

Sustainable Claremont, the Next Chapter: BOOKS

By Lanore Pearlman, President
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Books are a home decorator's nightmare and an ecological mess. If you are a book lover, you are very aware of what happens when you buy more books than you have shelf space. You either buy more shelves, double up, or begin stacking -- or perhaps all three.

Books are made of various papers, inks, glues and other materials. Trees are downed, precious water is sacrificed, and a variety of other vital commodities are consumed to write, print, distribute, sell, and manage books. Not to mention *read* them!

So what is it with readers? Some of us study the best-seller list and read the books as they make their way to the top. Others read what their friends suggest or watch for stars on Amazon.com. Some are just learning to read. Others want help, or a good story, or a look at the past. Some are attracted by clever titles or stunning pictures on the cover. Readers buy books because there is a promise. *You will be transported.*

But, for the earth's sake, we need to get a grip on this book issue, and as president of the Friends of the Claremont Library, I am proposing some very sustainable, tree- water- and energy-saving suggestions:

Check out books from the library. There is a wide array of fiction and non-fiction available to you, for three weeks, and you can renew if you are a slow reader who likes to savor a book. No need to find room for these books on your bookshelf.

Shop at the Friends of the Claremont Library Bookstore for books that attract you. There is a very good bookstore in the Claremont Library. Volunteers work most days to renew the selection and restock the shelves. I guarantee, you'll find books you didn't even know you wanted at prices you can afford. And no \$3.99 shipping!

Corollary: Bring to the Claremont Library the books you no longer want.

On your shelves and in your stacks are books that you read but don't intend to look at again, or that book club read that didn't strike a chord with you, or even books that you bought awhile back but don't actually plan to read. In fact you don't know why you picked them up in the first place. Your books will then be added to those brought in by others and sold to readers who have an interest.

One afternoon, we had a group of scouts come to the library for a tour of the facility. They planned this trip in advance and had decided that they would each go through the books in their personal library and bag up the ones they no longer wanted to keep. And our bookstore received over a hundred books, which we then sold to children at prices ranging from 25 cents to two dollars. Recycling and promoting literacy go hand in hand.

Find books to treasure and give as gifts every day in the Claremont Library glass display case and in the December Antiquarian / Fine Book Sale.

Generous Claremont community members often donate some of the most beautiful, valuable, important, whimsical, old, collectible, artistic, historical, literary, and rare books! A number of them have been autographed. There isn't a better place to discover that rare find.