

BOOKSELLING **THIS** Week

AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION

October 04, 2007

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Danny Meyer to Set the Table for Another Great Winter Institute

October 04, 2007 -- Education sessions at the American Booksellers Association's Third Annual Winter Institute ¹ (Wi3) will kick off on Friday morning, January 25, with plenary speaker Danny Meyer, renowned restaurateur/entrepreneur and author of *Setting the Table: The Transforming Power of Hospitality in Business* ² (HarperCollins).

Meyer is the president of Union Square Hospitality Group (USHG), which includes Union Square Cafe, Gramercy Tavern, Eleven Madison Park, Tabla, Blue Smoke, and Jazz Standard, among others. Each is a distinctive restaurant, distinguished by warm hospitality and consistence excellence.

"Dine at one of Danny's restaurants, and you'll see why they are so highly regarded for customer service and hospitality," said ABA Education Director Len Vlahos. "We're really excited that our members will have a chance to benefit from his experience and expertise."

In *Setting the Table*, which is part business book, part memoir, and part peek behind the restaurant curtain, Meyer shares what he has learned about striving for and sustaining excellence in the workplace.

At Wi3's opening session, he will focus on what it takes to provide excellent customer service. Meyer will show why service and hospitality are not synonymous and explain how to do each well. He will also offer insights about philanthropy and community outreach and why they make good business sense.

³ In 1985, Meyer, who studied cooking in Italy and France in the early 1980s, launched Union Square Cafe, a new kind of American eatery that paired imaginative food and wine with caring hospitality, comfortable surroundings, and outstanding value. The cafe has been honored with a *New York Times* three-star rating twice and has been voted Zagat Survey's Most Popular Restaurant in New York City for seven years. Following the success of the cafe, Meyer opened the Gramercy Tavern in 1994 and Eleven Madison Park and Tabla in 1998. His Union Square Hospitality Group is considered one of the most successful hospitality organizations in the U.S.

In 1994, Meyer and chef Michael Romano co-authored the *Union Square Cafe Cookbook* (HarperCollins), which won the International Association of Culinary Professionals' Julia Child Award for the best new cookbook by a first-time author. The book was followed up with *Helpings From Union Square Cafe* (HarperCollins).

Meyer was recently named one of *New York* magazine's most influential New Yorkers of 2006.

A Bookseller's Buzz on the GLBA Trade Show

October 04, 2007 -- By Daniel Goldin, General Manager, Harry W. Schwartz Bookshops in Milwaukee

⁴ If a trade show has two themes, it must be twice as good as those old-fashioned one-themed regionals, right? For the Great Lakes Booksellers Association ⁵, the answer may be yes, as the education sessions at last weekend's show (at the Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center in Schaumburg, Illinois) played off of "The World Is Not Flat" while the show itself cheerily announced "It's About Books, It's About Buzz."

First, the brainy stuff. American Booksellers Association CEO Avin Mark Domnitz led the "Digital Future" workshop, which postulates the future of bookselling in Web 2.0. It's not an easy session for old-fashioned retailers with an even more old-fashioned product to embrace, and it was made even tougher because the program had to be condensed into 40 minutes.

It's daunting to hear about how rapid change, open source, and the wisdom of crowds are influencing our world, and there's a tendency to throw your hands up in surrender. But the message is ultimately affirming -- that our customers need us more than ever and we can harness these changes to bring people into our shops.

Other workshops were more hands-on. Robin Allen of Forever Books in St. Joseph, Michigan, moderated the "Ideas That Work" panel. According to booksellers, the idea that turned the most heads was her "Read for Pay" idea in which her staff is expected to read three books a month for extra compensation. Oh, and they have to like them. Liz Murphy of The Learned Owl in Hudson, Ohio, came armed with pro-indie logo tees and would have brought her "A better world without borders" mug if she hadn't just sold out. And pencils (or pencil equivalents) were used to furiously scribble while Gloria Tiller of Kazoo Books of Kalamazoo, Michigan, recounted her adventures in networking.

Sunday's book club panel featured Laura Barrato of Random House, Carol Ann Katzoulis of Anderson's in Naperville, Illinois, and Sue Boucher and Ann Walters of Lake Forest Book Store in Lake Forest, Illinois. It was clear that there are several ways to present at a book club night (few books versus a lot of books); an equal number of ways to display (a signed versus unsigned book club section); and lots of disagreement over whether a book in which there is nothing to talk about makes a good book club choice or not. While I was previously on the "don't recommend books you can't talk about" team, I thought that the other side had a very clean argument in that many clubs don't really want to talk about the book anyway.

An important session on Sunday was GLBA's "The World Is Not Flat," moderated by ABA's Domnitz, with talks from Matt Cunningham of Civic Economics (famous for their groundbreaking studies on the economic contributions of local businesses versus chains), Jeff Milchen, the Outreach Director of AMIBA (American Independent Business Alliance), plus some down-to-earth advice from Carol Bessie of Carmichael's (Louisville). I found the talk fascinating, and particularly appreciated Bessie's frank discussion of what worked and what did not in the formation and structuring of the Louisville Independent Business Alliance. Another bookseller did find the session intimidating, and we agreed that adding another bookseller from a smaller market who was taking small steps to combat non-local buying might have made the whole goal feel more doable.

A session on using My Space and blogs was basic and informative. Matt Norcross from McLean and Eakin in Petoskey, Michigan, handled the former while Bridget Rothenberger of Nomad Bookhouse in Jackson, Michigan, walked attendees through the latter. (When you sign your store up, make sure you remember to make your store's age at least 18 years old so that you don't have a problem with restrictive content!)

Finally, a series of sessions on Whiz Bang Marketing were led by Bob Negen of Whiz Bang Training⁶, whose success at building Mackinaw Kite Company into a three million dollar business has been parlayed into a series of programs to help small retailers. Three sessions, on exploding your sales, developing staff, and using web sites and e-mail to drive traffic, were positively received, and several booksellers told me afterwards that they bought the package.

Negen's tips had the beauty of being both counterintuitive and yet imbued with common sense. There was a lot of meat in the message. When you think about it, gift cards really are like cash, but coupons are like trash, so why not tempt potential customers

with the former instead of the latter and dramatically increase redemption?

And that was just the education sessions. For the rest of the show, buzz was the buzzword. Before the show, there were two "What's the buzz" panels, one each for adult and kids books. There was some discussion of what "buzz" was exactly, but at least for the adult panelists, we mostly saw this as an opportunity to help bring midlist titles to a wider audience.

Michael Boggs of Carmichaels and Deb Covey of Joseph-Beth in Cincinnati waxed on about Chronicle's lavish photography book *Creature*. Boggs also praised *Listening Is an Act of Love* (Dave Isay, Penguin) as this year's *This I Believe*. Cary Boswell of The Bookshelf in Cincinnati made an impassioned plea for spring's *The Rope Walk* from Carrie Brown (Pantheon), calling it the best novel she'd read in years. The engaged presentation of Karl Pohrt of Shaman Drum in Ann Arbor had me rethinking my buys on *The Book of Psalms* (Robert Alter, Norton) and *Proust and the Squid* (Maryanne Wolf, Harper). The final panelist [the writer himself] did a mediocre job (I can be quite self-critical) but did somewhat convince me that *The Uncommon Reader* (Alan Bennett, FSG) was the perfect indie book and we could all sell truckloads.

The Rep Around luncheon, new to GLBA, was a big success, according to both booksellers and exhibitors. The convention floor closed for a series of mini-presentations. Several booksellers including Norma Solberg from Anderson's were intrigued by *Rescuing Da Vinci* (Robert M. Edsel, Laurel Publishing/Midpoint), an oversized history of the "Monuments Men," a crack team of folks charged with rescuing artwork stolen by Nazis and returning them to their rightful owners.

The Authors Feast was also popular. GLBA Book Award winner Catherine Gilbert Murdock, author of *Dairy Queen* and *The Off Season* (Houghton), won over the crowd with her ode to independent bookselling. And Carol Bessie's Quiz Bowl was the subject of widespread discussion; most said the questions were the hardest yet. In the end, team Cincinnatus, led by Cary Boswell took top honors.

My favorite part of the show is chatting with booksellers about what will sell. Rukiya Johnson, buyer for Shrine of the Black Madonna Bookstores in Detroit said she was enthusiastic about Walter Moseley's return to Easy Rawlins with *Blonde Faith* (Little, Brown) Linda Bubon of Women and Children First in Chicago did a good job talking up *Bad Karma* (Tamara Sheward) from Academy Chicago, about the travel exploits of a cantankerous Australian. Several booksellers told me they were enthusiastic about reading the book after chatting with Linda.

Jill Webb and Sue Wood of the Cottage Bookshop of Glen Arbor, Michigan, agreed that the best swag were Christmas cards from Simon & Schuster. Marge Thomas of Coffeetree Books in Morehead, Kentucky, was enthusiastic about Arturo Perez-Reverte's *The Painter of Battles* (Random House). When one bookseller told me "Judy's assistant" was quite hot on *The Black Book of Secrets* (F.E. Higgins, Feiwel & Friends) I had to show her the fabulous finished copy at the Holtzbrinck booth and tell her about all the great reads we'd had on it. I never found out who Judy was, however.

Just about everyone had a book they wanted to share with the world. Betty Redmond of PGW told me that Frances Itani's new *Remembering the Bones* was even better than *The Deafening*. Johanna Hynes of Norton said that a number of booksellers were at the booth following up on titles they heard about from fellow

GLBA-ers. And even Avin Domnitz got into the act -- he's got a winter book he's wild about, but so far he's playing it close to the vest and I promised I wouldn't reveal the title.

In the end, isn't that what regionals are about? Get some good ideas from speakers and other booksellers and share some of your own. Hear what other booksellers are talking about, and then offer your own picks. The buzz is what we live for -- it's what keeps us ahead of the competition and it's what makes our jobs fun.

Booksellers who stopped by the ABA booth at any one of this season's trade shows are eligible to enter drawings for prizes, courtesy of ABA and BookExpo America. At GLBA, Larene Hall, owner of The Village Bookworm in Coshocton, Ohio, won an iPod, courtesy of BEA. ABA donated a color inkjet printer to GLBA's Silent Auction, which was subsequently won by Rita Williams of Books of Aurora, in Aurora, Ohio.

Both winners, along with other booksellers who dropped off their business cards at the ABA booth, will be included in drawings taking place at the end of October, at the conclusion of the trade show season: for accommodations at Hotel ABA at BEA 2008 in Los Angeles, courtesy of BEA; for hotel accommodations at the Third Annual Winter Institute in Louisville in January, courtesy of BEA; and for one of 24 publisher-sponsored scholarships, including reasonable transportation costs and up to a three-night hotel stay at the Winter Institute.

Getting Energized at MPIBA's Book Camp

October 04, 2007 -- By Joe Foster, Ordering Manager, Maria's Bookshop in Durango, Colorado

⁷ I always come home jazzed from the fall trade show. There's just something beautiful about knowing that you're not alone and that everyone in this business has the same issues and concerns, that we all work as indentured servants to the one passion that binds us all into an industry. This year Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association ⁸ (MPIBA) Book Camp had a sizzle to it that I hadn't experienced before. Energy was up, and everyone seemed to be very excited about the upcoming season.

Day One of the show, held from Thursday, September 27, through Sunday, September 30, at the Denver Marriott Tech Center, was education-oriented and started out with Peer-to-Peer Roundtables, something new and incredibly useful. There were groups specifically for issues of frontline bookselling, such as difficult customers, resources, and handselling. The group I was in, buyers, discussed buying and co-op, while owners in another group discussed development of booksellers, delegation to managers, and store security. My group was diverse, with stores representing a span from Texas to Montana and from one-person operations to those with help in the hundreds. One thing that speaks to the equality of this group, however, is that we all buy pretty much the same stuff from pretty much the same folks. I picked up a few pages worth of notes and tips from these beleaguered geniuses.

Lunchtime was coupled with the General Meeting, the main thrust of which was to showcase and discuss the new MPIBA website, www.mountainsplains.org ⁹. I've skated around it a bit and have found it to be a great improvement. I'm not completely sure of the value of the site as a resource for the general public, but I love the idea of having the MPIBA Handbook of Members available,

updateable, and searchable online. With a section listing links to upcoming regional author events and a featured bookstore, it's now a bit easier to get to know your neighbors.

Next came the American Booksellers Association's session on Staff Development, presented by Chuck and Dee Robinson of Village Books in Bellingham, Washington. These two seem like they would be amazing to work with. I had seen their presentation at BookExpo America, but still managed to take plenty of notes on new ideas. It's always been my thought that we spend more time with co-workers than with our loved ones, so we better love our co-workers. Chuck and Dee had some pretty good ideas on hiring people worthy of that love, and also on how to keep them around.

Following Staff Development came a choice of two sessions, one on YA events, and another on, you could say, community development: Locals First/Independent Business Alliances. I attended the latter, as it seems such ideas will be an important part of the coming year in Durango. We heard from three outrageously successful programs. Betsy Burton of The King's English was as mind-bogglingly inspiring as always, and spoke of the statewide push in Utah. That's right, *statewide*. Incredible. Steve Bercu of BookPeople in Austin spoke of his success as well. As kudos to Steve, I'm happy to report that I saw a guy in Maria's wearing a "Keep Austin Weird" cap this summer. David Bolduc of Boulder Bookstore spoke of his initiative and how it almost cost him some friends, although I assume he's doing okay now.

After the classes came, of course, the requisite author and bookseller booze schmooze, which I always enjoy just a bit more than I should, but not more than is healthy, I think.

Friday was dubbed "Up Close & Personal Day" and consisted of the Pick of the Lists sessions, occurring pretty much all day, pretty much uninterrupted. How very nice to not have to choose between a great educational session and hearing about the next great book. One can assume that the publishers were pretty happy about this situation as well, considering that the room was chock full of booksellers held rapt and captive all day long.

And then, yes, more booze schmooze. Very fun. I'll say no more.

Saturday morning's Author Breakfast for Literacy was awesome. I was lucky enough to have breakfast at the same table with the humbly brilliant Michael Chabon. (Good things can happen when you tell your Random House rep that she rocks the Casbah ... even if you don't really know what that means.) Michael Korda spoke in a booming voice about heroism and his book *Ike: An American Hero* (HarperCollins). Molly Gloss was very impressive, arguing against heroism and the possibly damaging image of the heroic western male, and her book *The Hearts of Horses* (Houghton Mifflin). Margaret Coel gossiped about *The Girl With Braided Hair* (Berkley) and had the crowd in hysterics. Michael Chabon educated the crowd on "Jews with Swords," also known as his new novel, *Gentlemen of the Road* (Del Rey). I've already finished it and loved its guts; a very fun read.

The trade show floor, for many the most important part of the Fall Book Camp, was pretty exhilarating. It was long, yes, running from 9:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., but it was packed and vibrant and loud the whole day long. I asked almost every person I talked to how they felt about things and the response was overwhelmingly positive. I saw plenty of people placing orders, and definitely placed a few my own. Expectations, I think, are very high for holiday season sales.

And yet another night of soused chin-wagging.

Sunday morning was dedicated to Above the Treeline¹⁰ for both publishers and booksellers. The dig of this meeting was towards greater communication between the two groups, using the tools that Treeline provides, as well as some suggestions for newer and better tools yet. It was this roundtable meeting that really book-ended the Fall Book Camp with the spirit of teamwork and camaraderie for me. I started home with the feeling that we all left the show as stronger booksellers because of the strength of our comrades and the support we get from our business partners. I drove the six hours back through high mountain passes and quaking aspens in full fall regalia eager to get back to work.

Booksellers who stopped by the ABA booth at any one of this season's trade shows are eligible to enter drawings for prizes, courtesy of ABA and BookExpo America. At MPIBA, Drew Goodman of University of Utah Campus Store won a color inkjet printer, courtesy of ABA, and Joe Foster of Maria's Bookshop won an iPod, courtesy of BEA.

Both winners, along with other booksellers who dropped off their business cards at the ABA booth, will be included in drawings taking place at the end of October, at the conclusion of the trade show season: for accommodations at Hotel ABA at BEA 2008 in Los Angeles, courtesy of BEA; for hotel accommodations at the Third Annual Winter Institute in Louisville in January, courtesy of BEA; and for one of 24 publisher-sponsored scholarships, including reasonable transportation costs and up to a three-night hotel stay at the Winter Institute.

NEIBA Show Makes a Smooth Transition

October 04, 2007 -- By Megan Sullivan, Head Buyer, Harvard Bookstore in Cambridge, Massachusetts

¹¹ Each fall, I look forward to attending the New England Independent Booksellers Association¹² (NEIBA) trade show (this year, from Thursday, September 27, through Saturday, September 29, at the Rhode Island Convention Center). With such a stellar lineup of books this season, I was even more eager to see some of the final products, such as Alice Water's *The Art of Simple Cooking* (Clarkson Potter) and Andrea Barrett's *The Air We Breathe* (Norton). And usually, I look forward to seeing Rusty Drugan, whose death last year was a notable loss to New England booksellers. I'm honored to be the first-ever recipient of a scholarship in his name. The great thing about winning this meant that I was able to stay down at the Westin in Providence rather than having to drive back to Boston each evening. Of course, I would gladly make the drive if it meant seeing Rusty walking around the floor, something everyone mentioned missing. New Executive Director Steve Fischer did an excellent job of filling Rusty's role, however, and made sure everything went off without a hitch.

This year also saw a change in the format of the programming. NEIBA moved to a Thursday to Saturday schedule, with Thursday dedicated entirely to education, Saturday dedicated to the show floor, and some of both on Friday. The new schedule kept the show floor busier while it was open, and meant a better experience for both booksellers and publishers: fewer conflicts between education time and floor time.

Thursday saw the show open with a keynote address from Gary Hirshberg, president and "CE-yo" of Stonyfield Farm, who spoke about the forthcoming *Stirring It Up: How to Make Money and*

Save the World (Hyperion). I had no idea that yogurt could be so fascinating. Hirshberg's basic message is that businesses need to address their environmental impact at all levels, or they'll kill their customers. He wasn't just speaking about the larger corporations, either. We all need to take stock and stop saying it can't be done. "The best way to predict the future is to invent it," Hirshberg said. That's a bold statement addressed to an industry facing consolidation and squeezed margins, especially considering that it sells a product made from dead trees. Some booksellers think that getting publishers to use recycled paper is impossible, but Hirshberg suggested that booksellers could succeed by creating more consumer demand for more environmentally sustainable books.

Later, at the Awards Luncheon, NEIBA President Allan Schmid presented Richard Russo with the President's Award for lifetime achievement, and gave the Gilman award for outstanding service as a sales representative for New England bookstores to Katie McGarry of Simon & Schuster. Russo, who has just published his seventh book, quipped that he hoped this was a mid-life achievement award. I'm pretty sure he's got at least a couple of good novels left in him. Also awarded were the 2007 New England Book Awards¹³. All authors gave stirring speeches, but Roy Blount got me to laugh the most, when he griped that not everyone in the world is a Red Sox fan. (Just watch the away games, Roy, and you'll see how many of us there are!)

The afternoon featured programs on "Maximizing School & Library Partnerships," "Higher Above the Treeline," "Loyalty Programs," and "Career Paths for Booksellers: I Love My Job, Now What?" Perhaps the most valuable advice came from my own boss, Carole Horne, now general manager of the Harvard Book Store. She advised younger booksellers, "Every chance that you get, talk to other booksellers. At least half of what I know in the book business I learned from other booksellers." Wise advice indeed.

Perhaps one of my favorite things about NEIBA is meeting up with old friends and making new ones. It's always exciting to hear about someone opening up a new store or getting a promotion. I've been getting very involved in the Emerging Leaders Project¹⁴, as I believe that in order to further the existence and growth of bookstores, we need to encourage and foster those new to the business. I don't want to sound like Whitney Houston saying "the children are the future," but meeting other people my age in the industry gave me more confidence about my career. Book retail isn't an industry that politicians discuss at high-profile summit meetings, but we still have to attract dynamic new leaders to ensure our future -- to keep bookselling alive through the 21st century. That's the Emerging Leaders goal. It seems that the more we meet, the more people attend, which is an encouraging sign.

On Friday, at the NEIBA annual meeting the new board¹⁵ was announced for 2007 - 2009. Friday's highlight for me was the session called "Doing Digital Right," sponsored by the American Booksellers Association. Booksellers, not always known to be on the cutting edge, are dipping their toes into the digital world. This session was offered as a swimming lesson for them, introducing new ways they could broaden their horizons with online technology. Robert Gray of Northshire Books and *Shelf Awareness* said it's "about taking something that's electronic and making it human."

I've also enjoyed seeing the rise of Shop Local programs. The four

o'clock panel highlighted the importance of raising community awareness about these programs. NEIBA has been granting money to booksellers to form or join existing local business alliances in their regions. It's a chance to hear what works and what doesn't, as well as to show how much of a difference it makes. I know that I'm proud to shop here in Cambridge at businesses sporting "Shop Local First" stickers on their front doors. As the gatekeepers of information, bookstores in particular have the power to show how important it is to keep money in the community.

As always, the show floor hummed with energy as folks walked around the booths, looking at the fall highlights. I also used it as an opportunity to find small gems, such as MIT Press's *I am a Beautiful Monster* by Francis Picabia, one of Dada's leading figures. This is a beautiful volume containing some never before translated poems and prose. I also loved *Transit Maps of the World* by Mark Ovenden, a nice paperback coming from Penguin, which is a great find for the map geek in all of us.

Driving back to Boston, I was exhausted, but confident that independent bookstores throughout New England have the tools and the wherewithal to prosper over the coming year, especially since there were so many excellent galleys stuffed into my trunk. Of course, the Red Sox win of the AL East title may have helped as well.

Booksellers who stopped by the ABA booth at any one of this season's trade shows are eligible to enter drawings for prizes, courtesy of ABA and BookExpo America. At NEIBA, Carol Chittenden of Eight Cousins in Falmouth, Massachusetts, won a color inkjet printer, courtesy of ABA, and Bobbi Brewer of Maine Coast Bookshop & Cafe in Damariscotta, Maine, won an iPod, courtesy of BEA.

Both winners, along with other booksellers who dropped off their business cards at the ABA booth, will be included in drawings taking place at the end of October, at the conclusion of the trade show season: for accommodations at Hotel ABA at BEA 2008 in Los Angeles, courtesy of BEA; for hotel accommodations at the Third Annual Winter Institute in Louisville in January, courtesy of BEA; and for one of 24 publisher-sponsored scholarships, including reasonable transportation costs and up to a three-night hotel stay at the Winter Institute.

SIBA Unveils a New Trade Show Schedule

October 04, 2007 -- By Rona Brinlee, Owner, The Bookmark in Atlantic Beach, Florida

¹⁶The Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance ¹⁷(SIBA) held its fall trade show from Friday, September 28, through Sunday, September 30, at the Hilton Atlanta in Georgia. The show featured a new schedule -- with the exhibit floor opening at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday and staying open until 10:00 p.m. The format change was much discussed by SIBA booksellers, with very few having no opinion at all.

The weekend began with tours of area bookstores on Thursday, and on Friday an opening breakfast featuring author Daniel Pink (*A Whole New Mind* , Riverhead) was followed by educational sessions. With no access to exhibits until late on Saturday, many

publishers and booksellers delayed their arrivals. SIBA Executive Director Wanda Jewell explained this was a consideration in trying the new schedule -- to allow publishers to set up a day later and save on expenses.

Despite the change in the trade floor schedule, many early educational sessions were well attended, with more than 50 people attending some programs. Seasoned booksellers shared the podium with American Booksellers Association staff at three sessions, "Building and Rewarding Customer Loyalty," "Creating Killer Events," and "Bookstore Self Audit." Booksellers from G.J. Ford on St. Simon's Island and Prince Books in Norfolk took the challenge of auditing their stores according to seven criteria at the self-audit panel, moderated by ABA COO Oren Teicher. The participants ranked the importance of each criterion and then evaluated how well they thought their stores were performing. All agreed this self-audit is good as a regular check and is especially critical if a store is facing new competition. The importance of good service and having the right inventory was acknowledged by booksellers from stores of all ages who agreed that price is not the issue for them or for their customers.

First-timers, sporting stars on their badges, sat alongside veteran booksellers at the educational sessions, and the interaction was often enlightening. No matter how many years of experience, there was something for everyone. Small, newer stores were encouraged to host events, and old-timers were reassured that events are well worth doing. They were also reminded to tend to some things that often get relegated to the end of the list by seemingly more urgent items. Nancy Olson, owner of 24-year-old Quail Ridge Books in Raleigh, North Carolina, shared tips for press kits, targeted e-mails, and authorless events, including ticketed wine tastings. When advised not to be afraid of controversy, experienced booksellers nodded in agreement, but they added, a good facilitator is critical. There was no caveat necessary to the exhortation that events keep stores profitable and help build the reputation as a place to go -- where things are always happening.

Proving you can never hear an important message too many times, one bookseller said she learned more the second time she participated in the session on loyalty programs. The first time encouraged her to introduce a loyalty program in the store. This weekend, only three weeks after instituting the program, her questions were different and other aspects of the presentation had much more relevance. The atmosphere at all of the sessions echoed the mantra offered by ABA's Teicher -- we are lucky to be in an industry where people are generous and willing to share ideas.

Despite a late night with some funny and entertaining authors at the annual SIBA supper and an even later night previewing the *Kite Runner* movie, hearty sales reps were ready on Saturday morning to highlight their book picks for the next season. Perhaps because there was no competition from the trade show floor, and certainly because of the enthusiasm of these reps, booksellers flocked to hear publishers recommend their favorite books. Whereas last year reps reported audiences of often less than 20 or so, this year they were surprised by crowds numbering more than 100. Most were booksellers at stores that do not see publishers' reps, and they seized this opportunity to hear the pitches that comprise a sales call.

Authors were sighted throughout the hotel lobby. Jeff Lindsay (*Dexter in the Dark* , Doubleday) sported the hand-painted shirt that appears on his book jacket. A close look revealed not a random pattern, but rather bloody daggers representative of his loveable serial killer. And some lucky booksellers got the chance to sip wine and chat with this year's winner of the SIBA award for fiction,

Charles Frazier (*Thirteen Moons*, Random House).

Outgoing SIBA President Sally Brewster of Charlotte, North Carolina's Park Road Books said show attendance had increased this year and noted a number of sold-out events. Jewell confirmed early counts of more than 225 bookstores, 187 vendors, and approximately 100 authors, adding that the show traditionally draws well in Atlanta. In addition, publishers reported brisk ordering, and thought crowds were good until about 9:00 p.m. on Saturday evening, when the need for dinner perhaps overcame the interest in books. The 8:00 a.m. opening on Sunday might have felt early for some, for coffee was ubiquitous, with boxes of donuts stashed behind more than a few booths.

As the show wound down, Jewell said most attendees were happy with the new schedule, although some who had been angry about the changes remained upset. She said it was not yet decided whether SIBA will repeat this schedule next year, when the show will be held in Mobile, Alabama, and noted that she did agree that the floor hours should shift to open and close earlier, and that more needed to happen that appeals to the more experienced attendees.

Another topic stirring up debate at the show were changes to the SIBA book awards that would bring critics into the final selection process and move the announcement of the winners to the Decatur Book Festival instead of the trade show.

By the end of the show, as always, friendships were renewed and forged; news of stores, babies, and retirement were shared; and mentors were found. All left reinvigorated and eager to implement new ideas for the holidays.

Booksellers who stopped by the ABA booth at any one of this season's trade shows are eligible to enter drawings for prizes, courtesy of ABA and BookExpo America. At SIBA, Peter Yurko of Osondu Booksellers in Waynesville, North Carolina, won a color inkjet printer, courtesy of ABA, and Beth Carpenter of The Country Bookshop in Southern Pines, North Carolina, won an iPod, courtesy of BEA.

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ABDebs Books & Gifts: A First for Knightdale, North Carolina

October 03, 2007 -- New bookseller Alyce Boyd-Stewart worked as a civil rights lawyer for nearly 25 years before retiring. But she hadn't stopped working for long, she said, when she "started messing around with the idea of owning a bookstore." After attending BookExpo America in Washington, D.C. two years ago and completing a Paz & Associates booksellers school, in March Boyd-Stewart opened ABDebs Books & Gifts in Knightdale, North Carolina, population 9,000.

Boyd-Stewart's longstanding love of books began when she was a little girl, spending hours in an Ohio public library, an "old beautiful building with marble floors and brass rails." Her father,

she said, could barely read, and although her mother had only a 7th-grade education, she instilled a love of books in her daughter.

In 2005, both Boyd-Stewart and her husband, Edward Stewart, were at home trying to enjoy their retirement. "We were sitting around doing nothing," said Boyd-Stewart. "And I said, 'I'm opening up a bookstore.' My husband said, 'You're nuts,' as usual. And I ignored him ... as usual."

Boyd-Stewart dove into the research, attending BEA and booksellers school. Her first foray into finding a space for the store didn't go so well, however. "I spoke to a landlord who said I could rent his space, but I had to have my husband cosign," she explained. "I said, 'Excuse me? Do you know who you're talking to?'"

Boyd-Stewart soon found another landlord, whom she told straight out, "I don't want to hear anything about my husband cosigning. It's *my* bookstore." She got the space. ABDebs Books & Gifts, named after Boyd-Stewart and her daughter, is now famous for its golden tangerine walls. "It's the prettiest bookstore you'd ever want to put your foot into," she said.

It's also the first and only bookstore Knightdale has ever seen, according to Boyd-Stewart, and the town appreciates that it's there. ABDebs quickly established itself as a place with devoted customer service and a willingness to track down titles in and out of print. The shelves are filled with 12,000 books in 900-square feet of selling space. An additional several hundred square feet is reserved for a community center called The Meeting Place. ABDebs hosts meetings of local organizations, including Toast Masters and a group opposed to Wal-Mart.

Sections include a "young folks" section, history, classics, poetry, humor, biography, health, history, African-American literature, and a large fiction area. Although, since attending the Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance trade show, Boyd-Stewart plans on rearranging the fiction shelves. "I'm about to take out all the mysteries from the fiction section, and they're going to get their own home," she said.

ABDebs also has an active reading program/contest for kids. "We tell the kids that they don't have to buy the books from us, they just have to commit to reading 15 minutes a day. The kid who reads the most books in his or her grade wins." The prize is a small pizza party and a \$25 gift certificate at ABDebs. Several area papers have reported on the contest.

The bookstore launched its reading series soon after opening and holds several monthly. Upcoming author events include book signings with Andrea Ferrell (*Autumn Seclusion*, Trafford) and Ella Logan (*Life After the Storm*, AuthorHouse).

After owning a bookstore for just over six months, Boyd-Stewart said her new career has been "gratifying." And, she added, "My husband, who said, 'We're not opening a bookstore' -- guess who works in the bookstore all the time and has one thousand ideas about how to make it better? His profession was computers. He worked for 30 years for the Department of Defense. So he can make Anthology jump up and down." -- *Karen Schechner*¹⁸

Local First Chicago: Maintaining Local Flavor, One Neighborhood at a Time

October 03, 2007 --¹⁹ Chicago is not just a big city: it's a conglomeration of neighborhoods, each with its own unique flair and style. But over the past five years, local business owners and residents have seen some Chicago neighborhoods turn over to

chain stores -- and bit by bit those areas are losing their unique character.

"There's no reason to go [to a neighborhood] if it's just like anywhere else," said Ellen Shepard, executive director of the Andersonville (Chicago) Chamber of Commerce. "So you end up losing business." Fortunately, a number of independent businesses decided to do something to help maintain their respective neighborhoods' uniqueness. The result is Local First Chicago²⁰.

Shepard and Suzanne Keers, a Chicago-based IT professional, spearheaded the creation of Local First Chicago. Shepard and Keers were well aware that local business coalitions were springing up all over the country. More importantly, they knew that these kinds of organizations were becoming a vital conduit of information from independent business owners to consumers, providing a good platform on which to raise awareness on the value of shopping local. "We were very much aware of this national movement," Shepard said.

Local First Chicago initially launched as coalition of independent businesses from four Chicago neighborhoods: Andersonville, Lincoln Park, Lincoln Square, and Wicker Park/Bucktown, but is now growing citywide. As so often is the case with an independent coalition, among the first members were two independent bookstores, Women & Children First in the Andersonville neighborhood and The Book Cellar in Lincoln Square.

Shepard noted, "We used BALLE [Business Alliance for Local, Living Economies] as a resource." She added that the then-chair of BALLE, Laury Hammel, came to Chicago and spoke to the group about starting an independent business coalition. Local First Chicago is a chapter of BALLE²¹.

The Local First Chicago mission statement²² is to "keep money and character in our neighborhoods and build a thriving local living economy. Local First Chicago works primarily through public education, business support, and advocacy."

Ann Christophersen, co-owner of Women & Children First, told *BTW* that her store joined Local First Chicago, because, "like Book Sense, it was an opportunity to work with other independent businesses to do joint promotions and provide education about what makes independent businesses different and what the threats are."

The Book Cellar's Susan Takacs explained, "I'm a small, independent bookstore, and I thought it was important that our neighborhood learn what it means to support the local stores in our community and the benefits they can gain." Thus far, she noted that Local First Chicago has raised awareness. "I think it has helped, but I think we can continue the process."

The ranks of Local First Chicago grew quickly, from about eight to 100 members in just a couple of months, Shepard reported. Members receive a basic Local First Campaign kit; e-mail newsletter and announcements; access to the members-only section of the group's website; their business name in Local First Chicago educational materials and a name/link on the website; free or reduced fee entrance to Local First Chicago events and meetings; and member-to-member discussion/networking.

Local First Chicago's first campaign, which kicked off in November 2005 with the slogan "Shopping in a Local Wonderland," focused on consumer awareness. "It garnered lots of media coverage," said Shepard. The group repeated the event in 2006 and will again in 2007. "The media seems to love these campaigns," she added, "so you get free media attention and every

year we see more and more people [shopping locally]."

Businesses in the Andersonville neighborhood also have very specific economic data that supports their mission. In 2004, Civic Economics released "The Andersonville Study of Retail Economics²³," which showed that, for every \$100 in consumer spending with a local firm, \$73 remains in the Chicago economy; and for every \$100 in consumer spending with a chain firm, \$43 remains in the Chicago economy. Women & Children First participated in the study, which was commissioned by the Andersonville Development Corporation (ADC), with the support of the Andersonville Chamber of Commerce and funding by Special Service Area District No. 22.

Shepard said that it helps to have economic data that supports the mission of Local First Chicago and it's equally useful when discussing issues with local lawmakers and planners. -- *David Grogan*²⁴

YA Authors Support Intellectual Freedom "As If!"

October 03, 2007 --²⁵ In a stand against censorship, approximately 80 Young Adult authors are members of As If!²⁶ (Authors Supporting Intellectual Freedom), a blog chronicling challenges to YA books around the country. Author members include M.T. Anderson, Meg Cabot, Cynthia Kadohata, Gregory McGuire, and Lisa Yee.

"There are a lot of people in this country who are really sick of censorship," said As If! founding member and YA author Jordan Sonnenblick. "I think the trend towards attacking schools and libraries is a disturbing facet of the general erosion of our civil rights, and our citizens are looking for rallying points from which they can fight back."

The blog was launched in 2005 when the board of trustees at Austin, Texas' St. Andrew's Episcopal School stood on principle and rejected a \$3 million gift because the donor, film producer Cary McNair, requested that Annie Proulx's *Brokeback Mountain* be removed from the optional reading list for high school students.

YA author Brent Hartinger, another founding member, explained, "[The] specific catalyst for As If! was the events at St. Andrews, but the truth is, a group of us teen lit authors had been informally discussing censorship issues for years, on an online e-mail list. Once it became clear that there was something that we, as authors, could do, we quickly sprang into action."

Although the group's members hold similar attitudes about censorship, Hartinger stressed they were a diverse population. "We come from all different geographic areas, and different religious and political points of view. Many of us are parents ourselves (a few of us might even be called 'overprotective parents!)," he said. "We're not necessarily what some people expect in an anticensorship group. But what unites us is the fundamental idea that, ultimately, knowledge is power, that dialogue and debate are good things, and that literature and its points of access must remain free and unfettered. If there is a difficult issue to be decided, it's generally best to let individuals and individual families decide for themselves, rather than let an individual or group decide for everyone else."

The group's web presence includes blogs on Blogger, MySpace, and LiveJournal, as well as individual author blogs, where members look to educate people about specific book challenges and the greater issues involved. "We speak out as individuals on

behalf of As If! at conferences and individual events, talking about censorship issues in keynote addresses or informational sessions," said Hartinger. "[And] we work behind-the-scenes with specific librarians and/or educators on specific book challenges."

As If! serves as a central information point for challenges to YA books. It includes lists of Banned Book Events, links, and posts about challenges. "Any time we hear about a book challenge, especially if it's complicated or if the censors seem to be winning, we blog about it," said Sonnenblick. "If there seems to be an opportunity to influence events on the ground, we sometimes coordinate e-mail campaigns. More often, I call or e-mail principals, school boards, superintendents, and local media wherever the censorship is occurring."

Posters to the blog often include authors responding to news about challenges to their own books. Ellen Wittlinger's *Sandpiper* (Simon Pulse) was recently challenged by an Alabama teenager, who, with the support of her grandmother, refused to return the book to the school library because she believed it was too sexually explicit. Wittlinger said on the blog, "I know that there are people in this country who, in the name of religion, feel high school students should be kept as ignorant of sex as possible, but I was shocked that the girl herself was equally afraid of knowledge."

Harteringer summed up the collective attitude of the YA authors who participate in As If!: "You might say that, as authors, we have a vested interest in keeping books on the shelves and, of course, we do. But we see ourselves as being in a unique position, because not only do we create the books that get some folks upset (and, as a result, we know exactly why we write the books we write, and how to defend them), but we also see firsthand the impact that our books have on actual readers.... We all take our responsibility as writers of fiction for young people very seriously. But we also believe that authenticity and verisimilitude are the hallmarks of good, engaging fiction."

For the record, he added, "We also believe that most Americans agree with us, and that those who would ban or restrict access to books are a minority -- a vocal one, but a minority nonetheless." -- *Karen Schechner*²⁷

Blogging to Save the Environment

October 03, 2007 -- On October 15, the voices of thousands of Internet bloggers will unite to participate in Blog Action Day²⁸, an international initiative to focus on one issue the entire day -- the environment. Organizers are asking participants to blog about some aspect of the environment or to donate their earnings on October 15 to one of several environmental organizations. Everyone with access to a blog or website is being asked to publicize Blog Action Day with a banner or announcement²⁹.

Planned as an annual event, the non-profit Blog Action Day is the creation of a core group of experienced bloggers, including Australians Collis Ta'eed and Cyan Ta'eed of a www.FreelanceSwitch.com³⁰, and Leo Babauta of zenhabits.net/³¹.

Collis Ta'eed explained that organizers hope "to bring bloggers together, to get them talking, thinking, and reaching out to their audiences." So far, more than 6,500 blogs or websites, with a combined audience of almost five million regular readers, have signed on to participate.

Postings can relate to the blog's topic in any way, or they can offer environmental ideas completely off topic, according to the Blog

Action Day founders. They suggest that those in bookselling or publishing might discuss efforts to use "greener" techniques in the book production process, as well as in their store and office environments. Lists of new books, or classics, on environmental issues could be included in the blogs. "Our aim," said Ta'eed, "is to get people thinking, discussing, questioning, and talking about the environment, from every angle, niche, viewpoint, and personality."

All interested bloggers are urged to register their blog³². A sampling of the diverse blogs already registered include Armenian Eagle, 1001 Gatos de Schrodinger, veggie monologues, Human Rights Sweden, and Lifehack.org. A video announcement³³ of Blog Action Day can be viewed on YouTube.

Ta'eed hopes that many significant issues can be addressed through future Blog Action Days. "In an age," he said, "when information technology is becoming central to our everyday activity, it is appropriate that we find ways to harness that power to build a better world." --*Nomi Schwartz*³⁴

BTW News Briefs

October 03, 2007 --

Atlas Books Looks to Step In for Closed BookWorld

The small press distributor BookWorld, headquartered in Sarasota, Florida, closed its doors on Friday, September 28, and the fate of its 104 publisher-clients remains uncertain. Atlas Books of Ashland, Ohio, the trade book distribution division of BookMasters, hopes to take over distribution for most of BookWorld's publishers. Watch for more information in next week's *BTW*.

NRF to Credit Card Companies: Stop Forcing Retailers to Store Credit Card Data

On October 4, citing concern over data breaches, the National Retail Federation sent a letter to Payment Card Industry (PCI) Security Standards Council, requesting changes in how the credit card industry requires merchants to store credit card data. "All of us -- merchants, banks, credit card companies and our customers -- want to eliminate credit card fraud," said NRF Chief Information Officer David Hogan in the letter. "But if the goal is to make credit card data less vulnerable, the ultimate solution is to stop requiring merchants to store card data in the first place."

Credit card companies typically require retailers to store credit card numbers anywhere from one year to 18 months in order to satisfy card company retrieval requests. According to NRF, retailers should have a choice as to whether or not they want to store credit card numbers at all.

The letter outlines the retail industry's commitment to PCI compliance while addressing the issue that PCI itself does not discourage hackers from attempting breaches of retailers' systems. "With this letter, we are officially putting the credit card industry on notice," said Hogan. "Instead of making the industry jump through hoops to create an impenetrable fortress, retailers want to eliminate the incentive for hackers to break into their systems in the first place."

Hogan outlined NRF's approach in the letter, stating that credit card companies and their banks should provide merchants with the option of keeping nothing more than the authorization code provided at the time of sale and a truncated receipt, rather than requiring that merchants keep reams of data for an extended period

of time, putting retail customers at unnecessary risk. A full version of the letter can be found at www.nrf.com³⁵.

NRF Releases 2007 Holiday Season Forecast

On September 20, the National Retail Federation released its forecast for the upcoming 2007 holiday season, predicting that sales will rise 4.0 percent this year to \$474.5 billion. "Retailers are in for a somewhat challenging holiday season as consumers are faced with numerous economic obstacles," said NRF Chief Economist Rosalind Wells. "With the weak housing market and current credit crunch, consumers will be forced to be more prudent with their holiday spending."

The 2007 holiday sales increase is expected to fall below the 10-year average of 4.8 percent. It would represent the slowest holiday sales growth since 2002, when sales rose 1.3 percent. The retailers most affected by the economy will be those catering to the low to middle income consumer. This could spell trouble for discounters and some department stores whose shoppers may be looking to trade down.

Alice Notley Receives the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize

On October 3, the Academy of American poets announced that Alice Notley's *Grave of Light: New and Selected Poems 1970 - 2005* (Wesleyan University Press) was chosen by poets David Baker, Mark McMorris, and Marie Ponsot to receive the 2007 Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize, which awards \$25,000 to the most outstanding book of poetry published the previous year. The finalist for the award is David Wojahn for his collection *Interrogation Palace* (University of Pittsburgh Press).

About Notley's winning book, judge Marie Ponsot, author of *Springing* (Knopf) remarked, "These poems give us 35 years of political, personal, death-defying engagement. The nature Notley most loves is human nature. That urban passion propels her speculative dramas of gender, class, and race; of Vietnam and Iraq; of schemes of power and the claims of art. Ardent and agile, she is willing to cry out, to drift, to stammer, so as to put every turn of language to her use. Her aim is to speak to everyone; her book shows her success."

Ohio Suffers Setback in Bid to Join Streamlined Sales Tax Project

Ohio suffered a "major setback" in its bid to join the Streamlined Sales Tax Project, as reported by Business First Columbus³⁶. Richard A. Levin, the Ohio Tax Commissioner, reported that the state could not reach an agreement with the board overseeing the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement in regards to an exemption for Ohio businesses doing less than \$500K in annual delivery sales in Ohio, the article noted.

Ohio loses between \$350 million to \$400 million annually in lost tax revenue from companies with no operations in Ohio, "a chief reason why the state has sought to become a full coalition member," *BFC* reported.

Kimberly Reynolds Named VP of Ingram Book Group for Marketing and Creative Services

This week, Ingram Book Group Inc. announced the appointment of Kimberly Reynolds to the position of vice president for marketing and creative services. Reynolds is the former director of marketing

and communications at Saint Thomas Health Services in Nashville.

Reynolds will lead the development and execution of strategic marketing and communications for all Ingram Book Group channels including Ingram Book Company, Ingram Publisher Services, Spring Arbor, Ingram Library Services, Ingram International and Ingram Periodicals. She will also work closely with the Ingram sister companies -- Ingram Digital Group and Lightning Source Inc. -- on cross-company initiatives.

Six Women Receive Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers Awards

At a ceremony on September 27 in New York City, six women writers were honored by the Rona Jaffe Foundation³⁷ with awards of \$25,000 each. The Writers Awards program was created by Jaffe, who passed away in 2005, to address the particular difficulties that many women writers have in finding time to write. The Jaffe Writers Awards are given to writers of fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction.

The 2007 recipients are:

- Elif Batuman, currently working on her first novel, *My Apprenticeship* ;
- Sarah Braunstein, currently working on her first novel, *Split* ;
- Robin Ekiss, finishing her first collection of poems, *The Mansion of Happiness* ;
- Alma Garcia, working on her first novel, *Shallow Waters* ;
- Jennifer Grotz, working on her second collection of poems (her first collection, *Cusp* , won the Bakeless Prize for Poetry and was published by Houghton Mifflin in 2003);
- Holly Goddard Jones, just completed her first story collection, *Girl Trouble* .

Nominations Needed for ABA Board Director Candidates

October 02, 2007 -- The American Booksellers Association's Nominating Committee, chaired by Beth Puffer of Bank Street Bookstore in New York City, is searching for qualified candidates to serve on the ABA Board of Directors³⁸. Any ABA member may submit nominations for board directors.

A board candidate must be an ABA member who is the owner or employee of an independent bookstore with a storefront location that is operated according to sound business principles. In addition, a candidate must have at least three years of recent experience as an owner or employee of a member company. It is desirable that nominees have at least two years of experience as an active volunteer in ABA or in a regional association or other constituency organization, or possess similar experience. Complete qualifications are outlined in the "ABA Nomination and Election Guidelines"³⁹.

Under ABA's bylaws⁴⁰, the terms of three members of the nine-member board expire each year, and at least one of the three nominated candidates cannot have served on the current board. Board members are eligible to be elected for two three-year terms.

Nominations should be sent to the attention of Beth Puffer, Chair, ABA Nominating Committee. A nomination form may be downloaded in PDF format⁴¹ and mailed to Puffer at Bank Street Bookstore, 610 West 112th Street, New York, NY 10025; or it may be faxed to (212) 316-7026. Nominations may also be sent via an electronic nomination form⁴². Both are available on ABA's trade website, BookWeb.org⁴³.

The Nominating Committee requests that as much information as possible be provided about candidates; all information will be kept confidential. Nominations should be submitted as soon as possible but no later than November 9, 2007.

BOOK SENSE THIS WEEK

The November Book Sense Picks & Notables Preview

October 04, 2007 -- Here is the full listing of November Book Sense Picks, with booksellers' comments, as well as a preview of the month's Notables. Independent booksellers in the Book Sense program will be receiving their November Picks fliers in the October Red Box.

The November 2007 Book Sense Picks

1. 20TH CENTURY GHOSTS, by **Joe Hill** (Morrow, \$24.95, 9780061147975 / 0061147974) "Reading this collection from the author of *Heart-Shaped Box* is like driving on hairpin curves: You never know what to expect. Joe Hill seamlessly alternates between making my skin crawl with 'Best New Horror' and my eyes tear up from 'Pop Art.' What a talent!" -- **Katie Glasgow, Mitchell Books, Fort Wayne, IN**

THE CONTRACTOR, by **Charles Holdefer** (Permanent Press, \$26, 9781579621735 / 1579621732) " *The Contractor* charts the downward spiral of a Gulf War veteran who becomes a highly paid contractor, interrogating prisoners who legally do not exist. His attempts to do right only serve to illustrate the dangers of the consequence-free legal gray area that exists around alleged enemy combatants." -- **Rich Rennicks, Malaprop's Bookstore/Cafe, Asheville, NC**

THE ABSTINENCE TEACHER: A Novel, by **Tom Perrotta** (St. Martin's, \$24.95, 9780312358334 / 0312358334) "A sex-ed teacher and a Christian soccer coach, the teacher's daughter's soccer coach no less, find themselves on opposite sides of the hot-button issues of abstinence education and school prayer. What could be cheap for another writer turns to grace in Perrotta's hands." -- **Daniel Goldin, Harry W. Schwartz Bookshops, Milwaukee, WI**

FINDING IRIS CHANG: Friendship, Ambition, and the Loss of an Extraordinary Mind, by **Paula Kamen** (Da Capo, \$26, 9780306814662 / 0306814668) "Paula Kamen writes about her longtime friend, writer, and activist Iris Chang, author of *The Rape of Nanking*, who killed herself in 2004. Kamen creates an intimate and compelling story about an extraordinary woman and her sudden, mysterious death." -- **Linda Bubon, Women & Children First, Chicago, IL**

THE END OF AMERICA: A Letter of Warning to a Young Patriot, by **Naomi Wolf** (Chelsea Green, \$13.95 paper, 9781933392790 / 1933392797) "In this brief pamphlet in the tradition of *Common Sense*, Naomi Wolf warns us of the methods used by modern tyrants and implores patriotic Americans to hold fast to the strongest tool the founders gave us for our defense: the Constitution." -- **Harry Payne, Constellation Books, Reisterstown, MD**

HOW TO TALK ABOUT BOOKS YOU HAVEN'T READ, by

Pierre Bayard (Bloomsbury, \$19.95, 9781596914698 / 1596914696) "Since we all occasionally need to sound just a bit more literate than we might actually be (or at least in order to pretend to have read the book everyone is raving about), Bayard has decided to write a primer for us -- and it's a real hoot. This is for the smart person who loves books but just doesn't have enough hours in the day to actually read them all." -- **Elisabeth Grant-Gibson, Windows a bookshop, Monroe, LA**

THE SOUND OF BUTTERFLIES: A Novel, by **Rachael King** (Morrow, \$24.95, 9780061357640 / 0061357642) "Rachael King's writing makes for smooth sailing for readers of this historical novel about an amateur naturalist whose voyage to the Amazon leaves him a changed man. More tortuous is the journey his wife must take to find the mystery behind his unnerving transformation. Rich in detail and well-researched." -- **Laura Hansen, Bookin' It, Little Falls, MN**

A FREE LIFE: A Novel, by **Ha Jin** (Pantheon, \$26, 9780375424656 / 0375424652) "This is another excellent story by Ha Jin, who immediately draws you into the lives of the Wu family -- father Nan, mother Pingping, and son Taotao -- immigrants from China now in the U.S. The experiences that Nan goes through make him re-evaluate his life, which, in turn, opens readers to a wonderful, introspective read." -- **Bobbi Brewer, Maine Coast Book Shop, Damariscotta, ME**

A MONK JUMPED OVER A WALL: A Novel, by **Jay Nussbaum** (Toby, \$14.95 paper, 9781592642014 / 1592642012) "Jay Nussbaum is a master storyteller. *A Monk Jumped Over a Wall* is a heartfelt story of one man's journey of self-discovery, as he searches for his life's true path. Nussbaum's characters are vividly drawn, depicting both human frailty and personal courage. Some books are read and forgotten, this one will long be remembered." -- **Carol Arnold, Browsing Bison Books, Deer Lodge, MT**

A PIGEON AND A BOY: A Novel, by **Meir Shalev** (Schocken, \$25, 9780805242515 / 0805242511) "Meir Shalev has written a romantic and lush story of Israel on the eve of independence juxtaposed against the present. More than anything I have read, in the rhythm of the stories, the romantic longing, and the intense love, this beautiful book reminds me of *Love in the Time of Cholera*." -- **Carla Cohen, Politics & Prose Books & Coffee, Washington, DC**

DARKNESS FALLS, by **Kyle Mills** (Vanguard, \$24.95, 9781593154592 / 1593154593) "Terrorists have produced a bacteria that eats crude oil. When they manage to infect the largest fields in Saudi Arabia and Alaska, the world is thrown into chaos. As government agents work with top scientist to halt the catastrophe, gas prices soar and life in the civilized world is changed forever. Mills' thriller feels uncomfortably realistic." -- **Linda Walonen, Bay Books, San Ramon, CA**

DEAD MAN IN PARADISE: Unraveling a Murder From a Time of Revolution, by **J.B. MacKinnon** (New Press, \$24.95, 9781595581815 / 1595581812) "An extremely readable political history of the Dominican Republic depicted through a nephew's search for the truth behind his uncle's murder. Very well researched and thorough, and highly recommended." -- **Julia Green, Front Street Books, Alpine, TX**

GOD OF LUCK, by **Ruthanne Lum McCunn** (Soho, \$23, 9781569474662 / 1569474664) "Like thousands of Chinese men who were kidnapped in the 19th century for the little-known coolie trade to the Americas, Ah Lung is separated from his beloved wife

as he is enslaved and sent to toil in the guano mines in offshore Peru. Never giving up hope for his freedom, Ah Lung constantly entrusts his fate to the God of Luck. Author McCunn hones her passionate storytelling skills in a spellbinding story you won't soon forget." -- **Lillian Kinsey, Bohannons' Books With a Past, Georgetown, KY**

THE INDIAN CLERK: A Novel, by **David Leavitt** (Bloomsbury, \$24.95, 9781596910409 / 1596910402) "Paul Erdos once asked G.H. Hardy, the noted 20th century British mathematician, to name his greatest contribution to their field. Hardy unhesitatingly replied that it was the 'discovery' of Srinivasa Ramanujan, one of the great mathematical geniuses in recent centuries. Across the chasm created by color, nationality, education, language, and colonialism, they spoke to each other in the language of pure numbers. Their collaboration plays out in this novel of intellectual history against the clubby atmosphere of British academics, homosexuality, food, and, finally, WWI." -- **Chris Stier, Shaman Drum Bookshop, Ann Arbor, MI**

THE MELANCHOLY FATE OF CAPT. LEWIS: A Novel of Lewis & Clark, by **Michael Pritchett** (Unbridled, \$24.95, 9781932961416 / 1932961410) "High school history teacher Bill Lewis, in the midst of writing a book about explorer Meriwether Lewis, reveals that he shares the historic Lewis trait of depression and madness. Fascinated by the hellish adventures of Captain Lewis, morbidly drawn to the downward spiral of his biographer, I read to the end, as Bill Lewis glimpses a ray of hope for his sanity, his son, and his marriage." -- **Gina Webb, Tall Tales Book Shop, Atlanta, GA**

THE PURE IN HEART, by **Susan Hill** (Overlook, \$24.95, 9781585679287 / 1585679283) "Susan Hills' second foray into the realm of crime fiction is a very British whodunit that unfolds in the cathedral town of Lafferton, with DCI Simon Serrailier back in action. Like Ruth Rendall, the characters are as important as the circumstances, and the result is a psychological thriller, full of sharp detail and finely crafted prose. Very satisfying." -- **Whitney Spotts, Schuler Books & Music, Lansing, MI**

THE RACE, by **Richard North Patterson** (Holt, \$26, 9780805079487 / 0805079483) "This book asks 'Can an honest man become president?' The time period is today, beginning with early primaries and ending up at the Republican convention. The politics are dirty -- full of lies, double-crosses, and manipulations -- and the candidates lining up vary from a shrewd businessman who has his own Christian TV show and theme parks to Corey Grace, a war hero who is brilliant, honest, and forthright. An electrifying page-turner!" -- **Susan Wasson, Bookworks, Albuquerque, NM**

THE SCENT OF DESIRE: Discovering Our Enigmatic Sense of Smell, by **Rachel Herz** (Morrow, \$24.95, 9780060825379 / 0060825375) "Since reading *Scent of Desire* I've noticed myself inhaling more deeply, wanting to capture the smells around me (at a restaurant or florist -- even on the bus). This clever examination of the physiology and psychology of scent will wake you up to the world around you." -- **Lori Kauffman, Brookline Booksmith, Brookline, MA**

I AM LEGEND, by **Richard Matheson** (Tor, \$14.95 paper, 9780765318749 / 0765318741) "In a genre where authors typically employ more gore and violence than plot and character, it is refreshing for a vampire novel to succeed as brilliantly this one. Robert Neville is, to the best of his knowledge, the only human still alive. As he searches for answers, the story moves beyond the horror genre and into the realm of social criticism. A terrific study of solitude and fear." -- **Jon Stich, DIESEL, A Bookstore,**

Oakland, CA

THE THANKSGIVING TABLE: Recipes and Ideas to Create Your Own Holiday, by **Diane Morgan** (Chronicle, \$19.95 paper, 9780811855426 / 0811855422) "Since I was born on Thanksgiving Day, this holiday has been special to me. I tell people that having your birthday the week of Thanksgiving guarantees you'll have at least one good meal near your birthday -- and this is a great book to help you do just that." -- **Caroline Stoufer, Buckskin Booksellers, Ouray, CO**

The November 2007 Book Sense Notables

Fiction

THE AIR WE BREATHE, by **Andrea Barrett** (Norton, \$24.95, 9780393061086 / 0393061086)

THE CHASE, by **Clive Cussler** (Putnam, \$26.95, 9780399154386 / 0399154388)

THE CHRISTMAS PEARL, by **Dorothea Benton Frank** (Morrow, \$14.95, 9780061438448 / 0061438448)

LIFE OF PI: Deluxe Illustrated Edition, by **Yann Martel** (Harcourt, \$29.95, 9780151013838 / 0151013837)

SAMEDI THE DEAFNESS, by **Jesse Ball** (Vintage, \$12.95 paper, 9780307278852 / 0307278859)

STEPS THROUGH THE MIST, by **Zoran Zivkovic** (Aio, \$23.95, 9781933083100 / 1933083107)

TIPPERARY, by **Frank Delaney** (Random House, \$26.95, 9781400065233 / 1400065232)

WINTERBIRTH, by **Brian Ruckley** (Orbit, \$14.99 paper, 9780316067690 / 0316067695)

Nonfiction

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Welcome to Zagat Survey, A New Publisher Partner

October 03, 2007 -- Zagat Survey, launched nearly 30 years ago as the hobby of two New York lawyers and dedicated diners, Tim and Nina Zagat (rhymes with "the cat"), is one of the Book Sense program's newest Publisher Partners. Zagat offers guides to dining for more than 70 major markets, as well as guides for hotels, resorts and spas, family travel, entertaining, shopping, nightlife, movies, music, theater, and golf. The company is also expanding into travel with a "Best of" guides series.

"For 28 years Zagat Survey has been providing consumers with the information and inspiration about the best places to Eat, Drink, Stay & Play in hundreds of cities around the globe," said Zagat Vice President of Marketing John Boris. "Each year we continue to add new titles and improve our guides and content to better serve locals and travelers."

The Zagats, who met at Yale Law School, thought that the measure of a restaurant would be better taken by a "wisdom of crowds" approach rather a recommendation from a single reviewer. So the couple created a restaurant evaluation survey using about 100 of their friends as voters, and gave away copies of the results. In 1979, they sold the first *Zagat NYC Restaurant Survey* by going from bookstore to bookstore. Now Zagat Survey has 250,000 voters participating worldwide. Both Tim and Nina Zagat continue to take an active role in the day-to-day operations.

The publisher continues to capitalize on the same popular survey style, but has updated features and expanded its guides. "For example," said Boris, "in 2007 we made significant changes to the book and added foldout color maps, neighborhood maps, stick-on bookmarks, two-color interior design, easier-to-read color icons, a new cover design. Plus, we actually increased the size of the book by making a quarter of an inch wider for easier reading."

New titles include the *Zagat Walt Disney World Insider's Guide*, which covers dining and nightlife as well as evaluations of rides and strategies to shorten waits. This type of guide was a new

direction for the publisher, explained Boris. "Not only was this title a first for us in that it covered various categories for a specific theme park (attractions, dining, nightlife, shopping, hotels, golf, etc.), but, it was our first guide to incorporate 16-pages of color photos, five foldout color maps, special Disney stick-on bookmarks, and, of course, our trademark Zagat ratings and reviews."

The company plans on further broadening the scope of its publishing program with its "Best of" series, designed to appeal to both travelers and locals. "These guides include a selection of the best places to Eat, Drink, Stay & Play in various cities," noted Boris. "To date, we have 'Best of' guides for New Orleans, London, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, and Las Vegas (December 2007). In addition to expanding our 'Best of' series, we are looking into various print guide formats to accommodate the weekend travelers."

The latest edition of the *Zagat New York City Restaurants*, the first and most popular guide, will be released October 10. The updated edition includes a new cover, a foldout map, stick-on bookmarks, and more than 2,050 restaurants. For more information, contact Zagat's Trade Sales Department at (866) 999-0991. -- *Karen Schechner*⁴⁶

Prince Books Celebrates a Reign of 25 Years

October 03, 2007 -- The silver anniversary celebration of downtown Norfolk, Virginia's Prince Books⁴⁷ may be understated, but the community it has served since 1982 has been enthusiastically showing its support.

Owner and co-founder Sarah Pishko told *BTW* that the store plans a 25 percent-off sale with refreshments on Wednesday, October 10. The tasteful and low-key commemoration is characteristic of the downtown fixture, which caters to readers of all ages and interests, and offers sandwiches, coffee, wines, and gifts, through its partnership of five years with Taste Unlimited.

In a 2,800-square-foot space, 2,100 is devoted to the bookstore. The corner site on Main Street is the bookstore's third location in 25 years. Both previous locations have been redeveloped and make the area more diverse and dynamic. "The whole street has changed," Pishko noted. "We were originally part of a strip of rundown stores." Now on Prince's original site is a Marriott Hotel, a popular spot for conventions, which bring business to the bookstore. Nearby in the Selden Arcade, the store's home from 1984 to 1994, a free, public museum space, d'Art Center⁴⁸ has opened.

Situated one block from the Intracoastal Waterway and in the hometown of the nation's largest naval base, Prince Books stocks plenty of boating and military reading as well as many Chesapeake Bay and Outer Banks, North Carolina, titles.

Recalling the store's inception two-and-a-half decades ago, Pishko said, "There were no bookstores in Norfolk then and I wanted to give it a try. I found a partner, and we pulled it off." She bought out the partner about 20 years ago and became the sole owner.

Two Norfolk bookstores, one independent and one chain, closed in the past year; however, one of the store's newest neighbors is a 28,000-square-foot Barnes & Noble college store in the MacArthur Mall, two blocks away. The two-story "academic superstore" opened in August in connection with Tidewater Community College, which recently moved one of its four campuses

downtown.

When plans for the B&N were announced, Pishko decided she wasn't going to wait to see what the store's presence would mean to her business. At this year's BookExpo America, Prince Books was the subject of the American Booksellers Association's case study, "What to Do When the Competition Comes to Town," which is tracking the store's response to its prospective competition. Pishko also hired a PR firm to develop some print materials and copy to use for publicity. Top reasons for shopping at Prince Books including --"We Read What We Sell" and "We Love Local Authors, and They Love Us" -- helped remind people why they love the store, according to Pishko.

The publicity push had an impact. "It had the effect of helping to temper local enthusiasm for the [B&N] opening," she said. "People could see that it's not all a great thing."

Several news and feature stories on the merits of independently owned, local businesses in general, and Prince Books specifically, have also appeared in the local media. In *Port Folio*, a free Norfolk-area weekly, an article entitled "A Prince and a Noble" asked, "Will the opening of a new Barnes & Noble ... hurt the independent local favorite, Prince Books?" Pishko, who is quoted widely in the article, emphasized that independent bookstores "have so much personality. We're all so different, unique, not just the same."

Another column, this one by Norfolk resident David Giffiths in the daily *Virginia Pilot*, said, "From its green awning and sidewalk tables, Prince Books features a modest yet chic inventory of books and magazines, hosts frequent author readings and offers friendly, personalized service -- typically on a first-name basis with regular customers -- that has been around for years...We sort of took it for granted because it was always there. But now it has competition. Yet Prince Books is exactly what a neighborhood bookshop should be."

Pishko was gratified, and a bit surprised, at the paean to her store. "He [Giffiths] is not a very well known customer here," she said. "We had no idea he would write such a nice column about us." Pishko emphasized, "We'll have nothing to worry about, so long as enough people remember how much they like the store and keep shopping here." --*Nomi Schwartz*⁴⁹

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