

## Caroline County Library

### COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

#### **Policy Statement**

Caroline County Library strives to assist the community in fulfilling their recreational, informational, and cultural needs by providing a well-rounded collection of materials that are free and easily accessible. This collection, which is offered in a variety of formats, is current, balanced, and representative of the interests of the public, including materials that are timely and those that withstand the test of time. This policy serves as a framework for the acquisition and retention of library materials. By necessity, the library's selection decisions are influenced by budget and space considerations, as well as the availability and accessibility of alternative information resources.

In support of these collection goals, the library endorses American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statement. Only parents or guardians have the right and responsibility to monitor and/or restrict material for their own minor child or children.

#### **Policy Regulations**

##### **Selection**

###### *Selection Responsibility*

The responsibility for materials selection is assigned to the library director and his/her designees. Branch managers also participate in the selection process, but the final decision is made by the director. The public can give their input by submitting recommendations for purchase or gifts to the library.

###### *Selection Aids*

Consideration of materials for selection is based on reviews in library and other publications, listings in bibliographies, indexes, and catalogs, publisher's catalogs and flyers, patron requests, and staff observations of circulation and other use patterns. The final decision to add materials to the collection is based on the value of the item to the collection and not on the personal tastes of the selectors.

###### *Recommendations for Purchase*

Patrons may request titles that are not yet available in the library collection or recommend titles for addition to the collection. Forms are available for this purpose at all library locations. There is a limit of three (3) title requests per month for books and videos. For eBooks, downloadable audio, or downloadable video, requests can be made directly through Overdrive. At this time, the library cannot fulfill requests for specific audiobook titles.

All requests will be evaluated by senior staff and are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials. Not all requests will be added to the collection. Older or specialized titles may

be referred to interlibrary loan, if available. If the title is acquired by the library, then the request will be processed as a hold for the patron that recommended it.

### *Gifts and Donations*

All gift materials are judged by the same selection criteria used in the selection of new materials. All gifts, which may only be accepted without restriction, become the property of Caroline County Library. Any materials sent or brought into the library for addition to the collection will be considered an unsolicited donation. Caroline County Library does not purchase or otherwise pay for any materials donated to the library. For more information, please see the library's *Donations Policy*.

### *Selection Criteria*

To build collections of merit and significance, materials must be measured by objective guidelines. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria written below. An item need not meet all of them in order to be acceptable. Materials are evaluated on the significance of the entire work rather individual parts.

Nonfiction and reference materials are evaluated on these criteria:

- Authority of author, creator, publisher, or sponsoring group
- Significance of subject matter
- Accuracy of information, presentation, subject
- Potential or known demand
- Importance to total collection
- Availability and suitability of format
- Price
- Appropriate presentation for the interested audience
- Relevance to community needs
- Contemporary or permanent value
- Reviews
- Organization of the contents

Fiction materials are judged on the following criteria:

- Literary merit
- Popular or limited appeal
- Contribution to the value of the library's total collection
- Edition
- Series
- Any appropriate nonfiction criteria listed above

Items will not be included or excluded from the collection because of:

- The race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or views of the author
- Depictions or descriptions of violence or sexual activity
- Controversial content
- Endorsement or disapproval by any individual or community group

### **Specific Collection Considerations**

### *Audiobooks*

Audiobooks, or books on CD, are purchased through the use of a standing order plan. This plan ensures that the library receives the most popular new books as soon as they are published. The standing order is reevaluated annually. The number of titles and type of plan may be adjusted to accommodate patron interest.

### *Videos*

Videos are selected for both adult and juvenile audiences, to meet the recreational needs of the community. Selection is based on reviews, anticipated interest, and circulation patterns. Film ratings are considered in selection, but are not a major criterion for either inclusion or exclusion from the collection.

### *OverDrive*

Caroline County Library provides eBooks, as well as downloadable audio and video materials through its participation in the Southern Virginia Libraries United electronically (SOVALUe) consortium on the OverDrive platform. By cooperating with other libraries in the state, the library is able to provide many more titles than it otherwise would be able to afford. Each library in the consortium purchases materials for a particular genre or age-range. Caroline County Library uses the same selection criteria it uses for other materials when choosing titles for this platform. Continued participation in the consortium is reevaluated annually.

### *E-Resources*

Many of the library's online databases are provided through Library Service and Technology Act funding granted by the Institute of Museum and Library Services administered by the Library of Virginia. The Library of Virginia selects the databases it will provide based on federal guidelines, cost, and statewide usage. They are evaluated annually on the federal fiscal cycle.

The library may also purchase subscriptions to other online databases, like Ancestry Library. The selection criteria for these databases are:

- Scope and coverage
- Ease of use by general public
- Accuracy and quality of content
- Licensing restrictions
- Remote or in-library access
- Cost

### *Periodicals and Newspapers*

The library provides local newspapers in print format primarily for current reading purposes. Back issues of *The Caroline Progress* are available for research purposes only. Other newspapers are not retained beyond the current week.

Periodicals are selected for the collection based on broad popular appeal, general interest, and anticipated circulation. Only the most recent issues are kept on display, depending on space availability. Free or gift titles are retained for current display only.

### *Self-Published or Pay-to-Publish*

Self-published or pay-to-publish presses produce works of varying quality and are seldom reviewed. These titles are not generally purchased. Exceptions may be made in cases of high demand, so long as the books are examined by senior staff for other selection criteria and found to be of merit. Such materials from local or regional authors may also be accepted when the item is donated rather than purchased.

### *Mass Market Paperbacks*

The paperback collection is a recreational reading collection, and is regarded as supplemental to the nonfiction and fiction collections. It is not intended to be a permanent collection and is weeded frequently to make room for new titles. No attempt is made to provide all titles of an author or all series sequels.

### *Reference*

As described above, titles designated as reference are selected based on the same criteria as other nonfiction materials. However, because reference materials are consulted to obtain specific facts or information rather than read in their entirety, and because they tend to have potentially recurring use, they do not circulate. This includes the library's Virginiana and Genealogy collection. Titles selected for this collection are focused on genealogy resources dealing with the state of Virginia and surrounding areas. Particular emphasis is placed on genealogical materials and family histories relevant to Caroline County, as well as local historical resources.

### *The Herbert R. Collins Collection*

The Herbert R. Collins Collection is a gift from Herbert R. Collins, a local historian and author. The purpose of the collection is use for genealogical research and reference. Only items donated by Mr. Collins from his personal library can be added to this collection.

## **Collection Maintenance**

Selection is only the first step in collection development. Attention is given to the needs of the community by adding or removing duplicate copies, replacing worn or damaged copies, making physical repairs, and weeding. It is the library's goal to retain library materials in the collection as long as it is possible and appropriate to do so, in order that the library may be a good steward of community resources.

### *Repair and Replacement*

The library may perform simple repairs to materials in order to prolong their lifespan in the collection. More extensive damage requires that the item be discarded.

Not all items that are lost or damaged will be replaced. Library materials will be replaced when the item has continuing value and usage. In other cases, substitution with more current titles will be preferred.

### *Weeding*

In order to maintain the usefulness, relevance, and vitality of the collection, the library evaluates and removes items from its shelves. Materials which no longer meet the objectives of the

collection are systematically eliminated according to accepted professional practices. Outdated, unnecessary, and unusable materials clog the collection and distract patrons from materials that are more useful. No distinction is made between donated or purchased materials when making weeding decisions.

Removal from the collection is appropriate under the following circumstances:

- The item has not circulated within the last three (3) years and there is little expectation of future use. (The three year period is primarily a guideline for evaluation and is not an absolute criterion for removal.)
- The title has multiple copies in the system and the item is not needed to satisfy demand.
- The information contained in the item is outdated or superseded and therefore is misleading or useless.
- The item is in poor physical condition and/or cannot be repaired.

Once removed from the collection, weeded materials are disposed according to the discretion of senior staff. Items will primarily be placed in library book sales or discarded, based on the condition of the item.

### **Requests for Reconsideration**

The Caroline County Library supports the principles of intellectual freedom and rejects censorship, but assumes an objective position concerning any issue of challenged materials. Patrons may request that a specific item be reconsidered for inclusion in or removal from the collection or that it be reclassified within the collection. Please see the library's *Challenge to Library Materials Policy* for the more information.

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