



Champaign County Humane Society



GIANT Garage Sale Volunteer Handbook

Kesler Hall, Champaign County Fairgrounds, Urbana

Thank you for volunteering! The first CCHS Garage Sale was held April 1985. Since then our annual sales have yielded more than three quarters of a million dollars to care for the homeless pets at CCHS. This year's sale is sure to be another winner.

I'm here – now what?

- Get yourself a nametag (green for first-year, red for second-year and white for veterans; department czars and czarinas wear blue) and check in at the Command Center with the day supervisor who will be wearing a big pawprint on a yellow apron. She/he can direct you to where you're needed. New volunteers will be matched up with a veteran. Return your tag to the board at the end of your shift. We reuse these from year to year.
- Sign yourself in on your timesheet. Fill out your contact info so our records are up-to-date. Please record your hours every shift you work. It's important to our planning.

What jobs are needed to be done?

During dropoffs: • Help unload vehicles. Sticky notes are available for any details donors might share, especially on valuable items. Be certain to thank the donor and offer a tax letter. • Sort merchandise. • Price merchandise • Sort/evaluate/display clothing.

During the sale: • Bag merchandise for cashiers • Straighten merchandise and move items from floor to table • Assist shoppers

After the sale: • Sort, recycle leftovers • Clean Kesler Hall • Return sale props to CCHS

A few words about sorting/pricing

Merchandise is priced at the tables throughout the hall by the Czars and Czarinas who have volunteered to be responsible for them. (See list of czars/czarinas posted in Command Center). The exception is housewares, which are priced at the sorting/pricing tables in the middle of Kesler Hall near the ramp and delivered to the housewares tables. Nothing should be priced under \$0.25. If you'd like to work in a particular section, please let the day supervisor know. Place unpriced items in the other categories on the ends of the tables nearest the aisle. Clothing, shoes, children's clothing and toys, linens and purses are taken directly up the ramp where volunteers in those sections sort them. Fur items are being collected for wild animal rehabilitation.

Anything electrical – small appliances, lamps, personal care items and electronics – are checked and labeled to be in good working order. Those that do not work are recycled.

• Boutique items

If an item appears to be valuable or collectible, set it aside in the designated area in the Boutique (in the corner near the ramp). Suspected antiques are set aside in a designated area of the Antique department (under the CCHS banner at the far end of Kesler). These items will be evaluated during the organization days by knowledgeable experts and priced accordingly by Thursday before the sale. None of the items will be sold from the Antiques department before sale day. If you are interested in a Boutique item, indicate that interest to the Ervins in the Antique section. Your interest does not obligate you to buy the item. If multiple volunteers are interested in the same item, we'll conduct a silent auction. All items will go on sale to the volunteers first on the Thursday before the sale – time to be announced – at the prices set by our panel of experts.

• Price stickers

Our standard tools are black Sharpie pens and masking tape. Be careful where you place labels/tape. (Don't put them on the front of a painting, for instance, or in a place where it may harm the finish) and remove others' price stickers on items.

• Box small items

Small trinkets that sell for less than a quarter should be grouped together with similar items and sold as a bundle or box, priced accordingly. Be creative. We've found that dishes and glasses are more appealing and convenient for buyers if boxed ahead and sold as a set. Similar, but mismatched pieces of china can be attractively presented when sold as a unit. Craft items in particular are enticing and more salable when packaged.

We recycle!

Plastic, paper and cardboard are all recycled in the large green U-Cycle toter bins. Plastic bags are put in the labeled barrels and folded for use at the sale. Packing materials are saved in the labeled barrels for use by Housewares pricers and at sale days. Cardboard boxes are stacked in the corner near the overhead door for recycling or re-use. Metal items (nonworking electrical items, etc.) are left in the same corner. Clothes and other fiber items, shoes, belts, plush toys that do not sell or are too poor condition to sell are also recycled/reused by a recycler at the end of the sale. We'll have a trucked dedicated to the fiber recycling.

Housekeeping

- Restrooms are in the block building just west of Kesler Hall.
- Contributions to the canteen are welcome. Lunch is provided each workday by a volunteer. Menu is posted. Both vegetarian and meat options are offered.
- A good work ethic is appreciated. Taking a break after putting in some time and perusing the tables is expected.
- Your suggestions are welcome. A suggestion box is at the Command Center.

What don't we sell? We also don't accept these if they're visible in their donation. If they're buried in the box, we're stuck with them and find a home for them elsewhere. Handouts for alternative venues – Habitat's ReStore, Goodwill, etc – are available.

- Animal traps
- Anything broken or with missing parts
- Books without covers
- Carpeting
- Chemicals
- Children's car seats
- Computer monitors, unless flat screen
- Electrical items that do not work
- Flammable liquids
- Large appliances or furniture
- Lumber
- Magazines
- Mattresses/box springs
- Paint
- Sinks
- Tires
- Windows
- Weapons

Frequently asked questions

Is my donation tax deductible? Yes. Give them a blank "tax form." We do not set the value, nor list what they donate. This is the donor's responsibility.

When is the sale? Friday (from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and Saturday (from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and Sunday (10 a.m.-noon giveaway) of Memorial Day weekend.

Is there an admission for the sale? There is a \$3 admission charge until 3 p.m. on Friday and \$1 admission for the giveaway.

Is there a bag sale? Yes. Starting at 3 p.m. on Saturday. The price is \$3 per grocery bag (paid as the shopper leaves). We provide the bags. We will ask all shoppers to leave the building about 2:30 to give us some time to set up. During this time we will scan the merchandise to see if there is anything we would like to reserve to try to sell elsewhere. Asking everyone to leave prevents some of our shoppers from just stockpiling merchandise and waiting until the bag sale starts to pay for it.

When is the last day for drop-offs? Sunday before the sale at 3 p.m.

Can I pay for this item and pick it up later? No. We will no longer accept money for large items during the sale and then hold the item while they go find a friend with a truck. If they want the item, they must pay for it and then take it out of the building. We have had too many unpleasant incidents as a result of the "sold" tag being lost or deliberately removed or swapped and we have sold the item twice.

Perks for the volunteers

All volunteers who work a minimum of *10 hours before the sale* **and** *commit to working at least four hours during the sale or cleanup* are eligible to purchase items before the sale. There will be a small area set aside for volunteers to collect items they would like to purchase **as soon as they have worked 10 hours**. Be sure your name is on your box. *If something is not yet priced, ask the Czar or Czarina from that section to price it for you. You may not price your own purchases.* After you've worked 10 hours, you may record your purchases on the backside of your time sheet when you remove your items and pay for your purchases at one time. All items must be paid for and removed from the holding area by Thursday before the sale or they will be returned to the sale floor. *The day supervisor on duty is the only one allowed to take money.*

Finally: The big days

We have a critical need for volunteers to work the days of the sale.

We will provide a pizza lunch, salad and drinks on Friday and Saturday for volunteers working over the lunch hour. Pizza will be served about 11 a.m. *Your privilege of shopping the sale early is predicated on your volunteering during sale and cleanup.*

On Friday no negotiations are made on pricing. At noon Saturday Czars and Czarinas may selectively cut prices and negotiate during the bag sale for larger items. We do NOT have a half-price sale. It never hurts to remind our shoppers that all proceeds benefit the homeless animals at the Humane Society, though that will not likely motivate them to stop dickering.

Cleanup

We do a minimal amount of cleanup as the bag sale winds down. We will return at 8 a.m. Sunday to continue the cleanup. We instituted a giveaway on Sunday morning in 2011. Cleanup continues in the midst of the giveaway. We need volunteers with trucks to help move fixtures back to the shelter Sunday and Tuesday. We need fresh volunteers for the weekend cleanup.

Thanks again for volunteering. On behalf of the CCHS Board of Directors, I thank you for your support! If you have questions, please contact me at 217-763-6999 H or 217-871-1927 C or mlpayne@illinois.edu.  Mare Payne, Chair