

2003 LIBRARY WEEK

a new approach

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Promotions and Publications

It has become an annual custom for the public library sector to celebrate Library Week in South Africa during the last two weeks of May.

Change of date

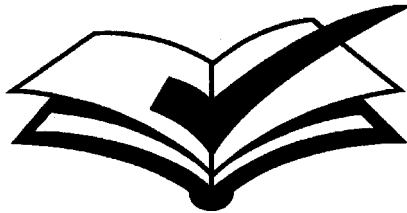
The Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA), however, has as its vision a celebration of a truly National Library Week, one that will embrace all types of libraries and all kinds of users and potential users. With this in mind LIASA embarked on a process of consultation with its membership and the following proposal, supported by the Western Cape Provincial Library Service, was accepted: 'that the week within which 20 March falls should be National Library Week. In the event of this day falling within a weekend, the week preceding it should be celebrated as National Library Week.'

The 20th of March is an important date in the history of libraries in South Africa. The South African Public Library, now known as the National Library of South Africa (Cape Town) was the first library to be established in South Africa. This was done by a government proclamation on 20 March 1818. The South African Library started off as a true public library and has played an important role in South African library history.

The Western Cape Provincial Library Service is in support of this change of date, now and in the future, and public libraries in the Western Cape will receive the customary Library Week material much earlier than usual to ensure that they can join in the 2003 national celebrations from 17-22 March.

Theme

During the 2001 and 2002 campaigns that mainly targeted younger library patrons, the much-loved Bhuki was used to encourage children to read. In 2003 the focus will be on the adult and young adult members of the community. The theme is based on an 'election campaign' and the slogan *Your right to read / Jou reg om te lees / Ukufunda*



lilungelo lakho, reminds the public that reading is one of their basic rights and they should exercise that right. The campaign challenges all potential readers and not only regular library patrons. The public library is the obvious place to obtain reading matter suited to each individual taste and need.

Promotional material

To enable public librarians to launch a successful Library Week, the Western Cape Provincial Library Service will provide free promotional material to public libraries affiliated to the Western Cape Provincial Library service via the regional organisation. A variety of interesting items will be produced to promote this campaign reminding the public of the value of the ability to read and the role the public library can play in their lives.

A poster in three languages

A colourful 'election' poster that contains a strong message reminding people of their right to read can be used effectively to draw readers into your library. Negotiate with the local authority to display these posters on lampposts and other prominent well-used areas like taxi ranks. As the library is one of the services they provide to the community they surely will welcome free publicity, especially if it does not have any financial implications for them!

License disc holders

Complaints received in the past that stickers used for vehicle licenses, leave sticky marks on the windscreens have been taken to heart. It was decided for this campaign that license disc holders with a colourful design will be printed on electrostatic vinyl. This should enforce the message that it is your right to read each time a person gets into their car! These are, however, expensive items - please use them judiciously.

Bookmarks

Bookmarks in the format of a doorhandle notice should impress upon your readers the necessity of using a bookmark to prevent folded pages or covers.

Plastic bags

This is a standard item on the list of promotional items produced for Library Week and once again your library patrons will not be disappointed. Loop handle bags will boast a dramatic and colourful design.

Stick-on tattoos

The teenage market is part of the group targeted in 2003. The tattoos can be used as prizes or handouts to publicise the benefits of reading and specifically to promote the use of your library when dealing with these often reluctant members of your community.

Promotion over the airwaves

The radio is a powerful medium and reaches millions of listeners every day. As part of the Library Week campaign the Library Service will be using this medium for the first time. During Library Week, reading and the use of libraries will be publicised on different radio stations in three different languages. This will complement the efforts of public librarians to promote reading. You will be informed closer to the time of the exact time slots and stations. Publicise these broadcast times in your library.

Conclusion

A new date, new promotional material, an additional radio campaign - all in all an exciting and interesting Library Week that lies ahead in March 2003. As they have proven in the past, public librarians will surely rise to the occasion and organise a week full of action-packed activities, interesting competitions, and creative displays. Accept the challenge of reminding the public out there that they are entitled to their right to read and that the library is just the place to start using that right!