

Try Us Out! / Discover the Library!

January 18, 2018

A pilot project to encourage Library Use by Dundee and Rural Newberg residents

Background: The residents of Dundee and the rural areas outside of Newberg (primarily the Newberg School District boundaries) are not within any library taxing district. They pay no taxes for the support of a public library or a public library system. They may come to the library and use the services in house (computers, use materials within the library) or attend programs, but they cannot checkout materials or use online resources. The city council supports a program that provides a library card at no charge for high school and younger children that allows check out of Newberg materials (the limitation to Newberg items is a CCRLS policy).

These residents have the option of purchasing a library card for the Newberg Public Library (\$79/\$75 for seniors) or at the libraries in Clackamas County (\$95), Washington County (\$140) or Multnomah County (\$180) annually.

Library staff have commented on the negative interactions with these residents when they learn there is an over the counter charge for a library card. People have a belief that libraries are free and while there is no over the counter charge for those who support libraries through property taxes where they live, it is very common for non-residents/non-taxpayers of a library service area to be charged an over the counter fee. In Oregon, 104 libraries charge a non-resident fee (\$20-\$180 with an average of \$75) and only 29 (25 of which are the tiniest libraries serving under 1,000 residents) do not.

Staff have commented that they felt if they could give someone a “trial” card, they might find they like what they are offered and would then purchase a card.

In Action:

A non-resident comes to library in pursuit of a library card. Staff offer the card at the \$79 cost. Non-resident is reluctant. Staff can offer a “Try Us Out/Discover the Library Card”. ***It would be good to check out 3 items from Newberg, placing 1 hold, access Library2Go and other online resources. It would expire in one month.***

The card itself would be one of our temporary paper cards. It would include information that it is good only at Newberg Library. It would also list many of the resources available to card holders. It would have the 1 month expiration date.

We would study the response rate of people transitioning to a full service card, those who do not and any material that was not returned and report to the board next fall.

Additional Information: CCRLS temporary account available online (30 days):

Access electronic resources & databases, including ebooks and downloadable audio || Place 1 hold on an item