

'It could be somebody else's treasure'

There will be more than 70,000 books at the Friends of Penfield Public Library's 30th annual book sale.

By **AMY CAVALIER**

Messenger Post Staff

In a small room in the rear of Penfield Public Library packed with boxes labeled with numbers, four women work like a well-oiled machine sorting books. They ought to. They have many years of volunteering with Penfield Public Library's annual book sale under their belts.

While they sort and box books, they reminisce.

Volunteer Julie O'Brien recalls arriving at former Denonville Middle School on the first morning of Penfield Library's annual book sale in 1977 only to discover the cafeteria freezers had turned off in the middle of the night and the chickens had gone bad.

"It stunk," she said of the sale.

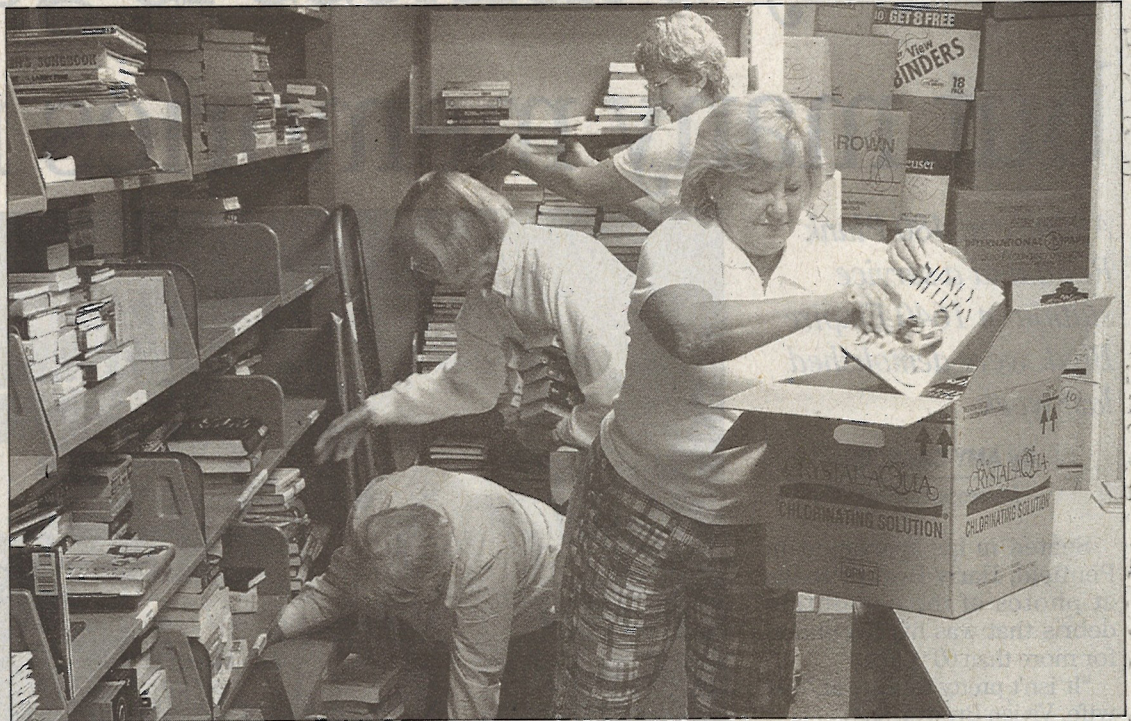
On Saturday of the sale on that same year, she got a call in the morning hours informing her that someone had broken the windows at the school overnight. There was glass all over the books. But the sale went on.

O'Brien got a good laugh out of it later that day when a gentleman asked her if there was any science-fiction at the book sale.

"I said 'Sir, the whole sale has been science-fiction from the start,'" she recalls.

This year is the Friends of Penfield Public Library's 30th year hosting a book sale. The sale runs Sept. 11 through 15 at Penfield Public Library, 1985 Baird Road.

The sale is open to members only from 5 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 11. Membership costs \$5 per person. The sale is open to the general public from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 12 and Thursday, Sept. 13. On Friday, Sept. 14, books will be half-



STAFF PHOTO/AMY CAVALIER

Members of Friends of Penfield Public Library sort books for the 30th annual Penfield Library Book Sale, which will be held Sept. 11 through the 15 at the Penfield Community Center, 1985 Baird Road.

Fast facts:

- **Who:** Friends of Penfield Public Library
- **When:** Tuesday, Sept. 11 through Saturday, Sept. 15.
- **Where:** Penfield Public Library, 1985 Baird Road.
- **For more information:** call (585) 340-8655.

price and the sale will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. On Saturday, Sept. 15, books will cost \$3 per bag from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

This year there are more than 70,000 books sorted into 50 categories. They are donated to the library throughout the year.

A handful of volunteers does all the sorting, which begins the day after the sale ends. Last Thursday, sorters included Maggie Hession, president of Friends of Penfield Public Library, O'Brien, Eileen Line and Priscilla Due.

"I come in whenever I'm available," says Due. "When I was (living) across the street, I

practically haunted the place."

As they sort, Librarian Camille DeVecchio comes in looking for a specific title.

"So many books are added to the library's collection," she said. "I scavenge some from the sale."

Money raised by the annual event pays for equipment for the library. In 2006, the funds were used for a new digital camera, a new color printer, scanner and copier, a new fax machine, tote bags for patrons, downloadable books, March Into Arts programming and new podcasting equipment for teen programming.

Most hardbacks go for \$1 apiece and paperbacks are priced at 50 cents apiece, but books on the special rack might bring in a few more dollars. They include things like good quality children's books and New York Times best sellers.

Hession said dealers come in the first night of the sale, pay \$5 to become a Friend of Penfield Public Library and buy up a lot

of books. Some come from as far away as Pennsylvania and Boston. Books left over at the end of the sale are donated to charity, home schoolers, teachers and religious organizations.

"It could be somebody else's treasure," says Hession.

The women sorting books for the sale say they clean out their shelves at home and bring them in to be sold. O'Brien cleaned out her son's record collection, accidentally donating his old Beatles White Album to the sale.

The women said they also pick up a few items while volunteering. Line admits spending \$90 last year. Volunteers get to pick out six books before the sale begins as a reward for their hard work. It's fun work, they say.

"It is or we wouldn't be doing it," says Due, "because the pay isn't that good."

"I'm giving you all a raise," Hession chimes in. "One hundred percent more than you got last year."