
CHETCO COMMUNITY PUBLIC LIBRARY

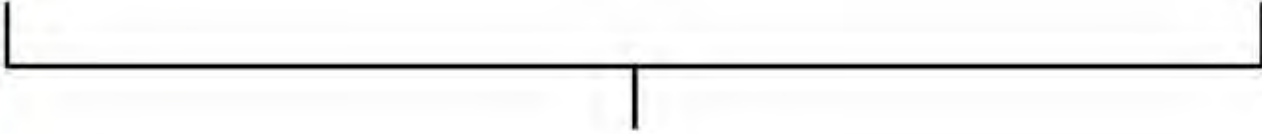
SPACE AUDIT Best Practices

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This is the space audit for the Chetco Community Public Library.

Based on a visit to the library and discussion with the staff as well as a review of your blueprints and a detailed examination of photos and video, this audit gives you recommendations on specific steps you can take to improve your space utilization. This audit also included a consultation with the original architect for the space, Rich Turi.

The objective is to make the library easier to use and to increase both circulation and discovery. The ultimate goal is to make the Chetco Community Public Library the preferred destination in your community to answer the question “What should I read/see/watch/do next?”

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OBSERVATIONS

The Chetco Community Public library is an attractive structure with an airy, open design, but the interior layout and furniture do not meet the needs of current library patrons. The library lacks adequate modern seating, comfortable study alternatives like laptop chairs and has little meeting space beyond a large program room. Legacy media like CDs, DVDs and print magazines take up a great deal of valuable floorspace.

The library staff has done an excellent job of weeding, which will make reorganizing the library easier when renovating. The current layout robs energy from the library as the open adult library – which lacks any sonic barriers – necessitates a hushed tone for all patrons, regardless of need. The entrance to the library is an unwelcoming chokepoint – an underutilized vestibule funneling patrons through a second set of doors past a large circulation desk that adds friction to the process of entering the library.

RFID combined with well-placed self-checkout stations (such as Bibliotheca 1000) could help alter the librarian workflow to allow for a more display-oriented strategy. Chetco could increase circulation by winnowing the collection further while adding a marketplace of discoverable collection items near the entrance and a discovery path through the adult library.

Public computers are split between a computer room and stations in the middle of a walking pathway through the adult library. Either consolidating them by combining the computer room with the current audio book room or moving to a completely decentralized system would be better.

The children's room has too much furniture and shelving and too little differentiation from the adult library. It is also a source of potential conflict as noise travels easily in the main room of the library which is shared by both adult and children's libraries. Similar to the adult library, the children's library lacks adequate program space.

RECOMMENDATIONS - Entrance

Opening the entrance to the library and adding a concierge stand, a marketplace, and better seating will dramatically change the critical first impression of the library and lead to better overall space utilization.

Add a Concierge Stand – this would create a more friendly service-point at the front of the library, assist with wayfinding, allow special accommodations for elderly and special needs patrons and facilitate a parking-lot-holds-delivery program.

Eliminate the Circulation Desk – this will dramatically open the entrance to the library, allowing for a friendlier concierge stand, more visible self-checkout kiosks and a marketplace of discoverable collection items near the entrance to the library.

Self-Checkout/RFID – positioning highly visible, freestanding self-checkout kiosks near the entrance will free librarian time for other tasks like restocking displays. Consider RFID to allow for expedited checkout and better security.

Offer Parking Lot Delivery – The key to creating longer and more effective pathways in the library is solving some potential complaints from commuters, families, seniors and disabled patrons. By offering Parking Lot Delivery of holds, Chetco will be able to move holds further into the adult library and create a discovery pathway.

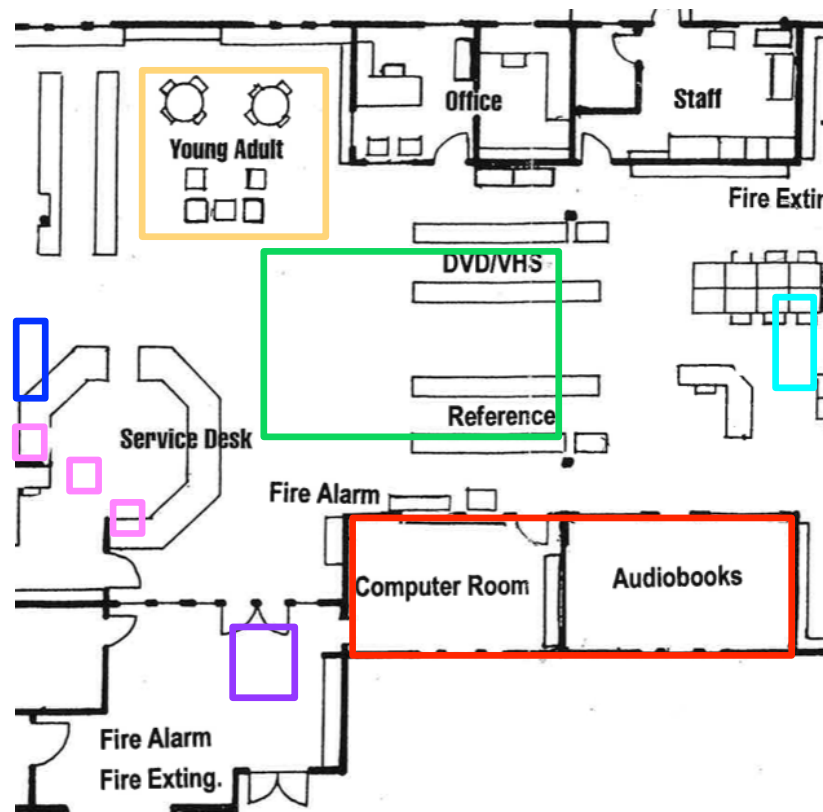
Consolidate (or eliminate) the Public Computers – Moving public computers currently blocking the pathway through the adult library into the current audio book room and joining that with the computer room would be a better use of this space. Another option would be to make these two rooms meeting rooms and scatter the public computers around the adult library rather than clustering them. There is a crawlspace underneath the library floor, so adding power in any location within the library should not be expensive.

Create a Marketplace – At the center of the adult library is a tiled floor in a soaring atrium that should generate more energy and excitement than it currently does. Turning this into a marketplace and making it the electric center of the library would change the feeling of the entire building.

Add Better YA Seating – The current YA seating area uses undifferentiated adult furniture in an inefficient configuration.

Consider Removing the Vestibule – Rich Turi, the building's architect has confirmed that the wall creating this vestibule a structural element. One reason not to do this would be if the library would like to prioritize access to the meeting room when the library is closed. While this option may need to be weighed against the cost tradeoff, removal would allow for a better space for a concierge stand and marketplace.

Floor Plan - Entrance



1. [Concierge Stand](#) – Add a small concierge stand near the entrance to the library.
2. [Self-Checkout](#) – Self-checkout stations will make the library friendlier to introverts and eliminate a bottleneck for exiting the library.
3. [Service Desk](#) – A smaller info desk can replace the circulation desk..
4. [YA Reading](#) – Keep this as a YA reading spot but refresh the furniture and lean towards more individual seating that can be moved by patrons within this zone.
5. [Marketplace](#) – Removing the circulation desk frees enough clearance to create a marketplace of collection items in displays at the center of the building which would enhance discovery.
6. [Public Computers](#) – The audio books nook can be eliminated. Either extend the computer room through the wall to include this space or keep these two rooms separate as conference rooms and decentralize the computers. Either way, the bank of computers in the middle of the adult library should be eliminated.
7. [Discovery Path with Seating](#) – If computer room is expanded, use short stacks with top 1-2 rows facing out staggered slightly to the back of the room to allow patrons to walk to the right after turning into the adult library and passing through the marketplace.

RECOMMENDATIONS – Adult Library

The primary aim of renovating the library should be to create better pathways, improve zone efficiency, add meeting and program space, and improve circulation. These changes will also position Chetco as a tastemaker in the community.

Discovery Pathway – eliminating the current circulation desk will dramatically open the entrance to the library, allowing for a friendlier concierge stand, more visible self-checkout kiosks and a discovery pathway from the marketplace through the media zone to a new virtual reading room at the back of the library.

Media Area – For legacy media such as DVDs, curating rather than warehousing will allow for a more engaging media area. Though backroom storage space is limited, it might be worth rearranging to allow some of the collection to be stored in staff areas or across the street.

New Meeting Room – meeting and program space is at a premium in this library. A new meeting room could be created by dropping a glass wall from the 9’6” beam in the current Large Print section.

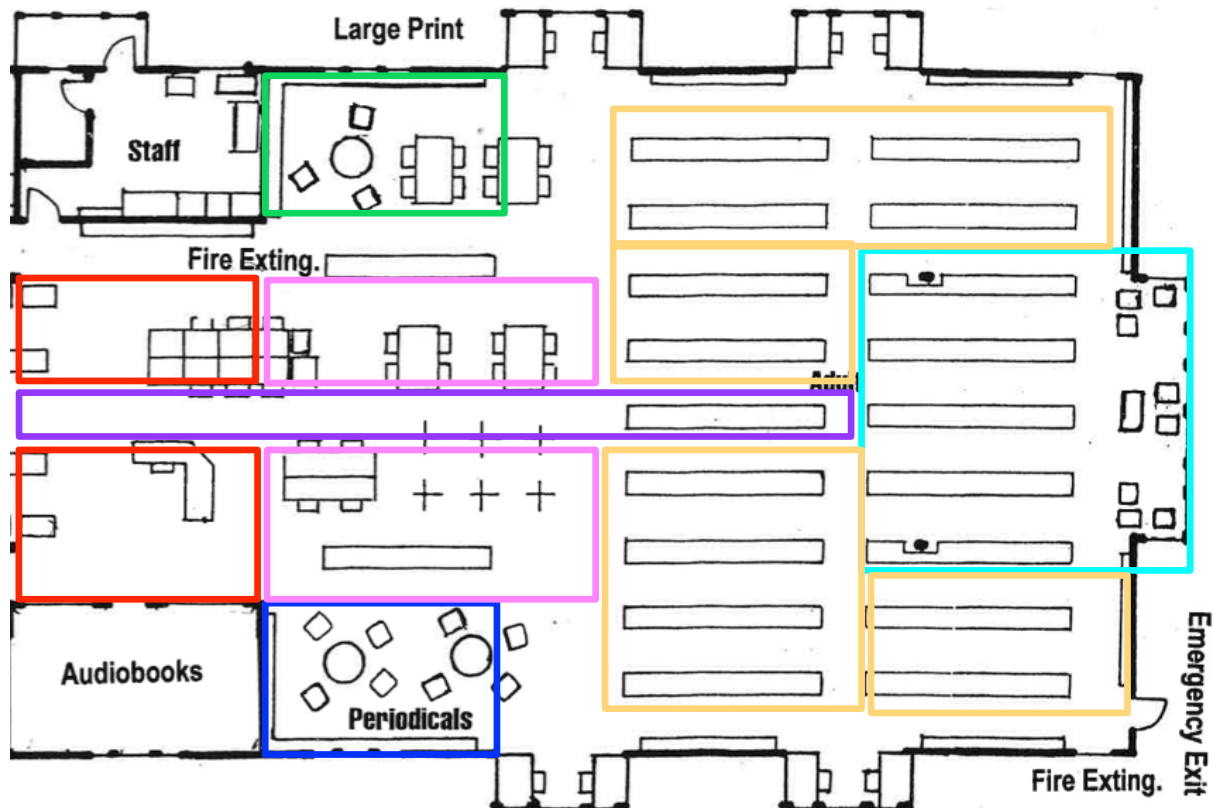
Quiet Magazine Room – To alleviate senior citizen complaints, creating a quiet meeting room in the current periodicals space by dropping down another glass wall. Winnowing the magazine selection and showcasing current issues only in wall and vertical floor displays will allow for more seating and choosing flexible furniture might allow this space to be used for book clubs or other programs in the evenings.

Remove 5-6 Tall Stacks – Removing 4-5 tall shelves from the Plan West side of the library (end of the adult library near the glass windows) will create a virtual reading room that will bring light and warmth to the rest of the adult library while creating a refuge from more bustling sections of the library. Removing an additional tall stack between this room and the media area will extend the discovery pathway to the back of the library.

A Virtual Reading Room – With the stack removal, add seating that is comfortable but also laptop friendly (perhaps incorporating flip-up tray tables) to allow for reading, studying and remote work.

Enhance Wayfinding – Create a signage system that has a consistent taxonomy. Fewer signs could communicate more information with fewer words. All signage in the library should be professionally produced/mounted. Effective pathway design and library layout will negate the need for most negatively worded signage.

Floor Plan – Adult Library



1. [Study/Reading Area](#) – Immediately adjacent to the Marketplace. Add seating suited to both individuals and small groups, flexible by numbers. This would not be a noise-free zone. Friendly to younger readers and studiers.
2. [Meeting Room](#) – The beam here is 9’6” which makes a glass wall (Steelcase or even Nana Wall) possible. This would frame a meeting room that would not block light and could even disappear. These systems can be put in without cutting carpet.
3. [Meeting Room/Quiet Room](#) – Adding walls (at least one glass) would allow seating among compact display stands of magazines and newspapers. By using flexible furniture and rolling displays, this space could become a meeting room when needed.
4. [Media Zone](#) – Move a smaller, curated selection of DVDs and audiobooks here. Merchandise electronic viewing and listening options. Add seating and leave a pathway towards the back of the library.
5. [Discovery Pathway](#) – Leave a corridor from the marketplace open and ensure there are displays on either side through the study area and media zone. Remove a tall stack here in the first row.
6. [Reading and Quiet Study Area](#)– Removing 4-5 tall stacks here would transform this area into a virtual ‘reading room’ and take advantage of the soaring glass windows that create the best architectural feature of the building.
7. [Tall Stacks](#) – In the short term, maintain 12-13 tall stacks here to house the adult collection. Try to window if possible and use better signage and shelf talkers to promote the collection. Consider moving to low shelving if the display strategy in the Marketplace is successful.

RECOMMENDATIONS – Children’s Library

Making the children’s library more effective is primarily a matter of weeding, display, differentiation (creating three distinct zones for different-aged children that are easy to observe and discern) and accommodation (sourcing furniture more appropriate for each of these ages and activity patterns).

Shared Computer Hub – a common space between the three age zones where a computer cluster can sit. By sourcing chairs and workstations that will adjust up and down, this cluster can accommodate waxing and waning numbers of different-aged children throughout the day.

Self-Checkout – as with the adult library, more prominent self-checkout nearer to the entrance and exit to the children’s library will increase the usage of this time-saving convenience.

A Small Info Desk– placed near the entrance to the children’s library would assist with program questions, wayfinding and potentially even laptop checkout for parents and older children in a way that the current circulation desk does not.

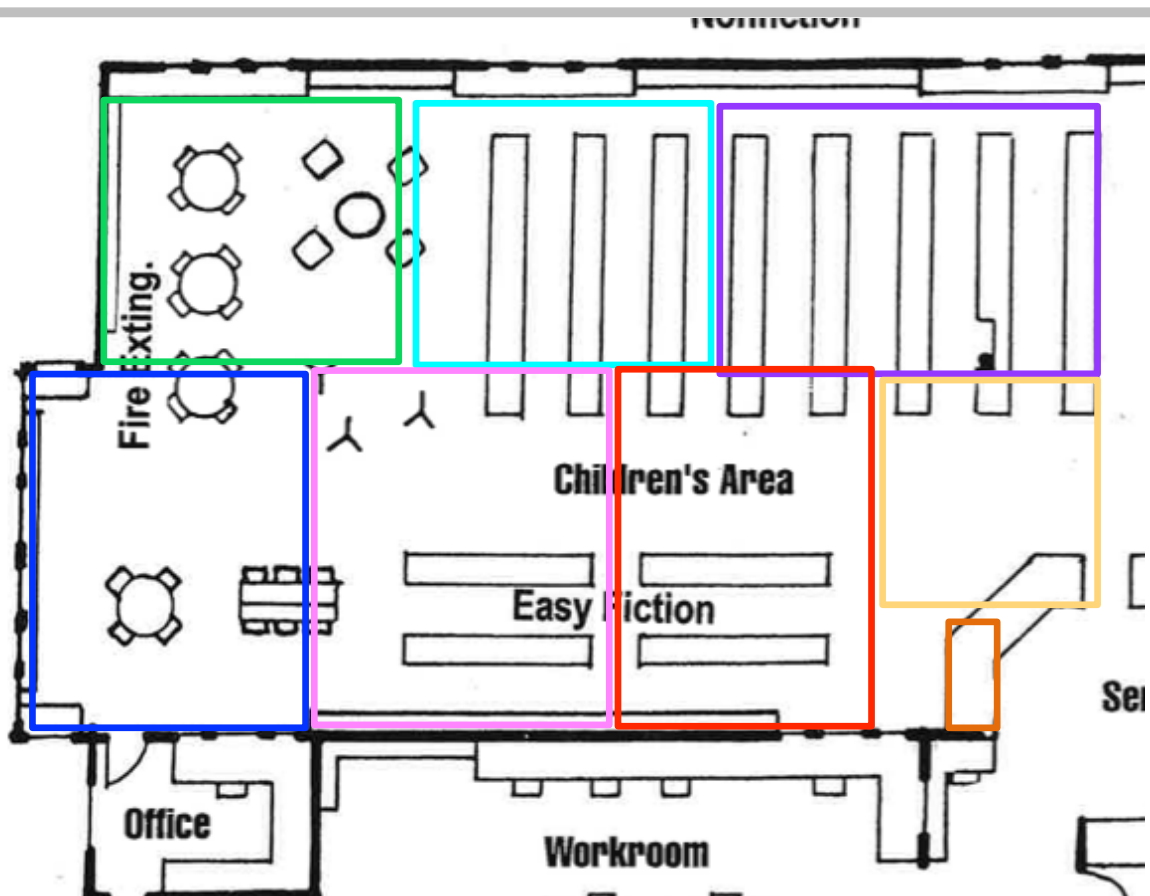
Activity Zone – For the youngest children, a bigger, clear space with more imagination-based play and engagement will help burn energy in a constructive manner. I suggest making this a separate room, to limit the acoustic disruption of small children. The program north end of this room will accommodate a Nana Wall which can be folded in.

Remove Stacks – There are far too many stacks in the children’s library. Flip bins are appropriate for high density storage – particularly for children’s books. Seek to move most of the collection to displays and low shelving with at least the top row face out. Use mobile shelving that can be easily moved.

Use Colors and Textures – To make the children’s library function effectively, using visual patterns to signal age appropriateness is far preferable to signs or experimentation. Flooring, furniture colors and carpeting should all be used to convey these signals.

Build in flexibility – Particularly in the area for the oldest children near the front of the library, purchasing more furniture and props to support programs and events on the floor of the library will help. Explore different fixtures offering the stability needed for children’s library usage that are still relatively easy to move.

Floor Plan – Children’s Library



1. [Toddler/Pre-K Activity Zone](#) – Framing this out with a Nana Wall (the beam is 9’6” which would work for a Nana Wall or a Steelcase wall) or even a permanent windowed or glass wall would have two benefits: it would reduce noise and separate the play zone and also allow for this area to become a program room for older kids in different dayparts.
2. [Toddler/Pre-K Engagement Zone](#) – Seating for reading, crafts or other quiet engagement for younger children including parents reading to kids. Low stacks with flip bins and face-out picture books in this area.
3. [Shared Computer Hub](#) – Computer stations that are mobile and height-adjustable that can be used by children from ages 5-11. This area can be reset for after-school use after caregivers leave by the early afternoon.
4. [Collaboration Zone](#) – For K-6th grade children, a zone with reconfigurable tables, individual seating and options for tutoring. Displays to promote impulse reading.
5. [Low Stacks K-6](#) – Display-oriented mobile shelving with selections for young school-aged children .
6. [Middle Grade Zone](#) – Comfortable seating (ideally with flip-up trays for laptops) geared to middle schoolers. Displays of middle grade selections.
7. [YA Marketplace](#) – Displays for YA readers. Assumption is that they will sit on adult side of library if they are reading/studying.
8. [Children’s Service Desk](#) – A smaller, separate service desk for the childrens’ room.

Flexible Conference Rooms



Sliding glass walls (Nana Wall, above) or fixed glass walls (Steelcase, below) can be used to create meeting rooms that do not block light up to 10' high. With sliding glass walls, a conference room can disappear when it is not needed.



RECOMMENDATION



The sign for the library is recessive (not easily visible against the background) and as this is a community where the library is used by tourists and the building looks like it might easily be a hotel, restaurant or a community center, signage is potentially important. Consider more prominent signage as well as a sign that includes the brand personality of the library.

BEST PRACTICES

The Madison Public Library's Alicia Ashman Branch shows how font choice and signage can convey the personality of the library. Of note here is not only the interplay between the two signs but also the lamps above, and the design of the archway entrance. Note the banner hanging just to the right.



RECOMMENDATION



There is room here to add a digital sign to promote events.

BEST PRACTICE

A digital community board allows interaction but is far less messy than a physical board.

It will also automatically discard older bulletins and give you a cleaner way to organize related flyers



RECOMMENDATION



This sign is not easily visible through the glass door. A print on the door might be more effective, or a sign to the right.

BEST PRACTICE

Signage on the glass itself is more visible (particularly in a color other than white or black) and can add branding to the library.



RECOMMENDATION



This art display case is intriguing but doesn't seem to connect to the library in any simple way. Without this large display unit, there would be an ideal space for signage or even a digital interactive community board or wayfinding display.

RECOMMENDATION



The purpose of these magazines is not easily apparent to the casual observer. Is this meant to be a “take one, leave one” display? Are these magazines for sale? Can they be checked out? Why would I donate magazines to the library? Regardless of the answer, this is far from the most important thing the library does and it’s in a prime position to get attention while entering the library.

RECOMMENDATION



A digital community board would be more effective than this tower display. The sign on top is not a good size or in a good position to be effective.

The Lobby Space

The current lobby space is ineffective and disconnects the program room from the library space. This could be useful if the program room is to be used when the library is closed. If not, then consider removing it. This would allow for a warmer entrance to the library with a concierge stand within 10 feet of the entrance. According to the original architect, the wall separating the main library from the vestibule/lobby is not structural.

RECOMMENDATION



Tax forms should more logically be displayed near the copier, at the business center.

RECOMMENDATION



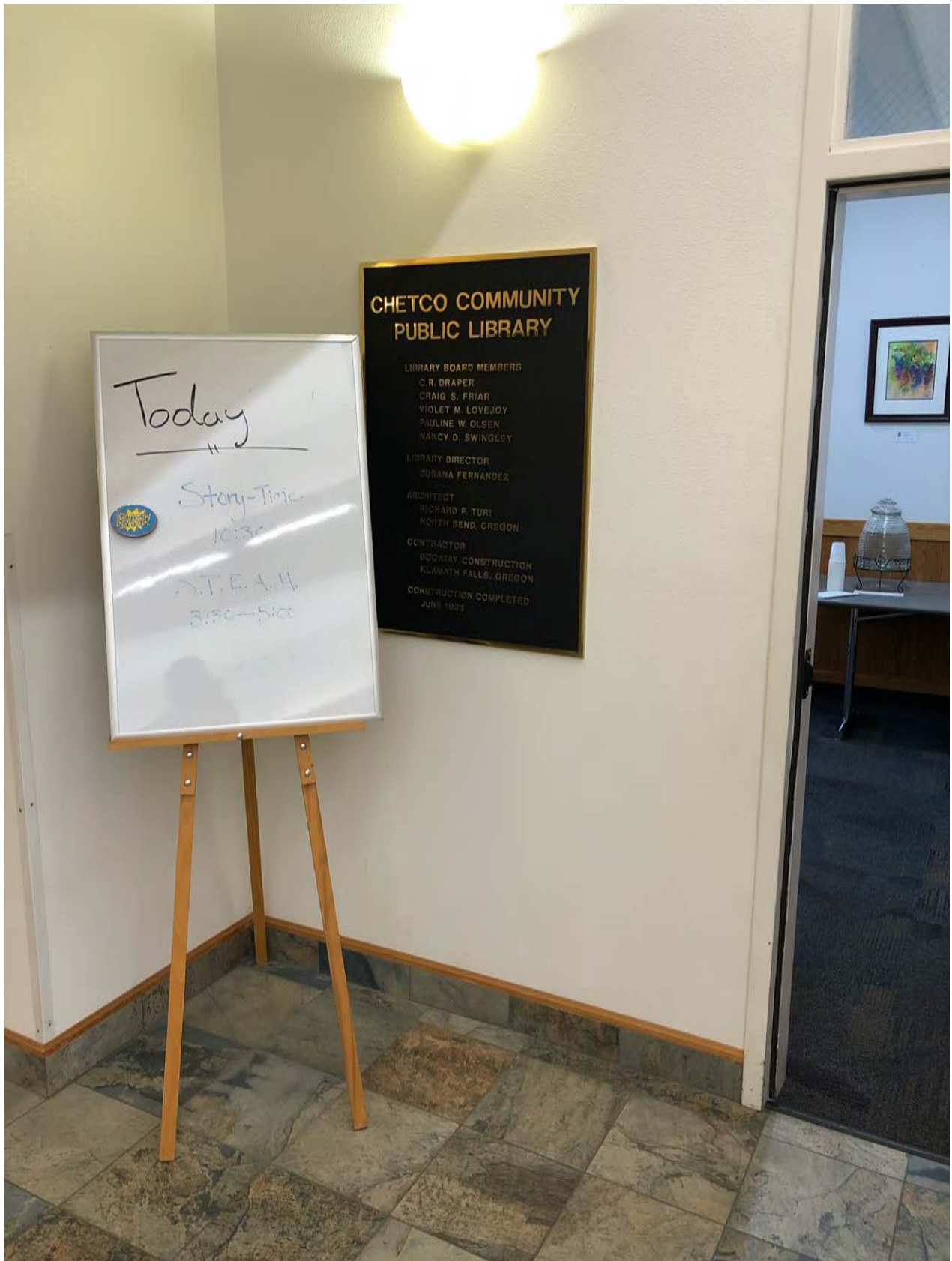
Posters behind glass are not effective. Digital signage would be ideal to promote library programs.

BEST PRACTICE

Miller Branch Library in Ellicott City



RECOMMENDATION



This dedication plaque could perhaps be moved to a conference room where it might be read more often. The white board is not easy to read.

RECOMMENDATION



More flexible furniture would allow this space to be used for a wider variety of purposes. Merchandise programs with rolling displays here to lure program attendees to become readers, listeners and borrowers.

BEST PRACTICE



RECOMMENDATION



There is a tremendous amount of clutter on the inside window here. Moreover this entryway creates an unnatural and unnecessary chokepoint in the library. Consider removing this barrier and putting a concierge stand near the entrance to the building.

RECOMMENDATION



A beautiful piece of art which sits in an ideal space for display.

RECOMMENDATION



This enormous circulation desk makes the library feel less welcoming and creates a chokepoint at the entrance. It also separates librarians from patrons. Removing this and replacing it with a concierge stand, an info desk and several self-check stations would allow librarians to focus on patron service and restocking displays. Any work which is not interruptible should be performed out of the public eye.

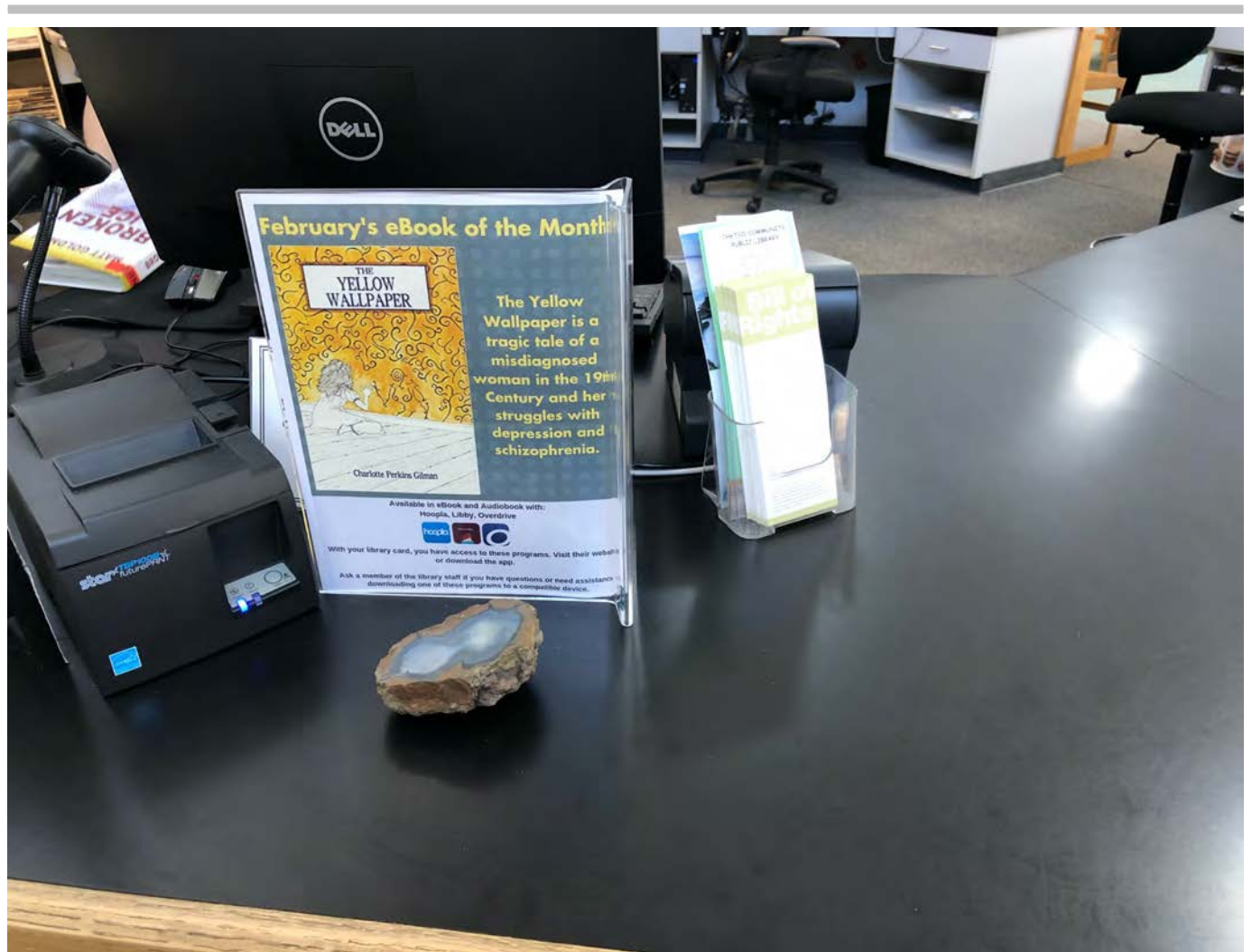
Concierge Stand

Removing the circulation desk will open the entrance to the library. It will also allow room for a concierge stand (see below) at the entrance in case the current lobby area remains intact and a concierge stand cannot be placed there. Frequently asked questions (how to use the copier, where to find tax forms, etc.) can be printed on laminated cards that can be reused.

In combination with self check kiosks and a small desk, the library will be significantly easier to access.

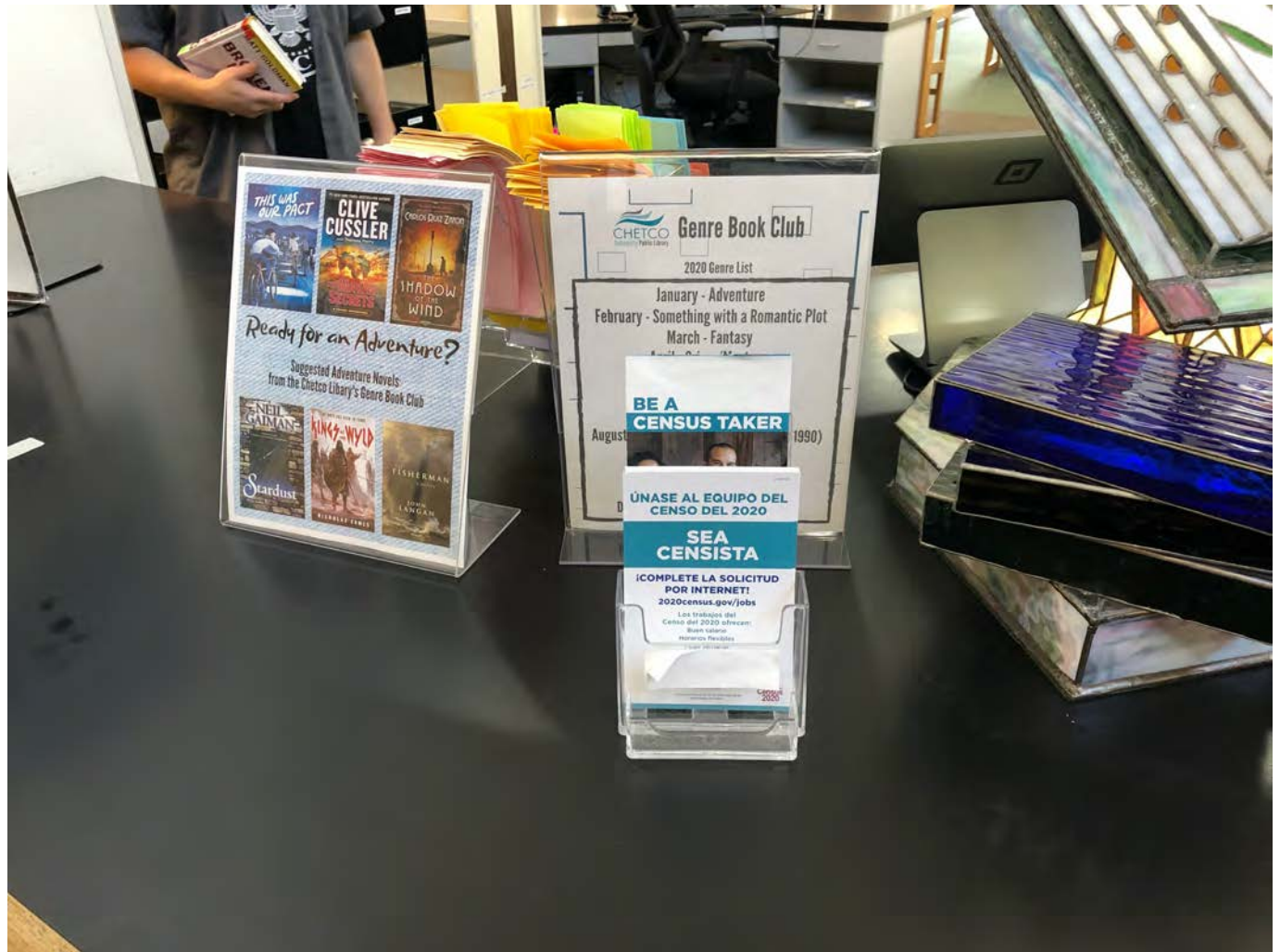


RECOMMENDATION



Signs like this scan as book covers in the peripheral vision of patrons and tend to get ignored. There is far too much clutter on this desk.

RECOMMENDATION



These two signs and two pamphlets compete for attention and create confusion.

RECOMMENDATION



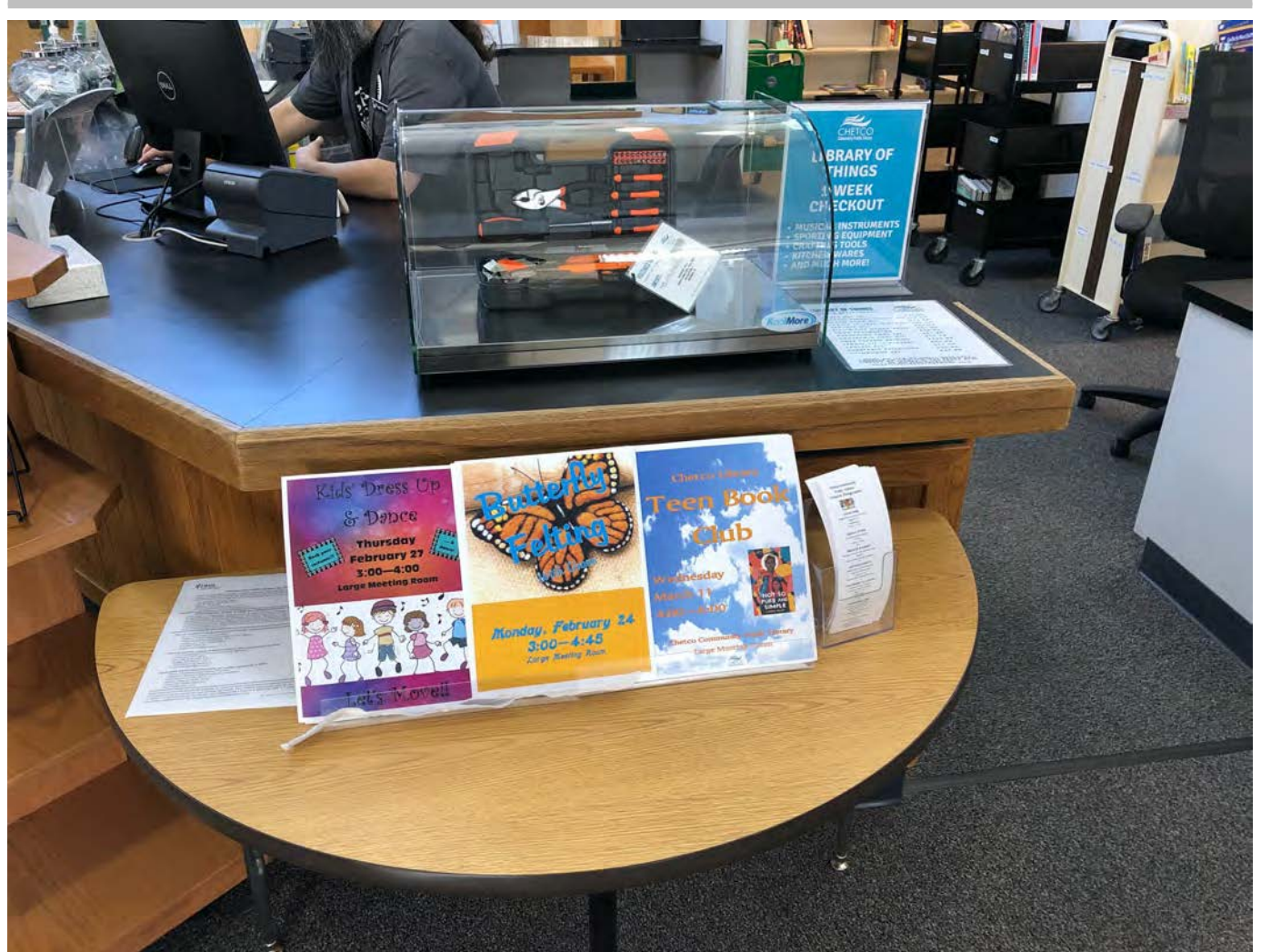
An attractive but not efficient book display. Each shelf should display three books, with two at angles. If this is not possible, simply display a single title on each shelf.

BEST PRACTICE

Use the Rule of 3 for display



RECOMMENDATION



More clutter, which simply obscures something very important here.

RECOMMENDATION



This is an interesting offering from the library which largely gets lost on the circulation desk. Advertising this with digital signage and a proper display would create more of an impact.

RECOMMENDATION



A discovery path would be ideal in this space with displays leading into the adult library. Individual seating could be interspersed with these displays without any loss of occupancy.

BEST PRACTICE

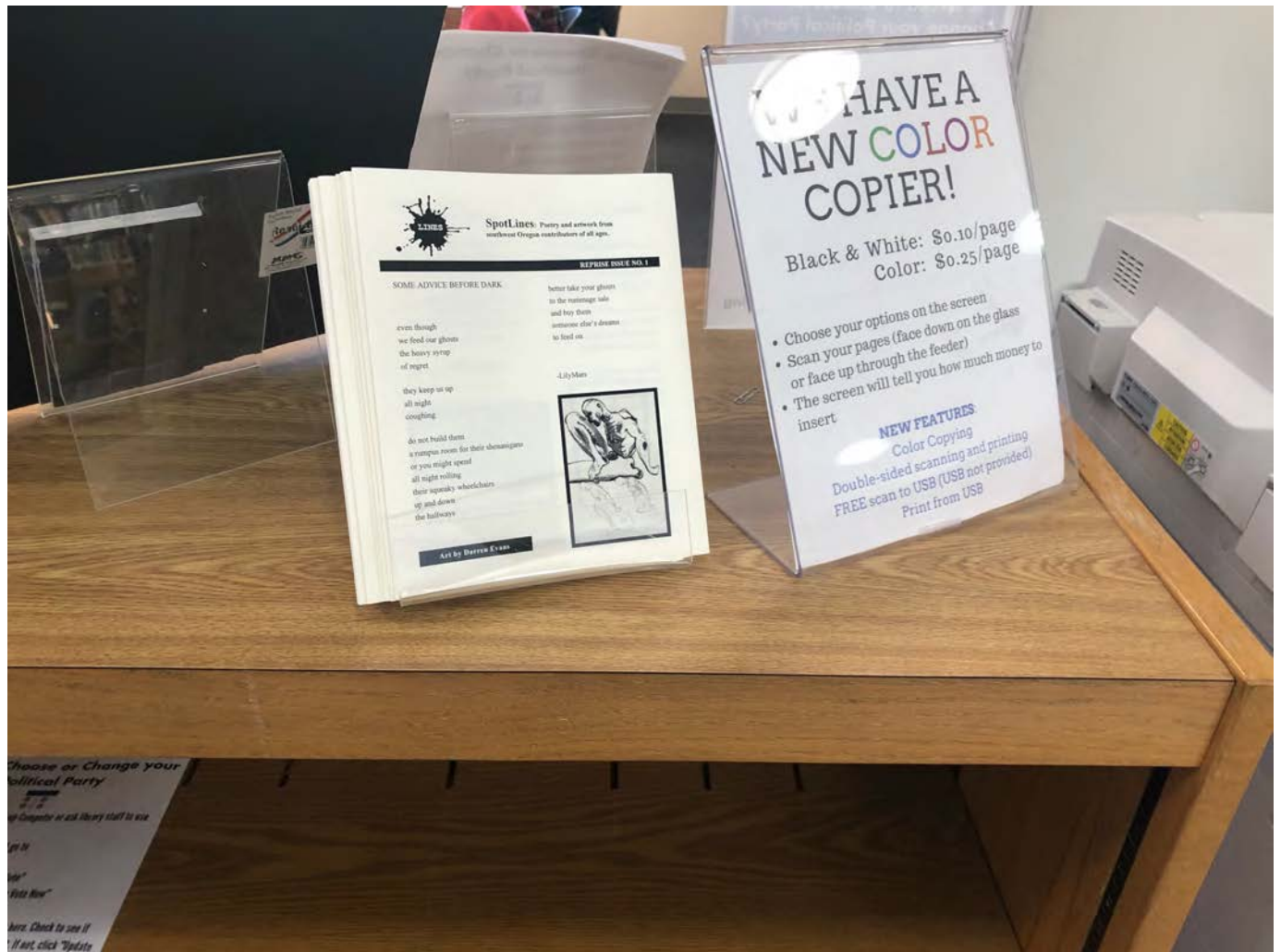


RECOMMENDATION



This area can move to a new business center - potentially combined with the computer area.

RECOMMENDATION



Poetry and copier instructions are an interesting juxtaposition but not effective signage.

RECOMMENDATION



This is a high-utilization space. Expanding this into the current audiobook room (and moving the copier there) would help keep the computers from blocking the flow of the main adult library. Also consider laptop checkout that would allow study carrels to be used for library computers.

Alternatively, these computers could be dispersed (and more stations to accommodate personal devices and library laptops added). This room could become a meeting room.

RECOMMENDATION



Although graphic novels have a wide appeal across age groups, they seem out of place here. They should also be visually merchandised. They also block the flow of this space.

RECOMMENDATION



Signs like these (above and below) scan as book covers in the peripheral vision of patrons and thus are rarely as effective as intended. Consider creating a full taxonomy for signage to allow users to know what kind of information a sign contains through size, shape, color and placement before reading it.

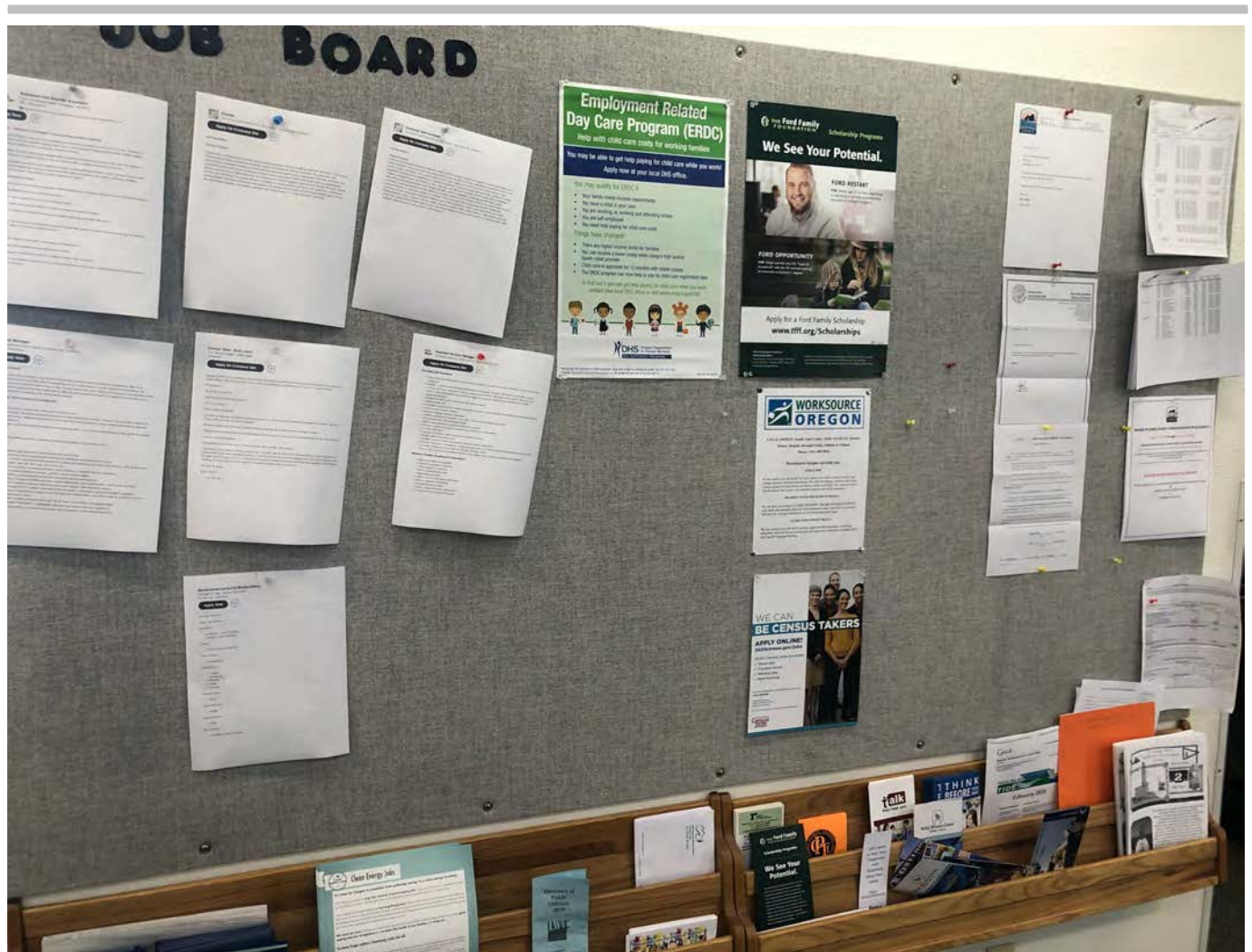


RECOMMENDATION



This terminal seems superfluous.

RECOMMENDATION



This is not an effective display. Consider creating online and self-guided equivalents to these resources. If kept, they should be moved to the business center.

RECOMMENDATION



Rather than storing all audiobooks on the floor in a format that is not friendly to browsing, curate a selection and display it. Keep the remainder of these selections in staff areas to rotate into displays.

RECOMMENDATION



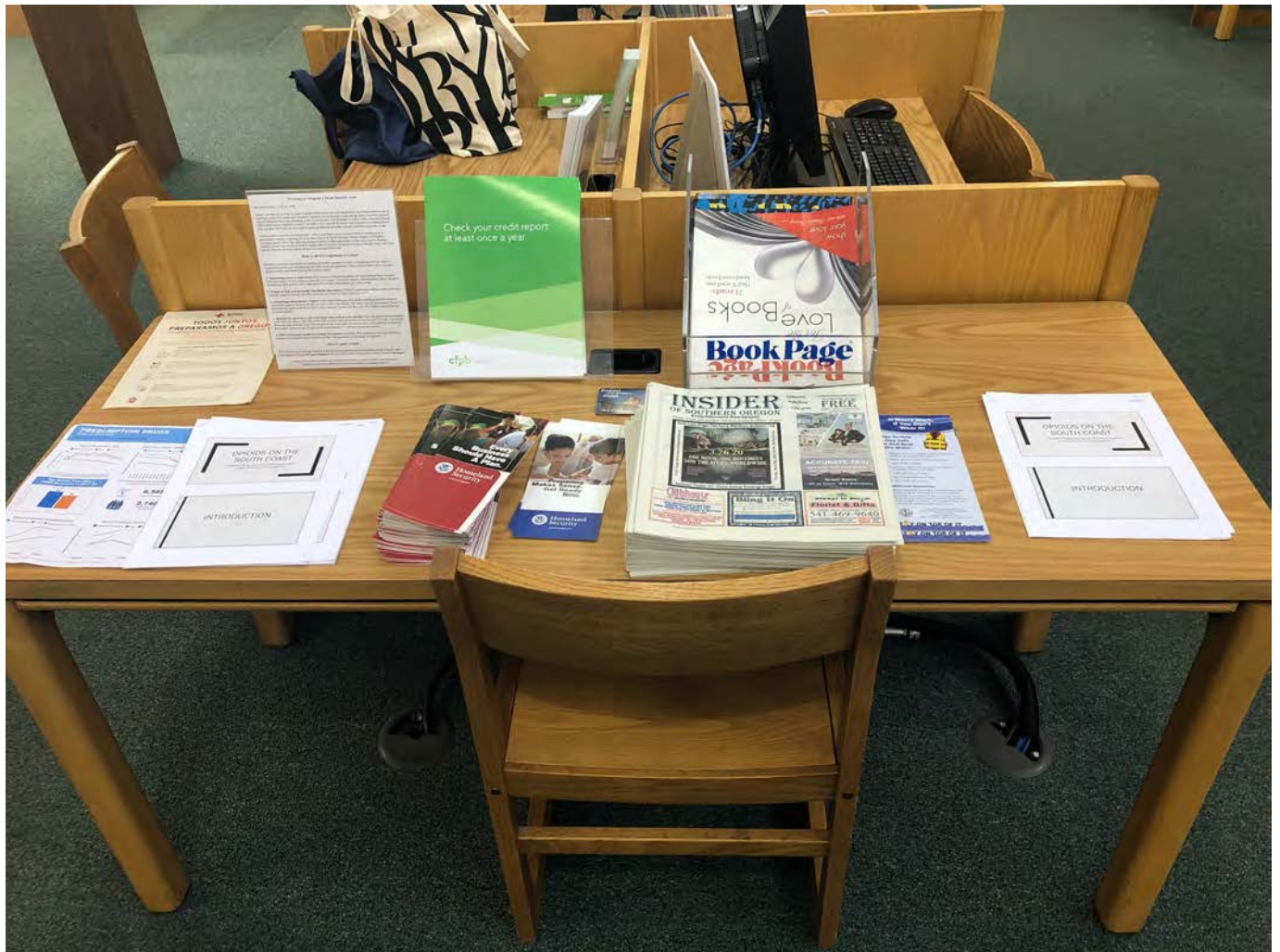
A great sign that weeding is already well underway!

RECOMMENDATION



This station is too large and isolates the librarian. The sight lines are also off.

RECOMMENDATION



This is a random collection of information which is better delivered person to person by a concierge (except for the free newspaper).

RECOMMENDATION



A very important sign notifying patrons of a vital library resource which is in the wrong place. This should be at eye level where patrons are reading magazines or newspapers as well as displayed with DVDs and CDs.

RECOMMENDATION



This mix-and-match computer and pamphlet pod should be relocated as it blocks flow. Consider repurposing the existing audio book room.

RECOMMENDATION



Wooden four-person tables are inefficient and may be underused except by middle schoolers. Consider more flexible and comfortable seating options that are also easier to move to accommodate library programs.

BEST PRACTICE



RECOMMENDATION



New fiction and nonfiction might better be integrated into a discovery zone/marketplace. This would allow this area to be used for self-service holds.

RECOMMENDATION



Rather than house a paperback exchange in the library, why not seed it in the community in littlefreelibrarys or something similar? This takes up a good deal of space but is not near a well-used reading and browsing area.

RECOMMENDATION



Chetco uses a great deal of space shelving legacy media like DVDs. Instead, consider keeping these collections off the floor and instead presenting a curated selection on displays and rotated frequently. This would also allow the library to promote Hoopla more intensively, to get patrons to discover new video at the library but consume it on their own personal devices.

RECOMMENDATION



(Above and below) Two good signs that there is space to create a discovery zone and marketplace in the library!

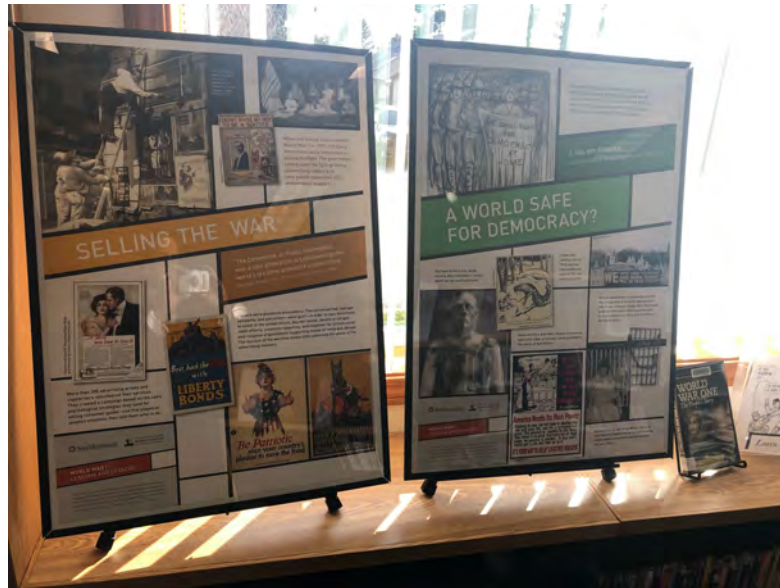


RECOMMENDATION



Even more space used to store DVDs in a format that is not easy to browse.

RECOMMENDATION



These signs - particularly the beautiful posters below - get lost in a corner of the adult library. They relate directly to an ongoing program the library is running in the program room. Better to merchandise these posters in the front of the library or in the program room during the video showing to get patrons to engage with them.

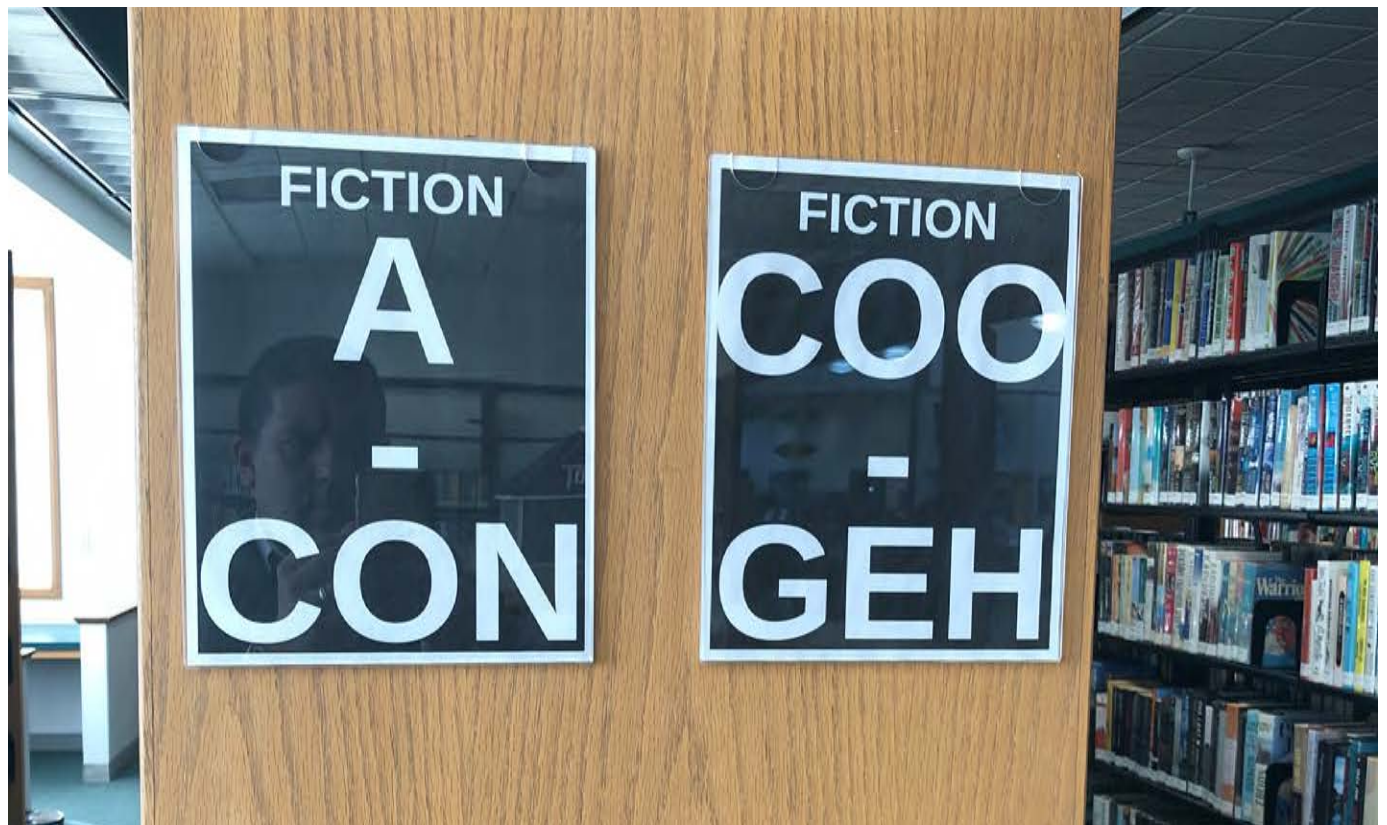


RECOMMENDATION



While the idea is good, the furniture is dated and uncomfortable.











RECOMMENDATION



These signs are not part of a clear taxonomy - so it takes some mental work to get the point.

BEST PRACTICE

the DEWEY DECIMAL SYSTEM

 <p>000 GENERAL KNOWLEDGE</p>	 <p>100 PHILOSOPHY & PSYCHOLOGY</p>	 <p>200 RELIGION</p>	 <p>300 SOCIAL SCIENCES</p>	 <p>400 LANGUAGES</p>
 <p>500 SCIENCE</p>	 <p>600 TECHNOLOGY</p>	 <p>700 ARTS & RECREATION</p>	 <p>800 LITERATURE</p>	 <p>900 HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY</p>

LWW/CS&A EAST CAMPUS LIBRARY • MADE BY MALGORIE APPLETON

RECOMMENDATION



Large print titles should not be displayed spine-in as that turns them into small print titles.

RECOMMENDATION



The same shelf is depicted above and below (second pic is other side of the shelf). Tall stacks that show some signs of weeding are an ideal candidate for windowing - which can transform a mundane shelf into a vibrant display. Windowing also provides an anchor for the shelf (it is clear to patrons what type of books are above and below) as well as creating visibility so that patrons can see each other - and daylight - when moving through the stacks.



RECOMMENDATION



This is the architectural highlight of the building (above and below) - a bank of windows with a soaring ceiling flooded with natural light. Unfortunately it is completely unused because the space is too narrow, the furniture is fixed, and decoration takes up more than half the space. By removing some of the fixed shelving here, the library could create a quiet reading/study area that would be the focal point of the adult space. The discovery pathway could lead here.



RECOMMENDATION



While these signs are better than plain Dewey numbers, they are not part of a clear taxonomy and thus likely to be missed altogether by patrons.

RECOMMENDATION



This space could be expanded and made more effective with fewer items, more display and better and more flexible seating options. Hoopla should also be merchandised - and personally promoted by librarians - to patrons who frequent this space.

RECOMMENDATION



It is not necessary to protect and store magazines. Instead, display current copies only, curated by interest and spread through a comfortable reading area.

RECOMMENDATION



Similarly with newspapers - only the current day's news with as many copies as are needed.

RECOMMENDATION



This space could blossom into a better casual reading area.

RECOMMENDATION



There is no differentiation between the Children’s Library and the Adult Library apart from the height of the shelving, and no wayfinding. This does not make the children’s library feel special or different.

BEST PRACTICE

Avon Library:

Excellent, imaginative entrance to the children’s area.



RECOMMENDATION



These signs get lost on the circulation desk. They should be merchandised in contextually relevant locations.

RECOMMENDATION



A book exchange is not a bad idea (again though - it might be more effective in external locations as a littlefreelibrary), but this shelf seems neglected.

RECOMMENDATION



Picture books must either face out or sit in flip-bins. This is a very unfriendly way to store books for the smallest children

BEST PRACTICE



RECOMMENDATION



A nice idea, though the display is too dense and requires work to understand. Instead, put just a sign flanked by two 'bundles' on the top and then put the rest of the bundles - three to a section - faced outwards on the shelves below. For the pictures of story time it's better to use a better photo-grade stock but not laminate the pictures - it will give them more immediacy to parents and caregivers.

RECOMMENDATION



Several different zones with potential for conflict are combined here. Active zones, engagement zones and computer areas should be distinct with visible transitions. Engaged toddlers can be distracted by play if it is taking place just feet away in plain sight.

BEST PRACTICE

Maximize child-friendly displays



RECOMMENDATION



This is the architectural highlight of the children's library. Again it is rendered less effective by the mishmash of different items here as well as the adult feeling of the room.

RECOMMENDATION



More imaginative furniture will create better engagement. This area appears to be designed for children of two distinctly different age groups, which is not ideal.

BEST PRACTICE



RECOMMENDATION



To be effective, displays must be refreshed when patrons borrow the books.

RECOMMENDATION



This shelving is far too dense for a children’s library. Move to lower, mobile shelving that is face out on at least the top two rows. This will also allow for expansion of program space in the children’s library.

RECOMMENDATION



Graphic novels should always face out. There is plenty of room on this shelf to face multiple titles face out.

BEST PRACTICE

Graphic novels have some of the most creative covers in all of publishing – facing out is a must for visual impact.

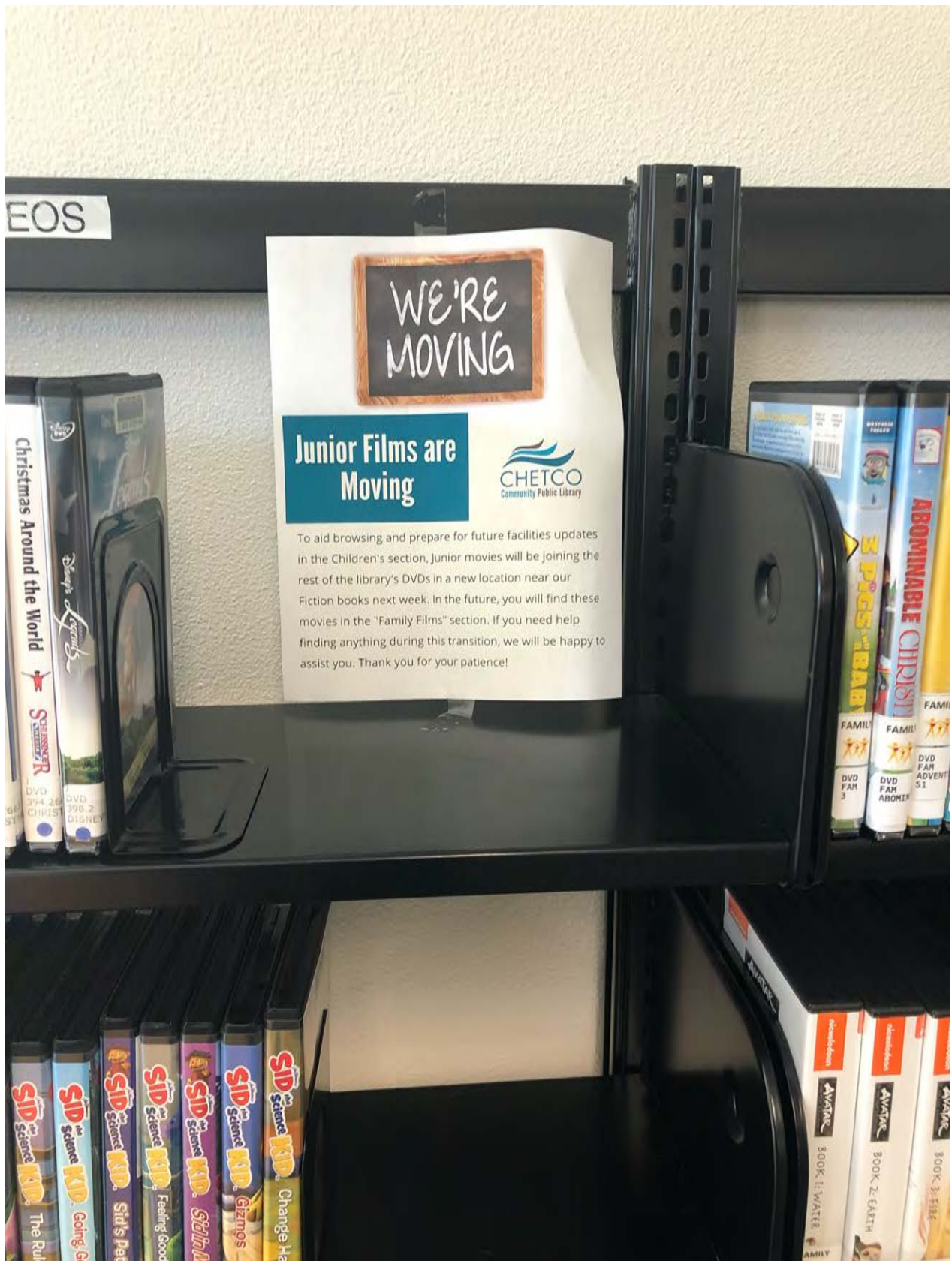


RECOMMENDATION



Consider keeping some of the toddler's toy stations in storage areas and rotating them daily. Having a regular routine of different toys will create anticipation in the youngest library patrons.

RECOMMENDATION



Signs like these don't work as they scan as book covers in the peripheral vision of patrons.

RECOMMENDATION



This area - in the middle of the children's library - looks entirely like an adult reading zone. Though it is clearly meant for YA readers, it will attract actual adults if more visual and sensory cues connecting to the right age group are not added.

BEST PRACTICE



RECOMMENDATION



As in the adult library, there are signs of weeding that may make it easier to move to a more display-based presentation. Nice work here of turning some titles face-out.

RECOMMENDATION



This looks like seating for children in theory but may feel more like a time-out bench in practice.

RECOMMENDATION



It took me three hours to 'see' this display for the Library of Things even though it was less than a dozen feet from me the entire time. Displays behind glass are not ideal as they feel less engaging and immediate. Better to add security tags and make these items touchable for those considering checking them out.

RECOMMENDATION



The holds shelf can move into the public space, midway back into the library.

RECOMMENDATION



Books for reshelving can be turned into a display. They have social proof: someone else wanted them. This also can reduce the amount of reshelving necessary.

BEST PRACTICE

The book return cart can also create a great opportunity for a display which can reduce librarians' workload. This is a social proof display: someone wanted those books, so I might too!



RECOMMENDATION



This would make a nice craft room or small program space for the children's library.

RECOMMENDATION



This space appears to be fully utilized at present, though there is some opportunity for clutter cleanup and consolidation. As self-check changes the workflow and more of the staff spends time on the floor, see if any of this space can be used for back-room storage for backfill of displays.

CONTACT INFO



DAVID VINJAMURI

(212) 543-3200

david@brandtrainers.com

Twitter: @dvinjamuri