

PALESTINE PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMUNITY OUTREACH PLAN



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Palestine Public Library Community Outreach Plan

Outreach Plan

Introduction

Palestine is the county seat of Anderson County in the Piney Woods of Texas. It is located 112 miles southeast of Dallas and 135 miles southwest of Shreveport, Louisiana.

The first of five courthouses were built in Palestine in 1856. The town began its growth around the courthouse. By 1866, several businesses were in operation around the square. The Trinity River provided for local commerce as paddle-wheel steamers transported goods to Magnolia, Texas from Palestine. In 1872, the International-Great Northern Railroad arrived in Palestine. This ended river shipping in the area. The railroad provided year-round transportation to Houston and Laredo. The railroad's dominance completely changed the town when they built their offices nearly a mile west of the central city. Cotton, lumber, cottonseed oil, and fruit were shipped from Palestine. During the late 1880s, many new businesses opened around the tracks, which led to the formation of a new business district. This resulted in two business districts, Old Town and New Town.

By the early 1900s, Palestine had a population of approximately 11,000 with a booming business climate that included five weekly newspapers, sawmills, cotton gins, a foundry, brick factory and a creamery. In 1928, oil was discovered in Boggy Creek near Palestine. This discovery produced a more diverse economy for Palestine. Several other oil fields were discovered in the area, making Palestine a center for the oil industry.

Today, Palestine continues to have oil and gas producers, well servicers, various small businesses, and the railroad. Four state prisons in the county also provide local jobs. There are cattle ranches located in Palestine and timber continues to be a main industry.

The National Scientific Balloon Flight Facility, operated by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration is located in Palestine. In the spring, Palestine attracts thousands of visitors who attend the annual Texas Dogwood Trails. Palestine is home to the Texas State Railroad, now a state park, which operates steam excursion trains between Palestine and Rusk.

The *Herald-Press*, a daily newspaper founded in the 1900s, is still in operation today as the *Palestine Herald*. In 2010, the population was 18,712.

Historical, Current, and Future Roles of the Library

Historically, the library has been a place for: lifelong learning; free information access; a meeting place; provider of educational and recreational materials; information assistance; local history; formal education support; provider of current topics and titles; public computer access; a place for early childhood literacy, and a pre-school door to learning. Currently, the library fulfills those roles plus being a place for adult learning, a gateway to information, and a place to get help with career and workforce development through computer classes. In the future the library would like to revive the Teen Advisory Board (TAB), offer a bilingual story time, cultural programming for adults, and apply for a Big Read grant.

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Existing Programs

The library offers a weekly story time for children, computer classes, and author visits for adults. The library also offers weekly Tai Chi classes, a summer reading program for children and teens, and numerous special programs. Onsite services include computer access, free Wi-Fi, copying, printing, and faxing services. Free online resources include Tutor.com, Mango Languages, the Chilton database, ebooks, Freegal music, Ancestry Library Edition, and an online library catalog.

Identified Needs

Identified needs for the community include more businesses to provide local employment. Palestine also has a sizeable population of undereducated citizens with a low socioeconomic status.

Identified needs for the library are for more programming for adults and teens.

Identified Assets

Palestine's assets include a very close-knit community dedicated to children, historical restoration, and education. Its many historical buildings, parks, lakes, and recreation areas are assets.

The library's identified assets include a large building with space for growth, a large well-equipped technology center, and a professional and friendly staff.

Thank You Statement

Palestine Public Library would like to thank the city of Palestine, Anderson County, the Palestine Public Library Board, the Palestine Library Friends, the Palestine Public Library Memorial Board, the staff, and volunteers of the library and the community of Palestine and Anderson County for their support. Thank you to the Robert and Rudy Priddy Charitable Trust, the funders of the University of North Texas PEARL project, for this opportunity.

Community Profile Narrative

Set among the beautiful pines, magnolias and dogwood trees, Palestine has been described as "a graceful and romantic city," by the Chamber of Commerce. Palestine offers most of the modern amenities demanded by visitors mingled with many historical buildings and attractions. A modern medical facility provides health care for the entire eastern area of Texas. The primary employers in Palestine are the prison system, the school district, and retail businesses such as Wal-Mart and its warehouses.

Second only to Galveston, Palestine has over 1,800 historical sites. There are two wineries, a vineyard, restaurants, and an active community theater. Palestine is also home to the National Scientific Balloon Flight Facility that provides tours for visitors and the Texas State Railroad that provides both steam and diesel excursions that travel through the piney woods to Rusk on a daily basis.

Annual events include the Hot Pepper Festival, Neches Wilderness Canoe races, Dogwood Trails Festival, and the Dulcimer Festival.

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Main Geographic Features

Community Features

Assets and Challenges

Community assets include the beautiful natural setting that surrounds the community and its many historical homes. Four nature areas provide many opportunities for nature lovers. Reagan Park is a large public park with a playground, walking and biking trails, tennis court, and is home to the Museum of East Texas Culture. Lake Palestine and Richland Chambers Lake provide boating, swimming, fishing, and water recreation.

An identified challenge for the community is the distance to a major metropolitan area. Tyler is the nearest larger city and it is 45 minutes away. Dallas is a two hour drive away.

Library Features

Assets and Challenges

The library's location is a geographic asset in that it is located across the street from the middle school and high school

Geographic challenges for the library include no longer being located in a neighborhood and being located on very busy roads where cars are driving 45-50 mph. This makes it difficult for students to walk to the library even though the middle school and high school are across the street. Elderly patrons complain the walk from the parking lot to the library is difficult. They have to cross the parking lot, then walk across the mall to get to the library.

Community Demographics

The 2010 census shows the population of Palestine as 18,718. 8.8% of Palestine residents are under 5 years of age; 4% are over 65. The median age is 32. Approximately 21.9% are Hispanic or Latino; 15.3% have a native language other than English. 75% of the population graduated from high school, with 14.8% having a bachelor's degree. The median household income is \$37,716; 26.6% are below the poverty level.

Library Profile Narrative

The library in Palestine has been in four different locations since its original establishment in 1882. At that time, a Library Society was chartered and held weekly public meetings. In 1910, a library association was formed and they made a formal request to the city for an appropriation of \$300 per year. The title to the property was transferred to the city. The Carnegie Foundation gave \$15,000 for a building; the city provided the building site and \$1,500 per year for maintenance.

By 1977, the library needed to expand. It was determined the Carnegie building was not suitable for expansion. The parking lot was also problematic in that it was too small. Under the leadership of the mayor, the city began planning to find another location for the library. In 1983, the Palestine School Board donated the Alamo School building for use as a library. The new library opened on April 14, 1986. \$200,000 was left from a city bond issue and the library board secured a \$200,000 LSCA grant. The city council gave the library board six months to raise the \$600,000 still needed for construction.

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Although the library is no longer housed in the Carnegie building, the structure has been well maintained and is used for special events. It is one of the few remaining Carnegie buildings in Texas.

In 2009, rains caused the roof in the library's south wing to collapse. Later that same year the north wing's roof also collapsed. Library staff re-located to an office in the downtown area. In 2010, the city purchased the Palestine Mall to house the library. A 17,000 square foot former Goody's department store was renovated and remodeled. The library opened in its current location in February of 2011.

Most Important Library Statistics

The library has a service population of 39,787. In 2009, the library had a collection of 80,917 titles with circulation of 167,974. It had 14,293 registered borrowers and 113,064 library visits. Program attendance was 16,539 and recorded computer usage was 22,612. The library has a staff of 10 people.

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

Vision Statement

Palestine Public Library is the informational and cultural center to inform, educate, entertain, and enrich our community.

Mission Statement

Palestine Public Library provides library service for Palestine and Anderson County residents. The Library enables people of all ages to have access to ideas, information, experiences, and materials in a variety of formats for lifelong learning and cultural enrichment. The Library creates an environment for all residents to learn, to explore, to enjoy, to create, to connect, and to be inspired.

Goals and Objectives for the Library

SERVICE GOALS

- Goal 1. Provide programming and services that support the library's mission and service responses and that augment the collection.
- Objective 1. Develop programs for all patrons to stimulate interest and develop appreciation for reading and lifelong learning.
 - Objective 2. Continue to provide basic computer literacy.
 - Objective 3. Provide advanced computer literacy that includes job skills.
 - Objective 4. Continue programming and services to children to foster lifelong learning and love of books.
 - Objective 5. Evaluate ways to make the library a destination and valued resource for teens.
 - Objective 6. Continue to provide monthly programming on the topics of art, science, health, and general interest.
- Goal 2. Maintain a digitization effort to preserve our history and heritage.
- Objective 1. Maintain our relationship with the University of North Texas to participate in the Portal to Texas History project.

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Objective 2. Continue to work with organizations and individuals to enhance our collection by loan or acquisition.

Objective 3. Continue to collect information, photographs, and artifacts related to the history of the library, the community, and its citizens.

Goal 3. Provide programming and activities that identify the library as a cultural center.

Objective 1. Continue to provide museum displays with associated activities and programming.

Objective 2. Cooperate with and participate in the activities of the Palestine Arts Board.

Goal 4. Continue to collaborate with other organizations in support of services to all the populations we serve.

Objective 1. Maintain relationships with all schools, preschools, service organizations, government agencies, Museum for East Texas Culture, Anderson County Historical Commission, heritage organizations, media, businesses, Chamber of Commerce, and others to further the mission of the library.

Objective 2. Continue to host the annual Anderson county History Forum, maintaining our partners: the Anderson County Historical Commission and the Museum for East Texas Culture.

Goal 5. Continue to increase and improve public awareness of the library's facilities, materials, and services.

Goal 6. Update and enhance the library website to better showcase library activities and services and make using and catalog searching easier.

MANAGEMENT GOALS

Goal 1. Optimize utilization of staff and their skills.

Objective 1. Provide opportunities for all staff members to participate in in-service staff development and other continuing education.

Objective 2. Prepare staff for emergencies, including city and countywide emergencies and participation in EOC activities.

Goal 2. Develop and maintain a diverse and dynamic collection in all formats to further the library's mission and service responses which reflect current standards and the library's Collection Development Policy.

Objective 1. Evaluate and implement, as needed, a downloadable book and video collection.

Objective 2. Continue to enhance methods of analysis for addressing collection adjustments for type and circulation and utilize results to improve the collection.

Goal 3. The Library Board will continue to develop sources of public and private funding in support of a new facility (acquiring land and new building) to support the library's mission of service to all members of the community.

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- Goal 4. Administer the library to meet the service responses, goals and policies established by the Library Board.
- Goal 5. Identify and apply for grants available to fit the needs of the library.
- Goal. 6 Follow Technology Plan to keep technology current for patron and staff member usage.
- Objective 1. Evaluate and implement self-checkout.
- Objective 2. Evaluate and implement RFID for inventory and security.

Goals and Objectives for Outreach Program

Goal: The goal of the *Paint and Take* program is to promote the library as a cultural center for the city. This program directly addresses Service Goals, Goal # 3 “Provide programming and activities that identify the library as a cultural center”.

Objective: The objective of the outreach program is to collaborate with local businesses and local artist Barbara Eaton to offer a painting class that allows participants to successfully complete a painting art project to take home.

Outreach Programs

The Palestine library will collaborate with the Anderson County Arts Council and the senior citizens center to offer a *Paint and Take* program for adults and senior citizens in the community. Two painting classes will be offered. One will be from noon till 2:00 p.m. on January 31; the second class will be from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The library will collaborate with local businesses and organizations to provide refreshments for participants. The program will offer the opportunity for community members to come together to learn to paint and to cultivate a love of art in the community.

Statement of need

In September, the library conducted a community-wide survey. 560 completed surveys were returned. Based on the survey results, the service patrons most wanted were more arts and crafts, musical programs, and genealogy programs.

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

The *Paint and Take* program targets the adults and senior citizens in the community.

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

67.9% of the population in Palestine is over the age of 21 and 16.7% are over the age of 60.

Estimated number of potential participants

The class will be limited to 15-20 students per session so that Ms. Eaton will be able to help individual students. The library estimates that 30-40 people will participate in the two sessions.

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Description of the characteristics of the audience

The hours were selected so seniors can attend the early afternoon session and working adults can attend the program after work. Daytime programs are usually better for senior citizens, since many seniors no longer drive at night. Participants will drive to the library.

List potential partners based on your assets assessment

The Anderson County Arts Council, the senior citizens center, the chamber of commerce, KYYK (local radio station), Palestine *Herald Press*, and the Palestine Economic Development Corporation will provide publicity and support for the program. Bon Appetit, a local coffee shop and bakery, will be contacted to provide cookies and coffee for the group.

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

The library will provide publicity, and staff support for the program. Library staff will arrange for the location of the program, set up, and prepare the room for the two programs.

Detailed Action Plan

Action Plan Goal(s):

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

Action Plan Objective(s):

1. Partner with Anderson County Arts Council and artist Barbara Eaton to develop and present a painting workshop entitled *Paint and Take*.
2. Develop partnerships with local businesses and service organizations by providing flyers and posters on the library's *Paint and Take* program so they will endorse and promote the workshop.
3. Implement a painting program workshop in the library for adults and senior citizens in the community.
4. Distribute post-program evaluations and evaluate results.

Action Plan Table

IMPLEMENTATION			EVALUATION	
Action	Name and Date	Resources Needed	Measurement	Analysis
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, and personnel are needed?	How will progress be measured (#, % of participation or attendance)?	How and when will data be gathered and analyzed to determine success?
Create a flyer and poster promoting the <i>Paint and Take</i> program	Adult Services Librarian, November 20, 2012	Time – 20 minutes \$ 0 Materials- paper and toner Personnel-1	Master flyer and poster created	Count #

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Meet with the director of the senior center to formalize the partnership	Theresa, November 21, 2012	Time – 1 hour \$ 0 Materials – flyer, calendar Personnel - 1	Times and dates scheduled	Times and dates agreed by partners
Meet with the city events planner to book room in the mall for the program	Adult Services Librarian, November 21, 2012	Time – 1 hour \$ 0 Materials – none Personnel - 1	Times and dates for room agreed upon	Program booked on city events calendar
Photocopy 300 flyers and 50 posters for distribution	Library staff or volunteer , December 10, 2012	Time – 1 hour \$75 Materials –1 ream of paper and toner Personnel – 1	Flyers and posters printed	Count number
Make a presentation to the senior center members describing the program	Theresa , January 14, 2013	Time –2 hours \$ - 0 Materials – flyers & posters Personnel – 1	Presentation made to seniors	Count number of flyers distributed
Meet with Bon Appetit to discussion refreshments	Theresa and Friends of the Library, December, 18, 2012	Time –2 hours \$ - 0 Materials – none Personnel - 2	Bon Appetit contacted	Bon Appetit committed to support
Place posters in local businesses including chamber of commerce and Palestine Economic Development Corporation	Theresa and Friends of the Library, January 8, 2013	Time – 1 hour \$ 0 Materials – flyers, tape, tacks, transportation Personnel – 3	Posters in businesses	Count number
Prepare PSA for local radio station KYYK	Theresa, January 8, 2013	Time – 1/2 hour \$ 0 Materials – computer Personnel - 1	PSA written	Count number of spots on radio
Prepare PowerPoint presentation to run at the circulation desk	Adult Services Librarian, January 9, 2013	Time – 2 hours \$ 0 Materials – computer Personnel - 1	Presentation prepared	Presentation runs at circulation desk
Post program on library website, Facebook and Twitter pages	Adult Services Librarian, January 9, 2013	Time – 30 minutes \$ 0 Materials – computer Personnel – 1	Program posted on website, Facebook and Twitter	Monitor hits

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Create a short evaluation form for the <i>Paint and Take</i> program	Theresa, January 16, 2013	Time – 20 minutes \$ 10 Materials - computer Personnel - 1	Master survey created	Count #
Make 45 copies of the evaluation	Library staff January 28, 2013	Time – 5 minutes \$ 15 Materials – paper, printer Personnel - 1	45 surveys and evaluations printed	Count number
Prepare the area for painting program	Adult Services Librarian & staff member January 31, 2013	Time - 30 minutes \$ 0 Materials – tables, chairs, refreshments Personnel – 2	Room is set up for meeting	Count number
Hold program	Theresa, Barbara Eaton and Adult Services Librarian January 31, 2013	Time – 5 hours \$ 0 Materials - painting supplies, surveys Personnel - 3	Program is held	Count number
Collect completed evaluations from the program members	Theresa, January 31, 2013	Time – 20 minutes \$ - 0 Materials – None Personnel - 1	Surveys and evaluations collected	Count number
Compile and analyze evaluations	Theresa, February 4, 2013	Time-1 hour \$0 Materials-computer Personnel-1	Evaluations compiled	Report started
Gather all statistics and stories including anecdotal and publicity	Theresa- February 5, 2013	Time- 1 hour \$0 Materials-computer Personnel -1	Statistics and anecdotes with written report compiled	Submit to PEARL office and post on website