Notes From the NEIBA Advisory Council

"Spotlight on Children's Books", an interview with Robin Gross at Books on the Square

Robin Gross has been the Children's Book Buyer for 17 years. She began her journey as the young adult book buyer, and now she is the Children's Book Buyer/Bookseller Extraordinaire at Books on the Square (seriously that is her new job title). Along the way there has been a transformation in the children's book industry that celebrates diversity and innovation. Jacqueline Woodson is the 2018/2019 "National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, and her platform is "READING = HOPE x CHANGE", which encourages young people to think about the moment they are living in, and to believe in the power of reading to create hope and change in the world. Robin has been a champion of NECBA's "Windows and Mirrors" initiative, which exemplifies diverse experiences and identities. Our children's department reflects these changes with the renovation of the physical space, as well as, the promotion of titles. There is not a better hand seller of children's books IMHO, no matter the age, interest, enthusiasm, or lack thereof, Robin can find the book that you need!

Susan: How did you come to fall in love with children's books and book selling?

Robin: Loving to read was something that I felt from my earliest memory. I came from a noisy, active family, my mother couldn't sit still for 2
Help Wanted

NORTHSHIRE BOOKSTORE, Manchester Center, VT is seeking someone to work in our Children’s Department. The ideal applicant would have a love for kids books and merchandise and an ability to share their enthusiasm with our customers. Qualifications include, children's book knowledge, experience in retail, familiarity with computers, flexibility and reliability. Come join the Northshire family! Please submit an application online at www.northshire.com

Bookstore Manager, Milford NH

We are looking for an experienced manager with

minutes. So, I suppose, this was my way of tuning out. I am a "people" person, so selling comes naturally. Stories of all kinds give children a head start in understanding the broad wonderful world we live in!

Susan: You have three daughters, what books did you most enjoy reading to them, or with them?

Robin: My favorite book to read to my girls was "Hurry, Hurry" by Edith Thacher Hurd. Miss Mugs was the nanny, and she was always in a hurry. One day she ran under a ladder where a man was using glue, and it fell over on her. I won't give it away - but it is funny.

Susan: When you became the Children's Book Wizard, (this is now your new title), you had the opportunity to redesign the children's space. What is your favorite new addition to the children's section?

Robin: I always have wanted the space to feel cozy. Who doesn't love to cozy up with a good book?! It was important to have room for story time. And, when Mark Teague agreed to paint a mural on the wall - it just pulled everything together.

Susan: What YA title should everyone read this year?

Robin: "The 57 Bus"

Susan: What challenges, and successes, did you find in the "Windows and Mirrors" initiative?

Robin: The Windows and Mirrors initiative has been a wonderful collaboration between NECBA and Grace Lin, who designed the logo, and NEiBA, who has supported our mission. For me personally, it has been a way to connect with other booksellers on stories that open our eyes, and teach compassion, and show we are not so different.

Susan: You recently attended the Kid's Buyers Retreat in Rhinebeck, NY. Can you tell us a little about the experience?

Robin: Rhinebeck is on the Taconic Parkway, which is drenched in American history. Scholastic, Little Brown, and HarperCollins presented their future list and enlightened us. We helped with everything from cover design to editing suggestions. Beth Wagner then had the room offer "one thing that changed your life in selling books" - it was so awesome to come away with so many suggestions!

~ Susan Schlesinger, Books on the Square, Providence RI
We are looking for an experienced manager with demonstrated abilities to lead a small but enthusiastic staff in our 28 year old store in Milford, NH. The job will entail a variety of duties from working the counter to ordering new titles, reorders, arranging displays and events, and attending to the myriad details that make the store an enjoyable and inviting place to be. An extensive knowledge of, interest in, and curiosity about a broad range of books is essential.

We offer health insurance and pay a major portion of the premium, as well as fully paid dental insurance, paid vacations, employee discounts and a flexible work schedule when possible.

Please contact co-owner Willard Williams in the Peterborough store at 603-924-3543, by email books@ptoad.com, or by mail: The Toadstool Bookshop, 12 Depot Sq. Peterborough, NH 03458.

More about our stores can be found at our website www.toadbooks.com.

Founded in 1972 in Peterborough, NH, ours is a family owned business now with three stores in southwestern NH.

David R. Godine, Publisher is creating a unique position for a Sales and Marketing Associate to join our sales and marketing team. This exciting opportunity is perfect for a candidate who has a passion for both the book world and travel. The right person will possess solid communication skills and have a strong eye for detail. Speaking comfortably to small groups is a must, as well as the ability to grow long-term one-on-one relationships. The ideal applicant will be able to work independently and be self-motivated. Relevant experience in the book industry, especially in a bookstore setting, is an asset but not required. Must be good with numbers and proficient in Microsoft Office Suite.

The main objectives of this position are as follows:

♦ To sell books and build the Godine brand in the independent bookstore community.
♦ To work with the Director of Sales and Marketing to create a sales and marketing strategy that enhances this brand and the customer experience with David R. Godine, Publisher.

This full-time position is based in central Boston, but roughly 50% of time would be spent traveling domestically with the remaining hours spent in the Boston office supporting the Director of Sales and Marketing. Must provide one's own transportation throughout the Northeast and be a competent driver.

Please send a cover letter and résumé to kcourtchesne@godine.com.

Binc Announces 2018 Share the Good Campaign

The Book Industry Charitable (Binc) Foundation kicked off their spring fundraising drive Sunday, April 1. The Share the Good campaign will encourage monthly sustaining donations by sharing the stories of book people who help and have been helped by the Foundation.

Throughout the month of April, Binc will share stories of booksellers who have been helped after life changing events, from natural disasters to medical emergencies. Binc will also share messages from current supporters explaining why it’s important to maintain a safety net for booksellers. The goal of the campaign is to encourage 50 booklovers from across the country to become Binc monthly sustaining donors.

AND

There is a “Share the Good” campaign regional IBA challenge!

Prize: Win an ice cream party for your fall tradeshow!

How does this work?: Sign up to be a new monthly sustaining donor to Binc. The region who signs up the highest number will win an ice party at their fall tradeshow. Click here to sign up today.

“Sharing these stories is important because they illustrate how book people are really helping each other,” said Pamela French, Executive Director. “But more importantly these stories show how critical it is to have a place to turn when life throws you a curve ball.”

A book industry veteran of more than 40 years is among those whose stories will be told during Share the Good:

In my 47-year career in the book business, I never asked for anything in return. Simply being around books, and in the culture of books, was the reward in itself. But sometimes life throws painful challenges in our path that we could never anticipate. This is what happened to me.

And it’s because of indie booksellers such as yourselves who donate money to Binc - even when times are toughest - that I received the crucial help I needed after my surgery. My gratitude for all of you good people is beyond measure. I have been deeply humbled, and I promise you that when I am able, I will pay it...
promise you that when I am able, I will pay it forward.

New England Independent Booksellers Association, 1955 Massachusetts Avenue, #2, Cambridge, MA 02140

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