

## HOOKED ON BOOKS?

Check out Friends of the Pleasanton Library semiannual sale



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Friends of the Library offers books for sale every day in its section of the library, as well as at its two big events each year.

By DOLORES FOX CIARDELLI

Looking for a novel “en français”? Don't miss the Friends of the Pleasanton Library book sale the weekend of Sept. 22-24.

“We always have Korean, Japanese and Chinese books — and one year we had eight boxes of Russian — but this time we have a bunch in the French language,” said book sale coordinator Kate Roush.

The group holds its sales each spring and fall, but its members gather every week year-round to sort through contributions that are donated every day. They keep only the books, DVDs and CDs that are in almost pristine condition.

“We get 40 boxes a week that we sort through to see what we can keep,” Roush said. “A group of us gets together every Monday and we organize what has been brought in, by genre.”

When Monday is a holiday, they work on Tuesday — otherwise they would be totally swamped, she said. They end up keeping about half of the materials to sell, donating the rest to groups that serve populations in need.

“We donate a lot of books to Open Heart Kitchen, to Livermore elementary schools, to Tri-Valley Haven, to veterans' organizations,” Roush said. “We have a woman who comes in and gets 10 boxes a week for Open Heart Kitchen, and she says they all go.”

They discard any textbook, computer or travel book that is more than five years old.

“We don't want to give any false information,” Roush explained.

What can't be sold or donated is recycled. Sorting the books includes leafing through them to check the condition — and for anything left inside.

“We go through every single book,” Roush said. “We won't use one that is written in, other than a name, or if it has highlighting. We will donate it but not sell it.”

She noted it is interesting to see what folks use for bookmarks — and leave inside — such as money, photos, birthday cards and letters.

“We get photos of grandkids — that always breaks our heart. We are going to post those this year,” Roush said.

They all read the letters they find.

“There was a whole series of letters written during some wartime,” Roush recalled. “They were very, very old and faded.”

They also find gift cards, which they cash in to benefit the library as does other money discovered.

“Once we found a \$50 bill and everyone was very excited,” Roush said.

Some people use paper clips as bookmarks, which she cautioned “mess up the books.”

Each book sale earns \$15,000-\$20,000, plus money is raised from the bookstore inside the library, across from the main checkout desk.

“It is on the honor system,” Roush said. “We have a little box there and people put money in the box. It makes about \$1,500 a month.”

One volunteer sells donated books that

are considered high value or unique on Amazon, which earns another \$1,000 each month.

All of these funds pay for programs and activities and to purchase materials and furnishings that aren't in the library's budget.

The Friends' storage room at City Hall contains about 600-700 boxes, with materials organized into 30 categories, and the week before each sale, everyone kicks into high gear.

“We can definitely use volunteers for our setup Sept. 18, 19 and 20,” Roush said. “We have teenagers who move all those boxes over for us on the 17th. Then there will be about 25 of us in there, unboxing everything, and putting the books in the same direction and on the shelves. It looks really nice on Friday.”

Roush said that former coordinators Marilyn and Hal Swanson developed a program that runs the sales efficiently. Thirty or so teenagers deliver the boxes of books, using pickup trucks.

“All the boxes are color coded so they know where to put them,” Roush said. “I will know how many feet we will need for each genre.”

The categories at the sale include popular novels as well as mystery, home and garden, cookbooks, textbooks, classics, sports, non-fiction, self-help books, romance, science fiction and children's books.

“The last four or five years, all the foreign language stuff, audio visual as well as reading materials, as well as learn-a-language, has grown immensely,” Roush noted.

The book sale will be held in the large meeting room at the library, 400 Old Bernal Ave. Cash, credit cards and local checks are accepted. ■

**‘We get 40 boxes a week that we sort through to see what we can keep ... We go through every single book.’**

**Kate Roush,**  
Book sale coordinator



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**Top:** Book sale coordinator Kate Roush and longtime volunteer Hal Swanson check the program he developed to make sure the thousands of books will have the right number of tables at the book sale. **Above:** Donated books are stored in boxes that are color-coded according to category.

### Book sale Sept. 22-24

**Friday:** 6-9 p.m., members only (\$10, annual individual; \$15, annual family; \$100, lifetime)

**Saturday:** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., open to everyone; 50 cents for small paperbacks; \$1 for trade paperbacks and hardbacks; \$1 for CDs; \$2 for DVDs

**Sunday:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., fill a shopping bag for \$7

**For more information:** visit [www.friendsofthepleasantonlibrary.org](http://www.friendsofthepleasantonlibrary.org).