. Would you recommend participating in this program to other students that you know?

Yes No