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SEASPAR Aktion Club

Growing Community Connections, One Library at a Time

2026 Single Service Project Award Submission by the SEASPAR Aktion Club

PROJECT AT A GLANCE

After successfully creating its first Little Free Library in 2024, the SEASPAR Aktion Club expanded the project in 2026 by planning, building, painting, and installing a second library in partnership with the Westmont Park District. This member-led project increases access to books, encourages reading, gives used books a new life, and creates a lasting point of connection for the community.

1. Identifying a Service Need

Aktion Club members recognized that access to books and opportunities to read should be available throughout the community, not limited to a school, bookstore, or traditional library. They also saw an opportunity to reduce waste by giving gently used books a new home instead of allowing them to be discarded. A Little Free Library offered a simple, welcoming solution built around the idea of “take a book, share a book.” Community members can choose a book at no cost and contribute a book for someone else to enjoy.

2. Creating the Service Project Plan

The project began with leadership from one of the club’s board officers, who opened a conversation with the Executive Director of the Westmont Park District about bringing a Little Free Library to a Westmont park district site. The officer and director explored the proposed location together and considered visibility, accessibility, and the number of children, families, and community members who regularly use the area. The club then developed a collaborative plan that identified responsibilities for building, designing, painting, delivering, installing, and maintaining the library.

3. Carrying Out the Project Plan

Club members made meaningful decisions throughout the project. During a club meeting, members reviewed options and voted on the library’s colors. Eric Alwin, the club’s faculty advisor and sponsor from the Woodridge Kiwanis Club, constructed the library using wood and other materials he already had in his garage. Reusing these materials reinforced the project’s commitment to sustainability and kept costs low.

Members then took turns painting the library and contributed ideas for its design. Once the library was complete, the club coordinated delivery and installation with the Westmont Park District's facilities and maintenance team. Each phase, from selecting the location to choosing colors and completing the artwork, gave members an active role in transforming their idea into a permanent community resource.

4. Engaging Others

The project brought together Aktion Club members and advisors, the Woodridge Kiwanis Club, SEASPAR staff, and Westmont Park District staff. These partners shared their time, skills, materials, and resources to paint, transport, and install the library. Westmont Park District staff also became partners in monitoring and maintaining the library so that it remains inviting, stocked, and available to the public.

To celebrate the partnership and introduce the project to the community, the club organized a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Aktion Club members and advisors joined Westmont Park District and SEASPAR staff to share a few words about the process, recognize everyone's contributions, and officially welcome the community to use the library.

5. Impact on Aktion Club Members

Members experienced the full service-project process: recognizing a need, building a partnership, making group decisions, creating something together, and seeing it installed for public use. The project reinforced that their ideas and work can create visible, lasting change. It also strengthened members' leadership, teamwork, creativity, and pride in serving their community.

Completing a second Little Free Library showed members that the success of their 2024 project could grow into an ongoing service initiative. Members are now inspired to partner with another local community to create a third library and are continuing conversations about additional service projects they can lead in the future.

6. Impact on the Community

The Little Free Library is located outside a busy Westmont Park District building near softball fields. The site serves children and families participating in before- and after-school care, summer camp, recreational programs, athletic activities, and other community events. Its placement makes books available where people already gather, wait, play, and connect. Because the library is free and does not require registration or a library card, it offers an easy, low-barrier way for people of different ages and backgrounds to discover and share books.

The project will continue serving the community long after its installation. Each exchanged book supports literacy, reuse, and neighbor-to-neighbor generosity. The

library also raises awareness of Aktion Club, Kiwanis, SEASPAR, and the Westmont Park District and demonstrates what can happen when people with disabilities are recognized as leaders and active contributors within their communities.

Why This Project Stands Out

Growing Community Connections, One Library at a Time is more than the installation of a book-sharing box. It is a sustainable, member-led project that combines literacy, environmental responsibility, creative expression, and community partnership. By expanding from one Little Free Library in 2024 to a second in 2026 (and already envisioning a third) the SEASPAR Aktion Club has turned one successful service project into a growing tradition of access, inclusion, and community connection.