

Harry Potter Yule Ball

[Salt Lake County Library Services](#)

Young Adult

Harry Potter Yule Ball

Apr 24, 2015

\$1,001-2,500

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Your name

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Library Services

The Harry Potter Yule Ball is a free annual event for teens hosted by the Salt Lake County Library at the library's Viridian Event Center. In 2015 — the third year of the event — it featured a presentation by the Rocky Mountain Muggles costume troupe, dancing with a DJ, a Diagon Alley, and free crafts and activities. This event is held from 7 to 10 p.m. and is for teens ages 12 to 19 only. It is presented in partnership with The Harry Potter Alliance, the Rocky Mountain Muggles and FantasyCon.

Advanced Planning

2015 was our third year doing this event. Our first one was in January 2013 and we had 700 teens. From there, it has grown to 1,100 in 2014 until we reached 1,500 in 2015. Typically, we start planning about October/November for the event. However, we've gotten faster at it during the years! The event is run by a committee of librarians and our event planners at the Viridian Event Center.

Marketing

To promote the Teen Yule Ball, we utilized the large, existing audience for Harry Potter. That fandom has only grown over the years, reaching to a younger audience. We partnered with the Rocky Mountain Muggles, a charity costuming group who promoted and volunteered at the event. Additionally, we contacted some junior high and high schools Harry Potter clubs.

Teen Yule Ball also has an ongoing Facebook presence, and the months leading up to the event there were postings every day. The Facebook event was shared widely with our partners, particularly our largest partner in 2014, [FantasyCON](#). They shared it to their almost 100,000 Facebook fans, which increased its online presence. Geek'd Out Events, the Muggles and other groups also shared our posts. Furthermore, we did media alerts, press releases, posters and went to schools.

Budgeting

Salt Lake County Library is fortunate to have the [Viridian Event Center](#), which can accommodate an event of this size. The 7,100-square-foot multipurpose room is ideal for the dance. In doing an event like this, the cost of the space is typically the largest budget item. Each year the Yule Ball has been run for about \$1,500. (This does not include paid staffing costs.) The money primarily goes to a DJ, crafts, hiring tarot readers to tell fortunes, and to a lesser extent, décor.

In 2014, a craft room was created where teens could create wands out of chopsticks and superglue. This extremely popular craft was done cheaply, creating about 2,000 wands for \$300. You can find a detailed version of the craft on [The Leaky Cauldron's](#)

[website](#).

Day-of-event Activity

Teen Yule Ball is run by a small librarian committee with the Viridian Event Center manager (about six people each year). Each librarian takes a separate area: décor, crafts, activities, etc. Extra library staff are used for the day of the event, but that number doesn't exceed 10 or 12 total.

Volunteers are used heavily to supplement the paid staff. The Yule Ball is less structured, with activities in more of a central location and occurring through the evening. There is not much need for one-one-one guidance. Staff do more roving and providing directions than anything else. We also utilize the cosplayers from the Rocky Mountain Muggles and FantasyCON to not only create a wizardly ambience, but to provide directions and help at the event. There are teen volunteer at this event as well, and they help with set-up and take-down.

Program Execution

The Yule Ball is three hours long, an ideal time for this type of event. In the beginning the teens are sorted into houses and given a colored wristband. (To help promote the Teen Yule Ball further, we had the silicone wristbands printed with #teenyuleball so when the teens took selfies they could use the hashtag). From there, the teens can proceed to several places: the dance, craft room, game room with Wizard Chess and Harry Potter Scene It, fortune tellers (aka Divination Room), or a Diagon Alley complete with owls, snakes, backdrops and a Leaky Cauldron. Most of the teens completed all the activities, but spent the majority of the time at the dance.

During the dance and activities, teens could earn House Points. Roving staff inputted the points in a Google Sheet which was then updated on a Power Point screen and projected in the dance room. The House who had the most points had a special dance at the end — the teens always get very competitive for points!

In 2016, we are looking to expand the Yule Ball in hours or over two nights. We are pushing up against the fire code for the space, so to accommodate more teens changes have to be made. Another reason is that we've found that the younger teens (12-14) prefer the activities, while the older teens (14-19) prefer the dance. Having two separate dances, or an extended time for younger vs. older, would allow more activities and accommodate more teens.

Advice

My advice is to go for it! Harry Potter is a great theme and all ages love it. (We've learned that adults continue to be interested in Harry Potter. Each year we have adults asking when we will do a ball for them! Harry Potter truly transcends generations). Also, teens are an integral role in this event, they volunteer, plan and help promote it.

My only other piece of advice is that great-looking décor doesn't have to be expensive. The first year we took discarded Christmas trees and spray painted them white and silver. They looked great. This past year, large snowflakes were made and hung. They were just made out of paper and added to the winter feel of the event. You can find [directions for this craft online](#).

Supporting Materials

Document

[HPYuleBall15.pdf](#)

[Download this Program as a PDF](#)

- Feedback (Coming Soon!)
- [Programming Librarian Facebook Group](#)

Slideshow Images

Image



More Programs

Apr 12, 2015

Young Adult (17 - 20)+ |

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[Spring Teen Programming Ideas](#)

Audiences:

Audience

Young Adult (17 - 20)

Mar 19, 2015

Young Adult (17 - 20)+ | \$

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Zombie Prom

Audiences:

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Mar 19, 2015

Children (9 and under)+ | \$

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Open Mic

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)

Young Adult (17 - 20)

Adults (21 and up)

Intergenerational