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# NEWS RELEASE

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## Little Free Libraries Established at Dubuque Fire Stations

DUBUQUE, Iowa –The Dubuque Campaign for Grade-Level Reading and the AmeriCorps VISTA program recently established five permanent “Little Free Libraries” (LFLs) at five of Dubuque’s six fire stations to promote literacy and increase access to books.

A Little Free Library, in its most basic form, is a small box that houses free books for anyone to take and exchange at any time. Returns and/or exchanges are not mandatory, but encouraged. Dubuque’s Little Free Libraries are open to everyone regardless of income level, age, or residence. Non-residents are welcome to participate.

“The libraries provide a ‘take a book, return a book’ gathering place where people can share their favorite literature or stories,” said Stacy Seyer, AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Learning Coordinator, who coordinated the effort as part of her AmeriCorps VISTA project. “People are encouraged to make the book selections as unique as those living in the area.”

All time and supplies for the construction of the book houses were donated by area professionals, including Tricon Construction, Mike Brimeyer, John Gregorich, Mike Cherry, Dubuque Window and Door Co., and Guardian Industries. Installation was completed by Tim Lattner, Bob Lanka, and two Urban Youth Corps participants from the City’s Parks Division. An AmeriCorps VISTA book drive held in January 2014 yielded 1,500 donated books that were used to stock the libraries. The Dubuque Fire Department maintains the libraries with support of the Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

“The fire department is happy to be involved in this project,” said Rick Steines, assistant fire chief for the Dubuque Fire Department. “We welcome our neighbors to stop by the LFL locations and get to know their local firefighters while choosing a book.”

Dubuque’s Little Free Libraries can be found at the following fire station locations:

- 2180 JFK Rd. (Fire Station 2)
- 3155 Central Ave. (Fire Station 3)
- 1697 University Ave. (Fire Station 4)
- 689 S. Grandview Ave. (Fire Station 5)
- 1500 Rhomberg Ave. (Fire Station 6)

Other Free Little Libraries locations in Dubuque include:

- Mercy Hospital, 890 W. Third St.
- Lincoln Elementary, 419 Winona St.
- University of Dubuque, corner of North Algona St. and West Third St.
- Eisenhower Elementary, 2984 Castle Woods Lane
- Bryant Elementary, 220 Hill St.

Additional locations are expected to be added in the future.

The worldwide movement of Little Free Libraries (LFLs) began in Wisconsin in 2009. As a tribute to his mother, a former school teacher with a love of reading, Todd Bol built a model of a one-room schoolhouse and filled it with books free for the taking. By January 2014, the total number of registered Little Free Libraries in the world was conservatively estimated to be nearly 15,000, with thousands more being built.

A “Dubuque Little Free Libraries” Facebook page has been created and general information about Little Free Libraries is available at <http://littlefreelibrary.org>.

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