



## SPOTSWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

548 Main Street

Spotswood, NJ 08884

732-251-1515

[www.spotslibrary.org](http://www.spotslibrary.org)

To read. To learn. To discover.

### PROGRAMMING POLICY

The Spotswood Public Library is committed to offering programming that fosters learning through reliable information and quality entertainment. Programs complement other library services by providing an opportunity to highlight collections, promote services and share knowledge and expertise. They are a strong mechanism for outreach and promotion which allow the library to forge partnerships with a wide variety of groups and individuals and attract both regular and new users of all ages and backgrounds. Programs promote awareness of the Library in the community and have a positive impact on library use.

Library programs benefit the community by:

- being responsive to current interests
- serving as a forum for idea sharing, information gathering and education
- promoting cultural awareness
- developing information literacy
- offering training and assistance with new technologies
- fostering a love of reading and learning
- providing early literacy experiences to young children
- providing a safe, welcoming environment for meeting with others
- providing entertainment
- providing opportunities for lifelong learning

Ultimate responsibility for programming policy lies with the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees delegate to the Director of the Library the planning and promotion of library programs. Staff members and the Friends of the Spotswood Public Library aid in this process as the Director deems appropriate.

The Spotswood Public Library and its Board of Trustees endorse and support the Library Bill of Rights and the American Library Association interpretation resulting in Library Initiated Programs as a Resource.\*

#### Content

In developing and delivering programs, the Library Director utilizes staff expertise, collections, equipment, and facilities. The following criteria are used in making decisions about program topics, speakers, and accompanying resources:

- Relevance to community interests and issues
- Availability of program space
- Budget (cost of program, supplies, and staff time )
- Treatment of content for intended audience
- Presentation quality
- Presenter background/qualifications in content area
- Historical or educational significance
- Relation to Library collections, resources, exhibits and programs

The Library will endeavor to provide programs and sponsor programs that present a broad spectrum of opinion and a variety of viewpoints. Library programs will not exclude topics deemed controversial. Presentation of such programs does not constitute an endorsement of the topic by the Library. The Library is not obligated to present a program which represents multiple and/or opposing viewpoints within one program or series. The Library is obligated to offer the opportunity for other viewpoints to be presented.

Library programs must be non-commercial. Presenters may be professionals or business people, but the information presented must be generic in nature. *No solicitation for business will be permitted.*

The sale of products at a Library program is not allowed. There are two exceptions:

1. The Library wants to encourage reading, writing and an appreciation for culture – authors and performers may obtain approval to sell their own works at the Library before or after a program.
2. The Friends of the Library may sell items at the Library programs they sponsor.

The Library will co-sponsor programs with other agencies, organizations, and businesses when they are compatible with the Library's mission and goals.

## **Registration and Attendance**

Library programs are free to the public, though in some cases it may be necessary to charge a supply fee to cover materials costs that are not covered by our budget, particularly in the case of a program when the participant will keep the finished product.

The Library reserves the right to set age limits for all programs. In the case of film programs the Motion Picture Association of America ratings are provided for information only.

Registration may be required for planning purposes or when space is limited. Every attempt will be made to accommodate all who wish to attend a program. However, when safety or the success of a program requires it, attendance may be limited by number or to a certain age group. When limits must be established, attendance will be determined on a first come, first served basis, either with advanced registration or at the door.

Those arriving late to a program that is in progress may not be guaranteed seating even if they had registered.

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion from customers concerning programming. If a customer questions a library program, he/she should first address the concern with a Library staff member.

***This policy was reviewed and approved by The Spotswood Library Board of Trustees at a regular meeting on February 16, 2017.***

## **Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Library-initiated programs support the mission of the library by providing users with additional opportunities for information, education, and recreation. Article I of the [\*Library Bill of Rights\*](#) states: “Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves.”

Library-initiated programs take advantage of library staff expertise, collections, services and facilities to increase access to information and information resources. Library-initiated programs introduce users and potential users to the resources of the library and to the library’s primary function as a facilitator of information access. The library may participate in cooperative or joint programs with other agencies, organizations, institutions, or individuals as part of its own effort to address information needs and to facilitate information access in the community the library serves.

Library-initiated programs on site and in other locations include, but are not limited to, speeches, community forums, discussion groups, demonstrations, displays, and live or media presentations.

Libraries serving multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those for whom English is a second language. Library-initiated programs that cross language and cultural barriers introduce otherwise underserved populations to the resources of the library and provide access to information.

Library-initiated programs “should not be proscribed or removed [or canceled] because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval” of the contents of the program or the views expressed by the participants, as stated in Article II of the *Library Bill of Rights*. Library sponsorship of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the content of the program or the views expressed by the participants, any more than the purchase of material for the library collection constitutes an endorsement of the contents of the material or the views of its creator.

Library-initiated programs are a library resource, and, as such, are developed in accordance with written guidelines, as approved and adopted by the library’s policy-making body. These guidelines should include an endorsement of the *Library Bill of Rights* and set forth the library’s commitment to free and open access to information and ideas for all users.

Library staff select topics, speakers and resource materials for library-initiated programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Topics, speakers and resource materials are not excluded from library-initiated programs because of possible controversy. Concerns, questions or complaints about library-initiated programs are handled according to the same written policy and procedures that govern reconsiderations of other library resources.

Library-initiated programs are offered free of charge and are open to all. Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states: “A person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.”

The “right to use a library” encompasses all the resources the library offers, including the right to attend library-initiated programs. Libraries do not deny or abridge access to library resources, including library-initiated programs, based on an individual’s economic background or ability to pay.

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Adopted January 27, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 1990; July 12, 2000.