

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Territory's First 'Little Library' Installed In St. Thomas

Tourism / **Published On March 26, 2019 10:20 AM /**

Staff **March 26, 2019**



St. Thomas is now home to the territory's first Little Free Library, an international neighborhood book exchange program that will give children and residents of all ages access to free reading material, the Department of Tourism announced Monday.

According to the release, earlier this month, the first Little Free Library was installed at the Havensight Mall near Smoking Rooster with the help of volunteers from the University of Alaska and Howard University. Volunteers worked with My Brother's Workshop (MBW) as part of their participation in the [Department of Tourism's Purpose in Paradise voluntourism program](#), which matches visitors interested in contributing their time or resources with projects in need of assistance.

Made possible by philanthropic support from Carnival Corporation, Princess Cruises and Princess Cruises Community Foundation, "Little Free Libraries VI" will be a shared resource that aims to encourage and inspire not only a love of reading but also community engagement. The Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) is managing the funds and overall implementation of the project.

"At Princess Cruises, we are reminded on a daily basis how interconnected we are with the communities and people around the world," said Karen Reich, executive director of Princess Cruises Community Foundation. "That's why we are thrilled to help bring the first Little Free Library to St. Thomas, which we hope will inspire a love of reading, spark creativity and foster community."



Tourism industry and community representatives at this month's unveiling

Upon arrival, Princess Cruises' passengers eagerly donated gently used books. Within two hours of assembling the 'run off' donation box, donations exceeded 100 books.

In the coming months, volunteers will install approximately two dozen Little Libraries across St. Thomas and St. John. The project partners are also exploring additional funding and partnership opportunities to expand the project to St. Croix.

"We are excited to see our months of planning come to fruition," noted CFVI's Director of Grants and Programs, Anna Wheatley Scarbriel. "When the Carnival and Princess teams approached us about supporting hurricane recovery, we knew we wanted to incorporate unique initiatives that would touch on some of our preexisting challenges, such as improving literacy and enriching the lives of our children and youth."

MBW Executive Director Jenny Hawkes noted: "Little Free Libraries is a program that the youth in our community will benefit from and MBW is happy to be a part of bringing this initiative to the VI."

In promoting the program, the Department of Tourism joins community-based organizations in the Territory in seeking to meet a critical need of children throughout the Virgin Islands.

"We are honored to have the support of Carnival Corporation and Princess Cruises in bringing Little Free Libraries to the U.S. Virgin Islands and helping our young people gain much needed access to these resources," stated Dept. of Tourism Commissioner Nominee Joseph Boschulte.

"The goals of the program align strongly with our vision for the Purpose in Paradise initiative," he added, while encouraging visitors and residents to visit the neighborhood locations and donate books.

The territory's Little Free Libraries are started with preassembled kits and operate on the practice of "leave a book, take a book".

The world's largest book-sharing movement, Little Free Library is a nonprofit organization with more than 80,000 registered book-sharing boxes in 91 countries worldwide.

For more information about the national Little Free Library program, visit www.littlefreelibrary.org.