

Collection Analysis, Overview of the Collection

Department of Library and Information Studies, Old Dominion University

LIBS 658: Knowledge Resources-Collections

Dr. Dawn Betts-Green

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Ashlee V. Mullis

The Blue Ridge Regional Library Main Branch is a one-story library located in Martinsville. As far as space configuration and purpose, the library is divided into several sections. When you enter the building, the adult section takes up the right half of the library. Included in that section is a small area for sitting and reading. That section includes the general collection, computers, and circulation. The children's section is on the opposite end of the building. The children's section has easy books, juvenile literature, and young adult literature. It also has computers for the kids to use with additional filters installed. There is a meeting room in the front of the building that is available by signing up, but it is not available to use to sell products or goods. This room was used to hold events before the pandemic, and it will hopefully be available for that again soon. The reference desks are in the public area. Staff offices are closed off to the public.

The mission statement of Blue Ridge Regional Library is to provide free, friendly service and access to timely materials that educate, enrich, and entertain the entire community. They have a large number of databases that are available to patrons, including Find-It-Virginia, Learning Express, BrainFuse VetNow, Salem Health Database, Infobase Just For Kids, Salem History Database, Practice Driving Tests, World Book Online – Early World of Learning, Kids InfoBits, Gale LegalForms, Career Transitions, Explora Primary, Explora Middle School, Explora High School, Explora, Ebsco Masterfile, Readit!, Brainfuse HelpNow, NoveList K-8 Plus, NoveList, Universal Class, Rocket Languages, BrainFuse JobNow, and Ancestry for Virginians. There are two programs for ebooks, and those are Hoopla and OverDrive/Libby.

The available technology at the main branch include a desktop computer at each branch, printers (print at circulation/both black and white and color), scanners, microfiche reader with printer, Chromebooks and hot spots available for check out, and copiers. The desktop computers have Office Suite installed.

At the time I inquired, there were 298,331 physical materials. Once the electronic collections (e-books, etc.) were added, the number went to 311,378. As far as books, they have large print, Christian fiction, mysteries, westerns, science fiction, regular fiction, non-fiction, young adult, juvenile non-fiction, juvenile biography, juvenile fiction, easy, board books, and non-barcoded paperbacks. They have fiction, non-fiction, young adult, and juvenile CD audiobooks. DVDs are available as well. There are some CDs in circulation, but they are being phased out. Patrons can check out nature backpacks, literacy backpacks, and Totes for Tots (developmental backpacks). There are a few kits for children, which consists of an audiobook with a paper book, but they are being phased out. There are also toys, tackle boxes, and fishing poles. As mentioned earlier, they have hot spots, Chromebooks, e-books, e-audiobooks, and e-music and downloadable movies and shows available through Hoopla. Some branches, including the main branch, circulate magazines. There are newspapers and magazines

for in-house use as well. The main branch has a sizable reference collection. They have board games and exercise equipment, but it is not available to check out.

Overall, the library has a wide selection of print and electronic sources. I believe they could benefit from a larger reading area. There are lots of ways to make the area more inviting, like adding more flexible seating and better lighting. The children's area is spacious, but there could also be an improved reading nook. The main branch is the largest in the BRRL system, but it doesn't contain all the titles that are available in the other libraries. This may be an inconvenience, but I think that is made up for by the fact you can usually have a book transferred from another branch by the next day. Probably the biggest need is a maker space. A maker space can add so many available activities to a library.

Resources

Blue Ridge Regional Library. (2022). <https://www.brrl.lib.va.us/>

M. Rich, personal communication, February 24, 2022.

R. Ward, personal communication, February 24, 2022.