Collection Development Policy

Washoe County Library System-Reno Senior Center

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Community Overview

Located in Northern Nevada along the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Washoe County Library System is the second largest in the state. As stated in the Collection Development Plan (2004) for Washoe County Library System, the description of the county is an “area of diversity with congested urban areas and large tracts of rural land.” Total county population equals 423,000 and the growth rate equals 1.48% annually (Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Commission, 2008). The majority of the population lives near or around the third largest city in Nevada, Reno.

Washoe County Library System

Beginning as a Carnegie Free Public Library in 1904, the Washoe County Library System has been an integral part of the community and continues the tradition today (Washoe County Library System [WCLS], 2008). Serving a diverse economic, educational and cultural community, the library system contains 14 libraries including seven partnership branches and an Internet branch (WCLS, 2008). The Senior Center Library, located within the Reno Senior Center at the Washoe County complex is included as a partnership branch. With the assistance of grant funding the Senior Center branch began serving the public in 1979 and moved to the current location in 1991 (WCLS, 2008). Staffing includes a Librarian and Library Assistant and volunteers help serve the public Monday through Thursday, during the daytime hours. Additionally, activities for the approximate 150 daily users include book discussion groups, computer training and book talk programs to area retirement homes (Washoe County, 2009).
Senior Center Patron Demographics

Currently, 12% of Washoe County’s 400,000 citizens are of retirement age and contribute to the largest growth of the region. The majority of the older adult population lives within the communities of Reno. A small segment lives in the Incline Village region near Lake Tahoe and is outside the Senior Center service area (Washoe County, 2006). The library expects increase usage as Washoe County experiences a population shift within the next decade as more baby boomers continue to age and less working age individuals remain in the county. Citizens aged 65 and over will grow to 17% of the overall county population by 2030. This population will almost double the current amount of 48,000 and equal the projected amount of 106,000 (Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Commission, 2008, pg.9). Main action items for the county include developing programs for the increase older population including the increasing Hispanic population. Although the current Hispanic population represents 4.8% of the current older adult population, the county expects an increase of this demographic in the next decade, as more Hispanics relocate to Reno (Washoe County, 2006).

Additional sources for further demographic information are located through the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency, which provides a consensus forecast for Washoe County and surrounding area through 2030. Further sources of data include the Senior Services department of Washoe County and the Strategic Plan for Washoe County Senior Citizens completed in 2006. The Nevada Small Business Development Center is an additional source for demographic information and resources as well as the United States Census Bureau.
Mission Statement

The inclusion of a mission statement allows the Collection Development Policy to provide the foundation for the library (Evans and Saponaro, 2005, pg. 54). Washoe County Library System encourages the library to be a “cultural center offering lifelong learning enrichment opportunities through access to ideas, information and the arts” (Washoe County, 2008). The mission and goals for the Senior Center branch of the library system maintain this purpose and emphasize the importance of continual educational opportunities in the lives of older adults. The mission of the Washoe County Senior Center Library includes providing educational, personnel enrichment and enjoyment information resources to the community with a special commitment to providing materials dedicated to the needs of the mature population.

Programs and Goals

As part of the Washoe County Senior Citizen Strategic Plan, focus groups stated many issues of concern for the population group. The most important issues include cultural competency and awareness, access, medical, housing and aging in place (Washoe County, 2006). Washoe County community needs are similar to the needs of the older adult population in the United States. Most citizens 65 and older information needs consist of social security benefits and entitlement, health, housing, residential or assisted living care and support services (Kendall, 1996, pg. 17). Additionally, cultural events and activities play an important role for older adults’ wellbeing. “The importance of providing opportunities for older people to participate in arts activities such as community-based activities involving artists and writers, particularly oral history and reminiscence projects, which may result in plays, books of poetry and prose, videos
and exhibitions” (Kendall, 1996, pg 17). In addition, advertising in older adult focus magazines concentrate on the topics of health, travel and finance (Zabel, 1999, pg. 129).

In order to accomplish the library’s mission and meet the needs of the older adult community, the Senior Center Library expected goals include:

- Provide print and non-print materials including electronically and audiovisual materials concentrating on the education and entertainment and overall enhancement of older adults
- Increase education programming in the area of technology including Internet
- Provide services and programs geared towards the diverse needs of the older adult community including cultural, reminiscence and wellness programs
- Provide reference resource materials for the betterment and education of the older adult population, their families and care providers

Parameters of Collection

Due to the scope and size of the collection, certain parameters are required to ensure equal representation of materials for all users. In terms of the age of materials, emphasis is placed on providing the most current materials according to the user needs. Exceptions include the genealogy and local history special collections, due to the nature of the materials. In addition, to control budgetary considerations, publishers within the United States are preferred for material purchases. Exceptions include significant international titles or Spanish materials not currently available within the United States. In addition, the collection will consist of primarily English language materials and limited Spanish resources according to demand. Demand and budgetary considerations determine the purchase of multiple copies. In the case of bestseller or popular fiction, every effort will be made to utilize vendor leasing to alleviate cost. In order to provide the
excellent service, a ratio of one item per every eight request submitted through the catalog will be enforced by the Washoe County Library.

**Collection Formats**

In order to serve the diverse community of the older adults in Washoe County, the Senior Center Library’s collection aligns with the mission and goals of the library system in providing entertainment, enriching and educational library materials. Several formats satisfy the needs of the community including fiction, nonfiction and other associated audiovisual resources. Large print items in fiction and nonfiction are essential, however not every title should be in large print due to the size and difficulty in holding a heavy item for patrons with arthritis (Ahlvers, 2006, pg. 310). In addition, vision impairments are common in the specialized community of this collection and audio books offer an added format for the enjoyment of the collection. In terms of readers’ advisory, an excellent source that evaluates the three subsets of the older adult population including the G.I. Generation, the Silent Generation, and Baby Boomers and their reading habits is the article *Older Adults and Readers’ Advisory* by Alicia Ahlvers (2006). Each subset requires different collection considerations including preferences in genres and subjects areas. Additionally, due to the fact the collection might serve intergenerational patrons, the inclusion of children’s books and reminiscence kits are vital. Reminiscence kits and classic children’s literature provide patrons and their families the ability to remember the past and share memories (BiFolkal Productions Inc., 2008).

**Fiction**

The collection contains a variety of current and classical works of fiction, which meet the guidelines of selection and demand of the community. Consideration priorities will be given to
hardback items due to durability. When available, paperback options are considered when size and weight of material is an issue for the older adult patrons.

**Large Print**

Large print items will represent approximately half of the circulating collection. Materials include fiction and nonfiction titles representing the needs of the community. This includes popular fiction, inspirational, westerns, biographies and health related materials.

**Nonfiction**

This collection will reflect the informational needs and lifelong learning objectives of the older adult community. Specific subjects of priority include Health and Fitness, Finance and Retirement, History, Hobbies and Crafts, and Religion. The collection will not include items of in depth research; however will include items of basic and intermediate knowledge.

**Local History**

The local history collection refers to items of interest pertaining to Reno, Washoe County and the surrounding region of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. This collection will not contain research materials, rather a concentration of entertainment and enrichment materials about the local region.

**Genealogy Collection**

The genealogy collection contains basic or foundation level materials used for beginning searches of family history. Interlibrary loan and the use of materials from the *Reno Family History Center*, an affiliate of the *Family History Center* in Salt Lake City will be used to provide further information and materials.
Spanish Collection

The focus of this collection is fiction and nonfiction materials written in Spanish for recreational use by the multicultural community. Materials will be part of the permanent Spanish collection of the Washoe County Library system and will rotate quarterly or according to demand. Priority will be in providing classical literature of Spanish origin.

Children Picture Books

The collection contains items of classical children’s literature and items to share with the intergenerational community. Demand and request from the community will dictate the size and scope of the collection.

Government Documents/Brochures/Pamphlets

This collection of community resources provides federal, state and local county forms as a convenience for the older adult community. Priority applied to items not accessible online or electronically available to the public, especially in the areas of healthcare and wellness.

Periodicals

Publications received on a regular basis used to compliment the print materials available to the public. Preference of materials given to current local or regional news, recreational needs and/or lifelong learning issues. Back issues will circulate for one year beyond the current issue or shorter if available electronically. Journals and scholarly publications are not part of the collection unless community needs or demands warrant.

Reminiscence Kits
This collection includes but not limited to BiFolkal Reminiscence Kits used to aid patrons with memory or cognitive disorders, such as dementia or Alzheimer’s disease. Theme priorities placed on items acceptable for use in resident care facilities or intergenerational programming.

**Reference**

This non-circulating collection includes materials designed to provide reliable information in a concise manner, available to the general public and library professionals. Types of materials include, but not limited to dictionaries, almanacs, encyclopedias, handbooks pertaining to the interest of the community. Additional electronic resources are accessible via the branch computers for further content and information when feasible.

**Internet Access**

Information and services via the Internet provided directly by the library or through license databases for the education and entertainment of the community. Further rules and regulations of use found in the Internet Computer Use Policy.

**Audio Visual Collection**

**Sound Recordings**

Limited collections of classical or influential compact discs (CD) are available.

Emphasizes placed on establish needs and demands of community, including but not limited to soundtracks, country, folk, jazz and classical recordings.

**Audio Books**
The library collection consists of a combination of fiction and nonfiction selections similar to the print counterparts. Preference given to unabridged editions, however collection may contain abridged editions depending on availability. Currently, compact discs and Playaways are a priority; however, as technology advances other formats will be considered.

**DVDs**

This collection includes instructional, educational and entertainment records. Preference will be for DVDs satisfying cultural, historic or non-violent selections according to the needs of the community. In addition, Spanish language movies will be considered according to demand.

**Selectors**

Based on the collection development policy established by Washoe County Library, the main responsibility relies on the Director and the Board of Trustees (Washoe County Library System [WCLS], 2004). However, given the nature of the specific needs of the Senior Center Library, the selection process begins with the Head Librarian and the potential users of the library. As stated by Evans and Saponaro, special libraries rely on the staff and primary users to develop collections (2005, pg.60). Washoe County’s policy on selectors is similar to the views of Evans and Saponaro, in that a manager or head librarians “are responsible for choosing, replacing and deselecting materials that reflect community demand and library service roles, while keeping the collection in good condition” (WCLS, 2004).
Selection Criteria

“Selection is a discerning and interpretive process, involving a general knowledge of the subject and its important literature, a familiarity with the materials in the collection, an awareness of the bibliographies of the subject and recognition of the needs of the community.”

(Morton Grove Public Library, 2009)

The previous quote from the Collection Development Policy of the Morton Grove Public Library expresses the importance of selection criteria in a policy. As with most public libraries, community need and predicting this need is the primary concern when selecting items for a collection. Additional important factors when deciding on materials for a collection including the following:

- Subject
- Authoritative
- Author’s Credentials
- Reliable Publisher
- Currency of Subject
- Quality of Construction, including binding and paper
- Price
- Published Reviews
- Value to the Collection
- Public Demand
- Availability in other area libraries
- Fit the Community Needs
- Level of Difficulty
Selection Aids

Ultimately, for the smaller or special library, the decision to purchase an item depends on budget and appropriateness for the collection. Therefore, “reviews play a vital role in helping selectors at the small library locate the best possible buys with limited funds (Evans and Saponaro, 2005, pg 76). Sources for reviews include the prestige and highly acclaim periodicals of Publisher’s Weekly, Booklist, and Library Journal. Each of the previous periodicals provides insightful reviews and in the case of Library Journal, tailor reviews for the library community. Additional sources for material reviews unique to the older adult population include publications such as AARP and Readers Digest. Especially helpful for the selection of Large Print items are catalogs, flyers and announcements for the Thorndike Press, which specialize in publishing such materials (Ahlvers, 2006, pg. 309).

For current published materials, most small and large libraries rely on Books in Print and related in print sources to assist in selection. As well, print sources essential for public libraries include Fiction Catalog and the Public Library Catalog, which provide a benchmark or starting point for a collection (Evans and Saponaro, 2005, pg. 92). Additional selection tools include “best of” list from Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble or related booksellers allow selectors to see what is popular and what items not to be missed (Arizona State Library, 2008).

Gifts

Due to the nature of the primary patrons of the Senior Center collection, memorial or related gifts are expected to be common and encouraged. Recommendations pertaining to a statement on gifts of monetary or materials should include the stipulation of all items must adhere to the guidelines and policies of Washoe County and the Board of Trustees. Donated
items should match the collection to prevent further issues with discarding or elimination from the collection (Evans and Saponaro, 2005, pg. 61). In addition, the library should state the right to refuse, sell or donate items not acceptable due to condition, content, or age. Priorities of items include local interest, donations to specific areas of the collection, such as a particular hobby or interest or a general donation for additional materials.

**Collection Maintenance**

The Senior Center Library of Washoe County will encounter space issues due to the inclusion within the Senior Services Building. Lacks of storage and shelf space, as well as the goal of providing current materials to the patrons are indicators for the need of a deselection and discard policy. “Weeding, or the withdrawal of materials from the collection, is a necessary part of the collection development process as it allows for the systematic withdrawal of worn, dated, or damaged library materials” (Longview Public Library, 2004). As stated previously in the examination of the collection areas, periodicals are maintained for one year beyond the current issue. This policy allows the library to purchase more publications and keep currency a priority. Print and non-print materials considered not a valuable component of the collection would undergo an evaluation process conducted by the Head Librarian or related library personnel.

**Collection Evaluation**

In order to effectively serve the public, an evaluation of the collection with occur for internal purposes throughout the year, or as needed according to public informational needs. Tools used during the assessment process include material reviews, public comments, circulation reports and related statistical data.
Complaints and Censorship

A policy outlining steps to take in handling complaints over material in a collection, especially in a specialized collection at the Senior Center is important due to the preventative nature or insurance if a situation should arise (Evans and Saponaro, 2005, pg. 63). Being prepared when a complainant or dispute happens eliminates frustration on the part of the patron and the library professional. Recommendations for the Senior Center policy include a statement of reflecting the policies used for selection of materials and the goals of the collection. Alternatively, complaints to library personnel may provide evidence of a lack of viewpoints in a particular subject area and should be reviewed with professionalism (Morton Grove Public Library, 2009). As with any matter concerning patrons, the issue of censorship or complaints of a particular item need action and providing a policy with assist in this matter.
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