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Little Boxes, Big Hearts: New Map Tracks Little Free Libraries Sharing Food and Household Items

The Little Free Library nonprofit organization invites all sharing-box owners to add their locations to this online resource

Hudson, WI (April 7, 2020) – A new online map launched by the Little Free Library® (LFL) nonprofit organization tracks little libraries sharing food, personal-care items and other household goods—from ramen noodles and fresh fruit to toilet paper and face masks. The map can be found on LFL’s website [here](#).

Many Little Free Library stewards have transformed their book boxes to include alternative items in an effort to help neighbors in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. The sharing-box map makes it easy for families and individuals to find these locations across the country.

“Little Free Library stewards converting their libraries into broader sharing boxes are showing the better side of humanity in a deeply challenging time,” says LFL executive director Greig Metzger. “As the media picked up stories about them, we realized there were many more potentially going unnoticed. We decided to help our stewards spread the word by giving them an online resource to share their activity. We welcome anyone that would like to share, whether they have a registered library with us or not, to sign up.”

On the map, each location pin includes the sharing box’s address, city and state, often with a note about what is being offered. Items may include canned food, cleaning supplies, diapers, jigsaw puzzles and more. Here are a few examples of what’s happening at the sites:

- In Washington, D.C., Amanda Farnan shares soap and snacks. “To be quite honest, I did not think my supplies would be taken or noticed,” Farnan said. “I was wildly incorrect—as I continue to restock these libraries every other day, the supplies are always taken and the ‘pay it forward’ attitude continues!”
- In Anacortes, Washington, Carol Miner shares home-sewn face masks. “I sew the masks using my 1933 Singer featherweight sewing machine. The same machine that was used to sew bandages for the Second World War,” she noted. “To me that seemed very significant. I now make about a dozen masks a day for children as well as for adults.”
- In Buffalo, New York, Jenn Isaacson shares food to bridge the gap until school is back in session. “When they announced our schools were closing, I knew kids were going to be hungry,” she said. “So the next morning I emptied out our Little Free Library, put the word out on social media, and sat back and waited. Within four hours, we had food for those in need!”

- In Ojai, California, Kristine Humphries shares fruit from her citrus trees. “The demand for food banks and senior meal deliveries has skyrocketed in our area. The demand for books as well, and our bookstore and libraries are closed,” she said. “What Ojai has in abundance is citrus, so we have opted to put a free produce bin next to our Little Free Library.”
- In Evanston, Illinois, Joseph Meyer also shares food—and finds thank-you notes in return. “Many in our neighborhood were caught short by the COVID-19 crisis,” Meyer said. “Paychecks ended as stores and restaurants closed. Once our local food pantry closed, we decided to change the focus of our LFL.... The need is there. We have the ability to help. It’s who we are.”

While currently most of the sharing boxes on the new map are in the United States, countries like Australia, Canada and India are also represented. LFL invites all sharing-box owners to add their locations to the map.

Do you have a sharing box you’d like to add to Little Free Library’s sharing-box map? [Fill out this form](#) to submit your location.

For more information about LFL’s sharing-box map or to read their [suggested best practices](#) at Little Free Library boxes during the COVID-19 outbreak, visit LittleFreeLibrary.org.

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Carol Miner’s Little Free Library in Anacortes, Washington, sharing face masks.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Additional photos available upon request.

About Little Free Library: Little Free Library (LFL) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that inspires a love of reading, builds community and improves book access by fostering neighborhood book-exchange boxes around the world. LFL has received recognition from the Library of Congress, the National Book Foundation and others for its dedication to expanding book access for all. There are more than 100,000 registered Little Free Library book-sharing boxes worldwide, located in all 50 states and in 108 countries. Through them more than 165 million books have been shared. To learn more, visit LittleFreeLibrary.org.