

University of Nebraska at Omaha DigitalCommons@UNO

Criss Library Faculty Proceedings & Presentations

Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Library

10-20-2016

More than Potlucks: Reviving social engagement for a thriving library workplace

Heidi Blackburn University of Nebraska at Omaha, hblackbu@gmail.com

Laine McCurrin University of Nebraska at Omaha

Lori Schwartz University of Nebraska at Omaha, lschwartz@unomaha.edu

Diana Allard University of Nebraska at Omaha

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/crisslibfacproc

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons Please take our feedback survey at: https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/ SV_8cchtFmpDyGfBLE

Recommended Citation

Blackburn, Heidi; McCurrin, Laine; Schwartz, Lori; and Allard, Diana, "More than Potlucks: Reviving social engagement for a thriving library workplace" (2016). *Criss Library Faculty Proceedings & Presentations*. 110.

https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/crisslibfacproc/110

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Library at DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Criss Library Faculty Proceedings & Presentations by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.





More than Potlucks:

Reviving social engagement for a thriving library workplace

Heidi Blackburn, Lori Schwartz, Diana Allard, and Laine McCurrin



Organizational Culture

"practices, values, beliefs, and underlying assumptions of formal and informal groups" (George & Jones, 2008, p. 567)

"Institutions are constellations of established and enduring practices, beliefs, roles, and meanings, which shape and are shaped by individual actions. They provide rules, norms, ideas, and assumptions and constrain or enable us" (Garcia, 2011, p. 150)



We don't have time! (Why should we care?)

- Poor organizational culture can cause workplace anxiety and attrition if employees feel unwelcome.
- Issues such as dysfunctional coworker relations, stereotyping, discrimination, and even sexual harassment could all complicate an otherwise effective workplace environment.
- Organizations must be proactive in creating environments that increase the likelihood of success for all members (Greer, Stephens, & Coleman, 2001).



Courtesy Committee (1985-2006)

- Staff
 - Voluntary, representation from all departments
- Space
 - Large break room, non-public staff areas
- Funding
 - Proceeds from Goodie Days
 - Selling ice cream bars (freezer)
 - Coffee proceeds
 - Stipend from Dean



Events (1985-2006)

- Holiday Party/Chili Feed
- End of Spring Semester Potluck
- Student Worker Appreciation Day
- Valentine's Day Treats
- St. Patrick's Day Treats
- Halloween Treats
- Retirement Parties



Potluck





Valentine's Day





Retirement





No Committee (2006-2010)

- Library renovation
- Lack of funding
- Departmental events





Positive Employee Recognition Committee (PERC) (2010-2013)

- Staff
 - Voluntary, representation from all departments
- Space
 - Reserved classrooms, Faculty Lounge, non-public staff areas
- Funding
 - Stipend from acting Dean (non-food items)
 - University Library Friends



Events & Activities (2010-2013)

- Holiday Party/Potluck
- Library Worker's Day
- Ice Cream Social
- Retirement Parties
- KUDOS Board
- Birthday Cards and Yearly Work Anniversary Certificates
- Monthly treat day for that month's Birthdays
- Set up CLASS (Criss Library Academic Student Scholarship) Scholarship with Director of Patron Services



Retirement





Retirement

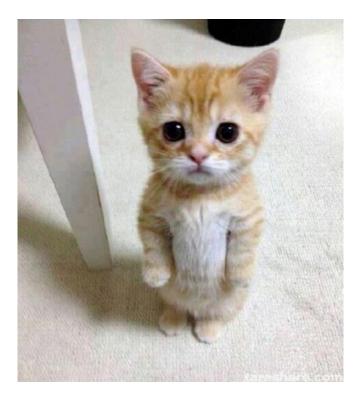




No Committee (2014-2015)

Departmental events for all:

- Chili Cook-off
- Dip Contest
- Baking Contest
- Salad Days
- Pi Day (3.14)





Pi Day





Pi Day





Pi Day Winner





Social Engagement Committee (2015-Present)

We needed a revival:

- Morale was plateaued because of uncertainty
 - No dean, interim dean, new dean
 - Strategic plan -> No strategic plan
- Lots of new hires!
 - Introductions between departments to cut down silos
 - UNO/Criss Library traditions/ideas
- Culture shift



Social Engagement Committee (2015-Present)

- Made up of 2 staff from every department
- Meets only as necessary
- Provides Welcome Swag Bag to all employees and goes out lunch with members outside their departments
- Reoccurring events but also spontaneous events (40th Birthday, Barak Obama's visit, Halloween)



Dec 2015 – Jun 2016

Holiday Potluck	Dec 2015 – afternoon potluck for employees/student workers	Pi Day Bake-off	Mar 2016 – Pie back-off. Vote with change. Proceeds to UNO Food Pantry
Color Me Calm	Dec 2015 – Relaxation event to unwind post-finals	National Library Workers Day	Apr 2016 – Catered breakfast tacos and afternoon cupcakes from local businesses
Bizarre Bazaar	Jan 2016 – trade your weird holiday presents	Claussen-Leahy 5k	Apr 2016 - Library team of walkers (and a couple runners). Partners attended.
Chili Cook-off	Jan 7 – Cook-off, vote with your change. Proceeds go to Employee Emergency Loan Fund	Dips de Mayo	May 2016 – Dip cook-off. Vote with change. Proceeds go to GSRC.
Welcome for Dean	Jan 2016 - Welcome reception for new Dean	Bark in the Park	June 2016 – Meet at dog park for some social time. Then cook-out at someone's house. Partners attended.
Farewell for Dean	Jan 2016 - Farewell reception for interim dean	Birthday/Anniversaries	Monthly treats celebrating employee birthday/work anniversaries



Jul 2016 – Jun 2017

Shakespeare on the Green Volunteering	July 2016 – Several employees volunteered one night at Shakespeare on the Green, a local Omaha event.	Bizarre Bazaar	Dec 2016
Smooth(ie) Ride	July 2016 – Blender bike for students workers and employees	Chili Cook-off	Jan 2017
Ice Cream Social	Aug 2016 – Afternoon event to build your own sundae	Pi Day Bake-off	Mar 2017
Geeks Who Drink Trivia Night	Aug 2016 – Geeks Who Drink Trivia night at Nebraska Brewing Company Tap Room. Partners attended.	National Library Workers Day	April 2017
40 th Birthday Party	Sep 2016 – Celebrated Criss' 40 th birthday with cupcakes and lecture of our history	Claussen-Leahy 5k	April 2017
NLA Raffle Basket	Oct 2016 – SHAMELESS PLUG. Donated items for raffle basket	Dips de Mayo	May 2017
Halloween Costume Photo Display	Oct 2016 – Show off your favorite current or historical Halloween costume. Vote on your favorite.	Bark in the Park	May 2017
Holiday Potluck	Dec 2016	Birthday/Anniversaries	Monthly treats celebrating employee birthday/work anniversaries



Chili Cook-off January 2016





Chili Cook-off

January 2016







Pi Day Bake-off March 2016





Pi Day Bake-off March 2016





Pi Day Bake-off March 2016



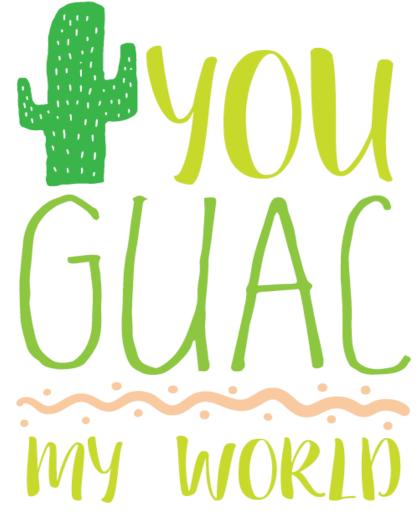


Claussen-Leahy 5K April 2016





Dips de Mayo May 2016



Please join us for

Dips de Mayo

May 5th, 11:30am-1:30pm

Room 231

Looking to flex your dipping muscles? Grab your favorite recipe and enter your dip in the following categories:

- Salty and satisfying
- Smooth and sweet
- Nacho typical dip (other category)

Sign up on the wiki to bring a dip and/or a dipper to complement your colleague's entry (chips, graham crackers, fruit, etc.). Bring your appetite and vote with your change for the People's Choice trophy!

 $\ensuremath{\mathbb{C}}$ 2015, Love The Day Designs, for personal use only



Dips de Mayo May 2016









LIBRARY.UNOMAHA.EDU

Dips de Mayo

May 2016



Bark in the Park

Tired of just eating at library events? HOWL about we try something new!

BARK IN THE PARK!

suppy time

This will be a CAT-

astrophe...

00.

WHEN:	Friday, 3 June @ 5:30pm
WHERE:	Hanscom Dog Park— 32nd and Woolworth
WHO:	You and your two - and four - legged friend(s)!
AFTER:	Meet-up at Tammi's for EATING! And more

Don't have a dog? Don't TERRIER self up about it!

Bring yourself and have a BALL!

YORKIE to contributing is to bring something to eat or grill at Tammi's! We all will!

(It looks like this is the end- I might have to pull the PUG on this flyer...)



Bark in the Park



WHEN: June 3rd @ 530pm WHERE: Hanscom Dog Park– 32nd and Woolworth

WHO: You and your two — and four legged friend(s) AFTER:

Meet-up at Tammi's for grilling (thanks Scott!), potluck, and more puppies!

Bring something to grill for yourself and/or a side dish for everyone to share. BYOB, if you're into that!

The pups will be provided for in Tammi's backyard, so bring them along, too!



SHARK IN THE PARK?!

Bark in the Park

bark in the park.



nope.

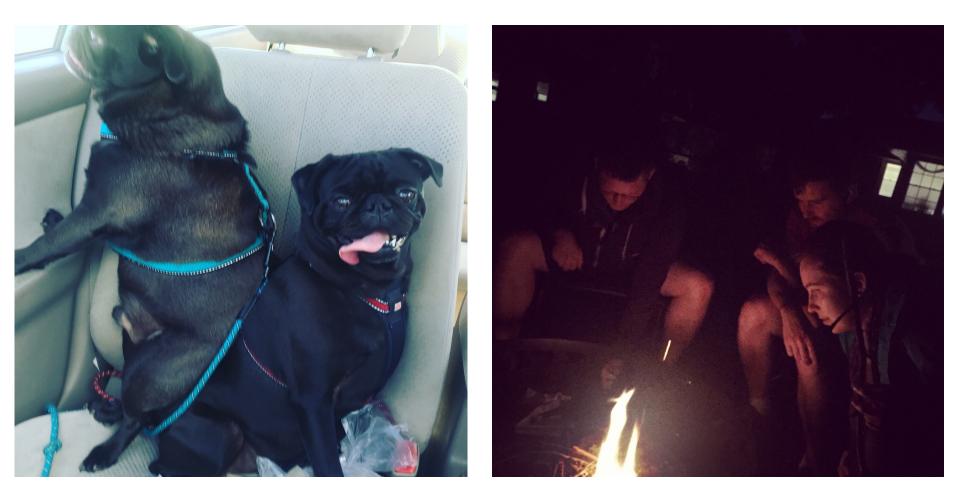


Bark in the Park





Bark in the Park June 2016





the quizic upon us...



Q: Objectively, when is the best date for inter-office socialization??
A: August 12, 530-930

Q: Where, objectively, should you be for said inter-office socialization?A: Nebraska Brewing Company Tap Room (6950 S 108th St, La Vista, NE 68128)

Q: Who should attend said socialization event?

A: You, your spouse, BFF, plus-one, partner, buddy-o... whomever makes you happy!

Q: Can I eat there?

A: Of course! the SEC is buying appetizers!

Q: Can I drink there?

A: Of course! Nebraska Brewing Company makes some super sweet beers. You'll have to pay for your own,

though. State funding...

Q: What about trivia teams?

A: Either work out a team of six ahead of time, or we'll make them up on Friday!

That's Mike He's our Quizmaster!

LIBRARY.UNOMAHA.EDU

Criss Library Trivia Night

Join us for a little back-to-school brew!

Come enjoy some light appetizers and get to know your co-workers! A full variety of craft beers will be available for purchase.

Flex your trivia muscles by joining a team or cheer on your colleagues from the sidelines.

Trivia will start around 6:30pm and significant others are welcome!

We hope to see you there!

August 12, 5:30pm

Nebraska Brewing Company

7474 Towne Center Pkwy #101,

Papillion, NE 68046

Join us for trivia with



For more details about this group, see http://www.geekswhodrink.com/

Brought to you by the Criss Library Social Engagement Committee Questions? Contact Heidi at <u>hblackburn@unomaha.edu</u>









Scores Our Other N

Our Other Name is a Pun ... 58 Staff Infection ... 58 Chewbacca ... 57 LOCness Monster ... 57 The REAL Founders of ISIS ...52 Dean's Dead Heads ... 41











40th Birthday September 2016





Lessons Learned: Variety

- > Free events...Events that cost money
- > Annual events...One-time events
- Food events...Active events...Community events
- Inside the library...Out in the wild
- Interaction required...Not required
- > Different times of day (involve all employees)



Lessons Learned: Funds, Support, Communication

Funds:

- Line in budget
- Friends group

Support of Leadership:

- \$\$ (what they provide)
- Verbal (what they say)
- Visual (how they participate)

Communication:

>Frequent updates by email or whatever works for you

>Bulletin board that changes and is interactive



Lessons Learned: Formalize

Give your committee (group, team...) structure:

- Elect leaders and set term limits.
- > Aim for participation from every department/area.
- > Be flexible (don't squash enthusiasm).

Strategic planning:

- > "Culture" reflected in current plan.
- Need leadership on board...refer them to research presented earlier if they're reluctant!
- Workplace culture can turn over quickly—for the good or bad. Make it a priority.



References

For continuous updates on creating an engaged and supportive workplace, subscribe to *Library Worklife* (ALA/APA) at <u>http://ala-apa.org/newsletter/</u>

Garcia, M. A. (2011). *Ask a librarian: The profession, professional identities, and constitutive rhetoric of librarians.* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3470703)

George, J. M., & Jones, G. R. (2008). *Understanding and managing organizational behavior*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Greer, B. P. D., Stephens, D., & Coleman, V. (2001). Cultural diversity and gender role spillover: A working perspective. *Journal of Library Administration*, 33, 125-140.



The University of Nebraska does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment.