



Local Authors: Good for Everyone

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THE PHENOMENA

- Changes in book production have fueled a hefty rise in self-publishing bringing new authors to libraries who seek exposure and promotion.
- Their request for library support make librarians think carefully about our traditional relations with authors, and what a change could mean for our collections and our programming.

WHY DID THIS HAPPEN?

- Digital technologies keep creation and distribution costs low.
- With Web 2.0, people expect to be able to “do it themselves” which lends itself naturally to self-publishing.
- Self-publishing services may not offer the marketing and promotional support we came to expect from traditional publishing houses effectively forcing authors to be creator, editor, marketer, and distributor.

WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE US?



with **RESISTANCE** or even **FEAR**

- Their books will weaken our collection's integrity.
- Programming is costly, yet author talks are not likely to boast great attendance. I don't want to schedule a dud!
- There are too many of them, and my library can't support them all evenly and fairly.
- They are not ready for the spotlight, but how do I say that without injuring relations?

IS IT ALL IN OUR HEADS?

- With the drop in publishing gatekeepers, self-published works may lack the quality many have come to expect from a published book.

THE REFRAME

- Local authors can be valuable programming partners in a variety of useful ways, and it behooves us to serve them with sincere enthusiasm and creativity. Consider their assets.

REFRAME: whom they are

Local authors are often...

- accomplished and creative people capable of deep intellectual organization. *They dreamed it, and did it!*
- ambitious go-getters, not afraid of hard work and getting it done.
- area resources connected to community stakeholders—indeed they may be a community stakeholder—with influence and expertise your library could use.
- passionate believers or advocates of their topics.
- These attributes can give us reason to be proud to call them partners.

REFRAME: what they offer us

- They are often inexpensive partners willing to work with us in a variety of ways. Utilize this to your mutual advantages.
- They have skills which typically include basic writing; an appreciation of reading; knowledge of self-publishing and maybe even marketing; as well as whatever topic on which they wrote. Very possibly, they are expert in something!
- Often, they are big library fans. They love us, and what we do.

REFRAME: still not convinced?

- They are your neighbors and your constituents. As people from our communities, we are bound to serve them.
- Increasingly, they are young implying that this is a growing trend likely to last.

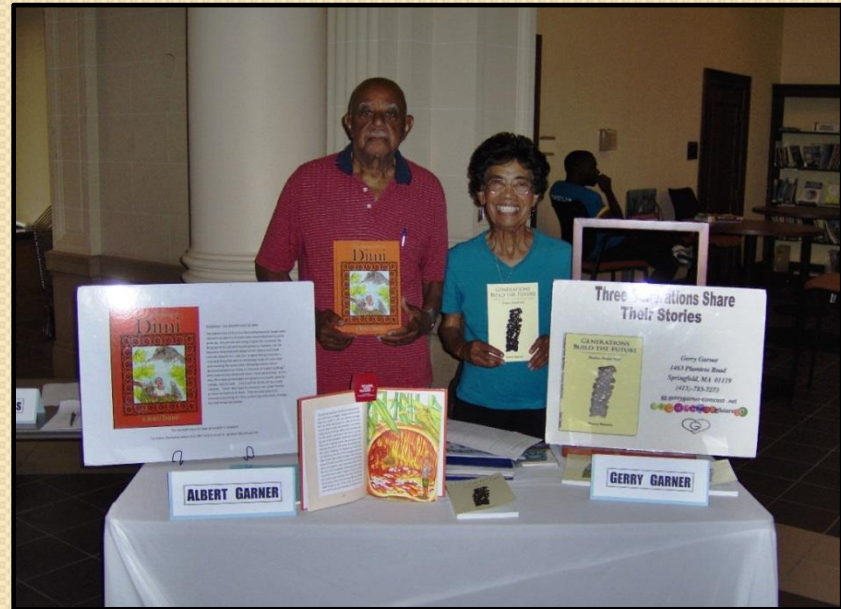
REFRAME:

what partnerships could yield

- solo book signings
- group book signings
- shared readings
- special presentations, or guest appearances
- writing workshops

THE AUTHOR FAIR

- group book signing
- meet-and-greet
- readers engagement
- chance for authors to sell books & gain exposure
- networking opportunity for the authors
- chance to meet other librarians
- enlivening & repurposeful



**LET'S THINK ABOUT THIS
TOGETHER**



IN CONCLUSION

- Enjoy getting to know the authors, and serve them sincerely. In the end, it'll afford both parties a positive experience.
- Take pride in what they've done, and believe that they are community assets. (Springfield's tag line is *Local Authors: a measure of accomplishment, a source of pride.*)
- In response to shrinking resources and the perception that librarians are losing relevance, take this chance to develop strong relationships that enable you to build inexpensive yet useful programs that serve the participants (authors & your library), as well as the community.



Thank you for your time and consideration.

Please visit my information table near the room's entrance/exit.

Do you have any questions?

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