

VENTURE ACADEMICS Q4

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Little Free Libraries

Venture English Strand students built three Little Free Libraries which they will donate to low-income areas in hopes of keeping kids reading during the summer months. Junior Carly Schrum and Seniors Ally Anderson and Rita Tofanelli developed and organized a "Paws for Reading" program with second grade students at Indian Creek Elementary during the school year. As their program continued, they started wondering how they could transfer the student's excitement for reading to the months of summer vacation.

"The kids get so excited about reading, but some kids don't have the resources or support they need to keep reading while not in school," said Junior Carly Schrum.

The trio brainstormed and came up with the idea of building three Little Free Libraries and stocking them with books to prevent the "Summer Slide." "The Summer Slide" is the theory that kids who don't read during the summer often lose the reading progress they developed during the previous school year.

The students learned valuable skills during the project and have been supported by many people along the way. Emily Russ from MEDCO suggested the team pitch the idea to Jim McGrew at Suburban Lumber, who generously donated all the wood and many supplies for the libraries. Friends of the Marion Library donated children's books and Linn-Mar's Key Club donated money for the purchase of additional books to stock the libraries.

The greatest help, however, came from Billy Frosch, an Industrial Arts teacher at Linn-Mar. He helped students learn to use various tools and construct the libraries. All 3 libraries have been installed and are ready for children to use this summer.

HERE'S THE SCOOP:

LITTLE FREE LIBRARIES

DESIGN DASH

EB SOLUTIONS

REWILDING URBAN AREAS



Constructing libraries



Design Dash:

In April Venture Advanced Business students participated in DesignDash, a one-day entrepreneurial workshop for high school students presented by the University of Iowa Jacobson Institute and the Iowa EdTech Collaborative, in partnership with the university's John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (Iowa JPEC) and College of Education, Pearson, TechStars Iowa, 1 Million Cups, and MERGE.

Venture students were split up into two groups. One group was awarded best pitch, the other was awarded best presentation board.



EB Solutions

Venture AP Environmental Science students heard from Nick Glew, Marion Economic Development Co. President, and Ed Bertch, EB Solutions Owner, to learn about wetlands and how they impact economic development. Students, Glew, and Bertch visited the MEDCO Marion Enterprise Center which houses lots that can be purchased by companies to develop.

At the MEC site students learned of measures that were taken to preserve and move a wetland area on the property. Students had opportunities to take water and soil samples and learn about Ed's process when he evaluates wetland sites.



AP Environmental Science students at the MEC.

Rewilding Urban Areas

Venture Life Science (biology) students identified that the loss of natural prairie and native plants in Iowa has caused decline in the variety of plants, insects, and animals in our ecosystem. A loss of variety in our habitat has many negative consequences. Most notably, many pollinators no longer have host plants to support them. Without pollinators we cannot grow food.

These students came up with the idea create a solution to rewild urban areas. Students worked with local professionals such as Sylvia Street (Master Gardener), Andy Huck (Linn County Conservation), and Cindy Garlock (Noelridge Greenhouse).

Their solution? Create seed bombs (Newspaper balls filled with native seeds) that can be planted in urban yards to attract pollinators. Additionally students constructed an insect hotel prototype that will create homes for various types of pollinators.



Venture Health Science: Life Guard Helicopter at St. Lukes



Insect Hotel



Wending Quarry