

Friends of
BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
TOWSON BRANCH

April 2026 NEWSLETTER

Behind the Scenes to Prepare for the Book Sale (Part 2): Storing the Inventory

Editor's Note: In a previous newsletter, we took readers into the sorting area, where Friends board members shelve donated books by genre. The shelves, towering along a back wall in the library offices, fill quickly.

By Jan Davies

Once the donated books are sorted, then comes the process of boxing these thousands of books and moving them to the library's basement for storage until the sale (April 15-18 this year). Through trial and error, the book sale committee has determined the best way to box these books.

The first step was determining which box to use. Banker's boxes are sturdy, but a little too big and too difficult to pick up once full. Plus, their lids are loose fitting. Boxes from Chewy pet supply deliveries are plentiful and sturdy, but do not have proper-fitting lids. Boxes from office supply stores for reams of paper are just right! Approximately 700 paper boxes (see photo above) have been gathered over the years for reuse, some more battered than others.

Filling these boxes is similar to building a 3D puzzle. The boxes must be completely filled with books abutting each corner to prevent collapse. Twenty to 40 or more books of the same genre are artfully arranged so no space remains. If there is a little window of empty space, it is stuffed with paper and bubble wrap. When I first learned to box, I had to sign my box label so an experienced committee member could check my work! It may seem excessive, but the last thing we want to happen is a stack of



boxes tumbling, spilling its contents all over the storage room. Yes, it has happened! Plastic crates are used for special-sized books such as Fine Art, Cooking, and Travel Narrative and are stacked separately.



Every Friday, before the library opens, the “cart team” of Nora Kotula (at right in this photo, book sale co-chair), Doris McClure (at left in photo, secretary/treasurer), and Jan Davies (event committee chair) push the wheeled carts of boxes to the elevators, down two floors, and unload the boxes of future sales items in the basement storage closet-room. One side of the closet is for fiction, which is sold in the Wilson Room. The

other side is for nonfiction, sold in the Towson Room. Over the winter, the storage room slowly fills, building hopes of another successful book sale. To date, 585 boxes are stacked and awaiting YOU to come purchase their contents.

NEWS AND NOTES:

- Look for our postcard in the library, and bring it with you to the sale on Thursday or Friday, April 16-17, to receive one free fiction book.
- If you haven't yet, please renew your Friends membership for 2026. You can easily renew online at towsonfriends.org/support.
- Book Sale Reminder: We accept cash, checks or credit cards (minimum charge is \$5). Bargain day is Saturday, April 18, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., when all books are priced at \$5 a foot.
- Check out our website at www.towsonfriends.org

