

May 27, 2016

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Close the Books on a Fantastic First Little Free Library Festival

Minneapolis, Minn. – The book-loving, community-building, nonprofit Little Free Library successfully celebrated its mission with friends and supporters on the grounds of Minnehaha Park in Minneapolis on Saturday, May 21.

“The festival was a fun way to mark Little Free Library’s growth from an idea about tiny book exchanges to a nonprofit organization with global reach that connects communities to books and to each other,” said Todd Bol, Little Free Library Founder and Executive Director. The festival came just four days after the nonprofit’s fourth birthday.

Based on Minneapolis Police and Park Board staff estimates, it appears that about 8,000 people enjoyed the day-long festivities, which included music, poetry, puppetry, puppies, and Harry Potter trivia. Other highlights from the day included a Little Free Library build, a book swap and giveaway, hair trims for kids, a canine costume contest, and a fundraiser.

- The festival began with the reading of a proclamation signed by Governor Mark Dayton declaring May 21, 2016 to be Little Free Library Day in the state of Minnesota.
- Volunteers from the community and Minneapolis law enforcement built 104 Little Free Libraries that will be placed in locations where they can have high impact, including 25 destined for North Minneapolis.
- As part of the festival, 30 people were selected to receive free Libraries from more than 250 online applicants who described the impact the Libraries would have in their neighborhoods. An additional five were given away through random drawings at the festival.
- More than 5500 books were given away. These included 2262 copies of Happy by Pharrell Williams and 2520 Adult and Young Adult titles donated by Penguin Random House; 300 books donated by Little Free Library; and 575 brought to the festival by the public.
- Approximately 100 children read books while receiving hair trims and color sprays from the Storybook Barbers.
- Proud fur-baby parents outfitted 25 dogs for the Canine Literary Costume Contest. With costumes ranging from Harry Potter characters, to "d'Ogtagnan" based on a character from Alexandre Dumas' The Three Musketeers, to Otto Binder's Supergirl, to “Thing 1 and Thing 2” from Dr. Seuss, they were all winners.
- The Tutus-on-Wheels Fundraiser drew 88 who participants helped to raise more than \$3000 to support Little Free Library’s mission to motivate readers and connect communities through the sharing of books.

For those who could not make it to Minnehaha Park, Little Free Library collaborated with Penguin Random House and the American Library Association to promote participation in National Readathon Day.

“May 21st was a special day and we’re grateful to Little Free Library stewards, festival volunteers, our festival sponsors, and readers around the worlds who helped to make it great,” notes Bol.

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