



Library Recognition Award 2022 Nomination Form

Please answer the following 3 questions using this form. Make your answers descriptive and concise. Sell your project or service! This written part of the application should be no more than 2 pages total. You may add up to 2 additional pages of support materials – photos, publicity materials, news stories, etc. The overall application package may not exceed 4 pages total.

I nominate the Community Library for the **2022** MVLS Library Recognition Award.

Project Title: Trivia Night at the Library

Submitted by: Don LaPlant Library COB

Submit nomination via email to kclingan@mvls.info by Friday, September 2, 2022

1. Describe what you did. Where and when did activities & services take place? Who were your partners?

In March 2022, The Community Library in Cobleskill began hosting “Trivia Night at the Library,” a monthly, live, in-person, team trivia event similar to Pub Quiz events popular around the world. Teams of up to five patrons work together to answer questions researched, written, and presented by Adult Services Librarian Don LaPlant. The questions cover a range of topics and are grouped by Dewey Decimal Classification categories e.g. 641.5 for questions about food and cooking, 810s for American Literature questions. Answer sheets are collected at the end of each of two rounds and prizes are awarded at the end of the night to the three teams with the highest scores. Question categories can highlight local interests, current events, popular culture, or other topics covered in books and DVDs in the library’s collection. Often, questions will be thematically related to other recent or upcoming library programs; in July, for instance, all questions were somehow related to oceans, sea life, islands, ships, pirates, or seafood, allowing us to capitalize on the Summer Reading theme “Oceans of Possibilities.”

We partnered with our Friends of the Library organization, which has agreed to run a concession table serving snacks and beverage (“sold” by donation) before and during the 90-minute event. In addition to earning money, their participation also allows them to solicit new Friends memberships and promote upcoming fundraising events for the library, e.g. their on-going book sale and annual basket raffle.

In addition, as part of our ongoing outreach efforts, we partner with a different local business each month. These businesses serve as our official trivia sponsor for the month and donate 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes to winning teams—typically gift certificates, unique merchandise, or branded promotional items. In exchange, we advertise the businesses on slides shown before and during the event, highlighting the range of products or services they offer and featuring photos taken inside and outside the businesses.

2. What community need did your project address? Why did you develop this activity or service?

Expanding adult programming and community engagement have been identified as top priorities for The Community Library since the hiring of the library's first Adult Services Librarian. In February 2022 the library had a very positive response to a passive program/display called "High Circulation Trivia" where we asked patrons to answer questions about our most circulated titles from the previous year. We also knew that two restaurants in Cobleskill drew large crowds for their weekly trivia nights, but we felt that many members of our impoverished rural community were unable to afford the expensive meals and beverages at those venues. We also believed there were some in our community who would be interested in a trivia night, but who would prefer to attend an event somewhere other than a bar.

We also developed this program in hopes of providing additional opportunities to collaborate with our Friends group and a range of local businesses who could receive positive publicity and promotion through their support of this regularly-scheduled event. Further, we recognized that a program like this could serve the broader goals of libraries generally by encouraging intellectual curiosity, celebrating knowledge, highlighting materials in our collection, drawing more diverse crowds, and attracting people who may not visit the library regularly. The library benefits directly not only by drawing patrons to educational programs, but also by providing another opportunity to advertise library programs and services to attendees—including several who did not previously have library cards. We also benefit indirectly by helping our Friends group raise money that will be donated back to us. Our community partners benefit through the expanded awareness of their services and products, as well as earning praise for their investment in the life of the community. Our patrons, meanwhile, have fun, learn things, meet new people, and develop interests the library is eager to help them explore in more detail.

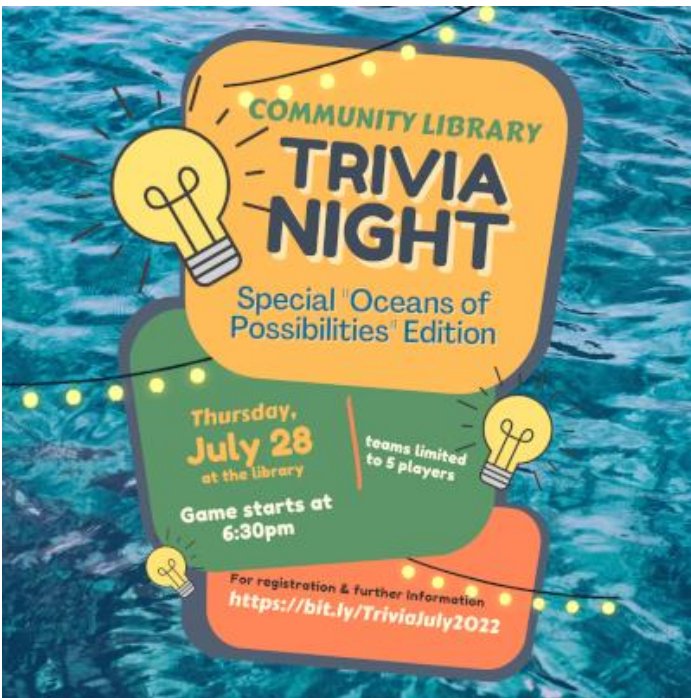
3. Describe how this project or service made a difference in your community using statistics, stories & photos. Who benefited and how did they benefit? Will you continue this activity or service? Why?

This recurring program has met or exceeded our expectations thus far and has been consistently well-attended, with an average of 18 participants each month. Many attendees are patrons who rarely attend other library programs, including faculty and staff from our local college, library board members, and family teams bringing together multiple generations. Since the trivia questions cover a wide range of topics, regular participants have found it helpful to invite friends and coworkers with different areas of expertise to join their teams as a means of improving their scores. Consequently, patrons are doing some of the promotional work for us by introducing new patrons to our programs. In addition, individuals who show up without teammates typically find that other groups are eager to add new members to their teams, increasing the sense that the library is a place for fun social events and that visiting offers the opportunity to make new friends.

Our Friends group has expressed excitement about their collaboration on these events, indicating they typically earn \$20-25 in donations each Trivia Night and never have difficulty finding members willing to volunteer for this assignment. In fact, Friends volunteers actively participate in the program, answering trivia questions from the snack table and occasionally using the event to advertise their own fundraising activities.

Conversations with participating business owners and managers have suggested additional benefits as they've encountered new customers bearing gift cards they have won as trivia prizes. One local business owner we contacted as a potential sponsor indicated he was unaware the library even offered programs for adults, which provided us the opportunity to sign him up to receive the library's newsletter detailing all of our offerings. New partnerships like this provide additional promotional opportunities for the library as business owners are eager to promote their collaboration with us.

We definitely intend to continue this monthly program and are continually seeking additional sponsors from the community. In the coming year we hope to expand our sponsorship outreach by contacting local non-profit organizations who might welcome the opportunity to partner with us to promote their programs and services. We're also eager to explore additional ways of strengthening the connections between the program and our collections to highlight more of the information sources and materials we rely on to generate trivia questions.



Trivia Night Sponsors since March 2022:

Chieftans Restaurant
Price Chopper of Cobleskill
Friends of the Community Library

Harmony Acres Craft Store
Catnap Books
Tagua Nut Café and Gift Shop

Thanks to tonight's sponsor:
Grapevine Farms



Round ONE

400s: Languages

994: Australia

523.4: Planets

390: Folklore & Mythology

780s: Music

