

Beyond Books and Media

Building Community Through Non-Traditional Collections in Public Libraries

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Building Community, One Tool at a Time: The Berkeley Public Library's Tool Branch



- Established in 1979 with a \$30,000 federal Community Development Block Grant
- Started with 500 tools, a portable trailer, and one full-time employee

www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org

- The Library held focus groups to determine what tools, services, and support the community wanted
- Originally, most patrons paid a small fee to borrow tools
- In 1988, voters passed a property-based library tax, and now the Tool Lending Library is included in the public library's budget, and free to all city residents

www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org/locations/tool-lending-library/tool-lending-library-brief-history

More Inspirational Collections:

- Telescopes and air quality meters
–Ann Arbor District Library
- Guitars and sewing machines
–Sacramento Public “Library of Things”
- Cake pans
–8 Public Libraries in Iowa

“Bad libraries build collections,
good libraries build services,
great libraries build communities.”
–R. David Lankes



LIS 650: Management of Libraries and Information Centers, Dr. Rich Gazan
Based on the “Evolving the Library” Project by Chezlani Casar, Alison Costanzo, Jennifer Fuchikami, Erin Tagomori, and Mark Tokuuke

Lending Garden Plots: The St. Louis County Library's Experience

“Community gardens and libraries are a natural fit,” says Kristen Sorth, St. Louis County Library's director. “Both provide safe spaces for learning and community building...It has been a thrill to watch how popular these spaces have become with our patrons.”



news.stlpublicradio.org

- First garden was established in March 2013
- Proved so popular that two more branches have since added gardens
- Created as a partnership with Gateway Gardens, a nonprofit, and financially supported by a grant from the Missouri Foundation for Health
- The gardens host around 40 programs annually for all age groups

Hazlett, Denice. *Lending A Green Thumb*, Library Journal, July 2015 28-29.

What Else Can We Lend?

Seeds	Toys	Board Games
iPads	People	Art Prints
Book Club Kits	Art Tools	Microscopes
Ukuleles	Video Games	The possibilities are endless!