

Todd H. Bol

About Founder and Creator Todd H. Bol, 1956-2018

Todd H. Bol created the first Little Free Library in 2009 in Hudson, Wisconsin, launching what would become a global book-sharing movement.

Todd built the inaugural Little Free Library book exchange in honor of his mother, a schoolteacher and lifelong reader. When he placed the structure in his front yard, Todd saw the “take a book, share a book” concept resonate with his neighbors, and he began shaping a vision to bring Little Free Libraries to the rest of the world.



I really believe in a Little Free Library on every block and a book in every hand. I believe people can fix their neighborhoods, fix their communities, develop systems of sharing, learn from each other, and see that they have a better place on this planet to live.

Todd H. Bol
Co-Founder, Little Free Library

Read select news stories celebrating Todd's life:

- [Todd Bol, Creator of Little Free Library Movement, Dies at 62 \(The New York Times\)](#)
- [Todd Bol, whose Little Free Library brought books to the street corner, dies at 62 \(The Washington Post\)](#)
- [Todd Bol, who started Little Free Library, dies at 62 \(TODAY\)](#)
- [Todd Bol, man who started the Little Free Library movement, dies at 62 \(USA Today\)](#)
- [Todd Bol Searched for a Mission and Finally Found It with Little Free Libraries \(The Wall Street Journal\)](#)
- [The legacy of Todd Bol and his Little Free Libraries \(Philanthropy Daily\)](#)
- [Hail and farewell to those we lost in 2018 \(CBS Sunday Morning\)](#)
- [Little Free Library creator Todd Bol passes after cancer battle \(KARE 11\)](#)
- [Little Free Library Creator Todd Bol Dies \(NPR\)](#)
- [A Tribute to Todd H. Bol \(Publishers Weekly\)](#)
- [After terminal cancer diagnosis, Little Free Library founder feels like 'most successful person I know' \(Star Tribune\)](#)

In 2012, Todd co-founded the Little Free Library nonprofit organization with Rick Brooks (retired from Little Free Library 2014), serving as executive director until October 2018, when he died of complications of pancreatic cancer. By the time of his death, there were more than 75,000 registered Little Free Library book exchanges around the world in 88 countries, from the Netherlands, Brazil, and Japan to Australia, Ghana, and Pakistan.

Todd spent much of his last decade working toward a world where neighbors know each other by name and everyone has access to books. In the days before his passing, Todd shared these thoughts:

“I really believe in a Little Free Library on every block and a book in every hand. I believe people can fix their neighborhoods, fix their communities, develop systems of sharing, learn from each other, and see that they have a better place on this planet to live.”

He was heartened by the community of Little Free Library stewards around the world dedicated to literacy and community, saying, “How I love them so; 75,000 like-minded people who believe reading defines our humanity. [The Little Free Library network] is the stewards’ song of community.”

But Todd was more than just the creative force behind Little Free Library. He was a teacher, a lifelong entrepreneur, a father and a husband. He is survived by his wife Susan, his daughter Allison and his son Austin, who said of Todd, “He was the best, most generous, goofy, and kind person. He taught us to be kind to others. To many he was an innovator and genuine change maker. To us, he was dad. We will miss him always.”

In the wake of Todd’s death, more than 500 people shared stories and fond memories of Todd’s generous spirit and innovative nature. Read them all here. Stewards also honored Todd’s memory by placing a silver or white ribbon on their Little Libraries and using #ThankYouToddBol to share photos on social media.

