

# BOOKSELLING THIS Week

AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION

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## Holiday Survey Shows Sales Increase for Indie Business and Positive Effect of Buy Local Campaigns

January 14, 2010 -- More holiday shoppers deliberately sought out locally owned businesses this year, according to a national survey of more than 1,800 independent businesses.

The survey found that holiday sales for independent retailers were up an average of 2.2 percent. That contrasts with the Commerce Department figures released today, which show that overall retail sales were down 0.3 percent in December and up 1.8 percent in November.

The survey also found that for the third year in a row independent retailers in cities with active "Buy Local" or "Think Local First" campaigns reported stronger holiday sales than those in cities without such campaigns. These campaigns have been launched by local business alliances in more than 100 cities and towns. Independent retailers in these cities reported an average increase in holiday sales of 3.0 percent, compared to 1.0 percent for those in cities without an active Buy Local initiative.

Nearly 80 percent of those business owners surveyed said public awareness of the value of choosing locally owned businesses had

increased in the last year (16 percent said it had stayed the same).

A bookstore owner in Oregon said that the growing public awareness and support for independent businesses "has been critical to our ability to stay in business during down economic times."

"The buzz about buying local was louder among my customers this year than any other year," said a shoe store owner in Michigan.

A retailer in Maine added, "We've had many customers say they are making a real effort to 'Buy Local' this year. A number of customers said they saw an item at a chain store or online, and came back to us to purchase it."

The survey was conducted by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance<sup>1</sup> (ILSR), a nonprofit research organization, in partnership with several business organizations, including the American Booksellers Association, American Independent Business Alliance, American Specialty Toy Retailers Association, Business Alliance for Local Living Economies, and National Bicycle Dealers Association.

Similar surveys conducted by ILSR in 2009 and 2008 also found that independent businesses in cities with Buy Local campaigns reported stronger sales than those in communities without such an initiative.

"It is extremely encouraging to see -- even in this very challenging economic climate -- that, for the third year in a row, independent retailers in communities with active shop local campaigns have outperformed retailers in cities and towns without such campaigns," said ABA CEO Oren Teicher. "This significant trend is the result of hard work and innovative management, and this survey demonstrates how important a Buy Local/Local First campaign is in helping indie businesses achieve greater sales. This insight regarding consumers' preferences is consistent with what we have seen since the launch of IndieBound in 2008. Shoppers value authenticity, they want to connect with and to strengthen their communities, and they recognize that bigger is not always better. Because of that, we believe this is a time of great potential for locally owned businesses that are committed to working together."

"This survey adds to the growing body of evidence that people are increasingly bypassing big business in favor of local entrepreneurs," said Stacy Mitchell, senior researcher for the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. "Amid the worst downturn in more than 60 years, independent businesses are managing to succeed by emphasizing their community roots and local ownership."

"These results reinforce what we've heard from our local affiliates -- that their campaigns are yielding real dividends and shifting local spending," said Jennifer Rockne, director of the American Independent Business Alliance. "That's good news for their local economies. Studies show that small businesses keep more dollars circulating locally and generate the majority of new jobs."

"For the third year in a row, this study demonstrates the bottom-line impact of local business alliances running Think Local First campaigns," said Michelle Long, executive director of the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies. "Local

entrepreneurs are the bedrock of the U.S. economy and, when they work together, they make our communities more resilient, unique, and rewarding places to live."

## 40 ABA Member Stores Open in 2009

January 14, 2010 -- Despite last year's economic challenges, 40 ABA member stores opened in 2009 across the U.S. The new indie bookstores are in 19 states, with California, New York, and Wisconsin leading the way, at five openings each. Illinois and Texas followed, each with four new indie bookstores. Included in the 40 regular new stores are two branches of existing businesses -- Books Inc. in Berkeley, California, and Posman Books in New York City. One ABA international member also opened for business in 2009: Coral Reef Bookstore in Anguilla, British West Indies.

To meet the challenges of the Great Recession, the new owners carefully fashioned business plans, put together curated book inventories, added an array of gift and other non-book items, and sought unique ways to promote their stores.

Daniel Goldin, who opened Boswell Book Company<sup>2</sup> on Downer Avenue in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in April in the former Harry W. Schwartz location he had managed, told *BTW*: "We've been very lucky in that the community seems to be responding to us well. When we first opened, folks were very gracious, but when they came back this fall, they said, 'Actually, we were happy to have anything, but now we really like the store.'" Although Boswell has not reached Goldin's "very ambitious numbers," he said, "We're generally within spitting distance of our sales goals. Transaction numbers are off, but the sales per customer are above projection. That makes us think we're really connecting with core book buyers and folks who really value what we're doing."

Importantly, and what should make publishers happy, he said, "is that new book sales are up substantially more than anything else." The biggest shortfalls were in sales of magazines and bargain books, but bargain book numbers have improved with the addition of more inventory and display space.

Goldin takes advantage of free local media coverage to promote store events and utilizes all of the major social networking sites. He freely admits that the store is "good at blogs, OK with Facebook, crappy with Twitter." Boswell also publishes an e-mail newsletter ("it's very counter to a lot of other ones out there, long and gabby and almost meant to be printed out," he said), and an in-store event calendar/newsletter that is sometimes mailed out.

Customers can sign up for a five-percent rebate program, and Boswell occasionally offers coupons. "We do traditional ads and co-sponsorships, and we did a lot of off-sites and selling at gift markets," Goldin added. "That led to us trying to have some gift markets in the store (one was based around a graphic novel, and another took on some local craftspeople after their outdoor farmer's market closed), and they've been very successful at building traffic." Goldin doesn't charge vendors a percentage or a booth fee for these occasional events; he views these giveaways as an investment in building traditional sales.

Boswell's book club program is off to a good start, and a shopping night program (an idea borrowed from the Schwartz Bookshops) is doing pretty well. But, Goldin said, "We have a long ways to go in many areas."

Goldin initially concentrated on building Boswell's core book business, and then slowly began adding non-book items to the

inventory mix. "By fall we had a pretty nice selection of journals, cards, plush, and assorted bric-a-brac," he said. Although he has brought many of the successful ideas from the Schwartz Bookshops to his new store, Goldin believes he has an advantage in being able to get his staff more involved in the inventory selection process, and that it is easier for the single store to incorporate themed displays. "We had a bird table (assorted cards, bookends, resin birds, and that wonderful *Bright Wings* anthology and many other books)," he said, "a very successful sock monkey table (assorted toys, bookmarks, cards, plus that *Te Neues* book and some kids' titles), and a William Morris table that sold not just cards, journals and those V&A kitchen tools, but a pile of the little pattern book from Phaidon and several copies of his socialist essays from Penguin. Very cool!"

Goldin, whose high-energy and enthusiasm is well known among his bookselling colleagues, said of his first-year: "I scheduled 28 hours in a day to get things done, and I'm rather irritated that there are only 24."

Lanora Hurley, who opened Next Chapter Bookshop<sup>3</sup> in the Schwartz Mequon location that she used to manage, told *BTW*: "Not a day that goes by that we do not hear 'I'm so glad you are still here!' The community here has been amazing. Over Christmas, customers brought in sweets for the staff to say 'Thank You.' The comments and support from the community has been what has kept me going through the long hours and general insanity of opening a business in these hard times."

Hurley said that hiring an "amazing staff" was among the things that she has done right. "My marketing and event coordinator, Rebecca Rick, worked under Nancy Quinn at Harry W. Schwartz, and she has done a phenomenal job," said Hurley. "We have learned that the most effective marketing tool we have is a print newsletter. This has surprised us a little, because it flies in the face of everything we are hearing. It turns out that our customers are still readers, and they like having something in their hands and in their mailboxes."

Next Chapter's holiday sales were given a boost by a gift guide put together by Rick, which Hurley said was fantastic. "We had people coming in the store with books circled and pages torn out with our recommendations that they wanted."

Hurley has paired down her store inventory to "30 percent less than the former [Schwartz] store, across the board," and she has put the focus on achieving the right mix of books. While Next Chapter does offer some gift items, "it has been a challenge to keep the gift inventory at a good level," she explained. "While we are not selling as much gift inventory as the Schwartz store did, as a percentage of sales we are selling more on less inventory. So, that is good.... The only area where we felt it necessary to get the inventory level near where it was last year was in the Children's Department, where sales are flat. And flat is the new up!"

Despite working hard this year to reach out to former Schwartz customers, "whether it is the economy or the change over, we still have a 15 to 20 percent decrease in traffic," said Hurley. An outreach to area teachers and schools has had moderate results.

Hurley is looking forward to April, when Next Chapter marks its first anniversary and she can start comparing the store's monthly sales figures with its own previous year's results. "Now that we are in our groove with just running the business, we are looking forward to spreading our wings a little and trying some new things, especially with our events," she said. "I am really proud of all the hard work and dedication my staff has put in for the past nine

months. None of this has been easy, but it sure has been fun!"

Jane Phalen, manager of Kennebooks<sup>4</sup> in Kennebunk, Maine, told *BTW*: "It has been an interesting opening year for us. As our event coordinator, Ann Carmichael, put it, 'If you build it, they will come' really only happens in the movies. That being said, the rainy summer was extremely helpful. We opened Memorial Day and had a wonderful reception. There were many visitors who were not able to be outside, and the new bookstore was a great alternative."

Phalen said that working with local inns and hotels has been a priority. Kennebooks gives these businesses coupons to offer their guests and makes them aware of upcoming events. "We started our e-mail list from day one," she added, "and with the busy summer we were able to build it quickly, and our customers are very receptive to joining. Using Constant Contact has been a good experience, and we use our bimonthly newsletter for event notification and to highlight specific books and sidelines. Online ordering is in the near future."

Kennebooks' non-book inventory includes cards, journals, prints by local artists, puzzles and games, and Envirosax nylon bags ("that have done quite well").

Kennebunk's winter population is about one-third that of the summer population, and the bookstore's biggest challenge, said Phalen, "seems to be making it known that we are here." The bookstore has done quite a bit of print and radio advertising, but since it's in a stand-alone renovated farmhouse the bookstore is easy to miss from the road. Owner Trish Koch has come up with a solution that is working quite well, however: She hung a bright, lime green sign that says "BOOK STORE" on the business' existing sign near the road. "Results were immediate!" said Phalen. "We are now working on becoming more involved with the community. We are in the process of establishing partnerships with the local schools. We offer our event room to book clubs registered with us, and will soon be hosting in-store book clubs, as well as reviving the story hour that did well in the summer." Kennebooks is also continuing to host author events in the store as well as off-site.

Joanna Richmond, who with her husband, Stuart, opened Read All Over<sup>5</sup> this past summer said that almost everyone in the Port Arthur, Texas, community was very enthusiastic and excited to see the store arrive.

The Richmonds have been promoting the store via advertising in local newspapers, on the radio and TV, and in high school yearbooks. Read All Over, which features local author events each month, offers a frequent buyer club that is free to join and rewards \$200 in purchases with a \$10 gift certificate.

"We have added calendars and moleskine notebooks, etc. to our sidelines of jigsaw puzzles, greeting cards, puzzle balls, mugs, magazines, and journals," said Richmond. However, sales have not grown as fast as the couple had hoped. December helped, she said, but January sales are still below expectations.

Diane Savage was inspired to open The Reading Bug<sup>6</sup> in San Carlos, California, by the birth of her granddaughter, Chloe. With the help of her entire family, and especially daughter-in-law (and mother of Chloe) Lauren Savage, she set out to create a warm, inviting children's bookstore with a robust selection of books for adults. Her hope was that the community would demonstrate its support by buying books from The Reading Bug rather than at a chain or from another online retailer. "The community's response has exceeded our expectations," said Savage. "The Reading Bug has very quickly become a part of the mid-Peninsula community, and many of our customers have told us that they are purchasing all

of their books from us because they want us to be successful."

The Savages promote all activities and events via the store's e-commerce site<sup>7</sup> and send a weekly newsletter to customers. They have also met with the librarians of the San Carlos schools and many other community organizations. In October, The Reading Bug introduced a customer loyalty program that provides a gift card to customers who purchase \$200 of merchandise. Savage explained, "In December we extended this program so that schools can sign up for the same program, and parents can elect for their store purchases to be applied to their children's schools."

The Reading Bug attracts customers by offering at least one story time every day from Tuesday through Sunday. Story times on Saturday and Sunday feature a craft activity.

"We try to offer as many books as we can in paperback form, so that children can make their dollars go further," said Savage. "In order to realize our goal of becoming a community resource, as well as to increase our revenue, we offer a number of non-book items in the store -- music CDs, gift cards, plush toys (primarily toys that relate to our books), puzzles, wooden toys, and recycled toys and craft kits." All of the items are carefully selected. "We offer many items that were made in the United States; we offer fair trade plush toys made by mothers in Peru; and we offer as many good toys made from recycled materials as we can find," Savage explained. "We also offer to host book-themed birthday parties and other events at our store. Our store has a unique look and feel that makes it a wonderful venue for parties, and the community response to our parties has also been excellent."

Savage summed up her family's bookselling experiences to date: "We have learned that the book business is a complicated and difficult business, but there are many non-monetary rewards."

Joni Montover, owner of Paragraphs on Padre Boulevard<sup>8</sup> on South Padre Island, Texas, is pleased with the way the community has embraced her new bookstore, although, she added, "The majority of my business is still from visitors to the island, but I continue to build a local customer base. I think that a lot of residents have learned to buy books online or have gone to a Kindle since we did not have a bookstore within 100 miles and habits are hard to break."

To bring Paragraphs to the attention of local residents, she has made sure that community organizations and nonprofit groups know that the bookstore exists and is willing to support them in any way possible. "Shortly after we opened, we hosted a 'Turtle Tea' to benefit Sea Turtle Inc., a sea turtle rescue facility located on the Island," Montover said. "For many raffles and other fundraising events, we provide ARCs and bookmarks that have the store's information included. We also sell tickets for local performances sponsored by the El Paseo Arts Foundation and provided a venue for the Valley International Poetry Festival. A well-attended and popular monthly event is a Play Readers group, where participants take turns reading the roles of characters in a selected play. The leader gives the group some background information on the play and then provides some insight into the characters."

Montover continues to refine and look for additional items for Paragraphs' nonbook inventory. "The reading glasses from 2020 Vision [benefiting ABFFE<sup>9</sup>] have been well-received, as has the Crane stationery, which we buy through B&T. Less successful has been the NPR/B&T music promotion but it does add interest and is worth the effort of monthly returns. I am looking forward to adding a selection of magazines for the summer."

As for her overall bookselling experience to date, she said, "I am

pleased with how well the first year has gone. I am surprised that we have been as successful as we have considering the overall economy and that tourism has been down. The general level of business on the Island has been down this year, so I am quite pleased that we have been able to meet my gross revenue goals for our first year. The other side of this is that more time is spent meeting with customers, and I have had less time available for back room functions that I had hoped to finish once we were open. The result is a feeling of always playing catch-up and an incredibly long list of things I want to do in the future."

For 2010, Montover's goals include converting her two-year-old blog into an e-commerce site that will offer customers the ability to download audio and e-books, and setting up accounts with more publishers so she can take advantage of their higher discounts.

In summary, Montover said, "It has been a busy year, and there are days when I feel pretty stressed, but, generally, I feel really lucky to live on a sandbar and to be surrounded by books. I wouldn't recommend moving to a new town, and building a shop and residence in order to open a new business in which one has no expertise, but, having done it, I must say it has been rewarding and a lot of fun." -- *Rosemary Hawkins*<sup>10</sup>

**2009 ABA Member Store Openings**

Alchemy of Woodstock	Woodstock	NY
Backlist Books	Massillon	OH
Bertram & Oliver Booksellers <sup>11</sup>	Amesbury	MA
Book King Bookstore	Rutland	VT
BookBundlz <sup>12</sup>	Chicago	IL
Books Inc. <sup>13</sup>	Berkeley	CA
Books N Beans, LLC	Portage	WI
Boswell Book Company <sup>14</sup>	Milwaukee	WI
Bridgeside Books <sup>15</sup>	Waterbury	VT
Buffalo Books	New Buffalo	MI
Cliff Notes Prolonged Media	Dallas	TX
Dulce Bread & Book Shop	Dripping Springs	TX
Eclectic Books <sup>16</sup>	Murrieta	CA
Flyleaf Books <sup>17</sup>	Chapel Hill	NC
Green Bean Books <sup>18</sup>	Portland	OR
Greenlight Bookstore <sup>19</sup>	Brooklyn	NY

Kennebooks <sup>20</sup>	Kennebunk	ME
Knight Corner Bookshop	Neenah	WI
Montauk Bookshop	Montauk	NY
Next Chapter Bookshop <sup>21</sup>	Mequon	WI
Off the Beaten Path <sup>22</sup>	Lakewood	NY
Old Towne Books and Tea	Oswego	IL
Only Helpful Books.com <sup>23</sup>	La Crescenta	CA
Open Book	Shorewood	WI
Open Books <sup>24</sup>	Chicago	IL
Paragraphs on Padre Boulevard <sup>25</sup>	South Padre Island	TX
Play by Play Theatre Bookstore <sup>26</sup>	Saint Paul	MN
Posman Books	New York	NY
Read All Over <sup>27</sup>	Port Arthur	TX
Read Booksellers <sup>28</sup>	Danville	CA
Reading Frenzy BookShop <sup>29</sup>	Zimmerman	MN
Simple Pleasures Books & Gifts <sup>30</sup>	Ashland	VA
Stone Alley Books & Collectibles	Galesburg	IL
Sven and Oles Books <sup>31</sup>	New Ulm	MN
Swift Books <sup>32</sup>	Orangeburg	SC
Tale of Two Sisters Bookstore	Covington	LA
The Bookery Nook <sup>33</sup>	Denver	CO
The Reading Bug <sup>34</sup>	San Carlos	CA
The Reading Place <sup>35</sup>	Edinboro	PA
Words	Maplewood	NJ
Coral Reef Bookstore	Anguilla	BWI

**Five More Authors Join Winter Institute Lineup**

January 14, 2010 -- The list of participants in the Winter Institute's popular Author Reception grew by five this week. Joining the Wi5 roster <sup>36</sup>, which was announced by the American Booksellers Association in mid-December, are:

- J. Kirk Boyd, *2048: Humanity's Agreement to Live Together*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers (distributed by Ingram)
- Avner Mandelman, *The Debba: A Novel*, Other Press
- Diane Meier, *The Season of Second Chances: A Novel*, Henry Holt and Company
- Suruchi Mohan, *Divine Music: A Novel*, Bayeux Arts (distributed by Small Press Distribution)
- Howard Norman, *What Is Left The Daughter: A Novel*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

The total number of authors and illustrators scheduled to appear is now 42 -- the greatest number ever participating in an ABA Winter Institute event. The Author Reception, from 6:15 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 4, is free and open to all Wi5 registrants. For complete Wi5 details, visit [BookWeb.org](http://BookWeb.org) <sup>37</sup>.

## Booksellers Urged to Contact Legislators to Demand E-Fairness

January 14, 2010 -- Last week, the American Booksellers Association launched the E-Fairness Action Kit (E-FACT) <sup>38</sup> to provide booksellers with crucial, state-specific tools to help them with their e-fairness communications and advocacy efforts. E-FACT provides booksellers in the 42 states that collect sales tax but do not have e-fairness legislation with state-specific template letters calling for e-fairness that can be sent to their state legislators and governor. ABA is urging booksellers in the 42 states to use the available templates to reach out to their state legislators, governor, and revenue departments.

Booksellers can go to E-FACT <sup>39</sup> and navigate to their state, where they will find the relevant documents, which can be adapted and then e-mailed to the appropriate person. Look for E-FACT to continue to grow to include FAQs, relevant articles, and other material.

Very soon, ABA will add to E-FACT both an op-ed template and practical suggestions for advocating on behalf of e-fairness. Booksellers are urged to adapt the editorial and submit it to their local newspapers to help increase public awareness of the importance of e-fairness.

In addition, within the next month, ABA will provide fact sheets that will provide key economic stats, including how much sales tax revenue ABA member bookstores provide to each state. The fact sheets can make a powerful impact in conjunction with letters or as a leave-behind in meetings with state legislators.

Booksellers who have questions, need assistance, or want more information on ABA's e-fairness efforts should contact David Grogan at (800) 637-0037, ext. 6662 or via e-mail at [dave@bookweb.org](mailto:dave@bookweb.org) <sup>40</sup>.

## Bookstore Sales Fall in November

January 14, 2010 --

After a strong September, retail sales at bookstores fell for the second straight month. Bookstore sales decreased by 2.0 percent in November 2009, compared to November 2008, according to preliminary figures recently released by the Bureau of the Census.

November 2009 bookstore sales are estimated at \$1,025 million, compared to sales of \$1,046 million for the same period last year. October 2009 sales dropped by 1.3 percent, compared to October 2008.

Overall total retail and food service sales increased by 2.5 percent in November. Overall retail sales were \$347.2 billion in November 2009, compared to \$338.8 billion in November 2008.

Period	2008 Final (Millions Dollars)	of	2009 (Millions Dollars)	of	% Change 2009 over 2008
January	2,271		2,233		(1.7)
February	1,139		1,010		(11.3)
March	1,012		998		(1.4)
April	994		962		(3.2)
May	1,141		1,108		(2.9)
June	1,065		1,103		3.6
July	1,115		1,104		(1.0)
August	2,402		2,422		0.8
September	1,476		1,580		7.0
October	1,044		1,030		(1.3)
November	1,046		1,025 (p)		(2.0)
YTD	14,705		14,579 (p)		(0.9)

(p) Preliminary figure

Note: Estimates reflect sales of all types of participating bookstore, 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.

## IndieCommerce Outlines Plans for First Half of 2010

January 14, 2010 -- This week, the American Booksellers Association presented IndieCommerce members with a roadmap of upgrades and new features planned for the first half of 2010. ABA also assured members that, in the wake of the staff reorganization announced last week <sup>41</sup>, IndieCommerce remains an extremely high priority and that the recent changes would put staff in a stronger position to respond to customer service questions and to implement new features.

The plan, presented below, prioritizes some of IndieCommerce members' wish list features in order to hit the most critical targets first.

At the top of this year's schedule are two major projects:

- **Finish the migration of legacy stores to the Drupal platform.** The migration, which has been an enormous but necessary drain on customer service resources, is scheduled for completion by the end of March. This will free up IndieCommerce staff to implement new features faster.
- **Upgrade to Drupal 6 and Ubercart 2.** Upgrading to the latest version of Drupal and Ubercart will not only ensure future security and stability, it should improve site performance and add some new features as well. Testing is underway, and the rollout is expected to begin in March and to finish in May, before BookExpo America.

While those major projects are underway, there are several other new features IndieCommerce staff will be working to implement:

- **UPS and USPS Ubercart modules that support price quotes by weight.** These modules will integrate with a store's own UPS/USPS accounts to automatically adjust shipping charges at checkout.
- **E-book pricing.** IndieCommerce is working on a system to show to store administrators the wholesale price for e-book downloads to help stores set consumer prices for e-books.
- **Google Preview.** Google Preview offers a slick, comprehensive "look-inside-the-book" feature.
- **Gift wrap.** Allow customers to select a free gift-wrap option at checkout.
- **Don't enter shipping address for Pay at Store.** IndieCommerce staff is investigating options for re-ordering items on the checkout page, so that customers who wish to pick up a book in the store do not have to enter a shipping address. IndieCommerce is committed to implementing this feature -- if not before the upgrade to Drupal 6 -- then immediately after.
- **Coupon codes.** Offer customers a discount by creating "coupon codes" that can be entered at checkout.
- **Make event date formatting more user friendly.** IndieCommerce is reviewing some improvements to the event module so that it does not require the Start Date and End Date for events that take place on a single day.

IndieCommerce has a long wish list of additional features that may not be implemented in within the next six months, but a few of the items that it plans to explore as future options are:

- **Destination-based tax system** (a top priority following the successful upgrade to Drupal 6/Ubercart 2)
- **Discounts by customer class**
- **Combining gift card and credit card payment methods** (using a credit card if gift card doesn't have enough funds)
- **Improvements to the book list feature** (search by title/author, not just ISBN)
- **Fine tuning search results to collapse books by edition**
- **Adding an "add to cart" button to search results**
- **Implementing Google Checkout**

Questions and comments about anything related to IndieCommerce

should be addressed to [staff@bookweb.org](mailto:staff@bookweb.org) <sup>42</sup>.

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## Reservations Open for ABA Hotel at BEA 2010

*January 14, 2010* -- Booksellers at ABA member stores can now make reservations for the official "ABA Hotel," which was secured by BookExpo America <sup>43</sup> (BEA) for the 2010 show in New York City. The Park Central Hotel, located just 20 blocks north of the Javits Center, near Times Square, provides easy access to BEA via taxi, bus, or subway.

The Park Central's special low rate for ABA bookstore members is \$179 for one or two beds, single or double occupancy; \$199 for triple occupancy; and \$219 for a quad. A special link to the BEA hotel reservation site and the access code required to book a room at the Park Central is now available to ABA bookseller members via BookWeb.org.

All ABA member stores will receive a complimentary BEA badge allotment. All ABA Winter Institute participants will also receive an additional complimentary badge to BEA.

Look for more on perks for ABA members staying at the Park Central for BEA 2010 in upcoming editions of BTW. For more on ABA at BEA 2010, visit [BookWeb.org](http://BookWeb.org). <sup>44</sup>

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## Obituary: Bob Simoneaux

*January 14, 2010* -- Robert Ross "Bob" Simoneaux, 64, of West Chester, Pennsylvania, died on Monday, January 11, 2010, after a long illness. He was co-owner, with his wife, Kathleen Yates Simoneaux, of Chester Country Book & Music Company <sup>45</sup> in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

Simoneaux's career in the book business, which began at age 18, included positions at Curtis Circulation Company, Pocket Books, Bayou News, and Fawcett Books. He also worked at one time as a police officer in New Orleans.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by three sons, Parrish, Troy, and Brandon Simoneaux, and seven grandchildren, all of New Orleans.

Visitation and a memorial service will be held on Friday, January 29, in West Chester at DellaVecchia, Reilly, Smith & Boyd Funeral Home <sup>46</sup>.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to West Chester Area Senior Center, 530 E. Union St., West Chester, PA 19382 or Neighborhood Hospice, 400 E. Marshall St., West Chester, PA 19380.

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## A Quick Look at Some Gift Card Packaging Options

*January 14, 2010* -- The National Retail Federation lists gift cards as the most requested holiday item, and they remain a popular choice year round. With their consumer appeal, and ability to draw new customers who are likely to spend more than the face value, gift cards' only drawback is their size.

To help booksellers increase the visibility of gift cards, here's a shortlist of alternative sources for packaging and holders:

- Marian Heath Greeting Cards <sup>47</sup> offers creative gift card envelopes.
- Specialty Bottle <sup>48</sup> sells gift card tins (used by Bookshop Santa

Cruz).

- Seastone <sup>49</sup>, a gift card package company, offers a large selection of presenters, but has large minimum orders.
- W.G. Ellerkamp <sup>50</sup>, supplier of IndieBound natural Kraft recycled bags, also offers the Huckleberry envelope (pricing here <sup>51</sup>)

Another alternative is for stores to create and print their own presenters. ABA offers a downloadable gift card presenter template <sup>52</sup>, which has been used by several indies (including Builder's Booksource, Books Inc., and Greetings & Readings) to create their own unique presenters.

Some of the greeting card companies listed in ABA's *Booksellers Resource Directory* <sup>53</sup> may also offer envelopes for gift cards. And, of course, a quick Internet search will always bring up some possibilities that may be worth exploring.

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## BTW News Briefs

January 14, 2010 --

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**Spartanburg Writers Project to Open Indie Bookstore** The Hub City Writers Project has begun a fundraising campaign to bring an independent bookstore to an historic Masonic Temple building in downtown Spartanburg, South Carolina, according to *Hub City News* <sup>54</sup>. Betsy Teter, executive director of the Hub City Writers Project, said that new bookstore would be "on the leading edge of a new business model emerging in the bookselling industry -- nonprofit bookstores financially supported by communities of book-lovers and civically engaged residents."

The group, which has already received several substantial gifts, is seeking contributions from the community to renovate a 3,000-square-foot space in the 82-year-old building. Renovations and bookstore fixtures for the store, which will stock bestsellers, regional books, university press books, children's books, and used books, are expected to cost \$100,000.

The bookstore is slated to open in the spring, and proceeds from book sales will fund local literary programming, Hub City Press publishing operations, college scholarships for local creative writers, and other charitable activities.

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### IndieBound iPhone App Receives Kudos From Boston Globe

Last Sunday, the IndieBound iPhone app was featured in a *Boston Globe* article <sup>55</sup> on how to follow the world of ideas on the go. Writer Joanne McNeil said of the app: "Next time you are on vacation and craving a quirky beach read, check out this great app from the independent bookseller alliance IndieBound. It uses GPS to find the nonchain bookstores nearest to you, complete with a contact number, hours of operation, and link to its website. You can use IndieBound to order books to pick up at the indie bookshop of your choice and keep a 'wish list' of books you'd like to read next. It is also excellent for browsing, when no brick-and-mortar shop is nearby. Check out the bestseller lists and reading group recommendations in categories ranging from 'Comics and Graphic Novels' to 'Memorable Women.' Now, isn't that better than I Am T-Pain?"

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### Seattle's University Book Store Celebrates 110 With 110

*Seattle Times* book editor Mary Ann Gwinn <sup>56</sup> reported on this past

weekend's 110th anniversary celebration of the University Book Store. Gwinn called the Seattle indie "the sine qua non of university bookstores" and cited its many author readings, well-read staff, wonderful children's department, free parking with purchase, and "some of the most interesting sale tables on the planet."

To commemorate this milestone, University Book Store has published *110/110*, a collection of original works of 110 words or less by 110 of the store's favorite Northwest authors and artists. Contributors include Tony Angell, Chris Crutcher, Ivan Doig, Terry Brooks, and Shawn Wong.

While supplies last, University Book Store is giving away a copy of the *110/110* to anyone who purchases a title by a contributor to the collection, either in the store or online. Excerpts from the book can be found on the store's e-commerce site <sup>57</sup>

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### PNBA Announces Award Winners

The Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association <sup>58</sup> recently announced its 2010 Book Award winners, as selected by a committee of independent booksellers from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska, from more than 200 nominated titles.

Winning titles, written by a Northwest author and published in 2009, are:

*The Big Burn: Teddy Roosevelt & the Fire That Saved America* by Timothy Egan (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) *The Collector: David Douglas and the Natural History of the Northwest* by Jack Nisbet (Sasquatch Books) *Boneshaker* by Cherie Priest (Tor Books) *The Crying Tree* by Naseem Rakha (Broadway Books) *All in a Day* by Cynthia Rylant; illustrated by Nikki McClure (Abrams Books for Young Readers)

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### NRF Finds Holiday Season Ends on High Note

The National Retail Federation <sup>59</sup> reported today that December retail sales (which exclude automobiles, gas stations, and restaurants) rose 2.3 percent unadjusted year-over-year and fell 0.5 percent seasonally adjusted from November.

"As a result," said NRF, "preliminary 2009 holiday sales, which combine the full months of November and December, rose 1.1 percent to \$446.8 billion," surpassing its projected decline of 1.0 percent.

"Apparel was a big driver for retailers as clothing and clothing accessories stores for December increased 7.0 percent year-over-year and dipped 0.6 percent from November," according to NRF. "Sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores also performed well with December sales increasing 3.9 percent from last year and up 1.6 percent month-to-month."

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## The Indie Mind, Body, Spirit Bestseller List

January 14, 2010 -- For the eight-week period ending January 12, 2010, and based on sales in hundreds of independent bookstores nationwide.

1.	<b>Guardians of Being</b> Eckhart Tolle, Patrick McDonnell (Illus.), New World, \$18, 9781577316718
2.	<b>The Power of Now</b> Eckhart Tolle, New World, \$14, 9781577314806

3.	<b>The Four Agreements</b> Don Miguel Ruiz, Amber-Allen, \$12.95, 9781878424310
4.	<b>A New Earth</b> Eckhart Tolle, Plume, \$14, 9780452289963
5.	<b>Reinventing the Body, Resurrecting the Soul: How to Create a New You</b> Deepak Chopra, Harmony, \$25, 9780307452337
6.	<b>The Secret</b> Rhonda Byrne, Atria/Beyond Words, \$23.95, 9781582701707
7.	<b>Taking the Leap: Freeing Ourselves From Old Habits and Fears</b> Pema Chodron, Shambhala, \$21.95, 9781590306345
8.	<b>Oneness With All Life: Inspirational Selections From a New Earth</b> Eckhart Tolle, Plume, \$16, 9780452296084
9.	<b>90 Minutes in Heaven</b> Don Piper, Revell, \$13.99, 9780800759490
10.	<b>Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life</b> Thich Nhat Hanh, Bantam, \$15, 9780553351392
11.	<b>The Fifth Agreement</b> Don Miguel Ruiz, Don Jose Ruiz, Amber-Allen, \$19.95, 9781878424686
12.	<b>The Vortex: Where the Law of Attraction Assembles All Cooperative Relationships</b> Esther Hicks, Jerry Hicks, Hay House, \$16.95, 9781401918828
13.	<b>Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom</b> John O'Donohue, Harper Perennial, \$14.99, 9780060929435
14.	<b>Many Lives, Many Masters</b> Brian L. Weiss, Fireside, \$14, 9780671657864
15.	<b>2012: The Return of Quetzalcoatl</b> Daniel Pinchbeck, Tarcher, \$15.95, 9781585425921
16.	<b>The 2012 Story: The Myths, Fallacies, and Truth Behind the Most Intriguing Date in History</b> John Major Jenkins, Tarcher, \$25.95, 9781585427666
17.	<b>The Third Jesus: The Christ We Cannot Ignore</b> Deepak Chopra, Three Rivers, \$15, 9780307338327
18.	<b>Eternal Life: A New Vision: Beyond Religion, Beyond Theism, Beyond Heaven and Hell</b> John Shelby Spong, HarperOne, \$24.99, 9780060762063
19.	<b>A Book of Silence</b> Sara Maitland, Counterpoint, \$25, 9781582435176
20.	<b>Be Here Now</b> Ram Dass, Three Rivers, \$15.15, 9780517543054
21.	<b>The Book of Secrets: Unlocking the Hidden Dimensions of Your Life</b> Deepak Chopra, Three Rivers, \$14.95, 9781400098347
22.	<b>Defy Gravity: Healing Beyond the Bounds of Reason</b> Caroline Myss, Hay House, \$24.95, 9781401922900
23.	<b>Ask and It Is Given: Learning to Manifest Your Desires</b> Esther Hicks, Jerry Hicks, Hay House, \$14.95, 9781401904593
24.	<b>Why Is God Laughing?: The Path to Joy and Spiritual Optimism</b> Deepak Chopra, Three Rivers, \$12, 9780307408891

25.	<b>Clear Your Clutter With Feng Shui</b> Karen Kingston, Broadway, \$11.95, 9780767903592
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# MARKETPLACE

## Classifieds

### HELP WANTED

#### ABA MEMBER RELATIONSHIP MANAGER

The American Booksellers Association is looking to fill the newly formed position of Member Relationship Manager, to report to the Membership and Marketing Officer. The successful candidate will manage a portfolio of member accounts as part of the Member Relationship Team, and will be those accounts' main liaison for all aspects of membership in ABA, including joining and renewal, event registration, benefit maximization, and general customer service, with the intended goal to insure member satisfaction, retention, and success.

Bookselling and/or customer service experience preferred. Requirements include excellent writing and phone skills, an energetic demeanor, ability to work and follow-through autonomously, interest in independent bookselling and/or retail, and familiarity with Microsoft Office Suite and database programs. There is potential for advancement within the association.

Salary commensurate with experience. Send resume and cover letter to [meg@bookweb.org](mailto:meg@bookweb.org)<sup>65</sup>. No phone calls, please.

#### A.C. VROMAN, INC. OPERATIONS MANAGER

A.C. Vroman, Inc. is seeking to hire an Operations Manager. A.C. Vroman, Inc., a 115-year-old independent company, owns Vroman's Bookstore, Vroman's Bookstore Hastings Ranch, and Vroman's Fine Writing, Gifts & Stationery, all in Pasadena, California. Vroman's Bookstore is Southern California's Oldest and Largest Independent Bookstore and was named Publisher's Weekly Bookseller of the Year in 2008. A.C. Vroman, Inc. also recently acquired another well-known independent bookstore, Book Soup in West Hollywood, California.

The Operations Manager is part of the senior management team and reports directly to the President/Chief Operating Officer. The position's primary responsibility is overseeing the day-to-day sales floor operations of all of the above-named store locations.

The ideal candidate must be a self motivated leader who is capable of self direction, able to multi-task/juggle multiple priorities, and able to motivate and develop staff.

Requirements include: retail management experience; demonstrated initiative; a willingness to be on call and work extra hours as needed; a positive, team player attitude; strong written and verbal communication skills; and extraordinary customer service skills.

Bookstore experience is a plus. Book knowledge and a passion for books are preferred.

This is an exempt, full-time position, 40+ hours per week, nights and weekends required. Benefits include medical, dental and vision insurance; vacation and sick.

Please email resume with salary requirement to Allison Hill at

ahill@vromansbookstore.com<sup>66</sup>.

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### BOOKSTORE FOR SALE

**6,300 sq. ft., new and used bookstore in historic Tacoma, Washington, neighborhood.** Gross: \$200,000.00 per year. Knowledgeable staff; loyal customer base. Great turnkey opportunity in a growing Pacific Northwest region. Asking \$150,000.00. Contact Pat, John, or Sweet Pea. (253) 272-8801.

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### FIXTURES FOR SALE

**BOOKSTORE REMODELING** -- Franklin Fixtures for Sale. We have bookshelves, magazine racks, CD racks with storage and display tables for sale. For more information on pricing or photos, please e-mail mitchellbooks.book@gmail.com<sup>67</sup>. Must pick up in Ft. Wayne, IN.

**BOOKSTORE CLOSING** -- Franklin Fixtures for a 2,000 square foot store, including counter, wall units, aisle units, and magazine racks. Greeting card racks. Slatwall fixturing. Book stands and displays. Must pick up in Washington, DC, or Rehoboth Beach, DE, by mid-Jan. No reasonable offer refused. (202) 462-6969. Ask for Deacon.

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### WANTED

**Gladewater Books is expanding its offerings to include private label needlework kits.** We buy original crochet, knit, needlepoint,

and cross stitch designs and need folks to review kits and stitch up prototypes. E-mail ederieux@gladewaterbooks.com<sup>68</sup> or call (903) 720-3098 for submission guidelines or more information about carrying the kits in your bookstore.

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**All Regular ABA Member Bookstores in good standing may have up to four 2-week Classified Ad insertions per year in *Bookselling This Week* at no charge (50-word limit). For more information on booking a classified ad, click here<sup>69</sup>.**

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## Other Advertising

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