



LITTLE FREE LIBRARY.ORG®
TAKE A BOOK • SHARE A BOOK



Media Contact

Jeff Reiter

Cantigny Park

630.260.8218

jreiter@mccormickfoundation.org

CANTIGNY PARK DEBUTS LITTLE FREE LIBRARY

May 7 grand opening includes children's book drive with Bernie's Book Bank

Wheaton, Ill., April 7, 2021—[Cantigny Park](#) will soon have a new attraction, and it's not a garden, a tank or museum exhibit. On Friday, May 7, the park plans to unveil a Free Little Library book exchange near the Red Oaks Farm playground. Visitors will be able to "take a book and share a book" during park hours, seven days a week.

The initiative launches Cantigny's partnership with [Little Free Library](#) (LFL), a nonprofit organization dedicated to building community, inspiring readers and expanding book access for all. It's the world's largest book-sharing movement, with more than 100,000 registered libraries in 108 countries. Wheaton alone has about 30, mostly in neighborhood front yards.

A ribbon cutting is planned for 10 am on Friday, May 7. [Bernie's Book Bank](#), based in Lake Bluff, will conduct a Children's Book Drive on site from 10 am to 2 pm. Only new or gently used books for ages birth through 6th grade reading levels will be accepted. Bernie's mission is to collect and distribute books to the children who need them most throughout Chicagoland.

"It's going to be a special day at Cantigny, and a great day for literacy," said Alicia Catalano, Cantigny Park membership and retail operations manager. "We've been wanting a Little Free Library for some time now, and the pandemic set back our plans. But we know it'll be worth the wait and the library is a great fit with our playground and surrounding picnic area."

The Little Free Library was built by [Wheaton Rotary](#), which supports literacy in the community. Rotarians Tom Newman and Thor Davidson designed and constructed the Cantigny library with a farm theme, to complement the Red Oaks Farm playground.

Books in the library are intended for beginning through young adult readers. Some titles will be provided by Cantigny but all park visitors are encouraged to donate and, of course, take books home to enjoy.

In addition, Cantigny has signed on to [Read in Color](#), a program supporting equity and inclusion that aims to bring diverse children's books to Little Free Library book-sharing boxes around the world. The initiative by LFL began last summer in Minneapolis, following the death of George Floyd.

###

About Little Free Library

Little Free Library (LFL) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that builds community, inspires readers and expands book access for all through a global network of volunteer-led little libraries. Founded in 2009, the organization is at the center of a global literacy movement, with more than 100,000 book exchanges in all 50 states and 108 countries. LFL has been

honored by the Library of Congress, National Book Foundation and World Literacy Foundation for improving book access and bringing people together. Learn more at www.littlefreelibrary.org.

About Bernie's Book Bank

Founded as a 501(c)(3) in 2009, Bernie's Book Bank has sourced, processed and distributed more than 19 million quality new and gently used children's books to underserved infants, toddlers and school-age children throughout Chicagoland. Each year, Bernie's Book Bank delivers bags of six books to children through their schools and early childhood programs. The mission is to increase book ownership and empower children to read their way to a better life. For more information, visit www.berniesbookbank.org.

About Wheaton Rotary

Founded in 1959, Wheaton Rotary is a group of business and professional women and men who meet weekly, where the knowledge and experience of a guest speaker is shared and matters of interest are discussed. The purpose of club fellowship is to provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and to help build goodwill and peace in the world. Rotary International connects 1.2 million people of action from more than 35,000 Rotary clubs in almost every country. For more information, visit WheatonRotary.org or Rotary.org.

About Cantigny Park

Cantigny Park, part of the Chicago-based Robert R. McCormick Foundation, is the 500-acre Wheaton estate of Robert R. McCormick (1880-1955), long-time editor and publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*. It is home to the McCormick House, First Division Museum, display gardens, picnic grounds, walking trails and a Visitors Center with banquet and dining facilities. More information, including hours, directions and upcoming events is online at Cantigny.org. Cantigny Golf, adjacent to the park, features a 27-hole championship golf course, full-service clubhouse, Cantigny Golf Academy and the 9-hole Cantigny Youth Links. For more information, visit CantignyGolf.com.