

**CONTACT US**  
**Erick Bengel** | Features Editor  
 ebengel@dailyastorian.com

# WEEKEND BREAK

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Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Kassie Engel prepares to load books into her library in Chinook.

## Take a book, leave a book

Kassie Engel from Chinook runs the Little Free Library

By **PATTY HARDIN**  
 For *The Daily Astorian*

**B**uild your vocabulary, travel to other countries and experience their cultures, learn to care for plants and pets, or simply be entertained. All of this, and more, is possible with books.

Kassandra Engel, from Chinook, Washington, who turned 8 this week, is doing her part to put books in the hands of child and adult readers. With help from her grandparents, Jim and Tammy Engel, she created Kassie's Little Free Library.

When Kassie attended Shooting Stars Child Development Center in Astoria, she and her mom would drive by a free library on their way to and from the school. And when she saw a commercial on TV about free libraries, Kassie wanted to make one, too.

Samantha Engel, Kassie's mom, took her to Home Depot, and Kassie picked out the current color: pink. She helped grandpa Jim build and paint the library.

Tammy ordered a little stamp that Kassie uses to stamp every book that comes in. It reads:

"Kassie's Little Free Library  
 Take a Book - Leave a Book  
 Never for sale"

"Sometimes Kassie will go through the kids' books and pick out one she likes to read before she puts it in the library," Tammy said.

The house Tammy and Jim own, which is more than 100 years old, also contributed to the project: The library's door is the house's original bathroom window.

### Love of reading

The library has two sections: adult books on the top shelf, children's books on the bottom.

Tammy estimates that about 960 books have made it in and out of the library. "It's a busy little library," she said.

There is a bench by the library, and Tammy said she has seen kids ride up on their bicycles, take out a book, sit down on the bench and read.

Pink was Kassie's favorite color when she made the library, but now she would like to paint it purple. Whether that change will take place remains to be seen.

Tammy and Kassie check the library about once a month to perform any needed maintenance. They also try to make sure as many of the books as possible bear Kassie's special stamp.

In the Engel family, the love of books and reading has passed from grandmother to daughter to granddaughter. Now Kassie is working to make sure others have the opportunity to explore the exciting world of reading.

"Mom used to read to me," Samantha said, "and now I read to Kassie."

Kassie also reads on her own, about 20 minutes a day. "Reading is important," Kassie said, "because it helps you be a better learner."



**ABOVE:** Kassie Engel's library is full of a wide variety of publications. **LEFT:** Engel's library is free, but users are encouraged to swap out books.

**'READING IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT HELPS YOU BE A BETTER LEARNER.'**

**Kassie Engel** | 8-year-old from Chinook who runs the Little Free Library