



Cassandra Moss

For the love of books
Elementary school student organizes
Saturday book drive to promote literacy

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The idea for a community-wide book drive came to 11-year-old Cassandra Moss at a most appropriate time while she was reading. Last month, Moss read about Read All Over, an organization 10-year-old Brant Whiting founded in 2001 that promotes literacy through book drives. Moss thought, "Wow, I should do that," she said. "I think this community probably has a lot of books." The Kalmiopsis Elementary School fifth-grader will hold the book drive from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday during the PTA carnival in the Kalmiopsis cafeteria. Donors may also use a drive-up box near the front of the school at that time.

Additionally, a collection box sits in each Kalmiopsis classroom this week, Moss said. Moss hopes to collect 3,500 new, unused and "gently used" books. She and her mother, Tanja Smith, plan to drive the books to Doernbecher Children's Hospital in June. "I think more kids need books," Moss said. "Not many people are doing this," she said about book drives. "People don't give a second thought about kids who want books." Moss knows a thing or two about wanting books. She reads at a 10th-grade level. She recently mowed through the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, which she said is the most advanced she's tackled yet. "She reads while she's walking," Smith said of her daughter. Smith started reading "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" to her daughter, then age 4, when it came out. By the time they were halfway through the book, Moss was the one reading it. Harry Potter books are among her favorites, Moss said. She also enjoys the "Goosebumps" series. Moss and Smith said people with large quantities of books they'd like to donate may contact them to schedule a pick up. Donors may also contact Moss or Smith if they'd like to donate and cannot do so at Saturday's book drive.