

Welcome Volunteer!

The Donald W. Reynolds Library serving Baxter County welcomes you to the Library team. We seek to provide volunteers with a solid training foundation, including information about our mission, policies, procedures, goals and general guidelines.

This handbook addresses basic questions about volunteering at the Library. As a volunteer, you will be expected to function within these guidelines. If a situation arises that is not addressed here, please contact your Department Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteer positions are designed to match a volunteer's skills, interests and schedule. Volunteers receive valuable experience and learn new skills in a professional environment. They give to their community, enjoy the appreciation of Library employees and patrons, and meet new people. We encourage and appreciate volunteer input.

Donald W. Reynolds Library Mission Statement

The Donald W. Reynolds Library serving Baxter County is a bridge to broader horizons, opened minds, and improved lives. We provide lifelong resources in a welcoming environment.

Volunteer Program Mission Statement

The Library provides constructive and rewarding volunteer opportunities. Volunteers help the Library provide high-quality services on a limited budget, build public awareness of Library operations, and strengthen the Library's ties to the community.

A Brief History of the Library

Volunteers have always been the cornerstone of the Library. In the beginning, local volunteer organizations maintained a small Library collection. During the 1930s, the 20th Century Club established a volunteer-run Library in the Baxter County Courthouse. A decade later, the local Business and Professional Women's Club managed the volunteer-run Library.

In 1952, the BPW Club backed a successful campaign that culminated in Baxter County voters approving a one-mill tax to support a County Library. The Baxter County Library officially opened above Mountain Home City Hall on Sixth Street in July 1953. Eleven years later, the Library moved to a new, 3,166 square-foot building on Seventh Street. The building was constructed on government-donated land and financed with a federal grant and matching funds. In 1969, a 1,000 square-foot addition was completed with the help of donations and another federal grant.

The Friends of the Baxter County Library, a volunteer group whose mission is to supplement the library's resources, was established in 1980 and took as its first major project raising funds for a 4,800 square-foot addition completed in 1983.

From 1988 to 1993, the Library opened three branches. They include the Gassville branch, which continues today and is staffed by volunteers.

The year 1993 was marked by the completion of a 3,024 square-foot expansion of the main Library, financed by private donations and a federal grant.

Beginning in 2005, the Baxter County Library Foundation worked through a deliberate planning process for a new Library. Those efforts were rewarded in 2008 when the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation awarded a grant of \$9.8 million to build, furnish and equip a 35,500 square-foot Library. Construction began in March 2009 on the two-story building atop Library Hill in Mountain Home. The Donald W. Reynolds Library serving Baxter County opened its doors in September 2010.

In addition to grant funds from the Reynolds Foundation, area residents pledged more than \$2 million, the earnings from which can be used to supplement Library programs. That major public commitment was a requirement of the Las Vegas-based Reynolds Foundation.

Today, the Donald W. Reynolds Library serving Baxter County is three times the size of the former Library building and has a collection capacity of 90,000+ items. Library technology, such as self-check stations, automated book returns, and online library-card accounts, helps the staff manage the larger facility.

Still, a significant percentage of the Library's operating revenues come from the one-mill Library tax enacted by voters in 1952. That means we must continue to stretch every dollar. It also means that volunteers remain the cornerstone of Library operations to support staff and patrons. We simply couldn't do it without you!

Steps to Becoming a Volunteer

1. All prospective volunteers must complete a volunteer application.
2. The Volunteer Coordinator will hold an initial interview with each prospective volunteer to determine whether a match exists between the applicant's skills and availability and volunteer positions.
3. Prospective volunteers will be provided with an orientation session to become familiar with the Library and its policies and procedures.
4. All volunteers will receive a written job description and appropriate training.
5. To assess the effectiveness, strengths and weaknesses of the Volunteer Program, it will be necessary to periodically evaluate the program and its volunteers.

Benefits to Volunteering at the Donald W. Reynolds Library

- Make an important contribution to the Library and the community.
- Learn new skills and meet new people.
- Twenty percent discount on most items at Bookworms Cafe for volunteers wearing the Library volunteer vest.
- Letter of reference upon request for volunteers who have served satisfactorily at least three months.

Volunteer Expectations

Donald W. Reynolds Library Volunteers have the right to:

- A clearly-defined job description for each assignment.
- Appropriate assignments based on skills, interests, availability and training.
- Adequate orientation and training for any assignment accepted.
- Clear instructions/guidelines about assigned tasks.
- Proper supplies and work space.
- Say “no” if unable or unwilling to volunteer.
- Regular feedback about performance.
- Expect that records will be kept documenting volunteer experience.
- Be treated as a respected member of the work team.
- Be informed of changes in policies or procedures.
- Express their opinions and ideas. The Volunteer Coordinator encourages observations and suggestions about assignments and the volunteer program.

Library Expectations

Volunteers are responsible for:

- Behaving professionally.
- Knowing assigned duties and doing them promptly, correctly and pleasantly.
- Respecting staff responsibilities and not interfering with staff duties.
- Following proper procedures and adhering to rules, regulations and standards.
- Wearing a volunteer vest and nametag at all times while on duty.
- Cooperating with staff and fellow volunteers and maintaining a good attitude.
- Treating the public and fellow workers honestly and politely.
- Keeping all communications concerning library patrons, staff and other volunteers strictly confidential.
- Informing the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible of any absences or lateness.

Volunteer Opportunities—A Sampling of Our Volunteer Posts

Greeter: Often the first Library team member that patrons meet. Duties include welcoming and assisting patrons with automatic check out and book return, directing them to various departments, demonstrating how to search collections and obtain a library card, and generally helping them have a positive experience.

Shelf Volunteer: There are many aspects to this job, including shelving books and other items in the collections. Volunteers must know filing systems to put books in alphabetical and numerical order. This is a physically demanding job as shelf volunteers carry books, push carts, walk, stand, stoop and reach to shelve items. Good close and intermediate vision is necessary.

Sorter Room Volunteer: This is a vital spot for Library Circulation operations. Volunteers sort through items returned at the automatic return station, checking each item's condition. Damaged items are sent for repairs or replacement. Items in good condition are further sorted onto carts for return to their respective collections by Shelf Volunteers and staff.

Genealogy Volunteer: Genealogical knowledge is helpful for this post. Among other things, volunteers ensure that patrons using the Genealogy Room follow its special rules and provide research assistance.

Computer Volunteer: These volunteers provide important assistance to the Circulation staff. Computer volunteers work in the Public Access Computer area, where they assist patrons in using the Library's computer software and ensuring that Library policies are followed. Others teach introductory computer courses in the Library Computer Lab.

Children's Library Volunteer: This volunteer assists the Children's Librarian in many ways, including preparing materials for regular and special programs and assisting staff during Story Time on Wednesdays and Saturdays mornings.

Teen Library Volunteer: These volunteers work in the Teen Library during evening Teen Council meetings. They also assist the Teen librarians during special events on occasional evenings and Saturdays. Must enjoy teenagers!

Audio-Visual Processing Volunteer: A Cataloging and Processing Department job that requires manual dexterity and strength, patience, and attention to detail. Volunteers use a copier to shrink or enlarge artwork on commercial CD and DVD packages according to the Library template, then insert the resized artwork and CDs or DVDs into Library cases. Accurate use of scissors to cut light-weight cardboard is a must.

CD/DVD Maintenance Volunteer: Volunteers operate a machine that cleans and removes scratches from Library CDs and DVDs. This is a weekly, seated position, depending on workload.

Special Projects Volunteer: Do you want to help but are unable to commit to a regular schedule? We have many occasional jobs, including special events, mailings and prep work, and virtual volunteering.

Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Please read this handbook carefully. It is designed to answer many of your questions about policies and procedures, what is expected of you, and what you can expect from us. The handbook is available at our website, www.baxtercountylibrary.org.

Confidential Information

The Library has an obligation to its patrons, staff and volunteers to maintain their confidentiality and respect their privacy. During your volunteer time, you may be exposed to confidential information. Such information is not to be shared with anyone, including family, friends or acquaintances. No one is permitted to remove or make copies of any records, reports or documents.

Attendance

Once volunteers have chosen their work schedule, we ask that you be prompt and consistent in your attendance. If you need to miss a work shift or shifts, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible.

Recording Volunteer Hours

All volunteers must sign in and out at designated computers. This helps us in many ways, from tracking volunteer hours to qualifying for grant funding.

Dress Code

Take your cue from the staff and dress appropriately for the job you're doing. Attire should be neat, clean and conservative. Volunteers will wear a volunteer vest and nametag while on duty.

Locker Space

You may use assigned lockers for personal items while on duty. Volunteer lockers are the bottom-row lockers in the staff break room. The code for all volunteer lockers is 2244.

Parking

Volunteers should park in the staff parking lot on the south side of the Library. Volunteers may enter the Library through the staff entrance on the south side of the building. The entrance is

locked, and volunteers must press a doorbell on a brown box beside the entry door to be admitted.

Emergency

Volunteers are to report any job-related injury immediately, regardless of severity, to the Volunteer Coordinator or their Department Manager. The Volunteer Coordinator will maintain volunteer emergency contact information to be used in case of emergency. Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator of any changes to your emergency contact information.

Background Check

In order to ensure the safety of our patrons, staff and volunteers, it may be necessary at times to do a background check for certain positions. If a background check is deemed necessary, the volunteer will be asked to sign a release allowing one to be conducted.

Non-Resident Library Card Fee Waiver

Non-resident card renewal fee of \$30 will be waived with 40 hours of volunteerism per year.

Exit Interview

When a volunteer leaves the program, we would like to discuss the reasons for leaving and any impressions you may have about the Library in an exit interview. During the interview, volunteers are encouraged to express themselves freely. It is hoped this will provide insights into possible improvements in the program.

Termination

In very rare instances, volunteer termination may be necessary for behavioral and performance misconduct. A volunteer may be dismissed by the Volunteer Coordinator, Department Manager or County Librarian, either verbally or in writing. Grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, failure to adhere to the Volunteer Handbook, including Library policies and procedures; illegal, inappropriate or unsafe acts; or releasing confidential information.