

Library's Collection of Books and Videos in Spanish Growing

The American Library Association initiated a campaign called “@ Your Library” that raises awareness of libraries and updates the images of libraries and librarians for the 21st century. The title of the campaign is rather fitting, as it is YOUR library. Is it supported by you, enjoyed by you, and is designed to serve you. The Bartholomew County Public Library, however, does not serve a “one-size-fits-all” patron. We realize that the needs of our patrons are just as diverse as this county is becoming. In a recent column, we discussed ways that the Public Library serves the needs of our vision-impaired patrons. But what if the barrier to experiencing the Public Library’s stated mission of “life-long learning and enjoyment” was a language barrier?

Regardless of your take on the debates regarding the population surge of native Spanish speakers in this country and locally, no one can deny the existence of this group and the distinctive qualities it brings to the community. As Bartholomew County residents, this group is entitled to the high-quality services and materials that Bartholomew County Public Library provides. This includes a collection of materials in their native language of Spanish.

The Children’s Area of the library has worked hard for years to create a large collection of both bilingual and Spanish-only reading materials for those children who read best in Spanish or those who would like to learn Spanish. The adult floor of the library has owned videos in Spanish for some time but had not until recently owned a collection of books in Spanish. Recently, we have taken up this task of selecting fiction and non-fiction books to create a selection of materials for our teen and adult Spanish-speaking patrons. The collection includes educational materials, such as test preparation and child care information, as well as books meant for enjoyment, such as fiction and recreation books. We have acquired many titles in the past few months, and currently these items are being catalogued while space is being created near the Spanish videos.

This existence of materials in Spanish in the Library’s collection is by no means meant to be counterproductive to English literacy. I recently attended a seminar at City Hall on the growing Hispanic community, and the lecturer vehemently stated that “they want to learn English!” However, learning English can take time and the Spanish-speaking population has immediate information needs, just like all of our library patrons. While they are experiencing our Spanish materials on learning English or budgeting time for example, they can enjoy a novel such as “The Da Vinci Code” (“El Código Da Vinci”) or an inspirational novel in Spanish.

The teen and adult Spanish books collection is currently being prepared and should be available for check-out shortly after the New Year. It will be located in the tall shelf near the videos on the main floor. The children’s Spanish books collection is available for checkout, and it is located in the Children’s Area of the library, near the puppet theater. Please tell anyone who may be interested in these collections.

La Biblioteca Pública (536 Calle 5a.) tiene muchos libros en español para niños y vídeos para adultos. Muy pronto, la Biblioteca va a introducir una colección de libros en español para adultos, también. La colección incluye libros recreativos, como novelas, y libros educativos, como muchos libros de “que hacer.” Busque esta colección en las semanas próximas, cerca de los vídeos. ¿Preguntas? Habla con Tyler Munn a la Biblioteca, llame 379-1266 o tmunn@barth.lib.in.us por correo electrónico. Se habla español.

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