

Big Programs, Little Budget: Forging Community Partnerships in a Small Town



Chelsea Price, Library Director, Meservey Public Library



Meservey, Iowa

- Population approx. 250
- Nearest school in district is 20 minutes away
- Nearest grocery store, movie theater, source of entertainment is 15+ minutes away



- Offering FREE entertainment to our community is key!
- 2-person staff
- Prior to last year, we had not received an increase from the city since the year 2000

Budget-Friendly Program Ideas

Successful Programs that Didn't Break the Bank



Harry Potter party



Wrap & Yap party

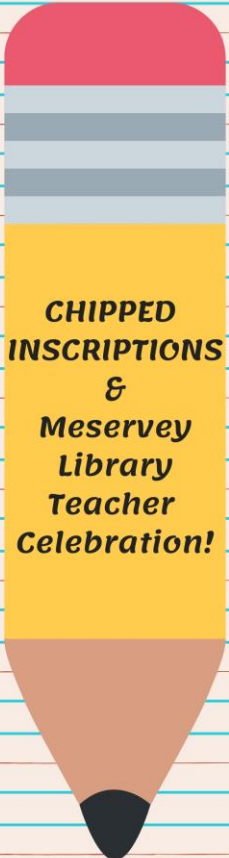


Giant board games



Rock-painting program

Some programs will fail...and that's okay!

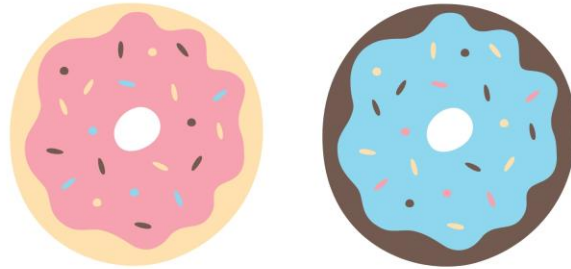


CHIPPED INSCRIPTIONS & Meservey Library Teacher Celebration!

Meservey Public Library
Friday, June 10
6:00 PM

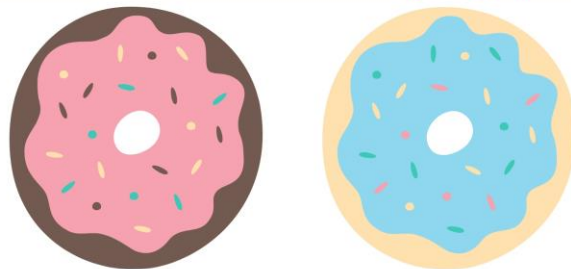
If you work in education and need an adorable custom sign for your home or classroom, join us for a great night of creative fun!

Bring your own drinks - we will have light snacks & cookies to share. There will also be some fun teacher-themed giveaways!



Donuts with Dad, Munchkins with Mom

Join us for a parent/child brunch at the Meservey Public Library on Saturday, May 12th at 10:00. We will be serving scrambled eggs, juice, coffee, and doughnuts. There will also be several crafts to celebrate Mother's Day & Father's Day. Cost to eat is a freewill donation. THIS PROGRAM IS LIMITED TO 20 CHILDREN - contact the library to sign up!



MESERVEY LIBRARY PUPPY PARTY!

JOIN US ON
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4TH
FROM 2:00-3:00
TO WATCH A LIVE STREAM OF THE
PUPPY BOWL & ENJOY SNACKS,
CRAFTS, & GAMES!!



Building Partnerships

Ideas for Mining Your Community to Find Program GOLD!



Police officer
and fire chief
visit



Therapy dog visit



Local Humane Society
partnership

STORIES & SNACKS WITH SANTA!

Meservey Library Saturday, Dec. 17 at 10:30
Come & meet Santa - great photo opportunity!



Santa photos



Floral pumpkin workshop

Joint library concert



Back To School pizza party



A promotional poster for a Zumba/yoga instructor visit. The background shows a group of people in athletic wear. The text is overlaid in white rounded rectangles with purple and yellow accents. The main text reads: "LET'S GET PHYSICAL! Meservey Library Wednesdays from 6 - 6:30 PM". A smaller box at the bottom says: "Come sweat it out with us every Wednesday evening! A different light/moderate exercise video will be used each session. Everyone is welcome!"

**LET'S
GET
PHYSICAL!**

Meservey Library

**Wednesdays from 6 -
6:30 PM**

**Come sweat it out with us every
Wednesday evening! A different
light/moderate exercise video will be
used each session. Everyone is welcome!**

Zumba/yoga
instructor visits



Lime Creek
Nature
Center
partnership



Potato bar
fundraiser



Kiss Me Like One
OF Your French girls
Toni

The
LX

Let's go over
the
rainbow

May

"Books educate and inspire, and they soothe souls - like comfort food without the calories." - Elizabeth Berg, Home Safe

An Afternoon with Elizabeth Berg

Join the New York Times bestselling author to hear about her newest novel, snuggle with an adoptable dog from the Humane Society of North Iowa, and enjoy baked treats from Fairy Kisses Bakery, Othelia's Doughnuts, and more!

**Thursday, August 31 at noon
Meservey Public Library**

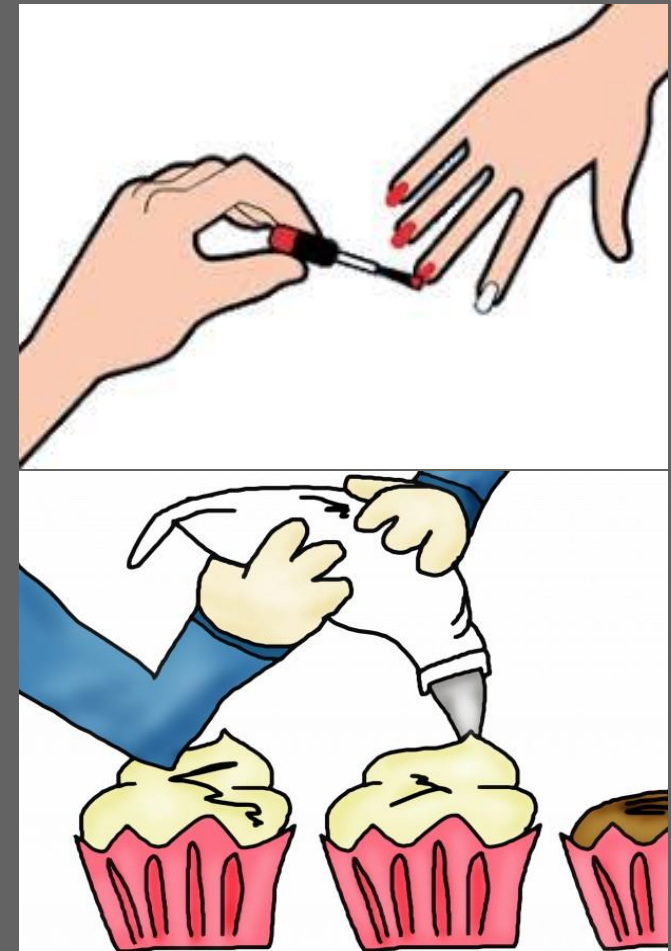


FEED THE ELEPHANT!!
This elephant likes to snack on money!! Please feed him some coins/bills to help with next year's carnival!



Have a friend/relative with a unique skill? Ask them to participate in a program!

- Again, think outside of the box!
 - Local beautician, city employees, school district staff, photographer, veterinarian, dentist, local scrapbooking expert
- To find free or very reasonable presenters, look for those who may have something to gain by coming to your library
- Don't forget that kids are often happy to help, too!
 - High school choir/band, shop class, honor students looking for extra credit



Things to Consider

- 3 things that can MAKE your programs:
 - Visuals/hands-on
 - FREE
 - FREE FOOD
- ALWAYS send thank you notes to presenters
- Advertising on a budget:
 - Video content
 - Ask local businesses
 - Digital photo frames at circulation desk



Embedded Librarianship

How to Become Involved in Your Community

Where is Your Community?

- Find out! Then, **GO THERE!**
 - Get **OUT** to get them **IN**
 - Free advertising
 - Partnership opportunities
- Join clubs and committees
- Promote other local libraries, businesses, and events



- Develop positive relationships with local newspapers
 - Libraries should be in the newspaper a lot: “There’s **ALWAYS** something going on at the library!”
 - Send thank you notes to local media as well

GET OUT of the Library!



- Embedded librarianship vs. Outreach – both are GREAT, but there is a difference
- Leave your comfort zone
 - Local farmer's markets, summer events, kindergarten roundup
- Library is a reflection of YOU
 - Always be positive
 - Make a point to learn names
- Be an advocate for your entire town, not just your library
 - Facebook rule: For every post you promote or share that's about your library, share another about a community event, program, or business

Outreach

- There are more opportunities than you think!
 - Daycare visits, nursing home visits, storytime in the park, school visits, shut-ins, hospital
- Make a point to regularly visit your local school
 - Build positive relationships with school staff, including their librarian
 - Opportunity to promote one another
 - Opportunity for future programming
- **HAVE FUN!** Make people want to visit your library in person



Navigating City Council

Getting along, getting involved, and getting more money!

Things I've Learned

- GO TO MEETINGS!!!
- Personally invite council members to programs/events
- Make them feel important – ask for their advice and input
- Keep interactions positive
- When asking for an increase in funding, think STORIES, not statistics
 - Also helpful to create an infographic
 - Collect positive comments you've received from patrons and share with council

Getting Donations & Grants

Tips to Remember when Applying for Grants or Appealing to Donors

What I've Learned



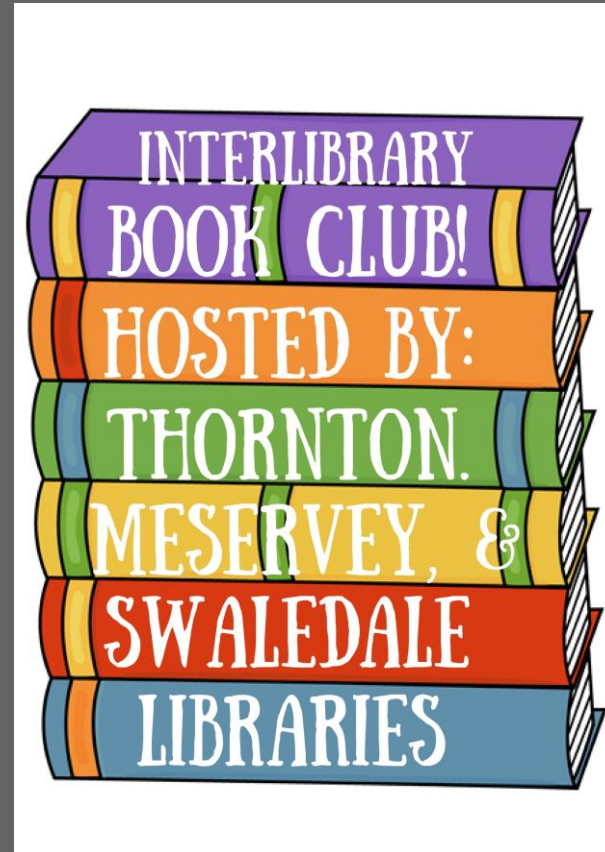
- Look for donations from places you may not expect
- ALWAYS send thank you notes, no matter how small the donation
- The small things often make the biggest difference to donors
 - Personalize each inquiry
- Give recognition to all donors
- Try to reach everyone, NOT just current patrons
- JUST ASK – the worst they can say is “no”!
- Remember that effective fundraising is about relationships first, money second
- When applying for grants, tell a story – make readers feel something

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

– Maya Angelou

General Money-Saving Tips

- Look for prizes/toys for cheap prices at places like Dollar Tree, Goodwill, Target Dollar Spot, and garage sales
- Consider replacing SRP prizes with “experience” prizes instead
- Survey sites for magazine subscriptions
- Collaborate with other small libraries nearby
- Free advertising: Water bills and church bulletins
- Passive programming



Blog Resources for Ideas:

Programming Librarian

ALSC Blog

Teen Services Underground

In Short, I'm Busy

5 Minute Librarian

Webinar Resources for Ideas (check the archives):

WebJunction

Texas State Library Online

Infopeople

New Routes to Library Success by Elisabeth Doucett

Survey/Reward Websites (magazine subscriptions or gift cards):

Mysurvey.com

Rewardsurvey.com

Recyclebank.com

Feel free to contact me at chelseaprice@meservey.lib.ia.us OR on our library's Facebook page (Meservey Public Library)!

THANK YOU!