

VALLEY COTTAGE LIBRARY

110 Route 303, Valley Cottage, New York 10989 • 845.268.7700 • www.valleycottagelibrary.org



Library Material Selection Policy

The Valley Cottage Library is maintained as a public service for the benefit and free use on equal terms for all the people of the community. The purpose of the library is to provide access to books and other resources and services expressing the widest diversity of views and expressions as a means of education, information and recreation.

The Valley Cottage Library believes that a librarian and library trustees do not, and need not, endorse every idea or approve of every manner of expression in the library materials they make available to the public. Nor does it believe that any political or governmental body is qualified to determine what one person should or should not read, listen to or view. It would be contrary to the public interest for library officials to establish their own political, aesthetic or moral views as the sole standard for determining what library materials should be circulated. Likewise, it would be contrary to the public interest for the library to bow to pressure from individuals or organizations that would become arbiters of the morals or political opinion of others.

The library will not attempt to judge for the library patron whether or not given library material is good, bad, subversive or immoral. This is the privilege of the library patron. The library recognizes its obligation to serve the reading, information and recreational needs of a community with varied tastes and interests and abilities. It is the clear duty of the library to select for the community as a whole. It recognizes that there is no way for a library to suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others. Each library patron is privileged to select for themselves among the library materials available and no one is obliged to read, listen to or view what they do not like. The library cannot refuse to make available any library materials published within existing obscenity laws as defined by the courts. We urge parents who have pronounced views about what their children read to monitor the library materials their children withdraw from the library but not to attempt to extend interfamily censorship to those outside their family.

We are in agreement and do endorse the American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

And the Library Bill of Rights <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

Responsibility for Selection

Overall responsibility for collection development rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Valley Cottage Library Board of Trustees. The Director delegates selection responsibilities to a professional staff with the authority to interpret and apply selection policy.

Staff contributes to the development of patron-oriented collections by:

- Engaging in open, continuous two-way communication with library patrons and recognizing that individuals have different ways of expressing their needs based on age, language, economic status, culture, or other characteristics
- Interacting with patrons with understanding, respect, and responsiveness
- Handling all requests equitably
- Working in partnership with one another to understand and respond to community needs
- Understanding and responding to rapidly changing demographics, as well as societal and technological changes
- Recognizing that materials of varying complexities and formats are necessary to satisfy diverse needs of library users
- Balancing individual needs and broader community needs in determining the best allocation of collection budget for acquiring or providing access to materials and information
- Seeking continuous improvement through ongoing measurement
- Reviewing the collection on a regular basis to identify areas of community interest that may need to be strengthened

Criteria for Selection

The library materials of the permanent collection of the Valley Cottage Library are carefully selected from those reviewed and recommended by nationally accepted guidelines: namely, but not limited to, ALA Booklist, Library Journal, Kirkus, Horn Book. The only limitations are budgetary considerations, needs of the community, need and demand for materials in certain areas, and availability of special materials in more comprehensive collections.

All materials, whether purchased or donated, are subject to the criteria listed below:

- Current and anticipated needs and interests of the public
- Enduring value
- Treatment of subject for intended audience
- Physical durability
- Creative, literary, or technical quality/merit
- Quality of the production
- Cost and availability
- Evaluations in review media
- Professional or literary reputation of the author, publisher, or producer
- Relation to existing collection and other materials on the subject
- Space and budgetary limits
- Suitability of the format for Library use
- Availability in other formats

An item need not meet all of these standards to be included in the Library's collection.

Collection Maintenance

Continuous evaluation of the library's collection is necessary to ensure that materials are useful and accessible. Items are regularly removed to keep the collection current, accurate, and appealing. The library withdraws items from the collection based on a number of factors, including publishing date, frequency of circulation, community interest, and availability of newer or more valid materials. Items dealing with local history are an exception, as are certain classics and award-winning children's books.

Withdrawn books are a source of income for the Library through our passive book sale, or through sustainable vendor sites that accept materials for resale with commission or recycling. The proceeds from such sales are used for the benefit of the library.

Gifts and Donations

All Gift materials are accepted with the understanding that the library reserves the right of decision as to usefulness to the collection and suitability according to accepted guidelines and may dispose of such gifts as it deems advisable. Gifts in the form of money are gratefully accepted and will be used for the benefit of the Library.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

Requests for reconsideration are made through the submission of the Request for Re-evaluation of Library Material form. The completed form will be brought to the Board of Trustees for consideration at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board reserves the right to make a thorough investigation of the resource prior to making a decision. The investigation may include conversations with stakeholders, staff, professional organizations (ALA, NYLA), the library attorney, or other resources.

In the absence of extenuating circumstances, the Board's decisions on reconsidered materials will stand for five years before new requests for reconsideration of the same item will be entertained.

Once a decision has been made, the person bringing the Request for Reconsideration to the attention of the Board will be notified in writing of the Board's decision through mail or email.

Requests for reconsideration of materials shall only be accepted by residents of the Nyack School District, or their representatives. No anonymous Requests for Reconsideration will be entertained.

Adopted, Board of Trustees, June 1968
Revised, June 2013
Revised, January 18, 2023

Request for Re-evaluation of Library Material

Request initiated by _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Person making the request represents:

Name of Individual Group or Organization Name

Author _____ Publisher _____

Title _____ Publication date _____

1. To what, in the library material do you object? (Please be specific: cite pages, etc.)

2. In your opinion, what harmful effects might result from use of this library material?

3. Do you see any instructional value in the use of this library material?

4. Did you review the entire contents of the library material in question?

5. Should the opinion of any additional experts in the field be considered? If yes, please list:

6. In the place of this library material would you care to recommend other material which you consider to be of superior quality?

7. Do you wish to make an oral presentation of 15 minutes or less to the Board of Trustees?

Yes No

Date Signature

The final decision on this request rests with the Board of Trustees of the Valley Cottage Library.