

FOCUSED DISCUSSION SESSION NOTES
DIAMOND HILL RECREATION CENTER
Fort Worth, Texas
Thursday, May 30, 2002
11 a.m.
Attendance: 23

1. FLIP CHART SUMMARY

The session started with 18 people and ended with 23. They have lived in Fort Worth from 35 to 76 years.

The participants' responses to the question about what they would like to do ranged from "nothing" to "done everything" to wanting to obtain "mastery" of a subject (e.g., becoming a magician or learning the computer).

They described Fort Worth as a "small big town" that is "easy to get around in." The city has a lively downtown, friendly people, good schools, and good transportation. They considered it the "best place to live."

Of their community's amenities, focus group members liked most the senior center, cultural center, convention center, stockyards and the schools. They viewed the library as "good." Participants would like to see less violence, fewer potholes, less noise and graffiti and more police enforcing the traffic codes.

Regarding the services and programs they would like to have, respondents mentioned having a building of their own, computer classes, and more regulation concerning parking because people park everywhere--in yards, on sidewalk and in empty lots.

The group usually gets information at the Recreation Center and from the Neighborhood Action Community, the library, and City Councilman Jim Lane's office. They also mentioned computers and the Internet as information sources as well as television and the newspaper.

Hearing the word "library" made them think of books, information, easy access to information, programs, good people, "kids' programs" and reading classes.

During their last visit to a public library, participants remembered that there were lots of young people; the library didn't have the book they wanted but was able to get it

from another branch and called them when it arrived; there were not enough books on magic; they “got a library card”; and they went there to vote.

When asked what they would like to see in their library, participants wanted “more people using it”; more open hours, especially in the evening and, if possible, 24 hours; good movies; “more copies of the same book”; more storytelling; “books on burros and magic”; more publicity on programs; and “more volunteers.” They also want assistance in getting to the Central Library as it is difficult to park there.

Participants usually visit the branch in the south side, the Riverside Library, and the Diamond Hill Library.

Overall, they were quite satisfied and offered the following suggestions: distribute flyers with information about library programs in the neighborhoods; advertise in the newspaper; have more literacy programs.

2. FINDINGS

The seniors who attended the Diamond Hill Recreation Center focus group know each other well and are frequent library users. The library visits the Center regularly. The group was very satisfied with that outreach program.

The seniors think that Fort Worth is the best place in which to live and have lived there either most or all of their lives. In their opinion, Fort Worth is “certainly better than Dallas.” They have some issues concerning the surrounding community: e.g., too much noise in the neighborhood (i.e., loud music), graffiti, people not being courteous and “civic- mannered when it comes to traffic.”

The participants love the Recreation Center and would like to have a building of their own as they share the facility with students from the elementary school next door.

Apparently, not many of the Recreation Center patrons regularly use the library. However, those who do are happy with its services. As one of them said during the session, “... [T]here is so much you can do to get people using /visiting the library; for many that is just not their habit.”

Computers, and classes for learning how to use them, are topics on which the library could capitalize. Respondents use computers at the Center, at the library or at home--where six of them have access to one.

Focus group participants mentioned the library and the Internet as information sources. However, they get most of their information at the Recreation Center as the library, the City Council office and Neighborhood Action Community groups deliver print materials there.

They associate library with books and information and how libraries are connected with each other making it easier to get the materials one needs. They also would like to see more copies of the same book in the library and more opening hours in the evening, more literacy programs, more good movies and books on magic and burros. They suggested that the library advertise in the newspaper and hand out flyers in the neighborhood to promote programs and services.

3. SERVICE RESPONSES SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions are recommended as Service Responses to the needs that surfaced during the focus group session:

- Lifelong Learning
- Current Topics and Titles
- General Information

APPENDIX A. FLIP CHART SUMMARY

Number attending: 23

Number of years living in Fort Worth: 35 to 76 years

1. One thing you would like to learn to do:

- Master magician
- Master the computer (four)
- Done everything in the book
- Can't think of anything we haven't already done
- Live life
- Work in the yard, have 8 grandchildren
- Allergic to computers
- Nothing

2. How would you describe Fort Worth to a newcomer?

- Cowtown
- Lively downtown
- Easy to get around
- Small big town
- Easier to drive than Dallas
- People are friendlier
- Council gets along OK
- Good schools
- Good transportation
- Best place to live

3. What do you like most about the community?

- Senior center
- Cultural center
- Good library – good crew
- Convention center with hotels
- Stockyards
- Schools – improving

4. What changes would you like to see in the community?

- Less violence
- Fewer potholes
- Fewer stray dogs
- Boomboxes
- Noise
- Writing on wall by gangs – graffiti
- More speed bumps
- More police enforcing stop signs/red lights

5. What services and programs would you like to see in the community?

- Building of our own facility
- Computer classes (6 have computers at home)
- Pool time
- Police in the neighborhood to stop loud music and illegal parking in yards, sidewalk
- People park everywhere – streets, empty lots, etc. – needs regulating

6. Where do you go to get information?

- Senior center
- Neighborhood Police District #2
- NAC – Neighborhood Action Community
- Library
- Library visits here monthly
- Computers/Internet
- Patsy Steele – Jim Lane’s office from City Council
- Newspaper
- TV

7. When you hear the work library, what comes immediately to your mind?

- Books
- Information
- Connected with other libraries – can get books from everywhere (interlibrary loan)
- Programs
- Good bunch of people – workers are very good, they help not only at the library but try to help in the community
- Kids’ programs
- Reading classes

8. Think back to the last time you went to the public library. What do you remember about the experience?

- Lots of young people
- They didn't have the book I wanted and ordered it from other library. They called me when it came in
- Not many books on magic
- I took two young girls with me to the library and they argued about who would take most books
- Got a library card – haven't used it because my husband is the one who picks up the books for me
- Crafts for kids
- To vote
- Worked on the air conditioner

9. What would you like to see in your library?

- More people using it
- Open in evenings after work
- Open 24 hours
- Good movies
- More copies of same book
- Storytelling – need more of that
- Books on burros and magic
- Have programs and make sure we know about what is happening in the libraries
- More volunteers
- Assistance getting to Central Library (transportation) – Central is too hard to park
- Libraries frequently used
 - Southside
 - Riverside
 - Diamond Hill

10. Other suggestions?

- Pretty good
- Satisfied
- Hand out flyers in the neighborhoods about upcoming programs
- Announce information in newspaper about programs
- More literacy programs