

# Leon Valley Public Library Community Outreach Plan



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# Leon Valley Public Library Community Outreach Plan

## Outreach Plan

### Introduction

Leon Valley, Texas, is located near the junction of Loop 410 and State Highway 16, ten miles northwest of downtown San Antonio in northwestern Bexar County. The community was developed in the 1950s, and had a population of 536. In 1952, Leon Valley successfully filed a petition to incorporate when the city of San Antonio threatened annexation. In 2010, the population of Leon Valley was 10,151. The heart of Leon Valley lies along State Highway 16, also known as Bandera Road, and is made up of approximately 3.5 square miles.

Residents, as well as visitors, find Leon Valley to be the gateway to San Antonio's leading attractions, Sea World and Six Flags Fiesta Texas. Bandera Road and Loop 410 are the primary arteries to these attractions and the San Antonio employment base in the northwest sector. The City of Leon Valley is three miles from the University of Texas Health Sciences Center, and eight miles from the San Antonio International Airport.

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

Historically the library has served as a lifelong learning center, community meeting place, local history and genealogy source, and public computer access point. The library continues to serve these roles plus provide adult and children's programs, environmental programs and cultural awareness programs. In the future, the library would like to provide teen programs, computer classes, conservation and nature programs and early literacy programs.

### *Existing Programs:*

Existing programs include a regular story time for pre-school, an adult book club, regular toddler story time, assisted living center outreach, regular author visits and digitalizing local history materials.

### *Identified Needs*

The community needs to expand local sales tax base, which provides more than half of the municipal budget. There is a need for business to fill the large number of empty commercial spaces. Past industrial development has created environmental problems for two retail areas in the city. The city is working with the Environmental Protection Agency to mediate these problems.

The library needs space to provide additional study areas, programs, and shelving for the children's and youth collections. The library and the Friends of the Library, in partnership with the city, have hired an architect to design and plan a 4,000 square foot children's wing expansion, however funds to expand the facility are needed. Once the expansion is completed, the library will need a children's librarian.

### *Identified Assets*

Community assets include parks, a public swimming pool, tennis courts, hiking trails, birding trails, a natural area and a historical site. There is a community garden and recycling center available to residents. The city also has a senior center, community center, a conference center,

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and several apartment complexes including one low-income apartment complex. Huebner Creek runs through the heart of the community. The city is a part of an extensive bus transport system for transporting residents and visitors around the community and the greater San Antonio area.

One of its most important library assets is the experienced and dedicated staff. The staff has expertise that they are willing to share with community members. Personalized services, such as home delivery of materials for elderly or ill residents are a hallmark of library service. The library enjoys strong community support and is often referred to by elected officials as “the Heart of Leon Valley.”

The library provides 11 public access computers, a secure Wi-Fi, and a pleasant porch reading area. The library collection includes a large selection of audio books and large print titles.

### *Thank You Statement*

The Leon Valley Public Library would like to thank the Mayor of Leon Valley, City Council members and the library board for their ongoing support. The library would like to thank the businesses and volunteers who make the library a successful and vital asset for the community.

The library is grateful that the Robert and Ruby Priddy Charitable Trust funded the University of North Texas (UNT) Promoting and Enhancing the Advancement of Rural Libraries (PEARL) project. We thank the Trust and UNT for choosing our library to participate in the PEARL project. Director Joyce Trent would like to thank the staff of the library for their understanding and support while she worked on developing this outreach program and the UNT PEARL staff including Dr. Yunfei Du and Certificate of Advance Study student, RoseAleta Laurell.

### **Community Profile Narrative**

Leon Valley is surrounded by the city of San Antonio but retains its small town atmosphere while providing all the amenities of a large metropolitan area. Many of the residents of Leon Valley commute daily to work in San Antonio. As a bedroom community, life in Leon Valley is focused around family-oriented events and leaders of the community are dedicated to the quality of life. Numerous hospitals, cancer treatment centers and a medical and dental university are located just outside Leon Valley city limits. The Leon Valley Historical Society is in the midst of restoring the 1862 Huebner-Onion Homestead and Stagecoach Stop site.

Recent efforts to make the entire city of Leon Valley a “walkable community” have been successful. There are walking paths connecting neighborhoods to each other, recreational facilities, and several of the commercial shopping areas.

With an active chamber of commerce, Leon Valley residents and visitors enjoy a year-round calendar of events including the Los Leones Art Festival. Now in its tenth year, this event provides local students with the opportunity to show and sell their artwork and enjoy music, food, a chalk-fest, and demonstrations by professional artists, balloon art, and costumed characters. The "Taste of Leon Valley" event features the very best of area restaurants, grocers, and beverage companies. Leon Valley is a conservation-conscious community and many of the events center around environmental projects, including the annual Earthwise Living day and the

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annual Basura Bash to clean up Zarzamora Creek. The library sponsors an Earthwise Living Poetry contest, and offers ink cartridge and wine cork recycling bins.

### Community Features

#### *Assets and Challenges*

The beautiful green rolling hills surrounding Leon Valley is its greatest asset, with plentiful trees, creeks and rivers. The community has abundant outdoor activities including hike and bike trails, birding trails and walking trails. Its close proximity to tourist attractions in San Antonio is a major asset.

A major challenge for Leon Valley is the flooding of the Huebner Creek, which splits the main thoroughfare when flooding causes road closures.

### Library Features

#### *Assets and Challenges*

The library is geographically located in the center of the town with many other city buildings within easy walking distance. It is located near the senior citizens center, the community center, and the conference center. Parks, walking trails, and nature areas that border the library generate much foot traffic for the library.

Because of its location, Leon Valley library faces the challenge of educating newcomers that the library is not a branch of the larger San Antonio library system.

#### *Community Demographics*

According to the 2010 census, the population of Leon Valley was 10,151 with 5.6% of residents under the 5 years of age and 16.9% over 65. Approximately 56.2% were Hispanic or Latino with 41.2% having a native language other than English. The median household income was \$53,841; 4.5% of the population was below the poverty line.

### **Library Profile Narrative**

The Leon Valley Public Library was founded in 1976 and opened its doors to the community in May of 1977. Community activists secured a building, furniture, shelving, and donated books. Over the years, the support for the library from city revenue grew. It moved to a new building in 1989, and an expansion to the facility was added in 1995.

Fundraising is underway for a much needed 4,000 square foot children's wing. Currently most of the library budget is underwritten by the city of Leon Valley general fund. The Friends of the Library are excellent fundraisers and assist with special projects and programs. The library's location in the center of the community and near parks, walking trails, senior center, and a major thoroughfare make the library an important part of life in Leon Valley.

The staff has gone from entirely volunteer to 3.5 full-time equivalent and part-time summer hires. The library has a professional library director with a Masters in Library and Information Science from the University of Texas. The library and the staff have won numerous awards for excellence.

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### *Most Important Library Statistics*

One full-time librarian, two full-time clerks and 3 part-time staff serve a population of 11,020. The library has 6,824 library cardholders with 100,679 library visits each year. In 2010, the library had a collection of 67,431 titles with circulation of 49,992. Program attendance for 2010 was 971. In 2010, the library provided 6,000 reference transactions and 229 interlibrary loans. The library is open 40 hours per week. Library usage doubles during the summer months.

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

#### *Vision Statement*

The library provides public library services for all ages in the community. Personalized service to the resident is a primary goal. Lifelong learning opportunities, with an emphasis on technology as an information tool is a major function of the Library.

#### *Mission Statement*

It is our continued mission to encourage and promote cultural and community sustaining events.

#### *Goals and Objectives for the Library*

Accomplishments for 2010-2011:

1. Continued personal and specialized customer service to residents of all ages.
2. Offered author and storyteller visits and programming featuring “Live at the Library” performances for the education and entertainment of residents.
3. Assisted grant writer with information for Children’s Wing Expansion grants.
4. Improved Library web presence with new services and easier use.
5. Evaluated collection items with past usage and current space constraints as a focus.
6. Supported El Verde 2020 as a collection and information focus to the community.
7. Applied for and received a Lone Star Grant as a tool for collection and services improvement.
8. Continued very successful Precious Minds New Connections Parenting Grant classes in partnership with Northside Education Foundation and Urban Ministries.
9. Applied for and received a Texas Municipal Libraries Award of Excellence, one of only 27 awarded in 2011 from among the over 520 public libraries in Texas.
10. Continued participation in civic and community sustaining events, for example: Leon Valley Fourth of July, Pet Parade, and Breakfast with Santa.
11. Assisted the Friends of the Library with grant-funded opportunities for improved Library services.

Objectives for FY 2011-2012:

1. Continue to offer personal and specialized customer service to residents of all ages.
2. Offer author, artist, and storyteller visits featuring “Live at the Library” performances for the education and entertainment of residents.
3. Assist with grant writing to fund the Children’s Wing Expansion in order to complete this urgently needed project.
4. Continue collection evaluation with past usage and current space constraints as a focus.
5. Support El Verde 2020 as a collection and information focus for residents.
6. Expand e-book and e-services as a priority through the Library Online Catalog and web page: [www.leonvalley.lib.tx.us](http://www.leonvalley.lib.tx.us).

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7. Maintain City of Leon Valley and EPA Superfund Information area for after business hours usage by residents.
8. Apply for any available program / collection enrichment grants through the Texas State Library System and private sources.
9. Continue the very successful Precious Minds New Connections Parenting Grant classes in partnership with the Northside Education Foundation and Urban Ministries.
10. Continue participation in community sustaining and cultural events, for example, Leon Valley Fourth of July, Pet Parade, Taste of Leon Valley, Breakfast with Santa and others as may occur.
11. Complete staff training for Stat Pad defibrillator and Emergency Management certifications.
12. Assist the Friends of the Library with grant funded opportunities for improved Library Services and facilities.

### *Goals and Objectives for Outreach Program*

*Goal:* As part of the library's goal to provide lifelong learning opportunities and to participate in community sustaining events, it will offer a program entitled "An Informed Tour of Your Leon Valley Natural Area and National Historic Site Huebner-Onion Homestead". It is planned that participants will leave with an appreciation of their surroundings, both natural and historic and the resources of their library that supported the programming.

### *Objectives:*

The objectives of the program are:

1. To increase community knowledge of the history of Leon Valley and its historical structures.
2. To increase community knowledge of the park and native flora and fauna located in the natural area.
3. Reinforce to the community that the library is a source for local history through its unique archival resources.

### **Outreach Program**

"An Informed Tour of Your Leon Valley Natural Area and the Huebner-Onion Homestead National Historic Site" is a library sponsored outreach project. The project will be part of a city-wide celebration. The city of Leon Valley (LV) is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. This is also 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historic Huebner-Onion Homestead. City-wide celebrations are planned to be held during October, 2012.

The Leon Valley Public Library (LVPL) archives are unique in that they contain the only existing records regarding the earliest settlement in northwest Bexar County and the founding of the city of Leon Valley. As part of the library's program, it will provide access to the Ken and Esther Alley Historical Collection for research.

The program will consist of a number of components:

1. The first part of the program takes place at the library. There will be a brief overview of the Leon Valley Public Library (LVPL) archives with emphasis on the founding of the city, and the Huebner-Onion Homestead history as described in the files of the archive. At the conclusion of this portion of the tour, program participants will be given a Natural

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- Area Walking Journal to use to make notes during the next part of the tour, a nature walk. Younger children will be given stories and coloring sheets of the natural area wildlife.
2. Participants will walk across the street to the Raymond Rimkus Park walking path that intersects with the start of the Leon Valley Natural Area. LV Natural Area specialists will point out significant sights, both plant and animal, during the 30 minute walk.
  3. The LV Natural Area is very near the back property line of the Huebner-Onion Homestead and contains the gravesite of Joseph Huebner. A Huebner-Onion Homestead docent will take the group through the Huebner-Onion Homestead and grounds. A tour of the Homestead and grounds is a rare occurrence, since the site is still under restoration and is not accessible to the public at this time.
  4. Following the walk and tour, the group will return by van to the library porch for refreshments. The library staff will have on hand a collection of replicas of local artifacts provided by the Government Canyon State Park. This exhibit includes four large bins of authentic replicas of local artifacts representative of the wildlife in the area. The exhibit also includes games, puzzles, and handouts. The artifacts include foot print handouts, life-like skulls, plastic poop, and authentic pelts of native wildlife.

As one group leaves the library following the archives presentation, they will start the walk toward the LV Natural Area and tour of the Homestead grounds and buildings. While they are hiking, the second group will begin the archives presentation and then start the hike toward the Natural Area at about the same time the first group is finishing the walk and beginning the tour of the Homestead grounds. It is important for there to be separation of the first and second groups, in respect for the LV Natural Area birds and wildlife. Too many hikers in the Natural Area trails are discouraged as they disturb the wildlife.

Approximately 4 to 5 groups will be accommodated on a Saturday. Children under the age of 8 must be accompanied by an adult. If there is a need, additional Saturday sessions will be arranged during the October anniversary celebrations.

Seniors and others not able to travel on the trails will be offered an in-depth history of the area and a photographic tour of the LV Natural Area and Huebner-Onion Homestead. The library will produce materials for the photographic tour.

### *Statement of need*

Sixty surveys were distributed in the library, senior center, and with community organizations and community leaders. Forty-two were returned. Surveys indicated widespread knowledge of library services and resources. Surveys also showed an interest in local history and an interest in walking and exercise using the trail systems in the neighborhoods and park. An abbreviated LV Natural Area tour was offered as a part of library summer programming in 2011. The program was very popular; the library was unable to accommodate all who were interested in participating.

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

Target audience for the outreach program is children from 5-14 years of age, adults and seniors.



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

The target group is children, adults, and seniors living in Leon Valley who are interested in the natural resources and history of the community. A small group of homeschooled children is also targeted.

### *Estimated number of potential participants*

It is estimated that 40-50 participants can be accommodated in a one day program. If there is need, additional Saturday outreach programs will be conducted.

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

The library outreach program will be held on a Saturday in October and arranged to coordinate with other community events celebrating the anniversaries. The event will be offered to 4 groups of 10-12 attendees. A rain day will be scheduled in advance, in case of inclement weather. The program is planned for adults and children of all ages. Participants will provide their own transportation to the library for the start of the program.

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

Essential partners will be members of the Leon Valley Historical Society, the Leon Valley Park Commission, Leon Valley Fire Department and EMS, Friends of the Library, Texas Parks and Wildlife Government Canyon State Park resources, Boy & Girl Scouts, 4-H clubs, VIA Metro transit trolleys, Planning Committee for Anniversary Celebrations, and Earthwise Living Committee members. Partners and volunteers will assist with presenting the archived history of the city and Homestead overviews, conducting the Natural Area walks, Homestead and grounds tours, publicity, and refreshments.

Other partners are the *Northwest Weekly*, the city of Leon Valley *E-News*, Friends of the Library, Leon Valley Historical Society and Parks Commission, and the Leon Valley Chamber of Commerce.

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

The library has trained staff with computer and website skills to produce publicity for the program. The library will provide meeting space and the porch/outdoor classroom for programs. The library will provide all supplies for printing publicity materials, the digital photography equipment to document activities, and produce the photographic tour.

### Detailed Action Plan

#### *Action Plan Goals:*

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

#### *Action Plan Objective(s):*

1. Partner with the Leon Valley Historical Society, the Leon Valley Park Commission, Leon Valley Fire Department, EMS, Texas Parks and Wildlife Government Canyon State Park,

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Boy & Girl Scouts, 4-H clubs, VIA Metro transit trolleys, Planning Committee for Anniversary Celebrations, and Earthwise Living Committee members.

2. Develop schedule for library program presentations and tour.
3. Distribute surveys and evaluate results.

### Action Plan Table

The table below gives the action plan details for the program:

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?
Recruit partners/volunteers for program (at least one EMT)	Librarian/staff and Friends by August 30, 2012	Time-2-3 weeks \$ 0 Materials-None Personnel-3	Partners and volunteers are recruited	Count number
Reserve Govt. Canyon Natural Area trunks to be used for the program	Librarian by July 30, 2012	Time- 2 hours \$0 Materials-phone, email Personnel-1	Trunks are booked	Count number
Schedule event with Rain Day; check NISD calendar for conflicts	Librarian by July 30, 2012	Time-1 hour \$0 Materials-telephone/computer Personnel-1	Dates are agreed upon by all partners	Dates are confirmed
Develop publicity materials with an emphasizes on safety	Librarian by July 30, 2012	Time-2 hours \$0 Materials-computer, software Personnel-1	Publicity materials created. 1 brochure, 1 poster, 1 flyer	Count number
Print publicity materials	Librarian/staff by July 30, 2012	Time 3 hours \$200 Materials-paper, printer Personnel-2	500 brochures, flyers, 35 posters printed 500 flyers	Count number
Distribute publicity materials in community	Librarian and partners by July 30, 2012	Time- 3 days \$0;Materials-car, publicity materials Personnel-5	Publicity materials distributed in community	Count number

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Confirm volunteers and partner participation	Librarian and partners by August 30, 2012	Time-2-3 hours \$0 Materials- Phone, computer Personnel-3	20 Volunteers confirmed	Count number
Design and order Volunteer T-Shirts and participant buttons	Librarian by July 30, 2012	Time-1-2 hours \$75.00 Materials- computer Personnel-1	30 T- shirt designed and ordered; 100 buttons ordered	Count number
Purchase supplies, water, trail tape; print info sheets and Guide Books for Trail	Librarian by September 30, 2012	Time-5-6 hours \$200 Materials- computer, automobile Personnel-1	Supplies ordered; info sheets and	Count number
Design and print evaluation forms	Librarian by September 30, 2012	Time-1 hour \$0 Materials-computer Personnel-1	Evaluation form designed and printed	Count number
Pick up Government Canyon trunks	Librarian by October 1, 2012	Time-2 hours \$0 Materials-automobile Personnel-1	Trunks picked up	Display on-site and ready for display
Hold event	Librarian, volunteers, partners and EMT in October	Time-8 hours \$0 Materials-handouts, guide books, sign-in sheets, supplies Personnel-15	All supplies and program materials prepared	Count number
Collect evaluation forms at end of program	Librarian, partners and volunteers day of event	Time-4 hours \$0 Materials-computer, evaluation forms Personnel-15	Evaluation forms are collected and information documented	Count number
Write thank you notes to all volunteers and partners	Librarian and library staff by October 31, 2012	Time-2 hours \$30 Materials-cards, postage, Personnel-2	Thank yous written and mailed	Count number
Write newspaper article to publicize program success	Librarian by October 31, 2012	Time-30 minutes \$0 Materials-computer Personnel-1	Article written and e-mailed to news office	Article appears in local news paper

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Compile evaluations	Librarian by October 31, 2012	Time-1 hour \$0 Materials-computer Personnel-1	Evaluations compiled	Report submitted to PEARL office
Gather all statistics and stories including anecdotal	Librarian by October 31, 2012	Time- 1 hour \$0 Materials-computer Personnel-1	Statistics and anecdotes provided in written report	Submit to PEARL office and post on PEARL website