



# St. Charles City-County

## LIBRARY FOUNDATION

[www.stchlibraryfoundation.org](http://www.stchlibraryfoundation.org)

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Library Foundation and Rotary Place Mini Libraries to Bridge Children's Literacy Gap

**(St Peters, MO - November 20, 2013)** The St. Charles City-County Library Foundation is making an impact on reading readiness through the placement of miniature libraries with organizations that serve young children and families. The Foundation, focused on enhancing literacy throughout the county, specifically concentrates on children from birth to five years of age with its Ready to Read program. Ready to Read seeks to ensure that every child is equipped with the vital early literacy skills necessary to learn to read by the time he or she begins kindergarten.

"Developing literacy skills early in life is key to building a solid foundation for success in school," says Kristin Williams, Executive Director of the Library Foundation. "Studies show children without a solid foundation of basic vocabulary and exposure to reading are already behind when they start kindergarten. These kids typically stay behind, making it harder for them to succeed in school, in a career and throughout life. The Library Foundation is working to bridge that gap."

Generous donations from the Rotary Clubs of Cottleville Weldon Spring, St. Charles Sunrise and St. Charles Noonday, along with a matching gift from Rotary District 6060, made the placement of six new miniature libraries possible. Children and families can take advantage of age-appropriate books and educational toys at these partnering agencies:

- Boys and Girls Club - St. Charles
- New Frontier Bank at Zumbahl Road - St. Charles
- Church of the Shepherd - St. Charles
- The Salvation Army - St. Charles
- Department of Social Services - St. Peters
- Crider Health Center pediatric dental unit - Wentzville

Two-thirds of children living in poverty have no books at home; others in struggling families have no one to read to them and help them learn. By placing small libraries with agencies serving this population, the Library Foundation and Rotary are working together to educate the community on the importance of reading and specifically reach these fragile families. Additional funding from the Rotary Club of O'Fallon allowed the Library Foundation to provide a mini library to families selected for a home from Habitat for Humanity.

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The support of local Rotary Clubs was a natural partnership due to the Rotary International organization's efforts to strengthen the capacity of communities to support basic education, increase adult literacy, and reduce gender disparity in education. The passion for literacy is evident in both Rotary and the Library Foundation with several board members and employees serving both organizations.

"Literacy is important to Rotarians. Children who are strong readers perform better in school and can make a tremendous difference in our community," says Sue Cobb, a member of the Rotary Club of Cottleville/Weldon Spring and chairperson of the club's Foundation committee which oversees grant gifts. "We want to help build reading skills in our community and are thrilled to partner with the Library Foundation on these mini libraries."

For additional details about the Library Foundation's Ready to Read initiative, to make a donation or get involved, visit the Foundation online at [www.stchlibraryfoundation.org](http://www.stchlibraryfoundation.org) or contact Kristin [kwilliams@stchlibrary.org](mailto:kwilliams@stchlibrary.org) or call 636-441-2300, extension 1582.



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