

# BOOKSELLING **THIS** Week

AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION

September 16, 2004

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## At MPBA & Beyond, ABA Offers Much This Trade Show Season

September 16, 2004 -- The Mountains and Plains Booksellers Association (MPBA) Fall Trade Show is being held from Thursday, September 16, through Sunday, September 19, at the

Marriott Denver Tech Center in Denver, and ABA hopes booksellers will stop by the ABA booth on the trade show floor to learn about the Book Sense Gift Card Program and to share their thoughts on the direction of future ABA educational programming. In addition to its presence on the trade show floor, ABA is offering three educational sessions at the show on Friday, September 17:

- 10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.: "Identify Competition & Self-Evaluation: A Method to Conduct the Analysis"
- 1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.: "Book Sense Gift Card Users Group"
- 1:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.: "The 2% Solution"

These and other sessions are being offered at regional trade shows around the country this fall. Here is what booksellers had to say about ABA programming at this past weekend's shows.

"The 2% Solution," led by ABA CEO Avin Mark Domnitz, was held at both the MSIBA and SEBA trade shows this past weekend, and Phil Smith of Brace Books & More in Ponca City, Oklahoma, who attended the MSIBA show, told BTW, "I got a lot out of [the session]. It was very easy to understand -- you're looking at the whole picture rather than just one way to improve things."

Paul Cossman of Humpus Bumpus Books in Roswell, Georgia, attended "The 2% Solution" at the SEBA show, and said the seminar went "very well. I think that [Domnitz] is an extremely lucid speaker ... and explains things very clearly. I walked out with a lot of valuable information."

"It was helpful to hear [Domnitz] go through the processes," said Dinah Paul of A Likely Story in Alexandria, Virginia, who also attended the session at SEBA's trade show. "I found it very informative -- it was easy to take a lot of things away from it, [including] ways to improve sales. I am really pleased that ABA is focusing on educational programs, because one of our goals is walking away with industry best practices. As new bookstore owners, that's invaluable."

A two-part gift card/BookSense.com session was held at the MISBA show, while a Gift Card Users Group was held at both PNBA and SEBA, and a BookSense.com Users Group was held at PNBA.

Brace Books' Smith attended the two-part Book Sense session and said it was "interesting to see the feedback on the increase in sales of the gift cards that booksellers are seeing [as opposed to gift certificates]. There were some significant increases" reported at the session, he said.

The Gift Card Users Group, which was held at both the PNBA and SEBA shows, provided attendees an in-depth review of the gift card program and a discussion about future growth. A Likely Story's Paul attended the gift card session at the SEBA trade show, which was led by ABA Marketing Director Jill Perlstein.

"[Perlstein] took the time and walked us through the program," said Paul. "I was able to hear [attendees'] problems, concerns, and some really great suggestions from current gift card users on how to market the cards. We signed up for the program."

At PNBA, following the gift card session, there was a

BookSense.com Users Group," where attendees learned about the latest features of BookSense.com <sup>1</sup>, as well as planned enhancements to the product.

"Successful Successions," which was moderated by ABA COO Oren Teicher, was held at the PNBA show. This panel featured a group of booksellers who had bought or sold stores in recent years. Among those sharing their experiences was Molly Cook, previous owner of Magnolia's Books & Second Story Books in Seattle, Washington. Key issues in valuing a bookstore and assorted strategies on how best to get a bookstore ready to be sold were discussed.

"I walked away with four or five nuggets of information that I was itching to tell my partner," said attendee Susan Welch, co-owner of Hullabaloo Books in Seattle, Washington. "I come from a business school background, and exit strategies are a good thing to know about especially since the independent bookstore is just now getting back on its feet. [Teicher] said that now you can successfully sell your business, whereas five years ago, [an independent bookstore] often had to close down."

At PNBA, Teicher also moderated "Forming a Local Business Alliance." This panel looked at how booksellers and other independent businesses nationwide are working together to form local business alliances. Attendees heard from the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) and the American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA), as well as from several independent booksellers who have been at the forefront of creating such alliances in their towns and cities, including Chuck Robinson of Village Books in Bellingham, Washington.

"I thought it was very useful," said Ruthanne Devlin of Bell, Book & Candle in Port Orchard, Washington, who said that she is very interested in forming a local business alliance in her community and wants to determine how she can help to improve the viability of her core downtown area. "I'm looking at the ways booksellers can be part of a community action group."

A panel on small store issues, which was held at the SEBA trade show, looked at how, in the world of bookselling, "small" can be both good and vexing. The session covered the common issues of inventory management, stocking, ordering, time management, choosing a POS system, plus much more. Domnitz and ABA Board member, Carla Jimenez of Inkwood Books in Tampa, Florida, moderated this session.

Ginny Kemp of Book & Bean in Brooklet, Georgia, said the session was "great," and the session prompted her store to sign up as an ABA and Book Sense member. "Had we not gone to that class, we never would have known about [the Book Sense marketing program]."

For details about ABA programming at upcoming shows, see the regional show previews at [www.bookweb.org/read/286](http://www.bookweb.org/read/286) <sup>2</sup> or look for coverage in upcoming issues of *Bookselling This Week*.

## A Lively and Life-Changing MSIBA Trade Show

September 16, 2004 -- For its coverage of the fall regional trade shows this year, *Bookselling This Week* has asked a bookseller at each show to share their experiences with our readers. Here, Dana Harper of Brystone Children's Books in Fort Worth, Texas, provides a lively look at the Mid-South Independent Booksellers Association trade show, which was held from Thursday, September 9, through Sunday, September 12, in New Orleans. Harper spent

four busy days attending everything from the "Publisher Rep Show & Tell" to "Beignets With the Board" and was even witness to the spectacle of a desperate bidding battle for a sock monkey.

**By Dana Harper of Brystone Children's Books in Fort Worth, Texas**

New Orleans, city of humidity, drunkenness, and carousing (and that's just on the trade show floor!). All jokes aside, the Mid-South Independent Bookseller's Association Trade Show was the show of a decade! The entire show was packed with valuable educational sessions (the real reason I attended the show) and entertaining parties (where even a shy person like myself had a great time).

Attendees who were fortunate enough to arrive on Thursday were greeted with two valuable presentations. [ABA CEO] Avin Domintz's "The 2% Solution" referenced the 2003 ABACUS study. Avin's manner was clear and concise as he detailed ways to increase store profitability. To enjoy a two percent profit, booksellers need to increase sales, increase margin, and cut expenses. Avin gave us ideas to make this happen.

Nationally known speaker John Miller spoke about the principles of "QBQ -- The Question Behind the Question." John's interactive presentation was dynamic and a little bit confrontational. (Booksellers are not accustomed to yelling out answers to a speaker's questions.) John's practice of embracing personal accountability was a revelation for me. His attitude was extremely empowering. Now I will no longer ask, "Why don't we have more customers who spend more money?" I will ask, "What can I do to make things better?" John's presentation was life changing, funny, lively, and participatory. Read John's book *QBQ*.

Activities came fast and furious at this trade show. Afternoon brought the "Publisher Rep Show & Sell." I enjoyed hearing about all their favorite fall picks. Here are a few highlights: *The Original Lone Star State: The Story of the 1810 Rebellion in West Florida* (a fascinating episode of forgotten history); *Wink: The Story of Jimmy Wakefield* (the untold sports story of an African-American shoeshine boy who became a world class jockey); *The Know It All* (the book by that encyclopedia-reading guy. I can't wait to read this one!); and Walter the Farting Dog plush toy (certainly not a book but definitely memorable).

Our final event of the night was a reception at Octavia Books. This is possibly the most beautiful bookstore I have ever seen. I think my eager and repetitive compliments might have made the Octavia booksellers a bit nervous. How many times can one bookseller tell another bookseller how stunning their bookstore is? In my case, probably about 32.

The store created a tremendous impulse to buy. I purchased *Live From New York* and *Honky* for my reading pleasure. You would think I could just wait until I returned to my own bookstore in Texas, but the atmosphere was intoxicating: blonde wood accented by olive green, lighting that looked like someone truly cared, and an intimate courtyard complete with a large, live snail suctioned to a metallic wall fountain.

A tad tipsy with wine, the Brystone booksellers were taxied back to the Hyatt by Simon & Schuster rep Gillian Reed. (I must clearly state, however, that bookselling colleague Adrienne Harper did not drink alcohol that evening. Not that she has anything against drinking, she's just a stickler for accuracy.) The ride back through the Garden District was a breathtaking tour through historic domestic architecture. Not only that, on the ride back I had the privilege of sitting next to Donna Jo Napoli!

We returned to the hotel for an early night. I had to think of how I was going to introduce one of the morning workshop speakers and worry about things like A/V needs. (Not to mention trying to sleep on a pillow as soft as whipped cream. My pillow at home is as hard as a biscuit on the Mayflower.)

Friday morning opened with an entertaining Children's Breakfast featuring D.B. Johnson ( *Henry Works* ), Cece Bell ( *Sock Monkey Boogie Woogie* ), and Peter McCarty ( *T Is for Terrible* ). I eagerly listened to the author/illustrators but was a touch nervous about the upcoming speakers. One of the morning speakers requested two bottles of room temperature spring water. Much to my dismay, spring water is not to be had at a New Orleans Hyatt. The hotel gift shop had two brands, both refrigerated, and I randomly picked one. (This is an inaccurate statement. I actually picked the water based on the advertising on the bottle. What made the water inside sound more like "spring water"?) I had two hours to bring this water to room temperature. Using the wonders of body heat, I hoped to do just that.

Bottled water successfully warmed, it was time for the morning workshops. Jeffrey Gittomer was our first speaker. Jeffrey is a sales powerhouse. Here are a few tidbits I learned: Exceptional service and a positive attitude are the keys to success. You must love your customers. You must be unique. Read his new book *The Little Red Book of Selling: 12.5 Principles of Sales Greatness*. (Booksellers were somewhat uncomfortable when Jeffrey's presentation focused on a famous online "bookstore" that I refuse to mention by name.)

Ame Mahler Beanland was the next speaker to share valuable information. She is the co-author of the book *Nesting: It's a Chick Thing*. The book is packed with ideas for decorating and parties. Many of the ideas may be modified for a bookstore. In fact, Ame is well known in bookselling circles because of an article in *Publishers Weekly* by Karen Holt entitled "Bookstore Goes From Drab to Fab," which details how Ame helped Towne Center Books in California redecorate.

Ame was a great help for Mid-South's booksellers, too. Even if she can't personally visit all of our stores at least we had a chance to hear her pointers for inexpensive and innovative visual merchandising.

The workshops passed quickly, and it was time for another meal. The "Food for Thought Author Luncheon" featured Peni R. Griffin ( *11,000 Years Lost* ), Donna Jo Napoli ( *Bound* ), and Diane McWhorter ( *A Dream of Freedom* ). What a fascinating journey into three research-filled books. I was enthralled.

It was only Friday afternoon, and I was on the verge of exploding with everything I'd learned thus far. And there was much more to come. [ABA's] Meg Smith and Mark Nichols led user's groups on Book Sense gift cards and BookSense.com. Deb Lewis spoke to us about Penguin's Business-to-Business Advantage Plan. (I'm unbelievably excited to take advantage of this!) Baker & Taylor's Bert Giannamore discussed DVDs in bookstores. (I will be reevaluating multimedia in our store.)

Casino Night was the final event of the evening, and this must have been a massive undertaking. It was held at The Praline Connection, a ballroom-sized facility with a bar and buffet. ("Do you have anything besides seafood?") Casino Night featured gaming tables with real dealers complete with black vests and knowledge of all the rules. (Craps is an unbelievably complex game.) At the end of the night, gaming chips were cashed in and totaled up. We could use this tally to bid on items in a live auction. The live auction

included some notable prizes -- the most coveted among them being three handmade sock monkeys sewn and stuffed by [MSIBA] Children's Chairperson Jill Bailey. Booksellers, reps, and even the guy from *Publishers Weekly* fought in a desperate bidding battle to acquire a sock monkey. They were like wild dogs in a starved frenzy for their share of the meat. It was quite a spectacle and perhaps even the highlight of the show.

We returned to our hotel with visions of increased profitability dancing in our heads. Trade Show 2004 was power packed, chock full of information, and a delight to the lifelong learner. The Brystone booksellers sat in our hotel room and raised our voices with excitement. We were each competing for the right to be heard -- each trying to share what we felt were the most important kernels of the knowledge we'd gleaned.

Saturday morning was delightful. I was lucky enough to hear NPR wunderkind Andrew Codrescu. (Is it accurate to call someone older than you a wunderkind? It somehow seems so appropriate.) Mid-South board member David Cockcroft held an intriguing question-and-answer session with the author, whose new novel is called *Wakefield*.

After a lovely breakfast that seemed to end too soon, it was time to attack the trade show floor. The layout was completely revamped. A reading room and in-booth author signings added an extra dimension of excitement to the show.

After a long day on the floor, Sweet Potato Queen Jill Conner Brown titillated everyone. Believe me when I tell you that the hotel event staff did not know what to think of this woman. Stunned at first, I think they gradually felt comfortable smiling, and in the end they broke down into wide-mouthed laughter. Jill Conner Brown's personality lit up the room. Her new book is *The Sweet Potato Queens' Field Guide to Men*.

The activities for the night ended early (7:00 p.m.) so everyone could have a chance to experience the New Orleans nightlife. (You know who you are.) I spent the evening marking up backlists with my colleagues, content with a room-service meal. By the way, the Hyatt in New Orleans has the best grilled-cheese with french fries that I have ever tasted.

Sunday morning came early with an 8:00 a.m. breakfast/networking opportunity. "Beignets With the Board" was a lively affair for such an early hour. The powdered sugar covered beignets made us wish we hadn't worn black. (For those not in the know, a beignet is like a donut -- but nowhere near as good -- covered with powdered sugar. It is actually a lump of dough. It tastes like a funnel cake.) The mimosas made me wish I hadn't tried champagne so early in the morning. Next time I'm sticking with straight juice.

Following breakfast, the trade show continued as booksellers attempted to wrap things up. The show ended with a gaggle of prizes from a bevy of much appreciated publishers. I always gain an even greater appreciation for the generous publishers and their hardworking reps during the show.

Four days passed quicker than I could have ever imagined. I hardly even missed my dogs back in Texas. I was too busy thinking about bookselling. As I look back on the show, I look forward to applying all my newfound knowledge and offer a special thanks to all the reps, publishers, and booksellers who made it happen.

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## PNBA Trade Show "A Literary Delight"

September 16, 2004 -- From September 10 - 12, the Pacific

*Northwest Booksellers Association held its fall trade show at Oregon's Portland Convention Center. In an area of the country with some of the highest unemployment, attendance at this year's show was down from 2003, but PNBA Executive Director Thom Chambliss told BTW, "We are cautiously optimistic that the holiday season may allow us to begin to see the light at the end of the this multi-year tunnel of recession."*

*"The highlights of this year's show were definitely the author events," said Chambliss. "Both of our Book & Author Breakfasts were well attended and enthusiastically received. Our first-time Feast of Authors on Saturday night (which was modeled after the very successful 'Moveable Feast' at the Southern California Booksellers Association fall meeting), was considered a gamble by many of our booksellers, but turned out to be the most exciting event of the weekend. Everyone I spoke to about the Feast raved and said that it was the best author event they had ever attended at one of our shows. We featured 20 authors, each of whom sat with five different tables of booksellers and discussed their new books."*

*Here Cheryl McKeon of Third Place Books in Lake Forest Park, Washington, shares her thoughts on the delights of the show -- literary and otherwise.*

**By Cheryl McKeon of Third Place Books, Lake Forest Park, Washington**

Eager for their weekend at the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association trade show, Seattle booksellers settled in for the three-hour train ride to Portland, Oregon, and opened their latest ARCs for quality reading time. "Oh, I just read *The Da Vinci Code*!" came the voice of a fellow traveler. The booksellers suppressed sighs, returned to their pages, and anticipated three days of new books.

They weren't disappointed. With attendees from more than 140 bookstores across Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, and British Columbia; more than 400 exhibitors from 128 companies; and a number of author presentations, the September 10 - 12 PNBA fall trade show was, indeed, a literary delight.

Meeting at the Portland Convention Center, many had risen early enough for the first sessions on Friday: the reps' Pick of the Lists and the education sessions. More than 15 publishers' representatives shared their favorites from upcoming lists, in two marathon sessions, morning and afternoon. *More* Advanced Readers Copies were snapped up. We took notes: "Watch for Fannie Flagg for Christmas; advise book clubs that's coming in trade paper; order plenty of that coffee-table book for the holidays."

Booksellers chose among sessions on returns, maximizing co-op dollars, selling to the Christian market, creative use of the PNBA Holiday Catalog, and more.

Real, live authors' first appearances were well received at the "Celebration of Authors," where 10 writers, each in 12 minutes, introduced their new titles. A literary potpourri of subjects: poetry; a memoir of a doctor's experiences in remote PNW regions; a zany novel of a soldier in Vietnam, one of a career girl whose mother moves in, another of a healing friendship between an aged woman and a young girl, one of a "teenaged theater queen," and more.

For independent bookstores, one of the most creative and potentially lucrative business plans is forming alliances with other "indies" in their communities. A Friday session, moderated by ABA COO Oren Teicher, included Chuck Robinson of Village

Books in Bellingham, Washington, who told of the county-wide program in the northwest corner of the state that's successfully launched a "Think, Buy, Be" local campaign, urging customers to support local independent merchants. This "sustainable connections" program emphasizes that dollars spent locally keep jobs and sales tax funds in the area. Gifts, bumper stickers, posters, and contests based on customers' receipts are all part of the Bellingham plan.

Derrell Ness of Portland spoke of the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) program and noted that residents there are "willing to fight for their quality of life, inspired to change behavior by the 'McNeighborhood' fear." BALLE encourages alliances to stress the economic, environmental, community, and workplace benefits of locals working together.

In spite of the excitement of the day's events, attendance at the fall trade show was down, Thom Chambliss, PNBA executive director, told a small but enthusiastic group attending the PNBA Membership Meeting on Friday. Membership overall is also lower than last year, and Chambliss cited the regional economy, noting that Oregon and Alaska have very high unemployment.

There was good news, too. Portland will launch a new city-wide literary event and book show this spring. "Wordstock" runs April 19 - 24, preceded by a week of ticketed author events, which will help to fund the show.

"The Spoken Word," taped author events recorded at venues around the country and broadcast on local NPR stations, is a possible upcoming effort. The hour-long program would include frequent references to the host location as well as other PNBA bookstores in the area, and will be funded in part by bookseller's associations, including PNBA, Chambliss explained.

It was also announced that in response to bookseller requests, the spring 2005 PNBA show would be a weekday event, from Monday, March 14, through Wednesday, March 16, at the Seatac Hilton in Seattle.

As exciting and informative as the Friday events were, the literal and figurative feasts of desserts, authors, book chats, and banquets, all interspersed by tours of the 200 publishers and exhibitors' displays on the floor show, were enough to make an ardent bookseller swoon.

With good intentions of taking *only* what would fit into one canvas bag, few managed to resist "just one more" book, as exhibitors presented favorite new titles and sidelines. "I was only going to take book club-potential titles, but then I saw the new kids' books" one bookseller sighed. All activity paused, however, when Marc Acito ( *How I Paid for College* ) led the crowd in a "Happy Birthday" homage to Truman Capote, who would have been 80 on Saturday. Random House staff served birthday cake.

The Book Sense booth offered updates on the new gift card program for those who couldn't make the educational sessions, and ABA staff also distributed handouts for the "Freedom" campaign, noting that the "Patriot Act" petitions' final deadline is September 20. Materials for Banned Book Week were popular, too.

While the Saturday and Sunday Author Breakfasts maintained a traditional format, Saturday Night's "Moveable Feast" allowed 20 authors to circulate among tables of diners. While this allowed informal interaction, a drawback was that authors couldn't visit every table, so attendees missed some favorite presenters and only heard five writers, booksellers said.

As reps, buyers, and authors said goodbye during final tours of the

exhibits on Sunday, the numbing effect of sensory overload was beginning to show.

"Did you hear the Marine veteran who wrote about his experiences in *Nam-O-Rama*?" a woman asked her colleague. "Oh, you mean *Barack Obama*, who spoke at the Democratic Convention?" It was time to go home, probably doze on the train, and sort out the books, the orders, and the memories.

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## SEBA Show Worth Every Bit of the Effort

*September 16, 2004 -- Despite three major storms, which hit the southeast in quick succession, the Southeast Booksellers Association (SEBA) held a successful trade show in Atlanta from September 10 - 12. SEBA Executive Director Wanda Jewell told BTW that three exhibitors and seven bookstores had to cancel due to the weather, but "Atlanta is always [SEBA's] best attended show and our numbers were high this year." The show highlights, according to Jewell, were "opening exhibits from 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. to core bookstore members only, the spelling bee, the parties and the authors, the Thursday bookselling school filled to overflowing, the Moveable Feast -- the whole SEBA show!"*

*The virtual SEBA trade show will be up and running by October 1 so that core members and exhibitors can experience the show over and over again.*

*For those who didn't attend this year's SEBA show -- for whatever the reason -- here Nicki Leone of Bristol Books in Wilmington, North Carolina, makes the case for why you shouldn't miss another one.*

**By Nicki Leone of Bristol Books in Wilmington, North Carolina**

It was a seven-hour drive there, and a seven-hour drive back, but my trip to this year's Southeast Booksellers Association Trade Show was worth every bit of the hassle. The SEBA show is also an incredibly important part of our business strategy at Bristol Books. We are not a big store, and I know how hard it is to justify a trip like this when you have no travel budget and barely enough staff to cover the gap, but I think I'd be lost without the education and support that a show like SEBA provides. In fact, in our current economic climate, I don't think we could afford to miss the opportunity to network with so many other people in the industry. It is easy to become isolated, easy to fall into a rut when you only have yourself to look to for inspiration. Being at a show like SEBA tends to jumpstart my thinking. It is a relief to find so many other people facing the same economic hurdles that I am, and exciting to hear the many creative ways they have of confronting them.

That's right -- I don't go to SEBA for the great hotel coffee. I don't even go for the free books! I go to rip off other bookstores' ideas. A significant number of the successful strategies we use at Bristol Books came originally from talking to other booksellers, either at the trade show, or at one of the many SEBA-sponsored "Revivals" and "Shoptalks."

My favorite bookselling tip I heard this year? Leslie Reiner of Inkwood Books in Florida told me that her store, which is trying to contend with the polarized and heightened emotions of their customers around this year's election, is having an "Open Mind Sale": Buy a book of any political persuasion, and you can buy one of the opposite opinion for 50 percent off! What a great idea!

Here is another bit of advice: Kelly Justice from Fountain Bookstore in Richmond, Virginia, has found that using author

photos instead of book jackets on signs and flyers announcing events generates a lot more customer interest. (Kelly's other great piece of advice was "never use real food in store window displays." I think I'll take her word on that one.)

The other thing I don't do at SEBA is place a lot of orders. I always come prepared with a few, just for a chance to win the \$1000 raffle at the end of the show, but it isn't really a priority. (I never win any raffles anyway. It is a standing joke with those who know me -- I am the kiss of death to anybody's lucky streak.) What is a priority, after talking to as many other booksellers as I can (and stealing all their good ideas), is to talk to everybody else I possibly can. I love talking to the authors, because it helps me sell their books when I get back home. I love talking to the publisher reps, because they all have their favorite books on the list, and it is much more interesting to hear what they like in person, rather than trying to interpret the difference between what they are pushing, and what they are really reading.

And that is the other thing I do at SEBA -- I ask everyone what they are reading. Trust a bunch of book people to know a good book. So when Bill Verner told me to try *No Laughing Matter* by Peter Guttridge (\$13, Speck Press), it made it to the top of my bedside stack. Robert Segedy from Branch's Book Shop waxed eloquent about Kate Atkinson's *Case Histories*. And Carl Lennertz, (whom I have always thought of privately as "the amazing Carl" for his tireless defense of Book Sense and Independent Bookstores) was all full of a story collection called *The Secret Goldfish* by David Means.

There are other things to do at trade shows, of course. There are the educational sessions: [ABA CEO] Avin Domnitz's "The 2% Solution" analysis of bookstore profitability was as thorough as it was devastatingly accurate. There are the speakers: Jill Connor Browne, who told a charming story about an anatomically correct vibrator. Russell Wallace, who was moved to tears to be "back in SEBA country." There are the meals: The famous SEBA "Moveable Feast" where eight people sit around a table and are visited in quick succession by six authors, all shouting fascinating things about their new books across the plates of poached salmon. George Singleton was especially good at this. And there are the cocktail parties, and all the free wine: I toddled my way through enough glasses of Chardonnay not to complain when someone handed me a basket and said "Here, collect the raffle tickets for the door prize." (Did I mention that I never, ever win raffles?)

Attendance at SEBA seemed a little light this year, no doubt most of the Florida bookstores were recovering from Frances or preparing for Ivan. But it was, as always, a wonderfully fun and friendly group of people. We all fought over the book bags at the HarperCollins booth, and grabbed at the "Impeach Cheney First" pins at the Norton table (the most popular giveaway at the show, by far), traded stories, advice, and generally reminded each other that we are not in this business alone -- there are people right there with you, each of them as committed, as passionate as you are about books and reading and the transformative power of literature.

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## Michigan Bookseller Finds CRP Displays Draw Customers

*September 16, 2004 -- On Friday, September 9, all four locations of Schuler Books & Music mounted displays to encourage customers to participate in the campaign to amend Section 215 of the USA Patriot Act. The stores in Grand Rapids, Walker, Lansing, and Okemos, Michigan, have set up displays that include Campaign for*

Reader Privacy petitions and fliers that offer additional sources for information on the Patriot Act.

"A lot of people have been taking a look at the display," said Schuler's Promotions Coordinator Jennifer Malinowski. "We have the [CRP] petitions out and have three or four sheets filled and the display just went up a few days ago. We'll leave out the petitions as long as possible and then mail them [to ABA]."

While all four displays are not identical, they all share similar components. In addition to the petitions to amend the Patriot Act, Schuler Books also created shirts and buttons, which are for sale. The shirts read, "Amend the Patriot Act, Schuler Books & Music" on the back and have one of three slogans on the front: "Got Due Process?"; "What you read may NOW be held against you"; and "It's time to make amends."

Schuler co-owner Cecile Fehsenfeld told *BTW* that the store was emphasizing that the bookstore was "not in favor of abolishing the Patriot Act," but rather "in favor of amending Section 215."

In the Lansing and Okemos locations, Schuler's is also spearheading a letter writing campaign encouraging customers to tell their representative to support efforts to amend the Patriot Act by providing complimentary postcards. These postcards offer a statement in support of efforts to amend the Patriot Act. If customers choose to sign them, Schuler Books and Music will foot the cost of mailing them to Representative Mike Rogers (R-MI).

In order for signatures to be counted prior to their presentation to members of Congress on September 29, ABA has asked bookstores to send all signed petitions to its headquarters in Tarrytown, New York, by September 20. Representatives of the four organizations sponsoring CRP -- ABA, the Association of American Publishers, the American Library Association, and PEN American Center -- will travel to Washington, D.C. to present the signed petitions as part of Banned Books Week celebrations. Signed petitions should be sent to ABA, Restore Reader Privacy, Attn.: Oren Teicher, 828 S. Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591.

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## Oprah Announces Newest Book Club Selection

*September 16, 2004* -- On Thursday, September, 16, Oprah announced the selection of Simon & Schuster's *The Good Earth*<sup>3</sup> by Pearl S. Buck as the next title to be read by the Oprah Book Club.

The novel, set in the last years of imperial China, follows the lives of the peasant Wang Lung and his wife, O-Lan, who are forced to tackle a new and uncertain landscape. It was first published in 1931 and won the Pulitzer Prize the following year.

On her Web site, Oprah said, "It's a sweeping saga that's been called 'a universal tale of the destiny of man.' And it's juicy as all get out!"

For more about the Oprah Book Club, visit [www.oprah.com](http://www.oprah.com)<sup>4</sup>.

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## NAIBA Announces Books of the Year

*September 16, 2004* -- The New Atlantic Independent Booksellers Association (NAIBA) recently announced the winners of the 2004 NAIBA Book Awards. The award honors books that are written by authors from the region (New York to Virginia) or that take place in the region. The winners are:

- *Big Russ and Me*, Tim Russert, Miramax;

- *The Namesake*, Jhumpa Lahiri, Houghton Mifflin;
- *Gregor the Overlander*, Suzanne Collins, Scholastic;
- *Alice in Wonderland*, Robert Sabuda, S&S

Authors will be presented with a plaque recognizing their achievement at the NAIBA Breakfast of Champions on Monday, October 25, at the regional's fall trade show at the Borgata Hotel in Atlantic City from October 24 - 25. In addition, these titles will be featured in the NAIBA Holiday Catalog.

Look for a preview of the NAIBA fall trade show in an upcoming issue of *Bookselling This Week*.

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## BTW News Briefs

*September 16, 2004* --

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### Judy Blume Honored by National Book Foundation

On September 15, the National Book Foundation announced that it would bestow its 2004 Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters upon Judy Blume, one of the country's most widely read children's authors and a "vigorous" activist against censorship. Blume is the first author of young-adult literature and the fifth woman to receive the Medal in the 16-year history of the award. She will be honored at the 55th National Book Awards Ceremony and Benefit Dinner at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in Times Square in New York City on Wednesday, November 17.

The award is given to a person, who, in the opinion of the Board of Directors of the National Book Foundation, has enriched our literary heritage over a life of service, or corpus of work. Blume is the author of more than 20 books. "I'm thrilled by this unexpected honor," said Blume in a statement. "We don't write hoping to win awards. We write because we have to -- because of a burning need to share our characters and stories. For those of us who write for young readers, the hope is always that something we've written will so touch a young person that she or he will become a lifelong reader."

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### James E. Chandler Named President & CEO of Ingram Book Group

On Monday, September 13, Ingram announced that James E. Chandler, chief commercial officer of Ingram Book Group, was named president and chief executive officer. Chandler succeeds Mike Lovett, who will assume a new position with parent company Ingram Industries Inc., according to John R. Ingram, vice chairman of the board and chairman of Ingram Distribution Holdings. "Jim's extraordinary leadership skills and business acumen have been absolutely vital to the success of Ingram Book Group since he joined Ingram over seven years ago," Ingram noted.

In a related move, Peter Clifton, president of Ingram International Inc., will assume responsibility for Ingram Book Company, Spring Arbor Distributors Inc. and Tennessee Book Company, Ingram business units, which previously reported to Chandler. These new responsibilities are in addition to Clifton's current responsibilities for Ingram Periodicals Inc. and Ingram Library Services Inc., as well as Ingram International.

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### Scholastic Hires Head of Trade Sales

On September 10, Scholastic Inc. announced that it has appointed Jack W. Perry as vice president, Trade Sales, Scholastic, beginning mid-October. Reporting to Barbara Marcus, president of Childrens

Books, Scholastic, Perry will oversee sales in the trade national account, independent, warehouse clubs, and special sales channels. Most recently, Perry was the vice president, director of sales & marketing for Sourcebooks, Inc. in Naperville, Illinois, where he was responsible for all day-to-day and strategic planning for the entire Sales & Marketing department, as well as the Publicity Department. Before Sourcebooks, Perry held management positions at Random House over nine years, rising to vice president, sales, responsible for the sales efforts for six adult imprints.

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### Operation Ohio Looks to Wake Up Voters With Author Calls

Sunday's edition of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* reported that San Francisco writer Stephen Elliott has created Operation Ohio, a two part effort "aimed at coaxing out the youth vote," and focusing on the swing state of Ohio. Part I will consist of voter registration events at Ohio State University, Oberlin College, and Cleveland State University at the end of September. Part II will see famous writers give first-time voters age 25 and younger a "voting wake-up call."

Elliott told the *Dealer* that students make up one of several groups under-represented in elections. "Of course, do I think students are more likely to vote Democrat? I do," Elliott told the *Cleveland* paper. "But it's actually not a partisan project." Operation Ohio estimates that approximately 5,000 new voters attending the registration events, or through yet-to-be-established Internet forms, will request calls. The *Dealer* said that authors such as Aimee Bender, Michael Chabon, Dave Eggers, Rick Moody, Robert Olmstead, Julie Orringer, ZZ Packer, Anthony Swofford, and Tobias Wolff have all agreed to be part of the phone bank.

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### Innova Publishing Inks Deal With CDS

On September 14, Innova Publishing announced that it had entered into an agreement with Client Distribution Services (CDS) to distribute its books throughout the U.S. and Canada. Formed in 2004, Innova licenses lifestyle content and repackages and republishes titles that provide consumers with lower-priced hardcovers. Innova publishes in lifestyle categories such as parenting, health, nutrition, cooking, and self-improvement.

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## Despite Chapter 11 Filing, WordsWorth Doesn't Plan to Close the Book

*September 16, 2004* -- On Friday, September 12, the company that owns WordsWorth Books and Curious George Goes To WordsWorth, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The store's owner, Hillel Stavis, told *BTW*, "We're not closing. We're looking for a buyer [or investor]. We would like to keep it open. We think an infusion of capital will do wonders for the store and restore it to its legendary status."

WordsWorth Books, which is located on Brattle Street in Harvard Square, has been losing money for two years, Stavis told the *Boston Globe*. "In better times" the store had annual revenue of more than \$10 million and had 110 employees, the article reported. Currently, revenue is half of that and the store has a staff of around 20 people, the *Globe* reported.

According to documents filed in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Boston, the store has \$1.5 million in debt and \$1 million in inventory and

assets. The filing was made under the corporate name for both stores, Bandicoot Corp., according to the *Globe*.

As for the bookstore's dramatic downturn, Stavis said, "Too much Amazon, too much big box bookstores." And Stavis told the *Harvard Crimson* that national chains have hit Harvard Square hard, with customers preferring the mall to dealing with parking and crowds in the Square. "We've lost 20 bookstores in 20 years," he told *BTW*. Other recent closures in the area include retailers Abercrombie & Fitch, Brine's Sporting Goods, Tweeter (an electronics store, which closed on September 7), and a Chili's restaurant. "Harvard Square priced itself out of the market," he said.

However, Stavis reported that Curious George is "healthy and viable and showing signs of getting even better," and "we intend to open a second Curious George."

In the meantime, Stavis has no plans to fold WordsWorth. Under the protection of Chapter 11, the store is looking for "investors who feel passionate about independent bookselling," Stavis noted to the *Harvard Crimson*, and added that, right after the company had announced its bankruptcy filing, a group of local residents said they were forming a committee to help the store.

Stavis told *BTW* that he hopes to find a buyer or investor sometime in the next quarter. "We have some leads," he said.

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## Campaign for Reader Privacy Deadline Just Days Away

*September 16, 2004* -- Booksellers participating in the Campaign for Reader Privacy petition drive should note that the deadline to submit signed petitions is only five days away. In order for all collected signatures to be counted, booksellers must send all petitions by September 20 to ABA, Restore Reader Privacy, Attn.: Oren Teicher, 828 S. Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591. Until that time, ABA is urging booksellers to keep collecting signatures.

The petitions, calling on Congress to amend Section 215 of the USA Patriot Act and bearing thousands of signatures gathered at hundreds of bookstores and libraries across the country, will be presented to members of Congress by representatives from the campaign's four sponsoring organizations -- ABA, the American Library Association, Association of American Publishers, and PEN American Center -- on September 29, as part of Banned Books Week (September 25 - October 2) celebrations.

On another front, on Tuesday, September 14, the Board of Legislators of Westchester County, New York, which is home to the American Booksellers Association, voted 11 - 6 to join some 352 cities and counties and four states that have passed resolutions urging Congress to repeal provisions of the USA Patriot Act, as reported by the *Journal News*. Before the vote, ABA COO Oren Teicher appeared before the board and urged them to approve the resolution.

"While I understand that the resolution before you deals with the Patriot Act as a whole, bookstores are particularly concerned with Section 215 -- that grants extraordinary super powers to the FBI to ascertain information about what we are reading -- even if we are not suspected of any terrorist activity, or for that matter, of any other crime," Teicher said. "We recognize that there may be unusual circumstances when appropriate law enforcement authorities may be able to convince a court of law -- in an open hearing -- to issue a search warrant to a bookstore and/or library. But Section 215 mandates that a bookseller or librarian turn over

information about specific titles that an individual may have bought from a store or borrowed from a library -- without the benefit of any due process whatsoever."

Teicher continued, "Many of us believe that the best tribute we can pay to those who died on September 11 is to do whatever we can to preserve what it is that America is all about -- and the worst thing we could do would be to cave into the terrorists and allow them to dictate how we behave as Americans. Star chamber proceedings, where the rights of the reading public are trampled upon, and any right to due process is cavalierly discarded, is not the kind of America most of us want."

"Over the past months, bookstores across the country have been collecting signatures from the reading public urging Congress to repeal Section 215, and I can tell you that hundreds and hundreds of thousands of those petitions have flooded our offices in Tarrytown. Two weeks from tomorrow, we'll be presenting those petitions to members of Congress in Washington. I thought it best not to bring those petitions over tonight to add to your already tall pile of papers but wanted you to know that -- on their way to Washington -- those signatures have made a stop here in Westchester County. And I'd dearly love to report to the stores who have collected all those signatures that ABA is proudly located in one of the many jurisdictions throughout the U.S. that recognizes that the Patriot Act goes too far."

To read Teicher's speech in full, click here <sup>5</sup>.

Booksellers can order additional petition pads by calling ABA's Information Department at (800) 637-0037, ext. 1292 or 1293, or for a downloadable PDF of the petition, click here <sup>6</sup>.

For more about the Campaign for Reader Privacy, visit [www.readerprivacy.com/](http://www.readerprivacy.com/) <sup>7</sup>. To learn more about Banned Books Week, order products, and download the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression Banned Books Week campaign plan, click here <sup>8</sup>.

## GLBA to Focus on "Making It on Main Street"

September 15, 2004 -- The Great Lakes Booksellers Association (GLBA) Annual Fall Trade Show will take place at the Hyatt Regency in Dearborn, Michigan, from Friday, October 8, through Sunday, October 10. This year's show, the third in a row at the Dearborn site, is packed with educational programming, including timely information for store owners about Book Sense gift cards, workshops exploring ways to create successful events and to stimulate productivity, and reports from communities that are keeping 'Main Street' alive through independent business alliances. Special events include the Great Lakes Book Awards Luncheon, appearances by many popular authors at banquets and in expanded reading rooms, and just for fun -- several team competitions.

Educational programming begins on Friday with concurrent 40-minute sessions in four tracks: track 1 focuses on things operational (e.g., "How to Manage a Backlist" and "10 Things I Want My Rep/Booksellers to Do"); track 2 offers great marketing ideas and more (e.g., "Entice and Entertain Your Customers With Authorless Events" and "Slash Staff Costs While Stimulating Joyful Productivity"); in track 3, the focus is authors (e.g., "Writers of the Heartland" and the Poetry Reading Room); and track 4 features all things new (e.g., "What's the Buzz" and "Picks of the Lists").

The theme of this year's show, "Making It on Main Street," comes

to the fore on Sunday from 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., when ABA COO Oren Teicher will moderate the plenary session "Forming Local Business Alliances." Booksellers and other independent business owners across the country are working together to form local business alliances designed to promote the ever-growing importance of locally owned independent businesses to the economic stability of their communities. This session will introduce booksellers to the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) and the American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA). Independent booksellers who have been in the forefront of creating such alliances in their towns and cities will also participate.

To help booksellers make it on Main Street, ABA has developed the Book Sense Gift Card, and on Friday from 5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m., the "BookSense.com Users Group" will offer an in-depth review of the gift card program and a discussion about future growth. Over 200 participating bookstores have seen a dramatic increase in their sales. GLBA-member booksellers will be asked to share their experiences regarding the operation of the program as well as their marketing ideas. Stores that have not yet converted to gift cards are also welcome.

In addition, throughout the show, at the ABA booth, booksellers will have the opportunity to see demonstrations of the gift card program. As an incentive to try the gift card, ABA will waive the one-time \$25 set-up fee for booksellers signing up at each trade show. (Booksellers planning to sign up at the show should bring their checking account information.)

Also at the ABA booth, staff will be working toward implementing the number-one goal of ABA's strategic plan: "To provide independent professional booksellers with access to the education, information, and business services they need to succeed in a changing world." Dan Cullen, editor-in-chief of Book Sense Picks, and Teicher will be seeking bookseller input about how best to construct the association's future educational offerings. The "ABA Education 2005 Survey" has been sent to booksellers via e-mail, is available on BookWeb.org <sup>9</sup>, and will be available at the show. (Booksellers returning surveys at the trade show will be entered into a sweepstakes to win a color, inkjet computer printer.)

In addition to ABA staff members, ABA Board member Karl Pohrt of Shaman Drum Bookshop in Ann Arbor, Michigan, will also be at the show.

Always a special event, the Great Lakes Book Awards Luncheon this year will be held on Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Featured will be winning authors Blue Balliet (*Chasing Vermeer*, Scholastic), Candace Fleming (*Boxes for Katje*, illustrated by Stacey Dressen-McQueen, Melanie Kroupa Books/FSG), Ingrid Hill (*Ursula, Under*, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill), and Phyllis Vine (*One Man's Castle*, Amistad/Harper Collins).

GLBA Executive Director Jim Dana told *BTW* that he was especially looking forward to two Reading Room sessions. "We've added a second Reading Room this year -- one for new voices and one for poetry," Dana explained. The Poetry Reading Room will take place on Friday afternoon, from 5:15 p.m. - 6:15 p.m., and will feature Raymond McDaniel (*Murder [a violet]*, Coffee House Press); Keith Taylor (*Life Science & Other Stories*, chapbook); and Maurice Manning (*A Companion for Owls*, Harcourt). The New Voices group includes Doug Crandell (*Pig Boy's Wicked Bird*, Chicago Review Press); Steven Gillis (*The Weight of Nothing*, Brook Street Press); and Rob Laughner (*Our Nun*, Melville House).

GLBA's Booksellers Banquet, to be held on Saturday evening from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., will feature Maria Doria Russell ( *Thread of Grace*, Random House); T. Jefferson Parker ( *California Girl*, Morrow); and Ron McLarty ( *The Memory of Running*, Viking).

New this year is an after-hours participatory event -- "The Quiz Bowl" -- featuring A.J. Jacobs ( *The Know-It-All: One Man's Humble Quest to Become the Smartest Person in the World*, S&S) and moderated by Carol Besse of Carmichael's Bookstore in Louisville, Kentucky. This is a competition for teams of up to six people, who will be asked questions with a predominantly literary theme. Jacobs will provide commentary and sign books. "The Quiz Bowl" will take place at 9:30 p.m. on Saturday after the Booksellers Banquet. Refreshments will be provided. Teams can pre-register for both "The Quiz Bowl," as well as the "Spelling Bee" sponsored by American Heritage Dictionaries to be held on Friday at 1:10 p.m., at [www.books-glba.org/tradeshaw.php](http://www.books-glba.org/tradeshaw.php) <sup>10</sup>.

The Children's Book & Author Breakfast will begin at 7:45 a.m. on Sunday morning and run until 9:30 a.m. Guest speakers include, Marc Brown, ( *Wild About Books*, Knopf Books for Young Readers); Tomie DePaola ( *Guess Who's Coming to Santa's for Dinner?*, Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers); Cornelia Funke, ( *Dragon Rider*, Chicken House/Scholastic); and Peter Sis, ( *Train of States*, Greenwillow/HarperCollins Children's Books).

Most author events require advanced ticketing. For more information about the GLBA trade show and to register, visit [www.books-glba.org/tradeshaw.php](http://www.books-glba.org/tradeshaw.php) <sup>11</sup>. -- *Nomi Schwartz* <sup>12</sup>

## NEBA Anticipates a Busy, Well-Attended Show

*September 15, 2004* -- The New England Booksellers Association (NEBA) is expecting robust attendance at its 31st Annual Meeting & Trade Show, which will be held at the World Trade Center in Boston from Friday, October 8, through Sunday, October 10. The trade show floor will be open from 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. The American Booksellers Association will offer three free educational sessions at the show: "Book Sense Gift Card Users," "BookSense.com Users Group," and "The 2% Solution."

NEBA executive director Rusty Drugan told *BTW* that he expected a busy, well-attended show. "Attendance figures look very good," Drugan said. "We have for the first time had to make arrangements for two overflow hotels."

About NEBA's programming, Drugan said, "The buzz I hear leading up to our show is grassroots excitement about Kate Whouley's day-long workshop on Friday about refreshing and renewing your store's appearance. Lots of anticipation and interest. Everyone seems to be in a makeover mood."

This year's ABA exhibit will focus on "Book Sense Gift Cards: One Year Later" and will feature live demonstrations. Association staff will also be on hand to gather member input on ABA education initiatives, as well as to provide general information.

The Book Sense Gift Card Program, just completing its first year of operation, has already helped more than 200 bookstores dramatically increase their sales. The ABA exhibit will give booksellers the opportunity to see firsthand how the gift card program works. As an incentive to try the gift card, ABA will waive the one-time \$25 set-up fee for booksellers signing up at the show. (Booksellers planning to sign up at the show will need to bring their checking account information. For more details about

Book Sense gift cards, click here <sup>13</sup>.)

The number-one goal of ABA's strategic plan is to "provide independent professional booksellers with access to the education, information, and business services they need to succeed in a changing world," and ABA staff attending NEBA's trade show will be seeking bookseller input on how best to construct the association's educational offerings moving forward. An "ABA Education 2005 Survey" was recently sent to members via e-mail and can be downloaded in PDF format by clicking here <sup>14</sup>. Survey forms will also be available at ABA's booth on the trade show floor. (Booksellers returning surveys at the trade show will be entered into a sweepstakes to win a color, inkjet computer printer.)

Here is a look at ABA-sponsored programs to be held at the NEBA trade show.

### On Saturday, October 9:

- **1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. "Book Sense Gift Card Users Group."** An in-depth review of the gift card program and a discussion about future growth. Booksellers will be asked to share their experiences regarding the operation of the program as well as their marketing ideas. One-on-one meetings to discuss the Book Sense Gift Card Program may also be scheduled for any time during the NEBA trade show. This session will be moderated by ABA Marketing Director Jill Perlstein. To schedule a meeting in advance of the show, booksellers should send an e-mail to Perlstein at [jill@bookweb.org](mailto:jill@bookweb.org) <sup>15</sup>. Stores that have not yet converted to gift cards are also welcome.
- **2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. "BookSense.com Users Group."** BookSense.com users will learn about the latest features of BookSense.com, as well as planned enhancements to the product. Non-BookSense.com stores are welcome to attend this session, which will be led by BookSense.com Director Len Vlahos.

### On Sunday, October 10:

- **10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon. "The 2% Solution."** This seminar, offered this past spring at BookExpo America to rave reviews, looks at the drivers of bookstore profitability and examines how they can be worked on to move our businesses to greater profitability. Specific suggestions and ideas on how a bookseller can work on sales, gross margin, compensation and occupancy expenses will be provided. The 2003 ABACUS study of independent bookshop operations showed that the average profitability of all 197 participants was a negative 1.67%. While moving from negative profitability to a positive 2% is a long journey, this seminar will help us to start drawing the road map. ABA CEO Avin Mark Domnitz will present this program.

In addition to Domnitz, Perlstein, and Vlahos, ABA will be represented at the show by ABA COO Oren Teicher; Kristen Gilligan, associate director of programming and constituent groups liaison; and ABA Board members Suzy Staubach of UConn Co-op in Storrs, Connecticut, and Linda Ramsdell of The Galaxy Bookshop in Hardwick, Vermont.

NEBA education sessions will be held on Friday, from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; on Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; and on Sunday, from 10:15 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. Highlights of NEBA's education sessions include, on Friday, a two-part session led by bookstore consultant and author Kate Whouley ( *Cottage for Sale -- Must Be Moved*, Commonwealth Editions) from 10:00 a.m. - noon

and from 2:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., "Refresh and Renew" and "Creating a Store Your Customers Love (Even More)." The educational workshop shows how booksellers can reinforce the uniqueness of their bookstore by creating an appealing visual environment.

On Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., "Scams and Shoplifting: Theft in the Bookstore" will feature a panel of booksellers who will discuss security issues and solutions. Panel members are Jeff Smull of Toadstool Bookshop in Keene, New Hampshire; David Didriksen of Willow Books and Café in Acton, Massachusetts; and security systems industry professional Kagan Hidayar of OmniGuard Systems.

On Friday night from 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. NEBA hosts its annual Children's Books Author/Illustrator Dinner. Guest speakers include Graeme Base ( *Truck Dogs*, Abrams Books for Young Readers); Cornelia Funke ( *Dragon Rider*, Scholastic); and Janet Tashjian ( *Vote for Larry*, Henry Holt Books for Young Readers).

The next day, from 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m., will be the Saturday Breakfast With Authors. Guest speakers are Lynne Cox ( *Swimming to Antarctica*, Harcourt), Stewart O'Nan (co-author with Stephen King, *Faithful: Two Diehard Boston Red Sox Fans Chronicle the 2004 Season*, Scribner); and Esmeralda Santiago ( *The Turkish Lover*, Da Capo Press).

On Saturday night, NEBA will hold its annual reception from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., followed by the Dinner With Authors from 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Authors confirmed at press time are Kelly Braffet ( *Josie and Jack: A Novel*, Mariner Books); Jane Brox ( *Clearing the Land*, FSG); Edward Docx ( *The Calligrapher: A Novel*, Mariner Books); Ross Gelbspan ( *Boiling Point*, Basic Books); Jennifer Haigh ( *Baker Towers*, William Morrow); Chuck Hogan ( *Prince of Thieves*, Simon and Schuster); Jon Kabat-Zinn ( *Coming to Our Senses: Healing Ourselves and the World Through Mindfulness*, Hyperion); Garret Keizer ( *Help: The Original Human Dilemma*, HarperSanFrancisco); Margot Livesey ( *Banishing Verona*, Henry Holt & Co.); Howard Frank Mosher ( *Waiting For Teddy Williams: A Novel*, Houghton Mifflin Co.); Meg Ostrum (University of Nebraska); and Amanda Eyre Ward ( *How to Be Lost*, MacAdam/Cage). Tickets are required.

For the most up-to-date information and for registration, go to the NEBA Web site at [www.newenglandbooks.org](http://www.newenglandbooks.org)<sup>16</sup> or call (800) 466-8711.

## ABA Book Buyer's Handbook Update -- 9/14/04

September 15, 2004 -- Below is an outline of recent changes to the data in the *ABA Book Buyer's Handbook* online at [handbook.bookweb.org](http://handbook.bookweb.org)<sup>17</sup>.

Publishers can update their online listings and add special offers at any time using the Publisher Editing Tools at <http://handbook.bookweb.org/pubhome.jsp><sup>18</sup>. Questions about access to the editing features of the *Handbook* online should be e-mailed to [handbook@bookweb.org](mailto:handbook@bookweb.org)<sup>19</sup> or call (800) 637-0037, ext. 1263.

Booksellers are strongly encouraged to alert ABA of changing terms and special offers that come to their attention. This can easily be done by using an online form available at <http://handbook.bookweb.org/form.jsp><sup>20</sup>; by sending an e-mail to [handbook@bookweb.org](mailto:handbook@bookweb.org)<sup>21</sup>; or by calling (800) 637-0037, ext. 1263.

### Current Special Offers

- Permanent Press
- Simon & Schuster Sales and Distribution Division

### New Publisher Listings

- Brassey's, Inc.
- Dwelling Place Publishing

### Revised Company Listings

(The following companies have corrected or added information to their company listings in the designated sections.)

- Academic Therapy Publications -- Electronic Ordering.
- Bookworld Trade, Inc. -- Distribute.
- Cambridge University Press -- Discount Schedule, Damaged/Defective Returns, Overstock Returns, Personnel.
- Consortium Book Sales & Distribution -- Distribute, ISBN Prefix(es), Personnel.
- Dallas Institute Publications -- Personnel.
- Farrar, Straus and Giroux -- Discount Schedule, Damaged/Defective or Overstock Returns, Co-op Advertising.
- Hal Leonard Corporation -- Discount Schedule, Personnel.
- Hanaleipets.com -- Company Name, E-mail Address, Web Address.
- Henry Holt and Company -- Discount Schedule, Damaged/Defective or Overstock Returns, Co-op Advertising, Personnel.
- Home Planners, LLC -- E-mail Address, Web Address, Office Address, Electronic Ordering, Personnel.
- Human Ecology Balancing Sciences -- Office Phone, Office Fax, Address for Orders, Freight Policy.
- Hyperion -- Distribute, Personnel.
- January Productions, Inc. -- E-mail Address, Web Address, Office Phone Memo, Electronic Ordering, Discount Schedule, Personnel.
- Junction Press -- Office Fax, STOP.
- LEA Book Distributors -- Publisher Details, Freight Policy.
- Lectorum Publications, Inc. -- Office Address.
- Legal Books Distributing -- Electronic Ordering.
- Maryland Historical Press -- Office Address, E-mail Address, Address for Orders, Electronic Ordering, Damaged/Defective Returns, Personnel.
- Mercer University Press -- Office Address, Office Fax, Freight Policy, Discount Schedule, STOP, Overstock Returns, Personnel.
- Modern Signs Press, Inc. -- E-mail Address.
- Music Sales Corporation/ Omnibus Press/ Schirmer Trade Books -- ISBN Prefix(es), Phone for Orders, Personnel.
- Nolo -- Office Phone, ISBN Prefix(es), Freight Policy, Prepayment Discount, Personnel.
- Paladin Press -- E-mail Address, Imprints, Electronic Ordering, Freight Policy, Discount Schedule, Personnel.
- Paradise Cay Publications -- Discount Schedule, Damaged/Defective Returns, Credit Allowed.
- Pineapple Press, Inc. -- Office Phone, Office Fax, Publisher Details, STOP, Damaged/Defective Returns, Overstock Returns.
- powerhouse Books -- Office Address.
- Random House, Inc. -- Distribute, Retail Distribution Center, Discount Schedule, Co-op Advertising.
- Salem Press, Incorporated -- Company Name, Office Address 2, Publisher Details, Imprints, Freight Policy, Discount Schedule, Damaged/Defective and Overstock Returns, Personnel.

- **Seneca Press** -- E-mail Address, ISBN Prefix(es).
- **Shawnee Press, Inc.** -- Office Address, Toll-Free Order Fax, Office Phone, Imprints, Freight Policy, Personnel.
- **Smith and Kraus** -- E-mail Address, Toll-Free Phone Orders, Publisher Details, Distribution, Imprints, Personnel.
- **Spanish Speaking Bookstore Distributions** -- Publisher Details, Distribute, Period of Eligibility.
- **St. Martin's Press and Tor/Forge Books** -- ISBN Prefix(es), Discount Schedule, Damaged/Defective Returns or Overstock Returns, Co-op Advertising, Personnel.
- **Stones Point Press** -- E-mail Address, Web Address, Order Fax.
- **Tharpa Publications** -- Company Name, E-mail Address, Office Address, ISBN Prefix(es).
- **the Distributors** -- Distribute, Early Payment Discount, Personnel.
- **Trafford Publishing** -- ISBN Prefix(es), Personnel.
- **Trafton Publishing** -- E-mail Address, Web Address, Electronic Ordering.
- **WordMate** -- Office Address.

## Bookstore Sales Soft in July

September 14, 2004 -- Bookstore sales remained soft with July revenue off for the fourth month in a row. July 2004 bookstore sales of \$1,153 million were 1.9 percent lower than the \$1,175 million seen in July 2003.

Bookstore sales continued to disappoint, especially when contrasted with the strong performance of overall retail for the same period.

Overall retail of \$347 billion for July 2004 was 7.4 percent better than the \$323 billion in July **2003-2004 RETAIL SALES for BOOKSTORES (unadjusted)**

Period	2003 Final (Millions of Dollars)	2004 (Millions of Dollars)	% Increase 2004 Over 2003
January	2,172	2,153	(0.9)
February	1,043	1,144	9.7
March	963	1,067	10.8
April	1,018	1,016	(0.2)
May	1,143	1,097	(4.0)
June	1,222	1,191	(2.5)
July	1,175	1,153 (p)	(1.9)
<b>YTD</b>	8,736	8,821	1.0

(p) Preliminary figure

Note: Estimates reflect sales of all types of participating bookstores, including trade, college, religious, chain stores (including superstores), and others. A bookstore is defined as any retail establishment with sales comprised of more than 50 percent new books and periodicals, and estimates include sales of all products in these stores.

Source: Bureau of the Census, Current Retail Trade Branch.

## BOOK SENSE THIS WEEK

### Polar Express Ride for Reading Delivers First Book to Children

September 16, 2004 -- <sup>22</sup> *The Polar Express* <sup>23</sup>, Chris Van Allsburg's Caldecott Medal-winning children's book, will hit the big screen this November 10 in an animated adaptation from Warner Bros., starring Tom Hanks. And now, booksellers can not only benefit from the landslide of publicity the film release is expected to generate, but also help support a worthy cause. Polar Express Ride for Reading is a promotion, developed by the book's publisher, Houghton Mifflin, and Book Sense exclusively for independent bookstores with Book Sense, that offers booksellers the opportunity to participate in a fundraising effort to support First Book, a children's literacy organization.

First Book is a national nonprofit organization with the single mission of giving children from low-income families the opportunity to read and own their first new books. First Book provides books to children in literacy programs and housing project initiatives, in shelters and other community-based efforts reaching children living at or below the poverty line. In the last three years alone, First Book has provided more than 20 million new books to children in need in hundreds of communities nationwide.

"First Book is honored to be a part of the release of *The Polar Express*, a story that has been a magical part of the holidays for many years," said Kyle Zimmer, First Book's president. "In partnership with Book Sense, First Book will spark the imagination of children in communities across the country. We are so grateful to be a part of this celebration."

Materials for the Polar Express Ride for Reading are in the September Red Box mailing. Included are a poster to announce the fundraising effort and 200 boxcars for donors to post on the bookstore's walls. Donations will be collected for a period that each individual store will set, but it is suggested that the fundraising effort culminate with a party that takes place sometime between October 15 and November 10. A Polar Express party kit is also included.

Booksellers may also choose to raise money for a different literacy group of their choice. Questions about this promotion should be addressed to Associate Director of Book Sense Marketing Meg Smith at [meg@booksense.com](mailto:meg@booksense.com) <sup>24</sup>. Questions about First Book should be directed to Social Enterprise Fellow Rachel Einschlag at [reinschlag@firstbook.org](mailto:reinschlag@firstbook.org) <sup>25</sup> or (202) 393-1222.

One participating Book Sense store will receive a *Polar Express* Prize Package put together by Houghton Mifflin, which includes movie passes, a signed Chris Van Allsburg library, and a signed movie poster. Details and an entry form can be found in Polar Express folder in the Red Box.

### A Few Timely Reminders

September 16, 2004 -- Banned Books Week is only a week away, and, given the national First Amendment implications of the USA Patriot Act, this year the event is more important than ever.

Banned Books Week, held this year from September 25 - October 2, is sponsored by ABA, the American Booksellers Foundation for

Free Expression (ABFFE), the American Library Association (ALA), the Association of American Publishers, the American Society of Journalists and authors, and the National Association of College Stores. Banned Books Week is also endorsed by the Center for the Book of the Library of Congress.

Banned Books Week Kits are still available -- but only if you order today. For the kits to arrive by September 24, they must be ordered from ALA by calling (800) 545-2433, ext. 4220. The kits cost \$55.

There is an important Book Sense-related component to Banned Books Week this year, the first-ever Book Sense Top Ten Banned Books. The list of titles, as selected by independent booksellers, can become the centerpiece for Banned Books in-store displays. Pads were sent to stores with Book Sense in the August Red Box. To download a copy of the flier, click here <sup>26</sup>.

Looking ahead, there are two important nomination deadlines for Book Sense Picks:

Winter Children's Book Sense Picks -- September 24

December Book Sense Picks -- October 8

All thanks in advance, and many thanks for all you are doing for Book Sense.

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## "Exemplary Independent" Maria's Bookshop Celebrates 20 Years

September 16, 2004 -- At the nation's only four-state juncture, in the grand expanse of the West, a 1,850-square-foot bookstore occupies a much larger space in the hearts of residents of, and visitors to, Durango, Colorado. Maria's Bookshop, celebrating its 20th anniversary this month, has purveyed general books and Southwestern art, and has created a sense of community and an atmosphere where quality and service are paramount.

Names like Dusty and Cactus Ed pepper the history of the Main Street store, but nobody named Maria has ever worked at Maria's. The store was founded in 1984 by the aforementioned Dusty "Seldom Seen" Teal, who in 1995 expanded and moved the store to a larger Main Street location a few doors down. In 1998, Teal sold the store to longtime staff member Andrea Avantaggio and her husband, Peter Schertz.

Avantaggio was co-manager in 1998 and was not necessarily the highest bidder for the store. But she was "born to the task," according to Maria's first manager, Mary Ann Griffin. Griffin is quoted in the current issue of the publication *Inside Outside: Southwest* as having said, "It was simply meant to be. Dusty and I talked it over and neither of us could imagine Maria's going to anyone other than Andrea. Rather than making a financial killing, what Dusty wanted was for Durango to have an exemplary independent bookshop that would hold steady to the values we had worked so hard to establish."

Maria's is a very large, small bookstore. It stocks close to 25,000 titles, processes between 150 and 200 special orders a week, and, with a staff of 14, stays open from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. seven days a week. Maria's sponsors 50 active book clubs; supports dozens of nonprofit organizations, including the Southwest Peace and Justice Coalition, the Durango Fire and Rescue Authority, and the national Freedom to Read Initiative; and hosts at least 50 special events each year. Last year, Maria's Bookshop received the Durango Chamber of Commerce Small Business Award.

Author appearances include regional greats, as well as those

nationally known. Terry Tempest Williams, author of *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place* (Vintage), told David Petersen of *Inside Outside* that "giving a reading at Maria's Bookshop is like being in a living room with friends. The warmth, the depth of conversation, the glow one feels in the gracious space created, allows one to believe that ideas enter the world one person at a time."

Avantaggio and Schertz spoke to *BTW* by phone as they prepared for their imminent eight-hour journey, with their two young children, to attend the Mountains and Plains Booksellers Association (MPBA) trade show in Denver this weekend. Participating in the activities of MPBA and ABA has been key to their success as booksellers. "We have used everything that our regional association and ABA have offered. We used ABACUS extensively at the beginning -- it helped us get our feet on the ground," said Avantaggio. "We jumped into Book Sense as soon as we could. It's the best thing that's ever happened to independent booksellers. We replaced our paper certificates with Book Sense gift cards when the new program started, and we are a BookSense.com store, too. We report to the Book Sense Bestseller list and we use the lists as a talking point with customers. People ask if we have the *New York Times* Bestseller List, and we explain that our list reflects what people at the independents are really reading, not what the big publishers are pushing. The lists sell books. People seem to like being on the inside track."

In its promotional materials, Maria's terms Book Sense "the unrecognized champion of regional authors, literary fiction, local history, and non-mainstream thought."

Schertz, who mainly works behind the scenes, handling the store's financial end, recalled the exact day Maria's implemented the Book Sense Gift Card program. He told *BTW*, "It was November 3 [2003]. The program has been outstanding. There was a brief learning curve, but we have seen increases ranging from 17 to 22 percent over our store certificates. We promote [the cards] heavily on displays around the store, and we often donate them for community events."

The BookSense.com site, [www.mariasbookshop.com](http://www.mariasbookshop.com) <sup>27</sup>, also serves as the store's newsletter and directs people to events and store information. It also enables Avantaggio and Schertz to take advantage of publisher co-op funds.

Avantaggio, a former MPBA president, told *BTW* that she has always found MPBA and ABA educational sessions valuable. At trade shows, she attends as many workshops as possible and knows that "[she will] always come home with something new and useful. It might come from the presenter, or from comments by other booksellers. The shows are a refreshing reminder that bookselling is a profession, and great people are involved."

The store's 20th anniversary celebration includes a week of special events, from September 20 - 26, with daily refreshments, prizes, and a 20 percent off storewide sale. Local authors, poets, 'celebrity authors,' and young readers will be featured in the lineup of events. The final event celebrates "Readers Rights" and in recognition of Banned Books Week features a showing of "Reading Your Rights," a 30-minute documentary on the Tattered Cover's successful fight against a search warrant for customer records, and a discussion of the Patriot Act and the right to reader privacy led by a local attorney. -- *Nomi Schwartz* <sup>28</sup>

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## The Book Sense Music Bestseller List -- From Porter to Punk

September 15, 2004 -- Based on reporting from hundreds of independent bookstores with Book Sense across the U.S. for the four-week period ending September 12, 2004.

Past Category Bestseller lists are available at [www.bookweb.org/read/5677](http://www.bookweb.org/read/5677)<sup>29</sup>.

**Attention Media:** Please contact Meg Smith at [meg@booksense.com](mailto:meg@booksense.com)<sup>30</sup> for reprint guidelines for your newspaper or magazine.

The Book Sense Music Bestseller List	
1.	<b>The Piano Shop on the Left Bank: Discovering a Forgotten Passion in a Paris Atelier</b> Thaddeus Carhart, Random House, \$13.95, 0375758623
2.	<b>Ticket to Ride: Inside the Beatles' 1964 &amp; 1965 Tours That Changed the World (With Audio CD)</b> Larry Kane, Penguin, \$14, 014303426X
3.	<b>Jim Morrison: Life, Death, Legend</b> Stephen Davis, Gotham, \$27.50, 1592400647
4.	<b>Dylan's Visions of Sin</b> Christopher Ricks, Ecco, \$26.95, 0060599235
5.	<b>Wilco: Learning How to Die</b> Greg Kot, Broadway, \$14, 0767915585
6.	<b>Songbook</b> Nick Hornby, Riverhead, \$13, 1573223565
7.	<b>Rise Up Singing: The Group Singing Song Book</b> Peter Blood (Ed.), Sing Out Publications, \$17.95, 0962670472
8.	<b>Cole Porter: A Biography</b> William McBrien, Vintage, \$15, 0679727922
9.	<b>The New Complete Guitarist</b> Richard Chapman, DK, \$20, 0789497018
10.	<b>So What!: The Good, the Mad, and the Ugly</b> Metallica, Steffan Chirazi, Broadway, \$29.95, 0767918819
11.	<b>Every Little Thing Gonna Be Alright: The Bob Marley Reader</b> Hank Bordowitz (Ed.), Da Capo, \$17.95, 0306813408
12.	<b>Harmonograph: A Visual Guide to the Mathematics of Music</b> Anthony Ashton, Walker, \$10, 0802714099
13.	<b>Younger Than That Now: The Collected Interviews With Bob Dylan</b> Jim Ellison (Ed.), Thunder's Mouth, \$16.95, 1560255900
14.	<b>Moanin' at Midnight: The Life and Times of Howlin' Wolf</b> James Segrest, Mark Hoffman, Pantheon, \$26.95, 0375422463
15.	<b>Take a Walk on the Dark Side: Rock and Roll Myths, Legends, and Curses</b> R. Gary Patterson, Fireside, \$14, 0743244230
16.	<b>Duende: A Journey Into the Heart of Flamenco</b> Jason Webster, Broadway, \$14, 0767911679
17.	<b>Shakey: Neil Young's Biography</b> Jimmy McDonough, Anchor, \$16.95, 0679750967
18.	<b>Elvis Presley: The Man, the Life, the Legend</b> Pamela Clarke Keogh, Atria, \$35, 0743456033
19.	<b>The Rose That Grew From Concrete</b> Tupac Shakur, S&S, \$21, 0671028448
20.	<b>Traveling Music: The Soundtrack to My Life and Times</b> Neil Peart, ECW Press, \$19.95, 1550226665
21.	<b>The Phish Companion: A Guide to the Band and Their Music</b> The Mockingbird Foundation, Backbeat Books, \$24.95, 0879307994
22.	<b>When Hollywood Had a King: The Reign of Lew Wasserman, Who Leveraged Talent Into Power and Influence</b>

	Connie Bruck, Random House, \$16.95, 0812972171
23.	<b>The Vice Guide to Sex and Drugs and Rock and Roll</b> Gavin McInnes, Warner, \$16.95, 0446692816
24.	<b>Cash: The Autobiography</b> Johnny Cash, HarperSanFrancisco, \$7.99, 0061013579
25.	<b>Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk</b> Legs McNeil, Penguin, \$16, 0140266909
26.	<b>All You Need to Know About the Music Business - 5th Edition</b> Donald S. Passman, S&S, \$30, 0743246373
27.	<b>Where You're At: Notes From the Frontline of a Hip Hop Planet</b> Patrick Neate, Riverhead, \$14, 1594480125
28.	<b>The Dirt: Confessions of the World's Most Notorious Rock Band</b> Motley Crue, Regan Books, \$15.95, 0060989157
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